2014 Sub-Regional Peer Review

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Regional Transportation Authority

March 2016

Prepared by the Department of Capital Programming, Planning & Performance Analysis

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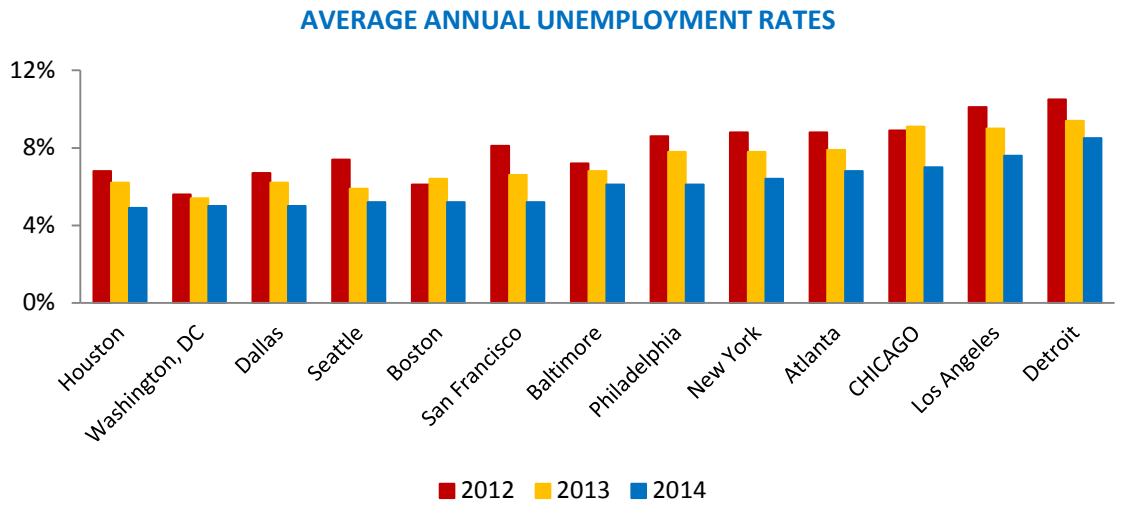
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sub-Regional Peer Review has been developed by the RTA as part of its oversight function to support the evaluation and management of the region's public transportation system. Examination of each service mode and comparison of its performance to the performance of a set of meaningful peers allows for the identification of potential improvement areas. The selection of appropriate peers was carefully performed to allow for the closest possible match of operating characteristics. For each service mode operated in the RTA region – urban bus, heavy rail, commuter rail, suburban bus, vanpool, and ADA paratransit – a peer group of five agencies has been chosen. This report is based on published data from the National Transit Database (NTD) to ensure as much comparability between agencies in definition and collection of data elements as possible. It covers data reported for 2014, the most current year available, which was released in January 2016.

The primary selection criteria for the peer agencies included: size of metropolitan area served, urban versus suburban character of the service area, size of the transit system, and operating characteristics such as speed, trip length, and whether bus services were operated in conjunction with rapid transit service. While the urban/suburban split of service is fairly clear in the Chicago region, in other areas the split is not so well-defined. In selecting appropriate peer groups, properties that were primarily urban were considered for comparison to CTA while those that were primarily suburban were considered for comparison to Pace. The performance of the Pace ADA paratransit service, which is reported as a separate mode to the NTD, is shown separately as well as in combination with dial-a-ride service, another demand-response service offered by Pace.

Although much care was used in selecting meaningful peers, no two transit agencies are perfectly comparable. Each agency has unique circumstances and a unique operating environment, and those differences should be kept in mind when making comparisons. Since there are no federal or industry standards for transit performance metrics, peer comparisons provide the best way to benchmark performance and identify best practices; further research can then be conducted to gain a better understanding of the factors contributing to observed levels of performance. The goal of the RTA performance measurement program is to point toward areas of potential improvement within the constraints and resources of our region.

Overall, the Chicago transit agencies performed well in 2014 in comparison to their peers. The Chicago operators are consistently among the largest of their peers, not surprising given the area's geographic breadth and large population. As in prior years' reports, special strengths were noted across modes in the service efficiency and effectiveness category and in service reliability. These results are indicative of the success the RTA agencies have had at running efficient, safe operations and indicate that scarce operating dollars are being used well.



For each of the peer regions, the economy continued to improve in 2014, as shown in the chart above, which shows peak unemployment rates in 2012 for each region under review in this report. In 2013, each region except Chicago saw improvements in unemployment rates; in 2014, Chicago recorded the largest drop in the average annual unemployment rate of the regions under review. RTA system ridership, however, decreased 2.4% in 2014, the result of extreme weather events, route streamlining, and increased availability and use of non-transit modes such as biking and ridesharing.

CTA Bus continued to perform well in comparison to its peer group, performing at or above the peer average for ten of eleven measures. For the sixth consecutive year, CTA ranked first for having the lowest operating cost per vehicle revenue hour; CTA was also strong in the other two measures of efficiency and effectiveness, ranking second for operating cost per passenger trip and operating cost per passenger mile. Improvement was noted for fare revenue per passenger trip, as CTA moved up one rank position to second; CTA maintained its second-place ranking for fare revenue per passenger mile, a position it's held for six consecutive years. Likewise, CTA ranked first for fare recovery ratio for the fifth year in a row. Continued improvement was noted for capital fund expenditures per passenger trip, for which CTA bus ranked last in 2010 and 2011; CTA ranked second for this measure in 2014.

CTA Rail continued to show strong performance for service efficiency and effectiveness, maintaining its first-place ranking for operating cost per vehicle revenue hour and operating cost per passenger mile. CTA also continued to perform well in the service maintenance and capital investment metrics, achieving top ranking for average fleet age and retaining its top-ranked position for miles between major mechanical failures for the fourth consecutive year. Without a fare increase, CTA maintained its rankings for fare revenue per passenger trip and per passenger mile, but fell one rank position for fare recovery ratio. The completion of the Red Line reconstruction project in late 2013 was followed by a 39% decrease in capital fund expenditures per passenger trip in 2014, and the loss of two rank positions for this metric.

Metra Commuter Rail has consistently performed better than the peer average for all service coverage and service efficiency and effectiveness measures since peer reporting began in 2009. Metra achieved first place rank for passenger trips per vehicle revenue hour for the first time in 2014. Metra also maintained first-place rank for operating cost per passenger mile and second place rank for three other measures of coverage and efficiency and effectiveness. Metra moved up one rank position for average fleet age as it continued efforts to modernize its fleet. However, Metra dropped one rank position for the reliability measure as a particularly harsh winter caused an upsurge in mechanical failures. Metra did not see any rank changes for the measures related to fare revenue but did improve to third rank position for capital fund expenditures per resident.

Pace Suburban Bus experienced its first year of ridership declines since 2009 but maintained its rank positions for both measures of service coverage; rankings for these measures are hampered by Pace's large geographic service area and low population density. Pace performed better than or equal to the peer average for each measure of the service efficiency and effectiveness area, maintaining the lowest operating cost per vehicle revenue hour for the sixth consecutive year and second-place rank for operating cost per passenger mile for the third consecutive year. Pace's performance for maintenance and capital investment was mixed; the average age of its buses increased and Pace moved down one rank position for that measure, while maintaining its rank for the reliability indicator despite extremely difficult weather challenges. Without a fare increase since 2009, Pace remained below the peer average for each measure relating to fares: fare revenue per passenger trip, fare revenue per passenger mile, and fare recovery ratio. However, Pace had nearly 40% higher capital fund expenditures per passenger trip than the peer average, and ranked second for this measure of solvency.

Pace Vanpool performed better than the peer average for two measures, improved its rank position for one measure, and lowered its position for two measures in 2014. Pace had its strongest showing in the service efficiency and effectiveness measures, for which it performed better than the peer average for operating cost per vehicle hour and operating cost per passenger trip. Pace came in last position for the two measures of maintenance and capital investment, having placed no new vehicles into service in 2014, and Pace reported more mechanical failures over fewer miles traveled. Although performance improvements were noted for fare revenue per passenger trip and fare recovery ratio, Pace's fifth-place rank positions for those two measures remained unchanged.

Pace ADA Paratransit is unique in having established a separate reporting structure to NTD and is presented within this report as a separate entity as well as in combination with Pace's demand-response service, dial-a-ride. Pace ADA paratransit service continued its favorable performance, equaling or exceeding the performance of its peers in nine of ten metrics, with rank improvements seen for three measures. Pace ranked first among peer ADA paratransit service providers for having the youngest fleet and second for operating cost per passenger mile and fare recovery ratio.

NOTES/METHODOLOGY

1. This analysis is based on 2014 published data from the National Transit Database (NTD), the most currently available data released in January, 2016. The data submission by transit agencies is a requirement of receiving federal funding and thus follows guidelines and procedures established by the Federal Transit Administration.

2. The recovery ratio used in this report follows the NTD definition, which is the proportion of operating costs that are recovered by fare revenues paid by passengers. The NTD recovery ratio differs from the RTA recovery ratio, which takes into account certain adjustments as enumerated in the RTA Act, such as the exclusion of various costs, the treatment of depreciation, and the inclusion of in-kind services. The RTA recovery ratio also includes system-generated revenue other than fares in its formula calculation.

PEER AGENCIES

MODE	PEER GROUP
CTA Bus	**METRO**: Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Los Angeles **MBTA**: Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, Boston **NYCT**: Metropolitan Transportation Authority – New York City Transit, New York **SEPTA**: Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, Philadelphia **WMATA**: Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, Washington, DC
CTA Rail	**MARTA**: Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority, Atlanta **MBTA**: Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, Boston **NYCT**: Metropolitan Transportation Authority – New York City Transit, New York **SEPTA**: Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, Philadelphia **WMATA**: Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, Washington, DC
Metra Commuter Rail	**LIRR**: Metropolitan Transportation Authority-Long Island Rail Road, New York City metropolitan area/Long Island **MBTA**: Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, Boston **MNCR**: Metropolitan Transportation Authority-Metro-North Commuter Railroad, New York City metropolitan area/Connecticut **NJT**: New Jersey Transit, New York City metropolitan area/New Jersey **SEPTA**: Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, Philadelphia
Pace Suburban Bus	**ACT**: Alameda-Contra Costa Transit, Oakland and East Bay communities **NICE**: Nassau Inter-County Express, New York **OCTA**: Orange County Transportation Authority, Los Angeles area **SAM**: San Mateo County Transit District, San Francisco Bay area **SMART**: Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation, Detroit area
Pace Vanpool	**DART**: Dallas Area Rapid Transit, Dallas **KING CO**: King County Metro Transit, Seattle area **METRO**: Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Los Angeles **OCTA**: Orange County Transportation Authority, Los Angeles area **HOUSTON**: Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Houston area
Pace ADA Paratransit	**MBTA**: Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, Boston **MTA**: Maryland Transit Administration, Baltimore **NYCT**: Metropolitan Transportation Authority – New York City Transit, New York **ACCESS**: Access Services, Los Angeles **WMATA**: Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, Washington, DC

DEFINITIONS

Average Age of Fleet: the mean of the difference between year of manufacture and year under consideration for all vehicles in the active fleet.

Average Vehicle Passenger Capacity: the mean number of passengers that can be carried per revenue vehicle, computed by adding seating capacity plus standing capacity and dividing that number by the number of active vehicles in the fleet. For the commuter rail mode, this calculation excludes standing passenger capacity to conform to industry standards and the expected provision of one seat per passenger.

Average Speed: the miles that vehicles travel while in revenue service divided by the hours that vehicles travel while in revenue service.

Average Trip Length: the average distance ridden for an unlinked passenger trip.

Capital Funds Expended: the expenses related to the purchase of capital assets; it does not include capital funds transferred to cover operating expenses.

Capital Funds Expended per Passenger Trip: expenses related to the purchase of capital assets divided by the total number of unlinked passenger trips provided.

Directional Route Miles: the mileage in each direction over which public transportation vehicles travel while in revenue service.

Fare Recovery Ratio: the recovery ratio used in this report follows the NTD definition, which is the proportion of operating costs that are covered by fare revenue paid by passengers. The NTD recovery ratio differs from the RTA recovery ratio, which takes into account other system-generated revenue and adjustments as enumerated in the RTA Act.

Fare Revenue: all income received directly from passengers, either paid in cash or through pre-paid tickets, passes, etc.

Fare Revenue per Passenger Mile: all income received from passengers divided by the total number of miles traveled by passengers.

Fare Revenue per Passenger Trip: all income received from passengers divided by the total number of unlinked passenger trips provided.

Miles between Major Mechanical Failures: the average number of miles that vehicles travel while in service between failures of some mechanical element or a safety concern that prevents the vehicle from completing a scheduled trip or from starting the next scheduled trip.

Operating Cost: the expenses associated with the operation of the transit agency.

Operating Cost Components: the allocation of costs among specific categories of expenses:

- General administration: all costs associated with the general administration of the transit agency
- Vehicle maintenance: all costs associated with revenue and non-revenue service vehicle maintenance
- Non-vehicle maintenance: all costs associated with facility maintenance
- Vehicle operations: all costs associated with vehicle operations

Operating Cost per Passenger Mile: total operating cost divided by the total number of miles traveled by passengers.

Operating Cost per Passenger Trip: total operating cost divided by the total number of unlinked passenger trips taken on public transportation vehicles.

Operating Cost per Vehicle Revenue Hour: total operating cost divided by the hours that vehicles travel while in revenue service.

Passenger Miles: cumulative sum of the distances ridden by each passenger: average trip length multiplied by total passenger trips.

Passenger Trips: unlinked passenger trips reported as the number of passengers who board public transportation vehicles, counted each time they board a vehicle used to travel from their origin to their destination.

Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Hour: total number of unlinked passenger trips divided by the total number of hours of transit service provided.

Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile: total number of unlinked passenger trips divided by the miles that vehicles travel while in revenue service.

Peak to Base Ratio: a comparison of how many revenue vehicles are in service during peak hours versus non-peak hours.

Population: the population of the area served by the transit agency as reported to NTD by the agency.

Population Density: the service area population divided by the service area square miles.

Revenue Components of Trip Cost: the cost of a trip viewed as the percentage and actual dollar amounts covered by fare and non-fare revenue (system-generated revenue and other subsidies).

Service Area: A measure of access to transit service in terms of population served and area coverage (square miles). The reporting transit agency determines the service area boundaries and population for most transit services using the definitions contained in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), i.e. a corridor surrounding the routes ¾ of a mile on either side, or for rail, a series of circles of radius ¾ mile centered on each station.

Vehicle Revenue Hours: hours that vehicles travel while in revenue service.

Vehicle Revenue Miles: miles that vehicles travel while in revenue service, including layover/recovery time, but excluding deadhead time.

Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service: the revenue vehicle count during the peak season of the year, on the week and day that maximum service is provided; excludes atypical days or one-time special events.

URBAN BUS

The peers selected for urban bus are those that serve the nation's largest urbanized areas with the most extensive, well-developed transit systems. These cities – Boston, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC – rank within the top ten in the country for metropolitan area population and the number of transit trips taken. They each also have both urban rail and bus services, which provide coordinated service throughout the metropolitan area. New York City Transit is the most analogous to CTA bus in that it has a service area largely defined by city boundaries. The bus systems serving the other cities also serve surrounding suburban areas, but are predominantly urban systems.

CTA performed better than the peer average for eight of eleven measures and equaled the peer average for two measures. With a significant drop in ridership, CTA dropped to fourth place for passenger trips per vehicle hour but maintained its second-place ranking for passenger trips per vehicle revenue mile. CTA again performed well in the efficiency and effectiveness measures, maintaining top ranking for operating cost per vehicle revenue hour and ranking second for operating cost per passenger trip and operating cost per passenger mile. Although it has the second-youngest fleet, CTA dropped to last place for the reliability measure after seeing a 21% increase in major mechanical failures in 2014. CTA continued its strong performance for service level solvency, improving its rank for fare revenue per passenger trip and maintaining first place for fare recovery ratio. CTA improved one rank position for capital fund expenditures per passenger trip, achieving second place -- an improvement from last-place ranking in 2011.

