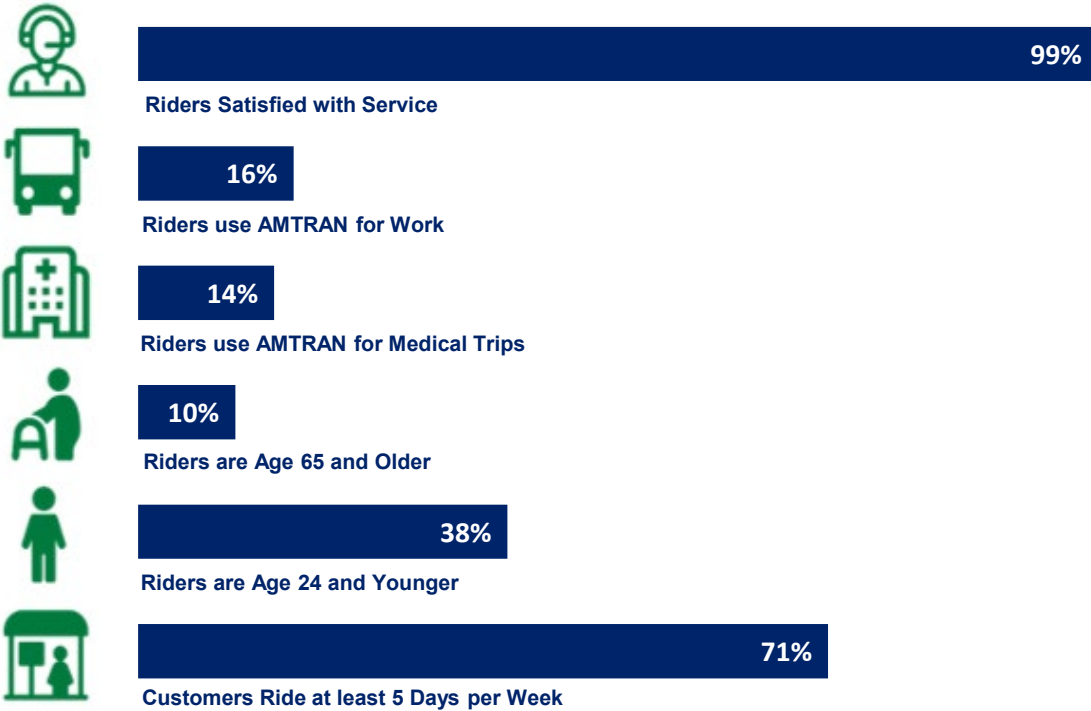




**FIXED-ROUTE RIDER PROFILE**



Source: 2019 Customer Satisfaction Survey

**COMMUNITY IMPACTS**

**SOCIAL**

**430,649** Fixed-Route Bus Trips (FYE 2022)

**384** Annual Trips per Rider (FYE 2019)      **2,014** Annual Miles per Rider (FYE 2019)

**5,048** ADA Van Paratransit Trips (FYE 2022)

**On-Time Performance (FYE 2022)**  
**87%** Fixed-Route Bus On-Time Performance

**COMMUNITY IMPACTS**

**ECONOMIC**



**\$3.2M** Spent doing Business With Pennsylvania Vendors (FYE 2021)







**\$1.5M** Operator Salaries & Wages (FYE 2022)

**\$28.22** Average Fixed-Route Hourly Driver Wage (FYE 2022)

Sources: dotGrants and Agency Reporting

**ACT 44 PERFORMANCE METRICS**

	TARGET (2021)	ACTUAL (2021)	CURRENT (2022)	FUTURE (2027)
 <p><b>INCREASE</b> <b>Passengers / RVH</b></p>	<b>16.05</b>	<b>6.97</b>	<b>9.43</b>	<b>9.67</b>
 <p><b>CONTAIN</b> <b>Operating Cost / RVH</b></p>	<b>\$154.82</b>	<b>\$123.47</b>	<b>\$126.13</b>	<b>\$146.22</b>
 <p><b>INCREASE</b> <b>Operating Revenue / RVH</b></p>	<b>\$21.71</b>	<b>\$12.80</b>	<b>\$14.90</b>	<b>\$17.28</b>
 <p><b>INCREASE</b> <b>Operating Cost / Passenger</b></p>	<b>\$9.65</b>	<b>\$17.71</b>	<b>\$13.38</b>	<b>\$15.13</b>

Note: AMTRAN began to experience the impacts of COVID-19 on ridership, revenue, and operating costs in March 2020.

**BEST PRACTICES**

- The 65<sup>th</sup> birthday card program registers 15 to 20 new monthly senior sign-ups
- Tracks monthly fuel costs by fuel type
- Well-documented maintenance plan
- Implemented a preventative maintenance digital board to track upcoming repairs
- Provides a quarterly dashboard report for the Board

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

- Create a comprehensive marketing strategy
- Consider a PR campaign to raise awareness of TDP service changes
- Continue to seek new revenue agreements
- Engage new municipalities requesting bus service for local match support

**ALTOONA METRO TRANSIT (AMTRAN)  
PERFORMANCE REVIEW EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



Other Fixed-Route Performance Statistics	FYE 2017	FYE 2022
Operating Revenue / Operating Cost	17.3%	11.8%
Operating Cost / Total Vehicle-Hours	\$100.24	\$124.81
Operating Cost / Total Vehicle-Miles	\$8.65	\$10.60
Total Passengers / Total Vehicle-Hours	12.63	9.33
Operating Cost / RVM	\$8.94	\$10.65
RVM / Total Vehicle-Miles	96.8%	99.5%
RVH / Total Vehicle-Hours	89.3%	99.0%
Operating Subsidy / Passenger Trips	\$6.56	\$11.80
Farebox Recovery	13.4%	9.7%

Note: Does not include ADA Paratransit Operating Statistics

Fixed-Route Annual Operating Statistics	FYE 2017	FYE 2022
Vehicles in Maximum Service (VOMS)	21	21
Operating Cost	\$4,425,704	\$5,760,704
Operating Revenues	\$766,033	\$680,635
Operating Subsidies	\$3,659,671	\$5,080,069
Total (Actual) Vehicle-Miles	511,645	543,563
Revenue Vehicle-Miles (RVM)	495,313	540,926
Total Vehicle-Hours	44,153	46,156
Revenue Vehicle-Hours (RVH)	39,445	45,671
Total Passenger Trips	557,710	430,649
Senior Passenger Trips	69,831	66,843

Note: Does not include ADA Paratransit Operating Statistics



AMTRAN CNG Fixed-Route Bus with Bike Rack

**AGENCY TRENDS**



**Serious Injuries**

**0.0**

Crashes per Million Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)



**Total Fleet**

**27**

VOMS



**Heavy-Duty Bus**

**24,200**

Estimated Annual Miles Per Bus



**Van**

**130**

Estimated Annual Miles Per Van



**Light-Duty Small Bus**

**N/A**

Estimated Annual Miles Per Bus



**Spare Vehicle Ratio**

**81%**

Fixed-Route Bus

**100%**

Shared-Ride Small Bus/Van

Source: Capital Planning Tool and dotGrants Reporting

**HIGH-LEVEL FINANCIAL INDICATORS**

**FYE 2017**

**98.9%**

**FYE 2022**

**54.6%**



**Cash Equivalent Balance / Total Operating Expenses**

**FYE 2017**

**\$1.23**

**FYE 2022**

**\$1.29**



**Effective Fare (Total Fare Revenue / Passenger Boardings)**

Source: dotGrants Reporting





# Performance Report

January 23, 2023

*Transit Performance Review*

**Transportation and Motor Buses for  
Public Use Authority  
(d.b.a., amtran)**

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## Preface

**Pennsylvania law requires transit agency performance reviews and five-year performance targets to improve efficiency and effectiveness of service**

**COVID-19: Transit-dependent populations are bearing a heavy burden**

**Transit agencies are navigating new demands, lower ridership, and higher costs**

**PennDOT will reevaluate performance targets when long-term impacts of the pandemic are known**

Act 44 of 2007 and Act 89 of 2013 increased funding for public transportation in Pennsylvania. The laws also required transit agencies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery through increased ridership, revenue, and cost containment. PennDOT evaluates every fixed-route transit agency in the Commonwealth through a performance review at least once every five years to determine how well the agency satisfies these requirements. Act 44 also requires PennDOT to develop five-year performance targets for each agency as part of the performance review process.

