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Public Transportation Board Effectiveness: A Self-Assessment Handbook

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TCRP REPORT 104

Public Transportation Board Effectiveness: A Self-Assessment Handbook

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Subject Areas
Planning and Administration • Public Transit

TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD

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TRANSIT COOPERATIVE RESEARCH PROGRAM

The nation's growth and the need to meet mobility, environmental, and energy objectives place demands on public transit systems. Current systems, some of which are old and in need of upgrading, must expand service area, increase service frequency, and improve efficiency to serve these demands. Research is necessary to solve operating problems, to adapt appropriate new technologies from other industries, and to introduce innovations into the transit industry. The Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) serves as one of the principal means by which the transit industry can develop innovative near-term solutions to meet demands placed on it.

The need for TCRP was originally identified in *TRB Special Report 213—Research for Public Transit: New Directions,* published in 1987 and based on a study sponsored by the Urban Mass Transportation Administration—now the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). A report by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), *Transportation 2000*, also recognized the need for local, problem-solving research. TCRP, modeled after the longstanding and successful National Cooperative Highway Research Program, undertakes research and other technical activities in response to the needs of transit service providers. The scope of TCRP includes a variety of transit research fields including planning, service configuration, equipment, facilities, operations, human resources, maintenance, policy, and administrative practices.

TCRP was established under FTA sponsorship in July 1992. Proposed by the U.S. Department of Transportation, TCRP was authorized as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). On May 13, 1992, a memorandum agreement outlining TCRP operating procedures was executed by the three cooperating organizations: FTA, The National Academies, acting through the Transportation Research Board (TRB); and the Transit Development Corporation, Inc. (TDC), a nonprofit educational and research organization established by APTA. TDC is responsible for forming the independent governing board, designated as the TCRP Oversight and Project Selection (TOPS) Committee.

Research problem statements for TCRP are solicited periodically but may be submitted to TRB by anyone at any time. It is the responsibility of the TOPS Committee to formulate the research program by identifying the highest priority projects. As part of the evaluation, the TOPS Committee defines funding levels and expected products.

Once selected, each project is assigned to an expert panel, appointed by the Transportation Research Board. The panels prepare project statements (requests for proposals), select contractors, and provide technical guidance and counsel throughout the life of the project. The process for developing research problem statements and selecting research agencies has been used by TRB in managing cooperative research programs since 1962. As in other TRB activities, TCRP project panels serve voluntarily without compensation.

Because research cannot have the desired impact if products fail to reach the intended audience, special emphasis is placed on disseminating TCRP results to the intended end users of the research: transit agencies, service providers, and suppliers. TRB provides a series of research reports, syntheses of transit practice, and other supporting material developed by TCRP research. APTA will arrange for workshops, training aids, field visits, and other activities to ensure that results are implemented by urban and rural transit industry practitioners.

The TCRP provides a forum where transit agencies can cooperatively address common operational problems. The TCRP results support and complement other ongoing transit research and training programs.

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The **Transportation Research Board** is a division of the National Research Council, which serves the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering. The Board's mission is to promote innovation and progress in transportation through research. In an objective and interdisciplinary setting, the Board facilitates the sharing of information on transportation practice and policy by researchers and practitioners; stimulates research and offers research management services that promote technical excellence; provides expert advice on transportation policy and programs; and disseminates research results broadly and encourages their implementation. The Board's varied activities annually engage more than 5,000 engineers, scientists, and other transportation researchers and practitioners from the public and private sectors and academia, all of whom contribute their expertise in the public interest. The program is supported by state transportation departments, federal agencies including the component administrations of the U.S. Department of Transportation, and other organizations and individuals interested in the development of transportation. **www.TRB.org**

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FOREWORD

By Gwen Chisholm-Smith
Staff Officer
Transportation Research
Board

TCRP Report 104: Public Transportation Board Effectiveness: A Self-Assessment Handbook provides a self-assessment process and tools to measure public transportation board effectiveness and provides references on how board characteristics can be changed to improve board effectiveness in various areas. The Handbook also identifies the characteristics of public transportation boards that influence transit system performance. The Handbook may be used by policymakers, transit chief executive officers, appointing bodies, and legal advisors.

The companion document to the Handbook is the TCRP Project H-24A final report, *The Public Transportation Board Effectiveness Study*, which focuses on the findings of the research. The report describes the two major phases of the study: the expert workshop, which resulted in the board performance measures, and the Handbook field test results, which include participant comments and suggestions. In addition, the report offers a complete list of transportation board performance measures. This report is published as *TCRP Web Document 24*, available at www4.trb.org/trb/onlinepubs.nsf.

This research builds on prior work done under TCRP Project H-24, which is published in *TCRP Report 85: Public Transit Board Governance Guidebook*. The purpose of TCRP Project H-24 was to develop a reference document that provides guidance to public transportation board members, general managers, and appointing bodies with respect to board powers, role, responsibilities, size, structure, organization, and composition. *TCRP Report 85* includes information on method of selection, compensation, term length, and committee structure of public transportation boards to define their organization and characteristics. It also is a "snapshot" of board organizational characteristics, with broad qualitative indicators of effectiveness, rather than a comprehensive analytical document.

Results of the prior study indicate that the development of an objective self-assessment process and tools that measure the effectiveness of a public transportation board would be useful. Such an assessment process and tools would provide information that could be used by boards of directors, appointing organizations/officials, and other entities to objectively assess public transportation board effectiveness.

AECOM Consult, Inc., in conjunction with the Mineta Transportation Institute and Will Scott & Co., LLC, conducted the research for TCRP Project H-24A. To achieve the project's objective of developing a public transportation board self-assessment process and tool, (1) a literature review was completed to identify the range of board assessment tools, (2) an expert workshop comprised of diverse transit board members and transit chief executive officers was held to select board performance measures, and (3) field tests were conducted to validate the Handbook. Based on the results of the expert workshop, performance measures were selected, and the Handbook was drafted and field tested by a cross section of U.S. transit agencies. Information, comments, and suggestions gathered from the expert workshop and field tests were incorporated into the Handbook.

CONTENTS

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION BOARD EFFECTIVENESS: A SELF-ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK

SUMMARY

The purpose of a transit board self-evaluation is to give the board an opportunity to regularly examine its goals and objectives, as well as its overall performance. The organization's ability to function effectively hinges on the board's concurrence with, and demonstration of, common values and goals.

The self-evaluation is an organized process by which the board regularly reexamines its goals, objectives, structure, processes, and collective performance. The board then reaffirms its commitment by adopting new goals and improved methods of operation.

TCRP Report 104: Public Transportation Board Effectiveness—A Self-Assessment Handbook (Handbook) is written for two primary users: (1) administrators who have been asked to help a transit board assess its own effectiveness and (2) individual board members responding to a self-assessment survey. The administrator could be a member of the transit agency or a third party. The administrator will play the role of facilitator by explaining, distributing, collecting, and summarizing a survey (the assessment tool) and then presenting the results to the board.

As envisioned in this Handbook, a transit board can evaluate its effectiveness through the following self-assessment process:

1. The transit board agrees to participate in the self-assessment and selects the administrator.
2. The administrator presents a summary of the Handbook and explains that the board should select one of three survey levels. The board then selects the level that is to be administered.
3. The board makes changes to the survey tool because this tool is *not* designed to be "one size fits all." Changes are encouraged to accommodate the uniqueness of each board.
4. The administrator distributes the assessment tool to each board member to individually perform the assessment.
5. The administrator then collects results from each board member.
6. The administrator compiles the results into a single document and distributes it to board members.
7. The board decides what actions to take on the basis of the results.

The Handbook equips the administrator with useful details on the following topics: (1) the purpose of, and need for, self-assessments; (2) decisions necessary to implement

a self-assessment; (3) disclosure and confidentiality issues and alternatives; (4) administration of a self-assessment; and (5) instructions for self-assessment administrators.

The self-assessment tool contains three progressive levels of assessment. Level II contains all of the steps in Level I, with additional steps and additional criteria in the assessment tool. Similarly, Level III contains all of the Level II features, together with additional assessment criteria and processes. The three levels differ primarily in the degree of detail with which the board assesses its processes and its fulfillment of fiduciary and legal responsibilities. A Level I assessment contains 13 criteria for measuring board effectiveness. A Level II assessment contains 22 criteria, including all 13 from Level I. A Level III assessment contains 31 criteria, including all 22 items from Level II.

SECTION **1**

INTRODUCTION—EFFECTIVENESS OF BOARDS OF DIRECTORS

Determining the effectiveness of a board of directors (board) responsible for policymaking and oversight for a nonprofit public enterprise such as a transit system depends on a number of perspectives with regard to what is to be evaluated, who will do the evaluation, and the level in the overall social, economic, and political environment at which the policymaking board operates. The system diagram shown in Exhibit 1 illustrates the variables that ultimately affect the performance characteristics that are to be evaluated by transit boards.

The diagram portrays the numerous factors that can affect a board's effectiveness. However, the most immediate improvements the board can undertake are limited to its own actions. The broader category of effort that boards exert to achieve intended results is called "Board Actions Behavior" in the diagram to include patterns of actions and effort to alter attitudes that may improve the board's effectiveness. Another important measure of board effectiveness is board results. Typical measures of board results include the proportion of meeting time spent on substantive discussions, the effectiveness of committee structures, and agenda prioritization. However, few of these measures attract unanimous support,

and fewer still are universally assessed. This is largely because of a focus on inputs and organization rather than on outputs (in the form of decisions and policymaking leadership for the organization).

Although there are few questions in the assessment tool pertaining to board attributes, the education or skills of the board members, or their qualifications to represent particular constituencies (such as the mobility impaired or economically disadvantaged), these characteristics are generally not directly affected by a sitting board, and they are therefore not considered in board effectiveness measurements. However, some may argue that many boards and many individual board members are consulted regarding upcoming board appointments. Those boards that do advise their appointing agencies about the skills and characteristics that are needed in future appointees to the board may decide to add such characteristics to the self-assessment. However, an expert panel that selected the evaluation criteria concurred that boards generally do not affect appointments and decided that board attributes should not be a board effectiveness assessment factor.