Peer Comparison

Service Area	Performance Measure	Performs better than peer average	
		2013	2014
Coverage	Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Hour	YES	EQUAL
	Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile	YES	EQUAL
Efficiency and Effectiveness	Operating Cost per Vehicle Revenue Hour	YES	YES
	Operating Cost per Passenger Trip	YES	YES
	Operating Cost per Passenger Mile	YES	YES
Maintenance and Capital Investment	Average Age	YES	YES
	Miles between Major Mechanical Failures	NO	NO
Solvency	Fare Revenue per Passenger Trip	YES	YES
	Fare Revenue per Passenger Mile	YES	YES
	Fare Recovery Ratio	YES	YES
	Capital Funds Expended per Passenger Trip	EQUAL	YES

Peer Modal Characteristics

In comparison to their peers, New York and Chicago have the smallest and most densely-populated operating environments. CTA ranks third, behind NYCT and Los Angeles Metro, for miles and hours of service provided, passenger trips, and passenger miles traveled.

Urban Bus Overview

Modal Characteristics	CTA	MBTA	METRO	NYCT	SEPTA	WMATA
	Chicago	Boston	Los Angeles	New York	Philadelphia	Washington, DC
Service Area Population	3,425,958	4,181,019	8,626,817	8,491,079	3,361,074	3,719,567
Service Area (square miles)	314	3,244	1,513	321	836	950
Population Density	10,911	1,289	5,702	26,452	4,020	3,915
Directional Route Miles	1,308	1,786	3,541	1,928	2,539	2,442
Vehicle Revenue Miles	52,380,315	23,659,283	75,665,201	97,792,242	40,260,177	40,210,824
Vehicle Revenue Hours	5,684,638	2,375,894	6,946,779	13,048,245	3,971,387	3,969,596
Passenger Trips	276,116,759	117,852,007	361,601,141	795,718,057	177,399,490	139,668,312
Passenger Miles	684,139,013	307,554,417	1,494,525,533	1,785,563,168	525,155,004	431,959,299
Operating Cost	$783,315,510	$419,764,031	$961,587,117	$2,892,642,241	$619,724,027	$583,490,687
Fare Revenue	$296,824,949	$90,105,863	$259,886,257	$949,897,633	$179,170,044	$145,391,200
Capital Funds Expended	$175,409,038	$34,779,087	$265,018,725	$109,606,312	$65,547,823	$23,166,770
Average Speed (miles per hour)	9.2	10.0	10.9	7.5	10.1	10.1
Average Trip Length (miles)	2.5	2.6	4.1	2.2	3.0	3.1
Average Vehicle Passenger Capacity	83	96	55	78	86	67
Average Vehicle Age (years)	7.6	10.3	9.4	8.5	9.7	7.5
Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	1,568	805	1,904	3,819	1,182	1,342

Modal Characteristics Highlights

Directional Route Miles: CTA was one of five agencies to reduce directional route miles in 2014; SEPTA expanded its network by just under 1%. CTA, which has the fewest directional route miles compared to its peers, decreased by 0.3%, although the peer average decrease was 3.5%. Over the past five years, CTA's directional route miles have declined by 3.7% versus the peer average of 1.4%.

Vehicle Revenue Miles: CTA was one of three agencies to see a decrease in vehicle revenue miles in 2014, with NYCT and WMATA. Since 2010, CTA has decreased its vehicle revenue miles by 7.8%, versus a peer average decrease of 2.5%.

Passenger Trips: CTA saw the steepest ridership decline in 2014 at -8.0%. Bus ridership has seen declines across each of the peer agencies over the 10-year period 2005-2014: LA METRO (-4%), SEPTA (-6%), CTA and WMATA (-9%), NYCT (-16%), and MBTA (-19%).

Operating Cost: CTA's operating cost increase was held to 2.5% in 2014 compared to an average increase of 4.5%. CTA's five-year increase of 10.2% is lower than the peer average of 13.9%, although CTA has achieved this by cutting significantly more vehicle revenue miles and hours compared to its peers.

Fare Revenue: In direct contrast to 2013, SEPTA was the only agency to implement a fare increase in 2014. Over the past five years, CTA fare revenue has increased 9.3% compared to a peer average of 16.1%.

Capital Funds Expended: CTA increased capital fund expenditure per passenger by 50% in 2014, overshadowed by SEPTA's increase of over 74%. Capital fund expenditures fluctuate greatly from year to year, generally corresponding to large capital outlays for new rolling stock or construction projects. In 2014, CTA expended over $114 million on new bus equipment – nearly as much as the prior three years combined.

Average Speed: Each agency saw decreased average bus speeds in 2014; CTA was down 0.2% compared to 2013 and had the second-lowest average speed of 9.2 miles per hour versus the peer average of 9.6 mph.

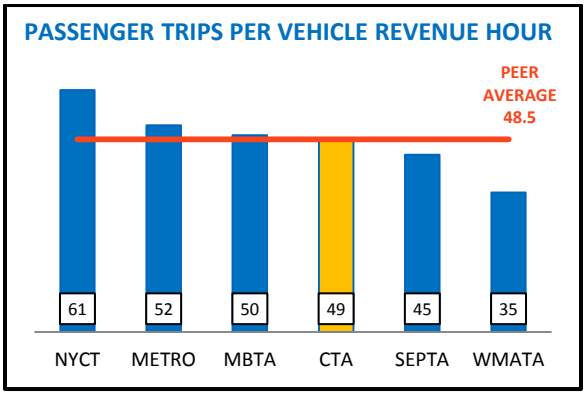
Average Trip Length: CTA bus riders travel an average 2.5 miles per trip, compared to the peer average of 3.0 miles. CTA saw a 2.1% increase in its average trip length in 2014, its third consecutive year-over-year increase. Over the past five years, CTA passenger average trip lengths have increased 7.2% compared to a peer average increase of 1.0%.

Average Vehicle Passenger Capacity: CTA operates the third-largest vehicles with an average passenger capacity of 82.8. Average passenger capacities vary from a low of 55.0 at METRO to 95.9 at MBTA.

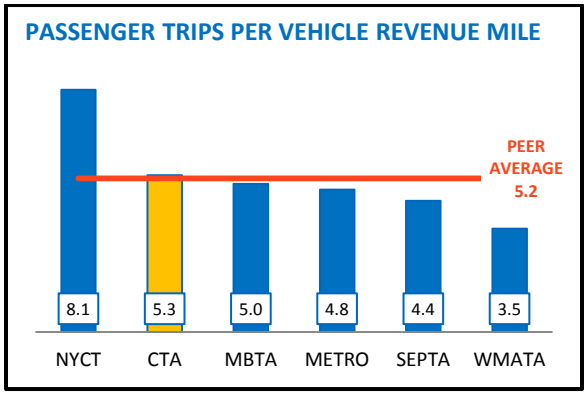
URBAN BUS

Service Coverage

CTA bus saw small decreases in vehicle revenue hours and vehicle revenue miles in 2014; however, an 8.0% drop in ridership resulted in unfavorable results for the performance measures shown below, passenger trips per vehicle revenue hour and passenger trips per vehicle revenue mile. CTA did not have any major route changes and did not add or eliminate any routes in 2014; however, bus ridership was negatively impacted by the re-opening of the Dan Ryan branch of the Red Line after a five-month closure, as well as bitter cold and snowy weather experienced in the first few months of the year. Of its peer group, CTA bus experienced the largest ridership losses in 2014 and lost one rank position for passenger trips per vehicle revenue hour, although it maintained its ranking for passenger trips per vehicle revenue mile.



CTA saw the steepest drop in ridership at -8.0%, while its vehicle revenue hours dropped by 1.8%. Passenger trips per vehicle revenue hour decreased 6.3% in 2014, the largest unfavorable change for this measure among its peer group, dropping CTA one rank position. CTA's performance of 48.6 passenger trips per vehicle revenue hour equals the peer average.

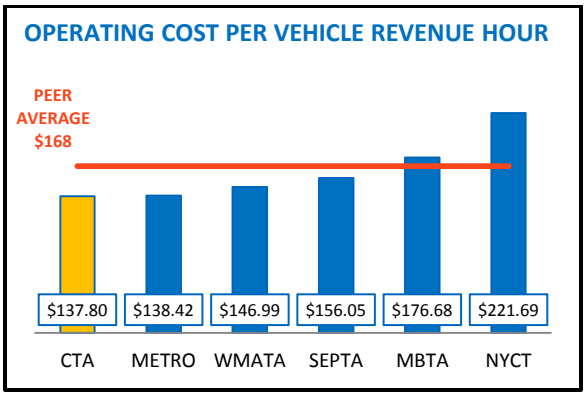


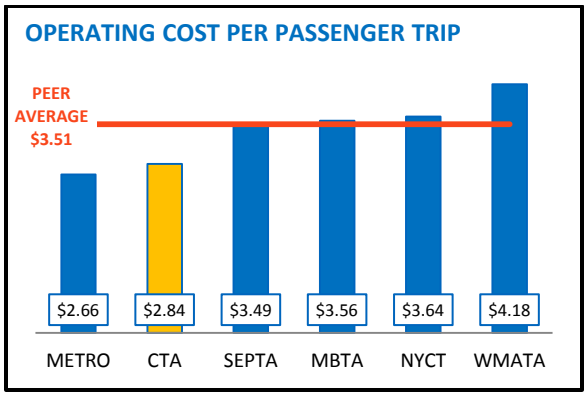
CTA maintained its second-place ranking for passenger trips per vehicle revenue mile although its performance decreased 6.1%, mostly influenced by the significant 8.0% ridership decrease. CTA's performance for this measure equals the peer average.

URBAN BUS

Service Efficiency and Effectiveness

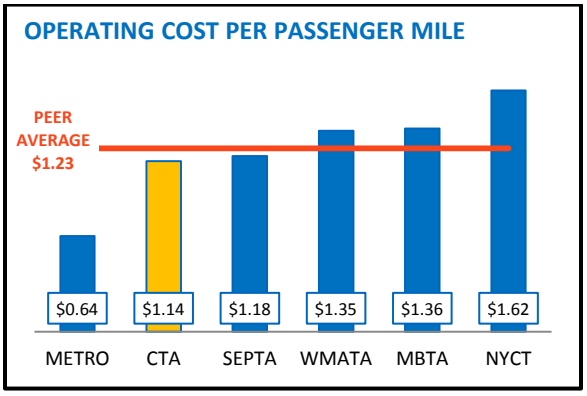
For the sixth consecutive year, CTA bus outperformed its peers for the service efficiency indicator operating cost per vehicle revenue hour, and has maintained its second-place ranking for operating cost per passenger mile for five years running. After four consecutive years in the top spot for operating cost per passenger trip, CTA dropped to second place as a result of declining ridership.

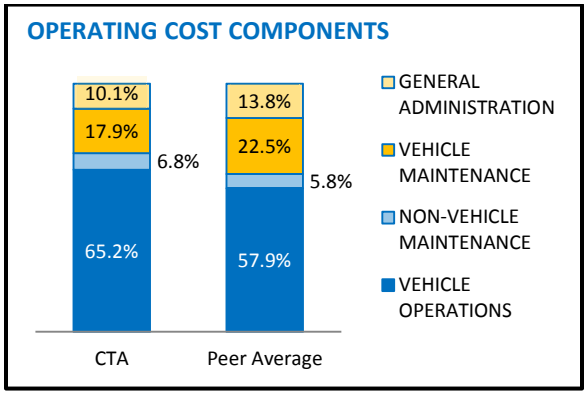




A 1.8% decrease in vehicle revenue hours, combined with a 2.5% operating cost increase, resulted in a 4.4% increase for this measure for CTA. METRO was the only agency to see a reduction for this measure, down 1.4% compared to 2013, resulting from service expansion coupled with the lowest operating cost increases of 0.6%.

After four years of having the lowest operating cost per passenger trip, CTA dropped to second place ranking due to two years of ridership decreases. Although increasing $0.29 from 2013, CTA's operating cost per passenger trip remains 19% lower than the peer average.





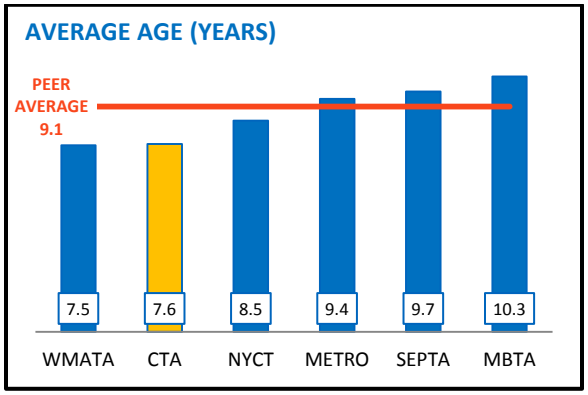
In spite of ridership losses, CTA maintained its second-place ranking for this measure. CTA's operating cost per passenger mile is roughly 7% lower than the peer average.

CTA bus expended 65.2% of its budget on vehicle operations, significantly more than the peer average of 57.9%, and proportionally less on general administration and vehicle maintenance compared to its peers.

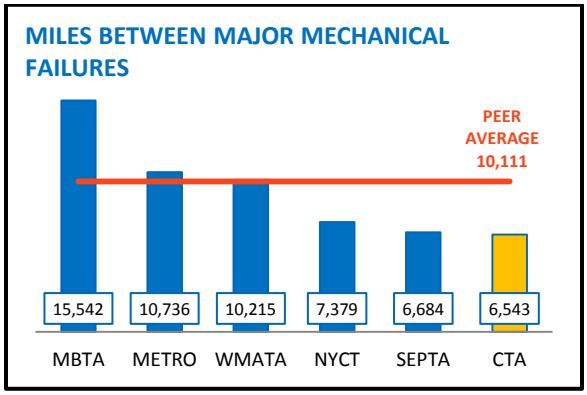
URBAN BUS

Service Maintenance and Capital Investment

CTA added 92 new buses into its active vehicle fleet in 2014 and held its second-rank position for average fleet age. However, over 50% of CTA vehicles have reached the middle of their expected useful life of 12 years; increasing vehicle age and a particularly severe winter led to a 20.6% increase in the number of major mechanical failures reported by CTA. Accordingly, CTA ranked sixth for miles between major mechanical failures in 2014 with a 19.1% drop from 2013 performance.



With an average age of 7.6 years, 56% of CTA buses have reached the middle of the expected minimum useful life of 12 years, versus a peer average fleet age of 9.1 years.

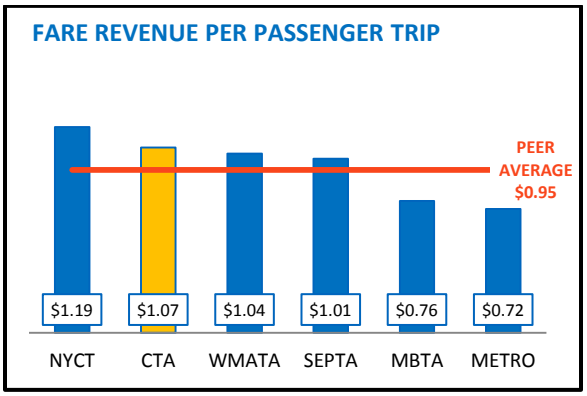


CTA's ranking for this metric has gone from first-place in 2010 to sixth place in 2014. CTA's mid-life bus overhaul program began in 2013 and continued throughout 2014. This effort to overhaul more than 1,000 buses was scheduled to be completed in 2015 and is expected to improve performance for this metric.