Beginning in February 2020, COVID-19 caused significant social and economic disruptions as workplaces closed and people limited travel and gatherings to reduce the spread of the disease. The adverse impacts throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania were profound. The health and unemployment effects of COVID-19 disproportionately impacted senior, disabled, and low-income populations. These individuals also rely heavily on public transportation to meet their essential travel needs.

The impacts of COVID-19 on the public transportation industry were also severe. Ridership decreased by more than 90 percent at some agencies during April 2020. Revenues dropped as agencies opted to waive fares to limit bus driver interactions and possible disease transmission from the handling of tickets and currency. Agencies increased the frequency and extent of bus cleaning, which increased operating costs. Some agencies furloughed drivers as they reduced service in response to plummeting passenger demand.

By late Summer 2020, transit agencies had begun to stabilize from the initial impacts of COVID-19, only to have statewide infection rates soar in the fall and winter. As of August 2022, the pandemic is ongoing, and its long-term effects on transit remain unknown. Social distancing guidelines could cause transit agencies to limit the number of passengers on buses and rail for years. Many of the ridership, revenue, and operating cost trends used to develop this transit performance review report, including five-year performance targets, rely on information that predates the pandemic. PennDOT will continue to monitor the impacts of COVID-19 and reassess the transit agency's five-year performance targets when the long-term effects of the pandemic are known. If the performance targets are revised, they will be published as an addendum to this report.

# Introduction

## Purpose

Act 44 requires local transportation organizations that receive state operating assistance to participate in periodic reviews to assess agency performance. PennDOT established a framework for conducting performance reviews with local transportation organizations to:

- Assess efficiency and effectiveness of service, financial stability, and general management/business practices;
- Agree to five-year targets for the Act 44-mandated performance criteria;
- Assist agencies in developing an action plan to address opportunities for improvement and to achieve performance targets;
- Provide technical assistance to help implement the plan at the request of the transportation organization; and
- Reassess each organization on a five-year cycle.

The reassessment at the end of each five-year cycle is to evaluate:

- Whether the organization met the agreed-upon performance targets; and
- The sufficiency and effectiveness of actions taken by the organization to improve performance and management practices in its efforts to meet performance targets.

This report presents the review of the Altoona Metro Transit (AMTRAN) on March 23, 2022.

## Performance Review Process Steps

The performance review process is a collaborative effort between the transit agency and PennDOT.

As shown in **Exhibit 1**, the performance review process assesses AMTRAN'S unique challenges, changes since the previous performance review, the accuracy and reliability of reported data, implemented practices, additional opportunities for improvement, and realistic targets to attain before the next review.



## Exhibit 1. Performance Review Process Steps

Key to Responsibilities:    **PennDOT**    **PennDOT + Transit Agency**    **Transit Agency**

<b>1.</b>	Notify agency of performance review schedule and request supporting documents.
<b>2.</b>	Review available data and request additional information.
<b>3.</b>	Agree upon a set of peer agencies for comparison.
<b>4.</b>	Review the most recent customer satisfaction survey.
<b>5.</b>	Assess Act 44 variables, including current performance, targets from the previous review, and Action Plan implementation.
<b>6.</b>	Conduct Act 44 performance criteria analysis.
<b>7.</b>	Interview agency management, staff, and governing body.
<b>8.</b>	Perform supplementary data collection and reconciliation.
<b>9.</b>	Evaluate performance, financial management, and operations.
<b>10.</b>	Report results and determine agency compliance with performance requirements.
<b>11.</b>	Develop the performance report.
<b>12.</b>	Develop, implement, and monitor a five-year Action Plan.
<b>13.</b>	Provide technical assistance, if required, to help meet five-year performance targets.



## Agency Overview

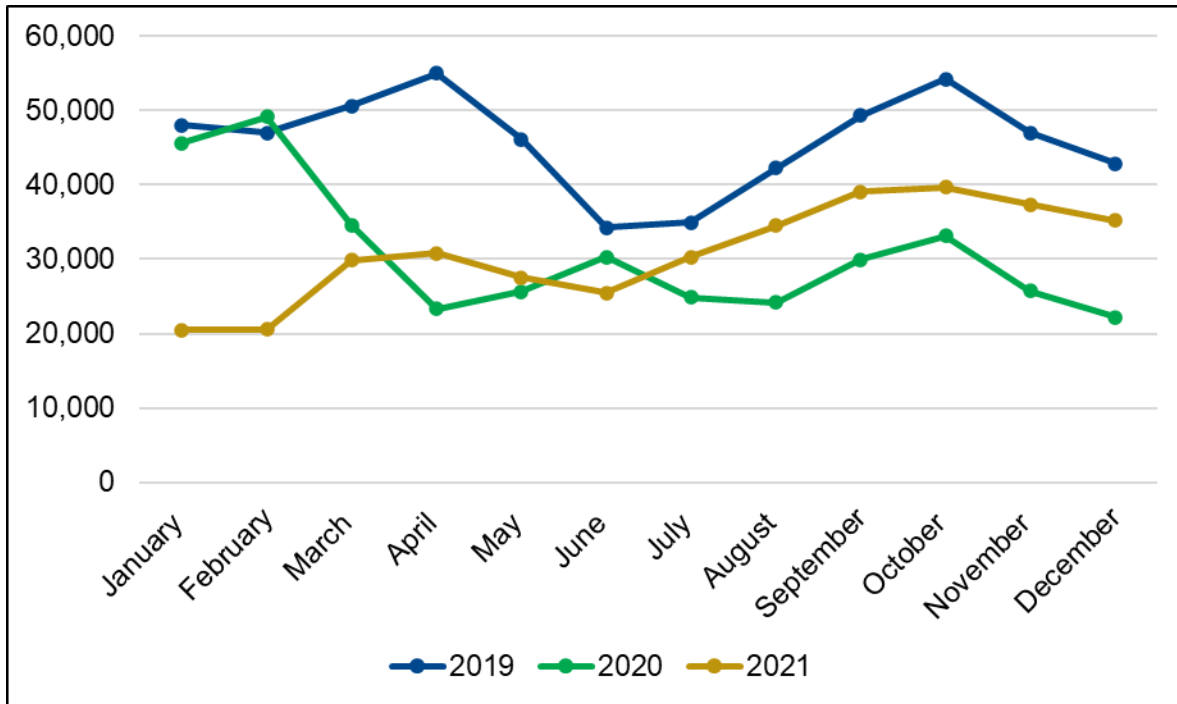
AMTRAN is an urban transit agency based in Blair County, PA. AMTRAN provides fixed-route (**Exhibit 2**) and demand-response bus service within the City of Altoona and surrounding municipalities. Established in 1958, AMTRAN is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the City of Altoona and other, surrounding local municipalities.

### Exhibit 2. AMTRAN Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) Bus with Bike Rack



In Fiscal Year 2020-21, AMTRAN had 21 fixed-route vehicles operated in maximum service (VOMS) and provided 314,830 total fixed-route passenger trips. AMTRAN has 12 VOMS sub-contracted and directly operates one VOMS for demand-response service and delivered 5,321 ADA-complementary trips. Like most transit systems nationally and across Pennsylvania, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted AMTRAN's ridership beginning in March 2020. Monthly fixed-route ridership through 2021 increased slightly above 2020 levels (**Exhibit 3**).

