
El Dorado County Transit Authority Triennial Performance Audit

for Fiscal Years 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18



Prepared for the
El Dorado County Transit Authority

Prepared by



TRIENNIAL PERFORMANCE AUDIT
of the
EL DORADO COUNTY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
for
Fiscal Years 2015-16 through 2017-18
Final

Prepared for the

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The California Public Utilities Code requires all transit operators that receive funding under Article 4 of the Transportation Development Act (TDA) be subject to a performance audit every three years. This document presents the findings from the performance audit of El Dorado County Transit Authority's (EDCTA) transit operations, which include fixed-route, commuter services, and Dial-A-Ride (DAR) programs. As the Regional Transportation Planning Agency responsible for TDA funding, these audits were performed under the authority of the El Dorado County Transportation Commission (EDCTC).

This audit report covers Fiscal Year (FY) 2015-16 through FY 2017-18, and was conducted by LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. The field reviews and data collection efforts were conducted the spring of 2019.

PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT AND ORGANIZATION

This Audit followed the steps recommended in the Caltrans Performance Audit Guidebook:

- ◆ A review of pertinent documents such as the prior performance audits, annual fiscal audits, internal operating reports, adopted policies and procedures, and State Controller Reports.
- ◆ On-site interviews with the EDCTA Executive Director, Operations Manager, and Planning and Marketing Manager.

BACKGROUND

Western El Dorado County transit services are provided through a joint powers agreement between the County of El Dorado and the City of Placerville. The EDCTA is governed by a five-member board of directors, with three members appointed by the County Board of Supervisors and two members appointed by the Placerville City Council. EDCTA operates a wide range of services in the western portion of the County (with service as far east as Pollock Pines) including local deviated fixed-routes, demand response, intercity commuter service and contracted social service transportation. EDCTA's combined operations and maintenance facility is located in Diamond Springs at 6565 Commerce Way.

EDCTA OPERATING AND FINANCIAL STATISTICS

A series of tables and figures displaying EDCTA operating data and performance indicators during this period and the prior audit period are presented in Chapter 2. The analysis shows a slow decline in performance during this audit period, primarily due to a nationwide downward trend in ridership combined with increasing operating costs from unfunded pension liabilities.

Overall, EDCTA met TDA farebox ratio minimums and most standards adopted in the most recent Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP).

REVIEW OF COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

As an entity receiving TDA funds for transit purposes, EDCTA is required to comply with the state's financial and reporting guidelines detailed in the *Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Entities* pursuant to TDA requirements. The guidebook identifies several specific requirements in TDA regulations that concern issues treated in performance audits. Table 4 of Chapter 2 outlines these compliance requirements. EDCTA met all the requirements.

STATUS OF PRIOR AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The prior TPA was prepared by LSC and contained the following recommendations:

- EDCTA should work with the Fiscal Auditor to correctly exclude the El Dorado Air Quality Grant revenue when calculating farebox ratio.
- If management is confident with the financial outlook for EDCTA operating requirements, EDCTA should strive to narrow the gap between the LTF allocation request for operating assistance and the maximum amount of LTF allowed for operating assistance.

EDCTA implemented all the prior audit recommendations.

DETAILED REVIEW OF TRANSIT OPERATOR FUNCTIONS

This section presents a review of the various functions of El Dorado Transit.

General Management and Organization

All operations, administration and maintenance are performed at EDCTA's facility in Diamond Springs, California. EDCTA is operated by a staff of 83 in-house employees. The management team includes five personnel: the Executive Director, Operations Manager, Finance Manager, Human Resources Manager, and Planning and Marketing Manager. Transit operators are covered by a collective bargaining Memorandum of Understanding between EDCTA and the Operating Engineers Local No. 3 Union. Given the size of the El Dorado Transit program, its internal organization structure is appropriate. Lines of reporting are clearly defined and meetings are held regularly.

EDCTA conducts sufficient administrative oversight. It regularly receives, reviews, and acts upon performance and financial information. EDCTA most recently revised the *Personnel Policies &*

Procedures Manual in 2018 which clearly outlines sick leave, vacation, disciplinary actions, dress code etc.

The Executive Director keeps a close eye on the transit operating budget and makes appropriately conservative budget forecasts. The EDCTA Board must approve substantial changes in the budget and/or spending. The EDCTA Bylaws outline a timeline for budget preparation and approval which includes review by the board and Transit Advisory Committee. Financial information and performance indicators are compiled in spreadsheet format and presented to the EDCTA Board and the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) every six months as the Administrative Operations Report. The annual version of the report is available to the public on the website.

The various accounting functions such as accounts payable and accounts receivable are assigned to different employees in an effort to reduce fraud. Petty cash is maintained and appropriately secure.

The Executive Director reviews the impact of service changes as part of the monthly operational review and compares results with previous expectations. In an effort to allow service changes to reach their full potential ridership, new services and demonstration projects are operated for a trial period before any necessary adjustments are made.

Discussions with both EDCTA and EDCTC staff show that there is an effective and positive relationship between the two agencies. EDCTA also maintains a good relationship with other governmental agencies.

Service Planning

The EDCTC commissioned the *Western El Dorado County Short and Long Range Transit Plan (SR/LRTP)*, which was completed by LSC Transportation Consultants in July 2014. The short range element of this plan covers FYs 2014-15 through 2018-19 while the long range element recommends transit service strategies through 2035. Several of the recommended plan elements have been implemented. An update to the plan is currently underway.

In terms of strategic planning, EDCTA has set clear, reasonable goals and objectives in the SRTP and LRTP. The Administrative Operations report provides the Executive Director and the Board with an easy to understand view of how EDCTA services measure up to adopted SRTP goals and standards.

El Dorado Transit's entire fleet of revenue vehicles is wheelchair accessible. EDCTA is in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements including complementary paratransit service.

EDCTA conducts public hearings and consults the Transit Advisory Committee prior to significant changes in service or fare structure. All El Dorado Transit meetings are open to the public, and are conducted in an accessible facility per the requirements of the ADA.

Scheduling, Dispatch, and Operations

EDCTA operators are appropriately certified for the types of vehicles operated for El Dorado Transit and are trained to operate each vehicle in the fleet. EDCTA employs part time and extra help operators to cover shifts for operators on vacation or sick leave.

DAR scheduling is performed using Routematch software. This software allows schedulers to easily access a database of passenger information, sort passenger-trip requests geographically, and provides several trip options for dispatchers to choose from. DAR no-show policies and subscription service forms are clearly outlined on the website. Subscription service levels are within the ADA guidelines.

EDCTA uses a variety of means to recruit new operators and provides all initial and on-going driver training on-site using EDCTA staff. Despite this, EDCTA has found it challenging to retain operators. EDCTA's *Personnel Policies & Procedures Manual* details its formalized employee discipline program and Drug and Alcohol policy.

EDCTA is covered under the CalTIP vehicle liability insurance pool at an adequate level. Established procedures for processing and investigating accident/injury claims are currently in place. EDCTA coordinates with the County Office of Emergency Services for Emergency Preparedness.

The El Dorado Transit facility in Diamond Springs provides adequate and secure office space for administrative and dispatching functions. The fare collection system includes a system of checks and balances which limit the opportunity for theft.

Marketing and Public Information

El Dorado Transit has a robust marketing program. In 2015, El Dorado Transit completed an update of the El Dorado Transit Assessment and Marketing Plan. EDCTA has implemented several recommendations such as rebranding and updating the website. An annual summary of customer complaints and compliments is included in the Administrative Operations Report so that the EDCTA and EDCTC board are aware of the public's opinion of the transit system. The Planning and Marketing Manager frequently makes informational presentations to specific groups.

Maintenance

The EDCTA fleet ranges from 5-passenger minivans used for demand response services to 57-passenger buses for commuter services. As the EDCTA fleet ages and vehicles are no longer

covered by warranty, road calls and vehicle maintenance costs per hour rise. EDCTA maintenance staff use Squarerigger® Fleet Maintenance software to track preventative maintenance repairs for the transit fleet. A preventive maintenance schedule is in place that meets the requirements of the bus manufacturers. The operations/maintenance facility appears to be sufficient for the varied types of vehicles operated. EDCTA has procured several vehicle maintenance related technologies such as Zonar and vehicle information management software which provide maintenance staff with a greater level of information pertaining to fleet management.

FINDINGS

- ◆ EDCTA was found to be in compliance with all performance related sections of the TDA public utilities code as identified in Table 4.
- ◆ EDCTA submit State Controller Reports and Fiscal and Compliance Audits in a timely fashion.
- ◆ EDCTA has a good data collection and reporting process in place. The Administrative Operations reports are effective and informative.
- ◆ Operating data found in internal reports generally match that reported to the State Controller with the exception of FTE's and Vehicle Service Miles for FY 2017-18.
- ◆ Overall performance declined for EDCTA, due mostly to a nationwide downtrend ridership combined with new state pension requirements which significantly impacted operating costs. However, EDCTA farebox ratio still remains well above the blended farebox ratio requirement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: *Monitor operating costs closely and look for cost saving opportunities as part of the ongoing Short Range Transit Plan effort and going forward.*

As noted in the compliance section, annual operating costs increased by 16 percent in FY 2016-17 and another 16 percent in FY 2017-18. EDCTA's FY 2017-18 operating cost per trip of \$22.43 and operating cost per hour of \$151.60 is higher than neighboring Placer County Transit (\$19.47, \$135.80 respectively) which provides similar types of services. Operating subsidy per trip has increased from \$11.57 to \$18.35 during this audit period. However, EDCTA continues to maintain a strong farebox recovery ratio of well over 12.2 percent. The greatest factor in increasing EDCTA's operating costs is the large increase in Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) and unfunded pension liabilities which the transit agency is now required to pay. Many transit agencies in California are dealing with the same issue and it is possible that this expense item will level off in the coming audit period. Additionally, as there is low unemployment in California, it is challenging for transit agencies to attract operators and keep labor costs low.

Insurance and fuel costs also contributed to the operating cost increase during this audit period. These are other factors which are generally out of the control of El Dorado Transit.

EDCTA is currently updating the Short Range and Long Range Transit Plan. As part of this effort, a wide variety of financially constrained service plan elements will be reviewed including possible elimination or changing of poor performing services such as the newly implemented El Dorado Hills fixed route. Along with this effort, EDCTA staff should continue to monitor operating costs going forward in an effort to constrain operating cost growth.

Recommendation 2: *As Information Technology (IT) demands for public transit related applications such as security cameras, Routematch software and automated vehicle announcement system put a strain on maintenance staff time, EDCTA should consider hiring additional staff to fill this role.*

Although technology such as security cameras and automated vehicle announcement has improved El Dorado Transit services, an increasing amount of maintenance tech time is spent fixing these IT devices. Each type of device has proprietary software which must be learned by maintenance technicians. The more complicated the devices are, the more likely they can break. EDCTA maintenance staff is beginning to track hours spent related to IT problems. If after a year of collecting data, the cost of maintenance staff time spent on IT problems combined with lost time on actual vehicle maintenance is significant, EDCTA should consider contracting with a IT Consultant or hiring a part-time or full-time IT position.

