

Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority (VTA)

Annual Report



Fiscal Year 2020

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020



Agency Overview

The Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority (VTA) provides fixed-route bus and ADA demand-responsive van service to the six towns on the Island of Martha's Vineyard. The VTA was created by the Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 161B, and is funded through fares, local, state, and federal sources.

Leadership

Per MGL Chapter 161B, the VTA is managed by an Administrator, who is appointed by an Advisory Board. The Advisory Board is composed of one representative from each member community, one Rider Community Representative and one Disabled Community Representative:

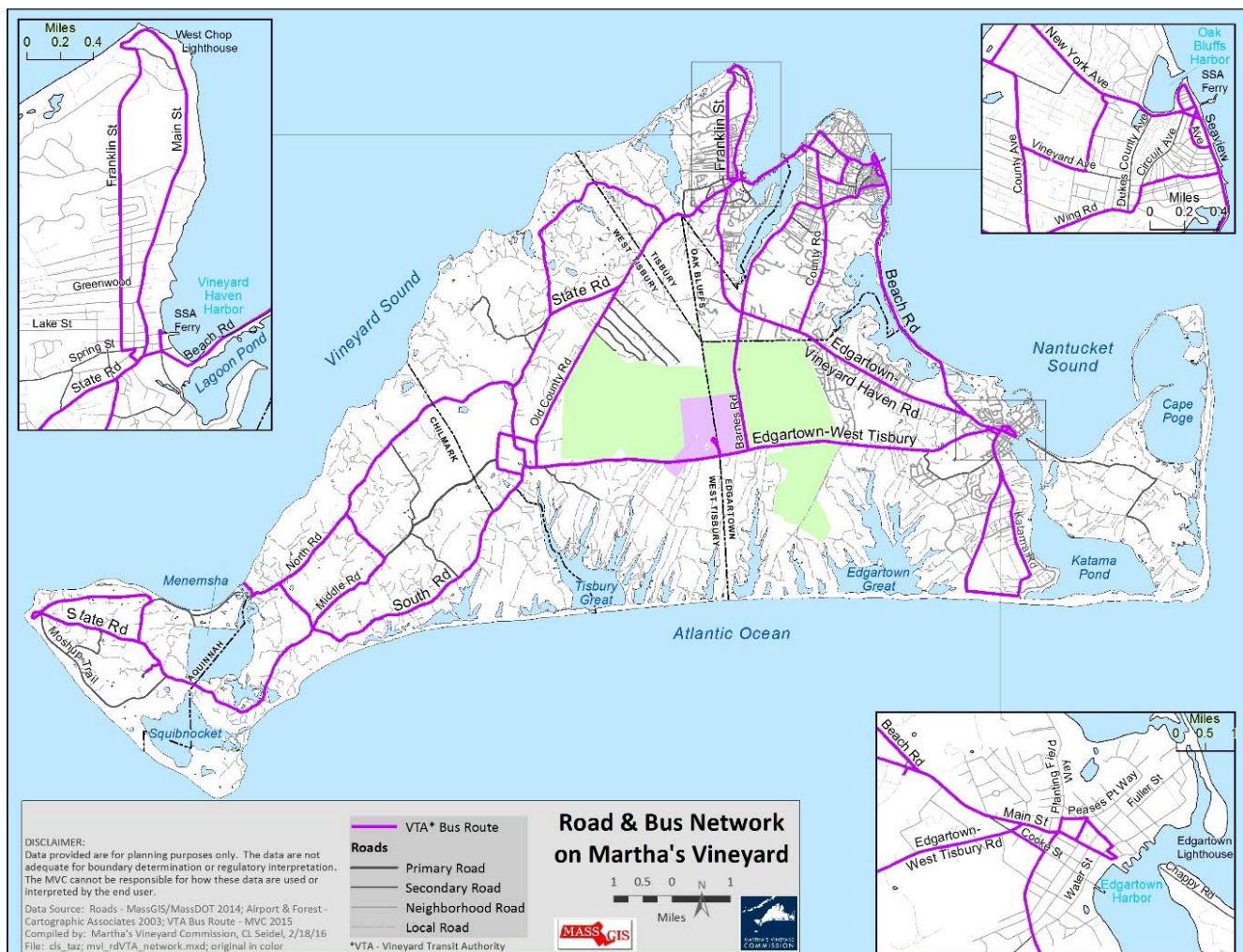
Oak Bluffs	Alice Butler, Chairman
West Tisbury	Susanna Sturgis
Aquinnah	June Manning
Tisbury	Elaine Miller
Chilmark	Leonard Jason
Edgartown	Mark Snider
Rider Community Representative	Carlton Crocker (Chilmark)
Disabled Community Representative	Sarah Nevin (Edgartown)
Administrator	Angela E. Gompert

