

# Washington County Transportation Authority **Strategic Business Plan**



June 2018

Prepared for:



Prepared by:



In association with:





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## Executive Summary

In 2017, the Washington County Transportation Authority (WCTA), using technical assistance from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC), initiated a planning process to improve public transportation in Washington County, Pennsylvania. SPC and WCTA share a recognition that public transportation is a vital component of a successful transportation network. Public transportation plays a key role in reducing the use of personal vehicles in a congested region and serves as a critical safety net for vulnerable populations that do not have access to personal transportation to meet their daily needs.

The results of this planning process in Washington County are presented in three companion documents: a Transit Development Plan (TDP), Transit Service Guidelines, and a Strategic Business Plan. The TDP establishes short-, medium-, and long-term improvements to public transportation services and identifies a future direction for transit in Washington County. The Transit Service Guidelines help WCTA's staff, customers, and stakeholders understand how service decisions will be made in the future and foster a culture of continuous improvement. This document, the Strategic Business Plan, focuses on WCTA as an organization and documents a shared vision and specific initiatives that will be undertaken to improve the governance, management, and operations of public transit in Washington County.

Through a multi-step process that involved WCTA staff, its governing board, and representatives from Washington County, the Strategic Business Plan identified eight Strategic Objectives that WCTA management will work on over the next five years. The Strategic Objectives are:

- **Improve and Standardize Operations**
- **Invest in Operational Technologies**
- **Enhance Transit Services to Improve Ridership**
- **Pursue Regional Collaboration**
- **Continue to Foster and Leverage Partnerships**
- **Improve Public Image and Perception**
- **Diversify Revenue to Strengthen Financial Position**
- **Improve the Customer Experience**

Each Strategic Objective has corresponding Action Strategies—steps that must be completed to accomplish the objective to achieve WCTA's mission and advance towards meeting the vision as identified by the Board. Each Action Strategy has been assigned a performance output or measure, a timeframe for implementation, and a key staff member who is responsible for implementation. Furthermore, a Board member has been assigned to track progress and provide guidance as needed to WCTA staff. Enacting multiple levels of accountability will help assure the full implementation of the WCTA Strategic Business Plan.

The WCTA Strategic Business Plan is a living document that will be updated at regular intervals to stay relevant and reflect changing realities in Washington County, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the transit industry at large.

## Agency Overview

The Washington County Transportation Authority (WCTA) was created by the Washington County Commissioners in 2001 to direct and manage the human service transportation programs that were previously overseen by the County's Department of Human Services and managed by a private broker. WCTA at the time operated under the moniker *Washington Rides* and provided Shared-ride demand response transportation throughout the county. In 2014, *Washington Rides* launched a fixed route demonstration route called the "Freedom Line" that served rural Washington County from the City of Washington north to McDonald at the Allegheny County border, the first foray into traditional fixed route public transportation.

As part of a statewide initiative to consolidate public transportation agencies to reduce costs, eliminate duplication, improve service, and operate more efficiently, WCTA combined with Washington City Transit on July 1, 2015. Washington City Transit provided fixed route transportation within the City of Washington and surrounding areas and was previously managed by a department of the City of Washington. The merger of WCT and WCTA increased the complexity of the organization by expanding regular fixed route service and requiring the provision of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Complementary Paratransit.

As part of the merger with Washington City Transit, WCTA rebranded the public transportation under a new name to reflect the expanded organization, Freedom Transit. Freedom Transit provides 4 regular weekday fixed routes, Saturday fixed route service, and Shared-ride demand response service.

WCTA does not directly operate transit service, but instead contracts service to a private company. The current contract holder is First Transit. WCTA employs a full-time Executive Director, Deputy Director, and Director of Fixed Route Services to oversee the day-to-day operations of Freedom Transit, along with a number of support staff to assist in the administration and management of the organization, and to provide shared-ride trip reservation and scheduling.

WCTA is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors that are appointed by the Washington County Board of Commissioners to oversee all matters pertaining to the Authority pursuant to the Authority's By-Laws (**Appendix A**).

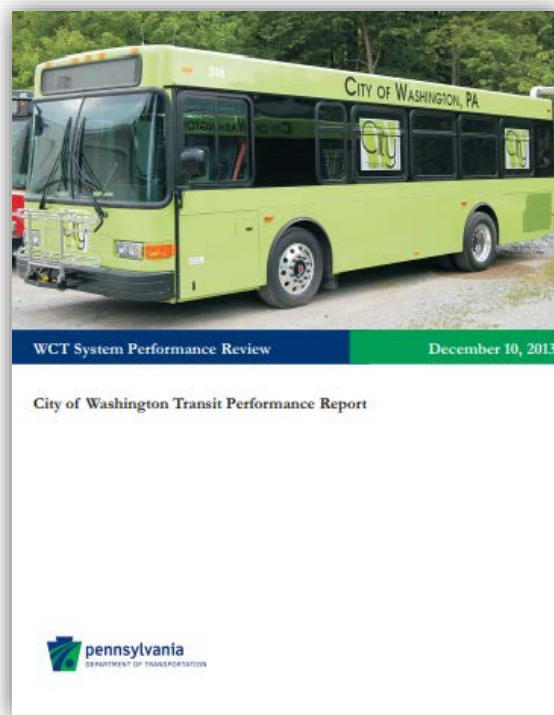
## Act 44 Transit Agency Performance Review

Act 44 of 2007 represented a comprehensive overhaul of transportation funding in Pennsylvania, most notably increasing public transportation funding and providing a dependable, dedicated funding source for the future. As a condition of receiving increased and stable funding, the Pennsylvania General Assembly required the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) to complete performance reviews for all fixed route agencies on a regular cycle (5 years) to identify ways to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and enhance the overall management of public transportation.