**Exhibit 3. Monthly Fixed-Route Ridership, January 2019 through December 2021**



## Community Impacts

**Public transportation is a vital service to the community. It provides mobility options and increases access to jobs, medical facilities, food stores, schools, and other economic destinations.**

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the critical nature of public transportation to individuals and their communities. Essential workers and those most reliant on public transportation services continue to ride throughout the pandemic while many former commuters with professional services jobs continue remote work.

Transportation equity has become a central theme as agencies invest in their core services, where ridership has continued throughout the pandemic. The performance review process assesses equity by measuring the economic and social impacts of public transportation to the community.

### Customer Satisfaction Survey

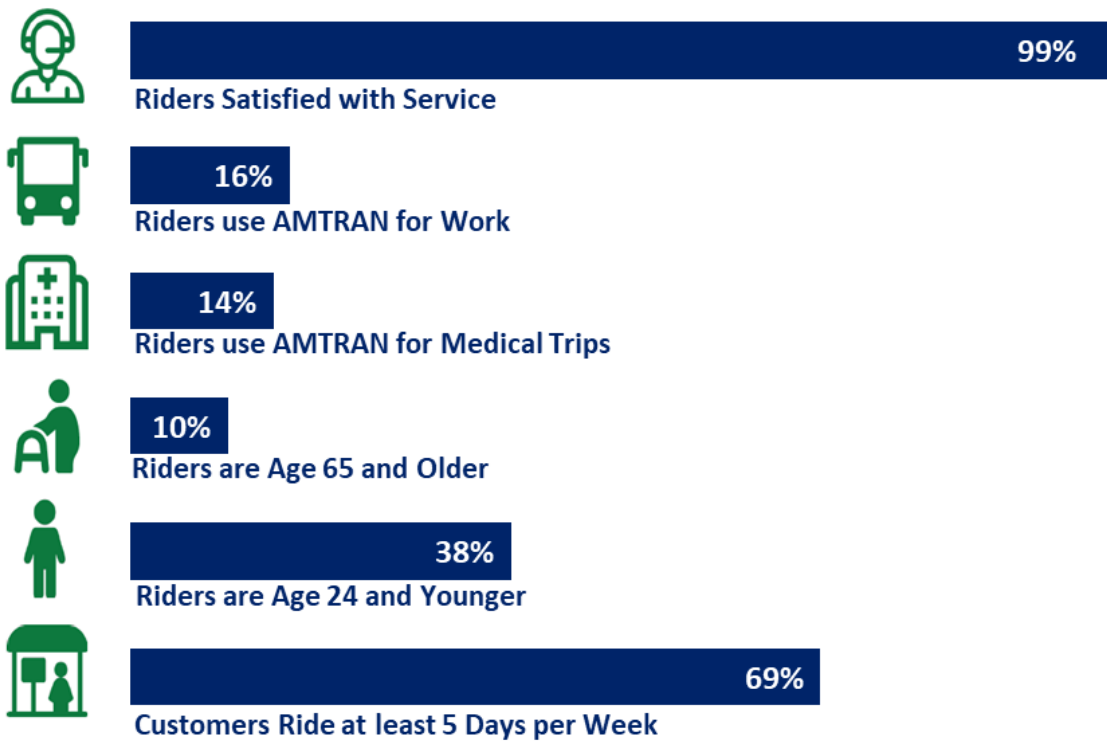
In April 2019, AMTRAN conducted a fixed-route service customer satisfaction survey (CSS). Based on the number of respondents and the results of the survey, the total number of individual riders is estimated to be between 1,100 and 1,800 with a margin of error less than 4.3 percent, for an average of 1,450 individual riders.

The survey results were aggregated to determine average satisfaction scores. Top-ranked measures included: safe and competent drivers, helpfulness of employees, and driver courtesy and friendliness. Lowest-ranked measures included: cleanliness inside of buses, comfort at bus stops, and comfortable bus seats.

### AMTRAN Rider Profile

The CSS provides insight into rider characteristics and preferences. The results showed that AMTRAN’s services are essential to its riders, with 61 percent indicating they do not have an alternate form of transportation. The vast majority of AMTRAN riders, 92 percent, access the fixed route network by walking to a bus stop. The primary rider uses of fixed-route service include accessing education at 37 percent, shopping at 18 percent, and work commuting at 16 percent. Further AMTRAN rider characteristics are shown below in **Exhibit 4**.

#### Exhibit 4. Fixed-Route Rider Profile



Source: 2019 AMTRAN Customer Satisfaction Survey Report; Data Centric Services

## Economic and Social Impacts

AMTRAN benefits the local economy and the communities it serves through the expenditure of public funds and fare revenue that directly support jobs in transit operations and indirectly by purchasing services and goods (**Exhibit 5**).

In FYE 2021, AMTRAN paid \$3.2 million to Pennsylvania-based businesses for various services and purchased goods to support operating activities. AMTRAN spent \$2.3 million in total wages: \$1.5 million for drivers, \$505,354 for maintenance personnel, and \$344,086 for general administration staff. AMTRAN currently employs 49 individuals. There are 23 full-time and seven part-time bus operators. AMTRAN had an average fixed-route driver wage of \$27.14 per hour in FYE 2021, which is roughly equal to an annual income of \$56,400.

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### Fixed-route customers rode AMTRAN for 1.6 million passenger-miles in FYE 2021.

---

A significant portion of AMTRAN's ridership occurs during the school year from tripper service provided to the Altoona Area School District and campus service for Penn State Altoona. Based on an estimated 1,450 pre-pandemic unique riders and the total of 2.9 million passenger-miles, each fixed-route passenger took an average of 384 trips and

rode AMTRAN for 2,014 total miles during FYE 2019. AMTRAN reported 1.6 million fixed-route passenger-miles as of FYE 2021 and had 87 percent on-time<sup>1</sup> bus departures exceeding its goal of 80 percent.

In FYE 2021, AMTRAN provided 75 Saturday ADA paratransit trips. AMTRAN contracts with Blair Senior Services for weekday ADA paratransit services. Blair Senior Services is the shared-ride service provider in Blair County. There were 5,246 subcontracted ADA paratransit trips in FYE 2021.

---

<sup>1</sup> On-time performance is a service reliability measure based on when a vehicle arrives within a certain range of its scheduled arrival. AMTRAN defines on-time as zero minutes early and no more than four minutes late of the scheduled arrival time at a stop.

