



Public Transit Route Performance Reviews
Annual Report for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2015

March, 2016

Prepared for VTTrans by:

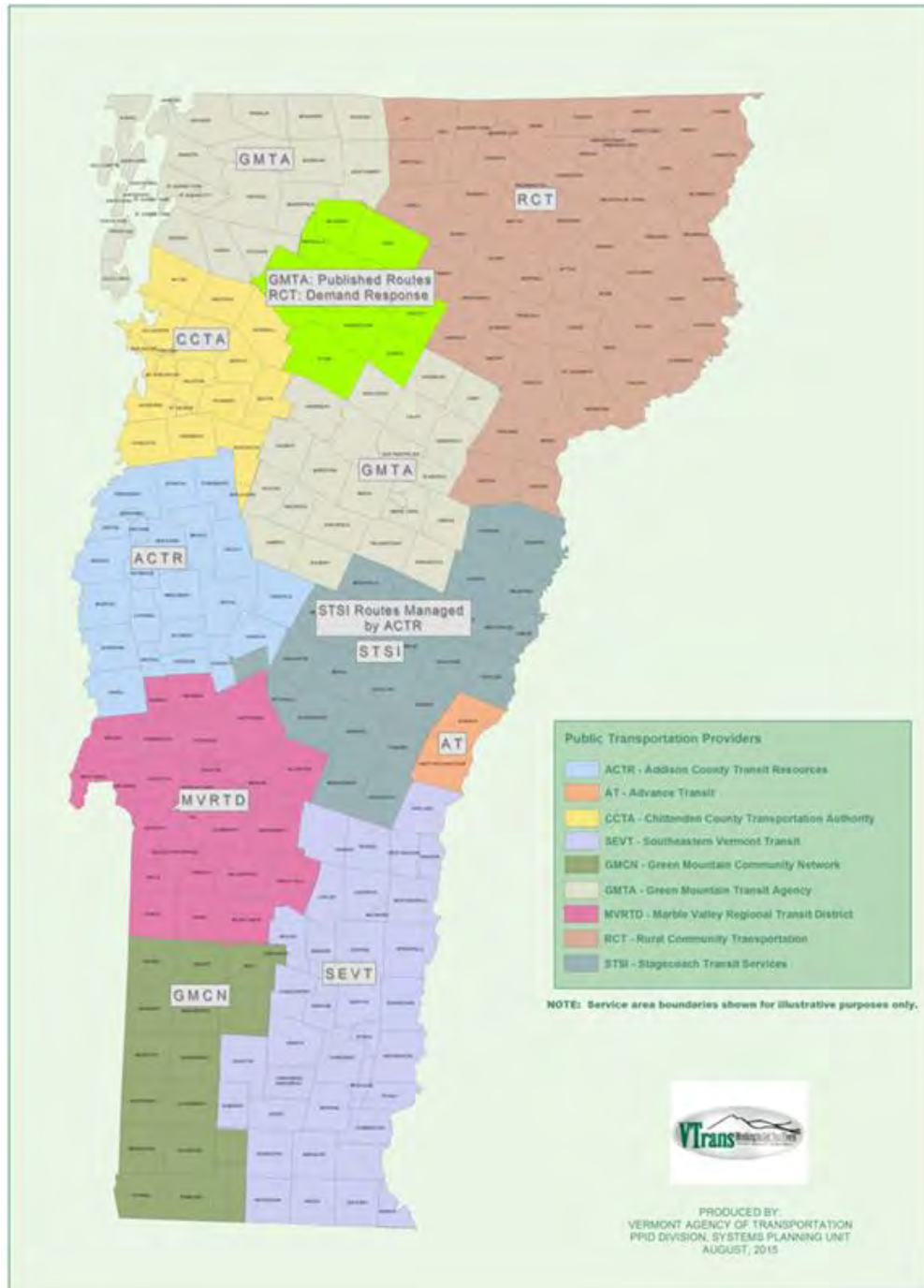


KEY OF VERMONT TRANSIT SYSTEMS

ACTR	Addison County Transit Resources
AT	Advance Transit
CCTA	Chittenden County Transportation Authority
CRT	Connecticut River Transit (previous system)
DVTA	Deerfield Valley Transit Association (previous system)
GMCN	Green Mountain Community Network, Inc.
GMTA	Green Mountain Transit Agency
MVRTD	Marble Valley Regional Transit District
RCT	Rural Community Transportation, Inc.
SEVT	Southeast Vermont Transit
STSI	Stagecoach Transportation Services, Inc.
VABVI	Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Shown in Figure 1, the service areas of Vermont’s public transit providers remain similar. STSI continues to be administered by ACTR, and the areas previously served by DVTA and CRT are now shown as Southeast Vermont Transit (SEVT).

Figure 1: Service Areas of Vermont’s Public Transportation Providers



Note: STSI provides all service in Hancock and Granville. STSI also provides the demand response service in Hartland and Hartford, while AT operates the published routes.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Public Transit Route Performance Report for state fiscal year (SFY) 2015 presents the results of VTrans' annual performance evaluations for public transit services across Vermont. VTrans manages Vermont's public transit program including monitoring transit performance. This report helps to ensure that public investment in transit is well spent by regularly conducting transit performance evaluations.

For this annual evaluation, VTrans grouped public transit routes and services throughout the state in like categories, such as Urban, Small Town, and Demand Response. In SFY 2015 Intercity service was added as a new category to evaluate the Greyhound route from White River Junction to Springfield, MA and the Vermont Translines routes that VTrans launched in June 2014. Peer-based performance measures for each category were applied to assess the productivity of the services in terms of ridership and the cost-effectiveness in terms of cost per ride provided. VTrans also evaluated the Elders and Persons with Disabilities (E&D) Transportation Program and the local share of transit operating budgets.

Statewide transit ridership has grown in the past few years to exceed 5 million in SFY 2015.¹ This represented a 4% increase over the past year and a 10% increase (436,000 more transit trips) over the last five years. While statewide ridership decreased slightly in SFY 2014 (largely attributable to the drivers' strike that occurred at CCTA), transit ridership in the past year returned to and exceeded the SFY 2013 level.

In SFY 2015 Vermont's transit systems provided over 5 million trips – a 10% increase, or 436,000 more trips, over the last five years.

The Chittenden County region accounted for just over half of the state's transit ridership, and the other half was spread throughout the rest of the state. Over the past five years, ridership in Chittenden County grew 8%, while the rest of the state saw a 12% increase. Many regions including Northeast Kingdom, Marble Valley, Bennington County, Upper Valley, and Southeast Vermont experienced double digit ridership growth over this period.

Many routes showed outstanding performance, in particular some of the Urban routes serving Burlington, Small Town and Demand Response services in Rutland, Rural service in the Northeast Kingdom, Small Town routes in the Upper Valley region, Tourism routes in the Deerfield Valley and Mad River Valley regions, and Rural Commuter routes in the Franklin/Grand Isle and Deerfield Valley regions. Only a few routes out of the dozens statewide showed sustained underperformance.

Policy regarding underperforming routes was established in the most recent Vermont Public Transit Policy Plan (2012). Where routes are shown to be underperforming through the

¹ Part of this increase in SFY 2015 was attributable to including the Greyhound route, with an annual ridership of about 14,000, in the performance evaluation for the first time.

analysis in this report, VTrans works proactively with the subject public transit provider to determine what, if any, strategies may result in increased performance for the route. If the route continues to underperform for a period of six months after modifications are made, VTrans may redirect funding from that route to another more productive existing route, either within the same transit provider's system, or elsewhere in the state. Alternative approaches to providing traditional transit service on underperforming routes may also include targeted outreach through the GoVermont program and possible VTrans sponsorship of a vanpool.

VTrans Public Transit staff is already working with providers to address performance issues identified in this report and looks forward to continuing positive relationships with the public transit providers throughout the state, both in addressing these routes and in continuing to grow a robust, efficient statewide public transit network.

INTRODUCTION

This report is developed annually to document the results of performance evaluations for public transit services across Vermont. The results are presented to the Legislature of the State of Vermont as part of VTrans' consolidated transportation system and activities report to the House and Senate Committees on Transportation. The Vermont Agency of Transportation's Policy, Planning, and Intermodal Development (PPAID) Division, specifically the Public Transit Section, is responsible for managing the state's Public Transit Program. This report documents the Public Transit Section's monitoring efforts to ensure that public investment in transit is well spent.

It should be noted that while there are ten transit providers as far as the public is concerned (plus the volunteer driver service run by VABVI), only seven transit agencies administer the transit services. CCTA and GMTA merged in July 2011; the rural service is still operated as GMTA though CCTA is responsible for all of the administration. During SFY 2014, ACTR took over the administration of STSI, and DVTA took over the administration of CRT. ACTR will continue to manage STSI for the foreseeable future under a management agreement as a separate entity. On July 1, 2015, CRT dissolved and transferred its assets and liabilities to DVTA, which changed its name to Southeast Vermont Transit (SEVT). SEVT operates two divisions, The Moover and The Current. While the organization is now known as SEVT, the data in the SFY 2015 report continues to be shown under DVTA and CRT.

The SFY 2015 performance evaluation methodology did not include any significant revisions, but added analysis of statewide trends over the past five years. This report continues to assess Vermont's transit services among nine service categories, including a new category for Intercity services to capture the Greyhound route from White River Junction to Springfield, MA and the Vermont Translines routes that started on June 9, 2014. With funding from VTrans and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Premier Coach began operating two new intercity bus routes: one that travels on Route 4 from Rutland to White River Junction and Hanover, NH, and the other travels on Route 7 from Burlington to Albany, NY with stops in Middlebury, Brandon, Rutland, Manchester, and Bennington. The service is known as Vermont Translines.

The report continues to provide information on fare recovery and local share and an overview of the Elders and Persons with Disabilities (E&D) Transportation Program. The services operated with E&D funds are still examined as part of the Demand Response category, but the overall effectiveness of the program is reviewed under a separate heading.

METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

VTrans conducts monitoring of transit services by evaluating statewide trends as well as route-level performance. Several data sources were used to develop this annual report:

- The transit systems provide route-level performance data to VTrans in §5311 – Rural Transit Program Monthly Service Indicator Reports (SIRs).
- VTrans collects data on volunteer driver trips from the transit providers annually.
- VTrans monitors operating budget data by funding source (federal, state, and local) in its Grant Tracking spreadsheets to analyze local share.
- CCTA and GMTA route statistics and budget data were provided directly by CCTA.

VTrans grouped public transit routes and services throughout the state in like categories. Peer-based performance measures for each category were applied to assess the productivity of the services in terms of ridership and the cost-effectiveness in terms of cost per ride provided. VTrans also evaluated the E&D Transportation Program and the local share of transit operating budgets.

Transit Service Categories

The service categories are the same as in last year's report, with the addition of one new category for Intercity services.

- 1) **Urban:** Routes operating primarily in an urbanized area with all-day, year-round service. The city served by the route has a population of at least 17,500 people and high-density development.
- 2) **Small Town:** Routes operating in towns with 7,500 to 17,500 people with all-day, year-round service. The route typically stays within one town or two adjoining towns, and does not run through long stretches of rural areas.
- 3) **Demand Response:** Primarily service that does not operate on a fixed schedule nor on a fixed route; also includes routes that are “rural” in nature but operate less than once a day (i.e., service operates only once a week or a few times a month).
- 4) **Rural:** Routes operating in towns with fewer than 7,500 people or connecting two small towns running through undeveloped areas. These routes operate year-round with all-day service, but the frequency may be low (more than one hour between trips).
- 5) **Rural Commuter:** Routes that are similar to the Rural category above, but operate primarily during peak commute periods. These routes usually connect several small towns or villages with intermediate stops and operate primarily on state routes in rural

areas. Some routes connect outlying areas to the nearby city, with a significant portion of the mileage in rural areas.

- 6) **Express Commuter:** Routes that operate primarily during peak commute periods and often include express segments. These routes are characterized by one-directional ridership, longer route lengths, and serve larger cities or towns with more than 7,500 people. These routes primarily travel on interstates and provide limited stops, often serving park and ride lots and major employers (rather than other local destinations).
- 7) **Tourism:** Seasonal routes that serve a specific tourist trip generator, such as a ski area.
- 8) **Volunteer Driver:** Services provided by volunteer drivers who use their own vehicles, donate their time to transport riders, and receive reimbursement for mileage at the federal rate.
- 9) **Intercity:** Routes operating regularly scheduled, fixed route, and limited stop service that connects places not in close proximity and makes meaningful connections to the larger intercity network.

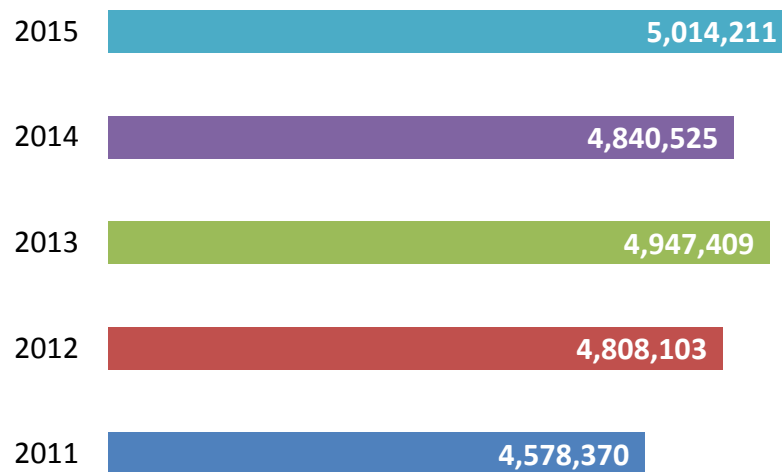
STATEWIDE TRENDS

This section describes the trends in Vermont's transit ridership and costs in recent years², before delving into route-level performance in the next section.

Transit Ridership

Statewide public transit ridership has steadily increased in recent years. In SFY 2015 Vermont's public transit systems provided over 5 million trips. Just over half of those rides were provided in the Chittenden County region, and the other half was spread throughout the rest of the state. Figure 2 presents Vermont's transit ridership over the past five years.

