



Improve Asset Conditions

Remaining Useful Life of Transit Buses

Purpose:

The age of transit buses is one of the measures used by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to evaluate the overall condition of the nation's transit fleet. Transit buses have "useful life" thresholds that vary from 4 to 12 years, depending on the type of vehicle, and vehicle fleets are often mixed. Therefore, it is more effective to measure the average remaining useful life of buses in order to evaluate changes in the fleet's condition over time. Modernizing newer transit buses will improve the quality of transit service, attract more riders, and reduce maintenance costs. Newer buses also bring improvements in technology, emissions, rider amenities, and other factors that can improve the general level of service to riders.

Data:

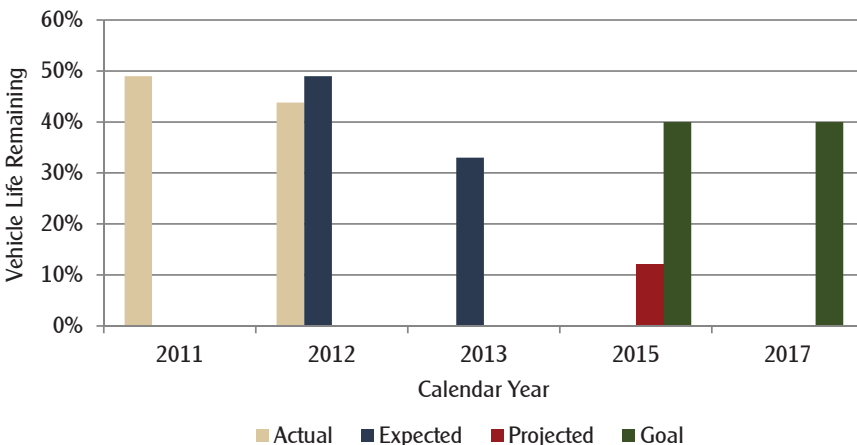
Transit buses in New Hampshire are purchased and maintained by transit systems and in some cases by the state or contractors to the state. The data presented here apply only to buses purchased by NHDOT or with funding from NHDOT (a total of 98 buses). Although this does not provide a comprehensive, statewide picture of transit bus condition, these data do give an indication of the age of the transit bus fleet in New Hampshire. The NHDOT data include buses operated by rural transit systems as well as by contractors operating commuter and intercity bus service in the state.

It is important to note that FTA regulations require that buses reach the end of their useful life (0% remaining useful life)

Improvement Status

The transit bus fleet in New Hampshire has been improved in recent years with the purchase of new buses for the I-93 commuter bus expansion project, with buses funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in 2009, and with several coach bus overhauls to extend the useful service life of the vehicles without new acquisitions. This addition of newer buses (and coach buses with a longer useful life) has meant that the average remaining useful life of transit buses funded through NHDOT is relatively high. In future years, it can be anticipated that the average remaining useful life will be lower. This will have implications for maintenance costs. Under the new MAP-21 transportation bill, FTA has implemented a new formula-funded program, Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities, that will provide some funding for vehicle replacements, but it will also be necessary to identify additional funding sources to replace buses so that the fleet includes new buses as well as those that were purchased in the past several years. Growth in transit ridership also means that additional buses will be needed to accommodate demand, and funding will be needed to allow transit service to keep pace with growth in population and ridership.

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before they may be replaced. Therefore, the remaining useful life measure may fluctuate over time depending on the cycles of bus acquisition and grant availability and the types of buses purchased in a particular time period.

It is difficult to project future grant funding to replace buses in the transit fleets. Therefore, the projection represents a scenario in which no buses are replaced over this period. This is unlikely but represents a worst case.