

III-B. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

A. FRAMEWORK OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN THE REGION

Public transportation plays a smaller role than personal automobile in terms of mobility, but the availability of alternative modes of travel is a significant factor in meeting the overall needs of the region. Public transportation includes both local and intercity options. Local options include fixed route bus service, public and client-based paratransit services, taxi and livery services. It is important to note that paratransit services are often partially or fully government subsidized. Intercity public transportation options include intercity bus, commuter rail, and intercity passenger rail.

Public transportation options serve the needs of both commuters and transit-dependent populations. While commuters in the CMMPO region had become less reliant on public transportation over the past 20 years, in recent years that trend appears to be reversing, first for those using improved commuter rail service, and now commuters returning to local public transit. Public transportation suffered from cutbacks in funding, which translated to cutbacks in available service, however, funding has become slightly more stable since the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan was written, and service has also stabilized as a result. In addition to riders who can choose transit or auto travel, for the transit-dependent populations (those who don't drive or can't afford a car), public transportation is the only option and it is vitally important to their quality of life. In addition, it is important to recognize the importance that transit can play in making communities more livable.

The demand for increased alternative travel options are being heard by the state and local officials. The state is in the process of completing transactions with CSX Corporation that will allow for more rail capacity to be available between Worcester and Boston, and plans for more passenger trains in the near future. In addition, state operating assistance for local transit service has begun to stabilize, and local transit officials have made strides in upgrading infrastructure and service features.

B. GOALS FOR THE FUTURE

B.1 SAFETEA-LU

SAFETEA-LU, the current authorization for federal transit and highway programs, recognized the importance of available and affordable public transit by increasing overall capital funding levels and by providing new dedicated operating assistance for programs that go above and beyond Americans with Disabilities (ADA) compliance criteria (New Freedom) and that provide additional options for individuals with low incomes who commute to work (Job Access Reverse Commute-JARC).

B.2 State Emphasis

The State of Massachusetts is the primary funder of statewide public transportation, funding approximately 72% of the fixed route and paratransit net costs within the region. While adequate funding has been an issue over the past decade (as will be discussed in more detail below), there has been recognition at the state level that the needs far outweigh the available service.

B.3 CMMPO Goals

The CMMPO recognized the importance of a viable public transportation system to the quality of life in the region. The goals and objectives that the CMMPO developed for the 2012 Regional Transportation Plan addressed the need to define and maintain acceptable conditions and optimal functionality of the public transit system. The CMMPO also recognized the need to improve and encourage the use of public transit (including both local transit and MBTA Commuter Rail), ridesharing services, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities so as to achieve a reduction in the percentage of commuter trips utilizing single-occupant vehicles (SOVs), as measured by US Census Journey-to-Work data. Lastly, the CMMPO acknowledged the need to develop an alternative, creative transportation system that integrates multiple travel modes and includes the use of technology.

B.4 Needs Identified Through Public Input

Public input provided an assortment of recommendations for public transportation, but overall the consensus was that more investment in existing services, especially commuter rail and fixed route service, is urgently needed.

Along with that, there is a perceived need for community-based transit service and more personalized/flexible paratransit services. The “Baby Boomer” generation has begun to reach early retirement age and by the year 2020 will begin to turn 75. In general, these individuals will not disassociate from society as was the norm in previous generations. The baby boomer generation will bring expectations for lifestyles and services that accommodate individual choice. This generation will expect a public transportation that meets their needs for remaining economically and socially active. The challenge will be for public transportation to change its perception as the mode of last resort to lure these individuals out of their cars. Their overall life focus will be on preventative health care, healthy lifestyles, nutrition and adequate and flexible community based activities and services. An increasing majority of older people are likely to be well, healthy, mobile and financially stable. Based on this pattern, it is more than likely that in succeeding groups of older people, the number of individuals who will wish to remain integrated as active, participating, productive members of their communities will grow.

While this picture is one possible scenario for the future, it is important to note that the possibility for more individuals with declining health needing public transportation services, as has been the trend over the past fifteen years, is also likely to continue concurrently. A third group is the 25-60 year olds who are looking for alternatives that are green and can save on gasoline costs, particularly since those costs are escalating at a far greater rate than inflation.

C. WRTA FIXED ROUTE SERVICES

C.1 Introduction

Fixed route transit operations continue to play an increasing and critical role in the 40 municipality Central Massachusetts Regional Planning District. Overall, transit serves approximately 0.5% of all person trips in the region¹. Within the City of Worcester itself, approximately 1.3% of all person trips are served by transit. However, transit serves a critical role because of its impact on downtown Worcester traffic flow and because of the market segment transit serves.

Transit's impact on traffic is greater than its small 0.7% share of total travel would indicate due to the fact that the fixed route system is radially oriented concentrated along the traffic corridors leading into the Worcester Central Business District (CBD). Given the eastern Massachusetts area's non-attainment status with regard to air quality, the City of Worcester's maintenance status for carbon monoxide, and the recent development activities in downtown Worcester (including the City Square project and MBTA service expansion), transit is a viable alternative to auto travel for trips destined to this potentially congested area. The nature of the market segment served by transit is the second reason for transit's important role in the regional transportation system. Traditionally in this area, transit has served persons who would find it difficult or impossible to make their trip by any other mode. Among the groups affected are: (1) elders, (2) people with disabilities, (3) young people and (4) people living on limited incomes. Over the past few years, the transit has begun to attract new riders who are becoming more environmentally aware and riders who are more concerned with higher gas prices. Overall, transit serves more than three million trips each year.

C.2 Characteristics/Trends

C.2.1 Providers

The single most important provider of fixed-route and paratransit services in Central Massachusetts is the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA). Its 35 member municipalities are depicted in Figure III-15. Under the provisions of the state enabling legislation, Chapter 161B of the General Laws of Massachusetts, the WRTA is prohibited from operating any services itself. All of its services are provided by transit operators who are under contract to the Authority.

The fixed route provider under contract to the WRTA is RTA Transit Services, Inc. RTA Transit Services currently operates 47 full size (30', 35' and 40') buses along with an additional 50 vans which are used for paratransit purposes. These vehicles along with the garage/maintenance facility at 287 Grove Street are owned by the WRTA.

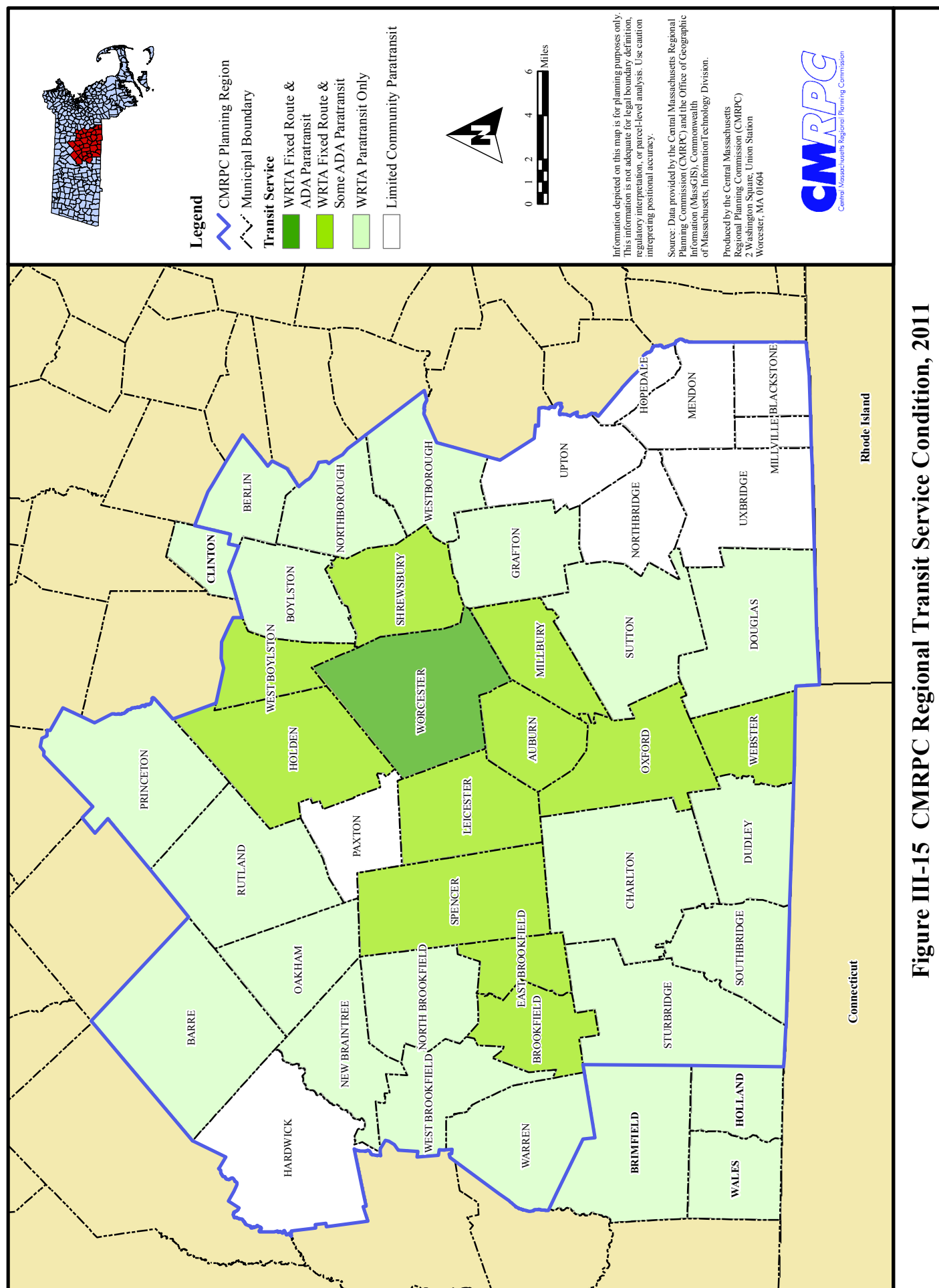
¹ The Worcester Regional Transit Authority carried about 11,800 riders per day according to the FY '10 National Transit Database (NTD) Report. It is estimated that there are about 1,251,000 person trips per day made in the 13 WRTA fixed route communities by all modes. This estimate is based on the National Household Travel Survey (NHTS) conducted in 2001 where the daily person trips per household was determined to be 9.66. $129,491 \text{ households in 13 fixed route communities} \times 9.66 = 1,250,883$.

