



King City

Triennial Performance Audit

FY 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04

Approved June 22, 2005

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Chapter 1. Introduction

This is the Summary Audit Report of the triennial performance audit of King City Transit covering the three years ending on June 30, 2004. Performance audits are required of all transit operators receiving funds under the Transportation Development Act (Public Utilities Code Section 99246). This audit has been conducted based on the January 1998 (second edition) Performance Audit Guidebook published by the California Department of Transportation.

Performance Audit Scope

The performance audit is designed to serve as a high-level management report that evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of public transit service provided by King City. The scope of this performance audit covers:

- A review of actions taken on prior performance audit recommendations.
- A review of management and control procedures, including an integrated planning and budgeting process, and internal performance monitoring procedures including goals and objectives.
- Verification of methods for calculating performance indicators.
- An evaluation of the efficiency, economy, and effectiveness of the operation, including an analysis of five required performance measures and additional measures as appropriate.
- An analysis of the needs and types of passengers being served, the employment of part-time drivers, and contracting with common carriers.
- Findings concerning each area of review or analysis.
- Recommendations for improving performance and/or compliance with TDA (Transportation Development Act) requirements.

The methodology for this audit has consisted of interviews with King City staff, reviews of statistical and financial reports, as well as a site visit to King City.

Chapter 2. Description of the Operator

King City is located approximately 45 miles southeast of Salinas along U.S. Highway 101. The 2000 Census shows a population of 11,094 within the city limits. The sole component of the City's transit service is King City Transit, which operates as a demand responsive system serving King City proper and the unincorporated area of Pine Canyon to the southwest. King City Transit service is open to the general public.

King City Transit is operated entirely by King City. One full-time driver who reports directly to the City's Public Works Superintendent normally staffs the operation, and this individual has been with the City for over 17 years. Relief drivers are drawn from the ranks of city employees who normally have other duties; currently, there is one relief driver who is certified to operate the transit vehicle. The regular full-time driver as well as the back up driver are fluent in both English and Spanish.

The City owns two vehicles used for King City Transit service. The City purchased a 2000 Dodge Ram vehicle, which has a hydraulic ramp to accommodate wheelchair passengers and serves as the primary vehicle for King City Transit. A 1995 Dodge minivan serves as the back up vehicle. Both vehicles are stored at City Hall when they are not in service. All maintenance is contracted to a private auto garage.

Service Hours

King City Transit operates a single vehicle on weekdays between 7:00 AM and 4:00 PM. No service is provided on weekends and holidays. King City Transit is operated purely as a demand responsive system; no subscription trips or standing order trips are provided, and reservations are accepted only for same-day trips.

Fares

King City in response to the prior audit recommendation implemented a fare increase in FY 2002. The new base fare for the general public on King City Transit is \$1.25. A reduced fare of \$0.75 is offered for seniors and passengers with disabilities. In addition, children age five and under who are accompanied by an adult pay a fare of \$0.50.

Chapter 3. Review of the Audit Period

During the audit period from FY 2002 through FY 2004, King City Transit implemented a fare increase. A new vehicle was purchased and delivered in FY 2002, which is the primary vehicle for the King City Transit.

The most noteworthy change of the current audit period is King City is in severe financial difficulties. Transit operations for the King City have not been affected by these financial difficulties as funding comes from state and federal sources. However, reporting has been impacted as the majority of the City's staff have been laid off.

Chapter 4. Compliance Review

Data Collection and Reporting Compliance

The auditor reviewed the procedures used to calculate performance measures required by the TDA. In addition, the auditor compared the measures as stated in different reports and spot-checked calculations.

Operating Cost

Operating costs are defined as the annual cost of running a transit operation (including purchased transportation services), exclusive of depreciation, capital expenditures, vehicle lease costs, and direct costs of providing charter service. In addition, for purposes of calculating fare box recovery ratio, the cost of providing ridesharing services and for service extensions which have occurred in the past two years can be excluded.

Operating cost was not independently verified as part of this audit. Operating cost figures from audited financial statements were used. However, consistency among reports was reviewed, as well as appropriate use of exclusions for reporting purposes. Operating costs, as reported on the State Controller's Reports and audited financial statements, were compared.

Operating cost figures from audited financial statements were used for FY 2002, but at the time of this report the City had not completed its fiscal audits for FY 2003 and FY 2004. King City also needs to file its FY 2004 report with the State Controller's Office.