Figure 2: Total Ridership



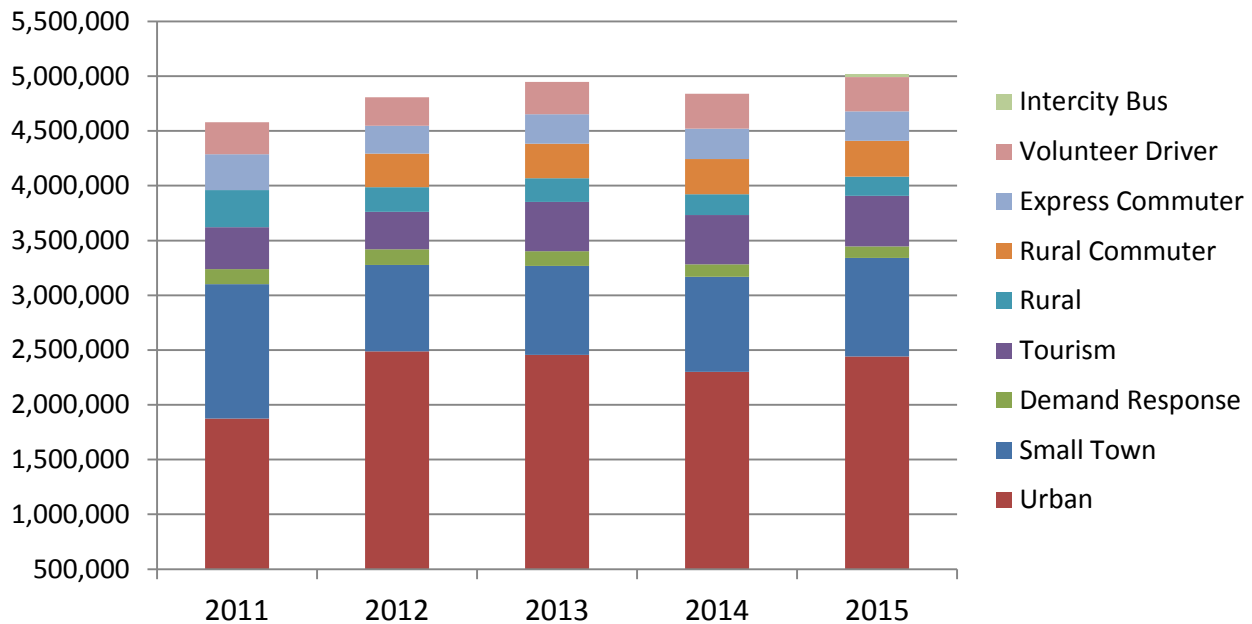
In the past year alone statewide transit ridership saw a modest 4% increase, but has increased about 10% in the past five years. Ridership dropped slightly in SFY 2014 due to the drivers' strike at CCTA, though the trend outside of Chittenden County was upward. CCTA would also likely have seen a ridership increase had it not been for the strike. Over the five-year period ridership growth in Chittenden County was about 8%, while the rest of the state saw a 12% increase. Many regions including Northeast Kingdom, Marble Valley, Bennington County, Upper Valley, and Southeast Vermont have seen double digit ridership growth (13% to 59%).

In the past five years many regions including Northeast Kingdom, Marble Valley, Bennington County, Upper Valley, and Southeast Vermont have seen double digit ridership growth.

² In 2015 data for Greyhound's White River Junction-Springfield, MA route was included in the statewide totals for the first time.

Vermont's transit systems provide an array of transit services to meet various markets and needs, including commuter, demand response, tourism, and volunteer driver services. Figure 3 illustrates recent ridership by service category, including the new category for Intercity service added in SFY 2015.

Figure 3: Transit Ridership by Service Category



When looking at ridership trends by service category, some ridership changes were due to the reclassification of routes. Several changes occurred in SFY 2012: Small Town ridership appears to have decreased significantly because CCTA's Williston route moved from the Small Town category to the Urban category; and ridership in both the Rural and Express Commuter categories decreased due to routes moving to the new Rural Commuter category. In SFY 2013, the Tourism category saw a boost in ridership due in part to new routes that DVTa reported for the first time, in addition to ridership increases on GMTA and MVRTD routes. In SFY 2014, GMTA's St. Albans Downtown Shuttle moved from the Rural to Small Town category. In SFY 2015, CCTA's 116 Commuter and Jeffersonville Commuter moved from the Express Commuter to the Rural Commuter category.

Accounting for the major route categorizations, five of the eight service categories have seen ridership increases in recent years.³ The largest increases have been among Small Town (11%) and Tourism (21%) routes. The Rural Commuter, Express Commuter, and Volunteer Driver categories have experienced modest ridership increases (6 to 7%). Ridership in the Demand Response and Rural categories has declined (13 to 23%) in the past few years. Ridership on CCTA's Urban routes has remained stable.

³ Excluding the Intercity category, which was new in SFY 2015.

Transit Costs

As transit ridership has increased over the past five years, so have transit operating costs to provide the services. In SFY 2015 Vermont's public transit operating costs totaled \$29.2 million. About 37% of the costs were spent on transit services in the Chittenden County region, and the remainder was spread throughout the rest of the state. Figure 4 presents Vermont's total transit operating costs over the past five years. In the past year alone statewide transit costs increased by 9%, accompanying a 4% ridership increase. Over the past five years, transit costs increased by 23%, while ridership increased 10%.

Figure 4: Total Operating Costs

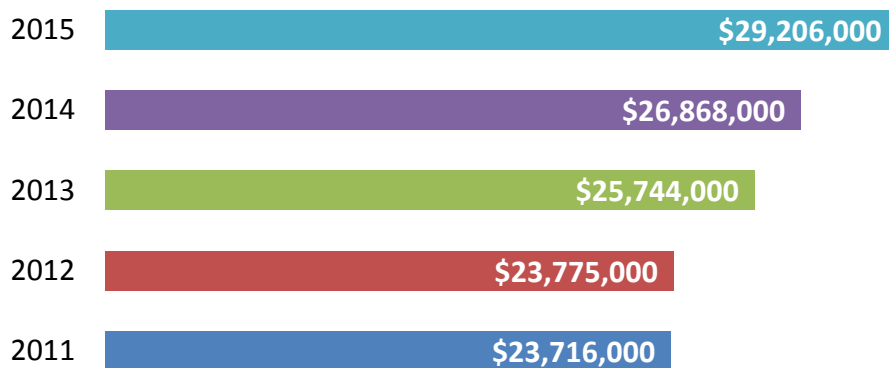
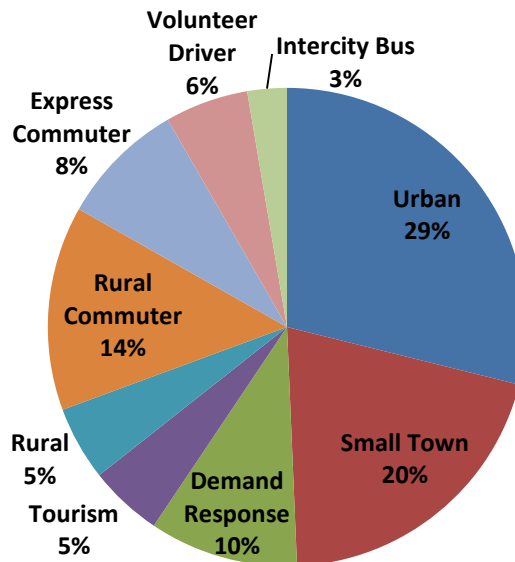


Figure 5 shows the operating costs per service category as a percentage of statewide costs in SFY 2015. These percentages have remained steady over the past five years.⁴

Figure 5: Operating Costs by Service Category in SFY 2015



⁴ Except for the Intercity Bus service category, which was introduced in SFY 2015.

Cost per Trip

The average cost for a transit trip in Vermont has increased by about 12% in the past five years, from \$5.18 in SFY 2011 to \$5.82 in SFY 2015. This growth is comparable to the increase in total ridership and about half of the increase in total costs over the five-year period. The cost per trip has increased by about 5% annually in recent years, with the exception of a decrease in SFY 2012 when total ridership increased by 5% while costs remained stable. Figure 6 illustrates the average cost per transit trip in the last five years.

Figure 6: Cost per Trip

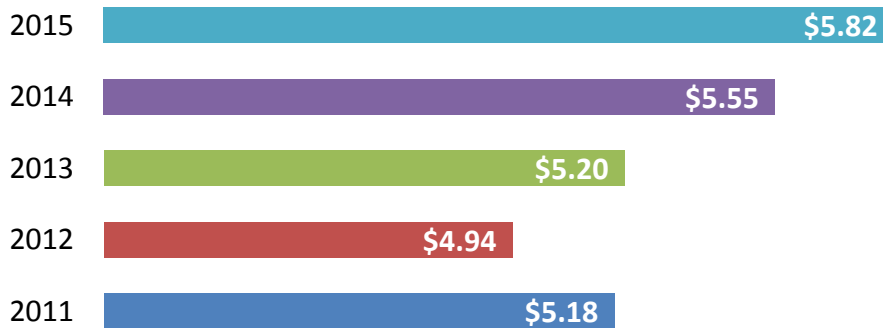
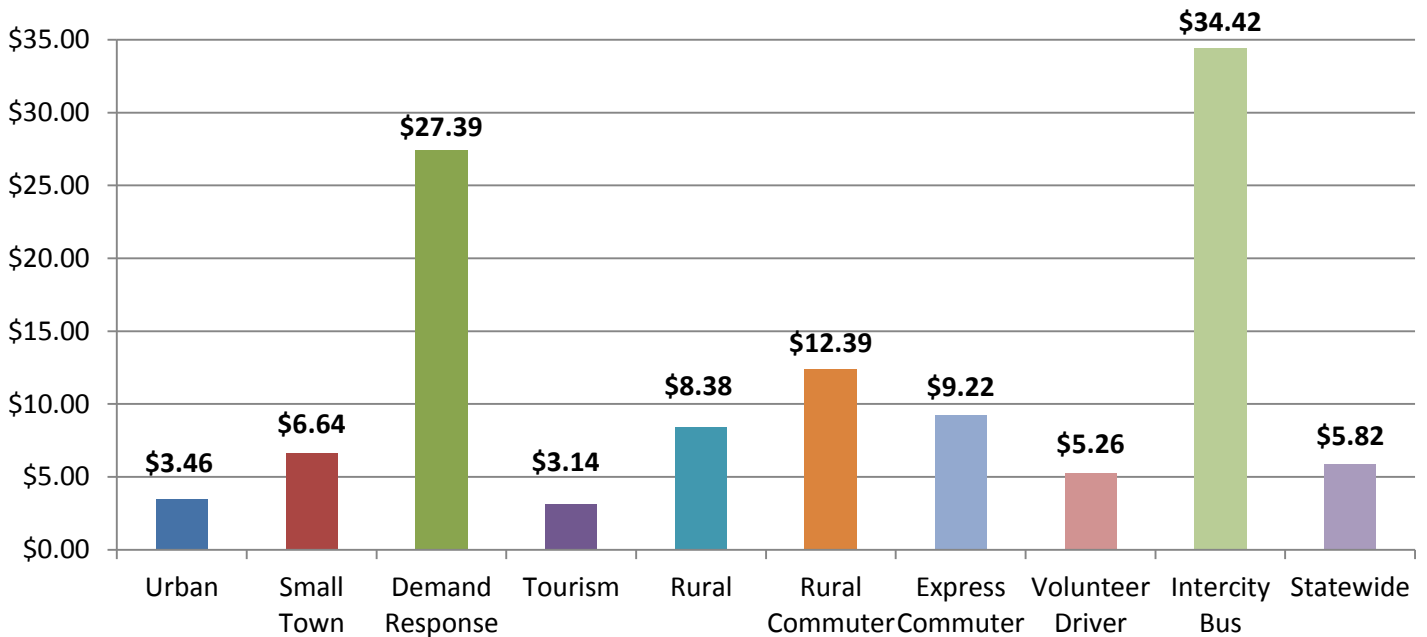


Figure 7 shows the cost per trip by service category in SFY 2015. The Tourism and Urban categories were the most cost-effective, while the Demand Response and Intercity categories had the highest costs per trip.

Figure 7: Cost per Trip by Service Category in SFY 2015

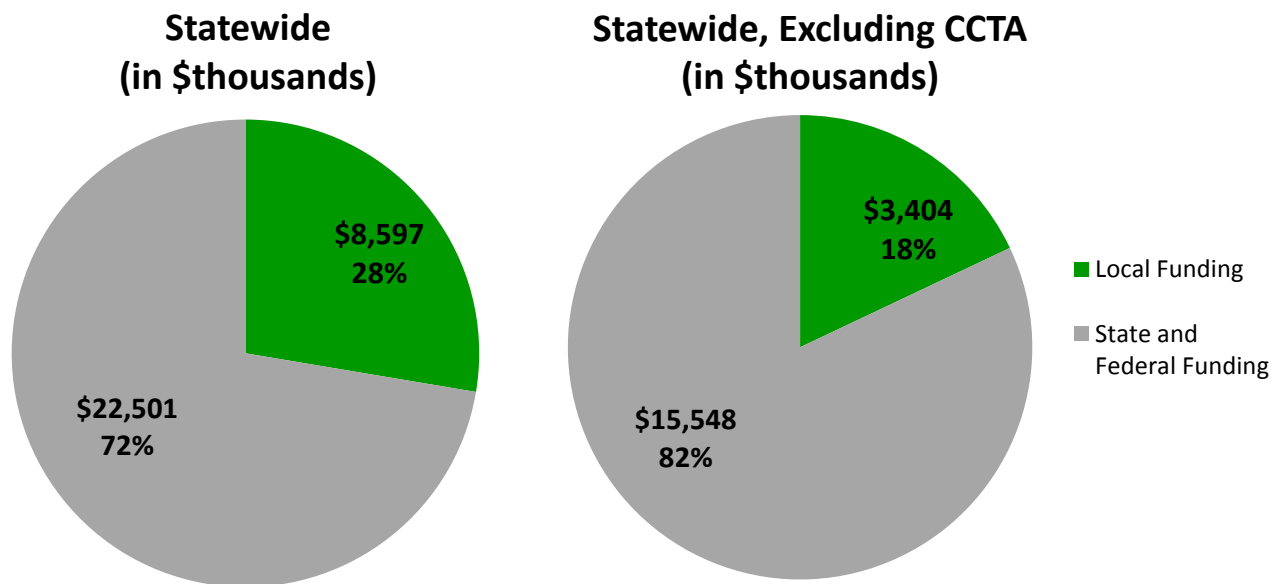


Local Share

The Public Transit Section also examines the transit providers' performance in generating local revenue. The Vermont Public Transit Policy Plan establishes a statewide goal that 20% of the funds for public transportation should be generated locally. This is a broad interpretation of local funding to include fare revenue, contributions from individuals, contracts with outside agencies, and payments from cities and towns.⁵ In other words, local share refers to the percentage of transit expenses that are *not* covered by the Federal Transit Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, or the state (and excludes state funding for capital, Rideshare, RTAP, JARC, and Medicaid).

VTrans has evaluated local share on a statewide basis since SFY 2012. Figure 8 displays the local share of transit operating budgets statewide in SFY 2015. The local share analysis found that 28% of transit funding statewide comes from local sources including fares. Even when excluding CCTA, the largest generator of fare revenue, the local share of transit budgets outside of Chittenden County nearly meets the state's 20% target.

Figure 8: Local Share in SFY 2015



⁵ The federal definition of local match for FTA funds removes fare revenue from the calculation and includes state operating assistance.

The share of public transportation operating funds generated from local sources has remained relatively stable over the past four years, ranging from 25% to 30%. Vermont's transit providers have successfully met the statewide goal of 20% local funding. Figure 9 portrays the statewide local share percentage over the past few years.