Since WCTA did not provide regular fixed route transportation prior to the merger with Washington City Transit, WCTA has not undergone an Act 44 performance review. However, this Strategic Business Plan was preceded by PennDOT's Act 44 Performance Review of Washington City Transit (WCT), published in 2013, which documented several key issues and challenges and included performance targets for the agency over the subsequent five years. While much has changed with the merger, the findings of the WCT performance review remain valid and should be addressed. Observations made in the final performance review report include:

- A lack of a formal governance structure (remedied with WCTA)
- No formal process for the oversight and management of contractors
- Inadequate tracking of performance targets for key agency functions
- Incomplete installation of and/or improvements needed in bus stop signs, shelters, and park-and-ride lots
- Poor performance of "Hopper" service (addressed by route restructure in 2016)
- Need to work with regional transit providers on smart card initiative
- Periodically re-examine the potential for regional consolidation

These major observations were used as a resource throughout the development of the strategic business plan and are important to note in preparation for a future Act 44 Performance Review of WCTA.



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## Strategic Business Plan

Strategic Plans are created and used by organizations worldwide to guide management actions and ensure that all levels of the organization are advancing in a shared direction. Strategic Plans are intended to identify the “ENDS,” or outcomes (Objectives), that the organization intends to achieve and are “owned” by the Board of Directors. Conversely, Business Plans document the “MEANS,” or the activities that are to be completed to attain the “ENDS.” Business Plans are generally created and “owned” by management and staff. This Strategic Business Plan combines these two functions and is specifically designed to overcome potential organizational accountability issues and to facilitate the Board’s decision-making for the next five years. It also serves as a plan to attain the performance targets set in the Act 44 Performance Review.



## Strategic Planning Process

The WCTA Strategic Business Plan followed a prescribed process designed to quickly achieve an action-oriented plan to advance public transportation in Washington County. The planning process leveraged data collected and analyzed through the companion Transit Development Plan (TDP) to understand the performance of WCTA in light of the current transit market and rider and non-rider perspectives.

The process focused on engaging WCTA staff and the Authority's Governing Board to define and develop the Strategic Business Plan and to ensure that the overall direction, philosophy, and purpose of the plan is a product of the Board. During the process, a committee was engaged consisting of WCTA staff, Board members, and county representatives to proceed through the phases of the strategic planning process:

- **Situational Analysis**
- **Mission & Vision**
- **Agency strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT)**

The committee then worked to document key themes to address the findings of the SWOT analysis and to achieve the mission and vision of the organization. The key themes were formed into Strategic Objectives with short-term, discreet Action Strategies that form a blueprint for major agency activities over the next five years. Finally, the committee worked to assign each Action Strategy to a WCTA staff member and Board member for tracking and management.

The information in this document is to be utilized by WCTA in conjunction with the TDP and Transit Service Guidelines as a starting point for making strategic fixed route and Shared-ride transit service decisions to enhance service delivery and performance. This document should be reviewed quarterly and updated annually by WCTA's Board of Directors as they see fit in accordance with their goals for the organization.

## Situational Analysis

A situational analysis is the first step in the strategic planning process. It identifies the realities (or situation) of the organization. The situational analysis includes an overview of the services provided, current financial position, system performance, customers, markets, and trends that affect the organization. The situational analysis is a key step to narrowing the focus of a strategic planning process and identifying priority areas.

WCTA operates three regular weekday fixed routes (Local A, Local B, and County Line), one weekday commuter route (Metro Commuter), and one Saturday Commuter Route (Metro Saturday). WCTA transit services are limited to the central and north central part of Washington County, while Mid Mon Valley Transit Authority (MMVTA) operates 7 routes in the eastern, “Mon Valley” portion of Washington County and provides commuter service to downtown Pittsburgh.

WCTA is the sole Shared-ride provider in Washington County, and is also the designated Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) coordinator and provider.

WCTA has an annual operating budget of nearly \$7 million, with 70 percent (70%) expended on Shared-ride demand response and the remainder on fixed route transit.

## Performance Trends

Understanding the performance of WCTA over a period of years is a foundational element of the strategic business plan as it identifies negative trends that threaten the viability of the organization and highlights positive trends that contribute to success.

Overall, the combination of WCT and WCTA had a positive impact on public transportation in Washington County. As shown in the performance trend data below, there was an immediate positive financial impact with a reduction in operating costs at both the fixed route and shared-ride levels, while at the same time WCTA improved operating efficiency and added riders. Costs have steadily increased since the combination, but are increasing at a rate consistent with the rest of the state.

Overall ridership on the fixed route system remains a concern and is an area of focus for the Strategic Business Plan as well as the Transit Development Plan (TDP). Slight declines in ridership in the Shared-ride system, while consistent with state and national trends, are also an area of focus as WCTA looks to continue providing a valuable service to those that need it.

### Fixed Route

In the fixed route system, operating expenses decreased slightly and have begun to rebound from Fiscal Year 2013-14 to Fiscal Year 2016-17. During the same period, revenue increased slightly, while the subsidy required to cover the full operating expenses stayed relatively consistent with expenses (Figure 1).

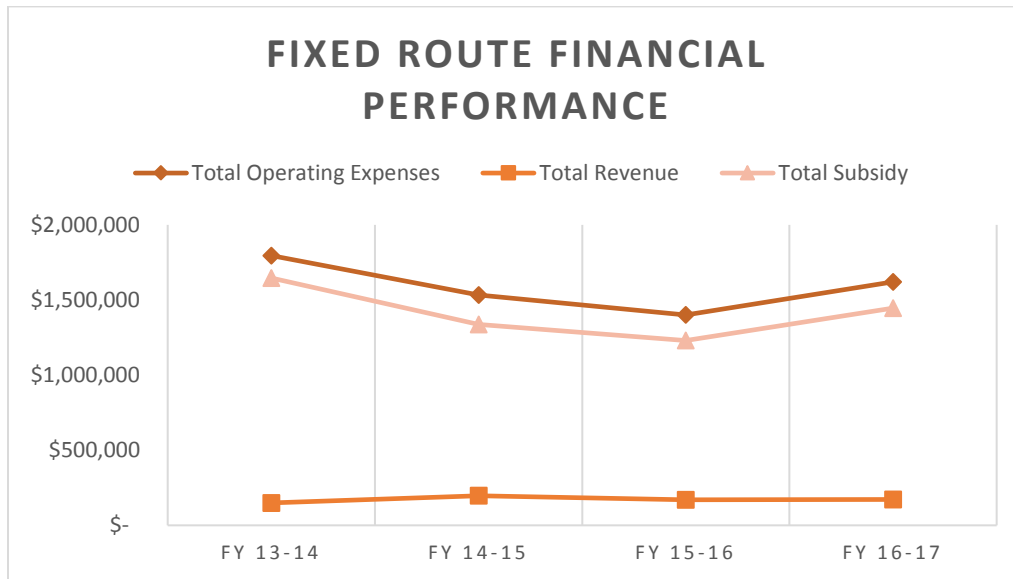


Figure 1: WCTA Fixed Route Operating Expenses, Revenues, and Subsidy (PennDOT BPT Annual Report)

