

FREEDOM ***TRANSIT***

2019/2020 **Annual Report**



WASHINGTON COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY



Mission & Vision

Mission Statement

The Mission of Freedom Transit is to connect the people who live, work, learn, and play in Washington County and surrounding areas by providing high quality, accessible public transportation services.

Vision Statement

The Vision of Freedom Transit is to be a preferred travel choice that connects the region by satisfying today's needs and anticipating tomorrow's demands.



Board of Directors



Rich Shriver- Chairman
Nick Rawlins- Vice Chairman
Leslie Grenfell- Secretary
Sharon Russell- Treasurer
Scott Putnam- Member

Joe Manning- Member
Robert Laick- Member
Tim Fedele- Solicitor
Sheila Gombita- Executive Director



MATP Brokerage



The proposed statewide brokerage model for the Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) was put on pause after it was agreed that the current operation of the program and proposed brokerage model should be looked at more closely. In the 18 months following this decision, the Governor's Administration, General Assembly, and public transit providers will explore options for the administration & service delivery and provide necessary facts, statistics, and insight to help choose the best way to advance forward in this critical decision. We continue to support the current operation of MATP, which has been recognized as a national model for coordinated transportation service.

Community Over COVID-19



During the COVID-19 pandemic, public transit was deemed an essential service. We continued to operate a limited offering of fixed route and shared ride service to connect residents to employment, grocery stores, medical appointments, and food distribution sites. Riders along bus routes that were temporarily suspended were provided shared ride pick-ups when needed. Fare collection was suspended in April & May to reduce contact between riders and drivers and offer public transit as a free option to those who need it to access essential services. Also in April, we began to require face masks for riders and drivers when using public transit to help stop the spread of the illness among those on board; seats were blocked off to help with social distancing; and buses began operating at less than 50% capacity levels. Efforts to protect our riders and drivers continue as we fight the COVID-19 pandemic with increased preventative measures.



Thank you to all essential workers, including public transit employees, who continued to work through the pandemic. We appreciate you!



blueprints Partnership

In the summer of 2019, we teamed up with Blueprints to educate their supervisors, managers, case workers, and aides on transportation options available to clients who reside in Washington County. Three separate Transit 101 sessions were held at Blueprints offices in Washington. We also attended Blueprints farmers markets and Touch-A-Truck events to help explain public transit to those interested, and held a Free Fare Day on August 19 to encourage public transit use among Blueprints clients. Blueprints staff continue to participate in our Transit Advisory Board, which meets bi-monthly to discuss transit needs within the community.



Marketing & Campaigns

During this fiscal year, many of our marketing efforts moved to online platforms, mainly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In late 2019, we worked with Savvy Fresh Media to produce four promotional videos that focused on fixed route service. These videos were then placed into social media and Google Ads promotional platforms to reach new audiences through online channels.



In December, we hosted our second *Twelve Stops of the Season* campaign which focuses on rewarding riders for their loyalty to the transit service with on-board gifts & giveaways. For this year's campaign we teamed up with 13 local businesses to provide our riders with even more freebies, coupons, and gift cards.

