



ASHEVILLE TRANSIT COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
First Floor Conference – City Hall
November 1, 2011 4:00-6:00

Attending:

Commission Members: Paul Van Heden, Julie Mayfield, Tom Tomlin, Ken O'Connor, Kevin Jenkins, Dave Erb, Councilman Gordon Smith

Staff: Mariate Echeverry, Martha McGlohon, Yuri Koslen, Norman Schenck, Janet George Murr.

Community members: Timothy Sadler, Lyuba Zuyeva, Jeanie Rosenthal, Steven Johnson, Andrew Tourier, Bruce Emory, Donna Oliver, Nancy Sanders.

4:03 p.m.: Paul Van Heden opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Paul Van Heden read the Explanation of Public Comment Standards and Opportunities.

Transit Commission Members and staff listed above introduced themselves.

November 1, 2011 Agenda Amendments: Correct date to November 1, 2011 of Agenda Amendments; Mariate's presentation was moved until after Staff Updates. Julie moved to approve the agenda; Tom second and carried unanimously.

October 4, 2011 Transit Commission Minutes Approval: Dave moved to approve the minutes, Julie second and carried unanimously.

Welcoming the Public – Introductions and Pre-Meeting Public Comment – Timothy Sadler stated that the Wells Fargo bus wrap is a poor representation of what Asheville is all about in being independent. Also, Mr. Sadler is an avid bus rider and because there wasn't a bus shelter at that particular bus stop, he was caught in the rain. Mr. Sadler is requesting to have more bus shelters installed. Also, Mr. Sadler asked why it is called "transit system" rather than a "bus system."

Public Comment - Part I: -

Transit Commission Members' Experiences on ATS this past month:

- Tom – observed that the buses at the Transit Center were coming in on time.
- Julie – nothing to report.
- Ken O – nothing to report.
- Kevin - "Route 9 and 18 were late, but not uncommon for these routes."
- Paul - nothing to report.
- Dave - "really good this month."
- Gordon - nothing to report.

NEW BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS:

● **Consolidation Study Update:**

- Julie asked Ken O on the update of a scheduled meeting between City and County. Ken O. stated that he has not had an opportunity to speak with Jon Creighton due to scheduling conflicts, but he will continue to try to reach him to have Ken P and Jon Creighton for a meeting.
- Julie stated that she has talked with Holly Jones of Buncombe County and asked if Ms. Jones could help with the resolution process. Ms. Jones indicated that she would be happy to speak with Wanda Greene and Jon Creighton about it. Julie also spoke with Denise Braine of Buncombe County at the Regional Transit Operators Meeting and that she would try to speak with Jon Creighton as well.

- Mariate stated that she spoke with Denise Braine at the request of Ken P. Denise Braine stated that for now Buncombe County is not interested in passing this type of resolution. The County feels that the resolution does not advance the process.
- Gordon stated that being able to meet with Buncombe County staffers is the best option.
- Julie asked Ken O to continue to follow up and Julie will follow up with Denise Braine.

● **Transit Commission Work Plan Update:** Julie asked TC for updates on respective goals. No updates -
Worth noting:

4. Advocacy:

- Dave stated that when he gave his presentation to the Sierra Club and Green Drinks last month, the audience did ask for more transit related information.
- Paul stated that Thursday 11/3/11 Get There Asheville will have the candidate forum on multi-modal at the Asheville Design Center which Paul will be video taping.

5. Integrate with other Transportation and Land Use Groups:

- Julie stated that the City of Asheville Planning and Zoning will be electing a new chairman and Julie will reach out to that person to update on Greenway Commission, Bike/Ped Task Force; Sustainability, Planning/Zoning and Transit Commission. Julie stated that she spoke with Matt Raker who chairs COA Sustainability Committee and the #1 priority was funding for the master planning implementation to include transit, greenways, etc.