Over the same period, ridership increased nearly 8% while revenue hours increased over 10% (Figure 2). Much of the increase in revenue hours can be attributed to new requirements for ADA complementary paratransit service on the Freedom Line. Absent the addition of rural ADA service, WCTA saw an increase in productivity over the last four years.

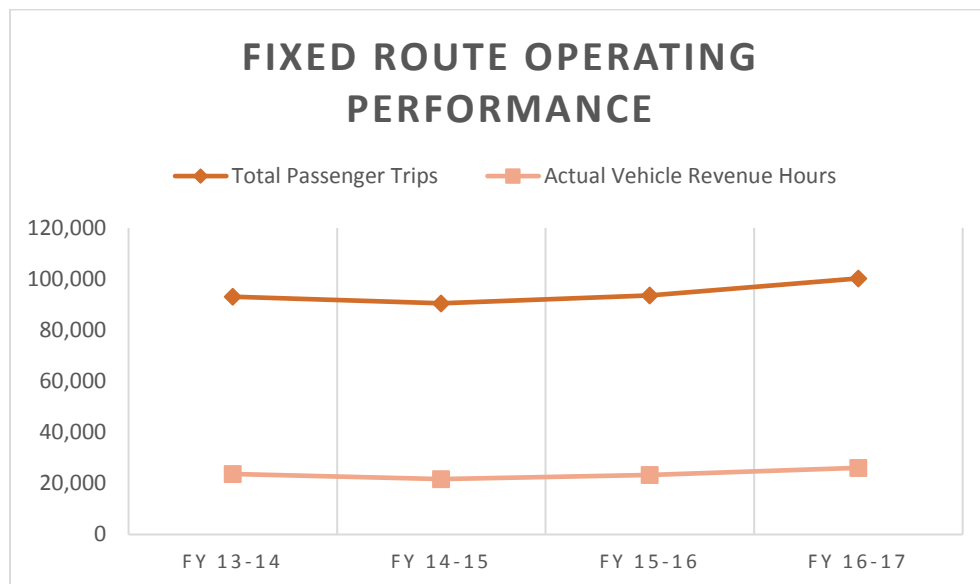


Figure 2: WCTA Fixed Route Operating Performance (PennDOT BPT Annual Report)

### Shared-ride

In the Shared-ride system, WCTA experienced a slight decline in operating expenses initially that is slowly returning to pre-combination levels (Figure 3). Shared-ride is intended to be a cost-neutral program, and after years of subsidizing with non-program funds, WCTA eliminated the need for subsidy in FY 16-17. Ridership over the same period has held relatively steady, following an initial decrease likely due to a shift of passengers to ADA service (Figure 4). Over the same period, WCTA has been able to reduce revenue hours and improve productivity.

Figure 3: WCTA Shared-Ride Operating Expenses, Revenues, and Subsidy (PennDOT BPT Annual Report)

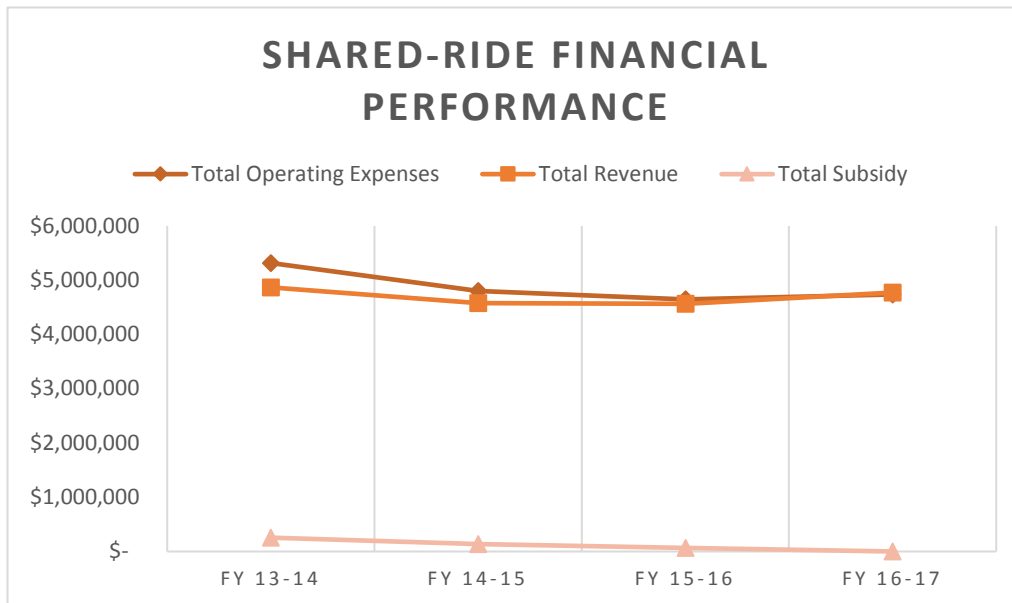
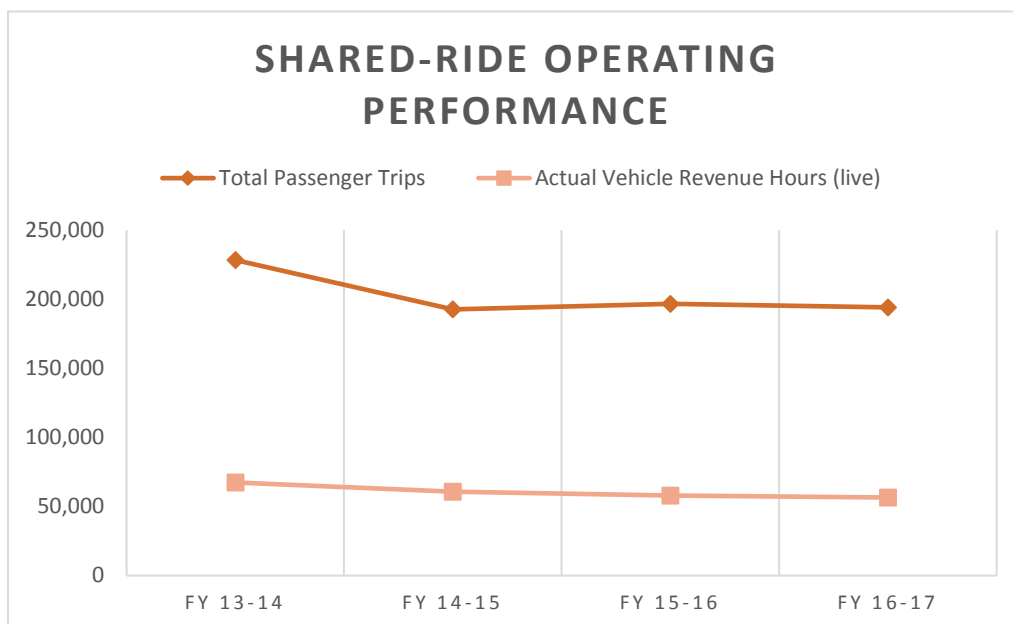


