



## FY13 ANNUAL REPORT

**Pioneer Valley Transit Authority** 



### Administrator's Message

FY 13 went out with a bang, when the State Legislature passed and the Governor signed a new Transportation Finance Plan that was implemented in the FY 14 Budget. PVTA received additional funding of \$1.6 million that allowed us to avoid a fare increase and add new service.

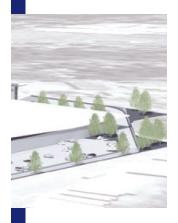
We started work on our comprehensive service analysis in FY 13, so we will be well prepared to make service improvement decisions in FY 14 for implementation in FY 15.

MassDOT developed a formula for distribution of State Contract Assistance based on ridership. Since PVTA has about 39% of all RTA ridership, that approach was most beneficial for PVTA.

One of PVTA's most significant achievements in FY 13 was reaching an important milestone of 11 million fixed route riders. PVTA has gained two million riders over the last five years without adding new service, so imagine what will happen when we have funding to add New Service!

Mary L. MacInnes

Administrator, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority



## CAPITAL PROJECTS

New PVTA
Operations
& Maintenance
Facility Design

## New PVTA Bus Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Facility

PVTA achieved several key design plan milestones in FY 13 including environmental concurrence from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Massachusetts Executive office of Energy and Environmental Affairs under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). PVTA also received approval from the State Land Court of proposed surveyed plans for the new site as well as a finding from the City of Springfield that the property conforms to all aspects of the Zoning Ordinance and that no special permit will be required from the City.

On May 29th, after completing appraisals and due diligence on the site, PVTA received both FTA and PVTA Advisory Board authorization to make a just compensation purchase offer to the property owner.

#### Westfield Transportation Center

In FY 13, the City of Westfield working in partnership with the PVTA completed a redevelopment Master Plan on a 2.8 acre site on Elm Street in Downtown Westfield. The plan calls for construction of a standalone 4 to 6 floor commercial building, a 400 to 500 space parking garage to support the commercial building and downtown, and a standalone transit pavilion with bike storage, paratransit, taxi, fixed-route bus and intercity bus transfer components.



Westfield Transportation Center

The \$8M transit pavilion will be an automated facility to include a bus waiting area, automated ticketing, electronic kiosks for bus scheduling/trip planning and real-time bus information/signage. The Westfield Redevelopment Authority (WRA) has received City and State approvals of its Urban Renewal Plan Update for the redevelopment.

The Westfield Redevelopment Authority (WRA) has received City and State approvals of its Urban Renewal Plan Update for the redevelopment. WRA is working on assembling the site for the new transit facility. Site assembly will include property acquisition and relocations as necessary, survey, site clean-up, demolition and lease. PVTA is currently completing environmental compliance for the transit facility project under NEPA/MEPA.

Once environmental clearances are obtained, the property will be acquired and PVTA will advance design and construction of the transit facility portion of the redevelopment. PVTA has secured \$3.6M in federal and state funding for the project but an additional \$4M will need to be secured to complete the project. Subject to funding, design is scheduled to proceed in 2014 with construction in 2015.



Renovation of Northampton PVTA bus maintenance facility and administrative office

## Major Facility Improvements at Springfield, Northampton & UMASS

PVTA completed three major improvements to bus maintenance facilities in FY13 including: a \$574,000 skylights replacement at Springfield and UMASS; a \$47,000 energy efficient lighting upgrade of the Northampton bus maintenance facility; and a \$72,000 boiler replacement at the Springfield bus maintenance facility.

PVTA completed design for replacing its antiquated and inefficient bus wash rack system in Springfield. The \$950,000 project will result in a much more efficient system with respect to electricity and water conservation. It will also result in cleaner buses and more efficient operations.

PVTA also completed design for the renovation of the Northampton Bus Maintenance Facility's administrative offices and former daycare center. The \$1.1M renovation will result in much needed expansion of dispatch area, administrative office areas, conference room, restrooms and driver break rooms. A new HVAC system will be installed to replace the existing system that is over 25 years old and beginning to fail.