Vehicle Service Hours and Miles

Vehicle service hours and miles are defined as the total annual hours or miles that vehicles are in revenue service. Travel time or distance to and from storage facilities and other deadhead travel are excluded. For demand response services, deadhead is the time or distance between leaving the storage facility and the first passenger pick-up and from the last passenger drop-off back to the storage facility. Other times when drivers are unavailable (such as lunch breaks) are also excluded.

For fixed-route services, vehicle service miles and hours are calculated by a simple formula: number of miles or hours of service scheduled per day for each type of service day multiplied by the number of service days of that type. For example, the weekday vehicle hours for a given month on a certain route equal the weekday service days per month multiplied by the length of time per weekday that a bus operates on this route. Differences in service hours between regular weekday service and weekend or holiday service are accounted for. This method is in compliance because it does not include any time or mileage before or after the route, or any driver breaks in between. Also any hours or miles that differ from the normal schedule, such as missed runs or additional service

hours or miles due to special events, are accounted for in all relevant monthly and annual financial statements.

Based on the recommendations contained in the prior audit, King City began to calculate vehicle service hours as only the time the vehicle is in service and carrying passengers, or between passengers, excluding lunch and breaks. A review of the daily driver logs and a check of the monthly and annual summaries showed that vehicle service hours are now being correctly calculated. A review of daily driver logs and a check of monthly and annual summaries showed that vehicle service miles were being reported correctly.

Passengers

Passenger counts are based on the total number of passenger trips recorded on the driver's daily log sheet. As required by TDA, this includes all passenger boardings, whether they are revenue producing or not. The driver collects fares from each passenger and records the Call in time, pick-up address, pick-up time, destination, and arrival time. At the end of each day, the driver reconciles the cash fares with total passengers on the log sheet and then deposits them with the cashier at City Hall, who enters the amount into the transit account and gives the driver a receipt.

Employees

TDA requires that employees be reported in terms of FTEs calculated by dividing total annual employee regular and overtime pay hours by 2,000. Both employees of the City and contract providers are to be included. Based on a review of State Controller's reports it appears that King City has reported its own employees based on a count of people.

For the purposes of this audit, the 1.3 FTE figure which appeared in previous audits will be used to calculate State mandated performance measures.

PUC Compliance Requirements

The Public Utilities Code and California Code of regulations includes eleven operator compliance requirements. These requirements are shown below in italics, then King City Transit's compliance activities briefly discussed in regular font.

1. *The transit operator submitted annual reports to the Regional Transportation Planning Entity based on Uniform System of Accounts and Records established by the State Controller.*

King City Transit has submitted the Annual Report of Financial Transactions of Transit Operators to the State Controller for fiscal years 2002 and 2003 of the audit period, however, fiscal year 2004 is still outstanding. The reports for all three years of the current audit period were filed after the October 20 deadline. King City also has certified compliance with Public Utilities Code Section 99243, which requires the Uniform System of Accounts and Records.

- 2. The operator has submitted annual fiscal audits and compliance audits to its RTPE and State Controller within 180 days following the end of fiscal year or has received the 90-day extension allowed by law.**

The audit for fiscal year 2001-2002 was completed and submitted within the 180 days following the end of the fiscal year. The audits for fiscal year 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 have not been completed, but King City hired an auditor to perform the work in March 2005.

- 3. The CHP has, within 13 months prior to each TDA claim, certified the operator's compliance with Vehicle Code Section 1808.1 following a CHP inspection of operator's terminal.**

The auditor reviewed CHP inspection reports kept at City Hall by King City Transit's full time driver. CHP inspections were performed before all three filings of the TDA claim. A satisfactory rating was provided upon each site visit: May 16, 2002; May 20, 2003; and July 13, 2004. King City transit did not pass the original June 1, 2004 CHP inspection based on outstanding maintenance, and as a result the vehicle was placed out of service. However, the maintenance was done and the vehicle passed a second CHP inspection on July 13, 2004.

- 4. The operator's TDA claims have been submitted in compliance with the rules and regulations adopted by the Regional Transportation Planning Entity (RTPE), the Transportation Agency for Monterey County.**

TDA claims for all three years were submitted and approved by the Transportation Agency of Monterey County (TAMC).

- 5. The operator does not routinely staff with two or more persons transit vehicles designed to be operated by one person.**

One driver staffs King City Transit.