● **Discussion on FTA to expedite Title VI Process:** Mariate stated FTA sent comments that need to be answered by 11/23/11. Since none of the comments were related to the major service change policy or the disparate impact policy that was set in the plan, they were able to proceed and prepare the service fare analysis to be sent to FTA this week. Mariate stated that when she attended the American Public Transportation Conference in New Orleans met with Title VI coordinator who is reviewing all of the Title VI plans and the service fare analysis and she stated that she will give priority to the revision of the service analysis in three to four weeks. Yuri is addressing all of the concerns with the prior submission which will be sent out soon. Gordon and Paul asked how much time from the response date and the implementation date. Mariate stated that she has been working with Melissa Williams in Communications to write up a plan to implement less than 30 days and to have informational public meetings. Mariate requested TC to consider passing a resolution to propose a one month free fare during the implementation of the route changes in order to encourage the public to try the new routes and to reduce stress on current riders. Mariate also stated that nothing can be printed until FTA approves. Norman stated that another portion is the Union contract a timeline of 6 to 8 weeks once the announcement of the change to the Union to sign up to do the new work which is a minimal of 6 weeks. Julie stated that TC is proposing to have 3 additional meetings to educate the public and having someone at the Transit Center. Kevin moved that the first 30 days of implementation of new routes be fare free. Julie second. Dave questioned the loss fare revenue in having the one month fare free. Paul stated that TC will take a vote when TC will have the numbers on the cost at the next meeting. Gordon suggested stating the beginning and ending dates on the resolution.

● **Advertising on buses - to have or not to have:** Mariate stated:

- a. COA is making a huge effort in creating a brand and image.
- b. Nine new buses are ordered and expected to arrive in 11 months.
- c. The new buses will not be wrapped with ads because they will damage the current wrap.
- d. Does TC want to continue with advertising? When the advertising program was developed we were hoping for \$100,000 every year; but the revenue has decreased in the past three fiscal years.
- c. The image suffers and the frames are detrimental to the image.
- d. An option would be that there will be 5-2006 Orion buses that could be used for advertising.
- e. The options are: continuing advertising; or discontinuing advertising; or continue on the 5 buses; or try to advertise a different way, i.e. on bus shelters or benches, which would involve amending the UDO.

After a discussion among TC, staff and community: Dave moved to consider this very important issue, but to table the vote for at least a month. Ken O second and the motion carried unanimously. The rate sheet will be forwarded to the TC members to review and calculate on how much revenue would be given up if advertising was eliminated. Mariate stated she will forward to TC the calculations that were sent to Council for permission to have the bus wraps.

- **Smoking Ban Policy at Transit Center:** Norman updated TC on the security at the non-smoking area at the Transit Center. There are more staff, supervisor and APD on the platform; the camera has been moved for a better view of that area and a new camera with better features will be installed. Jeanie Rosenthal suggested a non-smoking sign at the Post Office side which is non-smoking side.

STAFF UPDATES:

- **Brief discussion of Swannanoa Bus Shelter** - Yuri stated that the County Manager's office appreciates the interest.
 1. The Friends and Neighbors of Swannanoa (FANS) would fund the shelter.
 2. The City of Asheville (COA) and Buncombe County (BC) would sign the encroachment agreement with NCDOT.
 3. City staff could construct the shelter using FANS funds and BC would agree to the maintenance of the shelter over the long term.
 4. Buncombe County did not feel comfortable in agreeing to the maintenance of the shelter. Buncombe County does not have the funds, manpower, resources available for labor, materials or liability risk associated with maintaining the shelter of a non-county owned facility.
 5. Another idea proposed is to have a non-profit sign an encroachment agreement w/ NCDOT. Yuri asked for direction from TC. Kevin suggested asking Greenworks. Yuri will ask Greenworks for suggestions on encroachment agreements as a non-profit.
 6. Julie suggested that Mrs. Donna Oliver lead this effort and if there are road blocks along the way to consult with Yuri.

- **Framework on transit project from conception to completion** - Mariate stated that all capital projects are federally funded. Mariate would like to invite Paul Black of the Land of Sky Regional Council for the December TC meeting to give a presentation in explaining the big picture how projects are allocated in Comprehensive Long Range Transportation Plan.

- **Status on RFPs - buses, roof and marketing:**

1. **Buses** - Mariate stated that a PO has been issued for the 9 new of 2 hybrid/electric, 7 diesel 30foot 28 passenger buses; and 3 CNG for Henderson County.
2. **Transit garage roof** - Mariate stated that the bids that were received were too high; the engineers are changing the specs.
3. **Marketing** - Mariate stated until FTA approves Title VI approval, maps and marketing are on hold. Mariate announced the new decals on the new buses with ART branding.