# TECHNOLOGY/ PASSENGER COMMUNICATIONS



PVTA's New Mobile Website

#### Improving Transit Passenger Experience

PVTA leveraged new technologies in 2012 to improve the transit passenger experience. PVTA stepped into the Social Media arena by setting up Facebook and Twitter accounts to provide customers with timely, interactive communication. Facebook and Twitter are being utilized to publish service changes, alerts, PVTA promotions and to solicit passenger feedback.

#### **Real-Time Transit**

Real-time transit information dissemination efforts continue with the release of a PVTA developed consolidated data feed to provide bus location, next bus by route and stop information spanning the entire service area from a single website interface. This consolidated data feed makes it much easier for website and smart phone programmers to create applications that use PVTA transit information to provide timely service information to PVTA passengers.

#### **New Mobile Website**

PVTA unveiled a new mobile website in FY 13 featuring a cleaner layout with easier access to data on the PVTA home page. Customers using mobile devices can access PVTA schedules, service messages, fare information and trip planner functionality using an interface specifically designed to operate on smaller screens.

#### **Custom Developed Programs**

PVTA continues to make custom developed programs available to other Regional Transit Authorities. An example of this is the PVTA Feedback System, designed to track customer complaints, suggestions, commendations and report on the data received.



All PVTA Buses are equipped with GPS & AVL equipment

The system provides a closed loop reporting interface that automatically generates email notifications to users and management upon creation of an open case. This helps ensure all reports are investigated and the results documented and classified for further statistical analysis, tracking and reporting. Franklin Regional Transit Authority has been a long time user of the PVTA hosted Feedback System. During FY 13 Southeastern Regional Transit Authority was setup on the system and the Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority requested and received the software so that they could run, manage and modify the system on their own to better accommodate their internal business processes.

#### **QR Codes**

The use of bus stop QR codes were introduced in FY 13. QR codes are cell phone scannable labels at bus stops that provide a convenient way for passengers to obtain the next scheduled service at a given location or a complete bus stop schedule in PDF format so they can store it on their smart phone for future use.

#### **FFFICIENCIES**



#### Fall Fixed Route Service Modifications

Springfield area routes were evaluated in FY 13, including public hearings to eliminate unproductive service. Trips that were eliminated had ridership of 5 passengers or less per trip. Resources were reallocated to improve service on routes during peak overload times. The improved service was targeted to reduce the number of passengers left behind on main line routes due to capacity constraints.

#### **Travel Training**

PVTA's Travel Training program officially kicked off in July 2013. Travel Training is a self-paced, individualized process that teaches seniors and people with mobility impairments how to safely and independently use the fixed-route public bus system.

After a full year, the new Travel Training program has slightly exceeded expectations. The program activities included reaching out to agencies, schools and individuals to educate them on how to use the bus. To date the program has received 61 referrals, 42 trainees are currently enrolled in the program and 22 trainees have successfully completed the program.

Travel Training graduates say the instruction opens doors to:

- · Additional independent living skills
- Increased independence
- Greater opportunities for employment
- More access to community activities

#### **New Articulated Buses**

PVTA unveiled four new Articulated Hybrid buses that were delivered in May 2013. Two of the 60ft accordion-style buses will be operated on the B43 Northampton to Amherst route, while the other 2 will operate on UMass Transit routes 30 & 31. The articulated buses will increase capacity on existing service and reduce the need for helper buses that are currently used for over-capacity routes.



Left: Travel Trainer explaining how to read a PVTA schedule

Right: PVTA's New Articulated Style Bus As a hybrid, the Xcelsior model boasts a 10 to 15 per cent fuel savings compared to regular diesel vehicles, they are lightweight and quiet, have unique theatre-style seating in the articulated joint, and two rear exit doors. The hybrid diesel-electric buses will hold 40 percent more passengers than conventional buses.

#### **Paratransit Efficiency**

Advance Reservation Pilot — In an effort to improve the efficiency of PVTA's paratransit service, a modified Advance Reservation Policy was pilot tested from January 2, 2013 through March 31, 2013. Riders were able to reserve rides 5 days in advance as opposed to the typical 14 day reservation period.

The pilot was intended to significantly reduce the number of no shows, cancellations and call volume at the call-center that was associated with the lengthy call-in period. A shorter 5-day advance reservation period was recommended for testing.

PVTA held outreach meetings prior to and during the pilot period to obtain feedback from riders and agencies. During the pilot, no shows were reduced by 15% and cancellations were reduced by more than 20%. Rider and agency feedback indicated that 5-days requiring more than one call a week was difficult, but all were in favor of a 7-day advance reservation. In April 2013, PVTA modified its policy to a 7-day Advance Reservation for ADA trips.

#### PIONEER VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY STATEMENT OF NET ASSETS JUNE 30, 2013

	2013	2012
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and equivalents	\$ 7,457,564	4,852,904
Receivables, net	29,687,535	29,965,688
Prepaid expenses	824,356	878,090
Total current assets	37,969,455	35,696,682
Restricted cash (Note 9)	-	-
Prior receivables from the State	5,975,759	5,975,759
Allowance for uncollectible	(5,975,759)	(5,975,759)
Investment in Holyoke Intermodal Facility, LL	.C 4,091,077	4,107,260
Property and equipment, net	63,237,601	62,660,503
Total Assets	105,298,133	102,464,445
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	3,838,306	2,179,822
Accrued payroll and related liabilities	127,266	136,439
Accrued pension	123,142	431,460
Insurance claims reserve	1,450,000	1,450,000
Accrued interest	479,913	482,678
Notes payable	35,000,000	35,300,000
Total current liabilities	41,018,627	39,980,399
Deferred revenue	1,351,904	334,849
Accrued other post employment benefits	11,400,351	9,250,096
Total Liabilities	53,770,882	49,565,344
NET ASSETS		
Invested in capital assets, net of related debt	67,328,678	66,767,763
Restricted for other purposes	677,304	475,547
Unrestricted	(14,344,209)	(13,176,977)
Total Net Assets	\$51,527,251	\$52,899,101

#### PIONEER VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENSES & CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

For the Year Ended June 30, 2013

	,	
	2013	2012
OPERATING REVENUES		
Fixed route income	6,706,255	6,653,808
Paratransit income	668,227	670,666
Shuttle service income	31,949	30,279
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	7,406,431	7,354,753
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Fixed route service	28,725,369	27,493,317
Paratransit service	7,687,468	7,897,028
Shuttle service	265,008	262,798
Administrative Expenses	3,584,729	3,315,228
Reimbursable depreciation	21,940	22,000
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	40,284,514	38,990,371
Operating Income (Loss)	(32,878,083)	(31,635,618)
NONOPERATING REVENUES (EXPENSES)		
Operating assistance		
Federal	4,765,980	6,289,989
Massachusetts	19,090,849	16,216,342

Net assets, ending	51,527,251	52,899,101
Net assets, beginning	52,899,101	39,049,179
Change in net assets	(1,371,850)	13,849,922
Nonreimbursable Depreciation	(9,758,953)	(8,760,922)
Capital contributions	10,335,601	24,051,704
Income (loss) before capital contributions and other items	(1,948,498)	(1,440,860)
1 0	30,329,303	30,134,/30
Total Non-Operating Revenues (Expenses)	30,929,585	30,194,758
Interest expense	(255,340)	(353,778)
Interest income	32,184	28,807
Other income	65,024	146,788
Advertising income	227,519	231,372
Other State assistance	110,000	910,000
Member communities	6,893,369	6,725,238

#### **OPERATIONAL FACTS AND FIGURES**

FIXED ROUTE FINANCIALS	2013	2012
Operating Expenses	\$28,990,377	\$27,756,115
Revenue	\$6,738,204	\$6,684,087
Net Fixed Route Cost	\$22,252,173	\$21,072,028
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FIXED ROUTE CHARACTERISTICS	11 120 712	10.072.000
Passenger Trips	11,128,713	10,872,898
Vehicle Miles	4,422,171	4,397,518
Vehicle Hours	326,182	330,650
Revenue Miles Revenue Hours	4,231,906 316,051	4,318,997 324,037
	310,031	324,037
FIXED ROUTE PERFORMANCE MEASURES		
Operating Expenses Per Passenger Trip	\$2.61	\$2.55
Operating Expenses Per Vehicle Mile	\$6.56	\$6.31
Operating Expenses Per Vehicle Hour	\$88.88	\$83.94
Operating Expenses Per Revenue Mile	\$6.85	\$6.43
Operating Expenses Per Revenue Hour	\$91.73	\$85.66
Passenger Trip Per Mile	2.52	2.47
Passenger Trip Per Hour	34.12	32.88
Passenger Trip Per Revenue Mile	2.63	2.52
Passenger Trip Per Revenue Hour	35.21	33.55
PARATRANSIT FINANCIALS		
Operating Expense	\$7,687,468	\$7,897,028
Revenue	\$668,227	\$670,666
Net Paratransit Cost	\$7,019,241	\$7,226,362
PARATRANSIT CHARACTERISTICS		
Passenger Trips	312,015	316,208
Vehicle Miles	3,364,694	3,503,813
Vehicle Hours	247,052	240,927
Revenue Miles	2,716,346	2,768,236
Revenue Hours	198,850	197,906
PARATRANSIT PERFORMANCE MEASURES		
Operating Expenses Per Passenger Trip	\$24.64	\$24.97
Operating Expenses Per Vehicle Mile	\$2.28	\$2.25
Operating Expenses Per Vehicle Hour	\$31.12	\$32.78
Operating Expenses Per Revenue Mile	\$2.83	\$2.85
Operating Expenses Per Revenue Hour	\$38.66	\$39.90
Passenger Trip Per Mile	0.09	0.09
Passenger Trip Per Hour	1.26	1.31
Passenger Trip Per Revenue Mile	0.11	0.11
Passenger Trip Per Revenue Hour	1.57	1.60

#### **PLANNING**

#### **Comprehensive Service Analysis**

In February 2013 PVTA procured the services of Nelson Nygaard (NN), from a field of nine national and international consulting firms specializing in transit operations; to conduct a Comprehensive Service Analysis (CSA). The focus of the study is to improve the bus system by making it better meet the needs of the community and to ensure that necessary services are being provided in the most efficient manner possible. The goal of the study is to use existing resources more effectively and to determine the best places for additional services. The following tasks have been completed in FY13.

- Project Management plan developed to establish oversight protocols for the study.
- Project team conducted stakeholder forums in Springfield and Amherst with representatives from the business, education, medical and social service community.
- Project team members held open houses at each garage location to obtain input from drivers and operating staff regarding what is working, what can be improved and suggestions for new services.
- Development and distribution of a survey with over 600 respondents regarding transit services in the Pioneer Valley.
- Looking at key demographic criteria such as density, income, age and car ownership, the study team created maps of existing services and compared it to demographic information to determine underserved areas of the Authority.
- Quantitative system data was acquired from PVTA systems — including passenger on and offs, schedule adherence, load factors, service frequencies.
- Development and review of in-depth of route profiles for the initial set of current PVTA services. Information includes passenger on/off locations, load factors, transfer opportunities, comparisons to other PVTA services and suggestions for route improvements.
- Initial development of design guidelines to provide framework of PVTA service planning standards.



## **CUSTOMER OUTREACH**

LEP Outreach

## Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Outreach

The Pioneer Valley Planning
Commission has been coordinating
PVTA's LEP outreach program for the
past year and continues to reach out
to new LEP neighborhoods to make
them aware of PVTA's fixed route and
paratransit service. An LEP outreach
meeting was held on June 18, 2013 with
42 Limited English Speakers at Lutheran
Social Services in West Springfield.

#### **Paratransit Rider Meetings**

PVTA conducted four Paratransit Rider meetings from February — April to receive feedback on changes made to the advance reservation policy.

PVTA conducted two Paratransit rider meetings on November 6 in Northampton and in Springfield. The purpose of these meetings was to make people aware of a new paratransit software system.

## SAFETY & SECURITY



State Police training with a decommissioned PVTA bus

#### **Training Activities**

SATCo Maintenance Personnel conducted four maintenance walk-through training sessions at the Northampton Fire Department in September 2012 and four training sessions with the Agawam Fire Department in April, 2013.

Massachusetts State Troopers attended a maintenance walkthrough regarding training activities with PVTA buses at SATCo on September 11, 2012.

The State Police continued training on September 25, 2012 with a decommissioned PVTA bus. State Police SWAT teams from throughout the Commonwealth took part in several training activities throughout the day. Training from these activities is another effort to ensure safety for PVTA passengers and the communities we serve.

On November 7, 2012 PVTA and SATCo staff attended a Table Top exercise hosted by the City of Holyoke. The exercise focused on the use social media during an emergency event. The scenario involved a contaminated person at Holyoke Hospital leaving the facility and boarding a PVTA bus. PVTA's new AVL/GPS and surveillance systems were utilized during the table top showcasing PVTA's ability to provide critical information during emergencies.

PVTA partnered with the City of Holyoke in their full-scale drill on May 29, 2013. PVTA participated in the drill along with all city departments, Holyoke Hospital and Holyoke Community College.



### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

PVTA Celebrated reaching 11 million riders in FY 13

#### 11 Million Riders

PVTA staff celebrated by surprising the 11th million rider at the Main and Harrison Bus Stop in Springfield with a one-year PVTA Bus Pass and a variety of PVTA promotional items.

Reaching 11 million riders is significant for PVTA because in 2002 and 2003, 17% of PVTA service was eliminated due to funding shortfalls and PVTA lost 3 million riders. Over the last 6-years ridership has gone up each year. PVTA has now gained back 2 million of the 3 million riders that were lost.

#### Nuride

PVTA in partnership with MassDOT and NuRide, offer rider's rewards for choosing healthier and "greener" transportation options through the NuRide program. NuRide was developed to encourage people to make greener trips and earn rewards for doing so. From taking the PVTA bus, to walking, carpooling, van pooling, and biking, this program rewards points that can be accumulated and then redeemed for retail discounts, restaurant coupons, and tickets to shows and attractions. NuRide is made available by MassDOT and is supported by national and local sponsors who provide special offers to NuRide members that register on the NuRide website and track their trips.



#### Stuff the Bus

PVTA sponsored a "Stuff the Bus" event collecting school supplies for homeless children. The collection campaign ran July 21st - August 11th. Donations were collected at all PVTA customer service offices, terminals, and event collection sites staffed by PVTA & United Way at the Chicopee Walmart Parking lot on Saturday July 21 and July 28, and at the Holyoke Mall on Saturday July 21, July 28, August 4, and August 11 from 10:00 AM — 4:00 PM. Filled backpacks were distributed to the children through McKinney-Vento coordinators (est. through the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act) within the Chicopee, Holyoke, Springfield, Westfield, & West Springfield school districts.

PVTA hosted a "Stuff the Bus" Food Drive Event November 17 — December 1 collecting non-perishable food donations onboard all PVTA buses to benefit The Food Bank of Western Mass. Non-perishable food donations were collected onboard all PVTA Buses, at PVTA Terminals in Springfield & Holyoke, and at PVTA's customer service office.

