The 2013 Annual Report

of the City of Columbus – Transit

City of Columbus

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This Annual Report is prepared for the citizens of the City of Columbus and the following 2013 public officials:

Columbus Mayor:
The Honorable Kristen Brown

Columbus City Council:
Dascal Bunch
Ryan Brand
Frank Jerome
Frank Miller
Tim Shuffett
Aaron Hankins/Kenny Whipker
Jim Lienhoop

Board of Public Works and Safety:
Kristen Brown
Jayne Farber
Robert Crider
Robert Sullivan

Executive Summary

Mission

To provide a safe and affordable transit option that enables all citizen's access to all points of the city, easily and efficiently.

Vision

ColumBUS will focus on a quality fixed route system that meets the needs of the transit dependent and choice riders such that Transit becomes a real option for all trips.

Staff Overview

The transit department consists of 1 Transit Coordinator, 1 Operations Assistant, 2 part time clericals, 13 full time drivers, 9 on-call drivers, and 1 mechanic for a total of 27 employees. Transit has 5 Gillig buses, 3 Turtle Top Vans, 1 Ford, and 1 Dodge Van.

Vehicle Overview

Transit has five Gillig buses, three Turtle Top Vans, one Ford and 1 Dodge Van.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2013

- Transit has 4 fixed routes as well as Paratransit service running from 6:00am to 8:00pm Monday through Friday, & 6:00am to 6:00pm on Saturday
- Transit Mechanic Mike Shuff retired after seven years of service at the end of January
- Hired Mechanic Greg Noel in February. Greg transfers from the MVH department and has worked for the City for sixteen years
- Route study began in April with Parsons Brinckerhoff with on route monitors as well as rider surveys
- Completed reporting for NTD, The National Transit Database in April
- Driver, Derek Johnson placed first in the Indiana Paratransit State Roadeo at Cereland Park, winning a trip to the National competition in Albuquerque. He placed fifth in the Nationals.
- Implemented the new Paratransit eligibility requirements. New application is an 8 page Questionnaire, and Medical verification. There are over 250 processed applications, with full and conditional eligibility on file All qualified applicants receive a picture ID card for rides on the fixed routes
- Transit ran a 4-H Fair shuttle from the Depot to the fairgrounds during fair week. There were 220 riders shuttled
- The Transit Advisory Committee met at City Hall for monthly meetings the last Friday of each month
- Monthly safety meetings were conducted according to FTA regulations. Our drivers were certified in CPR and AED through the American Heart Association. The drivers went through defensive driving training conducted by Indiana RTAP, fire extinguisher training, and security training with Matt Myers of CPD
- Received four software proposals. Selected Mobilitat out of Greenriver, WY. Extensive training for the new software began in November. Parameters and geographic coding had to be set into the software as well as current rider data, and eligibility status
- Tablets for the drivers were purchased in December and driver training began as well
- We hired 3 on call drivers in 2013, as well as 2 part time office clerical staff
- The office hours were shortened on Saturdays from 7:00am to 6:00pm to 8:00 am to 4:00pm in November
- Office hours on Saturdays were changed in December of 2013, from 7:00am to 6:00pm to current hours of 8:00 am to 4:00. This change was put into place due to minimal phone and Depot activity. Route hours were not changed and there was no negative impact to riders.

Transit Route Study:

- The Transit Route Study began through funding from CAMPO. A consultant was hired to help us with the study. Numerous surveys were done and public meetings were held starting in April. These surveys were very helpful in letting us know what some of the transit improvements that were desired by current and non-riders. A route out Jonathan Moore Pike to the west was by far the most highly desired by existing riders. Longer hours were the second more popular request. The Transit Advisory Committee has acted as the Steering Committee for this study.

- The Transit Route study is nearing completion and we are expecting a plan in April of 2014 that provides some options to improve existing routes and provide better service with existing resources. Upon studying the possibilities of extending the hours, the Transit Advisory Committee recommended a potential to extend the hours in 2014 for one hour on weekdays, ending at 8:00pm instead of the current 7:00pm. This budget was approved and the extended hours went into effect in January of 2014.

- We are preparing to bring these route recommendations to the public and complete a final plan during the summer. We plan to begin implementation of these changes immediately upon their adoption.

Call-a-Bus Scheduling Software:

- We received a grant in 2012 from the Federal Transit Administration to purchase a paratransit scheduling system. We did a request for proposals and received four responses. A selection committee scored the proposals and Mobilitat out of Green River, WY was selected.

- This software will improve Call-a-Bus's existing client database, response time, reduce trip denials, and maintain performance monitoring of each driver and vehicle. Drivers have tablets and receive the schedule for the day, rider database, and have access to GPS, allowing office to track vehicles and schedule rides more efficiently.

- Extensive training for the new software began in November. Parameters and geographic coding had to be set into the software as well as current rider data, and eligibility status. Our projection for 2014 is to see a decrease cost per ride, increase rides per hour, and overall increase accountability.

