



# Transit Provider Summary

---

There are only two true transit providers providing service in Boone County. The two agencies contacted for information were Columbia Transit and OATS. Both agencies provided requested information which is summarized in the following text and tables.

## COLUMBIA TRANSIT

### Background

Columbia Transit is the general public provider in the City of Columbia. Service began 40 years ago in 1965. Under the umbrella of Columbia Transit, several services are offered: fixed-route, paratransit, and MU shuttle services. Columbia Transit provides nearly 1.4 million passenger-trips annually. Currently, Columbia Transit does not coordinate with any other transportation provider. There are 33 full-time employees involved in transit and 29 part-time employees (including seasonal employees). Columbia Transit falls under the Columbia City Manager and Public Works Department.

### Services

#### Fixed-Route

Fixed-route bus service within Columbia's city limits is accomplished using seven routes designated by number and color. Bus service starts at 6:25 a.m. and operates on various schedules ending anywhere between 5:30 p.m. and 1:30 a.m, with scaled-back Saturday service. No service is provided on Sunday. Fixed-route service provides nearly 533,000 annual passenger-trips. Passengers currently can flag down any fixed-route bus at the end of a block for a ride.

#### Paratransit

Columbia Para-Transit provides specialized van service for persons with disabilities and elderly who are unable to use the fixed-route bus system. Service is provided

## *Transit Provider Summary*

curb-to-curb within three-quarters of a mile from the fixed route. Riders must meet eligibility requirements and become certified riders. The one-way fare is \$1.00. Paratransit service is offered during the same hours as the fixed-route service. The service provides approximately 24,000 annual trips.

### MU Service

The final service Columbia Transit provides is contract service with the University of Missouri. Service is provided with three routes which cover the main campus. This service is operated during the fall and winter semesters only. Nearly 808,000 annual trips are provided. Service is provided through student fees.

### **Financial**

Columbia Transit is funded through a combination of FTA 5307 (urbanized) funds, FTA 5309 (discretionary) funds, a local dedicated transportation sales tax, fares and donations, and State of Missouri. Total operating costs are approximately \$3.3 million annually, of which 63 percent represents fixed-route operations.

### **Facilities**

Columbia Transit operates out of two facilities. The first is the *Wabash Station* located at 126 North 10<sup>th</sup> Street in Columbia. This facility is the main transfer hub for both fixed-route and paratransit routes. This facility is where buses are dispatched and is the main administrative office of Columbia Transit. This building used to be the Wabash Train Station and is nearly 100 years old. The facility is under refurbishment to enhance customer service and administrative operations for Columbia Transit.



*Wabash Station*

The second facility is the *Grissum Building*, located at 1313 Lakeview. This is a shared maintenance and storage facility for the Public Works Department, of which Columbia Transit is a division. This facility is used to store all Columbia Transit

vehicles which are maintained through the Fleet Operations Division of the Public Works Department.

**Performance Measures**

Columbia Transit’s baseline performance measures are shown in Table VI-1. The performance measures reflect the cost allocation provided by Columbia Transit.

| <b>Table VI-1<br/>Columbia Transit Service Summary</b> |                               |                             |                             |                       |                           |                      |                      |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Route/Service</b>                                   | <b>Annual Passenger-Trips</b> | <b>Annual Vehicle-Miles</b> | <b>Annual Vehicle-Hours</b> | <b>Service Cost</b>   | <b>Cost per Passenger</b> | <b>Cost per Mile</b> | <b>Cost per Hour</b> |
| Fixed-Route  | 532,828                       | 425,793                     | 32,450                      | \$2,114,140.00        | \$3.97                    | \$4.97               | \$65.15              |
| Paratransit  | 23,609                        | 117,995                     | 13,426                      | \$646,164.00          | \$27.37                   | \$5.48               | \$48.13              |
| MU Shuttle   | 807,731                       | 89,500                      | 17,376                      | \$583,924.00          | \$0.72                    | \$6.52               | \$33.61              |
| <b>Total Services</b>                                  | <b>1,364,168</b>              | <b>633,288</b>              | <b>63,252</b>               | <b>\$3,344,228.00</b> | <b>\$2.45</b>             | <b>\$5.28</b>        | <b>\$52.87</b>       |

*Source: Columbia Transit, LSC, 2005.*

**Capital (Vehicles)**

Columbia Transit has a fleet of 33 vehicles. Table VI-2 provides a listing of those vehicles including make and year.

| <b>Table VI-2<br/>Columbia Transit Vehicle Inventory</b> |             |                        |
|--|-------------|------------------------|
| <b>Type</b>  | <b>Year</b> | <b>Number of Units</b> |
| Chevrolet Pick-up  | 2005        | 1                      |
| Van (no lift)  | 1992        | 1                      |
| Diamond Cutaway  | 1999        | 4                      |
| Diamond Cutaway  | 2001        | 2                      |
| Diamond Cutaway  | 2004        | 2                      |
| Toyota Prius   | 2005        | 1                      |
| New Flyer (40')  | 1995        | 2                      |
| New Flyer (40')  | 2000        | 2                      |
| New Flyer (40')  | 2001        | 5                      |
| New Flyer (30')  | 2001        | 6                      |
| El Dorado National (30')                                 | 1997        | 5                      |
| Gillig (40')   | 1989        | 2                      |
| <b>Total Units</b>                                       |             | <b>33</b>              |

*Source: Columbia Transit, 2005.*

## Agency Needs

Columbia Transit states that short-term needs include refurbishment of the Wabash Station, purchase of vehicles, and passenger amenities. Table VI-3 provides Columbia Transit’s short-term needs and anticipated costs.

| <b>Table VI-3</b>                        |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| <b>Columbia Transit Short-Term Needs</b> |                         |
| <b>Activity</b>                          | <b>Anticipated Cost</b> |
| Refurbish and Expand Wabash Station      | \$2,932,892             |
| Purchase Paratransit Vehicles            | \$104,000               |
| Purchase 40' Low-Floor Buses             | \$526,000               |
| Passenger Amenities                      | \$100,000               |
| <b>Total</b>                             | <b>\$3,662,892</b>      |
| <i>Source: Columbia Transit, 2005.</i>   |                         |

## OATS, INC.

### Background

OATS is a private, nonprofit specialized transit provider which operates in 87 Missouri counties. OATS has been in operation since 1971 and provides door-to-door transportation services to individuals with little or no alternative form of transportation. In urban areas, they provide service to those 60 years and older and the disabled. In rural areas, routine service is also open to the general public.



OATS is funded by a combination of federal, state, and local funds. Government funding through contracts with various agencies covers the cost for the elderly/ disabled riders, while the general public riders are encouraged to pay the full suggested donation for service.

### Services

OATS provides service Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in Columbia. Service between the communities of Ashland, Central Boone County, Rocheport, and Columbia is provided on Mondays. Service between Centralia, Hallsville, Sturgeon, and Columbia are provided on Tuesdays. OATS’ annual ridership is

approximately 35,337 one-way trips. Table VI-4 provides the rider breakdown by category. As shown, the greatest majority of riders are the elderly, representing 60 percent of all trips.

Fares are based upon a suggested donation of \$3.00 per trip in town, \$5.00 within the county, and \$7.00 to an adjacent county. However, no ride will be denied on the basis of payment.

| <b>Table VI-4<br/>OATS Trip Categories</b> |                             |                   |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Fare Category</b>                       | <b>Annual One-Way Trips</b> | <b>% of Total</b> |
| Elderly                                    | 21,207                      | 60%               |
| Under 60 yrs.                              | 9,607                       | 27%               |
| Disabled                                   | 4,500                       | 13%               |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>35,314</b>               |                   |
| <i>Source: OATS, 2005.</i>                 |                             |                   |

## Financial

Boone County is one county of a 15-county region in the mid-Missouri area, and therefore it is difficult to breakdown costs by county. However, OATS did provide some information for Boone County. The Boone County program costs approximately \$500,000 annually to operate. Program revenues are shown in Table VI-5. As shown, the largest portion of revenue comes from federal dollars. The State of Missouri and Program Service Fees make up the next largest share of revenue. As shown, Boone County and the City of Columbia provide approximately \$21,000 annually to OATS.

| <b>Table VI-5<br/>OATS Revenue Sources FY2004</b> |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| <b>Revenue Source</b>                             | <b>FY2004 Actual</b> |
| Columbia Area United Way                          | \$23,000             |
| Fundraising/Direct Support                        | \$10,000             |
| Boone County                                      | \$8,000              |
| City of Columbia                                  | \$13,000             |
| Federal (Medicaid, Title III, etc.)               | \$335,406            |
| State   | \$47,546             |
| Program Service Fees                              | \$59,302             |
| <b>Total</b>                                      | <b>\$496,254</b>     |
| <i>Source: OATS, 2005.</i>                        |                      |

### Facilities

OATS has its main Mid-Missouri Regional Office in Columbia. There is covered parking for the Boone County fleet, including wash bays and a fueling station.

### Performance Measures

Transit performance measures are presented in Table VI-6. At present, OATS has a cost of approximately \$14.66 per trip and cost per hour of \$25.11, a fairly efficient service by county demand-response standards.

| Table VI-6<br>OATS Transit Service Summary |                        |                      |                      |              |                         |               |               |
|--|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Service                                    | Annual Passenger-Trips | Annual Vehicle-Miles | Annual Vehicle-Hours | Service Cost | Cost per Passenger-Trip | Cost per Mile | Cost per Hour |
| Demand-Response/Subscription               | 35,337                 | 247,549              | 20,636               | \$518,139    | \$14.66                 | \$2.09        | \$25.11       |
| <i>Source: OATS, LSC, 2005.</i>            |                        |                      |                      |              |                         |               |               |

### Capital (Vehicles)

OATS has a fleet of 14 vehicles. Table VI-7 provides a listing of those vehicles, including make and year. Primarily, vehicles are modified vans and several small buses. Most vehicles are wheelchair-equipped.

| Table VI-7<br>OATS Transit Vehicle Inventory |      |                 |
|--|------|-----------------|
| Type   | Year | Number of Units |
| Dodge Van (Modified)                         | 1997 | 3               |
| Dodge Caravan                                | 1999 | 1               |
| Ford Mini-bus                                | 1999 | 1               |
| Chevrolet Mini-bus                           | 2000 | 1               |
| Dodge Van (Modified)                         | 2000 | 1               |
| Dodge Caravan                                | 1999 | 1               |
| Dodge Van (Modified)                         | 2002 | 4               |
| Dodge Caravan                                | 2000 | 1               |
| Ford Van (Modified)                          | 2005 | 1               |
| <b>Total</b>                                 |      | <b>14</b>       |
| <i>Source: OATS, 2005.</i>                   |      |                 |

**Agency Needs**

Short-Term (1 to 6 years)

OATS indicated that short-term needs include vehicle replacement, securing additional operating funds to increase scheduled service in Columbia and Boone County in the amount of \$100,000 annually, and upgrading dispatch and scheduling software. Table VI-8 provides the short-term agency needs.

| <b>Table VI-8<br/>OATS Transit Short-Term Needs</b> |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| <b>Activity</b>                                     | <b>Anticipated Cost</b> |
| Replace Three Vehicles                              | \$75,000                |
| Secure Additional Funding (Operating Annually)      | \$100,000               |
| Upgrade Dispatching Software                        | n/a                     |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$175,000</b>        |
| <i>Source: OATS, 2005.</i>                          |                         |

Long-Term (7 to 20 years)

OATS continues to require vehicle replacement in the next 20 years. They estimate replacing nine vehicles at a cost of approximately \$75,000 each. Long term, OATS would like to see a tax-based supported transit system in the county.

**County Unmet Needs**

OATS indicated that within the next five to ten years, the major unmet transportation needs in Boone County include those related to employment transportation (especially third shift and weekends), medical and essential shopping transportation for elderly and disabled, and recreational (life enhancement) transportation.

**COORDINATION INTEREST**

As part of this project, all agencies surveyed were asked to indicated the level of interest in a number of coordination strategies. Table VI-9 indicates the coordination level as responded to by Columbia Transit and OATS. As shown, Columbia Transit has a high interest in “Highlighting connections to other fixed-route or demand-responsive services on [your] schedules or other information materials.” However, Columbia Transit is not interested in several of the activities. OATS

*Transit Provider Summary*

responded as being either interested or possibly interested in all but one category of coordination, purchasing services from another agency.

**Table VI-9  
Coordination Strategies and Responses**

|  | Columbia Transit Responses |                     |                |                | OATS Responses |                     |                |                |
|--|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|
|  | Interested                 | Possibly Interested | Not Interested | Not Applicable | Interested     | Possibly Interested | Not Interested | Not Applicable |
| a. Providing transportation services, or more transportation services, under contract to another agency or agencies.                       |                            |                     | ✓              |                | ✓              |                     |                |                |
| b. Purchasing transportation services from another organization, assuming that the price and quality of service met your needs.            |                            |                     | ✓              |                |                |                     |                | ✓              |
| c. Coordinating schedules and vehicle operation with nearby paratransit providers so that riders can transfer from one service to another. |                            | ✓                   |                |                | ✓              |                     |                |                |
| d. Joining together with another municipality or agency to consolidate the operation of transportation services.                           |                            |                     | ✓              |                |                | ✓                   |                |                |
| e. Joining together with another municipality or agency to consolidate the purchase (or contracting) of transportation services.           |                            |                     | ✓              |                | ✓              |                     |                |                |
| f. Highlighting connections to other fixed-route or demand-responsive services on your schedules or other information materials.           | ✓                          |                     |                |                | ✓              |                     |                |                |
| g. Adjusting hours or frequency of service.  |                            |                     | ✓              |                |                | ✓                   |                |                |
| h. Coordinating activities such as procurement, training, vehicle maintenance, and public information with other providers.                |                            | ✓                   |                |                |                | ✓                   |                |                |
| i. Participating in an organized county-wide transportation marketing program.   |                            | ✓                   |                |                |                | ✓                   |                |                |

Source: Transportation Manager, Columbia Transit, 2005.