



Synthesis of Information Related to Transit Problems: 2015

DETAILS

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information already exists, either in documented form or as undocumented experience and practice. This information may be fragmented, scattered, and unevaluated. As a consequence, full knowledge of what has been learned about a problem may not be brought to bear on its solution. Costly research findings may go unused, valuable experience may be overlooked, and due consideration may not be given to recommended practices for solving or alleviating the problem.

There is information on nearly every subject of concern to the transit industry. Much of it derives from research or from the work of practitioners faced with problems in their day-to-day work. To provide a systematic means for assembling and evaluating such useful information and to make it available to the entire transit community, the Transit Cooperative Research Program Oversight and Project Selection (TOPS) Committee authorized the Transportation Research Board to undertake a continuing study. This study, TCRP Project J-7, “Synthesis of Information Related to Transit Problems,” searches out and synthesizes useful knowledge from all available sources and prepares concise, documented reports on specific topics. Reports from this endeavor constitute a TCRP report series, Synthesis of Transit Practice.

THE SYNTHESIS PROGRAM

This synthesis series reports on current knowledge and practice, in a compact format, without the detailed directions usually found in handbooks or design manuals. Each report in the series provides a compendium of the current knowledge available on those measures found to be the most successful in resolving specific problems. To develop these syntheses in a comprehensive manner and to ensure inclusion of significant knowledge, TRB employs a consultant to gather and analyze available information from numerous sources, including a large number of transit agencies. A panel of experts in the subject area is established to guide the consultants in organizing and evaluating data collected on each topic and to review the synthesis report.

For each topic, the project objectives are (1) to locate and assemble documented information; (2) to learn what practice has been used for solving or alleviating problems; (3) to identify all ongoing research; (4) to learn what problems remain largely unsolved; and (5) to organize, evaluate, and document the useful information that is acquired.

Each synthesis is an immediately useful document that records practices that were acceptable within the limitations of the knowledge available at the time of its preparation. As the processes of advancement continue, new knowledge can be expected to be added to that which is now on hand; eventually the synthesis may need to be updated or redone. If you believe that a synthesis should be updated, it would be appreciated if you would contact TRB and let us know.

Selection of Topics

TCRP Oversight Panel J-7 meets each year (typically in May) to select topics for study using funds from the upcoming fiscal year. The membership of this committee is given in Table 1. Current funding allows for initiation of approximately six syntheses per year.

The following factors are considered in the selection process for synthesis topics:

- The problem should be widespread enough to generate broad interest in the synthesis.
- The topic should be timely and critical with respect to economic impact, safety, or social impact.
- The topic is appropriate if current practice is nonuniform or inconsistent from agency to agency, or if the validity of some practices appears to be questionable.
- The quality and quantity of useful available information should indicate a need to organize and compress that which has already been learned and written on the topic.
- The topic should not be one where ongoing research or other activities in progress might be expected to render the synthesis obsolete shortly after completion.

The continued success of this project depends on a constant supply of worthy synthesis topics solicited annually from a variety of sources, including transit officials, equipment and service suppliers, research organizations, FTA, APTA, and TRB committees. The interest of those who have recommended topics is sincerely appreciated, and they are urged to continue.

Conduct of the Studies

Throughout the year, following the J-7 Oversight Panel’s selection of topics, studies are initiated in the order of priority assigned by the committee. A panel

Table 1 TCRP Project Panel J-7

	Name	Affiliation
Chair	Brad J. Miller	Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA), St. Petersburg, FL
Member	Donna DeMartino	San Joaquin Regional Transit District, Stockton, CA
Member	Michael Ford	Ann Arbor Transportation Authority, Ann Arbor, MI
Member	Bobby J. Griffin	Griffin and Associates, Flower Mound, TX
Member	Robert H. Irwin	Consultant, Sooke, BC, Canada
Member	Jeanne Krieg	Eastern Contra Costa Transit Authority, Antioch, CA
Member	Paul J. Larrousse	Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, NJ
Member	David A. Lee	Connecticut Transit, Hartford, CT
Member	Bradford J. Miller	Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA), St. Petersburg, FL
Member	Elizabeth Presutti	Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority—DART, Des Moines, IA
Member	Robert H. Prince, Jr.	AECOM Consulting Transportation Group, Inc., Boston, MA
Liaison	Jarrett W. Stoltzfus	Federal Transit Administration, Washington, DC
Liaison	Samantha Smith	American Public Transportation Association, Washington, DC
Liaison	Jennifer L. Weeks	Transportation Research Board, Washington, DC

