RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY STUDY

FINAL REPORT

July 31st, 2025

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INTRODUCTION

Between April and July 2025, the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) worked with a consultant team of WSP USA and Foursquare ITP to conduct an Operational Efficiency Study (OES) as directed pursuant to Rhode Island's FY 2025 Budget. In accordance with this budget directive, the goal of the OES was to uncover ways to "enhance efficiency and streamline costs" to address RIPTA's projected budget shortfalls during the upcoming fiscal year (FY) 2026 and future years. The OES includes the following components:

— A peer and best practices review comparing how other transit agencies are operating in the current economic climate, dealing with national declines in ridership, addressing the divide between urban and rural/regional services, approaching cost-sharing partnerships, supporting local and regional economic development, and balancing federal and state funding sources.
— An assessment of RIPTA's federal funding, revenue sources, and operating cost drivers, including recommendations for how to improve operation efficiency and reduce costs
— A quantitative and qualitative assessment of the performance of each of RIPTA's services
— A review of Rhode Island's Transit Master Plan to assess implementation progress to date and the degree to which implementation can continue in a cost-constrained future.

RIPTA AGENCY ASSESSMENT

Across the transit industry nationwide, agencies are rebuilding ridership back to pre-pandemic levels. According to the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) latest Ridership Policy Brief,[1] nationwide bus ridership has recovered to 86% of 2019 levels, with rail modes recovered to 72%, and demand-response services recovered to 93%. As ridership levels rebound, agencies are actively looking at ways to deliver better service more efficiently, while also navigating workforce and funding challenges. As part of the OES, a peer and best practices review was conducted to understand how RIPTA's peers navigate changes in ridership and customer expectations, funding uncertainties, and workforce challenges.

LEARNING FROM PEER AGENCIES

The peer and best practices review includes research and interviews with six agencies comparable to RIPTA in size, transit services offered, and service area coverage. The peer agencies selected include Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) in Norfolk, VA; Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) in Albany, NY; CTtransit based out of Hartford CT; Delaware Transit Corporation (DART) serving all of Delaware; Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) serving Kansas City, MO and KS; and Regional Transit Service (RTS) in Rochester, NY.[2]

Key themes, findings, and takeaways are further explored in Chapter 1.

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[1] New APTA Reports Show Strong Industry Growth | Passenger Transport
[2] The methodology for selecting these agencies is discussed in Appendix A of this report.

REVIEW OF RIPTA'S OPERATING BUDGET

REVENUE SOURCES

RIPTA's revenue comes from a combination of fares, state, federal, and other revenues (see Chapter 2, Section 2.1). The OES analyzes projections of federal formula funds that are used to cover maintenance and operating costs and RIPTA's directly generated revenue, including fare revenue, advertising revenue, and revenue derived through partnerships with employers, schools, and other organizations.

OPERATING COSTS

The review of operating cost drivers includes an analysis of RIPTA's operating cost efficiency compared to the six peer agencies and an analysis of historical service and operating cost trends. The results of the analysis, which are described in Chapter 2, Section 2.2, show that across multiple measures RIPTA's operating costs are in line with or just above the average of the peer agencies.

ASSESSMENT OF RIPTA'S OPERATIONS

The OES includes a quantitative and qualitative performance assessment of RIPTA's current operations. The findings can be used by RIPTA to inform service planning, guide efficient resource allocation, and support its mission to provide equitable, efficient, and sustainable transit across the state. The assessment covers Fixed-Route Service (including express and seasonal routes), Flex/Flex On Demand, RIde ADA paratransit/RIde Anywhere, and the Commuter Resource RI (CRRI) program, highlighting the strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and impacts each of these modes and programs has on mobility, economic development, and the environment.

The performance assessment found that RIPTA provides an essential service for the region. This was made clear based on feedback from focus group sessions held in May 2025. Fixed-route service is the backbone of RIPTA's system and performs well, especially within urban corridors. While the assessment found that Flex/Flex On Demand services could be refined and service roles clarified, it also found that the service is vital for serving transit-dependent populations in lower density areas. Likewise, the RIde ADA paratransit and RIde Anywhere pilot program provide life-changing transit access for individuals with disabilities, particularly in rural areas that may not be served by fixed routes. CRRI, which comprises employer partnerships and other commuting programs, fills gaps in areas where the addition of fixed-routes is otherwise infeasible and can be a source of revenue. More detailed assessment results are included in Chapter 3.

ADDRESS BUDGET SHORTFALLS

Based on RIPTA's FY 2026 operating budget, and accounting for the additional $15 million dollars in state funding included in the state's FY 2026 budget bill (2025-H 5076A), RIPTA projected an approximately $18 million dollar operating deficit for FY 2026. As part of the review of revenue sources and operating cost drivers, the OES includes recommendations for reducing costs.

FEDERALIZE POSITIONS LINKED TO CAPITAL ASSETS

RIPTA could leverage federal funds to cover certain positions for which the costs are not currently reimbursed by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Opportunities exist to federalize positions linked to capital assets, i.e. reimburse these positions with federal formula funds used for capital projects. Based on estimates of total cost and percentage of time dedicated to capital, shifting certain eligible employee compensation costs to be paid by federal funds would represent $0.8 - $1 million; these are not actual

cost savings but only opportunities to leverage additional federal funds to reimburse some costs of RIPTA's operating budget. More details about the types of positions that could be federalized and the estimate can be found in Chapter 4.

INCREASE USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS TO REIMBURSE RURAL, LOW-INCOME, AND REVERSE COMMUTE SERVICES

Opportunities exist to increase the amount of federal formula funds used for route segments operating in rural areas or to cover operating costs for specific eligible services addressing the needs of low-income populations and reverse commute services. To explore these opportunities, the OES recommends that RIPTA systematically identify route segments outside of urbanized area (UZA) boundaries and allocate service costs to rural formula funds proportionately based on vehicle service miles. RIPTA could also review existing routes currently receiving Jobs Access & Reverse Commute (JARC) funding and analyze the potential creation of new routes that could qualify for additional funds. More details and analysis on opportunities to leverage federal formula funds can be found in Chapter 2, Chapter 4, and in Appendix C1C, a memo assessing current and potential JARC related funding.

EVALUATE CURRENT FLEX SERVICE STRUCTURE

Performance assessment of RIPTA's Flex/Flex On Demand service revealed that some refinement and clarification of service roles could be beneficial. As Flex zones are upgraded to on-demand service, RIPTA should reevaluate zone size and structure with reference to the Flex Suitability analysis findings included in Chapter 3, Section 3.5.2. For example, where larger zones show suitability in smaller areas, RIPTA might consider reducing zone size or splitting zones. To improve efficiency RIPTA should explore software and scheduling enhancement to minimize vehicles running without passengers.

REDUCTIONS TO SERVICE

Given the size of the projected operating deficit for FY 2026, RIPTA will likely need to make reductions to fixed-route service. To reduce service costs by $18 million, RIPTA may have to reduce up to 20% of current annual service. The OES identifies strategies by which these service reductions could be achieved and identifies potential impacts. Additional details and analysis are included in Chapter 3, Section 3.5.2 and Chapter 4.

Any service changes will be subject to the public hearing process and federally required equity analysis to determine disparate impact on low-income and minority communities.

PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE INVESTMENT

INVEST IN HIGH-PERFORMING ROUTES

The performance assessment identified RIPTA's highest performing local, express, and seasonal routes. In the future, RIPTA should maintain or increase service on routes that score above average in the Composite Score and its components. Additionally, RIPTA should maintain routes with above average equity score as these routes serve vulnerable, transit-oriented populations and provide access to jobs, shopping, medical appointments, and other services.

EXPAND COMMUTER RESOURCES RI (CRRI)

RIPTA has an extensive set of partnerships with private and public organizations through its CRRI program. Both the performance assessment (see Chapter 3) and analysis of fare and advertising revenue (see Chapter 2) recommend that RIPTA continue to promote this program to attract new riders. Some peer agencies offer additional tools that RIPTA could consider using to expand both ridership and revenue from the program (see Table 2-4: Partnership Programs in Chapter 2).

CONTINUE TO IMPLEMENT THE TRANSIT MASTER PLAN

Despite the need for near-term reductions to RIPTA's operating budget, progress is being made toward implementing the future vision identified in the long-range Transit Master Plan, also known as *Transit Forward RI* (TFRI). TFRI was adopted by the State Planning Council in late 2020.

TFRI provides a roadmap for modernizing and expanding the state's transit network to meet current needs and future demands. To accomplish this, the plan defined multiple implementation strategies for short, mid, and long-term projects with a target completion date of 2040. RIPTA has already begun planning for and rolling out improvements such as faster bus services, dedicated lanes, and upgraded transit hubs.

1   PEER AND BEST PRACTICES REVIEW

As part of the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) Operational Efficiency Study (OES), a peer and best practices review was conducted. The review consisted of desktop research and interviews with six agencies comparable to RIPTA in size, transit services offered, and service area coverage. The peer agencies selected include Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) in Norfolk, VA; Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) in Albany, NY; CTtransit based out of Hartford CT; Delaware Transit Corporation (DART) serving all of Delaware; Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) serving Kansas City, MO and KS; and Regional Transit Service (RTS) in Rochester, NY. The goal of the peer and best practices review is to understand how RIPTA's peers are navigating changes in ridership and customer expectations, funding uncertainties, and workforce challenges.

The peer agency review yielded the following key themes, findings, and takeaways.

- To respond to changes in ridership levels and patterns, the agencies interviewed cite the importance of reviewing current service levels, including conducting comprehensive service analyses to identify and eliminate or reduce underperforming routes, shifting resources to higher performing routes, and, in some cases, implementing microtransit to replace underperforming routes. Agencies shared that microtransit service should be carefully planned by considering the size of service area, cost per trip, and connections to fixed-route services. Increases in cost for paratransit operations was also identified and agencies stated that they are actively looking at ways to be more efficient, including reviewing how eligibility and verification is performed, comingling paratransit and microtransit customers when possible, and investing in scheduling software refinements to maximize the number of riders per trip.

- Many agencies are facing funding challenges due to expiring COVID funding, unstable or flat funding, and rising costs due to inflation. As a result, agencies are looking to optimize their internal operations through technology and process improvements, as well as generating additional revenue through increased advertising, third party service contracts, and in one case, the sale of station naming rights.

- Workforce recruitment and retention was identified as a major challenge for agencies across the board. Agencies are implementing a variety of strategies including offering higher wages, same day hiring, Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training, attendance bonuses, and more schedule flexibility through part-time work and compressed schedules.

1.1   HIGH-LEVEL AGENCY COMPARISON

Table 1-1 lists the compared transit agencies interviewed for this peer agency analysis. Table 1-2 shows National Transit Database (NTD) agency statistics for RIPTA and all agencies interviewed.

Table 1-1: Comparator Transit Agencies

Agency	Abbreviation	City/Metro Area
Hampton Roads Transit	HRT	Norfolk, VA
Capital District Transportation Authority	CDTA	Albany, NY
CTtransit Hartford Division	CTtransit	Hartford, CT
Delaware Transit Corporation	DART	Delaware
Kansas City Area Transportation Authority	KCATA	Kansas City, MO/KS
Regional Transit Service	RTS	Rochester, NY

1.2 PEER AGENCY SELECTION METHODOLOGY

Through the lens of RIPTA's stated goals, a list of peer transit agencies comparable to RIPTA in size, transit services offered, and service area coverage was developed. RIPTA was compared with the top performing similar transit agencies, and a list of potential peers was presented for RIPTA's consideration and approval. Metrics featuring service area population, passenger miles traveled, unlinked passenger trips, vehicle revenue miles, and vehicles revenue hours (see Table 1-2) were cataloged and assessed. The details of the methodology used to select the comparator agencies are discussed in Appendix A-1.

Table 1-2: Peer Agency Comparison – NTD Data

	Service Area Population	Service Area Sq Miles	Annual Passenger Miles Traveled (Bus)	Annual Passenger Trips (Bus)	Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles (Bus)	Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours (Bus)
RIPTA	**1,048,319**	**1,436**	**46,337,486**	**11,040,120**	**9,322,856**	**726,477**
HRT (Norfolk, VA)	1,150,833	438	28,852,135	5,814,456	9,766,038	770,244
CDTA (Albany, NY)	628,952	393	50,106,789	13,311,539	8,742,022	690,795
CTtransit (Hartford, CT)	851,535	664	60,413,371	13,968,837	8,701,904	696,022
DART (Delaware)	1,018,396	1,948	39,408,751	6,818,411	8,864,097	546,132
KCATA (Kansas City, MO & KS)	621,956	459	36,800,284	10,841,740	5,603,453	448,592
RTS (Rochester, NY)	674,800	298	24,382,975	8,761,940	4,498,030	411,978

Source: National Transit Database (2023 Annual Agency Profiles)

1.3 PEER AGENCY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

The six peer transit agencies identified in the agency comparison tables above (see Table 1-1 and Table 1-2) were interviewed. The interview questions focused on three main categories: Operations and Service Delivery, Funding Mechanisms and Revenue, and Innovative Service Delivery. The interview questions can be found in Appendix A-2.

It should be noted that not all these approaches are viable in all locations, and not all would necessarily produce the same results if applied at another agency.

1.3.1 OPERATIONS AND SERVICE DELIVERY

RIDERSHIP

As observed across the country, the rise of remote work has decreased transit ridership and shifted travel patterns. The agencies interviewed all experienced this, and associated ridership decreases were a common challenge. Similar to RIPTA, for four out of six agencies, ridership continues to be below pre-pandemic levels. Two agencies have ridership above pre-pandemic levels, and the reasons they cite for the increase vary. In one case, the increase is partly attributed to the elimination of fares, which continues to this day. That agency is currently navigating the potential political impacts of bringing back fare collection. At the other agency, ridership growth has been linked to service area and service expansion, including the implementation of bus rapid transit (BRT) projects.

To respond to changes in ridership levels and patterns, the agencies interviewed adopted some common approaches:

— Comprehensive service analyses (two out of six peer agencies)
— Elimination or reduction of underperforming fixed-route services (five out of six peer agencies)
— Replacement of fixed-route services with microtransit (five out of six peer agencies)

Two of the agencies interviewed noted that their initial response to the effects of the pandemic was to conduct a comprehensive analysis and system redesign. Another agency reflected on their need to complete a comprehensive operations analysis but had yet to complete one.

Another common strategy was the implementation of microtransit to replace underperforming fixed-route service. Microtransit can be a more efficient way to provide service in areas that are not well suited for fixed routes. One agency cited that as a by-product of microtransit implementation to replace fixed-route service, they recovered fixed-route capacity that had previously been lost when vehicles were redeployed to improve service frequency in denser areas. Two other agencies also made similar claims that microtransit has or is expected to create operational efficiencies.

As an example, one agency's redesign improved service frequency by implementing eight routes operating on 15-minute frequencies, with the remaining fixed-route services at a standard of 30-minute frequencies. The agency also operates three crosstown routes, with remaining gaps supplemented by microtransit service zones. Similarly, another agency responded to changing ridership demands by reducing the number of express routes operated. Citing a lack of demand, community interest, and funding, the agency eliminated poorly performing express routes and implemented microtransit services as a means of filling these gaps. Microtransit service is not without its own challenges, as some agencies cited high operating costs of long trips within microtransit zones.

One agency used analytics to determine the new ridership patterns that emerged since the pandemic. They expect that adjusting service to meet new trends will help reduce route overhead and management costs. For example, they note standard commuter peak patterns no longer exist, and ridership remains relatively consistent between 6 AM and 6 PM. To meet these demand patterns, the agency provides consistent service within this time window and has reduced service frequency at other times. The agency also noted the need to reevaluate ridership trends quarterly to determine if service meets demand.

WORKFORCE SHORTAGES

Like RIPTA, the agencies interviewed experienced challenges attracting and retaining frontline staff such as drivers, operators, and mechanics. While this challenge existed before the pandemic, it has worsened since. To attract workers, agencies have used various approaches to differing degrees of success. These approaches are described below.

- Increasing wages to remain competitive in the labor market: One agency increased wages to a nationally competitive level, attracting workers from out-of-state, but citing a great financial cost. Another agency increased wages only for higher-level administrative staff to attract more applicants.
- Offering hiring, retention, and attendance bonuses: Hiring and retention bonuses were seen by some as only a temporary solution, as workers often leave positions after receiving the bonuses.
- Offering Commercial Driver's License (CDL) prep courses.
- Participating in, and holding job fairs at, strategic locations such as at driver training schools where people receive CDLs at different times of day and days of the week to reach more people.
- Holding same-day conditional hiring events.
- Increasingly allowing opportunities for more flexible schedule arrangements such as part-time work, compressed schedules, and remote work.

SUPPLY CHAIN ISSUES

One effect of the pandemic was disruption of global supply chains, which delayed the procurement of vehicles. Agencies have experienced delays in procuring buses, with one agency noting that this has been particularly true for its paratransit fleet.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The agencies interviewed track performance measures and implement periodic (quarterly or biannual) reviews. One agency created and has used a branded performance 'scorecard' for over 15 years. The 'scorecard' sets targets and tracks a variety of metrics. Common metrics tracked across agencies include:

- *Ridership by revenue hour*, which is considered by one agency to be a very good indicator of productivity. They set different expectations by mode and by time of day. One agency noted that the recent certification of their Automatic Passenger Counters (APC) has allowed them to track ridership much more accurately and efficiently, leading to better service planning to meet ridership demand and make service adjustments.
- *On-time performance*, which was commonly identified by agencies as a leading indicator and is strongly associated with customer satisfaction.
- *Customer experience*, which agencies commonly measure through regular customer satisfaction surveys. This was noted to be particularly important to one agency when it comes to learning where new transit connections are needed.
- *Employee satisfaction*, measured through surveys. One agency noted that employee satisfaction survey response rates are sometimes low, and they are considering using focus groups to increase employee input.

One agency maintains an online performance dashboard that encompasses key metrics for their services by route, including on-time performance, ridership estimates, revenue hours, cost per rider, and more. The dashboard is primarily a public transparency tool that can be used to respond to questions related to service performance. The use of a software tool called Swiftly has allowed them to process large amounts of data in a short time and automatically generates run times based on real-time data.

Another agency cited the desire to track additional performance metrics, including:

- Operating cost recovery or cost per hour
- Paratransit metrics
- High priority destinations and accessibility
- CO_2 emissions per passenger mile
- Ridership per revenue hour
- Passenger injuries and preventable collisions

— On-job staff injury rates
— Absenteeism

PARATRANSIT

The structure and operations of paratransit and demand-response services vary significantly across the agencies interviewed. One agency offers paratransit service within three-quarters to one-mile around fixed-route transit service. The agency owns their paratransit fleet, but operations and maintenance are contracted out to a third party, while another company is contracted to determine ADA eligibility.

Another agency operates their paratransit service with a service area that is three times larger than what is required under the ADA. The service area encompasses the required ADA service area as well as an additional three-quarters of a mile around those areas. They noted that this additional level of service, while beneficial to customers, is straining the system by exacerbating limited operator availability. The agency is monitoring the demand for this service while seeking to balance community needs with workforce shortages and higher operating expenses. They cited that their paratransit ridership has decreased since the pandemic and attributed that to having to deny trips to riders outside the ADA required service and lack of available paratransit drivers to cover the large service area.

A third agency operates paratransit services under a hybrid model, where some operations are outsourced while others remain in-house. The agency is looking for opportunities to improve in-house capacity, as they believe it will be more cost-effective. They are also examining tightening eligibility standards to be more closely aligned with what is required by law.

One agency does not operate paratransit services in-house and instead relies on a local transit district to operate paratransit services. They do work with municipalities to make stops ADA accessible, but since the municipalities own the bus stops and need to find funding, this process moves slowly.

Another agency, in contrast, has observed a surge in paratransit ridership. The increase is attributed in part to the elimination of fares. To more efficiently manage costs, the agency recently migrated to a new software platform called "RideCo" that will streamline the logistics of dispatching paratransit service. The agency has seen good results since making the switch. So far, vehicle hours are down, with a projected cost reduction of $4.8 million below 2024 costs.

1.3.2 FUNDING MECHANISMS AND REVENUE

CAPITAL FUNDING

Agencies cited federal grants and state funds as their main sources of capital funding. Some agencies noted that there are concerns over the uncertainty of federal funding availability during the current federal administration. One agency identified the following state funding mechanisms:

— Transportation Trust Fund
— Toll revenue
— Motor Vehicle fees
— Gas tax revenue

Another agency identified the zero-emission fleet transition as one of the key capital needs in the next five to ten years. They noted that they are trying to conform to a state-mandated timeline for transition and expressed concern about less availability of federal funding to support the transition and supplement the funds set aside by the state.

OPERATING FUNDING

Like capital funding, operating expenses are commonly funded through a mix of federal formula grant programs and state funding sources, similar to how RIPTA's operating budget is funded. One agency noted that uncertainty about the availability of federal funds may increase reliance on state funds that may result in diminishing reserves. Many agencies are facing a drop in funding due to expiring pandemic funding and rising costs due to inflation. As a result, many agencies are looking for ways to optimize their system and create additional revenue sources. For instance, one agency noted that they hoped to increase service on the regional routes that typically generate more fare revenue.

By contrast, one agency is funded through a city-wide three-eighths cent sales tax allocated directly to the agency with additional funding coming from a one-half cent tax from member communities, the proportion of which goes to the agency is determined by each of the member communities. Most of the remaining budget comes from the city's general fund, which is variable year by year. The inherent uncertainty of this funding structure makes planning for the future difficult. Additional budgetary pressures are arising from a declining tax base.

With the elimination of fare revenue since the pandemic, coupled with increased costs of paratransit, one agency is facing an estimated loss of $17 million per year. An unintended side effect of free fare service is the additional cost of increased police and security presence (estimated at $4 million per year) to manage safety concerns related to loitering and substance abuse onboard transit vehicles.

For another agency, the farebox is not a reliable source of revenue given that fares are low across all services modes. Additionally, non-fare services account for a significant proportion of the agency's operating costs, including school bus operations which account for $10 million of their total $135 million budget.

One agency has identified a 'mortgage recording tax' as a funding mechanism that is performing well and is expected to grow in the coming years. This tax is a statewide source and comprises 9% of the agency's budget. Counties within the service area jurisdiction remit one-quarter of 1% to be used for public transit. Despite the funding mechanisms available, the agency is still facing budget shortfalls. With an estimated net deficit of $12 million, the shortfalls are currently bridged by the general funds which are expected to last for at least five years. To minimize the shortfalls, they are investigating potential changes to microtransit service to be more financially sustainable and operate at a net positive cost-per-customer. Another agency is looking at new ways to generate sustainable funding by adopting a regional or county-wide approach that would help alleviate some of the lost tax base in the downtown area.

FARE POLICY

Fare policy varies significantly across the agencies interviewed, including RIPTA, and ranges from fare-free, uniform fare for all modes, and differentiated fare types across modes and/or distances. More information on the fare policies of each agency interviewed is available in the Peer Agency Profiles section at the end of this section.

One of the agencies interviewed last changed its fares in 2008 when it reduced fares across all services to one dollar, except microtransit, which has a flat fare of three dollars. While the agency believes it is infeasible to increase fares in the short term, they might consider increasing microtransit fares. They have also pursued subsidy agreements with employers and educational institutions in the area whereby the employer funds additional capacity, span of service, or route extensions.

For the agency operating fare-free, the potential return to fares is challenging. As part of their effort to develop a new fare policy, they are considering potential ridership programs with free or reduced fares for veterans, employers, students, and low-income riders.

ADDITIONAL REVENUE SOURCES

Advertising is a common source of revenue across all agencies interviewed, including RIPTA. Advertising revenue can come from vehicle interiors and exteriors, and in some cases, bus shelter advertising—of which RIPTA uses all three. One peer agency hired a third-party media company to sell their advertisement space on buses. Another agency has offered casinos the naming rights to light rail stations as well as the option to buy advertising space on light rail vehicle wraps.

Agencies noted that while advertising revenue is stable, it is a small portion of overall revenue, and other stable revenue sources are needed. Another agency spoke about having a third-party agreement where there is a tunnel tolling project revenues of which are dedicated to improving and expanding transit in that corridor. Another novel approach for developing a new sustainable funding source is one agency's pursuit of "universal access agreements," which are a partnership model where employers pay an annual fee to the agency which enables employees (and students, in the case of universities) to access all transit services in the network.

Agencies are also investigating revenue sources linked to special events or one-time vehicle purchases. One agency incorporates special events as part of its annual service planning process. In coordination with their member communities, they calculate the number of hours needed to service the events and incorporate the cost into the draft budget. Subsequently, the agency can bill the event hours to the relevant member community. One agency noted that they use the Transportation Planning Organization-managed Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding to buy buses.

1.3.3 INNOVATIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

FLEXIBLE SERVICE MODELS AND FIRST AND LAST MILE CONNECTIONS

Many of the agencies interviewed are seeking to maintain ridership and eliminate operating inefficiencies by implementing microtransit services in place of fixed-route services. Generally, agencies characterized microtransit deployments as successful, showing sustained high levels of ridership. One agency has plans to expand its microtransit zones and is adding more weekend services for service industry workers.

Despite its benefits, one agency noted that microtransit fares, which mirror fixed-route fares similar to RIPTA's Flex on Demand, pose some challenges. The agency is now examining strategies to offset the higher costs of operating microtransit. One of these strategies is increasing fares for microtransit services; another would seek to improve efficiency by implementing virtual bus stops instead of curb-to-curb pickup and drop-off. In virtual bus stops, riders are directed to a specific location for pickup and drop-off. Another approach being considered is to alter the layout of the microtransit zones to reduce the number of long-distance trips within a single zone. For example, the agency is considering reducing the zone sizes around college areas, and offering microtransit services in the immediate area, with other commuter services between the college area and other areas in the region. Another agency similarly noted the need to reconfigure certain features of their microtransit service, including moving away from curb-to-curb pickup and drop off, and altering microtransit zones to prioritize connections to the fixed-route system.

One agency is exploring partnerships with Uber and Lyft to manage peak demand times for their app-driven microtransit on-demand services. Microtransit vehicles are ADA accessible and can connect users to fixed routes. The agency encourages microtransit use to reduce reliance on paratransit services.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IMPROVEMENTS

In addition, the agency exploring partnerships with Uber and Lyft has also implemented a variety of amenities that are aimed at improving customer experience. These include onboard screens with both advertising and public information, real-time information and fare payments via a mobile app, and digital displays at major bus stops. The agency has also added bus lanes and bump-outs at shelters to improve safety and enhance the overall transit experience.

PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE INFRASTRUCTURE ENHANCEMENTS

One of the agencies interviewed has made significant efforts to enhance modal connections for pedestrians, bicycle users, and other micromobility options by collaborating with the Department of Transportation (DOT) on sidewalk and bike network improvements and participating in the advisory pedestrian council. Several agencies have buses equipped with bike racks. One agency has installed bike repair stations at some transit centers and designated bus lanes as bike lanes, while another agency has added bicycle parking at a major transit center.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

One of the agencies interviewed has an in-house Development Department that brings in fees and has the capacity to fund Transit-Oriented Community Development (TOCD), including affordable, market-rate and mixed-income housing. Having this function in-house at the agency has sped up the development process and created better TOCD initiatives.

Another agency has supported transit-oriented development (TOD) around one transit station and is working with the DOT on transportation improvement districts to comprehensively coordinate land use and transportation within a geographic area and to secure improvements to transportation facilities within that area. Establishing a Transportation Improvement District eliminates the need for Traffic Impact Studies (TIS) and accelerates the plan approval process.

One agency has seen municipalities dramatically increase TOD development around the BRT system stations.

NEW TECHNOLOGY

Of the agencies interviewed, one noted how new technology and software have improved agency operations. Their adoption of data processing and analysis tools, such as Swiftly, has allowed the agency to quickly and efficiently manage scheduling, ridership, and operations. Another tool, called Hop Through, is a ridership trend analysis tool that has direct access to GTFS feeds and APC data. The software uses this data to create suggestions related to ridership trends and monetary savings. Finally, Transit, a popular trip planning application, helps operators identify and address issues in real-time through a crowdsourced mechanism allowing users to report problems, so agencies can respond immediately and can generate bulletins for customers. One agency partners with their State DOT who pays for Transit Royale, a premium subscription offered within the app that makes it free for their transit customers to use.

ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

At the end of each interview, agency staff were given the opportunity to discuss additional topics of their choosing. One agency emphasized the value of predictive maintenance to address potential issues as soon as possible. They also recommend considering other strategies for operator recruitment and retention, such as a mentoring program.

Finding efficiencies wherever possible was the focus of another agency. One such example is the agency's practice of interlining bus routes. The agency is seeking new ways to conduct driver reliefs so that there is not a strain on equipment availability for revenue service. While typical driver relief involves a bus coming back to a hub with a new bus put into service to replace it, there are potential operational deficiencies associated with this practice. The agency is investigating the feasibility of relief vehicles, transporting drivers to and from a relief location, which would be better for overall service and operations. A reduction in overall necessary bus procurement would be replaced by the likely additional need for cars or vans to conduct these shuttle operations, though at a much lower cost. Funding for this type of procurement may be less competitive, making potential funding easier. The agency is running a pilot program to demonstrate the feasibility of this relief method and is looking to expand the program further.

The same agency also highlighted the importance of creating guidelines for communicating directly with community partners regarding requests for additional service or service modifications and the best

strategies to serve their communities. The service guidelines helped to provide standards to allow the agency to respond fairly and consistently to requests for service and avoid requests that would create inefficiencies.

Another agency stated that they have struggled with loitering at stations and security concerns. In order to combat this and make the public feel safer, they have partnered with the police department and also hired a private contractor to support them with security patrols. They recognize the need to invest in more security improvements while broadcasting these improvements to the public.

1.4   PEER AGENCY PROFILES

The following agencies participated in the peer agency interview, and a profile of each agency was developed based on NTD and other publicly available information:

Agency	Interview Date
HRT (Hampton Roads Transit)	Tuesday, May 13th
RTS (Regional Transit Service)	Tuesday, May 13th
KCATA (Kansas City Area Transportation Authority)	Friday, May 9th
Delaware Transit Corp. (DART)	Wednesday, May 7th
CTtransit (Hartford Division)	Tuesday, May 27th
CDTA (Capital District Transit Authority)	Friday, May 16th

1.4.1 RIPTA (RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY)

NTD DATA

Metric	RIPTA Data
Per Capita Spending on Transit	$101
Admin Cost per Service Hour	$28
Advertising Revenue per Service Hour	$1.17
Passenger Trips per Service Hour	15
Cost per Service Hour	$155
Total Compensation per Hour for Bus Operations	$66
Fare Revenue per Trip	$1.31
Farebox Recovery	13%
Annual Unlinked Passenger Trips (Bus)	11,040,120

AGENCY PROFILE

Category	Summary
Services	RIPTA is the statewide public transit provider for Rhode Island. It currently serves 37 out of 39 Rhode Island communities across 1,436 square miles. RIPTA provides a comprehensive range of public transportation services across the state, including fixed-route bus service, flex service, paratransit, and van pool service.
	Bus service is comprised of 58 fixed-route services, flex service is operated in 10 communities, and paratransit service is operated within ¼ of a mile of fixed bus routes for seniors and people with disabilities. The fixed-route services include rapid bus, high-frequency, local, and express bus routes. RIPTA is also piloting Flex on Demand which is an app that allows passengers to use a smartphone app to request a ride to and from anywhere they wish to travel within the Flex Zone. The vehicles used for Flex on Demand are fully ADA accessible. Flex service provides the option to pick up a Flex van at a scheduled stop without a reservation or to pre-schedule a pick-up or drop-off point within the designated Flex Zone 24 hours in advance. Flex provides local service within its zone as well as connections to RIPTA's network of statewide services. Paratransit service and is available for seniors and people with disabilities and is offered within ¾ of

Category	Summary
	a mile of fixed bus routes. A statewide paratransit service called RIde Anywhere was just made permanent through the state budget process.
Ridership (FY 2023)	Annual ridership for 2024 totaled nearly 13.1 million trips. About 12.6 million of these trips were taken on fixed bus routes, 64,000 on flex services, 288,700 on paratransit, and 82,000 on van pool services.
Fleet	RIPTA maintains a fleet inventory of 230 fixed-route buses, 96 paratransit vans, and 20 Flex vans.
Workforce	RIPTA's mission is to provide safe, reliable and cost-effective transit service with a skilled team of professionals responsive to customers, the environment, and committed to transit excellence. RIPTA and its mission are supported by over 896 employees.
Fares Offered (Base)	All bus trips are $2 per trip. $6 unlimited ride daily passes are also available. Paratransit rides cost $4 per trip and fares are free for children under 5 years old. Discounted fares of $1 are offered during off-peak hours for seniors and people with disabilities. RIPTA also offers a Reduced Fare Bus Pass Program that allows qualifying low-income seniors (age 65 or over) and low-income persons with disabilities to travel at no cost.