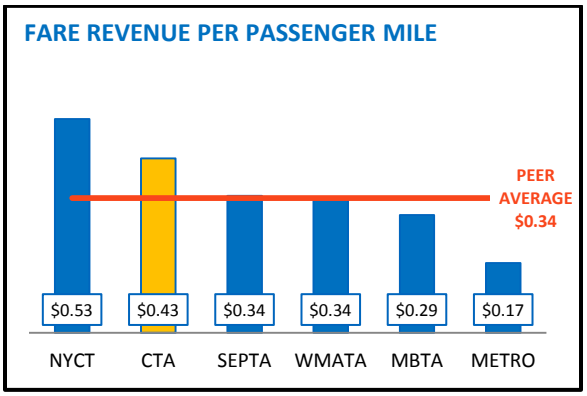
URBAN BUS

Service Level Solvency

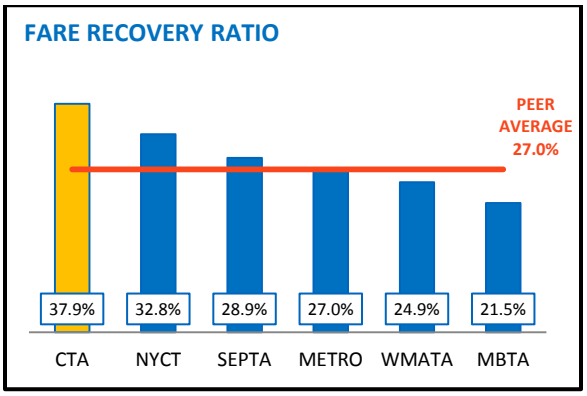
CTA has consistently performed well compared to its peers in the service level solvency area. Although passenger trips were down for 2014, fare revenues did not see a commensurate drop as fare collection methods improved and riders opted for different fare products.



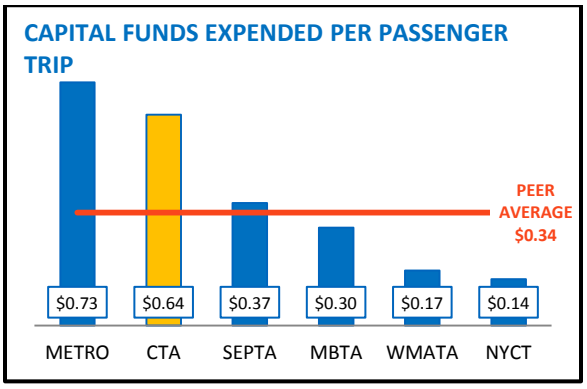
CTA moved up one rank position for this measure as fare revenue saw only a 0.7% decrease despite an 8.0% drop in ridership. CTA displaced WMATA for the second-highest average fare paid at $1.07.



CTA has held the second-rank position for this measure since peer reporting began in 2009. CTA saw a 5.8% gain for this measure in 2014 and received $0.09, or 29%, more than the peer average for this metric.



For the fifth consecutive year, CTA achieved first-place ranking for its fare recovery ratio, achieved by recovering 37.9% of its operating expenses through rider-paid fares and exceeding the peer average by 10.9 percentage points.



After ranking sixth for this measure in 2010 and 2011, CTA moved up one position in 2012, two positions in 2013, and another in 2014 to rank second. A significant 50% increase in CTA bus capital expenditures per passenger trip in 2014 reflects an aggressive capital improvement plan that has neared $500 million of investment since 2010.

HEAVY RAIL

The peers selected for CTA heavy rail were chosen from the largest rapid transit systems in the country. The number of cities with urban rail systems is much smaller than those with bus systems, limiting the group of potential peers. NYCT, MBTA, and SEPTA are all natural peers as older rail systems serving the urban center of large metropolitan areas. MARTA and WMATA, although relatively newer heavy rail systems, were chosen as peers due to their large sizes and mostly urban settings.

CTA rail operated better than its peers for six of the eleven measures examined. As it has in the past, CTA performed most strongly in the service efficiency and effectiveness area, maintaining top rankings for operating cost per vehicle revenue hour for the sixth consecutive year and operating cost per passenger mile for the fourth consecutive year. Significant gains were noted for the average age of the CTA rail fleet; CTA improved from having the oldest fleet as recently as 2012 to the youngest fleet in 2014. For the fourth consecutive year, CTA achieved top ranking for miles between major mechanical failures. CTA rail saw improvement for the metrics fare revenue per passenger trip and fare revenue per passenger mile, although rankings were unchanged from 2013. However, ranking for fare recovery ratio dropped one position to fifth and capital fund expenditures per passenger trip fell two positions in 2014, the year following the major Red Line south branch reconstruction project.

Peer Comparison

Service Area	Performance Measure	Performs better than peer average	
		2013	2014
Service Coverage	Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Hour	NO	NO
	Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile	NO	NO
Service Efficiency and Effectiveness	Operating Cost per Vehicle Revenue Hour	YES	YES
	Operating Cost per Passenger Trip	YES	YES
	Operating Cost per Passenger Mile	YES	YES
Service Maintenance and Capital Investment	Average Age	YES	YES
	Miles between Major Mechanical Failures	YES	YES
Service Level Solvency	Fare Revenue per Passenger Trip	NO	NO
	Fare Revenue per Passenger Mile	NO	NO
	Fare Recovery Ratio	NO	NO
	Capital Funds Expended per Passenger Trip	YES	YES

Peer Modal Characteristics

CTA operates heavy rail in the nation's second-most densely-populated area, after New York City. CTA ranks third among its peers for directional route miles, vehicle revenue miles, passenger trips, passenger miles, operating cost, fare revenue, and capital funds expended.

Heavy Rail Overview

Modal Characteristics	CTA	MARTA	MBTA	NYCT	SEPTA	WMATA
	Chicago	Atlanta	Boston	New York	Philadelphia	Washington, DC
Service Area Population	3,425,958	1,697,633	4,181,019	8,491,079	3,361,074	3,719,567
Service Area (square miles)	314	485	3,244	321	836	950
Population Density	10,911	3,500	1,289	26,452	4,020	3,915
Directional Route Miles	208	96	76	488	75	212
Vehicle Revenue Miles	70,679,582	18,086,375	23,133,946	345,106,130	17,018,476	74,078,897
Vehicle Revenue Hours	3,830,566	686,168	1,436,546	18,938,907	875,171	3,020,971
Passenger Trips	238,100,054	68,761,570	178,462,448	2,743,004,452	99,288,812	269,529,019
Passenger Miles	1,446,542,103	444,957,333	606,829,993	11,152,745,285	439,437,755	1,519,705,315
Operating Cost	$546,181,244	$215,884,855	$330,588,713	$5,022,082,486	$190,017,115	$952,625,777
Fare Revenue	$290,337,682	$74,914,218	$197,899,125	$3,171,793,085	$103,850,277	$593,323,968
Capital Funds Expended	$306,194,954	$110,887,397	$160,543,018	$2,588,545,173	$70,819,095	$395,616,287
Average Speed (miles per hour)	18.5	26.4	16.1	18.2	19.4	24.5
Average Trip Length (miles)	6.1	6.5	3.4	4.1	4.4	5.6
Average Vehicle Passenger Capacity	104	198	230	136	112	183
Average Vehicle Age (years)	15.9	24.8	26.0	20.6	21.7	23.9
Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	1,108	210	336	5,238	286	878

Modal Characteristics Highlights

Directional Route Miles: There were no changes among any of the peers for this metric.

Vehicle Revenue Miles: CTA reported the largest increase in vehicle revenue miles in 2014, up 2.4% compared to a peer average decrease of 0.2%.

Passenger Trips: CTA rail ridership increased 3.9% in 2014 to a record high, although this is partly due to 2013 ridership being negatively impacted by the five-month closure of the Dan Ryan branch of the Red Line for reconstruction. CTA's five-year ridership increase of 12.9% is significantly higher than the peer average ridership increase of 5.5%. Rail ridership has shown significant increases over the past five years for most of the major operators: SEPTA (+4%), NYCT (+12%), CTA (+13%), and MBTA (+28%), although WMATA has lost 6% of its rail ridership over that time period.

Operating Cost: Each agency reported higher operating costs in 2014. CTA's increase of 6.3% was higher than the peer average of 4.1% and the highest increase of its peer group. However, over the past five years, CTA's operating cost has grown by 21.1% versus the peer average of 23.8%.

Fare Revenue: CTA fare revenue rose 4.4% without a fare increase in 2014. SEPTA, the only peer agency to implement a fare increase in 2014, saw a fare revenue increase of 8.5%, the highest increase among the peer agencies. A five-year comparison shows that CTA's fare revenue increase totals 21.3% versus the peer average of 26.6%.

Capital Funds Expended: With Red Line reconstruction completed in 2013, CTA's capital fund expenditures dipped 36.3% in 2014. Nearly 80% of CTA's capital fund expenditures went toward facility projects in 2014.

Average Speed: At 18.5 miles per hour, CTA rail speed was 1.4% higher compared to 2013 but was the third-slowest speed among its peers, who averaged 20.9 miles per hour.

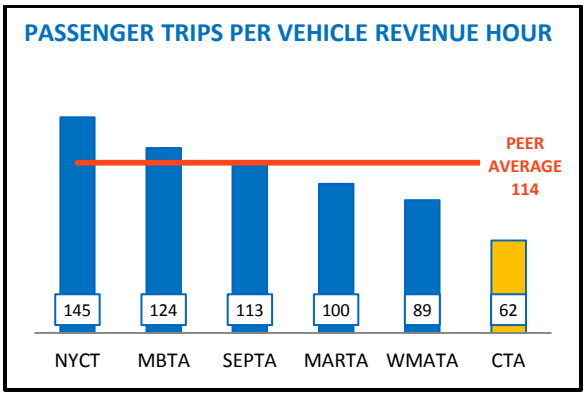
Average Trip Length: Following a 5.6% reduction in 2013, CTA rail trips in 2014 decreased another 3.4% to 6.1 miles. CTA average trip lengths are 27% longer than the peer average of 4.8 miles.

Average Vehicle Passenger Capacity: CTA cars are smaller in terms of the number of seats, length, and width compared to its peers due to its need to navigate tighter turns on its 'L' tracks. However, newer CTA rail cars have been able to accommodate more passengers, increasing this metric by 4.9% in 2014. The average vehicle passenger capacity of a CTA rail car is 103.9, about 40% smaller than the peer average of 171.8.

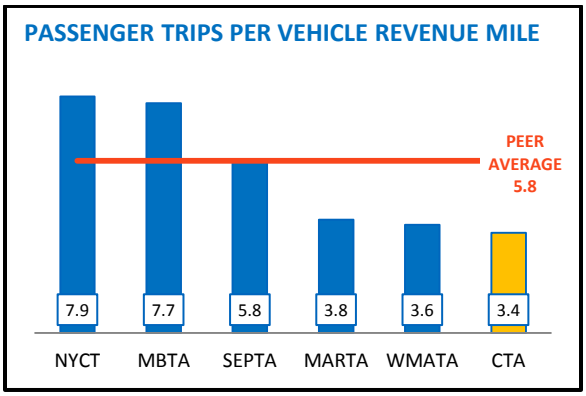
HEAVY RAIL

Service Coverage

CTA performance for the service coverage measures consistently falls below that of its peers. Newer CTA cars can carry more passengers (the average capacity in 2009 was 90; the average capacity in 2014 is 104 passengers), but CTA's cars are still significantly smaller than the peer average of 172. Smaller cars account for most of the variance in performance, as CTA must run more cars to serve the same number of passengers. SEPTA, which has the second-smallest size rail car, carries nearly twice the passengers per hour that CTA does, but CTA operates 24-hour rail service and has a more extensive network of stations in comparison. When passenger trips are examined in relation to overall capacity rather than per vehicle hour or mile, CTA performs above the peer average, indicating that although its cars are small, they are used effectively.



CTA saw a 1.0% increase in the number of vehicle revenue hours operated in 2014; increased service, occurring in conjunction with an increase in ridership, resulted in a 2.9% improvement in performance for this measure.

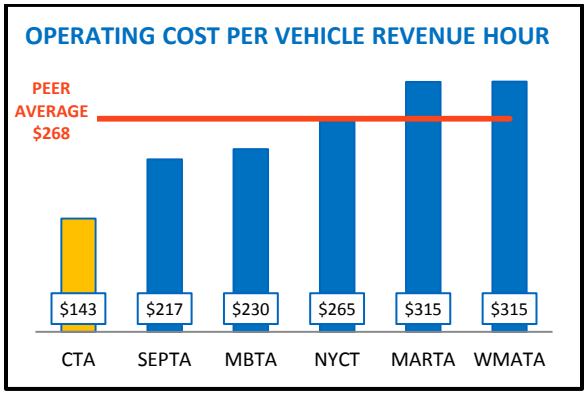


Along with the increase in vehicle revenue hours, CTA operated 2.4% more vehicle revenue miles in 2014. The 3.9% increase in ridership resulted in a 1.5% increase in performance for this measure.

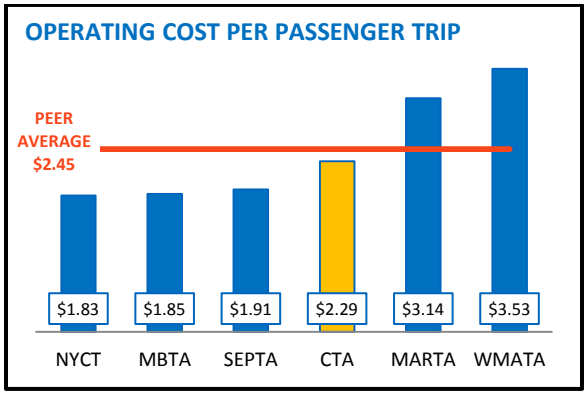
HEAVY RAIL

Service Efficiency and Effectiveness

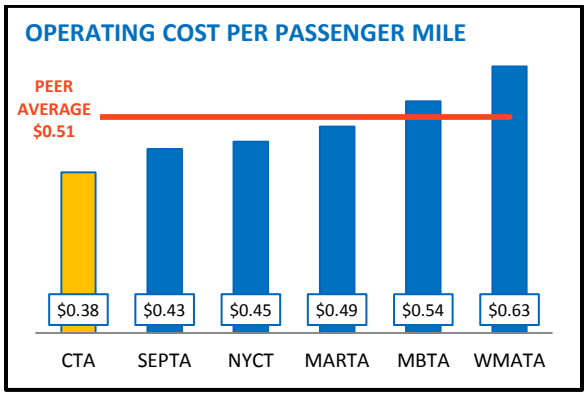
CTA performed well in service efficiency and effectiveness, maintaining its first place ranking for lowest operating cost per vehicle revenue hour and operating cost per passenger mile. Smaller vehicles and longer average trip lengths contribute to CTA's relative strong performance for these cost measures, as costs are spread over a larger number of vehicles and passenger miles.



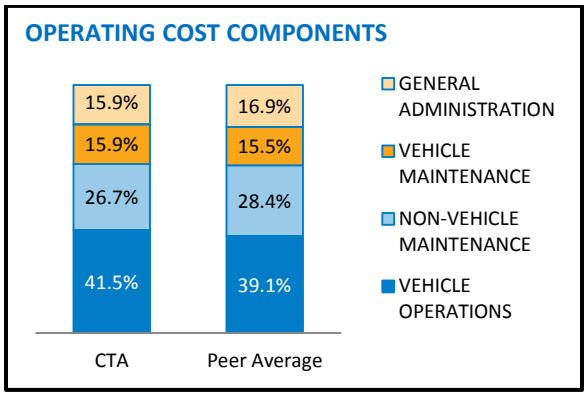
Higher operating cost paired with a 1.0% increase in vehicle revenue hours resulted in a 5.3% increase in operating cost per vehicle hour, a difference of $7.21, keeping CTA's metric 47% lower than the peer average.



CTA's operating cost per trip increased 2.3% in 2014 versus the peer average of 3.2%, for a net increase of $0.05. This was the fourth consecutive year that CTA has ranked fourth for this measure, although it has performed better than the peer average, which is skewed by MARTA and WMATA.



CTA has seen significant growth in passenger miles traveled from 2010-2014, up 11.6% compared to a peer average of 5.6%. In 2014, CTA saw an increase of $0.02 for this measure, matching the peer average increase, and maintained its first place ranking for the fourth consecutive year.