consisting of practitioners and researchers is formed for each topic. At its first meeting, this topic panel thoroughly discusses the topic, refines the tentative scope, suggests sources of information, and selects the consultant based on expression of interest received in response to an industry-wide solicitation.

Following this meeting, an agreement is negotiated with the consultant to gather information on the topic, synthesize it, and draft a report. Typically, the agreement covers a period of 9 months. Information gathering and preparation of the first draft of the synthesis report usually takes 5 months. This draft is then reviewed by the topic panel with the consultant, often at a second panel meeting. Subsequent drafts and a meeting are scheduled if needed, although this rarely occurs.

After the staff is substantially satisfied with the report, a final draft is sent to the members of the TCRP Oversight Panel J-7 for their approval. At the same time, members from the topic panel have their last chance to review the report. Comments from these reviews are incorporated into the final report, which is usually published as a TCRP Synthesis of Transit Practice.

Studies in Progress as of January 2015

Work is currently under way on the topics listed in Table 2. Questions on these topics should be addressed to the Project Study Manager, Donna L. Vlasak (e-mail: dvlasak@nas.edu and 202/334-2974) or the Synthesis Studies Director, Jon M. Williams (e-mail: jwilliams@nas.edu and 202/334-3245).

Available Publications

The Syntheses of Transit Practice that have been completed under this project are listed in Table 3. Copies of these syntheses can be obtained from the Publications Office, Transportation Research Board, 500 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20001; by calling 202/334-3213; and through the Internet at: <http://books.trbbookstore.org>. Please send check orders to: TRB, PO Box 936135, Atlanta, GA 31193-6135, or fax to: 202/334-2519. Electronic copies are available at: <http://www.trb.org/Publications/PubsTCRPSynthesisReports.aspx>.

Index of Topic Studies

Table 4 is a key word index of published syntheses and studies currently in progress.

Table 2 Synthesis Studies—In Progress as of January 2015

No.	Title
SA-33	Critical Incident Management and Clearance Practices for Transit
SA-34	Open Data: Challenges and Opportunities for Transit Agencies
SA-35	Better On-Street Bus Stops
SB-24	Methods for Title VI Fare and Service Equity Analysis
SB-25	Practices for Establishing ADA Paratransit Assessment Facilities
SG-13	Successful Practices for Utility Coordination in Transit Projects