- **Review of ATS monthly Reports on Accident Summary, Safety Report, Ridership, and Passport:** TC reviewed the reports.

- **Bus Passes** - Norman stated that 49.7% of fare revenue are passes. Tom asked about having a different pass for each category to prevent fraud. Norman stated that passes have not been ordered to delineate student, senior citizen, disabled, which is an added expense. Tom suggested if only student passes could be different than other passes. Mariate stated that it was decided last year to combine all of the passes since it is easier for the drivers to identify and not having to enforce any type of action with people who do not use the passes correctly. This transaction should occur at the Transit Center and not enforced on the buses. Tom suggested having the students purchased the student passes rather than the parents. Mariate stated that she has a problem with this transaction, since we are trying to make it easier for people to buy passes and are thinking about selling passes online and other at locations, other than the Transit Center. Dave asked if this fraud issue is a large problem. Mariate stated that at this time this is not a big problem mainly, because the drivers and the dispatchers know the riders. Yuri stated that if there is a considerable change in the stats then we would hope TC would help in this respect to guide staff.

• **Public Comment Part II:**

1. Lyuba Zuyeva of Land of Sky Regional Council announced the French Broad River MPO will be undertaking an update on the Human Services Transportation Plan for three County regions this winter and through March, 2012. The primary goal is to address the needs for the projects that would be applied for JARC, New Freedom and Elderly and Disabled Grant categories in May or June, 2012. Most of it will be community transportation needs which would be applicable to Mountain Mobility projects or that do not fit the fixed routes transit system. There will be a public input process in January and February, 2011 timeframe to enhance the existing Asheville Transit plan and not to detract from it.

2. Jeanie Rosenthal suggested that to make the bus ride more comfortable will be good to keep the temperature at a comfortable level; and emailing riders of changes in the scheduling and bus stop changes to help the people with the upcoming changes. Ms. Rosenthal suggested banning smoking on city property. Norman stated that in the summer the bus temperature is set 74° and in winter 68°. Norman stated that the fans are set by a computer and there is not much of an adjustment that the drivers can do on each individual bus.

3. Timothy Sadler requested 10 minutes to discuss an advertising proposal for Zero Zen Marketing on December 6, 2012 TC meeting. Paul requested Mr. Spader to send information to him and he will send to Janet.

• **Mariate's presentation on FTA trip to China and India:** Mariate presented a Power Point on the Sustainable Transportation - Environmentally Friendly Mobility Mission by the International Transit Studies Program-FTA Transportation Research Board.

Announcements:

December 6, 2011 Agenda Items

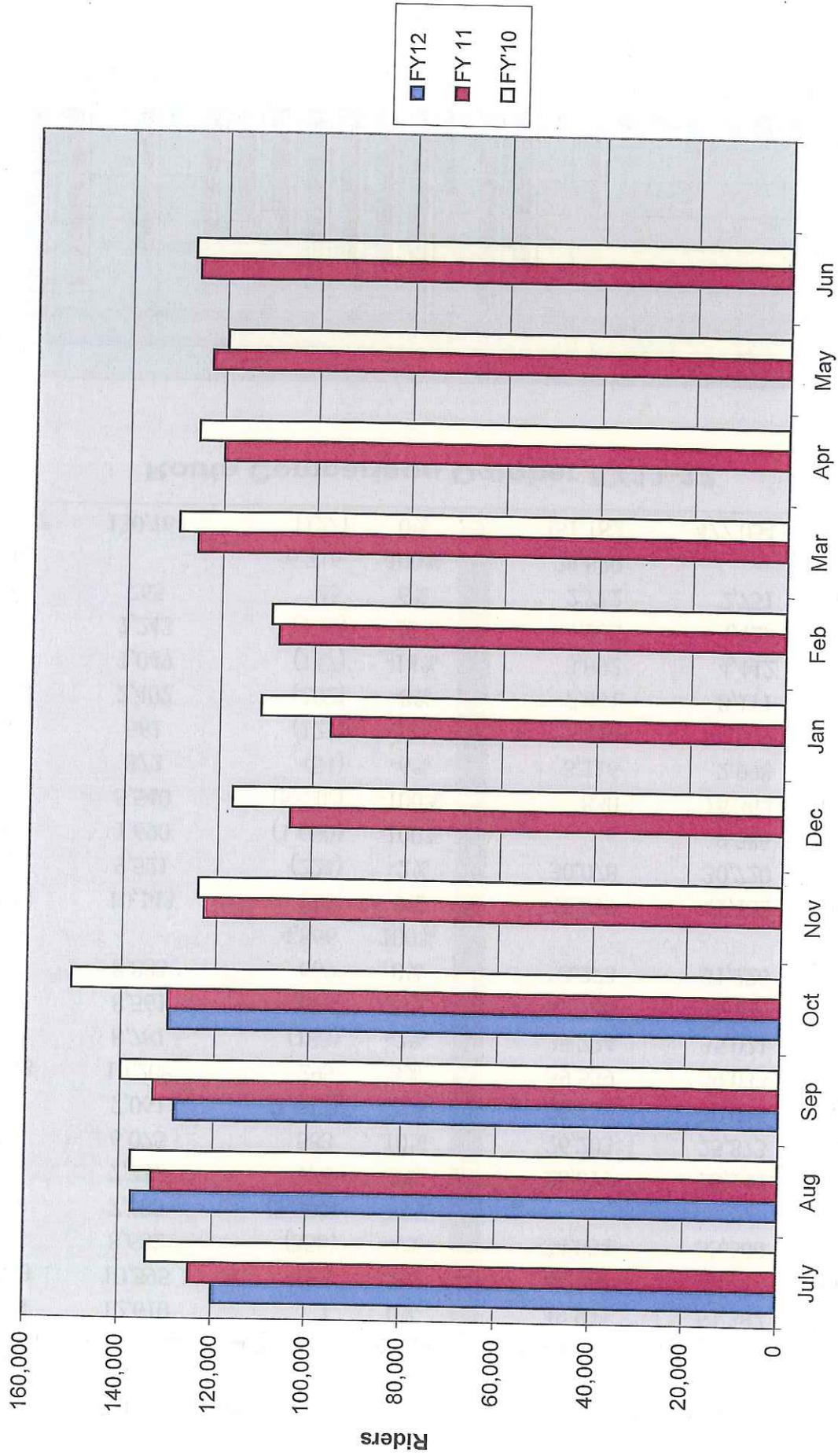
1. Tim Sadler of Zero to Zen Marketing for a presentation (10 minutes)
2. Month Fare Free;
3. Paul Black of Land Of Sky presentation;
4. Title VI;
5. Advertisement on the buses
6. Are there things from the TMP that will be part of the LOS plan that Lyuba discussed. Are there projects that the City can pursue the funding for that is part of the plan that Lyuba discussed.

Meeting Summary:

- Solicitation for request from public to be incorporated into next month's meeting agenda.
- Discuss agenda items for next TC meeting.

