

RESOLUTION NO. 2003 -068

ADOPTING A REVISED SERVICE POLICY

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees has been granted the power and authority, pursuant to Chapter 306 of the Ohio Revised Code, to manage and conduct the affairs of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees, on April 17, 1990, adopted a Service Policy as part of Resolution 1990-70; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees amended said Service Policy pursuant to Resolution Nos. 1992-44 and 1992-74; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees finds that a Service Policy revision is warranted by recent trends in land use, transit vehicle design, and Federal regulations; and

WHEREAS, the Operations Committee of the Board of Trustees recommends adoption of the attached Revised Service Policy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, Cuyahoga County, Ohio:

Section 1. That the revised Service Policy, a copy of which is attached hereto and fully incorporated herein, is hereby adopted.

Section 2. That the CEO/General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer of the Authority is hereby authorized to undertake the necessary administrative actions to implement the revised Service Policy.

Section 3. That Resolution No. 1990-70, adopting a Service Policy, and Resolution Nos. 1992-44 and 1992-74, amending the Service Policy, are hereby repealed.

Section 4. That this Resolution shall become effective upon its adoption.

Attachment: Revised Service Policy

Adopted: May 20, 2003

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President

Attest:   
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CEO/General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer

# **Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority**

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## **Revised Service Policy**

**Operations Division  
Service Management Department**

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**May 20, 2003**



## **Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority Services Policy Executive Summary**

The GCRTA Service Policy, as originally adopted in April 1990, was designed to guide the management of existing transit services, as well as the planning and implementation of new and modified transit services. The Policy's intent was to establish consistent criteria for evaluating transit performance. The policy was to provide an objective framework by which limited resources could be allocated to improve the quality and productivity of transit services.

During the last decade, there have been major changes in the environment in which the GCRTA functions. There have been regulatory changes, such as those accompanying the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act by Congress. There have been demographic changes in the GCRTA service area, such as continuing suburban development and sprawl, which has resulted in pressures to provide more community-based transit services, such as Community Circulators, and "reverse-commute" services to take Cleveland and inner-ring suburban residents to jobs in the outlying suburbs and even outside of Cuyahoga County.

As the original Service Policy was intended to be a "living document," to be modified as needed in order to maintain it as an effective planning and management tool, RTA Management believes that it is time to update the document to reflect the current regulatory setting, service environment, and service delivery mechanisms.

The Service Policy consists of six chapters. Chapter One consists of general provisions, including the purpose, scope, and amendment procedures, as well as definitions of terms used in the Service Policy. Chapter Two describes the various categories of transit services that GCRTA provides. Chapter Three addresses the guidelines for route network design, for the design of individual line-haul and Community Circulator bus routes, and for the location of passenger facilities such as bus stops, passenger shelters, and transit centers. Chapter Four establishes criteria and guidelines for evaluating service quality characteristics such as schedule adherence and passenger overcrowding. Chapter Five establishes procedures for ensuring scheduling efficiency and for evaluating and improving the ridership productivity of transit services. Finally, Chapter Six describes the various components of service management, such as ongoing service monitoring, development of service proposals and the Annual Service Management Plan, public hearing requirements, and trial periods for new and modified routes.

The intent in updating the Service Policy is to bring the document in line with GCRTA's current operating conditions and to make it a more practical, user-friendly tool for managing transit services.

PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE  
SERVICE POLICIES  
OF THE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF THE  
GREATER CLEVELAND REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

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CHAPTER ONE  
General Provisions and Definitions

**I PURPOSE.**

(a) The purpose of this service policy (Title Two of Part Ten of these Policies and Procedures) is to establish goals, objectives, measures, guidelines and procedures for both the management of existing GCRTA (hereinafter referred to as the "Authority") transit services as well as the planning and implementation of new transit services. It is also intended to provide direction for Authority staff as well as to provide elected officials and the general public with a clearer understanding of how both existing and new transit services are managed.

(b) It is intended that this policy will accomplish the following:

- (1) Provide consistent criteria for evaluating, maintaining and improving the quality and productivity of existing transit services;
- (2) Provide guidelines for planning and developing new transit services; and
- (3) Provide objective framework for the allocation of limited service resources among existing services and new services.

**II REVISIONS AND AMENDMENTS; REVIEW BY OPERATIONS COMMITTEE.**

(a) The service policies delineated in this service policy shall be subject to review and revision by the Board of Trustees on an as-needed basis.

(b) Amendments or revisions to this service policy may be initiated or proposed by any member of the Board of Trustees or by the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer.

