B. Costs and Charges

1. REVENUES AND COSTS

No analysis of transit costs can be meaningful without consideration of the changes in transit use. Prior to World War II, the peak of transit traffic was reached in 1926. In that year, over 17 billion passengers were carried by all modes of urban mass transit in the United States (table X). Following 1926, changes in our society brought about an increase in the use of private transportation and a corresponding decrease in mass transit ridership. Automobiles became cheaper and more plentiful and roads improved. As urban areas expanded, the private automobile became more useful as a flexible, rapid means of transportation. Between 1935 and 1960, urban population increased about 60 percent, estimated automobile travel in urban areas (in miles) increased by 170 percent, while mass transit rides declined about 25 percent. This trend of decreasing use of mass transit facilities has continued to the present despite a period during World War II when restrictions were placed on the use of the private automobile. The declining volume of passengers was accompanied by a decline in transit operating revenues, as shown in table XI.

Long-Term Trend of Traffic

Table X.—*Total passengers carried on transit lines of the United States*

[In millions]

Year	Electric railways			Trolley coaches	Motor-buses	Total
	Rapid transit	Surface	Total			
1912	1,041	11,109	[1] 12,150	----------	----------	12,150
1920	1,792	13,770	15,562	----------	----------	15,562
1925	2,264	12,924	15,188	----------	1,484	16,672
1926	2,350	12,895	15,245	----------	2,009	17,254
1930	2,559	10,530	13,089	16	2,481	15,586
1935	2,236	7,286	9,522	96	2,625	12,243
1940	2,382	5,951	8,333	542	4,255	13,130
1945	2,698	9,426	12,124	1,298	9,946	23,368
1946	2,835	9,027	11,862	1,354	10,247	23,463
1947	2,756	8,096	10,852	1,398	10,374	22,624
1948	2,606	6,506	9,112	1,558	10,759	21,429
1949	2,346	4,839	7,185	1,691	10,193	19,069
1950	2,264	3,904	6,168	1,686	9,447	17,301
1951	2,189	3,101	5,290	1,658	9,227	16,175
1952	2,124	2,477	4,601	1,666	8,901	15,168
1953	2,040	2,036	4,076	1,587	8,280	13,943
1954	1,912	1,489	3,401	1,387	7,643	12,431
1955	1,870	1,207	3,077	1,223	7,269	11,569
1956	1,880	876	2,756	1,163	7,062	10,981
1957	1,843	679	2,522	1,003	6,903	10,428
1958	1,815	572	2,387	843	6,540	9,770
1959	1,828	521	2,349	749	6,498	9,596
1960	1,850	463	2,313	657	6,425	9,395
1961	1,855	434	2,289	601	5,993	8,883
1962	1,890	393	2,283	547	5,865	8,695
1963	1,836	329	2,165	413	5,822	8,400
1964	1,877	289	2,166	349	5,813	8,328

[1] From U.S. Census of Electrical Industries; remaining figures are American Transit Association estimates.