Paul adjourned at 6:00 pm

Ridership Comparison



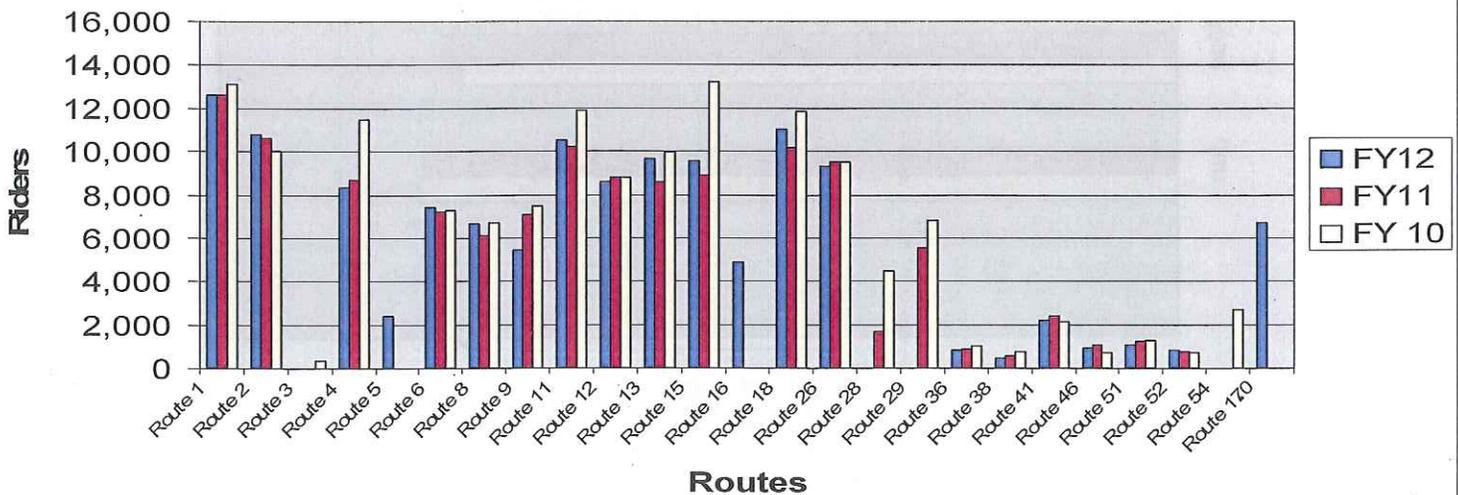
Route Ridership-October, 2011

Current Month

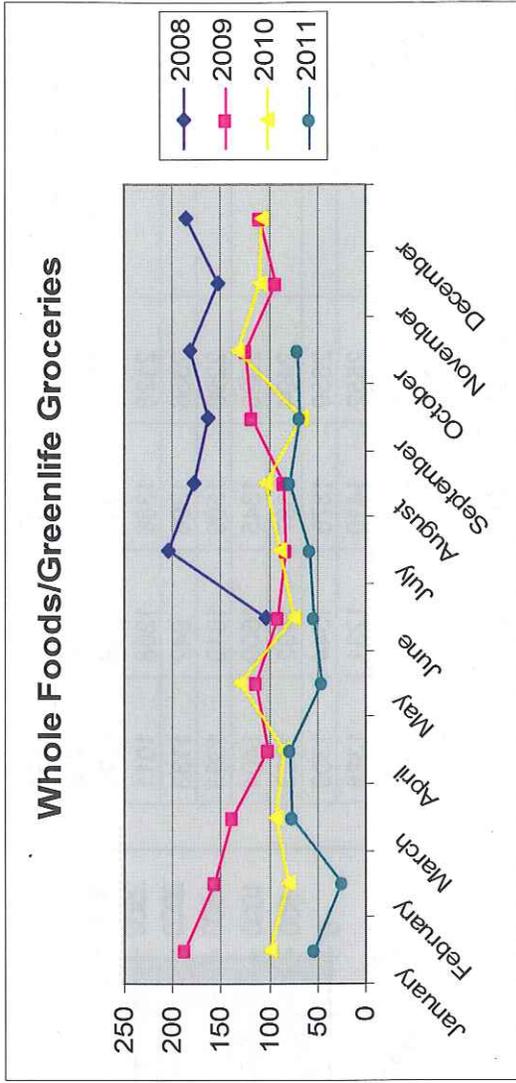
Fiscal Year to Date

Route	<u>This Year</u>	<u>Last Year</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Delta</u>		<u>This Year</u>	<u>Last Year</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Delta</u>
1	12,611	12,610	1	0%		49,931	51,387	(1,456)	-3%
2	10,768	10,595	173	2%		41,668	42,713	(1,045)	-2%
4	8,324	8,682	(358)	-4%		34,054	33,600	454	1%
5	2,381	7,685	(5,304)	-69%					
6	7,413	7,237	176	2%		28,019	28,144	(125)	0%
8	6,658	6,075	583	10%		26,203	25,873	330	1%
9	5,444	7,061	(1,617)	-23%		26,777	30,015	(3,238)	-11%
11	10,503	10,208	295	3%		39,539	39,033	506	1%
12	8,598	8,781	(183)	-2%		35,724	35,021	703	2%
13	9,637	8,561	1,076	13%		37,740	35,173	2,567	7%
15	9,552	8,883	669	8%		33,273	31,226	2,047	7%
16	4,866		4,866	100%					
18	11,041	10,143	898	9%		42,099	41,462	637	2%
26	9,297	9,521	(224)	-2%		30,078	30,720	(642)	-2%
28	0	1,690	(1,690)	-100%		-	9,586	(9,586)	-100%
29	0	5,540	(5,540)	-100%		830	16,363	(15,533)	-95%
36	818	872	(54)	-6%		3,116	2,998	118	4%
38	440	561	(121)	-22%		3,640	4,009	(369)	-9%
41	2,200	2,402	(202)	-8%		7,831	8,111	(280)	-3%
46	902	1,049	(147)	-14%		3,892	4,442	(550)	-12%
51	1,058	1,243	(185)	-15%		4,056	4,427	(371)	-8%
52	810	765	45	6%		2,712	2,751	(39)	-1%
170	6,716		6,716	100%		24,820	-	24,820	100%
Total	130,037	130,164	(127)	0%		451,182	477,054	(25,872)	-5%

