Downeast Transportation

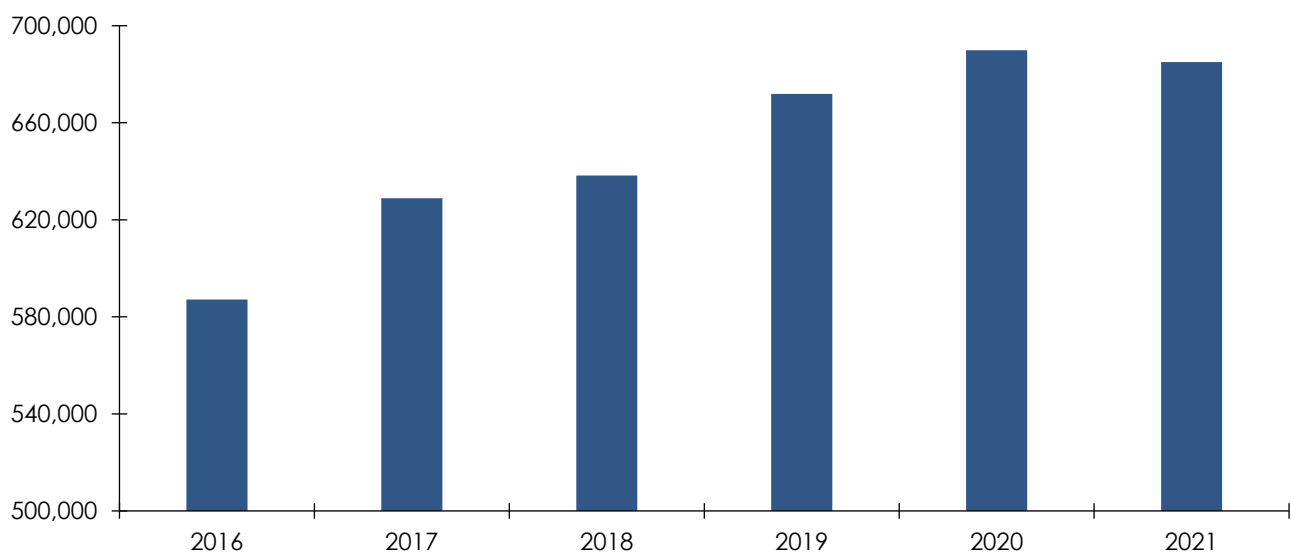Downeast Transportation provides scheduled transit services into and out of Bar Harbor.

Service Description and Fares

Downeast Transportation service consists of seven routes, into and out of Bar Harbor and neighboring communities, along with Bangor. Downeast Transportation also operates a fare-free seasonal service in and around Acadia National Park consisting of 12 routes. Year-round services are operated on weekdays and consist of anywhere from 1 to 4 daily trips. Fares vary based on the route and distance traveled. The midday fare is $1.00 per day within one town, $3 within neighboring towns, and $6 for longer Hancock County rides. Rides to Bangor cost $9 from Bar Harbor and Blue Hill, $8 from Trenton, and $7 from Ellsworth. The round-trip fare is the same as the one-way fare, provided the roundtrip is completed the same day.

Ridership

Total ridership for 2016 through 2021 is shown in Figure 1. Between 2016 and 2020, ridership increased from under 600,000 trips to approximately 690,000 trips, before declining in 2021.

Figure 1   Downeast Transportation Annual Unlinked Trips (2016–2021)

Modal Operating Characteristics

Revenue miles and revenue hours are shown in Figure 2 and Figure 3. Both revenue miles and revenue hours rose between 2016 and 2021. In 2021, both metrics reached highs of approximately 760,000 revenue miles and 48,000 revenue hours.