- 6. The operator's budget has not increased by more than 15% over the preceding year, nor is there a substantial increase or decrease in the scope of operations or capital budget provisions for major fixed facilities unless the operator has reasonably supported and substantiated the changes.**

As stated in the TDA Claim, cost did not increase by more than 15% for King City Transit.

- 7. Operator funding provided through the Transportation Development Act makes up no more than 50% of operating, maintenance, capital and debt service after federal grants are deducted, if applicable.**

As long as King City Transit maintains the required farebox recovery ratio, it is exempt from the 50% limitation. It complied in all three of the audit years.

8. Operators serving rural areas must meet the farebox recovery ratio of 10%.

King City Transit has met the farebox recovery ratio of 10% for all three audit years.

9. The operator's retirement system is fully funded, or the operator is implementing a plan approved by the RTPE, which will fully fund the retirement system within 40 years.

King City Transit belongs to the California Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). The current cost of this retirement system is fully funded with respect to the officers and employees of the public transit system.

10. If the operator receives state transit assistance funds, the operator is not precluded by contract from employing part-time drivers or contracting with common carriers.

There are no such limitations; King City has one full time driver who staffs King City Transit, and a City employee who covers the transit service when the full time driver is unavailable.

11. If the operator receives state transit assistance funds, the operator makes full use of funds available to it under the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964 before TDA claims are granted.

As reported in the annual State Controller Reports, King City received the following amounts of Federal Funding: \$33,382 in Fiscal Year 2002, \$34,153 in Fiscal Year 2003, and \$33,320¹ in Fiscal Year 2004.

¹ From Unaudited FY 2004 data.

Chapter 5. Performance Trends

The Transportation Development Act requires that recipients of TDA Article 4 funding report the five following performance indicators:

- Operating cost per passenger
- Operating cost per vehicle service hour
- Passengers per vehicle service hour
- Passengers per vehicle service mile
- Vehicle service hours per full-time employee equivalent (FTE)

The Act also requires achievement of a farebox recovery ratio of ten percent of operating costs for demand response services in non-urbanized rural areas.

Figure 5-1 presents King City Transit's operating data and performance measures for fiscal years 1999 through 2004. The performance indicators are graphed over the six-year period to understand the trends in the data (Figure 5-2). An analysis of the performance data and trends focusing on the current audit period follows.

Observing the trends in operating cost per vehicle service hour best represents cost efficiency. Operating cost per hour remained reasonably stable between FY 2002 and FY 2004, between \$40 and \$42 an hour. Operating expenses were fairly consistent between FY 2002 and FY 2004 however, there was a significant drop in fare revenue (12.8%), due to a drop in passengers (14.5%). Total passengers continued to decline in the second and third year of the audit (FY 2003 & FY 2004), but Fare revenue remained steady until FY 2004, which is probably due to the fare increase in FY 2002.

Measures that track service and labor productivity include:

- Passengers per vehicle service hour
- Passengers per vehicle service mile
- Vehicle service hours per FTE

Passengers per vehicle service hour, a good indicator of service productivity, increased by 22% during FY 2002. However, in FY 2003 this indicator dropped, by 9.3% (5.25) and again by 7.3% (4.86) in FY 2004.

Passengers per vehicle mile, also a good indicator of service productivity, rose by almost 14% in FY 2002 (0.54), and then dropped by 9.3% in FY 2003 (0.49) and down again 6.8% (0.46).

An indicator of labor productivity, vehicle service hours per FTE, rose 24% in FY 2002 to 1,883 and again by almost 2% in FY 2003. Then in FY 2004 the indicator fell by 8.3% to 1,764.

Operating cost per passenger and fare revenue recovery as percentage of operating costs (farebox recovery ratio) are good measures of cost effectiveness. In FY 2002 Operating Cost per passenger dropped by eighteen percent to \$6.97. However, in FY 2003 and FY 2004 cost per passenger again began to rise, to \$7.70 and \$8.83 respectively.