Figure 9: Statewide Local Share



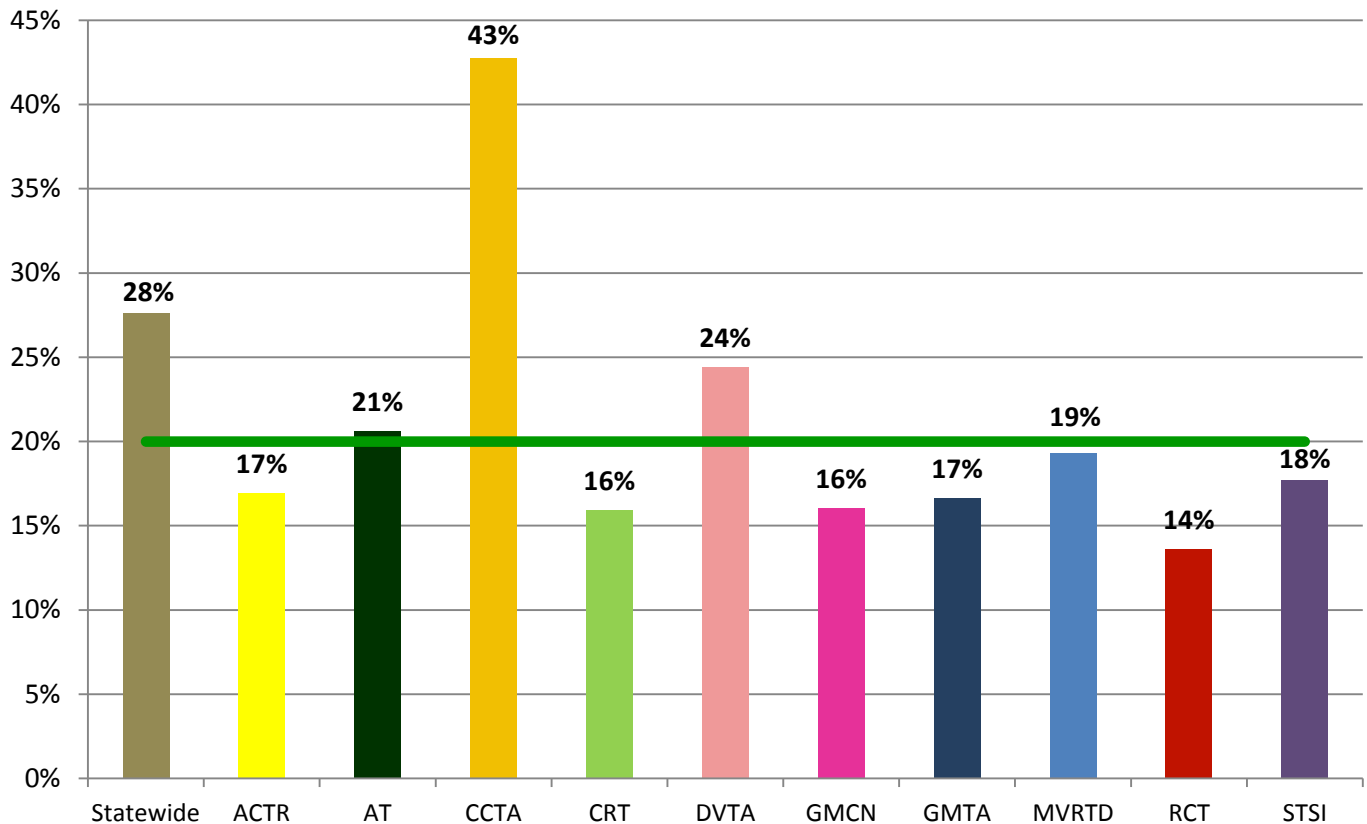
In SFY 2015 VTrans also examined local share per transit provider. The available resources and partnerships that transit providers rely on for public transportation funding vary widely. VTrans provides flexibility to the transit providers in using various sources of local revenue to match state and federal funding.

For example, a large portion of DVTA's local funding comes from ski resorts, with which the agency has partnered for many years to transport employees, visitors, and local residents. RCT has a strong volunteer driver program, and the volunteer driver hours provided as in-kind match comprise the majority of RCT's local share. CRT has a true mix of local funding sources including municipal contributions, business sponsors, advertising, match from human service agency partners for E&D transportation, donations, and fares.

Sources for local funding for transit vary widely by region and include municipal contributions, business sponsors, contracts with human service agencies, in-kind match from volunteer driver programs, advertising, donations, and fares.

Figure 10 illustrates the local share percentage by transit system in SFY 2015, in comparison with the state's 20% goal shown as the green line. AT, CCTA, and DVTA exceeded the 20% local share target. The local share for the other transit systems ranged from 14% to 19%. Note that these local share percentages were calculated based on the local funding provided to match VTrans operating grants and fare revenue.⁶ The transit providers typically have other local funding beyond that required to match the VTrans grants, but this data has not been collected by VTrans to date.

Figure 10: SFY 2015 Local Share by Transit System



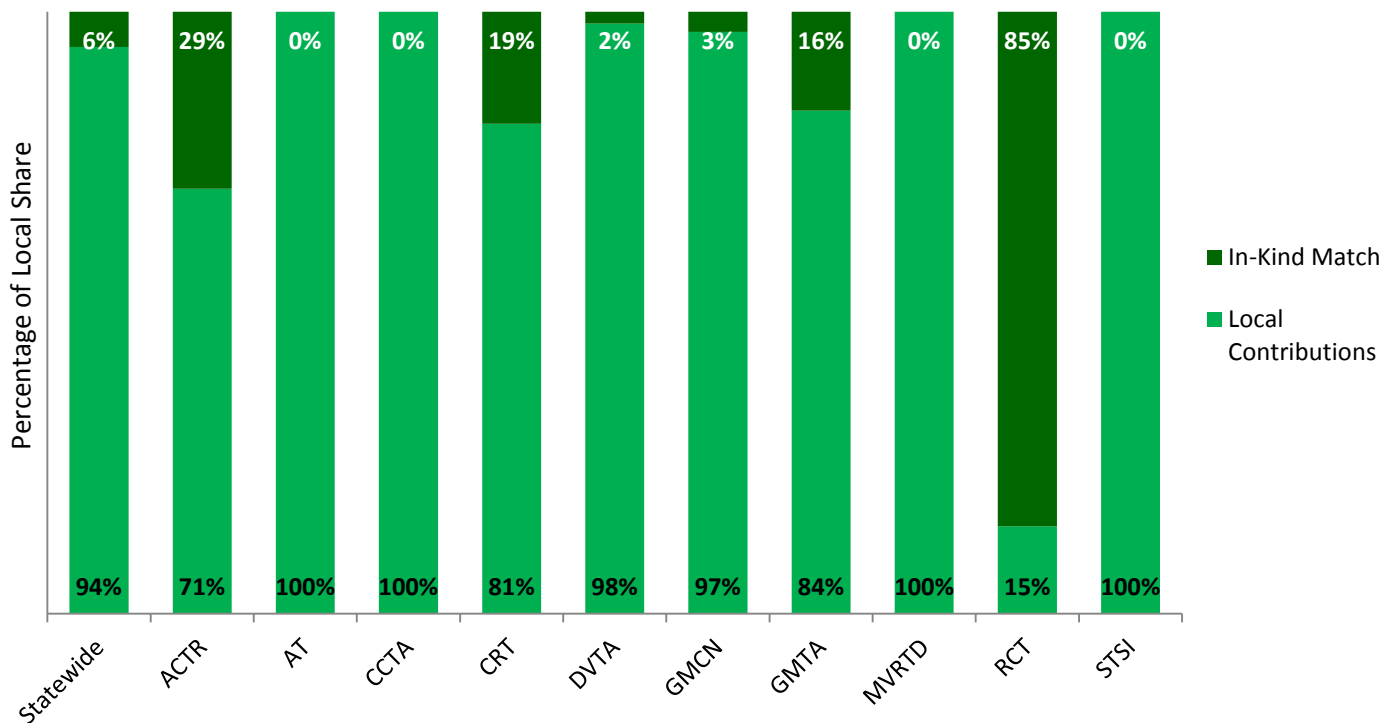
Note: DVTA's local share percentage includes some resort routes that are fully funded by local dollars.

⁶ With the exception of DVTA, which provided its total budget and local income for FY 2015.

Figure 11 portrays the portions of local share provided through local cash contributions and in-kind match. This analysis is an approximation based on the local funding sources and amounts that the transit providers identified in their SFY 2015 §5311 grant applications to VTrans (as opposed to the local share based on actual operating expenses from VTrans’ Grant Tracking spreadsheets shown above). The statewide local share is primarily comprised of local contributions with in-kind match accounting for 6% of the total local share.

ACTR, CRT, GMTA, and RCT provide notable portions of their local share through in-kind match, with RCT providing the majority of its local share (85%) through in-kind match. The other six transit systems provide local match almost entirely as cash from various sources including fare revenue, advertising, service contracts, donations, and contributions from municipalities, business sponsors, institutions, and tourism destinations.

Figure 11: SFY 2015 In-Kind Match and Local Contributions by Transit System

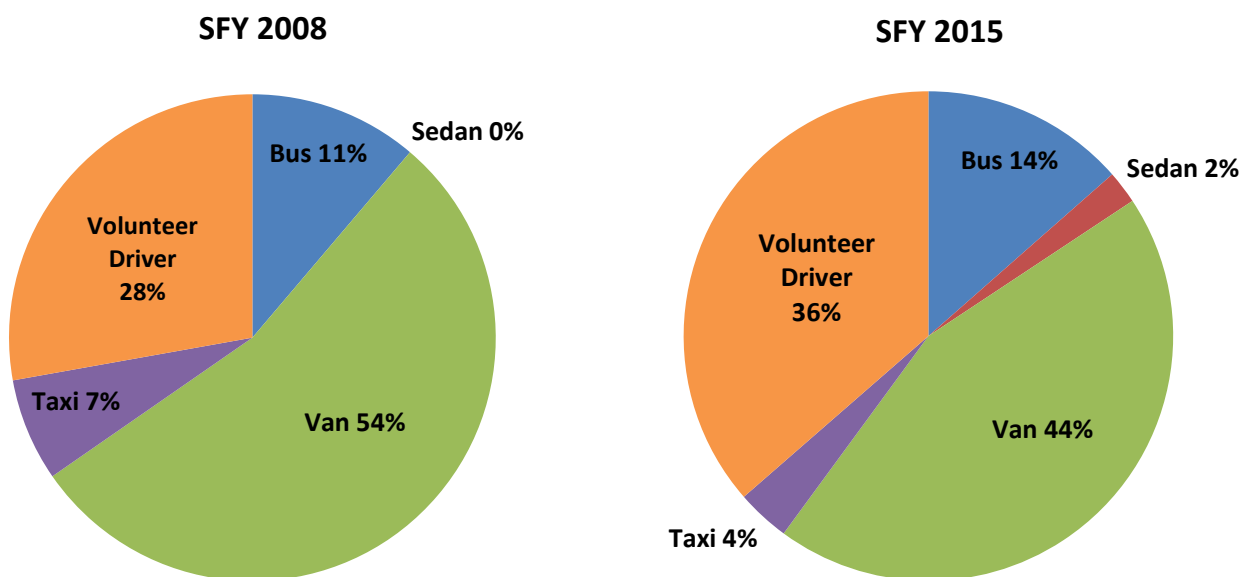


Elders and Persons with Disabilities (E&D) Transportation Program

Of the numerous funding programs administered by the FTA, the §5310 program is targeted toward seniors and people with disabilities. The E&D Program, as it is commonly known, is used in most parts of the country to finance the purchase of accessible vans and buses to transport these segments of the population. In Vermont the scope of the E&D Program has been expanded to include the funding of operations by incorporating funds from the §5311 (non-urban) program. The E&D Program is structured so that the local match (using the strict federal definition – see footnote 5) for the federal §5311 funds is only 20%, as opposed to the normal 50% for §5311 operating assistance.

In SFY 2015, the total amount spent on the E&D Program in Vermont was \$4.5 million, 80% of which (\$3.6 million) was federal money. This funding provided 181,935 rides, for a cost per passenger trip of about \$25. This cost is reflected in Graph #11 in the following section, as most of the van service represented in the Demand Response category is funded through the E&D Program. However, only 44% of E&D-funded trips are provided by vans operated by the transit agencies. About 14% of E&D trips are provided on regular bus routes, 6% in sedans or taxicabs, and most importantly, 36% in private cars operated by volunteer drivers. Figure 12 illustrates the percentages of E&D trips provided by mode in SFY 2015 compared to SFY 2008.⁷ About 10% of E&D trips have shifted from vans to volunteer drivers.

Figure 12: E&D Trips by Mode



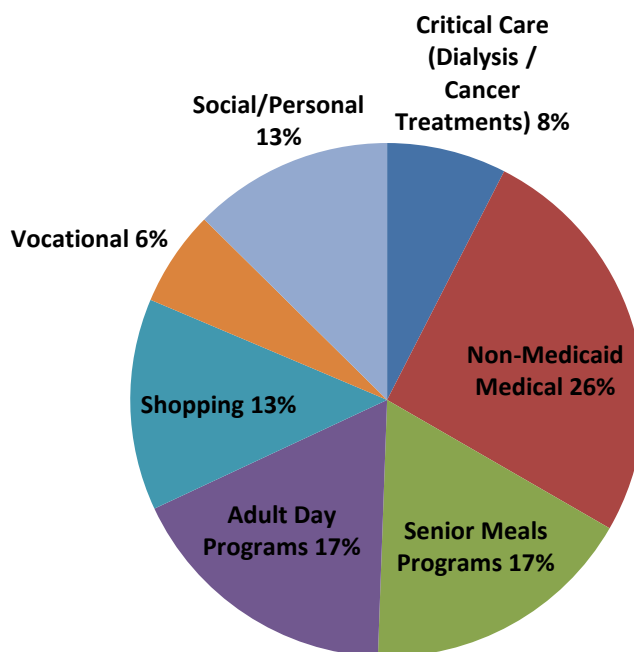
⁷ SFY 2008 was the earliest year for which E&D data by mode was available.

In recent years the transit providers, which also serve as E&D brokers, increasingly used volunteer drivers to transport riders under the E&D Program. The volunteer driver program accounts for 43% of E&D Program costs overall and 83% of the miles driven, making it the most cost-effective mode. The cost per mile for volunteer driver trips is about \$1, compared to nearly \$6 for van trips. E&D brokers use volunteer drivers to make long distance trips, often taking clients to medical appointments, sometimes in adjoining states where special services are required. The average trip length of a volunteer driver trip is six times longer than van trips (29 miles compared to 5 miles in SFY 2015).

Volunteer driver trips are especially important in RCT's service area in the Northeast Kingdom, where the population is thinly distributed over a very large area. RCT accounts for nearly 30% of the E&D-funded volunteer driver trips statewide. The high degree of cost-effectiveness of these trips is essential to allow for coverage of large rural areas.

Figure 13 displays the percentages of E&D trips by trip type in SFY 2015. About 33% of E&D trips take riders to critical care and non-Medicaid medical services. Another 35% of E&D trips are used to access senior meals and adult day programs. Shopping, personal, and social trips comprise 26% of E&D trips, while the remaining 6% are vocational trips.

Figure 13: E&D Trips by Type in SFY 2015



In January 2016 VTrans completed a comprehensive review of the E&D Program, as requested by the Vermont Legislature. Refer to that report for additional details on the E&D Program's successes, challenges, and opportunities including unmet needs, projected future demand, and funding gaps.

ROUTE-LEVEL PERFORMANCE

The Public Transit Section evaluates Vermont's transit services by their productivity and cost-effectiveness. All transit services in the state are grouped by service category and evaluated against peer-based performance measures.

Two existing routes were recategorized for the SFY 2015 report: CCTA's Route 116 Commuter and Jeffersonville Commuter routes. Both were moved from Express Commuter to Rural Commuter because the routes connect rural, outlying areas to Burlington. The populations that the routes serve outside the Burlington urbanized area are considerably smaller than for CCTA's LINK Express routes. A notable portion of the routes' mileage takes place in rural areas. The Route 116 Commuter was also moved to Rural Commuter so that it is grouped with the ACTR portion of the service and compared with the same standards.

Methodology for Developing Performance Standards

The approach for developing performance standards to evaluate Vermont's transit services was similar to the last few years' reports. Recent National Transit Database (NTD) data (from Report Year 2013) were used to develop performance benchmarks for all categories except for Intercity and Volunteer Driver. In past years the Express Commuter and Rural Commuter categories used Vermont averages to establish the "Successful" standard, but national peer groups have been used since SFY 2014. The standard for the Volunteer Driver category is still based on Vermont averages. The performance thresholds for Vermont's Tourism services incorporated both Rural NTD data and data collected directly from selected Tourism peers.

