

CHAPTER 8

Service Assessment

Service Assessment

The stakeholder input summarized in the previous chapter, together with the findings of the market analysis discussed in **Chapter 5 Market Analysis** provide context for the assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities of each BARTA and RRTA route. Using these analyses as a starting point, the study team developed detailed, diagnostic profiles for each route. The profiles, presented in this chapter, describe each route's service characteristics, ridership patterns, productivity, and on-time performance. At the conclusion of each route profile is a list of potential service improvement options for the route, based on the quantitative findings of the profile; a set of qualitative guiding principles, representing industry best practices; and the vision, goals, and objectives of the SCTA TDP, as described in **Chapter 2 Strategic Vision**.

Service Profiles

Each service profile includes a series of quantitative and qualitative measures. Quantitative measures on the profiles covered the following metrics:

- Ridership
 - By day
 - By trip
 - By stop
- Productivity
 - Passengers per hour
 - Passengers per mile
 - Passengers per trip
- On-time performance
 - Percentage of early trips
 - Percentage of late trips
 - Percentage of on-time trips

Additionally, the profiles answered the following questions; answers to these questions represented the qualitative measures covered on the service profile for each route:

- Is the service simple?
 - Do schedules have clockface frequencies?
 - Are routes direct rather than circuitous?
 - Are routes symmetrical in the inbound and outbound directions?
 - Do routes serve well defined markets?
 - Is service well-coordinated at transfer hubs?

KEY FINDINGS

The results of the service analysis for both RRTA and BARTA were similar. RRTA and BARTA each have a mix of high- and low-productivity routes. In both counties, there is also a close correlation between transit ridership and transit potential. That is, ridership is tied to density, and in areas with a higher density of people and jobs, transit ridership was consistently higher. Ridership and productivity in both counties are strongest in the central cities (Reading and Lancaster); as routes extend into more suburban and rural areas, ridership declines.

Additionally, transit ridership potential in both systems is limited by service design. In Lancaster County, for example, limited and irregular service frequencies, circuitous alignments, and one-way service segments are also likely causes of lower ridership and productivity. In Berks County, circuitous alignments and one-way service segments limit ridership and productivity.

The route profiles for each route in the existing BARTA and RRTA networks are available in **Appendix J**.