(c) Proposed amendments or revisions to this service policy shall be subject to review and study by the Operations Committee of the Board of Trustees. The Operations Committee will make recommendations on any proposed amendment or revision to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees must approve any amendment or revision by majority vote, as defined in the Bylaws, before such amendment or revision will become official policy of the Authority.

**III DEFINITIONS.**

As used in this service policy:

- (a) Charter service: public transportation service on an exclusive basis, rendered in a vehicle which is licensed to render that service and engaged at a single price for the trip or a period of time agreed on by the operating licensee, its agent or the chauffeur and the charter.
- (b) Fixed route: a transit route that is scheduled to always operate over the same alignment.
- (c) Headway: time interval between vehicles moving along the same road or track in the same direction.
- (d) Line-haul bus: bus service that is designed to provide travel between various origins and destinations along a travel corridor.
- (e) Maximum load point: the location along a transit line where the greatest vehicle loads occur.
- (f) Park-n-ride: a procedure that permits a patron to drive a private automobile to a transit station, park in the area provided for that purpose and ride the transit system to his or her destination.

- (g) Peak-period, or rush hours: the hours, generally 6:00 to 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. during weekdays when the demand for transportation is greatest.
- (h) Radial route: a fixed-route bus service that extends outward from the Central Business District or a concentrated activity center along a main arterial road.
- (i) Route deviation: a scheduled exception to the normal fixed-route of a bus line in order to serve a specific activity center.

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CHAPTER TWO  
Service Categories

**I BASIC CATEGORIES.**

This portion of the service policy describes the categories of service that the Authority currently operates or may choose to operate in the future. These categories are based on the type of vehicle utilized and the type of routing/schedule operated. Currently, the basic service categories are bus services, paratransit services, rail services, and special services. As it becomes desirable to do so in order to penetrate new transit markets, the Authority may establish new service categories.

**II BUS SERVICES.**

Bus services are currently operated using small, medium or large buses on fixed routes with fixed schedules. There are four categories of existing bus services: local/radial, express/flyer, crosstown/feeder and circulator. Another category of bus service under consideration for the future is subscription bus.

- (a) Local Radial Service. Local radial bus service is used to collect and distribute high-turnover traffic along developed corridors radiating to and from major trip generators such as the Cleveland Central Business District or other high-density activity centers. It is characterized by frequent stops, shorter passenger trips, a higher level of base or off-peak patronage, and slower bus speeds due to passenger boarding and alighting and traffic conditions.
- (b) Express/flyer Service. Express service is used to provide fast line-haul service to major trip attractions under high peak-period ridership conditions. It generally serves suburban areas and/or park-n-ride facilities. This service is characterized by longer passenger trips, reduced levels of patron turnover, and fewer passengers per mile. There are three kinds of express bus services: limited-stop arterial express, arterial and freeway flyer, and exclusive park-n-ride flyer.
  - (1) Limited-stop arterial express routes (denoted by an "X") travel over regular arterial roads bypassing selected marked bus stops which are served by local service.
  - (2) Freeway Flyer routes (denoted by an "F") operate their express segment on freeways rather than parallel arterial roads.
  - (3) Exclusive Park-N-Ride Flyer routes collect the majority of their riders at designated park-n-ride lots and then operate via freeway to the Central Business District.
- (c) Crosstown/Feeder Service. Crosstown/feeder service is used to link routes or route segments. This type of service provides travel opportunities for patrons with dispersed trip origins and destinations. This service is characterized by patrons boarding throughout a large area and frequently transferring to another bus or to the rail to complete their trip.

(d) Community Circulator Services. Community Circulator bus operations provide transportation to popular destinations within selected neighborhoods or communities. Vehicles utilized for this service are typically smaller than other bus types, often running frequently over a limited span of hours to supplement and/or complement other bus service. These routes best serve areas that have the following characteristics:

- (1) High employment and diversified activities within a well-defined area; or
- (2) High residential density with poor access to fixed-route service and/or diversified activity centers.
- (3) Future neighborhood flexible routings and/or flexible trip patterns based on passenger trip origins and destinations in specific geographic areas are envisioned under this category of service.

(e) Downtown Loop Services. Downtown Loop bus collect/distribute passengers along the important business/commercial streets in the Cleveland CBD. The Loop Service:

- (1) allows passengers to complete trips made on rail or line-haul bus routes
- (2) provides internal transportation within the CBD

(f) Special Services. See section V. below.

### III PARATRANSIT SERVICE.

Paratransit services are special transportation services designed to meet the needs of persons with disabilities who meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) eligibility criteria for functional mobility and eligible senior citizens. These services are typically provided with smaller vehicles and are generally operated on a demand-respective schedule (i.e., the schedule and routing may vary from day to day depending on the origins and destinations of the trips that are requested). There are two types of service provided based on the ADA Complementary Paratransit Service and eligibility guidelines.