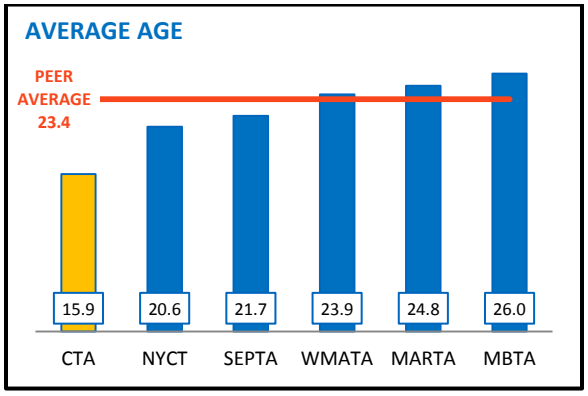


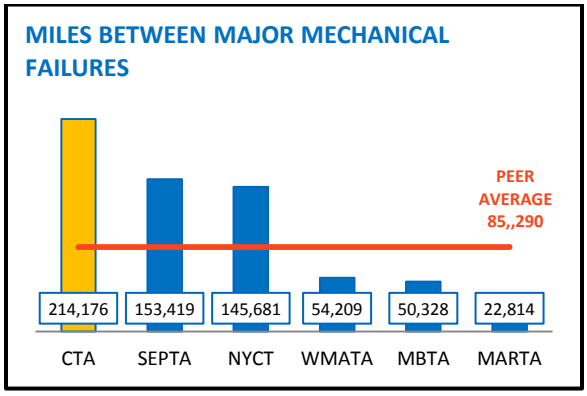
CTA spends a larger portion of its budget on vehicle operations than the peer average (41.5% vs. 39.1%) and slightly less on non-vehicle maintenance (26.7% vs. 28.4%). Vehicle maintenance and general administration expenditures are on par with the peer averages, varying by one percent or less.

HEAVY RAIL

Service Maintenance and Capital Investment

In 2014 CTA put 224 new rail vehicles into service (more than any of its peers) and retired 162 older vehicles, which lowered the average age of CTA rail cars from 20.0 to 15.9 years. Following four consecutive years of having the oldest average fleet age, CTA improved its rank position by four spots in 2013 and another spot in 2014, and now has the youngest fleet of its peer group. CTA maintained its top-ranked position for miles between major mechanical failures, making 2014 the fourth consecutive year in this spot.



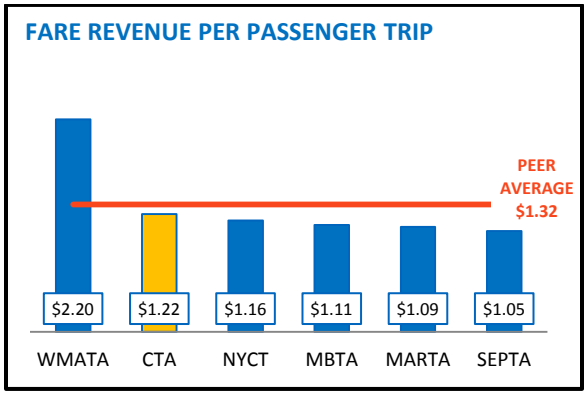


CTA continued its major fleet modernization program; through year-end 2014, CTA has added 594 new "5000 series" rail cars into its active fleet and has removed all of its 2400-series rail cars built in 1976-1978. In addition, in late 2014, CTA began seeking bids on the next generation of rail cars to keep its fleet modernization plan moving forward.

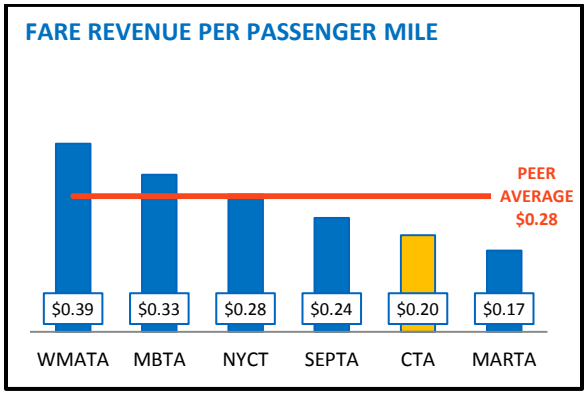
CTA has ranked either first or second for this measure each year since peer reporting began in 2009. In 2014, CTA saw a 6.1% decrease for this measure, with the number of major mechanical failures increasing by over 9%. Still, CTA maintained top ranking for this metric, with vehicles traveling an average of 214,000 miles between major mechanical failures versus its peer average of 85,300 miles.

HEAVY RAIL
Service Level Solvency

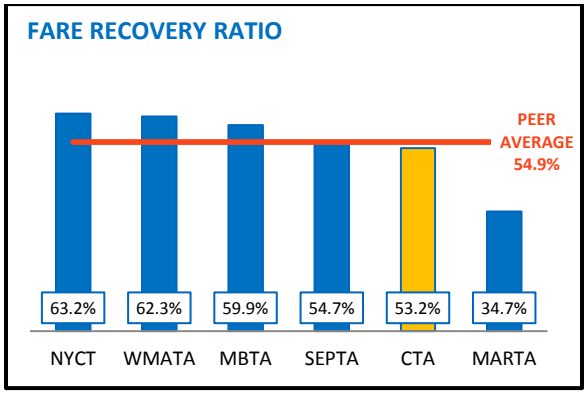
CTA's fare revenues are negatively impacted by a state mandate to provide free rides to qualifying passengers, which is not a factor for its peers. In 2014, CTA maintained its ranking for fare revenue per passenger trip and fare revenue per passenger mile, but dropped one position for fare recovery ratio and two positions for capital funds expended per passenger trip.



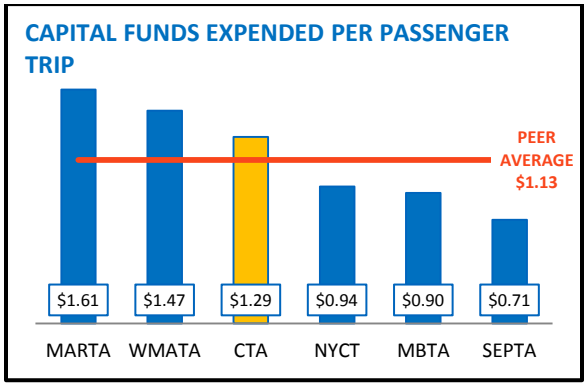
CTA realized a gain of $0.01 in fare revenue per passenger trip in 2014, maintaining its second-place rank for the sixth consecutive year. WMATA, which has a zone-based and peak/off-peak fare schedule, skews the peer average to $1.32.



CTA saw a gain of $0.01 per passenger mile in 2014 and remains 29% below the peer average for this measure as fare revenues are spread over CTA's longer average trip length.



CTA moved down one rank position for fare recovery ratio, displaced by SEPTA, which implemented a fare increase in 2014. CTA's recovery ratio decreased by one percentage point, but the peer average also fell, by 0.8 percentage points, as operating costs increased at a faster pace than fare revenues.



After ranking first for this metric in 2013, CTA dropped two rank positions in 2014 after completion of the Red Line reconstruction. Still, CTA rail capital fund expenditures per passenger trip exceed the peer average by over 14%.

COMMUTER RAIL

The peers selected for commuter rail represent the largest commuter rail systems in the United States; all are traditional systems that can trace their roots to rail passenger services that have operated since the late 19th century. Three of the peers provide service to New York City from the states of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, with Boston and Philadelphia being the other major cities served. There are differences in the operating environment of each railroad affecting its service delivery and cost structure. Metra operates predominantly diesel services with one electric line and contends with more intermingling with freight operations than the other railroads. It benefits from the use of bi-level cars on all trains, enabling it to carry large passenger loads more cost-effectively. It also operates with a mix between directly-operated and contracted services. The New York peers have less interference with freight traffic, but confront greater capacity constraints and less operating flexibility due of the need to operate through tunnels or over bridges to New York City's center in Manhattan. SEPTA is unique in operating a fully electric service, which yields cost savings during times of high diesel prices.

Metra performed better than the peer average for each of the measures in the service coverage and service efficiency and effectiveness measures, ranking first or second for each metric. The retirement of hundreds of older rail cars lowered Metra's average fleet age and improved its rank position; however, unusual winter weather significantly impacted mileage between major mechanical failures, leading to a loss of one rank position for that metric. Although Metra saw increased fare revenue in 2014, Metra still ranked below the peer average for all measures in the service level solvency category.

Peer Comparison

Service Area	Performance Measure	Performs better than peer average	
		2013	2014
Service Coverage	Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Hour	YES	YES
	Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile	YES	YES
Service Efficiency and Effectiveness	Operating Cost per Vehicle Revenue Hour	YES	YES
	Operating Cost per Passenger Trip	YES	YES
	Operating Cost per Passenger Mile	YES	YES
Service Maintenance and Capital Investment	Average Age	NO	NO
	Miles between Major Mechanical Failures	EQUAL	NO
Service Level Solvency	Fare Revenue per Passenger Trip	NO	NO
	Fare Revenue per Passenger Mile	NO	NO
	Fare Recovery Ratio	NO	NO
	Capital Funds Expended per Passenger Trip	NO	NO

Peer Modal Characteristics

Metra operates the second-largest commuter rail system in the country, as measured by route miles. The three agencies that service the New York area each provide more vehicle revenue miles, passenger trips, and passenger miles than Metra. The New York systems also spent the most operating dollars and collected more fare revenue.

Commuter Rail Overview

Modal Characteristics	Metra	MBTA	LIRR	MNCR	NJT	SEPTA
	Chicago	Boston	New York	New York	Newark	Philadelphia
Service Area Population	7,261,176	4,181,019	11,352,004	6,503,894	18,351,295	3,361,074
Service Area (square miles)	1,940	3,244	2,967	527	3,450	836
Population Density	3,743	1,289	3,826	12,341	5,319	4,020
Directional Route Miles	975	776	638	546	1,002	447
Vehicle Revenue Miles	43,186,609	23,332,209	66,616,031	68,058,540	62,874,564	19,047,891
Vehicle Revenue Hours	1,424,749	760,828	2,079,945	1,986,288	1,895,817	869,045
Passenger Trips	74,382,121	35,251,719	97,869,572	84,463,717	85,639,201	37,690,388
Passenger Miles	1,668,440,867	721,741,107	1,917,248,083	2,588,133,596	2,172,465,749	497,583,330
Operating Cost	$678,128,337	$380,940,670	$1,302,984,612	$1,154,911,714	$961,804,728	$252,456,379
Fare Revenue	$311,685,272	$190,363,685	$660,551,144	$649,849,733	$520,917,786	$148,939,089
Capital Funds Expended	$251,661,853	$276,548,992	$328,472,248	$270,068,866	$333,422,860	$123,882,830
Average Speed (miles per hour)	30.3	30.7	32.0	34.3	33.2	21.9
Average Trip Length (miles)	22.4	20.5	19.6	30.6	25.4	13.2
Average Vehicle Passenger Capacity	127	118	108	108	107	115
Average Vehicle Age (years)	25.3	23.4	12.7	15.1	16.0	26.5
Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	1,051	416	1,014	1,173	1,296	338

Modal Characteristics Highlights

Directional Route Miles: There were no changes among any of the peers for this metric.

Vehicle Revenue Miles: Metra was the only agency to not report an increase in vehicle revenue miles for 2014; the peer average increase was 3.7%.

Passenger Trips: Metra was one of five agencies to report an increase in ridership for 2014, up 1.1%.

Operating Cost: Each agency reported operating cost increases in 2014; Metra's 2.1% increase was the lowest rate of increase among its peers.

Fare Revenue: Metra saw a 0.7% increase in farebox revenue in 2014. SEPTA was the only agency to implement a fare increase in 2014 and saw its fare revenues increase 8.4% for the year.

Capital Funds Expended: Metra saw a 14.2% decrease in capital fund expenditures in 2014. Two other peer agencies (Metro-North and SEPTA) reported decreases also, as capital fund availability can vary greatly from year to year.

Average Speed: Average speeds tend to remain largely unchanged from year to year. Metra experienced a 1.1% decline in average speed due to the increase in vehicle revenue hours and no commensurate increase in vehicle miles.

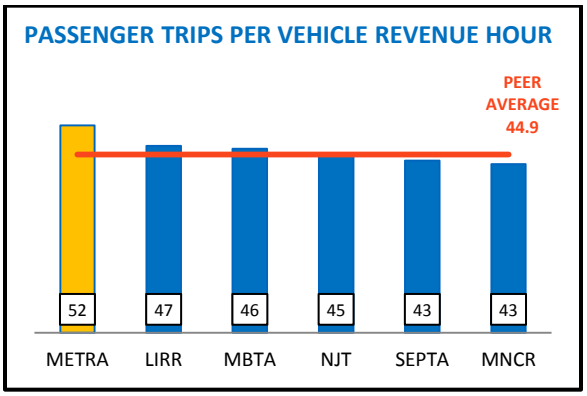
Average Trip Length: Metra's average trip length for 2014 was 22.4 miles, a 0.9% decrease from 2013 and just above the peer average of 21.9 miles. Five agencies saw decreases for this metric, with only Metro-North experiencing a 2.0% increase in average trip length.

Average Vehicle Passenger Capacity: For the commuter rail mode, this comparison excludes standing passenger capacity to conform to industry standards and the expected provision of one seat per passenger. Metra, with its full fleet of double-decker cars, offers the highest average passenger seating capacity of its peers, with over 14% more capacity than the peer average.

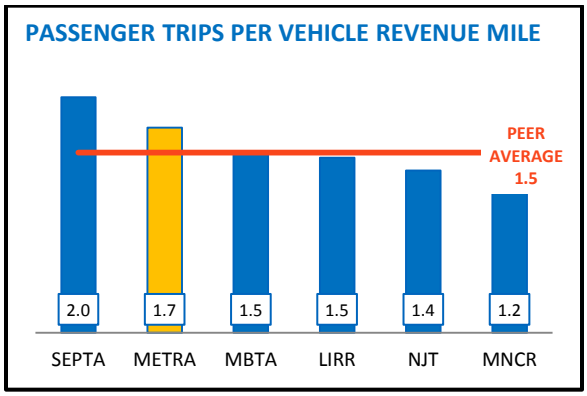
COMMUTER RAIL

Service Coverage

Metra has consistently performed better than the peer average for the two measures of service coverage shown below since peer reporting began in 2009. A ridership increase of 1.1% in 2014, occurring in conjunction with a 1.0% increase in vehicle revenue hours and stable vehicle revenue miles, produced the same results and rankings as 2013.



For the first time since peer reporting began, Metra achieved the top ranking for passenger trips per vehicle revenue hour. SEPTA reported an increase in vehicle revenue hours, which caused its ranking for this metric to drop four positions.

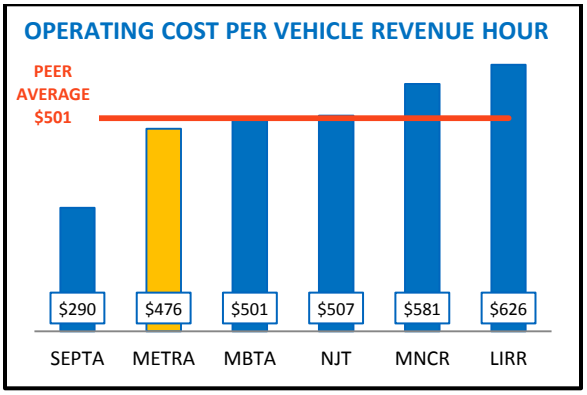


For the fifth consecutive year, Metra ranked second for passenger trips per vehicle revenue mile, matching last year's result of 1.7. Metra had a 1.1% improvement for this metric versus the peer average decrease of 1.9%.

