



## Appendix A

# Peer Review



Central Yavapai Transit Implementation Plan Update



**CYMPO**  
Central Yavapai Metropolitan  
Planning Organization



# Comparative Transit System Information

## Peer System Review in Support of CYMPO Regional Transit Service Study



May 14, 2019

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1.1</b>	<b>CART/Cotton Express</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1.1	Background	1
1.1.2	Operations	1
1.1.3	Fare Structure	2
1.1.4	Service Supplied	2
1.1.5	Ridership	2
1.1.6	Governance	2
1.1.7	Funding	3
1.1.8	5-Year Growth Trend	3
1.1.9	Lessons Learned/Relevant Experiences	4
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Cottonwood Area Transit (CAT)/Verde-Lynx System, Cottonwood, AZ</b>	<b>5</b>
1.2.1	Background	5
1.2.2	Operations	5
1.2.3	Fare Structure	5
1.2.4	Service Supplied	6
1.2.5	Ridership	6
1.2.6	Governance	6
1.2.7	Funding	7
1.2.8	5-Year Growth Trend	7
1.2.9	Lessons Learned/Relevant Experiences	7
<b>1.3</b>	<b>Grand Valley Transit, Grand Junction, CO</b>	<b>9</b>
1.3.1	Background	9
1.3.2	Operations	9
1.3.3	Fare Structure	9
1.3.4	Service Supplied	9
1.3.5	Ridership	10
1.3.6	Governance	10
1.3.7	Funding	10
1.3.8	5-Year Growth Trend	11
1.3.9	Lessons Learned/Relevant Experiences	11
<b>1.4</b>	<b>RoadRUNNER Transit System, Las Cruces, NM</b>	<b>14</b>
1.4.1	Background	14
1.4.2	Operations	14
1.4.3	Fare Structure	15
1.4.4	Service Supplied	15
1.4.5	Ridership	15
1.4.6	Governance	15
1.4.7	Funding	16
1.4.8	5-Year Growth Trend	16
1.4.9	Lessons Learned/Relevant Experiences	17
<b>1.5</b>	<b>SunTran System, City of St. George (UT)</b>	<b>19</b>
1.5.1	Background	19
1.5.2	Operations	19
1.5.3	Fare Structure	19
1.5.4	Service Supplied	19
1.5.5	Ridership	20
1.5.6	Governance	20

1.5.7	Funding.....	20
1.5.8	5-Year Growth Trend .....	21
1.5.9	Lessons Learned/Relevant Experiences .....	21
<b>1.6</b>	<b>Yuma County Area Transit, Yuma, AZ</b> .....	<b>23</b>
1.6.1	Background.....	23
1.6.2	Operations .....	23
1.6.3	Fare Structure.....	23
1.6.4	Service Supplied.....	24
1.6.5	Ridership.....	24
1.6.6	Governance .....	24
1.6.7	Funding.....	25
1.6.8	5-Year Growth Trend .....	26
1.6.9	Lessons Learned/Relevant Experiences .....	26

## COMPARISON WITH PEER TRANSIT SYSTEMS

To provide some context for assessing the potential for developing public transit within the CYMPO planning area, operating and organizational information of six peer transit systems was compared. These systems were selected to provide a glance into how the CYMPO planning area stacks up against transit systems providing service in similar settings. The peer systems selected include: Cottonwood Area Transit (CAT)/Verde-Lynx System; Las Cruces RoadRUNNER Transit System; City of St. George (UT) SunTran System; Yuma County Area Transit (YCAT); Santa Fe Trails (Santa Fe, NM); Central Arizona Regional Transit (CART)/Cotton Express (Coolidge, AZ); and Grand Valley Transit (Grand Junction, CO).

*All tabular data were derived from National Transit Database Transit Agency Profiles for 2017 accessed at NTD Data on the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Web site, unless otherwise indicated.*

### 1.1 CART/COTTON EXPRESS

#### 1.1.1 BACKGROUND

Cotton Express and Central Arizona Regional Transit (CART) are the primary providers of public transit services in central Pinal County. Cotton Express is an urban system that provides both a Deviated Fixed-Route service within the City of Coolidge in conjunction with Demand-Response (DR) service to accommodate specialized mobility needs. Cotton Express began service in 1990 as a DR system and expanded to provide deviated, fixed-route service in 1997 offered within the City and to unincorporated areas within ten miles of the City limits.



CART is an intercity, rural/regional service component of the public transit system in central Pinal County. CART connects the Town of Florence with the cities of Coolidge and Casa Grande and parts in between these three urban areas. It is an important rural/regional transportation system and is especially critical for students attending Central Arizona College.



#### 1.1.2 OPERATIONS

Cotton Express operates two fixed routes in the City of Coolidge, Arizona. The two interlined routes operate on 30-minute headways from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Also, there is an On-Demand and Deviated-Route Service that is in effect 7:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Buses are accessible to persons in wheelchairs or otherwise mobility impaired. Transfers are accommodated at the Coolidge Transit Center, where also connection to the CART system is possible.

The CART system provides a regional public transit service, connecting Coolidge with Florence, the County Seat to the east, and Casa Grande to the west. CART is comprised of a Westbound Route and Eastbound Route. The two routes maintain coincident operations between Casa Grande and Florence, diverging into one-way loops to serve each of these two urban communities. The current routing also provides connectivity with Central Arizona College, which is located between Coolidge and Casa Grande. CART service is important for central Pinal County residents desiring access for education, employment, medical, governmental, and personal needs. CART operates on a 2.5-hour headway, but stops only at designated bus stops. Buses are accessible to persons in wheelchairs or otherwise mobility impaired.

### 1.1.3 FARE STRUCTURE

Fixed-route fares are as follows: The base fare per one-way trip is \$1.00 for adults; children ages 3 to 11 pay a half fare, and children under 3 years old ride free. A Daily Pass is available for \$2.00, \$1.00, and Free, respectively. Monthly Passes are priced at \$30.00, \$15.00, and Free, respectively. The special On-Demand and Deviated-Route Service carries a slightly higher cost; the adult fare per one-way trip is \$1.50, \$3.00 for a Daily Pass, and \$45.00 for a Monthly Pass.

CART regional and commuter service offers a per trip (one-way) fare of \$1.00 for children 12 years old and under; adults (ages 13 and over) all pay \$2.00. A Daily Fare, providing unlimited travel, is priced at \$2.00 for children and \$4.00 for adults. The Monthly Fare is \$30.00 and \$60.00, respectively. CART also offers a Local & CART Daily and Monthly Fares that permit linked travel with Cotton Express within Coolidge: \$3.00 and \$6.00 for the Daily Fare, and \$60.00 and \$90.00 for the Monthly Fare.

### 1.1.4 SERVICE SUPPLIED

Service Supplied - 2017	
<b>Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles (VRM)</b>	
Fixed-Route Bus	49,252
Demand Response	47,321
Commuter Bus	125,033
Vanpool	0
Total VRM	221,606
<b>Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours (VRH)</b>	
Fixed Route Bus	5,152
Demand Response	4,949
Commuter Bus	4,921
Vanpool	0
Total VRH	15,022

### 1.1.5 RIDERSHIP

Annual Ridership (Unlinked Passenger Trips) - 2017	
Fixed Route Bus (Cotton Express)	20,714 <sup>a</sup>
Demand Response (DR)	--
Commuter Bus Services (CART)	15,693 <sup>b</sup>
Vanpool	--
Annual Service Consumption	36,407

### 1.1.6 GOVERNANCE

Cotton Express is owned and operated by the City of Coolidge Transit Department. A Transit Advisory Committee (TAC), established in 2016, serves as an advisory body to the City Council on matters involving transit service delivery.

