



*Measuring and Reporting Transit Agency
& Industry-wide Performance Impacts*

October 27, 2011

John W. Martin



Southeastern Institute of Research

Today's Agenda

**Impact Reporting – What It Is
& Why It's Important**

**Seven Step Process For Assessing
Your Impact and Telling Your Story**

**Suggestions for Alaska's
Transit Industry-wide Impact**

Next Steps



**What Is
Impact
Reporting?**

**Answering
the Question:
Why Should
We Exist?**



**Quantify the
overall community impact
a transit system has
on the region it serves.**

Societal Impacts

- ❖ Quality of Life
 - ❖ Customer cost savings
- ❖ Access to Healthcare
- ❖ Allowing for aging in place
- ❖ Maintaining character of rural communities



Economic Impacts

- ❖ Access to Businesses/Jobs
- ❖ Transit Operations – Direct and Supporting Jobs
- ❖ Keeping workers employed/Avoiding welfare costs



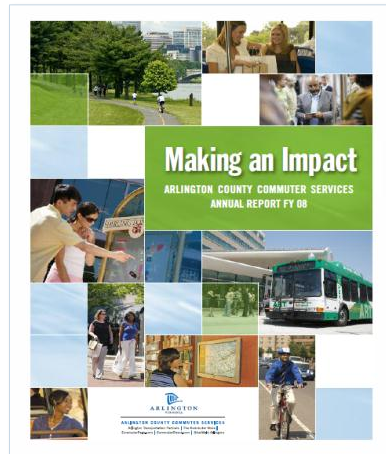
Environmental Impacts

- ❖ Reduction in Pollution
- ❖ Reduction in Energy Consumption
- ❖ Reduction in Greenhouse Gas Emissions



Case Study #1: Urban Transit & TDM Agency

Arlington County, Va.



Customer Service Fulfillment Center

703.228.RIDE call center for ART, websites

- ❖ **Fulfilled 29,000 inquiries in 2008 for transit info, fare media, and other services**
- ❖ **Generated \$13M in sales in 2008 - 54% from web**
- ❖ **Provide fare media for VRE, WMATA, MARC, MTA**
- ❖ **Introduced SmartBenefits option to receive paper rail tickets**



Distribution & Logistics and Bus Stop Signage



- ❖ Distributed 550,000 transit schedules
- ❖ Placed transit info at 425 ART and 55 Pike Ride bus stops
- ❖ Installed 150 "take one" info display units at commercial and residential buildings



Special Initiatives

Bike Arlington, WALKArlington, Arlington Carshare



Internet Services

CommuterPage.com, CommuterDirect, ArtAlert



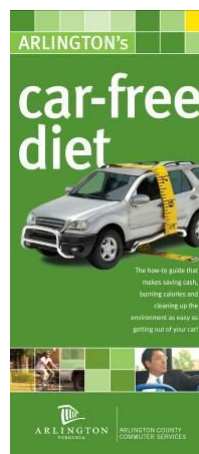
- 3,500 visitors per day
- 12th year of CommuterPage.com
- Citation from Dr. Gridlock as "region's best transportation resource"



CommuterPage.com



ACCS Marketing



- Launched Car-free diet campaign to reduce use of SOV – print and web ads, brochures, direct mail, carfreediet.com, news coverage
- 18-month iRide Teen Transit initiative – received awards from APTA and ACT
- ART lunch loop
- Produced Arlington edition of *How to Live Well Without a Car*

388 The Orange Line with a View Ballston Clarendon Rosslyn Georgetown Farragut West

TDM for Site Plan Development



- 113 site plans in TDM database
- 100% compliance in 2008
- 12 new sites plans with TDM
- \$1.5 M new contributions over 30 years



17



79%

Net Promoter Score™



**Quantify specific contributions
a transit system makes to a
community's transportation
system - **VMTs and air quality.****



**Quantify specific contributions
to an area's economic health -
mobility and access
**(to high quality of life ...
healthcare, education, etc.).****



Key Impact: Changes in Travel Mode

A sizeable share of ACCS customers *started or increased use of non-SOV modes* since using ACCS services:



	<u>Work Mode</u>	<u>Non-work</u>
Commuter Stores	32%	32%
CommuterDirect	31%	25%
CommuterPage	55%	43%
BikeArlington	----	33%
Walk Arlington	----	37%



Trips and VMT Reduced - 2008

38,000

daily trips reduced – 19,000 each a.m. and p.m.