Rider Survey

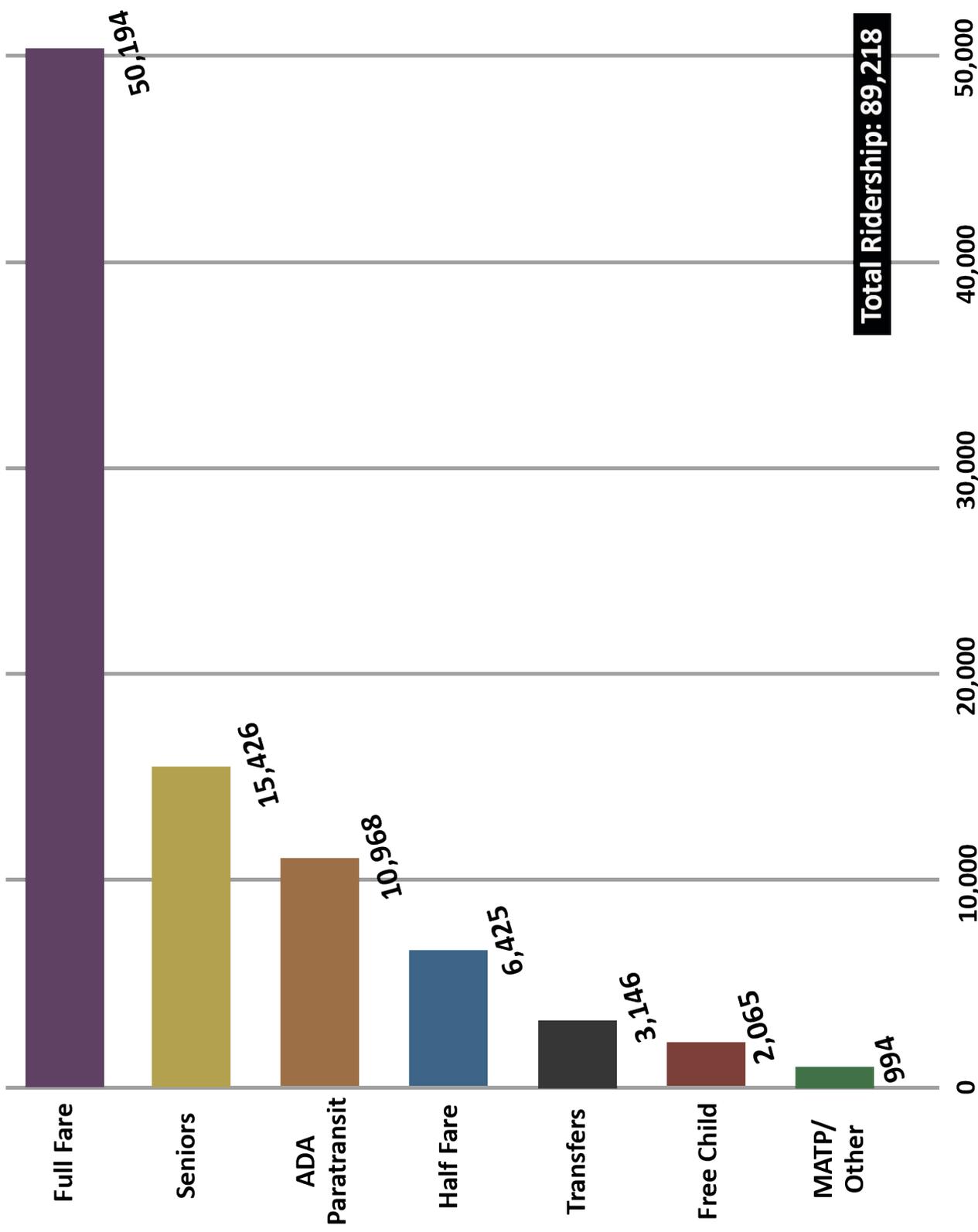
In the Fall of 2019, we conducted a customer satisfaction survey targeted towards fixed route riders. We received a total of 219 survey responses and the survey responses indicated that 97% of riders were either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the current fixed route service. The majority of our riders use the service to get to work, with 37% of the responses, and another 25% of responses indicated that they used the service to access social or recreational locations. Our top three performance measures included bus cleanliness, safe drivers, and friendly drivers.



FreedomFlex

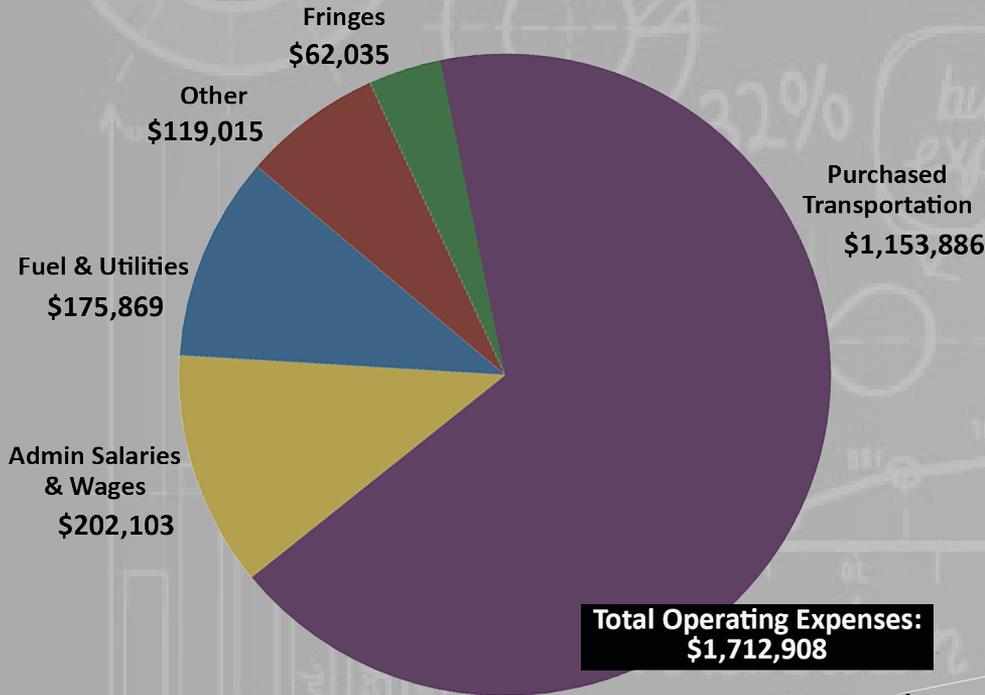
FreedomFlex was introduced in May 2020 as a cash-free fare payment system for shared ride trips. Any rider registered with a shared ride program can open a FreedomFlex account and deposit funds into the e-wallet system. When a rider schedules a trip and has a FreedomFlex balance, they are able to deduct the funds from their account to pay for the trip. Fare can be deposited into a FreedomFlex account with cash or credit card and funds never expire.