(a) Category #1 and Category #3 Door-to-Door Service:

All ADA certified customers in categories #1 and #3 will be provided door-to-door paratransit service as follows:

- (1) For trips of five (5) miles or less, the service will be provided without regard to whether or not there is parallel fixed-route service (three-fourths (3/4) of a mile from a customer's trip origin/trip destination, limited to the day and times that such fixed route service operates).
- (2) For trips greater than five (5) miles, the provision of paratransit service is dependent on whether or not parallel fixed-route service (three-fourths (3/4) of a mile from customer's trip origin/trip destination) is available at the desired time of travel.

(b) Category #2: Call-A-Lift Service:

This service allows ADA eligible individuals to call twenty-four hours ahead and request that an accessible bus be used on a particular fixed-route at the time the person needs to travel. (Note: once RTA's bus fleet is 100% accessible, this service category will no longer be applicable.)

### IV RAIL SERVICES.

Rail services consist of the heavy-rail Red Line and the light-rail Blue and Green Lines (which includes the Waterfront Line).

(a) The heavy-rail and light-rail services differ as to how the cars are boarded.

- (1) The heavy-rail Red Line service is boarded from high platforms which are at the same height as the car floors.
- (2) The light-rail Blue and Green lines are boarded from low platforms which require



climbing steps to enter the car.

- (b) The heavy and light rail services also vary as to the nature of the train operation and speed over the right-of-way.
  - (1) The heavy-rail Red line is fully-grade separated right of way which permits it to operate at relatively high speeds between stations.
  - (2) The light-rail Blue and Green lines have 3 unique operating segments:
    - A. Fully-grade separated right of way west of Shaker Square to Tower City, which allows high-speed operations comparable to the heavy rail-service.
    - B. At-grade service in a boulevard median, with grade crossings at all cross streets (eastern terminii to Shaker Square). Currently this service is subject to same traffic signals as the boulevard traffic, resulting in lower operating speeds.
    - C. Private right of way on the Waterfront Line alignment, from Tower City to South Harbor Station. This segment is a hybrid—from Tower City to Flats East Bank, there are signalized grade crossings; from Flats East Bank to South Harbor, the alignment is fully-grade separated.

#### **V SPECIAL BUS OR RAIL SERVICES.**

- (a) Special Seasonal bus or rail services are operated for single events (e.g. Air Show, Grand Prix, etc.) or for an ongoing seasonal series of events (i.e., Cleveland Indians, Cleveland Browns or Cavaliers home games) or permanent service to a location that RTA normally would not serve. RTA normally does not provide service where, (1) service is out of Cuyahoga County, (2) a location that doesn't have enough travel demand to justify a regular bus route.
- (b) Such special service may be instituted by:
  - (1) A sponsor willing to compensate the Authority for the difference between the cost of operating the service and the fare revenues produced by the service; or
  - (2) The Authority, in order to prevent overcrowding on regularly scheduled services, to attract additional riders, or to meet a community need or interest.

#### **VI CHARTER SERVICES.**

- (a) The Authority can operate charter service.
- (b) The General Manager shall annually set charter rates that will fully recover costs.
- (c) The Authority will conform to Federal Charter regulations

#### **VII JOB ACCESS SERVICES.**

- (a) This specialized service was initiated under an agreement between RTA and the Cuyahoga County Board of Commissioners, authorized by the RTA Board of Trustees in June 2002. The service will continue as long as that agreement, or a successor agreement, remains in effect.
- (b) The service carries customers to and from jobs, job interviews, and job training opportunities, when regular transit service is not reasonably available.
- (c) Vehicle trips are routinely added, deleted, and modified by the RTA staff in response to changes in customer needs and resource availability.
- (d) The service is supported largely by funds that cannot be used for general transit operations.

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**CHAPTER THREE**  
Service Design**I CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES.**

The service design section of this service policy addresses criteria and guidelines for the route network, individual route design schedules, and route facilities of the Authority's system. These criteria and guidelines ensure that:

- (a) New transit services are coordinated with the existing transit network.
- (b) New and existing services are aligned based on locations of activity centers and likely transit users.
- (c) Transit services provide the most direct and the fastest service possible given the travel needs of the customers utilizing the service.
- (d) Service schedules are tailored to provide an attractive level of service to the target market.
- (e) Route facilities are located in a logical, orderly fashion that is at the same time responsive to the needs of customers.