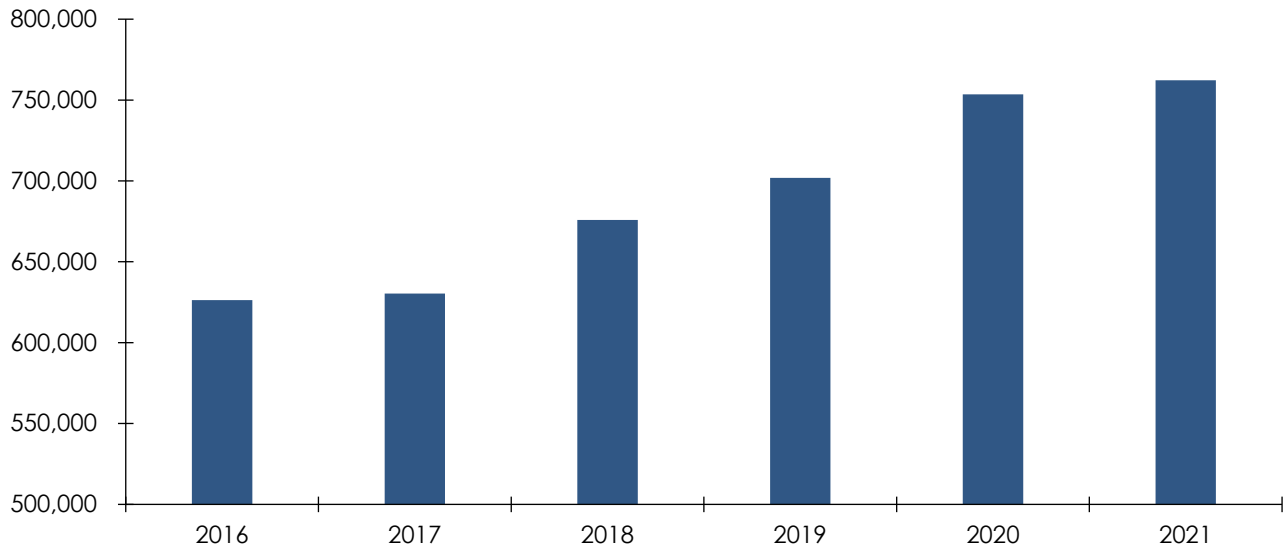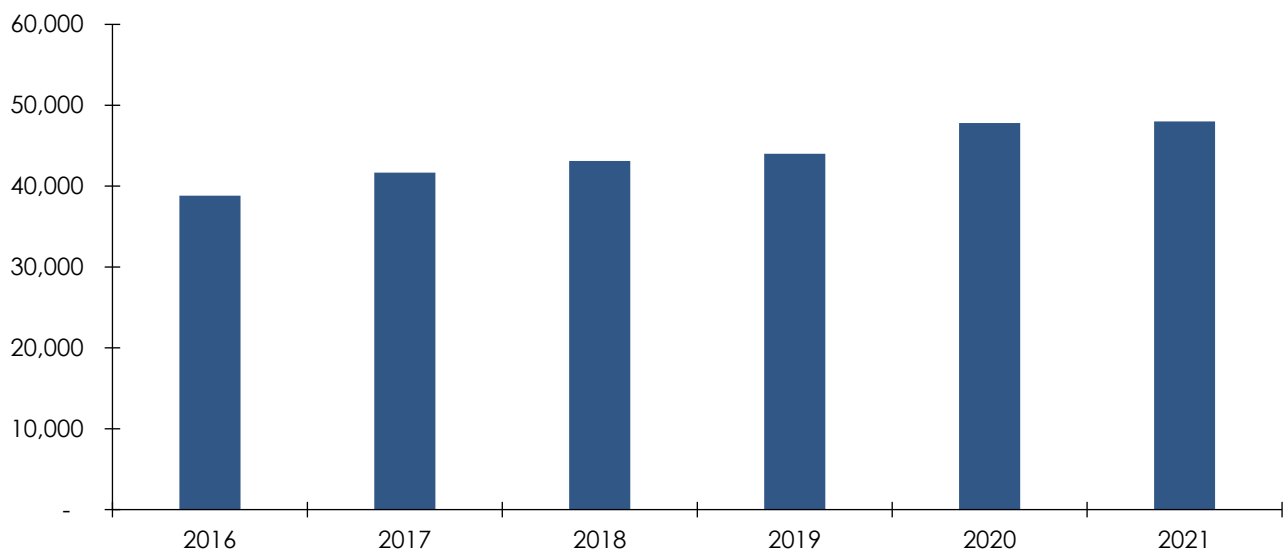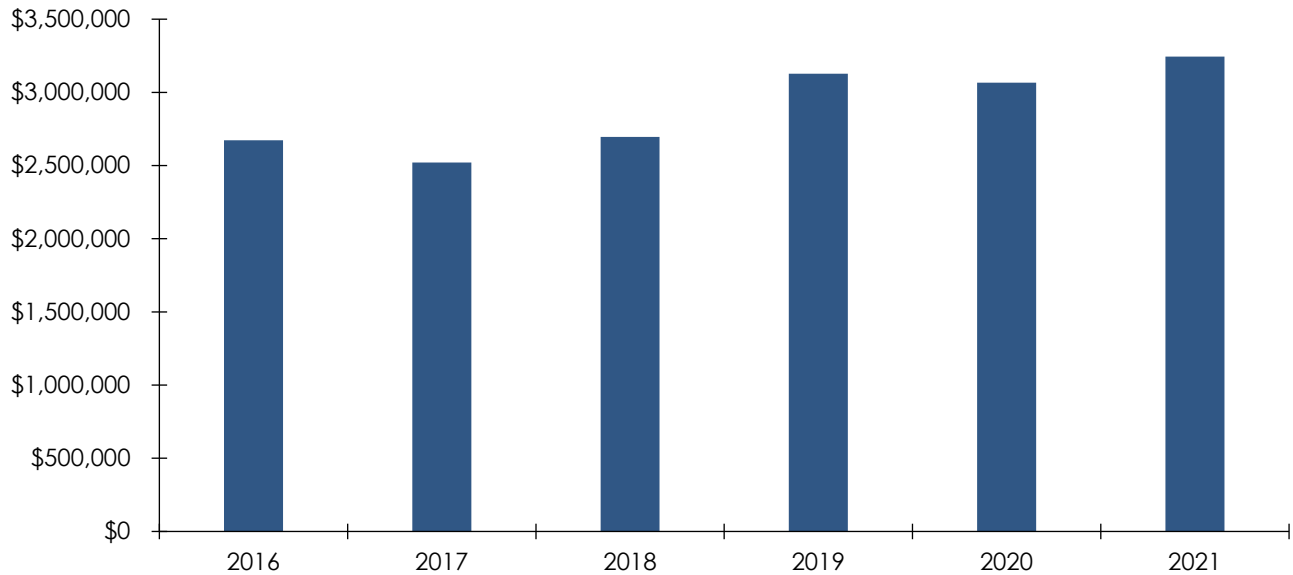**Figure 2**   **Downeast Transportation Vehicle Revenue Miles (2016–2021)**