Mission

We believe that public transportation is essential to the economic vitality, environmental stability, and quality of life on the Island of Martha's Vineyard. We provide a safe and secure environment for our customers, community and employees through consistent training, enforcement, and allocation of resources. We continuously strive to improve the cost efficiency of our services and approach our financial relationships with integrity and transparency.

Description of Services

During Fiscal Year 2020, the VTA operated eight year-round routes, plus four additional summer peak season routes and paratransit service in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The fixed routes are organized into a hub and spoke system around four hubs, which are located in the Vineyard's largest communities (Vineyard Haven, Oak Bluffs, Edgartown and West Tisbury). With one exception, all VTA routes serve at least one hub. Connecting to and between hubs allows passengers to transfer between routes and increases accessibility to the Island's major services and destinations. The VTA also interlines buses to offer one-seat rides between key destinations. The VTA's annual operating budget for FY20 was \$6.02 million, plus \$2.175 million in capital funds. This investment supported 890,783 riders and 936,989 miles of service. FY20 was a year like no other; beginning with a labor strike that resolved in August 2019, to operating through a global pandemic the last four months of the year. The VTA will continue to navigate these challenges to provide the best transit services possible for their community.



Funding Updates

CARES Act Funding

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the VTA was awarded \$1,462,310 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding. As of 6/30/2020, the VTA had used \$654,626.28 of CARES funding to provide employees with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), sanitizing supplies, labor and enhanced vehicle and facility filtration for HVAC systems and cleaning, driver protection barriers, and lost wages. From March 21, 2020 through June 30, 2020, the VTA implemented rear-door boarding and fare forgiveness to protect both our drivers and passengers. CARES funding was used for the months of March – June to supplement lost fares.

MassDOT Discretionary Funding Program

Section 74 of the Fiscal Year 2019 Massachusetts Budget created an additional \$4 million of funding for Regional Transit Authorities that (1) provide best practice services and/or (2) seek to initiate, maintain, or expand service to a priority population. The VTA applied for this competitive grant and was awarded \$83,500 to restore fixed route service on Routes 1 and 13 during the In-Season, which often exceed capacity during peak periods. For FY20 the VTA used \$41,633.51 of this grant for additional service provided on Routes 1 and 13 primarily from August 2019 – October 2019. The remaining balance will be used in FY21 for Route 13 service provided in September 2020.

Volkswagen (VW) Mitigation Funds

The Volkswagen Diesel Emissions Environmental Mitigation Trust was developed for the purpose of implementing an Eligible Mitigation Action under the VW Trust to offset excess NO_x (nitrogen oxide gases) emissions resulting from the VW violations, and to help electrify the Massachusetts transportation network. In accordance with the Massachusetts VW Beneficiary Mitigation Plan, the VTA applied for and received \$3,900,000 of the VW Funds for the procurement and deployment of zero emission electric transit buses. In October of 2019 the VTA took delivery of four all-electric battery 35' BYD buses, and in January of 2020 took delivery of two all-electric battery 30' BYD buses. With the addition of these 6 buses, the VTA's fixed route fleet now has 12 all-electric buses.

Service Modifications

The VTA planned some service modifications for FY 2020. Due to circumstances, those service modifications were much more extensive than anticipated over the course of the year.

Changes to In-Season 2019 as Compared to In-Season 2018 (starting in July)

Planning for In-Season 2019 included some trimming of late-night trips after midnight on Routes 1 and 13. These decisions were made as cost-saving measures due to low ridership performance on these trips. End of service day trips were also eliminated on Routes 2 and 10A. Similarly, end of service day trips that operated on Fridays and Saturdays during the In-Season shoulder periods were eliminated on Routes 3, 4 and 5. Changes were also planned for the Route 11 service.