Recommendation 3: *Ensure that providing Special Services transportation does not negatively impact the provision of regularly scheduled public transit service.*

For several years, El Dorado Transit operated the Apple Hill Shuttle which carried tourists and residents visiting the popular Apple Hill area in Camino from a Park and Ride lot to various farms and shops. The service was operated in partnership with El Dorado County and funded in part with a County Air Quality grant. The program was designed to reduce high levels of congestion and alleviate a parking problem. Although the service was successful in terms of ridership, it was discontinued as a special service. Because of the on-going need for a parking shuttle, in 2018 EDCTA contracted with the county to again provide the Apple Hill Shuttle but as a contracted service.

Although the Apple Hill Shuttle and other Special Services such as the Fair Shuttle have relatively high ridership and increase the public profile of EDCTA, there are underlying costs of providing these types of services which can impact operation of the overall transit system. For example, the Apple Hill Shuttle operates on weekends. If EDCTA staff are used to run the shuttle, driver hours can increase beyond mandated maximums, making it difficult to find enough operators to operate regular transit service the following Monday. There is also the additional wear and tear on EDCTA vehicles. Helping to reduce congestion is a worthy cause; however, the primary focus of a public transit agency is to meet the mobility needs of the general public, particularly those who are dependent of public transit for their quality of life.

Private transportation companies are available to meet the needs for more specific short-term services. Therefore, prior to offering Special Services Transportation, EDCTA should consider all indirect costs of providing the service and only take on providing special service transportation if it will not impact the provision of regularly scheduled service.

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BACKGROUND

The Transportation Development Act (TDA), also known as the “Mills-Alquist Deddeh Act,” provides two major sources of funding for public transportation providers in California: the Local Transportation Fund (LTF) and the State Transit Assistance (STA). The LTF is derived from 0.25 percent of the 7.25 percent retail sales tax collected statewide and can be used for a variety of transportation purposes according to a set of priorities detailed in the Act. The State Board of Equalization returns the LTF to each county according to the amount of tax collected in that county. STA funds are derived from statewide sales tax on diesel fuel, and are allocated to each county based on the following formula: 50 percent according to population and 50 percent according to operator revenues from the prior fiscal year. STA funds can only be used to pay for transit planning, capital projects, and operations.

TDA law requires that a Triennial Performance Audit (TPA) be conducted for all transit operators and Regional Transportation Planning Agencies. A performance audit is a systematic process of evaluating an organization’s effectiveness, efficiency, and economy of operations under management control. The objectives of the audit are to provide a means for evaluating an organization’s performance and to enhance the performance by making recommendations for improvements. In addition, the audit evaluates the adequacy of an organization’s systems and the degree of compliance with established policies and procedures.

PERFORMANCE AUDIT AND REPORT ORGANIZATION

This performance audit included the following steps as recommended in the Performance Audit Guidebook:

- ◆ Review of compliance with certain performance related TDA statutes and requirements
- ◆ Follow-up review of prior performance audit recommendations
- ◆ Performance indicator analysis of EDCTA services
- ◆ On site interviews with several EDCTA staff to discuss transit operator functions
- ◆ Preparation of the Draft Audit report

TRANSIT PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Modern public transit services have been available in western El Dorado County since the late 1970s. Service was provided to the elderly and disabled population of greater Placerville until 1980, when it was opened to the general public. In recent years, a well-established public transit system has developed, serving both the Placerville area and regionally. The creation of EDCTA in 1993 has proven to be an important milestone in the provision of an effective and well-accepted public transit system.

Western El Dorado County transit services are provided through a joint powers agreement between the County of El Dorado and the City of Placerville. EDCTA is governed by a five-member board of directors, three members appointed by the County Board of Supervisors and two members appointed by the Placerville City Council. Additionally, a Transit Advisory Committee (TAC), made up of nine members representing transit disadvantaged groups, human service providers, and non-profit organizations, is responsible for reviewing the operation of the transit system, monitoring levels of service as they fall within funding constraints, and providing advice to the Executive Director. Agencies and groups represented on the TAC include El Dorado County Transportation Commission, Chamber of Commerce, 50 Corridor Transportation Management Association, senior representative, disabled representative, low income representative, and commuter representative. TAC meetings are scheduled three times a year and review the budget and provide input on transportation issues. Funds for El Dorado Transit come from many sources, including those allocated by the EDCTC, which consists of voting members from El Dorado County and the City of Placerville, and advisory members from Caltrans and the City of South Lake Tahoe.

EDCTA operates a wide range of services including local rural fixed-routes, demand response, urban commuter routes, special services, and contracted social service transportation. The following describes each of the existing services.

El Dorado Transit Local Routes

- **Placerville Route 20** – This route travels to major activity centers in the City of Placerville between the Missouri Flat Transfer Station and the Placerville Station Transfer Center.
- **Diamond Springs Route 30** – The Diamond Springs route begins and ends at the Missouri Flat Transfer Center and serves a loop around Diamond Springs. Service is provided to the Folsom Lake College El Dorado Center.
- **Cameron Park Route 40** – This route loops around Cameron Park and Shingle Springs, providing transfers to the 50 Express and Sacramento Commuter Routes.
- **Pollock Pines Route 60** – The Pollock Pines route travels in an east and west direction along the US 50 corridor between the Missouri Flat Transfer Center in Diamond Springs and Pollock Pines.
- **El Dorado Hills Route 70** – During the audit period, El Dorado Transit tried multiple methods of serving the growing community of El Dorado Hills: taxi voucher program, fixed route combined with Cameron Park and lastly, a fixed route only serving El Dorado Hills.
- **Saturday Express Route** – This route is a reduced combination of the Placerville and Pollock Pines route.

- **Diamond Springs Saturday** – El Dorado Transit operates a Saturday version of the Diamond Springs route with shortened service hours.
- **50 Express Route** – This local urban route provides hourly service between the Missouri Flat Transfer Center, Folsom Iron Point Light Rail Station and Folsom Lake College. This route implemented in July 2015 replaced the previous Iron Point Connector service.

El Dorado Transit Urban Commuter Routes

- **Sacramento Commuter** – El Dorado Transit provides weekday commuter service to downtown Sacramento during the morning and afternoon commute periods. Eleven runs are offered to Sacramento in the morning with eleven return runs in the afternoon.
- **Reverse Commuter** – Additionally, El Dorado Transit offers two roundtrips per day as “Reverse Commute” service, from Sacramento to Placerville. These are provided by Commuter buses, which would be running in the off-peak direction in any case.

El Dorado Transit Demand Response Services

- **Dial-A-Ride (DAR)** – Reservation service is offered seven days a week in the greater Placerville, Camino, Diamond Springs, Cameron Park, El Dorado Hills, Coloma and Pollock Pines area to elderly and disabled passengers. During the audit period, service was also available to the general public on a space available basis.
- **SAC-MED** – This demand response type service is a non-emergency medical transportation service for the general public with medical appointments in Sacramento County and in Roseville. Service is offered twice weekly.
- **Contracted Social Services** – EDCTA contracts with M.O.R.E. to provide subscription DAR service between program participant homes and program facilities in Placerville. Alta Regional Center provides funding for M.O.R.E clients.
- **ADA Complimentary Paratransit** – Door to door public transit service is available to qualified passengers within a ¾ mile radius of the local fixed routes: Placerville, Diamond Springs, Pollock Pines, El Dorado Hills, and Cameron Park.

Special Services

- **El Dorado County Fair Shuttle** – This service provides transportation for fair-goers between parking lots and the fairgrounds and is funded through an El Dorado County Air Quality grant.

EDCTA OPERATING AND FINANCIAL STATISTICS

The following section quantitatively analyzes the performance of EDCTA services. Operating data and financial statistics are presented in Tables 1-3 and Figures 1-16. Operating data was obtained from EDCTA annual operations reports while financial data was obtained from annual Fiscal and Compliance Audits. EDCTA data by service type is presented in Tables 1 and 2 while Table 3 presents a summary of systemwide data. Operating data from the Administrative Operations reports was compared to data reported to the State Controller. The figures in each report were consistent, with the exception of Vehicle Service Miles in FY 2017-18.

Data Collection Methods

As part of the TPA process, the auditor must collect and verify the following transit operator statistics are recorded in accordance with established TDA definitions:

- Passenger Counts
- Operating Cost
- Vehicle Service Hours
- Vehicle Service Miles
- Fare Revenue
- Employee Hours in Full-Time Equivalents

Passenger Counts – TDA defines passenger counts as one-way unlinked trips. EDCTA’s counting of passengers is consistent with this definition. As described in the functional review section, EDCTA employs computer tablets to record operating statistics such as passengers, hours, and miles.

Table 3 presents annual ridership data for EDCTA services during the audit period, as well as data from the previous three-year period (for purposes of comparison). Despite an increase in ridership in FY 2015-16 (due to the new 50 Express route), EDCTA has seen a slow downward trend in ridership over the past six years. This is representative of most transit systems nationwide. Reasons may be due to relatively low gas prices along with an increase in vehicle ownership resulting from low-cost auto loans.

As can be seen in Table 1, local fixed route ridership experienced a 9.6 percent decline during the audit period while commuter ridership (which is a reflection of state worker hiring trends and housing patterns) grew by 4.9 percent. Special services ridership is sporadic and depends on the types of services offered. As shown in Table 2, all demand response services ridership declined along with fixed route ridership but the Sac-Med service saw an increase of 88 annual trips in FY 2014-15. EDCTA has a system-wide annual increase in ridership goal of 3 percent.

TABLE 1 : El Dorado Transit Fixed Route Services Performance Measures

Performance Measures	Local Fixed Routes			Commuter Routes			Special Services		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
One-Way Passenger-Trips	184,195	179,485	166,489	139,118	139,792	145,949	12,100	9,489	10,947
% Change from Previous Year	--	-2.6%	-7.2%	--	0.5%	4.4%	--	-21.6%	15.4%
Vehicle Service Hours	24,562	25,984	29,031	9,319	9,057	8,940	171	180	204
% Change from Previous Year	--	5.8%	11.7%	--	-2.8%	-1.3%	--	5.3%	13.3%
Vehicle Service Miles	487,132	505,096	541,898	287,238	281,027	274,399	2,297	3,212	2,549
% Change from Previous Year	--	3.7%	7.3%	--	-2.2%	-2.4%	--	39.8%	-20.6%
Operating Costs	\$3,094,403	\$3,523,891	\$3,989,396	\$1,340,949	\$1,411,253	\$1,431,311	\$35,111	\$38,152	\$42,781
% Change from Previous Year	--	13.9%	13.2%	--	5.2%	1.4%	--	8.7%	12.1%
Farebox Revenues	\$207,477	\$246,855	\$228,773	\$712,511	\$750,079	\$793,050	\$5,378	\$5,554	\$5,957
% Change from Previous Year	--	19.0%	-7.3%	--	5.3%	5.7%	--	3.3%	7.3%
Operating Cost per One-Way Passenger-Trip	\$16.80	\$19.63	\$23.96	\$9.64	\$10.10	\$9.81	\$2.90	\$4.02	\$3.91
% Change from Previous Year	--	16.9%	22.0%	--	4.7%	-2.9%	--	38.6%	-2.8%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour	\$125.98	\$135.62	\$137.42	\$143.89	\$155.82	\$160.10	\$205.33	\$211.95	\$209.71
% Change from Previous Year	--	7.6%	1.3%	--	8.3%	2.7%	--	3.2%	-1.1%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Hour	7.5	6.9	5.7	14.9	15.4	16.3	70.8	52.7	53.7
% Change from Previous Year	--	-7.9%	-17.0%	--	3.4%	5.8%	--	-25.5%	1.8%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Mile	0.38	0.36	0.31	0.48	0.50	0.53	5.27	2.95	4.29
% Change from Previous Year	--	-6.0%	-13.5%	--	2.7%	6.9%	--	-43.9%	45.4%
Farebox Recovery Ratio	6.7%	7.0%	5.7%	53.1%	53.1%	55.4%	15.3%	14.6%	13.9%
% Change from Previous Year	--	4.5%	-18.1%	--	0.0%	4.2%	--	-5.0%	-4.3%