542,000

daily VMT eliminated



Environmental Benefits - 2008

- ❖ Shifts to non-drive alone modes and reduced VMT also help meet environmental goals, reduce Arlington's carbon footprint, and save energy
- ❖ In 2008, ACCS programs reduced:
 - ❖ **65 tons** of NOx
 - ❖ **40 tons** of VOC
 - ❖ **64,000 tons** of CO2
 - ❖ **6.2 million** gallons of gas



Case Study #2: Rural Transit Agency



Baldwin Rural Area Transportation System (BRATS), Alabama

Ride to Work program was established after consultation with area businesses, area chambers of commerce, and with local human service agencies to develop services to connect rural areas to urban Mobile, Alabama market.



Results

- BRATS now runs over 2,000 passenger trips per month during the morning and evening commute.
- Supports over 1,000 jobs!

Source: CTAA 2009 Profile of Rural Vanpool Programs



Case Study #3: Rural Transit Agency

Case Study: Kings Area Rural Transit



Challenge:

Limited transportation options for residents and workers in the San Joaquin Valley, located in southern California, needing to travel to work sites such as farms, correctional facilities and employers located in rural communities throughout the region. Additionally, farm workers were travelling in unsafe and unreliable conditions. New services would have to meet long-distance commute patterns and off-peak shift hours.



Case Study: Kings Area Rural Transit



Solution:

KART started a vanpool program to meet the transportation needs in the region. These vanpools effectively address the challenges of limited public transit options for work trips, varied work sites and nontraditional work shifts.

Additionally, farm workers have safe, reliable transportation operated by qualified drivers.

Currently, more than 350 vanpools operate in eight counties.

Now casinos and ski resorts throughout the state are turning to KART for advice as well.



**Why Invest In
Measuring &
Reporting
Impacts?**

1.

**Demonstrates positive
return on historic investment
in your transit services.**



2.

**Makes a compelling case
for continued investment
into the future.**



3.

**Demonstrates your culture
of accountability
and transparency.**



4.

**Helps build greater
awareness and understanding of
your transit system**



5.

**Organizes key messages
for your supporters and advocates**



6.

**Distinguishes your agency from
most others in grant requests**



7.

**In line with the latest trends –
*being a purposeful organization***



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& Why It's Important**

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Your Impact and Telling Your Story**

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Easy Steps To Assess & Reporting Your Impacts



**Establish impact criteria
that will impress your
stakeholders**

What To Do

Interview Your Stakeholders.

Find out what specific "impact areas" impress them.

Societal Impacts

- ❖ Quality of Life
 - ❖ Customer cost savings
- ❖ Access to Healthcare
- ❖ Allowing for aging in place
- ❖ Maintaining character of rural communities



Economic Impacts

- ❖ Access to Businesses/Jobs
- ❖ Transit Operations – Direct and Supporting Jobs
- ❖ Keeping workers employed/Avoiding welfare costs



Environmental Impacts

- ❖ Reduction in Pollution
- ❖ Reduction in Energy Consumption
- ❖ Reduction in Greenhouse Gas Emissions



Local Business Impacts

- ❖ Access to expanded workforce
- ❖ Tourism revenue (where applicable)
- ❖ Expanded access to consumers