**II NETWORK DESIGN.**

- (a) Route coverage and spacing should be based on demonstrated need or potential demand.
- (b) Maximize bus/rail interface opportunities
- (c) Line-haul bus should use arterials
- (d) Minimize route duplication, exceptions being:
  - (1) Approach roads to CBD, rail stations, and other major trip generators
  - (2) Community Circulators can duplicate line-haul routes when such duplication provides the most cost-effective solution to linking key trip generators

**III ROUTE DESIGN GUIDELINES****(a) Service Type.**

- (1) Line-haul route (local radial, express/flyer, crosstown/feeder, and downtown loop)
  - A. Heavily-traveled corridor with many trip origins/destinations within walking distance of the main travel artery
  - B. Passenger volumes requiring larger-capacity vehicles
- (2) Community Circulator
  - A. Intended for collection/distribution within a neighborhood/community.
  - B. Effective in situations where:
    - i. There is a need for new intra-community service in a previously unserved area
    - ii. There is a low-productivity branch or segment on a line-haul route
    - iii. There is a compelling need for an intra-community service directly linking residential with retail, institutional, and medical facilities, and it is more cost-effective to provide a dedicated service as opposed to increasing service levels on existing services.
    - iv. Typically operated with smaller vehicles, which are more appropriate for neighborhood streets.

- (b) Route Directness.
- (1) Two-way service on a street is desirable
  - (2) Service should utilize most direct routing possible so service is attractive
  - (3) Off-route deviations on line-haul routes should not be considered unless there is a compelling reason such as a major activity generator. Benefits of such deviations must outweigh disadvantages to passengers. Factors to be considered include percentage of passengers benefiting from the deviation amount of time to make the deviation, and the additional costs.
  - (4) It is not appropriate to deviate line-haul routes off-street to serve activity centers, except at a route terminus.
- (c) Route Length. Route length should be limited by the ability to keep service operating on schedule.

#### IV SCHEDULING DESIGN GUIDELINES

- (a) Days of Service.
- (1) New bus services. Days of service are designed according to anticipated travel demand and available resources.
  - (2) Existing bus services. Requests for additional days of service will be evaluated according to the route's current productivity relative to its route group, as well as the potential ridership demand for the proposed service period. If the existing service is performing at or above the average for the route group and a strong ridership demand for the additional days of service exists, the request will be considered.
  - (3) Rail service. All light and heavy rail services shall operate seven days a week.
- (b) Service Span.
- (1) New bus service. Service spans are designed according to anticipated travel demand and available resources.
  - (2) Existing bus service. Requests for a wider span of service in a day will be evaluated according to the route's current productivity performance relative to its route group, as well as the potential ridership demand for the proposed service period. If the existing service is performing at or above the average for the route group and a strong ridership demand for the additional span of service exists, the request will be considered.
- (c) Service frequency.
- (1) Hourly service is generally considered a minimum service frequency for a regular transit route. When headways (i.e., time intervals between vehicles) of 10-59 minutes are required by ridership levels, RTA will, when practical, select headways that are factors of 60 minutes (i.e., 30, 20, 15, 12, or 10 minutes). Using these time intervals helps customers to remember the schedule because the pattern repeats itself every hour. When service operates at headways that are less than 10 minutes remembering the schedule is not important for most customers.

- (2) Service frequency on each service is based on ridership demand. RTA's policy is to provide a minimum number of trips per hour on any route, as follows:

5 a.m. -10 p.m.    Other Times

Rail *	2	1
Bus *	1	1

“\*” = Does not apply to minor branches and special services

(3) In some instances, to maintain service coverage, RTA may make exceptions to Section 2 above. For example, sometimes a single vehicle is assigned to a route, and the route's round-trip cycle time dictates the frequency. RTA staff will conduct a public hearing before initiating an exception to Section IV (c) (2) above.

- (d) Schedule Coordination. To the extent possible, schedules will be coordinated to facilitate transfers.

**V    BUS STOP/PASSENGER STOPS GUIDELINES.**

(a) Bus Stop Location

- (1) Bus stops should be located in proximity to known passenger activity center (e.g., apartments, office buildings, hospitals, etc.) and on the basis of general spacing guidelines rather than required fixed spacing distances.
- (2) For any given route, stops shall be placed approximately 8 per mile, except in low-density areas approximately 4 per mile. The use of “flag stops,” at which buses stop at locations requested by passengers, is permitted where warranted by local conditions and type of service.

(b) Passenger Shelters.

(1) General policies.