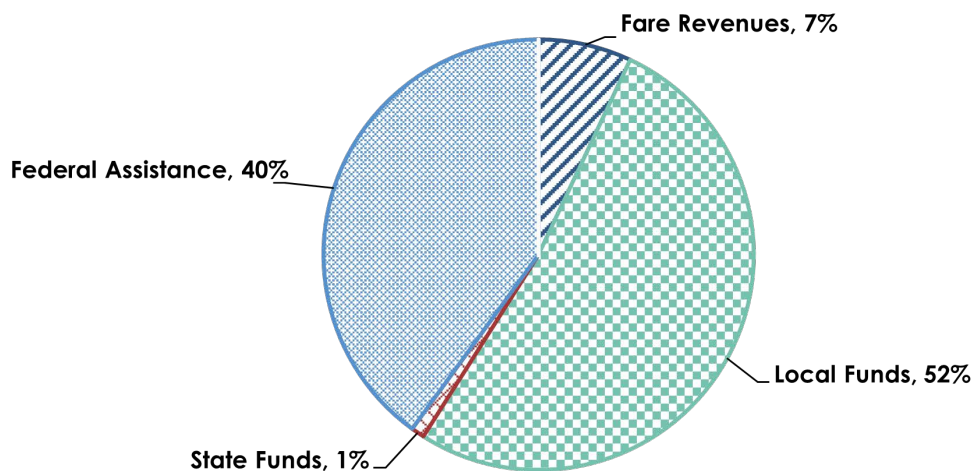**Figure 3**   **Downeast Transportation Vehicle Revenue Hours (2016–2021)**

Budget Metrics

Annual operating expenses for 2016 through 2021 are shown in Figure 4. From 2016 through 2018, annual operating expenses remained at just over $2.5 million. Beyond 2018 and through 2021, annual operating expenses rose to above $3 million.

Figure 4   Downeast Transportation Operating Expenses (2016–2021)

The breakdown of operating expense funding sources for 2020 is shown in Figure 5. In 2020, federal assistance accounted for 52 percent of local funding. Farebox revenue accounted for 7 percent of funding. The majority of funding consisted of federal funds, which accounted for 40 percent of total funding.