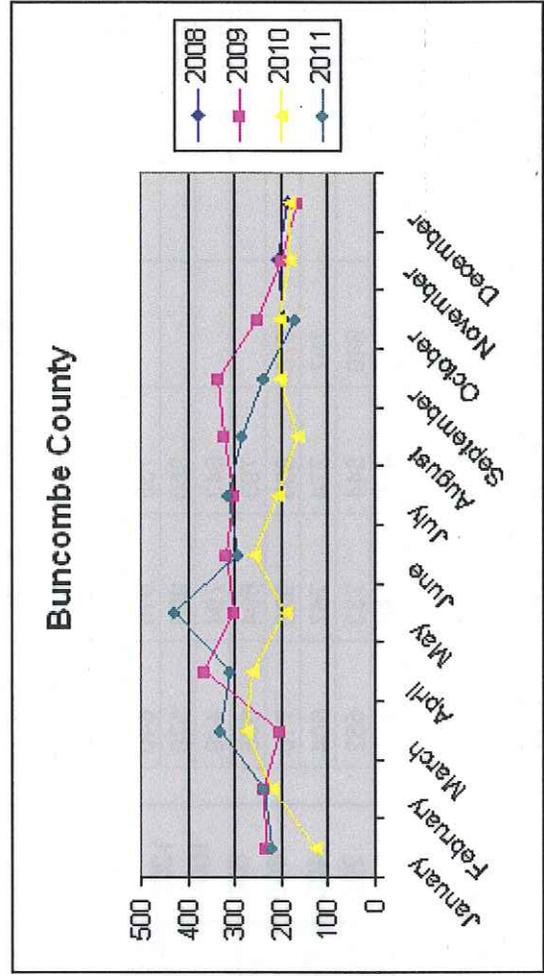
Route Comparison October FY11-12



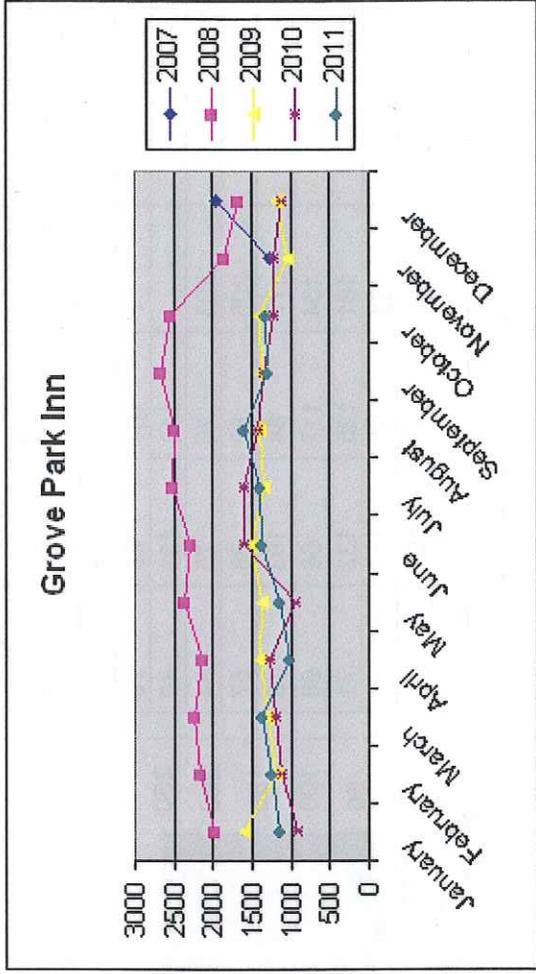
Whole Foods/Greenlife	2008	2009	2010	2011
January		188	100	54
February		156	80	25
March		138	94	77
April		101	85	79
May		113	131	46
June	103	90	75	54
July	205	82	88	57
August	177	84	103	79
September	164	117	66	68
October	181	125	133	71
November	152	93	110	
December	185	109	107	
Year Totals	1167	1396	1172	610
Overall Totals	4345			