1.4.2 HRT (HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT)

NTD DATA

Metric	HRT Data
Per Capita Spending on Transit	$82
Admin Cost per Service Hour	$25
Advertising Revenue per Service Hour	$1.10
Passenger Trips per Service Hour	8
Cost per Service Hour	$119
Total Compensation per Hour for Bus Operations	$34
Fare Revenue per Trip	$1.12
Farebox Recovery	7%
Annual Unlinked Passenger Trips (Bus)	5,814,456

AGENCY PROFILE

Category	Summary
Services	HRT is the regional public transit provider for Virginia's Hampton Roads metropolitan area, including the cities of Norfolk, Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, Portsmouth, Hampton, Newport News, Williamsburg, and the town of Smithfield. It currently serves a 369-square-mile service area. HRT provides a comprehensive range of public transportation services across the Hampton Roads region, including bus service, paratransit, light rail (The Tide), ferry service (Elizabeth River Ferry), microtransit, (OnDemand pilot program), and trolley service (VB Wave).

Bus service is comprised of 71 routes broken out into *five* groupings: Southside (39 routes), VB Wave (4), Peninsula (15), Peninsula Commuter (5), and 757 Express (7). Services run every day with 15-minute frequency during peak hours. The Tide light rail runs 7.4 mi*les* in Norfolk from Eastern Virginia Medical School through downtown Norfolk to Newtown Road near the city's eastern boundary. The Tide currently runs 15-minute frequencies serving its *11* stations between Fort Norfolk/EVMC Station & Newtown Road Station. Most stations are served with at least one HRT bus route. HRT provides ADA Paratransit service and is available within ¾ of a mile of regularly |

	scheduled bus routes. Certification and reservations are required. Finally, the ferry operates every 30 minutes, with additional 15-minute service at peak times on weekends
Ridership (FY 2023)	Annual ridership for 2024 totaled 9.7 million trips. In 2024, HRT ridership peaked in August at 915,000 driven largely by transit bus usage, which accounted for 776,000 riders. Light rail also saw high usage that month with 74,000 riders. Ferry ridership shows a seasonal trend – trips peaked at around 40,000 riders in June, while ridership outside of those months does not exceed 20,000. Paratransit services remained relatively stable, ranging from 30,000 to 40,000 riders each month over the course of the year. Overall, transit buses remained the dominant mode of transportation, consistently carrying over 600,000 riders each month.
Fleet	The HRT fleet inventory consists of 345 vehicles, including 329 diesel buses, 10 trolley-style buses, and six battery electric buses. The fleet also includes nine light rail rolling stock, three paddle wheel ferries and 33 paratransit vans. HRT also leases an additional 54 paratransit vans from contractors to meet service requirements. As of Summer 2024, free Wi-Fi is available on every bus, trolley, light rail car and ferry.
Workforce	Hampton Roads Transit envisions itself as a progressive mobility agency that fosters prosperity throughout the region by emphasizing collaboration and teamwork. Its mission is to connect the communities of Hampton Roads through transportation solutions that are reliable, safe, efficient, and sustainable. Guided by its core values, Safety, Customer Service, Workforce Success, and Fiscal Responsibility, HRT is committed to delivering high-quality transit services while supporting its employees and managing resources responsibly. HRT and its mission are supported by over 1,200 employees.
Fares Offered (Base)	All Bus, ferry, and light rail service is $2 per trip. Free fares are available to certified paratransit users, and children aged 17 and below. Further, discounted fares of $1 per trip are available to senior citizens, Medicare cardholders, and people with disabilities.
Other	HRT executes the Traffix Transportation demand management program that encourages people to use forms of transportation other than single occupancy cars. Traffix oversees and promotes regional commuter initiatives, including carpooling and remote work by reaching out to and collaborating with area employers.

1.4.3 RTS (REGIONAL TRANSIT SERVICE; LOCATED IN ROCHESTER, NY)

NTD DATA

Metric	RTS Data
Per Capita Spending on Transit	$145
Admin Cost per Service Hour	$39
Advertising Revenue per Service Hour	$1.50
Passenger Trips per Service Hour	21
Cost per Service Hour	$192
Total Compensation per Hour for Bus Operations	$60
Fare Revenue per Trip	$1.74
Farebox Recovery	19%
Annual Unlinked Passenger Trips (Bus)	8,761,940

AGENCY PROFILE

Category	Summary
Services	RTS is operated by the Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA) and provides public transit across Monroe and seven surrounding counties in New York. Services include fixed-route buses, paratransit (RTS Access), RTS On Demand in suburban zones, and commuter and rural routes through subsidiaries like RTS Livingston, RTS Wayne, and others. RTS provides service to the surrounding counties of Genesee, Livingston, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne and Wyoming, including service into Avon, Victor, Lyons, and Le Roy.
	Overall, RTS Connect (Monroe County) serves 33 routes; Neighborhood Direct Service provides 100 routes. Another 40 routes are served outside of Monroe County. Finally, there are seven On Demand Zones where curb-to-curb services may be called. RTS was 92% on-time in the eight-county region in 2022. RTS was 93% on-time in Monroe County, slightly more than the region overall.

Category	Summary
Ridership (FY 2023)	In 2024, annual ridership hit 11.1 million, with average weekday ridership totaling 38,400. Most routes are within Monroe County, highlighting its pivotal role in the area's transit network.
Fleet	RTS is comprised of 308 revenue vehicles, and operates a mixed fleet of diesel, diesel-electric hybrid, and battery-electric buses. The fleet includes standard buses and vans, with ongoing efforts to modernize and electrify.
Workforce	The RGRTA is guided by a 16-member board of commissioners. Today, the agency employs nearly 1,000 people to support its operations. This includes operators, maintenance staff, administrative personnel, and support teams across its 11 subsidiaries.
Fares Offered (Base)	The base fare is $1 for RTS Connect (local fixed-route service). A reduced fare of $0.50 is available for seniors, people with disabilities, and Medicare cardholders. Children under five ride free and RTS On Demand is $1 per ride.
Other	RTS Transit Center in downtown Rochester serves as the central hub for the system. RTS On Demand zones offer flexible, app-based service in suburban areas. RTS buses are also equipped with bike racks, allowing riders to combine cycling with public transit. RTS is actively transitioning to a cleaner fleet, including battery-electric buses, and has a focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving air quality.

KCATA

NTD DATA

Metric	KCATA Data
Per Capita Spending on Transit	$67
Admin Cost per Service Hour	$48
Advertising Revenue per Service Hour	$0.69
Passenger Trips per Service Hour	24
Cost per Service Hour	$188
Total Compensation per Hour for Bus Operations	$52
Fare Revenue per Trip	$0.00
Farebox Recovery	0%
Annual Unlinked Passenger Trips (Bus)	10,841,740

AGENCY PROFILE

Category	Summary
Services	The KCATA District includes seven counties: Cass, Clay, Jackson, and Platte in Missouri, Johnson, Leavenworth, and Wyandotte in Kansas. RideKC offers a comprehensive public transportation system in Kansas City, including 41 fixed bus routes (29 operated by KCATA, five by Wyandotte County, and seven by Johnson County), six express routes (four by Johnson County and two by KCATA), and approximately 6,504 stops with nine transit centers and 11 major park-and-ride locations. The Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system includes 3 MAX routes (Main MAX, Troost MAX, and Prospect MAX) with around 113 stops. Additionally, RideKC operates a 2.2-mile streetcar with 16 stops in Downtown Kansas City, a flex demand-response service in six zones, microtransit services in six zones, RideKC Freedom (on-demand paratransit for riders with disabilities), and RideKC Van (vanpool rideshare focused on work commutes). Service frequency varies by line: the KC Streetcar runs every 10-15 minutes during peak times and 12-18 minutes off-peak. The Main MAX and Prospect MAX routes have a 20-minute frequency, while the Troost MAX operates every 60 minutes.

Category	Summary
Ridership (FY 2023)	The KC Streetcar averaged 4,400 daily riders and had 1.9 million riders in 2024. For 2025, up to March 31, the total ridership was 287,000 with a daily average of 3,200. Performance indicators for KCATA-operated services in March 2025 show 98.4% completed trips, 83.2% on-time performance for fixed routes, and 88.0% on-time performance for paratransit. Total ridership for March 2025 was 985,865, with 960,094 from fixed routes and 25,771 from Flex and IRIS services. There were 33,012 revenue hours, 45,842 platform hours, 29 passengers per revenue hour, 18,962 paratransit trips, 20,529 paratransit passengers, 68 road calls, and 22 vehicle incidents.
Fleet	The KCATA operates 300 fixed-route buses, 31 MAX buses, and 14 streetcars.
Workforce	The KCATA's mission is to "Connect all people to opportunities," with a vision to "Enhance lives in our region through reliable and convenient mobility options." Their core values include Safety and Security, Customer Focus, Respect and Integrity, Fiscal Sustainability, and Collaboration. The agency is committed to addressing environmental pollution through mass transit solutions. KCATA employs approximately 800 people.
Fares Offered (Base)	KCATA ended fares in 2020, but as of April 2025, the agency is planning to reinstate $2 fares for most people. Low-income riders and people receiving aid from social service agencies, such as veterans or unhoused people, will not be charged fares under the proposed plan.
Other	BikeWalkKC supports a transit-adjacent bikeshare system offering both electric and traditional rental bicycles with various rental options. In March 2025, there were 2,701 bike trips taken by 789 unique users, with an average trip time of 21 minutes.

1.4.5 DART (DELAWARE TRANSIT CORPORATION)

NTD DATA

Metric	DART Data
Per Capita Spending on Transit	$23
Admin Cost per Service Hour	$22
Advertising Revenue per Service Hour	$1.41
Passenger Trips per Service Hour	12
Cost per Service Hour	$153
Total Compensation per Hour for Bus Operations	$48
Fare Revenue per Trip	$1.11
Farebox Recovery	9%
Annual Unlinked Passenger Trips (Bus)	6,818,411

AGENCY PROFILE

Category	Summary
Services	DART offers a statewide network of transportation options, including 54 bus routes with over 2,300 bus stops, 37 park & rides, and 12 park & pools. It operates 49 county routes within New Castle, Kent, and Sussex counties, four intercounty routes, one flex route, three seasonal beach bus services, paratransit for people with disabilities, and commuter train services contracted through SEPTA and Delaware Commute Solutions. The SEPTA Wilmington/Newark Line in Delaware runs 32 weekday trains and 17 weekend trains.
Ridership (FY 2023)	In FY 2023, the agency recorded 6,328,833 trips system-wide, including 5,017,921 fixed-route bus trips, 811,075 paratransit trips, and 499,837 SEPTA train trips.
Fleet	The agency operates 251 fixed-route vehicles, 284 paratransit vehicles, and four rail cars.
Workforce	With over 1,000 employees across two administrative offices, the agency is committed to providing safe, reliable, and convenient rides, excellent customer

Category	Summary
	experiences, and environmental protection. DTC is committed to providing a public transit service that protects and preserves the environment with every trip on DART services and every dollar invested in green technology.
Fares Offered (Base)	Adult fares are $2, with reduced fares of $0.80 available for seniors and people with disabilities. Fares for students aged 17 and below are $1. Children (46 inches in height or under) and blind individuals (with DVI photo ID card) ride free.
Other	The agency supports biking with bike racks on buses and offers the Home Free Guarantee for emergencies. It aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030, supported by six Low/No Emission Bus Grants totaling $31.4M, and currently operates 14 zero-emission buses in New Castle and six each in Kent and Sussex counties.

1.4.6 CDTA (CAPITAL DISTRICT TRANSIT AUTHORITY)

NTD DATA

Metric	CDTA Data
Per Capita Spending on Transit	$199
Admin Cost per Service Hour	$21
Advertising Revenue per Service Hour	$2.38
Passenger Trips per Service Hour	19
Cost per Service Hour	$130
Total Compensation per Hour for Bus Operations	$49
Fare Revenue per Trip	$0.80
Farebox Recovery	12%
Annual Unlinked Passenger Trips (Bus)	13,311,539

AGENCY PROFILE

Category	Summary
Services	CDTA provides a wide range of public transportation services across Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Saratoga, Montgomery, Washington, and Warren counties in New York. Its offerings include local and express bus service, Bus Rapid Transit (BusPlus) with four lines, commuter coach service, Paratransit (STAR), on-demand services (Flex) and the management of three Amtrak stations (Albany-Rensselaer, Schenectady, and Saratoga Springs). CDTA operates 65 routes, many of which connect neighborhoods to downtowns or downtowns to shopping areas, with six routes linking key towns together (NX: Northway Xpress). Service mostly runs from 5:30 a.m.-12:00 a.m. weeknights, 6:00 a.m.-12:00 a.m. Saturdays, and 7:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. Sundays with the college routes running until 2:00 a.m. in Albany and Troy. Flex on-demand services run Monday-Saturday from 6:00AM-10:45PM and Sunday from 10:00AM-6:00PM across three zones.
Ridership (FY 2023)	Annual Ridership in 2024 totaled 18,256,200, with average weekday ridership hitting nearly 60,000 trips.

Category	Summary
Fleet	CDTA's fleet is comprised of 461 revenue vehicles. Fuel types include diesel and diesel-electric hybrid. CDTA will get 9 more electric buses, with delivery in early 2026. that will bring their fleet to 17 electric buses.
Workforce	CDTA envisions a sustainable and connected Capital Region, where public transportation plays a central role in enhancing quality of life, supporting economic development, reducing environmental impact, and promoting energy independence and cleaner communities. CDTA currently employs 750 people. Of these, 650 are frontline workers, including bus drivers, mechanics, and operational personnel.
Fares Offered (Base)	The base fare for local service is $1.50 for local service, with a reduced fare of $0.75 for seniors, people with disabilities, and Medicare cardholders. STAR paratransit fare is $2.50. BusPlus (BRT) and express fares vary based on travel distance across transit zones. Flex on-demand trips also cost $1.50 per ride.
Other	CDTA also supports establishing bike infrastructure and mobility hubs and has explored microtransit and mobility-as-a-service (MaaS) initiatives. For instance, CDTA has been promoting its own electric scooters. Initially planned for use by the public in the summer of 2021, implementation has been delayed.

1.4.7 CTTRANSIT HARTFORD DIVISION

NTD DATA

Metric	CTtransit (Hartford) Data
Per Capita Spending on Transit	$122
Admin Cost per Service Hour	$18
Advertising Revenue per Service Hour	$0.89
Passenger Trips per Service Hour	20
Cost per Service Hour	$157
Total Compensation per Hour for Bus Operations	$55
Fare Revenue per Trip	$0.21
Farebox Recovery	3%
Annual Unlinked Passenger Trips (Bus)	13,968,837

AGENCY PROFILE

Category	Summary
Services	CTtransit Hartford Division is the largest division of CTtransit, providing service on 43 local routes, five "flyer" limited stop routes and 18 express routes throughout 27 towns in Hartford County, including Bloomfield, East Hartford, Farmington, Glastonbury, Manchester, Middletown, Newington, New Britain, Rocky Hill, South Windsor, West Hartford, Wethersfield and Windsor, in addition to Hartford. Service is provided seven days a week in the region, with routes centered on Hartford. Express service primarily operates weekdays only, with service seven days a week on the 913 and 928 express routes. CTtransit Hartford Division also operates eight BRT routes as part of CTfastrak, a dedicated BRT corridor that enhances regional mobility. Connections are available to CTfastrak and local CTtransit routes in other neighboring cities.
Ridership (FY 2023)	Annual unlinked trips exceeded 15.0 million in 2023, with nearly 14.0 million of those trips stemming from buses. The remainder were connected to BRT.
Fleet	The Hartford division operates a fleet of approximately 308 buses, including newer models like the 2024 New Flyer XE40 battery-electric buses. The fleet is branded under both CTtransit and CTfastrak.

Workforce	CTtransit is managed by RATP Dev under contract with the Connecticut Department of Transportation. Across the state, CTtransit supports a large workforce of over 1,400 employees to manage its extensive service area and fleet.
Fares Offered (Base)	The base fare for CTtransit services is typically $1.75 for local routes, with higher fares for express services. Discounts are available for youth ($1.40) and seniors and people with disabilities ($0.85). Transfers are free within a two-hour window.
Other	CTtransit Hartford is integrated with CTfastrak, a dedicated bus rapid transit corridor that enhances regional mobility. The system also supports bike racks on buses, real-time tracking, and mobile fare payment options.

2   REVIEW OF OPERATING BUDGET

RIPTA's revenue for their operating budget comes from a combination of local, state, and federal sources and cover different types of costs. This section analyzes RIPTA's revenue projections from various sources. Additionally, this section also reviews RIPTA's operating cost drivers and provides an analysis of operating cost efficiency compared to the six peer agencies and an analysis of historical service and operating cost trends.

2.1   REVENUE

2.1.1   HISTORICAL REVENUE TRENDS

RIPTA's revenue comes from a combination of fares, state, federal, and other revenues, and, through FY 2025, Federal COVID Relief Funds. This section describes historical trends for RIPTA's revenue from FY 2019 (the last full fiscal year before the COVID-19 pandemic) to FY 2024, the last year for which full data is available.

— Fare revenue, including revenue generated from passenger fares and third-party fares (from partnerships with employers, businesses, schools, and universities), has grown since FY 2021, but not fully recovered to pre-pandemic levels. In FY 2019, fare revenue comprised 20% of total revenue, excluding capital and pass-throughs. Since FY 2022, it has varied between 14% to 17% of RIPTA's total revenue.

— State revenue has dipped since FY 2019, both on an absolute basis as well as when taken as a percentage of total operating revenue. In FY 2019, total state subsidies were $54.6 million, accounting for 44% of the operating budget, and by FY 2024, state subsidies for operations decreased to $50.1 million, or 37% of RIPTA's operating revenue.

— Federal revenue (excluding federal pandemic relief funds) makes up between 20% to 24% of total revenue generated, with an annual growth rate from FY 2019 to FY 2024 of 2.85%. This slow rate of growth is common for transit agencies across the board, with state and federal subsidies typically increasing at a slower rate than agency costs.

— Other revenue generated by RIPTA includes miscellaneous items such as Volkswagen Revenue[3]. This revenue source has been declining over time, dropping from 15% of total revenue in FY 2019 to 7% in FY 2024.

— Federal COVID Relief Funds supported the agency after the pandemic, starting in FY 2020 and peaking at 26% of RIPTA's revenue in FY 2021. FY 2025 is the last year in which these funds were available.

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[3] Proceeds from VW Environmental Mitigation Trust resulting from civil settlement with the U.S. government for violating the Clean Air Act. This fund is for a specific capital project (R-Line electrification). Funds are not used to support operations and have an offsetting capital expenditure.

2.1.2 CURRENT REVENUE SOURCES

FEDERAL FORMULA FUNDS

The OES analyzed RIPTA's projections of federal formula funds, as well as current uses for covering part of its operating budget in the areas of maintenance, administration, project management and support, and operations. This analysis led to recommendations for increasing the use of federal funds in Chapter 4.

FORMULA FUNDS AVAILABLE TO RIPTA

Projected Federal Formula Funds

RIPTA has access to five types of federal formula funds from the FTA, which are shown in Table 2-1 below. These funds are only available on a reimbursement basis, and their eligible uses are defined in circulars published by the FTA. Each federal formula section has a specific allocation formula, but in general, population and transit service levels are the two most important factors influencing federal formula funding apportionments. This means that in the long run, transit service reductions would likely result in a reduction in these formula funds.

Table 2-1 Federal Formula Funds Available to RIPTA

Federal fund formula section	Amount available to RIPTA for Federal Fiscal Year 2025 (millions of dollars)[4,5]	Eligible uses
5307	$35.24	Capital; limited use allowed for operations; for all modes
5310	$1.60	Capital and operations for ADA-compliant services
5311	$1.10	Capital and operations for rural services
5337	$2.91	Capital; limited use allowed for operations; for high intensity transit only
5339	$1.77	Capital only

Source: WSP

Growth Assumption in Future Federal Apportionments

Federal formula funds are currently assumed to be steady in RIPTA's five-year financial plan. These funds are generally slated for slow increases in Surface Transportation Authorizations like the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA). Every year FTA calculates the apportionment based on different rules for each formula fund section. Population is a key input to the formula for 5307 funds and generally no growth assumptions are used in areas of declining population, where it is expected that the population decrease will offset any increase in the amounts appropriated by Congress for the entire US. The IIJA includes the following annual growth rates in the aggregate amount of funds to be apportioned in the following formula funding programs: 2.32% for 5339 funds, 2.34% for 5307 funds and 1.83% for 5337 funds. Despite growth in aggregate funding for these programs, the Providence urbanized area did see

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[4] Amounts calculated based on Federal Fiscal Year (FFY)25 FTA apportionment tables, with RIPTA percentage splits from FFY24 FTA Urbanized Area Split letter covering the Providence, Rhode Island - Massachusetts urbanized area.
[5] Additional federal funding is potentially available through FTA 5303 and 5304 funds and FHWA CMAQ funds. These funds are apportioned to Rhode Island's Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Rhode Island Department of Transportation. 5303 and 5304 are available for planning purposes and CMAQ is available for both capital and operating costs.

some small decreases between federal fiscal year (FFY) 2024 and 2025, including a 6% decrease in 5337 funding and a 1% decrease in 5339 funding, as FTA no longer held transit agencies harmless from service changes during the Covid-19 pandemic. Until FFY 2025, FTA was using fiscal year (FY) 2019 service levels to determine formula funding apportionments.

USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS FOR MAINTENANCE

RIPTA's Formula funds that are otherwise focused on capital expenditures, sections 5307 and 5337, can be "flexed" to cover preventive maintenance expenditures that are part of a transit agency's operating budget. This report assessed opportunities to leverage additional federal formula funds away from capital funding and towards operating revenue.

RIPTA is already optimizing the use of section 5307 and 5337 funds for maintenance. The most recent budgeted maintenance costs and corresponding federal funding reimbursements are lower than what was initially forecasted for FY 2026 based on lower-than-expected eligible expenses and corresponding federal reimbursements for FY 2025. RIPTA initially budgeted $26.9 million for preventative maintenance costs in FY 2026, with a revised budget reducing that amount down to $18.8 million. The revised preventative maintenance budget for FY 2026 is slightly above the FY 2025 actual expense, which is on pace to reach $18.5 million. The budget decrease was due to lower-than-expected major component replacement costs (such as engines) and slower than expected hiring of mechanics. This revision in expected preventative maintenance costs amounts to 80% of the decrease in federal formula fund operating revenue between RIPTA's initial and updated FY 2026 operating budget.

If maintenance costs are higher than budgeted in FY 2026, potentially due to harder to predict costs such as engine replacements, federal funding will be available to be drawn down. Federal reimbursements must be accompanied by a 20% non-federal match, with limited exceptions.

USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS FOR OPERATIONS

Rural Services

RIPTA is currently using 5311 funds on rural service operations, and there may be opportunities to further utilize these funds through bus purchases to support rural routes. Opportunities exist to increase the use of section 5311 funds for rural operations by classifying route segments as rural where applicable.

Low-Income and Reverse Commute Services

Section 5307 funds offer opportunities to cover operating costs for specific eligible services addressing the needs of low-income populations and reverse commute services. Appendix C includes an analysis of existing routes currently receiving funding from the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program, as well as potential opportunities to qualify for additional JARC funds.

FARE AND ADVERTISING REVENUE

This section of the report assesses RIPTA's directly generated revenue, including fare revenue, advertising revenue, and revenue derived through partnerships with employers, schools, and other organizations. The analysis includes peer comparisons and outlines potential opportunities to generate additional revenue. Scenarios outlined include increases to base fares and implementing higher fares on select longer routes. Also included is an assessment of current and potential fee revenue collected through partnerships with employers, schools, and other organizations, compared to RIPTA's peer agencies.

PEER AGENCY FARE COMPARISON

Table 2-2 below summarizes the key bus fare policies for RIPTA and the peer agencies. Among the agencies evaluated, RIPTA has the second highest total fare revenue and fare revenue per trip for bus service. The total fare revenue collected for each agency is a function of fares, ridership, fare evasion rates and discounts programs for groups such as seniors and students.

Table 2-2: Peer Agency Bus Fare Comparison

Fare Measure	RIPTA	CDTA	DART	HRT	RTS	CTtransit
Cash Single Trip Fare	$2	$1.50	$2	$2	$1	$1.75
Zone-Based Fares per Trip on Select Routes	n/a[6]	$2 to $7	$2 to $6	n/a	n/a	$3.20 to $6
Monthly Pass Price	$70	$65	Zone-based rates ranging from $60 to $120	$70	$56	$63 (local); zone-based express passes ranging from $108 to $204
Last Change to Base Fare	2010 (increase)	2009 (increase)	2021 (increase)	2017 (increase)	2009 (decrease)	2016 (increase)
2023 Fare Revenue (millions)[7]	$14.4M	$10.7M	$7.5M	$6.5M	$15.2M[8]	$3.1M[9]
2023 Revenue per Trip	$1.31	$0.80	$1.11	$1.12	$1.74	$0.20

* KCATA currently operates as fare-free and thus is not included in this table.

FARE INCREASE CONSIDERATIONS

This section presents a comparison between fare two increase scenarios: a general fare increase applying to all routes and all users, and an increase targeted on specific routes only to address a fare disparity concern.

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[6] No zone-based fares. One route (24L) has a higher $4 fare per trip.
[7] 2023 NTD. Includes fares paid by passengers as well as organizations.
[8] Includes $10.2 million in fare revenue paid by organizations. Source: RTS Independent Auditors Report FY 2023
[7] CTtransit suspended fare collection from April 1, 2022 to April 1, 2023, resulting reduced fare revenue collected during 2023.

Table 2-3: Fare Increase Considerations

Criterion	General Fare Increase	Fare Increases Only on Select Routes
Revenue Generation	Generates higher revenues ($1-2M rough order of magnitude)	Generates very limited revenues (well below $1M rough order of magnitude)
Ease of Use / Understanding	Easy to understand for all public audiences	More challenging to understand for all public audiences, especially those directly impacted
Equity	Impacts all public audiences in a similar way, including transit-dependent and low-income populations, which could potentially result in disparate impacts on minority people or a disproportionate burden on people with low incomes	May generate more equitable outcomes if services requiring a higher fare are used by choice riders rather than transit-dependent and/or low-income riders. Special consideration may need to be given to rural users that may have to travel longer distances
Acceptability	May generate resistance from broader swaths of the public	May generate resistance from specific user communities
Internal Management	Requires same management / enforcement	May require different enforcement / fare technology / equipment
Branding	N/A	Services requiring higher fares may require recognizable branding so that users understand that they will have to pay a higher fare for the service. Some agencies use naming conventions or even logos and/or different branding conventions (e.g. colors) to differentiate premium service
Regulatory process[10]	Requires Title VI public engagement statewide	Requires Title VI public engagement statewide, despite potentially more limited impacts in terms of direct route users

Transit Demand Elasticity in Response to Fare Increases

An important consideration with respect to an overall fare increase is that of transit ridership and demand elasticity. Fare increases will discourage some riders from continuing to use transit, such that it diminishes the total revenue increase that would have occurred if all riders continued using transit. Some estimates suggest travel demand reduces by roughly half the fare increase, such that a 10% fare

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[10] A permanent fare change will require a Fare Equity Analysis per Title VI. The geographic area would reflect RIPTA's service area, per FTA Circular 4702.1B: Title 6 Requirements and Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients.

increase would result in 5% decrease in travel demand[11]. A dedicated fare study could help RIPTA consider ways to better optimize fare revenue with consideration to travel demand elasticity, fare revenue maximization, and equity considerations, while accounting for RIPTA's unique statewide service model with longer routes than some of its peers.

Inflation-linked Fare Increases

One potential approach to increasing fare revenue in the long run on a more steady, predictable basis would be to link fare increases to annual inflation adjustments as a matter of RIPTA policy, rather than relying on more sporadic fare increases. This could alleviate some of the challenges that arise from increasing fares by larger amounts on a less frequent basis that is more typical of North American transit agencies. The downside of this approach is that it creates challenges for unbanked riders that rely on paying for single trips with cash, since inflation-linked fare increases are generally less than a quarter and make cash payments more complicated. Open payment systems where riders can pay for a single trip directly with credit, debit or transit cards enable some riders to more conveniently pay inflation-linked fares. However, such systems can still be challenging for unbanked riders who need to put cash on transit cards.

REVENUE FROM PARTNERSHIPS WITH ORGANIZATIONS

RIPTA has an extensive set of partnerships with private and other public organizations. Some peer agencies offer additional tools that RIPTA could consider using to expand both ridership and revenue. Table 2-4 below organizes these partnerships by category and provides an overview of both RIPTA's experience and examples from peer agencies that are relevant to RIPTA.

Table 2-4: Partnership Programs

| Partner Entity	RIPTA's Experience	Experience from Peer Agencies
Employers / businesses (including business coalitions / partnerships)	Wave to Work program with businesses such as Amazon, Greystone Manufacturing, Omni Hotel, and Miriam Hospital	CDTA Universal Access Agreements offer equivalent of U-Pass programs to employers and other private organizations at a discount, providing steady revenues; CTtransit started offering a similar program, CTpass, following 2022 legislation HRT provides summer trolley service indirectly subsidized by Virginia Beach waterfront business community Some agencies that are not authorities are not allowed to receive payments from a private organization for service Other agencies have found that trip extensions paid for by certain businesses at certain hours are not as beneficial as consistent services seven days a week, minimizing routing alternatives, to make the system simpler

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[11] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0967070X2100055X

Partner Entity	RIPTA's Experience	Experience from Peer Agencies
Schools and universities	Providence School District: >3,000 student passes ($70 each) U-Pass for schools like Rhode Island College, Brown University, Roger Williams University	Connecticut U-Pass[a] gives access to all state college and university students to transit in Connecticut, generating steady revenue School district service varies widely from agency to agency; some have stopped offering school bus transportation in the last 15 years
Non-profit organizations	Over 20 Low-Income Fare Benefit Program partners across the state. Select examples listed below: — Catholic Social Services - Emmanuel House — Crossroads Rhode Island — Domestic Violence Resource Center of South County — Newport Mental Health — Pawtucket Housing Authority	CDTA's Universal Access Agreements offer equivalent of U-Pass programs to employers and other private organizations
Real estate developers / landlords	Partnership with Pennrose to provide passes to affordable housing residents	Innovative practice used by larger transit agencies (e.g. Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, Pittsburgh Regional Transit) Peer agencies have not reported such partnerships
Local governments / public organizations	Route partnership with Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) for shuttle service to ferry terminal	Depends on governance and funding model of the agency: HRT is funded and governed by the six municipalities it serves exclusively Partnerships with state DOT / tolling operator supporting transit service on tolled bridges and tunnels
Sports teams / event organizers / Convention & Visitors Bureaus	Routes partly or fully sponsored by organizations such as Discover Newport Partnership with Tidewater / Rhode Island FC which includes each organization advertising for the other and supplemental bus service for games and select special events at Centreville Bank Stadium	Larger agencies provide expanded service hours paid for by sports teams Peer agencies offer additional service, but not necessarily paid for by private organizations

[a] https://ctrides.com/u-pass-ct/

ADVERTISING REVENUE

Advertising revenue is a small but not insignificant revenue source for most transit agencies. To facilitate a comparison of advertising revenue between RIPTA and the peer agencies, total advertising revenue for 2023 was divided by the total revenue hours for modes that typically support advertising, namely bus and where applicable light rail (see Figure). RIPTA is just below the peer average in advertising revenue generated per revenue hour. CDTA has the highest advertising revenue per revenue hour at $2.38 per revenue hour and generated $1.7 million in advertising revenue in 2023. If RIPTA were able to match CDTA's advertising rate, it would more than double current advertising revenue from less than $0.9 million generated in 2023 to between $1.6 - $1.8 million.