Figure 5   Downeast Transportation Operating Funding Sources (2020)

Service efficiency metrics are shown in Figure 6 and Figure 7. Between 2016 and 2021, vehicle revenue mile operating expenses largely ranged between $4.00 and $4.50. Apart from 2019, vehicle revenue hour operating expenses ranged between $60.00 and $70.00.

Figure 6   **Downeast Transportation Operating Expenses per Vehicle Revenue Mile (2016–2021)**
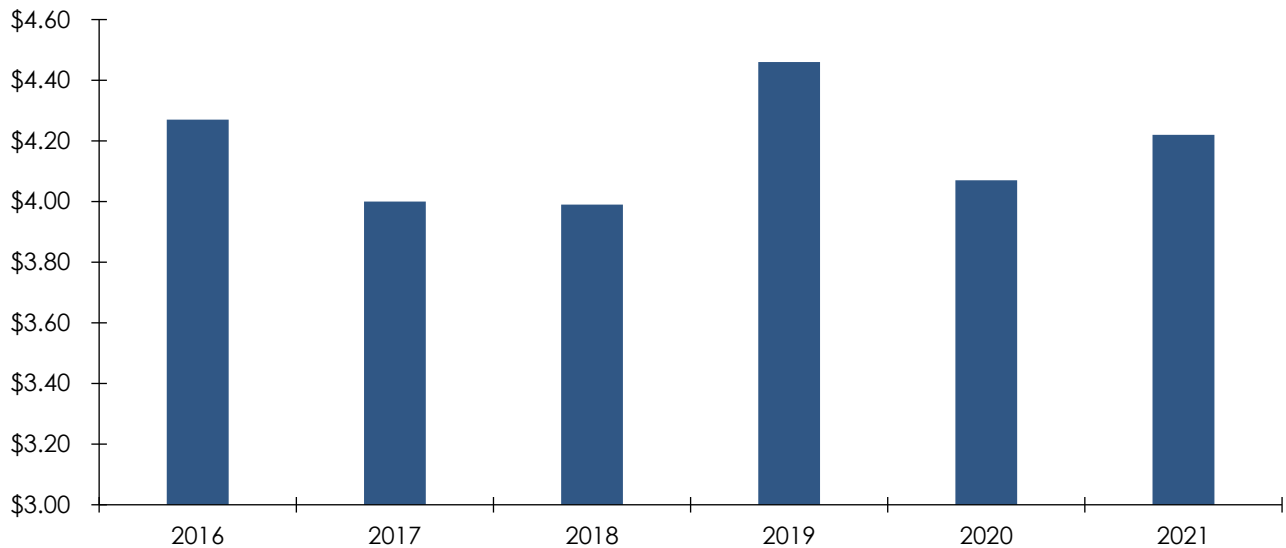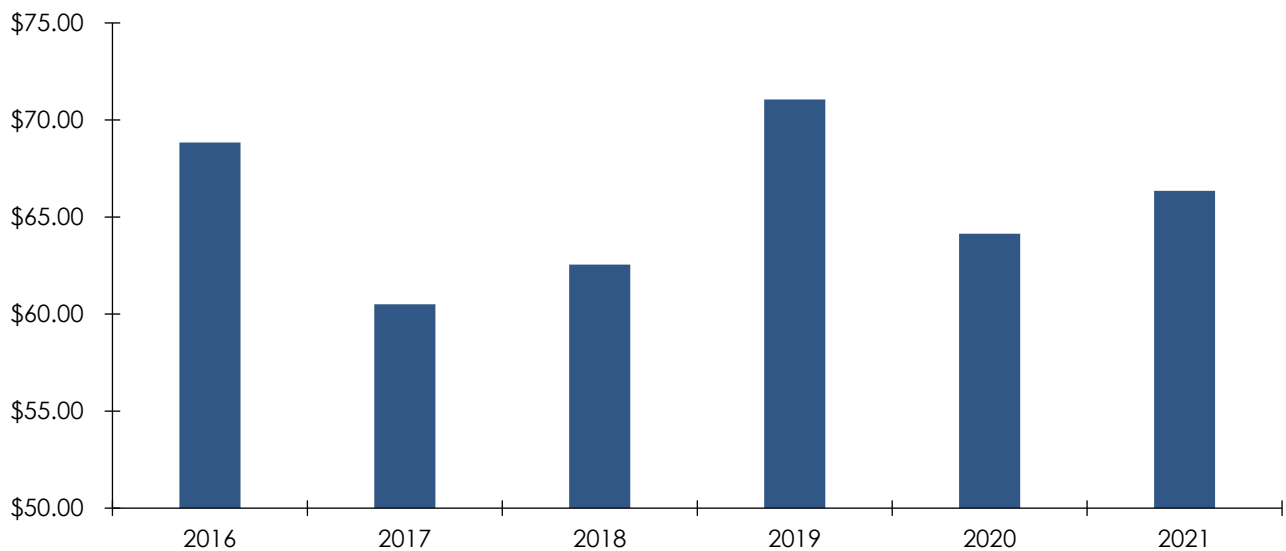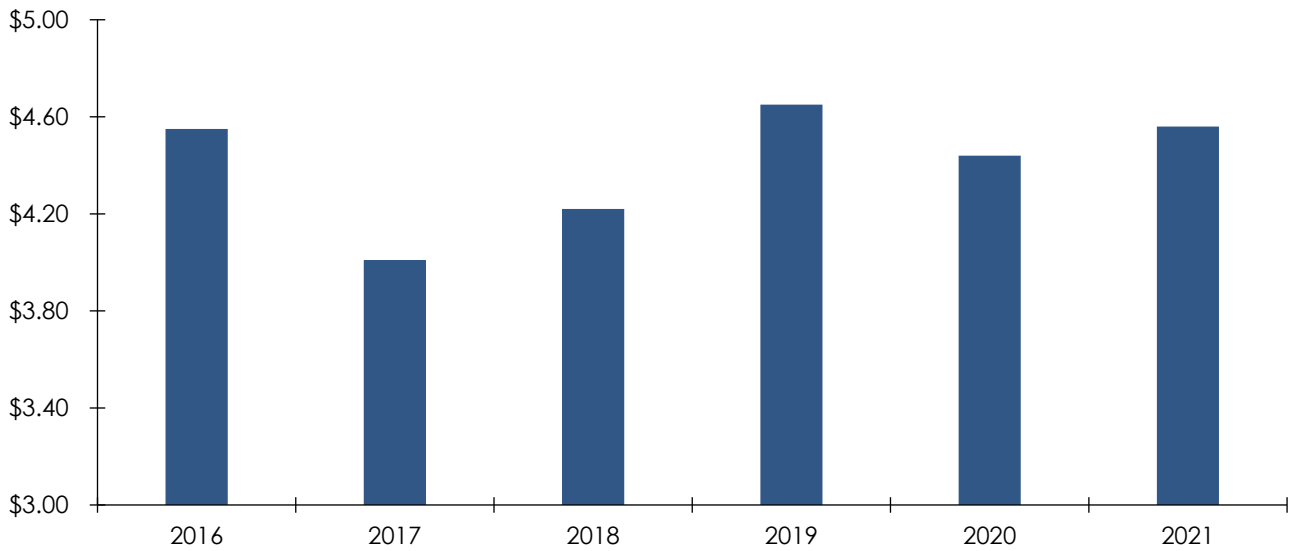