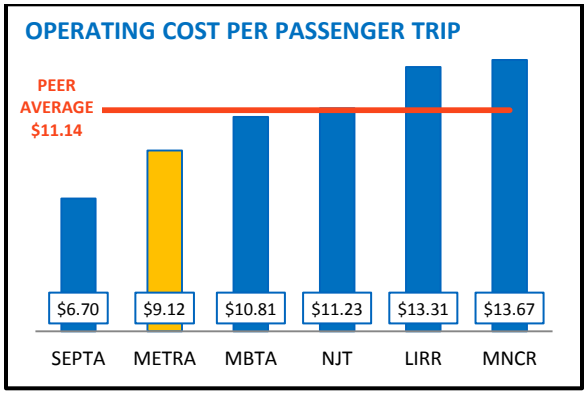
COMMUTER RAIL

Service Efficiency and Effectiveness

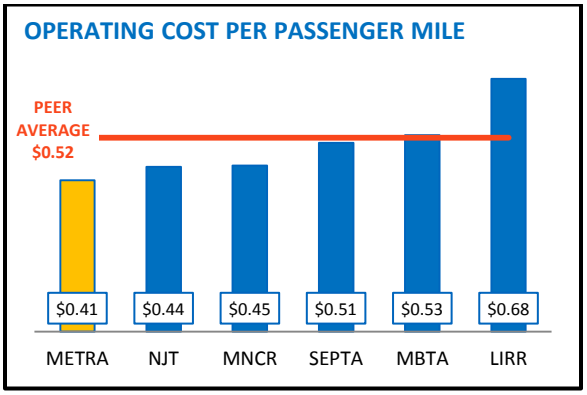
Metra performs very well compared to its peers for the service efficiency and effectiveness measures. With the lowest operating cost increase in 2014, Metra maintained its second-place rank positions for operating cost per vehicle revenue hour and operating cost per passenger trip, as well as its top ranking for operating cost per passenger mile.



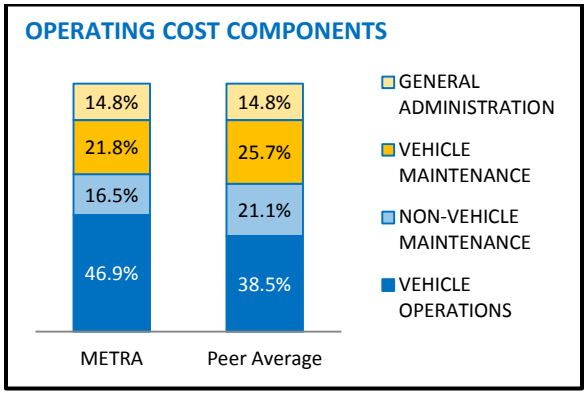
Four agencies reported increases in operating cost per vehicle revenue hour in 2014, including Metra, which had a 1.1% increase. With an operating cost per vehicle revenue hour of $476, Metra outperformed the peer average by 5.1% and held its rank position.



For the fourth consecutive year, Metra maintained its second-rank position for this measure with a 1.0% increase from 2013. Metra's operating cost per passenger trip was $2.02 favorable to the peer average and 34% less than MNCR.



Each agency reported increased operating cost per passenger mile. Metra had the lowest increase, 2.0% versus the peer average increase of 9%. Metra retained its first-place ranking for this measure for the third consecutive year

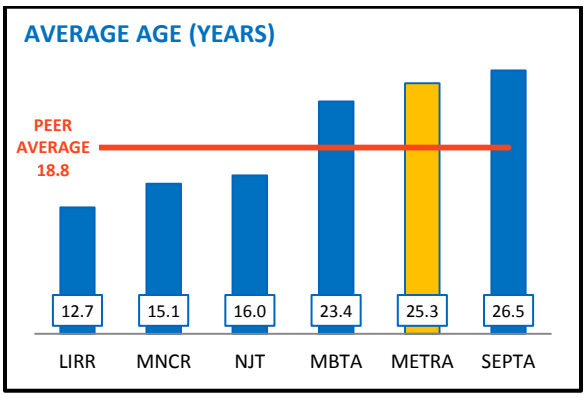


Vehicle operations make up the largest portion of each peer agency budget; this totaled 46.9% of Metra's 2014 budget compared to the peer average of 38.5%. Metra expends several percentage points less than the peer average for the two maintenance components, and equal proportions on general administration.

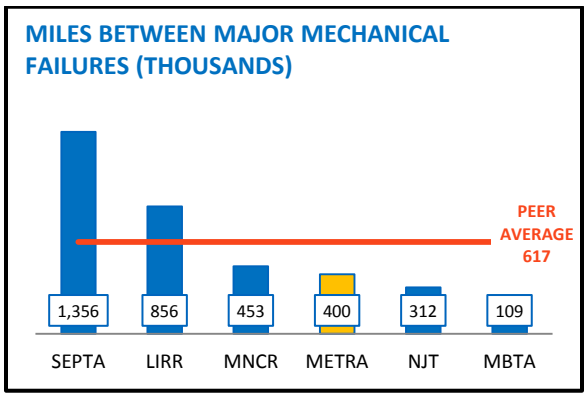
COMMUTER RAIL

Service Maintenance and Capital Investment

After two years in last position for having the oldest average fleet, Metra moved up one position as it continued with its fleet modernization efforts. Although roughly half of its vehicles have reached their minimum useful life, vehicle mid-life rehabilitation and end-of-life rebuild schedules have enabled Metra to maintain its older fleet in a relative state of good repair.



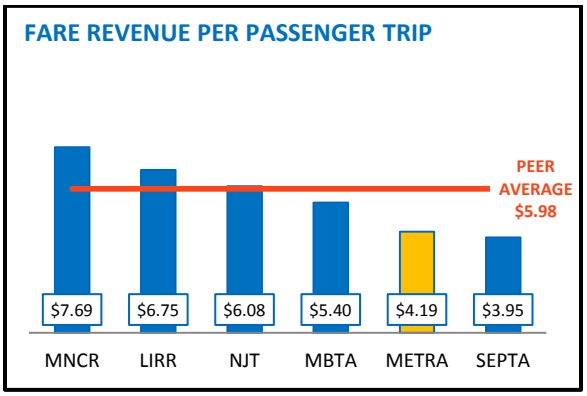
With an average fleet age of 25.3 years, Metra's revenue vehicles are, on average, four years younger than in 2013. Metra will complete the replacement of all vehicles on its Electric District Line over the following few years and has developed its first long-term capital investment fleet modernization plan.



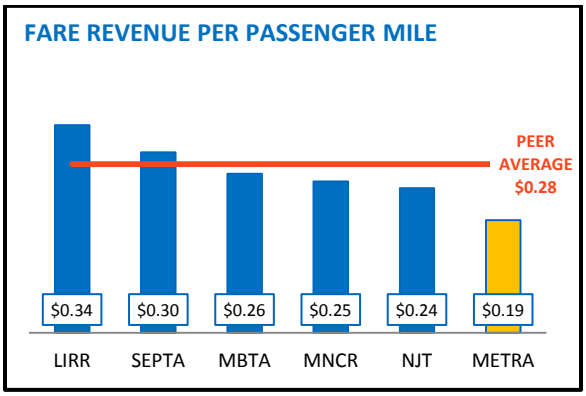
Metra dropped one rank position to fourth for this measure in 2014; the beginning of the year presented historically severe weather-related problems that resulted in a 68.7% increase in major mechanical failures for Metra. This was the first year Metra did not meet or exceed the peer average since peer reporting began in 2009.

COMMUTER RAIL
Service Level Solvency

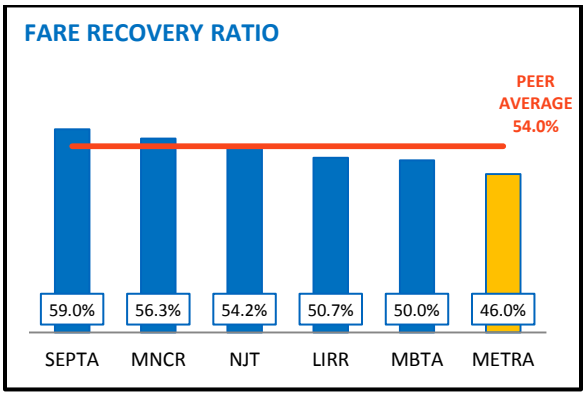
Metra's performance in the solvency area is relatively unchanged from 2013. Metra did not change its rank position for any of the measures related to fares, but did move up one rank position for capital fund expenditures per passenger trip.



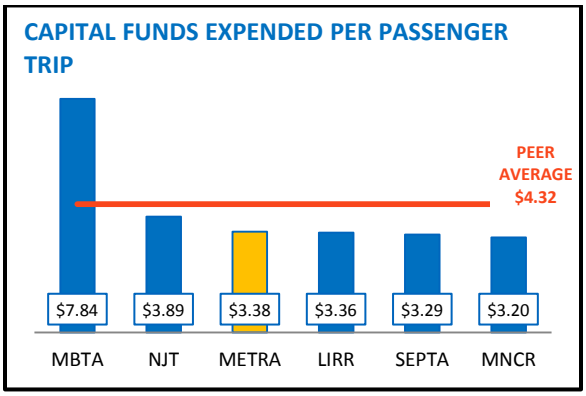
Metra maintained its rank position for this measure. In 2014, Metra's fare revenue per passenger trip decreased by one cent. Metra's fare revenue per passenger trip was 30%, or $1.79, below the peer average.



Metra fare revenue per passenger mile remained unchanged in 2014 at $0.19, 33% below the peer average. Each of Metra's peer agencies saw improvements for this measure in 2014.



Metra's fare recovery ratio decreased from 46.6% to 46.0% in 2014, 8 percentage points below the peer average. This is the second consecutive year Metra's recovery ratio variance from the peer average has increased; however, this is a significant improvement from the 14.8 percentage point gap from 2011.



Metra improved one rank position from 2013 although its capital fund expenditures per passenger trip decreased 15.1%. With capital expenditures of $3.38 per passenger trip, Metra remains 22% below the peer average for this measure.

SUBURBAN BUS

The peers selected for Pace bus include relatively large bus systems that operate in predominantly suburban areas. They each operate adjacent to a major city with service area populations ranging from 737,000 in San Mateo to 5.6 million in Chicago. In addition to serving the largest population, Pace serves the largest geographic region, at more than triple the size of the next largest peer. The peers differ in the extent to which they may provide some urban service within their service mix. None is the primary service provider for the major metropolitan area to which they are adjacent, although some have smaller cities (populations 300,000 to 400,000) within their service regions such as Oakland, served by AC Transit, and Anaheim, served by OCTA. However, both AC Transit and OCTA have peak fleet sizes comparable to Pace (450-600 buses). SMART, NICE, and SamTrans match Pace more closely in the overall suburban character of their service areas, but operate smaller fleets (200-300 buses).

Pace bus was significantly impacted by unusually severe weather events at the beginning of 2014. Each measure of coverage and efficiency and effectiveness was at least 5% unfavorable compared to 2013, yet Pace performed at or above the peer average for each measure of them, ranking first for operating cost per vehicle revenue hour and second for operating cost per passenger mile. Pace saw improved performance for the three fare-related measures (although still fell below the peer average for each measure), while ranking second for capital fund expenditures per passenger trip.

Peer Comparison

Service Area	Performance Measure	Performs better than peer average	
		2013	2014
Service Coverage	Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Hour	NO	NO
	Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile	NO	NO
Service Efficiency and Effectiveness	Operating Cost per Vehicle Revenue Hour	YES	YES
	Operating Cost per Passenger Trip	YES	EQUAL
	Operating Cost per Passenger Mile	YES	YES
Service Maintenance and Capital Investment	Average Age	YES	YES
	Miles between Major Mechanical Failures	YES	NO
Service Level Solvency	Fare Revenue per Passenger Trip	NO	NO
	Fare Revenue per Passenger Mile	NO	NO
	Fare Recovery Ratio	NO	NO
	Capital Funds Expended per Passenger Trip	YES	YES

Peer Modal Characteristics

Pace Suburban Bus provides service to a much larger population than its peers, spread over a far broader network, as evidenced by having the largest service area and the lowest population density of its peers. Pace operates the most directional route miles, with the most vehicle revenue miles, yet experiences only the third-largest number of passenger trips.

Suburban Bus Overview

Modal Characteristics	Pace	SMART	OCTA	NICE	SAMTRANS	AC Transit
	Chicago	Detroit	Orange County	New York	San Mateo Co	San Francisco
Service Area Population	5,630,238	3,734,090	3,041,754	1,339,532	737,100	1,425,275
Service Area (square miles)	3,519	1,074	465	285	97	524
Population Density	1,600	3,477	6,541	4,700	7,599	2,720
Directional Route Miles	4,144	1,415	2,105	723	957	1,187
Vehicle Revenue Miles	21,107,721	8,711,941	19,633,621	9,714,891	6,795,082	18,602,578
Vehicle Revenue Hours	1,492,469	524,287	1,606,000	795,210	505,763	1,654,704
Passenger Trips	31,685,589	9,248,599	48,904,819	28,383,880	13,248,248	56,058,548
Passenger Miles	205,684,480	72,122,441	191,044,281	134,875,577	61,834,904	214,082,656
Operating Cost	$179,970,914	$74,062,770	$195,259,761	$104,944,723	$95,781,674	$303,702,299
Fare Revenue	$33,432,466	$12,088,882	$51,846,972	$44,595,702	$19,538,699	$65,024,734
Capital Funds Expended	$43,095,906	$6,813,186	$23,716,706	$7,537,228	$33,281,368	$51,440,717
Average Speed (miles per hour)	14.1	16.6	12.2	12.2	13.4	11.2
Average Trip Length (miles)	6.5	7.8	3.9	4.8	4.7	3.8
Average Vehicle Passenger Capacity	48	47	74	61	59	62
Average Vehicle Age (years)	8.3	10.8	8.2	7.0	8.3	8.2
Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	628	205	489	252	278	472

Modal Characteristics Highlights

Directional Route Miles: Pace routes cover nearly double the route miles than its closest peer, OCTA.

Vehicle Revenue Miles: Pace had its third consecutive year of increases in vehicle revenue miles in 2014, increasing 2.5% over 2013.

Passenger Trips: Following three consecutive years of ridership increases, Pace bus ridership decreased 3.1% in 2014, as did three of its peers. Route pruning and realignment, the elimination of cash transfers, and the historically severe weather events of early 2014 all played roles in Pace's ridership loss for the year.

Operating Cost: Pace saw the steepest increase in operating cost at 8.7% versus a peer average of 0.5%.

Fare Revenue: Pace's fare revenue increased for the fourth consecutive year, up 10.4%, although it has not implemented a fare increase since 2009. Pace's fare revenues have benefitted from fare increases at CTA, favorable pass agreements, the elimination of cash transfers, and the tendency of riders to pay a full $2.00 fare although the base fare is $1.75.

Capital Funds Expended: Pace saw a decrease of 4.6% for capital fund expenditures in 2014, and dropped to second place rank for the capital fund expenditure per passenger trip measure.

Average Speed: Pace's average speed of 14.1 miles per hour is the second-fastest among its peers, which range from 11.2 to 16.6 miles per hour.

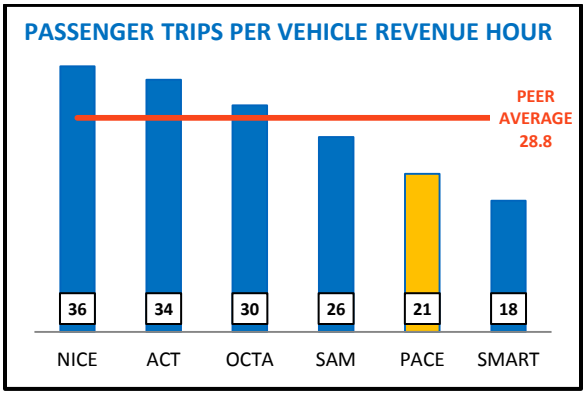
Average Trip Length: Pace's riders travel the second-longest trip lengths with an average of 6.5 miles versus its peer average of 5.0 miles.

Average Vehicle Passenger Capacity: Pace's peer agencies run vehicles that are up to 35% larger. With an average vehicle passenger capacity of 47.8, Pace runs the second-smallest capacity buses of its peer group.