- A. The Authority will provide passenger shelters throughout the service area to protect waiting passengers from inclement weather conditions. Shelters may be installed outside the boundaries of Cuyahoga County, provided that the site meets the criteria for the placement of a shelter. However, first priority will be given to sites within the County.
- B. The goal of the shelter program is to provide shelters at all bus stops which meet the criteria set forth in this policy.
- C. Shelters will be installed at bus stops where:
  1. The daily passenger volume is sufficient to justify the expense of buying, installing and maintaining the shelter.
  2. The shelter can be installed without creating a safety hazard.
- D. The Authority will buy new shelters which are a mixture of sizes/types in order to be able to respond to different site circumstances and requirements. All Authority passenger shelters will meet ADA specifications and be of a consistent design to minimize initial and ongoing, expense. The design will be durable and easy to maintain and will provide a safe and secure environment for the Authority's customers.
- E. New passenger shelters will be bought on a regular basis to ensure that requests for new shelter locations can be responded to in a reasonable period of time and that badly damaged shelters can be replaced

- expeditiously.
- F. All passenger shelters will be cleaned on a regular basis and repairs will be made as quickly as possible to ensure customer satisfaction and community acceptance.
- (2) Program guidelines. The program guidelines set forth herein will ensure that passenger shelters are installed and/or replaced on an ongoing basis in a consistent and uniform pattern. As requests are received, all potential sites will be evaluated to ensure that they meet the established criteria. Passenger counts will be conducted and the sites will be inspected for operational considerations. The Authority will obtain permits and easements as required.
- A. Criteria for shelter placement
- (i) In general, shelters will be installed where physically feasible at stops with fifty or more daily boardings.
  - (ii) At stops with fewer than 50 daily boardings, exceptions to the above guideline may be considered if special circumstances exist such as transferring passengers, senior and/or disabled customers, or lack of any other shelter in the area.
  - (iii) At stops with 50 or more daily boardings, a shelter is typically not installed if there is a building overhang, canopy, or other suitable place for passengers to wait.
  - (iv) The Authority will consider installation of a shelter at locations not meeting these criteria if a sponsor provides funding for installation and maintenance.

## VI TRANSIT CENTER GUIDELINES.

- (a) Transit Centers in the RTA system fall into 3 categories:
- (1) Transit hubs where multiple routes converge. An example would be a suburban hub where several regional bus routes and a community circulator meet. Another example would be a rail station where a train line and at least one bus line meet.
  - (2) Regional park-and-ride lots. Examples would be a rail station with a large customer parking lot and a suburban park-and-ride lot served by a flyer bus route.
  - (3) Small local park-and-ride lots which are served by arterial routes.
- (b) Common characteristics of both transit hubs and regional park-and-rides:
- (1) Must be a component of a Board-approved plan.
  - (2) Ownership of the facility or a long-term lease at the facility is required.
  - (3) Should be designed for easy bus ingress/egress.
  - (4) Should be designed for easy transferring between routes.
  - (5) A sheltered passenger waiting area should be provided, which can be as simple as a bus shelter.

- (c) In addition, transit hubs should have the following features:
  - (1) Should be located near trip generators.
  - (2) Should have additional passenger amenities (e.g., schedule information).
  
- (d) In addition, regional park-and-rides should have the following features:
  - (1) Should be located near a freeway interchange.
  - (2) Should have sufficient customer parking to support an attractive, high-frequency service.
  
- (e) In order to build additional customer demand along arterial radial routes, RTA staff can negotiate with private property owners to lease small parking areas for use by RTA riders within existing parking lots.

CHAPTER FOUR  
Service Quality Criteria and Guidelines

**I PURPOSE.**

(a) This chapter of the service policy is intended to address characteristics of system services that may influence a customer's actual or potential use of Authority services. The criteria and guidelines associated with those characteristics are intended to establish a direction in which the system should be oriented and to facilitate an assessment of how well the system is progressing in that direction. They will assist in identifying areas where remedial actions are needed to improve service quality to Authority customers.

(b) The following service quality criteria and guidelines are intended to apply to transit services contracted by the Authority as well as to those directly operated by the Authority. These criteria and appropriate penalties violating them will be incorporated into service contracts

**II SCHEDULE ADHERENCE.**

(a) A vehicle is considered "on time" when its arrival is from zero to five minutes after the scheduled time. A vehicle is considered "late" when it arrives more than five minutes after the scheduled time. There will be no tolerance for vehicles arriving before the scheduled time, or "early."

(b) The goal is that all services will be on time 100% (zero to five minutes late)

(c) Routes and/or individual trips identified as low performers shall be subject to review, with remedial action taken at the earliest opportunity.

(d) It is virtually impossible to achieve and maintain 100 percent on-time performance due to varying traffic, inclement weather conditions, and service scheduling limitations. However, objectives for improving systemwide on-time performance shall be established annually. The purpose here is to focus attention on continually improving on-time performance over time in an effort to achieve the schedule adherence goals established.