Figure 5-1 King City Transit TDA Performance Measures and Indicators

	FY 1999	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY2002	FY 2003	FY 2004
Performance Measures						
Operating Cost	\$61,175	\$64,177	\$74,846	\$75,916	\$77,217	\$75,820
<i>Change over Previous Year</i>		4.9%	16.6%	1.4%	1.7%	-1.8%
Fare Revenue	\$8,919	\$8,197	\$8,083	\$10,013	\$11,949	\$10,415
		-8.1%	-1.4%	23.9%	19.3%	-12.8%
Vehicle Service Hours	1,828	1,899	1,864	1,883	1,911	1,764
		3.9%	-1.8%	1.0%	1.5%	-7.7%
Vehicle Service Miles	21,274	20,141	18,543	20,095	20,410	18,729
		-5.3%	-7.9%	8.4%	1.6%	-8.2%
Total Passengers	9,720	9,080	8,833	10,895	10,033	8,582
		-6.6%	-2.7%	23.3%	-7.9%	-14.5%
Employees	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.00	1.00	1.00
		0.0%	0.0%	-23.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Performance Indicators						
Operating Cost Per Hour	\$33.47	\$33.80	\$40.15	\$40.32	\$40.41	\$42.97
		1.0%	18.8%	0.4%	0.2%	6.4%
Operating Cost Per Passenger	\$6.29	\$7.07	\$8.47	\$6.97	\$7.70	\$8.83
		12.3%	19.9%	-17.8%	10.5%	14.8%
Passengers Per Hour	5.32	4.78	4.74	5.79	5.25	4.86
		-10.1%	-0.9%	22.1%	-9.3%	-7.3%
Passengers Per Mile	0.46	0.45	0.48	0.54	0.49	0.46
		-1.3%	5.7%	13.8%	-9.3%	-6.8%
Farebox Recovery	14.6%	12.8%	10.8%	13.2%	15.5%	13.7%
		-12.4%	-15.4%	22.1%	17.3%	-11.2%
Hours per Employee	1,406	1,461	1,434	1,883	1,911	1,764
		3.7%	-1.9%	23.9%	1.5%	-8.31%

Sources: FY 1999 through FY 2001 - from prior audit report

FY 2002 through FY 2003: Operating Cost and Fare Revenue from Independent Auditor's Report.

FY 2002 through FY 2003: Vehicle Service Hours, Vehicle Service Miles, Employee Full-Time Equivalents and Total Passengers from State Controller's Report.

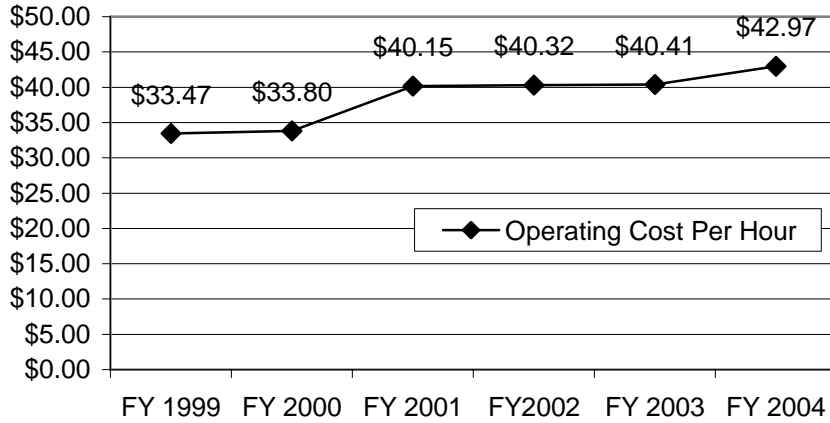
FY 2004: Operating Cost, Fare Revenue, and Employee Full-Time Equivalents from unaudited King City operating data provided by the King City.

FY 2004: Vehicle Service Hours, Vehicle Service Miles, and Total Passengers from driver manifests.

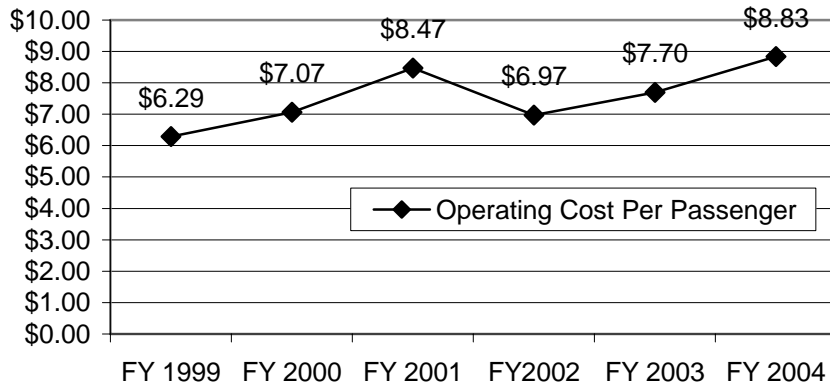
(1) Operating Cost excludes depreciation