Table 3 Published TCRP Syntheses

No.	Title/Pages/Price
1	Safe Operating Procedures for Alternative Fuel Buses (1993) 48 pp., \$16.00
2	Low-Floor Transit Buses (1994) 43 pp., \$12.00
3	Incentive Programs to Improve Transit Employee Performance (1994) 44 pp., \$12.00
4	Integration of Bicycles and Transit (1994) 58 pp., \$12.00
5	Management Information Systems (1994) 77 pp., \$19.00
6	The Role of Performance-Based Measures in Allocating Funding for Transit Operations (1994) 52 pp., \$11.00
7	Regulatory Impacts on Design and Retrofit of Bus Maintenance Facilities (1994) 50 pp., \$12.00
8	Retrofit of Buses to Meet Clean Air Regulations (1994) 48 pp., \$12.00
9	Waste Control Practices at Bus Maintenance Facilities (1995) 26 pp., \$10.00
10	Bus Route Evaluation Standards (1995) 54 pp., \$12.00
11	System-Specific Spare Bus Ratios (1995) 46 pp., \$12.00
12	Transit Bus Service Line and Cleaning Functions (1995) 48 pp., \$14.00
13	Risk Management for Small and Medium Transit Agencies (1995) 31 pp., \$13.00
14	Innovative Suburb-to-Suburb Transit Practices (1995) 50 pp., \$14.00
15	System-Specific Spare Rail Vehicle Ratios (1995) 43 pp., \$13.00
16	Changing Roles and Practices of Bus Field Supervisors (1996) 45 pp., \$13.00
17	Customer Information at Bus Stops (1996) 64 pp., \$18.00
18	Bus Occupant Safety (1996) 55 pp., \$15.00
19	Passenger Transfer System Review (1996) 37 pp., \$14.00
20	Transit-Focused Development (1997) 55 pp., \$16.00
21	Improving Transit Security (1997) 36 pp., \$15.00
22	Monitoring Bus Maintenance Performance (1997) 48 pp., \$16.00
23	Inspection Policy and Procedures for Rail Transit Tunnels and Underground Structures (1997) 95 pp., \$25.00
24	AVL Systems for Bus Transit (1997) 47 pp., \$16.00
25	Light Rail Vehicle Compression Requirements (1997) 34 pp., \$15.00
26	Bus Transit Fare Collection Practices (1997) 29 pp., \$14.00
27	Emergency Preparedness for Transit Terrorism (1997) 73 pp., \$21.00
28	Managing Transit Construction Contract Claims (1998) 50 pp., \$17.00
29	Passenger Counting Technologies and Procedures (1998) 50 pp., \$23.00
30	ADA Paratransit Eligibility Certification Practices (1998) 38 pp., \$16.00
31	Paratransit Contracting and Service Delivery Methods (1998) 35 pp., \$16.00
32	Transit Advertising Revenue: Traditional and New Sources and Structures (1998) 58 pp., \$20.00
33	Practices in Assuring Employee Availability (1999) 69 pp., \$27.00
34	Data Analysis for Bus Planning and Monitoring (2000) 62 pp., \$27.00
35	Information Technology Update for Transit (2000) 98 pp., \$31.00
36	Identifying and Reducing Fraudulent Third Party Tort Claims Against Public Transit Agencies (2000) 58 pp., \$25.00
37	Communicating with Persons with Disabilities in a Multimodal Environment (2001) 48 pp., \$26.00
38	Electronic Surveillance Technology on Transit Vehicles (2001) 57 pp., \$28.00
39	Transportation on College and University Campuses (2001) 62 pp., \$28.00
40	A Challenged Employment System: Hiring, Training, Performance Evaluation, and Retention of Bus Operators (2001) 72 pp., \$29.00
41	The Use of Small Buses in Transit Service (2002) 72 pp., \$15.00
42	Use of Flexible Funds for Transit Under ISTEA and TEA-21 (2002) 40 pp., \$15.00
43	Effective Use of Transit Websites (2002) 79 pp., \$16.00
44	Training for On-Board Bus Electronic (2002) 63 pp., \$15.00
45	Customer-Focused Transit (2002) 100 pp., \$17.00
46	Diversity Training Initiatives (2003) 59 pp., \$15.00
47	Corporate Culture as the Driver of Transit Leadership Practices (2003) 91 pp., \$17.00
48	Real-Time Bus Arrival Information Systems (2003) 61 pp., \$15.00

Table 3 (Continued)