In SFY 2015, a new category for Intercity service was added. The performance standards for Intercity service were based on the performance metrics included in VTrans' intercity bus program solicitation document. These performance metrics were developed to be comparable with peer intercity bus services in other states. The productivity measure for Intercity service is boardings per trip, while the cost-effectiveness measure is subsidy per passenger-trip.

The "Successful" standard for most service categories was the peer average. For the Volunteer Driver category, 80% of the Vermont average was considered the Successful standard, per guidelines in the Vermont Public Transit Policy Plan. The minimum standards identified for VTrans' intercity bus program were used to set the Successful standard for Intercity services. For all the service categories, the "Acceptable" standard was set at half the Successful threshold in measuring productivity, and twice the Successful threshold in measuring cost-effectiveness.

Table 1 summarizes the SFY 2015 performance standards compared to the SFY 2013 benchmarks. The same standards were used in the SFY 2015 performance evaluation as in SFY 2014, based on the most recent NTD data available (2013) at the time of the study. The exceptions were the Tourism and Volunteer Driver standards, which were updated with SFY 2015 performance data from peers. The only notable changes between the SFY 2014 and SFY 2015 standards for these categories was a higher productivity standard for the Tourism category (by 12%) and a higher cost-effectiveness standard for the Volunteer Driver category (by 5%).

Table 1: Comparison of SFY 2015 and SFY 2013 Performance Standards

Service Category	"Successful" Productivity Standard		"Successful" Cost-Effectiveness Standard (cost/passenger) ¹		"Successful" Local Share Standard
	2013	2015	2013	2015	
Urban	1.49 boardings/mile	2.02 boardings/mile	\$4.79	\$4.15	20% (evaluated on a statewide basis)
Small Town	9.26 boardings/hour	8.89 boardings/hour	\$7.94	\$7.94	
Demand Response	3.71 boardings/hour	3.72 boardings/hour	\$15.51	\$16.43	
Tourism	14.09 boardings/hour	15.75 boardings/hour	\$5.46	\$5.55	
Rural	7.38 boardings/hour	7.13 boardings/hour	\$12.68	\$12.73	
Rural Commuter	7.53 boardings/hour	7.06 boardings/hour	\$11.21	\$14.20	
Express Commuter	18.60 boardings/trip	17.41 boardings/trip	\$12.47	\$8.92	
Volunteer Driver	n/a	n/a	\$3.65	\$3.58	
Intercity	n/a	3.28 boardings/trip	n/a	\$30.00	

¹ Except Intercity standard is subsidy per passenger-trip

Overall the performance standards used in the last few years' evaluations were comparable, with a few notable changes:

- Higher standards in the Urban category for both productivity (by 36%) and cost-effectiveness (by 13%), due to the development of a new set of peers in SFY 2014.
- Lower standards in the Rural Commuter category for both productivity (by 6%) and cost-effectiveness (by 27%), due to using national peers instead of the Vermont average.
- The Express Commuter category had a lower productivity standard (by 6%) and a higher cost-effectiveness standard (by 28%), due to using national peers instead of the Vermont average.

Route Evaluation Results

Overall, in SFY 2015 Vermont's transit services met the performance standards set by peer systems. The majority (85%) of the 118 transit services evaluated across the state met the Acceptable standards for both productivity and cost-effectiveness. Nearly 40% of the state's transit routes were considered successful in both measures compared to their peers. Certain service categories performed very well in meeting the Successful standards. At least 50% of the services in the Urban, Tourism, and Volunteer Driver categories met their respective Successful standards in both productivity and cost-effectiveness.

Improved Transit Routes

Two GMCN routes experienced significant ridership increases in SFY 2015 and improved to meet the Acceptable standard in productivity. In the Small Town category, the Green route saw a 41% increase in ridership. In the Rural Commuter category, GMCN's portion of the Wilmington-Bennington route, known as the Emerald Line and in its third year as a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program funded service, saw a 48% increase in ridership.

GMTA's Morrisville Loop had been underperforming in productivity the past two years, but improved to meet the Acceptable standard in SFY 2015. Categorized as a Rural service, this route experienced a 15% increase in ridership over the past year.

Underperforming Transit Services

Eighteen transit services did not meet the Acceptable thresholds for productivity, cost-effectiveness, or both measures. Half of these services were underperforming for the first time:

- CCTA: Sunday Service
- CRT: Brattleboro White Line
- CRT: Springfield In-Town
- CRT: Bellows Falls In-Town
- CRT: Bellows Falls-Springfield
- STSI: Demand Response
- CRT/MVRTD: Bellows Falls-Rutland
- STSI: River Route
- Vermont Translines: Route 4 (new in SFY 2015)

Many of the CRT routes likely experienced ridership decreases as a result of new fare requirements effective as of August 2014. Ten of the 18 transit services were within 10% of the productivity and/or cost-effectiveness standards and fell just short. Three of the

underperforming services were new or expanded services (two CMAQ-funded) within their first three years of operation.

Table 2 outlines the services that have been underperforming for two consecutive years. Five of the nine services were within 10% of the standards for productivity and/or cost-effectiveness. Two of the routes were CMAQ-funded new or expanded services, and the transit providers are still working to establish solid ridership markets. Some routes underperformed due to ridership decreases in SFY 2015.

Table 2: Underperforming Services

Service Category	Route	Years Underperformed in:	
		Productivity	Cost-Effectiveness
Demand Response	ACTR		4
Tourism	GMTA: Mad River Glen	3	3
Tourism	GMTA: SnowCap Commuter	2	4
Tourism	GMTA: Valley Floor		2
Rural Commuter	CRT: Okemo Seasonal	4	
Rural Commuter	DVTA/GMCN: Wilmington-Bennington (CMAQ Y3)	3	
Rural Commuter	MVRTD: Middlebury Conn. Exp. (CMAQ Y2)	2	2
Rural Commuter	STSI: 89er North	4	4
Express Commuter	STSI: 89er		2

Six of the routes have underperformed for three or four consecutive years. Some of these routes increased ridership in SFY 2015, but the revenue hours or costs also increased. There were some improvements in performance, but the services fell short of the Acceptable thresholds. ACTR's demand response service appeared to have underperformed for four consecutive years, but the performance data did not account for the 24,000 annual trips provided by its sub-grantee, Elderly Services, Inc. DVTA's portion of the Wilmington-Bennington route was in its third year of CMAQ-funded service. Ridership was comparable to GMCN's share of the route, but productivity appeared lower because DVTA operated more revenue hours.

Performance Graphs

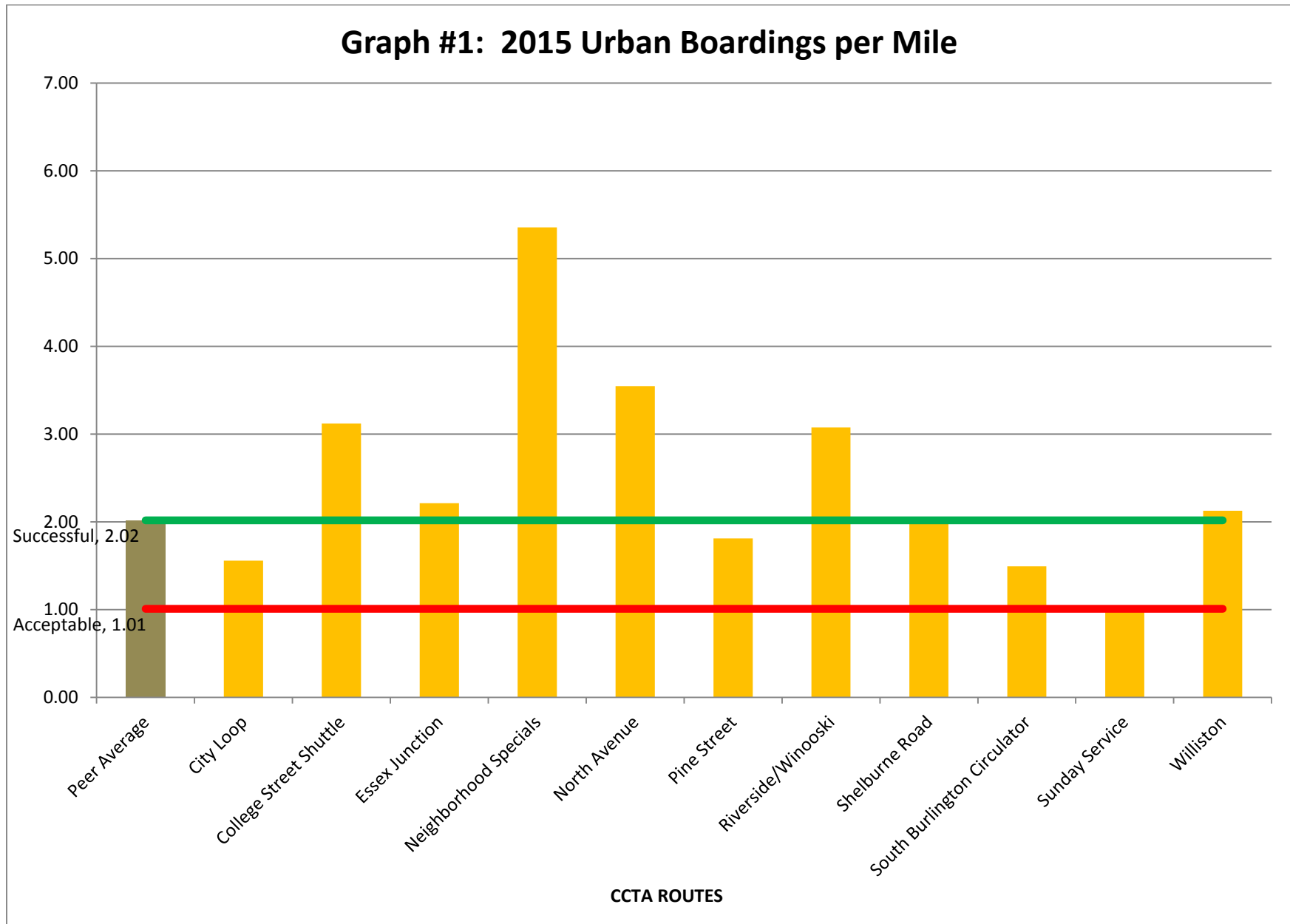
The next section of the report includes graphs depicting the performance data for all transit services in Vermont. Graphs 1 – 8 depict the SFY 2015 productivity data per service category, and Graphs 9 – 17 display the SFY 2015 cost-effectiveness data per service category. The standard for Successful services, equal to the peer average, is shown on each graph as a green line, while the standard for Acceptable services is shown as a red line. New transit services, which are funded through the CMAQ Program, are distinguished by a diagonal line fill in the

graphs. Each provider has a specific and consistent color used throughout all of the graphs. Appendix A includes the same performance data, for each route by service category, in a tabular format for easy reference.

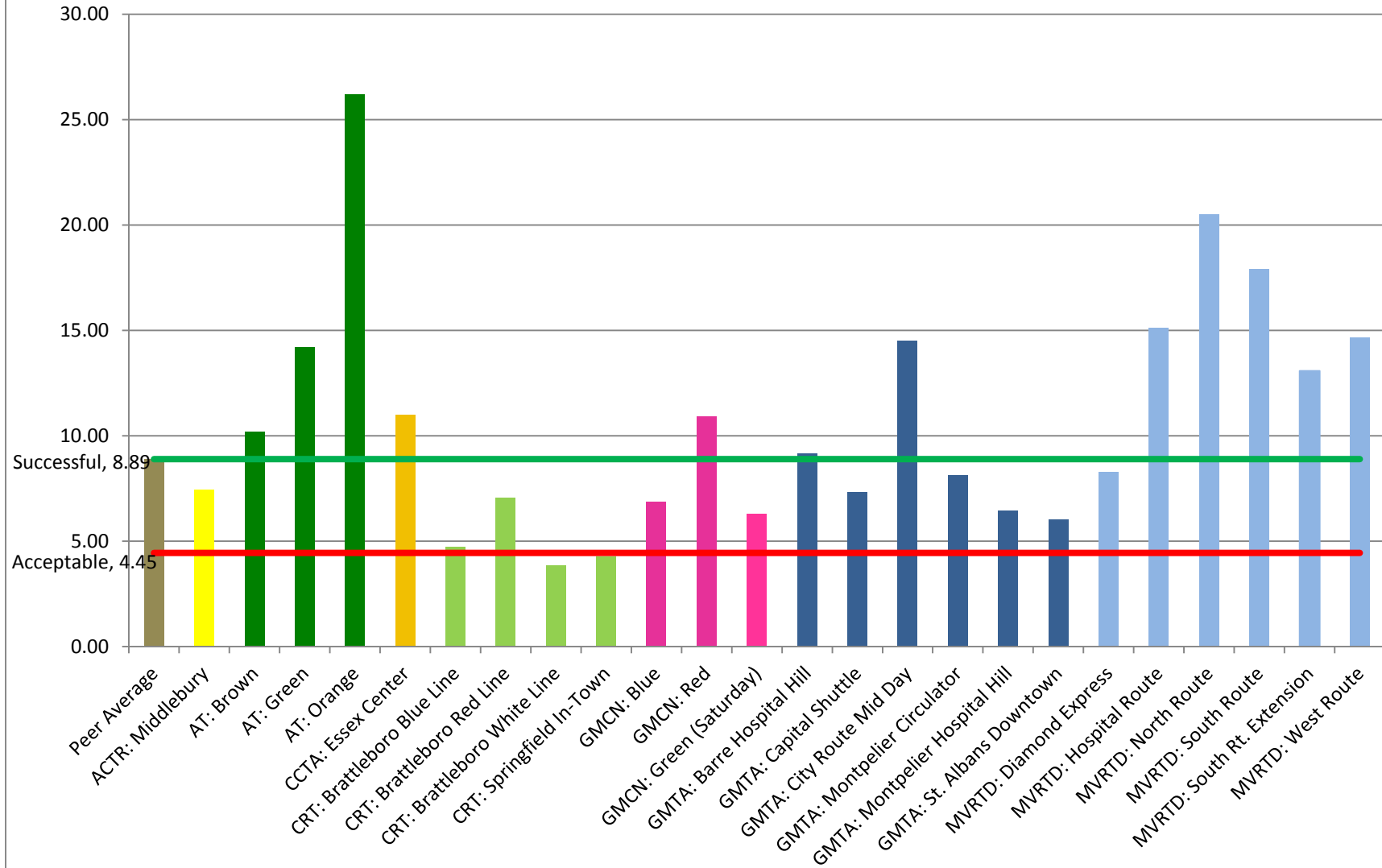
Appendix B includes charts that portray historical ridership, total operating cost, and cost per trip by transit system from SFY 2011 through SFY 2015. Appendix C presents the historical performance for every route or service in Vermont from SFY 2012⁸ through SFY 2015, showing the trends in productivity and cost-effectiveness. Again, where routes were supported through the CMAQ Program, performance data for those years are distinguished by a diagonal line fill in the graphs.

⁸ Historical performance at the route level excludes SFY 2011 data because significant revisions to the service categories occurred in SFY 2012. Different productivity measures were examined depending on the service category. Therefore SFY 2012 data provides a good baseline to review historical performance to ensure consistency with the current performance evaluation methodology.