**III PASSENGER LOADING STANDARDS.**

(a) The availability of seating/standing room on a transit vehicle is an important factor for both the transit customer and the transit operator. From the rider's perspective, if vehicles are repeatedly overcrowded, with no seats available and uncomfortable standing conditions, using public transit becomes a less attractive transportation option. From the transit operator's perspective, the objective is to achieve a balance between service efficiency and attractiveness.

(b) Table A shows, for both rush hours and non-rush hours, the allowable passenger load standards by service type. The standards are expressed as the interior vehicle area, in square feet, allowed per passenger. Following that, Table B below shows, by service type, some illustrative examples of how the RTA staff would apply the standards to calculate the allowable maximum loads per bus for rush hours and non-rush hours.

**Table A**

LOAD STANDARDS SQUARE FEET OF INTERIOR SPACE PER PASSENGER		
SERVICE TYPE	RUSH HOURS	NON-RUSH HOURS
Circulator	6	7
Park & Ride	4.5	5.5
Regular Bus	4.5	5.5
Heavy Rail	4.5	5.5
Light Rail	4.5	5.5
Bus Rapid Transit	4.5	5.5

**Table B**

TYPICAL APPLICATION OF MAXIMUM LOAD STANDARDS				
SERVICE TYPE	TYPICAL INTERIOR SPACE (SQ. FT.)	TYPICAL RESULT OF LOAD STANDARD		TYPICAL NUMBER OF SEATS
		RUSH HOURS	NON-RUSH HOUR	
Circulator	138	23	20	16-22
Park & Ride	243-281	54-63	44-51	45-57
Regular Bus	162-243	37-54	30-44	27-45
Heavy Rail	641	142	117	80
Light Rail	592	132	108	76
Bus Rapid Transit	426	95	77	30-60

- (c) Adherence to allowable load standards is monitored as follows:
- (1) Passenger load counts are taken at the point on the route where the majority of trips are carrying their greatest load (maximum load point).
  - (2) Average per-trip passenger loads are calculated for thirty-minute intervals during rush hours and sixty-minute intervals during other time periods.
  - (3) Average per-trip loads that exceed the standards shown in Table A above constitute an overload.
  - (4) Once identified, appropriate service adjustments should be made in order to alleviate the overload situation.
  - (5) If a single trip in a 30- or 60-minute interval carries a load above the standard in Table A above, that will not constitute an overload so long as the average load of the other trips in the interval is within the standard.



CHAPTER FIVE  
Service Utilization/Productivity/Efficiency

**I PURPOSE.**

- (a) This chapter of the service policy deals with the following issues:
- (1) How efficiently service resources (vehicles and labor) are utilized to produce transit service;
  - (2) How closely the service supply is being matched to the service demand; and
  - (3) What percentage of the costs of operating transit services is being recovered through passenger fares and related revenues.
- (b) The objectives are to ensure that:
- (1) Service resources are being used to produce the greatest amount of service possible.
  - (2) Service is allocated among various routes based on demonstrated demand.

**II SCHEDULING EFFICIENCY.** The policy objective is to ensure that service hours are utilized to the maximum extent possible in a revenue producing mode within the available service budget while complying with Authority/A.T.U. contract provisions and maintaining schedule reliability.

**III SERVICE UTILIZATION; ROUTE PRODUCTIVITY.**

(a) Intent. The policy objective is to ensure that service levels are correlated to demonstrated passenger demands for each route or service. The intent is to provide a level of service which is attractive to the rider, yet not wasteful of service resources, as well as to ensure a minimum level of ridership on all routes.

(b) Procedure for Annual Bus Route Performance Evaluation

- (1) Each Authority bus service which has been in service for one full calendar year will be assigned to a service category (based on the primary market served) as follows:
  - A. Local radial bus;
  - B. Express/flyer bus;
  - C. Crosstown/feeder bus;
  - D. Community Circulator; and
  - E. Downtown Loop
  - F. Seasonal/Supplemental Service
- (2) Using ridership for the previous year, the following unfactored ridership indicators will be calculated for each route/service:
  - A. Boardings per trip;
  - B. Boardings per vehicle mile; and
  - C. Boardings per vehicle hour.

The systemwide averages calculated for each service group become the system guidelines against which route-level productivity is to be measured until the next annual performance evaluation is performed.