No.	Title/Pages/Price
49	Yield to Bus Programs—State of the Practice (2003) 78 pp., \$16.00
50	Use of Rear-Facing Position for Common Wheelchairs on Transit Buses (2003) 42 pp., \$14.00
51	Transit Advertising Sales Agreements (2004) 99 pp., \$18.00
52	Transit Operator Health and Wellness Programs (2004) 80 pp., \$17.00
53	Operational Experiences with Flexible Services in Transit Systems (2004) 57 pp., \$16.00
54	Maintenance Productivity Practices (2004) 92 pp., \$18.00
55	Geographic Information Systems Applications in Transit (2004) 60 pp., \$16.00
56	Performance-Based Measures in Transit Fund Allocation (2004) 74 pp., \$16.00
57	Computer-Aided Scheduling and Dispatch in Demand-Responsive Transit Services (2004) 79 pp., \$17.00
58	Emergency Response Procedures for Natural Gas Transit Vehicles (2005) 53 pp., \$15.00
59	Strategic Planning and Management in Transit Agencies (2005) 44 pp., \$15.00
60	Practices in No-Show and Late Cancellation Policies for ADA Paratransit (2005) 49 pp., \$16.00
61	Maintenance Staffing Levels for Light Rail Transit (2005) 41 pp., \$16.00
62	Integration of Bicycles and Transit (2005) 70 pp., \$17.00
63	On-Board and Intercept Transit Survey Techniques (2005) 91 pp., \$19.00
64	Bus Use of Shoulders (2006) 91 pp., \$35.00
65	Transit Agency Participation in Medicaid Transportation Programs (2006) 48 pp., \$31.00
66	Fixed-Route Transit Ridership Forecasting and Service Planning Methods (2006) 51 pp., \$31.00
67	Bus Transit Service in Land Development Planning (2006) 62 pp., \$32.00
68	Methods of Rider Communication (2006) 95 pp., \$35.00
69	Web-Based Survey Techniques (2006) 104 pp., \$35.00
70	Mobile Data Terminals (2007) 150 pp., \$47.00
71	Paratransit Manager's Skills, Qualifications, and Needs (2007) 52 pp., \$36.00
72	Use of Biodiesel in a Transit Fleet (2007) 61 pp., \$38.00
73	AVL Systems for Bus Transit Update (2007) 104 pp., \$50.00
74	Policies and Practices for Effectively and Efficiently Meeting ADA Paratransit Demand (2008) 54 pp., \$40.00
75	Uses of Higher Capacity Buses in Transit Service (2008) 72 pp., \$45.00
76	Integration of Paratransit and Fixed-Route Transit Services (2008) 48 pp., \$40.00
77	Passenger Counting Systems (2008) 73 pp., \$45.00
78	Transit Systems in College and University Communities (2008) 88 pp., \$47.00
79	Light Rail Vehicle Collisions with Vehicles at Signalized Intersections (2008) 40 pp., \$37.00
80	Transit Security Update (2008) 141 pp., \$57.00
81	Preventive Maintenance Intervals for Transit Buses (2010) 71 pp., \$47.00
82	Transit Fare Arrangements for Public Employees (2010) 81 pp., \$49.00
83	Bus and Rail Transit Preferential Treatments in Mixed Traffic (2010) 202 pp., \$68.00
84	Current Practices in Greenhouse Gas Emissions Savings from Transit (2010) 77 pp., \$49.00
85	Effective Use of Citizen Advisory Committees for Transit Planning and Operations (2010) 63 pp., \$43.00
86	Relationships Between Streetcars and the Built Environment (2010) 52 pp., \$42.00
87	Practices in the Development and Deployment of Downtown Circulators (2011) 113 pp., \$57.00
88	Strollers, Carts, and Other Large Items on Buses and Trains (2011) 162 pp., \$63.00
89	Public Participation Strategies for Transit (2011) 87 pp., \$54.00
90	Video Surveillance Uses by Rail Transit Agencies (2011), 79 pp., \$52.00
91	Use and Deployment of Mobile Device Technology for Real-Time Transit Information (2011) 78 pp., \$49.00
92	Transit Asset Condition Reporting (2011) 45 pp., \$41.00
93	Practices to Protect Bus Operators from Passenger Assault (2011) 126 pp., \$60.00
94	Innovative Rural Transit Services (2011) 43 pp., \$41.00
95	Practices for Wayside Rail Transit Worker Protection (2012) 79 pp., \$54.00
96	Off-Board Fare Payment Using Proof-of-Payment Verification (2012) 117 pp., \$60.00
97	Improving Bus Transit Safety Through Rewards and Discipline (2012) 53 pp., \$46.00
98	Ridesharing as a Complement to Transit (2012) 62 pp., \$48.00

Table 3 (Continued)

No.	Title/Pages/Price
99	Uses of Social Media in Public Transportation (2012) 57 pp., \$48.00
100	Elevator and Escalator Maintenance and Safety Practices (2012) 58 pp., \$48.00
101	Implementation and Outcomes of Fare-Free Transit Systems (2012) 96 pp., \$57.00
102	Integrating Passenger Ferry Service with Mass Transit (2013) 45 pp., \$44.00
103	Transit Station and Stop Adoption Programs (2013) 59 pp., \$49.00
104	Use of Electronic Passenger Information Signage in Transit (2013) 100 pp., \$58.00
105	Use of Market Research Panels in Transit (2013) 62 pp., \$48.00
106	Energy Savings Strategies for Transit Agencies (2013) 68 pp., \$52.00
107	Rail Transit Track Inspection Practices (2014) 50 pp., \$50.00
108	Transit Bus Operator Distraction Policies (2013) 92 pp., \$58.00
109	System-Specific Spare Bus Ratios Update (2014) 61 pp., \$49.00
110	Commonsense Approaches for Improving Transit Bus Speeds (2014) 147 pp., \$68.00
111	Optimizing Bus Warranty (2014) 62 pp. (online only)
112	Maintaining Transit Effectiveness (2014) 107 pp. (online only)
113	Sub-Allocating FTA Section 5307 Funding Among Multiple Recipients in Metropolitan Areas (2014) 73 pp. (online only)
43	Track Maintenance Costs on Rail Transit Properties (2008) (web-only doc)

Table 4 Index to TCRP Syntheses and Studies

Absenteeism	33, 52	Buses	
Accidents		– Alternative Fuels	1
– Light Rail	79	– Compressed Natural Gas	1
– Prevention	95	– Ethanol	1
– Reduction	97	– Liquefied Natural Gas	1
Adopt-a-Stop	103	– Liquefied Petroleum Gas	1
Advertising		– Methanol	1
– Buses/Trains, on	32, 51	– Automated Vehicle Location Systems	24, 34, 48, 53, 55, 94
– Stations/Stops	32, 51	– Bicycle, Integration with	4, 62, 88
– Websites	43	– Biodiesel	72
Advisory Committees	85	– Bypass Lanes	83
Alternative Fuels	1	– Cleaning	12
– Safe Operating Procedures, Buses	1	– College and University Campuses	39, 78
Asset Management	92, 100	– Downtown Circulators	87
Automated Onboard Systems, Vehicle Health	81	– Driver Availability	33, 40, 52
Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) Systems	24, 34, 48, 53, 55, 73, 77, 91, 93, 94, 110	– Electronic Equipment	44
Automatic Passenger Counters (APC)	29, 66, 73, 77	– Fare Collection	26, 96
Automatic Vehicle Monitoring	24, 34, 48, 53, 55, 73	– Fare-Free	101
Bicycles		– Field Supervisors	16
– Integration with Buses	4, 62	– Fuel and Fluid Storage	7
– Integration with Ferries	4, 62	– Higher Capacity	75
– Integration with Rail	4, 62	– Intercity	94
Biodiesel	72	– Integration with Passenger Ferries	102
Buff Load (see Compression Requirements)		– Low-Floor	2
Built Environment	86	– Maintenance	54, 81, 111
		– Maintenance Facilities	7, 9, 12
		– Natural Gas	58