Figure 2-1: Advertising Revenue per Revenue Hour[12]
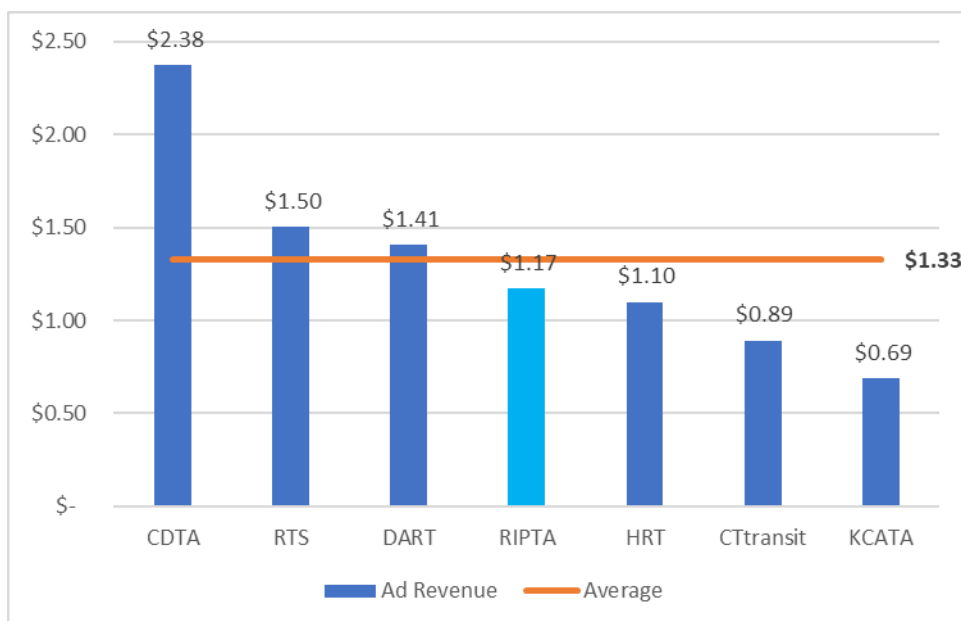
Source: 2023 NDT, RIPTA internal data

When exploring paths to increased advertising revenue, it can be helpful to review factors including whether or not to allow full bus wraps with window coverage, on-board infotainment screens, bus stop or station naming rights, and whether to impose restrictions on certain types of advertisements. For instance, KCATA estimates that they have been leaving $1 - $1.5 million on the table by restricting alcohol advertisements and are not updating their policy. RIPTA may wish to review its policy and consider whether any changes might lead to increased revenue. RIPTA may also wish to initiate a conversation with CDTA to explore whether opportunities exist to increase revenue by adopting successful practices from this peer.

2.2 OPERATING COSTS

This section assesses RIPTA's operating costs through a peer comparison, review of historical trends, and a high-level estimate of the cost savings that could be derived from a service reduction. The analysis highlights areas where RIPTA is performing well, most notably on bus operations, where RIPTA's cost per revenue hour is closely in line with peer average. Additionally, RIPTA's labor costs have grown at a

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[12] Service hours exclude Demand Response modes. In addition to standard fixed route bus service, RIPTA, CTtransit, HRT and KCATA have bus rapid transit (BRT) service and HRT includes light rail (LRT) service.

noticeably slow rate since 2019, the last full fiscal year before the Covid-19 pandemic. The analysis also outlines potential opportunities for cost savings in the form of service cuts.

2.2.1 PEER COMPARISON

A key step in assessing the cost efficiency with which RIPTA operates is benchmarking it against a set of peer agencies. Table 2-5 below lists the peer agency set used throughout this analysis. An explanation of the basis for which these agencies were chosen is included in *Chapter 1 Peer and Best Practices Review*.

Table 2-5 Peer Transit Agencies

Agency	Abbreviation	City/Metro Area
Hampton Roads Transit	HRT	Norfolk, VA
Capital District Transportation Authority	CDTA	Albany, NY
Delaware Transit Corporation	DART	Delaware
Kansas City Area Transportation Authority	KCATA	Kansas City, MO/KS
Regional Transit Service	RTS	Rochester, NY
Connecticut Transit (Hartford division)	CTtransit	Hartford, CT

The peer comparison data was obtained from the NTD. At the time of the analysis, 2023 was the most recent data available.

BUS COST PER REVENUE HOUR AND MILE

Bus operating cost per revenue hour and revenue mile were examined to determine the overall cost efficiency of RIPTA's bus service compared to the peer agencies. The operating costs reflected in these rates include not only the direct operating costs such driver compensation, fuel, and vehicle maintenance, but also include allocated shares of facility maintenance and administrative costs.

Figure 2-2 below shows RIPTA's bus operating cost per revenue hour is in line with the average of the peer agencies.

Figure 2-2 Bus Cost per Revenue Hour
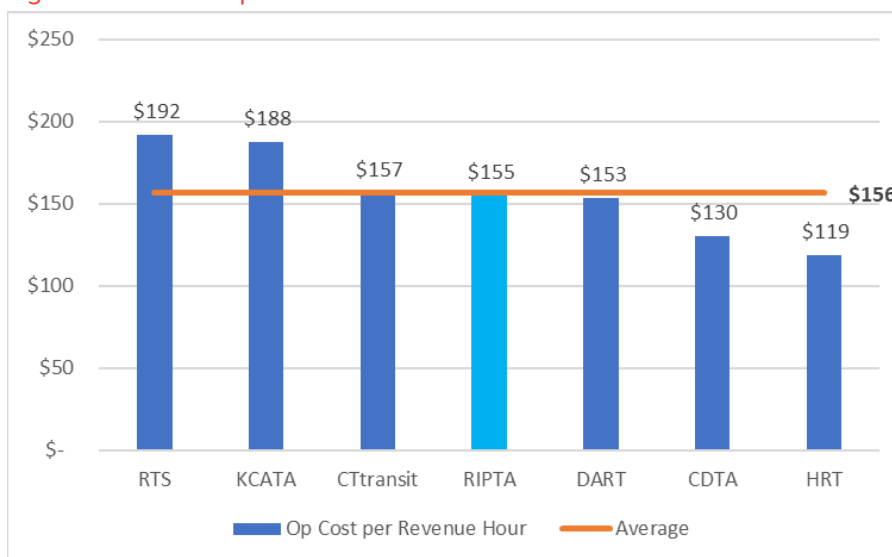
Source: 2023 NTD, RIPTA internal data

Bus operating cost per revenue mile was examined separately from cost per revenue hour, in part to assess if RIPTA's long routes with statewide coverage would result in different standing among the peer

agencies when looking at miles rather than hours. As Figure 2-3 shows, RIPTA's bus operating cost per revenue mile is just below the average of the peer agencies, and ranks in the middle, with three agencies having higher costs and three agencies having lower costs.

Figure 2-3 Bus Cost per Revenue Mile
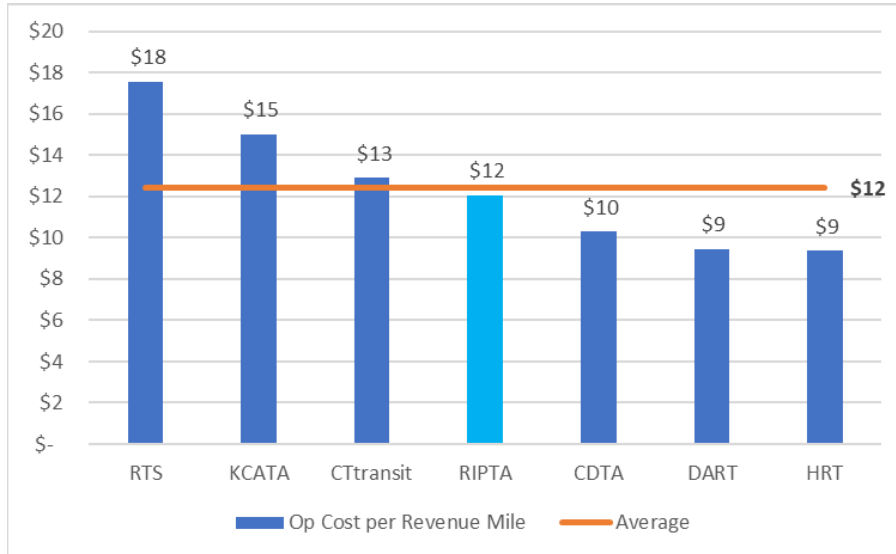
Source: 2023 NTD

To provide further context for each agency's operations, Figure 2-4 shows the service area of each agency in square miles. Larger service areas can mean a larger number of routes in low density/low ridership areas, leading to lower farebox recovery. DART and RIPTA have the largest service areas among this peer set, which is perhaps unsurprising as they are the only agencies in this peer set that operate statewide. CTtransit is a statewide agency, but the peer analysis is limited to the Hartford division of CTtransit which operates in a smaller defined area of the state.

Figure 2-4 Service Area Size in Square Miles
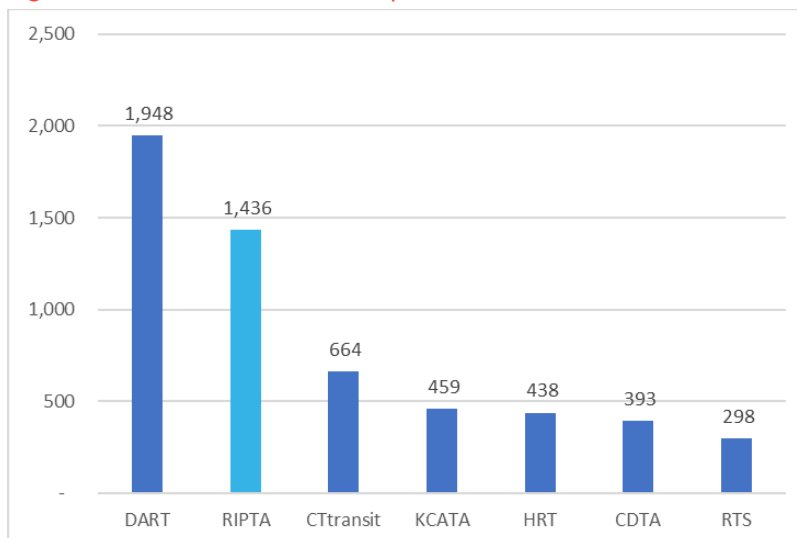
Source: 2023 NTD

ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

Administrative costs capture the support and management functions of transit agencies. As shown Figure 2-5, RIPTA is slightly below average, and ranks in the middle of the peer group.

Figure 2-5 Percent General Administrative Expenses of Total Operating Expenses
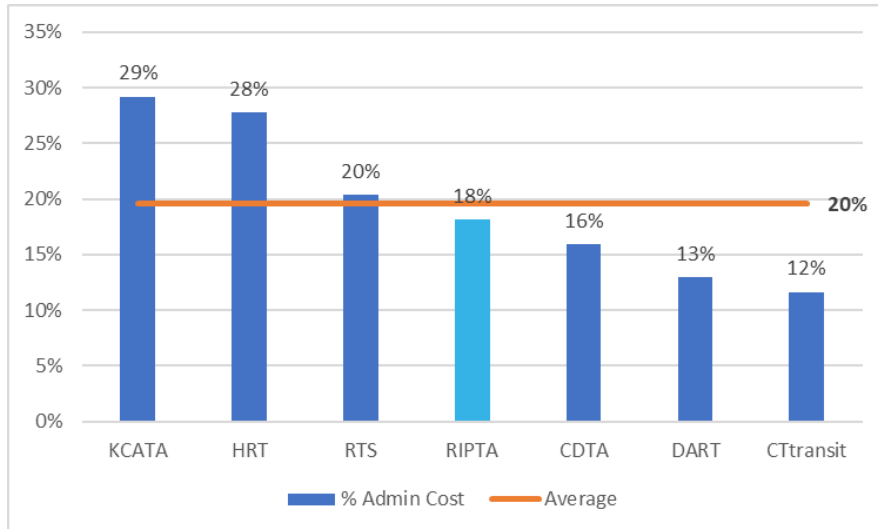
Source: 2023 NTD

OVERALL PER CAPITA SPENDING ON TRANSIT

The total transit spending per capita for RIPTA and the peer agencies was calculated by taking the total operating costs for 2023 divided by the population of the corresponding urbanized area. This comparison is shown in Figure 2-6, below.

RIPTA is about 18% below the peer set average, at $101 per capita compared to the $123 per capita average among the peer agencies.

Figure 2-6: Per Capita Spending on Transit
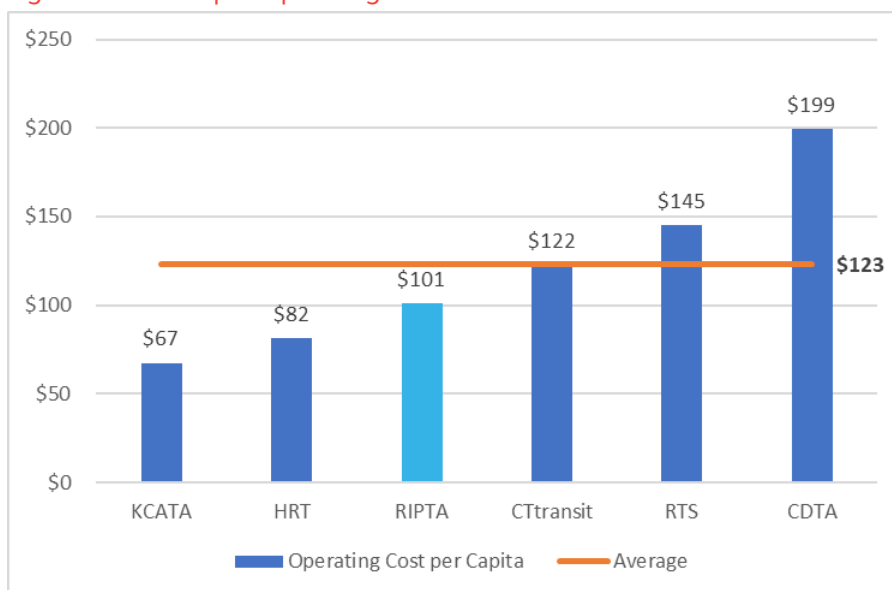
Source: 2023 NTD

Note: DART is excluded since the corresponding urbanized area includes the population of Philadelphia and other agencies such as the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA). This skews the per capita spending for DART, making it an outlier among peers.

2.2.2 COSTS AND SERVICE HISTORICAL TRENDS

This section describes historical trends for RIPTA's costs and service levels from FY 2019 (the last full fiscal year before the COVID-19 pandemic) to FY 2024, the last year for which full data is available.

COSTS

Figure 2-7 shows the overall stability of RIPTA's labor costs over time, including overtime, fringe, benefits, and retiree healthcare costs. Looking at the entire period from FY 2019 to FY 2024, labor costs have grown slower than inflation, with a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 2.66%. The decrease in FY 2022 was largely the result of a decrease in the required pension contribution due to pension fund performance. In general, labor costs grow more quickly than revenue, in part because of healthcare costs.

Figure 2-7: Evolution of RIPTA's Total Labor Costs
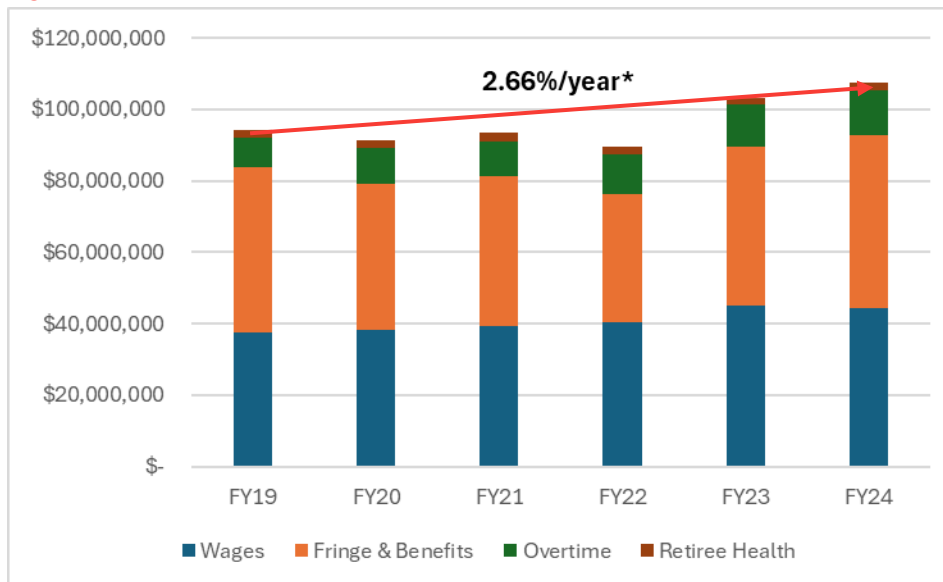
Source: RIPTA Financial Data.
*Compound annual growth rate.

Figure 2-8 depicts the evolution of all RIPTA's expenses, excluding depreciation and pass-throughs. Overall, RIPTA's expenses have grown at an annual rate of 1.16% over the period from FY 2019 to FY 2024, significantly slower than inflation over the period, both nationally and in the transit industry.

Figure 2-8: Evolution of RIPTA's Total Expenses
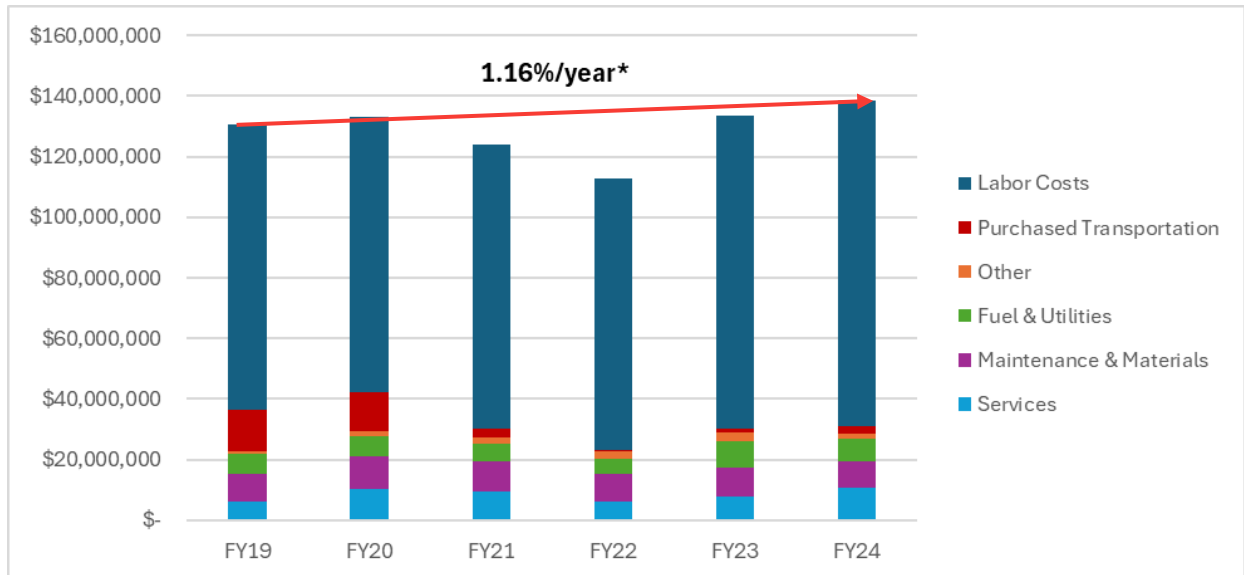
Source: RIPTA financial data.

Note: excludes depreciation and pass-throughs. Total expense reduction in FY 2021 is due to a significant decrease in purchased transportation costs. Total expense reduction in FY 2022 is due to a significant decrease in pension and in legal settlement costs.

*Compound annual growth rate.

SERVICE LEVELS

Figure 2-9 shows how RIPTA's bus revenue hours have increased from FY 2019 to FY 2024. On Average, service grew 0.8% a year over the period, ending in FY 2024, at a slightly higher level than FY 2019 service (+4.1%).

Figure 2-9: Evolution of RIPTA's bus revenue hours
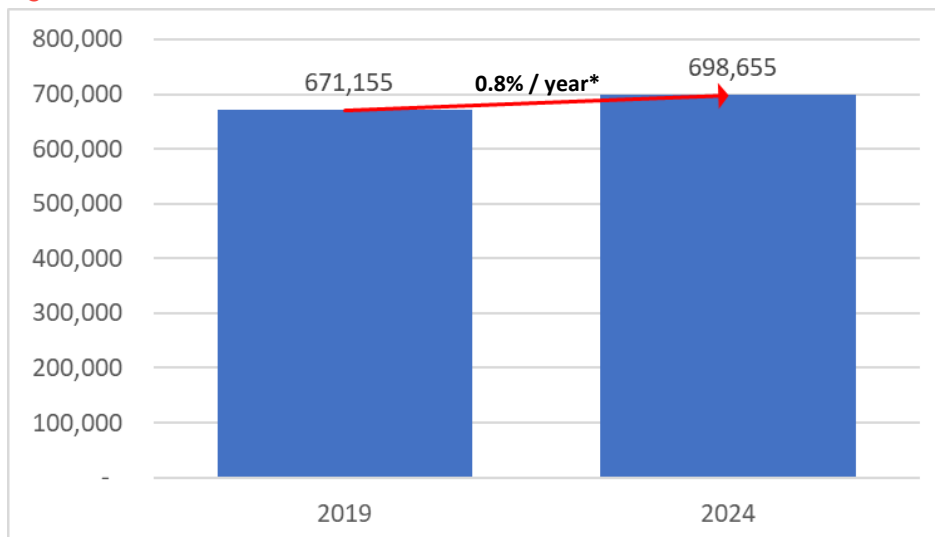
Source: NTD, RIPTA internal data

*Compound annual growth rate.

SERVICE COST REDUCTION STRATEGIES

Based on RIPTA's FY 2026 operating budget, and accounting for the additional $15 million dollars in state funding included in the state's FY 2026 budget bill (2025-H 5076A), RIPTA currently projects to have an $18 million dollar operating deficit for FY 2026, and will likely need to implement service cuts to close that gap. To reduce service costs by $18 million in FY 2026, RIPTA would have to reduce service by the equivalent of approximately 150,000 hours,[13] based on a high-level estimate of $120 per hour in projected FY 2026 variable costs for bus service, which is up to 20% of its current annual service.

Service cost reductions could be achieved by the following strategies, among others:

1. Spread out the service reduction so each route receives an approximately equivalent level of reduction
2. Focus service reductions on the least efficient routes
3. A hybrid approach between 1 and 2

Any service reductions will have additional impacts in terms of:

1. Additional losses in terms of fare revenues
2. Longer-term losses in terms of federal formula funds
3. Network effects leading to additional losses in ridership due to inability to connect between routes

Service changes will be subject to the public hearing process and federally required equity analysis to determine disparate impact on low-income and minority communities.

Additionally, while the need to reduce service for FY 2026 may be necessary and immediate, RIPTA should also consider opportunities to increase revenue identified in Section 2.1 that can be phased in over future fiscal years as the Agency considers options to recover and restore service in the future.

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[13] Vehicle Revenue Hours on an annualized basis. Assumes that the 150,000 hour service reduction happens in the near-term on a 10-month basis, starting September 1st, and not on the full year. Hence, the service reduction will actually be equivalent to 180,000 revenue hours on an annualized basis.

3 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF OPERATIONS

RIPTA, as Rhode Island's Mobility Manager, provides a statewide service that enables access to jobs, education, healthcare, and economic opportunity for Rhode Islanders. The agency strives to deliver this service in an efficient manner, optimizing resources to meet the needs of both urban and rural communities. In particular, the system is a lifeline for many low-income households, individuals without access to a car, and workers in service-sector or lower-wage jobs. As one staff member noted, "We have two types of passengers: those by choice and those who must. We're really a lifeline for those passengers [who must]." This perspective reflects RIPTA's core commitment to ensuring mobility and equity for the people who depend on it most. The transit network supports both mobility and equity and connects residents to higher-paying jobs, helping to foster upward economic opportunity.

The purpose of this chapter is to present a performance assessment of RIPTA's services and identify opportunities to prioritize resources, fill gaps, and consider service restructuring, as part of the OES. The analysis covers Fixed-Route Service (including express and seasonal routes), Flex/Flex On Demand, RIde ADA paratransit/RIde Anywhere, and the Commuter Resource RI (CRRI) program, highlighting the strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and impacts each of these modes has on mobility, economic development, and the environment.

A Composite Route Score method was used to assess Fixed-Route and Flex/Flex On Demand service, combining metrics of Impact, Efficiency, and Equity. Additional data was used to evaluate performance and environmental impacts of all service modes. Qualitative data from stakeholder sessions and rider engagement further contextualizes how services perform and are experienced across the state.

Findings from this study can be used to inform future service planning, guide resource allocation, and support RIPTA's mission to provide equitable, efficient, and sustainable transit across the state.

Table 3-1 provides a high-level summary of each service type in distinct categories

Table 3-1: High-Level Summary by Service Type

	FIXED-ROUTE/EXPRESS/ SEASONAL	FLEX/FLEX ON DEMAND	RIDE ADA PARATRANSIT/ RIDE ANYWHERE	COMMUTER RESOURCE RI (CRRI) PROGRAM
Users	High school students, college students and faculty, low-income individuals, seniors, people with disabilities, tourists, commuters	Individuals with mobility limitations, students, and low-income workers in areas underserved by fixed-route service	People with disabilities who cannot use fixed-route service	University students and faculty, shift workers, seniors, youth, high school students, low-income individuals, people with disabilities
Issues and Needs of Users	Need for more frequent and reliable service, cross-town and rural routes	Need for expansions or adjustments of flex zones	Issues with timeliness and routing software for RIde ADA paratransit	Challenges recruiting employers for Wave to Work and securing vanpool drivers
Impact on Mobility	Primary mode for transit dependent individuals and those commuting to major job centers	Enhances mobility for users not served by transit with limited to no car access	Essential for the mobility of people with disabilities	Improves mobility for shift workers working outside of fixed-route service hours and with limited car access
Impact on Economic Development	Connects riders to employment and commercial centers, helps reduce unemployment	Connects workers to employment and commercial centers	Broadens employment opportunities for users and connects users to commercial centers	Wave to Work program brings private funding to RIPTA fixed-route service Lowers costs for employers and employees
Impact on Environment	Reduces congestion and emissions, particularly in high traffic areas	Shared trips reduce the number of single occupancy vehicle trips and improve congestion and emissions	Grouped RIde paratransit ride requests reduce number of single occupancy vehicle trips	Promotes sustainable mode use and reduces number of single occupancy vehicle trips
Overall Role	Provides essential transportation throughout Rhode Island	Fills gaps in fixed-route service	Connects people with disabilities to essential goods and services	Incentivizes and facilitates the use of RIPTA fixed-route service and other modes
Overall Impact	"Lifeline" for transit-dependent individuals and vulnerable communities	Critical service, only option for many users in service areas	Critical service, life-changing for people with disabilities	Reduces single occupancy vehicle trips and increases transit ridership
Ridership Data	Annual Ridership: 12,662,251 Annual Passenger Miles (estimated): 52,312,556	Annual Ridership: 40,489 Annual Passenger Miles: 182,744	Annual Ridership: 299,238 Annual Passenger Miles: 4,934,430	Annual Ridership (Vanpool): 79,242 Annual Passenger Miles (Vanpool): 528,303

	FIXED-ROUTE/EXPRESS/ SEASONAL	FLEX/FLEX ON DEMAND	RIDE ADA PARATRANSIT/ RIDE ANYWHERE	COMMUTER RESOURCE RI (CRRI) PROGRAM
Performance Data	Annual Revenue Hours: 687,134 Operating Cost: $208.81 per vehicle revenue hour	Annual Revenue Hours: 26,955 Operating Cost: $115.14 per vehicle revenue hour	Annual Revenue Hours: 167,266 Operating Cost: N/A	Annual Revenue Hours (Vanpool): 10,496 Operating Cost (Vanpool): $0.15 per passenger mile traveled
Trip Purposes	Commute trips to work and school, medical appointments, shopping, and other daily trips	Commute trips to work and school, medical appointments, shopping	Commute trips to work, medical appointments, shopping, social/community events	Commute trips to work and school

3.1 QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT – FIXED-ROUTE SERVICE

The consultant team conducted a quantitative performance assessment of RIPTA's fixed-route services using a Composite Route Score approach. This approach has been applied successfully in similar network evaluations, such as for Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's (WMATA) Better Bus Network Redesign. This analysis helps RIPTA identify where service is providing the greatest impact and where adjustments may be warranted by evaluating fixed routes using consistent, data-driven metrics. However, it is recognized that some routes serve vital community purposes not always captured in standard performance measures.

Each route was assessed using a Composite Route Score with tables shown on the following pages, which incorporates three equally weighted components:

— **Impact:** Assesses ridership, population served, job access, connectivity (transfers), and unique access provided.
— **Efficiency:** Measures service productivity (passenger trips per revenue hour) and cost-effectiveness (cost per passenger trip).
— **Equity:** Evaluates rider demographics, service area characteristics, and access to lower-wage jobs.

The fixed routes were divided into three categories, with scores for each route calculated and compared only against others within the same category. The categories and their respective routes are listed below:

— **Local Routes:** All rapid bus routes, high-frequency routes, local routes, and special services
— **Express Routes:** 9x, 10x, 12x, 24L, 59x, 61x, 65x, 95x, Qx
— **Seasonal Routes:** 45, 46, 47

RIPTA also provides shuttle service to the Providence–Newport ferry terminal that was not given a Composite Route Score as similar data for this service was not available.

A comprehensive list of fixed route names and route numbers, in addition to their schedules and maps, can be found on RIPTA's website. Additionally, RIPTA staff provided further contextual detail to support the evaluation of fixed-route service in terms of critical access, partner funding, and community value that can be found in Appendix B-1: Supplemental Fixed Route Context.