TCRP Case Study Examples



http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_34.pdf



8 Case Study Examples – TCRP Report 34

Table 23
BENEFIT/COST RATIOS FOR CASE STUDY SYSTEMS

SYSTEM'S NAME	ANNUAL OPERATING EXPENSE	NUMBER OF VEHICLES	NUMBER OF TRIPS/YEAR	BENEFIT ESTIMATE	BENEFIT/COST RATIO	DATA YEAR	PRINCIPAL BENEFIT TYPES
Blacksburg Transit, Virginia	\$1,677,975	33	1,470,000	\$2,819,350	1.67/1	FY 96	Traffic Reduction Parking
COLTS (Lee County), North Carolina	\$258,986	15	54,339	\$1,093,316	4.22/1	FY 95	Dialysis Welfare to work Nutrition Training
County Commuter, Maryland	\$1,089,201	12	290,000	\$3,462,717	3.18/1	FY 94	Employment Medical Training
Delta Area Rural Transportation System, Mississippi	\$800,350	21	109,930	\$2,843,880	3.55/1	FY 96	Employment Dialysis
JAUNT, Inc., Virginia	\$1,641,710	60	209,799	\$3,040,500	1.85/1	FY 96	Employment Disabled Empl. Dialysis/medical
Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority, South Carolina	\$3,808,025	89	531,455	\$12,362,423	3.25/1	FY 96	Employment Welfare to work Dialysis Emergency
STAR, Sweetwater County, Wyoming	\$554,859	14	83,659	\$1,681,287	3.03/1	FY 96	Employment Medical Indep. Living
Zuni Entrepreneurial Enterprises, New Mexico	\$115,726	4	15,998	\$488,880	4.22/1	FY 96	Education Employment



What To Do

**With impact areas defined,
outline the mathematical
formula (calculation) needed
and specific data required to
calculate impact(s).**

2

**Put a measurement /
assessment system
In place to collect
needed inputs**

Use Surveys & Secondary Information To Support Criteria Selected In Step 1

- ❖ Might include any or all of following:
 - ❖ Customer Survey
 - ❖ Business Survey
 - ❖ Community Survey

- ❖ Secondary data:
 - ❖ Cross referencing of US Census data with currently collected data such as ridership
 - ❖ Costs figures from outside sources:
 - ❖ Cost per gallon of fuel
 - ❖ Opportunity costs of receiving preventative healthcare vs. waiting until emergency healthcare



Word of Caution

The system you put in place will be determined by the Impacts selected in Step 1. You may have to revise the Impacts in Step 1 if you find the data collection becomes overwhelming or too time consuming or expensive to collect.

Crawl. Walk. Run.



Sample Questionnaire

1. What is the main purpose of your trip? If going home, indicate where you came from before you got on the bus.
 - a. Work / Work-related
 - b. Medical / Dental
 - c. Education
 - d. Shopping, recreation or tourism
 - e. Other

2. For work trips - If public transportation was not available, you would:
 - a. Not be able to work
 - b. Look for another job (closer to home)
 - c. Adjust your working hours
 - d. Work at home
 - e. Use another means of transportation
 - f. Other



*Adopted from Michigan DOT Economic and Community
Benefits of Local Bus Transit Service (Phase 2) – 07/10*



Sample Questionnaire

3. For medical trips - If public transportation was not available, you would:
- Not seek medical assistance
 - Select another physician / care provider
 - Receive home care
 - Use another means of transportation
 - Other
4. For education trips - If public transportation was not available, you would:
- Not be able to attend school / college
 - Miss more classes or school activities
 - Choose another school (closer to home)
 - Use another means of transportation
 - Other

*Adopted from Michigan DOT Economic and Community
Benefits of Local Bus Transit Service (Phase 2) – 07/10*



Sample Questionnaire

- 5) For shopping, recreation or tourism trips - If public transportation was not available, you would:
- Make fewer trips
 - Go to a different shopping center/attraction
 - Shop online or by catalog
 - Use another means of transportation
 - Other
- 6) For other trips - If public transportation was not available, you would:
- Make fewer trips
 - Use another means of transportation
 - Other

*Adopted from Michigan DOT Economic and Community
Benefits of Local Bus Transit Service (Phase 2) – 07/10*



Sample Questionnaire

- 7) If public transportation was not available, what other means of transportation would you use?
- Drive your personal vehicle
 - Ride with someone else
 - Taxi
 - Bicycle
 - Walk
 - Other
- 8) Optional: If you are taking this bus for work, please list the name of your employer.
- 9) In your own words, what does this service mean for you?