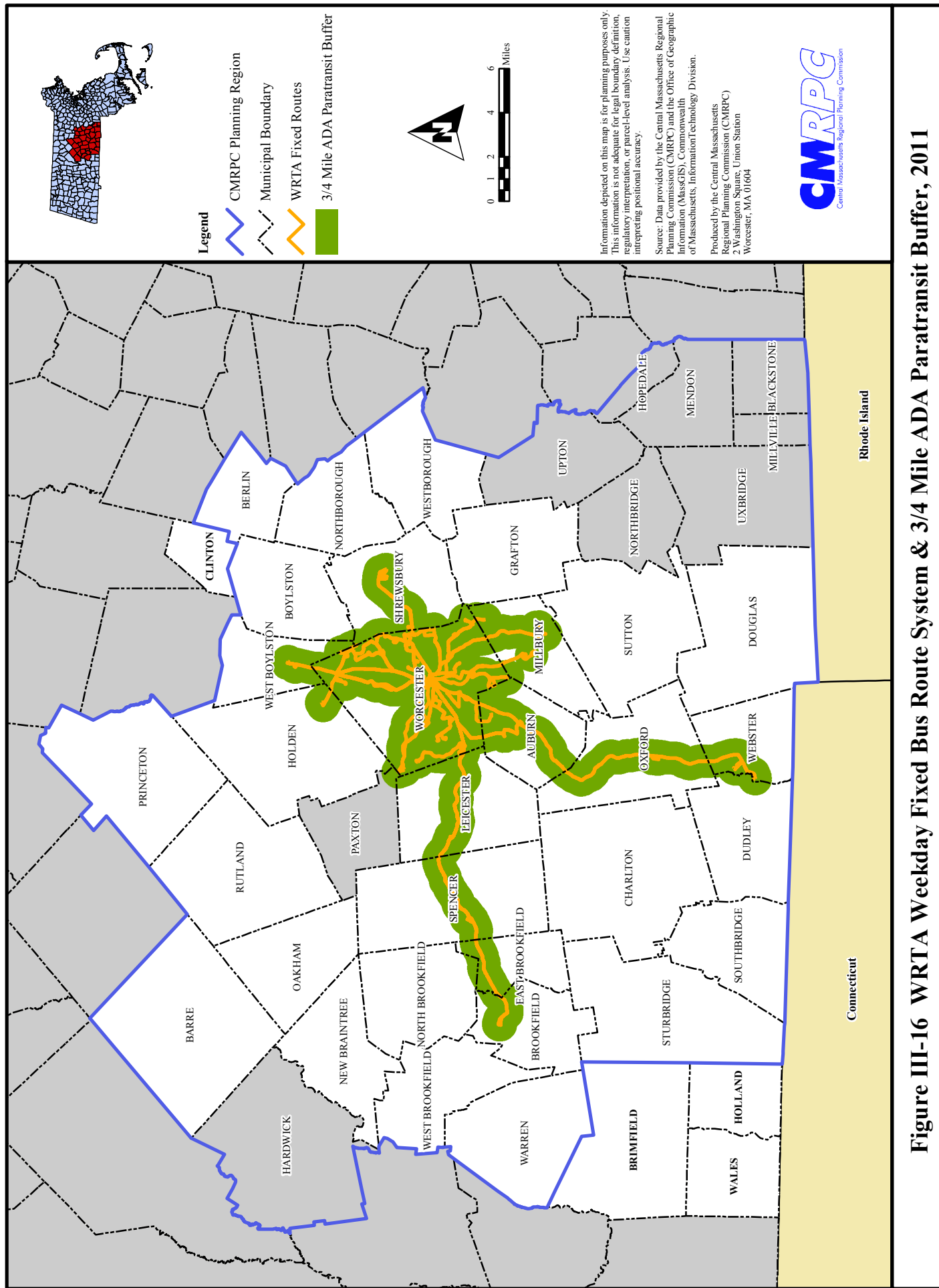
C.2.2 Fixed Route Service Area and Population

RTA Transit Services provides service on 23 weekday routes. These routes serve the City of Worcester and eleven (11) surrounding communities. All routes are oriented to Downtown Worcester. Eleven (11) of the 23 routes serve outlying communities. Service extends as far out as Brookfield (18 miles from Downtown Worcester) and Webster (20 miles). Route coverage is depicted in Figure III-16. The fixed route system basically serves the population within or going to the Worcester Urbanized Area. The 2010 Federal Census population for the entire 35 community WRTA service area is 509,764.

C.2.3 Ridership, Route Characteristics, Service Days/Hours

The WRTA has embarked on an aggressive campaign over the past three years to increase ridership, resulting in 2-3% increases in each year. In addition, they are on par to increase ridership by at least 3% in the current fiscal year. Overall, ridership has increased by 13% over the past four years.





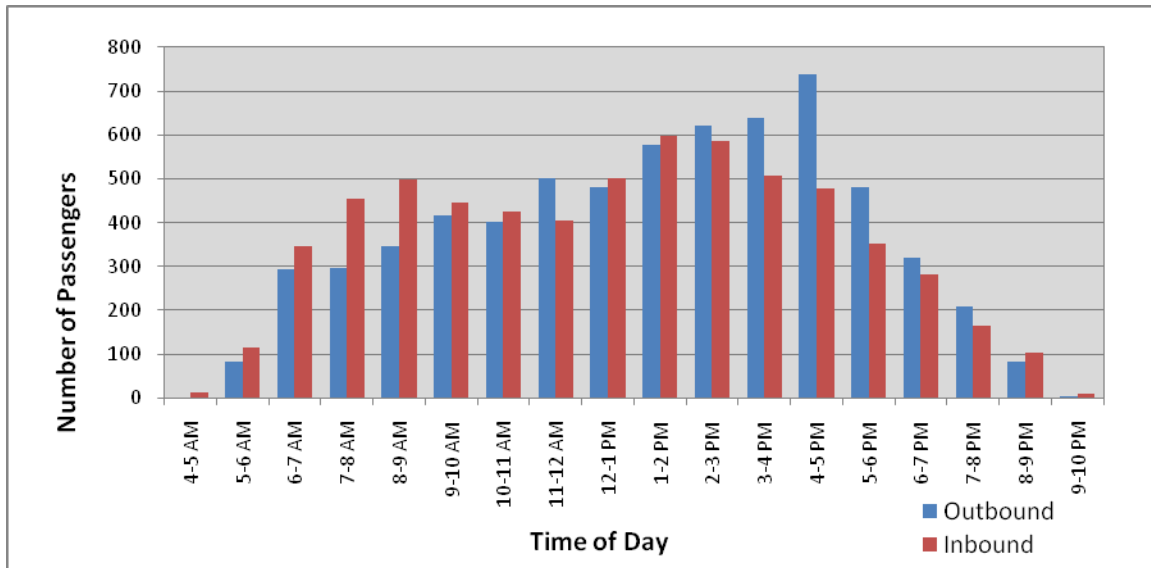
Seven day a week service is provided by the WRTA albeit to a lesser degree during the weekend time period, particularly on Sunday. The result of the most recent weekday driver surveys and ridership makeup is presented in Tables III-8. It should be noted that (in FY '11) Saturday service approximated 37% (in terms of passenger trips) of that provided during weekdays. Sunday service is approximately 12% of that provided on weekdays.

Table III-8
Weekday Passenger Ridership Makeup
(Driver Count – November 2010)

Route	Fare Category		Total	Ridership Makeup %	
	Full Fare	E&D		Full Fare	E&D
1	190	75	265	71.7	28.3
2	293	163	455	64.3	35.7
3	118	82	200	59.0	41.0
4	127	60	187	68.1	31.9
5	592	213	805	73.6	26.4
6	179	71	250	71.5	28.5
7	408	205	613	66.6	33.4
11	790	318	1,108	71.3	28.7
14	157	58	215	73.1	26.9
15	211	78	289	73.0	27.0
16	232	91	323	71.9	28.1
19	832	310	1,142	72.8	27.2
22	124	4	128	96.8	3.2
23	647	245	892	72.5	27.5
24	581	305	886	65.5	34.5
25	217	51	268	81.0	19.0
26	954	263	1,217	78.4	21.6
27	952	358	1,310	72.7	27.3
30	768	192	960	80.0	20.0
31	486	116	602	80.7	19.3
33	387	83	470	82.4	17.6
42	148	43	191	77.2	22.8
System	9,392	3,384	12,776	73.5	26.5

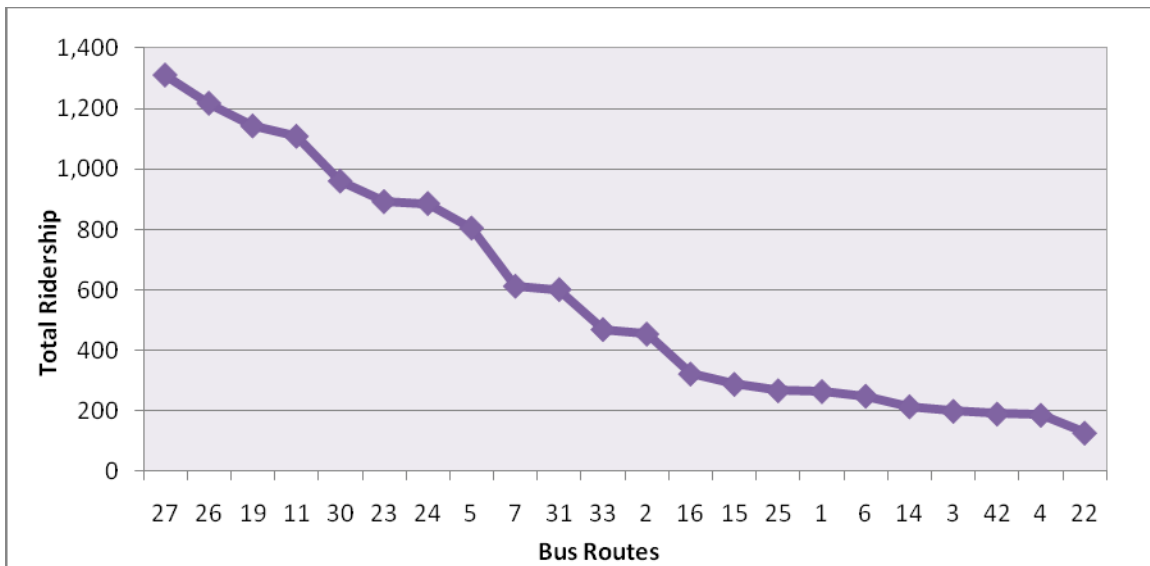
Weekday directional hourly ridership profiles are depicted in Figure III-17. As expected, ridership is highest inbound in the morning and outbound in the evening. What is perhaps more unusual is that ridership is generally at its highest from 1PM to 5PM, and that ridership remains high throughout the middle of the day.