Figure 4: WCTA Shared-Ride Operating Performance (PennDOT BPT Annual Report)



Act 44 Performance

These trends identified above are contrary to those identified in WCT’s Act 44 Performance Review mentioned earlier in the document. This fact reflects the positive improvements made by combining WCT and WCTA. By comparing current statistics to the same-year targets set by the Act 44 Performance Review, WCTA achieves nearly all the performance targets when using combined rural and urban fixed route statistics, and meets all targets when using the urban system only (which compares to the WCT system for which the targets were originally set). Despite this positive fact, WCTA still ranks at the bottom for ridership in Pennsylvania which, when combined with rising costs, necessitates a concerted focus on identifying ways to increase ridership (number of passengers) and control costs or increase revenues.

Table 1: Act 44 Performance Target Comparison (PennDOT BPT Annual Report)

Performance Metric	WCT 2018 Target (5-year)	WCT 2017 Target (Interim)	Freedom Transit 2017 Urban Only	Freedom Transit 2017 Total
Passengers / Revenue Hour	4.26	4.13	4.3	4.24
Operating Cost / Revenue Hour	\$94.31	\$91.56	\$72.11	\$69.77
Operating Revenue / Revenue Hour	\$7.67	\$7.45	\$8.82	\$7.41
Operating Cost / Passenger	\$22.16	\$22.16	\$16.85	\$16.44

## Mission Statement

Mission statements communicate the purpose of the organization to both external stakeholders and the organization's workforce. Mission statements are core elements of both planning and implementation. They serve as a means for managers and others to make decisions. Statements must be clear, concise, relevant, and easy to understand.

The mission statement answers the questions:

- What do we do?
- How do we do it?
- Who do we do it for?
- What value do we provide?

WCTA's mission statement was created through an iterative process with the strategic planning committee, and reflects the current makeup of the organization. WCTA mission is:

***To connect people who live, work, learn and play in Washington County and surrounding areas by providing high quality, accessible public transportation services.***

This statement serves as a litmus test for objectives, actions, and measures. Each objective must relate to the stated mission. All elements of the statement must be reflected in the strategic business plan.

## Vision Statement

A vision is a clear, compelling, and shared picture of the future an organization seeks to create. It clarifies the purpose and direction of the organization and tests the assumptions made in the mission statement development process, including:

- What are Washington County's aspirations for public transportation services?
- What services are provided and what populations are served?
- What roles/functions will Freedom Transit and other agencies/partners have?

WCTA's vision statement was developed through a work session with the strategic planning committee and serves as the guidepost by which all actions are measured. WCTA's vision is:

***To be a preferred travel choice that connects the region by satisfying today's needs and anticipating tomorrow's demands.***

## Key Themes and Strategic Objectives

As part of the strategic planning process, the strategic planning committee completed a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis. SWOT analyses evaluate internal and external positive and negative facts or perceptions that affect the organization. A summary of the SWOT analysis completed for WCTA follows, with a full list in Appendix B.

**Strengths** – Internal positives that are accomplished particularly well or unique assets as compared to similar or competitive organizations. *Strengths need to be preserved, built on, and leveraged.* WCTA is seen to be strong for the following reasons:

- Good management team.
- Strong, dedicated board.
- Positive working relationship with funding partners.
- Good existing partnerships with local human services organizations.
- Financially sound in the short term.

**Weaknesses** – Internal challenges that are not accomplished particularly well, hinder or prevent attaining desired performance, or are acutely lacking or need to be improved. *Weaknesses need to be addressed and remedied.* WCTA is seen to have the following weaknesses:

- Lack of technology.
- Relatively unknown by the public.
- Lack an agency-owned maintenance facility.
- Low ridership when compared to peer agencies.
- Limited staff capacity.

**Opportunities** – External positives that can be captured to help realize the mission and vision of the authority. *Opportunities need to be seized or capitalized on.*

- Growing population and new demographics that don't see transit with a stigma.
- Expanded partnerships with medical providers and non-profit brokers.
- Emerging technologies present opportunities to advance public transit.

**Threats** – External challenges that can threaten the realization of the mission and vision of the authority. *Threats need to be mitigated or, if possible, eliminated.*

- Cost escalation in the future.
- New modes and technologies (autonomous vehicles, Transportation Network Companies).
- Highway network encourages people to drive.
- Competition from oil and gas industry for drivers and maintenance staff.

Using the information in the SWOT analysis, broad themes can be developed that lead toward the development of strategic objectives and actions for the authority to work on over the next five years.