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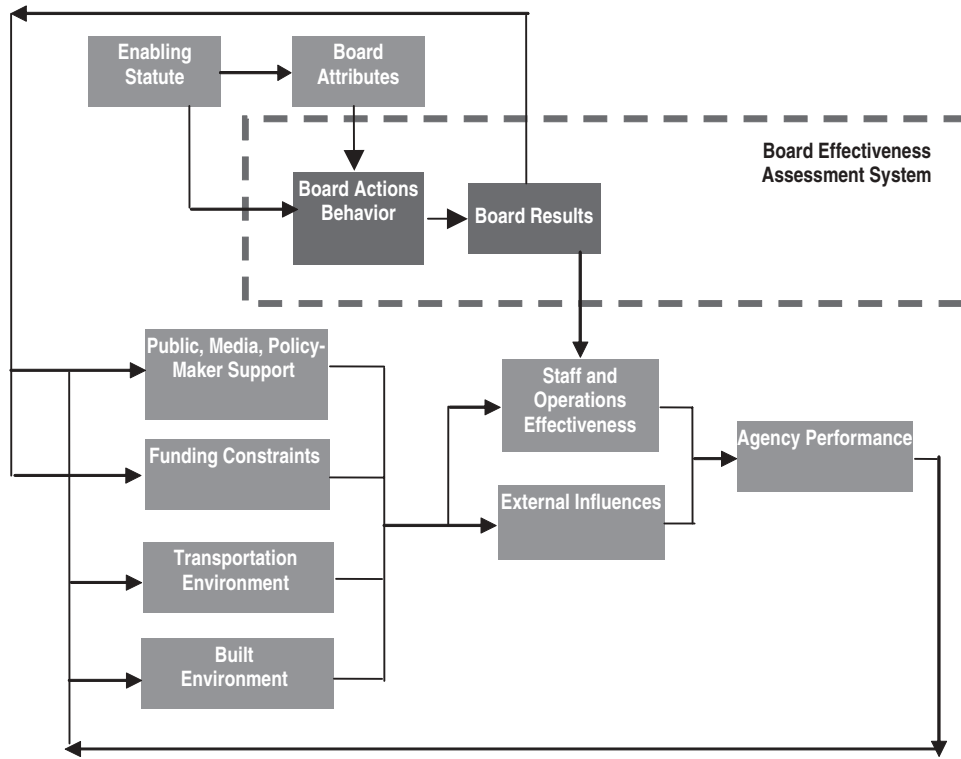
Exhibit 1.   Board effectiveness assessment system.

SECTION **2**

THE PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT

WHO SHOULD USE THE ASSESSMENT?

TCRP Report 104: Public Transportation Board Effectiveness—A Self-Assessment Handbook (Handbook) has been prepared to address a variety of policymaker and oversight situations, including the following:

- Transit boards composed of appointed or elected directors;
- Transit boards composed of citizen volunteers and/or elected officials;
- Directors serving as volunteers or compensated for part-time or full-time services;
- Chairpersons seeking to identify board performance improvements; and
- Consultants, advisors, and board mentors seeking to identify performance issues and improve board effectiveness.

WHY SHOULD A BOARD ASSESS ITS PERFORMANCE?

The need for a board self-assessment of its performance as a policymaking and oversight body can arise from a number of situations that are either positive or negative and either internal or external to the board. Typical factors that may promote board interest in self-assessment of its performance are discussed below.

Board members' interest in, and commitment to, identifying and improving processes that enhance board effectiveness. This is not necessarily an indication of known deficiencies, but rather a tacit admission that the board may have areas in which it could work more effectively as a policymaking and oversight body. The self-assessment instrument allows directors to evaluate different categories and subcategories of board performance. The results can be used to focus on particular topics, depending on the directors' self-assessment responses. The assessment provides a common denominator, allowing the board to review and discuss performance perceptions, issues, and concerns voiced by directors.

An interest in establishing assessment trend lines for issues and outlining areas of strength and further development. From this perspective, board performance assessment is not viewed as a unique, one-time event, but rather as a series of potentially interrelated applications over time. The continuing purpose is to measure trends in board development, from both an individual and collective perspective. Boards grow in their effectiveness as directors begin working together more effectively. Boards may wish to use the self-assessment process at different times and for different purposes; these might include familiarizing new directors with the operation or identifying particular talents the board is seeking for actual or impending vacancies. The assessment provides a means for determining how directors view the board's effectiveness in particular categories of performance. Over time, the directors or their views may change, just as the issues that face the board may change. Accordingly, the self-assessment should allow for multiple applications as circumstances change.

A need for a mechanism to help the board develop greater effectiveness in deliberations, decisions, and oversight. Self-assessments of board effectiveness will often vary, reflecting the different perceptions and perspectives of individual directors. The self-assessment process gives the board a way to identify the divergence and convergence of different directors' performance assessments. This helps to identify areas for change and improvement. For example, more or less attention to detail may be appropriate with respect to operating performance, expense budgets, and so forth. The self-assessment provides an opportunity to inform discerning directors by giving them a potentially enlightened perspective on their interests, participation, and involvement in board deliberations relative to the body as a whole.

A desire for a flexible tool for orienting and training relatively new directors about board performance and the effectiveness of directors and the board. The self-assessment can be used to introduce new directors to the board and its policymaking oversight responsibilities, either apart from the board assessment process (such as during orientation or when reviewing general board materials) or as part of the full board assessment of its performance. Newly appointed directors can get a perspective on where the board is vis-à-vis the skills and abilities that they might contribute to enhance board effectiveness. The self-assessment process can be used to inform new directors as to what is expected of them as effective contributors to the existing, usually less-than-perfect policymaking body.

A need to identify whether new talent or expertise for policymaking oversight is necessary when vacancies of directors arise or are anticipated. Aside from assistance in training or orienting new directors, the board can use the self-assessment process to identify particular talents or skill sets that would complement the continuing board. Whether directors are retiring or are otherwise not likely candidates for reappointment or reelection, board turnover is an opportunity to identify whether there are unique underdeveloped skill sets that are particularly needed by the board (e.g., knowledge of insurance, liability, and actuarial issues). Board self-assessment may be an appropriate mechanism for effectively conveying to appointing officials the board's sense of the director qualifications that are needed to enhance board performance.

An interest in providing direction and incentive for the board and the chair to work more effectively with senior management officials who report directly to the board. A primary function of the board is to set policies and have them implemented through a chief executive officer (CEO) that the board has recruited and hired. The CEO usually serves at the pleasure of the policymaking body. There may also be other senior-level staff members who report directly to the board and serve at its pleasure. Accordingly, a major role for the board is periodically evaluating the CEO and other reporting staff with regard to board-specified performance criteria and making commensurate merit adjustments in compensation. Beyond these milestones, which presumably occur at least annually, the board, the CEO, and other directly reporting staff must develop a harmonious relationship of mutual respect and trust. The self-assessment process can be used to identify areas where board members can contribute positively to this ongoing relationship, as well as communicate to the management staff group better-defined board expectations concerning their performance and their relationship with the board. The board self-assessment may also be used effectively by the board chair in conferring with the CEO, and it may allow individual directors, as members of the policymaking and oversight body, to better assess their roles and relationships to the CEO.

A need to explicitly recognize particular board policy and oversight responsibilities and identify areas not normally under direct board oversight. Most boards and directors have to exercise judgment on whether and to what extent to become involved in governance of particular aspects of transit performance under the rubric of policymaking oversight. The gap between policymaking with effective oversight and usurping management prerogatives by intrusion into the day-to-day administrative details of management and staff is sometimes not clear with respect to particular issues or in terms of the directors' perceptions and interests. One advantage of performing a self-assessment is that it collectively identifies, from the directors' perspectives (which may not be shared by

the management), just how well the board thinks that it is doing with respect to (1) adherence to broad policy and oversight responsibilities and (2) leaving the delegation of these items to the purview of management. Whether directors have a proclivity to intervene or not to intervene in operations or administration matters under the responsibility of management, the self-assessment gives them an opportunity to see the perspective of the overall policymaking body as it strives to function in the longer-range strategic policy and oversight affairs of the transit agency.

An interest in identifying directors' views about board effectiveness and solidifying board consensus on performance issues and areas of concern. Policymaking oversight bodies will usually be composed of members with different personalities, perspectives, interests, and levels of participation in board business. Differences among directors or groups of directors may arise over views on board effectiveness in general or in particular areas. The self-assessment can help boards define the directors' different views about board effectiveness and seek to address common performance issues and areas of concern. The improvement consensus can become an agenda for change by identifying the gaps that exist among directors on how board effectiveness is identified (in terms of particular performance issues and areas of concern that affect board members). The self-assessment can be used to develop a strategy to improve performance.

A need to distinguish between board performance issues and unique concerns of particular directors. The self-assessment can be used to identify whether a particular director's board performance perceptions and concerns are shared by other members of the board or tend to reflect individual characteristics. This can provide some insight for the board and the chair, helping to identify the extent to which these director-specific concerns can be refocused or otherwise prevented from becoming disruptive to the workings of the board if pursued by other directors.

An interest in discovering common insights on, and shared perspectives of, board performance. The self-assessment will allow boards to evaluate their performance on a variety of topics and issues particular to policymaking oversight bodies. The self-assessment can be viewed as a means to solidify common insights and perceptions about where the board is and where it needs to be with regard to particular categories of performance. The self-assessment process can be viewed as an instrument to provide for focused and planned changes to enhance the board's performance according to the shared perspectives of directors. The self-assessment process is a vehicle to identify the shared concerns and begin to develop a consensus to address them.

A desire for information that could serve as the basis for discussions with other transit agency boards or individual

directors about board performance issues, perspectives, and so forth. The self-assessment of performance can provide boards and directors with a perspective on their own situation to share with other transit directors across the industry. Policymaking oversight boards seldom operate in a vacuum. Boards and directors engaging in self-assessment would be equipped to converse with other transit boards about board inputs and outputs with regard to particular performance issues, as well as the particular benefits of the self-assessment. The self-assessment can enable a sharing of experience, wherein different transit boards can relate their own ideas and contributions arising from use of the Handbook.

WHEN SHOULD THE ASSESSMENT BE INITIATED, AND SHOULD IT BE REPEATED?

A board performance assessment can be initiated at any time, but it will usually accompany changes in the decision-making, policy formulation, and oversight environment. Those changes may be internal to the board or the transit agency or driven by external elements (such as the community at large or funding sources). Potential stimulants for board self-assessment of performance are discussed below.

Changes in board personnel or in policymaking and oversight issues. As the board changes through new directors and as the policymaking and oversight issues change, the board may wish to use the assessment as part of taking inventory of its perceived strengths and possible weaknesses. Directors and boards have life cycles with respect to familiarity with issues, diligence in discharging board roles and responsibilities, the proclivity to engage in review of agency details (versus outsourcing all but legally mandated board approval to the purview of staff and management), and so forth. An assessment may be appropriate when there are changes in board composition, leadership, or the commitment and interests of long-serving directors. An assessment may also be warranted when there are major changes in policy and oversight issues that tax the existing board's ability to adapt to change or that require different skill sets. The use of self-assessment in these situations would be analogous to a "stress test" for a heart-wellness examination.

Changes in the internal transit agency environment that affect board policy and oversight, potentially characterized by management and staff criticism or communication difficulties. Board self-assessment may be triggered by transit agency management and staff dissatisfaction with board performance. The board may perceive that there are communication difficulties with the management and staff or that board policy and oversight are known to be under critical review by management or staff. A board's self-assessment may be a conduit for discussing its perceived and expected performance, as well as what changes (if any) need to be considered to address valid criticisms that management and staff may have, particularly criticisms that are supported by the self-assessment.

Changes in the external environment that affect board policy and oversight, potentially characterized by community criticism or communication difficulties. Board self-assessment may be triggered by the dissatisfaction of the community external to the transit agency (including specific interest groups, political bodies, funding sources, etc.) with board performance. Self-assessment may allow the board to discuss its performance in light of the criticisms and identify what changes (if any) need to be made to address valid criticisms that outside interests may have with respect to the board.