PRODUCTIVITY PERFORMANCE BY SERVICE CATEGORY

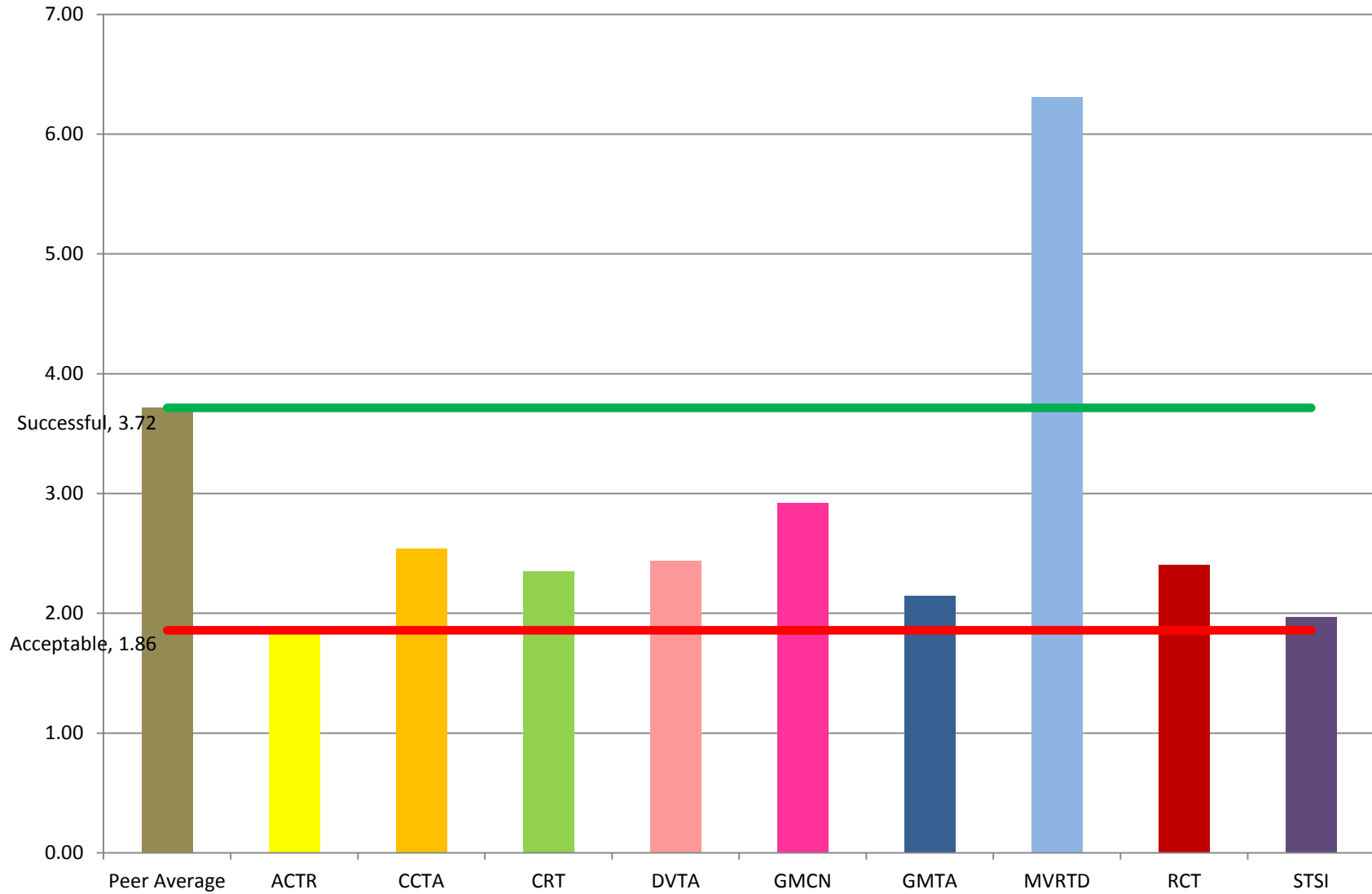


Graph #2: 2015 Small Town Boardings per Hour



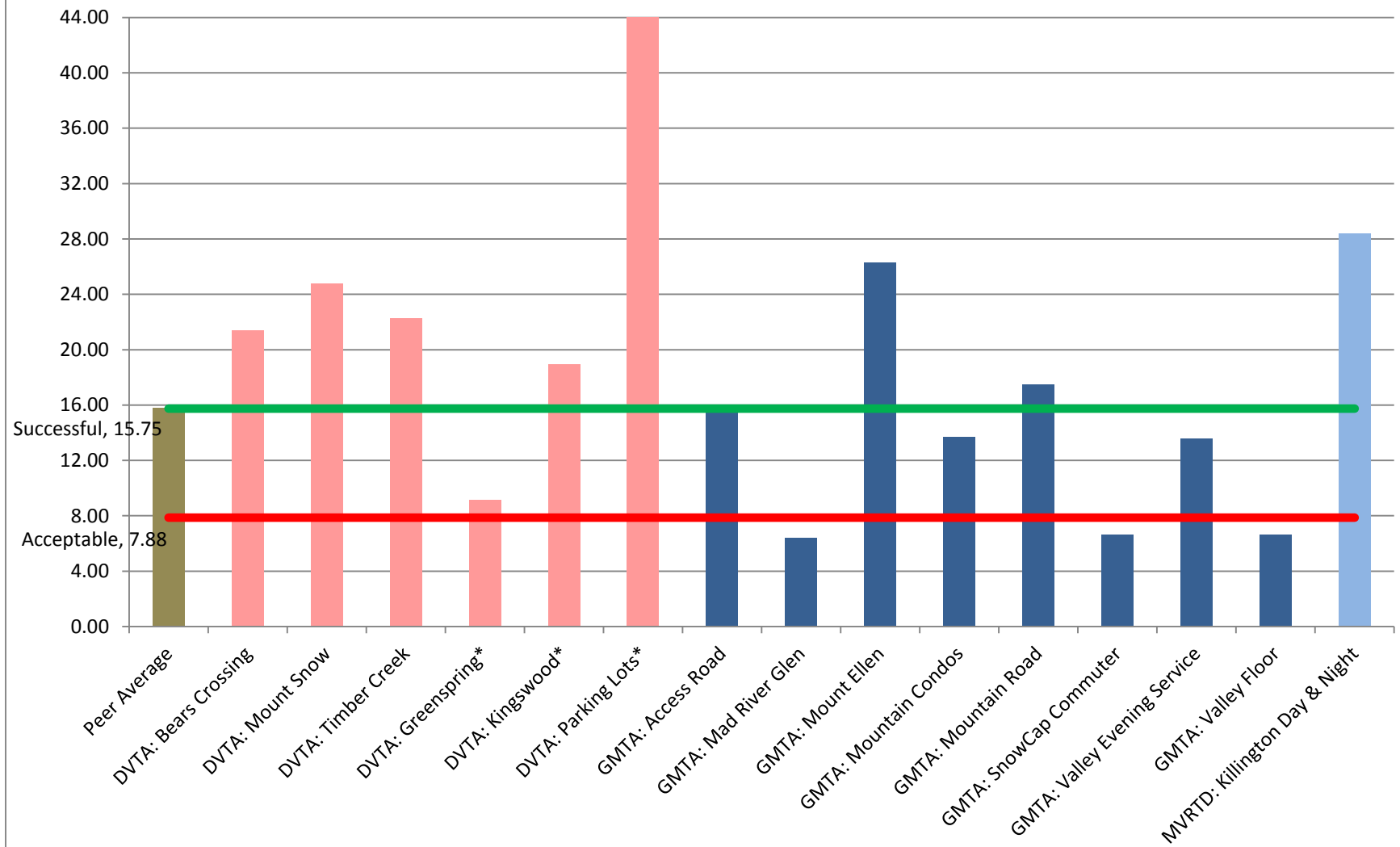
Note: Data for AT routes represent the entire route, even though a portion of the route is in New Hampshire.

Graph #3: 2015 Demand Response Boardings per Hour



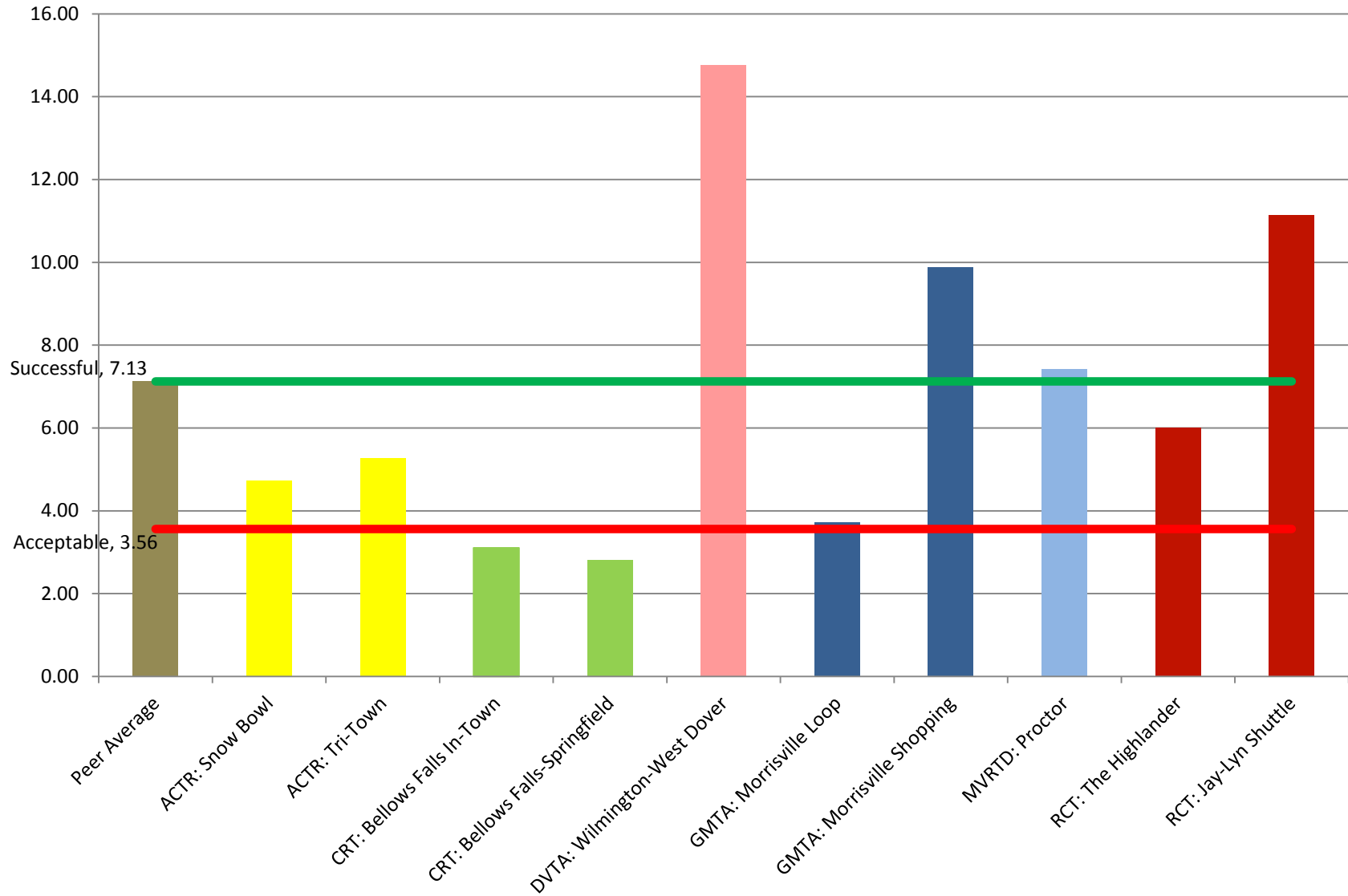
Note: ACTR's demand response data does not account for 24,000 annual trips provided by its sub-grantee.

Graph #4: 2015 Tourism Boardings per Hour

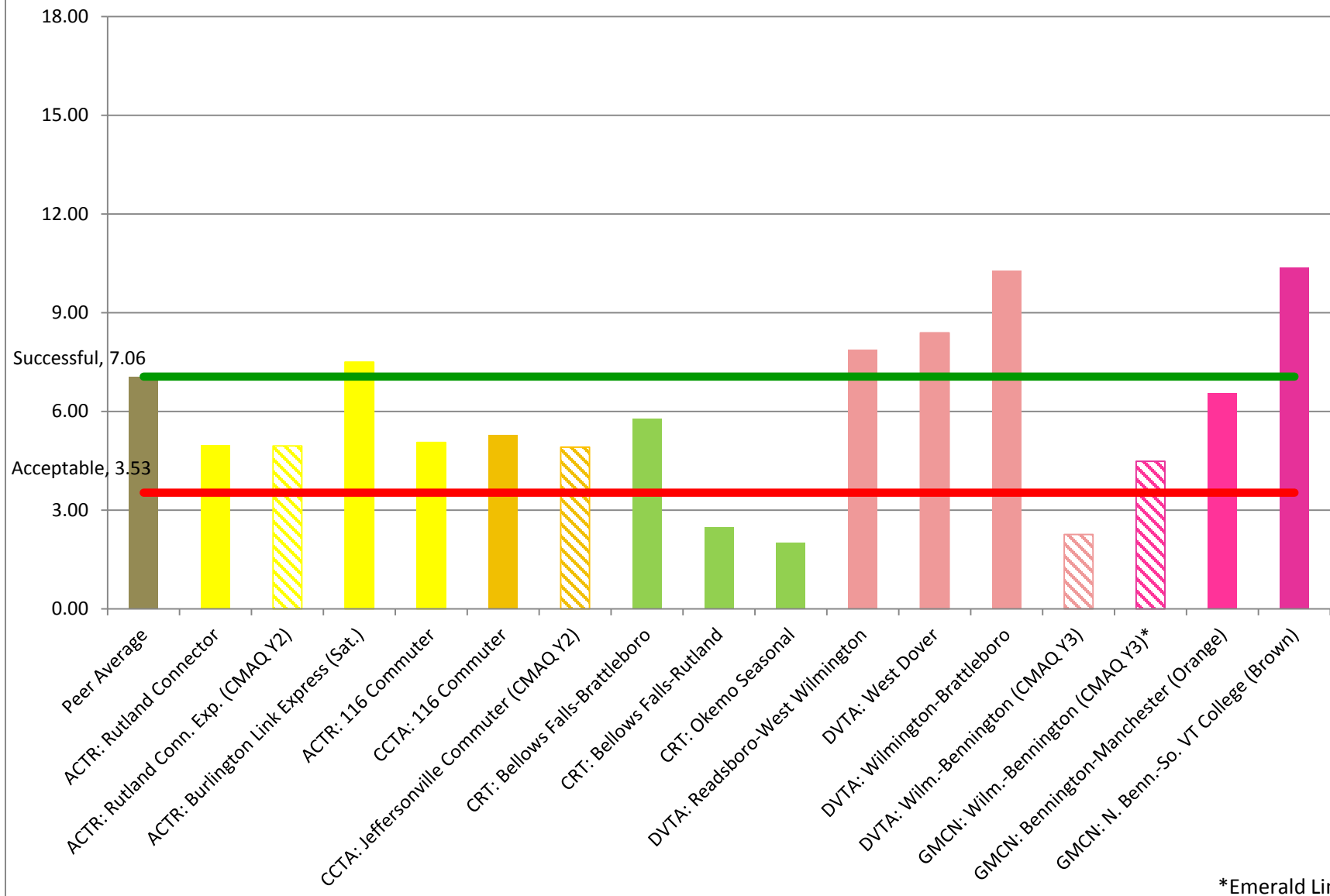


*Greenspring, Kingswood and Parking Lots route operations privately funded; no state or federal funds used.

