

MORE THAN ONE
MEASURE OF OUR

SUCCESS

BRTA FY 2021
ANNUAL REPORT



A LETTER

FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

Unprecedented is often used to describe the pandemic's impact. For BRTA, navigating the events of the past year has provided greater insight into what success means.

FY21 was a year when ridership began to stabilize, a new community partnership was forged. Staff and drivers responded to a steady diet of change with their knees bent, ready to respond. After all, we knew some of our customers were essential workers who had to get to work. We also figured out a way to keep our late-night service open so customers could get to the grocery store or their second job.

There were disappointments and setbacks. The impact of BRTA's Human Service Transportation/MassHealth Brokerage relationship coming to an end represented more than a loss of revenue. It meant the loss of a vital link between some of our disabled and vulnerable population and the BRTA call center. When you read about the lengths to which our employees went to try and save the service, you'll know why I see this as another measure of our success.

We learned we had an Unsung Hero among us. Read about Bridget Keegan's volunteer efforts to make sure people were able to schedule their vaccinations. And BRTA bus shelters took on the new role as product test sites. Finally, our safety video won a regional creative award.

Read more about these stories and check our performance measures in the pages that follow.

I hope you'll be reminded about the many ways BRTA supports life in the Berkshires.

Best regards,
Robert Malnati

HUMAN SERVICE TRANSPORTATION

June 30th, 2021 was a sad day for BRTA and its call center. It marked the end of a decades long Human Service Transportation contract.

MassHealth decided to expand the required service area to include Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, and Worcester County and awarded the contract that includes Berkshire County to Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART).

BRTA continued to work with the legislative delegation and area agencies to submit letters protesting the decision. These efforts were unsuccessful in reversing the decision to award the contract to another RTA.

What was successful was the proactive work the BRTA call

center employees took on to make sure Berkshire residents who rely on this service to get to their doctors' appointments understood what was happening and how to access the new provider. Why? Quite simply, Call Center employees said, "We know our people."

The Call Center did more than just arrange for transportation to doctors' appointments. They had meaningful conversations with these Berkshire County residents. They regularly checked in on folks and were caring listeners. Call Center employees understood that the change in

service would be challenging, given technology constraints among many riders.

BRTA continues to provide fully ADA compliant transportation services to customers on our full-size buses (equipped with wheelchair lift and ramp) and our paratransit vans. Unfortunately, we will no longer broker MassHealth transportation services for residents of the 32 cities and towns in Berkshire County.



The Call Center operated for **20 YEARS**



Proudly served **32** cities + towns



Many meaningful conversations with Berkshire County residents



A HEROINE IN OUR MIDST

Bridget Keegan had an unusual preoccupation during 2021.

She decided to help people secure vaccination appointments. She started with a Facebook post in January '21 in which she offered to schedule appointments for Berkshire County residents, ages 75 and older. She was sensitive to the technology challenges for many older adults. In just three months, Bridget had **scheduled 127 appointments**, admittedly not an easy task.

She had to borrow multiple devices from family members and log into GetVaccinatedBerkshires.com website and wait until she was able to secure the appointments. She learned some tricks along the way and got more efficient with her after-hours scheduling.

This may not seem like the stuff of heroes but for people who had grown frustrated trying on their own to schedule or for people without smart phones, emails or WIFI, **Bridget's kindness meant the world to them**. Reactions were over-the-top, comparing the appointment to "winning the lottery." Bridget was simply happy to live in a place where vaccinations were valued, and people were so appreciative of her efforts.



AN UNUSUAL NEW PARTNERSHIP FORGED

BRTA has been working with SABIC staff on multiple projects with plastic polycarbonate products. This **cooperative endeavor has educated both parties** in the proper, most effective use of plastic polycarbonate in items used by our customers and staff daily.

Plastic polycarbonate barriers on BRTA vehicles help limit Operator exposure to customers and help protect drivers and customers. The material helps reduce glare and scratching while maintaining visibility. SABIC guided BRTA in the purchase of the most effective material.

BRTA participated in a materials' test for SABIC. Our bus shelters were retrofitted with plastic polycarbonate from SABIC to test durability, scratch resistance, and ease in graffiti cleanup. Two shelters located in the main thoroughfare of downtown Pittsfield were test sites, providing evidence of the materials' effectiveness.

Now, SABIC is helping to **educate the transit industry** in the use of plastic polycarbonate in safe and effective applications. BRTA is grateful for this mutually beneficial partnership.

FY 2021 EMPLOYEE

SUCCESES

2021 was full of ups and downs, but BRTA staff members were always ready to tackle any challenge. We asked our staff to reflect on important messages and new skills that were learned. Here's a sampling.



I learned that life is chaotic and unpredictable. It gave me pause to think about my future and my relationships.



I learned how to work remotely through technology. It was helpful to see co-workers when working.



Flexibility is a mindset and required for success.



I was able to organize my electronic files which enabled me to work remotely more effectively.



Tomorrow may be very different than today. Take some joy from now.



I learned time management and how to allocate time for non-work activities.



Safety Video Wins Award

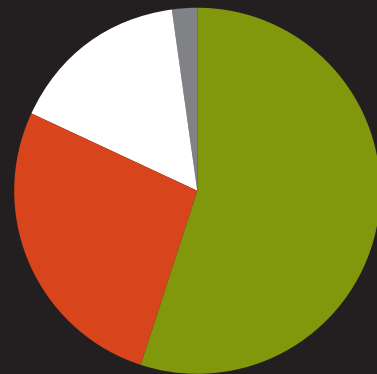
We wanted our customers to know we were implementing strict cleaning and distancing protocols.

So we asked our marketing team to produce a video for our website. The video was submitted to a regional awards show and won a bronze medal.

It's good to know that informative can also be award-winning!

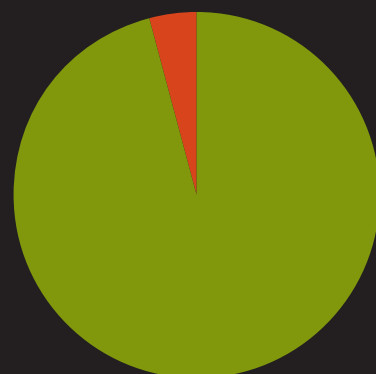
BY THE NUMBERS

Total Operating + Non-operating Revenues of **\$15,669,968** by Source



- Transportation revenues 55%
- State & local operating grants 27%
- Federal operating grants 16%
- Other 2%

Total Operating + Non-operating Expenses of **\$15,666,334** by Source



- Transportation services 96%
- Administration 4%

BRTA TRIP HISTORY

	FY20	FY21
Bikes	4,400	3,938
Mobility Devices	2,347	1,940
Total	6,747	5,878

WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

FY 2021 EVENING SERVICE PERFORMANCE



Service on **4 ROUTES**



4 HOURS per weekday

Trip Averages

	Pilot	Systemwide
Average trip per day	44.7	1,067
Average trip per service hour	11.2	66.3



10,720 total trips

=

3.3%

of total fixed route FY21 ridership

Conclusion: Evening service is **important** to customers and **frequently used**.

TOTAL RIDERSHIP



Fixed Route **327,100**



Paratransit **15,044**



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