Table 4 (Continued)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Occupant Safety 18, 38, 50, 58 – Passenger Transfer 19 – Procurement 111 – Rail, Integration with 83 – Rapid Transit 75, 83 – Repairs 111 – Retrofitting 8 – Route Evaluation Standards 10 – Routes 110 – Safety 97 – Service Line and Cleaning 12 – Signage 104 – Shoulders 64 – Small Buses 41 – Speeds 110 – Stops, Customer Information at 17, 37, 48 – Strollers, Integration with 88 – Suburb-to-Suburb Service 14 – System-Specific Spare Ratios 11 – Traffic Operations 49 – Warranty 111 – Waste Control at Maintenance Facilities 9 Bus Field Supervisors – Changing Roles and Practices 16 Bus Garages (see Bus Maintenance Facilities) Bus Maintenance Facilities – Cleaning 12 – Regulations on Design and Retrofit of 7 – Waste Control 9 Bus Route Evaluation Standards 10, 14 Bus Stops – Information at 17, 37, 48 – Locations 53 – Safety Design 18 – Signs 17, 37 Claims (see Liability) Circulators 87 Codes (see Regulations, Standards) College and University Campuses 39, 78 Communications – Riders 68, 89 Commuter Benefits, 82 Compression Requirements – Light Rail Vehicles 25 Computer-Aided Dispatch 73, 91, 93, 110 Congestion Mitigation 84 Construction Contract Claims 28 Contracts – Advertising 32, 51 – Disputes and Resolution 28 – Information Technology Services 35 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Maintenance 54 – Paratransit Services 31, 71 Cost-Effectiveness – Fare-Free Transit 101 – Transit 112 Customer Service 43, 45 – Automatic Vehicle Location 73 – Awareness 43, 45, 48, 49, 68 – Bicycles on Transit 62 – Complaint Resolution 38 – Computer-Aided Scheduling and Dispatch 57, 91 – Employee Fare Programs 82 – Geographic Information Systems 55 – Information at Bus Stops 17, 48 – Management Role 16, 47 – Passengers with Disabilities 30, 31, 37, 50, 53, 60, 74 – Passengers with Strollers, Carts and Other Large Items 88 – Public Participation 89 – Service Line and Cleaning 12 – Surveys 63, 69 – Transfers 19 Design – Bicycle Storage and Transport 62 – Bus <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Air Regulations, to Meet 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Low-Floor Transit Buses 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Safety 18, 50, 58, 93 – Bus Maintenance Facilities 7 – Bus Stops 18 – Elevators and Escalators 100 – Engines 7, 8 – Regulatory, Impacts on 7, 8 – Small Buses 41 – Streetcar Systems 86 – Surveillance Technology 38 – Survey Questionnaires 63, 69 – Tunnels 23 – Websites 43 Dispatch 57 – Bus 53, 60, Distraction Policies 108 Diversity – Training 46 Driver – Distractions 108 – Health and Wellness 52 – Hiring 40 – Performance Evaluation 40 – Retention 40 – Training 40, 44, 45, 49, 57 Dynamic Message Signs 91, 104
---	---

Table 4 (Continued)

Electronic Signage	104	Incentive Programs	
Electronic Surveillance	38, 90	– Employee	3, 33, 52, 82
Elevators	100	Information Technology (IT)	5, 35, 43, 57
Emergency Procedures		– Automatic Vehicle Location	73
– Bus	58	– Geographic Information Systems	55
Emissions, Greenhouse Gas	84	– Global Positioning Systems	70
Employee Assistance Programs	16, 52, 82	– Mobile Device Technology	91
Energy, Savings	106	– Signage	104
Environment, The		– Social Media	99
– Clean Air Act	1, 7, 8	– Supervisors, Impact on	16
– Emissions, Biodiesel	72	– Web-Based Surveys	69
– Greenhouse Gas Emissions	84	Infrastructure	92
– Waste Control	9	Inspection	
Escalators	100	– Bus Maintenance	81
Fare Collection		– Elevators and Escalators	100
– Bus	26, 34	– Rail Tunnels and Underground Structures	23
– Downtown Circulators	87	– Track	95, 107
– Electronic Registering Fareboxes (ERFs)	29	Integrated Service	76, 98
– Evasion	93, 96	Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)	
– Fare-Free	101	– Advanced Public Transportation Systems	
– Off-Board	96	(APTS)	35
– Structure	102	– Automated Vehicle Location Systems	24, 34, 48,
– Unlimited Access Systems	39	53, 55, 73, 77, 91	
Ferries		– Automated Vehicle Monitoring (AVM)	24, 34, 48,
– Bicycles, Integration with	4, 62	53, 55, 73	
– Passenger Ferry, Integration with Mass Transit	102	– Automatic Passenger Counters	29, 34, 77
Fleet Management	15, 24, 35, 109	– Global Positioning Systems (GPS)	24, 53
Flexible Transit Service	53	– Transfer Automation	19
Fixed-Route Transit	66, 74	– Mobile Data Terminals	70
Fraudulent Claims	36	– Mobile Device Technology	91, 99
Fuel Systems	72	Internet	43
Funding Allocation		Liability	
– Bicycle Services	62	– Construction Contract Claims	28
– Circulators	87	– Fraudulent Third Party Claims	36
– Infrastructure	92	– Institutional	49
– Fare-Free Transit	101	– Risk Management	13
– FTA Section 5307		Light Rail Vehicles (LRV)	
– Maintenance	53	– Compression Requirements	25
– Medicaid Transportation Programs	65	– Operations	79
– Performance-Based	56	– System-Specific Spare Ratios	15
– Role of Performance-Based Measures	6	Light Rail Transit	61, 79, 83
– Spare Bus Ratios, System-Specific	11	– Fare Collection	96
– Spare Rail Vehicle Ratios	15	Litter Collection	103
– Surveillance	90	Low-Floor Buses	2
– Systems Costs	48	Maintenance	
– Under ISTEA and TEA-21	42	– Bus Maintenance Facilities	7, 9
Funding, Flexible	42	– Fleet Programs	109
Geographic Information Systems	55	– Elevators and Escalators	100
Global Positioning Systems (GPS)		– Line and Cleaning Functions	12
– Bus	24, 53, 73, 78, 91, 110	– Light Rail Transit	61, 43 (web-only)
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	84	– Monitoring Performance	22, 44
		– Preventive	81, 92

Table 4 (Continued)

– Productivity 53, 54	Preventive Maintenance 109
– Rail Track 107	Productivity
– Stops/Stations 103	– Employee 3, 16, 22, 33, 54
Maintenance Management Information System 109	– Proof-of-Payment 96
Management 44, 47, 59, 71	– Transit System 54, 56, 60, 112
Management Information Systems (see	Public Involvement in Transit Planning 85, 89
Information Technology)	Public Transportation
Market Research, Panels 105	– Funding 113
Marketing	
– Bicycles on Transit 62	Quality Assurance
– Circulators 87	– Bus Maintenance 81
– Social Media 99	Queue Jump/Bypass Lanes 83
Mobile Data Terminals 70	
Monitoring Maintenance Performance 22, 54	Rail
Multimodal Service Coordination 102	– Bicycle, Integration with 4, 62
	– Integration with Large Items 88
Non-Emergency Medical Transportation 65	– Light Rail Vehicle Compression Requirements 25
	– Passenger Transfers 19
On Time Performance 110	– Security 21, 90
	– Station Area Development 20
Panels, Market Research 105	– Streetcars 86
Paratransit Services 30, 31, 60, 65, 71, 74, 76, 112	– Suburb-to-Suburb Service 14
Parking and Storage	– System-Specific Spare Ratios 15
– Bicycles 62	– Track Inspection 107
Partnerships, 65	– Tunnel and Underground Structures 23
Passengers	Real-Time Transit Information 91, 99, 104
– Comfort 12	Recruitment
– Communicating with 37, 68, 89, 102	– Bus Drivers 16, 33, 40
– Information Display 91, 104	– Management 47
– Ridership Counts 29, 34	– Security Personnel 21
– Safety 18, 21, 50, 58, 80, 88, 100	– Supervisors 16
– Satisfaction 45, 64, 69, 101	Regulations
– Transfer Systems 19	– Air Quality 1, 7, 8, 84
Performance-Based Measures	– Alternative Fuel Buses 1, 72
– Funding Allocation 56	– Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 2, 7, 16, 17,
– Diversity Training 46	24, 30, 31, 37, 50, 53, 60, 65, 74, 76
– Role in Funding Allocation 6	– Buses on Shoulders 64
Performance Evaluation	– Drugs and Alcohol 16
– Bus Operators 40	– EPA 7
– Fare-Free Transit 101	– Family Leave Medical Act 33
– Circulators 87	– Leave Policies 33
– Real-Time Bus Arrival Information Systems 43,	– Local and State 7
48, 91	– Occupational Safety and Health Administration
– Travel Time 110	7, 52
Planning	– Resource Conservation and Recovery Act 9
– Advisory Committees 85	– Retrofitting 7, 8
– Strategic 59	– Suburb-to-Suburb Service 14
Policy Development	– Waste Management 9
– No-Show and Late Cancellation 60	Retrofitting
– Greenhouse Gas Emissions 84	– Bus 8, 49
Policy Procedures	– Bus Maintenance Facilities 7
– Rail Tunnel and Underground Structures	– Engine 7, 8
Inspection 23	– Regulatory, Impacts on 7
– Safe Operation for Alternative Fuel Buses 1	

Table 4 (Continued)

Revenues	– Quality 15, 45, 53, 57
– Advertising 51	– Small Buses 41
Ridesharing 98	Service Line and Cleaning 12
Ridership 63	Signage 104
– Fare-Free Transit 101	Social Media, Uses of in Public Transportation 99
– Forecasting 66	Spare Ratios
Risk Management 90	– System-Specific Buses 11, 109
– Medium Agencies 13	– System-Specific Rail Vehicles 15
– Small Agencies 13	Standards
Safety	– Alternative Fuels 1
– Alternative Fuel Bus Operation 1	– Bus Route Evaluation 10, 14
– Bus Drivers 93, 108	– Maintenance 54
– Bus Occupant 18, 38, 50, 64	State of Good Repair 92
– Bus Route Evaluation 10	Stop Adoption Programs 103
– Communications 68	Streetcars 86
– Light Rail Vehicle Compression Resistance 25	Sub-Allocation, Funding 113
– Incentives and Rewards 97	Suburb-to-Suburb Commuting 14
– Infrastructure 92	Supervisors
– Track Workers 95, 107	– Bus Field 16
– Traffic Operations 49	– Relations with Drivers 33
– Video Surveillance 90	Surveillance 90
Scheduling	Surveys
– Adherence 49	– On-Line and Intercept 63
– Automatic Vehicle Location Systems 24, 48, 53, 55, 73, 91	– Web-Based 69
– Bus Driver Availability 33	Terrorism 27, 80
– Bus Route Evaluation 10	Ticket Purchasing 96
– Bus Stop Information 17, 48	Tort Claims 36
– Bus Transfers 19	Track Inspection 107
– Computer-Aided 57	Track Maintenance 43 (web-only), 95, 107
– Demand-Responsive 53, 57	Traffic Engineering 110
– Downtown Circulators 87	Training
– Elevators and Escalators 100	– Bus Drivers 18, 30, 40
– Flexible Route 53	– Diversity Training 46
– Maintenance, Bus 81	– Information Technology 35, 44
– Paratransit 74, 76	– Management, Paratransit 71
– Point Deviation 53	– Riders, Paratransit 74
– Ridesharing 98	– Supervisors 16
– Ridership Data Collection 29, 34, 63	– Technicians 81
– Small Buses 41	– Track Inspection 107
– Social Media 99	– Warranty 111
– Suburb-to-Suburb 14	Transfers 19
Security	Transit-Focused Development 20
– Automatic Vehicle Location 73	Transit Funding 113
– Bus Drivers, for 33, 93	Transit, Integration with Ridesharing 98
– Crime Prevention 21, 38, 80	Transit, Public Involvement 89
– Passenger Security Inspections 80	Transit, Security 90, 93
– Technology Systems 35, 38	Transit Signal Priority 83
– Terrorism 27, 80	Transit Stops/Stations, Adoption 103
– Violence Reduction 21, 93	Transit Vehicle Technologies 106
Service	Transitways 83
– Planning 66, 89, 94	Transportation Demand Management 39
– Productivity 112	Tunnels 23

Table 4 (Continued)

Underground Structures	23	Violence (see Security)	
Unions	54	Volunteers	103
U-Pass	78		
Urbanized Area Formula Program	113	Warranty Programs	
		– Bus	111
Vandalism	93	Waste Control	
Van Pools	98	– Bus Maintenance Facilities	9
Video Surveillance	90		



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