Graph #5: 2015 Rural Boardings per Hour

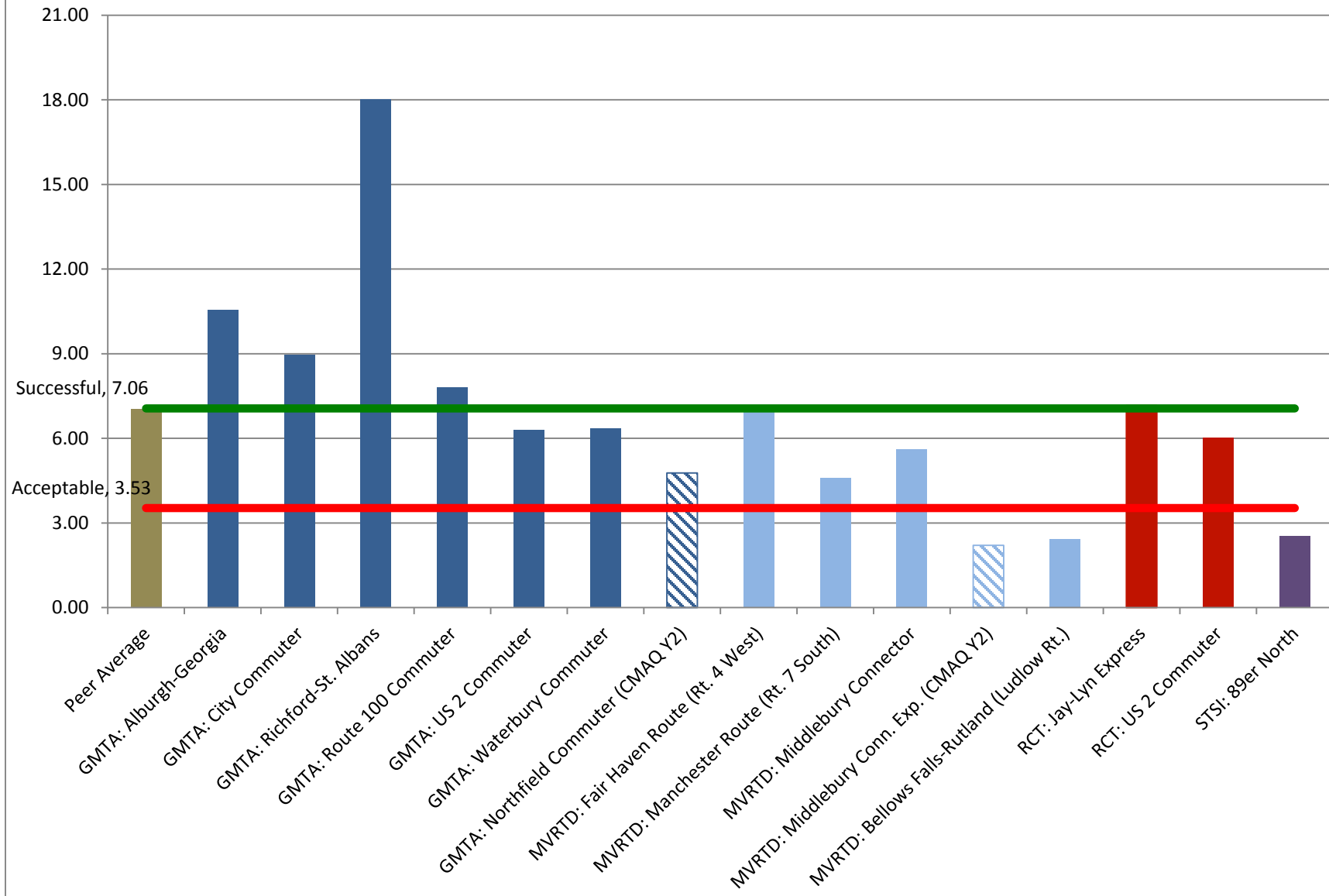


Graph #6: 2015 Rural Commuter Boardings per Hour

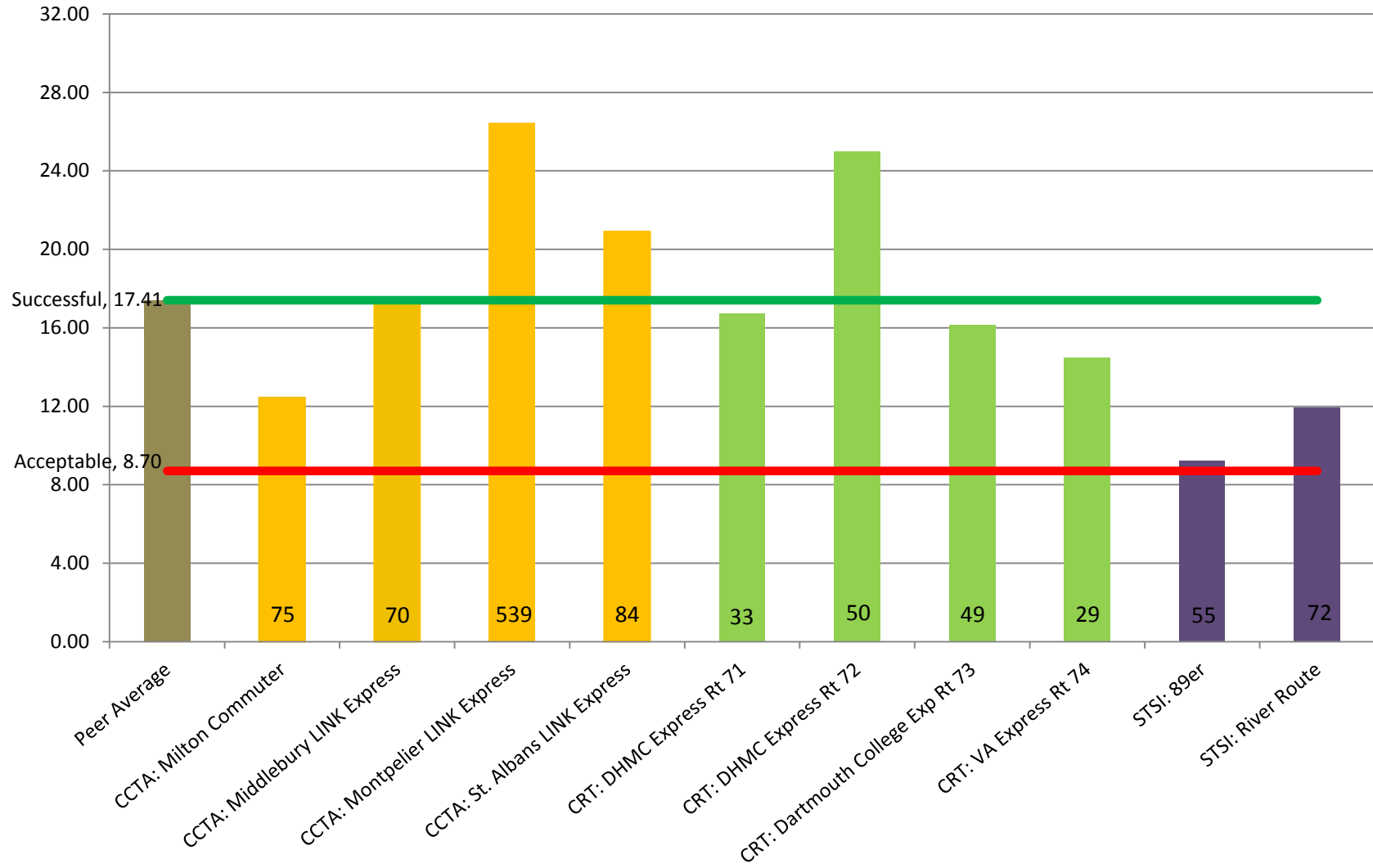


*Emerald Line

Graph #6: 2015 Rural Commuter Boardings per Hour (continued)

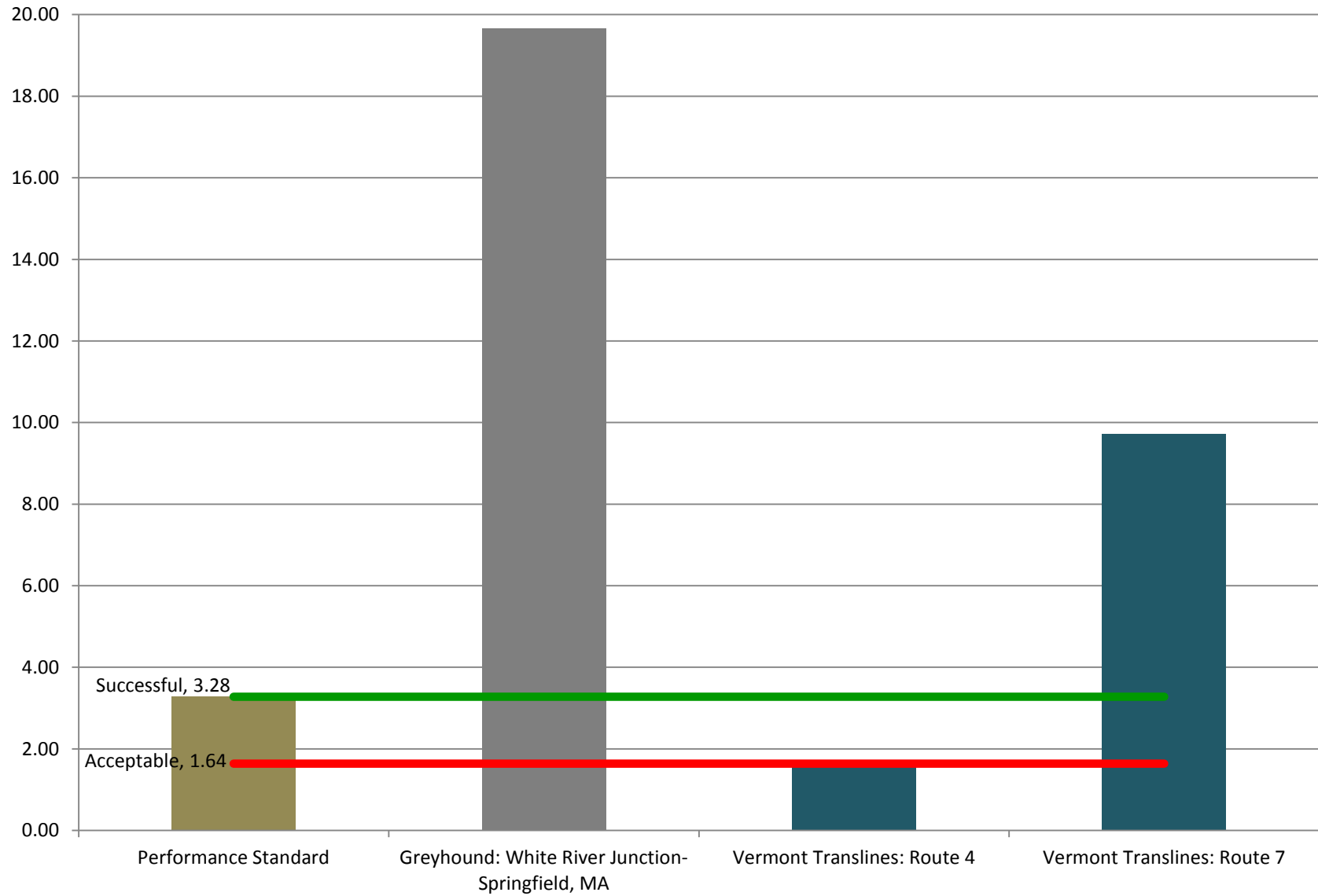


Graph #7: 2015 Express Commuter Boardings per Trip



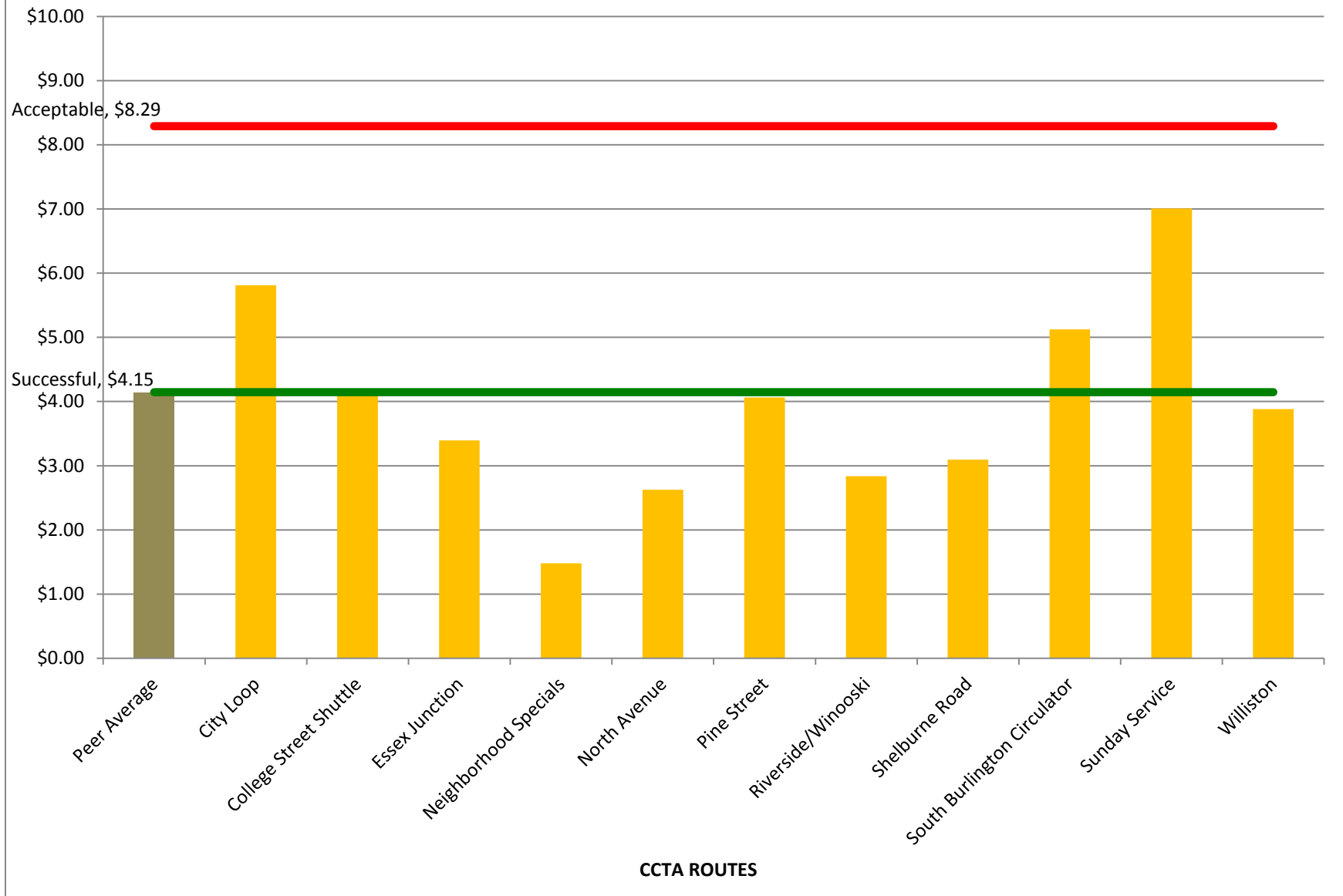
Note: The numbers at the bottom of the bars indicate the routes' FY 2015 average daily ridership.

