

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **6.2 TRANSIT SECURITY - CURRENT AND FUTURE CAPITAL NEEDS**

#### **6.2.1. INTRODUCTION**

The Western Reserve Transit Authority is an authorized regional agent that is eligible to receive federal and state financial aid for the operation of public mass transportation in Mahoning and Trumbull counties. The transit authority completes an annual application for capital, planning and operating assistance that is submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for funding consideration under 49 United States Code Section 5307. WRTA's Fiscal Year Funding Apportionments and Allocation for the Urbanized Area Formula Program is published by FTA in the Federal Register on an annual basis.

When a transit authority makes application for Urbanized Area Formula Program Funds, they are required to comply with various certification requirements. One such requirement is that the transit authority must either certify that: not less than one percent of the program funds for each fiscal year will be expended for transit security related projects; or expenditures for transit security projects are deemed unnecessary for their particular system.

The purpose of this element is to assess the current and future capital expenditures needed to provide the WRTA with a safe and secure transit system for its customers and employees. The assessment was conducted by Eastgate with support from the Western Reserve Transit Authority. This assessment provided the two agencies with the necessary planning documentation for evaluating current projects and programming future capital funding for related transit security improvements. Examples of security related projects can be, but are not limited to, the increased lighting of a facility or transfer points; surveillance equipment at a facility or within the transit system; contracts for security training services, or staff time allocated to address security issues.

Security staffing varies depending on the size of a transit authority. Regardless of the system size, security is the responsibility of every employee for the prevention of incidents. Some examples of transit personnel who play a role in security related functions are those who observe a revenue transfer, clerks, and personnel assigned to open or close a transit facility. The WRTA utilizes one administrative and one transit employee to manage security operations. These two employees do not devote their time exclusively to security operations.

The WRTA currently contracts private armed security officers from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday, and from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. The security officers patrol the entire system, including the downtown Federal Station Passenger Terminal during all hours of operation. During the evening, the transit system is patrolled by security officers who travel between the Administration and Maintenance Facility, and Federal Station. All security officers report to the WRTA's administrative personnel for guidance, assignments and security monitoring performance.

Section 5307 Urbanized Funds expended by the WRTA for security purposes is outlined in the Letter of Agreement to Distribute Federal Transit Administration Section 5307 funding in the Youngstown OH-PA bi-state urban area. These agreements are signed yearly based on the federal transit allocations that are published in the Federal Register.

The estimated cost for the replacement of existing and future security capital equipment from 2016 through 2040 is \$1,857,900.

The WRTA's service area encompasses approximately 452.4 square miles crossing many political jurisdictions. Current personnel and security officers require a level of knowledge over policing powers in different jurisdiction if a security incident occurs. The transit authority depends solely on the assistance of local police departments for resolving security issues. If the WRTA was to establish their own transit police, then the authority should have strong working agreements with the different local police departments.

The establishment of a Transit Safety and Security Task Force is a resource tool that can be used to focus on the coordination of security operations between local jurisdictions, standards of operations, training, communication requirements and emergency response procedures. The WRTA currently has a Safety Committee that meets monthly with their three unions to discuss all aspects of safety operations and security issues.

It is very important that the WRTA establish written agreements with neighboring communities when responding to security incident, including portions of Trumbull County where WRTA provides service. Currently, if an incident occurs in a neighboring city, township or county, the law enforcement agency responding to an incident prosecutes according to their own policies and procedures.

### **6.2.2. PREVENTION THROUGH TRAINING**

The prevention of security incidents requires all personnel be prepared and maintain a level of readiness to handle the incident. The level of readiness is contingent on the level of training provided to current personnel. Training should include:

- Ongoing training for safety operations and procedures,
- Training for proper safety procedures for the employees, operators, police, fire, and ambulance,
- Emergency response bus evacuation training,
- Inter-jurisdictional coordination,
- Handling of the homeless,
- Sensitivity training for victims,
- Public relations and assistance, and
- Crisis response training programs.

A transit system cannot be expected to train each employee to handle every type of incident. Employees can be trained to recognize different incidents that may occur in a system as well as the proper procedures for handling security incidents. Once a system develops policies and procedures for handling security incidents, then training of employees should include awareness sessions, role playing, videotapes and films, and training drills with exercises. The WRTA provides ongoing security training for its employee's with the prior approval of the Safety Committee. The transit authority also notifies its employees of security issues by enclosing flyers in the employee's paychecks.

Awareness sessions serve to inform employees of the proper procedures to take when an incident occurs. Once employees become familiar with policies and procedures, role playing helps illustrate to the employees how different individuals react in an event of a crime. Role-playing activities can be videotaped and used as training materials to show employees if proper policies and procedures were followed during the role-playing activity. The overall expectations of an employee plan of action during an incident should be clearly understood before the training session is over. At the end of a training session unannounced mock drills and exercises can be performed periodically for modifications to training sessions. The WRTA's Safety Committee evaluates, recommends, and approves any special safety and security training that is deemed necessary.

### **6.2.3. COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES**

The level of communication, for transit security operations and procedures, between transit personnel and emergency response teams reinforces executing any plan of action to correct future incidents. Communication initiatives to enhance operations and procedures should include:

- Installation of two way video communication surveillance cameras,
- Installation of emergency response buttons at facilities, buses and transit hubs,
- Installation of vehicles tracking systems,
- Installation of text pager systems for sending immediate text messages,
- Establishing verbal codification systems between operators, dispatchers, and other personnel, and
- Emergency phone communication systems.

The communication initiatives that the WRTA is currently reviewing to enhance the system are the bus tracking capabilities, silent alarms, and security cameras on buses to monitor passengers.

It is recommended that transit systems coordinate the sharing of information, establish agreements for roles and responsibilities within political jurisdictions, develop and implement safety communication procedures, and participate during training exercise for any transit security program. Communicating to the public how secure the transit system is can encourage transit ridership. If a patron perceives the transit facility or system to be unsafe; ridership tends to decline.

### **6.2.4. HISTORY AND PUBLIC PERCEPTION**

In January 1997, the WRTA and Eastgate were involved in a transportation coordination project that resulted in key leaders in Mahoning County being interviewed and coming together to discuss future transit services in Mahoning County; interviews were followed with two workshops in April and May 1997. The interviews and workshops were completed by Lifespan Associates, Inc. and identified through a study funded by Project ACTION in Washington, D.C. to develop model transportation coordination procedures that could be applied on a national basis.

Some community leaders mention a perceived lack of safety associated with traveling or making transfers at the downtown terminal. The perception of safety at the WRTA terminal is unrelated to actual statistics reported by WRTA on their National Transit Database Report (NTDR) submitted to the Federal Transit Administration every year.

The public perception of safety depends on the actual visibility of protection, and an individual fear of crime. A patron's perception of an unsafe transit system is directly related to visual images of trash, graffiti, evidence of vandalism, and physical deterioration of the system. The WRTA's physical infrastructure and the rolling stock are well maintained and rated in good condition. The transit system utilizes the expertise of their own maintenance crews and on various occasions, contracts services to insure that the existing facilities are clean and in good working condition.

There is also the perception that if a system operates during off peak hours then the security of the system is at a minimum. There are also individuals who have been witnesses to a crime, been a victim of crime, or have heard of a crime that hold negative perceptions of a transit system.

The WRTA's video surveillance system has help authorities solve local crimes that have occurred on fixed routes throughout the City of Youngstown. The surveillance equipment has also assisted and protected the

transit authority from false accident claims. The public now considers the WRTA surveillance equipment as a beneficial tool to enhance the safety and security of the community.

### **6.2.5. EDUCATION**

Safety and Security education and visibility efforts can assist the transit authority in changing the unsafe perceptions of patrons and key leaders in Mahoning County. Safety and Security education should include:

- The development of safety brochures for public distribution,
- Conduct yearly safety evaluations,
- Review any incidents and develop a plan of actions,
- Provide visible uniformed patrols and surveillance cameras with monitors,
- Review any facility design that obstructs visibility,
- Increase lighting at bus stops, shelters, and transit hubs,
- Review and correct facility maintenance,
- Establish and encourage anonymous reporting,
- Conduct passenger relations training of operators,
- Have a designated spokesperson for speaking to the media, and
- Establish good working relationships with the media.

### **6.2.6. CURRENT SECURITY EXPENDITURES**

WRTA invested in security upgrades through its recent renovation and expansion of its Administration facility on Mahoning Avenue in Youngstown, funded by the Federal Transit Administration's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) program. WRTA invested in new lighting for security through its rehabilitation of all exterior space at its transit center, Federal Station, in downtown Youngstown. Finally, WRTA is moving forward in 2012 to rehabilitate, renovate and modernize all interiors spaces in Federal Station. This will include safety cameras, communications, lighting and other improvements to upgrade the safety and security for WRTA's travelling public.