Goals / 2014

- Purchase vehicle according to route study results
- Continue with policy & procedure updates
- Improve current routes and expand service to route study requests
- Continue with in depth safety training
- Improve upon FTA regulatory reporting through new Mobilitat software
- Update audio/video surveillance for the transit system
- Implement employee evaluation policy
- Establish an on call driver policy
- Improve ridership efficiency and fuel economy by utilizing data from software

Financials

Expenses, Ridership & Fares:

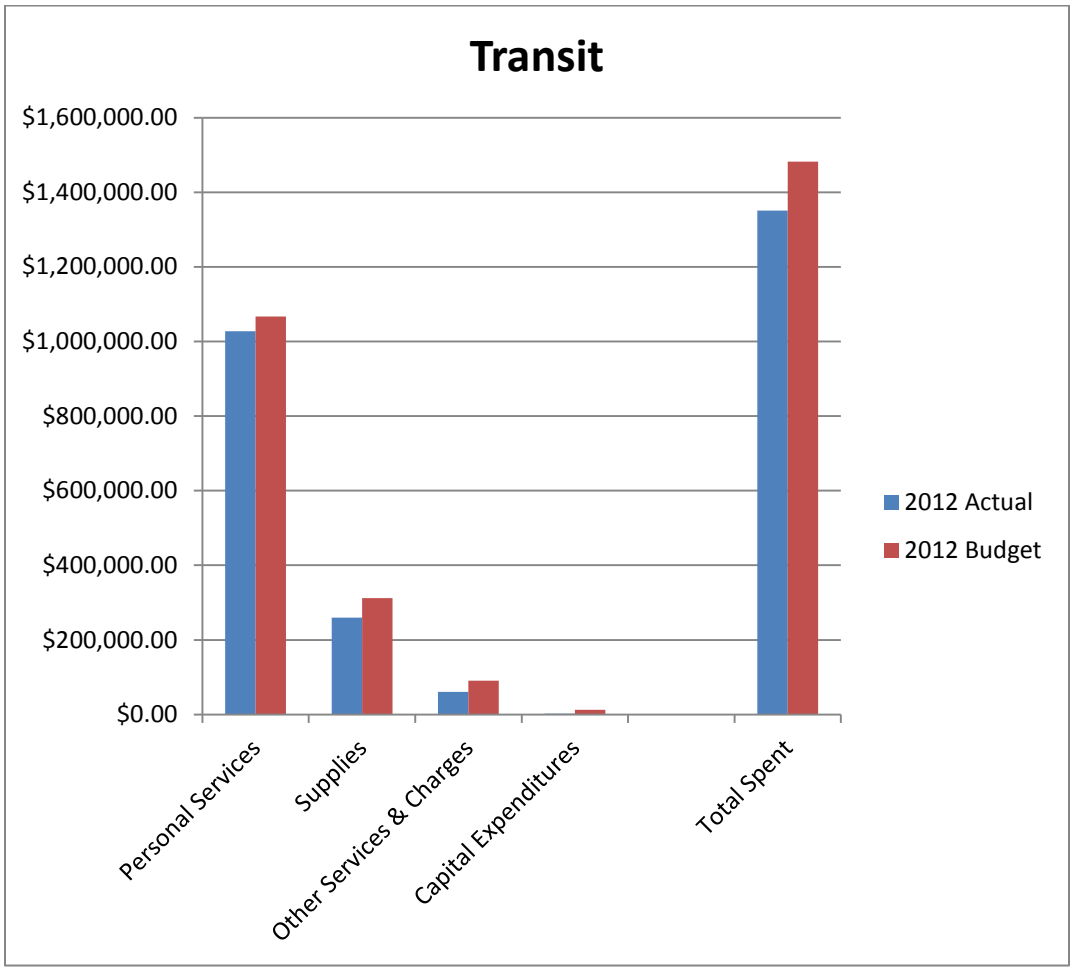
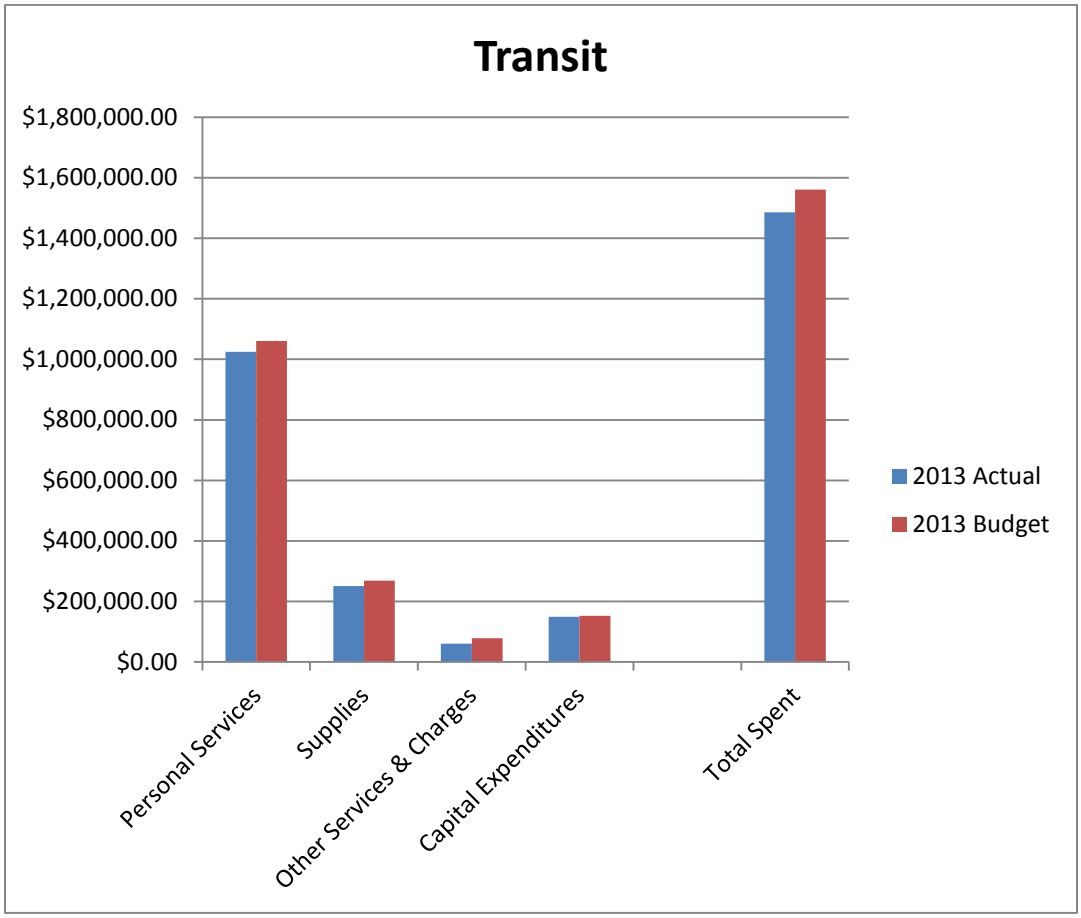
2013 Transit Financial Data	
Revenue	
Fare Box	**$ 33,783.42**
Local	**$ 387,094.00**
State	**$ 295,148.00**
Federal	**$ 682,244.00**
Total Revenue	**$ 1,398,269.42**
Ridership	
Fixed Route	**178,182**
Demand Response	**17,564**
Total Ridership	**195,746**