The second step in a SWOT analysis focuses on major areas of emphasis; that is, identified strategic areas of focus ***based on how strengths and weaknesses address threats and opportunities***:

- Where an organizational strength meets an external opportunity, it can *capitalize* on the situation.
- Where an organizational strength meets an external threat, it can mitigate the threat and *turn around* the situation.
- Where an organizational weakness meets an external opportunity, it can *improve* its performance.
- Where an organizational weakness meets an external threat, it must expend resources to *defend* itself until a weakness can be turned into a strength.

As presented in Table 2, the SWOT analysis results were then used by the SBP Committee to create a list of Key Themes which were translated into eight strategic objectives for implementation. The strategic objectives are discussed in more detail in the following section.

*Table 2: WCTA Key Themes and Strategic Objectives*

Key Themes	Strategic Objectives
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve and Standardize Operations</li> <li>• Invest in Operational Technologies</li> <li>• Enhance Transit Services to Improve Ridership</li> </ul>
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursue Regional Collaboration</li> <li>• Continue to Foster and Leverage Partnerships</li> </ul>
Marketing/Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve Public Image &amp; Perception</li> </ul>
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversify Revenue to Strengthen Financial Position</li> </ul>
Customer Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the Customer Experience</li> </ul>

## Strategic Objectives and Actions

Strategic objectives represent the primary areas of work for the organization over the next five years. Objectives are specific enough to be actionable but broad enough to stretch the organization to achieve better results. Objectives must support the WCTA mission and advance the organization toward achieving the vision that was set at the beginning of the strategic planning process.

Strategic objectives are both independent and interrelated. WCTA can work on objectives separately, but the outcome of one set of actions will impact, inform, or advance others. To illustrate this interrelatedness, Figure 5 identifies the eight strategic objectives and how they relate to each other.

### Freedom Transit Strategic Business Plan Strategy Map

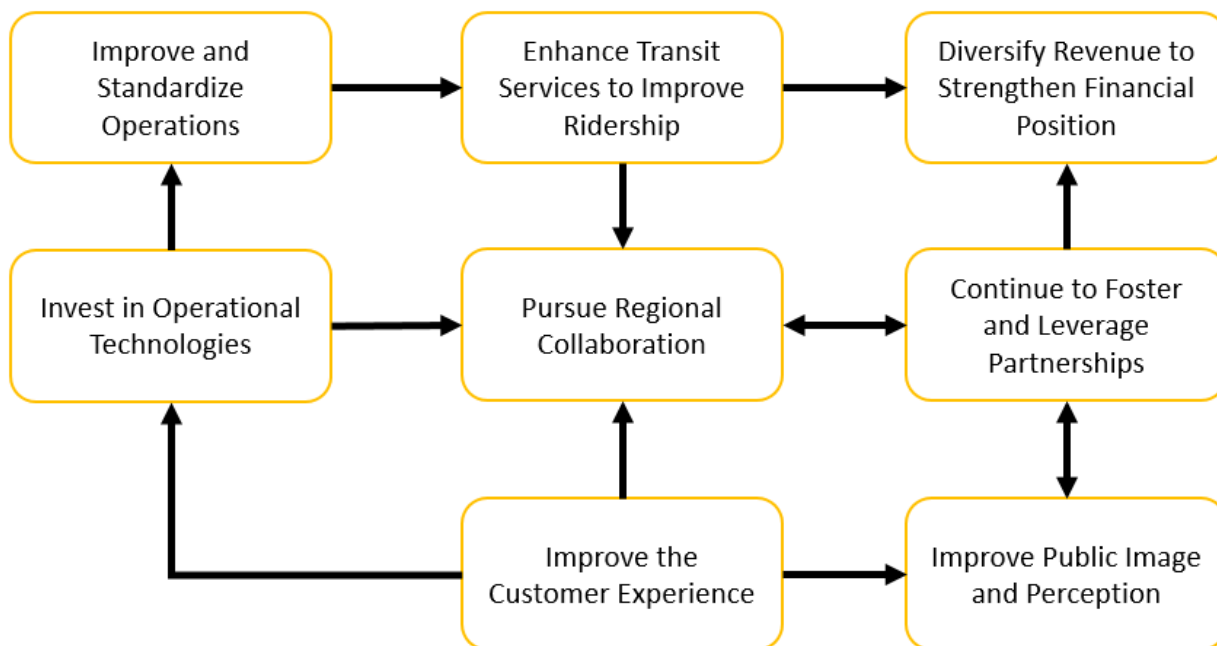


Figure 5: WCTA Strategy Map

To advance each objective and implement the strategic business plan, each strategic objective consists of Action Strategies. Action Strategies are discrete steps that must be taken to achieve the Strategic Objective and enable WCTA to achieve the mission and progress towards meeting the vision.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	ACTION STRATEGIES
<p><b>Improve and Standardize Operations</b></p>	<p>Pursue the design and construction of a transit vehicle maintenance and storage facility</p>
	<p>Determine the appropriate mix of direct, contracted, and shared staff for the WCTA of the future</p>
	<p>Actively implement the PennDOT group Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan to manage existing physical assets and maintain a state-of-good-repair</p>
	<p>Develop and implement standard-operating-procedures for contractor(s) to ensure continuity of service and rider experience</p>
<p><b>Invest in Operational Technologies</b></p>	<p>Conduct passenger and non-rider survey to determine preferences for technology</p>
	<p>Utilize PennDOT Fixed Route Intelligent Transportation System (FRITS) program to invest in operational technologies, including real time bus tracking, passenger counters, smart fare media, dynamic on-board signage, and others</p>
	<p>Develop and implement data management/utilization plan to base management and service decisions on data</p>
<p><b>Enhance Transit Services to Improve Ridership</b></p>	<p>Implement short-term service recommendations of the Transit Development Plan (TDP)</p>
	<p>Continue to monitor PennDOT Shared-Ride Pilot project and adjust accordingly</p>
	<p>Investigate additional park-and-ride lots to expand access to Freedom Transit for Commuters (as referenced in TDP)</p>

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	ACTION STRATEGIES
<b>Pursue Regional Collaboration</b>	<p>Convene a discussion between Washington and Westmoreland County Commissioners to explore regional transit services and operational efficiencies</p> <p>Identify short-term areas where staff could be shared between Washington County, MMVTA, WCTA, and others</p>
<b>Continue to Foster and Leverage Partnerships</b>	<p>Become a Board member of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Appoint a "business and industry" representative to serve as a non-voting member of the WCTA board</p> <p>Organize an employer advisory committee</p>
<b>Improve Public Image and Perception</b>	<p>Create, implement, and maintain a marketing plan which includes a public relations and branding strategy</p> <p>Participate in regional activities to raise awareness of Freedom Transit and public transportation</p>
<b>Diversify Revenue to Strengthen Financial Position</b>	<p>Leverage transit service partnerships and revenue through private sector employers, institutions of higher education, school districts, and managed care organizations (MCOs)</p> <p>Explore establishing an IRS tax-deductible charitable foundation (i.e. 501(c)3) to fundraise for trips that are not funded by other means</p>
<b>Improve the Customer Experience</b>	<p>Modernize the public website to include enhance information, tools, and apps for riders and potential customers</p> <p>Improve bus stops and shelters</p>

## Implementation Strategy

The most critical element to a strategic business plan is implementation and accountability. Strategic business plans are working documents that guide an organization and form the basis for every decision made.

To focus on implementation and accountability, an implementation matrix was developed and is included on the following pages. The implementation matrix identifies each Strategic Objective and assigned Action Strategy and couples it with an output or measure by which WCTA staff and board members will know when, and where possible how well, an action is accomplished. Furthermore, a staff-level owner is assigned who has ultimate responsibility for the successful close-out of each action strategy. In addition to a staff-level owner, a board member is assigned to each Action Strategy to provide board-level guidance and help in the implementation of strategies at a policy-level.

As time progresses, the WCTA staff should update the implementation matrix on a quarterly basis and use it as a tool for implementation reporting. Annually, the entire strategic business plan should be re-evaluated to confirm direction and adjust as necessary to reflect the realities of Washington County, Pennsylvania, and the transit industry as a whole.

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Objective	Action Strategy	Output/Measure	Owner	Board Member Oversight	Start Date for Action	End Date for Action	Issues and Actions
<b>Improve and Standardize Operations</b>	Pursue the design and construction of a transit vehicle maintenance and storage facility.	New Facility.	Sheila Gombita	Rich Shriver	2018	Ongoing	
	Determine the appropriate mix of direct, contracted, and shared staff for the WCTA of the future.	Organizational structure and staffing plan.	Sheila Gombita	Nick Rawlins	2020	2021	
	Actively implement the PennDOT group Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan to manage existing physical assets and achieve a state-of-good-repair.	Meet performance targets set in TAM Plan (forthcoming).	Ian Ramsey	Scott Putnam	2018	Ongoing	
	Develop and implement standard-operating-procedures for contractor(s) to ensure continuity of service and rider experience.	Operations and maintenance standards w/ liquidated damages and standard-operating-procedures.	Sheila Gombita	Sharon Russell	2019	Ongoing	
<b>Invest in Operational Technologies</b>	Conduct passenger and non-rider survey to determine preferences for technology.	Annual survey.	Joe Thomas	Joe Manning	2018	2019	
	Utilize PennDOT FRITS to invest in operational technologies, including AVL, APC, smart fare media, dynamic on-board signage, "next-bus", etc.	Technology installation plan & schedule.	Ian Ramsey	Nick Rawlins	2019	2020	
	Develop and implement data management/utilization plan to base management and service decisions on data.	Data management plan.	Ian Ramsey	Nick Rawlins	2020	Ongoing	
<b>Enhance Transit Services to Improve Ridership</b>	Implement recommendations of the Transit Development Plan (TDP).	Service improvements made.	Joe Thomas	Don Angelone	2019	2023	
	Continue to monitor PennDOT shared-ride pilot project and adjust accordingly.	Meet pilot business plan projections and expectations.	Ian Ramsey	Leslie Grenfell	2018	2019	
	Investigate additional park-and-ride lots to expand access to Freedom Transit for Commuters.	Secure 1 new park-and-ride lot.	Sheila Gombita	Scott Putnam	2019	2020	

Objective	Action Strategy	Output/Measure	Owner	Board Member Oversight	Start Date for Action	End Date for Action	Issues and Actions
<b>Pursue Regional Collaboration</b>	Convene a discussion between Washington and Westmoreland County Commissioners to explore regional transit services and operational efficiencies.	1 initial meeting and follow-ups as appropriate.	Washington County Commissioners	Rich Shriver	2019	2020	
	Identify short-term areas where staff could be shared between Washington County, MMVTA, WCTA, and others.	Staff coordination/sharing plan with associated agreements.	Sheila Gombita	Sharon Russell	2019	2020	
<b>Continue to Foster and Leverage Partnerships</b>	Become a Board member of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce.	Regular attendance at meetings.	Sheila Gombita	Scott Putnam	2020	2021	
	Appoint a "business and industry" representative to serve as a non-voting member of the WCTA Board.	Regular attendee at meetings.	Sheila Gombita	Joe Manning	2020	2021	
	Organize an employer advisory committee.	Meetings at least semi-annually.	Sheila Gombita	Don Angelone	2019	2020	
<b>Improve Public Image and Perception</b>	Create, implement, and maintain a marketing plan which includes a public relations and branding strategy.	Marketing plan.	Alexandra Sakalik	Sharon Russell	2018	2019	
	Participate in regional activities to raise awareness of Freedom Transit and public transportation.	1 event per quarter.	Alexandra Sakalik	Don Angelone	2018	Ongoing	
<b>Diversify Revenue to Strengthen Financial Position</b>	Leverage transit service partnerships and revenue through private sector employers, institutions of higher education, school districts, governmental entities, and managed care organizations (MCOs).	New revenue-positive partnerships.	Sheila Gombita	Leslie Grenfell	2018	Ongoing	
	Explore establishing an IRS tax-deductible charitable foundation (i.e. 501(c)3) to fundraise for trips that are not funded by other means.	Affiliated non-profit.	Sheila Gombita	Leslie Grenfell	2019	2020	
<b>Improve the Customer Experience</b>	Modernize the public website to include enhance information, tools, and apps for riders and potential customers.	Updated website.	Alexandra Sakalik	Joe Manning	2019	2020	
	Improve bus stops and shelters.	Bus stop improvement phasing plan; 1 bus stop per year.	Joe Thomas	Rich Shriver	2018	2023	



Appendix A – WCTA By-Laws

BYLAWS  
OF  
THE WASHINGTON COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

ARTICLE 1

OFFICES

The principal office of the Washington County Transportation Authority in Pennsylvania shall be located at 50 East Chestnut Street, Washington, Pennsylvania, or such other location as shall be selected by the Board of Directors. The Authority may also have offices at such other places as the Board of Directors may determine.

ARTICLE 2

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Washington County Transportation Authority is to coordinate, manage and oversee all federal and/or state subsidized transportation programs in Washington County and to undertake and perform all services or actions attendant thereto; to promote and provide high-quality, cost-effective transportation to the citizens of Washington County and surrounding areas as appropriate, especially older adults, persons with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged individuals, including those on Medical Assistance; with and to accomplish any and all purposes and to exercise all powers contemplated under the Municipality Authorities Act of 1945, as amended, and under Act 22-2001 (S.N. 780, enacted June 19, 2001).

ARTICLE 3

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

3.1 General Powers. The business, property and affairs of the Authority shall be managed by its Board of Directors.

3.2 Number and Term of Office. The Board of Directors shall be appointed by the Washington County Board of Commissioners and shall consist of seven (7) members, whose terms shall be staggered in accordance with the provisions of Section 5610 of Act 22-2001, codified at 53 Pa. C.S.A. § 5610. The seven (7) members shall include one appointment representing senior citizens; one appointment representing persons with disabilities; and two appointments representing the City of Washington in accordance with baseline guaranteed local operating match contribution.

3.3 Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Board of Directors of the Authority shall be held on the first Tuesday of each month, at the Authority offices. The Board of Directors may determine the time and place for holding additional meetings. The regular meeting held in June of each year shall be the Annual Meeting of the Authority Board.

3.4 Special Meetings. A special meeting of the Board of Directors may be called by or at the request of the Chairman or by three (3) members of the Board of Directors, and shall be held at such place as the Board of Directors may determine or as may be designated in the notice of the meeting.

3.5 Quorum. A majority of the Members of the Board in office shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Board of Directors.

3.6 Voting Requirements. The affirmative vote at a Board meeting duly held and at which a quorum is present, of a majority of the Members at such meeting which are entitled to vote, shall be the act of the Board of Directors. A roll call vote shall be required for all fiscal matters.

3.7 Telephone Meetings. One or more Members of the Board may participate in a meeting of the Board of Directors by use of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment which allows all persons participating in the meeting to hear one another.

3.8 Committees. The Board, by resolution adopted by a majority of the Members, may establish one or more committees to consist of one or more Board Members. Any such committee shall have and may exercise such authority of the Board of Directors as shall be provided by resolution of the Board of Directors.

3.10 Vacancies. In the case of a vacancy occurring on the Board of Directors by reason of the expiration of the term of any Member, the Washington County Board of Commissioners shall appoint a new member, or re-appoint the member whose term has expired for a term of five (5) years from the date of expiration of the prior term. . Until such appointment is made, the member whose term has expired shall, if they so choose, continue to serve on the Board of Directors, with full authority, until said vacancy has been filled. In the case of a vacancy by reason of death, resignation, removal or disqualification, the Board of Commissioners shall appoint a successor to fill his or her unexpired term.

3.11 Removal. A Member of the Board may be removed for cause by the Court of Common Pleas of Washington County after having been provided with a copy of the charges against him or her and after having been provided a full hearing in accordance with 53 Pa. C.S.A. § 5610(D). In addition, unless excused by the Board, the Washington County Board of Commissioners may remove a Member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the

Board, provided that such removal occurs within sixty (60) days after the date of the third meeting which the Member fails to attend.

## ARTICLE 4

### OFFICERS

4.1 Number. The officers of the Authority shall be a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and such other officers as the Board of Directors may determine from time to time. An individual may hold more than one office if so appointed by the Board of Directors.

4.2 Election and Term of Office. The officers of the Corporation shall be elected annually by the Board of Directors at the regular meeting of the Board of Directors held in June of each year. If the election of officers is not held at such meeting, such election shall be held as soon as practicable thereafter. Each officer shall hold office until his successor has been duly elected and qualified or until his earlier death, resignation or removal.

4.3 Powers and Duties. The powers and duties of each officer shall be as provided from time to time by the Board of Directors. In the absence of such provisions, each officer shall have the powers and shall discharge the duties customarily incident to his office.

- (a) Chairman. The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Board. Except as otherwise authorized by resolution of the Board of this Authority, the Chairman, along with the Authority's Executive Director, shall sign all contracts, deeds and other instruments made on behalf of the Authority.
- (b) Vice-Chairman. The Vice-Chairman shall perform the duties of the Chairman in the absence or incapacity of the Chairman; and in case of the resignation or death of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman shall perform such duties as are imposed on the Chairman until such time as the Board shall appoint a new Chairman.
- (c) Secretary. The Secretary shall keep the records of the Authority, shall act as secretary of the meetings of the Board and record all votes, and shall keep a record of the proceedings of the Board in a journal of proceedings to be kept for such purposes and shall perform all duties incident to his office. The Secretary shall keep in safe custody the seal of the Authority and shall have the power to affix such seal to all proceedings and resolutions of the Board and to all contracts and instruments authorized to be executed by the Authority.

- (d) Treasurer. The Treasurer shall have the care and custody of all funds of the Authority and shall deposit same in the name of the Authority in such bank or banks as the Board may select. All orders and checks for the payment of money from Authority funds shall be issued under the direction of the Board in accordance to the established disbursement procedures. The Treasurer shall keep regular books of account showing receipts and expenditures and shall render to the Board at each regular meeting, or at times requested by the Board, an account of all transactions, as well as an account of the financial condition of the Authority.

All individuals authorized to sign checks on behalf of the Authority shall give such bond for faithful performance of his or her duties as the Board may determine.