TABLE 2 : El Dorado Transit Demand Response Services Performance Measures

Performance Measures	Dial-A-Ride		Contracted and Subscription Services		Sac-Med	
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
One-Way Passenger-Trips	21,414	21,873	19,734	34,424	31,197	28,408
% Change from Previous Year	--	2.1%	-9.8%	--	-9.4%	-8.9%
Vehicle Service Hours	11,621	11,594	11,151	5,237	5,109	5,124
% Change from Previous Year	--	-0.2%	-3.8%	--	-2.4%	0.3%
Vehicle Service Miles	212,036	212,879	199,337	118,813	117,157	117,614
% Change from Previous Year	--	0.4%	-6.4%	--	-1.4%	0.4%
Operating Costs	\$1,390,707	\$1,513,306	\$1,484,947	\$728,136	\$762,875	\$775,447
% Change from Previous Year	--	8.8%	-1.9%	--	4.8%	1.6%
Farebox Revenues	\$60,264	\$60,486	\$84,651	\$513,306	\$484,508	\$446,443
% Change from Previous Year	--	0.4%	40.0%	--	-5.6%	-7.9%
Operating Cost per One-Way Passenger-Trip	\$64.94	\$69.19	\$75.25	\$21.15	\$24.45	\$27.30
% Change from Previous Year	--	6.5%	8.8%	--	15.6%	11.6%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour	\$119.67	\$130.52	\$133.17	\$139.04	\$149.32	\$151.34
% Change from Previous Year	--	9.1%	2.0%	--	7.4%	1.4%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Hour	1.8	1.9	1.8	6.6	6.1	5.5
% Change from Previous Year	--	2.4%	-6.2%	--	-7.1%	-9.2%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Mile	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.29	0.27	0.24
% Change from Previous Year	--	1.7%	-3.7%	--	-8.1%	-9.3%
Farebox Recovery Ratio	4.3%	4.0%	5.7%	70.5%	63.5%	57.6%
% Change from Previous Year	--	-7.8%	42.6%	--	-9.9%	-9.4%
				2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
				733	572	527
				--	-22.0%	-7.9%
				856	670	596
				--	-21.7%	-11.0%
				22,150	17,021	15,207
				--	-23.2%	-10.7%
				\$116,772	\$97,950	\$88,201
				--	-16.1%	-10.0%
				\$6,310	\$4,970	\$5,360
				--	-21.2%	7.8%
				\$159.31	\$171.24	\$167.36
				--	7.5%	-2.3%
				\$136.42	\$146.19	\$147.99
				--	7.2%	1.2%
				0.9	0.9	0.9
				--	-0.3%	3.6%
				0.03	0.03	0.03
				--	1.6%	3.1%
				5.4%	5.1%	6.1%
				--	-6.1%	19.8%

TABLE 3 : El Dorado Transit Services Systemwide Operating Data Summary

Performance Measures	Previous Audit Period			Current Audit Period		
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
One-Way Passenger-Trips	414,304	403,192	373,723	391,984	382,408	372,054
% Change from Previous Year	-2.2%	-2.7%	-7.3%	4.9%	-2.4%	-2.7%
Vehicle Service Hours	44,968	45,581	44,567	51,766	52,594	55,046
% Change from Previous Year	1.3%	1.4%	-2.2%	16.2%	1.6%	4.7%
Vehicle Service Miles	1,009,071	1,000,040	968,256	1,129,666	1,136,392	1,151,004
% Change from Previous Year	-1.8%	-0.9%	-3.2%	16.7%	0.6%	1.3%
Operating Costs	\$5,476,262	\$5,764,633	\$5,758,468	\$6,132,379	\$7,146,168	\$8,345,005
% Change from Previous Year	1.1%	5.3%	-0.1%	6.5%	16.5%	16.8%
# Employees in FTEs	60	60	60	65	71	72
% Change from Previous Year	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%	9.2%	1.4%
Farebox Revenues	\$1,513,603	\$1,589,115	\$1,609,426	\$1,598,753	\$1,578,807	\$1,517,864
% Change from Previous Year	1.1%	5.0%	1.3%	-0.7%	-1.2%	-3.9%
Operating Cost per One-Way Passenger-Trip	\$13.22	\$14.30	\$15.41	\$15.64	\$18.69	\$22.43
% Change from Previous Year	3.4%	8.2%	7.8%	1.5%	19.4%	20.0%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour	\$121.78	\$126.47	\$129.21	\$118.46	\$135.87	\$151.60
% Change from Previous Year	-0.1%	3.9%	2.2%	-8.3%	14.7%	11.6%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Hour	9.2	8.8	8.4	7.6	7.3	6.8
% Change from Previous Year	-3.4%	-4.0%	-5.2%	-9.7%	-4.0%	-7.0%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Mile	0.41	0.40	0.39	0.35	0.34	0.32
% Change from Previous Year	-0.4%	-1.8%	-4.3%	-10.1%	-3.0%	-3.9%
Vehicle Service Hours per FTE	749	760	743	796	741	765
% Change from Previous Year	-0.4%	1.4%	-2.2%	7.2%	-7.0%	3.2%
Farebox Recovery Ratio	27.6%	27.6%	27.9%	26.1%	22.1%	18.2%
% Change from Previous Year	0.0%	-0.3%	1.4%	-6.7%	-15.3%	-17.7%

Note: Previous audit period data obtained from prior performance audit.

Operating Costs – Per TDA, operating costs include the annual cost of running a transit operation exclusive of depreciation, capital expenditures, vehicle lease costs, and direct costs of providing charter service. EDCTA follows this definition.

As can be seen in Table 3, system-wide operating costs increased by 36 percent over the audit period. The performance auditor reviewed the line item operating expenses from the Fiscal and Compliance audits to determine which expense categories had the greatest increases. Between FY 2015-16 and FY 2016-17, labor expenses increased the most with worker’s compensation insurance going up by 44 percent and employee benefits increasing by 23 percent. General liability insurance also increased by 25 percent. The last year of the audit period, employee benefits again increased, this time by 75 percent. Fuel and lubricants increased by 23 percent. As discussed in the compliance section, the large increase in employee benefits is due to unfunded pension liabilities which CalPERS is now requiring state entities to cover.

Vehicle Service Hours – Vehicle service hours include that time during which a revenue vehicle is available to carry fare-paying passengers, and which includes only those times between the

time or schedule time of the first passenger pickup and the last passenger drop-off during a period of the vehicle's continuous availability. EDCTA records vehicle service hours correctly.

Systemwide service levels increased during the audit period, due to the replacement of the Iron Point Connector service with the more frequent 50 Express as well as a new fixed route serving El Dorado Hills.

Vehicle Service Miles – TDA defines vehicle service miles as those miles traveled by revenue vehicles during their vehicle service hours. As indicated in the Vehicle Service Hours discussion, EDCTA records vehicle service miles correctly.

Systemwide vehicle service miles increased with the service changes during the audit period.

The **Fare Revenue** data presented in Table 3 was obtained from annual Fiscal and Compliance Audit reports. Fare revenue by service was obtained from Administrative Operations Reports. There were minor differences between fare revenue in Administrative Operations Reports and the Fiscal and Compliance audit but this is not unusual as the Administrative Operations Reports use unaudited data. EDCTA calculates and reports fare revenue correctly to the State Controller.

The **Employee Hours** data presented in Tables 1 to 3 was obtained from State Controller reports. The Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) definition currently used by EDCTA is consistent with the definition presented in Appendix B of the *Performance Audit Guidebook* which is the number of person hours worked by persons employed in connection with the public transit system divided by 2,000. However, FTE's reported in the Administrative Operations Reports (and shown in Table 3) do not match the figures obtained from the State Controller Reports. EDCTA added staff during this audit period to meet increased service levels as well as relieve some administrative work load from management.

Calculation and Evaluation of Performance Indicators

Performance indicators are frequently used to quantify and review the efficiency and effectiveness of a transit operator's activities. Such indicators can provide insight on current operations as well as on the operator's performance over a period of time. Using the data described above, the following performance indicators were calculated as required in Section 99246(d) of the Public Utilities Code:

- Operating Cost per Passenger
- Operating Cost per Vehicle Revenue Hour
- Passengers per Vehicle Revenue Hour
- Passengers per Vehicle Revenue Mile
- Vehicle Revenue Hours per Employee

In addition, the Farebox Recovery Ratio is calculated and evaluated herein, as required in Section 99268 et seq. of the Public Utilities Code.

The **Operating Cost per (One-way) Passenger-Trip** data is presented in Tables 1 to 3 and Figures 1 to 3. This performance measure is a key indicator of a transit system's cost effectiveness. According to the available data, the operating cost per one-way passenger-trip increased steadily over the audit period from \$15.64 to \$22.43. The decline in this performance indicator is due to both the decrease in ridership and significant increase in operating costs. By type of service, special services and commuter services have the lowest operating cost per trip.

The **Operating Cost per Vehicle Revenue Hour** data is presented in Tables 1 to 3 and Figures 4 to 6. This performance measure is a key indicator of a transit system's cost efficiency. The operating cost per vehicle revenue hour increased by 27 percent from \$118.46 to \$151.60 during this audit period; however FY 2015-16 operating cost per hour is less than the prior audit period. By type of service, Special Services and Commuter Services have the highest operating cost per hour.

The **Passengers per Vehicle Revenue Hour** (commonly referred to as "productivity") is presented in Tables 1-3 and Figures 7-9. One-way passenger-trips per vehicle service hour decreased by 10.7 percent during the audit period due to a decrease in ridership and increase in vehicle hours from new services. By type, Special Services and Commuter Services are the most productive. Sac-med is the least productive service. The adopted Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) includes a list of goals and standards for EDCTA services by type of service.

- Urban services – 10.0 passenger trips per hour
- Rural route services – 5.0 passenger trips per hour
- Demand response services – 2.0 passenger trips per hour

In FY 2017-18 50 Express service did not meet the urban service standard of 10.0 passenger trips per hour. Although 50 Express is an urban service, it is also classified as a local route. Additionally, the reverse commuter does not meet the standard; however, the bus would otherwise be deadheading back to the yard.

In FY 2017-18 the following rural routes did not meet the productivity standards:

- Cameron Park/Shingle Springs
- Diamond Springs Saturday
- Cameron Park/El Dorado Hills

In FY 2017-18, Dial-A-Ride and the Sac Med service carried less than 2.0 passenger trips per hour.