Figure 7   **Downeast Transportation Operating Expenses per Vehicle Revenue Hour (2016–2021)**

Operating expenses per unlinked passenger trip are shown in Figure 8. Between 2016 and 2021, per passenger operating expenses ranged between approximately $4.00 and $4.65. Per passenger operating expenses reached the upper end of this range in 2019, before declining in 2020.

Figure 8   Downeaster Operating Expenses per Unlinked Passenger Trips (2016–2021)

Organizational Management Structure

Management of Downeast Transportation is comprised of:

» Board of Directors

» Executive Director

» Facility/Grounds Manager

» Operations Manager

» Finance Director (outsourced)

Asset Management

Transit asset management is conducted through the Downeast Transportation Comprehensive Asset Management Plan. In 2020, the Downeast Transportation fleet consisted of:

» 62 revenue vehicles

» 2 service vehicles

The Downeast Transportation fleet utilized for maximum service consisted of:

» 6 commuter buses

» 34 flex route buses

Technology Capabilities

Downeast Transportation utilizes the following software in their operations:

» **Asset Management Software:** Fleet Maintenance Pro

» **Computer Aided Dispatch/Automatic Vehicle Location (CAD/AVL):** Avail Technologies includes AVL, passenger counters, voice and text stop annunciators, and real time departure signs.