Figure 5-2 Trends in Performance Indicators

Operating Cost Per Vehicle Service Hour



Operating Cost Per Passenger



Passengers Per Hour and Passengers Per Mile

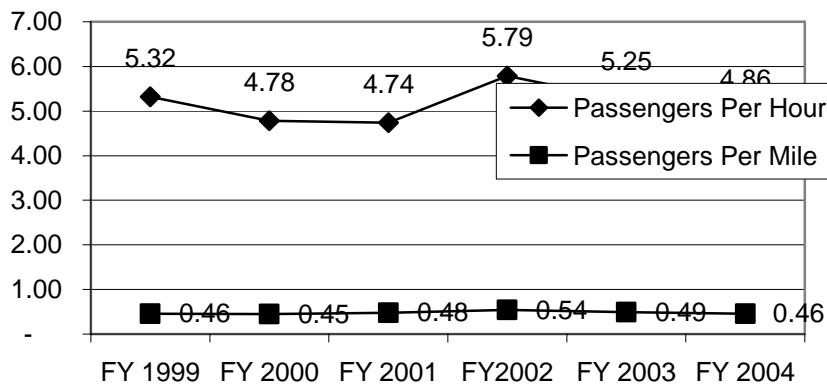
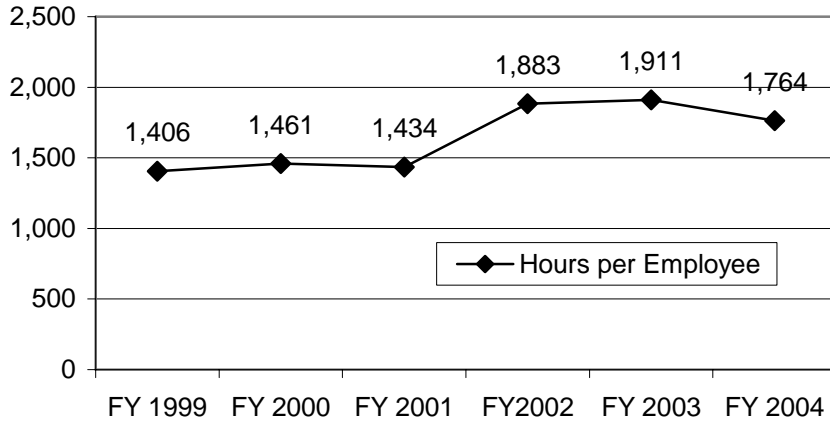
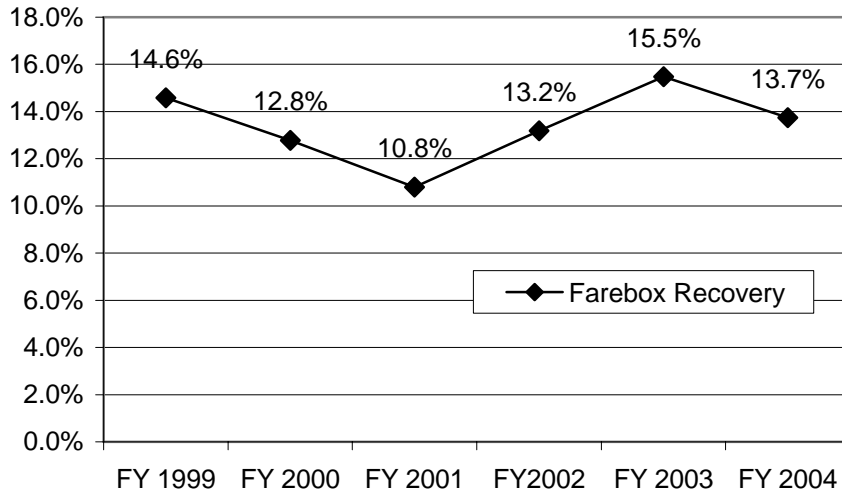


Figure 5-3 Trends in Performance Indicators (cont.)

Vehicle Service Hours Per Employee



Farebox Recovery Ratio



Chapter 6. Functional Review

This chapter provides a review of the following functional areas for King City Transit.