- (3) Authority services which are identified as not meeting performance criteria shall be prioritized for analysis and remedial action as follows:
  - A. First priority. Substandard the previous year, has shown no improvement, or is in a worsened condition;
  - B. Second priority. First-time deficiency;
  - C. Third priority. Substandard the previous year, still substandard but improved performance; and
  - D. Fourth priority. After those routes which are substandard have been dealt with, those routes which are not substandard but which have opportunities for improvement.
- (4) Any individual route/service having any indicators falling below the systemwide average for its service group will be analyzed for possible causes of poor productivity. Recommendations will be developed for remedial actions to be taken, which may include:
  - A. Targeted route promotions to increase ridership;
  - B. Realign the route in order to:
    1. Eliminate nonproductive route segments; and
    2. Reduce overall route mileage and/or increase speed.
  - C. Realign to ensure that major activity centers are served;
  - D. Coordinate schedules with shift times at major employment centers;
  - E. Short turn trips, reducing frequency on outlying route segments where ridership is low;
  - F. Increase headways and/or shorten service spans; and
  - G. Eliminate service.
- (5) An annual report will be prepared. This report will highlight those routes, which are performing below standard and recommend remedial actions.

(c) Rail Station Utilization.

- (1) Rail stations will remain in service as long as their utilization is sufficient to justify their costs. Therefore, rail station performance will be evaluated as follows:
  - A. Station Boardings. Based on passenger boardings per station, average and median station boardings volumes will be calculated within each category. Stations in the bottom quartile of their category warrant closer examination including cost-benefit analysis. Stations are categorized as follows; based on maintenance costs:
    - i. Stations with enclosed areas for passenger waiting
    - ii. Stations without enclosed areas for passenger waiting but with one or more stairways; and
    - iii. Stations without enclosed areas for passenger waiting and

- without a stairway
- B. Station Spacing. Appropriate station spacing will be based on convenient access and attractiveness for faster service. Wider spacing provides speedy long-haul trips. Typically, close station spacing causes slower trips with higher vehicle maintenance costs. As much as possible bus services should provide the block-by-block service and rail service the long-haul faster service.
- (2) Remedial actions that may be taken to correct substandard rail station productivity are:
- A. Determine if any operational changes could increase station productivity.
  - B. Explore various alternative service options and possible marketing campaigns.
  - C. Before closing any rail station, management must first hold a public hearing, as required in Chapter Six, Section IV (b) (1) and (2), and must present a report on the rail station evaluation to the Board of Trustees.

CHAPTER SIX  
Service Management

**I PURPOSE.**

(a) This chapter of the service policy deals with the procedures by which existing services are monitored, evaluated, and modified when necessary to improve their performance, as well as the process by which service improvements and new services are conceived, evaluated and implemented.

(b) This chapter is intended to ensure that:

- (1) Existing service is periodically monitored and evaluated in order to determine compliance with those provisions of the service policy regarding service quality and service productivity.
- (2) Existing services are monitored, evaluated, and modified as needed in order to increase their market share.
- (3) New services are planned and implemented in order to service new transit markets and increase overall market share.

**II MANAGEMENT OF EXISTING SERVICES.**

(a) Ongoing Service Monitoring.

(1) Ridership monitoring and frequency adjustment. The Authority will collect ridership data, in order to determine peak vehicle loadings, compared to the appropriate loading standards. When overloads occur, frequencies will be adjusted in order to bring loading within the standards.

(2) Running time analysis. The Authority will collect information concerning proper running time. Schedules should be adjusted to insure that the majority of trips operate "on-time" without requiring an operator to operate less than the normal traffic speed. Running times shall be set to allow operation within legal speed.

(3) Routine service adjustments. In order to improve the performance of substandard routes, minor service adjustments may be performed to better match the service supply to the demonstrated ridership demand.

(b) Annual Route Performance Evaluation.

An annual route performance evaluation will be conducted. (See Chapter Five, Section III)

**III DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICE PROPOSALS AND ANNUAL SERVICE MANAGEMENT PLANS.**

(a) Service Proposals. Sources for service proposals will include:

- (1) The annual route performance evaluation. This evaluation, described in Chapter Five, Section III, will be carried out early in the preliminary planning process,

using ridership data from the previous year. Those lines that are identified as substandard in productivity will be prioritized for analysis and remedial action based on their performance. Service proposals will be developed for these routes with the intent of improving their performance.

- (2) Suggestions and recommendations will be collected from the following sources:
- A. Authority patrons;
  - B. Authority employees;
  - C. Civic leaders, elected officials; and
  - D. Studies carried out by the Authority through consultant services and by outside agencies.

- (b) Developing the Annual Service Management Plan. Each year as part of the development of the annual operating budget for the following year, staff will produce an annual Service Management Plan detailing the service changes to be implemented. Funding availability will dictate the nature of the service proposals to be considered in the Service Management Plan. Regardless of whether the budget projects an increase or decrease, the emphasis should always be on improving the productivity of services. Staff should aggressively pursue service proposals, which improve productivity so that service resources may be reallocated for promising service improvements or new service.