The VTA experienced a labor strike at the outset of the In-Season in June 2019, which continued through the end of July. The VTA provided a reduced level of transit service with vehicle operators who did not choose to strike, other staff, and seasonal operators. Resources were applied to the routes with the highest travel demand, and during the peak periods of travel during the day. Evening service was reduced throughout July. Certain routes like Routes 2, 10A, 11, and 12, were not operated at all or on significantly reduced schedules. The impacts of labor shortages continued through the peak month of August as well, affecting how much of the originally planned and published timetable service the VTA was able to offer. These modifications were temporary on the VTA's usual transit operations and service.

Changes to Off-Season 2019-2020 as Compared to Off-Season 2018-2019

The plan for the Off-Season continued to comprise three schedule periods – Fall, Winter, and Spring. The Off-Season Fall schedule continued the trend of paring down later evening trips that had low ridership performance in the previous year for the same time period. As anticipated, to fund the new collective bargaining agreement with labor and an increase in insurance premiums, more substantial service cuts were required. Routes 2, 4, 8, and 10A were eliminated from the Off-Season schedule. The Winter period was also started a full month earlier – at the beginning instead of the end of December. Sunday service was also reduced to only service on Routes 1, 10, and 13. Routes 1 and 13 Sunday service had a separate schedule served by one vehicle, and Route 13 service was limited to the Vineyard Haven – Oak Bluffs link only.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting dramatic decrease in travel demand in March 2020 changed VTA transit planning for the rest of the fiscal year. The Winter season was extended until April 30, 2020. For comparison, the VTA In-Season historically began at the end of April. With travel demand reduced and slowly increasing with the summer season approaching, the VTA operated two schedule periods to close out the fiscal year – one from May 1 – June 18, and another starting June 19, 2020 that would operate into the next fiscal year. This schedule included routes that had not operated during the Off-Season, including Routes 2, 4, 8, and 10A. The In-Season schedule was reduced for all routes due to pandemic conditions. Route 1 maintained its typical 30 minute frequency, while ending service earlier in the evenings. Up-Island routes were mostly reduced to two hour frequency instead of one hour frequency, as were Routes 7 and 9 in Oak Bluffs. Route 8 to South Beach was served by one bus instead of the usual two. Route 13 along the Beach Roads serving Edgartown, Oak Bluffs and Tisbury operated with 30 minute headways, less than the usual 15-20 minute headways. Following social distance guidelines aboard the buses, the VTA operated a similar number of buses during peak periods on Route 13 to carry roughly half the peak season travel demand. It was very difficult to predict travel demand during the pandemic. These schedules were considered temporary measures for unusual conditions, and additional headways were added as we entered FY 21.

Fare Adjustments

Effective July 1, 2019 the VTA zone fare went from \$1.25 per town to \$2.00 per town for the In-Season. Effective September 29, 2019, zone fares went back to \$1.25 per town for the Off-Season.

Effective August 4, 2019, the One Day Pass increased from \$8.00 to \$10.00; the reduced fare One Day Pass remained at \$5.00.

Effective October 1, 2109, the Boston Medivan rate increased from \$15.00 to \$20.00 one way. From March 22, 2020 through June 30, 2020, the VTA implemented rear-door boarding due to the COVID-19 pandemic - fares were not collected during this time period.

Clean Transportation Initiatives

In 2017, the VTA commenced an ambitious project to electrify its transit fleet and fuel the fleet with renewable solar energy and integrated energy storage. This system of locally generated renewables, storage, and vehicle charging will create a first-of-its-kind fully integrated, clean, resilient, and flexible public transportation system.

To date, the VTA has made great strides in its electrification project. The VTA has 12 electric buses in service, with over 400,000 fleet miles and 4 more electric buses scheduled to be delivered in April/May of 2021. With these additional 4 buses, half of the VTA's fleet will be all electric battery buses. The electric buses have been well received by the community and the VTA is pleased with how well this new technology is working.