*Adopted from Michigan DOT Economic and Community
Benefits of Local Bus Transit Service (Phase 2) – 07/10*



What To Do

**Survey your riders.
Use their self-reported use of
your transit system as
impact inputs.**



3

Periodically collect needed data

Data Collection Should Be Methodical

- ❖ Take into account service fluctuations
 - ❖ Seasonal trends
 - ❖ Time of day
 - ❖ Weekday vs. weekend
- ❖ Collect ongoing data around same time of year
- ❖ Do not duplicate what is already collected
- ❖ Balance data collection vs. overburdening staff



What To Do

**Map out data collection
schedule – one-time vs.
ongoing.**

*Adjust schedules if necessary to
avoid weather events.*



4

**Analyze data and
calculate “impacts”**

Data Analysis

- ❖ Check and clean data that has been collected
 - throw out outliers
- ❖ Use survey-generated data to run simple “impact equations / models.”
- ❖ Use and properly source surrogate “multipliers” if local estimates are not available.



Job Impact - Positive

How many people “get to work” using your system?

unique riders in a year

X

percentage who say they use your system to get to work



Job Impact – Safety Net

How many people would not be able to work if your system did not exist?

Unique riders

X

percentage who say they could not get to work if public transit was not provided



Education Impact - Positive

How many people get to attend school/college because of your system?

unique riders per year

X

percentage who say they attend school/college using your public transit system



Education Impact – Safety Net

How many people get to attend school/college because of your system?

unique riders per year

X

percentage who say they could not attend school/college if public transit was not provided



Public Assistance Cost Avoidance Impact

How much other governmental expense is avoided because your system exists?

Unique riders per year

X

percentage who say they could not get to work if public transit was not provided

X

average monthly public assistance cost (\$196*)

X

average duration (12 months*)



**Average Rural Transit Figures Adopted from Michigan DOT Economic and Community Benefits of Local Bus Transit Service (Phase 2) Model Inputs – 07/10*



Aging In Place Cost Savings Impact

What is the public benefit of providing transit which allows seniors to age in place rather than live in a nursing home?

# riders who would otherwise be in nursing home Est. 30	X	(annual nursing home cost – at-home cost) Est. \$24,000 annually	=	Public benefit of allowing seniors to age in place Est. \$720,000 annually
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TCRP Report 34 STAR Transit example – p. 187



Incremental Healthcare Cost Savings Impact

How much does your transit system save your community in healthcare costs?

# unique riders per year X	percentage who say they would not seek medical assistance if public transit was not provided X	incremental healthcare cost of home healthcare visit(\$50*) X	average number of medical-related visits (over 12 months*) X
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Average Rural Transit Figures Adopted from Michigan DOT Economic and Community Benefits of Local Bus Transit Service (Phase 2) Model Inputs – 07/10



Case Study Examples



http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_34.pdf



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What To Do

**Use data to fill in “equations”
to calculate impacts**

*Note where third-party professional
estimates / assumptions are used
and what they are based upon*



5

**Create the
“Wow” Factor**

The “Wow” Factor

- ❖ Tell your story using language that’s impressive...and that your audience understands.
- ❖ Use imagination to “Wow” them.
- ❖ Consider how things would be if your system did not exist – Ex: Without ABC Transit, 3,000 residents would not have jobs, and then list costs to the community.
- ❖ Personalize the factoids with testimonials.



Virginia Commuter Programs

- ❖ On the impact of its Commuter Assistance Program...

“According to US Census figures, 440,000 Virginians carpool to work each day.

If every one of them stopped carpooling and got into a single occupant vehicle, it would represent a single lane of cars stretching from Richmond to Orlando – and back.”

Source: Virginia DRPT



Michigan Transit Services

Transit Saves Money for Riders

- ✓ *Reduces the cost of transportation* – When people use public transit instead of a more costly alternative (personal car or taxi) they save money, which in turn can be spent on food, healthcare, housing and other staples. In 2008, out-of-pocket cost savings totaled \$348.8 million for riders in Michigan.

“Public transportation helps many who medically or financially can’t drive. It is a very vital part of the community.”