Graph #8: 2015 Intercity Boardings per Trip

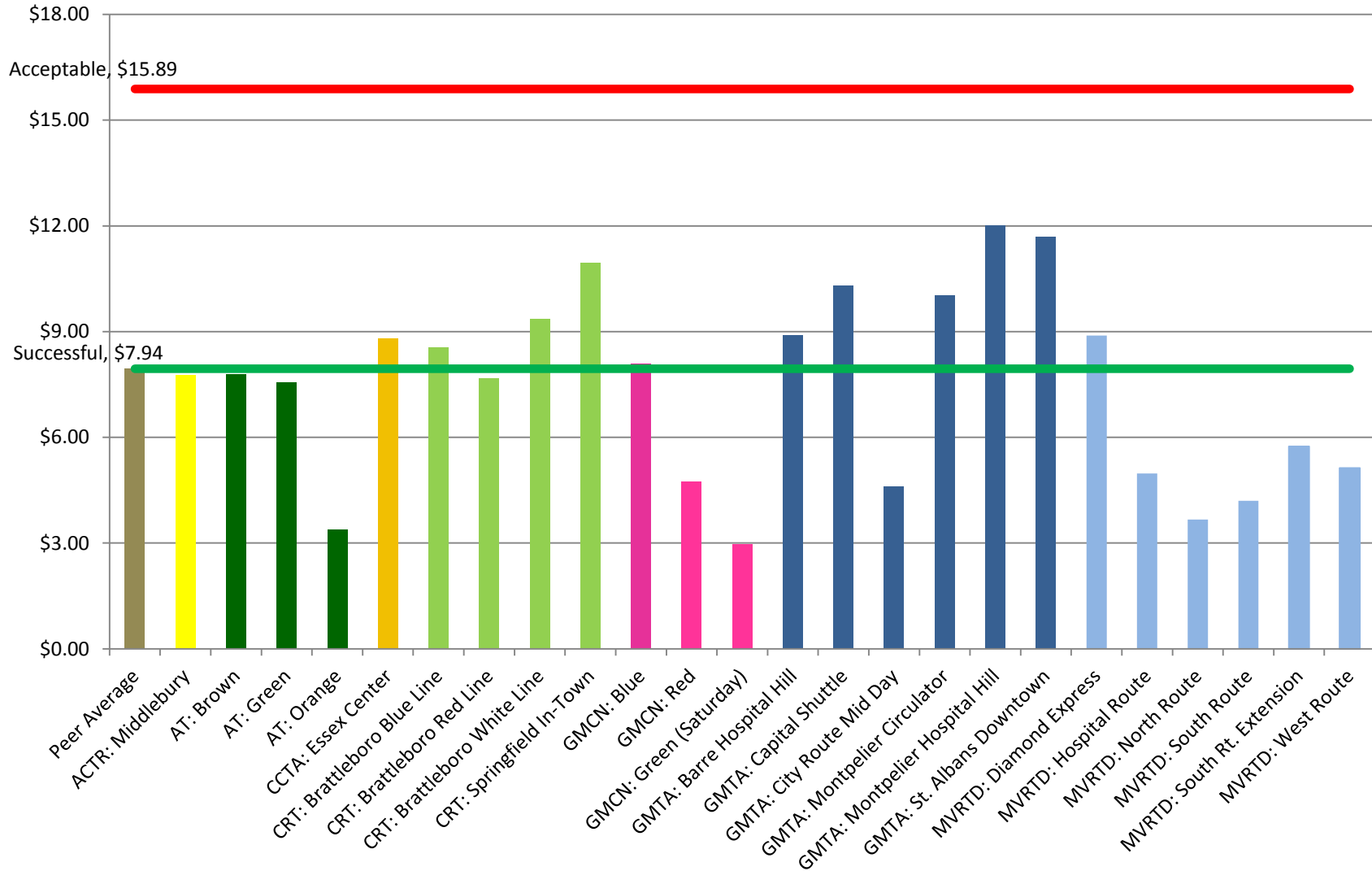


COST-EFFECTIVENESS PERFORMANCE BY SERVICE CATEGORY

Graph #9: 2015 Urban Cost per Passenger

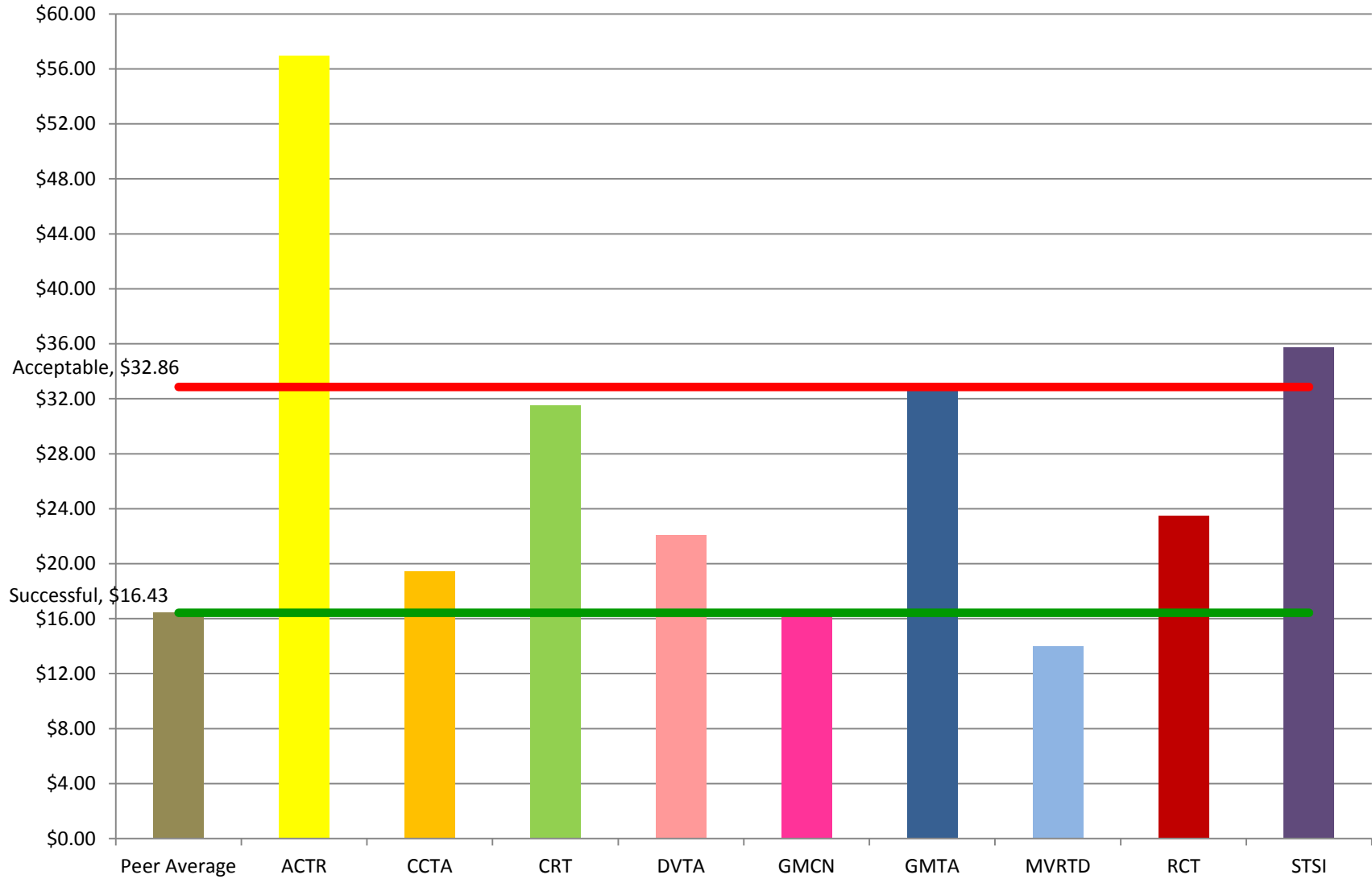


Graph #10: 2015 Small Town Cost per Passenger



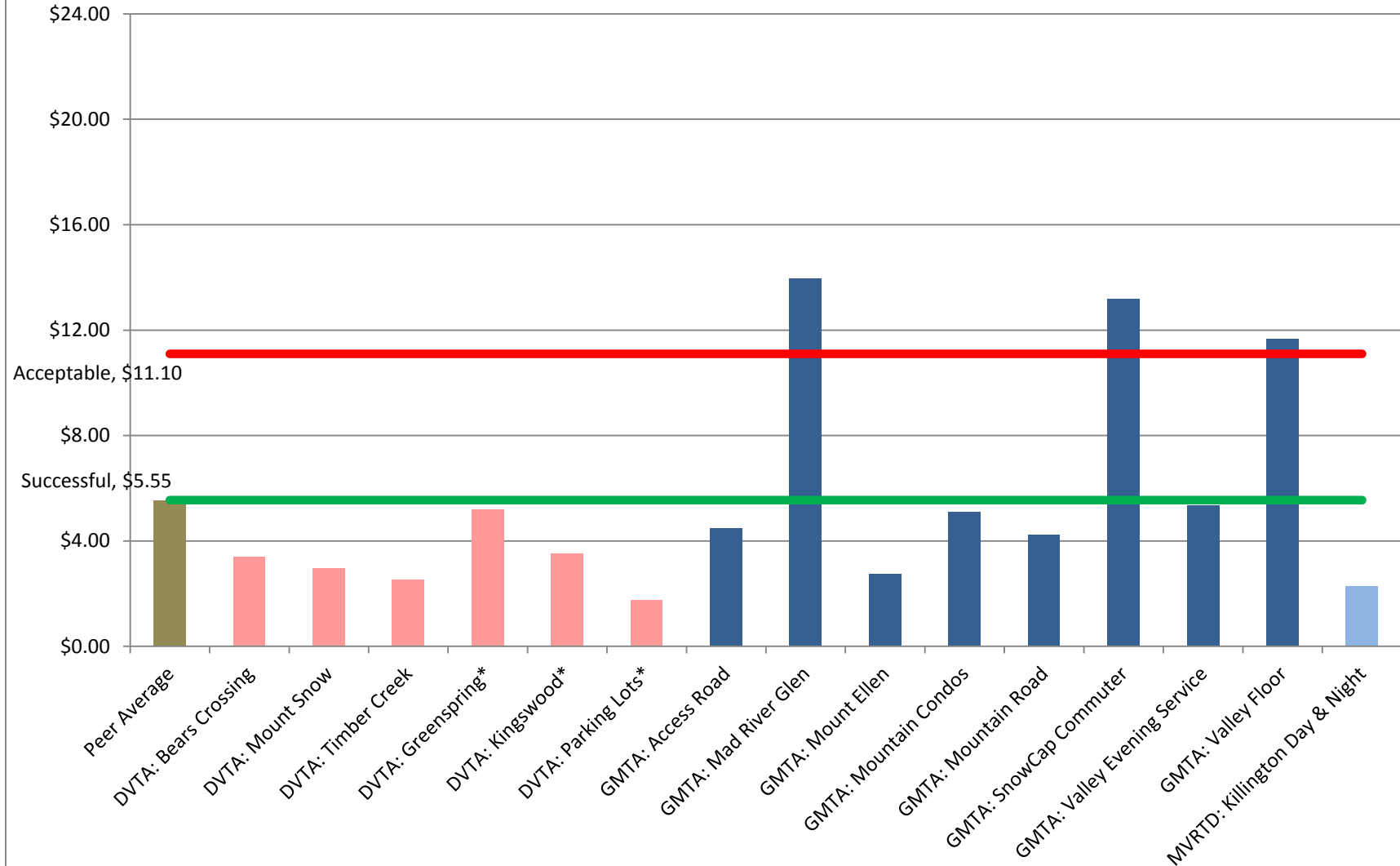
Note: Data for AT routes represent the entire route, even though a portion of the route is in New Hampshire.

Graph #11: 2015 Demand Response Cost per Passenger



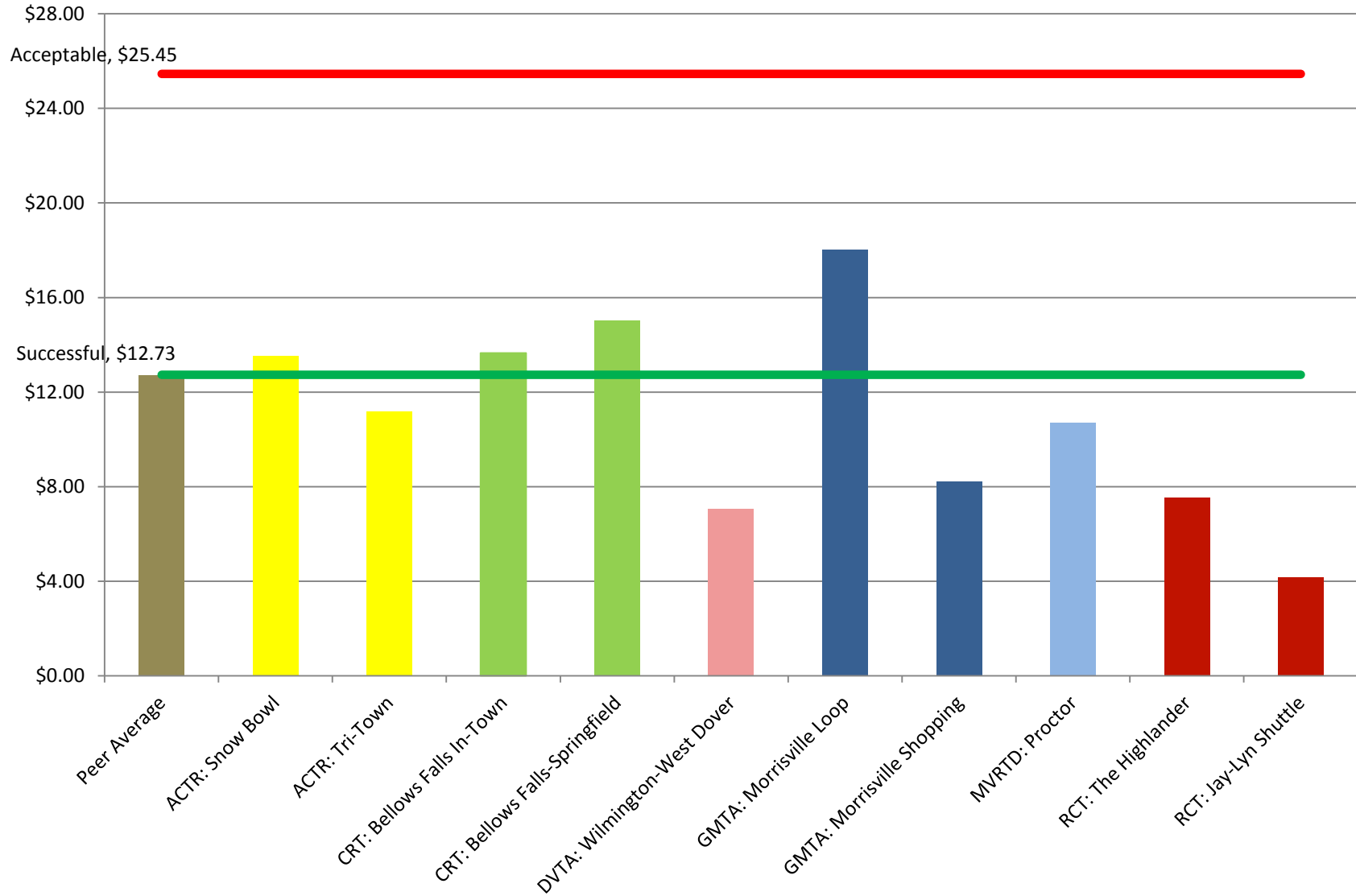
Note: ACTR's demand response data does not account for 24,000 annual trips provided by its sub-grantee.

Graph #12: 2015 Tourism Cost per Passenger

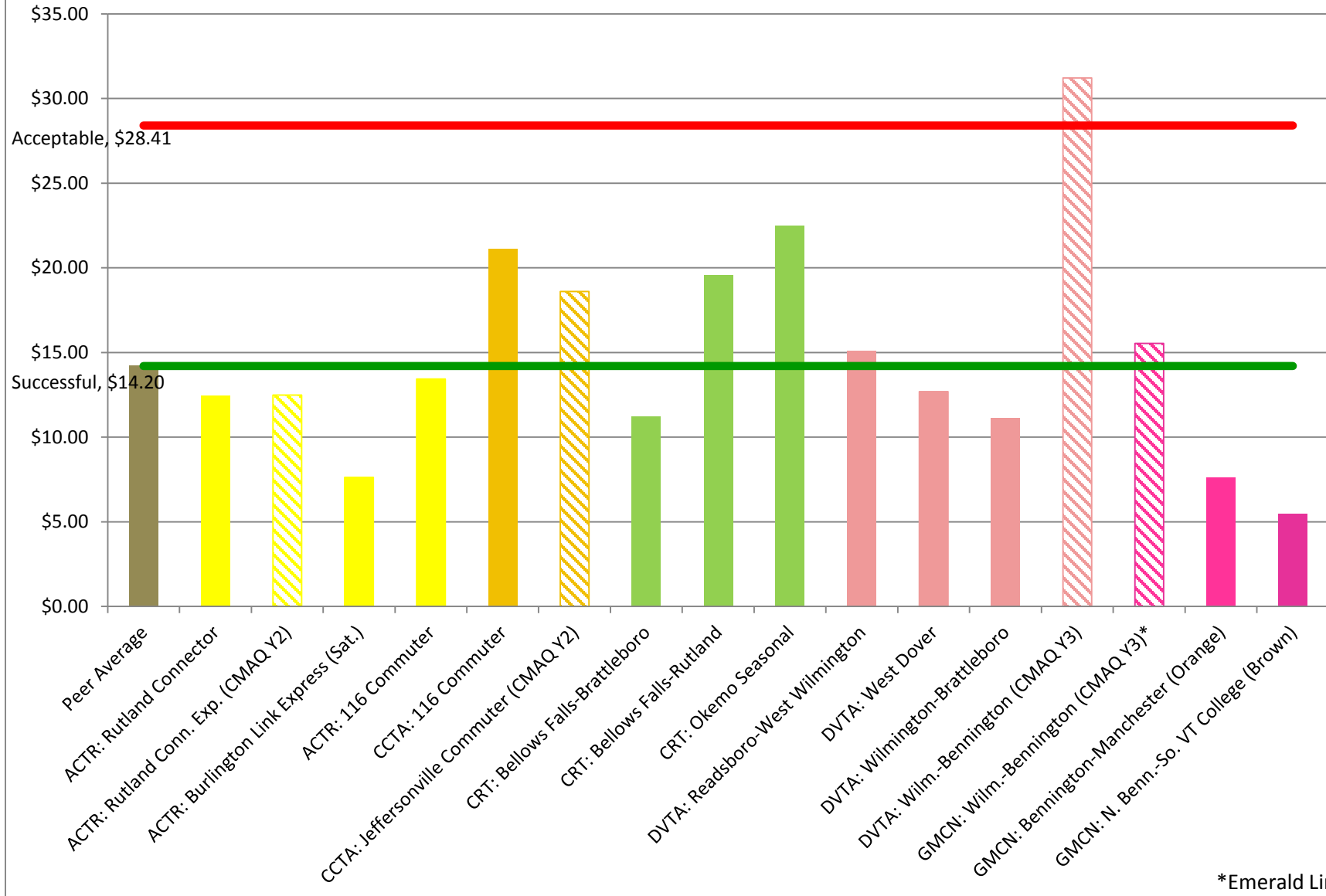


*Greenspring, Kingswood, and Parking Lots route operations privately funded; no state or federal funds used.

Graph #13: 2015 Rural Cost per Passenger

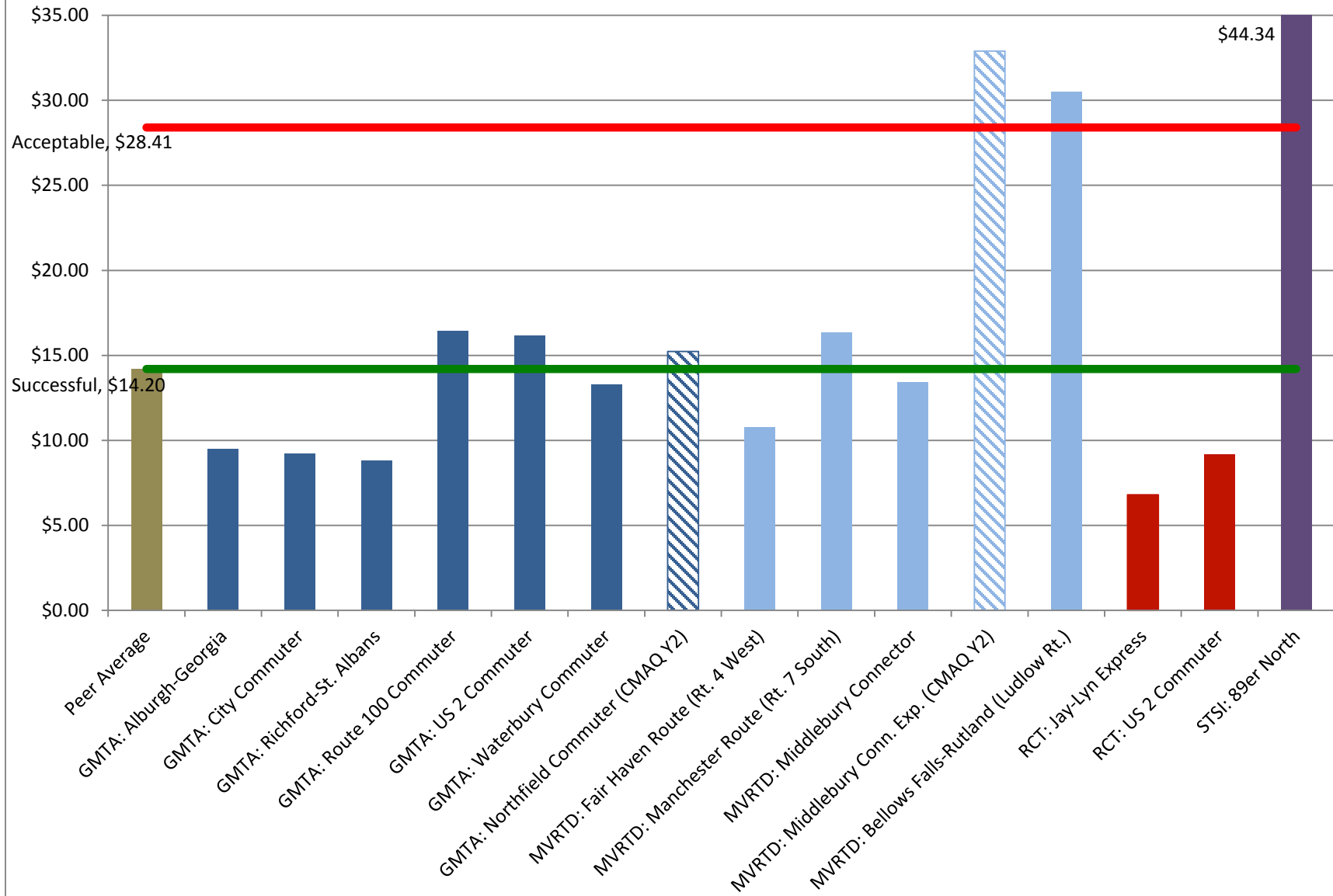


Graph #14: 2015 Rural Commuter Cost per Passenger

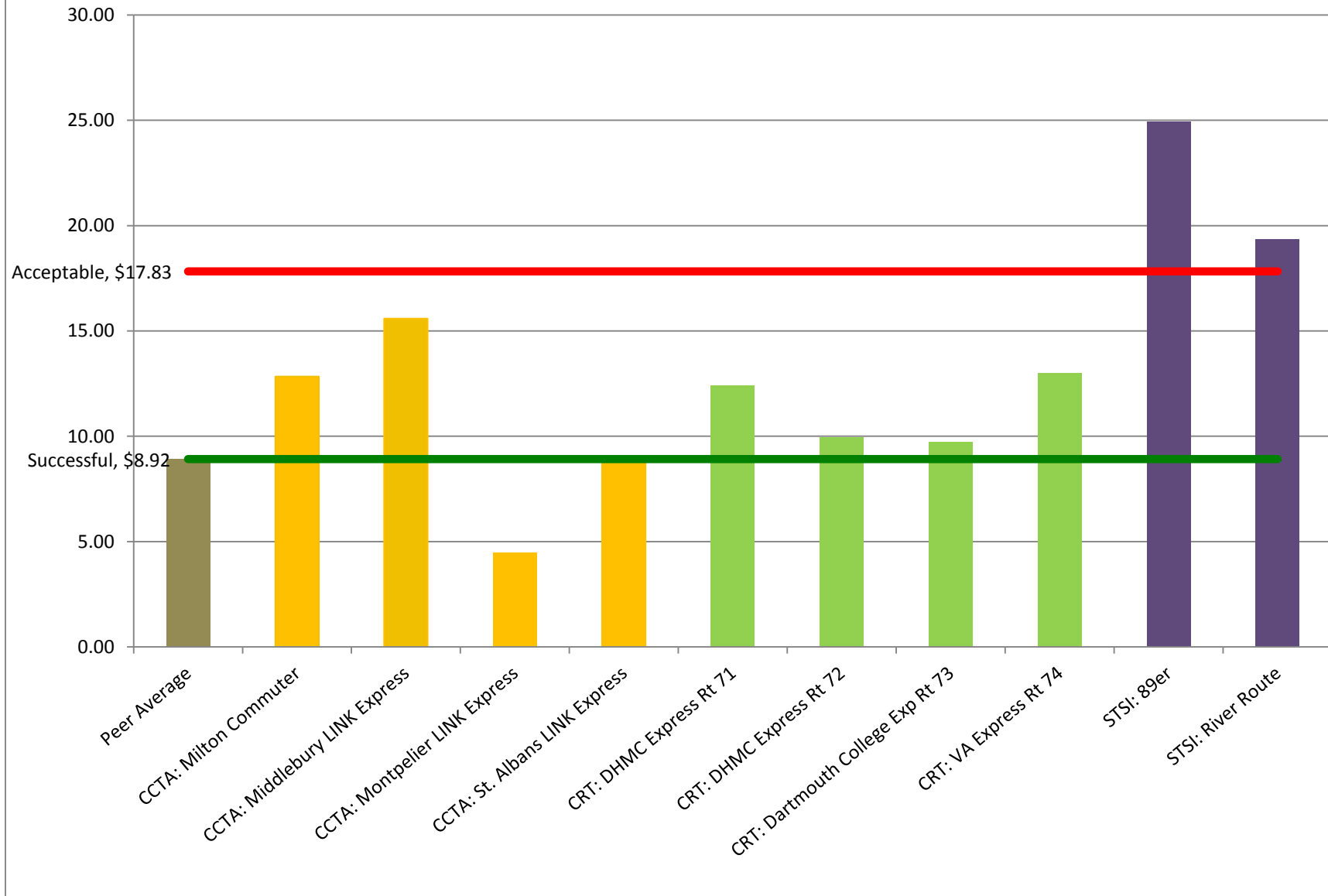


*Emerald Line

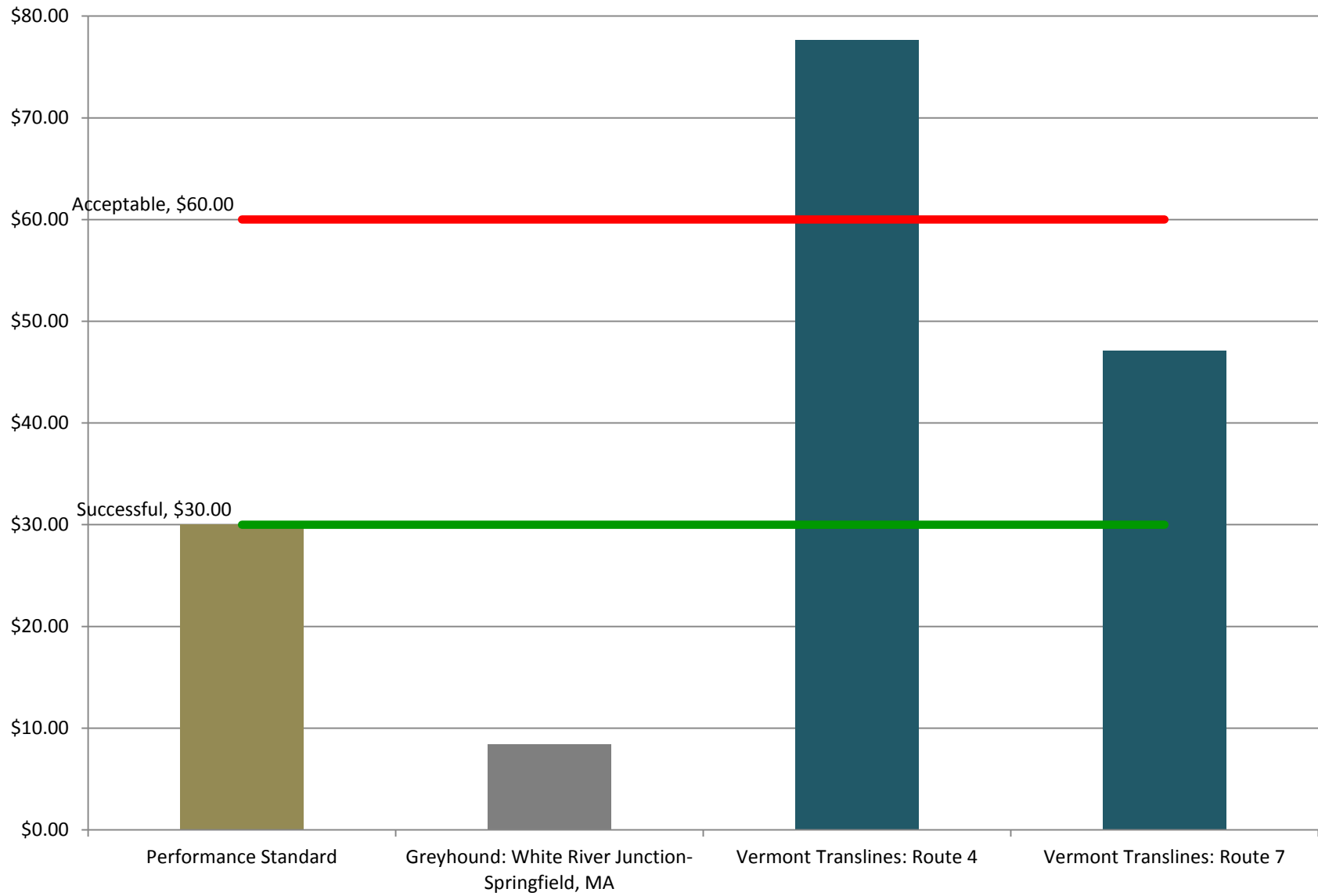
Graph #14: 2015 Rural Commuter Cost per Passenger (continued)



Graph #15: 2015 Express Commuter Cost per Passenger



Graph #16: 2015 Intercity Subsidy per Passenger



Graph #17: 2015 Administrative Cost per Volunteer Trip