A decision to use multiple board performance assessments as a long-term learning tool. In this case, board self-assessment is not viewed as a one-time event, but rather as an opportunity for a series of assessments over time as the composition of the board and its policymaking and oversight issues change. In this case, the use of one of the assessments (Level I, for example, with its 13 responses) does not preclude using the more detailed assessment of the Level II or Level III variety at a later time. Similarly, a board that uses a more detailed Level II or Level III assessment would not be precluded from subsequently using a less detailed assessment for different circumstances or purposes (such as orientation of new directors).

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE ASSESSMENT?

The self-assessment instruments contain explicit statements about board performance effectiveness. Directors indicate their levels of agreement using a scale ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates "strongly disagree" and 5 indicates "strongly agree." The results are expected to be a compilation of individual director responses that can be used to facilitate constructive, confidential review and discussion by directors. Board confidentiality requirements will affect how assessment results are compiled. The assessment results can be compiled, distributed, and discussed informally or formally. In either case, the results are expected to be discussed in both informal and formal sessions to examine the responses, compilations, and opinions of the board.

In theory, the results of the less formal and more formal approaches can be the same with regard to the level of detail with which the composite assessment of the board performance is recorded, tabulated, analyzed, and presented. However, the results of the less formal approach will tend to be more general, which will be reflected in their compilation and distribution. More formal assessment processes will tend to result in richer detail, with the compilation, presentation, and distribution of results reflecting greater thoroughness and

precision in conveying the directors' responses. The results of self-assessment are discussed more specifically below.

Informally compiled assessment results for directors tend to relate more to individual perspectives and responses. Less formal compilation of assessment results tends to avoid use of written materials entirely or makes minimal use of them. This facilitates presentation and discussion of the results. Although the directors' responses may still be compiled and discussed, there would normally be no formal documentation, and recordkeeping would be minimal. This helps avoid possible disclosure of the self-assessment (which creates potential confidentiality concerns). In fact, the major advantage of compiling and sharing the self-assessment results informally is that confidentiality is likely to be maximized, and the potential for disclosure outside the board is minimized. A less formal compilation of assessment results will tend to be more meaningful to individual directors than to the board as a whole, because there typically will be less review as a board of the detailed results. Such reviews are typically limited to tabulations on overheads or erasable boards, or they generate brief notes that are not circulated or retained.

Formally compiled assessment results for the board tend to relate more to the collective pursuit of additional measures for self-help. More formal compilation of assessment results typically includes the use of statistics to get a better picture of the board's response as a whole. Directors' responses can be statistically tabulated to show average effectiveness scores, ranges between high and low scores, and other measures of dispersion among responses. The formally compiled results give board members something they can collectively review in greater detail. This is sometimes viewed as an advantage, providing an element that facilitates discussion. However, any concerns about confidentiality and leakage would need to be adequately addressed by the board *before* formally compiled self-assessment results are produced or distributed.

Use of assessment to foster a commitment to enhance effectiveness and working relationships among board members and between board and senior management. Regardless of the format used to present the results of the self-assessment (whether a less formal or more formal compilation of responses and statistics is envisioned, for example), it is important for the board to emerge from the process with a clear picture of the directors' overall perceptions of board effectiveness in different performance categories. When the self-assessment is seriously and genuinely undertaken by individual directors, the board should have a clear indication of how its constituents view its performance across the different categories. The informal or formal dissemination of the range and variability of director responses provides insights as to the level of agreement on board effectiveness across performance categories. Boards may find that considerable

differences in directors' assessments may be resolved after issues are clarified. Conversely, an apparent similarity in responses may mask divergent perceptions or assessment approaches. In short, the self-assessment responses provide the basis for *board review of how its members view its performance.* This is the staging ground to stimulate discussions, with the ultimate objective being to foster agreement for constructive changes and to address shared concerns about performance enhancements. The assessment should lead to consideration of follow-up actions by the board and by individual directors who are motivated to improve their effectiveness.

WHAT ABOUT FOLLOW-UP TO THE ASSESSMENT?

The Handbook includes these different means of follow-up to self-assessment: (1) organizational behavior assessment tools, (2) a goal-setting process, (3) an annotated bibliography of follow-up resources, and (4) application of other assessment levels or reassessment using the same instrument. Each follow-up strategy or tool is discussed below.

Organizational behavior assessment tools. The Handbook includes an optional organizational behavioral approach to board assessment developed by Dr. Edgar Schein. Dr. Schein has identified several variables to measure group effectiveness in terms of (1) goals, (2) participation, (3) feelings, (4) diagnosis of team problems, (5) leadership, (6) decisions, (7) trust, and (8) creativity. The particular instrument developed by Dr. Schein is merely one example among many organizational behavior assessment tools, practices, and applications that are commercially available to groups, including policy-making and oversight bodies. The optional organizational behavior assessment tool is included as Section VII in the Level III assessment.

Goal-setting process. The Handbook includes a goal-setting process for transit boards that choose the Level II or Level III assessment options. The goal-setting process is an approach to self-assessment based on adopting goals and subsequently assessing whether self-defined goals have been met. Appendix A of the Handbook contains a sample of Chittenden County Transit Authority's 2002 board goals. A board using this process would need to articulate some goals and provide for a follow-up mechanism for this approach to be useful.

Annotated bibliography of follow-up resources. The Handbook contains an annotated bibliography (Appendix B) of board management materials related to the six categories of assessing board performance: (1) goal-setting processes, (2) strategic planning, (3) fiduciary and legal responsibilities, (4) diversity, (5) CEO relations, and (6) public advocacy. Board responses to self-assessment could include targeting strengths and weaknesses for enhancement of best practices in con-

junction with consulting the remedial references supplied in the Handbook.

Application of other assessment levels or reassessment using the same instrument. The Handbook contains three levels of assessment, offering boards a choice of the level of detail to pursue with regard to the six measures of board performance. Transit boards will be able to use the same assessment level (reassessment) or an alternative level whenever the board determines that a reassessment should be conducted. Boards may wish to establish a timeframe for possible reassessment as one means of follow-up.

SECTION **3**

DECISIONS NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT

TO WHOM SHOULD THE ASSESSMENT BE DISCLOSED?

A critical concern of many boards is the confidentiality of the self-assessment. Many boards do not have wide discretion under their state's sunshine laws, and this may affect their predisposition for information sharing. Other boards may have legal discretion and a mutual commitment to maintain confidentiality. The Handbook does not mandate either openness or confidentiality, and the self-assessment process can be conducted under either approach.

Disclosure

Boards that see merit in public disclosure of the assessment process act for several reasons, including the ones listed below.

Board effectiveness is a topic that interests and concerns the public. A theme that underlies sunshine laws and public involvement is that the transit operation is ultimately owned and funded by, and operated for, the benefit of the public; the agency (including its board) is responsible to the public. An assessment of its effectiveness is arguably the highest-level and most far-reaching topic considered by the board and should therefore be a topic of most immediate relevance and interest to the public and to the board's appointing entities.

Public disclosure of the process will improve the responsiveness of the process. Interaction with the public in preparation for board meetings, and even during the public comment portions of board meetings, can improve the objectivity and perceptiveness of the board's assessment of itself. Further, the public's understanding of the board's strengths, efforts, and opportunities for improvement will enhance public understanding and action on many other issues.

Public disclosure will reinforce constructive action. One of the most useful results of the self-assessment process is the collective recognition by the board of concerns that individuals might have only articulated privately if there were no appropriate public forum for bringing such issues to the board's attention. Such concerns may be sensitive enough to be skirted by the board or suppressed if discussed only in a closed session; an open-session board discussion and subsequent discussion by the public may persuade the board to take constructive action.

Openness will enhance public trust in the board. An open self-assessment process, particularly as part of a general practice of openness on issues of public interest, will earn public confidence in the board and trust that issues of interest and concern are being candidly disclosed. This trust may generate understanding and support, as well as carry over to more controversial issues such as service reductions, fare increases, or exercise of eminent domain, where public trust is crucial.

Limited Disclosure

For boards that are permitted to meet in closed session for certain classes of sessions (e.g., those that do not include public business actions, debate, or "deliberations"), a middle road between complete disclosure and complete confidentiality may be to receive an advance briefing on the process in closed session, to be briefed on the compiled results in closed session, and then to hold an open session to consider the results and adopt a plan of action regarding the opportunities for improvement.

Confidentiality

A board's concern about the confidentiality of the assessment may arise from a number of causes, including the ones listed below.

The media and the public are hungry for sound-bite judgments. The public and the media want to know whether public agencies and officials are doing well or not; however, information on their performance is usually communicated within the tight confines of a news broadcast or a few column-inches of newsprint. A self-assessment is just the sort of information that can be easily (if not always accurately) conveyed in such a format. There is a risk that a fairly sensitive and balanced assessment will be translated into "Trouble at the Beleaguered Transit Authority Board."

Disclosure of negative assessments may put the board on the defensive. If the members of the community or media do

remember negative aspects of the assessment and opportunities identified for improvement, they may become single-minded and prevent the board from advancing other initiatives or dealing with other issues until the negative findings are resolved.

Disclosure of assessments could reflect negatively on individual board members. Although the process addresses only the collective performance of the board, if a board member is associated with a specific issue or characteristic (e.g., union relations or frequent absences), an assessment finding on the topic may be interpreted to reflect on the individual board member.

Disclosure of assessments could unbalance the scales on current transit issues. If there are key issues currently at stake (e.g., a fare increase, a rail initiative, or service reductions), the assessment may seem to reflect on the issue in a way that changes board members' positions or changes public reaction. For example, a negative finding on financial management may undermine support for a fare increase, a negative finding on strategic planning may weaken a rail initiative, or a negative finding on public involvements might strengthen opponents of service reductions.

Guiding Access to Information

Although the involvement and reaction of members of the community to the board assessment cannot be predicted any more accurately than their reaction to many other issues of public interest, the board can choose among several steps to guide access to the information. These steps are listed below.

Come to an agreement on the degree of confidentiality or disclosure desired. If the board has an opportunity to discuss the self-assessment at the outset, it should discuss the issue of confidentiality. A decision should be made regarding disclosure of the self-assessment process and disclosure of its results. The entire board should be informed.

Consider executive session if permitted by law. If the board has decided to keep the process confidential, it may be possible to discuss the assessment in a closed session. Under specified circumstances, most boards are permitted to meet in private, without public or media representatives. If the law limits the reasons for which a board may convene in executive session, the permissible reasons may include confidentiality of personnel issues or personnel performance evaluation (and the board itself may be included in the definition of "personnel"). The board's attorney may also identify other circumstances under which the board would be permitted to discuss the assessment in executive session. If the board desires confidentiality but is not permitted to discuss the assessment in executive session, it may conduct confidential

discussions in some other manner that does not violate its open meetings act (e.g., in small groups or during interviews with an outside administrator).

Consider holding discussions at a board retreat. Many boards conduct retreats to discuss longer-term or internal matters (such as the performance assessment) in environments that often do not attract public or media attention because specific issues are not debated and often no action is to be taken. Such retreats may have protection under a state's open meetings act, and they may be well suited to self-assessment discussions.

Consider entrusting the process to an outside party that is equipped to legally or practically protect the information. The Handbook calls for written assessments to be prepared by the board members. The assessments are then compiled to form the basis of the self-assessment. In addition to the discussions themselves, sunshine laws may govern these documents. Like the discussions, however, they may be protected under provisions governing the confidentiality of personnel records. If the board asks someone outside the system to administer the assessment, such as a consultant or external auditor, that person may be able to retain the documents without subjecting them to public disclosure. Restriction of the documents to a trusted external party provides an additional layer of confidentiality and practical protection against inadvertent or subversive disclosure.