#### Massachusetts Car Free Week

PVTA along with the MassDOT, MassRIDES, and MassCommute, celebrated Car-Free Week September 17 through September 21 promoting the environmental, financial, community, and health benefits of using public transportation along with carpooling, bicycling, and walking. PVTA celebrated Car-Free week at various locations throughout the week with Event Staff passing out information about PVTA, handing out give-a-ways, and holding free raffles for PVTA Passes.

#### **Earth Day**

PVTA celebrated Earth Day, Monday, April 22, at various locations throughout the day. PVTA event staff handed out eco-friendly dry erase memo boards to passengers as well as offering a spin of PVTA's prize wheel for a chance to win a variety of prizes including PVTA T-shirts, tote bags, and other PVTA prizes in celebration of Earth Day.



### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

#### **Bike Week**

PVTA participated in Bike Week at the North Riverfront Park May 11 - May 19. PVTA promoted the use of Bike Racks on the buses, handed out PVTA water bottles, and staffed a variety of Bike Week events.

#### **National Dump the Pump Day**

PVTA celebrated National Dump the Pump Day on Thursday, June 20, at various locations throughout the day. PVTA staff provided information on PVTA services. National Dump the Pump Day is a day that encourages people to ride public transportation and save money, instead of driving a car. PVTA event staff promoted use of public transportation and offered riders a spin on PVTA's prize wheel for a chance to win a variety of prizes including PVTA T-shirts, tote bags, and other PVTA prizes in celebration of 8th Annual National Dump the Pump Day.

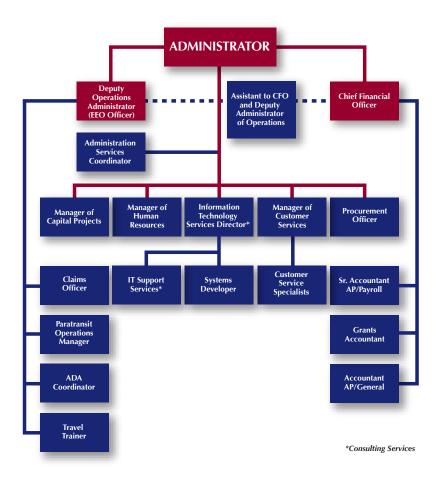
#### **Awards**

PVTA was recognized as a Leader Award recipient at MassRides 3rd Annual Excellence in Commuter Options (ECO) Awards on March 28th in the EMC Club at Fenway Park for outstanding participation and promotion of healthier and greener transportation options.

#### **Convoy of Hope**

PVTA participated in the Pioneer Valley Convoy of Hope Event on August 17 at the Springfield Riverfront Park. Pioneer Valley Convoy of Hope is a neighborhood partnership between area churches, social, educational, and medical agencies. It is all of these agencies coming together to bring "hope" to families, single moms, underprivileged, unemployed and homeless within our community.

## PVTA ORGANIZATION



The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) is the largest regional transit authority in Massachusetts with 174 buses, 144 vans and 24 participating member communities, and provides fixed-route bus and ADA demand-responsive van service. Funding for the PVTA comes from local, state and federal sources. The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority was created by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 161B in 1974 as a funding source and to provide oversight and coordination of public transportation within the Pioneer Valley region.

## Pioneer Valley Transit Authority Participating Communities

Agawam Amherst Belchertown Chicopee

Easthampton

East Longmeadow Granby

Hadley

Hampden Holyoke

Leverett

Longmeadow

Ludlow

Northampton

Palmer

Pelham

South Hadley

Springfield Sunderland

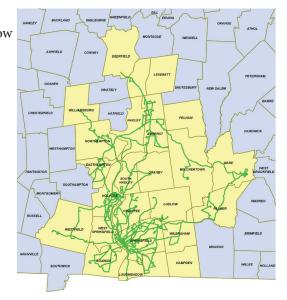
Ware

Westfield

West Springfield

Wilbraham

Williamsburg







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The PVTA values workplace diversity and is strongly committed to its policies on equal employment opportunity and affirmative action. To view our EEO policies, please visit our website at www.pvta.com. EEO/AA/DF.