CART is operated by the City of Coolidge under an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) created in June, 2011. The IGA includes the City of Coolidge, Town of Florence, Pinal County, and Central Arizona College (CAC). The CART Board meets quarterly to review and discuss system operations and needs. The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is an ex-officio member of the CART Board; the agency offers planning assistance. The TAC created by the City of Coolidge also advises on matters relating to the CART service. Operating records and management of the CART system are accounted for and logged under Cotton Express by the FTA.

### 1.1.7 FUNDING

Transit service operations for both CART and Cotton Express are primarily funded through FTA Grants. Cotton Express is funded by a 5311 FTA Grant plus local match from City of Coolidge., CART similarly is funded by a 5311 FTA Grant, but it also receives Intercity Funding from 5311f Funds derived from direct connectivity to a new Greyhound Station in Eloy. CART also receives additional funds directly from Greyhound. The local match to fully fund the regional CART service is provided by the City of Coolidge, Pinal County, the Town of Florence, and CAC. These matching funds primarily are used for operations, but potentially could be used for local transit enhancements, including minor capital investments.

<b>Sources of Operating Funds - 2017</b>	
Fare Revenue	\$39,054
Local Funds	\$309,948
State Funds	\$0
Federal Assistance	\$587,141
Other Funds	\$0
Total Operating Funds Expended	\$936,143
<b>Sources of Capital Funds - 2017</b>	
Fare Revenue	\$0
Local Funds	\$1,500
State Funds	\$0
Federal Assistance	\$13,500
Other Funds	\$0
Total Capital Funds Expended	\$15,000

### 1.1.8 5-YEAR GROWTH TREND

#### HOURS OF SERVICE

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Hours of Service (VRH)*	N/A	13,674	N/A	14,906	9.0	15,266	2.4	15,022	-1.6
Operating Expenses/VRH	N/A	\$59.01	N/A	\$58.01	-1.7	\$59.11	1.9	\$62.32	5.4

\* VRH = Vehicle Revenue Hour

#### MILES OPERATED

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Miles Operated (VRM)*	N/A	224,938	N/A	224,120	-0.4	225,018	0.4	221,606	-1.5
Operating Expenses/VRM	N/A	\$3.59	N/A	\$3.86	7.5	\$4.01	3.9	\$4.22	5.2

\* VRM = Vehicle Revenue Mile

#### RIDERSHIP

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Ridership*	N/A	52,731	N/A	56,450	7.1	56,425	0.0	36,407	-35.5
Operating Expenses/UPT	N/A	\$15.30	N/A	\$15.32	0.1	\$15.99	4.4	\$25.71	60.8

\* UPT = Unlinked Passengers Trips

## **FUNDING**

<b>Annual Operating Metric</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
Operating Funds	N/A	\$806,847	\$864,734	\$902,416	\$936,143
Capital Funding	N/A	\$293,719	\$0.0	\$11,381	\$15,000

## **1.1.9 LESSONS LEARNED/RELEVANT EXPERIENCES**

### **LESSONS LEARNED**

- Municipal commitment is key to establishing service that the local community can rely on.

### **SUCCESS STORIES**

- A potential desire to reduce or eliminate local funding by elected official was overcome by testimony from the transit dependent community and choice riders that had benefited from the transit service through enhanced levels of mobility.
- CAC students are well served by CART and many patrons state that availability of this regional transit service is a key reason why they are able to pursue higher education.

### **IF THINGS WERE DIFFERENT**

- A reduction in local government operating and reporting requirements would benefit the organizational budget.
- The process of hiring employees is complex and time consuming, due to the City of Coolidge policies and procedures.
- It would be desirable to have a higher frequency of service and improved travel time for to better serve existing riders and attract future patrons.
- Currently the routing for both services consists of one-way loops; bi-directional service would be desirable, but this is dependent on the availability of additional funding.

### **GENERAL ADVICE**

- If new FTA funding is requested within a designated region, it is apparent that partnerships with adjacent communities is preferred to reduce federal and state administrative costs.
- Financial stability is key; thus, formation of a Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) structure could be useful in Yavapai County.



## 1.2 COTTONWOOD AREA TRANSIT (CAT)/VERDE-LYNX SYSTEM, COTTONWOOD, AZ

### 1.2.1 BACKGROUND

The CAT system provides service to the City of Cottonwood, Town of Clarkdale, and rural areas of Yavapai County surrounding Cottonwood in north central Arizona. Population of the service area of the transit system is approximately 40,000 (2010) within a service area of 715 square miles. The 2010 Census indicates the central city of Cottonwood's population was 11,265; it is estimated that the population has since topped 12,000.



### 1.2.2 OPERATIONS

The fixed-route service is made up of four fixed-routes that run on a schedule of 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. The Red Route averages 48 trips a day and services Clarkdale and Yavapai College, as well as Old Town area of Cottonwood. The Blue Route averages 120 trips a day and services the primary medical and commercial and retail areas of Cottonwood, the rural Yavapai County area of Bridgeport, and the southern rural communities of the Verde Villages. Both routes operate on an hourly basis. CAT operates two buses, one each, on the Red and Blue routes.

CAT also operates commuter service between Cottonwood and Sedona, known as the Verde-Lynx. This service runs eight daily roundtrips between Cottonwood and Sedona, Monday through Saturday, and six roundtrips on Sunday. Verde-Lynx service connects with the CAT routes and operates Monday through



Saturday, 6:00 am to 7:15 pm and 7:320 am to 6:00 pm on Sunday. All services run on major holidays, with the exception of Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. CAT operates a single bus for the Verde-Lynx commuter service.

CAT Paratransit is a service complementing the local fixed-route bus service. CAT Paratransit service is provided for customers who are functionally unable to use the fixed-route service. CAT Paratransit operates

the same hours and serves the same areas as the fixed-route system, but only operates weekdays. All buses are ADA accessible and accessible to people with disabilities, including those that require a wheelchair. CAT has a total of 10 buses and 1 minivan, all capable of providing rides to persons that require a wheelchair.

### 1.2.3 FARE STRUCTURE

Fixed-route fares are as follows: Cash fare per ride on the CAT buses is \$1.25, all day passes are \$3.00, 20-trip passes are \$25.00, and monthly passes are \$40.00. Verde-Lynx commuter service is \$2.00 per trip, \$40.00 for a 20-trip pass, and a monthly pass costing \$60.00. Also available are All Access Passes that provide rides on both CAT and Verde-Lynx are \$7.50 for daily and \$80.00 for the monthly. *[Excerpt from Paratransit Plan, Cottonwood Area Transit (CAT), January 20, 2018.]*

## 1.2.4 SERVICE SUPPLIED

Service Supplied - 2017	
Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles (VRM)	
Fixed-Route Bus	143,554
Demand Response	107,091
Commuter Bus	166,999
Vanpool	0
Total VRM	417,644
Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours (VRH)	
Fixed Route Bus	9,360
Demand Response	8,304
Commuter Bus	5,821
Vanpool	0
Total VRH	23,485

## 1.2.5 RIDERSHIP

Annual Ridership (Unlinked Passenger Trips) - 2017	
Fixed Route Bus	80,366
Demand Response (DR)	18,216
Commuter Bus Services (Verde – LYNX)	55,211 <sup>a</sup>
Vanpool	0
Annual Service Consumption	153,793

## 1.2.6 GOVERNANCE

The Transportation Department of the City of Cottonwood is the operator of Cottonwood Area Transit (CAT) and Verde-Lynx public transit services. The system is managed by a designated Transportation Manager. A Transit Advisory Board (TAB) holds regular monthly meetings with a majority of area stakeholders to discuss transit operations and plans. That TAB is comprised of a former member of the Cottonwood City Council, Clarkdale City Manager, Clarkdale Council Member, Assistant City Manager for Sedona, Executive Director of Verde Valley Caregivers Coalition, representing the disabled, disadvantaged, and transportation challenged in Yavapai and Coconino Counties, representative of NACOG (Northern Arizona Council of Governments), and a Current City Council member for the City of Cottonwood. In addition, the City participates in coordination meetings with the Northern Arizona Council of Governments (NACOG) and meets every other month with the Yavapai County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO).

## 1.2.7 FUNDING

Sources of Operating Funds - 2017	
Fare Revenue	\$196,954
Local Funds	\$481,806
State Funds	\$0
Federal Assistance	\$868,954
Other Funds	\$0
Total Operating Funds Expended	\$1,547,714
Sources of Capital Funds - 2017	
Fare Revenue	\$0
Local Funds	\$0
State Funds	\$0
Federal Assistance	\$0
Other Funds	\$0
Total Capital Funds Expended	\$0

## 1.2.8 5-YEAR GROWTH TREND

### HOURS OF SERVICE

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Hours of Service (VRH)*	N/A	18,490	N/A	21,996	19.0	21,891	-0.5	23,485	7.3
Operating Expenses/VRH	N/A	\$58.94	N/A	\$60.35	2.4	\$58.11	-3.7	\$65.90	13.4

\* VRH = Vehicle Revenue Hour

### MILES OPERATED

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Miles Operated (VRM)*	N/A	321,202	N/A	183,025	-43.0	393,191	114.8	417,644	6.2
Operating Expenses/VRM	N/A	\$3.39	N/A	\$7.25	113.9	\$3.24	-55.3	\$3.71	14.5

\* VRM = Vehicle Revenue Mile

### RIDERSHIP

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Ridership (UPT)*	N/A	113,408	N/A	149,492	31.8	146,548	-2.0	153,793	4.9
Operating Expenses/UPT	N/A	\$9.61	N/A	\$8.88	-7.6	\$8.68	-2.3	\$10.06	15.9

\* UPT = Unlinked Passenger Trips

### FUNDING

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Operating Funds	N/A	\$1,089,770	\$1,327,531	\$1,272,048	\$1,547,714
Capital Funding	N/A	\$369,919	\$529,898	\$226,580	\$0.0

## **1.2.9 LESSONS LEARNED/RELEVANT EXPERIENCES**

### **LESSONS LEARNED**

- Slow incremental growth is most effective with proper phasing for warranted expansions.
- Start with what you know you can deliver.
- Fully commit to initial service, including a reasonable number of years; just a one- or two-year experiment - Not a good idea!
- Plan transit projects years in advance.
- There is a need to remain committed over the mid-term, with a minimum five-year funding stream.
- There is a need to constantly monitor operations and service quality to optimize performance and assist in achieving the long-term vision.
- Commitment of governing body is needed in all phases of system management and operations.
- Four to six months is necessary to have patrons or residents even realize the service exists, notwithstanding positive aspects of a well-intentioned advertising campaign.
- Constantly remain committed to communicating with the public and advertising the service - "Promote, Promote, Promote!!"

### **SUCCESS STORIES**

- Very pleased with consistent City Council commitment to keep transit system functioning.
- Very encouraged by existence of Yavapai Regional Transit (YRT) in Prescott/Prescott Valley, which was initiated with an FTA 5311 rural transit grant and is operating with donations only.

### **IF THINGS WERE DIFFERENT**

- Doing as best as possible, given current funding environment.
- Attaining a sales tax-based government funding structure for communities supporting transit is a challenge.
- Community wants Saturday and/or Sunday service, but there is a concern that an adequate level of ridership does not exist to justify operations; may not be able to justify weekend transit service expansion now, even though a need exists.

### **GENERAL ADVICE**

- In terms of governance, firm belief that an overarching RTA with taxing authority would improve the ability of the region to organize and deliver transit services within the defined geography.
- The formation of an RTA would allow dedicated funding to properly plan for and deliver model projects within entire region.
- An RTA would create a uniform approach to planning and consensus for prioritized improvements, including phased transit system enhancements.

## 1.3 GRAND VALLEY TRANSIT, GRAND JUNCTION, CO

### 1.3.1 BACKGROUND

Grand Valley Transit (GVT) serves the greater Grand Junction, CO, urban area. The geographic locality associated with the service occupies 79 square miles in west central Colorado. According to the 2010 Census, the population of the greater Las Cruces area was reported to be 128,124. GVT has a 66-square-mile service area, and the system provides direct service to a population of 101,846.

### 1.3.2 OPERATIONS

All bus service begins at 5:00 am and ceases at 8:00 pm Monday through Saturday; no service is available on Sunday or recognized holidays. The system consists of 12 fixed-route lines, providing scheduled service on an hourly basis. Ten of the 12 routes serve the greater Grand Junction community; two routes extend to communities 12 miles distant from Grand Junction.



Dial-A-Ride and Paratransit services are operated as Demand Response operations. The Dial-A-Ride service is provided in Redlands, where fixed-route service does not operate. Paratransit service extends to: City of Fruita; Town of Palisade; and unincorporated communities of Clifton, Fruitvale, Redlands (within system limits), and Orchard Mesa.

### 1.3.3 FARE STRUCTURE

GVT has a variety of fare programs that are geared to both choice and transit dependence riders and special fares for seniors and youth. The base fare for fixed-route service is \$1.50, one-way. Dial-A-Ride service is available for a \$3 fare. The fare for Paratransit service, which is available through a diversion from fixed-routes – up to ¾ of a mile, is discounted under a reduced fare program. A variety of passes for extended system use also is available.

### 1.3.4 SERVICE SUPPLIED

Service Supplied - 2017	
<b>Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles (VRM)</b>	
Fixed-Route Bus	811,249
Demand Response	142,116
Commuter Bus	0
Vanpool	0
Total VRM	953,365
<b>Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours (VRH)</b>	
Fixed Route Bus	55,442
Demand Response	9,536
Commuter Bus	0
Vanpool	0
Total VRH	64,978

### 1.3.5 RIDERSHIP

Annual Ridership (Unlinked Passenger Trips) - 2017	
Fixed Route Bus	770,031
Demand Response (DR)	22,915
Commuter Bus Services	0
Vanpool	0
Annual Service Consumption	792,946

### 1.3.6 GOVERNANCE

The Grand Valley Regional Transportation Planning Office (RTPO), an extension of Mesa County, administers state- and federally-mandated planning activities for the Grand Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the Mesa County Transportation Planning Region (TPR), and the Grand Valley Transit (GVT) system. The policy making body for the RTPO is the Grand Valley Regional Transportation Committee (GVRTC), which is composed of a single elected representative from Mesa County, Grand Junction, Fruita, and Palisade.

### 1.3.7 FUNDING

GVT receives funding directly from FTA formula grants that support service in urbanized and non-urbanized areas of Mesa County. GVT also may apply for additional FTA grants that are competitively awarded for: vehicle repair and replacement; transit programs for elderly, low-income, or disabled residents; and programs that support transit ridership as a commute alternative. Funding support for transit capital expenses also comes from the State of Colorado’s FASTER program and local governments. Operating costs primarily are supported by federal grants, local governments, and agency-generated revenues (e.g., service fares). Funding also is allocated annually to GVT from the General Funds of Mesa County and the cities of Grand Junction and Fruita and Town of Palisade in Mesa County. Funding sources for operations and capital acquisitions are shown below.

Sources of Operating Funds - 2017	
Fare Revenue	\$428,080
Local Funds	\$1,378,175
State Funds	\$0
Federal Assistance	\$1,673,948
Other Funds	\$10,939
Total Operating Funds Expended	\$3,491,142
Sources of Capital Funds - 2017	
Fare Revenue	\$0
Local Funds	\$443,502
State Funds	\$1,013,806
Federal Assistance	\$624,581
Other Funds	\$0
Total Capital Funds Expended	\$2,081,889

A summary of funding of the funding conditions in 2015, as presented in 1-10 Year Grand Valley Transit Strategic Plan (April 2018), is presented below:

*In 2015, Grand Valley Transit’s annual budget was just over \$3.3 million. Federal assistance accounted for almost half of those funds (47.2%), while local contributions and fares accounted for 37.4% and 15.2%, respectively. The remaining 0.2% comes from bench*

and shelter advertising revenue through an advertising vendor contract. Operating expenses for 2015 are dominated by Purchased Transportation at 61% of the total. The Purchased Transportation services includes funds paid to the contracted transit provider TransDev, who currently operates GVT's services. Materials and supplies followed by salaries, wages and benefits and other operating expenses are 26%, 11% and 2%, respectively.

### 1.3.8 5-YEAR GROWTH TREND

#### HOURS OF SERVICE

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Hours of Service (VRH)*	64,912	63,160	-2.7	63,079	-0.1	64,613	2.4	64,978	0.6
Operating Expenses/VRH	\$59.08	\$54.81	-7.2	\$53.31	-2.7	\$54.57	2.4	\$53.73	-1.5

\* VRH = Vehicle Revenue Hour

#### MILES OPERATED

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Miles Operated (VRM)*	988,484	966,906	-2.2	959,088	-0.8	968,921	1.0	953,365	-1.6
Operating Expenses/VRM	\$3.88	\$3.58	-7.7	\$3.51	-2.0	\$3.64	3.7	\$3.66	0.5

\* VRM = Vehicle Revenue Mile

#### RIDERSHIP

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Ridership (UPT)*	990,521	919,348	-7.2	831,608	-9.5	792,946	-4.6	792,946	0.0
Operating Expenses/UPT	\$3.87	\$3.77	-2.6	\$4.04	7.2	\$4.45	10.1	\$4.40	-1.1

\* UPT = Unlinked Passenger Trips

#### FUNDING

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Operating Funds	\$3,835,272	\$3,461,783	\$3,362,714	\$3,526,055	\$3,491,142
Capital Funding	\$2,342,232	\$2,342,232	\$1,602,063	\$608,021	\$2,081,889

### 1.3.9 LESSONS LEARNED/RELEVANT EXPERIENCES

#### LESSONS LEARNED

- Make sure you create strong partnerships and/or have strong partnerships in place, including Human Service Agencies, College/Universities, School Districts, Hospitals, local, state and federal governments...etc.
- Revenues available to cover rising costs and meet increasing demand can become stretched and can remain stagnant or even decrease in the future without a dynamic and responsive financing policy.
- GVT continues to engage customers and community members on decisions involving existing and future route, fares, and policy changes.

## **SUCCESS STORIES**

- 100% CNG Bus Fleet
- The construction of numerous facilities including one operations facility, three transfer facilities, three park-and-rides, one maintenance facility, one CNG fueling facility, and numerous sidewalk projects.
- The Colorado State Transit Plan reports the average cost per passenger trip of rural transit systems operating in rural transportation planning regions across Colorado is \$5.00. GVT's cost per trip of \$3.00 is the lowest among the comparison areas. This could be attributable to GVT's investment in maintenance facilities, maintaining a compact service area, and route management.
- GVT has a strong safety record. Most safety incidents do not involve serious collisions, but "...slips, trips, falls, electric shocks, vehicles leaving the roadway, and other minor events." Similarly, most injuries to passengers or employees are classified as minor, not serious injuries or fatalities.

## **IF THINGS WERE DIFFERENT**

- A dedicated funding source would be of great benefit. In our case, the County and municipalities appropriate funds for transit operations and maintenance (O&M) and transit capital needs. Monies to be appropriated come generally from local property taxes and sales taxes. Competition for such funding is tough and local governments generally do not have the capacity to undertake major new annual funding responsibilities for transit. These funds currently are being provided to fund Grand Valley Transit services as part of the existing Interlocal Agreement (IGA).
- Some residents believe mass transit services will be more important in the future, if the region's air quality deteriorates resulting in designation as a non-attainment area.
- The fiscally-constrained 2020 Transit Plan is limited only to maintaining existing services. This means the region may not be able to pursue high-priority service expansions or additions and alternative revenue sources will have to be explored.

## **GENERAL ADVICE**

- Hire the best General Manager possible!
- As traffic becomes more and more congested, transit systems help alleviate congestion, as well as provide a viable transportation option for those who wouldn't normally have significant mobility.
- Transit ridership is likely to continue to see long-term growth. If route expansions and service extensions are undertaken, growth could be expected to occur. If financial constraints result in service reductions, growth could be expected to be less than currently forecast.
- For smaller urban operators, such as GVT, costs may be significant to implement required operational elements, such as: system performance monitoring, Agency Safety Plan, operator training, and safety risk mitigation (e.g., through fleet replacement).





## 1.4 ROADRUNNER TRANSIT SYSTEM, LAS CRUCES, NM

### 1.4.1 BACKGROUND

RoadRUNNER Transit serves the greater Las Cruces, NM, urban area. The system provides service to the City of Las Cruces and coordinates with three other specialized transit services operated by others. The geographic locality associated with the service occupies 65 square miles in southern New Mexico. According to the 2010 Census, the population of the greater Las Cruces area was reported to be 128,600. The service area of the RoadRUNNER Transit System is 55 square miles, and the system provides direct service to a population of 107,419.



### 1.4.2 OPERATIONS

Bus service, as of May 13, 2019, was expanded to the hours of 7:00 am to 10:30 pm weekdays. Saturday service is provided from 9:30 am to 6:00 pm; no service is available on Sunday or recognized holidays. The system consists of eight routes providing scheduled fixed-route service. All routes connect through either the Mesilla Valley Mall (MCM) or Mesilla Valley Intermodal Transit Terminal. The route system of RoadRUNNER Transit was significantly modified and restructured in Macy, 2016, which helped on-time performance. Nevertheless, consistent with the National trend, ridership is down.

In addition to the regularly scheduled, fixed-route service, RoadRUNNER Transit operates two “Aggie” shuttles to support the mobility needs of students at New Mexico State University (NMSU). Two interconnecting buses serve the NMSU campus from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday, operating on a 10-minute headway. This service operates only when classes are in session and does not operate during breaks and holidays. It is jointly supported by NMSU Transportation and Parking Services, Associated Students of NMSU, and RoadRUNNER Transit. By-reservation-only (at least 24-hours prior), “Free” shuttle service to/from El Paso International Airport also is available to NMSU students (home-to-home service costs \$10). There are three fixed pick-up/drop-off points on and adjacent the campus. The round-trip, airport shuttle generally operates seven times, seven days a week.

RoadRUNNER transit services are coordinated with three other transit services operating to serve the Las Cruces urban area. The South Central Regional Transit District (SCRTD) provides service to the Las Cruces urban area with connectivity to: Alamogordo, Anthony, Sunland Park, Chaparral, and El Paso, TX. Fixed-route SCRTD service is made up of four routes. The Red Line connects Las Cruces and Anthony via Highway 28S. The Blue Line connects Las Cruces and Anthony via Stern Drive. The Turquoise Line connects Chaparral and Anthony via Highway 404. The Purple Line connects Anthony and Sunland Park via Highway 28N. These routes are operated Monday through Saturday.

Other available transit services include a separate commuter service – Z-Trans Public Transportation, which operates between Las Cruces and Alamogordo Monday through Friday. Plus, the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) operates and Park-and-Ride commuter service for the Las Cruces area, in conjunction with RoadRUNNER. The service consists of two commuter routes: the Gold Route – links Las Cruces with El Paso, TX, via Anthony; and the Silver Route – links New Mexico State University (NMSU) in Las Cruces with the White Sands Missile Range (WSMR). The Gold Route has five pick-up/drop-off locations, and the Silver Route has three such locations. Service is operated weekdays with the exception of State holidays.

### 1.4.3 FARE STRUCTURE

The general fare for RoadRUNNER service is \$1.00 for adults 19 to 59 years of age. Senior citizens (60+ years of age), youth (6 to 18 years of age), persons with special mobility needs, and students pay a half-fare. Children 5 and under ride free, and the Aggie shuttle service also is free with a “U-Pass.” One-Day (\$2.25), Weekly (\$8.00), 31-Day (\$30.00), and 30-Ride (\$30.00) passes also are available. The same half-fare rules apply to these service, with the exception that the half-fare for the One-Day Pass is \$1.25.

### 1.4.4 SERVICE SUPPLIED

Service Supplied - 2017	
<b>Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles (VRM)</b>	
Fixed-Route Bus	508,784
Demand Response	200,330
Commuter Bus	0
Vanpool	0
Total VRM	709,114
<b>Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours (VRH)</b>	
Fixed Route Bus	39,478
Demand Response	23,351
Commuter Bus	0
Vanpool	0
Total VRH	62,829

### 1.4.5 RIDERSHIP

Annual Ridership (Unlinked Passenger Trip) - 2017	
Fixed Route Bus	539,143
Demand Response (DR)	56,125
Commuter Bus Services	0
Vanpool	0
Annual Service Consumption	595,268

### 1.4.6 GOVERNANCE

The RoadRUNNER Transit System is operated by the City of Las Cruces as public transportation service. The Las Cruces Area Transit Advisory Board (TAB) is a representative group appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of the City Council. Board members represent categories of transit users rather than representatives from individual Council Districts. These categories are: an NMSU representative, a Dona Ana Community College (DACC) representative, a senior citizen representative, a disabled community representative, a business community representative, and two general citizen representatives. The seven-member TAB has regular meetings on the third Thursday of January, April, July, and October. The TAB reviews system operations and the City’s program transit services. It makes recommendations to the Transit Administrator for system improvements; serves as a resource group on Transit issues; and encourages support and use of the Transit system among their representative groups.

## 1.4.7 FUNDING

Sources of Operating Funds - 2017	
Fare Revenue	\$809,559
Local Funds	\$1,764,195
State Funds	\$0
Federal Assistance	\$1,562,932
Other Funds	\$57,270
Total Operating Funds Expended	\$4,193,956
Sources of Capital Funds - 2017	
Fare Revenue	\$0
Local Funds	\$163,293
State Funds	\$167,855
Federal Assistance	\$416,280
Other Funds	\$0
Total Capital Funds Expended	\$747,428

## 1.4.8 5-YEAR GROWTH TREND

### HOURS OF SERVICE

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Hours of Service (VRH)*	59,206	60,170	1.6	60,229	0.1	60,583	0.6	62,829	3.7
Operating Expenses/VRH	\$62.41	\$64.66	3.6	\$62.62	-3.2	\$62.15	-0.8	\$66.75	7.4

\* VRH = Vehicle Revenue Hour

### MILES OPERATED

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Miles Operated (VRM)*	711,735	712,986	0.2	723,445	1.5	723,533	0.0	709,114	-2.0
Operating Expenses/VRM	\$5.19	\$5.46	5.2	\$5.21	-4.6	\$5.20	-0.2	\$5.91	13.7

\* VRM = Vehicle Revenue Mile

### RIDERSHIP

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Ridership (UPT)*	813,634	789,592	-3.0	793,978	0.6	727,137	-8.4	595,268	-18.1
Operating Expenses/UPT	\$4.54	\$4.93	8.6	\$4.75	-3.7	\$5.18	9.1	\$7.05	36.1

\* UPT = Unlinked Passenger Trips

### FUNDING

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Operating Funds	\$3,694,922	\$3,890,808	\$3,771,494	\$3,764,978	\$4,193,956
Capital Funding	\$2,612,916	\$1,170,198	\$1,086,981	\$1,087,653	\$747,428

## **1.4.9 LESSONS LEARNED/RELEVANT EXPERIENCES**

### **LESSONS LEARNED**

- Either hire a professional Transit Manager that knows about starting service or educate yourself by visiting peer groups and learning firsthand what obstacles you will encounter.
- Get your city/county to buy in all the way. If you do not have their full support, you will have an uphill battle.
- Let the public be your biggest asset. Public engagement and outreach will go a long way with getting elected officials to support transit.
- Try to have at least one vehicle that is purchased with 100% local funds (no federal dollars). This will give you use of the vehicle without certain restrictions (charters, government use, local use) that come with federally-funded vehicles.
- We are in the process of lowering our Day Pass costs to the equivalent of two, one-way trips. This will remove the need for transfers and remove a lot of negative interaction between drivers and riders, as there always are issues with fare evasion, expired transfers, and riders trying to use transfers at stops not designated as transfer points or shared stops.

### **SUCCESS STORIES**

- We reached out to our local Veterans Administration (VA) and area health clinics to see where new buildings were being constructed and were proactive by including them in new routes.
- We hired an excellent consulting firm that helped us create our Short- and Long-Range Transit Plans. They helped guide us to and through milestones to keep transit evolving and growing.
- We were awarded grant funding that will help us move to battery-powered, electric buses in the near future.

### **IF THINGS WERE DIFFERENT**

- Know that every day will be different in public transit.
- Have a full complement of staff (drivers, trainers, supervisors, extra board/on-call drivers). There is a lot of demand to this job and the easiest way to burn folks out is to overwork them, due to staffing shortages.
- There is a lot of technology (cameras, GPS, farebox, social media) that take up a lot of time. Hire the appropriate staff to be able to utilize this technology without burdening field supervisors.
- Pay your staff accordingly. It's hard to keep qualified drivers if your wages are not competitive.

### **GENERAL ADVICE**

- Keep the public involved. Have several public input meetings, explain your plans, and solicit feedback.
- Advertise your service and partner with the business community to support transit.
- Make sure transit has a place at the table on new construction/developments for future planning.
- Keep the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) handy. You will need it.



## 1.5 SUNTRAN SYSTEM, CITY OF ST. GEORGE (UT)

### 1.5.1 BACKGROUND

SunTran is the public transportation system serving the small urban area of St. George in southern Utah. It was formerly known as Dixie Area Rapid Transit or DART, which was launched and funded by Five County Association of Governments in 2003. The City of St. George in conjunction with federal transportation funding bought the bus system, today known as SunTran.



### 1.5.2 OPERATIONS

The geographic locality associated with the service occupies 45 square miles in southern Utah. According to the 2010 Census, the City's population was reported to be 98,370. The SunTran service area is 35 square miles, and the system provides direct service to a population of 75,561.

The system operates six routes Monday through Saturday, from 5:40 am to 8:40 pm. Five buses are operated in peak fixed route service out of a fleet comprised of seven buses (low-floor, heavy-duty, diesel, ADA-accessible transit coaches). Paratransit service, is supported by two accessible vans and two accessible cutaway buses. Paratransit serves operates in unison with fixed-route service, serving origins and destinations within ¾-mil of fixed routes. This service is limited to persons with disabilities.

### 1.5.3 FARE STRUCTURE

Bus fares are \$1 for one-way/one-transfer trips. Seniors (65 years of age and older), disabled persons, and Medicare members pay a half-fare - \$0.50. There is no fare to kids below the age of six when accompanied by a fare-paying rider, although a 3-kid limit applies. Extended-ride passes may be purchased at select locations throughout the City. A One-Day Pass (\$2.50), 10-Ride Pass (\$10.00), and Monthly Pass (\$30.00) are available. Dixie State University studies ride free with student ID.

### 1.5.4 SERVICE SUPPLIED

Service Supplied - 2017	
<b>Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles (VRM)</b>	
Fixed-Route Bus	343,159
Demand Response	58,263
Commuter Bus	0
Vanpool	0
Total VRM	401,422
<b>Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours (VRH)</b>	
Fixed Route Bus	22,951
Demand Response	6,494
Commuter Bus	0
Vanpool	0
Total VRH	29,445

### 1.5.5 RIDERSHIP

Annual Ridership (Unlinked Passenger Trips) - 2017	
Fixed Route Bus	427,817
Demand Response (DR)	10,290
Commuter Bus Services	0
Vanpool	0
Annual Service Consumption	438,107

### 1.5.6 GOVERNANCE

SunTran is operated by the City of St. George with staff located within the Public Works Department which includes Transportation and Engineering. The Transit Manager currently has three staff positions in place: one full-time position, an Administrative Assistant; and, two shared/part-time positions, an Accountant/Grant Administrator and a Fleet Shop Technician. The operations of dispatch and driving are staffed with three supervisors and eight full- and part-time drivers under each of the supervisors. The Transit Manager reports directly to the City Public Works Director. The Transit Manager frequently reports on operations, service, opportunities, and needs to the Transportation Executive Council, which is managed by the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Washington County. The City provides Human Resources (HR), Maintenance, Legal, and Finance support.

### 1.5.7 FUNDING

SunTran receives urbanized area transit funding through a 5307 Grant from the FTA. The majority of local-match funding is provided by a voter approved 1/4 cent Transportation Improvement Fund (TIF) within Washington County of which Transit receives an allocation of 10%. Additionally, SunTran has a number of additional revenue sources including agreements with multiple local institutions and organizations: including: Dixie State University (with 9,000 students donating \$3.00/full-time and \$1.50/part-time student, resulting in a contribution of approximately \$25K/year); various agencies that serve the disabled community that contribute a portion of their State funding (approximately \$35K/year); and advertising (approximately \$140K/year).

Sources of Operating Funds - 2017	
Fare Revenue	\$169,667
Local Funds	\$504,205
State Funds	\$55,519
Federal Assistance	\$823,131
Other Funds	\$135,247
Total Operating Funds Expended	\$1,687,769
Sources of Capital Funds - 2017	
Fare Revenue	\$0
Local Funds	\$11,239
State Funds	\$0
Federal Assistance	\$44,954
Other Funds	\$0
Total Capital Funds Expended	\$56,193



## 1.5.8 5-YEAR GROWTH TREND

### Hours of Service

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Hours of Service (VRH)*	25,018	25,085	0.3	28,991	15.6	31,597	9.0	25,085	-20.6
Operating Expenses/VRH	\$48.39	\$50.04	3.4	\$48.69	-2.7	\$47.91	-1.6	\$57.32	19.6

VRH = Vehicle Revenue Hour

### MILES OPERATED

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Miles Operated (VRM)*	270,325	308,726	14.2	356,326	15.4	402,206	12.9	308,726	-23.2
Operating Expenses/VRM	\$4.48	\$4.07	-9.1	\$3.96	-2.7	\$3.76	-5.1	\$4.20	11.7

\* VRM = Vehicle Revenue Mile

### RIDERSHIP

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Ridership (UPT)*	480,795	464,600	-3.4	464,401	0.0	461,258	-0.7	464,600	0.7
Operating Expenses/UPT	\$2.52	\$2.70	7.2	\$3.04	20.7	\$3.28	7.9	\$3.85	17.4

\* UPT = Unlinked Passenger Trips

### FUNDING

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Operating Funds	\$1,210,707	\$1,255,256	\$1,411,583	\$1,513,857	\$1,687,769
Capital Funding	\$0.0	\$519,212	\$1,313,349	\$249,889	\$586,193

## 1.5.9 LESSONS LEARNED/RELEVANT EXPERIENCES

### LESSONS LEARNED

- Even though the City of St. George population nearly doubled over the first 10 years of transit system operation, no significant changes in service occurred and the loop-based system had begun to reach its limits.
- There are great advantages to hiring a professional transit management operator during the early years of a transit system operation; start-up operations can be greatly enhanced with reliance on the expertise of an experienced transit operator.
- Plan-it, Design-it, and Implement with a professional transit management operator in control. The operator contract can be structured with an option for local takeover of system operations, with local staff, once the service is optimized during the initial two to three years of operation.

### SUCCESS STORIES

- Ridership on the system increased from 65,000 to approximately 450,000 riders over a 12-year span.

- Significant ridership increases occurred even though service and routing remained basically static over the 12-year period of time. This was despite the fact that there were inefficiencies inherent in the circular nature of the original routing scheme.
- A stable source of funding has been a great advantage for SunTran and is one of the keys to providing a successful transit service.
- SunTran was able to provide a very high level of transit service to its customers over the years, even though there was not a consistent level of attention dedicated to recognizing driver performance and adequate levels of compensation for drivers.

### **IF THINGS WERE DIFFERENT**

- SunTran would be greatly benefited by the addition of a full-time Transit Operations Manager.
- A professional transit operator management company would have been hired during the system start-up phase to provide adequate guidance for refining operations and optimizing service.
- Hiring inexperienced staff, lacking past transit experience, would have been avoided; this especially is true for key positions.
- A plan to manage staff and operator training and turnover would have been formulated and followed.

### **GENERAL ADVICE**

- During the initial years of transit service operations, it is especially important to listen to the drivers for ideas and input related to safety and service improvements. By taking their input and acting on their suggestions, the service can be greatly optimized during the first three to five years of operation.
- Make sure clear and effective route maps, identifying local points of interest and key destinations, are posted clearly within the interior of each bus vehicle.
- Make sure red painted curbs at boarding/deboarding locations are properly located and maintenance activities at each transit stop are well coordinated and consistently implemented.
- Turnover rates for drivers and staff can be minimized with a management style that is inclusive and open to new ideas to improve efficiency.
- Management should always be interested in receiving input that can improve operations and customer service.

## 1.6 YUMA COUNTY AREA TRANSIT, YUMA, AZ

### 1.6.1 BACKGROUND

The Yuma County Area Transit (YCAT) includes fixed-route transit service, vanpool services, and “YCAT OnCall” demand-response (DR) bus service throughout Yuma County. The service area includes the cities of Yuma, San Luis, and Somerton, the Town of Wellton, the Cocopah Indian Reservation, and the Fort Yuma-Quechan Indian Reservation. It also extends across the Colorado River to serve the Census-Designated Place (CDP) of Winterhaven located in eastern Imperial County, California. In addition, YCAT serves Gadsden, Fortuna Foothills, and Ligurta, which are small, unincorporated communities of in Yuma County.



The urbanized area of Yuma occupies 58 square miles in southwestern Arizona. The 2010 Census recorded a population of 136,267. YCAT, being a countywide transit system, has a service area of 78 square miles, within which the population is 195,751 (2010). The service area is expanded further beyond the established fixed-route system by specialized transit services and the provision of OnCall service in the areas within ½-mile of a fixed-route stop.

### 1.6.2 OPERATIONS

YCAT operates eleven fixed-routes and a DR service throughout the southwestern quadrant of Yuma County and eastern Imperial County. The system operates Monday-Friday from 5:50 am to approximately 7:30 pm, with limited service continuing until 11:00 pm. Saturday service operates from 9:15 am to 6:30 pm. Generally, service is provide at 60-minute headways; although, three routes operating more like commuter service make discrete trips. There is no service on Sundays or major holidays at this time.

In addition, YCAT provides four other specialized services. A shuttle service – NightCAT – oriented to major education facilities operates from 7:15 pm to 11:15 pm, Monday through Friday. This service includes three night trips from AWC/NAU/UA to Winterhaven, Yuma, Somerton, San Luis, Cocopah, Fort Yuma Indian Reservations, Fortuna Foothills and unincorporated areas within a ¾-mile radius of existing YCAT routes only. YCAT OnCall, is an urban and rural Dial-A-Ride service that operates from 5:50 am to 8:00 pm, Monday through Friday and 9:15 am to 6:30 pm, Saturday. WelltonCAT is another Dial-A-Ride oriented to serving the needs of the Town of Wellton by providing connectivity with eastern portions of the Yuma metropolitan area. WelltonCAT service is limited, only operating between 3:00 pm and 7:00 pm on Fridays. YCAT Vanpool operates contract vans, 24-hours per day, to/from designated locations.

YCAT has a fleet of 30 buses, of which 19 could be operating during times of peak travel demand. All buses and vans are owned by YCIPTA and were purchased with FTA funding. The transit system is operated under a under a contractual arrangement with Parking Concepts, Inc. of Irvine, California through its Transportation Concepts Division.

### 1.6.3 FARE STRUCTURE

YCAT operates under a relatively complex fare structure. The base fare is \$2.00 for persons 19-64 years old and youth (5-18 years old) without a student ID. Youth with an appropriate ID, seniors (65+ years old), disabled persons, and Medicare card holders pay a half fare. A discount card – “Smart” – reduces the base fares to \$1.75 and \$0.75, respectively. Then, there are Day Passes, 10-ride Passes, and 31-Day Passes, each benefiting from a reduced rate when using the Smart Card. Route Deviation requests on certain routes (i.e., ½-mil from a fixed-route stop) is \$2.00 with or without the Smart Card. Express services have

a base fare of \$5.00, plus varying rates for the extend-ride passes, all of which are discounted with the Smart Card.

#### 1.6.4 SERVICE SUPPLIED

Service Supplied - 2017	
<b>Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles (VRM)</b>	
Fixed-Route Bus	842,094
Demand Response	76,190
Commuter Bus	413,436
Vanpool	0
Total VRM	1,331,720
<b>Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours (VRH)</b>	
Fixed Route Bus	37,906
Demand Response	4,181
Commuter Bus	9,113
Vanpool	0
Total VRH	51,200

#### 1.6.5 RIDERSHIP

Annual Ridership (Unlinked Passenger Trips) - 2017	
Fixed Route Bus	421,004
Demand Response (DR)	8,696
Commuter Bus Services	0
Vanpool	66,813
Annual Service Consumption	496,513

#### 1.6.6 GOVERNANCE

The Yuma County Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority (YCIPTA) was formed on December 13, 2010, by the Yuma County Board of Supervisors. YCIPTA was formed to administer, plan, operate and maintain public transit services throughout Yuma County, including within the political jurisdictional boundaries of the Cities of Yuma, San Luis, Somerton, Town of Wellton and the unincorporated Yuma County areas. In addition, Arizona Western College (AWC), Northern Arizona University, and the Quechan and Cocopah Indian tribes have become part of the YCIPTA organization.

YCIPTA is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors, consisting of the County, City, and Town Administrators, Tribal Planning Directors, and the local college and university Presidents. A staff of six presently manages and supports the day to day operations of YCIPTA. As of July 1, 2012, the transit operation and administration transferred to YCIPTA, which is managed by a Transit Director with support staff from a Financial Services Operations Manager, a Transit Operations Manager, an Office Specialist, and two Clerk I's. YCIPTA has agreements in place with Yuma County for supporting Human Resources, Financial Services, and Treasurer functions. Agreements with Western Arizona Council of Governments (WACOG), In-Kind support from Greyhound Lines, Inc., Quechan Indian Tribe, and Yuma County have been successful at supporting and sustaining operating requirements of the YCAT system and will be continued.

## 1.6.7 FUNDING

Sources of Operating Funds - 2017	
Fare Revenue	\$763,961
Local Funds	\$1,448,493
State Funds	\$0
Federal Assistance	\$2,364,207
Other Funds	\$65,355
Total Operating Funds Expended	\$4,642,016
Sources of Capital Funds - 2017	
Fare Revenue	\$0
Local Funds	\$4,387
State Funds	\$0
Federal Assistance	\$13,155
Other Funds	\$0
Total Capital Funds Expended	\$17,542

Local funds contributions of the member organizations have increased since 2010 to match FTA funding, which has increased from slightly more than \$1.5 million in 2008 to approximately \$2.6 million in 2017. In addition, YCIPTA has had success obtaining greater contributions from external vendors, such as Greyhound, educational institutions and major employers, and securing in-kind contributions to be used towards future capital purchases, such as new vehicles to start replacing the fleet. The success of this effort has reduced the need to request an increase in transit dues from member agencies. Nevertheless, YCIPTA has faced challenges in the area of funding that are important to note.

- YCIPTA initiated a detailed system review in 2003 in conjunction with financial and operating difficulties, nearly caused the fixed-route transit system to shut down. After the review, the City of Yuma and other member jurisdictions in Yuma County contributed additional funding to the transit system. In addition, a new operating contractor was selected and the two routes restructured. With these changes the system improved; the physical extent and operating times of service was expanded to 10:00 pm on all routes in the sever-route system.
- In June 2010, reductions in funding from the State of Arizona and local member participants, required elimination of two routes within the City of Yuma and reduction of service hours from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Saturday. A new operations strategy adopted by YMPO for the YCAT system kept transit system operational under a reduced level of local funding.
- In January 2012, YCIPTA restructured the transit system based on information from the Yuma Regional Transit Study and outreach with transit passengers. The new plan restored routes within the City of Yuma and added numerous other services to the service area.
- YCAT is looking to a future of greater stability and opportunities to continue to improve services within southwestern Yuma and eastern Imperial County (California) following several years of changes and adaptations, including. Much planning has been accomplished, including: the Yuma Regional Transit Study, completed by ADOT and Yuma County; a Five-Year Short-Range Transit Plan, completed by ADOT, YCIPTA and YMPO; and formation and consolidation of YCIPTA.
- The funding picture for the YCAT system has improved with the addition of contributions from AWC, NAU, Quechan Indian Tribe, the newly added partnership with Imperial County Transportation Commission, and restoration of funding from the City of Yuma. YCIPTA, with assistance from YMPO and ADOT, will be updating the Short-Range Transit Plan (to be completed early next year), which again will address the funding issue.

- Although YCIPTA should be eligible to use Federal transit funds for operating expenses in the foreseeable future, there is an ongoing effort to identify appropriate other sources of funding to sustain operations, such as restructuring or future taxation. Regarding system funding, YCIPTA has been seeking a dedicated source of funding to mitigate the historically tenuous financial status impacting YCAT service. A transit-dedicated tax, based on a small increase in the “privilege tax” (1/10 of a % sales tax), was first proposed and introduced to the public in 2014. Such a tax would significantly aid in developing a more effective and efficient transit service. The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017, still called for a future transit tax as a way to increase transit services and operate these services more efficiently and effectively. The issue: the tax proposal cannot be submitted to voters without a change in current Arizona State Statutes, specifically ARS§42-6106 which allows a regional transportation authority (RTA) to create such a tax but does not include IPTAs.

## 1.6.8 5-YEAR GROWTH TREND

### HOURS OF SERVICE

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Hours of Service (VRH)*	35,302	38,928	10.3	44,665	14.7	49,881	11.7	51,200	2.6
Operating Expenses/VRH	\$80.99	\$93.04	14.9	\$86.56	-7.0	\$82.27	-5.0	\$86.27	4.9

\* VRH = Vehicle Revenue Hour

### MILES OPERATED

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Miles Operated (VRM)*	756,190	900,232	19.0	1,015,512	12.8	1,268,901	25.0	1,331,720	5.0
Operating Expenses/VRM	\$3.78	\$4.02	6.3	\$3.81	-5.2	\$3.23	-15.2	\$3.32	2.8

\* VRM = Vehicle Revenue Mile

### RIDERSHIP

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	% Chg	2015	% Chg	2016	% Chg	2017	% Chg
Ridership (UPT)*	381,042	472,768	24.1	496,441	5.0	497,694	0.3	496,513	-0.2
Operating Expenses/UPT	\$7.50	\$7.66	2.1	\$7.79	3.8	\$8.25	5.9	\$8.90	7.9

\* UPT = Unlinked Passenger Trips

### FUNDING

Annual Operating Metric	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Operating Funds	\$2,899,184	\$3,908,077	\$3,916,393	\$4,265,466	\$4,642,016
Capital Funding	\$264,434	\$114,362	\$288,346	\$904,274	\$17,542

## 1.6.9 LESSONS LEARNED/RELEVANT EXPERIENCES

### LESSONS LEARNED

- Managing and operating a transit system is a never-ending journey, always learning

- The more transparent you are, the better support you will have from your Board. The more they know, the more they want to be active and involved.
- Forming an advisory Community Transit Committee. This has been difficult to achieve, as it seems most people do not want to put in any time as a volunteer. YCIPTA is pushing hard to establish such a Committee, as we feel it is important and will prove valuable for advising the Board of Directors relative to developing and sustaining transit services. Because the general public is both user and financier of YCAT services, it is important for the community to participate in identifying transportation issues and comment on potential alternatives. The Committee would:
  - Acts as a sounding board for policies and plans.
  - Provides a communication link between the residents of the service area and YCIPTA Board of Directors.
  - Recommends plans, policies and procedures to the YCIPTA Board of Directors.
  - Promotes agency accountability.
  - Form community partnerships.
  - Addresses other public transit matters as requested by the Board of Directors or staff.
- Always monitor, review, audit. Never assume just because you think operations and maintenance activities are running as they should on the exterior that does not mean these critical elements are running smoothly on the inside. Remember what “assume” means!
- ALWAYS LISTEN!

### **SUCCESS STORIES**

- Successful grant applications for competitive funding allowed YCIPTA to replace aging fleet.
- Upgrading antiquated fare collection system and adding automatic passenger counters succeeded in bringing our transit services out of the Stone Age.
- Excellent staff. When you work hard to have the right people in place, it makes your agency run like a well-oiled machine. Make sure your staff knows often that they are important.
- Having a Board made up of non-elected officials has been a huge positive for YCIPTA and the YCAT Transit System. This form of Board makeup keeps politics out of daily transit operations. Each Board member has a vested interest not a personal or political agenda.

### **IF THINGS WERE DIFFERENT**

- If we had a dedicated funding source, such as a sales tax, we would be in a much better situation. As guaranteed source of income would permit developing needed new facilities, reduce or eliminate the continual struggle to attain local-match funding to replace vehicles, etc. For example, the Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization's 1995 – 2015 Countywide Transportation Study included a recommendation to convert the Hotel Del Sol into a Multimodal Transportation Center to address the needs for improved transportation for residents and visitors of the greater Yuma area. The intent of this project, as defined, was to integrate Amtrak's cross-country rail services, Greyhound's regional intercity bus lines, and YCAT local bus services. Although the hotel was purchased for this purpose in 2006 and the focus of the transit system moved to the 3rd Street/Gila Street intersections where the hotel is located, completing this project has proven to be a challenge. Two grants have finally been awarded for design and pre-construction. Additional funding for the project needed to meet the current schedule for completion of 2021 is proving elusive.
- If it wasn't so hard working with local cities and the County regarding bus stop permits, we would have shelters placed everywhere there is an identified need.

- If we did not have driver and mechanic shortages, we would be fully staffed at all times. It is very difficult to find qualified people in Yuma County, and the pay scale for YCIPTA and the area as a whole does not help either.

### **GENERAL ADVICE**

- Always be proactive instead of reactive.
- Having a well done Short- and Long-Range Transit Plans is crucial.
- Extensive planning and coordination can lead to new innovations in service delivery, local examples include: a future transit tax, a new maintenance facility, and development of the Yuma Multimodal Transit Center.
- We at YCIPTA have had a difficult time getting the public involved, and they like to complain but do not want to be part of the solution. Nevertheless, forming a Community Transit Committee early on and sustaining interaction with the Committee is desirable.