The seasonal routes serve very specific purposes, connecting the urban areas of the state to the state's beaches. As a result, all three routes score similarly and demonstrate high Impact and Equity Scores, reflecting their role in providing access to recreation and beaches for transit-dependent populations during peak seasonal demand. Although the ferry shuttle service was not scored, it remains an important partnership and supports alternative transportation within and between two centers of tourism in Rhode Island.

The three scores for all fixed routes are displayed in the Composite Route Score in Figure 3-1, Figure 3-2, and Figure 3-3.

Figure 3-1: Composite Route Scores (Local)
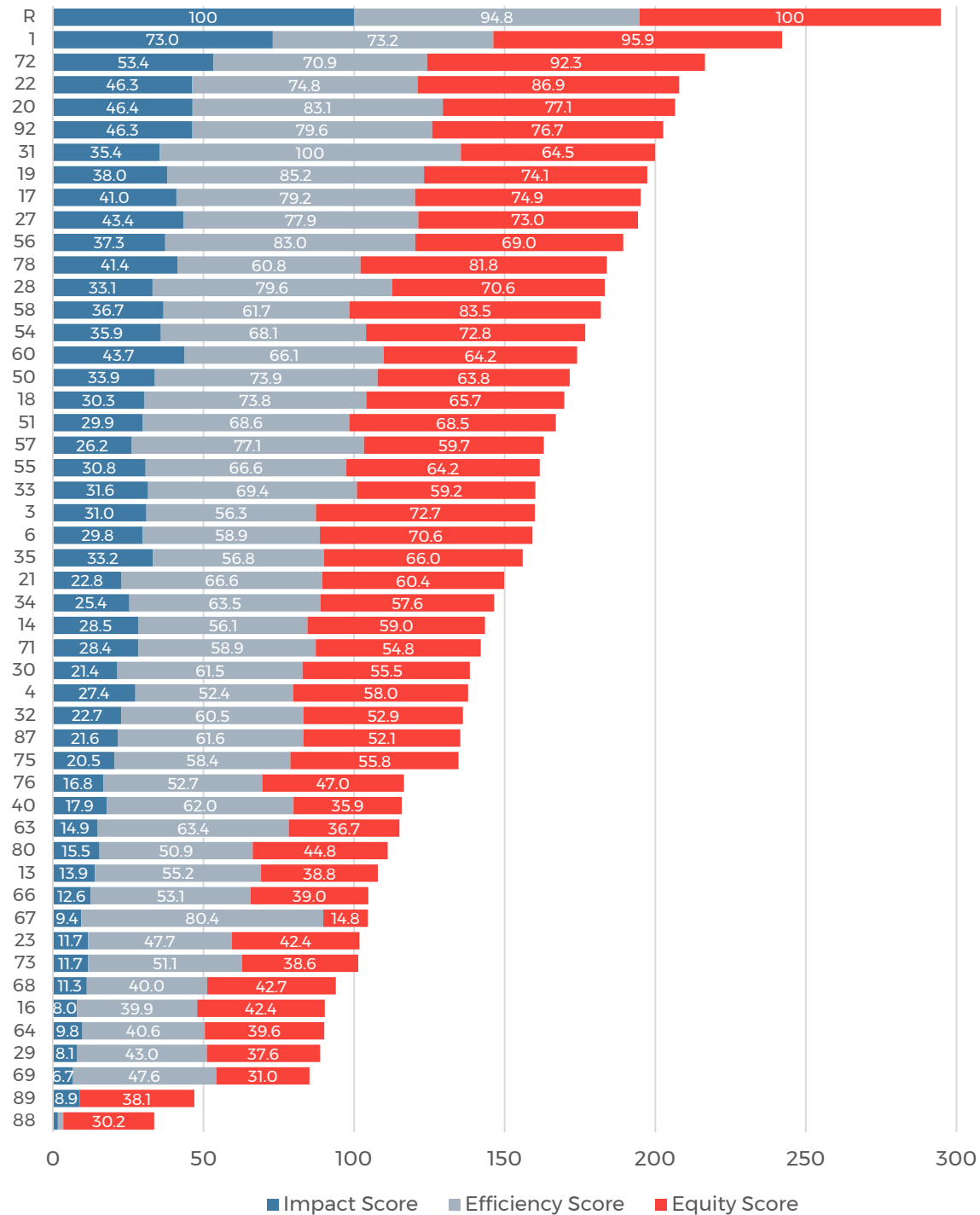
Figure 3-2: Composite Route Scores (Express)

Route	Impact Score	Efficiency Score	Equity Score
24L	100	89.8	62.1
QX	94.0	58.5	76.7
61x	73.9	49.8	100
65x	67.4	100	44.4
9x	79.8	52.7	46.7
12x	60.8	32.7	65.1
10x	44.2	53.4	50.6
95x	57.4	21.3	51.7
59x	41.0	38.8	37.9
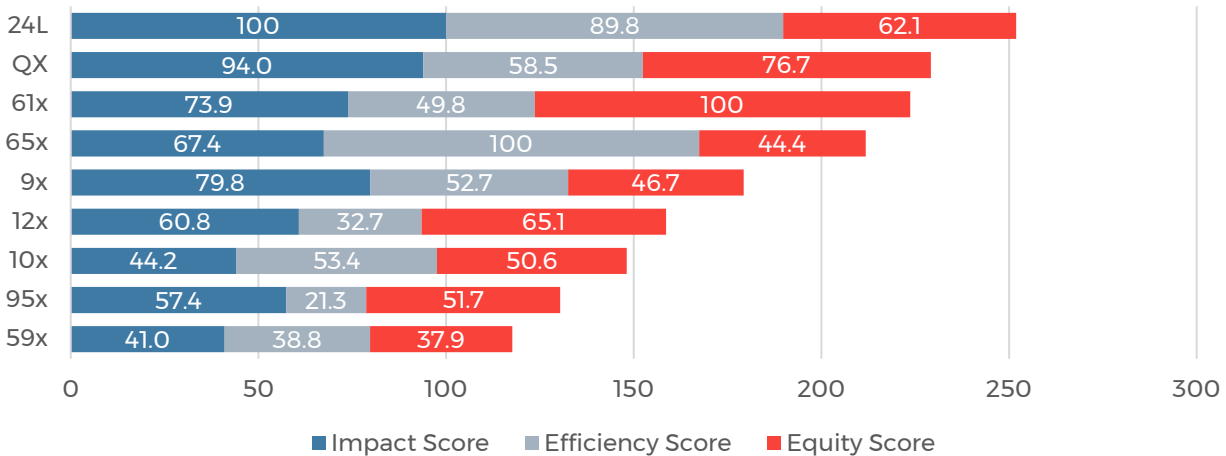
Figure 3-3: Composite Route Scores (Seasonal)

Route	Impact Score	Equity Score
46	100	91.2
45	77.4	100
47	65.1	92.6
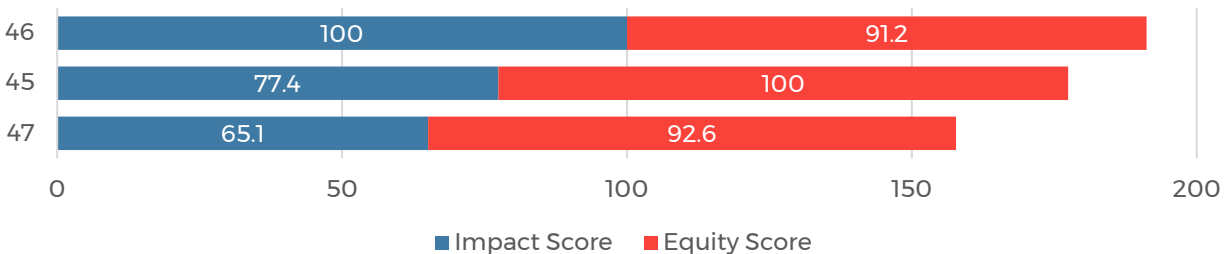
3.1.1 ROUTE IMPACT SCORE

The Route Impact Score highlights how each route contributes to the overall fixed-route network, offering a consistent framework to compare each route. The score can help to identify which routes need improvements to make them more impactful and which routes play the most vital role in supporting the overall network and therefore should be prioritized for investments. The consultant team has used this type of score on several bus network redesigns to help evaluate individual fixed routes, including for WMATA, and the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS). For each of these studies, the Route Impact Score helped identify how different routes impact the network as a whole outside of pure ridership and efficiency metrics. The score helped recognize that some routes may perform lower in terms of ridership, etc. yet still benefit the network as a whole by feeding passengers into other routes, serving vulnerable populations, and providing service coverage in transit-dependent neighborhoods. The Route Impact Score comprises three components:

— **Ridership:** Intended to highlight high ridership routes that form the backbone of the network.

— **Population Served:** Intended to highlight routes that serve high concentrations of vulnerable populations and in the case of express routes, commuters.

— **Network Value:** Intended to highlight routes that play an integral role in enhancing connectivity in the network by facilitating transfers and feeding into higher ridership routes.

Takeaways from local routes include:

— The R-Line and Route 1 score the highest in each component and the overall Route Impact Score. These routes are high ridership, high frequency, and help form the core of the fixed-route network.

— Lower scoring routes in each component contribute less overall to the network but may still serve specific purposes that need to be considered as they can be lifelines for vulnerable populations. This includes:

  — Serving senior housing and shopping centers (e.g., Special Service Routes 88 and 89).

  — Providing feeder service to the higher frequency fixed-route network and the MBTA Commuter Rail that may have lower ridership but provide essential connections (e.g., Routes 76 and 80).

— Connecting key educational institutions and regional hubs, such as routes which serve South County and link the state's flagship university (University of Rhode Island) with the fixed-route network at CCRI Warwick and downtown Providence (e.g., Routes 66 and 69).

Takeaways from express routes include:

— Routes 24L and Qx provide express service to outlying employment centers and smaller cities in the Providence metro and this important aspect is represented by their high scores.

— Lower scoring routes in each component may have less impact on the overall network but still satisfy specific needs such as providing park-and-ride service from the northern part of the state to Providence and connecting to suburban employment centers (e.g., Route 59x).

3.1.2 ROUTE EFFICIENCY SCORE

The Route Efficiency Score evaluates how effectively each route utilizes resources relative to the demand it serves. It captures two key dimensions: Service Productivity, measured by passenger trips per revenue hour, and Financial Performance, measured by cost per passenger trip. Higher ridership per revenue hour indicates that a route is highly productive. Higher cost per rider suggests lower financial efficiency and potential for service optimization. Takeaways from local routes include:

— Local routes average 14.2 passenger trips per revenue hour, far outperforming express routes, which average 3.6 trips per revenue hour. As a whole, the fixed-route network sees 16.7 passenger trips per revenue hour.

— The average cost per passenger trip for local routes is $22.30, more cost-efficient compared to $68.70 for express routes. As a whole, the fixed-route network costs $12.47 per passenger trip.

— Route 31 and the R-Line are the most productive among local routes in terms of trips per hour and cost-efficiency. This is largely because they serve dense neighborhoods with transit-dependent populations, where strong demand is supported by frequent and reliable service.

— Routes with limited connections to dense neighborhoods tend to have lower efficiency due to their lower demand, but they may still serve important functions by connecting specific transit-oriented populations to essential goods and services, such as linking senior housing with a shopping center. In such cases, maintaining the current service may be warranted despite lower performance metrics (e.g., Special Service Route 88).

Takeaways from express routes include:

— Route 65x ranks highest in efficiency among express routes, with Route 24L also showing strong performance. Their efficiency is supported by service to major transit centers, and offering connections to intercity bus services, increasing their utility for long-distance travelers.

— The least efficient routes are primarily impacted by longer travel distances and lower ridership, resulting in higher costs per passenger. However, many of these routes serve key connection points such as railroad stations or park-and-rides. In these cases, it may be warranted to reassess alternative connection methods, while recognizing that maintaining these services could be essential if they are the only viable option for transferring commuters along key corridors. Reducing the service only during specific time periods with consistently low demand, while preserving critical access during peak travel times, could help improve the efficiency of these routes (e.g., Routes 95x and 12x).

3.1.3   ROUTE EQUITY SCORE

The Route Equity Score assesses each route's accessibility to key populations and jobs by evaluating its demographic reach. The score is made up of three components: Rider Demographics, Service Area Demographics, and Transit-Oriented Jobs. A higher Route Equity Score indicates that a route provides access to a greater number of transit-dependent riders and essential destinations.

Takeaways from local routes include:

—   The R-Line provides the greatest access to transit-dependent populations and essential destinations among local routes, followed by Routes 1 and 72.

—   Route 19 has the highest share of transit-oriented riders among all local routes, followed by Routes 78 and 56, based on responses from the OD survey[14], indicating a strong presence of transit-dependent riders on these routes.

—   Although some routes have lower access to transit-oriented neighborhoods or jobs, they still attract a relatively higher share of transit-dependent riders on board, suggesting strong reliance on these routes highlights their role in supporting regional commute, despite limited geographic equity coverage (e.g., Routes 69, 29).

Takeaways from express and seasonal routes include:

—   Routes 61x, Qx and 12x provide access to the most transit-reliant individuals and jobs among all express routes, by connecting downtown Providence with employment centers and smaller cities in the south, including Tiverton, Quonset, and various park-and-ride locations. These routes play a key role in supporting long-distance commutes for transit-dependent populations.

—   Despite having lower access to transit-oriented populations, some express routes have a higher share of transit-oriented riders among express routes, as shown in the Rider Demographics component. This suggests that these routes play a critical role for transit-dependent individuals who may travel from outside the immediate service area or rely on it for longer-distance connections to areas, such as in Fall River and Newport (e.g., Route 24L).

—   Seasonal routes connect the urban areas of the state to the state's beaches, and they share similar level of access to transit-oriented populations and jobs.

3.1.4   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF FIXED-ROUTE SERVICE

RIPTA's fixed routes have a substantial positive impact on the environment and the transportation system as a whole. By converting single-occupant vehicle trips into transit trips, RIPTA capitalizes on economies of scale to reduce emissions and improve congestion. Since fixed-route service operates on a set schedule, the number of trips and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by buses remains constant regardless of how many riders are being served. In the past year, RIPTA's fixed-route service had the following impact:[15]

—   Statewide vehicle trips were reduced by approximately 11.5 million trips and statewide VMT were reduced by over 43 million miles.

—   Emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOC) were reduced by 96%, or over 10,400 kg, and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions were reduced by 25%, or 4,620 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e).

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[14] The OD survey was an onboard survey collected in October of 2024 to collect travel pattern and trip and rider characteristics.
[15] Data represents March 2024 through February 2025. Routes 45, 46, 47, 88, 89, and Qx are not included due to seasonal limitations and inconsistent data. Calculations assume all transit trips become single-occupant vehicle trips.

3.2 QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT - NON-FIXED SERVICE/PROGRAMS

RIPTA operates three categories of non-fixed services and programs: Flex/Flex On Demand, RIde ADA paratransit/RIde Anywhere, and the CRRI program. These services target specific populations and geographies that are not well-served by standard routes, while also promoting sustainable travel behavior among commuters. The following sections describe each service, its available performance data, and environmental impact.

3.2.1 FLEX/FLEX ON DEMAND

Flex provides local service within six zones, as well as connections to RIPTA's statewide fixed-route network. To use Flex, passengers can either make a reservation 24 hours in advance or board the Flex vehicle at any of the scheduled Flex stops within three zones: 204 (Westerly), 231 (South Aquidneck), and 282 (Pascoag/Slatersville). Flex route 301 (Westerly/Hope Valley) was excluded from the analysis due to its limited service (Fridays only).

Flex On Demand, currently a pilot program, allows passengers to use a smartphone app to request a ride to and from anywhere they wish to travel within the Flex Zone. Unlike Flex, passengers do not need to make a reservation in advance. The service is currently being offered in the Flex 203 zone, which includes Kingston Village and the University of Rhode Island.

Flex/Flex On Demand provided just **over 40,000 passenger trips from March 2024 through February 2025. Passengers traveled over 180,000 miles, with** an average trip length of 4.5 miles. Flex/Flex On Demand operated in revenue service for almost 27,000 hours at a fully allocated cost of $115.14 per vehicle revenue hour.

ZONE IMPACT, EFFICIENCY, AND EQUITY SCORES

Similar to the fixed routes, a Composite Zone Score was generated for each Flex/Flex On Demand Zone. The score incorporates three equally weighted components:

— **Impact:** Assesses population served.

— **Efficiency:** Measures service productivity and cost-effectiveness.

— **Equity:** Evaluates rider demographics, service area characteristics, and access to lower-wage jobs.

The Composite Zone Scores for the six Flex/Flex On Demand zones are shown in Figure 3-4 and the components of the Zone Equity, Efficiency, and Impact Scores are detailed in Appendix B-2: Route and Zone Scoring Details.

— Zone 281 (Woonsocket/Manville) scores the highest in Impact, Efficiency, and Equity. Zone 242 scores highly in Impact and Equity as well. Both are relatively more urbanized than the other zones.

— Zone 282 (Pascoag/Slatersville) scores the lowest in Impact, Efficiency, and Equity. In general, the more rural Flex zones have lower scores than zones in more urbanized areas closer to Providence.

Figure 3-4 Composite Flex Zone Scores

	Impact Score	Efficiency Score	Equity Score
281	100	100	100
242	82.1	75.6	90.1
203	46.4	95.9	44.2
204	23.6	85.6	24.1
231	26.9	36.2	27.1
282	10.8	13.6	8.4
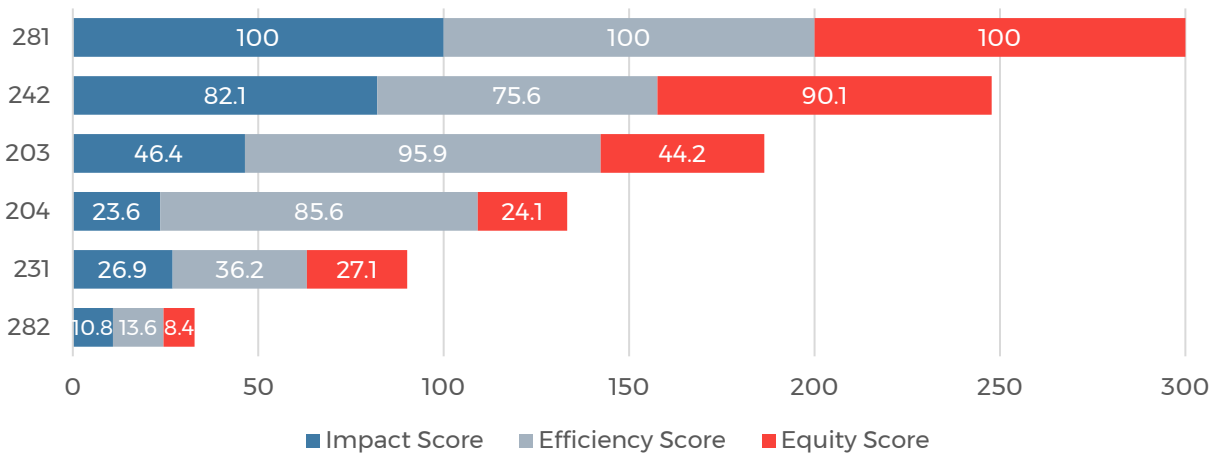
3.2.2 RIDE ADA PARATRANSIT/RIDE ANYWHERE

RIde ADA paratransit is a complementary ADA paratransit service that provides door-to-door service for people with disabilities who are traveling within ¾-mile of a fixed bus route and cannot independently take the bus or travel to and from a bus stop. This paratransit service is mandated by federal guidance and operates during the same spans as the fixed-route service it is complementing. In January 2024, RIPTA launched RIde Anywhere, a pilot program that provides door-to-door service statewide for RIde paratransit passengers.

— RIde ADA paratransit/RIde Anywhere provided almost 300,000 passenger trips from March 2024 through February 2025, an average of 818 daily trips.
— Passengers traveled over 4,930,000 miles, with an average trip length of 16.5 miles.
— RIde ADA paratransit/RIde Anywhere operated in revenue service for over 167,000 hours.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF RIDE/RIDE ANYWHERE

RIPTA's paratransit service has a positive impact on the environment and the transportation system as a whole. By converting single-occupant vehicle trips into transit trips with potentially more than one rider, the service reduces emissions and improves congestion. Overall, these services:

— Reduced statewide vehicle trips by 69,400 and statewide VMT by over 1.7 million.[16]
— Reduced NOx emissions by 33%, or 425 kg; VOC emissions by 75%, or 397 kg; and GHG emissions by 14%, or 236 metric tons CO_2e.

3.2.3 COMMUTER RESOURCE RI PROGRAM (VANPOOL, CARPOOL, BIKE TO WORK, U-PASS, WAVE TO WORK)

CRRI is Rhode Island's statewide transportation demand management (TDM) program. CRRI manages a range of initiatives that aim to convert single-occupant vehicle trips into alternative modes to reduce congestion and the environmental impacts of travel, including:

— Wave to Work program, which allows employers to subsidize bus fares partially or fully for their employees by providing them with preloaded Wave smart cards.

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[16] Data represents March 2024 to February 2025. Calculations assume all transit trips become single-occupant vehicle trips.

- University Pass Program (U-PASS), which allows participating universities to partially or fully fund transit benefits for their students, faculty, and staff.
  - Participants took over 500,000 trips from March 2024 to February 2025, with Brown University accounting for 44% of trips and Rhode Island College accounting for 23% of trips.
  - Other participating universities include Rhode Island School of Design, Salve Regina University, Bryant University, Providence College, Roger Williams University, Johnson & Wales University, and the Community College of Rhode Island.
- Subsidized vanpool service through a partnership with Commute with Enterprise.
  - The program had 30 participating vanpools serving 150 total riders and drivers in FY 2023. The program reduced statewide vehicle trips by 73,200 and statewide VMT by over 2.8 million.
  - The program is less expensive to operate than fixed-route service ($0.15 per passenger mile traveled versus $2.03) and has a significantly higher farebox recovery rate (95% versus 14%).
  - The program had a positive return on investment, generating almost $350,000 in federal formula funds after accounting for state subsidies.
  - The program provides access to some major outlying employment sites that have struggled to support fixed-route service, including the Quonset Business Park.
  - GHG emissions were reduced by 79%, or 866 metric tons of CO_2e; NOx emissions were reduced by 78%, or 644 kg; and VOC emissions were reduced by 81%, or 234 kg.
- The Drive Less RI app, which allows commuters to log non-single-occupancy vehicle trips, connect with active carpools, and earn rewards.
  - Drive Less RI has over 560 participating organizations and 4,200 participating commuters; of the more than 600 active participants, more than half previously drove alone to work.
  - Participants recorded over 35,000 non-single-occupant vehicle trips in Drive Less RI since April 2024, reducing statewide VMT by over 540,000 miles.
  - Participants saved $370,000 when accounting for vehicle-related costs.
  - Participants saved nearly 25,000 gallons of gas. GHG emissions were reduced by 220 metric tons CO_2e, NOx emissions were reduced by 322 kg, and VOC emissions were reduced by 318 kg.
  - While over 40% of trips were made by bicycle, carpool trips accounted for the vast majority of VMT reductions and money saved.
  - Over 1,900 ridesharing inquiries were made and over half produced matching names for potential carpooling or vanpooling.

3.3 TRANSIT PROPENSITY & GAPS ANALYSES

Identifying where transit users are and where they want to go is a key component in evaluating how RIPTA's existing service meets current and future transit demand. As part of Transit Forward RI 2050, transit propensity and gaps analyses were conducted to identify areas with transit demand, including those with service gaps. The analysis identified areas of high potential transit demand based on:

- Population density
- Employment density
- Demographics (e.g., low-income, zero-car households)

As population density increases, the ridership base for transit service grows. Similarly, the location and density of jobs is an indicator of demand since commuting represents a sizable portion of transit trips. Employment can indicate potential demand for other types of trips as well. For example, destinations like shopping malls or hospitals are frequented by employees and visitors alike. As population and employment densities increase, there is more demand for transit and more intensive service becomes more appropriate.

In addition to raw population and employment density, socioeconomic characteristics can be indicators of a population's likelihood of using transit. For example, households with limited or no access to a personal vehicle are more likely to use and rely on transit. Other demographic groups with higher propensity for transit use include minority populations, immigrant communities, and lower income households.

High transit demand areas in population, employment, and demographics include the urban core of the state (Providence, Pawtucket, and Central Falls), Cranston/Warwick along the I-95 corridor, West Warwick, Woonsocket, and Newport. More moderate demand exists in Quonset, Kingston, Westerly, Wakefield, and much of the East Bay. The more urban parts of these communities have higher concentrations of populations that are more likely to use transit, as opposed to more suburban areas such as East Greenwich, Smithfield, and Lincoln with lower expected demand. Employment is concentrated in downtown Providence and its immediate surroundings, with notable pockets in Central Falls, Woonsocket, Quonset, and Newport. Outside of these communities, much of Rhode Island has little to no demand for more intensive fixed-route service due to its exurban or rural nature.

Gaps in fixed-route service frequency and coverage exist across the state. There is demand for more frequent service along major corridors within and between urban areas such as Providence, Pawtucket, and Warwick. There is also demand for additional fixed-route service outside of the Providence metro area, including within Woonsocket, Cranston-Warwick-West Warwick, Quonset, Kingston-Wakefield, Newport, and Westerly. Additionally, there is demand for new crosstown service along the Park Avenue corridor in Cranston, between Pawtucket and Johnston, and between eastern and western portions of Warwick.

Looking into the future, demand for transit will likely remain similar or increase slightly since the statewide population is projected to remain relatively constant and employment is projected to grow. In particular, demand is expected to increase in Newport and around T.F. Green Airport, as well as across the state border in Fall River, Massachusetts.

3.4 QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT – ALL SERVICES

The qualitative assessment complements the quantitative performance metrics by capturing the lived experiences and perspectives of RIPTA riders, staff, and community stakeholders through targeted outreach sessions. Feedback on the role, impact, and effectiveness of each service provides critical context to understand not only how each service operates, but how it is perceived and experienced by the people who rely on it daily – particularly underserved populations. The findings highlight recurring themes, identify gaps, and inform recommendations to enhance service quality, equity, and access.

Four stakeholder outreach sessions were held, each focusing on one of RIPTA's core services: Fixed-Route (including express and seasonal services); Flex/Flex On Demand; RIde Anywhere/RIde ADA paratransit; and the CRRI program. Each session included a mix of community members and representatives from RIPTA, social service organizations, local businesses, a community group, and other stakeholders.

Each session opened with a presentation introducing the goals of the study and the purpose of the outreach sessions. A series of questions were posed to participants to understand the impact and role of the service for stakeholders, as well as the needs of users, trip purposes and other qualitative data.

The discussion was guided by the following topics and questions:

— **Issues and needs of users:** Which populations are primarily using this service today? Are there groups who especially depend on this service? What challenges do users face when trying to access or use these services? Are there specific needs that are currently unmet by this service?

— **Impact on mobility:** How does this service impact people's ability to get where they need to go? Are users dependent on this service or do they generally have other transportation options as well?

— **Impact on economic development:** In what ways does this service help support access to jobs, businesses, or economic activity in your community?

- **Impact on environment:** Do you see this service contributing to reduced car trips, traffic congestion, or emissions in your community?
- **Overall role of service(s):** Overall, how important would you say this service is for your community's transportation needs?
- **Ridership information:** Are you aware of general usage patterns for this service? How frequently do people you work with use this service?
- **Performance data:** From what you observe, does this service seem to be run efficiently? Are there concerns about service reliability, timeliness, or coverage?
- **Trip purposes:** For the people you serve, what are the main reasons they use this service? Are there trip purposes that are especially critical for this community?

The following sections describe the findings from each session. A matrix with a high-level summary of the qualitative assessment can be found in the Value Assessment of Each Service section.

3.4.1 FIXED-ROUTE – OUTREACH FINDINGS

The Fixed-Route Service stakeholder session was held on May 14, 2025, at RIPTA Headquarters. A virtual option was available for remote attendees. Approximately two dozen stakeholders were in attendance, including individual riders and representatives from RIPTA, the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals (BHDDH), Quonset Development Corporation, and South Kingstown Senior Services. Frequency, reliability, and funding for RIPTA's fixed-route service were central themes of the session discussion.

- Desire for more predictable service, particularly on routes with high variability.
- Inconsistent service on specific routes, including:
    - Buses serving the Kingston Amtrak Station.
    - Routes connecting East Side and Downtown Providence.
- More frequent delays and service gaps during weekday evenings when riders reported greater difficulty planning trips.
- Community members echoed a general sentiment of wanting more resources to expand service and improve ridership and user experience.
- Many participants voiced concerns about reducing or eliminating service on routes with low ridership, particularly the negative impacts this could have on transit dependent communities in rural areas. One rider emphasized that relying solely on ridership data to allocate resources could harm transit-dependent communities, stating:

    "Putting resources where resources are needed might cancel some routes that are needed so using just ridership data won't improve the reliability of RIPTA."

Overall, the discussion highlighted fixed-route service as essential to meet the mobility needs of Rhode Islanders, with concerns that reduced service could be detrimental to individuals who rely on transit, particularly vulnerable communities in rural areas. Regarding the importance of RIPTA fixed-route service, a representative commented that:

"We have two types of passengers: those by choice and those who must. We're really a lifeline for those passengers [who must]."

To improve service reliability, participants recommended:

- Better promotion of schedule-tracking apps,

— The designation of more dedicated areas for buses operating early to pause and to maintain schedule adherence, and

— The marketing and promotion of the Wave smart card and mobile app, to move away from cash payment and speed up the boarding process.

Geographic and temporal gaps were identified:

— The need for cross-town routes, service in rural areas, and a shift away from the hub-and-spoke system was raised.

— Concerns were raised about the span on particular routes including from a representative of Quonset Business Park who noted that routes do not serve early-morning shift workers.

— RIPTA representatives acknowledged that service must adjust to the movement of jobs out of the urban core and the need to serve outlying areas and shift-based workers. However, this will continue to be a challenge without sufficient funding.

High ridership routes were identified:

— Participants noted the R-Line and Route 1 (Eddy/Hope/Benefit) as being consistently overcrowded, with workers, high school students, university students and faculty, particularly during peak hours.

— Routes serving the University of Rhode Island (URI) were also noted as having high ridership, as well as overcrowding on routes serving Brown University and high schools in Providence.

— Route 50 (Douglas Ave/Bryant University) was identified as important for economic activity and access to jobs.

— Rural routes serving South Kingstown senior housing facilities were noted as being valuable for seniors who are low income or have mobility limitations.

— Some observations and feedback on express and seasonal routes were provided. A suggestion was made to consider a focus on tourism and increasing service in Newport and South County.

— Another participant observed lower ridership on express routes in South Kingstown post-pandemic.

ABBG CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

RIPTA has conducted customer satisfaction surveys through the American Bus Benchmarking Group (ABBG) for over a decade. Almost 950 customers responded to the 2024 survey, and RIPTA has received over 13,700 responses since 2013. While most customers raised issues or did not leave a written comment, many also praised RIPTA's fixed-route service, noting that:

— The service is useful, reliable, and efficient and connects riders with the places they need or want to go.

— Riders rely on RIPTA to get around because they do not drive or have another mode of transportation for personal, financial, or mobility reasons.

— The bus drivers are helpful, friendly, and professional.

— RIPTA compares favorably to transit providers in other American cities.

— The R-Line is particularly useful and important. One user noted:

> "I have depended on bus service for at least 45 years, traveling to work and my kids traveling to school daily. [I] do not know what we would have done without bus service."

The most common issues raised by customers included unreliability and on-time performance, driver temperament, skipped stops, rider behavior, dirty buses, and a lack of shelter or seating at some stops. The most common requests from customers included higher frequency, better real-time tracking, more weekend and night service, more crosstown routes, and more fare options. In recent years, complaints about drivers have decreased and complaints or requests about service have increased.