**Exhibit 5. Economic and Social Measures**

**ECONOMIC**



**\$3.2M** Spent doing Business  
With Pennsylvania Vendors (FYE 2021)



**\$1.5M** Operator Salaries & Wages (FYE 2021)

**\$27.14** Average Fixed-Route Hourly Driver Wage (FYE 2021)

**SOCIAL**



**314,830** Fixed-Route Trips (FYE 2021)



**384**  
Annual Trips per  
Rider (FYE 2019)



**2,014**  
Annual Miles per  
Rider (FYE 2019)



**5,321** ADA Paratransit Trips (FYE 2021)

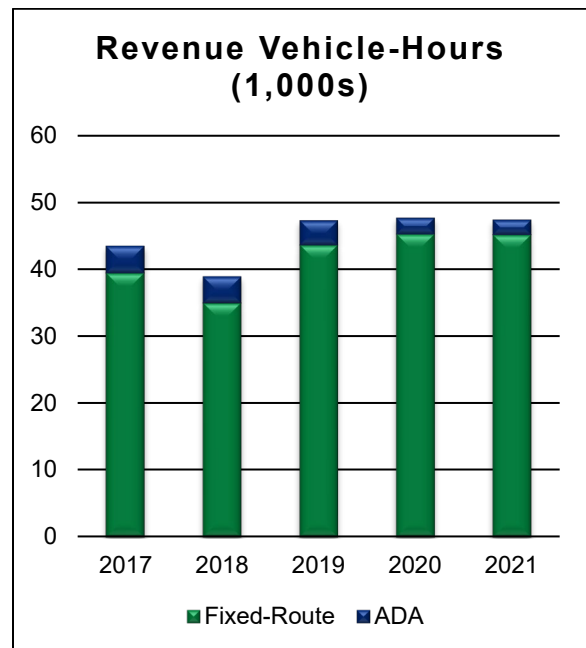
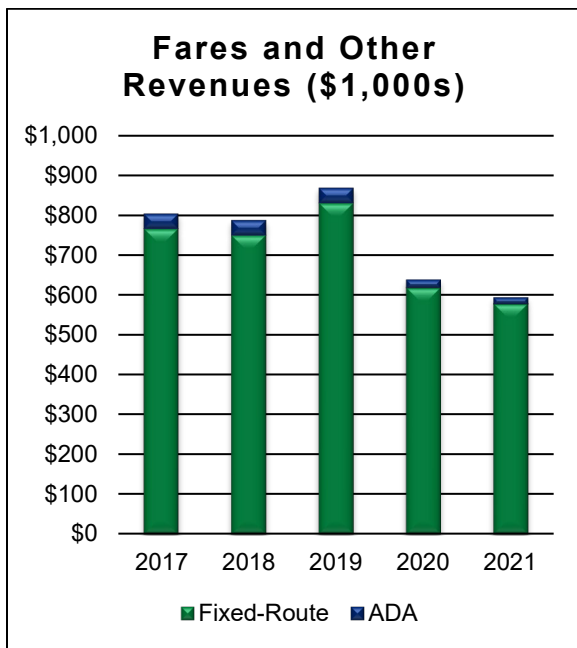
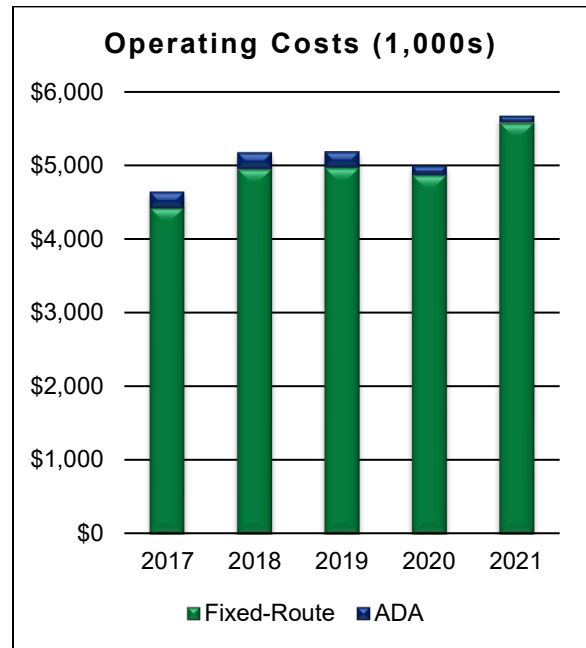
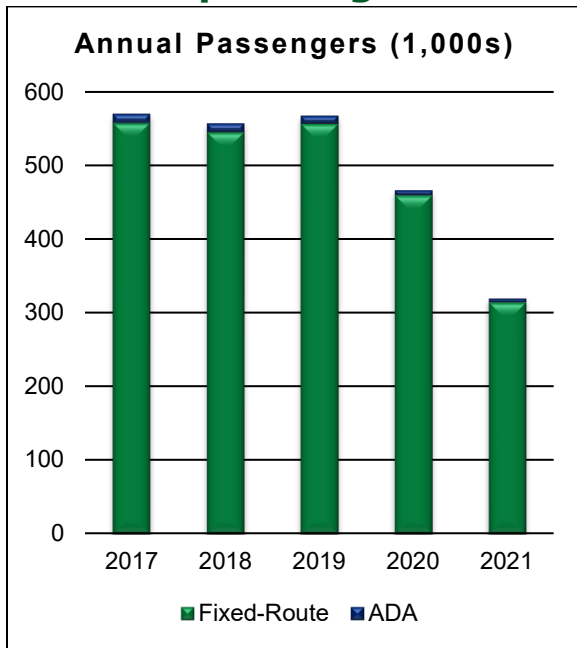


Fixed-Route Bus  
On-Time Performance **87%**  
(FYE 2021)

Source: FYE 2021 dotGrants and agency reported values.

# Agency Trends

## Annual Operating Statistics



## Financial Health

**Transit agencies in good financial health typically have diverse revenue streams, build sufficient operating reserves, and prioritize long-term financial sustainability.**

AMTRAN operated with a balanced budget during FY 2020-21 (**Exhibit 6**). Total transportation services cost approximately \$5.7 million to operate. AMTRAN generated \$596,230 in revenues and required approximately \$5.1 million in subsidies to offset operating deficits.

### Exhibit 6. FYE 2021 Operating Budget Summary

Fiscal Year 2020-21	Fixed-Route	ADA	Total
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	\$5,576,493	\$91,736	\$5,668,229
<b>Total Revenue</b>	\$578,227	\$18,003	\$596,230
<b>Total Federal Subsidies</b>	\$1,835,337	\$2,188	\$1,837,525
<b>Total State Subsidies</b>	\$2,984,222	\$67,924	\$3,052,146
<b>Total Local Subsidies</b>	\$178,707	\$3,621	\$182,328

As shown in **Exhibit 7**, as of FYE 2021, AMTRAN had carryover subsidies (cash reserves) equal to 91.3 percent of its total annual operating costs, which exceeds the recommended target for liquidity. AMTRAN increased carryover subsidies in part from an influx of federal COVID relief funds for operating expenses, which enabled the authority to build its state operating reserves. In FYE 2019, cash reserves equaled 88.6 percent of total annual operating costs. Maintaining the current level of cash reserves ensures AMTRAN continues to operate from a strong financial position with the ability to meet unexpected increases in operating costs.

AMTRAN has no line of credit as of FYE 2021. Amounts of accounts payable and accounts receivable over 90 days are negligible. There is no outstanding debt as of FYE 2021.

### AMTRAN's operating revenues recovered 13.5% of annual operating costs before the pandemic.

Before the pandemic, AMTRAN had a farebox recovery ratio of 13.5 percent. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, operating revenues recovered 8.5 percent of annual operating costs. AMTRAN increased fares from \$1.50 to \$1.75 in 2022. AMTRAN's operating subsidy per passenger trip was \$15.88 in FYE 2021, which doubled compared to \$7.30 in FYE 2019. The increase in subsidies offset the loss of passenger revenues. As with many transit systems, fixed-route ridership

continues below pre-pandemic levels and will continue to impact farebox recovery. AMTRAN has only rebounded to 57 percent of its pre-COVID-19 ridership as of FYE 2021. The Altoona Area School District represents the largest customer base for AMTRAN. The District initiated a phased reopening of schools in 2021, but with a reduced bus load from 48 to 24 students. Similarly, Penn State Altoona, AMTRAN's second largest customer base had a phased reopening for in-person classes for the Spring 2022 semester.