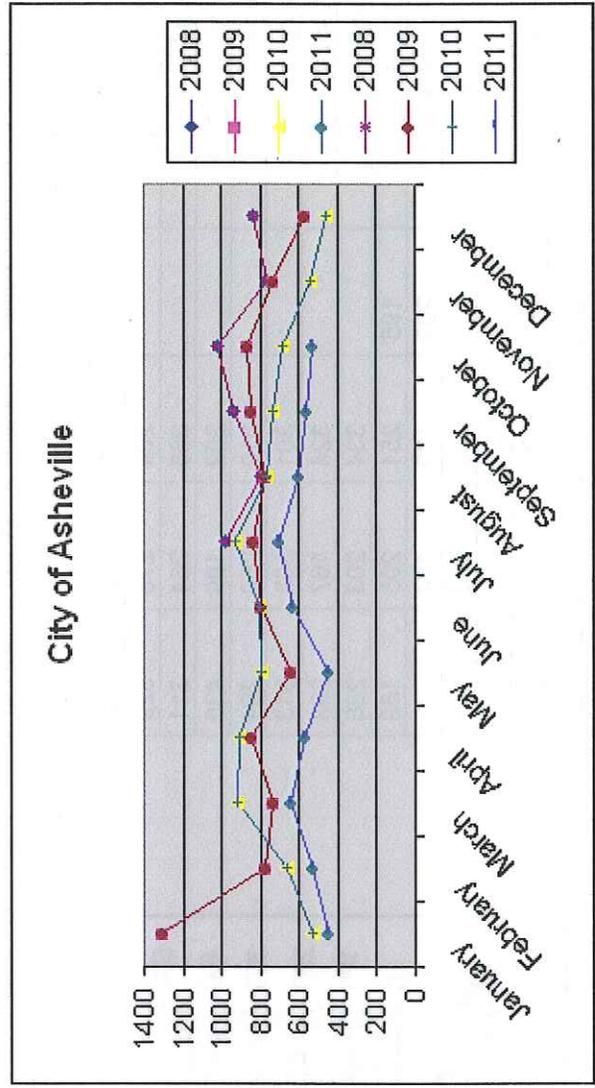
Buncombe County	2008	2009	2010	2011
January		231	127	221
February		236	222	238
March		204	275	329
April		366	264	311
May		302	189	430
June		319	259	294
July		301	208	313
August		324	167	283
September		334	203	236
October	195	251	205	169
November	209	199	184	
December	187	165	183	
Year Totals	591	3232	2486	2824
Overall Totals	9133			



Grove Park Inn	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
January		1993	1592	913	1137
February		2156	1198	1119	1238
March		2225	1305	1205	1375
April		2128	1386	1268	1011
May		2356	1366	942	1133
June		2298	1509	1610	1383
July		2520	1345	1609	1404
August		2494	1387	1432	1603
September		2659	1376	1344	1303
October		2552	1410	1231	1328
November	1268	1863	1042	1217	
December	1969	1676	1167	1112	
Year Totals	3237	26920	16083	15002	12915
Overall Totals	74157				



City of Asheville	2008	2009	2010	2011
January		1306	530	448
February		779	664	536
March		733	916	640
April		850	906	570
May		643	794	449
June		793	804	635
July	976	838	926	710
August	797	774	767	604
September	940	844	733	562
October	1018	873	680	531
November	770	735	545	
December	835	575	458	
Year Totals	5336	9743	8723	5685
Overall Totals	29487			



UNCA	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
January						
February		2433	3140	4777	2020	2326
March		2860	4041	4562	3346	2652
April		3536	3346	3554	3335	2662
May		3163	3906	3891	3433	2888
June		2010	2870	1803	2248	1582
July		1529	2882	1253	2129	2055
August		1816	2692	1677	1890	1918
September		3611	5336	3118	3013	2923
October		4512	6755	3897	4663	4511
November	1285	4881	6169	3935	3774	4455
December	1754	3452	4444	3234	3072	
		2443	3649	2124	2042	
Year Totals	3039	36246	49230	37825	34965	27972
Overall Totals	189277					