The **Passengers per Vehicle Revenue Mile** data is presented in Table 1 to 3 and Figure 10 to 12. As presented, passengers per vehicle revenue mile have followed the same trend as passengers per hour with a decrease of 6.8 percent from 0.35 to .032.

The **Vehicle Service Hours per Employee** data is presented in Tables 1 to 3 and Figure 13. As presented, the number of vehicle revenue hours per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) decreased slightly during the audit period from 796 to 765.

Farebox Recovery Ratio – Transit operators who make claims under Article 4 of the TDA in rural counties must maintain a minimum farebox recovery ratio of 10 percent, while transit operators in urbanized areas with a population of less than 500,000 must maintain a 15 percent farebox ratio. El Dorado County includes both rural and urbanized areas as defined by the US Census Bureau. Therefore, EDCTA is subject to a “blended” farebox recovery ratio. The Sacramento Urbanized Area boundary has expanded over the past two decennial census to include a larger portion of western El Dorado County. As such, EDCTC changed the adopted blended farebox ratio from 11.5 percent to 12.22 percent in June of 2014, to be consistent with 2010 Census urbanized area boundaries and populations.

EDCTA farebox ratio data is presented in Tables 1 to 3 and Figures 14-16. The farebox recovery ratio of 18.2 percent in FY 2017-18 surpasses the required minimum farebox ratio of 12.2 percent for EDCTA services that year. Although there is still a comfortable margin over the TDA requirement, systemwide farebox ratio declined during this audit period. By type of service, the demand response contracted/subscription services had the highest farebox ratio (58-70 percent), followed by commuter services (53-55 percent). Dial-A-Ride has the lowest farebox ratio of 4-5 percent.

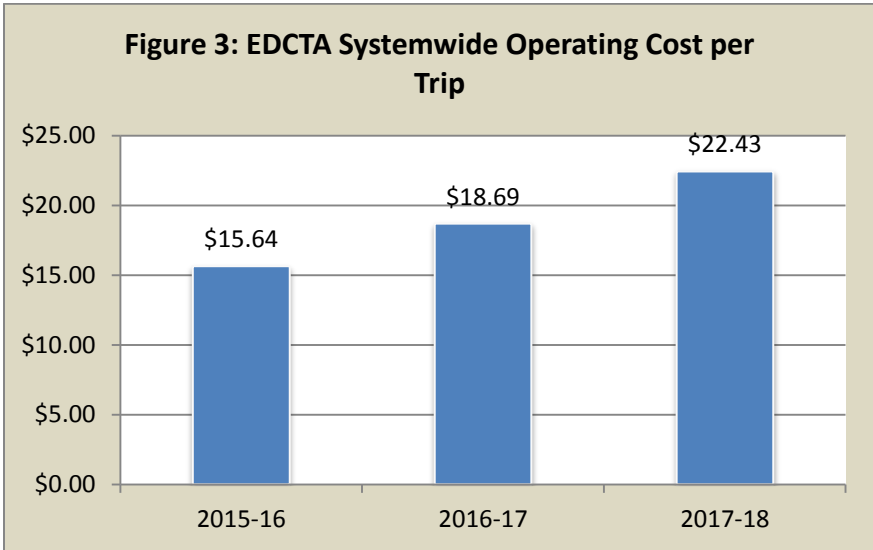
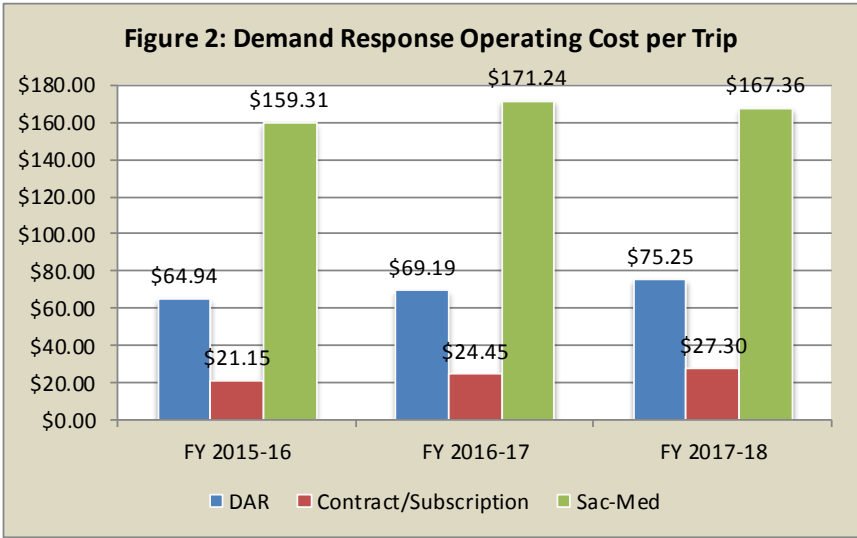
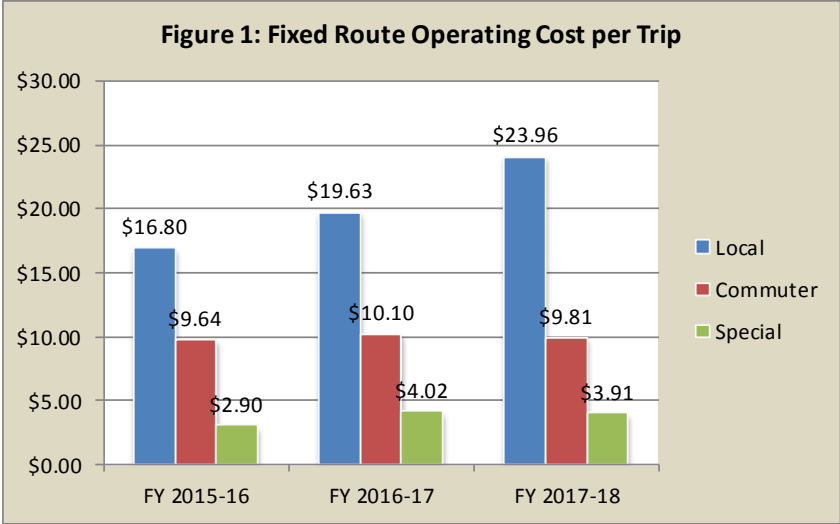
The SRTP’s adopted farebox ratio standards by service type are as follows:

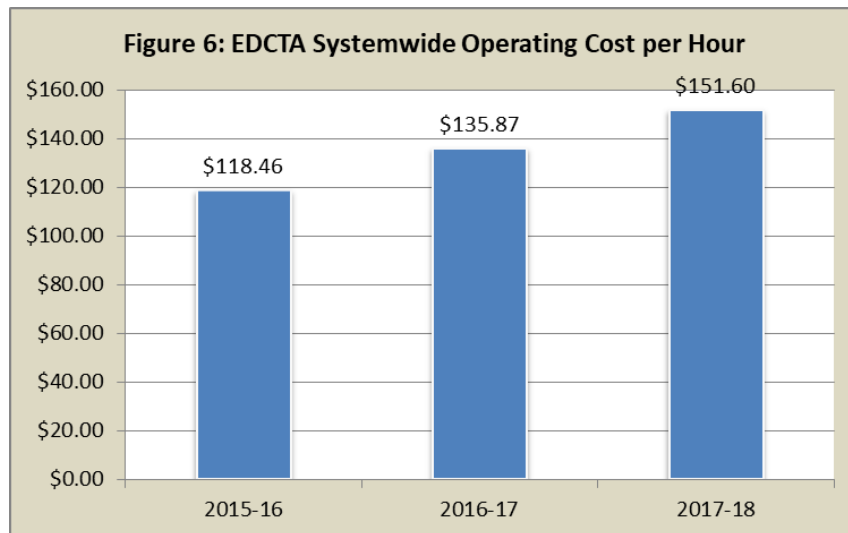
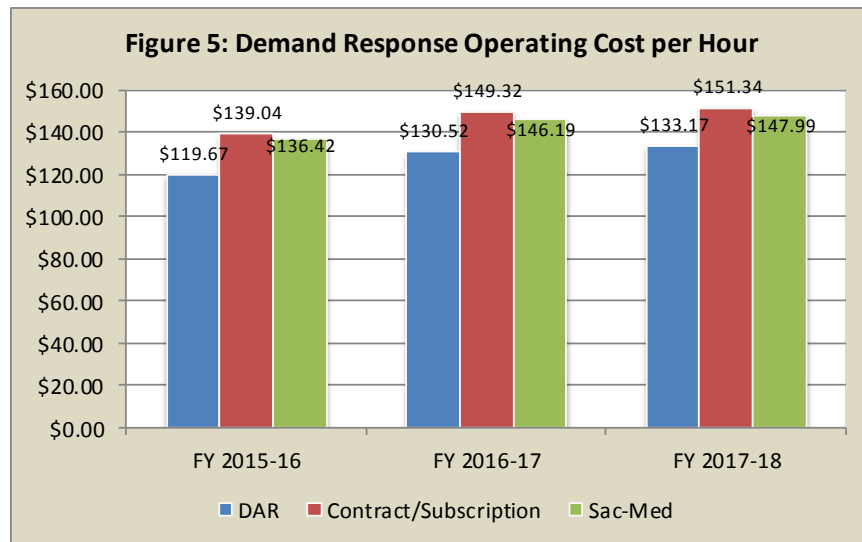
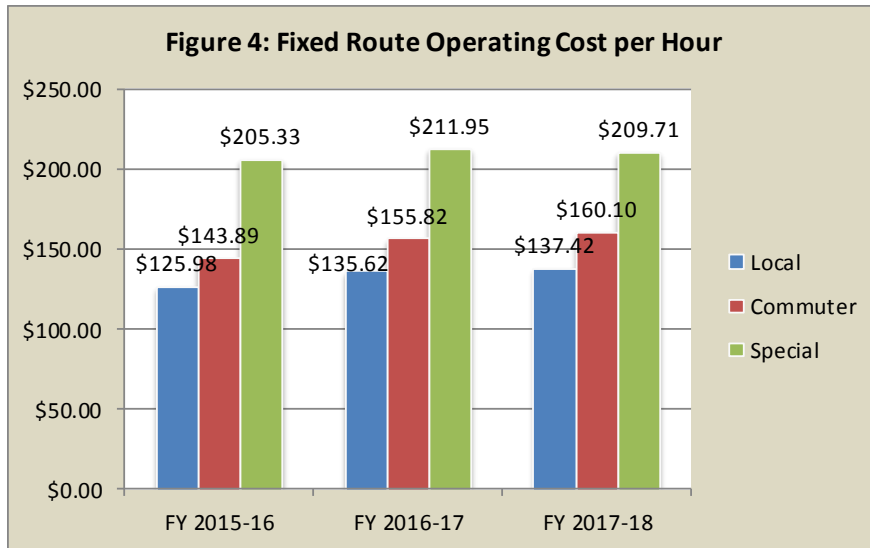
- Commuter Services = 50%
- Local Services = 10%
- Demand Response Services = NA

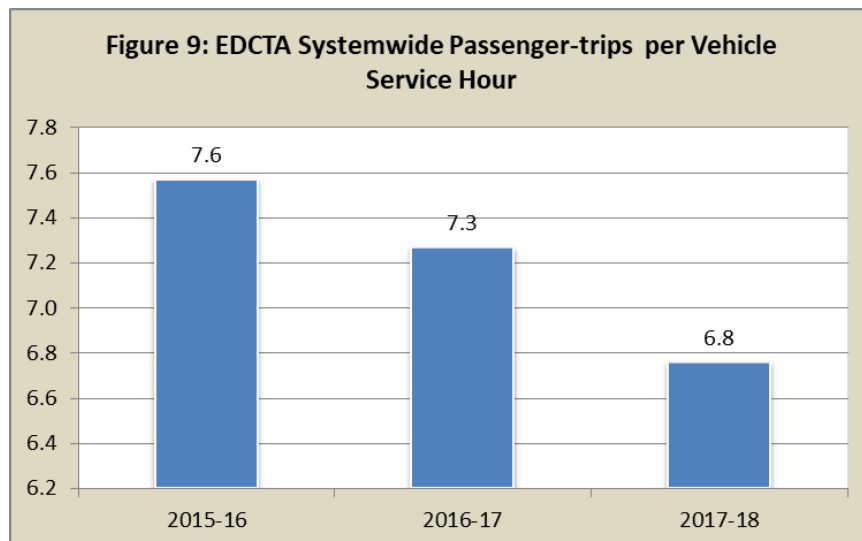
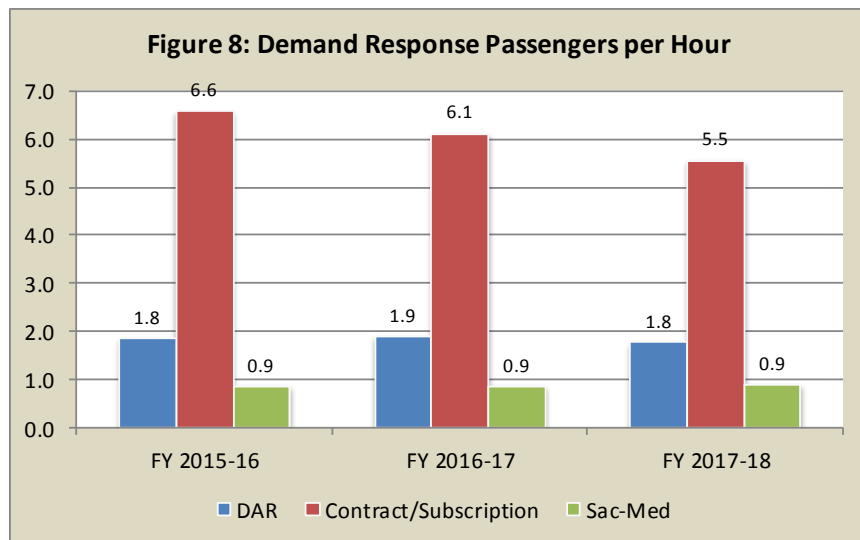
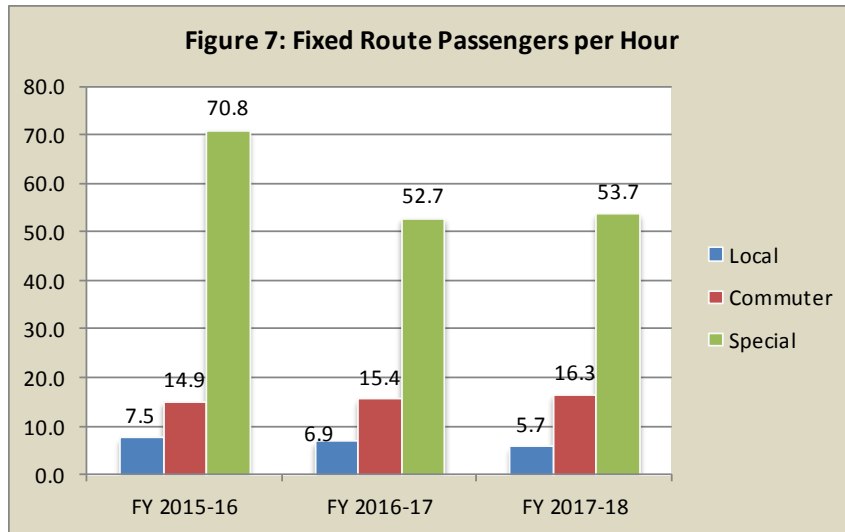
Commuter Services met the standard but Local Services fell below the 10 percent farebox ratio during this audit period.

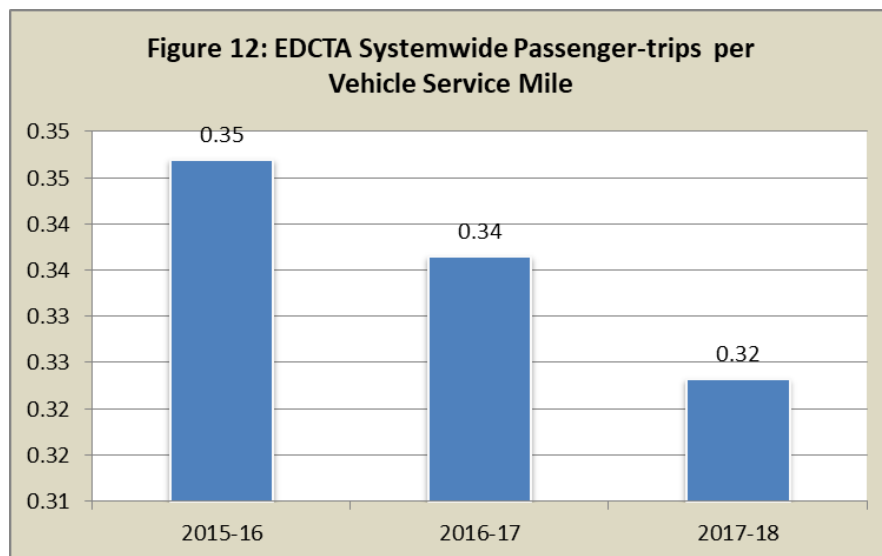
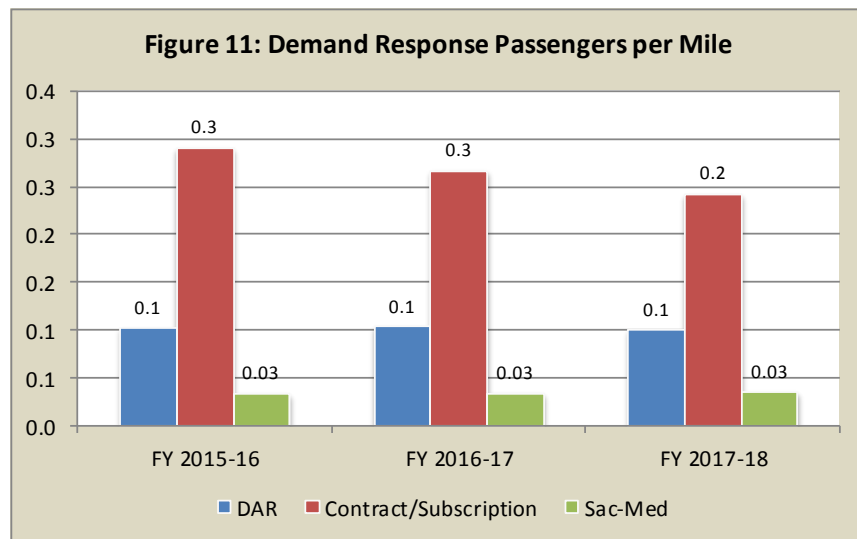
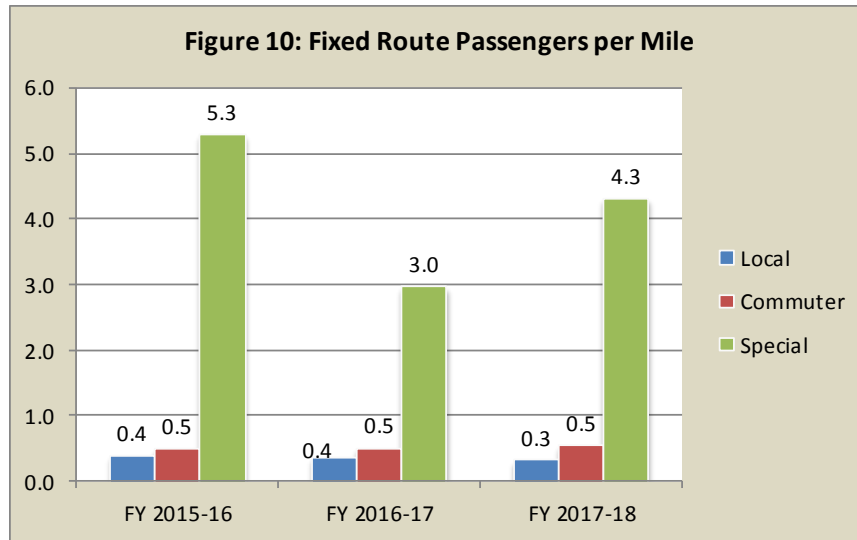
Performance Indicator Summary

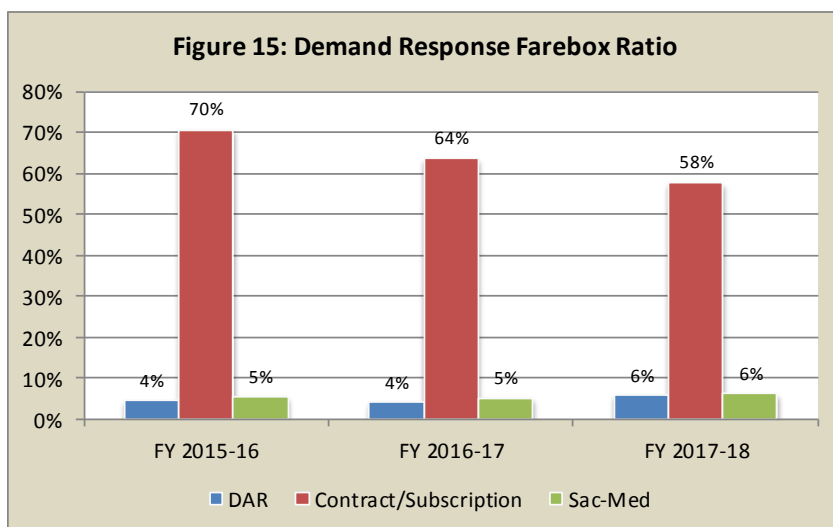
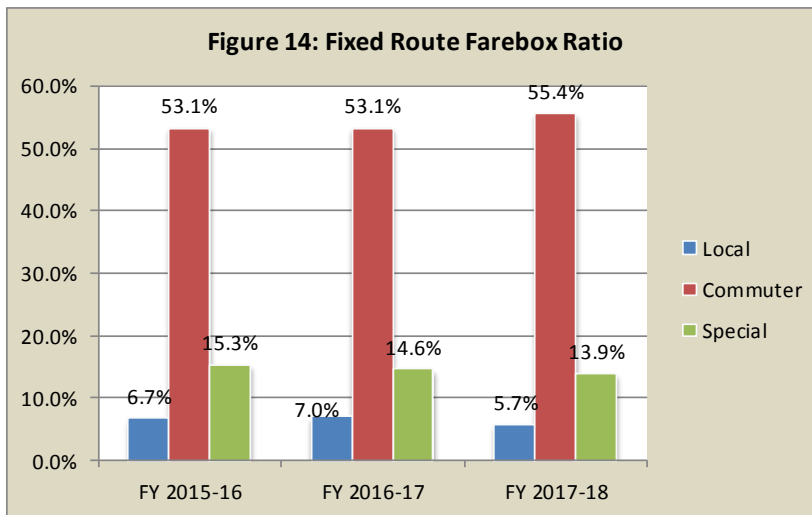
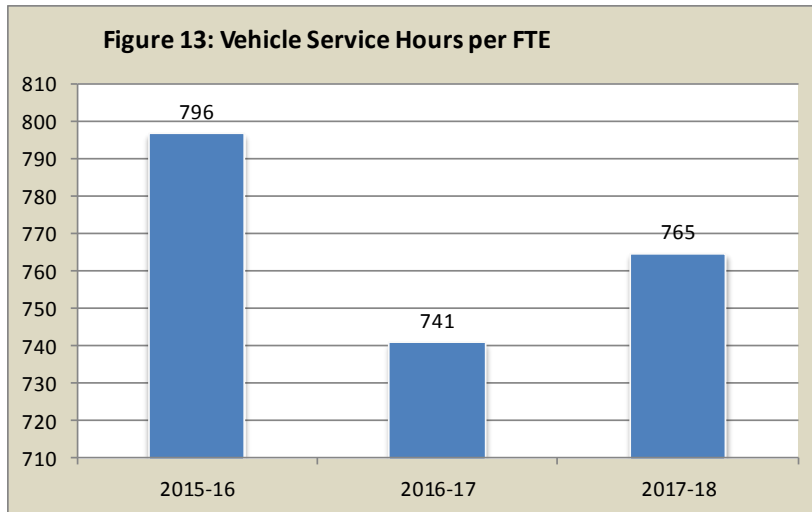
The performance declines seen during this audit period are most representative of a decrease in ridership combined with an increase in operating costs mostly due to CalPERS unfunded pension liabilities and other labor costs. Transit agencies in Northern California have felt upward pressure on wages as the California economy grows. Overall, EDCTA met TDA farebox ratio minimums and many internal standards. EDCTA’s trend in performance is on par with other similar transit agencies in Northern California.

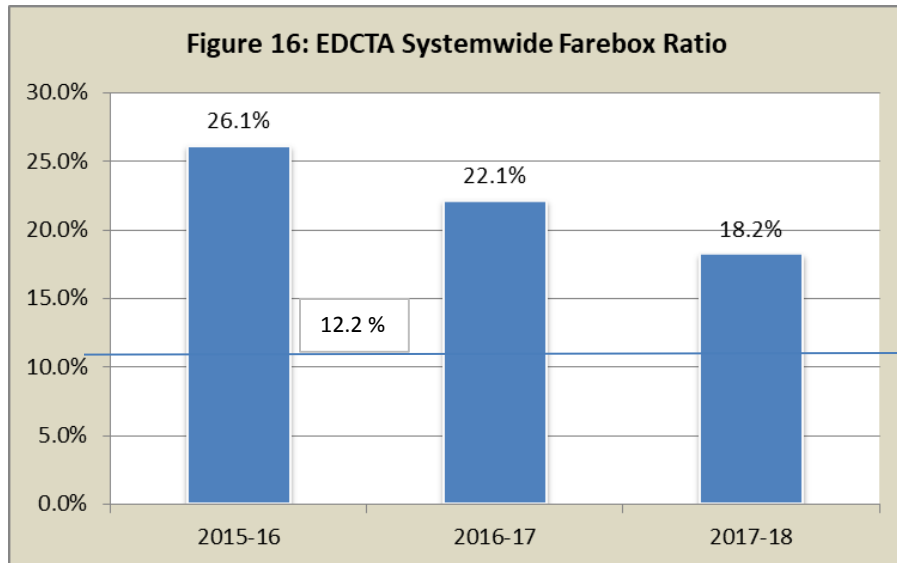












Recommendations on Data Collection

Operating data reported to the State Controller in the Transit Operators and Non-Transit Claimants Annual Reports very closely match that found in the Annual Administrative Operations Reports. The overall data collection and recording process for EDCTA is good. EDCTA uses Routematch software to collect and report transit operating data. Operators are provided a computer tablet for recording operating data such as passengers, hours, and miles. The data is automatically downloaded to the “cloud”, allowing operating statistics reports by route to be easily produced. These reports are used by the Finance Manager and the Planning and Marketing Manager to prepare the Administrative Operations Reports.

Assessment of Internal Controls

To ensure that the information gathered as part of this audit is reliable and valid, a review of internal controls is necessary. A transit operator’s internal controls are intended to do the following:

- Provide reasonable assurance that program goals and objectives are met
- Ensure that resources are adequately safeguarded and efficiently used
- Ensure that reliable data is obtained, maintained, and fairly disclosed in reports
- Ensure that the transit operator complies with laws and regulations

EDCTA appears to have a reasonably well developed system of internal controls appropriate to the size of the transit system. This statement is echoed in each of the three annual Independent Fiscal and Compliance Auditor’s Reports. No significant deficiencies or material weaknesses were reported.

REVIEW OF COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

As an entity receiving TDA funds for transit purposes, EDCTA is required to comply with the state's financial and reporting guidelines detailed in the Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Entities (RTPEs) pursuant to TDA requirements. Below is a discussion of each compliance section required in Public Utilities Code 99246 as part of the TPA. Table 4 displays the results of the compliance analysis:

- ◆ In accordance with Public Utilities Code Section 99243, El Dorado Transit has submitted annual reports to the EDCTC based on the Uniform System of Accounts and Records established by the State Controller. For FY 2015-16, these reports were required to be filed with the RTPE and the State Controller 90 days from the end of the fiscal year (September 28th) for paper filing and 110 days after the end of the fiscal year (October 18th) for electronic filing. For the latter two years of the audit period, the State Controller Report was not due until January 31 of the following year. EDCTA submit all three reports within the required time period.
- ◆ In accordance with Public Utilities Code Section 99245, EDCTA submitted annual fiscal and compliance audits to the EDCTC and to the State Controller within 180 days following the end of the fiscal year for each audit period. An independent auditor completed these fiscal and compliance audits, as required.
- ◆ In accordance with Public Utilities Code Section 99251, El Dorado Transit has submitted evidence that the California Highway Patrol has certified compliance with Vehicle Code Section 1808.1 within the 13 months prior to each TDA claim submitted.
- ◆ In accordance with Public Utilities Code Section 99261, EDCTA's claims for TDA funds are submitted in compliance with rules and regulations adopted by the EDCTC for such claims.
- ◆ Per TDA, transit operators serving rural areas are required to maintain a ratio of fare revenues to operating costs at least equal to one-tenth (10 percent) as detailed in Public Utilities Code Sections 99268.2, 99268.4, and 99268.5 and transit operators serving urbanized areas with a population less than 500,000 must maintain a farebox ratio of 15 percent. The 2010 US Census designated the westernmost portion of El Dorado County to be part of the Sacramento Urbanized Area; therefore EDCTC developed a blended farebox ratio of 12.22 percent based on the proportion of population in the rural and urban portions of the county. As can be seen in Table 3 and Figure 16, EDCTA meets the blended farebox ratio requirement.
- ◆ Public Utilities Code Section 99266 requires that El Dorado Transit's operating budgets not increase by more than 15 percent over the preceding year, and no substantial increase or decrease in the scope of operations or capital budget provisions for major new fixed facilities be realized unless the operator has reasonably supported and substantiated the change(s). See Table 3 for actual operating costs between Fiscal Years 2012-13 and 2017-18.

In FY 2016-17 annual operating costs increased 16 percent over the prior year. This occurred again in FY 2017-18.

According to the Fiscal Audits, much of the increase is due to changes in employee benefits, workers compensation insurance, general liability insurance and fuel costs. Employee benefits alone increased by over \$1,000,000 from FY 2016-17 to FY 2017-18 and an additional \$263,000 from FY 2015-16 to FY 2016-17. During this period, CalPERS required participating agencies to increase payments to the program to cover OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits) and unfunded pension liability. This translates to a significant expense for EDCTA as well as other transit agencies. In June 2015 a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was ratified with the labor union. The MOU called for a four year contract that included a raise of 12 percent the first year, 5 percent the second year, 5 percent the third year and 3 percent the fourth year. These increases reflect that that, due to the recession, raises were not given to operators between FY 2008-09 and FY 2013-14. Raises were also needed to attract and retain operators, as transit agencies around Northern California have generally found it difficult to retain operators. These pension and labor cost increases along with insurance and fuel cost increases (which are out of the control of EDCTA) contributed to the large increase in operating costs.

- ◆ EDCTA's definition of performance measures are consistent with Public Utilities Code Section 99247 including (a) operating cost, (b) operating cost per passenger, (c) operating cost per vehicle service hour, (d) passengers per vehicle service hour, (e) passengers per vehicle service mile, (f) total passengers, (g) transit vehicle, (h) vehicle service hours, (i) vehicle service miles, and (j) vehicle service hours per employee.
- ◆ EDCTA offers a retirement plan to its transportation employees through the California Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). EDCTA also participates in a Risk Pool as required by PERS. As of June 2018, CalPERS was only around 70 percent funded; however, CalPERS is taking steps to increase the funded status such as shortening the amortization period, adopting new strategic asset allocation, and by raising fees for participating government entities (discussed above). Actuarial valuations performed by CalPERS assume that the amortization period for the unfunded liability for EDCTA is 30 years or less. Therefore, the retirement system will be funded within 40 years, per PUC 99271.
- ◆ In accordance with California Code of Regulations Section 6754(a) (3), El Dorado Transit makes full use of funds if available to it under the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964 (in particular, FTA Section 5311 Non-Urbanized Area Formula Program funds, FTA 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program funds, and FTA Section 5310 Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities Program funds administered by Caltrans) before TDA claims are granted.

TABLE 4: El Dorado Transit Authority Compliance Requirements

Requirement	PUC Reference	In Compliance?	
		Yes	No
(1) The transit operator submitted annual reports to the RTPA based upon the Uniform System of Accounts and Records established by the State Controller within the specified time period.	99243	X	
(2) The operator has submitted annual fiscal and compliance audits to its RTPA and to the State Controller within 180 days following the end of the fiscal year, or has received the 90-day extension allowed by law.	99245	X	
(3) The CHP has, within the 13 months prior to each TDA claim submitted by an operator certified the operator's compliance with Vehicle Code Section 1808.1 following CHP inspection of the operator's terminal.	99251 b	X	
(4) The operator's claim for TDA funds is submitted in compliance with rules and regulations adopted by the RTPA for such claims.	99261	X	
(5) If an operator serves urbanized and non-urbanized areas, it has maintained a ratio of fare revenues to operating costs at least equal to the ratio determined by the rules and regulations adopted by the RTPA.	99270.1	X	
(6) The operator's operating budget has not increased by more than 15 percent over the preceding year, nor is there a substantial increase or decrease in the scope of operations or capital budget provisions for major new fixed facilities.	99266	X	
(7) The operator's definitions of performance measures are consistent with Public Utilities Code Section 99247.	99247	X	
(8) If the operator serves an urbanized area, it has maintained a ratio of fare revenue to operating cost at least equal to one-fifth (20 percent), unless it is in a county with a population of less than 500,000, in which case it must maintain a ratio of at least three-twentieths (15 percent).	99268.2, 99268.3, and 99268.1	NA	
(9) If the operator serves a rural area, it has maintained a ratio of fare revenues to operating costs at least equal to one-tenth (10 percent).	99268.2, 99268.4, and 99268.5	NA	
(10) The current cost of operator's retirement system is fully funded with respect to the officers and employees of its public transportation system, or the operator is implementing a plan approved by the RTPA, which will fully fund the retirement system within 40 years.	99271	X	
(11) If the operator receives state transit assistance funds, the operator makes full use of funds if available to it under the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964 before TDA claims are granted.	California Code of Regulations, Section 6754 (a) (3)	X	

STATUS OF PRIOR AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous audit was completed by LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. in April of 2016. The recommendations and their status from that effort are presented below.

Recommendation 1: *EDCTA should work with the Fiscal Auditor to correctly exclude the El Dorado Air Quality Grant revenue when calculating farebox ratio.*

Implementation Complete – According to the Fiscal and Compliance Audits for this audit period, Air Quality Grant revenue was not included in the farebox ratio calculations. However, in January 2016, the TDA definition of “local support” was broadened as follows:

“local funds” means any nonfederal or nonstate grant funds or other revenues generated by, earned by, or distributed to an operator.

Under this definition, the El Dorado County Air Quality Grant revenue could be used as local support to boost EDCTA’s farebox ratio, if EDCTA fails to meet the required 12.2 percent. Additionally, any local match for the El Dorado Air Quality Grant provided by the Fair Association can be classified as Special Transit Fares, as it is revenue given to guarantee a special route for which the Fair Association is a beneficiary of the service. Special Transit Fares can also be included in farebox ratio calculation. In FY 2017-18 EDCTA had a farebox ratio of 18.2 percent, so adding local support to the farebox ratio calculation is not necessary. However, if farebox ratio continues to decline, EDCTA could consider applying the El Dorado County Air Quality Grant as local support to the farebox ratio calculation.

Recommendation 2: *If management is confident with the financial outlook for EDCTA operating requirements, EDCTA should strive to narrow the gap between the LTF allocation request for operating assistance and the maximum amount of LTF allowed for operating assistance.*

Implementation Complete – Per the FY 2016-17 and FY 2017-18 Fiscal Audits there was no unearned LTF revenue. During the prior audit period, EDCTA budgeted for unknown operating costs increases such as labor costs resulting from a new union contract and a salary scale adjustment. As noted in the operating cost discussion above, these labor costs actually occurred during this audit period, beginning in FY 2015-16. Going forward, there may be new service plan element recommendations resulting from the ongoing Short Range/Long Range Transit Plan update which would require an increase in the budget.

DETAILED REVIEW OF TRANSIT OPERATOR FUNCTIONS

This section presents a review of the various functions of El Dorado Transit. In general, transit operator functions can be divided into the following areas:

- ◆ General Management and Organization
- ◆ Service Planning
- ◆ Personnel Management and Training
- ◆ Administration

- ◆ Scheduling, Dispatch and Operations
- ◆ Maintenance
- ◆ Marketing and Public Information

General Management and Organization

Administrative Oversight

All operations, administration and maintenance are performed at EDCTA’s facility in Diamond Springs, California. EDCTA is operated by a staff of 83 in house employees, as shown in Figure 17. The management team includes five personnel: the Executive Director, Operations Manager, Finance Manager, Human Resources Manager, and Planning and Marketing Manager. The Operations Manager oversees a total of 73 employees. A Maintenance & Facilities Supervisor and three Transit Operations Supervisors report directly to the Operations Manager. The operators and dispatchers directly report to the Operations Supervisors and maintenance and equipment staff report directly to the Maintenance & Facilities Supervisor.

Transit operators are covered by a collective bargaining Memorandum of Understanding between EDCTA and the Operating Engineers Local No. 3 Union. Total number of employees increased from 77 to 83 during the audit period. The following positions were added during the audit period in response to increased services:

- 3 FTE operators
- Dispatcher
- Equipment Mechanic
- Safety Coordinator
- Administrative Coordinator

Given the size and scope of the El Dorado Transit program and the amount of administrative work which accompanies transit system operation, the new staff positions added is appropriate. Lines of reporting are clearly defined.

Management staff and operations management meet weekly. Four hour Verification Transit Training are held each spring. Other meetings are scheduled as needed to update staff on new equipment or special services.

EDCTA has an appropriately well-defined program of administrative oversight. It regularly receives, reviews, and acts upon performance and financial information. The Executive Director reviews operations reports on a monthly basis and more frequently if prompted by passenger complaints, issues, or after new services have been implemented.

EDCTA has established an Open Door Policy. All employees are encouraged to share concerns and provide input. Supervisors and managers are encouraged to actively resolve conflicts. EDCTA revised and adopted the Personnel Policies & Procedures Manual in 2018 which clearly outlines sick leave, vacation, disciplinary actions, dress code etc.

Budget Administration

The Executive Director compares budgeted expectations with actual revenue and expenses on a monthly basis. The Finance Manager prepares reports showing actual expenses as compared to the budget year to date, monthly, which is reviewed by the Executive Director and other administrative managers. The EDCTA board must approve substantial changes in the budget and/or spending. The budget includes a contingency line item in case of a sudden drop in transit revenues.

Each month, the Planning and Marketing Manager compiles financial information and performance indicators into the Administrative Operations Report. The report is reported to the Board and TAC every six months.

Recent Program Changes

During the audit period, the following service changes occurred:

- Replaced the Iron Point Connector service with the more frequent 50 Express route
- Eliminated the underperforming Grizzly Flat route
- Implemented earlier and later service on the local routes
- Eliminated taxi voucher program in El Dorado Hills and began fixed route demonstration program

The Executive Director reviews the impact of service changes as part of the monthly operational review and compares results with previous expectations. New services are implemented as demonstration projects and reevaluated if the service is not meeting expectations. Fixed route service in El Dorado Hills is a good example. EDCTA has tried multiple methods of providing public transit service to this community. The on-going Short Range Transit Plan will review this service further and provide a recommendation.

Communications with Other Government Agencies

Discussions with both EDCTA and EDCTC staff show that there is an effective and positive relationship between the two agencies. EDCTA also maintains a good relationship with other governmental agencies. The Executive Director serves on advisory and ad hoc committees such as the transit coordinating committee for the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), Policy Advisory Team for EDCTC, Chamber of Commerce, County Economic Development, and County Community Development. As the Executive Director neared retirement, more of these coordination and outreach duties were being delegated to the Planning and Marketing Manager.

Service Planning

Prior to implementing service changes that will significantly affect passengers, EDCTA conducts studies and changes are reviewed by the TAC and Board. One recent example is changes to the DAR service. EDCTA conducted a focus group study prior to eliminating some of the outlying zones and changing the fare structure.

The effectiveness of a transit system is highly dependent upon the continued development of short- and long-range transit plans. The EDCTC commissioned the *Western El Dorado County Short and Long Range Transit Plan* (SRTP, LRTP), which will be completed in October of 2019. EDCTA implemented many of the recommendations from the previous transit plan such as:

- Establish a taxi voucher program in El Dorado Hills
- Establish 50 Express service

In terms of strategic planning, EDCTA has set clear, reasonable goals and objectives in the SRTP and LRTP. The Administrative Operations report provides the Executive Director and the governing board with an easy to understand view of how EDCTA services measure up to adopted SRTP goals and standards. The report includes comparison by type of service for TDA performance measures such as passenger-trips per hour as well as reliability performance measures such as on-time performance and road calls. Annual Administrative Operations reports are posted on the EDCTA website for review by interested parties.

In terms of short range planning, the SRTP identifies residential, retail, and other developments which may require transportation. The Executive Director is provided the opportunity to comment on local entity commercial, retail, multi-family, and low income new development projects, if the project may require public transit.

On-board surveys were conducted as part of the ongoing SRTP update in 2019 to determine origin to destination patterns, how services were perceived and to ascertain what shortcomings, if any, were present. An additional on-line survey was conducted in order to reach a wider range of residents who may not currently use public transit. These responses will be used to guide the alternatives process for the Short Range Transit Plan.

Special Service Transportation Needs

El Dorado Transit's entire fleet of revenue vehicles is wheelchair accessible. In an effort to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), EDCTA offers paratransit service to complement the Placerville, Diamond Springs, Pollock Pines, El Dorado Hills and Cameron Park routes. Several of EDCTA services focus on transportation for elderly and disabled residents. This includes contracted transportation for human service agencies. EDCTA is in compliance with ADA requirements.

Public Participation

All El Dorado Transit meetings are open to the public, and are conducted in an accessible facility per the requirements of the ADA. EDCTA policy requires public notification for major service changes (more than 20 percent of total system square mile service area) or any fare change. A public hearing is conducted and the EDCTA TAC is consulted. The public is notified by publishing legal notices and press releases. In addition, transit service revision notices are posted on EDCTA vehicles, in passenger facilities and on the website. However, public outreach is typically conducted for most service changes. The EDCTC Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) also acts as an important conduit for soliciting public input.

Scheduling, Dispatch, and Operations

EDCTA operators are appropriately certified for the types of vehicles operated for El Dorado Transit. Operators choose shifts based on seniority and are trained to operate each vehicle in the fleet. Driver bids change at least twice each year. EDCTA operators are represented by the Operating Engineers Local No. 3 Union. Both part-time and full-time employees are eligible for vacation, sick leave, and any other employer-paid benefits. EDCTA's *Personnel Policies & Procedures Manual* details procedures regarding vacation, absences, and sick leave. In addition to part-time operators, EDCTA hires "extra help" operators to cover shifts for operators on vacation or sick leave.

DAR scheduling is performed using Routematch software. This software allows schedulers to easily access a database of passenger information, sort passenger-trip requests geographically, and provides several trip options for dispatchers to choose from. Passengers are allowed to schedule rides up to three days in advance and subscription service is available. El Dorado Transit currently schedules an average of three subscription trips per day. This is well within the ADA Guidance. EDCTA's no show policy is also clearly outlined on the website. For a sample week in September, roughly 3.5 percent of trips were no-shows, which indicates a need to strictly enforce the no-show policy.