### Exhibit 7. High-Level Financial Indicators

Indicator	Value		Assessment Criteria / Rationale	Source
	FYE 2019	FYE 2021		
<b>Total Carryover Subsidies / Annual Operating Cost</b>	88.6%	91.3%	A combined target of 25%+ provides liquidity to cover unexpected cost increases or service changes without incurring interest fees from loans.	FYE 2019 – FYE 2021 Audits
<b>Credit Available/ Annual Payroll</b>	0.0%		Only necessary if combined carryover subsidies are less than 25% of annual operating costs. This ensures that the agency maintains sufficient cash flow and liquidity to pay all current bills.	FYE 2021 Audit and PennDOT dotGrants
<b>Accounts Payable (AP) 90+ days</b>	0.0%		Target should be 0% over 90 days. Larger values indicate cash flow concerns.	August 2021 AMTRAN-reported value
<b>Accounts Receivable (AR) 90+ days</b>	0.7%		Target should be 0% over 90 days. Larger values can cause cash flow problems.	August 2021 AMTRAN-reported value
<b>Debt / Annual Operating Cost</b>	0.0%		Target should be 0%. Low debt amounts reduce interest expense.	FYE 2021 Audit
<b>Farebox Recovery</b>	FYE 2019	FYE 2021	Typically, the target should be 12%–15% or higher. The drop in ridership associated with the COVID-19 pandemic significantly reduced farebox recovery.	FYE 2019 – FYE 2021 Audits and PennDOT dotGrants
	13.5%	8.5%		
<b>Effective Average Fare</b>	FYE 2019	FYE 2021	Total fare revenue / total passengers. Effective fare calculates the actual value of fares per passenger trip and is an indicator of when fares might need adjustment to offset increases in operating costs.	FYE 2019 – FYE 2021 Audits and PennDOT dotGrants
	\$1.20	\$1.50		
<b>Operating Subsidy per Passenger Trip</b>	FYE 2019	FYE 2021	Indicates the subsidy requirement to offset operating losses per passenger trip.	FYE 2019 – FYE 2021 Audits and PennDOT dotGrants
	\$7.30	\$15.88		

## Safety

Federal transportation legislation requires a holistic, performance-based approach for Safety Management Systems (SMS). AMTRAN adopted its Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) in April 2020, as required by 49 CFR Part 673 for agencies that receive Section 5307 funding. The PTASP includes safety performance targets based on the federal measures established in the National Public Transportation Safety Plan and may include additional safety metrics self-reported by the agency. AMTRAN developed its safety targets based on five-year historical averages of reported data.

As shown in (Exhibit 8), AMTRAN met its annual safety targets for fatalities, serious injuries, and system reliability<sup>2</sup>. System reliability targets were exceeded, especially for fixed-route vehicles, indicating AMTRAN kept its fleet well maintained and conditioned for uninterrupted service. AMTRAN reported more safety events<sup>3</sup> on fixed-route bus than its target for FYE 2021.

**Exhibit 8. PTASP Annual Safety Performance Targets and FYE 2021 Results**

Safety Targets	Fixed-Route		ADA Paratransit	
	Target	Results	Target	Results
Fatalities	0	0	0	0
Serious Injuries	3	0	3	0
Safety Events	12	15	5	0
System Reliability	18,874	31,151	1,202	1,388

## Capital Asset Management

PennDOT verifies asset conditions by reviewing Capital Planning Tool (CPT) records and interviewing transit agency management, operations, and maintenance staff. Transit Asset Management (TAM) is a systematic process that enables public transportation agencies to track assets, forecast asset conditions, and plan for asset maintenance or replacement. This Federal Transit Administration (FTA)-required process accounts for the entire life cycle of a capital asset (e.g., facilities, equipment, rolling stock, and infrastructure, etc.) used for public transportation, from procurement through operations and maintenance to disposal. A critical element of the TAM process is the inventorying and assessment of asset conditions.

Detailed inventories of the fleet and other capital assets indicate when assets should be scheduled for replacement. This process is key for efficient coordination with local funding contributors. PennDOT recognizes a revenue vehicle asset as eligible for replacement when it reaches its useful life in both years and miles. The estimated service life (ESL) for a vehicle depends on its size, fuel type, and seating capacity:

- Large, heavy-duty bus ESL is 500,000 miles and 12 years;

<sup>2</sup> System reliability is expressed in miles and is the average distance between major mechanical failures that prevent a vehicle from completing a revenue trip.

<sup>3</sup> NTD defines as safety event as a collision, derailment, fire, hazardous material spill, act of nature (Act of God), evacuation, or other safety occurrence not otherwise classified (OSONOC) occurring on a transit right-of-way, in a transit revenue facility, in a transit maintenance facility, or involving a transit revenue vehicle and meeting established NTD thresholds.

- Medium-duty bus ESL is 350,000 miles and 10 years;
- Light-duty bus ESL is 150,000 miles and five years; and
- Van ESL is 100,000 miles and four years.

As of May 2022, AMTRAN had a fleet of 27 total vehicles. The fleet consists of heavy-duty buses and one van. As shown in **Exhibit 9**:

- Heavy-duty buses accrued an average of 25,300 miles; and,
- The van accrued 127 miles.

**Exhibit 9. 2022 Fleet Utilization**

Vehicle Type	Fleet	ESL Requirements		Annual Miles	
		Years	Miles	2022 Estimate	ESL
Heavy-Duty Bus	26	12	500,000	24,200	42,000
Van	1	5	100,000	130	25,000

Based on current odometer readings and estimated yearly mileage, AMTRAN’s heavy-duty buses and van<sup>4</sup> accumulated fewer than 42,000 and 25,000 annual miles. These vehicles will be able to remain in-service beyond twelve and four years. Historically, AMTRAN’s robust maintenance program enabled the Authority to operate a fleet of GMC New Look buses from the 1970s until retirement in FYE 2018. Furthermore, AMTRAN’s tripper service only operates during the school year, which reduces total monthly vehicle miles accumulated during the off season.

If current utilization levels continue, AMTRAN should:

1. Ensure preventative maintenance occurs on time and on schedule as vehicles operate past their estimated useful life in years.
2. Consider performing mid-life vehicle overhauls on tripper service buses to extend the life of vehicles under annual mileage rates for scheduled replacement.

---

<sup>4</sup> AMTRAN purchases complementary ADA paratransit from Blair Senior Services Monday through Friday and directly operates its paratransit van on Saturday.

# Act 44 Performance Review Findings

## Prior Performance Reviews

Based on prior performance reviews, AMTRAN took action to increase fixed-route ridership and revenues and contain growth in operating costs. Prior action plans recommended:

- Promote greater use of smart cards and track passenger trend data to monitor the effectiveness of marketing activities.
- Conduct a cost–benefit analysis to evaluate private-sector partnerships for fixed-route service.
- Pursue route guarantees as a built-in cost-recovery mechanism.
- Conduct bus shelter renovations and replacements that generate more rentable ad space.
- Develop an unscheduled overtime target.
- Continue to monitor operating costs and identify opportunities to reduce expenses.
- Develop a strategic plan that outlines short and long-term agency goals.
- Develop a strategy for Board training.
- List the location, dates, and agendas of Board meetings on the AMTRAN website.

## Current Performance Assessment and Findings

The current performance assessment reviews agency progress in achieving its five-year performance goals and identifies additional steps taken to improve performance. The 2018 performance report established performance targets for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2021, based on the following annual goals (**Exhibit 10**):

- Increase passengers per revenue vehicle-hour 1.0 percent per year;
- Increase operating revenue per revenue vehicle-hour 1.0 percent per year;
- Contain growth in operating costs per revenue vehicle-hour to 3.0 percent per year; and
- Contain growth in operating cost per passenger to 2.0 percent per year.

**Exhibit 10. FYE 2021 Performance Assessment**

Act 44 Performance Metrics	Annual Performance Goals	Performance Assessment	
		FYE 2021 Target	FYE 2021 Actual
Passengers/RVH	1.00%	16.05	6.97
Operating Revenue/RVH	1.00%	\$21.93	\$12.80
Operating Cost/RVH	3.00%	\$159.46	\$123.47
Operating Cost/Passenger	2.00%	\$9.84	\$17.71

AMTRAN was on track to meet its targets prior to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on ridership, revenues, and operating costs. Steps AMTRAN took to improve agency performance included:

- Negotiated with the union to move employees over to a qualified-high-deductible (HSA) health insurance plan.
- Continually conducted cost and price analyses on all purchases in an effort to keep costs down. However, with the pandemic and subsequent inflation and supply chain issues, AMTRAN has experienced increased operating expense.
- Worked with the Altoona School District to provide additional trips for elementary students.
- AMTRAN initiated a transit development plan (TDP) project with Foursquare ITP in May 2021. One of the goals is to identify opportunities for enhancing existing service and increasing ridership.