While most comments were about fixed-route service in general, some identified specific routes. In the past four years, Routes 13 (Coventry/Arctic/CCRI) and 14 (West Bay) received the most comments, followed by Routes 27 (Broadway/Manton) and 60 (Providence/Newport). For Route 14, customers were largely concerned about the loss of express service and direct service to T.F. Green Airport. Route-specific comments were not available for other routes, but general themes included a desire for higher frequencies, longer spans, and better on-time performance.

3.4.2 FLEX/FLEX ON DEMAND – OUTREACH FINDINGS

The Flex/Flex On Demand stakeholder session was held on May 14, 2025, at RIPTA Headquarters. A virtual option was available for remote attendees. Eight stakeholders were in attendance, including current users and representatives from RIPTA and Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds in Washington County. Written feedback from a RIPTA employee who works as a Flex Service Scheduler was also included in the outreach findings. Feedback focused on the importance of this service for users who live outside of the fixed-route service area.

Key points of feedback included:

— Current riders in Woonsocket and South County expressed ease of use with the Flex On Demand app and reported their communities relying heavily on the service.
— A RIPTA employee who manages data tracking for the Flex program identified Westerly and Narragansett as areas with high vehicle trips.
— RIPTA representatives shared that Flex and Flex On Demand have a core group of users who depend on the service for recurring trips to get to work, medical appointments, school, run errands and attend social activities and community events. One participant and user of Flex for 15 years shared:

> *"I depend on Flex. I use it for shopping and medical appointments."*

Stakeholder feedback identified key user groups, including low-income workers, veterans, students, and individuals with mobility limitations, including seniors and people with disabilities. The Flex/Flex On Demand service attracts riders who have no or limited access to a personal vehicle and live in areas with little to no fixed-route service. Flex/Flex On Demand is a critical service for these groups. Another participant noted that community members in South County are dependent on both Flex and Flex On Demand service.

> *"In South County, there are people who really don't have any other options."*

— Several needs and recommendations were identified by the stakeholders, most notably expanding flex zones into rural areas and urban areas that are underserved by transit.
    — One participant identified the need for expanded flex zones into rural areas of South Kingstown.
— One participant relayed feedback that Flex On Demand requests can interfere with users who have prebooked Flex service.
— A Flex service representative also identified scheduling challenges with booking 24 hours in advance and recommended real-time booking options to better meet the needs of users.
— Fares may be cost-prohibitive for low-income users. A participant suggested offering lower-cost options for income-qualifying riders.

3.4.3 RIDE ADA PARATRANSIT/RIDE ANYWHERE – OUTREACH FINDINGS

The RIde Anywhere/RIde ADA paratransit stakeholder session was held on May 15, 2025, at RIPTA Headquarters. A virtual option was available for remote attendees. Nine stakeholders were in attendance, including current users and representatives from RIPTA and BHDDH.

RIde Anywhere and RIde ADA paratransit user feedback was mostly positive, noting:

— The RIde Anywhere pilot program is particularly critical for individuals with disabilities living in rural areas.
— Several users remarked that the RIde Anywhere pilot program has significantly increased their independence, mobility, and quality of life, connecting them to employment, medical appointments, social activities, and other opportunities that would have otherwise been challenging or impossible to access. Without the RIde Anywhere pilot program, users shared they would have no other options to maintain their mobility. One user described the RIde Anywhere and RIde ADA paratransit services as:

  "Absolutely essential to the mobility of people with disabilities."

— Another user expressed how much the RIde Anywhere pilot program has changed her life, noting that:

  "Up until the program began in 2024, I was housebound for five years."

— Further, she mentioned the service enables her to better access essential services and feel connected to her community. RIde Anywhere and RIde ADA paratransit are critical for the mobility of users with participants sharing that a loss of the service would be detrimental to their quality of life, access to employment, and independence.

Issues with the timeliness and routing of the RIde ADA paratransit service were noted, with a participant having experienced lagged tracking of buses and late departures and arrivals, despite users planning in advance:

— Users experience challenges, particularly during peak commute hours, with wait times for the scheduling phone line and online software incorrectly estimating trip times, causing delays.
— Some RIde paratransit users recounted instances where individual trips could have been grouped but were not. It was suggested that scheduling improvements could be made to group nearby trip requests and decrease the number of solo trips.
— It was suggested that operators should have improved ability to better account for traffic and streamline routing for group trips that include multiple destinations.

RIDE SERVICES RIDER ENGAGEMENT

RIPTA conducted separate outreach to RIde Anywhere pilot program users, including nine individual interviews, a focus group with five participants, and an online survey to better understand rider travel needs and identify opportunities for service improvement. The feedback was very positive, with many riders emphasizing how the service enhances their independence, reduces social isolation, and provides critical access to jobs and essential services beyond RIde ADA paratransit hours. These insights echoed themes heard during the OES outreach.

Participants expressed a strong preference for RIPTA-operated vans over taxis, especially among riders with low vision or those who use wheelchairs. It was mentioned that there are recurring issues with communication and trip tracking for taxi rides. Notably, the majority of the interviewees' RIde Anywhere trips were solo trips, even during peak commute hours, suggesting inefficiencies in vehicle utilization. An analysis of the engagement suggests trip negotiation as a potential solution to group trips, reduce inefficiencies, and lower costs.

Overall, the RIde Anywhere pilot program significantly improves mobility and quality of life for riders with disabilities, with some customers noting that they would still use RIde Anywhere even if fares were increased to be higher than the standard RIde ADA paratransit fare.

RIPTA has also received favorable comments about RIde ADA paratransit through the ABBG customer satisfaction surveys. Customers have noted how important the service is for increasing their mobility, as well as how great the drivers and schedulers are.

3.4.4 COMMUTER RESOURCE RI PROGRAM (VANPOOL, CARPOOL, BIKE TO WORK, WAVE TO WORK) – OUTREACH FINDINGS

The CRRI stakeholder session was held on May 15, 2025, at RIPTA Headquarters. A virtual option was available for remote attendees. Six stakeholders were in attendance, including a current RIPTA rider and representatives from CRRI, BHDDH, The State of Rhode Island Governor's Commission on Disabilities, and Rhode Island Transit Riders.

The stakeholder discussion identified CRRI programs, namely Wave to Work, vanpools, and travel training, as serving predominantly university students and staff, shift-workers, and youth and seniors, respectively. Insights showed Wave to Work and vanpools as having positive impacts on mobility and economic development by providing low-cost options for workers with limited car access and shift workers who work schedules outside of transit service. Some of the key insights included:

— CRRI travel training was noted as a vital service for helping youth and seniors learn how to use and rely on transit, further boosting mobility for these groups.

— Overall, CRRI was seen as having a positive environmental impact by working to reduce drive alone trips, leading to lower congestion on roadways. The discussion also identified CRRI programs as an important way to expand transit ridership by attracting riders and encouraging behavior change. One participant noted:

> "Compared to the other sectors like the fixed route, these options attract choice riders that have other options, but when you think about climate change and mode shift, this is making a bigger climate impact."

— CRRI representatives identified challenges with effectively marketing their services, recruiting employers for Wave to Work, and securing drivers for vanpools. Stakeholder recommendations included outreach to small employers (particularly those in suburban office parks), non-profits, and worker co-operatives which may have higher employee interest in vanpool and transit.

3.5 VALUE ASSESSMENT OF EACH SERVICE

Each of RIPTA's services has its strengths and weaknesses while at the same time serving a number of purposes for Rhode Islanders. Together, these services create a far-reaching network throughout the state that offers extensive mobility options for vulnerable populations and choice riders, has positive impacts on the environment in a state that is highly vulnerable to climate change, and also improves the state's economy by offering access to jobs and services and providing connections to higher paying jobs in the Boston metro through the MBTA commuter rail. The following sections summarize the value of each service in providing a unique, statewide transit service that is rare in America.

3.5.1 FIXED-ROUTE VALUE

RIPTA's fixed-route bus network provides far-reaching and reliable service to the residents of Rhode Island, carrying over 12.6 million passenger trips in FY 2024 – an increase of 17% from FY 2023. The fixed-route network is highly reliable with an on-time performance rate of nearly 80% in 2025. It also performs well overall in terms of efficiency, delivering just over 20 passengers per revenue hour in FY 2023. Environmentally, fixed-route service takes 11.5 million trips off the road and reduces statewide VMT by over 43 million miles – reducing emissions and easing congestion.

The fixed-route network alone provides transit access to:

— Nearly 560,000 people,
— 87,000 seniors,
— 79,000 low-income households,
— 250,000 minorities, and
— 266,000 jobs and allows for several connections to suburban job sites that typically are difficult to serve on routes like the 10x, Qx, and 75.

Access to jobs is one of the most important benefits of fixed-route transit for the local economy. According to a 2020 study by the American Public Transit Association (APTA), transit investments support cost savings for both public transit users and non-users through reductions in car ownership and reductions in traffic congestion. By giving people an opportunity to reduce car ownership, public transit can save users nearly $10,000 per year.[17] This savings can be reinvested in the local economy. Additionally, bus transit in small or medium-sized cities has been shown to reduce reliance on public assistance, lower unemployment, and decrease poverty[18].

Certain local fixed routes serve different purposes, as outlined in the Route Impact, Efficiency, and Equity scores. While some routes like the R-Line, 1 (Eddy/Hope/Benefit), and 72 (Weeden/Central Falls) have a high impact, high efficiency, and serve large numbers of vulnerable populations, others serve more specific purposes. A number of routes score much higher in their Equity score than they do in Route Impact and Efficiency. For example:

— Route 88, which provides service between Simmons Village in Johnston and the Cranston Walmart, scores much higher in equity than efficiency and provides the ability for seniors to access shopping.
— Route 58, which provides crosstown service on Mineral Spring Avenue in North Providence, also provides access to shopping at Smithfield Crossing for vulnerable populations, including seniors, who reside in North Providence.
— Route 3, which provides service to the Brown Health hospital complex, Washington Park, and much of Warwick including Oakland Beach, also serves a number of vulnerable populations with high transit propensity despite being less efficient than some urban fixed routes.

RIPTA may want to review local routes with low Impact, Equity, and Efficiency scores to determine whether these routes could be restructured for more effective use of resources.

3.5.2 FLEX/FLEX ON DEMAND VALUE

RIPTA's Flex service provides a different service option for suburban or outlying urban residents that can connect them to the fixed-route network for statewide travel or allow access to essential services within their communities. During outreach, RIPTA staff mentioned that there is a core group of Flex riders that rely on this service for school, shopping, and medical appointments. All-in-all, Flex service provided just over 40,000 passenger trips traveling over 180,000 passenger miles in the 12 months starting in March 2024 – reducing the number of vehicle trips in the state. Additionally, the Flex service area serves 137,000 people and just over 60,000 jobs. Like fixed routes, different Flex zones serve different needs around the state. For example:

— Zone 282 provides essential service for Woonsocket residents – many of whom are seniors or low-income. Woonsocket also has moderate transit demand as documented in the Transit Propensity analysis. This zone also allows connections to Woonsocket's main fixed route, Route 87.
— Zone 242 provides essential service in Kent County including to major shopping districts and the RIPTA hub at CCRI Warwick.

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[17] APTA. (2020). Economic Impact of Public Transportation Investment. Retrieved from: https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/APTA-Economic-Impact-Public-Transit-2020.pdf
[18] Faulk, D. & Hicks, M. (2010). The Economic Effects of Bus Transit in Small Cities. *Public Finance Review*, 38(5) 513-539.

— Zone 203 provides service in Narragansett and South Kingstown – areas with less frequent fixed-route service but also major activity centers like Wakefield and URI.

Overall, Zones 282 (North Smithfield-Burrillville) and 231 (South Aquidneck) provide the least overall impact and serve lower numbers of vulnerable populations and jobs. In both zones, an expansion to adjacent areas could attract additional riders.

3.5.3   RIDE ADA PARATRANSIT/RIDE ANYWHERE VALUE

RIPTA's RIde paratransit service and RIde Anywhere pilot program provide essential services to some of the most vulnerable populations in the state. RIde paratransit service fulfills federal laws requiring complementary ADA paratransit service that provides door-to-door service for people with disabilities who are traveling within ¾-mile of a fixed bus route and cannot independently take the bus or travel to and from a bus stop. This requirement makes the RIde program dependent on fixed-route locations and service times, and often areas that lose fixed-route service get "grandfathered in" and allow existing riders in these areas to still use the service. In the 12-month period beginning in March 2024, RIde provided nearly 300,000 passenger trips for its 4,000 enrollees, the majority of whom have no other transportation option.

The RIde Anywhere pilot program provides paratransit service statewide and for fixed hours (6am to 11pm on weekdays, often longer than the regular RIde service area). During outreach, it was noted that this service in particular has given mobility to individuals with disabilities and seniors who live outside of the RIde paratransit service area - particularly in more rural areas of the state. As was previously mentioned, transit can have positive effects on the need for social assistance, and counties with bus transit have lower unemployment rates than those that do not. The program also provides independence for these individuals and access to employment and the local economy. According to the latest American Community Survey (2023), just over 270,000 Rhode Islanders are seniors aged 65 or older, and over 154,000 have a disability.

3.5.4   COMMUTER RESOURCE RI VALUE

The CRRI program provides a number of different services that help reduce vehicle miles traveled in the state, including vanpools, transit passes, and carpool matching platforms. This program supports not only all of the other RIPTA services but also automobile commuters who are seeking ways to reduce their transportation costs by carpooling or using vanpools to avoid high parking costs and gas prices. The Wave to Work program, managed by CRRI, bolsters RIPTA's fixed-route service by encouraging employers to buy transit passes for their employees – providing a bucket of private funding for RIPTA's fixed-route service. reduced statewide vehicle trips by 73,200 and statewide VMT by over 2.8 million.

In particular, the vanpool program took around 73,000 vehicles off the road and reduced statewide vehicle miles traveled by over 2.8 million annually – reducing emissions and helping ease congestion. The program also has a significant impact on the local economy as many vanpools serve outlying business parks like Quonset that otherwise have limited fixed-route service. The vanpool program has been an effective marketing tool for Quonset Development Corporation, which has used it to recruit companies and employees. This expands access to well-paying jobs in these areas to individuals who may lack access to a private vehicle or are "car-lite." In the 12 months beginning in March 2024, nearly 80,000 trips were taken by vanpool. Vanpools also provide an alternative commuting method for those who cannot afford parking in downtown Providence. As there is cost differential to the passenger in comparison to a monthly bus pass, vanpool should not be considered as a replacement for fixed-route service.

3.6 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the quantitative and qualitative analyses, a number of conclusions can be drawn to demonstrate the positive impacts of RIPTA's services and help inform policy for RIPTA.

— **Fixed-Route Service** forms the backbone of the system and performs well, especially in core urban corridors.

— **Flex/Flex On Demand** is essential for transit-oriented populations in lower density areas. Some current zones are sprawling or overlap the fixed-route network. Refinement and clarification of service roles could be beneficial.

— **RIde ADA paratransit/RIde Anywhere** pilot program delivers life changing access for individuals with disabilities. RIde Anywhere is especially important in rural areas unserved by fixed routes. They are a critical part of RIPTA's equitable transit network.

— **CRRI** fills gaps through employer partnerships and commuting programs, especially in areas where fixed routes are infeasible. Initiatives like the vanpool program nearly pay for themselves, generate additional matching funds for RIPTA, and are used as recruiting tools by business parks and employers.

Recommendations to reevaluate the Flex Service are included in Chapter 4, and recommendations to strengthen investment in high-performing routes and to assess less critical/underperforming routes in Chapter 5.

4 STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS BUDGET SHORTFALLS

Based on RIPTA's FY 2026 operating budget, and accounting for the additional $15 million dollars in state funding included in the state's FY 2026 budget bill (2025-H 5076A), RIPTA projected an approximately $18 million dollar operating deficit for FY 2026. This section looks a opportunities to help address the budget shortfall by leveraging federal funds across RIPTA's operating environment, evaluating existing services for additional federal funds, and considerations for a service reduction to meet the immediate operating budget shortfall.

4.1 LEVERAGE FEDERAL FORMULA FUNDS

This analysis builds off the assessment of federal formula funds in Chapter 2 and presents opportunities to increase the use of federal funds in projections of federal formula funds, as well as current uses for covering part of its operating budget in the areas of maintenance, administration, project management and support, and operations. This includes shifting select employee costs and increasing the amount of federally funded bus service by assigning routes serving rural and low-income populations with federal funds targeted to those areas. It is important to note that optimizing the use of federal funds for operations and maintenance may in the short to medium term impede RIPTA's ability to procure replacement buses and maintain spar

e ratios required by the FTA for operating compliance.

4.1.1 ADJUST GROWTH ASSUMPTION IN FUTURE FEDERAL APPORTIONMENTS

Consider including a conservative percentage increase for federal formula funds in budget projections.

Federal formula funds are generally slated for slow increases in Surface Transportation Authorizations like the IIJA; however, these funds are currently assumed to be steady in RIPTA's five-year financial plan.

4.1.2 APPLY FEDERAL FUNDS TO ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT

Start developing a cost allocation method to capture indirect costs, such as administrative and project management expenses, that are eligible to be charged to federal grants.

This section provides a high-level assessment of the opportunity to leverage federal funds to cover certain positions for which the costs are not currently reimbursed by the FTA.

Opportunities to Federalize Positions

Opportunities exist to federalize positions linked to capital assets., i.e. reimburse these positions with federal formula funds used for capital projects. The following positions have been identified as potential opportunities:

1. Procurement:
   a. Contracts & Specifications Agent
   b. Purchasing Clerk
   c. Purchasing Info/Specialist
   d. Director of Procurement

    e   Deputy Chief of Procurement, Inventory & Vehicle Operations
- **2**   Project Management:
  - a   Project Manager
  - b   Deputy Chief of Project Management & Facilities Management
- **3**   Finance:
  - a   Junior Financial Analyst

A high-level, rough order of magnitude estimate on the potential shift of operating costs to capital funds based on the following factors was prepared:

- **1**   Estimates for the total cost (wages/salary + fringe/benefits) of each of the positions listed above
- **2**   Percentage of time dedicated to capital for the positions listed above

Given these estimates of total cost and percentage of time dedicated to capital, shifting certain eligible employee compensation costs to be paid by federal funds would represent $0.8 - $1 million. It should be noted that these are not actual cost savings but only opportunities to leverage additional federal funds to reimburse some costs of RIPTA's operating budget.

4.1.3   USES OF FEDERAL FUNDS FOR OPERATIONS

Increase use of federal funds to reimburse certain types of service operation expenditures, particularly rural services.

Rural Services

Opportunities exist to increase the use of section 5311 funds for rural operations by classifying route segments as rural where applicable. There may be opportunities to further utilize 5311 funds on rural service operations through bus purchases to support rural routes by mapping RIPTA bus routes to systematically identify segments outside of urbanized area (UZA) boundaries and allocate service costs to rural formula funds proportionately based on vehicle service miles.

Low-Income and Reverse Commute Services

Section 5307 funds offer opportunities to cover operating costs for specific eligible services addressing the needs of low-income populations and reverse commute services. However, existing routes cannot be reclassified for these uses. Appendix C includes an analysis of potential opportunities to qualify for additional JARC funds.

RIPTA may want to review existing routes currently receiving JARC funding and further analyze the potential creation of new routes that could qualify for additional JARC funds. Additional analysis is included in the summary of existing JARC routes section 2.2 below.

4.2   EVALUATE CURRENT FLEX SERVICE STRUCTURE

Reevaluate Flex Service Area.
— **As Flex zones are upgraded to on-demand service, reevaluate zone size and structure.**
— **Further study areas for Flex suitability to determine if they could support Flex service.**
— Consider exploring **software and scheduling enhancements** to increase efficiency in each zone and cut down on vehicles running without passengers.
  — *Chapter 1 Peer and Best Practices Review* above notes that peer agencies are making investments in scheduling software to increase efficiency.
— Continue providing RIde Anywhere services.

— The RIde Anywhere pilot program is a statewide mobility lifeline for people with disabilities in more rural areas, providing access to jobs, shopping, and medical appointments and therefore bolstering the local economy. **RIde Anywhere is a vital service that should be maintained beyond its pilot.**
    — *Chapter 1 Peer and Best Practices Review* above notes that some peer agencies have encouraged microtransit use in place of paratransit services when microtransit is available as a way to maximize resources.
— *Chapter 1 Peer and Best Practices Review* above highlights that some agencies are interested in further evaluating elements such as verification, fare structures, and other aspects of service delivery. These areas should continue to be assessed to help identify the most feasible and effective service model.
— Continue exploring **software and scheduling** enhancements to increase efficiency.
    — *Chapter 1 Peer and Best Practices Review* above notes that peer agencies are making investments in scheduling software to increase efficiency.

4.3   SERVICE REDUCTIONS

Assess less critical or underperforming routes.

— **Consider reducing or reallocating resources on local routes that score below average in the Composite score** and its individual components (Route Impact, Route Efficiency, and Route Equity) – **particularly those with higher operating costs.** These routes may be candidates for reductions or consolidations.
— *Chapter 1 Peer and Best Practices Review* above notes that some peer agencies have converted less productive fixed routes into microtransit zones that feed into the high-performing fixed route network.
— **Study how restructuring routes with below average Efficiency scores but higher operating costs could help improve efficiency** while maintaining their impacts on the network and their purpose in providing equity in the network.
— Restructuring examples include: consolidation with connecting or parallel routes, extensions to major generators, and shifting alignments to major corridors to provide more frequent service along them. If low efficiency routes score more highly in the Impact and Equity scores, their alignments should not be eliminated.

5 PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE INVESTMENT

Despite the immediate FY2026 operating budget challenges, the Chapter 3 Performance Assessment clearly identified a need for future investment in critical and well-used transit services that are supportive of RIPTA's forward looking Transit Master Plan. This chapter identifies priorities to future investment to better meet the public's current needs and progress toward building a system to meet Rhode Island's future needs.

5.1   FOCUS ON HIGH-PERFORMING ROUTES

Strengthen Investment in High-Performing Routes.

— Maintain or increase service on routes that score above average in the Composite Score and its individual components (Route Impact, Route Efficiency, and Route Equity).
— **Maintain routes with above average equity scores** – these routes serve vulnerable, transit-oriented populations and provide lifelines for seniors, low-income individuals, and individuals without access to a private vehicle to reach jobs, shopping, medical appointments, and other services.

5.2   EXPAND COMMUTER RESOURCES RI (CCRI)

Expand CCRI's Reach

— **Continue promoting employer and university participation** in Wave to Work and vanpool programs to attract new riders (e.g., Quonset, Warwick Industrial Parks).
— **Implement plans to increase and expand travel training activities. This is a vital service** for helping youth, seniors, and individuals with disabilities learn how to use RIPTA services.
— Continue building partnerships with suburban office parks and outlying job centers not served by fixed routes. Promote **vanpool, carpool, and other innovative job access tools** for shift workers.

5.3   IMPLEMENT THE TRANSIT MASTER PLAN

The table attached in Appendix D documents RIPTA's progress toward implementing the projects, programs, service, and future vision identified in Rhode Island's Transit Master Plan, also known as *Transit Forward RI* (TFRI).

5.3.1   TRANSIT MASTER PLAN HISTORY

TFRI is Rhode Island's long-range Transit Master Plan, which was adopted by the State Planning Council (Rhode Island's Metropolitan Planning Organization) in late 2020. Based on an analysis of current and projected land use and travel patterns as well as an extensive public and stakeholder engagement process, the plan was developed by RIPTA in collaboration with RIDOT and the Division of Statewide Planning.

The Plan was designed as a roadmap to modernize and expand the state's transit network to meet current needs and future demands. Its vision of *Better Transit for a Better Rhode Island* encompasses enhanced mobility, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and increased economic vitality through

improved transit infrastructure. The plan identifies the following short, mid, and long-term progress targets towards a completion date of 2040.

— List 1 to 4 years: Improve and Expand Services and Lay Groundwork for Bigger Improvements
— 5 to 10 years: Focus on High Capacity Transit
— 11 to 20 years: A Comprehensive Statewide System

RIPTA has already begun planning for and rolling out improvements such as faster bus services with dedicated lanes, upgraded transit hubs, and increased service frequencies.

5.3.2 ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION

Transit Forward Rhode Island Projects & Program status

The table in Appendix D identifies the status of TFRI projects, programs, and services recommended for implementation by 2040, including implementation lead organizations and the future impact on maintaining or delivering these projects, programs, or services under a scenario that assumes zero growth in transit funding.

APPENDIX
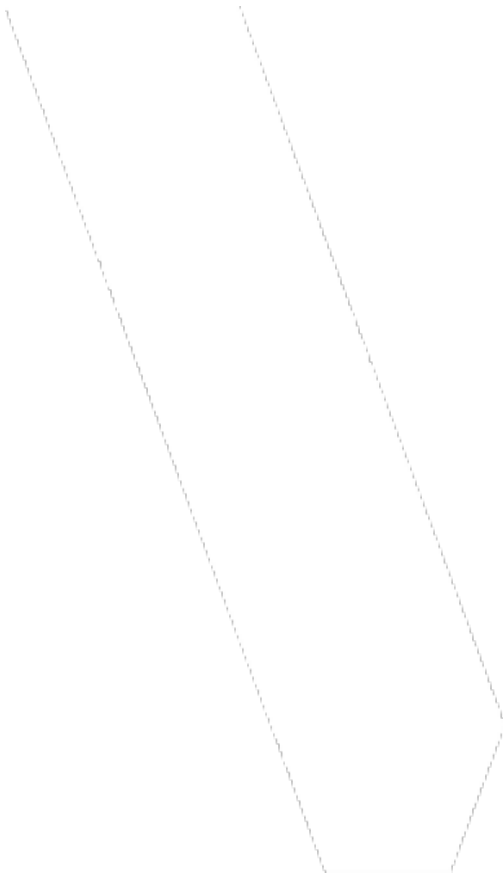
A. PEER AGENCIES AND BEST PRACTICES
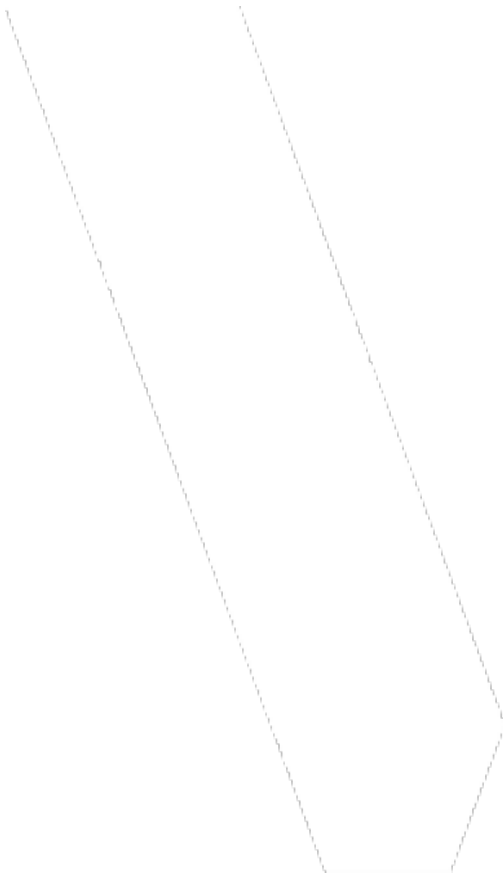
A-1 PEER AGENCY SELECTION
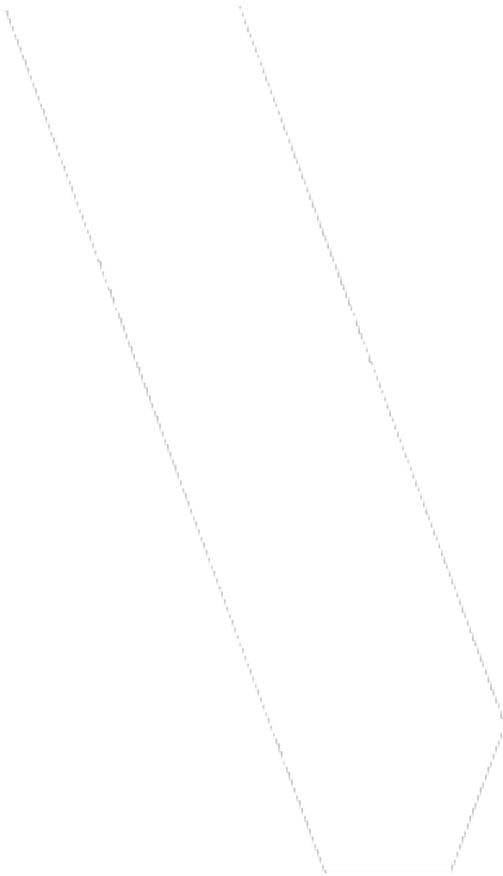
APPENDIX

PEER AGENCY SELECTION

An initial list of ten transit agencies was developed in collaboration with RIPTA staff, which considered a mix of factors including the amount and type of transit service delivered, operating cost environment, and regional proximity. Maryland Transit Authority (MTA) and Delaware Transit Corporation (DART) were included in the selection process in part because they operate statewide in the same way that RIPTA does. In addition to the points of comparison included in Table A-1, below are additional considerations that were used to narrow down the initial list of ten agencies and then again to the final list of six agencies.

— Regional proximity: Preference was given to agencies that were geographically closer to Rhode Island, since those agencies are more likely to be comparable across a wide range of factors including operating cost environment and service coverage area.

— State-level diversification: The peer set was selected to not be overconcentrated in any one state, to avoid skewing the results by any state-specific factors. As an example, Suffolk County Transit was excluded, since CDTA and RTS are also in New York state, and they are more comparable to RIPTA.

— Operating cost environment: There are transit agencies that are comparable to RIPTA in terms of the amount of bus service, but they operate in areas with higher incomes (e.g., Metro Areas of New York City, San Francisco and Los Angeles), and thus are less ideal for benchmarking purposes.

Table A- 1 below summarizes the initial set of ten agencies that were considered, and the primary criteria used to narrow that list to the six agencies included in the peer agency review. The goal was to have six or fewer peer agencies, and ultimately Maryland MTA, CapMetro, and COTA were removed due to having significantly higher annual operating costs than RIPTA.