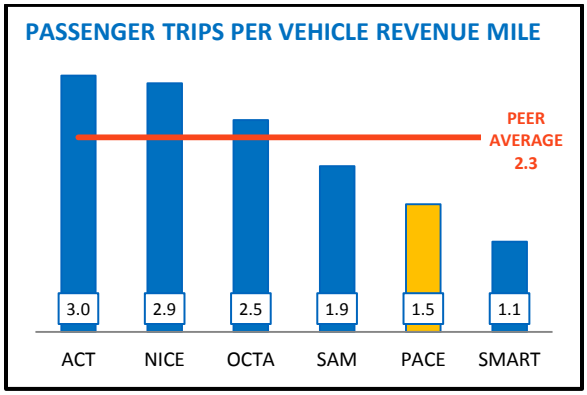
SUBURBAN BUS

Service Coverage

In 2014, Pace bus ridership decreased by 3.1% following three consecutive years of growth. Both measures of service coverage were negatively impacted by lower ridership, exacerbated by increases in vehicle revenue hours and vehicle revenue miles. However, Pace maintained its fifth-place rank position for both measures in 2014. Although Pace serves the largest population of its peer group, the geographic spread of that population produces the lowest population density. Lower population densities require Pace to operate approximately twice as much service to achieve similar ridership levels as the top performer for the coverage metrics below.



Although Pace's performance worsened by 6.0% for this measure in 2014, it maintained its rank position. At 21.2 passenger trips per vehicle revenue hour, Pace performance is 26% lower than the peer average.

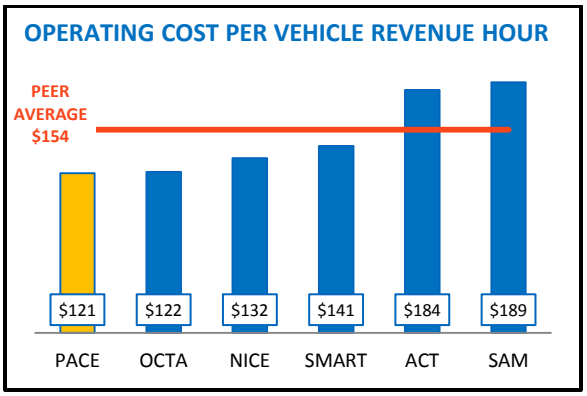


Pace averaged 1.5 passenger trips per vehicle revenue mile, slightly lower than 2013, and maintained its rank position. Pace's performance for this metric is 34% below the peer average and is reflective of Pace's much lower population density, less than one-third of the peer average.

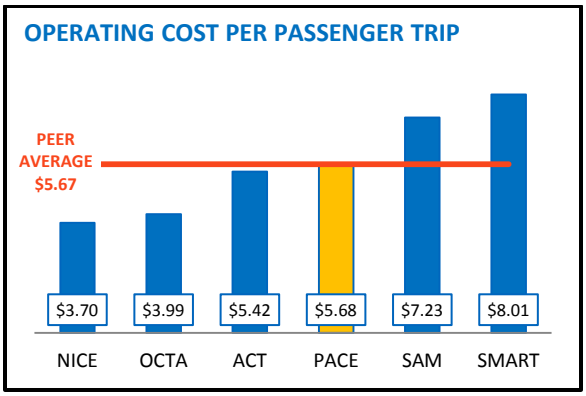
SUBURBAN BUS

Service Efficiency and Effectiveness

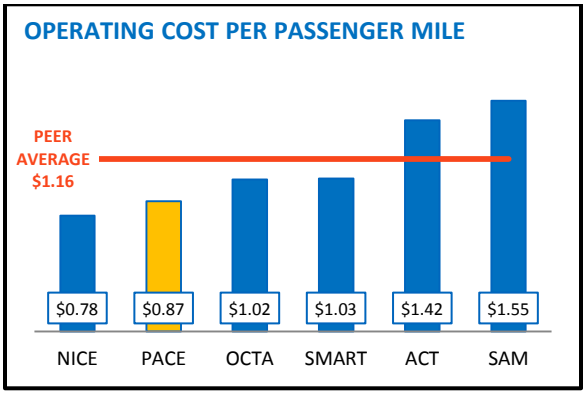
Pace performed better than or equal to the peer average for the three measures related to operating cost. Pace experienced the highest rate of increase in operating costs in 2014 (8.7%), yet maintained its top rank position for operating cost per vehicle revenue hour and second rank position for operating cost per passenger mile, while dropping to fourth for operating cost per passenger trip.



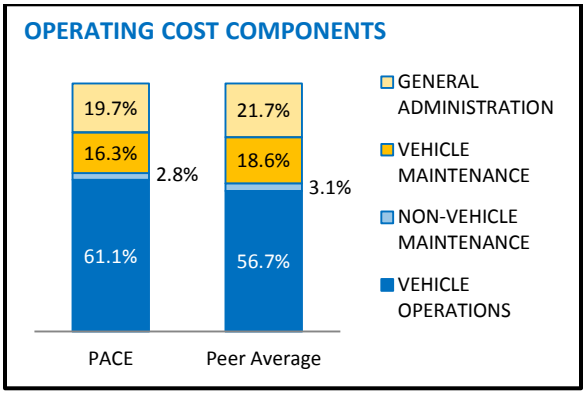
Pace maintained its top-ranked position for this measure for the sixth consecutive year. With an operating cost per vehicle revenue hour of $121, Pace remains 21%, or $33, below the peer average.



Five agencies experienced an increase for this measure, including Pace. Operating cost increases combined with a ridership decrease produced a 12.1% increase for this measure for Pace; it dropped one rank position and was $0.01 higher than the peer average.



Four of the six agencies saw increases in 2014 for this measure, including Pace. Pace's passenger miles traveled was roughly equal to 2013, so the $0.06 increase for this metric comes from increased operating cost. Pace has ranked first or second for this measure in each of the past six years.

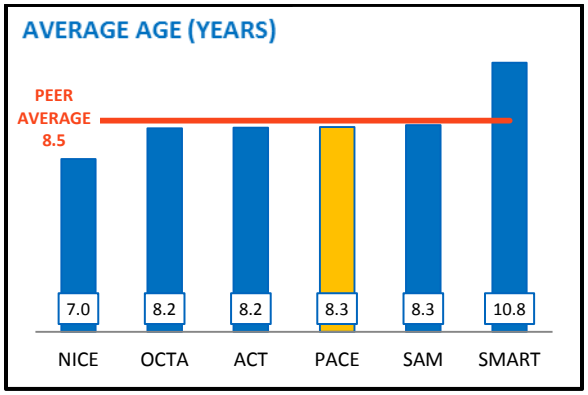


Pace devotes a larger proportion of its operating budget to vehicle operations, more than four percentage points more than the peer average. Pace expends less proportionally for each of the other three cost components compared to its peers.

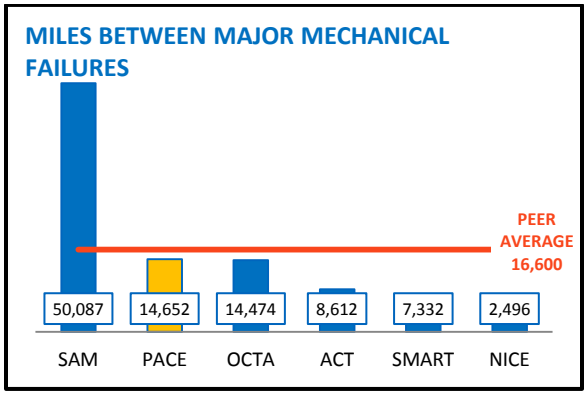
SUBURBAN BUS

Service Maintenance and Capital Investment

With an older average fleet age than in 2013, Pace lost one rank position but fared slightly better than the peer average. Pace maintained its second-place ranking for the reliability performance indicator miles between major mechanical failures although its performance actually declined over 24% in 2014.



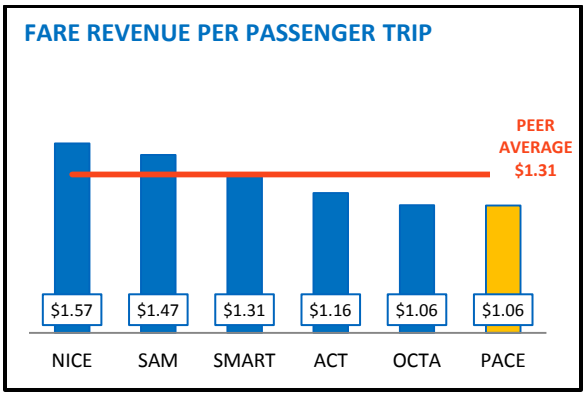
Pace added 19 new buses into its active fleet in 2014, the most of its peer group. Pace's average fleet age at 8.3 years is slightly younger than the peer average of 8.5 years.



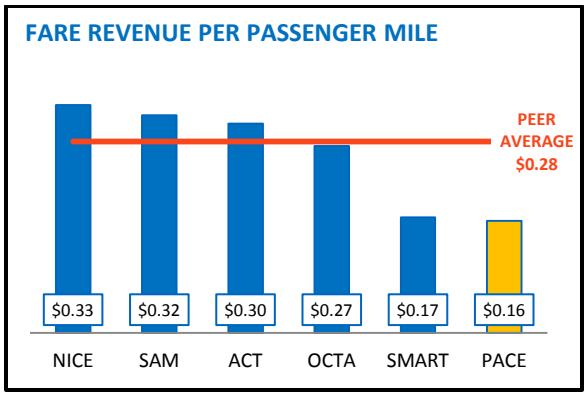
Pace was one of five agencies to see a reduction in miles between major mechanical failures in 2014, down 24.1% compared to 2013. Pace has held second or third place rankings for this metric for each of the past six years. Pace buses traveled about 2,000 fewer miles between major failures than the peer average, which is heavily skewed by the performance of SamTrans.

SUBURBAN BUS
Service Level Solvency

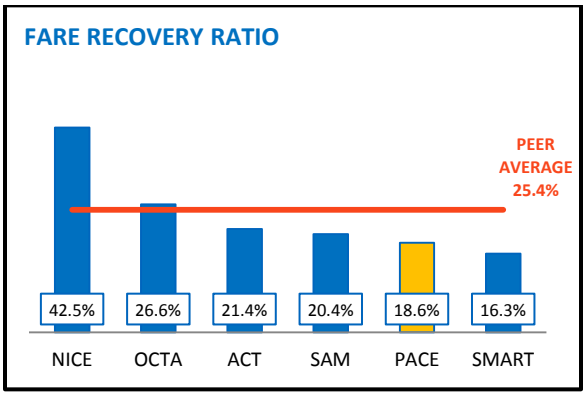
Pace realized a 10.4% improvement in fare revenues despite ridership losses in 2014. Pace performed below the peer average for each of the three measures related to fares. Pace's fare revenue is significantly impacted by a state mandate to provide free rides to qualifying passengers; an estimated one in six trips is provided free of charge. After two years in the top spot for capital fund expenditures per trip, Pace ranked second in 2014.



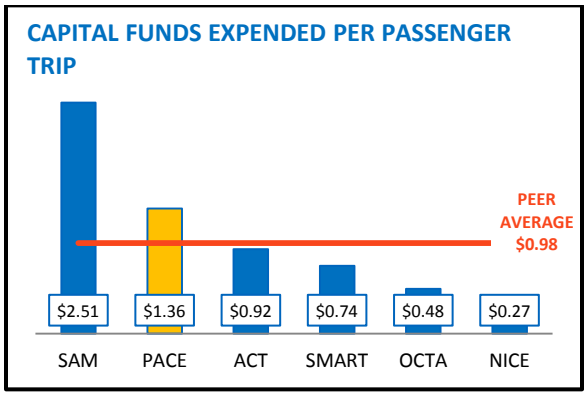
Pace's fare revenue per passenger trip increased $0.13 to $1.06, but was nearly 20% below the peer average of $1.31. Pace had the most improvement for this measure in 2014 (up 13.4%) yet tied for the lowest rank position.



Pace's fare revenue per passenger mile was $0.16, up $0.01 from 2013, and 42% below the peer average. Pace's passengers ride an average 30% longer average distances compared to its peers.



Pace's fare recovery ratio increased by 0.3 percentage points in 2014 as operating cost increases of 8.7% were exceeded by fare revenue gains of 10.4%. At 18.6%, Pace's fare recovery ratio falls 6.8 percentage points below the peer average.



Capital fund expenditures at Pace decreased by 4.6%, dropping Pace from the top rank position for this metric. At $1.36, Pace's capital fund expenditure per passenger trip is nearly 40% higher than the peer average.

VANPOOL

For the vanpool service mode, peers were chosen from the largest vanpool providers in the country since Pace operates one of the nation's largest programs. Agencies that provided fixed-route bus service along with their vanpool operations were considered and those that were operated by either the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or Department of Transportation (DOT) were excluded.

The Pace vanpool program added 14 new vanpools into service in 2014. Pace, as well as four of its five peers, saw ridership decline in 2014, likely due to falling gasoline prices, as vanpool ridership is particularly sensitive to gas price fluctuations. Service efficiency and effectiveness remains the strongest service area for Pace; although it moved down one rank position for operating cost per vehicle revenue hour, it moved up one position for operating cost per passenger trip. The 2014 Pace vanpool fleet was the oldest among its peers, dropping three rank positions. The Pace vanpool program, which has not implemented a fare increase since 2009, did see improvement in three solvency measures, but did not improve its rank position for any of them and remained below the peer average for each metric. The provision of reduced fares for ADA-eligible riders results in lower fare revenue for the Pace vanpool program, but plays an important role in contributing to an overall agency efficiency.

Peer Comparison

Service Area	Performance Measure	Performs better than peer average	
		2013	2014
Service Coverage	Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Hour	NO	NO
	Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile	NO	NO
Service Efficiency and Effectiveness	Operating Cost per Vehicle Revenue Hour	YES	YES
	Operating Cost per Passenger Trip	YES	YES
	Operating Cost per Passenger Mile	NO	NO
Service Maintenance and Capital Investment	Average Age	NO	NO
	Miles between Major Mechanical Failures	NO	NO
Service Level Solvency	Fare Revenue per Passenger Trip	NO	NO
	Fare Revenue per Passenger Mile	NO	NO
	Fare Recovery Ratio	NO	NO

Peer Modal Characteristics

Pace vanpool covers the largest service area and serves the second-largest population of its peers but remains the fourth-largest program as determined by fleet size, ridership, and passenger miles traveled. Pace vanpools travel the second-shortest average trip lengths at below-average speeds.

Vanpool Overview

Modal Characteristics	Pace	DART	STAR	METRO	METRO	OCTA
	Chicago	Dallas	Houston	Los Angeles	King County	Orange County
Service Area Population	5,630,238	2,334,880	4,020,000	8,626,817	2,017,250	3,041,754
Service Area (square miles)	3,519	650	1,285	1,513	2,134	465
Population Density	1,600	3,592	3,128	5,702	945	6,541
Vehicle Revenue Miles	10,458,598	3,426,983	9,314,069	31,054,693	14,498,635	7,900,853
Vehicle Revenue Hours	317,835	85,675	263,236	696,534	499,955	205,066
Passenger Trips	1,923,184	892,966	2,436,893	3,983,621	3,414,783	1,224,467
Passenger Miles	45,684,727	34,420,418	69,573,400	177,435,233	66,111,724	42,638,691
Operating Cost	$7,509,109	$2,284,620	$10,692,505	$17,561,221	$10,289,041	$7,547,032
Fare Revenue	$4,189,130	$996,424	$8,079,483	$17,275,865	$11,804,793	$5,160,742
Capital Funds Expended	$5,659,452	$0	$0	$0	$5,510,279	$0
Average Speed (miles per hour)	32.9	40.0	35.4	44.6	29.0	38.5
Average Trip Length (miles)	23.8	38.5	28.6	44.5	19.4	34.8
Average Vehicle Passenger Capacity	9.3	12.8	11.0	8.1	8.5	7.9
Average Vehicle Age (years)	3.7	2.0	3.3	1.4	3.4	1.3
Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	712	183	720	1,339	1,390	461

Modal Characteristics Highlights

Vehicle Revenue Miles: Four agencies experienced service declines, as shown by vehicle revenue miles, including Pace with a 3.0% decrease. Los Angeles Metro and King County Metro continued to expand their vanpool programs, reporting 7.8% and 3.3% increases, respectively, to their vehicle revenue miles.

Passenger Trips: Pace saw a ridership decrease of 3.8% in 2014. Four other agencies also saw ridership declines for the year; LA Metro was the only program to increase ridership in 2014 with a ridership growth of 9.8%.