- Administration
- Transit Operations
- Marketing
- Planning
- Maintenance

Administration

King City Transit is administered and operated by the King City under its Public Works Department. The Public Works Superintendent provides management oversight for King City Transit. The regular driver assists with the administration of King City Transit. Due to its financial difficulties, the City of King has been without an accountant since October 2002. The Interim Finance Director is currently covering those duties, which include: budgeting, grant management, procurement, and TDA claims. The Interim Finance Director reports to the City Council about King City Transit.

The average overhead rate was 13.5% during FY2002, FY2003, and FY2004 and is budgeted to transit for administration of the service. The King City uses this overhead rate in place of budgeting specific amounts of administrative time to transit for administrative activity by the Public Works Director or any other support staff.

As in the past, King City is eligible to be reimbursed by the County of Monterey for 25% of the cost for the trips it makes to and from Pine Canyon. During the current audit period King City Transit has maintained reasonable costs for service to Pine Canyon as it did in the previous audit. During the current audit period the percentage of trips to Pine Canyon were steady at around 8% in FY 2002 through FY 2004.

In reviewing documents left by her predecessor, the Interim Finance Director was unable to locate any goals or objectives created for King City Transit for the current audit period. The Interim Finance Director felt that in light of the city's financial difficulties creating goals and objectives for King City Transit was a low priority.

Transit Operations

The City has directly operated King City Transit since the inception of service in June 1979. The driver for King City Transit has now been with the City for almost 18 years, so driver turnover has not been a problem during the audit period. Due to financial difficulties at the City, it only has one staff member who serves as a back-up driver when the full-time driver is not available. The back up driver, like the full-time driver, is CHP-

certified to operate the transit vehicle and has completed the safety training program, which consists of a two-hour refresher course, medical exam, and on-the-job behind-the-wheel orientation. Fare revenues are collected by the driver and stored in a pouch. Reconciliation of the fares and deposits are handled by a cashier at City Hall the following day. The regular driver continues to provide excellent service on behalf of King City Transit and maintains strong records. In addition, based on staff cutbacks due to the City's financial difficulties, the consistency of the driver provides an added resource for King City Transit.

King City Transit is self-dispatched by the driver using a cell phone on board the vehicle. When the vehicle is not providing service, the driver will normally return with the vehicle to the City Hall, and telephone calls for service are redirected there. Generally, the eleven-passenger Dodge Ram is used to transport passengers as it has more capacity as well as an electric wheelchair lift. The five-passenger Dodge Caravan is only used when the other vehicle is out of service, as it has limited passenger space and a manual lift, which is difficult for the driver to operate.

Marketing

During the current audit period the only change in marketing efforts has been King City replacing the brochure with a business card. During the previous audit period it used both, but it now uses the business card as staff feels it is more efficient. The business card lists King City Transit's telephone number, hours of operation, and fares in both English and Spanish. The City's website offers information about Monterey Salinas Transit (MST), however, it does not have any information about King City Transit.

Both City vehicles have "King City Transit" on the top and side of the vehicles, as well as the phone number.

Planning

King City contributed comments to the 2004 update to the Salinas Valley Short Range Transit Plan prepared by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). Based on its limited finances, the City has been unable to do any planning beyond the work of AMBAG.

AMBAG completed the Salinas Valley SRTP, which was referred to in the prior audit, in the summer of 2004. Plan development is primarily done by AMBAG, with input from the City where appropriate. Unmet needs hearings are conducted by the City's Finance Director with assistance from the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC).

Maintenance

Due to the City's financial difficulties, maintenance work has been contracted out to a private auto garage. The Corporation Yard is now used mostly as a storage facility, and

both King City Transit vehicles are kept at City Hall. King City Transit passed all its CHP inspections during the audit period, except for one on June 1, 2004. The City of King had neglected to perform maintenance based on the Driver log comments, and as a result the Dodge Ram was placed out of service. The vehicle was re-examined by CHP on July 13, 2004 when it was given a satisfactory rating. Preventive maintenance inspections are conducted every 3,000 miles, and safety inspections are conducted every 45 days.

Due to the closing of the City's maintenance facilities, all maintenance work is now charged to transit operating costs. In the previous audit only work that was contracted out was charged to transit, and routine work was built into the City's costs.

Chapter 7. Progress to Implement Prior Performance Audit

The previous triennial performance audit conducted by Nelson\Nygaard for FY 1999 to FY 2001 made four recommendations for King City Transit.

Recommendations

1. Comply with TDA definitions for vehicle service hours and employee full-time equivalents.

Discussion

TDA Code requires that operators report FTEs (full time equivalents) as the number of pay hours worked by staff in a given year divided by 2000. King City Transit was only reporting the number of employees. In the case of vehicle service hours, King City Transit should only include the time between the first passenger pick-up and the last passenger drop off and exclude deadhead and breaks.

Progress

King City reports the number of employees. However, this is the same as FTEs when rounded to the nearest whole number as required by the State Controller's reporting format. The City implemented the prior audits recommendation and now only counts time when vehicle is carrying fare paying passengers including times between passenger pick ups and drop offs, but excluding breaks and deadhead.

2. Develop goals, objectives, and service standards.

Discussion

The prior audit noted small transit operators such as King City Transit could benefit from the development of simple and clear goals with a set of objectives and service standards that are reasonable to meet. The audit suggested that development of such standards could help the City better track the performance of the service and identify areas for improvement.

Progress

At the site interview in March 2005 the Interim Finance Director said she could not find any records left by her predecessor to indicate that this recommendation was ever acted upon. Further she indicated that due to the City's financial difficulties and staff cuts, this recommendation was unlikely to be acted upon anytime in the near future.

3. Develop monthly or quarterly reports to document trends.

Discussion

This recommendation was carried forward from the previous audit in FY 1998. It was recommended that the City develop a simple spreadsheet that is designed to track operating data over time and to monitor trends in King City Transit's performance. Benchmarks developed in this spreadsheet can be incorporated into the service standards as part of Goals, Objectives and Service Standards (Recommendation 2). Although King City did have operating data online, it did not seem to have any specific format to track performance standards.

Progress

King City did not have a spreadsheet during the current audit period, that tracked operating data and monitored performance trends. However, the City is making efforts to create such a spreadsheet to monitor performance trends, so it seems to be making progress towards this recommendation.

4. Monitor the farebox recovery ratio.

Discussion

In the FY 2002 audit it was noted the farebox recovery ratio for King City Transit had declined each year during the audit period, and had come close to not meeting the ten percent requirement set forth by TDA. One possible explanation is the number of trips made to Pine Canyon during those years. During the prior audit period, the proportion of trips to Pine Canyon had remained relatively stable, around 12%. It was noted in the site visit that the driver could make several in-town trips in the time it took to make one trip to Pine Canyon.

Progress

King City implemented a system-wide fare increase in 2002, and the current farebox recovery ratio is around 13%. The proportion of trips to Pine Canyon has dropped by to about 8% during each year of the current audit period.

Chapter 8. Findings and Recommendations

Findings

The City of King is in compliance with reporting of operating costs, vehicle service miles, vehicle service hours, passengers, and employees.

The City of King did not complete and submit the FY 2003 and 2004 fiscal audit to TAMC and the State Controller within the specified time frame as dictated by TDA.

The City of King is in full compliance with all other PUC requirements, including CHP certification of terminal compliance, no preclusion from employment of part-time drivers, and full funding of its retirement system.

Despite some minor declines in performance indicators, the City of King City continues to provide a cost effective service.

King City Transit saw a decline in passengers per hour during the baseline year, FY 2001 (to 4.7), followed by an increase in FY 2002 (to 5.7) and declining again in FY 2003 (to 5.2) and FY 2004 (to 4.8). This trend raises concerns about the productivity of the service, and questions as to why ridership is dropping.

King City Transit met the ten percent farebox recovery ratio mandated by the PUC for all three audit years, and has remained steady during the current audit period at around 13%. The City took effective action to ensure that the 10% farebox recovery ratio would be met by raising fares in FY 2002.

King City Transit provides an excellent service to its customers, and the driver seems to have a strong and effective relationship with passengers.

Recommendations

Two recommendations are provided below.

Recommendation #1: Develop goals, objectives, and service standards.

Despite the City's financial difficulties it would be helpful to develop goals, objectives and service standards. Development of such standards can help the City better track the performance of the service, and identify areas for improvement. We recognize that due to current circumstances and staff shortages that this goal may not be feasible in the short run. However, as soon as circumstances allow, it would be helpful to implement.

Recommendation #2: Posting information about King City Transit on the City's website.

The business card King City Transit distributes to customers is very succinct in the information it provides about the service, and it would be helpful to provide the same information on the City's website. If the City of King can list the schedules for MST on the website, it can also list the phone number, hours, and fares for King City Transit.