Figure III-17
Weekday Directional Hourly Ridership Profiles
(Driver Count November 1, 2010)



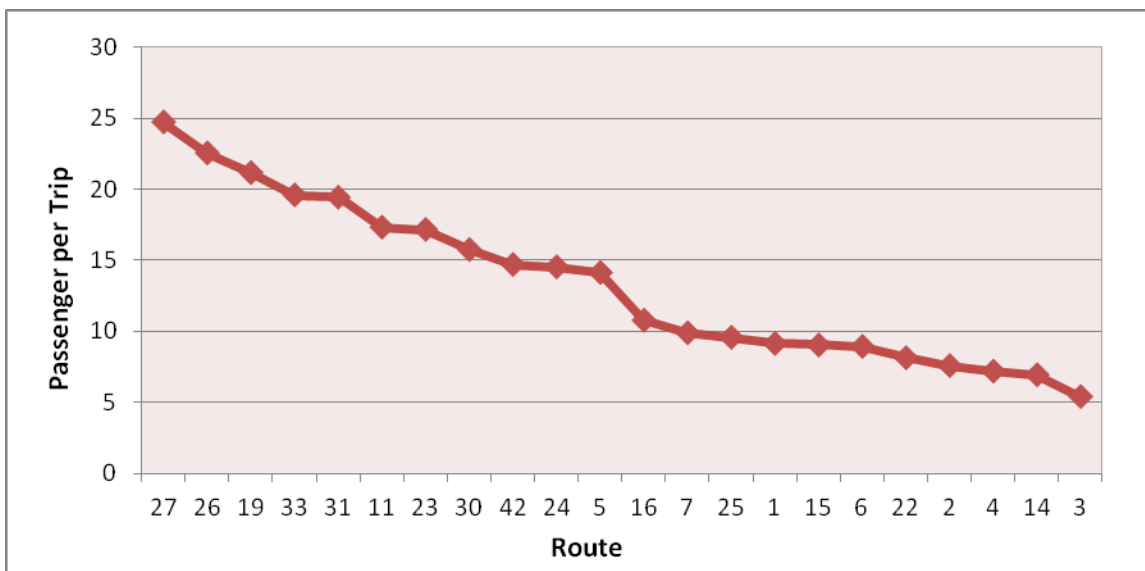
Weekday ridership by route is shown graphically in Figure III-18. It's important to note that most of the lower performing routes also have lower frequency of service and therefore less actual inbound/outbound trips. For this reason, it is also necessary to show the number of weekday passengers per trip by bus route which are depicted in Figure III-19.

Figure III-18
Weekday Ridership Makeup by Bus Route
(Driver Counts - November 1, 2010)



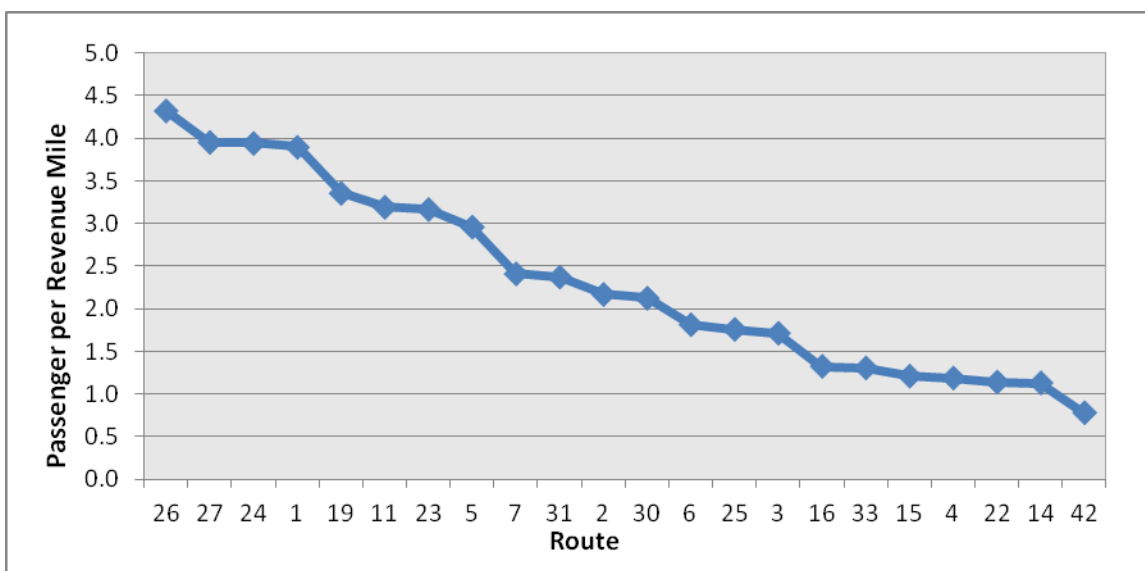
One of the lowest performing routes in terms of overall ridership is Route 42, however as can be seen below, Route 42 performs much better when you factor in that it also has lower frequency of service.

Figure III-19
Weekday Passengers per Trip by Bus Route
 (Driver Count - November 1, 2010)



Since cost of service is related not only to hours on the road, but also to miles of service, it is helpful to also consider the weekday passengers per mile by bus route, which are depicted in Figure III-20.

Figure III-20
Weekday Passengers per Revenue Mile by Bus Route
 (Driver Count - November 1, 2010)



Service hour extremes range from 4:55 A.M. to 9:50 P.M. on weekdays, from 5:50 A.M. to 9:47 P.M. on Saturdays and from 9:35 A.M. to 8:25 P.M. on Sundays. The hours of operation by route and day of week from the first A.M. trip (whether from inbound/Downtown terminus or outbound terminus) to its last P.M. trip are depicted in Table III-9.

Table III-9
Hours of Operation by Route and Day of Week
(Effective September 4, 2010)

Route	Description	Weekday		Saturday		Sunday	
1	Mt. St. Ann via Providence St.	6:00 AM	-- 8:20 PM	8:15 AM	-- 4:45 PM	10:30 AM	-- 5:10 PM
2	Tatnuck Square via Pleasant St.	5:45 AM	-- 8:55 PM	11:25 AM	-- 6:00 PM	11:30 AM	-- 6:30 PM
3	Worcester State University via Highland Street	5:15 AM	-- 9:25 PM	10:45 AM	-- 6:25 PM		
4	Shoppes at Blackstone Valley via Millbury Street	8:15 AM	-- 9:15 PM	10:00 AM	-- 6:00 PM	10:00 AM	-- 6:00 PM
5	SWCommons/Wheelock Avenue via Grafton Street	5:20 AM	-- 8:15 PM	10:30 AM	-- 5:20 PM	10:45 AM	-- 5:55 PM
6	West Tatnuck via Chandler St.	6:10 AM	-- 8:00 PM	7:00 AM	-- 8:50 PM		
7	Washington Heights Apts.	5:15 AM	-- 9:05 PM	6:15 AM	-- 9:20 PM	9:35 AM	-- 8:25 PM
11	Fair Plaza via Vernon Hill and Greenwood Street	5:00 AM	-- 9:10 PM	6:05 AM	-- 9:30 PM	12:00 AM	-- 7:30 PM
14	Showcase Cinemas/Holden via Burncoat Street	5:20 AM	-- 8:40 PM	10:45 AM	-- 6:10 PM		
15	Shrewsbury Center via Shrewsbury St. and Route 9	5:20 AM	-- 8:50 PM	11:35 AM	-- 5:25 PM		
16	Lincoln Plaza via Hamilton St. and Lake Avenue	6:00 AM	-- 9:30 PM	9:30 AM	-- 7:00 PM		
19	Worcester Airport/Leicester Wal-Mart via Main Street	4:55 AM	-- 8:30 PM	6:35 AM	-- 9:40 PM	11:00 AM	-- 7:00 PM
22	Millbury Center via Massasoit Road and Route 122A	Weekday Only Commuter Service (5:55 AM--8:45 AM; 1:10 PM--5:37 PM)					
23	Mountain Village via Lincoln St	5:25 AM	-- 9:00 PM	6:35 AM	-- 9:00 PM	12:00 AM	-- 7:30 PM
24	UMASS Medical Center via Belmont Street	5:45 AM	-- 9:50 PM	6:40 AM	-- 9:10 PM		
25	Auburn Industrial Park via Canterbury & Southbridge Sts.	6:30 AM	-- 8:20 PM	10:00 AM	-- 6:45 PM		
26	Great Brook Valley via Lincoln Street	5:35 AM	-- 9:05 PM	6:10 AM	-- 9:25 PM	10:08 AM	-- 8:25 PM
27	Auburn Mall via Main Street	5:35 AM	-- 9:20 PM	6:10 AM	-- 8:49 PM	10:30 AM	-- 6:30 PM
30	West Boylston Wal-Mart via Grove and West Boylston Sts.	5:35 AM	-- 9:05 PM	5:50 AM	-- 9:47 PM	11:00 AM	-- 6:25 PM
31	Lincoln Plaza via Grove and West Boylston Streets	5:00 AM	-- 8:55 PM	10:20 AM	-- 5:55 PM		
33	Worcester-Spencer-Brookfield via Main St./Rte. 9	5:10 AM	-- 9:06 PM				
34	George Booth Apts. via Belmont and Plantation Sts					10:00 AM	-- 8:00 PM
42	Worcester-Oxford-Webster via Southbridge St. & Rte 12	6:00 AM	-- 7:35 PM				

C.2.4 Route Combinations, Service Frequencies, Vehicle Requirements

Most routes are interlined in combination with one another for purposes of efficiency (it takes approximately 3-4 minutes to loop around the City Hall/Worcester Common area due to traffic signalization), passenger convenience (consideration is given to trip origin and destination patterns within the City of Worcester), and in recognition of air quality concerns and the commitment to mitigation measures.