Complementing these efforts, VTA has updated its operations and maintenance facility and now has an electrical distribution system capable of supplying electricity for charging stations for 40 buses, 7 vans and 6 cars. The installation of Energy Storage Systems (ESS) has been completed and additional work is underway to install solar canopies and inductive charging for its electric transit buses. The design also includes a central control system that will manage vehicle charging, reduce peak demand by ESS discharge, and supply emergency power through an island-able micro grid.

Partnerships & Community Outreach

The VTA continues to partner with the Island's Councils on Aging, elderly and disabled housing authorities, and schools to provide reduced fare annual passes for the Island's elderly, disabled and youth. Reduced fare passes are available for purchase through the Councils on Aging and all Island schools. The VTA also offers a Military reduced fare.

For the past 16 years, the VTA has maintained the Island's school bus fleet, saving the school district money and the complications of getting vehicles to the mainland for repair services, as viable and affordable alternatives do not exist in the private sector on the Island.

The VTA leases office space within their building to the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) to

operate a local branch for the Island. Every two years, the VTA hosts a boat and recreational vehicle registration event, a joint event sponsored by the RMV and Mass Energy and Environmental Affairs. This event is designed so members of the community can easily obtain proper registration for recreational boats and vehicles without having to travel to the mainland.

The VTA maintains its own fuel island on the property, with above-ground diesel and unleaded fuel tanks. We are the largest consumer of fuel on the Island. We allow other public agencies to fuel at our facility which, with the pooling of our fuel purchases saves tens of thousands of dollars annually for these public agencies: the Martha's Vineyard School District, Dukes County Sheriff's Department, several Towns' police, fire, and highway departments, Island Elderly Housing, the Land Bank, and the County. A computerized fuel authorization system allows access for these agencies to fuel twenty-four hours a day.

The VTA property is host to training exercises for MV Tactical Response Team and fire department drills. The VTA has provided vehicles and drivers, as needed, to the Airport so they can coordinate their Mass Casualty Incident Drills, as required by the FAA. We are a member of the County and all Island Towns' Emergency Management plans for evacuations, transportation, and cooling/warming rehabilitation vehicles in the event of an emergency.

The VTA is home to the only Commercial Driver's License (CDL) course. The VTA allows private, as well as other public agencies to train on and use the course for licensing.

Operational Facts and Figures

Fixed Route

Facts:

	FY 20	FY 19
Annual Ridership	894,055	1,305,195
Annual Farebox & Other Revenue	\$1,239,605	\$1,666,065
Annual Cost of Operations	\$4,820,037	\$4,695,938
% of Fare Box Recovery of Operating Costs	25.72%	35.48%
Fleet Size	32	32

Fixed Route:

Number of Fixed Routes	14	14
Annual Passenger Trips	894,055	1,305,195
Annual Revenue Hours	52,249	67,047
Annual Revenue Miles	804,254	1,097,108
Annual Vehicle Hours	55,584	71,025
Annual Vehicle Miles	855,590	1,162,191

Performance Measures:

Operating Expense Per Passenger Trip	\$5.39	\$3.60
Operating Expense Per Revenue Hour	\$92.25	\$70.04
Operating Expense Per Revenue Mile	\$5.99	\$4.28
Passenger Trips Per Revenue Hour	17.11	19.47
Passenger Trips Per Revenue Mile	1.11	1.19
Required Subsidy Per Passenger Trip	\$4.00	\$2.32

Fare Information:

Fixed Routes Fares:

Adult Base	\$2 / \$1.25 zone	\$2 / \$1.25 zone
Elderly Fare	\$1 / \$0.75 zone	\$1 / \$0.75 zone
Disabled Fare	\$1 / \$0.75 zone	\$1 / \$0.75 zone
Under 12	\$2 / \$1.25 zone	\$2 / \$1.25 zone
Under 6	Free	Free
Student Pass	Reduced Fare	Reduced Fare

Operational Facts and Figures

ADA - Demand Response

Facts:

	FY 20	FY 19
Annual Ridership	8,006	12,298
Annual Farebox & Other Revenue	\$20,312	\$32,384
Annual Cost of Operations	\$510,926	\$549,408
% of Fare Box Recovery of Operating Costs	4.00%	5.89%
Fleet Size	6	6