- (1) To improve service productivity, some of the strategies to be considered are:
- A. Achieving savings without adversely impacting riders;
  - B. Reducing service where service is duplicated
  - C. Eliminating excessive service where transportation alternatives exist.
  - D. Remove service from an area, if necessary

- (2) With resources saved by productivity improvements, the following service improvements for the public may be considered:
- A. Relief of existing service quality deficiencies;
  - B. Expansion/improvement of service to growing existing service markets
  - C. New service to unserved markets

#### **IV PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR SERVICE CHANGES**

- (a) A public hearing shall be conducted when the Authority is considering a service frequency reduction if the frequency being considered is less than the policy standard in Chapter Three, Section IV (c) (2).
- (b) When considering a permanent removal of service during any time period from a rail station, the following requirements apply:
- (1) A public hearing shall be conducted if the time period is longer than 2 hours.
  - (2) Either a public hearing or a community meeting shall be conducted if the time period is longer than 1 hour.

- (c) When considering a permanent removal of all fixed-route transit service during any time period from a road segment, the following requirements apply:
  - (1) A public hearing shall be conducted if the time period is longer than 2 hours and the road segment is longer than 1 mile.
  - (2) Either a public hearing or a community meeting shall be conducted if the time period is longer than 1 hour and the road segment is longer than 1/2 mile.
- (d) When considering changes to Paratransit service, a public hearing shall be conducted if required by the Americans with Disabilities Act regulations.
- (e) Public involvement is not required for changes to special seasonal services, reserved-ride job access services, and services funded through agreements with sponsors.
- (f) The Authority recognizes that a series of small service reductions, each not requiring a public hearing, can have the effect of a single large service reduction that requires a public hearing. Therefore, to determine whether a public hearing is required, the contemplated change shall be combined with all other changes made since the more recent of two dates:
  - (1) the date one year before the effective date of the contemplated change
  - (2) the date of the last public-hearing-supported change.

#### **V TRIAL PERIODS FOR NEW AND MODIFIED SERVICES**

- (a) New routes or major modifications to existing service shall operate substantially as implemented for one year, at which time they are to be evaluated for productivity (boardings per vehicle hour, boardings per vehicle mile, and passengers per trip).
- (b) At this time, the following types of service adjustments can be made based upon ridership performance to date:
  - (1) frequency changes warranted by passenger loading standards or customer comments;
  - (2) minor service reductions
  - (3) minor route extensions or reroutes with the potential to improve overall ridership productivity for the route
- (c) If route performance is below the system average for its service group at the end of one year, remedial action shall be taken as specified in Chapter Five, Section III (b) (4).
- (d) After one year, the route will become part of the annual route performance review.



Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority  
**STAFF SUMMARY AND COMMENTS**

m-2

TITLE/DESCRIPTION:  <b>ADOPTING A REVISED SERVICE POLICY</b>	Resolution No.: 2003- 068
	Date: May 15, 2003
	Initiator: Operations/ Service Management
ACTION REQUEST: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Review/Comment <input type="checkbox"/> Information Only <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	

- 1.0 PURPOSE/SCOPE: This action will adopt a revised Service Policy.
- 2.0 DESCRIPTION/JUSTIFICATION: The Board of Trustees adopted a comprehensive Service Policy on April 17, 1990. The Board adopted minor revisions to that policy in the early 1990s, but has not amended the policy during the past ten years. Those ten years have brought significant changes in the RTA's operating environment that impact service policy. For example, the continued decentralization of population and employment in our service area requires us to consider alternative service models such as flexible routes, and improved communications technology will soon make such flexibility possible. The trend toward low-floor transit vehicles, with fewer seats and more standing room, requires us to rethink our passenger load standards, which were based on the number of seats instead of the amount of space inside the vehicles. Our Paratransit service was substantially changed in response to Federal Transit Administration regulations pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act. Finally, the 1990 document included many administrative procedures that need not be included in a Board-adopted policy. The revised Service Policy responds to all these developments.
- 3.0 PROCUREMENT BACKGROUND: Does not apply.
- 4.0 DBE/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION BACKGROUND: Does not apply.
- 5.0 POLICY IMPACT: The resolution repeals all prior policies that conflict with the revised policy.
- 6.0 ECONOMIC IMPACT: Adopting the resolution will have a modest positive economic impact by giving the staff somewhat more flexibility to tailor service to ridership and resource levels.
- 7.0 ALTERNATIVES: Reject the resolution: this would require the staff to continue under the old policy. Some opportunities for improved service and efficiency would be missed.
- 8.0 RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends adoption of the resolution. The Operations Committee concurs in the staff recommendation.
- 9.0 ATTACHMENTS: Revised Service Policy (attached to resolution).

Recommended and certified as appropriate to the availability of funds, legal form and conformance with the Procurement requirements.

General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer