

**Existing Conditions  
Analysis**  
*Transit Agency  
Institutional Profiles*



# ***Transit Agency Institutional Profiles***

---

## **Introduction**

Three, public transit providers serve Washington County: Mid Mon Valley Transit Authority, Washington County Transit Authority, and the City of Washington. The transit providers are independent and quite different entities. Each service provider has its own particular governing structure, funding criteria, and mission that reflect the different time and circumstances of their creation. The following discussion reviews the organizational characteristics of these transit providers.

## **City of Washington**

Since the early 1980's, the City of Washington has made transit services available to its residents through a contract with GG&C Bus Company. These services replaced the bankrupted private operations, and were made possible through specifically authorized state subsidies.

The Mayor has overall responsibility acting upon authority that City Council granted to him. These responsibilities involve 3 functions. First, as the public transit sponsor, the City submits applications for and receives capital and operating assistance from the state and federal governments. Second, the City contracts with GG&C to handle all aspects of the transit service and pays for these many services by "passing through" the state and federal operating assistance to GG&C. Third, the City -- in this case, the City Clerk -- maintains the necessary and appropriate records. All of these functions count as in-kind contributions to the local match required for state and federal operating subsidies.

GG&C is the last remaining private operator of fixed route services in the City of Washington. In 2004, the company was sold to Mr. John Lenzner who previously was one of the owners and operators of Lenzner Coach Lines based in Allegheny County.

GG&C operates the fixed route services for the City of Washington under a contract that is annually renewed. As a third class city, Washington is not required to competitively bid this contract. However, PennDOT has encouraged the City to do so.

GG&C operates the bus service, maintains the transit fleet, and in a unique arrangement, also does all transit administrative functions and all

grant management for the City. On behalf of the City, GG&C also is responsible for keeping informed of ever-changing federal and state programs and regulations and serving on the SPC Transit Operators Committee. Finally, in recent years, GG&C has assumed responsibility for marketing and system planning.

GG&C also holds contracts with neighboring East Washington Borough and South Strabane, Canton, and Chartiers Townships. These municipalities pay GG&C relatively nominal fees, and the monies are used as local match to leverage federal and state operating assistance.

Notably, GG&C holds the PUC rights to the fixed routes that it operates.

GG&C also offers shared ride services under contract with the Washington County Transit Authority. GG&C operates and maintains the shared ride vehicles; WCTA assumes all other related responsibilities. And, GG&C owns, maintains, and operates school buses.

### **Washington County Transit Authority**

The Washington County Commissioners created the Washington County Transit Authority (WCTS) in 2001. It was organized under the Pennsylvania Municipalities Incorporation Act of 1945, as amended. Notably, WCTA replaced the Washington County Human Services Authority.

WCTA was incorporated "...to coordinate, manage, and oversee all federal and/or state subsidized transportation programs in Washington County, and to undertake and perform all services or actions attendant thereto..." In 2003 in an effort to further clarify its purpose, WCTA restated its mission, "To promote and provide high quality, cost-effective transportation to the citizens of Washington County and surrounding areas as appropriate, especially older adults, persons with disabilities, veterans, and economically disadvantaged individuals, including those on Medicaid Assistance."

WCTA is governed by a 9-member board that meets monthly. The County Commissioners appoint the Board members, who are selected to represent the following constituencies:

- Private transportation carrier (one member)
- Transportation Advisory Board (one member)
- Area Agency on Aging (one member)
- Occupational vocational rehabilitation (one member)
- Local business sector (one member)

- The four different geographic regions of the county (one member, each).

WCTA is a member of the SPC Transit Operators Committee and represented by its Executive Director.

WCTA is a non-operating authority; it provides shared ride services through competitively bid contracts with private operators. The current 3-year contracts were executed in 2005 with GG&C Bus Company, Tri-County Access, White Line Taxi, Laidlaw Transit Services, and Southwestern Pennsylvania Area Agency on Aging.

### **2007 Board of Directors Washington County Transit Authority**

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Residence</i>	<i>Constituency Representing</i>
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Chromulak	Donora	Section #2
<b>Vice Chair</b>	Joseph Dochinez	California	Section #3
<b>Secretary</b>	Leslie Grenfell	Monongahela	Elderly Consumers
<b>Treasurer</b>	Richard Alvarez	Burgettstown	Section #1
	Don Angelone	Canonsburg	Disabled Consumers
	Marvin Batten	Monongahela	Provider Agency
	Stanley Klapkowski	Claysville	Business Sector
	Mary Alice Luskoski	S.Franklin	Section #4
	Jacob Schneider	Atlasburg	Private Transportation Co.

Since its creation, WCTA has focused primarily on improving the quality of its shared ride services. Fares were restructured; rates were changed, standards were set; scheduling and operational systems were upgraded; contracts with transportation providers were competitively bid; vehicles were purchased; and services were changed as subsidized shared ride programs and regulations changed. In addition, WCTA addressed personnel policies, expanded staff, and relocated to larger, more functional offices. And, WCTA developed and instituted “Washington Rides” -- both a brand name and a comprehensive marketing program that includes a logo, website, brochures, and concerted outreach to state and local, civic and government organizations.

Notably, since 2004, WCTA has pursued these projects according to an adopted Strategic Plan. The Plan, which is updated annually, presents a 5-year program of projects concerning all aspects of WCTA’s mission.

Beginning in 2006, WCTA was ready to shift its focus from shared ride to Washington County's overall transportation needs. This process began with 2 sets of activities. First, WCTA initiated conversations with responsible state, regional, and local officials about the possibility of becoming the designated recipient for federal and state transit assistance – a fundamental institutional change that may be necessary for WCTA to offer fixed route services. Second, WCTA worked with GG&C, the City of Washington, MMVTA, and SPC to have this countywide transportation study done.

### **Mid Mon Valley Transit Authority**

The Mid Mon Valley Transit Authority (MMVTA) was created in 1985. The Authority was created at the time when the steel industry collapsed and the already-depressed local economy was further devastated. Three companies were providing some transit service, but were on the brink of closing. However, the 1980 Census found for the first time that 22 mid-Mon Valley communities located in Washington, Westmoreland, and Fayette Counties qualified as the Monessen Urbanized Area. As an Urbanized Area, these communities qualified to receive federal and state transit operating assistance. MMVTA was created to be the designated recipient of these monies and so insure that transit services could continue.

MMVTA was organized under the Pennsylvania Municipalities Incorporation Act of 1945, as amended. All 22 of the eligible communities formed the Authority and so became eligible to be represented on the Board. Presently 21 municipalities are members. Non-member municipalities may purchase services from MMVTA.

The mission of MMVTA is to provide transit services for its member municipalities and so help to revitalize the Mid Mon Valley. A 21-member board governs MMVTA. Each member municipality appoints its representative. The board member must be a taxpayer in, maintain a business in, or be a citizen of the municipality being represented. The Board meets monthly.

MMVTA is a member of the SPC Transit Operators Committee and represented by its Executive Director.

MMVTA is a non-operating authority. In 1985, 1990, and 1996, the local transit services and the commuter services to Pittsburgh were bid separately. 88 Transit Company secured the competitively bid contract for the commuter services, and 70s Transit Lines held the competitively bid contract for the local service. In 1996, 88 Transit Line out-bid 70s Transit Lines and the

latter company subsequently went out of business. Since then, in 2002 and 2005, all transit services have been incorporated in a single bid package, and 88 Transit has been the successful bidder.

Over the years, MMVTA has replaced its bus fleet as it aged and modified service and fares. In recent years, services for California University students have been substantially expanded with financial support from the University. Notably, a modern transit center was opened in Charleroi. MMVTA is now in the process of building a bus maintenance facility. Partial funding is in hand, and the necessary, additional funding will be obtained as planning proceeds. Site selection is in process.

### **2007 Board of Directors Mid MonValley Transit Authority**

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Representing Municipality</i>
<b>Chair</b>	Nick Lorenzo	Rostraver Township
<b>Vice-Chair</b>	VACANT	
<b>Secretary</b>	Sandy Davis	Roscoe Borough
<b>Ast. Secretary</b>	Dr. Harry Miale	City of Monongahela
<b>Treasurer</b>	Betty J. Shine-Hill	North Belle Vernon Borough
<b>Ast Treasurer</b>	Rose Carson	Dunlevy Borough
	VACANT	New Eagle Borough
	Lou Furlong	Stockdale Borough
	Marvin Batten	Carroll Township
	Joe Karbowsky	Allenport Borough
	Joe Donchinez	California Borough
	Mayor John Lignelli	Donora Borough
	Ed Martin	Belle Vernon Borough
	Donald Ruschak	Charleroi Borough
	Thomas P. Monack	Speers Borough
	Fred Naccarato	City of Monessen
	VACANT	Washington Township
	Mark Brown	Fayette City Borough
	Gerald Radus	Coal Center Borough
	Joe Vilella	North Charleroi Borough
	Olga Woodward	Fallowfield Township
	VACANT	Elco Borough