Consider discussions in a retreat without a written record. In cases in which the board desires confidentiality and believes that the greatest uncertainty arises from the survey documents and other written records of the process (as opposed to discussion in open meetings), the board may wish to conduct the process without a written record. With outside assistance, all of the steps of the process can be conducted orally. The one aspect of the self-assessment process that should be committed to writing is the documentation of goals, which are to be compared to progress at a later point in time.

Public Discussion of Self-Assessment Results

If a public discussion of the self-assessment results is anticipated, it may be desirable to draw up conclusions in advance and present a plan of action to address the opportunities disclosed by the assessment at the same time that the public discussion is held. Alternatively, a schedule for formulating such a plan of action could be presented.

WHO SHOULD ADMINISTER THE ASSESSMENT?

The board chair should designate who will administer the self-assessment process for the board in consultation with the

board and the chief executive. The self-assessment process may be administered by

- A member of the board or staff;
- An advisor to the board, such as the board counsel or auditor; or
- A consultant or other member of the national transit community willing to be the consultant for the board.

The key determinants of who should administer the self-assessment are the desired disclosure, confidentiality, and trust. The individual selected must be committed to the process, including the intended level of disclosure or confidentiality, and should not be susceptible to being compromised by other parties. If confidentiality is a concern, the board should determine whether the candidate's documents developed for the project would be subject to the laws governing public records. The administrator is not asked in this process to make significant judgments concerning board effectiveness: the process is one of self-assessment. Training in the process is not necessary, although familiarity with the process, with transit boards, and with policy board processes would be helpful. Discussions of each type of administrator of the self-assessment process (board/staff member, board advisor, or consultant) are provided below.

A member of the board or staff. Agency personnel who could administer the assessment would be the board chair, the chair or member(s) of a standing committee or ad hoc committee of directors, or an individual director. The most trusted, discreet individual(s) serving on the board will vary, as will the reasons for using one person or a small committee of two or three persons to compile the results. In general, if agency personnel administer the process, any nuance in the way the person administers the process may be interpreted as reflecting an interest that conflicts with the overall agency and board interests. Board members may be able to resolve such apparent conflicts, but staff members are not at an organizational level that enables them to defend themselves and to resolve the issues, so asking staff to administer the process is not recommended. Sometimes there is a staff person designated to support the board who could administer the assessment evenhandedly. Alternatively, the board could use a staff person if the board has access to these resources for the purposes of distributing and collecting the self-assessment instruments. Under most circumstances, compilation of the results would be best performed by the board itself or at least under the review of the board or its designated administrator, in order to preserve confidentiality.

Advisors to the board within the community. Within the local community there may be trusted persons sufficiently familiar with the board and its membership to handle the administration of the self-assessment process with diligence and discretion. Some boards have such relationships with their board counsel or with an external auditor. A former board member may be suitable as well. If the board has decided to keep the assessment confidential, the person or persons selected should determine whether assessment documents that he or she retains would be exempt from sunshine or Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) applications. The advantage of a local confidant is that he or she would be sufficiently familiar with the board members and the community issues that the policymaking oversight body faces. There may be alternative resources available to the transit board from other policymaking oversight bodies. For example, banks have long fostered training and self-help for directors. Similar resources from other nonprofit policymaking bodies (such as hospitals) may seem remote to the functions of a transit board, but they do exist and can be sought among networks of other policymaking bodies and directors. For an example, refer to www.boardsource.org.

Consultants or members of the national transit community willing to consult with the board. Within the transit community, there are individuals familiar with the nuances of policymaking and oversight boards. Generally, these persons have served as confidants or advisors to transit boards, often on sensitive issues such as the employment of chief executive officers and so forth. Consequently, these individuals usually are very astute about confidentiality and the application of public records laws to their situations. Moreover, they are often very cognizant of the issues surrounding and related to board and director performance assessments. Transit board consultants and advisors often have diverse interpersonal relationships with a wide range of political leaders who have been either appointed or elected, including the board members. These individuals can provide valuable insights when addressing the sensitivity of board self-assessments, particularly where there may be substantial diversity of opinion among directors.

WHAT LEVEL OF DETAIL OF BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT SHOULD BE USED?

Board assessments may take different forms as well as having different levels of detail. The Handbook provides for three levels of self-assessment that focus on six categories of board performance. The difference between the levels of assessment is in the degree of detail addressed for each of the six categories. Each successive assessment level includes and expands on the performance aspects from the prior level. Level I has 13 performance aspects. Level II adds nine performance aspects to those from Level I, for a total of 22. Level III adds 9 performance aspects to those contained in Level II, for a total of 31.

The most appropriate level of assessment with regard to detail and depth will vary by board, depending on several factors: (1) the board's interest, directors' commitments, and the resources available; (2) the life cycle of the board and the

objectives of the self-assessment; (3) trade-offs between more detail in the assessment and time; and (4) the risks of obtaining too little or too much detail (particularly for first-time users). These four factors are discussed in more detail below.

Board interest, directors' commitments, and the resources available to devote to the assessment, in terms of perceived correlation between inputs (time) and outputs (feedback). The level of detail used for the assessment should be congruent with the board's collective expectations about what is to be gained from the assessment and balanced by individual directors' time commitments and the time available to devote to the assessment. Choosing the most appropriate level of assessment will likely take into account the willingness and ability of the most encumbered directors, or least interested directors, to fully participate in the process. Also germane to the level of assessment are the resources available to the board for administration, including compilation and possible board review of the informal or formal results. Where administration resources are limited or potentially constrained by other concerns, such as confidentiality, the level of assessment may be limited to Level I or II, and the formality of the process may be limited as well.

The life cycle of the board and the objectives of the self-assessment instruments in identifying changes in board policymaking and oversight processes. The level of detail for an assessment will be affected by the life cycle of the board and its membership turnover, as well as by the perceived need to use the assessment to help identify possible changes in board processes. Relatively young boards or directors (with regard to tenure) may be more comfortable with a shorter assessment that can be a preamble for a future, more detailed assessment. Older boards (with respect to length of directors' tenure) may be more inclined to use a more detailed level of assessment, based on their greater familiarity with the workings of the board and the policymaking oversight duties of the board and its constituent directors.

Trade-offs between more detail in the assessment and time devoted to the inputs and outputs of the process. The choice of an assessment's level of detail can be influenced by pragmatic determinants such as the time required and the perceived benefits of accumulating more detail on the six performance categories. The assessment level should reflect the board's collective perception of the appropriate time investment and expected level of detail in information returned. If the directors' self-assessment time inputs are linear with the number of responses, a Level II assessment (22 statements) will require nearly double the time input of a Level I assessment (13 statements). A Level III assessment (31 statements) will require nearly two and a half times the time input of Level I. Although there are some fixed time costs for all the assessment levels (time required for board discussion and director participation), typically the incremental inputs for successively more detailed assessments will be weighed against the expected outputs, including board review and discussion. There will need to be strong board interest in, and commitment to, the assessment (both inputs and outputs) to spend up to twice as much (or more) time on a Level II or Level III assessment (compared with the time required for a Level I assessment).

The risks of obtaining too little or too much detail in the assessment, in terms of the board and individual director commitments required to meaningfully execute the process and assess the results. The level of detail selected for the assessment has to be weighed against the likely level of board participation from *all* directors. Too much detail will probably result in less than full participation, as individual directors decline to devote the time necessary to execute the entire self-assessment instrument. By choosing a level of assessment that is greater than the minimum (Level I), boards are assuming that all directors will fully participate in the higher level of detail; the risk is that they will obtain more detail from fewer fully participating directors. The level of detail should be appropriate to the level of full participation that the board expects from individual directors. There may be some directors who will not fully participate in a meaningful way even at the least detailed level of assessment (Level I). For a comprehensive board assessment, all directors should fully participate. The use of a particular assessment level that directly affects director time and input will require director buy-in; otherwise, the board is explicitly risking less than full participation by all directors.

SECTION **4**

ADMINISTRATION OF SELF-ASSESSMENT

Previous sections have emphasized that the format of the self-assessment will likely be a function of board concerns about maintenance of confidentiality and the level of trust among directors (i.e., that there will not be any leakages of the results of the assessment outside of the board). The confidentiality and trust issues will likely be paramount in determining the administration of the process with regard to (1) initiation and organization of the process, (2) leadership of process execution, (3) collection and compilation of results, (4) review and discussion of results, and (5) follow-up (improvement actions). These aspects of the process are discussed in more detail below.

Initiation and organization of process. Anyone can initiate the self-assessment process through access to the Handbook via TCRP, through referrals from other directors or boards, or through APTA industry affiliations (transit board member seminars and workshops). Preferably, the entire board or significant portions of the leadership will have a mutual interest in pursuing the effectiveness assessment. However, ultimately, one individual will normally introduce the concept, often by accessing the Handbook and bringing it up for board review and discussion. The introduction of the Handbook may come from inside the board (chair, committee, or member), within the board hierarchy (staff, if applicable), or outside the board (management or board consultant, advisor, mentor, etc.). The person who introduces the Handbook should be viewed as impartial and as not having an agenda that is outside of the issues germane to board performance effectiveness.

Leadership of process execution. The self-assessment process will require a designated leader to, at the very least, provide self-assessment forms to the directors. A completely oral assessment process would not require any collection of written self-assessments from directors or associated compilation of results, but only a discussion of the assessment criteria by the board. For more formal assessments, in which directors complete and submit written assessments (Level I, II, or III), there will need to be a designated recipient. The recipient may or may not be responsible for compilation of the results, depending on the formality of the process and the confidentiality provisions in effect. For example, the recipient of the self-assessments could be a designated staff member, but the compilation might be done by a director or subcommittee of directors. Regardless of the means used to collect and compile results, there will need to be a person designated to collect results who has the ability to remind directors of the schedule for returning the completed assessment forms. Inevitably, there will be a need for reminders and follow-up by the assessment leader. The reminders and follow-up should be consistent with the confidentiality requirements of the process (e.g., use of e-mail reminders would probably be inconsistent with a completely confidential self-assessment).

Collection and compilation of results. The compilation of results can range from rough, disposable notes to analyses using statistical packages and supporting graphics. Board expressions of confidentiality will be influential in determining the level of detail of the presentation of the results.

Review and discussion of results. Depending on confidentiality limitations, the results may be reviewed at executive session, at a board retreat, in a seminar, and so forth. The board should fully understand how susceptible any formal results may be to being accessed through open sessions, sunshine laws, or FOIA stipulations *before* the results are compiled. To a large degree, the interest of the board in the assessment results will dictate how much time is devoted to their review and discussion and whether an outside facilitator is used to guide the process. The board should consider the most effective way to constructively present the results to the directors. This means considering whether the results should be presented in oral and/or written form and whether a designated director (or directors) or an outside facilitator or confidant known and trusted by the board should do the presentation. In many respects, what the board does with the results in terms of review and discussion is the substance of the self-assessment process. The board should expect to devote a sufficient amount of time to the results of the self-assessment— an amount that is congruent with the expectations and the level of detail of the assessment (Level I, II, or III). If the results of the self-assessment are not given an appropriate amount of review, the self-assessment can become an academic exercise that is devoid of value in assessing the board's perceived effectiveness and its perception of where it needs to be in terms of considering steps (remedial actions) to improve board effectiveness.

Follow-up (improvement actions). Follow-up to the assessment is the responsibility of the board. There are a number of follow-up alternatives described in the Handbook (refer to the section above titled "What About Follow-Up to the Assessment?"). However, the key issue is that the board must collectively come to an understanding of what kind of follow-up (if any) it wishes to pursue. The board can pursue follow-up informally in executive session—potentially aided by a standing or designated subcommittee—or through the use of outside, professional resources. More formal approaches to follow-up may attract undesired public attention to the issue of concern; using industry initiatives (such as APTA transit board member seminars, etc.) may address the concern more discreetly. The board has a wide range of latitude to choose follow-up measures to improve board effectiveness, including encouraging individual directors to pursue self-study and attendance at transit industry forums that are geared to policymaking oversight bodies.

SECTION **5**

ASSESSMENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ADMINISTRATOR(S)

This section contains instructions for the transit board administrator to use in directing the self-assessment process. This set of instructions is designed to serve as a source of briefing material for the self-assessment administrator.

The instructions will cover the following topics: (1) the level of assessment to use, (2) categories of assessment, (3) particular assessment subcategories, (4) distribution of assessment tool, (5) responses, (6) compilation of responses, (7) presentation of board results, and (8) board actions based on results.

Level of assessment to use. The Handbook contains three successive and cumulative levels of assessment that differ with regard to the number of responses required from directors. The three assessment levels are as follows:

1. A Level I assessment uses 13 items to address the most important measures.
2. A Level II assessment includes the next 9 most important measures, for a total of 22 items. This assessment acquires more detail regarding board dynamics, policies, and procedures. In addition, a goal-setting process is suggested for boards as a means for them to approach future self-assessment based on goals that are adopted.
3. A Level III assessment includes an additional nine performance measures that address advanced or more in-depth interactions among board members. This level of assessment typically entails extensive board member participation, discussion, and follow-up, using a total of 31 items. An additional optional behavioral assessment tool is followed by the same goal-setting process used in Level II.

The major difference in the assessment levels is in the number of measures used to describe board performance and the resulting time required for board member responses. Boards using the self-assessment instrument for the first time might choose Level I or (if there is an initial interest in more detail) Level II. Level I is regarded as a "bare bones," minimum level of detail for assessment of board performance effectiveness. Level II adds considerably more coverage to the assessment; it is a good choice for first-time users who are interested in more than the minimum (Level I) but who do not desire the amount of detail posed by Level III.

Categories of assessment. All three levels of assessment use the same six categories to assess board performance, as follows:

1. Board processes,
2. Strategic planning,
3. Fiduciary and legal responsibilities,
4. Diversity programming and implementation,
5. CEO relations, and
6. Public advocacy.

Particular assessment subcategories. The three levels of assessment differ with regard to the detail used to assess board performance for each category. The assessment levels and the coverage of each category of board performance are as follows: Level I has 13 responses that are also included in Level II, along with 9 additional responses; all 22 items are included in Level III, which has 9 additional responses. Over half of the assessment items in Level I pertain to board processes and fiduciary and legal responsibilities, compared with nearly two-thirds of the assessment items for Levels II and III. The other major difference between the levels is the amount of detail devoted to strategic planning in Levels II and III.

Level II and Level III also contain a goal-setting process that is highly recommended for boards that are interested in performance evaluation. The adopted goals will act as the performance base. The research team recommends that boards set goals that are achievable within 1 year. Goals should not be too easy or too hard to achieve. Appendix A provides a sample of goals that were adopted by the Chittenden County Transportation Authority Board. The level of success for the reassessment depends on the number of goals that are achieved.

In addition to the goal-setting process, Level III also contains an optional organizational behavior assessment tool that helps boards evaluate their group effectiveness.

Distribution of assessment tool. The administrator is responsible for distributing the assessment tool to each board member and for collecting and compiling results, as directed by each individual board. The administrator can begin with the purpose and process stated in the Handbook and add addi-

tional material if it is appropriate for the specific case. The enclosed tool is not a "one size fits all" tool. Before copying and distributing the forms, the administrator should communicate to the board that it can change the tool in any way that would fit its unique organization.

Responses. Directors will respond to each statement about board performance using a 5-point scale that ranges from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree").

Compilation of responses. The compilation of responses can be qualitative and descriptive, or it can be quantitative and statistical. Informal compilation of responses would reflect a relatively nonquantitative approach, in which directors' evaluations would be reported for each assessment statement in a summary table. In formal compilation, the responses would be carefully analyzed in terms of degrees. For example, for Question 1, if two out of five respondents chose 1 (on a scale of 1 to 5) and three respondents chose 4, these results might be averaged $(1 + 1 + 4 + 4 + 4 = 14; 14 \div 5 = 2.8)$.

Statistics can be compiled for each statement. These include (1) average score values (sum of all scores divided by the number of responses) for individual statements, for all statements for particular board performance categories, or for all performance categories and (2) the ranges between high and low score responses.

One of the advantages of typically small transit boards (those with fewer than 10 persons) is that the responses can be compiled relatively easily, without using computers or calculators. However, software can be an effective tool for more formal computations, as well as for building graphical displays of responses. This is particularly useful when there are significant differences between directors or when there are correlations between responses to different assessments that can be shown graphically or statistically.

Presentation of board results. The administrator should get directions from the board with regard to how the results should be presented. The board may choose to have the administrator summarize the results orally, or they may prefer a detailed formal summary report to be distributed among board members, within the agency, and to the public. The resulting presentation is largely dependent on each board's preference as to the level of disclosure; this preference will vary from board to board.

Board actions based on results. For boards that choose Level II or Level III assessments and therefore go through the goal-setting process, the administrator will compile all suggested goals and present the results. The board must collectively agree on its adopted goals, either by consensus or by formal board action (resolution). The administrator will then schedule a reassessment time when the board will reevaluate itself against its own adopted goals.

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SECTION **6**

TRANSIT BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Transit Board Self-Assessment Tool Level I

Level I Survey Tool: Please rate each measure below, using the rating system of 1 = Strongly Disagree through 5 = Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	Strongly Agree 5
I. Board Processes					
1. The Board sets policy; management implements policy. Board members do not become involved in specific management, personnel, or service issues except in a predetermined oversight role.					
2. a. Board members devote sufficient time to fulfilling their responsibilities.					
b. Board members attend meetings well prepared and participate fully in all matters.					
3. Board members work cohesively and cooperatively to try to minimize miscommunication and confusion.					
4. There is an orientation process for new board members.					
II. Strategic Planning					
5. Board creates and communicates the agency's strategic direction; this is achieved by regularly evaluating core values and strategic mission.					
III. Fiduciary and Legal Responsibilities					
6. Board provides effective monitoring, evaluation, and oversight of the agency's fiscal concerns, including understanding of the funding mechanisms.					
7. Board supports a code of conduct and ethical practices; each board member is committed to ethical practices and guards against conflicts of interest.					
8. Board approves annual operating and capital goals and budgets.					

Transit Board Self-Assessment Tool Level I (continued)

Level I Survey Tool: Please rate each measure below, using the rating system of 1 = Strongly Disagree through 5 = Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
IV. Diversity Program and Implementation	1	2	3	4	5
9. The board develops and implements diversity policies and programs for the agency.					
V. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Relations					
10. The board strives to recruit and maintain superior management talent.					
11. The board chair and CEO meet regularly, maintain ongoing communications, and ensure availability.					
12. The board develops a regular policy and process for carrying out evaluations and compensation reviews for the CEO and other staff reporting directly to the board.					
VI. Public Advocacy					
13. The board assumes an active public and legislative advocacy role (i.e., by promoting the transit system and working with community and business leaders, outside interest groups, lobbies, local governments, and community associations).					

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Transit Board Self-Assessment Tool Level II

Level II Survey Tool: Please rate each measure below, using the rating system of 1 = Strongly Disagree through 5 = Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
I. Board Processes					
1. The board sets policy; management implements policy. Board members do not become involved in specific management, personnel, or service issues except in a predetermined oversight role.					
2. a. Board members devote sufficient time to fulfilling their responsibilities.					
b. Board members attend meetings well prepared and participate fully in all matters.					
3. Board members work cohesively and cooperatively to try to minimize miscommunication and confusion.					
4. There is an orientation process for new board members.					
5. The board knows the difference between policy and administration and between governance and management.					
6. The board regularly communicates with management and staff and remains open to comment and feedback.					
7. Board committee structures are streamlined for effective decision making.					
II. Strategic Planning					
8. The board creates and communicates the agency's strategic direction; this is achieved by regularly evaluating core values and the strategic mission.					
9. Board members ensure programs are consistent with the organizational mission and ensure that programs and services meet expectations.					
III. Fiduciary and Legal Responsibilities					
10. The board provides effective monitoring, evaluation, and oversight of the agency's fiscal concerns, including an understanding of the funding mechanisms.					
11. The board supports a code of conduct and ethical practices; each board member is committed to ethical practices and guards against conflicts of interest.					
12. The board approves annual operating and capital goals and budgets.					

Transit Board Self-Assessment Tool Level II (continued)

Level II Survey Tool: Please rate each measure below, using the rating system of 1 = Strongly Disagree through 5 = Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
13. The board develops a regular policy for carrying out employee evaluations and compensation reviews.					
14. The board understands and makes effective decisions regarding employee benefit and retirement plans.					
15. Board members do not reveal sensitive and confidential information.					
16. The board sets measurable objectives that permit monitoring of agency performance.					
IV. Diversity Program and Implementation					
17. The board develops and implements diversity policies and programs for the agency.					
V. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Relations					
18. The board strives to recruit and maintain superior management and talent.					
19. The board chair and CEO meet regularly, maintain ongoing communications, and ensure availability.					
20. The board develops a regular policy and process for carrying out evaluations and compensation reviews for the CEO and other staff reporting directly to the board.					
VI. Public Advocacy					
21. The board assumes an active public and legislative advocacy role (i.e., by promoting the transit system and working with community and business leaders, outside interest groups, lobbies, local governments, and community associations).					
22. The board takes note of how the public views the system, and the board responds.					

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Level II Goal-Setting Process

Please suggest the most important, challenging, and realistic goals that the board should achieve in the next year.
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Transit Board Self-Assessment Tool Level III

Level III Survey Tool: Please rate each measure below, using the rating system of 1 = Strongly Disagree through 5 = Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
I. Board Processes					
1. The board sets policy; the management implements policy. Board members do not become involved in specific management, personnel, or service issues except in a predetermined oversight role.					
2. a. Board members devote sufficient time to fulfilling their responsibilities.					
b. Board members attend meetings well prepared and participate fully in all matters.					
3. Board members work cohesively and cooperatively to try to minimize miscommunication and confusion.					
4. There is an orientation process for new board members.					
5. The board knows the difference between policy and administration and between governance and management.					
6. The board regularly communicates with management and staff and remains open to comment and feedback.					
7. Board committee structures are streamlined for effective decision making.					
8. The authority that the board retains for itself (i.e., without delegating to management) is clearly defined by the agency.					
9. The board maintains flexibility to adjust to changing internal and external circumstances.					
10. The board considers member candidates for endorsement based on each candidate's performance and actions.					
11. The chairman assumes active responsibility for ensuring the development and leadership of the board.					
12. There is an appropriate level of staff support for the board.					
II. Strategic Planning					
13. The board creates and communicates the agency's strategic direction; this is achieved by regularly evaluating core values and the strategic mission.					
14. Board members ensure programs are consistent with the organizational mission and ensure that programs and services meet expectations.					
15. The board identifies and uses the specific talents and skills that board members possess.					
16. The board promotes planning for leadership transitions.					

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Transit Board Self-Assessment Tool Level III (continued)

Level III Survey Tool: Please rate each measure below, using the rating system of 1 = Strongly Disagree through 5 = Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
III. Fiduciary and Legal Responsibilities					
17. The board provides effective monitoring, evaluation, and oversight of the agency's fiscal concerns, including an understanding of the funding mechanisms.					
18. The board supports a code of conduct and ethical practices; each board member is committed to ethical practices and guards against conflicts of interest.					
19. The board approves annual operating and capital goals and budgets.					
20. The board develops a regular policy for carrying out employee evaluations and compensation reviews.					
21. The board understands and makes effective decisions regarding employee benefit and retirement plans.					
22. Board members do not reveal sensitive and confidential information.					
23. The board sets measurable objectives that permit monitoring of agency performance.					
24. The board has processes for making effective decisions regarding new business proposals, and for reviewing existing practices.					
IV. Diversity Program and Implementation					
25. The board develops and implements diversity policies and programs for the agency.					
26. The board supports a board composition that reflects the community's demographics.					
V. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Relations					
27. The board strives to recruit and maintain superior management and talent.					
28. The board chair and CEO meet regularly, maintain ongoing communications, and ensure availability.					
29. The board develops a regular policy and process for carrying out evaluations and compensation reviews for the CEO and other staff reporting directly to the board.					
VI. Public Advocacy					
30. The board assumes an active public and legislative advocacy role (i.e., by promoting the transit system and working with community and business leaders, outside interest groups, lobbies, local governments, and community associations).					
31. The board takes note of how the public views the system, and responds.					

Transit Board Self-Assessment Tool Level III (continued)

VII. Behavioral Assessment Tool (Optional): Please answer the questions in the space provided.
32. **Goals** : Does the board know what needs to be accomplished and when? Do members know what the organization is trying to achieve?
Goals:
33. **Participation:** Do board members have an opportunity to contribute in meetings? Are all members listened to during board meetings?
Participation:
34. **Feelings** : Can board members express their feelings? If they do, do they get empathetic responses?
Feelings:
35. **Diagnosis of team problems**: When process problems arise are the causes addressed, rather than the symptoms?
Diagnosis of team problems:
36. **Leadership** : Does the board depend too much on a single person? Do members other than the nominal leader feel free to volunteer to meet group needs?
Leadership:
37. **Decisions** : Is consensus sought and tested? Are deviations appreciated? Once made, are decisions fully supported by the board?
Decisions:
38. **Trust** : Do board members trust one another? Can they express negative reactions without fearing reprisals?
Trust:
39. **Creativity:** Does the board seek new and better ways to do things? Are individuals changing and growing?
Creativity:

26

Level III Goal-Setting Process

Please suggest the most important, challenging, and realistic goals that the board should achieve in the next year.
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10.

APPENDIX A

CHITTENDEN COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
BOARD GOALS FOR FY 2003

PO Box 609   Phone (802) 864-0211
Burlington, VT 05402   Fax (802) 864-5564

MEMORANDUM

TO: CCTA Commissioners
        CCTA Managers

FROM: Christopher Cole
        General Manager

RE: **Board Goals for Fiscal Year 2003**

This memorandum reviews the CCTA Board goals for Fiscal Year 2003 that were accomplished by CCTA staff, as developed at the CCTA Board retreat on August 28, 2002.

Legislative Task Force

At the Board retreat it was determined that a public transportation system that optimally serves the region must be organized on a regional basis, both in membership and in funding. The CCTA Board of Commissioners has generally agreed to the following initial description and composition of a regional transit authority:

•   The Vermont General Assembly should transform CCTA from a local public transportation authority into a regional transportation authority. This transformation should take place with significant local involvement throughout the process.

•   Representation on the regional transit authority should be limited to the municipalities that comprise Chittenden County. Board members should be appointed by municipal boards. Representation on the Board should reflect population in some measure and should consider population density. Ideally, Board membership would be no greater than 12 to 15 members. The concept of at-large seats was discussed.

•   The regional revenue area should be Chittenden County. There should be a relationship between use of the automobile and generating revenues to support public transit in the region. The property tax as a public transit revenue source would be eliminated and other sources would be utilized on a regional basis.

•   The area of operation should be a non-described service area that gives the regional transit authority the opportunity to operate beyond Chittenden County at the request of local governmental bodies. Public transportation services must be consistent with the state's public transportation goals and ideally reduce traffic congestion in the main transportation corridors and urban core area.

•   Initially, the newly transformed regional transit authority will provide the public transportation bus service that CCTA currently provides. Commuter rail service in the County will continue to be operated by the Vermont Transportation Authority and funded through the state. Human service transportation services

would continue to be provided by SSTA. After CCTA has been transformed into a regional transportation authority, with regional funding, then an analysis and review of whether this RTA should also provide human service transportation and/or commuter rail service could be conducted.

- There may need to be some repayment to the current CCTA member communities for their capital equipment and facility investments.

While the CCTA didn't achieve this goal, important ground work was laid with the Legislature regarding the issue of regional transit authorities. I have been asked to work with the Joint Fiscal Office and the House Transportation Committee on this issue during the off-session, which may result in the introduction of a committee bill. CCTA has also been successful in expanding its operation to include Washington County and a portion of Orange County.

Events of Regional Significance

The MPO has established a committee to work on the issue of transit funding and the creation of a regional transit authority. CCTA has also expanded its operation into central Vermont which will provide an example of how a regional Transit Authority might operate.

Planning Projects
There were several planning projects the Board wanted initiated in Fiscal Year 2003. Overall, the CCTA Commissioners wanted CCTA to take an active role working cooperatively with the MPO in planning the region's public transportation system. The Board supported hiring a full time transit planner to achieve this goal as well as do the other planning work for the Authority.

Park and Ride Commuter Bus Services
The CCTA Commissioners have determined that transit services being operated from park and ride lots hold the best promise to reducing urban congestion from suburban communities. There was a consensus among CCTA Commissioners to accelerate implementation of the Park and Ride Projects listed in the 1999 report conducted by the MPO. CCTA should assist the MPO as necessary to ensure that a new Park and Ride facility is placed on the TIP for construction at a minimum of every two years. If possible, CCTA should secure federal funding, specifically to support the planning and construction of Park and Ride facilities in Chittenden County.

Goal not achieved. While this is a worthy goal and one that CCTA will continue to work towards, attainment is going to be elusive in the short term. The MPO and the state are working towards this goal but not at a rate that will satisfy the CCTA Board. CCTA planning staff and the General Manager are developing a proposal to expedite the park and ride construction process.

Bus Rapid Transit
CCTA Commissioners agreed that all corridor improvement projects planned by the MPO should contain as many elements of Bus Rapid Transit as practicable, including dedicated transit lanes, signal priority, queue jumping and others.

Goal achieved and ongoing. CCTA was successful in introducing the concept of transit signal priority to the region. The City of Burlington has agreed to provide CCTA vehicles with signal priority on certain routes, notably Main Street and Battery Street. The MPO is also working with CCTA to expand signal priority to the other CCTA member communities.

Large Bus vs. Small Bus Comparison
Responding to the requests of several CCTA member communities, the Authority has purchased four smaller buses, which are 25 feet in length and hold 20 passengers. This particular bus has a life expectancy of seven years as compared to the heavy duty transit bus which has a useful life of twelve years. The CCTA Board agreed

that they would like to optimize the bus fleet to the peak usage of our passengers which would presumably lead to smaller buses on some routes. But they also agreed that a reduction in the size of buses shouldn't substantially increase operating costs. CCTA will initiate a study to compare the lifecycle costs of small buses vs. big buses, as well as the changes in operating and maintenance costs associated with each. It is likely that a consultant will be hired to assist CCTA staff in this analysis.

Goal ongoing. CCTA has begun collecting data on operating and maintenance costs. Once a full year of costs are collected, staff will analyze the data and make comparisons between different types of vehicles in the fleet. The maintenance department should be ready to issue a report to the Board sometime in the spring of 2004.

The Commissioners determined that there were two events of regional significance for which CCTA should provide enhanced public transportation service without charging the sponsors of the events. Those events are the July 3rd fireworks and the First Night Celebration. There were two conditions placed upon not charging the event sponsors: 1) that the regular fares would be charged to passengers for the enhanced public transportation service, except for those individuals who purchased a First Night button, and 2) that CCTA would receive media exposure prior to the event, indicating that CCTA was sponsoring the transportation for that event (in the case of First Night, the Commissioners wanted to be named as a significant sponsor of the event).

CCTA sponsored both the First Night and the July 3rd shuttle operations this year and received enhanced marketing exposure at both of these events. In exchange for sponsoring the First Night shuttles, CCTA received recognition in all of the First Night marketing collateral as a second tier sponsor which is the same recognition that the City of Burlington received. Maryann was quite pleased with the level of marketing exposure that CCTA received from the First Night staff and we look forward to developing this reciprocal relationship with one of the regions premier public events. CCTA also received enhanced marketing exposure from the July 3rd celebration but not to the extent we received from First Night. However, since we charge a fare for July 3rd there is only a nominal cost to CCTA, which makes the marketing exposure we received a good value.

Maximization of Non-Tax Revenues
The Commissioners agreed that a fare policy should be developed by the Authority. CCTA staff will provide the resources necessary to assist the Commissioners as they develop such a policy.

Goal not achieved. CCTA staff was directed to work on other priority projects throughout the year.

The General Manager agreed that additional bus wraps shouldn't be deployed; however, it would be impossible to remove the current wraps from the buses because of the revenue they generate. The Marketing Department will ascertain whether wrap holes on the windows could be larger to increase rider visibility.

The policy of selling public transit services to non-members to expand commuter services in the member communities will continue, as long as existing public transportation services aren't negatively impacted.

Goal partially achieved. We began discussions with CATMA, FAHC, UVM, Saint Michael's College and the Sheraton to initiate a shuttle service on the Route 15 corridor and to extend the College Street Shuttle. CCTA is currently working on both of these projects and anticipates that they will be initiated sometime in FY 04.

Alternative Fuel Vehicles
The Board decided that reduction of fleet emissions was a worthy goal and should be pursued. The Board agreed, however, they also acknowledged that CCTA should wait until the hybrid technology was further developed and that the hybrids systems were being utilized by other transit properties. This is a project that staff can acquire knowledge about so that when the time is right an informed choice or choices can be made.

CCTA staff continued their education into alternative fuel technologies. A hybrid bus was brought to the CCTA operating area for demonstrations for interested municipal officials and the public. CCTA also put this bus into revenue service for a day so our passengers could experience riding on this vehicle. The CCTA marketing department was also able to arrange an interview with Channel 3 to promote this technology in our area. As these vehicles begin to be mass produced, CCTA will attempt to secure funding to purchase these vehicles for our fleet.

Allocation Formula

There was general consensus that the current allocation formula is not conducive to making changes in the system that might increase ridership or improve efficiencies in the operation. However, there is no easy answer to this dilemma and the Board felt that staff energies would be better spent focusing on transforming CCTA into a regional transit authority.

Goal not achieved. There is no easy solution but this issue still needs to be addressed even if CCTA becomes a larger RTA. CCTA staff did spend time working on this issue and a greater understanding of the complexities of the assessment formula was attained. This issue should continue to be worked on in FY 04.

Bus Shelters in Colchester

The informal policy of the board not to place bus shelters in Colchester will continue. Board members felt that until there are sufficient shelters in the member municipalities, then shelters in non-member areas will have to wait.

Goal achieved.

Fiscal Year FY 03 in Review

CCTA, through the hard work of its capable staff, attained many positive achievements on a variety of projects throughout the year. Some of the highlights are listed below.

The CATMA shuttles were initiated at the beginning of FY 03 and have proved to be a valuable addition to CCTA's service portfolio. CCTA expanded into the choice rider market and we will continue to pursue those opportunities as they are identified.

The Unlimited Access program for UVM was established in FY 03 and the ability of our fareboxes to read the UVM ID card was also finalized. This program has a terrific potential to boost ridership in the coming fiscal year.

CCTA began the process of expanding its operation by receiving Legislative approval to operate in Washington County and to operate in Franklin County on an interim basis. CCTA established a new operating entity, the Green Mountain Transit Agency, which began operations in central Vermont. The Authority then further established itself in that region by assuming management and operations of the Mad River Valley Transit District. While CCTA may not be a regional authority in name or through funding, we took several important steps in that direction. We are operating on a regional basis and we have provided a working model for the Legislature to examine in their analysis of how to reorganize public transportation in Vermont. I am confident that the steps we took this year expanding into Washington County will bear fruit for the CCTA in establishing a more equitable funding program for public transportation, as it relates to local funding.

While we didn't achieve the result we were looking for with respect to the Downtown Transit Center, staff put in a lot of hours on this project to ensure that it was operationally sound. The final project was something that the entire staff supported and was much improved from what was presented to CCTA initially. In conjunction with this project, the transit planner spent a lot of time developing an ITS program to implement those technologies that made the transit center work. We will continue our work in this area for FY 04 as the technological advancements can be fully utilized without the presence of the transit center.

The timepoint analysis data collection was completed and will begin to be analyzed and implemented in FY 04. This is a very important project because it focuses on a core competency that every transit system must adhere to, running the buses on time.

CCTA established a new service and new service type, in the Shopper Hopper which uses a demand response service model. We will be following this service very closely throughout FY 04.

CCTA staff spent a significant amount of time ensuring that the documents that are necessary for our FTA triennial review were available for FTA to inspect. While this work may not have the appeal of achieving a new service or another of the Board's goals, it is vital to the financial well being of the authority and was perhaps some of the most important work that CCTA staff accomplished this fiscal year.

The Short Range Transit Plan for our region was completed in FY 03 and CCTA staff spent significant time ensuring that this was a useful document.

CCTA staff, plagued by the computer system continually crashing, updated the servers that power the network. This too was another important project that was implemented expeditiously by your staff.

The first CCTA van pool program was established in FY 03 with much success.

CCTA marketing staff redesigned the bus stop signs and will begin deploying them at the beginning of FY 04. The marketing department also made great strides in acquiring data from our passengers and members of the community regarding public transportation.

There are many other achievements for FY 03 but they are too numerous to keep mentioning. We made additional staffing changes at CCTA during FY 03 adding a planner and other members to the administrative team. I am blessed to have such hard working knowledgeable people to work for me and am confident that the group that is currently assembled can tackle any challenge that is put before them. We have a lot of work that we are planning to accomplish in FY 04 and I expect that we will have a very productive year.

APPENDIX B

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF POTENTIAL REMEDIAL ACTION SOURCES

Board Development, Training, Accountability and Governance in the Canadian Voluntary Sector (2002). Information available at http://www.boarddevelopment.org.
Contact Information:
info@boarddevelopment.com.

This is an online resource for public boards, offering methods for improving board operations and processes. This resource lists 16 steps for addressing and improving the public board's basic responsibility to ensure its own renewal and development.

Jackson, Douglas K., and Thomas P. Holland, "Measuring the Effectiveness of Nonprofit Boards," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 27 (1998), pp. 159–182. Information available at http://www.arches.uga.edu/~dougjack/ Text/Measuring%20the%20Effectiveness%20of%20Non profit%20Boards.PDF.

Authors Jackson and Holland developed a comprehensive study on the benefits of promoting public board self-assessments as a way to improve public effectiveness and address underlying weaknesses. Relying on extensive published research, the authors contend that strengthening the performance of board processes has become a prerequisite for improving community services. When evaluating the effectiveness of board processes, Jackson and Holland contend that self-assessment questionnaires are generally well received because they are more accessible, less expensive, and more efficient.

Proctor, Steve, and Maynard Gunsgtra, "Restructuring the Board Selection Process Can Improve Governance," The FORCE D&O FORUM "On Being A Board" Discussion Group. Information available at http://www. forcefinancial.com.
Contact Information:
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Jacksonville, FL 32210
Tel.: 904-381-0421
Fax: 904-381-0436

A critical factor in the success of many retirement communities is the ability of the board of directors to examine its own composition and to restructure itself when necessary with the individuals and skills needed for sound planning and decision making. Moreover, board selection processes may need overhauling in order to attain the flexibility for accommodating strategic reforms.

"Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards," The National Center for Nonprofit Boards (1988). Information available at http://www.nsba.org/sbot/toolkit/EfBoards. html.
Contact Information:
National Center for Nonprofit Boards
2000 L Street, NW
Suite 510
Washington, DC 20036-4907
Tel.: 202-452-6262
Fax: 202-452-6299
Email: ncnb@ncnb.org

Increasingly, school board members from around the country are using assessment data to help make good decisions about improving public education for all children. As school districts across the country grapple with how to think systemically and strategically about reaching student achievement goals and how to forge creative solutions from standardized test data, data-driven decision making can be used to inform board decisions.

BOARD GOAL-SETTING PROCESSES

Information available at http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/Travel/ Deployment_Task_Force/perf_measures.htm.
Contact Information:
Vincent Pearce
FHWA Office of Travel Management
Email: vince.pearce@fhwa.dot.gov

This resource, developed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Operations, offers a methodology for adopting transportation-based performance measurement and goal-setting procedures. The rationale for goal setting, according to the FHWA, treats transportation as a service industry; in this construct, performance measurement and goal setting help to define the services each organization promises to provide, including the quality or level of service (e.g., timeliness, reliability, etc.).

Information available at http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/ pittd/contents.htm.
Contact Information:
Office of Information and Management Services
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590
Tel.: 202-366-9062
Publication No. FHWA-PD-96-031HEP-30/
9-96/(4M)QE

The FHWA's "Effective Transportation Goal-Setting: Public Involvement Techniques for Transportation Decision Making" promotes ways to ensure that all interested persons

have a voice in how our transportation system is developed. Contained in these discussions are helpful goal-setting practices that strive to improve transportation services in order to serve public needs at the highest levels possible.

Information available at http://www.azta.org/public.htm.

This resource pertains to statewide transportation systems but may be adapted to local/regional systems. The Arizona Transit Association (AzTA) developed a goal-setting methodology based on the concept that effective public transportation policy is an essential component of a successful, integrated state transportation system. AzTA advanced a series of goals and objectives as a framework for a state public transportation policy.

Information available at http://www.aptrex.com/Stumpo PaperHouston.pdf.

"Making a World-Class Transit System a Reality," developed by the Coast Mountain Bus Company Ltd., Vancouver, British Columbia, focuses on how to get an organization motivated so that everyone's involvement creates a level of ownership in the development of the strategy to achieve world-class performance.

Goal-setting criteria of the Proctor, Vermont, School Board. Information available at www.proctorhs.org/ school_board/policies/pol_B2.htm.
Contact Information:
Proctor Jr.-Sr. High School
4 Park Street
Proctor, VT 05765
Tel.: 802-459-3353
Fax: 802-459-6323

At least annually, the board participates in goal-setting and self-evaluation activities developed or recommended by the superintendent. Particular attention is given to board goals and performance in the following areas:

- Policymaking,
- Policy implementation,
- Community relations,
- Board interpersonal communication skills,
- Board/superintendent relations,
- Fiscal/budget management,
- The instructional program,
- Labor relations,
- Board in-service training, and
- Government relations.

Chicago Public Schools Policy Manual, **"School Board Goal Setting." Information available at http://policy.cps. k12.il.us/documents/201.1.pdf.**

This resource includes the following:

- The board will establish realistic performance objectives related to board policies, procedures, and relationships.

- The board will, at the end of the academic year, measure its performance against the stated objectives. To the extent practicable, these objectives will be stated in the form of behavioral change or productivity gains.
- The Chicago Board of Education will develop an annual planning calendar of board and committee meetings and important events scheduled for the upcoming academic year (which begins September 1).

BOARD STRATEGIC PLANNING

Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB). Information available at http://www.agb.org.
Contact Information:
One Dupont Circle, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036
Tel.: 202-296-8400
Fax: 202-223-7053

On its Web site, AGB lists **On-Campus Programs** (board self-study workshop, board education seminars, presidential search workshop, presidential and board assessment service, and foundation board self-study workshop) and **Conferences and Seminars** (national conference on trusteeship, institute for board chairs and presidents, leadership forum for foundation boards, effective endowment management, and academic restructuring). The Web site contains references to books and reports relating to strengthening the performance of boards of public and private higher education.

Bader, Barry S., and James E. Small, "Sample Board Self-Assessment Questionnaire (2001)." Information available at http://www.greatboards.org.
Contact Information:
Bader & Associates
Tel.: 301-340-0903
Fax: 301-340-1345
Email: bbader@greatboards.org

The Web site provides tools for boards to decide whether "Self-Assessment Express" is sufficient for your board or if more tailored tools must be designed. It also provides sample governance policies and tools.

The Web site contains summaries of services such as board self-evaluation and development retreats; strategic planning retreats; leadership retreats for boards, medical staff, and management; health system governance redesign and restructuring processes; and consultation on specific governance problems and opportunities.

Jackson, Douglas K., and Thomas P. Holland, "Measuring the Effectiveness of Nonprofit Boards," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, **27 (1998), pp. 159–182. Information available at http://www.arches.uga.edu/~dougjack/ Text/Measuring%20the%20Effectiveness%20of%20Non profit%20Boards.PDF.**

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assessments as a way to improve public effectiveness and address underlying weaknesses. Relying upon extensive published research, the authors contend that strengthening the performance of board processes has become a prerequisite for improving community services. When evaluating the effectiveness of board processes, Jackson and Holland contend that self-assessment questionnaires are generally well received because they are more accessible, less expensive, and more efficient.

BOARD FIDUCIARY AND LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

AuditNet's Control Self-Assessment Resources. Information available at www.auditnet.org.

This is a Web-based internal auditing tool that helps identify risks, develop best practices, and add value to organizations. The site includes self-assessment tools, checklists, methodologies, and templates. The control self-assessment (CSA) is a governance tool that can help auditors, management, and others examine and assess business processes and control effectiveness within the organization. The CSA involves interaction between auditors or other facilitators and audit subjects. Through the CSA process, participants learn more about controls and their own responsibility regarding risk management. They become involved in executing controls and maintaining an effective control environment that contributes to meeting the organization's goals and objectives. The CSA center offers guidance, publications, seminars, and conferences on implementation of control self-assessment. To access member information, it is necessary to become a member.

"Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards," The National Center for Nonprofit Boards (1988). Information available at http://www.nsba.org/sbot/toolkit/EfBoards. html.
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    Washington, DC 20036-4907
    Tel.: 202-452-6262
    Fax: 202-452-6299
    Email: ncnb@ncnb.org

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- Board/superintendent relations,
- Fiscal/budget management,
- The instructional program,
- Labor relations,
- Board in-service training, and
- Government relations.

BOARD DIVERSITY PROGRAM AND IMPLEMENTATION

Gill, Mel, "Building Effective Approaches to Governance," *The Nonprofit Quarterly* **(2002). Information available at http://www.tsne.org/section/313.html.**
Contact Information:
    Mel Gill, President
    Synergy Associates Inc.
    57 Westpark Drive
    Ottawa, ON K1B 3G4
    Canada
    Tel.: 613-837-8757
    Fax: 613-837-1431
    Email: mel.gill@synergyassociates.ca

This article is critical of John Carver's "Policy Governance" model. Gill's study found that the model did not comfortably fit many organization's boards, so boards "mixed and matched" with other models without a systematic rationale. Gill contends that prescriptive models such as Carver's fail in practice because they don't accommodate themselves to unique organizational circumstances and that there are no "magic bullets" for good governance. Boards, like their organizations, have different characteristics and needs. Nonprofit leaders need to have more exposure to a range of options to make informed choices. This does not diminish the value of theoretical governance models.

Edwards, C. P., and C. J. Cornforth, *Good Governance— Developing Effective Board Management Relations in Public and Voluntary Organizations***, London: CIMA Publishing (1998).**

The research suggests that boards do make a number of important contributions to the organizations they serve. The

nature of these contributions varies and is influenced by a variety of factors, for example, the way the organization is regulated, the history and culture of the organization, the way board members are chosen, board members' skills and experience, the relationship with senior managers, and the way the governance function is managed.

Regular review can help boards and staff to clarify their respective responsibilities and enable boards to identify the areas where they can add real value to the organization.

Horn, Kevin, *Transit Authority Boards of Directors: Membership, Organization, Functions, and Performance* **(1975), Pennsylvania State University Graduate School, Department of Business Logistics.**

This dissertation develops measures of transit board characteristics, focusing on organizational, functional, and director characteristics that would relate to board performance and effectiveness in policymaking, analogous to private-sector boards of directors. The seminal 1975 work provides a set of comprehensive benchmarks on board composition and structure, as well as the characteristics of board members, their duties and responsibilities, time spent, and so forth.

The research notes that "[b]y focusing on the development of meaningful goals and performance specifications for transit, as well as directing other policy areas, together with review of operations and management activities, transit boards of directors can make an effective contribution toward the provision of public transit services within the community."

Simon & Simon Research Associates, Inc., et al., *TCRP Web Document 21: Public Transit System Policy Boards: Organization and Characteristics,* **Transportation Research Board (2002). Information available at http://trb.org/publications/tcrp/tcrp_webdoc_21.pdf.**

The purpose of this study was to provide national data and information on public transit board governance and the nature and characteristics of transit board effectiveness. The majority of transit systems do not measure board effectiveness; only one-third of the boards conduct any type of evaluation to determine their effectiveness. Of those that do measure effectiveness, it is usually an informal self-assessment. Sometimes it can be as informal as asking, "Did we achieve our goals this year?" Only 10 percent of the respondents reported that they hire consultants to evaluate their performance. Systems that conduct assessments do so on an annual basis.

CEO suggestions for improving board effectiveness include measuring performance and finding ways to enhance board member commitment and time allotted for board work; improving board composition and structure by broadening diversity and streamlining committee structures; engaging in strategic and long-range planning; and improving information, communication, and knowledge. Board chairpersons suggested that board effectiveness could be improved if individuals were more diverse, more committed, and had better knowl-

edge of transit. They also suggested that boards should have more autonomy and authority, as well as better communication with external agencies.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO) RELATIONS

Carver, John, and Miriam Mayhew Carver, *Reinventing Your Board: A Step-by-Step Guide to Implementing Policy Governance* **(part of the Jossey-Boss Nonprofit Series that includes John Carver's** *Boards That Make a Difference: A New Design for Leadership in Nonprofit and Public Organizations***, 2nd ed.).**

In the best-selling *Boards That Make a Difference: A New Design for Leadership in Nonprofit and Public Organizations* (2nd ed.), John Carver includes updated policy samples, a new chapter on the process of policy development, and additional resources for various types of boards. With creative insight and common sense practicality, Carver presents a bold new approach to board job design, board/staff relationships, the chief executive role, performance monitoring, and virtually every aspect of the board/management relationship. He offers a board model designed to produce policies that make a difference; missions that are clearly articulated; standards that are ethical and prudent; meetings, officers, and committees that work; and leadership that supports the fulfillment of long-term goals.

Creating an Effective Charter School Governing Board. Information available at http://www.uscharterschools. org/governance/contents.htm.

The Web site contains a useful guidebook entitled "Creating an Effective Charter School Governing Board Guidebook." The guidebook is designed to help prepare board members to lead an autonomous public school and sustain them throughout the process. The much more extensive guidebook, available online at www.uscharterschools.org/gb/governance/, details governance principles and concepts, models of best practices, and essential resources. The overview of the larger guidebook summarizes 12 critical challenges that charter school developers must meet to build and maintain an effective charter school board. Following each challenge is a set of issues that boards may encounter along the way and a discussion of possible strategies. At the conclusion of the discussion of each challenge is a list of some of the numerous resources available in the larger online guidebook and elsewhere.

Proctor, Steve, and Maynard Gunsgtra, "Restructuring the Board Selection Process Can Improve Governance." The FORCE D&O FORUM "On Being a Board" Discussion Group. Information available at http://www. forcefinancial.com.

Contact Information:
    FORCE Financial, Ltd.
    4250 Lakeside Drive, Suite 212
    Jacksonville, FL 32210
    Tel: 904-381-0421
    Fax: 904-381-0436

A critical factor in the success of many retirement communities is the ability of the board of directors to examine its own composition and to restructure itself, when necessary, with the individuals and skills needed for sound planning and decision making. Moreover, board selection processes may need overhauling in order to attain the flexibility for accommodating strategic reforms.

The D&O FORUM discussion group is an online forum for the exchange of ideas relevant to officers and directors of senior living facilities. This site is provided and maintained by FORCE Financial, Ltd., to allow industry professionals and board members the opportunity to collaborate on solutions and share innovative ideas.

Simon & Simon Research Associates, Inc., et al., *TCRP Web Document 21: Public Transit System Policy Boards: Organization and Characteristics* **(2002), Transportation Research Board. Information available at http://trb.org/publications/tcrp/tcrp_webdoc_21.pdf.**

The purpose of this study was to provide national data and information on public transit board governance and the nature and characteristics of transit board effectiveness. The majority of transit systems do not measure board effectiveness; only one-third of the boards conduct any type of evaluation to determine their effectiveness. Of those that do measure effectiveness, it is usually an informal self-assessment. Sometimes it can be as informal as asking, "Did we achieve our goals this year?" Only 10 percent of the respondents reported that they hire consultants to evaluate their performance. Systems that conduct assessments do so on an annual basis.

CEO suggestions for improving board effectiveness include measuring performance and finding ways to enhance board member commitment and time allotted for board work; improving board composition and structure by broadening diversity and streamlining committee structures; engaging in strategic and long-range planning; and improving information, communication, and knowledge. Board chairpersons suggested that board effectiveness could be improved if individuals were more diverse, more committed, and had better knowledge of transit. They also suggested that boards should have more autonomy and authority, as well as better communication with external agencies.

BOARD PUBLIC ADVOCACY

Board Goal Setting and Self-Evaluation. Proctor, Vermont, Proctor School District Policies and Procedures (November 2001). Information available at http://www.proctorhs.org/policies_procedures.htm.

Contact Information:
    Proctor Jr.-Sr. High School
    4 Park Street
    Proctor, VT 05765
    Tel.: 802-459-3353
    Fax: 802-459-6323

The Web site provides a full documentation of Proctor School District policies and procedures under Vermont laws and regulations. The document contains a section that lists areas in which board goals and performance are based. Such areas include

- Policymaking,
- Policy implementation,
- Community relations,
- Board interpersonal communication skills,
- Board/superintendent relations,
- Fiscal/budget management,
- The instructional program,
- Labor relations,
- Board in-service training, and
- Government relations.

Institute on Governance, Effective Governance Through Thought and Action. Information available at http://www.iog.ca.
Contact Information:
    Institute on Governance
    122 Clarence St.
    Ottawa, ON K1N 5P6
    Canada
    Tel: 613 562-0090
    Fax: 613 562-0097
    Email: info@iog.ca

The Institute on Governance (IOG) is a nonprofit organization with charitable status, founded in 1990 to promote effective governance. The institute concentrates its work on specific knowledge areas, including the following:

- Aboriginal Governance,
- Accountability and Performance Measurement,
- Board Governance,
- Building Policy Capacity,
- Technology and Governance, and
- Youth and Governance.

For each area above, the organization provides services that include research and analysis, advisory services, professional development, conferences, workshops, and study tours. The organization produces and provides free publications on the site.

*Public Involvement Techniques for Transportation Decision Making***. Federal Highway Administration (May**

2003). Information available at http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/ reports/pittd/contents.htm.
Contact Information:
    Federal Highway Administration
   The FHWA's "Effective Transportation Goal-Setting: Public Involvement Techniques for Transportation Decision Making" promotes ways to ensure that all interested persons have a voice in how our transportation system is developed. Contained in these discussions are helpful goal-setting practices that strive to improve transportation services in order to serve public needs at the highest levels possible.

Abbreviations used without definitions in TRB publications:

AASHO	American Association of State Highway Officials
AASHTO	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
APTA	American Public Transportation Association
ASCE	American Society of Civil Engineers
ASME	American Society of Mechanical Engineers
ASTM	American Society for Testing and Materials
ATA	American Trucking Associations
CTAA	Community Transportation Association of America
CTBSSP	Commercial Truck and Bus Safety Synthesis Program
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FMCSA	Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
IEEE	Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
ITE	Institute of Transportation Engineers
NCHRP	National Cooperative Highway Research Program
NCTRP	National Cooperative Transit Research and Development Program
NHTSA	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
NTSB	National Transportation Safety Board
SAE	Society of Automotive Engineers
TCRP	Transit Cooperative Research Program
TRB	Transportation Research Board
U.S.DOT	United States Department of Transportation