Personnel Management and Training

The *EDCTA Driver Handbook* outlines a non-monetary safety incentive program that involves presentation of certificates at various intervals. Driver performance evaluations are conducted by EDCTA staff at least once a year. Each evaluation includes a ride along and a "trail check" from a supervisor's car. Employee turnover at EDCTA ranged from 6.8 percent to 12 percent of the average number of employees during the audit period. This is a result of employees retiring, resigning or being terminated. Recently, EDCTA has found it challenging to retain good operators, particularly younger recruits. A recent compensation report showed that EDCTA's starting hourly wage is low but overall compensation (including benefits) is high. The benefits package may not be as attractive to younger applicants due to the fact that EDCTA is competing with other higher wage hourly jobs in a tight labor market. EDCTA has an on-going recruitment

process through a variety of means including the internet, social media, job fairs, and local newspapers.

EDCTA has the ability to provide initial and on-going driver training on-site using EDCTA staff. All new recruits must pass a one year probation period. Operators are trained on all aspects of each type of vehicle in the fleet, including training on first aid, accident procedures, and wheelchair procedures. EDCTA's *Personnel Policies & Procedures Manual* details its formalized employee discipline program and conforms to labor agreements. All safety-sensitive employees are covered by the EDCTA's Drug and Alcohol Policy outlined in the *Personnel Policies & Procedures Manual*, which appears to meet all applicable state and federal requirements.

Regarding insurance, EDCTA is covered up to \$30 million under the CalTIP insurance pool. Established procedures for processing and investigating accident/injury claims are currently in place. During this period, a new Safety Coordinator position was added in anticipation of the FTA requirement for a Safety Manager. Job duties include: safety specific training, inspections of bus stops, observe work practices, injury and illness prevention, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) matters, coordination with Office of Emergency Services (OES) and other emergency response agencies. The Safety Coordinator maintains a safety committee and makes recommendations to the Executive Director. Formerly, these duties were under the purview of the Operations Manager, who now has more time to spend on managing day to day transit operations.

EDCTA coordinates with the County Office of Emergency Services and is prepared to assist in the event of a disaster. All supervisors are trained in National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The El Dorado Transit facility in Diamond Springs provides adequate office space for administrative and dispatching functions. The EDCTA fleet is parked outside in a secure lot at the facility. Entry into non-public areas of the facility require a key card. Security cameras have also been positioned at various entrances and in the counting room. The facility is maintained in house. Bus stops are maintained through a contract with an advertising vendor or by an EDCTA maintenance technician.

Fare Collection

Currently, EDCTA uses manual locking fareboxes for fare collection. EDCTA has an established daily farebox count procedure which is secure and requires accountability. Security cameras have been installed in the vault room, separate staff members verify the daily cash balance and access to the vault room and keys to the vaults are limited to authorized staff members. Additionally, an EDCTA dispatcher compares the actual amount of revenue collected to passenger-trips recorded for variance. If there is more than a five percent deviation, the driver's supervisor is notified. Each driver has a fare vault audit conducted once a year.

EDCTA is part of the regional Connect Card program, an electronic transit fare system which will allow passengers to use one “smart card” for Sac RT, Placer County Transit, Roseville Transit, Yuba Sutter Transit, E-tran, South County Transit and YoloBus. At the end of the day, Connect Card ridership data is downloaded wirelessly and transmitted to Sac RT who prepares monthly reports regarding revenue owed and costs shared.

Marketing and Public Information

El Dorado Transit has a robust marketing program. In 2015, El Dorado Transit completed an update of the *El Dorado Transit Assessment and Marketing Plan* which included development of the new logo and vehicle graphics. The Planning and Marketing Manager along with an Office Assistant travel to various groups to make on-site marketing presentations a couple times per month.

An annual summary of customer complaints and compliments is included in the Administrative Operations Report so that the EDCTA and EDCTC board are aware of the public’s opinion of the transit system. Passenger comments are tracked by date and route. It is EDCTA’s policy to respond to complaints or concerns within two business days. The public’s perception of El Dorado Transit’s services is seemingly favorable as evidenced in recent on-board surveys conducted as part of the Short Range Transit Plan effort. El Dorado Transit also conducts mobility training as a way to encourage able residents to ride the fixed routes instead of DAR.

Consistent on-time performance is an important part of marketing for a transit system. EDCTC had good on-time performance during this audit period. Overall, EDCTA staff dedicates sufficient resources to useful marketing materials, promotional campaigns, and other public outreach efforts.

Maintenance

The EDCTA fleet ranges from 5-passenger minivans used for demand response services to 57-passenger buses for commuter services. EDCTA maximizes FTA funding to procure vehicles. The average age of the revenue fleet is approximately 6 years, and the average accumulated mileage is 172,940 per revenue vehicle. A total of 23 revenue vehicles are eligible for replacement in the next five years, including 6 vehicles eligible for replacement in 2019. During the audit period, there was a steady uptick in the number of road calls. In FY 2017-18 a total of 168 road calls were made. This is an increase of 37 from the prior year and 59 from FY 2015-16. The on-going Short Range Transit Plan will outline a long-term and short term vehicle replacement plan which will reduce overall maintenance problems.

EDCTA maintenance staff use Squarerigger[®] Fleet Maintenance software to track preventative maintenance repairs for the transit fleet. A preventive maintenance schedule is in place that meets the requirements of the bus manufacturers. With the exception of body work and windshield, all vehicle repairs are performed by in-house mechanics. The operations/maintenance facility appears to be sufficient for the varied types of vehicles operated. All

EDCTA's staff is based in this facility, which includes administrative offices, conference room, a transit dispatch center, driver's check-in locker room, and employee breakroom. Access to the facility is by key card entry and security cameras are placed at the various entries. The maintenance facility includes three maintenance bays, three lifts (two portable), a drive-through bus wash, a parts supply room, a mechanic's breakroom, and the senior equipment mechanic's office. The fully-fenced bus parking lot is striped to accommodate up to 62 vehicles.

EDCTA currently employs Zonar Electronic Vehicle Inspection Report Technology for the primary purpose of fleet maintenance management. Electronic "tags" are placed at important inspection points on each vehicle. During daily vehicle inspections, each driver places a hand-held reader near each tag and keys in the condition of that part of the vehicle. After the inspection is complete, the reader is returned to a holder mounted inside the bus where the data is transmitted wirelessly to maintenance and operations staff. This technology improves operational efficiency by allowing managers to be informed of potential maintenance issues in a timely manner. The Zonar system also ensures that pre-trip vehicle inspections are properly performed and the appropriate staff members are notified of any needed repairs. EDCTA has a good procedure in place for prioritizing repairs. There is good communication between mechanics and dispatchers with respect to maintenance. An adequate supply of parts is available to minimize vehicle downtime.

EDCTA has also equipped all the commuter buses and most of the cutaways with a vehicle logical unit and vehicle information management software. The vehicle logical unit is connected to an automated vehicle annunciation system after the vehicle crosses through a geofence. The vehicle information management cameras and software allow maintenance staff to have continuously accessible video and fleet information. Security cameras have been installed on all buses.

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EDCTA Conclusions and Recommendations

The Auditor's analysis of EDCTA indicates that, in terms of operations, the system was efficiently run and well managed during the audit period.

FINDINGS

- ◆ EDCTA was found to be in compliance with all performance related sections of the TDA public utilities code as identified in Table 4.
- ◆ EDCTA submit State Controller Reports and Fiscal and Compliance Audits in a timely fashion.
- ◆ EDCTA has a good data collection and reporting process in place. The Administrative Operations reports are effective and informative.
- ◆ Operating data found in internal reports generally match that reported to the State Controller with the exception of FTE's and Vehicle Service Miles for FY 2017-18.
- ◆ Overall performance declined for EDCTA, due mostly to a nationwide downtrend ridership combined with new state pension requirements which significantly impacted operating costs. However, EDCTA farebox ratio still remains well above the blended farebox ratio requirement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: *Monitor operating costs closely and look for cost saving opportunities as part of the ongoing Short Range Transit Plan effort and going forward.*

As noted in the compliance section, annual operating costs increased by 16 percent in FY 2016-17 and another 16 percent in FY 2017-18. EDCTA's FY 2017-18 operating cost per trip of \$22.43 and operating cost per hour of \$151.60 is higher than neighboring Placer County Transit (\$19.47, \$135.80 respectively) which provides similar types of services. Operating subsidy per trip has increased from \$11.57 to \$18.35 during this audit period. However, EDCTA continues to maintain a strong farebox recovery ratio of well over 12.2 percent. The greatest factor in increasing EDCTA's operating costs is the large increase in OPEB and unfunded pension liabilities which the transit agency is now required to pay. Many transit agencies in California are dealing with the same issue and it is possible that this expense item will level off in the coming audit period. Additionally, as there is low unemployment in California, it is challenging for transit agencies to attract operators and keep labor costs low. Insurance and fuel costs also contributed to the operating cost increase during this audit period. These are other factors which are generally out of the control of El Dorado Transit.

EDCTA is currently updating the Short Range and Long Range Transit Plan. As part of this effort, a wide variety of financially constrained service plan elements will be reviewed including possible elimination or changing of poor performing services such as the newly implemented El

Dorado Hills fixed route. Along with this effort, EDCTA staff should continue to monitor operating costs going forward in an effort to constrain operating cost growth.

Recommendation 2: *As Information Technology (IT) demands for public transit related applications such as security cameras, Routematch software and automated vehicle announcement system put a strain on maintenance staff time, EDCTA should consider hiring additional staff to fill this role.*

Although technology such as security cameras and automated vehicle announcement has improved El Dorado Transit services, an increasing amount of maintenance tech time is spent fixing these Information Technology (IT) devices. Each type of device has proprietary software which must be learned by maintenance technicians. The more complicated devices are, the more likely they can break. EDCTA maintenance staff is beginning to track hours spent related to IT problems. If after a year of collecting data, the cost of maintenance staff time spent on IT problems combined with lost time on actual vehicle maintenance is significant, EDCTA should consider contracting with a IT Consultant or hiring a part-time or full-time IT position.

Recommendation 3: *Ensure that offering Special Services transportation does not negatively impact the provision of regularly scheduled public transit service.*

For several years, El Dorado Transit operated the Apple Hill Shuttle which carried tourists and residents visiting the Apple Hill area in Camino from a Park and Ride lot to various farms and shops. The service was operated in partnership with El Dorado County and funded in part with a County Air Quality grant. The program was designed to reduce high levels of congestion and alleviate a parking problem. Although the service was successful in terms of ridership, it was discontinued as a special service. Because of the on-going need for a parking shuttle, in 2018 EDCTA contracted with the county to again provide the Apple Hill Shuttle but as a contracted service.

Although the Apple Hill Shuttle and other Special Services such as the Fair Shuttle have relatively high ridership, as well as provide a great marketing opportunity for EDCTA, there are underlying costs of providing these types of services which can impact operation of the overall transit system. For example, the Apple Hill Shuttle operates on weekends. If EDCTA staff are used to run the shuttle, driver hours can increase beyond mandated maximums, making it difficult to find enough operators to operate regular transit service the following Monday. There is also the additional wear and tear on EDCTA vehicles. Helping to reduce congestion is a worthy cause; however, the primary focus of a public transit agency is to meet the mobility needs of the general public, particularly those who are dependent of public transit for commuting or their quality of life. Private transportation companies are available to meet the needs for more specific short-term services. Therefore, prior to offering Special Services Transportation, EDCTA should consider all indirect costs of providing the service and only provide special service transportation that does not negatively impact the provision of regularly scheduled service.