Fixed Route Ridership

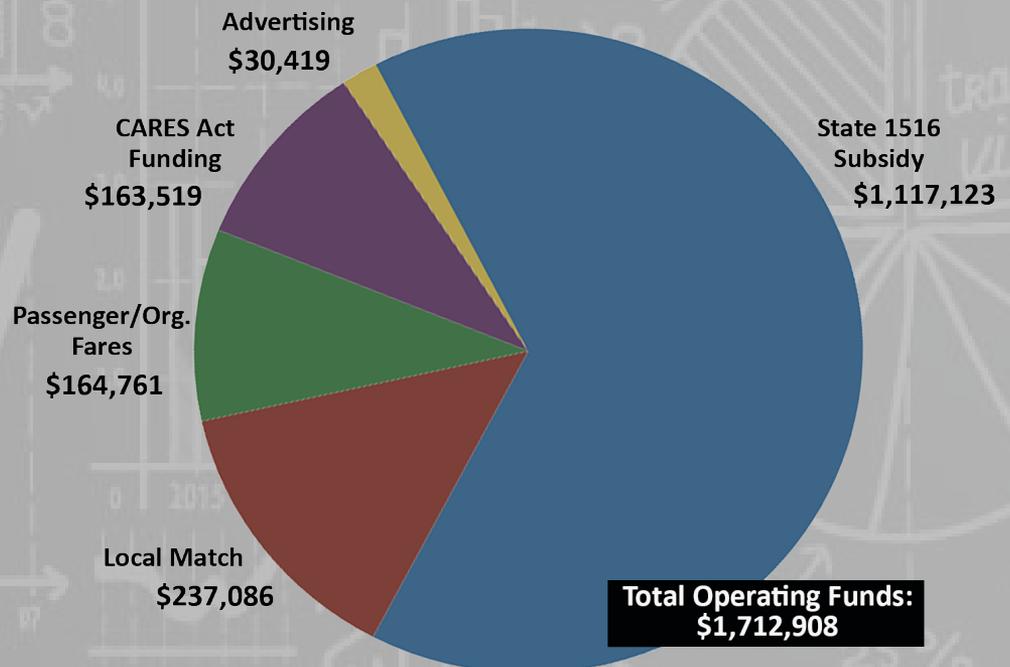


Fixed Route Financial

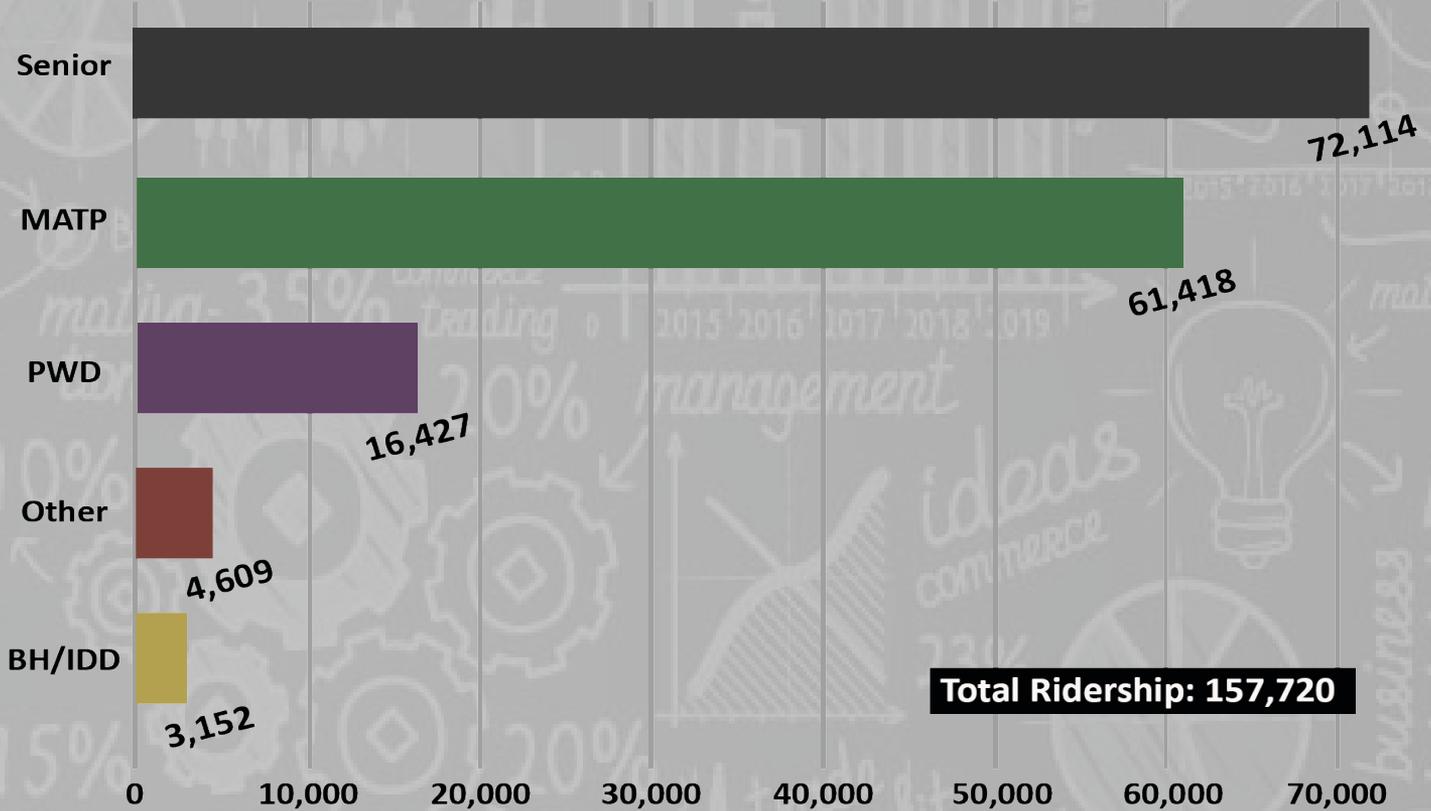
Fixed Route & ADA Operating Expenses



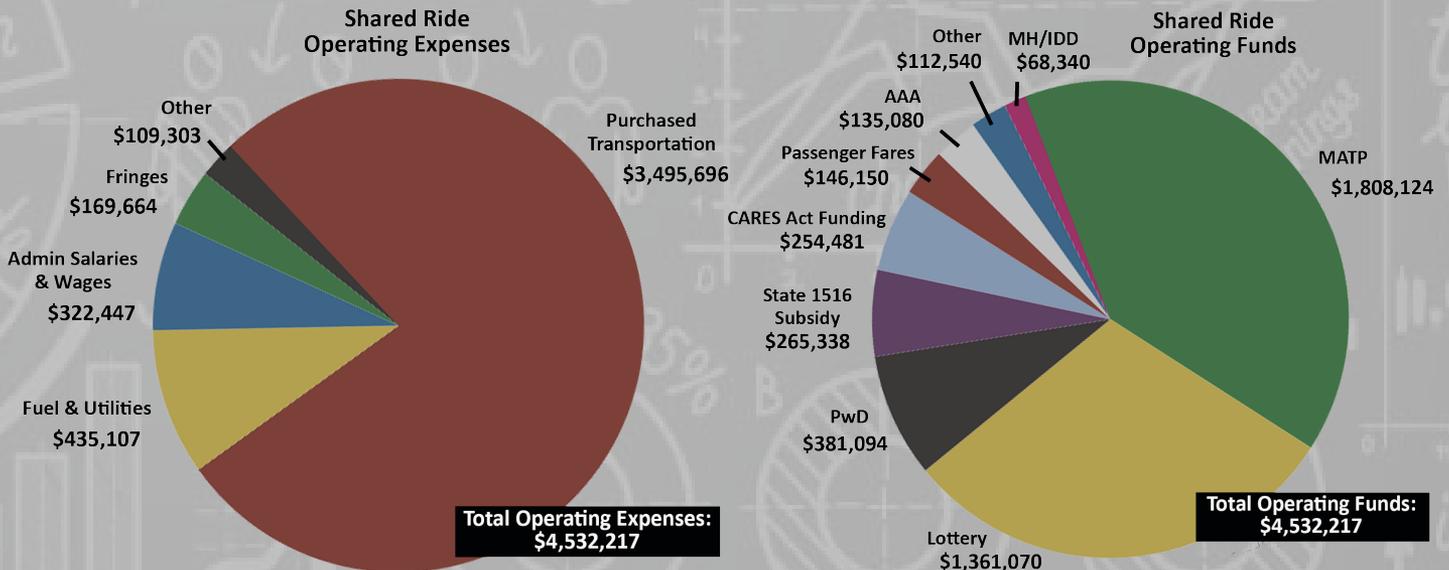
Fixed Route & ADA Operating Funds



Shared Ride Ridership



Shared Ride Financial



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Funded in part by:

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
Southwestern PA Area Agency on Aging

Washington County Board of Commissioners:

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Washington City Council:

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Joe Manning, Councilman

Kenneth Westcott, Councilman

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