Route combinations are determined/influenced by the demand for service on each route, the run time required by each route, and the desire to maintain clock headways. The size of the vehicles assigned to route combinations are primarily based on peak hour loadings (influenced heavily by school-related trip making) and roadway geometrics. The combinations for weekdays is presented in Tables III-10, along with the associated service frequencies and vehicle requirement. Combinations for Saturdays and Sundays vary.

Table III-10
Weekday Route Combinations/Service Frequencies/Vehicle Requirements
(Effective September 4, 2010)

Route Combination	Peak Period Frequency (minutes)	Vehicle Requirement	
		#	Size
1 / 16	60	2	35'
2 / 5	30	3	35'
30 / 3 / 6	20-40/60/60	4	40'
4	60	1	30'
7	30	2	30'
11 / 24	30	2	35'
14	60	1	40'
15	60	1	30'
19 / 23	35	4	40'
22	60	1	30'
26 / 27	35	4	40'
31 / 25	60	2	35'
33	>90	2	40'
42	120	1	40'
22 Routes Total		30	

Vehicle requirements, by category, by day of the week, are summarized in Table III-11. The fleet is 100% accessible with approximately 20 lift trips realized during a typical weekday.

Table III-11
***Peak Period Vehicle Requirement by Category by Day of Week**
 Effective September 4, 2010

Day of Week	30'	35'	40'	Total
Weekday	5	11	17	33**
Saturday	1	10	9	20
Sunday	2	3	7	12

* Peak Period Service operates between 8-10 A.M. and 4-6 P.M.

** Not including work and school related extras.

C.2.5 Fare Structure

A flat fare structure exists within the WRTA fixed route service area with adult fares costing \$1.50. The WRTA adopted this new flat fare structure in January 2009 when it increased fares from \$1.25 to \$1.50 and eliminated the four zones within the service area. Only two of the WRTA's routes operated over more than two zone changes and the administrative costs were more than the return.

Approximately 9% of all passenger trips involve a transfer (from one bus to another) for which there is a requirement of paying an additional \$1.50 fare. However, given the significant interlining of the route structure, approximately 17% of passengers travel from one bus route to another (essentially using the same bus) who escape this charge. In addition, passengers who will be making a return trip can purchase a one-day pass for \$3.50, thereby avoiding the charge for transferring to a different route.

Passenger fares have risen approximately 200% within the 1980-2010 time period – see Table III-12. However, while the base passenger fare has gone from \$.50 to \$1.50, passenger revenue as a percentage of total operating costs has decreased significantly over the same time frame, due to a more dramatic increase in operating costs.

Table III-12
Fare Changes FY '80 - FY '11

Year	Adult Fares* (\$)	Base Student Fare	# of Fare Zones	Transfer Fee (\$)
'80-'81	0.50-1.15	0.10	5	0
'82	0.60-1.25	0.30	5	0
'83	0.60-1.25	0.30	4	0.10
'84-'89	0.60-1.25	0.45	4	0.10
'90	0.75-1.75	0.45	5	0.25
'92-'96	0.75-1.75	0.75	5	0.25
'97-'01	1.00-1.75	0.75	4	0.25
'02-'09	1.25-2.00	N/A	4	0.25
'09-'11	1.50	N/A	1	N/A

* Elderly and Disabled (E&D) fares are 50% of the zonal adult fare throughout the day

As can be determined from Table III-13 passenger revenue made up 46% of the total operating cost in FY '84 but had decreased to 17% by FY'08. Over the past two years, the ratio of passenger revenue to operating costs has begun to increase again to 22%, partly due to the increase in fares, but also due to containment of costs and increasing ridership. It should be noted that a much lower revenue to cost ratio of 16.5% occurred in FY '05, but that year was abnormal given that there was a 67 day strike.

Table III-13
Operating Costs per Revenue Mile

Fiscal Year	Actual Revenue Miles	Operating Costs (\$)	Cost per Mile (\$)	Passenger Revenue (\$)	Passenger Revenue per Mile (\$)	Ratio of Revenue to Operating Costs
1980	1,963,279	4,918,116	2.51	2,014,221	1.03	40.96%
1990	2,032,367	7,788,300	3.83	2,676,639	1.32	34.37%
2000	2,160,419	11,463,970	4.93	3,047,684	1.41	28.60%
2001	2,232,221	12,137,140	5.17	3,455,628	1.56	30.22%
2002	2,109,332	12,063,441	5.56	3,160,108	1.52	27.34%
2003	1,918,455	12,779,151	6.41	3,062,027	1.60	24.98%
2004	1,616,082	12,243,796	7.24	2,559,374	1.60	22.06%
2005	1,290,845	11,423,516	8.51	1,811,904	1.40	16.49%
2006	1,546,451	12,957,085	8.04	2,502,893	1.68	20.13%
2007	1,557,080	13,352,596	8.25	2,373,636	1.52	18.48%
2008	1,568,224	14,089,605	9.20	2,461,007	1.57	17.07%
2009	1,562,176	14,173,204	9.39	2,718,538	1.74	18.53%
2010	1,522,274	14,262,021	9.06	2,966,352	1.95	21.51%

Actual revenue miles per NTD/Section 15 reports
Operating costs and revenue from Financial Statements

C.2.5.1 Net Operating Costs

The WRTA, similar to transit authorities throughout the country, operates at a substantial deficit. An issue facing the WRTA on a yearly basis is how to limit net operating costs such that the WRTA doesn't end the year with an unfunded net cost of service. This is problematic given that federal operating subsidies have been eliminated, local subsidies are constrained by Proposition 2 ½ and state contract assistance is capped and the amount is determined by the legislature in arrears.

Fixed costs (labor, health insurance, etc.) are the primary cause of the fixed route cost increases experienced by the Authority. In the past, inflation, along with the addition of paratransit services for new municipalities, were the primary causes of cost increases. Over the past four years, the WRTA has been somewhat successful in containing costs, in spite of significant increases in health care costs.

Net operating costs for both paratransit and fixed route services are depicted in Table III-14 and Figure III-21. Several measures have been taken by the Authority to limit fixed route costs since the 1980s including cutbacks in service, going out to bid on new fixed route service and the provision of existing suburban route service (#s 22, 32, 33, 42 and 110) by the Community

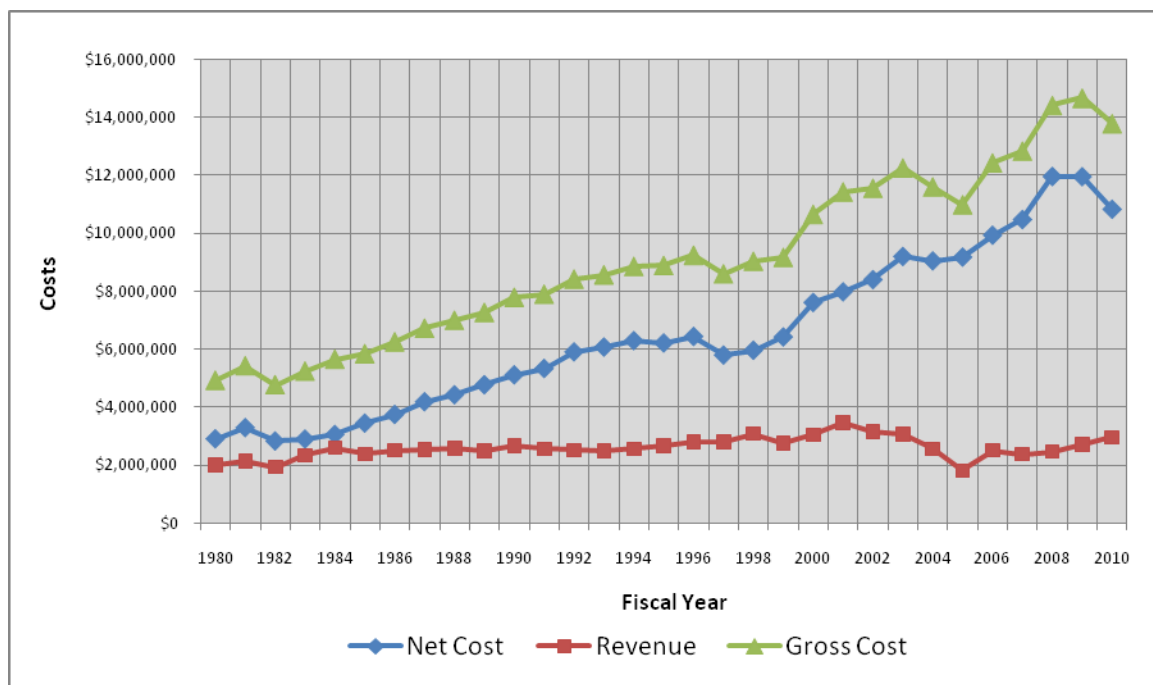
Division of RTA Transit Services, Inc. The Community Division has a separate collective bargaining agreement with a significantly lower associated wage rate than the City Division fixed route operators. Even with the above measures, fixed route operating costs have risen approximately 180% over the FY '80-FY '10 period. During the same 30-year timeframe, the corresponding increase in passenger revenue has been approximately 47%.

Table III-14
Comparison of WRTA Fixed Route and Paratransit Costs

Fiscal Year	Net Cost Fixed Route (\$)	% Fixed Route	Net Cost Paratransit (\$)	% Paratransit	Total Net Cost (\$)
1980	2,903,895	91.2	280,782	8.8	3,184,677
1990	5,111,661	77.0	1,525,404	23.0	6,637,065
2000	7,609,810	68.7	3,467,194	31.3	11,077,004
2001	7,977,514	66.5	4,026,096	33.5	12,003,610
2002	8,399,488	66.9	4,158,466	33.1	12,557,954
2003	9,198,152	67.2	4,483,205	32.8	13,681,357
2004	9,044,929	67.6	4,328,108	32.4	13,373,037
2005	9,176,467	68.1	4,300,599	31.9	13,477,066
2006	9,931,316	68.5	4,568,500	31.5	14,499,816
2007	10,471,109	70.0	4,484,748	30.0	14,955,857
2008	11,959,371	72.2	4,601,196	27.8	16,560,567
2009	11,953,055	74.2	4,145,361	25.8	16,098,416
2010	10,826,293	73.7	3,872,535	26.3	14,698,828

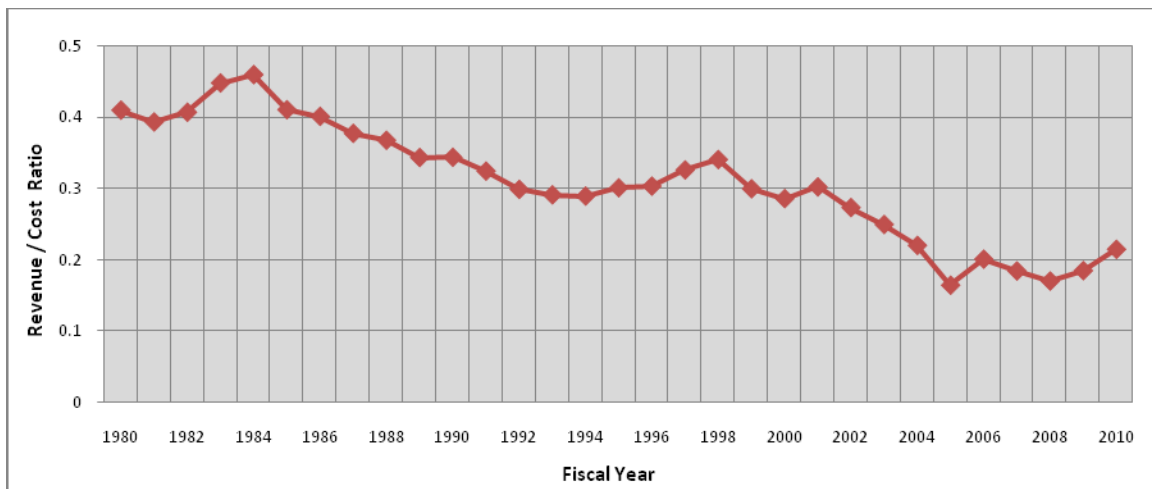
Source: McCarthy-Hargrave Certified Public Accountants
WRTA Annual Auditors Reports Fiscal Years 1980-2010

Figure III-21
Revenues and Costs of Fixed Route Service



As shown in Figure III-22 and in Table III-13 the revenue/cost ratio for fixed route service has decreased 49% over the time frame - from approximately 0.41 in FY '80 to approximately 0.21 in FY '10. Until two years ago, passenger revenues, even with fare increases, could not keep pace with operating costs. The WRTA has begun to contain operating cost increases over the past two years, and has experienced passenger growth in spite of a fare increase in January 2009- see Figure III-23.

Figure III-22
Revenue/Cost Ratio - Fixed Route Service for Fiscal Years 1980 thru 2010



Source: McCarthy-Hargrave Certified Public Accountants
WRTA Annual Auditors Reports Fiscal Years 1980-2010

Figure III-23
Net Operating Costs for Fiscal Years 1980 thru 2010
WRTA Fixed Route and Paratransit Services

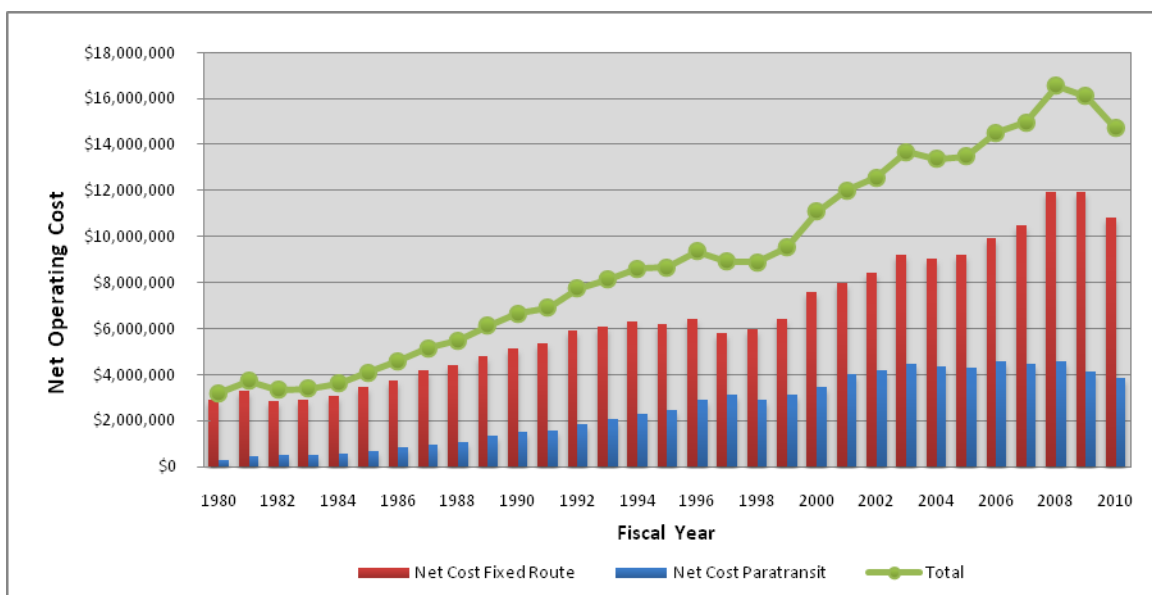
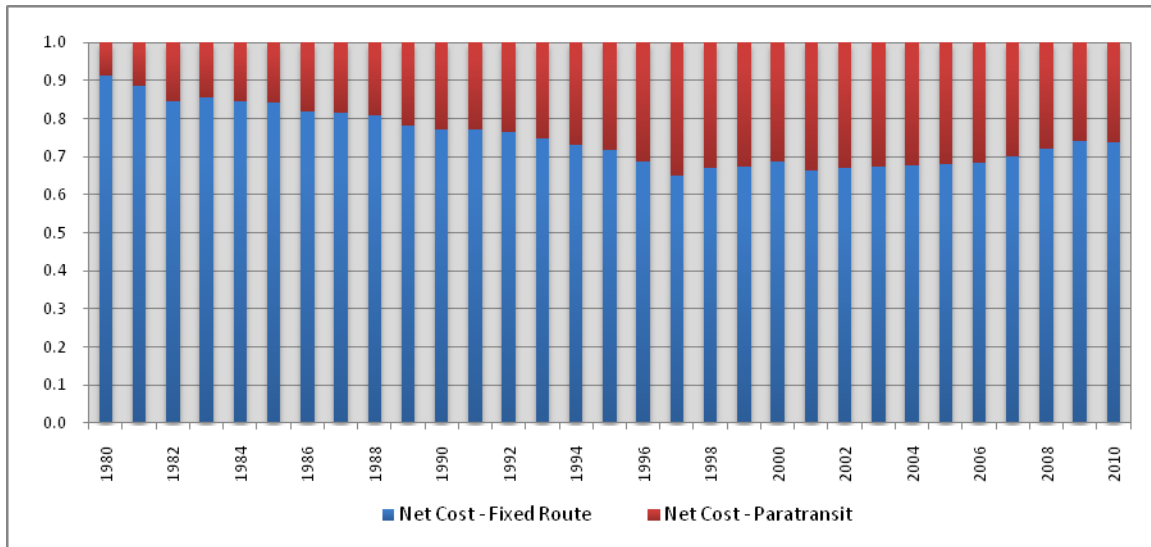


Figure III-24 depicts the fact that the fixed route – paratransit ratio of total operating costs have begun to drop back to a 75/25 split after rising for years to a 66/34 split. The paratransit component grew dramatically from 1980 when it only made up approximately 10% of total operating costs. The increase in paratransit costs primarily reflects the number of communities which joined the WRTA after 1980 for paratransit purposes, and then the rising cost of providing ADA services.

Figure III-24
Service Components of Total Operating Costs by Year



C.2.5.2 Subsidies

Given that federal operating monies were eliminated in the 1980s and the fact that local monies are constrained by Proposition 2½, there has been increasing reliance on the State to fund WRTA operations.

Table III-15 indicates the State’s share of the net cost of service over time. One can observe that the State’s share has increased from 50% in the early 80’s to nearly 84% in the early 90s, back to 72% in 2010. The rising cost of providing service, combined with the limitations of Proposition 2½ capping local assessments and State fiscal constraints on operating assistance result in the difficulty of even maintaining current levels of service.

Table III-15
State Share of Net Cost of Service

Year	Net Operating Deficit (\$)	State Share of Net Operating Deficit (\$)	%
2010	12,123,378	8,698,546	71.74
2009	12,128,761	8,814,942	72.68
2008	11,579,082	8,539,809	73.75
2007	10,977,851	8,022,400	73.08
2006	10,999,827	8,169,461	74.27
2005	10,663,763	7,937,139	74.43
2004	10,149,863	7,489,742	73.79
2003	9,931,449	7,336,209	73.87
2002	10,107,948	7,580,954	75.00
2001	9,798,782	7,336,209	74.87
2000	8,857,082	6,516,096	73.57
1993	7,541,535	6,301,860	83.56
1990	5,877,298	4,187,739	71.25
1980	1,656,480	828,240	50.00

Source: WRTA Year End Financial Statements prepared by McCarthy, Hargrave & Co.

C.2.6 Fleet Composition and Replacement

The composition of the fixed route fleet as of June 30, 2010 is presented in Table III-16.

Table III-16
WRTA Fixed Route Fleet Composition

Category	#	Year of Manufacture	Fuel Type	Seating Capacity	Standing Capacity	FY 2010 Mileage	Avg. Lifetime Mileage Per Vehicle
29', 35' and 40' Full Size Buses	5	1996	Diesel	43	10	137,225	494,257
	1	1996	Diesel	39	18	18,667	486,289
	4	1996	Diesel	35	8	94,945	508,750
	8	1997	Diesel	33	12	290,987	496,794
	3	1997	Diesel	39	18	65,541	480,780
	6	1998	Diesel	35	8	196,031	410,284
	3	1998	Diesel	43	10	68,148	397,496
	3	1998	Diesel	39	18	85,830	432,120
	2	2000	Diesel	35	8	60,287	357,084
	2	2008	Diesel	26	15	67,928	69,710
	6	2008	Diesel	38	20	253,017	84,589
	3	2009	Diesel	26	14	32,959	10,986
	8	2009	Diesel	38	18	109,658	13,707
	2	2009	Hybrid	26	14	21,644	10,822
	2	2009	Hybrid	38	18	28,515	14,258
Mini bus (24')	1	2003	Diesel	18	0	2,401	103,231
	3	2005	Diesel	18	0	20,345	82,622

Source: FY 2010 NTD/Section 15 Report

As can be determined, the average age of the above 29', 35' and 40' full-size bus fleet as of June 2010 was approximately 8.24 years and the average cumulative mileage per bus was approximately 297,000 miles. The average number of miles accumulated per year by vehicle for the above bus fleet was approximately 26K per year. All buses are wheelchair accessible.

A major concern in past years (as reflected in the '00, '03, and '07 Regional Transportation Plans) has been the adequacy of Federal Section 5307 monies to meet WRTA capital needs requirements. However, in contrast with both ISTEA and TEA 21, SAFETEA-LU Apportionment levels are significantly higher than either of the former and have allowed the WRTA to proceed with a very much needed fixed route replacement program. As noted above, the average age of the WRTA's full-size bus fleet as of June 2010 was 8.4 years, down from 9.1 years in 2007 and approximately 10 years in 2009. This is still above the generally accepted standard of 6.0 years which assumes that replacement buses are purchased on a regularly occurring one to four year basis, however the WRTA's fleet replacement program will continue for the next several years, and this will bring the age of the fleet into good condition.

C.2.7 Fixed Route Service Modifications

A number of revisions to the WRTA fixed route system have been considered/implemented over time as a result of reductions in operating assistance. The early and mid 2000s included reductions in service frequency, route consolidations, elimination of least productive routes, reductions in school trip extra service, the short-turning of certain routes, and a reduction in route deviations so as to decrease run times. The State's fiscal crisis precipitated two service reduction plans during the '02 and '03 fiscal years in addition to a general fare increase in the '03 fiscal year where the base adult fare rose from \$1.00 to \$1.25. The fiscal situation also led to a further service reduction plan (in the order of 15%) which took place in the '04 fiscal year. In addition, recommendations from a Comprehensive Service Redesign Study by the consultant Urbitran Associates were implemented in 2 phases over the '06-'07 time period. The changes basically reflect a reallocation of existing resources, particularly to shore up core services and eliminate several long-distance low performing routes.

Since 2007, the focus has been on re-structuring services to provide greater service efficiencies, while also providing new or increased service to major generators. The WRTA was able to take advantage of Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) funding to implement greater service to the WalMart in Leicester and the Shoppes at Blackstone Valley. In addition, services were re-structured to detour to the new Worcester WalMart when that opened in 2010. Geographically, routes have been combined where possible, while still maintaining some coverage to most areas of Worcester and the denser suburban areas. Notably, the northwest area of Worcester is no longer serviced by fixed route. When several low-performing routes were eliminated in this area, a flexible fixed route was instituted, but that also was cut due to low ridership.

In addition to the re-structuring noted above, over the past three years the WRTA has sought to more actively engage the community, including riders, community groups, colleges, and major employers. The WRTA, and its subcontractors, have met with many groups to re-introduce them to transit service and to better understand what is needed by each group. Where possible, routes

have been manipulated, in terms of timing or routing, to better service key destinations. In addition, informational materials have been tailored to each group, such as:

- Routing information for college students to get to key destinations, such as commuter rail;
- Combination schedules showing multiple routes for major employers;
- Employee address matching to provide personalized routing information;
- Improved opportunities for riders to obtain schedules and passes;
- Mapping of social service agency services in relation to the fixed route system;
- Training of personnel, particularly human resource and resident advisor staff, in using the bus; and
- Rider demonstrations on using the bus.

As noted earlier, these efforts have resulted in a significant increase in ridership in each year since 2007.

C.2.8 Fixed Facilities

While capital monies available to the WRTA are approximately 50% higher than in past years (\$8.5M in FFY '11 vs. \$5.3M in FFY '05), it also needs to be recognized that the WRTA has had to program capital funds as much as possible to preventive maintenance and ADA paratransit service (\$3.4M and \$0.9M respectively in FFY '10) in order to make up for limited state and local operating assistance.

Still, the higher federal capital funds have allowed the WRTA to tackle some important transit improvement efforts. One of the WRTA's recent capital expenditures is a "common branding" endeavor. Prior to this effort, the WRTA lacked a consistent branding that included a uniform color scheme for vehicles, haphazard bus stop signage, and literature that didn't follow a consistent template for easier reading. Under this new effort, the WRTA worked with Penta Communications to establish the following:

- A uniform coloring scheme for all buses, not just new buses that were purchased
- New and uniform replacement bus stop signage
- Literature (notices, schedules and maps) following a consistent format and color scheme
- A new WRTA logo and associated letterhead
- A revamped website to include the WRTA colors and logo, as well as non-English language interpretation

The WRTA has since seen a number of benefits with this common branding effort including passengers who find schedules easier to read, a more easy to navigate website and uniformly painted vehicles for easy identification.

In addition to branding efforts, the WRTA has also worked to improve environmental efforts. In addition to purchasing new diesel-hybrid buses to lower vehicle emissions and improve miles per gallon, the WRTA has worked to remediate as much as possible the environmental damages at its existing maintenance facility. WRTA and subcontractor staff participated in an FTA grant that allowed for extensive training in Environmental Management Systems techniques. This training not only has resulted in improved environmental conditions and reduced costs at the current

facility, but is also being factored into the design of new facilities. Further, the WRTA has participated in “Dump the Pump” programs to increase ridership, as well as the last three Earth Days at local, large employers promoting the environmental effects of transit use and their new vehicles.

In terms of fixed facilities, the WRTA’s largest effort is the design and construction of a new Maintenance and Operations facility to replace the existing garage and maintenance facility at 287 Grove Street. In FY 2010, the WRTA received a federal State of Good Repair grant of \$39 million, the second largest in the nation, to build the new facility. This new facility will be designed to LEED standards and will replace the functionally obsolete existing 77 year old facility and, more importantly, allow for the increased environmental mitigation at the Grove Street site once they have moved to the new location. The new site will be located closer to Union Station thereby decreasing deadhead travel time for more efficient operations.

In addition to the Maintenance and Operations facility, the WRTA is also in the process of designing a new bus “hub” at Union Station in Worcester. This new hub will be located on Foster Street next to the existing Peter Pan/Greyhound bus depot and, once complete, will provide easier intermodal connections to intercity bus (Peter Pan/Greyhound), intercity rail (Amtrak) and commuter rail (MBTA). The new hub will also include new administrative offices for the WRTA, customer service space, waiting areas, ticket/pass machines and restrooms. The facility will be able to hold eight full-size buses at a time and will also allow improved connections between fixed-route and paratransit service.

C.2.9 Technology

The WRTA is in the process of implementing a state-of-the-art technology system as the result of funding received from the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act. The new system, to be installed for both fixed route and paratransit systems, will include tools for improving the management of the system and tools for riders to obtain real-time information for trip planning and riding. Included in the implementation are:

- Automatic Vehicle Locator system
- Data Communications System
- Automatic Vehicle Announcements
- Automatic Passenger Counter System
- Dynamic Message Signs
- Traffic Signal Priority
- Maintenance Management System
- Web Interface for Real-Time Information

The system will begin to be deployed in Fall 2011 and will be completed in Summer 2012. Taken as a whole, the technology implementation will help the WRTA improve schedule reliability, reduce federal reporting costs, provide detailed information to assist in route planning, and assist the riding public in obtaining real-time information about their trip. Also, since the 2007 RTP, the WRTA has implemented a scheduling software program (HASTUS) to improve efficiency and has upgraded its telephone system to take advantage of new computer technology.

D. COORDINATED PARATRANSIT SERVICES

D.1 Introduction

The provision of public paratransit service in the Worcester area began in the 1970s primarily to meet the needs of elders. At that time, principal destinations included senior centers, grocery stores and local medical offices. Service was typically provided by the local Councils on Aging. Many communities joined the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) specifically to obtain funding for these services, although some communities, particularly in the Blackstone Valley, continued to fund them through local government sources.

With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, the provision of paratransit service became a civil right offered to all people with disabilities whose disabilities prevented them from using the fixed route (bus) service offered in their areas. By the time ADA was passed, most of the communities in the region offered some type of paratransit service, typically through a WRTA contract with the Councils on Aging, and still some others as a town service. In the WRTA fixed route service area, ADA formalized and expanded the level of paratransit service available. Though not federally required, the WRTA decided to continue the existing weekday service in communities outside of Worcester, where ADA service availability was limited to $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from fixed routes.

Trends in healthcare, technology, diversity, housing and community services during the last decade have improved overall mobility and life expectancy and created a shift in the provision of service to those individuals in their 70's and 80's and beyond. Changing demographics are creating a more diverse regional population. Housing trends and trends toward more community-based services have resulted in more people who are living independently in sprawling individual housing settings rather than in denser group facilities. Advances in medical technology, particularly in the early diagnosis and treatment of serious health issues, have created a larger demand for public transit for regimented medical treatments such as dialysis and chemotherapy. Compound regimented medical treatments with individuals who are increasingly older and frailer because of the extended period of decline that advances in medical technology have created, and the result is a widening gap in service between what public transit can provide due to funding versus what services individuals need. The challenge of reducing the gap will need to be addressed to meet current and future needs of more personalized service.

D.2 Impact of Federal Legislation and Coordination Efforts

D.2.1 ADA Law

The emphasis in paratransit planning shifted dramatically when the Americans with Disabilities Act passed in 1990. This powerful act has had far reaching implications for the WRTA and its services, particularly paratransit, and that trend is expected to continue into the foreseeable future. Before ADA, paratransit planning took a broader approach that emphasized "special efforts" in providing service not only for individuals with varying levels of limited functional mobility but also populations (particularly elders) whose circumstances could make them transit dependent even if their functional mobility allowed them to get around on their own. Often,

elders (even those without mobility limitations) need paratransit service because their other transportation options are either limited or non-existent.

In rural areas, there is little or no fixed route bus service because population densities are too low to support it. Often elders don't drive, nor do they have access to anyone else who can take them places on a regular basis. Even if they do drive, economic reasons may prevent them from owning a car or they may not feel confident driving in winter weather, in high traffic areas, or under the stress of traveling to or from medical appointments. Although taxi service may be available, limited incomes often make that option cost-prohibitive. In order to serve the transit dependent populations within both the disability (regardless of age) and the elderly ambulatory community throughout its service area, the WRTA paratransit system evolved to address the travel needs of both.

To understand the impact of ADA on this service model, it is helpful to understand the intent of ADA as civil rights legislation that narrowly mandates equal access for persons with disabilities. The amount of service required is based on a minimum standard of fixed route comparability for those persons whose disabilities prevent them from using fixed route systems. Although ADA service is available only to eligible individuals within the ADA service area, it is a costly service to provide and doesn't meet the full complement of transportation needs for either people with disabilities or elders. While the Federal government encourages planning for non-ADA needs, financial constraints on regional transit authorities generally limit the amount of general paratransit service that can be provided.

During its 30 years of funding mass transit service, the WRTA has been very responsive to regulatory changes and the growing demand for accessible service. In accordance with ADA, the WRTA equipped its entire fixed route bus fleet with ADA accessible lifts and implemented ADA compliant Complementary Paratransit Service for individuals whose disabilities prevent them from using the fixed route system. Although service requirements for ambulatory elders and non-ADA eligible individuals without disabilities are weaker and much less specific than those required for ADA eligible individuals, the WRTA has continually supported a level of non-ADA paratransit service for these populations - especially in WRTA communities where fixed route bus service and the accompanying ADA paratransit service is limited or non-existent.

D.2.2 Statewide Coordination Efforts

The second and concurrent driving force behind the region's paratransit evolution was a major effort by the MassDOT (formerly the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction) to make statewide coordination a reality. Throughout the 80's, MassDOT took the lead, and was assisted by regional planning agencies, in compiling what was then a patchwork of non-profit Council on Aging providers to coordinate with either RTAs or one another in areas where an RTA didn't exist. RTAs were the designated 'lead agencies' for their communities, statewide. Outside RTA service areas, MassDOT encouraged and supported effective non-profit agencies through the award of accessible vehicles and by providing technical assistance. These agencies were then designated "lead agencies" for non-RTA communities. Applicants seeking vehicles through the state Mobility Assistance Program were given priority if they coordinated with an RTA or MassDOT-designated lead agency. It should be noted that very few non-profit

transportation agencies are still in existence because although they were able to get vehicles through the Mobility Assistance Program, they were not able to generate funding to cover annual operating costs year after year.

Simultaneously, another effort was undertaken by MassDOT to encourage state human service agencies to coordinate their client transportation with RTAs. As a result, in 1988, under a Memorandum of Understanding between MassDOT and the Executive Office of Human Services (EOHS), the WRTA became a major provider of client transportation for the Department of Mental Retardation (DMR).

On and off since 1988, the WRTA has been under contract to provide client transportation for a variety of state human service agencies, including the Division of Medical Assistance, Department of Mental Retardation, and Department of Public Health. Issues associated with agency rates covering RTA costs or RTA costs exceeding what the state agencies were willing to pay for service has been an ongoing struggle and the WRTA has only provided limited human service transportation since 2002 because it is often not cost-effective.

D.3 Other Public Regional Providers

Traveling to other regions by public carriers is generally not possible except in the east direction. To the north, the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART) provides limited trips through its Human Services Coordination program and through a contract to provide veteran's services. The WRTA does not currently provide any service into the MART area, but has been working with MART and the Town of Barre to offer reciprocal paratransit services to residents in that area.

Service to the Rhode Island in the south is limited to one round trip daily on Peter Pan. The WRTA has not been approached about providing service in that direction. Fixed route service is currently provided to Webster, on the Connecticut border. The Northeast Connecticut Council of Governments (NECOG) operates fixed route shuttles in the northeast corner of Connecticut, a portion of which is in the Worcester Urbanized Area. NECOG reports that they have demand to go into Massachusetts, particularly for health care, and that they would like to pursue creating a connector service.

Under contract to the WRTA, S.C.M. Elderbus provides paratransit service to Palmer, Brimfield, and Wales to the west of the region, and provides limited tripmaking into communities that border the WRTA service area. There have been requests for fixed route bus service to connect to the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVRTA), but neither public agency has the resources to expand at this time.

Public service to the east is slightly more available, and also receives the highest demand at this time. The northeast subregion is the second largest home to jobs in the region, with one town, Westborough, employing more people than it has residents. This subregion is expecting high job growth between 2000 and 2035. The northeast subregion is the only subregion where jobs are expected to grow at a faster rate than population. The MBTA Commuter Rail service provides service to numerous communities to the east, although complementary fixed route feeder service is often not available except in Framingham and Boston. The WRTA and the MetroWest

Regional Transit Authority have a reciprocal arrangement to provide paratransit service in border communities to take advantage of each other's cost-efficiencies, depending on the details of each trip. Both agencies have discussed the need for fixed route service linkages along Route 9, which traverses the two regions, but funding has not been identified for this service. Both agencies are committed to finding ways to link services more in the future.

D.4 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

The Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization has prepared a Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. The Plan is a guiding document that focuses on the coordination of transportation services provided by public providers, human service agencies and private providers to eliminate duplication of services and identify where gaps in service exist to low-income individuals and people with disabilities.

Common problems recognized by commentors include:

- Limited service hours in the evening,
- Limited locations of service
- Limited or no access to employment in suburban locations
- Limited or no intermodal connections among various service providers
- Limited or no service to new shopping and/or recreational locations
- Limited ability for riders to obtain information about the full spectrum of services

Interestingly, duplication of service was limited among providers. This is likely because each of the providers transports a specific population who are typically separated by geographic distances.

D.5 WRTA Paratransit Services

The WRTA contracts with 10 Councils on Aging to provide paratransit service to 13 communities and one private non-profit agency to provide paratransit service to an additional 21 communities. While Council on Aging services have the distinct financial advantage of low overhead (administrative costs are often assumed by the Council on Aging/town), over time redundancies and inefficiencies in service were recognized. Often several WRTA vehicles were dropping off passengers to the same place, such as hospitals, and returning to their respective towns with little coordination among providers. In 2008, the WRTA Mobility Management Model was launched in an attempt to take advantage of the best of the Council on Aging model, but also to better coordinate services, particularly for out-of-town trips. The Model was designed to maximize efficiencies by utilizing the existing community infrastructure, including employees and vehicles, and pairing it with the WRTA's central paratransit brokerage office, PBSI, who would coordinate the services by providing call taking, scheduling, call backs and dispatching.

At the time, two communities offered to pilot the program. Now, two years later, the PBSI office coordinates service for seven communities including Worcester. The program's goal is to reduce operating costs by reducing the number of trips that PBSI must outsource to a local taxi company who is paid by the trip, while still providing at least the same level of service to communities.

When discussing paratransit service provided by the WRTA, it is necessary to separate service inside and outside Worcester. Due to the dominance of fixed route service offered in Worcester, the entire city has been blanketed with ADA level paratransit service. Outside Worcester, ADA level service is offered within a ¾ mile buffer within the hours and days of fixed route service but additional non-ADA level paratransit service is offered by the local Council on Aging. This additional service operates weekdays, typically 8:00am-4:00pm and provides an important local service to elders and people with disabilities in the towns who are typically more transit-dependent.

PBSI also continues to coordinate service for Eldershopper, a Worcester transportation service for grocery shopping. Over the years, as demographic changes in the elder population have occurred (including a higher rate of elders who remain independent and drive), the ridership on the Eldershopper has steadily decreased. In 2010, a decision was made to provide the service to a limited number of high-rise buildings in Worcester and serve a limited number of supermarkets. This difficult decision to reduce service has, in fact, resulted in cost and passenger efficiencies.

The WRTA has also been able to leverage the availability of paratransit service by receiving funding from New Freedom program to encourage more people to switch some of their trips to the more cost-effective fixed route system. WRTA has offered a Travel Training program free to all members of the public. The hope is that more people will be motivated to try using the fixed route service for some or all of their trips. Fixed route service is less expensive to use and offers the convenience of not needing to pre-schedule trips.

The WRTA has been successful in coordinating paratransit services with the neighboring MetroWest Regional Transit Authority. In a reciprocal arrangement, paratransit trips can be provided by MWRTA to WRTA paratransit customers who live in the WRTA service area but wish to enter the MWRTA service area. By entering a short distance into the neighboring transit authority's service area, each transit authority can serve people who otherwise may not be served.

Recognizing a gap in service in the SCM Elderbus service area, especially for people traveling to Worcester, New Freedom funds were used to provide midday paratransit service from the western area to Worcester. This service would be available for people traveling to Worcester, regardless of their trip purpose. Previously with no midday service, people would have to spend extended hours in Worcester before they could return to their own community.

In Jan 2009, the fare increased for all services including paratransit. While this is often met with negativity by the general public, people with disabilities and elders are often more impacted due to limited incomes. Nevertheless, the fare increase was implemented and did not cause a drop in ridership. It should be noted that this was the first fare increase since 2003, and only the second since the early 1990s.

Table III-17
WRTA Paratransit Services

Provider / Service	Service Area
PBSI brokers to RTA Van Division, private for-profit taxi & livery, SCM Elderbus , & Councils on Aging services	Brokers on behalf of Worcester, Auburn, Leicester, Northborough, Westborough, Boylston and Oxford and brokers ADA backup to the remaining WRTA towns
RTA Transit Services Van Division, ADA-level service	Worcester and backup to contiguous communities
SCM Elderbus, Inc. ADA-level service Non-ADA Service for elders and people with disabilities	The ADA service area along WRTA Bus Routes 19, 33 and 42. Barre, Brimfield, Brookfield, Charlton, Douglas, Dudley, East Brookfield, Holland, New Braintree, North Brookfield, Oakham, Princeton, Rutland, Southbridge, Spencer, Sturbridge, Sutton, Wales, Warren, Webster, and West Brookfield
Councils on Aging: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auburn CoA/Non-ADA &ADA • Clinton CoA/Non-ADA • Grafton CoA/Non-ADA • Holden CoA/Non-ADA &ADA • Leicester CoA/Non-ADA &ADA • Millbury CoA/Non-ADA &ADA • Northborough CoA/Non-ADA • Oxford CoA/Non-ADA &ADA • Shrewsbury CoA/Non-ADA &ADA • West Boylston CoA/Non-ADA &ADA 	Auburn Clinton, Berlin Grafton Holden Leicester Millbury Northborough, Westborough, Boylston Oxford Shrewsbury West Boylston

Table III-18
FY 2010 Operating Statistics for WRTA Paratransit Services

Name of Service	# of comm served	# of vehicles out at peak	Trips Ambulatory Elderly Passenger	Trips Disabled Passenger	Total Trips	Vehicle Mile	Vehicle Hour	Trip per Veh Hr	Net Cost per Trip
Auburn	1	2	4,345	1,661	6,006	26,156	2,431	2.47	\$5.33
Clinton	2	2	6,924	405	7,329	28,906	2,288	3.20	\$5.78
SCM Elderbus	21	17	18,752	10,636	29,388	351,905	20,415	1.44	\$27.18
Grafton	1	1	1,193	1,869	3,062	13,910	1,508	2.03	\$8.12
Holden	1	1	2,717	440	3,157	21,572	1,499	2.11	\$11.14
Leicester	1	1	3,356	385	3,741	12,074	1,222	3.06	\$6.33
Millbury	1	4	2,989	16,474	19,463	89,931	3,623	5.37	\$2.40
Northborough	3	3	494	4,347	4,841	49,822	3,190	1.52	\$12.64
Oxford	1	1	607	3,561	4,168	17,421	868	4.80	\$7.26
Shrewsbury	1	2	6,120	1,705	7,825	51,496	3,975	1.97	\$9.49
West Boylston	1	1	3,580	1,191	4,771	25,869	1,805	2.64	\$5.92
RTA Van Div'n		6	0	59,901	59,901	211,599	14,834	4.04	
Private Vendor		7	0	27,794	27,794	422,597	29,635	0.94	
Eldershopper	1	1	7,706	0	7,706	5,606	799	9.64	
Total		49	58,783	130,369	189,152	1,328,864	88,092	2.15	

Trip numbers do not include PCAs or companions
Clinton serves Clinton and Berlin
SCM Elderbus provides regional transportation services to 21 communities
Northborough serves Northborough, Westborough and Boylston

While overall costs of providing paratransit continue to escalate, ridership trends show a decrease in trip making. It is unclear whether this is due to a reduction in the number of people using the service, a reduction in the number service hours, an improvement in the fixed route service, the expansion of WRTA's Travel Training program or any other factor. The answer may be different depending on the area served, the service hours offered, additional local resources, the size of the ADA paratransit service area or a host of other possibilities.

It should be mentioned that in FY10, 72% of paratransit trips were for people with disabilities. This is a notable increase from FY06 when 58% of paratransit trips were for people with disabilities.

D.6 Local Councils on Aging

While the WRTA service area covers much of Central Massachusetts, most communities in the Blackstone Valley and the town of Paxton are not members. Paxton's ambulatory elders are served by the Council on Aging. Paxton residents requiring a lift-equipped vehicle are served by SCM Elderbus through a contract agreement.

The seven contiguous Blackstone Valley communities that do not belong to the WRTA (Upton, Northbridge, Uxbridge, Mendon, Hopedale, Millville, & Blackstone) either operate their own

van or receive paratransit service from non-WRTA operators, usually through the town's Council on Aging. Councils vary in their service but generally operate two to five days a week between 9:00am and 4:00pm. The Mendon Council on Aging recently received a new van through the State's Mobility Assistance Program to replace a well used vehicle in poor condition. Council on Aging services are typically available only to serve their own client trip needs and often that service is inadequate. Currently, service does not exist for the general public, for people with disabilities (except if they are elderly) or for the transportation disadvantaged. An ongoing issue for towns in the Blackstone Valley is the need to provide long distance medical trips, especially to Worcester, Framingham and Boston.

D.7 Private Non-Profit Services

A few Blackstone Valley private non-profit agencies serve their own clients. Blackstone Valley Multi-Human Service Agency and Beaumont Adult Day Health Center operate small fleets to transport their own clients to and from programs during their limited program hours.

While many non-profit social service agencies have found the provision of transportation service cost prohibitive, two agencies, primarily serving City of Worcester residents, are still in existence. Most of their trips involve many individuals to one destination (like nutrition sites or social day care) and are agency funded for specific clients. With the exception of cab trips provided by Elder Services of the Worcester area, very few public demand response/dial-a-ride (one to one) trips are provided due to cost.

In FY'10 Elder Services of Worcester funded over 15,177 cab rides for low-income elder clients. They also provide Adult Day Health transportation to the New England Dream Center, Meals on Wheels services to shut-ins, and transportation to Worcester Senior Center programs for Worcester residents. In combination with the Jewish Community Center, they play an important role in the Worcester transportation picture.

The Jewish Community Center, another multi-elder service agency, also operates a transportation service open to Worcester elders. Trip purposes served include adult day health, nutrition and medical trips. Service is available Monday through Friday from 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. No fare is charged.

The Central Massachusetts Area Agency on Aging funds the following programs that extend additional paratransit transportation throughout Worcester County. As previously noted, a grant to the Blackstone Valley Transportation Consortium provided 386 one-way long distance medical trips to the Framingham/Natick area in Fiscal Year '10. In 2010, the Massachusetts Association for the Blind provided 782 one-way trips (primarily to Boston) for 42 of their clients. Tri-Valley Elder Services provided 212 one-way trips to 63 of their clients.

D.8 Human Services Contracting

Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART), the current Central Massachusetts human service transportation broker, provided approximately 415,000 trips for the region during FY'10. Statewide, the Departments of Mental Retardation, Public Health, and Medical Assistance coordinate human services transportation by contracting with a single entity for the brokering of

the service. The broker uses numerous private entities, including those discussed in the next section, for that actual provision of service. For the past five years, MART has held that contract, but a new Request for Proposals (RFP) is expected to be issued in January.

D.9 Regional Private For-Profit Services

Central Massachusetts provides origin to destination service through the use of taxi, limousine, ambulance and charter service to the general population using both accessible and inaccessible vehicles. They range from highly specialized service like for people who need medical transportation or people who need assistance to upper floors of walkup buildings to curb-to-curb service offered by a charter bus. Only one of the taxi companies offers wheelchair accessible taxi service. They provided a total of 1,910 accessible trips during 2010.

Below is a listing of regional private for-profit taxi, limousine, ambulance and charter bus services in Central Massachusetts.

Taxi Services

Auburn Taxi	Sunshine Taxi
Blackstone Valley Taxi	Town Taxi
Grafton Taxi	Uxbridge Taxi
Millbury Taxi	Westboro Taxi
Red Cab*	Worcester Yellow Cab

*Accessible vehicles

Regional Private For-Profit Ambulance Services

Alert Ambulance Service, Inc.	Am-B-Care
Am-B-Chair Personal Transport	American Medical Response
Eascare	K Ambulance Service
Lifeline Ambulance	Medstar Ambulance
North Brookfield Emergency Squad, Inc.	Pathways Ambulance Service
Patriot Ambulance Service, Inc.	Quality Chairvan Service, Inc.
Spencer Rescue Squad, Inc.	

Regional Private For-Profit Limousine Services

AA Transportation Co, Inc.	A Limo Affair
A Perfect Limo	Airport Connection
Airports Unlimited	All Rolls Royce Limousines
Blackstone Valley Limousine Service	Cadillac Limousine
Car-A-Long	Comfort Limousine
Delta Limousine	Early's Custom Limousine
Ecua Limo	Edwards Limousine Service
Ekeh Transportation and Limo Services	Elegant Touch Limousine Service
Eric's Limousine Service	Executive Center Limousine Service
First Choice Limousine	Flicks Limousine Service
Fuller VIP Coach	Gold Limo Service
High Class Limo Service	Joey's Limousine Service

Knight's Airport Limousine Service
Max Silverman's Classic Limousines
New Worcester Limousine Service
Prescott Coach
Princeton Limousine
Reliable Ride
Smart Limousine Service
Supreme Transportation
Transportation Unlimited
Worcester Airport Limousine

Lewis and Lewis Limo
Mirage Limousine
Pegasus Limousine Service, Inc.
Prestige Limousine
Professional Limousine Service
Ritchie Bus Lines, Inc.
Sully's Limousine
Traditions Limousine Service, Inc.
Wellesley Hills Limousine

Private For-Profit Bus Companies

AA Transportation Co, Inc
Bloom Bus Lines, Inc
Conway Bus Service
First Student
Fuller VIP Coach
Laidlaw Transit
New York City Express
Ritchie Bus Lines, Inc
Wilson Charter and Tours

Atlantic Express Transportation
Buckingham Bus Co
County Cab
Fox Bus Lines
Holiday Charter Services, Inc
Lizak Motor Coach Service
Peter Pan Bus Lines
US Coachways