— A Michigan transit rider



IMPACT Statement + Testimonial = WOW!



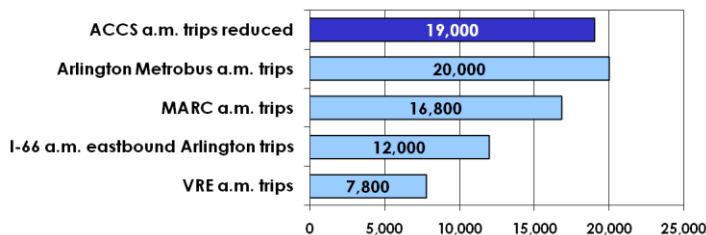
Source: Michigan DOT Report 07/10



ACCS' Wow Factors

- ❖ **38,000** daily trips reduced – 19,000 each a.m. and p.m.

Comparisons of scale – morning commute trips:



Arlington County Commuter Services

Arlington County Commuter Services has calculated that its Employer Services Programs costs ***\$.04 per vehicle mile reduced*** from customers using their program compared to the ***\$.92 per mile it would cost to construct the expressway lanes*** that would need to be built their customers if they drove alone – a difference of \$.88 per mile reduced.

On the surface it doesn't sound like much except for the fact that their program reduces 341,000 miles daily resulting in a positive cost impact of \$300,000 per day from this part of their program.

Source: 2010 ACCS Analysis



What To Do

Think big - “wow” factors and humanize the data /related outcomes when possible. Let your impact calculation tell a compelling story about your service.



6

Package impact outcomes into an official-looking report

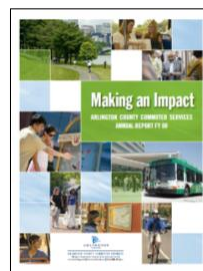
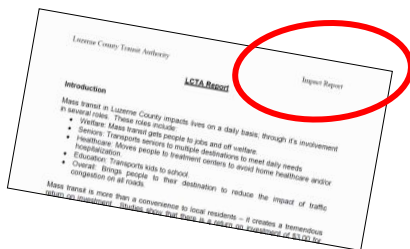
Hard Copy “Official” Report

- ❖ Can take many forms from professionally printed to Microsoft Word or PowerPoint
- ❖ One page – several pages
- ❖ Should be used as a leave behind with target audiences
- ❖ Careful how you name it – Annual Report implies you will do it every year
- ❖ Use customer testimonials and pictures of people – not buses.



Luzerne County Transit Authority

Arlington County Commuter Services




Virginia Regional Transit

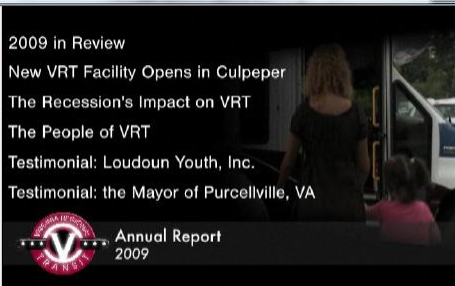
www.vatransit.org

Online Annual Video Report

Slide Title	Duration
Home	01:00
2009 in Review	05:11
New Culpeper Facility	02:52
Recession's Impact	02:50
People of VRT	03:35
Loudoun Youth, Inc.	02:51
Purcellville's Mayor	03:09



Annual Report 2009



00:06 / 21:28 Minutes


Done Internet | Protected Mode: On 100%

YouTube

Search Browse Upload

FY 2009 Annual Report for SunLine Transit Agency

SunLineTransitAgency 2 videos Subscribe



SunLineTransitAgency June 10, 2010

FY2009 was a year of challenge due to the state of public transit, but that h...

560 views

What To Do

Package your impacts / outcomes into report. Keep it professional but in line with other materials you produce. Make the Impacts the real story, not the report.