4.4 Removal. Any officer may be removed by the Board of Directors at any time with or without cause and with or without notice by a resolution adopted by a majority of the Board.

4.5 Vacancies. A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal or otherwise, may be filled by the Board of Directors for the unexpired portion of the term.

## ARTICLE 5

### FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Authority shall end on June 30<sup>th</sup>, unless and until changed by a resolution adopted by the Board of Directors.

## ARTICLE 6

### ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL

The Authority may from time to time employ such personnel as it deems necessary to exercise its powers, duties and function as prescribed by law. The selection and compensation of such personnel shall be determined by the Board, subject to the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

ARTICLE 7

SEAL OF AUTHORITY

The seal of the Authority shall contain the name of the Authority and the year of its incorporation, and shall be in the form of the seal impressed in the margin hereof, opposite this section.

ARTICLE 8


AMENDMENTS

The Bylaws of the Authority may be amended by the vote of a majority of the directors then in office following thirty (30) days' written notice of the proposed Amendment.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Bylaws of the Authority; and said Bylaws have not been rescinded, modified or amended and are in full force and effect on the date hereof.

Dated as of Nov. 10, 2015.

  
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Leslie Grenfell, Secretary

Adopted: October 2, 2001  
Amended: March 3, 2010  
Amended: November 10, 2015

## Appendix B – SWOT Analysis

Input	SWOT	Theme
Committed to excellent customer service	S	Customer Service
Provides personalized service and strives to make connections with passengers	S	Customer Service
Collects customer feedback which is reported to the Board on a monthly basis	S	Customer Service
Broad local funding base	S	Financial
Receive funding via non-traditional stakeholders	S	Financial
Bedroom community to Downtown Pittsburgh with affordable housing and lower taxes	S	Marketing/Branding
Well run organization	S	Operations
New administration facility	S	Operations
Ridership has been generally steady with a small increase	S	Operations
Recent vehicle purchase and has new vehicles for fixed route service	S	Operations
Positive working relationship with local, county, and state officials	S	Partnerships
Relationships with non-governmental groups	S	Partnerships
Board subgroup meets regularly with and solicits information and best practices from health and human service organizations	S	Partnerships
Proactive director with close ties with peer and state agencies	S	Workforce
Local government and elected officials have confidence in the authority	S	Workforce
Personnel that are invested and knowledgeable	S	Workforce
Cooperative, unified, and invested leadership (good communication, open dialogue, and positive engagement)	S	Workforce
Board has regular, hands-on interaction with staff	S	Workforce
Board is small and unified, it can be flexible and responsive	S	Workforce
High expectations of its employees and recognizes drivers with exceptional performance	S	Workforce
Rising costs of staff, fuel, etc. are a challenge	W	Financial
Negative public perception due to the former WCT legacy and tarnished brand	W	Marketing/Branding
Brand and service is unknown to the public	W	Marketing/Branding
Inadequate marketing, branding, and promotion	W	Marketing/Branding
Public feels that there is a stigma attached to public transit	W	Marketing/Branding
Lack of a strategic marketing plan	W	Marketing/Branding
Marketing is not reaching the target demographic	W	Marketing/Branding
Unsuccessful with consolidating with the Mid Mon Valley Transit Authority (MMVTA)	W	Operations
Lacks its own maintenance facility; currently bus operations are contracted out to a private operator	W	Operations
Sparsely populated service area	W	Operations
Growth focused along and near highway corridors	W	Operations



Input	SWOT	Theme
Low ridership compared to peer agencies	W	Operations
Shared-Ride Program governance structure is antiquated and impractical	W	Operations
Driver and bus maintenance services are contracted out; lack of oversight and control of its maintenance functions	W	Operations
Lack of technology integration at all levels of transit operations	W	Operations
Dispersed land use is challenging for the provision of services	W	Operations
First mile / last mile problem	W	Operations
Limited staff capacity	W	Workforce
Pursue non-traditional funding sources	O	Financial
Growing population and new demographics represent a market that expects transit and doesn't feel its stigma	O	Marketing/Branding
Must retain identity and local control if merged into a regional transit system	O	Marketing/Branding
Opportunity to become the single provider of transit in the county	O	Operations
A multi-county regional transit system is a possibility	O	Operations
Participation in Shared-Ride Pilot Program can provide opportunities to strengthen shared ride services and help make shared rides affordable and feasible in rural areas	O	Operations
Emerging technologies present opportunities for creative advances and new modalities	O	Operations
Potential to operate a public service similar to Uber	O	Operations
Leverage good highways in the County to improve service operations and efficiencies (e.g., express commuter service route(s))	O	Operations
Southpointe is growing and is a growth opportunity area for Freedom Transit	O	Operations
Expand its park and ride lots to offer greater access to fixed routes	O	Operations
Potential for transit inter-agency cooperation	O	Partnerships
Collaboration with entities that can "feed" riders to system	O	Partnerships
Partner with entities (institutions of higher education) creating new technologies like autonomous shuttles	O	Partnerships
Partner with medical providers and non-profit brokers	O	Partnerships
Washington and Jefferson College may provide an opportunity for a business partnership	O	Partnerships
Washington and Jefferson College could utilize transit services in lieu of having its own fleet	O	Partnerships
Provide student transit service to Washington and Jefferson College	O	Partnerships
Expand and/or leverage opportunities for disabled, senior, independent living, and other disadvantaged populations	O	Partnerships
Pursue merger with Mid Mon Valley Transit Authority (MMVTA) to further leverage opportunities and efficiencies	O	Partnerships
Change to having in-house operations (drivers) and maintenance staff	O	Workforce
PA State funding is volatile and unreliable	T	Financial
Cost containment needs while moving forward	T	Financial
If a regional transit entity is established, local transit might lose control and identity	T	Partnerships

Input	SWOT	Theme
Improving economy and lower fuel costs encourage people to drive in private vehicles rather than taking transit	T	Operations
New modes and technologies	T	Operations
Highway network encourages people to drive rather than take transit	T	Operations
The expanding oil and gas industry competes for drivers (less competitive wages)	T	Workforce