Table A- 1: : Peer Agency Selection

Agency	Bus VRH Rank	UZA Population (thousands)	Operating Expenses (millions of $s)	Bus Ridership (thousands of UPT)	Buses Operated at Maximum Service	Selected for Inclusion in Peer Agency Review
MTA (Maryland)	17	2,212	$918.1	45,734	642	✗
CapMetro (Austin)	28	1,810	$345.1	22,491	290	✗
COTA (Columbus, OH)	40	1,567	$187.0	11,129	189	✗
HRT (Norfolk, VA)	43	1,452	$118.4	5,814	225	☑
RIPTA	**44**	**1,286**	**$129.9**	**11,040**	**192**	**N/A**
CTtransit (Hartford)	46	977	$119.6	13,969	209	☑
CDTA (Albany)	47	593	$118.2	13,312	214	☑
DART (Delaware)	59	5,696	$113.3	6,818	212	☑
KCATA (Kansas City)	70	1,674	$112.8	10,842	120	☑
Suffolk County Transit (Long Island)	72	19,426	$94.5	2,578	124	✗
RTS (Rochester)	73	1,286	$102.2	8,762	163	☑

Source: 2023 NTD

A-2 PEER AGENCY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
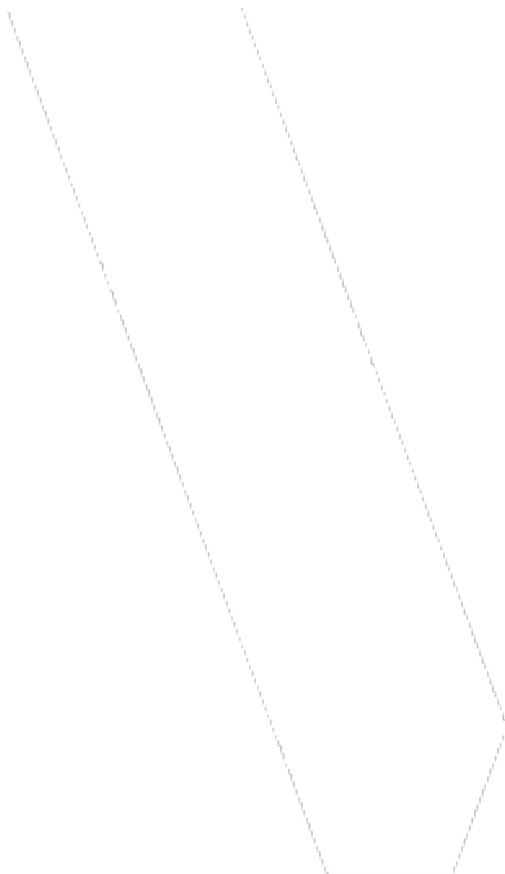
APPENDIX

PEER AGENCY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

<u>Operations and Service Delivery</u>

1 What challenges has your agency faced since the pandemic – workforce shortages, decreased ridership, changing ridership patterns, equipment availability, etc.?
   a How has the agency responded to changing ridership and commuting patterns?
2 If the agency has experienced workforce shortages, have any countermeasures been considered or implemented, including:
   a Innovative recruitment strategies
   b Improvements to the employee experience and/or benefits
   c Other retainment strategies
3 What is your agency's approach to allocating service hours to urban/core services versus rural/regional/express services?
   a Do you contract out any of these services and which?
   b If not, have you considered contracting out any of these services?
4 Have there been any changes to your operational fleet (i.e. capacity, expansion, etc.) since your last NTD submission?
5 What key benchmarks does your agency use to monitor performance (i.e. ridership, on-time performance, revenue, etc.)?
   a Are there performance metrics you would like to track but do not have the technology or capabilities to monitor?
   b What do you view as the most critical operational metrics to improve the performance of your transit operations?
6 How often do you review your service for potential service reductions or service increases?
   a Have you done a Comprehensive Operational Analysis in the last 5 years?
7 Can you share any of the best practices or strategies that your agency has implemented to save operating costs?
8 Related to ADA passenger access to the system – does your agency face capacity constraints? How are you addressing these?
9 For determining paratransit eligibility – do you require in person appointments? Or remote functional assessment?
   <u>Funding Mechanisms and Revenue</u>
10 How is your agency's capital budget funded?
   a How dependable/sustainable are these sources?
11 What state of good repair capital needs does your agency have?
12 How is your agency's operational budget funded?
   a How dependable/sustainable are these sources?
   b *(If needed)* What is your fare box recovery ratio?
13 What is your agency's biggest budgetary expense?
14 *(If applicable)* Would you share some examples of successful sustainable funding sources, revenue sources, and cost-sharing partnership opportunities?
15 Is your agency experiencing any funding shortfalls as we move away from federal funding made available during and following the COVID-19 pandemic? If so, how is your agency anticipating filling funding gaps?
16 Have any of these measures been considered or implemented in recent years?
   a Fare free service or fare discounts
   b Fare Increases or fare policy changes
   c Service reductions
   d Network redesign
   e Service to high-profile events
   f Third party agreements with businesses or other private entities

     g   Ad revenue either through advertisements on board or at shelters/stops
     h   Marketing campaigns to increase ridership

17 When was your agency's last fare study done? What changes were made?
18 How does your agency use JARC, CMAQ, and Mobility Management funds?
19 Which advertising programs are the most lucrative/best ROI for your agency?
20 Has your agency made any staffing/organizational changes relating to revenue maximization? If so, describe
21 Do you self-insure or contract out for General Liability insurance? How easily are you able to get quotes and coverage?

Innovative Service Delivery

22 Has your agency made any effort to maximize safe and easy modal connections for pedestrians, bicycle users, and other micromobility options?
23 Do you have any success stories where the agency supported local and/or regional economic development?
24 Does your agency offer any app-driven microtransit on-demand services? If yes, can you tell us more about lessons learned with these services?
25 [If applicable] Does your agency have an overlap of service between ADA and microtransit services? If not, have you considered/studied this as an option?
26 In recent years, has the agency explored or implemented the use of new technologies to improve customer experience?

A-3 PEER AGENCY METRIC DEFINITIONS

APPENDIX

AGENCY METRIC DEFINITIONS

Metric	Definition
Service Area Population	The number of people residing within the area served by the transit agency
Service Area Sq Miles	The geographic size, in square miles, of the area served by the transit agency
Annual Passenger Miles Traveled (Bus)	The cumulative sum of the distances ridden by each passenger per year
Annual Passenger Trips (Bus)	The number of passengers who board public transportation vehicles per year. Passengers are counted each time they board a vehicle, no matter how many vehicles they use to travel from their origin to their destination.
Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles (Bus)	The miles that vehicles/passenger cars travel while in revenue service
Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours (Bus)	The hours that vehicles/passenger cars travel while in revenue service
Per Capita Spending on Transit	Total Operating Expenses / UZA Population
Admin Cost per Service Hour	Operating Expenses for General Administration / Vehicle Revenue Hours
Advertising Revenue per Service Hour	Advertising Revenue / Vehicle Revenue Hours
Passenger Trips per Service Hour	Unlinked Passenger Trips / Vehicle Revenue Hours
Cost per Service Hour	Total Operating Expenses / Vehicle Revenue Hours
Total Compensation per Hour for Bus Operations	Wages/Salaries + Fringe Benefits + Paid Absences / Total Employee Hours Worked
Fare Revenue per Trip	Fare Revenues Earned / Unlinked Passenger Trips
Farebox Recovery	Fare Revenues Earned / Operating Expenses

A-4 NATIONAL TRANSIT DATABASE (NTD) BENCHMARKING TABLE

APPENDIX

NTD PEER BENCHMARKING TABLE

Agency	Per Capita Spending on Transit	Admin Cost per Service Hour	Advertising Revenue per Service Hour	Passenger Trips per Service Hour	Cost per Service Hour	Total Compensation per Hour for Bus Operations	Fare Revenue per Trip	Farebox Recovery	Annual Unlinked Passenger Trips (Bus)
RIPTA	$101	$28	$1.17	15	$155	$66	$1.31	13%	11,040,120
HRT	$82	$25	$1.10	8	$119	$34	$1.12	7%	5,814,456
CDTA	$199	$21	$2.38	19	$130	$49	$0.80	12%	13,311,539
CTtransit	$122	$18	$0.89	20	$157	$55	$0.21	3%	13,968,837
DART	$23	$22	$1.41	12	$153	$48	$1.11	9%	6,818,411
KCATA	$67	$48	$0.69	24	$188	$52	$0.00	0%	10,841,740
RTS	$145	$39	$1.50	21	$192	$60	$1.74	19%	8,761,940

B. OPERATIONS PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

B-1 SUPPLEMENTAL
FIXED ROUTE CONTEXT

APPENDIX

SUPPLEMENTAL FIXED ROUTE CONTEXT

To supplement the fixed-route analysis, RIPTA staff provided further contextual detail to support the evaluation of fixed-route service in terms of critical access, partner funding, and community value.

<u>Critical Destinations that Support Equity</u>

A number of RIPTA's routes serve key destinations in the state and provide access to medical care, schools, and major employers. These locations are detailed below by type of destination.

Hospitals
— Brown University Health (formerly Rhode Island Hospital, the largest employer in southern downtown) - Routes 1, 3, 4, 51, 54, 58 and 72
— Kent County Hospital – Routes 14 and 29
— Newport Hospital – Routes 60 and 63
— Miriam Hospital – Routes 1 and R-Line
— Fatima Hospital – Route 55

Colleges & Universities (Also supported through the University Pass Program)
— Johnson & Wales University, Downtown – Entire Providence Network serving Kennedy Plaza
— Johnson & Wales University, Harborside – Routes 3 and 4
— University of Rhode Island, Providence – Entire Providence Network serving Kennedy Plaza
— University of Rhode Island, Kingston – Routes 64, 66, 69 and 203 Kingston/Narragansett Flex
— University of Rhode Island, Narragansett Bay Campus – Route 64 and 203 Kingston/Narragansett Flex
— Rhode Island College – Routes 55 and 92
— CCRI Warwick – Routes 13, 14, 16, 21, 22, 23, 29, 30, 66 and 242 West Warwick/Coventry Flex
— CCRI Lincoln – Routes 51 and 54
— CCRI Newport – Routes 63 and 68
— CCRI Providence – Route 6
— Roger Williams University – Route 60
— Salve Regina University – Route 67
— New England Institute of Technology, East Greenwich – Route 16
— New England Institute of Technology, Warwick – Route 20
— Brown University – Routes 1, 32, 33, 34, 35, 40, 61x and 78

Providence High Schools
— Centra, Classical and PTCA High Schools – Routes R-Line, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22 and 31
— Hope High School – Routes 1 and R-Line
— Mt. Pleasant High School – Routes 55, 56, 57 and 92
— Alvarez High School – Route 20 and 22
— Met School – Routes 1, 3 and 4
— Juanita Sanchez Educational Complex – Routes 1, 3, 4 and 6
— Paul Cuffee High School – Routes 20 and 22

Other Major Employers
— State of Rhode Island, Providence, Capitol Hill – Routes 50, 55, 56, and 57
— State of Rhode Island, Cranston Pastore Campus – Routes 21 and 22
— Amica, Lincoln – Route 75

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- Textron, Providence – All routes serving Kennedy Plaza
- CVS, Highland Industrial Park, Woonsocket – 281 Woonsocket/Manville Flex
- Raytheon, Portsmouth – Route 60
- United States Navy, Newport – Routes 60, 63 and 64
- RI National Guard, Cranston – Route 21
- Hasbro, Pawtucket – Route 35
- Twin River Casino – Routes 51 and 54
- Electric Boat, Quonset Point – Route Qx
- Fidelity, Smithfield – Route 50
- Amazon, Johnston – Routes 10x and 28
- Centre of New England – Routes 23 and 242 West Warwick/Coventry Flex

High-Priority Service Areas

- Downtown Providence - Core Frequent Transit Network routes such as the R-Line, 1, 17, 20, 27, 31, 56, and 78.
- Rhode Island T.F. Green Airport – Routes 1, 14, 20, 66, and 95x
- Newport Transportation & Visitors Center – Routes 14, 60, 63, 64, 67, and 68
- Amtrak Kingston Station – Routes 66
- MBTA Wickford Junction – Routes 65x
- MBTA T.F. Green Station – Routes 1, 14, 20, and 66
- MBTA Providence Station -Nearly all Downtown Providence routes, including R-Line, 1, and 20
- MBTA Pawtucket-Central Falls Station – Routes 50 and 78
- Tourism and Ferry Access

There are a number of core routes in the network that were identified in the Transit Master Plan as routes that should be part of a high-frequency network. Spans of service on these routes should be maintained to ensure consistency with the plan. These routes include:

- 1, R-Line, 17, 19, 20, 24L, 27, 28, 31, 33, 35, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 60, 66, 72, 78 and 92.

B-2 ROUTE AND ZONE SCORING DETAILS

APPENDIX

ROUTE AND ZONE IMPACT SCORE DETAILS

The Route Impact Score results are detailed in the following tables. The overall Route Impact Score is provided first, followed by the scores in each component: Ridership, Population Served, and Network Value. To arrive at the Route Impact Score, each component is calculated as follows:

— The raw inputs are normalized and aggregated to produce the individual components.

— Each component is scaled from 0 to 100, where 100 indicates the most beneficial route, based on how the route compares to others within the same route category.

— The three components are weighted and combined, and then the combined score is normalized again to generate the overall Route Impact Score.

To ensure a balanced evaluation, the Ridership component is assigned half the weight of the other components. This approach prevents high-frequency routes, which naturally tend to have higher ridership, from disproportionately influencing the overall Route Impact Score. This allows routes that contribute to the network in other ways, such as serving transit-dependent populations or providing access to employment, to be recognized.

The Ridership component measures how heavily each route is used and identifies high-demand routes. It is calculated using annual ridership for each route during FY 2024, which captures seasonal variations such as increased summer ridership on certain routes like Route 67 (Bellevue Newport).

The Population Served component measures how well each route serves its target population. It is calculated based on the accessibility of one or more population groups to each route. Since different types of routes serve different functions within the fixed-route network, routes were evaluated based on their intended populations:

— Local and Seasonal Routes

— General Population Access: Routes are designed to serve more people or a specific function. This is assessed by calculating the total population within a quarter mile of bus stops served by the route.

— Transportation-Disadvantaged Population: Routes are designed to increase access for individuals with limited transportation options. This is assessed by calculating the low-income or zero-car households within a quarter mile of bus stops served by the route.

— Express Routes

— Commuters: Routes are designed to connect workers to employment centers during peak periods. This is assessed by calculating labor force within one mile of origin bus stops during the morning peak.

The Network Value component recognizes that no route operates in isolation and every route plays an important role in enhancing connectivity within the transit system. This score is comprised of three subcomponents:

— Transfers: This reflects the number of transfers from the route to other routes within the system, giving the route credit for its role as a feeder into the broader network. It uses origin-destination data from RIPTA's latest on-board survey to model the number of trips involving a transfer based on reported trip itineraries and actual ridership figures.

— Unique Access for Passengers: This measures the percentage of ridership that occurs on unique segments of a route's alignment that are not served by other routes, identifying routes that are the only source of transit for existing riders.

— Access to Destinations: This is calculated based on the number of jobs within a quarter mile of the route, with job numbers offering a proxy for how much of a draw locations are overall.

APPENDIX

Table A- 2: Summary of Route and Zone Impact Scores

SERVICE		RIDERSHIP	POPULATION SERVED	NETWORK VALUE	ROUTE IMPACT SCORE
Local	Highest	• R-Line • 1 • 20	• 1 • R-Line • 72	• R-Line • 1 • 72	• R-Line • 1 • 72
	Lowest	• 89 • 88 • 60	• 88 • 66 • 69	• 88 • 73 • 64	• 88 • 69 • 16
Express	Highest	• 24L • 65x	• Qx • 61x	• 24L • 9x	• 24L • Qx
	Lowest	• 10x • 12x	• 10x • 59x	• 59x • 10x	• 10x • 59x
Seasonal	Highest	• 46	• 46	-	• 46
	Lowest	• 47	• 47	-	• 47
Flex	Highest	-	• 281 • 242	-	• 281 • 242
	Lowest	-	• 282 • 204	-	• 282 • 204

APPENDIX

Figure A- 1: Route Impact Score (Local)

Route	Score
R Line	100
	73.0
72	53.4
	46.4
92	46.3
	46.3
60	43.7
	43.4
78	41.4
	41.0
19	38.0
	37.3
58	36.7
	35.9
31	35.4
	33.9
35	33.2
	33.1
33	31.6
	31.0
55	30.8
	30.3
51	29.9
	29.8
Average	28.5
	28.5
71	28.4
	27.4
57	26.2
	25.4
21	22.8
	22.7
87	21.6
	21.4
75	20.5
	17.9
76	16.8
	15.5
63	14.9
	13.9
66	12.6
	11.7
23	11.7
	11.3
64	9.8
	9.4
89	8.9
	8.1
16	8.0
	6.7
88	1.7
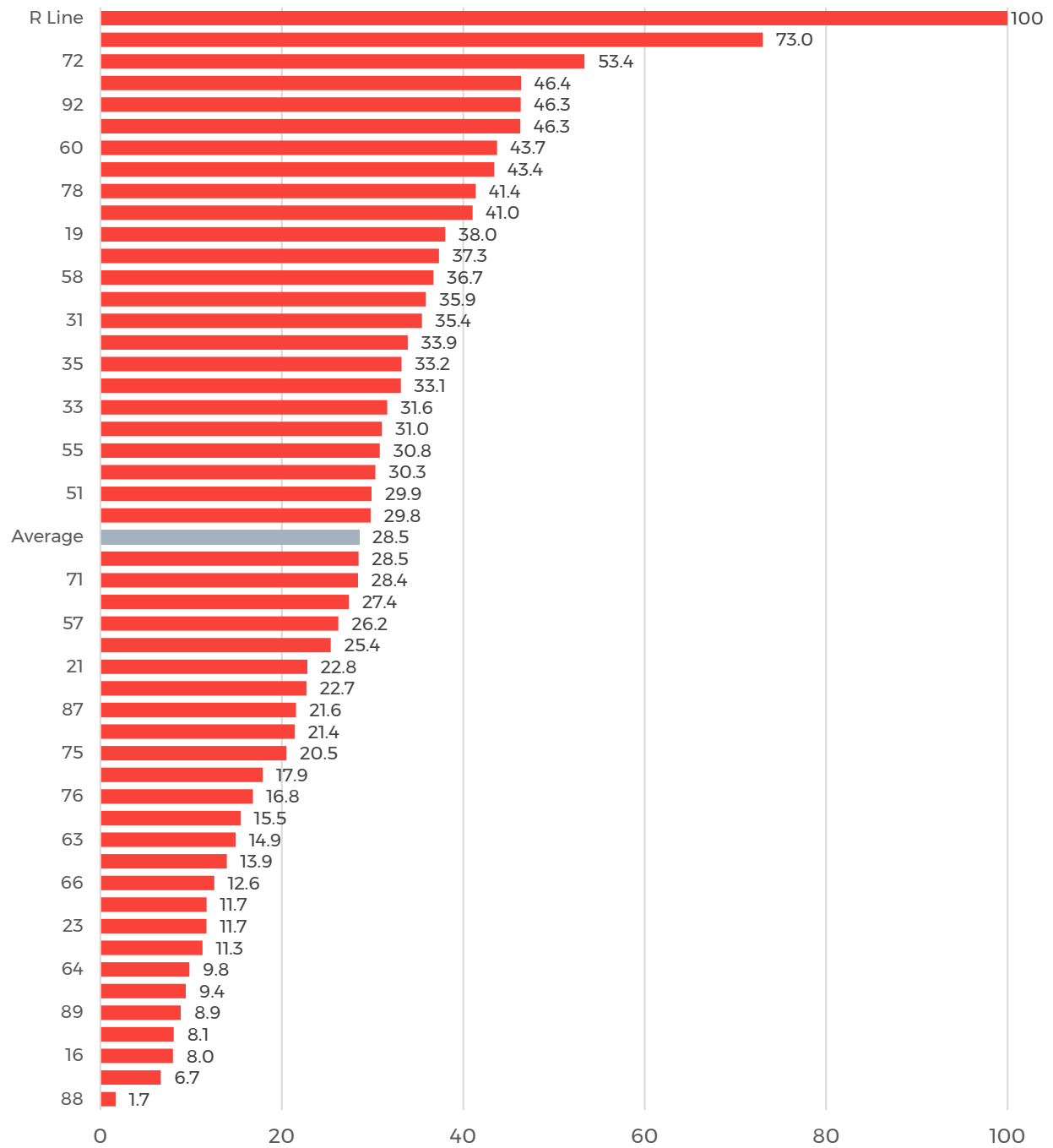
APPENDIX

Figure A- 2: Route Impact Score (Express)

Route	Score
24L	100
QX	94.0
9x	79.8
61x	73.9
Average	68.7
65x	67.4
12x	60.8
95x	57.4
10x	44.2
59x	41.0
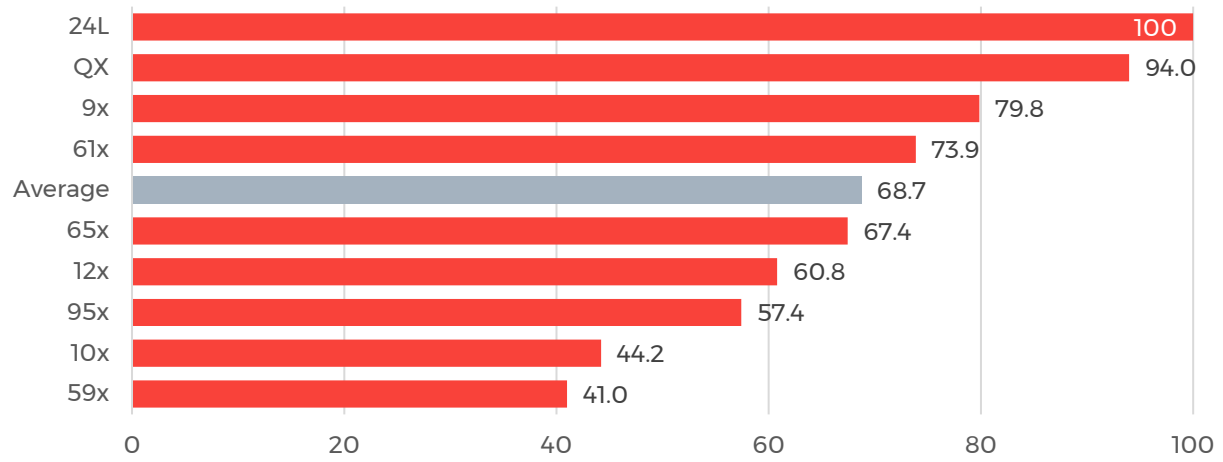
Figure A- 3: Route Impact Score (Seasonal)

Route	Score
46	100
Average	80.8
45	77.4
47	65.1
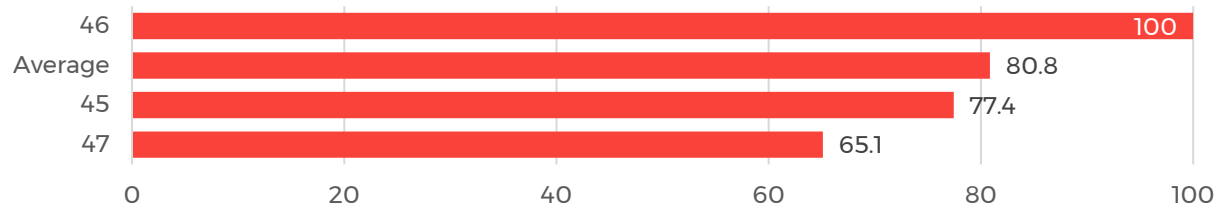
Figure A- 4: Flex Zone Impact Score

Zone	Score
281	100
242	82.1
Average	48.3
203	46.4
231	26.9
204	23.6
282	10.8
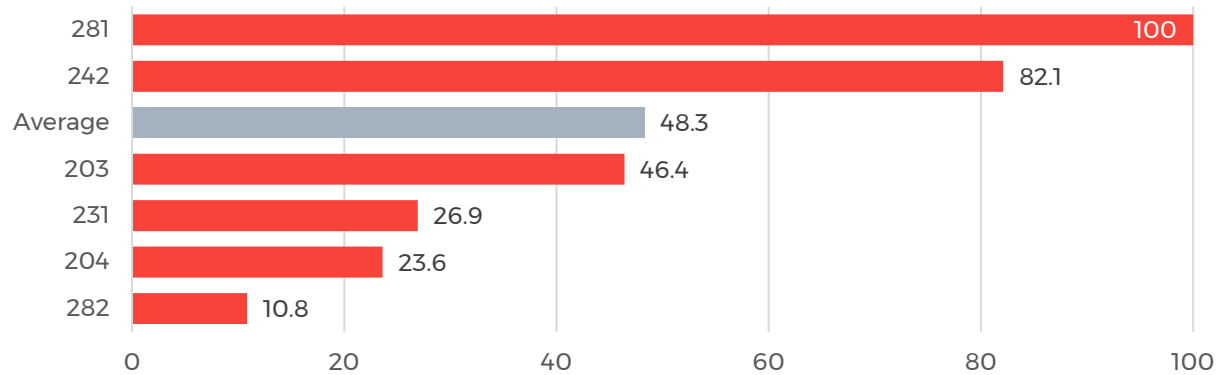
Figure A- 5: Ridership Component

Regular:
- R Line: 100
- 20: 32.5
- : 28.1
- 31: 24.7
- : 24.4
- 56: 22.5
- : 22.2
- 54: 18.6
- : 16.8
- 27: 15.6
- : 15.4
- 22: 14.2
- : 13.8
- 17: 13.6
- : 12.0
- 21: 11.7
- : 11.1
- 51: 10.7
- : 10.3
- 55: 9.7
- : 9.0
- 57: 8.9
- : 8.2
- 78: 8.2
- : 7.3
- 34: 6.5
- : 6.3
- 3: 5.9
- : 5.6
- 18: 5.5
- : 4.9
- 4: 4.9
- : 4.4
- 13: 4.2
- : 3.7
- 69: 3.7
- : 3.3
- 32: 3.0
- : 2.7
- 75: 2.1
- : 2.0
- 23: 1.9
- : 1.6
- 64: 1.6
- : 1.4
- 68: 1.1
- : 1.0
- 80: 0.8
- : 0.6
- 89: 0.0
- : 0.0

Express:
- : 100
- 65x: 67.1
- : 64.0
- Average: 49.2
- : 49.0
- 61x: 48.9
- 10x: 32.0
- : 29.8
- 12x: 29.2
- : 23.0

Seasonal:
- : 100
- 45: 84.0
- : 79.9
- 47: 55.6
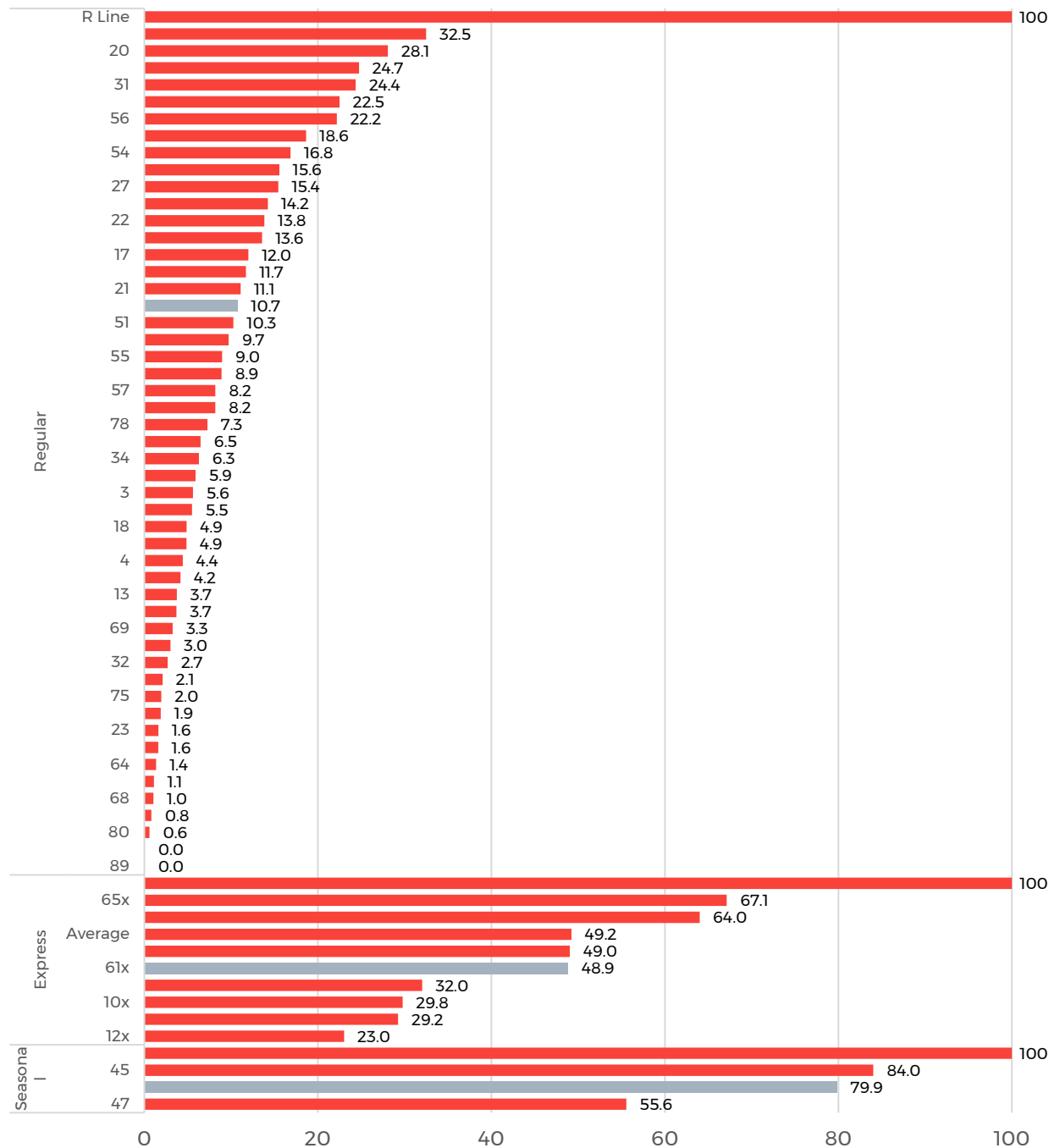
Figure A- 6: Population Served Component

Category	Route	Value
Regular	1	100
		97.9
	72	77.1
	22	70.4
		70.2
	17	67.6
		64.4
	20	62.1
		59.8
	58	57.3
		57.1
	60	56.7
		55.8
	18	53.5
		52.0
	6	51.4
		51.1
	55	48.3
		47.8
	3	44.2
		43.7
	56	43.7
		43.6
	75	41.9
		41.7
	87	41.4
		41.1
	4	38.3
		38.0
	14	37.4
		36.7
	34	36.6
		35.9
	80	35.2
		32.8
	63	30.7
		27.3
	73	26.6
		25.4
	21	25.0
		23.9
	68	22.9
		22.2
	89	19.9
		17.1
	67	13.9
		12.5
	69	12.4
		10.4
	88	10.1
		2.0
Express	61x	100
		55.6
	24L	33.4
		32.1
	65x	29.9
		18.5
	9x	16.4
		16.2
	10x	16.1
		15.9
Seasonal	Average	100
		81.3
	47	74.1
		69.9
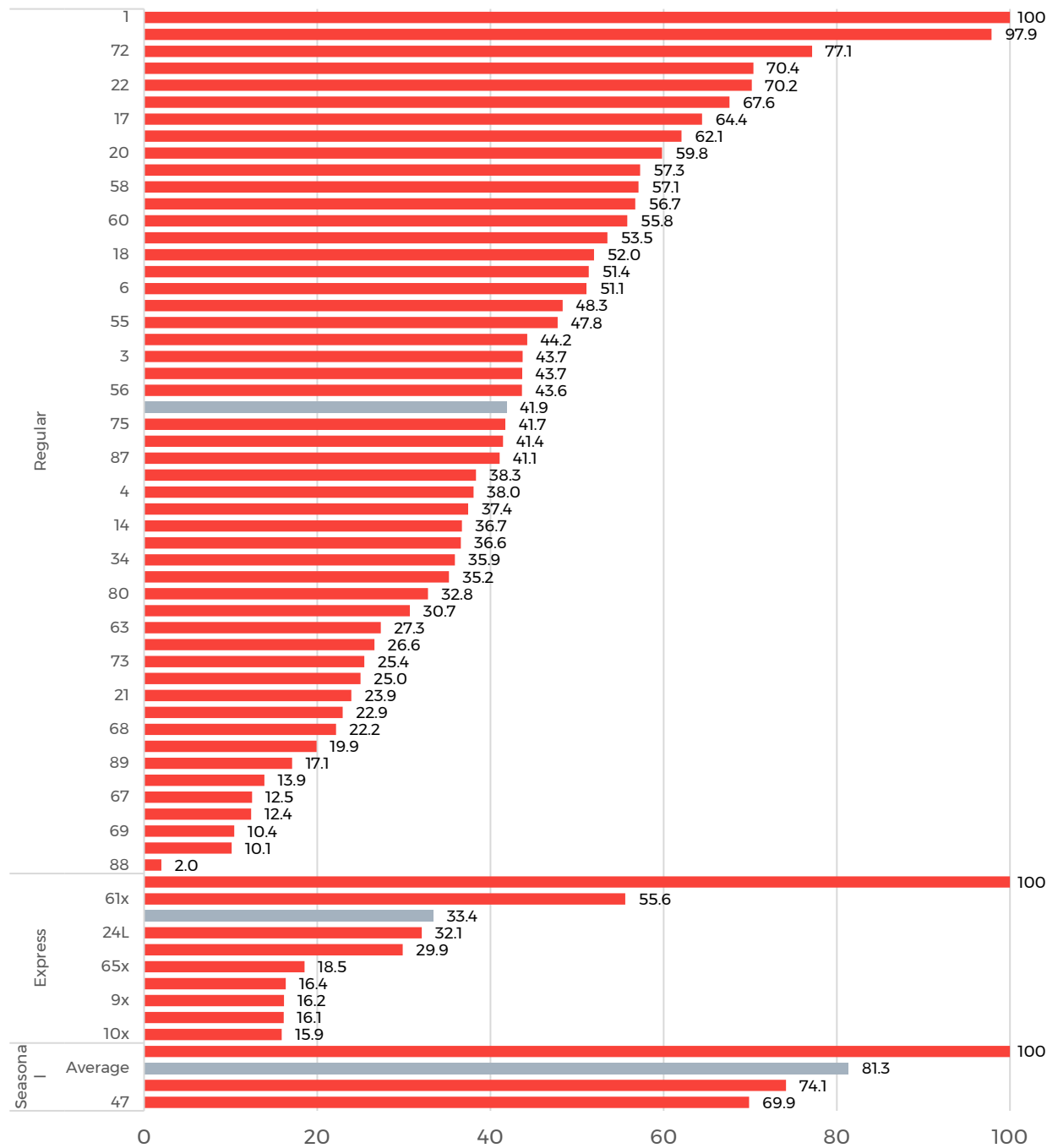
APPENDIX

Figure A- 7: Network Value Component
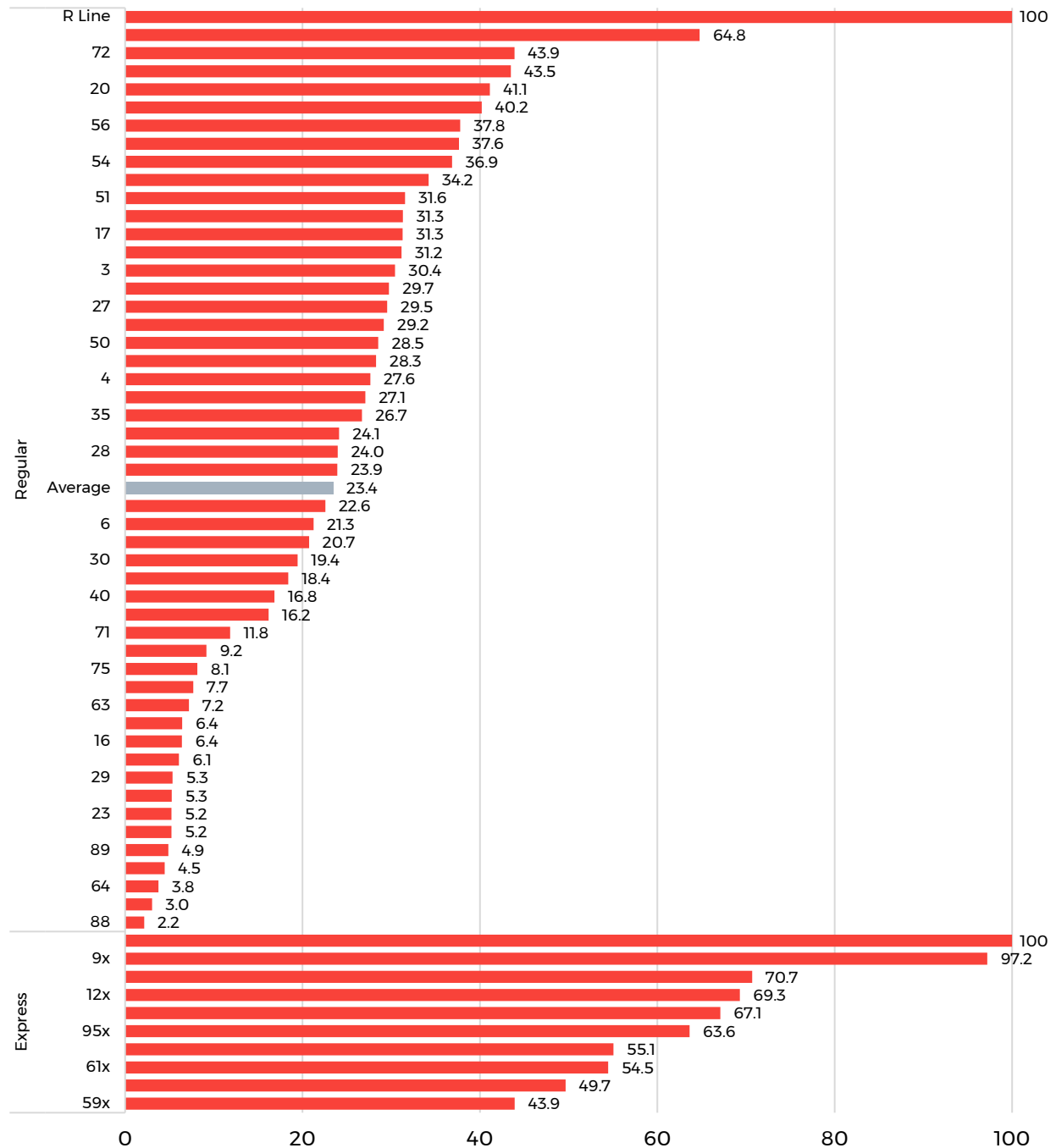
APPENDIX

ROUTE AND ZONE EFFICIENCY SCORE DETAILS

The Route Efficiency Score measures the overall efficiency of each route, capturing two key dimensions: Service Productivity, measured by passenger trips per revenue hour, and Financial Performance, assessed by cost per passenger trip. Higher ridership per revenue hour indicates that a route is highly productive. Higher cost per rider suggests lower financial efficiency and potential for service optimization.

Ridership is based on annual figures from FY 2024, while revenue hours and cost data are derived from the average values by route as of early 2025.[19] The raw values are normalized, with routes that have more passenger trips per revenue hour and lower cost per passenger trip receiving higher scores. These normalized values are then combined to produce the overall Route Efficiency Score. The seasonal routes were not scored since revenue hour and cost data was not available.

Table A- 3: Summary of Route and Zone Efficiency Scores

SERVICE		PASSENGER TRIPS PER REVENUE HOUR	COST PER PASSENGER TRIP	ROUTE EFFICIENCY SCORE
Local	Highest	• 31 • R-Line • 19	• 31 • R-Line • 19	• 31 • R-Line • 19
	Lowest	• 88 • 16 • 68	• 88 • 16 • 68	• 88 • 16 • 68
Express	Highest	• 65x • 24L	• 65x • 24L	• 65x • 24L
	Lowest	• 95x • 12x	• 95x • 12x	• 95x • 12x
Flex	Highest	• 281 • 203	• 281 • 203	• 281 • 203
	Lowest	• 282 • 231	• 282 • 231	• 282 • 231

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[19] Ridership from May 2024 to April 2025 was used for Route 10x to reflect recent service changes.

Figure A- 8: Route Efficiency Score (Local)

Label	Score
31	100
	94.8
19	85.2
	83.1
56	83.0
	80.4
92	79.6
	79.6
17	79.2
	77.9
57	77.1
	74.8
50	73.9
	73.8
1	73.2
	70.9
33	69.4
	68.6
54	68.1
	66.6
21	66.6
	66.1
34	63.5
	63.4
63	63.4
	62.0
58	61.7
	61.6
30	61.5
	60.8
32	60.5
	58.9
6	58.9
	58.4
35	56.8
	56.3
14	56.1
	55.2
66	53.1
	52.7
4	52.4
	51.1
80	50.9
	47.7
69	47.6
	43.0
64	40.6
	40.0
16	39.9
	1.8
89	
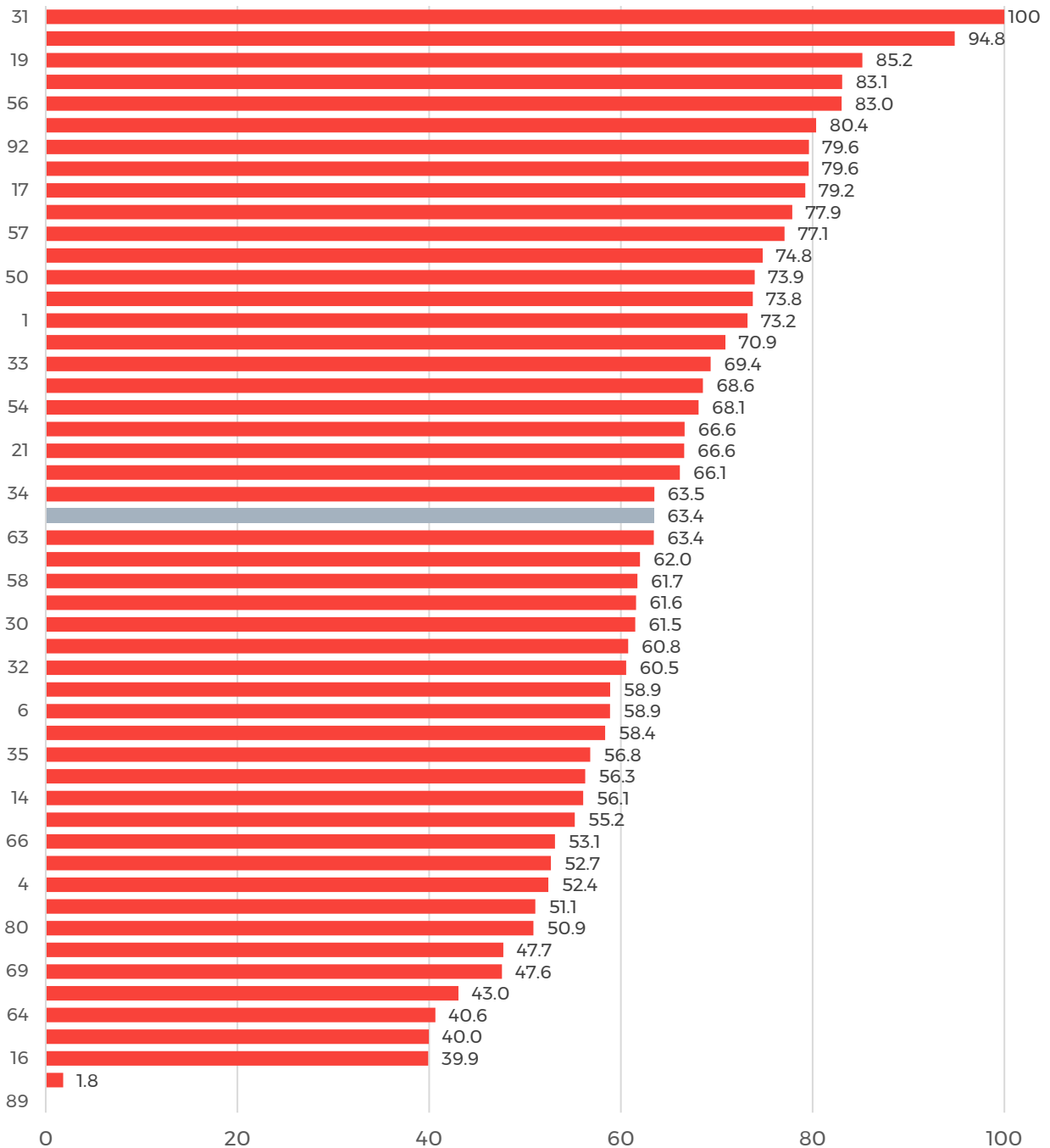
APPENDIX

Figure A- 9: Route Efficiency Score (Express)

Route	Score
65x	100
24L	89.8
QX	58.5
Average	55.2
10x	53.4
9x	52.7
61x	49.8
59x	38.8
12x	32.7
95x	21.3
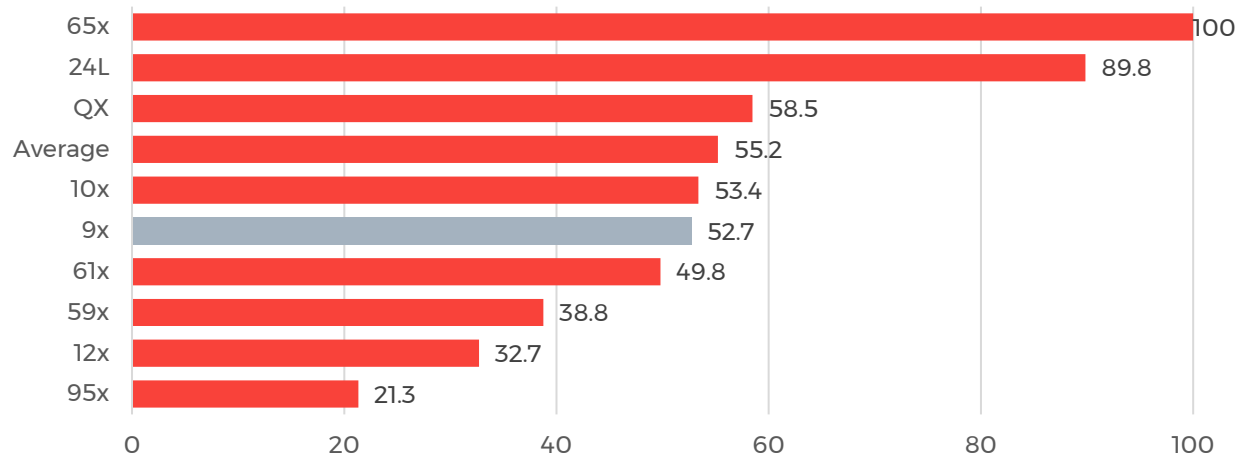
Figure A- 10: Flex Zone Efficiency Score

Zone	Score
281	100
203	95.9
204	85.6
242	75.6
231	36.2
282	13.6
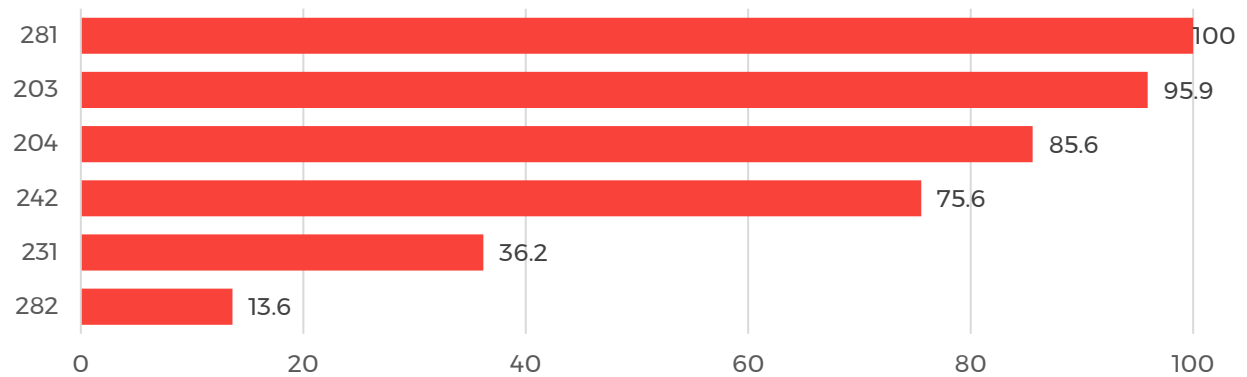
APPENDIX

Figure A-11: Passenger Trips Per Revenue Hour

Route	Value
R	37.3
	33.6
	26.8
20	25.3
	25.3
67	23.5
	23.0
28	22.9
	22.7
27	21.8
	21.3
22	19.7
	19.2
18	19.1
	18.7
72	17.2
	16.3
51	15.8
	15.5
55	14.6
	14.6
60	14.3
	14.2
34	12.8
	12.7
40	11.9
	11.8
87	11.7
	11.7
78	11.3
	11.2
71	10.3
	10.3
75	10.0
	9.3
3	9.1
	9.0
13	8.6
	7.7
76	7.5
	7.4
73	6.9
	6.9
23	5.9
	5.8
29	4.7
	4.2
68	4.0
	4.0
88	1.4
24L	6.0
	5.4
QX	3.8
	3.7
9x	3.5
	3.5
59x	3.4
	3.0
95x	2.9
	2.6
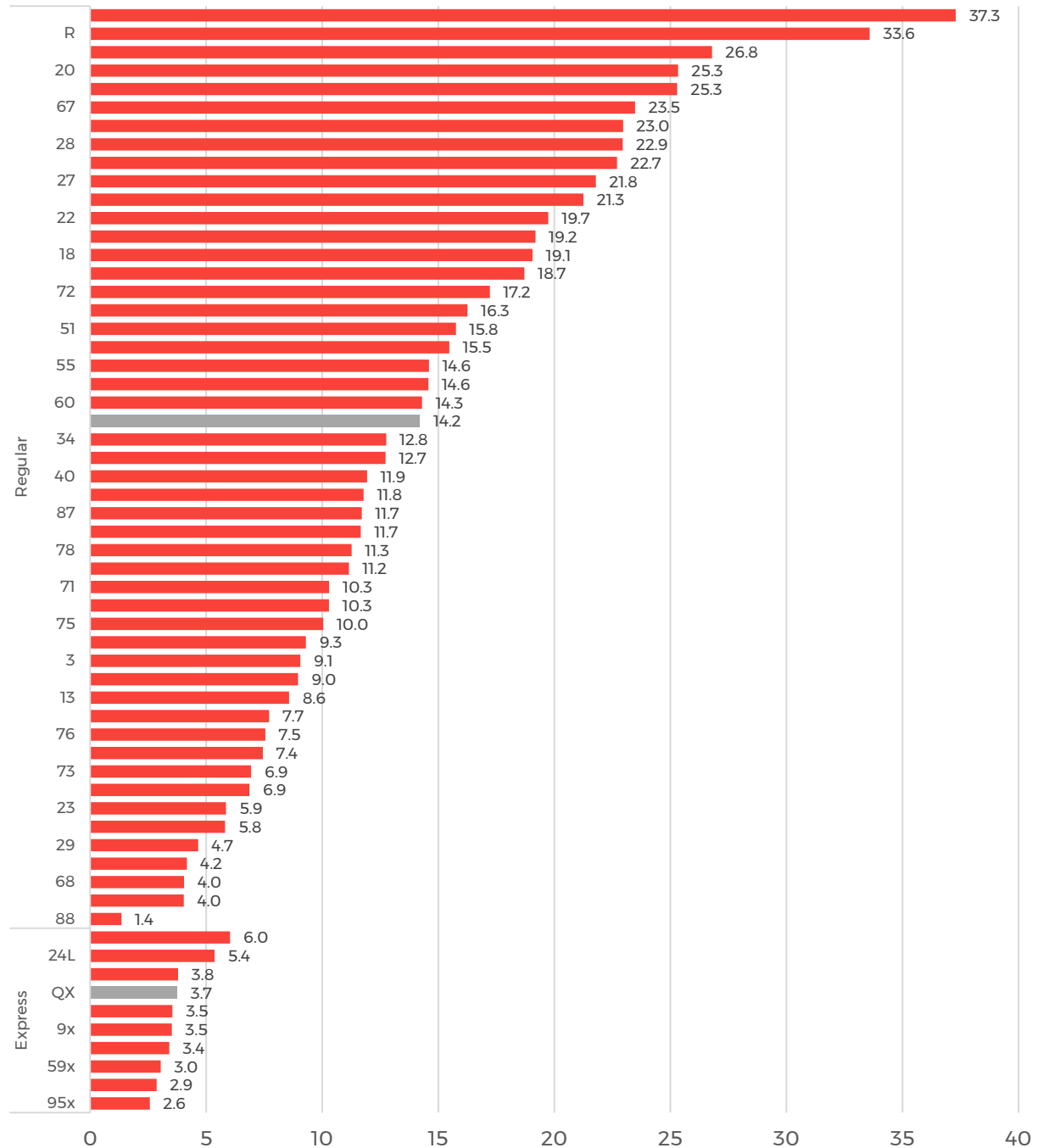
Figure A- 12: Cost Per Passenger Trip
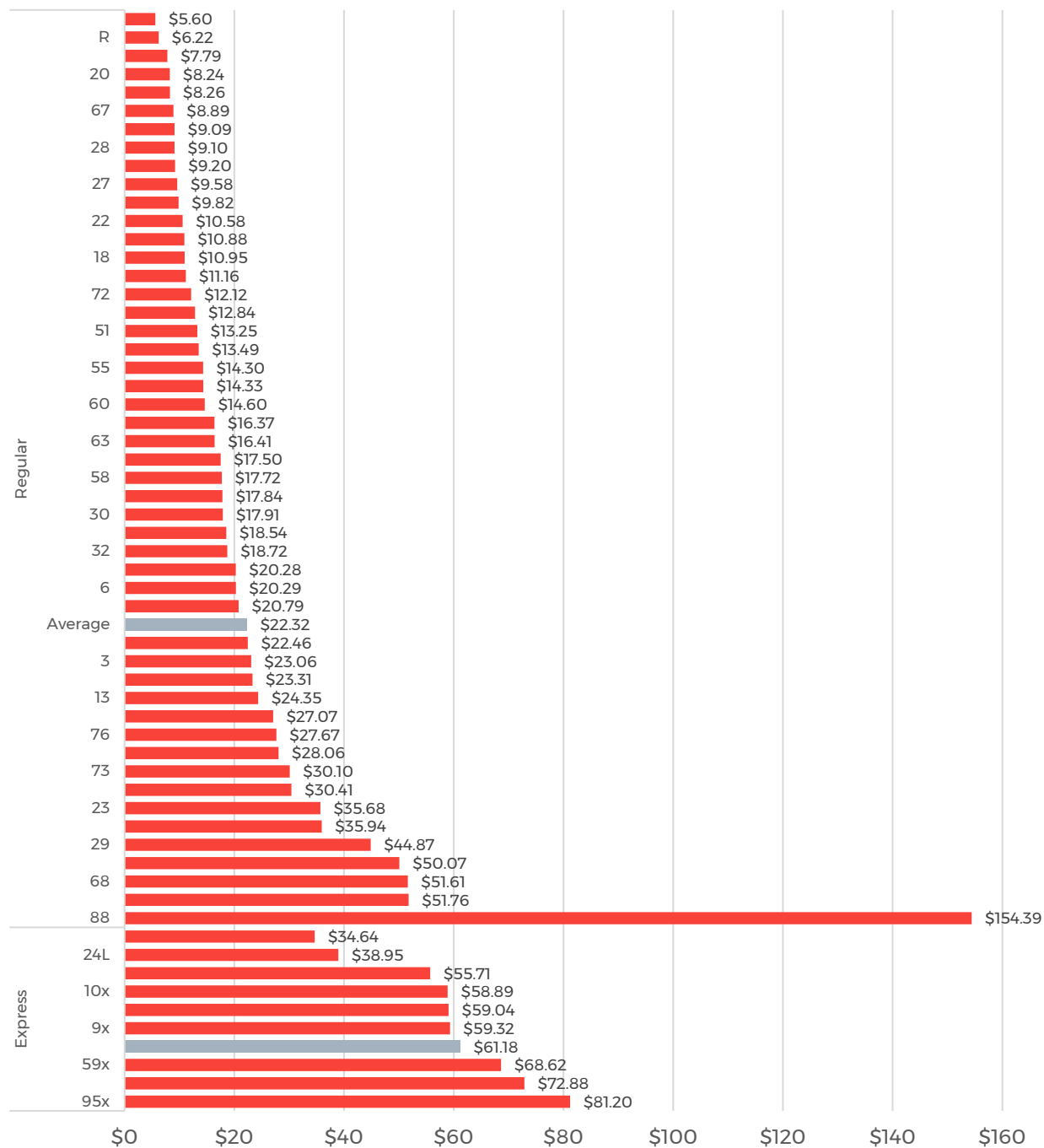
APPENDIX

ROUTE AND ZONE EQUITY SCORE DETAILS

The Route Equity Score assesses each route's accessibility to key populations and jobs by evaluating its demographic reach. The score is made up of three components: Rider Demographics, Service Area Demographics, and Transit-Oriented Jobs. A higher Route Equity Score indicates that a route provides access to a greater number of transportation-disadvantaged riders and essential destinations.

The Route Equity Score assesses each route's accessibility to key populations and jobs by evaluating its demographic reach. The score is made up of three components: Rider Demographics, Service Area Demographics, and Transit-Oriented Jobs. A higher Route Equity Score indicates that a route provides access to a greater number of transportation-disadvantaged riders and essential destinations.

For each of the three components, the inputs are normalized and aggregated to generate each value. If a route is missing a particular component, then the average value of that component by route category is used. These scores are then equally weighted, combined, and normalized again to generate the overall Route Equity Score. The Route Equity Score results are detailed in the following tables. The overall Route Equity Score is provided first, followed by details on its components: Rider Demographics, Area Demographics, and Transit-Oriented Jobs.

— The Rider Demographics component evaluates who uses each route by analyzing the responses from the origin-destination (OD) survey. Data was not available for seasonal routes due to when the survey was conducted. This component focuses on key transit-oriented populations, specifically low-income riders, minority riders, and riders living in zero-car households. Low-income riders are defined as those living in households earning less than the federal poverty line.

— The Service Area Demographics component assesses who lives near a route by measuring the number of low-income individuals, minority populations, and zero-car households located within the route's catchment area, which is defined as a quarter mile around each bus stop. Unlike the Rider Demographics component, which focuses on who actually uses the service, the Service Area Demographics component reflects the potential access the route provides to transit-dependent populations.

— The Transit-Oriented Jobs component assesses the number of low-wage jobs and service sector jobs served by each route. The component is based on the number of jobs located within a quarter mile of the route that either pay less than $40,000 per year, or are in industries such as healthcare, transportation and warehousing, public administration, retail, entertainment, food services, and accommodations (hospitality). These sectors are commonly associated with non-traditional hours, lower wages, and limited access to private vehicles, making transit access essential for workers' daily commutes. Job data was sourced from the 2022 LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) dataset.

APPENDIX

Table A- 4: *Summary of Route and Zone Equity Scores*

SERVICE		RIDER DEMOGRAPHIC	SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHIC	TRANSIT-ORIENTED JOBS	ROUTE EQUITY SCORE
Local	Highest	• 19 • 78 • 56	• R • 1 • 72	• 1 • R • 22	• R • 1 • 72
Local	Lowest	• 67 • 40 • 63	• 88 • 69 • 29	• 88 • 73 • 69	• 67 • 88 • 69
Express	Highest	• 24L • 61x • Qx	• 61x • Qx • 12x	• 61x • 12x • Qx	• 61x • Qx • 12x
Express	Lowest	• 59x • 65x • 9x	• 24L • 10x • 59x	• 24L • 59x • 9x	• 59x • 65x • 9x
Seasonal	Highest	-	• 46	• 47	• 45
Seasonal	Lowest	-	• 47	• 46	• 46
Flex	Highest	-	• 281 • 242	• 242 • 281	• 281 • 242
Flex	Lowest	-	• 282 • 204	• 282 • 204	• 282 • 204

Figure A- 13: Route Equity Score (Local)

Route	Score
R	100
	95.9
72	92.3
	86.9
58	83.5
	81.8
20	77.1
	76.7
17	74.9
	74.1
27	73.0
	72.8
3	72.7
	70.6
28	70.6
	69.0
51	68.5
	66.0
18	65.7
	64.5
55	64.2
	64.2
50	63.8
	60.4
57	59.7
	59.2
Average	59.1
	59.0
4	58.0
	57.6
75	55.8
	55.5
71	54.8
	52.9
87	52.1
	47.0
80	44.8
	42.7
16	42.4
	42.4
64	39.6
	39.0
13	38.8
	38.6
89	38.1
	37.6
63	36.7
	35.9
69	31.0
	30.2
67	14.8

APPENDIX

Figure A- 14: Route Equity Score (Express)

Route	Score
61x	100
QX	76.7
12x	65.1
24L	62.1
Average	59.5
95x	51.7
10x	50.6
9x	46.7
65x	44.4
59x	37.9
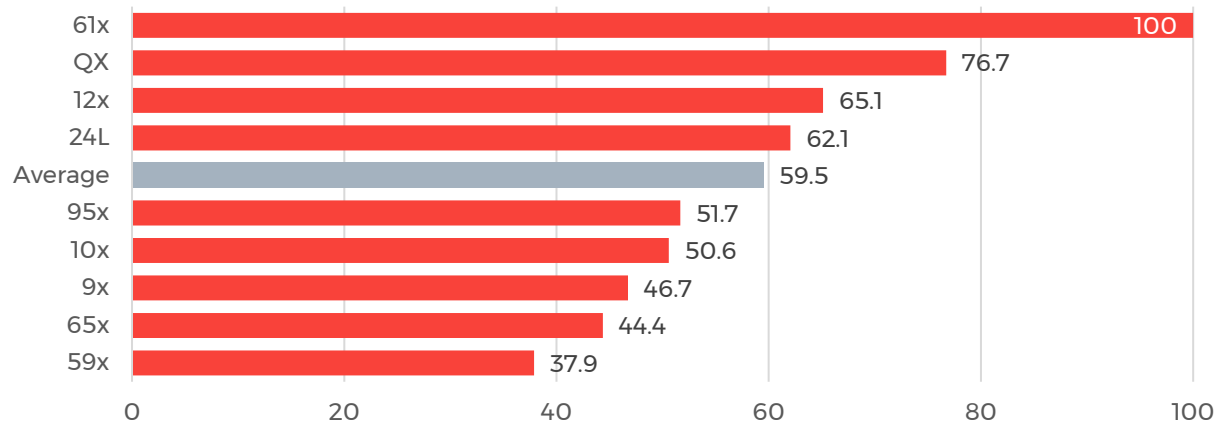
Figure A- 15: Route Equity Score (Seasonal)

Route	Score
45	100
Average	94.6
47	92.6
46	91.2
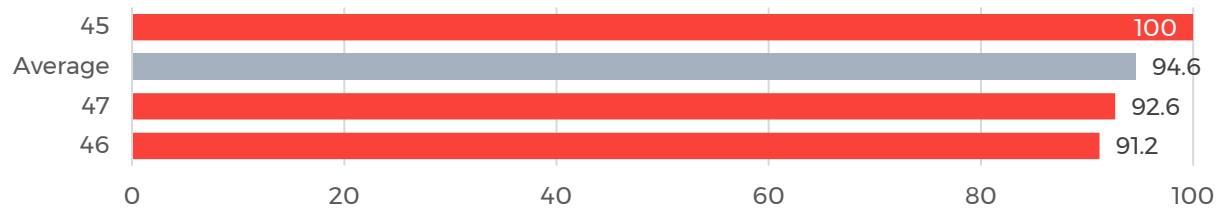
Figure A- 16: Flex Zone Equity Score

Zone	Score
281	100
242	90.1
Average	49.0
203	44.2
231	27.1
204	24.1
282	8.4
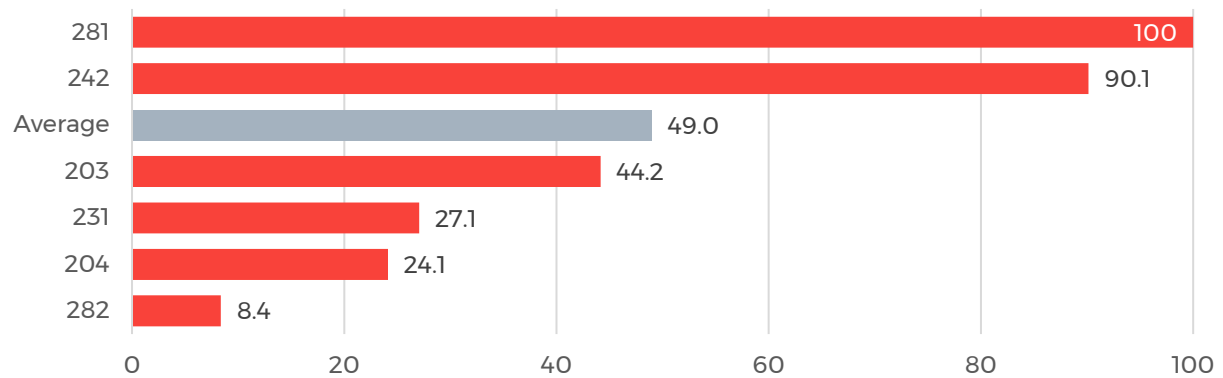
Figure A- 17: Rider Demographics
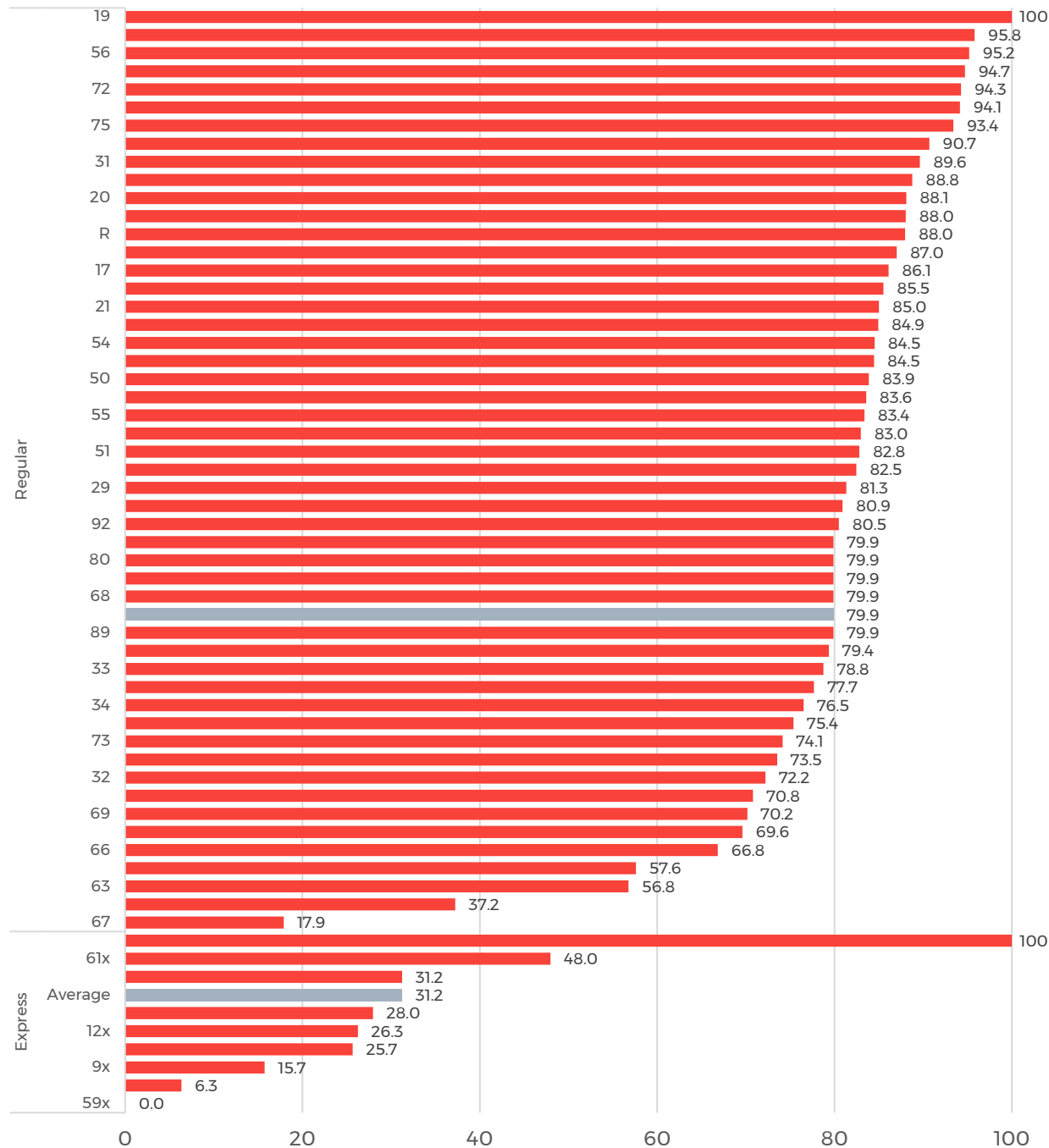
Figure A- 18: Service Area Demographics

Label	Value
R	100
	83.4
72	78.2
	66.9
17	62.8
	62.1
20	60.5
	58.5
78	57.9
	56.2
71	55.4
	55.1
18	52.5
	50.9
28	48.5
	44.6
31	43.5
	42.4
56	42.4
	41.1
54	39.0
	38.8
87	38.2
	36.5
60	34.5
	34.0
3	34.0
	32.2
33	31.8
	31.5
80	29.9
	28.8
34	28.5
	27.9
30	23.7
	22.6
14	21.2
	20.9
40	19.4
	18.5
21	16.2
	14.8
64	14.7
	14.0
89	13.8
	9.1
16	7.4
	7.1
29	6.1
	4.9
88	0.9

Regular

Label	Value
	100
QX	93.0
Average	59.4
	52.4
9x	43.6
	42.5
59x	40.7
	38.7
24L	38.6
	15.2

Express
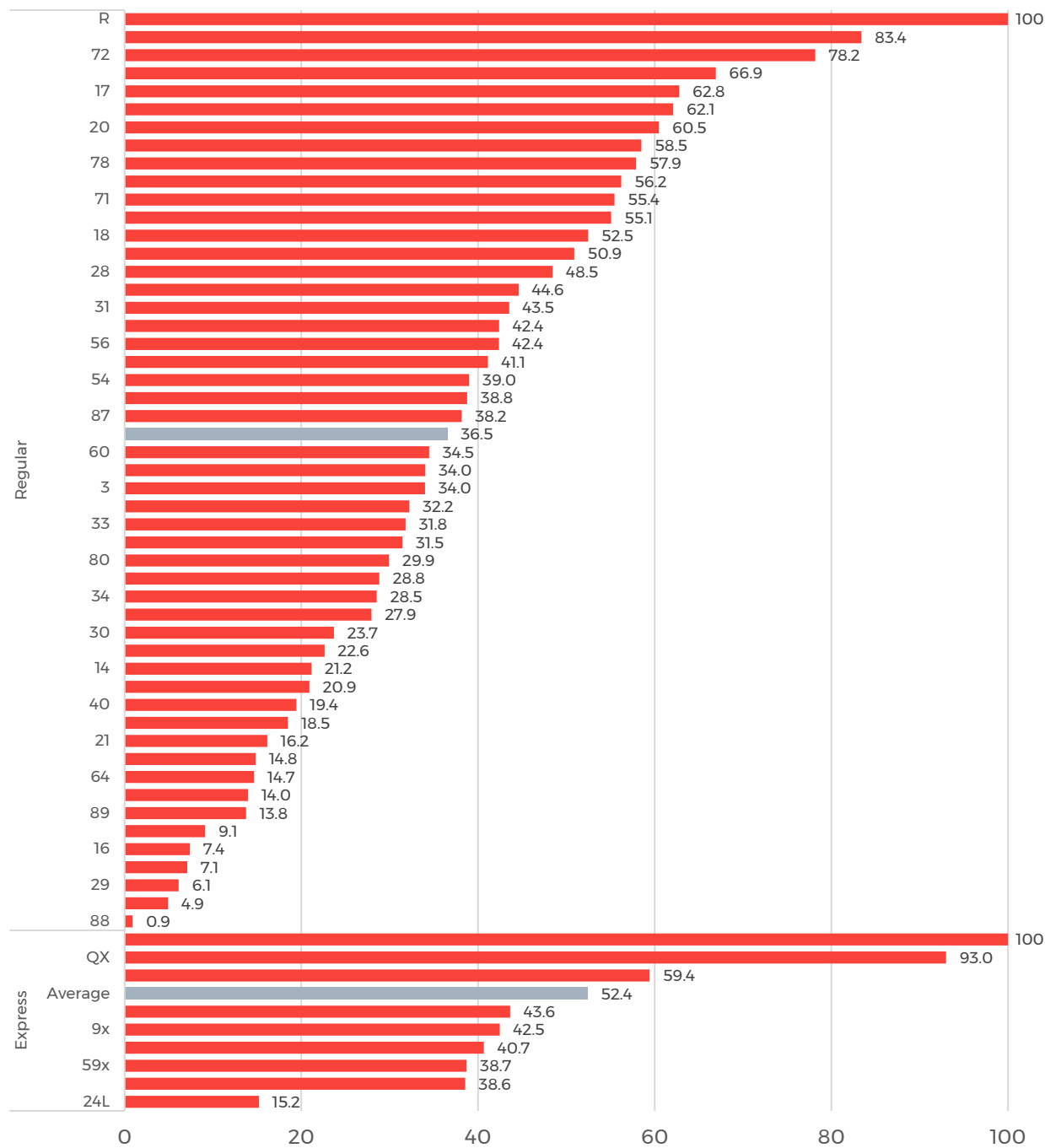
Figure A- 19: Transit-Oriented Jobs

Regular

Route	Value
1	100
	84.4
22	82.7
	82.3
3	79.2
	78.8
54	74.6
	72.5
60	70.7
	69.9
51	69.8
	69.0
14	65.9
	63.3
20	61.5
	60.0
17	55.1
	53.0
34	51.9
	50.6
56	50.4
	49.0
28	49.0
	48.6
30	48.2
	48.0
19	46.8
	45.3
Average	44.4
	43.0
31	42.6
	42.1
40	41.2
	32.4
71	23.0
	22.4
16	19.3
	18.1
75	17.5
	15.9
13	15.4
	15.0
64	13.4
	13.3
87	13.2
	13.0
80	12.3
	10.1
69	9.2
	8.4
88	1.4

Express

Route	Value
	100
12x	75.8
	66.0
Average	63.8
	61.2
65x	60.0
	59.5
9x	57.7
	55.3
24L	38.7
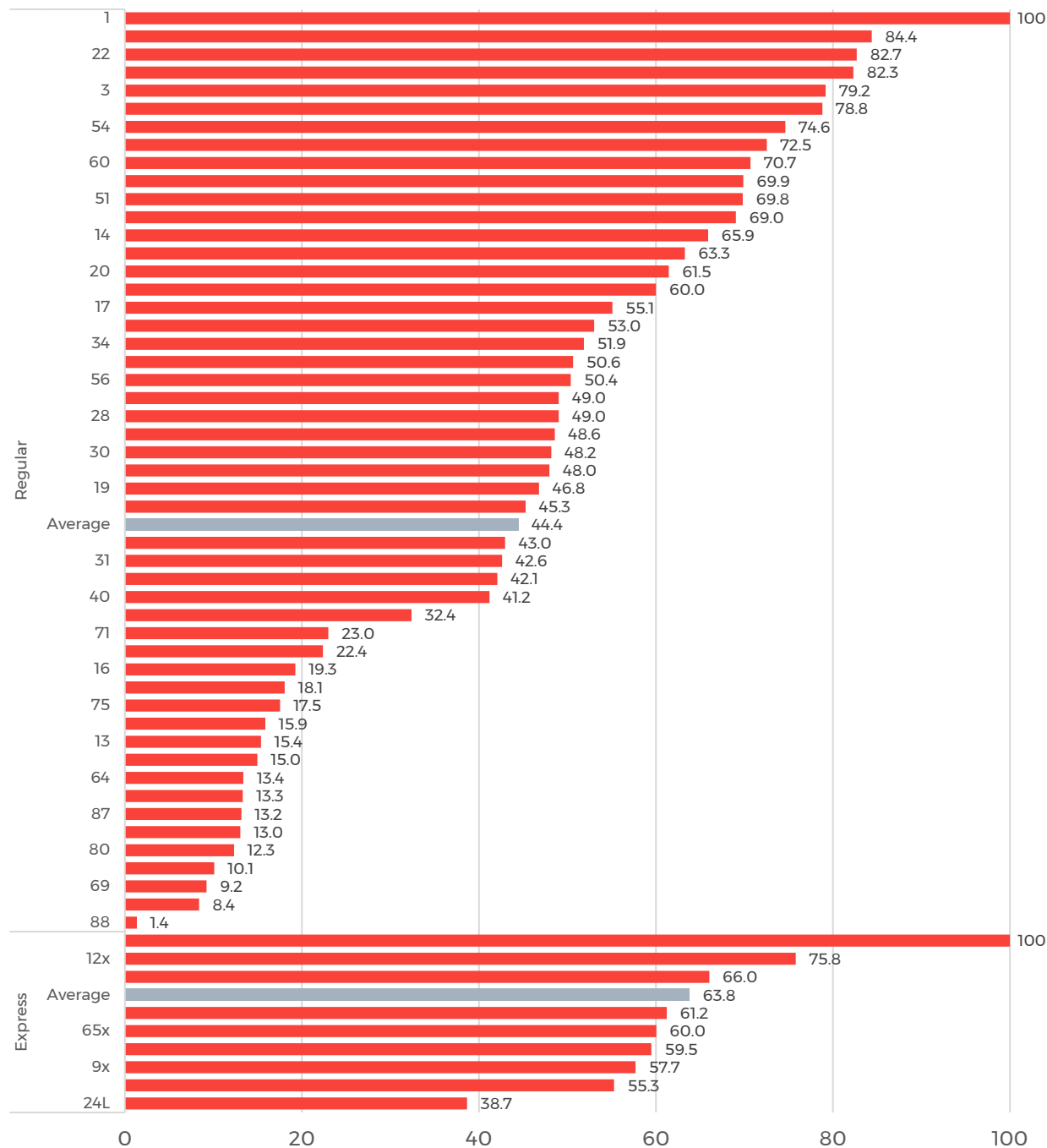
C. JARC MEMO

MEMO

Date: July 24, 2025

From: WSP and Foursquare ITP

To: Chris Durand, Chief Executive Officer, RIPTA

Subject: Task 5 - Summary of Existing JARC Routes (32, 34, 92)

SUMMARY OF EXISTING JARC ROUTES – 32, 34, AND 92

The Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program was established to address the unique transportation challenges faced by welfare recipients and low-income persons seeking to obtain and maintain employment. Many new entry-level jobs are located in suburban areas, and low-income individuals have difficulty accessing these jobs from their inner city, urban, or rural neighborhoods. In addition, many entry level-jobs require working late at night or on weekends when conventional transit services are either reduced or non-existent. Finally, many employment related-trips are complex and involve multiple destinations including reaching childcare facilities or other services. Capital, planning, and operating expenses for projects that transport low-income individuals to and from jobs and activities related to employment, and for reverse commute projects, are eligible for this funding.[1]

RIPTA's current JARC-funded services are Route 32 (East Providence/Wampanoag/Seekonk Square), Route 34 (East Providence/Seekonk Square), and Route 92 (RI College/Federal Hill/East Side).

Table 1 through Table 3 provide the span and service levels, daily ridership, and productivity metrics by service day for each of the three routes. Key takeaways include:

ROUTE 32

- Route 32 has the shortest service span of these three routes. It operates only on weekdays, from 5:45 AM to 7:30 PM, which doesn't accommodate non-traditional shift workers, particularly the retail workers at the Seekonk Square Shopping Plaza.
  - Route 32 operates with a 60-minute frequency. Combined with Route 34, it forms a cohesive 30-minute service along the trunk between Seekonk Square Mall and Kennedy Plaza.
  - The route links Kennedy Plaza to East Providence, serving the Citizens Bank office park along the way, and terminates at Seekonk Square Mall. It primarily carries retail and service job workers whose shifts extend beyond 9-to-5 hours, linking them to downtown Providence where they can transfer to other services, including MBTA commuter rail.
- The route serves a moderate share of low-income riders (17.8% based on 150% of the federal poverty level) and zero-car households (18.7%).
- The average weekday ridership is about 235 passengers per day, or 9 passengers per trip. This is low compared to nearby Route 34 and the local route average. The cost per passenger is $20, more costly than the other JARC-funded routes but roughly in line with the local route average.

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[1] https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/grant-programs/job-access-and-reverse-commute-program-5316

- **Opportunities:**
    - To increase ridership and better serve retail workers, weekday service could be extended to 10:30 PM and weekend service could be added--or at a minimum add just Saturday service.
    - The route could shift to Amaral Street, Risho Avenue, and Catamore Boulevard and then follow the alignment of Route 34 on US-6 to Seekonk Square (see Figure 1). This would increase access to jobs along Amaral Street and Risho Avenue and provide service to US-6 in Seekonk – particularly on weekends when demand may be higher. The block group containing Amaral Street and Catamore Boulevard currently has 1,452 jobs, many of which are in healthcare sector.
        - This option would increase runtimes by approximately 3 to 4 minutes, however, so a review of resulting cycle times would be necessary to ensure adequate layover would exist without having to increase headways.
        - Three stops on Route 32 would lose service under this scenario, however one has almost no ridership and the other two are served by other routes:
            - River after Mink (Stop ID 72555): < 1 boarding per day
            - 900 Wampanoag Mobil (Stop ID): 2 boardings per day, also served by Routes 60 and 61x
            - 610 Wampanoag (Stop ID 11820): 1 boarding per day, also served by Routes 60 and 61x
    - With the alignment changes, weekday extended spans with one vehicle, and Saturday service for 12 hours with one vehicle, annual revenue hours would increase by approximately 1,400.

ROUTE 34

- Route 34 shares the same alignment with Route 32 west of Broadway in East Providence and then reconnects with Route 32 at Seekonk Square. It provides additional access to retail and service employment, medical offices, urgent cares, and senior housing (e.g., Wampanoag Mall and Evergreen Senior Complex), thereby expanding mobility for both workers and transit-dependent residents.
    - The route operates every 60 minutes on weekdays from 5 AM to 10 PM, and is scheduled to interline with Route 32, creating an effective 30-minute headway at Seekonk Square and again west of Broadway into Providence via Warren Avenue, Massasoit Avenue, and the Henderson Bridge. On Saturdays, service frequency decreases to 40-minute headways but continues to operate between 5AM and 10PM and provides service to Seekonk Square Mall while Route 32 is not in operation. Sunday service currently operates on an hourly schedule from 6:30 AM to 10PM.
- This route serves a slightly higher percentage of low-income and zero-car households than Route 32, as it serves more residential areas of East Providence: 18.8% are low-income riders, and 18.7% of riders have no access to a car in their household.
- Ridership on Route 34 is higher than Route 32 because it serves Wampanoag Plaza, giving East Providence residents more convenient access to grocery and retail destinations. Saturday ridership even exceeds weekday levels, likely because riders who normally use Route 32 shift to Route 34 when Route 32 is not in service on weekends.
- The route averages about 13 passengers per trip on weekdays and 10 passengers per trip on weekends. The cost per passenger is approximately $17.50 on weekdays and Saturdays, and $15.40 on Sundays, making it slightly more productive than Route 32.
- The route currently provides access to about 27,000 jobs.
- **Opportunities:**
    - While ridership does not currently warrant additional frequency, additional frequency could grow ridership and better accommodate residents' shopping and mobility needs. Adding a bus with the route's 90-minute cycle time during peak periods would improve headways to every 36 minutes and result in approximately 1,500 additional annual revenue hours.
    - Even without additional vehicles, the proposed alignment changes on Route 32 would create an effective headway of 30 minutes along the entire US-6 corridor in Seekonk.

ROUTE 92

- o Route 92 most closely meets JARC eligibility requirements. This crosstown route provides a frequent and long-span service between Rhode Island College, Eagle Square, RI Nursing Education Center, Downtown, and Riverview Place.
- The service operates every 30 minutes, from 5:30 AM to 11 PM on weekdays, 6:30 AM to 11 PM on Saturdays, and 7:30 AM to 8 PM on Sundays.
- There are dense clusters of low-wage and service employment along this route. Like Routes 32 and 34, Route 92 links riders to shopping (Eagle Square) which provides retail and grocery workers access to jobs from downtown. Route 92 also serves Rhode Island College at its western end, providing service for students, faculty, and facilities staff. Near downtown, Route 92 stops at the Nursing Education Center, improving access for students pursuing medical careers and for the faculty and staff who work there. The route serves urban corridors with large amounts of restaurant workers as well, including Wickenden Street, Atwells Avenue, and Mount Pleasant Avenue.
- Of the three JARC routes, Route 92 has the highest percentage of low-income and zero-car households: 19.3% of riders are low income and 22.3% of riders have no access to cars in their households.
- Route 92 has the strongest weekday performance, carrying 1,206 daily riders on weekdays - nearly double its Saturday total. Peak weekday trips average about 21 passengers, almost twice as many as Routes 32 and 34. Saturday boardings per trip match Route 34, while Sunday ridership is lower. At a cost of roughly $10 per passenger on weekdays, this route is the most cost-efficient of the three JARC routes and performs well above the system average.
- **Opportunities:** Given its strong weekday performance and access to key destinations, RIPTA should consider adding a pattern to this route that operates between Rhode Island College and Kennedy Plaza - especially during peak periods. This portion of the route accounts for nearly 75% of ridership on this route. Currently, runtimes between Rhode Island College and Kennedy Plaza average around 45 minutes roundtrip – adding an additional vehicle with a cycle time of 50 minutes would improve headways to approximately 19 minutes on this segment. Operating this pattern for 12 hours each weekday would result in an additional 3,060 annual revenue hours.

Figure 1: Potential Realignment of Route 32

Table 1: Span and Service Levels by Service Day

ROUTE	WEEKDAY SPAN	SATURDAY SPAN	SUNDAY SPAN	WEEKDAY FREQUENCY	SATURDAY FREQUENCY	SUNDAY FREQUENCY
32	5:30AM – 7:30PM	-	-	60-min	-	-
34	5AM – 10PM	6:30AM – 10:30PM	7:30AM – 8PM	60-min	40-min	60-min
92	5:30AM – 11PM	6:30AM – 11PM	9AM – 7PM	30-min	30-min	30-min

Table 2: Average Daily Ridership by Service Day

ROUTE	AVERAGE WEEKDAY RIDERSHIP	AVERAGE SATURDAY RIDERSHIP	AVERAGE SUNDAY RIDERSHIP
32	235	-	-
34	393	465	271
92	1,206	663	351

Table 3: Productivity by Service Day

ROUTE	WEEKDAY PASSEENGER PER REVENUE HOUR	SATURDAY PASSEENGER PER REVENUE HOUR	SUNDAY PASSEENGER PER REVENUE HOUR	WEEKDAY COST PER PASSENGER	SATURDAY COST PER PASSENGER	SUNDAY COST PER PASSENGER	WEEKDAY PEAK PASSENGER PER TRIP	SATURDAY PEAK PASSENGER PER TRIP	SUNDAY PEAK PASSENGER PER TRIP
32	10	-	-	$20	-	-	9	-	-
34	12	12	14	$17.5	$17.5	$15.4	13	10	10
92	21	13	11	$10	$15.8	$18.5	25	12	10

D. TRANSIT MASTER PLAN STATUS

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

TRANSIT FORWARD RI – IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

Rhode Island's long-range Transit Master Plan, also known as *Transit Forward RI* (TFRI), was adopted by the State Planning Council (Rhode Island's Metropolitan Planning Organization) in late 2020. Based on an analysis of current and projected land use and travel patterns as well as an extensive public and stakeholder engagement process, the plan was developed by RIPTA in collaboration with the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) and the Division of Statewide Planning.

The Plan was designed as a roadmap to modernize and expand the state's transit network to meet current needs and future demands. Its vision of *Better Transit for a Better Rhode Island* encompasses enhanced mobility, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and increased economic vitality through improved transit infrastructure. The plan identifies the following short, mid, and long-term progress targets towards a completion date of 2040.

- 1 to 4 years: Improve and Expand Services and Lay Groundwork for Bigger Improvements
- 5 to 10 years: Focus on High Capacity Transit
- 11 to 20 years: A Comprehensive Statewide System

The following table documents the status of TFRI projects, programs, and services recommended for implementation by 2040, including implementation lead organizations and the future impact on maintaining or delivering these projects, programs, or services under a scenario that assumes zero growth in transit funding.

TRANSIT MASTER PLAN STATUS

No.	TFRI 2020 Projects/Programs	Status (June 2025)	Implementation Lead	Possibility to deliver in 'no growth' scenario	Detail
**1 to 4 years (IMPROVE AND EXPAND SERVICES AND LAY GROUNDWORK FOR BIGGER IMPROVEMENTS)**					
1	Develop a funding plan and strategy to leverage existing and new funding sources with broad-based public support	Complete	RIPTA	Yes	Funding plan was completed in 2021. Update is underway in 2025 that will also reflect change in costs.
2	Develop a Frequent Transit Network by increasing service on existing local routes	Some Progress	RIPTA	No	Requires additional buses, bus operators, and operating funds to implement
3	Provide more frequent service for longer hours on other local routes, with an emphasis on improving midday and evening services in high need areas	Some Progress	RIPTA	No	Requires additional buses, bus operators, and operating funds to implement
4	Use of MBTA Commuter Rail passes on Amtrak trains	Not yet started	MBTA, Amtrak, RIDOT	Yes	Efforts were underway pre-covid, but have been paused since 2020.
5	Complete Pawtucket/Central Falls commuter rail station	Complete	RIDOT, RIPTA	Yes	Station complete January 2023 for commuter rail service. Passenger facility under construction with anticipated completion in late 2025
6	Introduce app-based reservations, fare payment, and vehicle tracking for Flex service	Some Progress	RIPTA	Yes	Demonstration project nearly complete. Full implementation plan in development
7	Implement bus stop improvements at high volume stops	Some Progress	RIPTA, RIDOT, Municipalities	Yes	RIPTA is partnering with RIDOT, municipalities, and organizations to provide customer amenities (shelters, benches, etc.), sidewalks, crosswalks, and curbwork
8	Initiate project development for highest priority LRT and/or BRT lines and Rapid Bus lines	Some Progress	RIPTA	Yes	Design studies underway to support entering Project Development phase of federal Capital Improvement Grant funding program
9	Develop bus lanes and Transit Signal Priority in LRT/BRT and Rapid Bus corridors and Transit Emphasis Corridors	Some Progress	RIPTA, RIDOT, Municipalities	Yes	TSP and bus priority can be implemented by roadway owners in coordination with RIPTA as street maintenance and improvements are carried out
10	Extend the R-Line to Central Falls as precursor to LRT/BRT development	Not yet started	RIPTA	No	Requires additional operators and buses to implement
11	Begin to implement bus on shoulder improvements	Some Progress	RIDOT	Yes	RIDOT is constructing bus on shoulder improvements on highway 146, benefiting RIPTA Routes 54 and 59X. Anticipated completion late 2025
12	Provide additional services to special events	Some Progress	RIPTA	Maybe	Funding may be available depending on partnerships with third parties
13	Implement a Service Partnership Program to encourage third-party funding for transit expansion	Some Progress	RIPTA	Yes	Funding may be available depending on partnerships with third parties
14	Begin making pedestrian improvements to and from major transit locations	Some Progress	RIPTA, RIDOT, Municipalities	Yes	Sidewalk, crosswalk, and other pedestrian improvements can be carried out in partnership between RIPTA, RIDOT, and municipalities
15	Implement joint MBTA, RIPTA, SRTA, and GATRA fares	Some Progress	RIPTA, MBTA, SRTA, GATRA	Yes	Will be feasible upon completion of MBTA open fare platform as lead agency
16	Implement the first services to new areas	Some Progress	RIPTA	No	Requires additional buses, bus operators, and operating funds to implement

No.	TFRI 2020 Projects/Programs	Status (June 2025)	Implementation Lead	Possibility to deliver in 'no growth' scenario	Detail
		5 to 10 years (FOCUS ON HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT)			
17	Construct the first High Capacity Transit lines	Not yet started	RIPTA	No	Requires substantial capital funding (federal funding available) and commitment of local capital matching and operating funds
18	Continue to implement frequency and span improvements	Not yet started	RIPTA	No	Requires additional operators and buses to implement
19	Continue to expand service to new areas	Not yet started	RIPTA	No	Requires additional operators and buses to implement
20	Implement transit priority at traffic chokepoints	Not yet started	RIPTA, RIDOT, Municipalities	Yes	Transit priority can be implemented by roadway owners in coordination with RIPTA as street maintenance and improvements are carried out
21	Develop new park and ride lots	Some Progress	RIDOT	Yes	RIDOT leading the park and ride expansion opportunities
22	Develop an east-west Transit Emphasis Corridor	Some Progress	RIPTA,RIDOT, Municipalities	Maybe	May require additional operators and buses in addition to infrastructure investment in roadway changes and bus stop amenities
23	Improve rail service to TF Green Airport, including development of an Amtrak Station	Some Progress	MBTA,RIDOT, AMTRAK,	Maybe	Dependent on partnerships between MBTA, RIDOT, and Amtrak
24	Make bus stop improvements at more stops	Some Progress	RIPTA, Municipalities	Yes	Continuously making improvements
25	Develop new regional and community transit hubs	Some Progress	RIPTA, RIDOT, municipalities	Maybe	Planning underway, federal funding may be available to support build-out of new hubs
26	Continue to improve pedestrian and bicycle conditions at and around major transit facilities	Some Progress	RIPTA, Municipalities	Maybe	Continuously making improvements
27	Develop new Mobility-as-a-Service options	Not yet started	RIPTA	Yes	Considering a project change to align with advances in technology

No.	TFRI 2020 Projects/Programs	Status (June 2025)	Implementation Lead	Possibility to deliver in 'no growth' scenario	Detail
		11 to 20 Years (A COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE SYSTEM)			
28	Frequent rail service between Providence and Boston	Some Progress	Amtrak, MBTA, RIDOT	Maybe	Dependent on partnerships between MBTA, RIDOT, and Amtrak
29	Additional High Capacity Transit lines	Not yet started	RIPTA	No	Requires substantial capital and operating funding
30	Continued development of mobility hubs	Not yet started	RIPTA, Municipalities	Maybe	Planning underway, federal funding may be available to support build-out of new hubs
31	Pedestrian improvements at and around major transit facilities	Not yet started	RIPTA, Municipalities	Yes	Continuously making improvements
32	Continued development of Mobility-as-a-Service options	Not yet started	RIPTA	Yes	Considering a project change to align with advances in technology