THE WAY FORWARD

AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION
STRATEGIC PLAN 2015–2019
The public transportation industry is in the midst of exciting change, as people are both supporting it and riding at increasing levels. This transformative change brings both opportunities and challenges. The 2015-2019 APTA Strategic Plan addresses the main challenges and opportunities facing APTA’s membership over the next five years:

Strategic goals have been identified to address these key areas following extensive discussion with a broad representation of APTA’s membership as well as its main external stakeholders. The strategic plan outlines how APTA will address the goals and support its membership in meeting the challenges and leveraging the opportunities ahead.

In conclusion, it establishes desired outcomes toward which the association will measure progress on an annual basis.

The 2015-2019 APTA Strategic Plan aims to bring APTA and its membership a step closer to realizing APTA’s TransitVision 2050. The goals are written in the context of APTA’s overall vision, mission, and core values, using and building upon the array of existing member services (see Appendix A).

VISION
Be the leading force in advancing public transportation.

MISSION
To strengthen and improve public transportation, APTA serves and leads its diverse membership through advocacy, innovation and information sharing.

CORE VALUES
• Leadership
• Inclusiveness
• Accountability
• Integrity
• Fairness and Equity
• Excellence
• Teamwork
• Diversity
• Professionalism

Public transportation is essential to keeping metropolitan economies healthy, productive and prosperous, and for providing people access to these economic opportunities.

- US Conference of Mayors
Public transportation is one of the safest forms of transportation. APTA and the entire public transportation industry continue to place safety, security, and the wellness of our passengers and our workforce as a top priority. Maintaining a vibrant “safety and security first culture” is a key initiative of the industry.

In the next five years, the public transportation industry will be working within an invigorated regulatory environment. In parallel, public transportation worldwide remains one of the primary targets for terrorist activity. This requires consistent investment in enhanced safety and security measures.

**GOAL**

Promote, develop and support continuous improvement of safe and secure public transportation systems.

**STRATEGIES**

- **a. Strengthen** and reinforce the development and implementation of safety and security standards
- **b. Advocate** for enhanced analysis and commonality of available safety data sources to guide future goals and objectives
- **c. Develop** a “safety and security first culture” initiative
- **d. Continue** to advocate for increased safety and security funding
- **e. Increase** the visibility of APTA safety and security award programs
- **f. Continue** to be a forum for the development and dissemination of state of the art safety and security practices, standards, products, and services
- **g. Advocate** for a collaborative regulatory environment that engages all stakeholders
- **h. Support** members in striving for safety excellence and continual improvement through safety and security resources, including APTA’s Safety Management Audit and Peer Review programs

Since its inception, APTA and its predecessor associations have been vocal advocates and active instigators for safety improvements...the people involved in the operations and management of public transportation systems are completely committed to the safety of their systems, passengers and employees.

> – Michael P. Melaniphy
> APTA President & CEO
> Testimony before Congress, February 2014
The public transportation industry has been challenged with constrained resources. It faces the imperative of maintaining aging systems while also investing in necessary growth and upgrades of all modes of public transportation to meet customer needs in a reliable, safe and secure manner. The need to build systems that are resilient to natural disasters will be an additional demand on resources.

Robust and stable long-term federal, state and local funding is critical. In addition, new business models and project delivery approaches, including public-private partnerships, as well as financing options, are required to ensure public transportation’s integral role in developing the sustainable transportation network North America needs.

Ensuring that these imperatives are understood and action is taken at the federal, state, and local levels remain top priorities for APTA and its membership.

**GOAL**

Support the growth of federal and other funding and financing resources, improved project delivery approaches, and a more efficient regulatory environment.

**STRATEGIES**

a. Make the case for long-term federal funding in public transportation, focusing on both guaranteed long-term formula funding and expanded programmatic opportunities for discretionary funding.

b. Make the case for long-term federal funding in intercity passenger rail, including high-speed rail, focusing on both guaranteed long-term formula funding and expanded programmatic opportunities for discretionary funding.

c. Advocate for public transportation program and project access to all federal innovative financing and project delivery initiatives.

d. Continue to effectively position and brand public transportation as key to our goals, building on the “Where Public Transportation Goes, Community Grows” campaign.

e. Advocate to encourage funding for state and local agencies commensurate with the cost to implement federal mandates, technological advances or policy initiatives.

f. Maintain and build on existing legislative outreach/education/partnership-building.

g. Provide advocacy tools for members’ state and local outreach.

h. Continue to activate grassroots public transportation advocates.

i. Disseminate lessons learned nationally/internationally.

j. Promote inclusion of public transportation in successful financing strategies, project delivery approaches, including public-private partnerships, and business models that are alternatives, or additions to, traditional federal and local funding.

k. Lead the industry’s regulatory advocacy efforts.

l. Continue to develop the research and communication products that tie public transportation to overarching regional benefits and national goals.

“Federal investment in transportation is vital for economic growth, competitiveness and jobs.”

- Thomas J. Donohue, President & CEO
  U.S. Chamber of Commerce
  February 2014

**SHORTFALL BETWEEN TOTAL CURRENT FUNDING FROM ALL SOURCES FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND ACTUAL NEED (2014)**

$24 BILLION
Workforce demographics in public transportation are shifting dramatically as the industry faces a wave of retirements, with a commensurate loss of knowledge and know-how. There is an urgent need to attract a workforce with increasingly diverse skill sets for a technologically more complex and customer service-focused industry. Investment in education systems and training programs covering the breadth of the industry and geared toward attracting and retaining a quality workforce is paramount, as is effectively communicating the value and personal reward of working in the industry.

**GOAL**

Help members attract, develop, and retain a diverse workforce.

**STRATEGIES**

- a. Turn APTA into a hub for workforce development models and resources
- b. Leverage both the public and private sectors to showcase successful practices
- c. Develop more public transit-specific education and training programs with partners and through alliances
- d. Support the development of local and regional mentoring and internship programs
- e. Continue to enhance industry attractiveness through branding and image development
- f. Strategically maximize national/federal, regional, and local partnerships and programs
- g. Support members in leveraging and implementing structured and systematic approaches to workforce development and strategies for improving the diversity of their workforces
- h. Leverage the resources of the American Public Transportation Foundation in supporting the next generation of public transportation professionals
- i. Align with other interest groups advocating for science, technology, engineering and math education
DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS

As demographics shift with population growth, an aging society with greater longevity, and a large millennial generation taking a significant place in the workforce, lifestyle changes are dramatically reshaping the American landscape. There is movement away from cars and toward more urbanized, multimodal lifestyle choices. This leads to the development of Transit-Oriented Communities with opportunities for public transit, intercity rail, bicycle and pedestrian transportation, first mile/last mile service, and emerging mobility services. Changes in travel patterns mean many public transit systems are experiencing ridership increases during off-peak hours and on weekends.

The public transportation industry needs to respond to these shifts and meet customer expectations for increased services, quality of experience, and availability for all.

GOAL
Assist members in addressing ever-evolving lifestyles and mobility needs.

STRATEGIES

a. Help APTA members build their knowledge and capacity to influence land use decisions/meet customer expectations

b. Promote the development of Transit-Oriented Communities incorporating active transportation, first mile/last mile service, and emerging mobility services that provide equitable opportunities for all

c. Understand the usage, impact, and opportunities of new mobility services/technologies and how to maximize their synergies with public transit

d. Identify customer-focused approaches/technologies to accommodate a variety of mobility options/services and continue to maximize accessibility

e. Continue to underscore the relevance of public transportation

f. Help members engage all generations in the adaptation of public transit systems and services

g. Continue leadership on promoting accessibility for all, including people with disabilities, returning veterans with mobility challenges, older adults—many of whom are aging in place—and those who are not native English speakers

The baby boom generation has been accustomed to a high level of mobility and will expect that level of mobility to continue into their later years...Public transportation programs are vitally important to helping older persons maintain their independence and connection to their community.

– AARP President Testimony before Congress, June 2011

70% PERCENTAGE OF MILLENNIALS WHO USE MULTIPLE TRAVEL OPTIONS SEVERAL TIMES A DAY

54% PERCENTAGE OF MILLENNIALS WHO RANK PUBLIC TRANSIT AS THE BEST MODE TO CONNECT TO ALL OTHER MODES

Technological innovations are accelerating exponentially, creating more opportunities for customer-facing technology solutions, new mobility services, systems integration, data collection, energy efficiency and new methods for optimizing vehicle and infrastructure design. With these innovations come issues of service integration, data ownership and management, and proprietary designs as well as cyber security. In addition, more opportunities are being created for coordination with public and private services to address first mile/last mile access and for supportive use of emerging mobility services and technologies. This includes web-based applications and autonomous and connected vehicle technologies.

**GOAL**

Lead and serve member efforts to evaluate, develop and adapt to emerging technologies.

**STRATEGIES**

a. Advance members’ knowledge of evolving technology and address members’ needs and concerns

b. Support members in assessing, developing, and implementing technology, as well as technology management and integration

c. Serve as the industry portal for new and emerging technologies and innovative practices

d. Facilitate the development of advanced research into applied products

e. Promote standards implementation and develop a way to quantify it

f. Manage regulatory and funding factors

g. Engage with and integrate alternative mobility services and technology providers

h. Leverage existing partnerships with other technology-focused associations/organizations

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A transit app...is a transformative urban-planning tool that can convert car commuters into regular transit users.

- *Time magazine*, August 2014

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN TRANSPORTATION APP COMPANIES**

$3.3 BILLION

SOURCE: 1776
APTA must ensure it is well-positioned structurally and organizationally to meet the 2015-2019 strategic goals, as well as to continue to fulfill its overall mission.

**GOAL**

Provide world-class member services through a vital and robust organization.

**STRATEGIES**

a. Align APTA’s daily operations and the annual business plan with APTA’s Strategic Plan

b. Quantify resource needs, including human capital and financial, to achieve strategic goals

c. Analyze and convey the resource vs. goal gaps and present this information to the Board of Directors for policy prioritization and rationalization

d. Focus on staff proficiency, professional development, process management, agility, and effectiveness

e. Emphasize committee development/training/processes

f. Continue to develop APTA’s membership, including incorporation of new modes and services

g. Strategically assess and implement technological enhancements to APTA business practices and infrastructure

h. Continue to build on APTA brand awareness

APTA represents all modes of public transportation: bus, paratransit, light rail, commuter rail, subways, waterborne services, and intercity and high-speed passenger rail. This includes transit systems; planning, design, construction, and finance firms; product and service providers; academic institutions; transit associations; and state departments of transportation.
OUTCOMES

SAFETY & SECURITY FIRST

APTA members will have access to comprehensive safety and security standards, the needed knowledge and technical assistance to implement best practices and regulations, and the necessary data to assess and articulate the high level of safety and security in the public transportation industry:

a. APTA will review and update the Safety and Security Standards as needed to keep them current
b. Major conferences will have a minimum of one session devoted to either state-of-the-art safety or security, or both
c. APTA will periodically report on the high level of safety and security currently being delivered by the public transportation industry
d. To ensure that our federal partners are engaged in safety and security goals, APTA will continue to use its formal and informal mechanisms including the FTA TRACS, FRA RSAC, and TSA SCC working groups

RESOURCE ADVOCACY

APTA will remain an effective and respected advocate for robust, long-term federal public transportation funding, innovative financing, and project delivery approaches. It will give its members policy and advocacy tools and guidance to make the funding case at the state and local levels, as well as a formidable grassroots advocacy force. It will provide current information on successful funding, financing, and project delivery mechanisms:

a. APTA’s number one legislative priority remains having in place a multi-year, federal transportation bill that increases funding across the board, including long-term guaranteed funding as well as expanded programmatic opportunities for discretionary funding
b. APTA staff will regularly attend state and regional conferences to promote the message on a local level
c. APTA will make available materials for use in national, regional, and local advocacy efforts
d. APTA will periodically report on the use of new, different, or alternative financing streams and project delivery approaches

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

APTA will be the industry-recognized go-to place for workforce development guidance, resources, and models, including education and training programs, internship and mentorship program models, and advocacy support, all tied together with a strong partner network:

a. Best practices materials will be disseminated on internships and mentoring and on innovative models of workforce development in public transportation and other industries
b. APTA will continue to partner with higher education programs to encourage training in the necessary skills the industry requires
c. Programs will be created to educate and encourage people to consider public transportation as a career choice; attract a wide variety of disciplines; and appeal to millennials’ sense of service

DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS

APTA members will have the knowledge, understanding, and technical and policy expertise to be strong partners in developing Transit-Oriented Communities, to integrate new mobility services and to build, maintain, and engage a diverse customer base:

a. APTA will articulate and communicate a compelling vision of Transit-Oriented Communities
b. Best practices will be disseminated in land-use planning and service development, which support the kinds of mobility services and lifestyles both baby boomers and millennials are demanding

technological innovation

APTA will be a thought-leader on new and existing technological developments that can facilitate and enhance customer service, design, development, operations and maintenance:

a. A regular review of new technologies and their current and potential uses in public transportation systems will be carried out with key partners
b. Standards development opportunities will be integrated with emerging technologies to best promote innovation and efficient implementation of technology

APTA will pursue its goals with the necessary human and financial resources, infrastructure, business processes and governance structure:

a. APTA will secure the necessary resources to pursue the strategic goals, to the extent possible, and will adjust the goals, deliverables, timelines and expectations as needed
b. Areas that require skills development or enhancement will be identified
c. Business goals and programs will be matched to the goals of this strategic plan and APTA staff will be held accountable for adhering to them
To achieve the 2015-2019 goals, APTA will build upon its existing membership services and draw from a vast array of services and tools it has developed and successfully implemented. A list of these existing resources can be found below.

**Information Sharing & Networking**
- Annual Meeting*
- EXPO (every 3 years)
- Rail Conference* (yearly)
- Legislative Conference* (yearly)
- Bus & Paratransit Conference* (yearly)
- More than 15 Specialized Workshops and Seminars
- Webinars
- More than 125 Committees and Working Groups
- Online Forums
- Membership Directory
- Committee Lists
- Online Buyers’ Guide
* Major APTA Conferences

**Technical Expertise**
- Standards
- Peer Reviews
- Safety Audits
- Statistics
- Ridership Report
- Fact Book

**Publications**
- Passenger Transport
- Passenger Transport Express
- Fact Book
- Brochures
- Studies, Whitepapers, Technical Publications
- Specialized Newsletters

**Industry Recognition**
- Annual Awards
- Bus Roadeo and Rail Rodeo
- AdWheel
- Customer Service Challenge
- Call Center Challenge
- Safety and Security Awards
- Sustainability Commitment

**Workforce Development**
- Professional Development
- Leadership Development
- Technical Training and Development – Front-line Workforce
- Scholarships – American Public Transportation Foundation
- Higher Education Student Ambassador Program

**Advocacy and Outreach**
- www.apta.com
- PublicTransportation.org
- “Where Public Transportation Goes, Community Grows” campaign
- Media Outreach
- Social Media – Twitter – Facebook – Videos and YouTube
- National Alliance of Public Transportation Advocates (NAPTA)
- Voices for Public Transit
- Center for Transportation Excellence

**Partnerships**
- National Organizations and Coalitions
- International Associations

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**APPENDIX B**

**STRATEGIC PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**

| Chair: Phil Washington  
| Regional Transportation District  
| Denver, CO |
| Susannah Kerr Adler  
| SYSTRA Consulting Inc./SYSTRA Engineering Inc.  
| New York, NY |
| Helen Callier  
| Bradlink LLC  
| Kingwood, TX |
| Natalie Cornell  
| LTK Engineering Services  
| Ambler, PA |
| Fred Daniels  
| Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority  
| Atlanta, GA |
| Kevin Desmond  
| King County Metro Transit Division/Department of Transportation  
| Seattle, WA |
| Lee Gibson  
| Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County  
| Reno, NV |
| Sharon Greene  
| HDR/Sharon Greene + Associates  
| Laguna Beach, CA |
| Andrew Johnson  
| Connect Transit  
| Normal, IL |
| Valarie J. McCall  
| Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority  
| Cleveland, OH |
| Jerome C. Premo  
| AECOM  
| Orange, CA |
| Catherine Rinaldi  
| Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
| New York, NY |
| Robin Stimson  
| Siemens Infrastructure & Cities, Rail Systems Division  
| Sacramento, CA |
| Gary Thomas  
| Dallas Area Rapid Transit  
| Dallas, TX |
| Tom Waldron  
| HDR Engineering Inc.  
| New York, NY |

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