Operating Cost: Four agencies reported a decrease in operating cost in 2014, including Pace, down 2.1% compared to 2013.

Fare Revenue: All agencies reported increased fare revenues in 2014, including Pace with a 0.7% improvement. With over half of its vanpool program operating as reduced-fare ADA service, Pace is unique among its peers and accordingly receives less in fare revenues than a similarly-sized traditional vanpool service would generate.

Average Speed: Pace saw its third consecutive year of improvements to average speed; however, at 32.9 miles per hour, its vanpools travel 12% slower than the peer average. Pace is the only agency to operate in a geography devoid of high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes.

Average Trip Length: The average trip length for Pace vanpools was 23.8 miles, 5.7% longer than in 2013. With peer trip lengths ranging from 19.4 miles to 44.5 miles, Pace's average trip length was the second-shortest among its peers and 28% below the peer average.

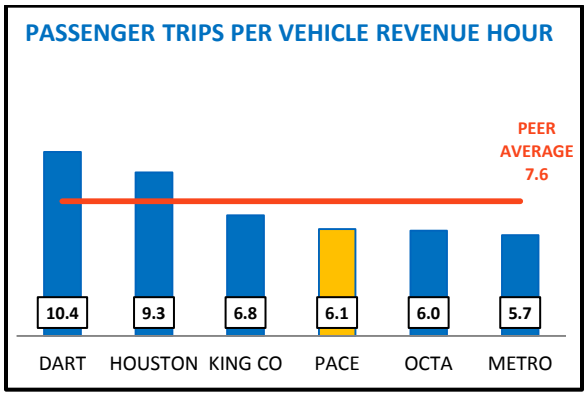
Average Vehicle Passenger Capacity: Pace vanpools operate a mix of vehicle types, from minivans to 14-passenger maxivans, with an overall average passenger capacity of 9.3 passengers, slightly lower than the peer average of 9.7 passengers.

Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service: Four vanpool programs expanded operations in 2013, including Pace with 14 new vanpools. LA Metro and King County Metro continued to expand, adding 73 and 48 new vanpools, respectively, to their programs. King County has a significant advantage to attract ridership in that Washington State has implemented mandates that require employers to meet minimum vehicle occupancy rates during peak hours, which results in employer-provided subsidies and incentives to form or join vanpools.

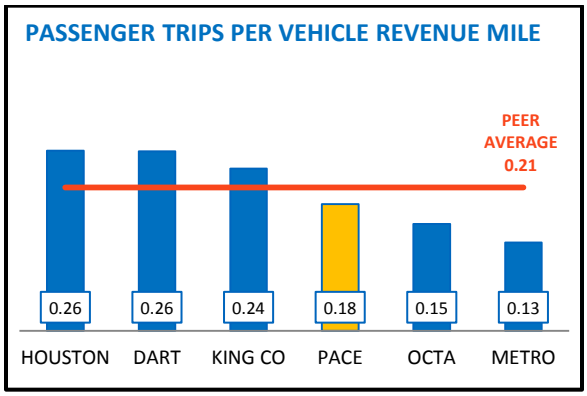
VANPOOL

Service Coverage

Following a ridership gain of 1.9% in 2013, Pace experienced a 3.8% loss in 2014. Four peer agencies also saw declines in ridership, from 0.2% at OCTA to 5.7% in Dallas. For each of the two measures of service coverage, Pace maintained its rank position and did not meet the peer average.



Pace's rank position for this measure was unchanged from 2013 as the decrease in vehicle revenue hours nearly matched the ridership decrease.

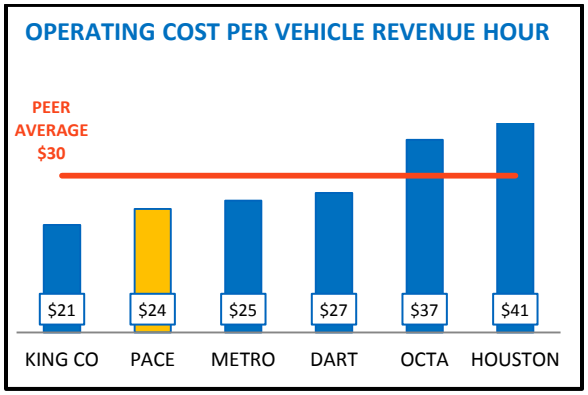


Pace's rank position for this measure has remained unchanged for six consecutive years. Performance for this measure decreased 0.9% in 2014 as the decrease in ridership was steeper than the decrease in vehicle revenue miles.

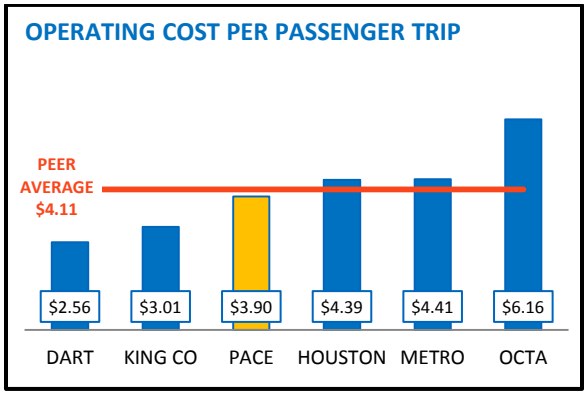
VANPOOL

Service Efficiency and Effectiveness

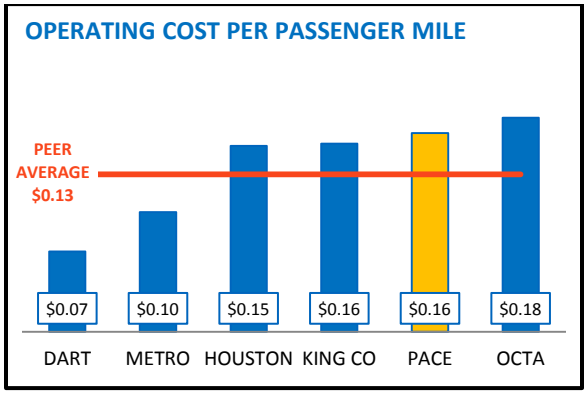
Following three consecutive years of increases for vehicle revenue hours, vehicle revenue miles, and passenger trips, Pace saw each indicator decline in 2014, resulting in lower operating costs. Pace lost one rank position for operating cost per vehicle revenue hour, gained one for cost per passenger trip, and maintained its rank for operating cost per passenger mile.



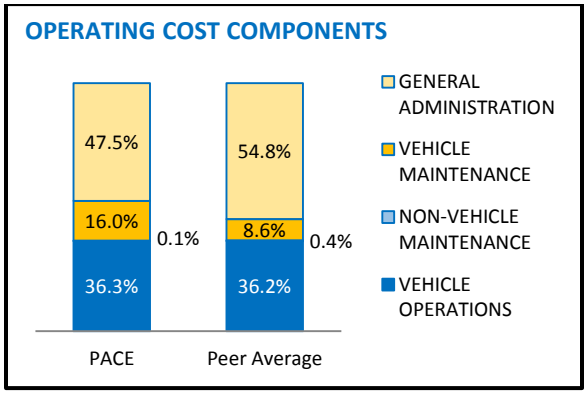
Pace vanpool's cost per vehicle revenue hour decreased by 1.4% in 2014 but fell to second place as King County reported large gains to vehicle revenue hours for the year. Pace's operating cost was 21% below the peer average.



The average Pace vanpool trip cost $3.90 in 2014, up $0.07, displacing Houston for the third rank position.



Pace maintained its rank position by posting a $0.01 improvement for operating cost per passenger mile. There were no rank changes for this measure in 2014 although Pace was the only agency to see a decrease; on average, its peer agencies' operating cost per passenger mile increased 5.7%.

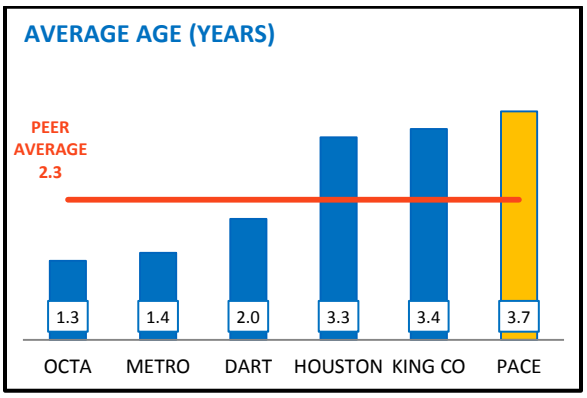


Pace's operating cost components are on par with DART and King County, the other two directly-operated vanpool programs. The Houston, Los Angeles, and Orange County programs are not directly-operated, making cost component breakdowns more difficult to examine as costs tend to be lumped into the administration category.

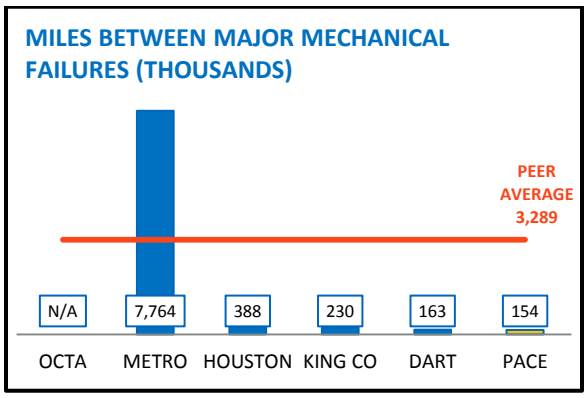
VANPOOL

Service Maintenance and Capital Investment

After replacing over 40% of its fleet in 2013, Pace did not add any new vans into its active fleet in 2014 and dropped three rank positions to sixth place, a volatility that is not unexpected given the short, four-year expected life span of a vanpool vehicle. Pace reported three more major mechanical failures in 2014, the most of its peers for the year; Pace's rank position for this measure of reliability remained unchanged from 2013.



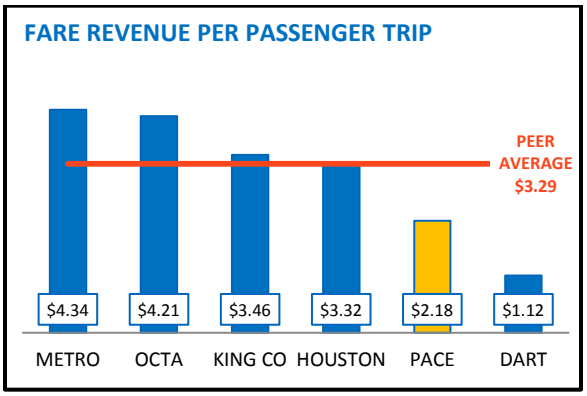
With an average age of 3.7 years, Pace has the oldest average fleet age of its peers and 32% of Pace's vanpools are beyond their minimum useful life of four years.



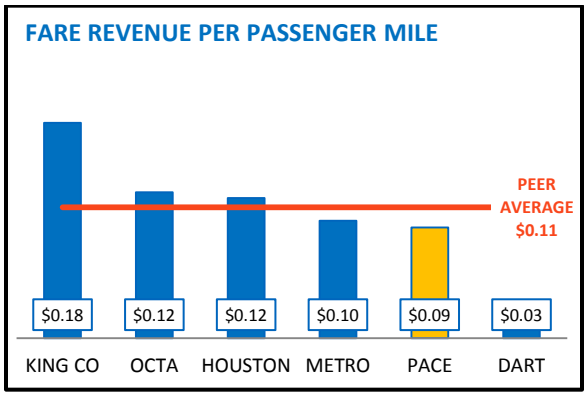
Orange County, which did not report any major mechanical failures in 2014, skewed the average dramatically, as did Los Angeles METRO, which reported four. Pace vanpool experienced 68 major mechanical failures versus the peer average of 22, ranking sixth for this measure for the second consecutive year.

VANPOOL
Service Level Solvency

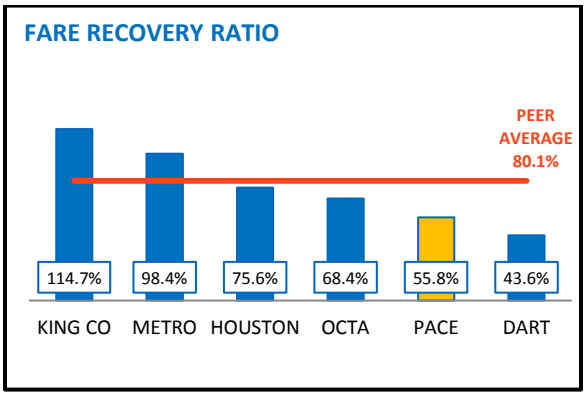
Pace maintained its fifth-place ranking for each service level solvency measure although improvements were noted for fare revenue per passenger trip and fare recovery ratio. Over half of Pace vanpools provide reduced fare service for ADA-eligible riders, resulting in significantly lower fare revenue than traditional vanpool operators.



Each agency reported increased fare revenue in 2014; Pace saw a fare revenue increase of 4.7%, or $0.10, per passenger trip. Pace's average fare was 34% below the peer average.



Pace passenger miles increased 1.6% in 2014, higher than the growth of fare revenues. Pace's fare revenue per passenger mile stayed at $0.09, two cents below the peer average yet half the result for King County.



Following a significant improvement in 2013, Pace again realized a higher fare recovery ratio, improving 1.5 percentage points as operating costs decreased and fare revenue increased. King County and METRO are able to come close to or exceed 100% recovery ratios through the extensive use of subsidies to offset participant fares.

ADA PARATRANSIT

The peers selected for Pace ADA paratransit and demand-response service were chosen from systems that provide region-wide complementary ADA paratransit service for a fixed-route system of similar size and complexity as the combination of Pace and CTA services that exists in the Chicago area. Fixed-route systems that provided both bus and heavy rail service were examined and as a result, the peers for ADA paratransit service closely mirror the CTA peers. The MTA in Baltimore was included because it is a region-wide provider of ADA paratransit service for a multi-modal fixed-route system.

The NTD category "demand-response" includes services that are initiated through a passenger request. These services encompass ADA paratransit programs, which are operated on smaller vehicles and use a reservation system, as well as programs such as Pace's dial-a-ride program, which is a pre-arranged trip service not restricted to ADA-certified passengers, but supporting similar community goals of providing fuller transportation access. Pace reports its ADA paratransit service as a separate entity from its demand-response service; therefore, two types of comparison were conducted for Pace's demand-response services: one reporting ADA service by itself and one reporting combined ADA paratransit and dial-a-ride (DAR) services. This report will focus mainly on Pace's ADA paratransit program, which continued to compare favorably to its peers, performing at or above the peer average for nine of ten measures.

Peer Comparison

Service Area	Performance Measure	Performs better than peer average			
		ADA		ADA/DAR	
		2013	2014	2013	2014
Coverage	Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Hour	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile	EQUAL	EQUAL	YES	YES
Efficiency and Effectiveness	Operating Cost per Vehicle Revenue Hour	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Operating Cost per Passenger Trip	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Operating Cost per Passenger Mile	YES	YES	YES	YES
Maintenance & Capital Investment	Average Age	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Miles between Major Mechanical Failures	NO	NO	NO	NO
Solvency	Fare Revenue per Passenger Trip	EQUAL	YES	NO	EQUAL
	Fare Revenue per Passenger Mile	NO	YES	NO	YES
	Fare Recovery Ratio	YES	YES	YES	YES

Peer Modal Characteristics

The following chart separates Pace ADA paratransit and dial-a-ride services as separate entities. Pace dial-a-ride service has varying eligibility criteria as determined by the community sponsoring the service; it may be open to the general public or limited to senior and disabled riders. Each of the peers represented restricts service to ADA-certified passengers only. Whether examined on its own or in combination with dial-a-ride service, Pace offers the third-largest demand-response service among its peers, following New York City Transit and Access Services in Los Angeles, in terms of service area population, vehicle revenue miles, and passenger miles traveled.