Columbus Transit had 178,182 boarding's on our fixed Route and 17,564 boarding's on our demand response in 2013. Revenue generated was $33,783.42. Transit has an Easy Rider program for students 7th grade through 12th. This allows students free rides to schools, after school activities, the library, and summer activities. There are currently 355 students signed up for this program. Students apply and are given an ID card to be shown to the driver as they board.

Many of our riders are "Half Fare" riders. A Half Fare application is available for Senior citizens age 60 or older, disabled individuals that qualify and Medicare cardholders. Half fare is actually less than half the fare; it is 10 cents. Approved riders receive an ID card. For Call-a-Bus, there is no reduced fare; the fare is always 50 cents for all riders. Also, there are passes for $5 for 25 rides, which is only 20 cents per ride, and Call-a-Bus passes are $10 for 25 riders, which is only 40 cents per ride. The sale of these passes has increased this year.

We count every fixed route boarding's, but we do not track how many boarding's are half-fare and how many are Easy Riders, but these are a substantial percentage of our riders. To gauge the amount of use of these discount rides, the 2013 revenue per boarding was 17.3 cents, while the 2012 revenue per boarding was 19.1 cents. This indicates an increase in discounted fares. The Transit Advisory Committee is studying options for fares so that ridership increases without a loss of fare box revenue.

Transit	2012 Actual	2012 Budget	%
Personal Services	$1,027,846.68	$1,067,045.63	96%
Supplies	$259,382.75	$312,350.00	83%
Other Services & Charges	$60,952.87	$90,331.00	67%
Capital Expenditures	$2,376.40	$12,500.00	19%
Total Spent	$1,350,558.70	$1,482,226.63	91%



Transit	2013 Actual	2013 Budget	%
Personal Services	$1,024,785.25	$1,060,131.00	97%
Supplies	$251,221.28	$268,854.29	93%
Other Services & Charges	$60,196.65	$78,736.90	76%
Capital Expenditures	$149,441.21	$152,500.00	98%
Total Spent	$1,485,644.39	$1,560,222.19	95%
Year Over Year- 2012/2013	$135,085.69	$77,995.56	
Year Over Year- 2012/2013	10%	5.26%