The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting changes in travel behavior adversely impacted AMTRAN's ability to achieve its 2021 performance targets. Ridership and revenue decreased significantly from March 2020 through June 30, 2020, while costs increased due to COVID mitigation measures (e.g., additional cleaning of vehicles, facilities, equipment, etc.). AMTRAN's largest customers (i.e., Altoona Area School District and Penn State Altoona) had phased reopening plans in 2021 and 2022 that required AMTRAN to accommodate social distancing policies as part of returning to in-person classes.

## Future Performance Goals

### Background

Act 44 requires PennDOT and transit agencies establish five-year performance targets for each of the four Act 44 metrics for fixed-route service:

- Passengers per Revenue Vehicle-Hour
- Operating Cost per Revenue Vehicle-Hour
- Operating Revenue per Revenue Vehicle-Hour
- Operating Cost per Passenger

Setting performance targets for these metrics and reevaluating performance on a regular basis is a process intended to improve service delivery effectiveness and efficiency. To keep pace with increases in operating costs, Act 89 requires agencies to maintain a policy to adjust fares for inflation. AMTRAN's policy measures the price of its base fare against the rate of inflation from the Consumer Price Index to determine if a fare increase is warranted.

PennDOT uses the most recent audited and agency-verified values for passengers, operating costs, and operating revenues as the baseline for developing the targets. Five-year targets are then set based on realistic and achievable expectations of improvement.

### AMTRAN Goals for FYE 2027

PennDOT based AMTRAN's future-year performance targets on the most recent financially audited year (i.e., FYE 2022). Over the next five years, AMTRAN must work to achieve the targets shown in **Exhibit 11** to ensure continued eligibility for full Section 1513 funding.

**Exhibit 11. FYE 2027 Performance Goals**

<b>Performance Criteria</b>	<b>FYE 2022 Audited</b>	<b>FYE 2027 Goal</b>	<b>Target Annual Increase</b>
<b>Passengers/RVH</b>	9.43	9.67	0.5%
<b>Operating Revenue/RVH</b>	\$14.90	\$17.28	3.0%
<b>Operating Cost/RVH</b>	\$126.13	\$146.22	3.0%
<b>Operating Cost/Passenger</b>	\$13.38	\$15.13	2.5%

PennDOT will continue to monitor the impacts of COVID-19 and reassess the transit agency's five-year performance targets when the long-term effects of the pandemic become known. If the performance targets are revised, they will be published as an addendum to this report.

## Functional Review

### Identifying Opportunities for Improvement and Best Practices

Functional reviews catalog best practices to share with other transit agencies and identify opportunities for improvement that should be addressed in the Action Plan. The performance review process includes a functional review of agency operations, management, and governance. Supporting documents detailing agency policies, programs, and practices, alongside a peer comparison of the Act 44 variables with similar-sized systems, are reviewed to identify areas of interest. The document review and peer comparison findings inform the performance discussions with agency leadership and staff. The outcome of the functional review is a collection of best practices applicable to other Pennsylvania transit agencies and a list of opportunities for retaining and promoting ridership, ensuring long-term financial sustainability, and other opportunities for improvement.

A recommended Action Plan is found in **Appendix B: Action Plan Template** on page 25, and the determinations and findings of the Act 44 peer review comparisons are found in **Appendix C: Act 44 Peer Comparison Analysis** on page 27.

### Retain and Promote Ridership

Service must be responsive to community needs to achieve optimum service levels. Before the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on ridership, transit systems nationwide faced lower ridership as gas prices fell and ridesharing companies competed with fixed-route systems. The rise in work-from-home practices, which increased dramatically due to the COVID-19 pandemic, significantly impacted commuter bus and passenger rail markets. As transit agencies work to restore ridership to pre-pandemic levels, actions that focus on raising the awareness of service, improving the customer experience, and identifying implementable operational efficiencies help retain and promote ridership.

#### Best Practices

1. **AMTRAN mails 65<sup>th</sup> birthday cards to eligible seniors inviting them to sign up for their senior identification cards.** The birthday card program is designed to improve senior ridership and raise awareness of free rides for eligible seniors. Management estimates the program brings in between 15 and 20 new applications a month.
2. **AMTRAN sets high expectations for the behavior of both drivers and riders.** AMTRAN invests in customer service training for drivers, as the frontline operators, AMTRAN also involves drivers in updating the Customer Code of Conduct to help ensure that drivers and other passengers are respected. Rider satisfaction increased from 90 percent in 2014 to 99 percent in 2019, according to the 2019 CSS.

#### Opportunities for Improvement

1. **Create a comprehensive marketing strategy.** Management acknowledged a need to prioritize marketing activities at AMTRAN and wants to build brand awareness and raise the agency's profile within the community. Currently, AMTRAN does not have staff



dedicated to developing marketing materials, and general marketing activities are carried out by management as needed. To build brand awareness, AMTRAN should develop a robust marketing plan that includes, but is not limited to:

- Goals;
- Objectives;
- Actions; and
- Identifies its target audiences.

AMTRAN can use the four principles mentioned above to:

- Create brand recognition by partnering with local businesses to place wayfinding stickers in windows indicating the closest bus routes;
- Improve customer satisfaction by updating old, outdated maps with high-resolution, web-friendly maps; and
- Target new riders by creating How-To-Ride videos and making it highly visible on the website and social media sites.

2. **Consider a public relations campaign to raise awareness of AMTRAN’s customer service changes resulting from the Transit Development Plan (TDP).** AMTRAN released an updated TDP in Summer 2022. The new plan identifies transit service needs, prioritizes improvements, and determines the resources required for implementing modified or new service. AMTRAN should develop a public relations campaign, advertising the changes to help build recognition and familiarize the public with the changes.

## Ensure Long-Term Financial Sustainability

Sound financial management is critical to ensuring the viability of transit services. Agencies often undertake major capital projects and must account for annual operating expenses on limited budgets. These activities include financing facility projects, purchasing new vehicles, and funding recurring costs, including operations and maintenance, annual fringe benefits, fuel, utilities, and cleaning. Steps to ensure long-term financial sustainability include improving farebox recovery, diversifying revenue streams, and identifying and implementing cost-control measures.

### Best Practices

1. **AMTRAN developed a fuel expense tracking tool to monitor cost trends and uses this tool when evaluating bus propulsion types for fleet replacement.** AMTRAN monitors monthly fuel expenses with its excel-based tracking tool and can develop monthly, and annual cost trend reports for the Board. This tool is useful when considering which bus propulsion types are most cost-effective by analyzing AMTRAN’s fuel consumption history by type and unit against price changes and market volatility.

### Opportunities for Improvement

1. **Continue to seek new revenue agreements.** AMTRAN has received interest in potentially serving employment centers beyond the metro Altoona area. Management should evaluate the cost of providing new service and seek revenue agreements to help offset the cost of any new or expanded services. For example, Lebanon Transit (LT) was

able to offset 25 percent of service costs by securing revenue agreements from warehouses and distribution centers to guarantee service at their facilities.

2. **Engage new municipalities requesting bus service for local match support.** AMTRAN receives requests to expand service into currently unserved municipalities. If AMTRAN plans to serve these municipalities, the Board and management should advocate for securing local match or revenue agreements before any expansion. Local match contributions should be presented as relatively small investments that leverage significant state and federal dollars. For example, in FYE 2021 for every \$1 of local investment AMTRAN received \$17 in state funds and \$10 in federal funds.