Demand Response Statistics:

Annual Passenger Trips	8,006	12,298
Annual Revenue Hours	5,213	7,321
Annual Revenue Miles	72,811	106,696
Annual Vehicle Hours	5,546	7,788
Annual Vehicle Miles	77,459	118,551

Performance measures:

Operating Expense Per Passenger Trip	\$63.82	\$44.67
Operating Expense Per Revenue Hour	\$98.01	\$75.05
Operating Expense Per Revenue Mile	\$7.02	\$5.15
Passenger Trips Per Revenue Hour	1.54	1.68
Passenger Trips Per Revenue Mile	0.11	0.12
Required Subsidy Per Passenger Trip	\$61.28	\$42.04

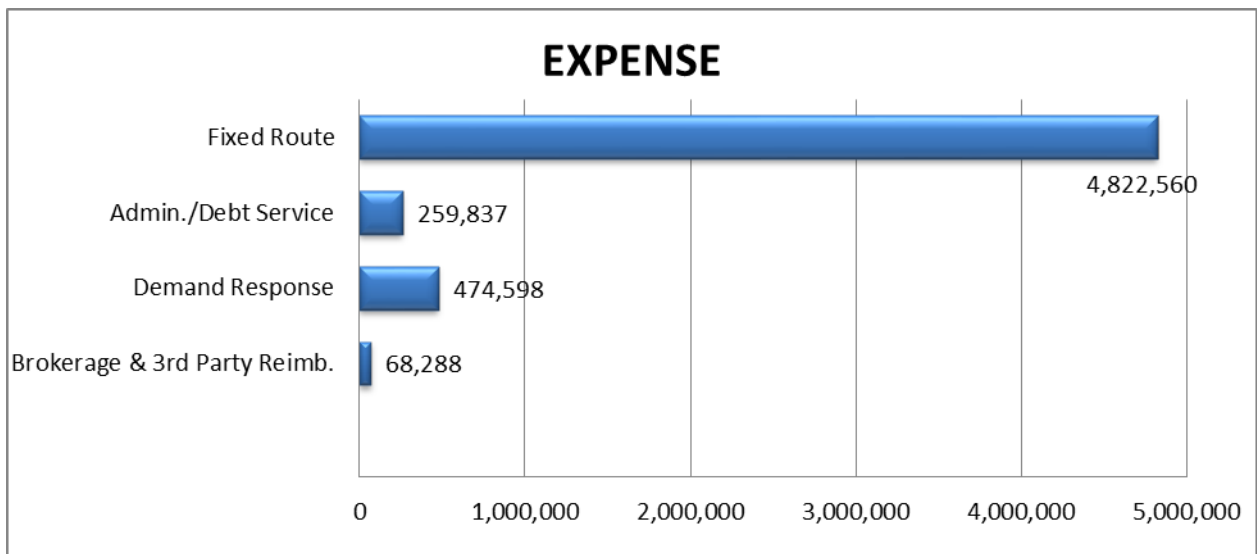
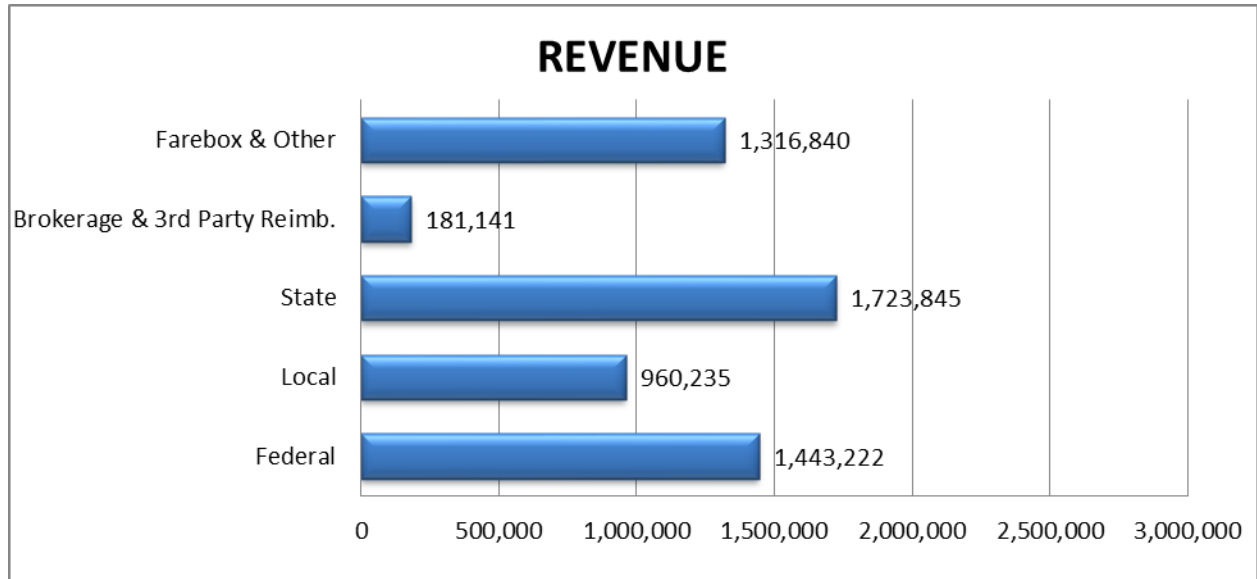
Fare Information:

Paratransit:

Elderly	\$2.00/town	\$2.00/town
Disabled	\$2.00/town	\$2.00/town
Pass Program	N/A	N/A
Ticket Program	N/A	N/A

Finance

Revenue and Expenses



Statement of Net Position

ASSETS		2020	2019
Current Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents		\$ 349,529	\$ 986,967
Receivable for operating assistance		\$ 2,625,447	\$ 2,020,467
Other current assets		\$ 433,758	\$ 452,436
Prepaid fuel hedge		\$ 108,158	\$ -
Total current assets		\$ 3,516,892	\$ 3,459,870
Restricted & Noncurrent Assets			
Restricted assets			
Cash and cash equivalents		\$ 249,240	\$ 221,136
Receivable for capital assistance		\$ 1,841,319	\$ 1,442,525
Total restricted assets		\$ 2,090,559	\$ 1,663,661
Receivable for operating assistance		\$ 509,010	\$ 464,195
Capital assets, net		\$ 19,706,095	\$ 15,763,867
Net OPEB asset		\$ 293,016	\$ 326,777
Total restricted assets & noncurrent assets		\$ 22,598,680	\$ 18,218,500
Total assets		\$ 26,115,572	\$ 21,678,370
Deferred Outflows of Resources			
Deferred outflows of resources related to pension		\$ 128,414	\$ 174,473
Deferred outflows of resources related to OPEB		\$ 78,149	\$ 15,562
Total assets & deferred outflows of resources		\$ 26,322,135	\$ 21,868,405
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Accounts payable and accrued expense		\$ 237,150	\$ 279,868
Total current liabilities		\$ 237,150	\$ 279,868
Restricted and noncurrent liabilities			
Liabilities payable from restricted assets			
Accounts payable and accrued expense		\$ 1,689,032	\$ 1,437,623
Total liabilities payable from restricted assets		\$ 1,689,032	\$ 1,437,623
Other post-employment benefits		\$ -	\$ -
Net pension liability		\$ 422,790	\$ 421,760
Revenue Anticipation Notes		\$ 2,000,000	\$ 1,762,820
Total restricted and noncurrent liabilities		\$ 4,111,822	\$ 3,622,203
Total liabilities		\$ 4,348,972	\$ 3,902,071
Deferred Inflows of Resources			
Deferred inflows of resources related to pension		\$ 16,906	\$ 21,132
Deferred inflows of resources related to OPEB		\$ 57,059	\$ -
Total liabilities & deferred inflows of resources		\$ 4,422,937	\$ 3,923,203
NET POSITION			
Invested in capital assets		\$ 19,706,095	\$ 15,763,867
Restricted		\$ 401,527	\$ 226,038
Other current assets		\$ 1,791,576	\$ 1,955,297
Total net position		\$ 21,899,198	\$ 17,945,202