7

Merchandise report to key stakeholders

Stakeholder Road Show

- ❖ Start with stakeholders who assisted you in Step 1
- ❖ Ask for continued support including speaking on your behalf at public hearings regarding funding
- ❖ Make sure to get in front of funders early in the process – especially local share funders
- ❖ Consider sharing on-line or at conferences
- ❖ Help others to tell your story . . .



www.transittalk.com



What To Do

Present your story starting with stakeholders identified in Step 1

Work back from key funding dates to get in front of the right people at the right time



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1

**Create “Impact Reporting”
Support Tools For
Transit Agencies**

Suggested Tools For Alaska Community Transit

- ❖ **Standard impact assessment questions for local surveys**
- ❖ **Directions on administering simple surveys and calculating impact outcomes**
- ❖ **Example Impact reporting templates**



**Create “Shared Repository”
of Impact Reporting
Best Practices**

Let's Share Our Knowledge

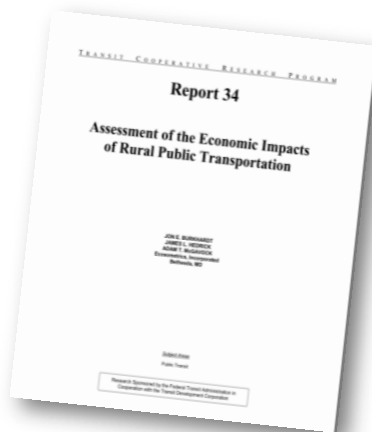
*Create an online resource sharing and exchange center on “calculating and reporting the impact of Alaska’s **community transit services.**”*



3

**Invest In A Study That
Measures Your Overall
Industry's Impact**

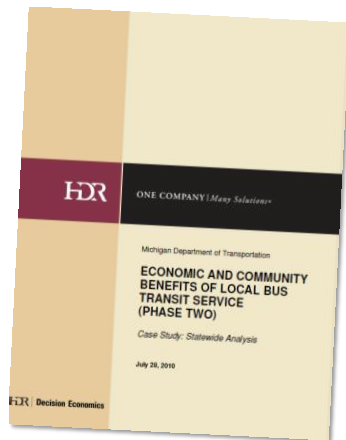
Transit Cooperative Research Program 1998
<http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp/rpt/34.pdf>



3.1 to 1
 For every dollar
 invested in rural
 transit, it generates
**\$3.1 dollars in
 community benefits**

**Quantify specific
 contributions a transit
 system makes to a
 community's overall
 vitality - such as **jobs and
 economic output.****

Michigan Impact Assessment 2010



Economic and Community Benefits of Local Bus Transit Service

Sustained about **9,200 jobs**

Contributed **\$1 billion in economic output** in Michigan in 2008.

Money passengers save by taking the bus **add \$264.4 million** to the Michigan economy.



www.michigan.gov/documents/mdot/MDOT-EconomicBenefitsCaseStudy_328979_7.pdf



Michigan Transit Expands Mobility

Facilitates access to jobs and medical care –

Over 40 percent of trips made by transit patrons in Michigan are for work or medical purposes. A number of those patrons (especially those with low income, no access to a car, or with disabilities) rely entirely on public transit for their mobility needs. ...

If public transit was no longer available they would have no choice but to forego their trips. **The economic value of those foregone trips is estimated at \$67.6 million in 2008.**

Some patrons would also require homecare or they would no longer be able to go to work. **Thus, an estimated \$56.6 million in cross-sector benefits** (i.e., homecare cost savings and welfare cost savings) in 2008 are attributable to public transit.



Source: Michigan DOT Report 07/10



Today's Agenda

Quick Review: Major Trends & 10 Strategic Imperatives for Rural Transit

Impact Reporting – What It Is & Why It's Important

Seven Step Process For Assessing Your Impact and Telling Your Story

Next Steps



1. Download This Presentation:

On Alaska Community Transit's Website



2. Get The Important Source Documents:



Download These Documents

Resources:

Arlington County Commuter Service IMPACT Report

<http://www.commuterpage.com/research/uploads/ACCS027/ACCS%20Impact%20FY08%20Report.pdf>

Michigan Case Study

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdot/MDOT-EconomicBenefitsCaseStudy_328979_7.pdf

TCRP Reports

http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_34.pdf

http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_49.pdf





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