### **6.2.7. FUTURE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

The schedules for security equipment replacement are divided into four capital purchasing categories. The first schedule lists the replacement of Interior and Exterior Security Cameras with Monitors to be installed at the WRTA's Federal Station Terminal. The security cameras with monitors are assumed to have a useful life of five (5) years. The acquisition cost within the replacement schedule is increased by approximately 4% per year.

The second schedule lists the replacement of Interior Security Cameras and Monitors at the WRTA's Administration Building, located on Mahoning Avenue. This equipment has an expected useful life of five (5) years. The schedule uses a cost for inflation of approximately 4% per year. (Table 6.2.1)

The third security replacement schedule is for the purchase of Exterior Security Cameras with Monitors to be installed at the WRTA's Administration Building. The equipment has an expected useful life of five (5) years. The schedule a cost for inflation of approximately 4% per year. (Table 6.2.2)

The last security replacement schedule is for the purchase of Building Alarms at the WRTA's Administration Building and at Federal Station Terminal. The buildings alarm systems have proven to be very durable, and were therefore assumed to have a useful life of fifteen (15) years. The replacement schedules assume a cost for inflation of approximately 4% per year. (Table 6.2.3)

**Table 6.2.1 – Security Equipment Replacement Schedule I**  
**Replacement Schedule for Security Related Items**  
**FY 2020 – FY 2040 (Beginning July 1, 2020)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Capital Improvement</b>	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>Federal Funding Source</b>	<b>Federal Share</b>	<b>State Share</b>	<b>Local Share</b>
2020	Exterior Security Cameras with monitors @ Administration Bldg.	135,200	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	108,160	3,520	13,520
2025	Exterior Security Cameras with monitors @ Administration Bldg.	164,500	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	131,600	16,450	16,450
2027	Security Fencing@ Administration Bldg.	50,000	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	40,000	5,000	5,000
2030	Exterior Security Cameras w/ monitors @ Administration Bldg.	200,200	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	160,160	20,020	20,020
2035	Exterior Security Cameras with monitors @ Administration Bldg.	243,500	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	194,800	24,350	24,350
2040	Exterior Security Cameras with monitors @ Administration Bldg.	296,300	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	237,551	29,630	29,630

**Table 6.2.2 – Security Equipment Replacement Schedule II**  
**Replacement Schedule for Security Related Items**  
**FY 2020 – FY 2040 (Beginning July 1, 2020)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Capital Improvement</b>	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>Federal Funding Source</b>	<b>Federal Share</b>	<b>State Share</b>	<b>Local Share</b>
2020	Interior & Exterior Security Cameras with monitors @ Federal Station	52,700	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	42,160	5,270	5,270
2025	Interior & Exterior Security Cameras with monitors @ Federal Station	64,100	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	51,280	6,410	6,410
2030	Interior & Exterior Security Cameras with monitors @ Federal Station	78,000	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	62,400	7,800	7,800
2035	Interior & Exterior Security Cameras with monitors @ Federal Station	94,800	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	75,840	9,480	9,480
2040	Interior & Exterior Security Cameras with monitors @ Federal Station	115,400	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	92,320	3,746	3,746

**Table 6.2.3 – Security Equipment Replacement Schedule III**  
**Replacement Schedule for Security Related Items**  
**FY 2020 – FY 2040 (Beginning July 1, 2020)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Capital Improvement</b>	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>Federal Funding Source</b>	<b>Federal Share</b>	<b>State Share</b>	<b>Local Share</b>
2030	Building Alarms @ Administration Bldg.	50,000	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	40,000	5,000	5,000
2021	Building Alarms @ Federal Station	21,000	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	16,800	2,100	2,100
2031	Building Alarms @ Federal Station	27,300	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	21,840	2,184	2,184
2040	Building Alarms @ Federal Station	35,500	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	24,800	2,480	2,480
2020	Building Alarms @ Administration Bldg.	60,000	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	48,000	4,800	4,800
2030	Building Alarms @ Administration Bldg.	78,000	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	62,400	6,240	6,240
2040	Building Alarms @ Administration Bldg.	101,400	FTA 49 USC Section 5307	81,120	8,112	8,112

### **6.2.8. CONCLUSION**

The WRTA has implemented several policies and procedures listed in this report under the four categories Prevention through Training, Communications Initiatives, Public Perception, and Education. The transit authority continues to fully identify, discuss, and determine how security issues can be proactive. The system does not have to wait for an incident to occur, but continues to review existing incident records and safety procedures. The transit agency continues to identify problem areas and formulates solutions. The solutions are then detailed and tested before they are adopted. Once the WRTA adopts policies and procedures, the transit agency should require that every employee to participate in a safety and security training program.