ADA Paratransit Overview

Modal Characteristics	Pace ADA	Pace DAR	MTA	MBTA	NYCT	Access	WMATA
	Chicago	Chicago	Baltimore	Boston	New York	LA	Washington, DC
Service Area Population	6,632,399	5,630,238	2,203,663	4,181,019	8,491,079	11,638,106	3,719,567
Service Area (square miles)	1,333	3,519	1,795	3,244	321	1,621	950
Population Density	4,976	1,600	1,228	1,289	26,452	7,180	3,915
Vehicle Revenue Miles	34,157,218	5,285,374	16,801,827	18,072,471	50,666,453	35,325,903	19,399,839
Vehicle Revenue Hours	2,339,009	349,282	1,245,807	1,435,641	4,293,529	2,076,977	1,844,436
Passenger Trips	4,068,918	1,185,079	2,288,803	2,123,810	6,448,134	3,751,555	2,126,461
Passenger Miles	36,027,699	7,298,546	16,628,390	15,951,935	56,098,766	49,462,904	17,059,877
Operating Cost	$155,574,602	$25,547,302	$85,806,514	$110,193,931	$456,313,906	$123,242,919	$105,472,029
Fare Revenue	$10,291,877	$1,932,777	$1,784,902	$6,510,248	$12,122,316	$7,700,640	$7,542,330
Capital Funds Expended	$0	$17,137,505	$645,097	$0	$5,461,358	$7,396,398	$84,891
Average Speed (miles per hour)	14.6	15.1	13.5	12.6	11.8	8.2	10.5
Average Trip Length (miles)	8.9	6.2	7.3	7.5	8.7	13.2	8.0
Average Vehicle Passenger Capacity	9.5	13.9	8.0	6.6	4.5	3.9	4.6
Average Vehicle Age (years)	1.8	4.4	4.4	4.8	3.8	3.4	2.0
Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	990	323	468	644	1,748	709	840

Modal Characteristics Highlights

Vehicle Revenue Miles: Pace ADA paratransit continued growing, with a 6.4% increase in vehicle revenue miles compared to 2013, a higher growth rate than the 5.6% peer average.

Passenger Trips: Pace ADA ridership continued its growth trajectory and grew by 4.4% in 2014; the average ridership growth of its peer agencies was 5.1%.

Operating Cost: Pace's operating cost increased by 6.6% in 2014, 2.2 percentage points higher than its ridership increase and significantly higher than its peer average increase of 1.2%.

Fare Revenue: Pace ADA paratransit fare revenue rose by 5.8%, nearly matching its increased operating cost. Dial-a-ride services experienced a 5.0% gain in fare revenue.

Capital Funds Expended: Pace ADA incorporates its capital costs for vehicles in the purchased transportation contracts with the vendors who provide both service and the vehicles. As a result, there is no separate reporting of capital costs for the ADA paratransit program. Among its peers, capital fund expenditures ranged from $0 at MBTA to over $7 million at Access Services in Los Angeles.

Average Speed: Pace ADA paratransit service offered the highest average speed at 14.6 miles per hour versus the peer average of 11.3 miles per hour.

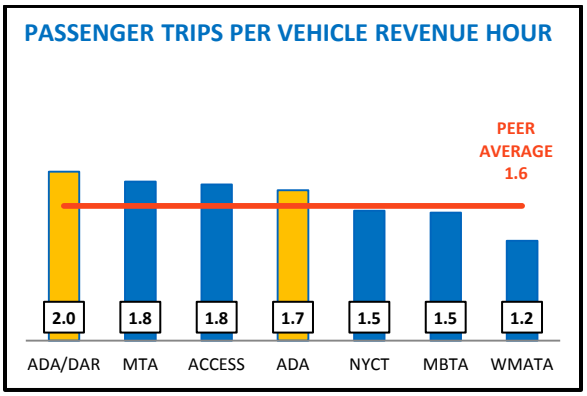
Average Trip Length: Pace ADA passengers rode an average trip length of 8.9 miles, equaling the peer average.

Average Vehicle Passenger Capacity: Pace uses vehicles with an average passenger capacity of 9.5, compared to a peer average of 5.5.

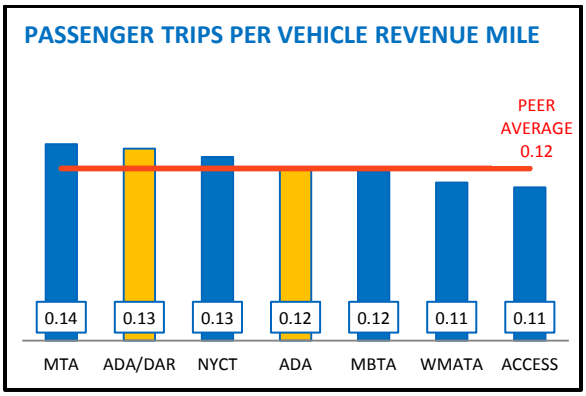
ADA PARATRANSIT

Service Coverage

In terms of passenger trips, the Pace ADA paratransit program is the second-largest among its peers, with New York having the largest program in the country. By itself, the ADA paratransit program provided 4.1 million passenger trips in 2014; combined with dial-a-ride service, the Pace demand-response service provided 5.3 million passenger trips. Pace ADA/DAR service maintained its first-place rank for passenger trips per vehicle revenue hour and the ADA service dropped two rank positions for this measure. The ranking for passenger trips per vehicle revenue mile remained improved from 2013 although performance was actually slightly worse. Efficiently scheduling service to maximize trips per hour and per mile is one of the strongest methods for reducing total program costs.



Pace ADA paratransit ridership was up 4.4% in 2014, but service hours were up 9.5%. This produced a less favorable service efficiency result and caused Pace's ranking to move down two rank positions from 2013. The combination of ADA/DAR service was the most effective at 2.0 passenger trips per vehicle revenue hour.

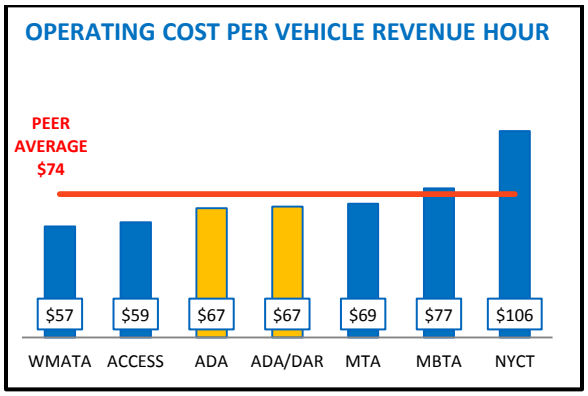


Pace ADA paratransit moved up one rank position for this measure in 2014 despite a 1.8% decrease in performance. Results for this measure vary by less than three-hundredths of one passenger trip, illustrating that Pace and its peers are about equally effective at scheduling these notably expensive passenger trips.

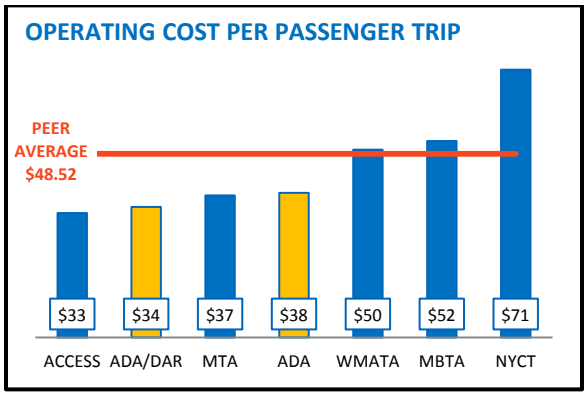
ADA PARATRANSIT

Service Efficiency and Effectiveness

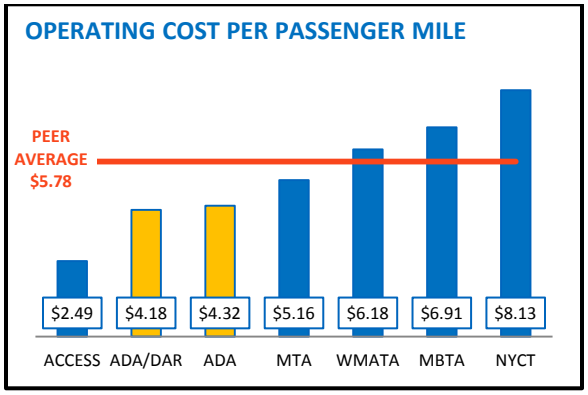
The Pace ADA paratransit program continued growth in each element of service coverage in 2014: vehicle revenue hours (+9.5%), vehicle revenue miles (+6.4%), ridership (+4.4%), and passenger miles traveled (+3.6%). Dial-a-ride service, however, saw decreases in service: vehicle revenue hours (-0.6%), vehicle revenue miles (-3.2%), and passenger trips (-4.5%), yet passenger miles traveled increased by 1.6% as its riders took longer trips compared to 2013.



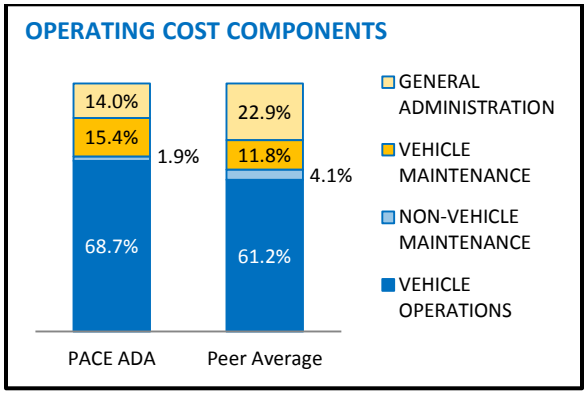
Pace ADA cost per vehicle revenue hour was 2.7% lower in 2014, due to the large increase in vehicle hours. At $66.51, Pace ADA cost per hour was 9.7% below the peer average of $73.69.



Pace ADA paratransit moved down one rank position for operating cost per trip, increasing 2.1% to $38.23. Pace's cost per trip is 21.2% below the peer average cost of $48.52.



Pace retained its rank positions for operating cost per passenger mile. Pace ADA paratransit service costs $4.32 per passenger mile, 25.2% less than the peer average of $5.78. The significantly longer average trip length at Access Services helps to mitigate the cost of providing each individual passenger trip.

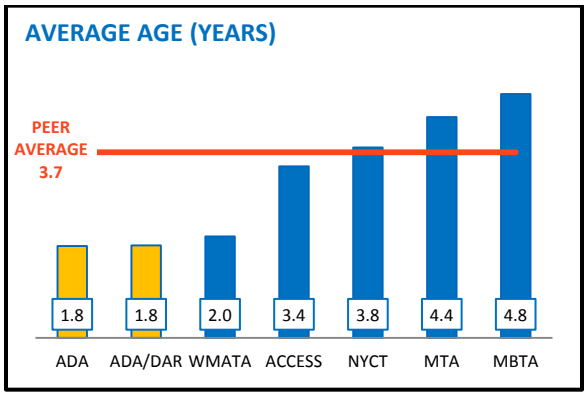


Pace ADA paratransit service expends a larger proportion of its budget on vehicle operations and vehicle maintenance compared to its peers, and has smaller than average proportions allocated to non-vehicle maintenance and general administration.

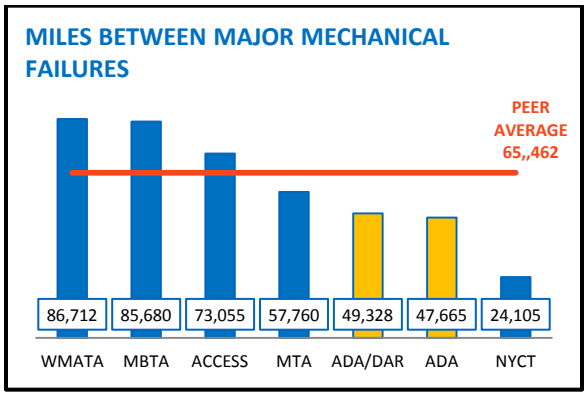
ADA PARATRANSIT

Service Maintenance and Capital Investment

Pace fleet vehicles ranked as the youngest of its peers, and Pace moved up one rank position for this measure from 2013. Pace experienced an improvement in the number of miles between major mechanical failures but held its fifth-rank position for this metric for the fifth consecutive year.



The average age of Pace vehicles increased by 0.1 years in 2014. With the exception of eight buses dedicated to dial-a-ride service, Pace ADA paratransit and dial-a-ride programs share vehicles, so the combined average age of the vehicles is the same.

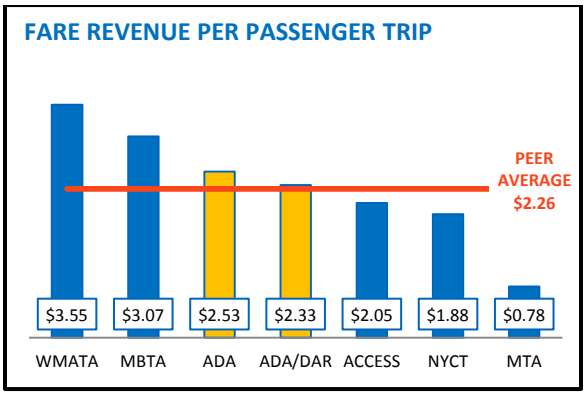


Pace ADA paratransit service experienced a favorable 7.0% gain in miles between major mechanical failures in 2014, with two fewer failures spread over more vehicle miles. Its rank position remained unchanged and was nearly 27.2% lower than the peer average, although this gap is significantly narrower than in 2013, when the gap neared 60%.

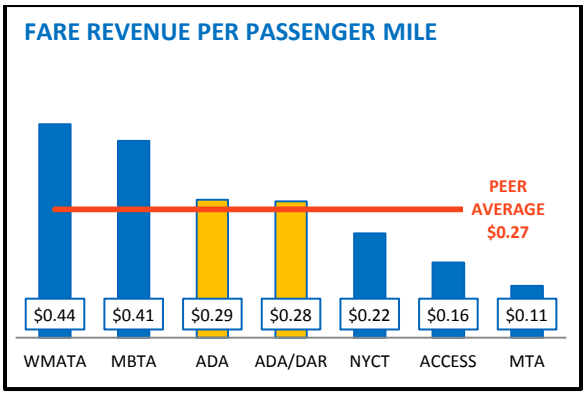
ADA PARATRANSIT

Service Level Solvency

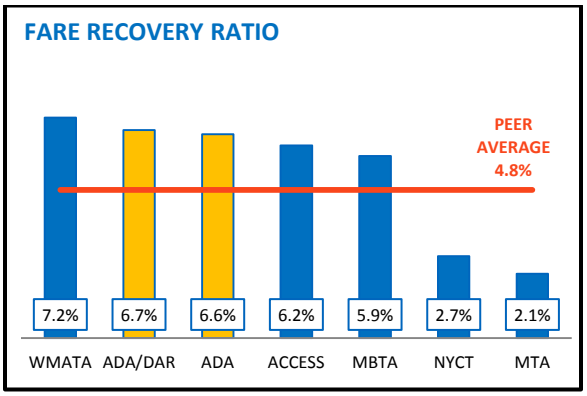
In the absence of a fare increase, Pace experienced gains in fare revenue that exceeded increases to ridership and nearly matched increased operating costs. Thus, an improvement was noted for fare revenue per passenger trip and the fare revenue per passenger mile, while the fare recovery ratio decreased by 0.1%. Pace ADA's rank position remained unchanged for fare revenue per passenger trip and per passenger mile, and rose one rank position for fare recovery ratio.



There were no ranking changes for any of the agencies in 2014. The average fare paid for Pace ADA paratransit services increased by $0.03, exceeding the peer average of $2.26. The Pace average fare is below its official $3.00 fare because approved ADA companions ride free of charge, a practice also followed by peers.



Pace ADA paratransit fare revenue increased $0.01 per passenger mile, and maintained its rank position. Pace ADA paratransit fare revenue per passenger mile is 7.4% below the peer average, which is skewed by the higher results for WMATA and MBTA.



The ADA paratransit fare recovery decreased by 0.1 percentage points and remained higher than the peer average of 4.8%, while the combined ADA/DAR recovery ratio equaled 2013 results. ADA and ADA/DAR each gained one rank position as MBTA lost its second-place rank after scaling back its policy to double fares in 2012 to a 50% increase.

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