## Identify Other Opportunities to Improve Performance

Actions that target organizational improvement, promote an efficient and transparent administration, and advocate with stakeholders and funding partners on behalf of the agency to build stronger community ties. Efforts such as strategic planning, workforce development, and practical advocacy help strengthen the agency by aligning board and management direction and building political support with the community, elected officials, and funding partners. These goal-oriented actions help inform management and the Board's decision-making when pursuing significant capital investments and new technologies.

### Best Practices

1. **AMTRAN has a well-documented maintenance plan that improves efficiency and reduces maintenance costs.** AMTRAN's maintenance plan includes chapters on maintenance and parts ordering procedures. Further, the document provides attachments ranging from inspection sheets to example service reports. Having a well-documented maintenance plan, such as AMTRAN's, extends asset life and reduces maintenance costs by ensuring vehicles are serviced in a timely manner. AMTRAN's current practice sets the expectation for maintenance staff on what the requirements are by standardizing maintenance procedures.
2. **Implemented a digital preventative maintenance board in the shop to keep track of upcoming repairs.** This system improved maintenance, efficiency, and oversight and allows AMTRAN to monitor mechanic productivity. For example, the maintenance director can track the time it takes to complete routine preventative maintenance and major repairs.
3. **Implemented a quarterly dashboard report that communicates agency information to the Board.** The quarterly dashboard report created by AMTRAN provides a quick and easy-to-understand way to communicate agency information to the Board such as maintenance statistics. The quarterly dashboard report ensures the Board is receiving the necessary information to make informed decisions for the agency.
4. **AMTRAN meets with the city emergency services departments regularly.** Transit agencies and emergency services departments rely on each other in times of crisis. It is important for the transit agency and local emergency services departments to meet regularly to discuss emergency management and bus safety practices. In 2019, AMTRAN met with all the local emergency services departments about safety issues relating to the agency.

## Opportunities for Improvement

1. **Continue developing maintenance processes that strengthen overall department efficiency.** AMTRAN routinely seeks out best practices for improving its Maintenance Department. For example, AMTRAN implemented a best practice from the Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA) and developed a digital preventative maintenance board to monitor shop productivity and assess repair time. There might be additional opportunities for AMTRAN to strengthen the efficiency of its Maintenance Department. For example, since the COVID-19 pandemic, many agencies have experienced supply shortages, and significant delays in parts reordering have continued through 2022. The County of Lackawanna Transit System (COLTS) and the Luzerne County Transportation Authority (LCTA) developed a parts-sharing program to mitigate delays in parts reordering and low short-term parts inventory levels. AMTRAN might consider a similar program with CATA.

## Appendix A: Data Reconciliation

The performance review process reconciles National Transit Database (NTD) data to audited, agency-reported dotGrants legacy budgets to ensure the data presented in this report are consistent, accurate, and correct. Certified audits, financial statements, and other agency-generated reports help identify potential discrepancies in financial information and operating statistics. Any discrepancies discovered are verified and appropriately reconciled with agency management before determining Act 44 performance metrics and establishing new performance goals.

<b>Ridership</b>	<b>FYE 2015</b>	<b>FYE 2016</b>	<b>FYE 2017</b>	<b>FYE 2018</b>	<b>FYE 2019</b>	<b>FYE 2020</b>
<b>NTD</b>	571,948	586,408	557,710	544,954	556,182	459,637
<b>dotGrants</b>	571,948	586,408	557,710	544,954	556,182	459,637
<b>Variance</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Percent Difference</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Adjusted Value</b>	571,948	586,408	557,710	544,954	556,182	459,637
<b>Operating Costs</b>	<b>FYE 2015</b>	<b>FYE 2016</b>	<b>FYE 2017</b>	<b>FYE 2018</b>	<b>FYE 2019</b>	<b>FYE 2020</b>
<b>NTD</b>	\$4,468,549	\$4,257,083	\$4,391,083	\$4,921,357	\$4,729,743	\$4,738,307
<b>dotGrants</b>	\$4,501,852	\$4,293,893	\$4,425,704	\$4,951,693	\$4,888,938	\$4,870,430
<b>Variance</b>	\$33,303	\$36,810	\$34,621	\$30,336	\$159,195	\$132,123
<b>Percent Difference</b>	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	3%
<b>Adjusted Value</b>	\$4,501,852	\$4,293,893	\$4,425,704	\$4,951,693	\$4,888,938	\$4,870,430
<b>Operating Revenue</b>	<b>FYE 2015</b>	<b>FYE 2016</b>	<b>FYE 2017</b>	<b>FYE 2018</b>	<b>FYE 2019</b>	<b>FYE 2020</b>
<b>NTD</b>	\$694,684	\$695,361	\$684,393	\$705,948	\$714,867	\$624,776
<b>dotGrants</b>	\$792,455	\$771,881	\$766,033	\$749,523	\$828,100	\$619,020
<b>Variance</b>	\$97,771	\$76,520	\$81,640	\$43,575	\$113,233	(\$5,756)
<b>Percent Difference</b>	14%	11%	12%	6%	16%	-1%
<b>Adjusted Value</b>	\$792,455	\$771,881	\$766,033	\$749,523	\$828,100	\$619,020
<b>Revenue Vehicle-Hours</b>	<b>FYE 2015</b>	<b>FYE 2016</b>	<b>FYE 2017</b>	<b>FYE 2018</b>	<b>FYE 2019</b>	<b>FYE 2020</b>
<b>NTD</b>	39,788	39,309	39,694	35,976	43,604	43,299
<b>dotGrants</b>	39,788	39,309	69,445	34,976	43,604	45,243
<b>Variance</b>	-	-	(249)	(1,000)	-	1,944
<b>Percent Difference</b>	0%	0%	-1%	-3%	0%	4%
<b>Adjusted Value</b>	39,788	39,309	39,445	34,976	43,604	45,243

The following Act 44 performance metrics were calculated for AMTRAN.

<b>Act 44 Adjusted Metrics</b>	<b>FYE 2015</b>	<b>FYE 2016</b>	<b>FYE 2017</b>	<b>FYE 2018</b>	<b>FYE 2019</b>	<b>FYE 2020</b>	<b>FYE 2021</b>
<b>Passengers/RVH</b>	14.37	14.92	14.14	15.58	12.76	10.16	6.97
<b>Operating Revenue/RVH</b>	\$19.92	\$19.64	\$19.42	\$21.43	\$18.99	\$13.68	\$12.80
<b>Operating Costs/RVH</b>	\$113.15	\$109.23	\$112.20	\$141.57	\$112.12	\$107.65	\$123.47
<b>Operating Cost/Passenger</b>	\$7.87	\$7.32	\$7.94	\$9.09	\$8.79	\$10.60	\$17.71

## Appendix B: Action Plan Template

### Part 1 – Actions to Retain and Promote Ridership

Recommendations From Narrative starting on page 19.	AMTRAN Action	Estimated Initiation Date	Estimated Completion Date
1. Create a comprehensive marketing strategy.			
2. Develop a public relations campaign to raise awareness of AMTRAN's customer service changes from the TDP.			

## Part 2 – Actions to Ensure Long-Term Financial Sustainability

Recommendations From Narrative starting on page 20.	AMTRAN Action	Estimated Initiation Date	Estimated Completion Date
1. Continue to seek new revenue agreements.			
2. Engage new municipalities requesting bus service for local match support.			

## Part 3 – Other Opportunities for Improvement

Recommendations From Narrative starting on page 21.	AMTRAN Action	Estimated Initiation Date	Estimated Completion Date
1. Continue developing maintenance processes that strengthen overall department efficiency.			



## Appendix C: Act 44 Peer Comparison Analysis

Peer agencies were identified through a collaborative process between PennDOT and AMTRAN management using criteria defined in Act 44 and NTD data from the most recently available year, FYE 2020. The systems identified for peer comparisons include:

1. Transit Services of Frederick County (TransIT), Frederick, MD
2. Eau Claire Transit, (ECT), Eau Claire, WI
3. City of Petersburg, (PAT), Petersburg, VA
4. Shoreline Metro, Sheboygan, WI
5. Kings County Area Public Transit Agency, (KART), Hanford, CA
6. GO Transit, Oshkosh, WI
7. Mid-Ohio Valley Transit Authority (MOVTA), Parkersburg, WV
8. Jackson Transit Authority, (JTA), Jackson, TN
9. City of Williamsport, (RVT), Williamsport, PA
10. New Castle Transit Authority (NCATA), New Castle, PA
11. Cambria County Transit Authority (CamTran), Johnstown, PA
12. Indiana County Transit Authority (IndiGO), Indiana, PA

## Passengers per Revenue Vehicle-Hour: Motor Bus (MB)

System	FYE 2020 Single-Year		Five-Year Change Since FYE 2015		
	Value	Rank of 13	2015 Value	Annual Rate	Rank of 13
Frederick County, Maryland	8.03	12	12.34	-8.24%	10
City of Eau Claire	9.16	10	17.79	-12.43%	12
City of Petersburg	6.27	13	9.30	-7.59%	8
City of Sheboygan	10.09	8	12.88	-4.78%	3
Kings County Area Public Transit Agency	14.29	2	19.54	-6.07%	5
City of Oshkosh, Wisconsin	11.48	4	23.77	-13.54%	13
Mid-Ohio Valley Transit Authority	8.19	11	13.29	-9.22%	11
Jackson Transit Authority	10.37	6	14.44	-6.40%	6
City of Williamsport	17.10	1	22.88	-5.66%	4
New Castle Area Transit Authority	10.39	5	10.61	-0.43%	1
Cambria County Transit Authority	12.58	3	14.58	-2.89%	2
Indiana County Transit Authority	9.39	9	13.95	-7.61%	9
<b>Altoona Metro Transit</b>	<b>10.16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14.37</b>	<b>-6.71%</b>	<b>7</b>
Average	10.71		15.37	-6.89%	
Standard Deviation	3.11		4.41	3.63%	
Average – 1 Standard Deviation	7.60		10.95	-10.52%	
Average + 1 Standard Deviation	13.82		19.78	-3.26%	
<b>Act 44 Compliance Determination</b>	<b>In Compliance</b>		<b>In Compliance</b>		
<b>Compared to the Peer Group Average</b>	<b>Weaker</b>		<b>Stronger</b>		

## Operating Revenue per Vehicle-Hour: MB

System	FYE 2020 Single-Year		Five-Year Change Since FYE 2015		
	Value	Rank of 13	2015 Value	Annual Rate	Rank of 13
Frederick County, Maryland	\$7.70	9	\$11.63	-7.93%	11
City of Eau Claire	\$12.95	6	\$15.93	-4.05%	7
City of Petersburg	\$4.88	12	\$10.95	-14.92%	13
City of Sheboygan	\$10.05	7	\$10.83	-1.48%	5
Kings County Area Public Transit Agency	\$17.77	3	\$15.83	2.34%	3
City of Oshkosh, Wisconsin	\$16.17	4	\$12.19	5.81%	2
Mid-Ohio Valley Transit Authority	\$4.68	13	\$7.85	-9.83%	12
Jackson Transit Authority	\$7.13	10	\$10.02	-6.59%	8
City of Williamsport	\$43.02	1	\$13.22	26.62%	1
New Castle Area Transit Authority	\$6.82	11	\$10.26	-7.86%	10
Cambria County Transit Authority	\$9.83	8	\$10.40	-1.12%	4
Indiana County Transit Authority	\$19.11	2	\$20.84	-1.72%	6
<b>Altoona Metro Transit, PA</b>	<b>\$13.68</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>\$19.92</b>	<b>-7.23%</b>	<b>9</b>
Average	\$11.46		\$14.56	-5.84%	
Standard Deviation	\$5.08		\$3.94	5.98%	
Average – 1 Standard Deviation	\$6.38		\$10.62	-11.82%	
Average + 1 Standard Deviation	\$16.54		\$18.50	0.14%	
<b>Act 44 Compliance Determination</b>	<b>In Compliance</b>		<b>In Compliance</b>		
<b>Compared to the Peer Group Average</b>	<b>Stronger</b>		<b>Weaker</b>		

## Operating Cost per Vehicle-Hour: MB

System	FYE 2020 Single-Year		Five-Year Change Since FYE 2015		
	Value	Rank of 13	2015 Value	Annual Rate	Rank of 13
Frederick County, Maryland	\$97.28	7	\$75.12	5.31%	12
City of Eau Claire	\$95.88	8	\$82.26	3.11%	7
City of Petersburg	\$60.82	13	\$69.57	-2.65%	1
City of Sheboygan	\$82.61	9	\$70.69	3.16%	8
Kings County Area Public Transit Agency	\$104.33	5	\$70.56	8.14%	13
City of Oshkosh, Wisconsin	\$98.44	6	\$83.48	3.35%	9
Mid-Ohio Valley Transit Authority	\$80.92	11	\$82.74	-0.44%	3
Jackson Transit Authority	\$65.27	12	\$60.44	1.55%	4
City of Williamsport	\$139.51	1	\$116.63	3.65%	10
New Castle Area Transit Authority	\$129.01	2	\$117.65	1.86%	5
Cambria County Transit Authority	\$104.97	4	\$93.99	2.23%	6
Indiana County Transit Authority	\$81.93	10	\$67.27	4.02%	11
<b>Altoona Metro Transit, PA</b>	<b>\$107.65</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>\$113.15</b>	<b>-0.99%</b>	<b>2</b>
Average	\$98.15		\$84.89	2.81%	
Standard Deviation	\$26.17		\$19.62	2.99%	
Average – 1 Standard Deviation	\$71.98		\$65.26	-0.18%	
Average + 1 Standard Deviation	\$124.32		\$104.51	5.80%	
<b>Act 44 Compliance Determination</b>	<b>In Compliance</b>		<b>In Compliance</b>		
<b>Compared to the Peer Group Average</b>	<b>Weaker</b>		<b>Stronger</b>		

## Operating Cost per Passenger: MB

System	FYE 2020 Single-Year		Five-Year Change Since FYE 2015		
	Value	Rank of 13	2015 Value	Annual Rate	Rank of 13
Frederick County, Maryland	\$12.12	12	\$6.09	14.77%	10
City of Eau Claire	\$10.46	10	\$4.62	17.75%	12
City of Petersburg	\$9.70	8	\$7.48	5.34%	3
City of Sheboygan	\$8.19	4	\$5.49	8.34%	5
Kings County Area Public Transit Agency	\$7.30	2	\$3.61	15.12%	11
City of Oshkosh, Wisconsin	\$8.57	6	\$3.51	19.54%	13
Mid-Ohio Valley Transit Authority	\$9.88	9	\$6.23	9.67%	7
Jackson Transit Authority	\$6.29	1	\$4.18	8.50%	6
City of Williamsport	\$8.16	3	\$5.10	9.86%	8
New Castle Area Transit Authority	\$12.42	13	\$11.09	2.30%	1
Cambria County Transit Authority	\$8.34	5	\$6.45	5.28%	2
Indiana County Transit Authority	\$8.73	7	\$4.82	12.59%	9
<b>Altoona Metro Transit, PA</b>	<b>\$10.60</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>\$7.87</b>	<b>6.13%</b>	<b>4</b>
Average	\$9.35		\$5.89	10.56%	
Standard Deviation	\$1.76		\$2.07	5.15%	
Average – 1 Standard Deviation	\$7.60		\$3.82	5.41%	
Average + 1 Standard Deviation	\$11.11		\$7.95	15.72%	
<b>Act 44 Compliance Determination</b>	<b>In Compliance</b>		<b>In Compliance</b>		
<b>Compared to the Peer Group Average</b>	<b>Weaker</b>		<b>Stronger</b>		

