

NTAS Phase IV Appendix 1: Transit System Interventions Research

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Introduction

Prior to MIT's development of an analytical framework, SFMTA staff researched forms of transit system operational interventions that transit agencies across the United States and Canada took in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the associated conditions of declined transit ridership and general uncertainty and precarity.

SFMTA looked at examples of post-pandemic strategies implemented by these agencies and compared the ridership in the first quarter of 2022 and 2023 (or comparable available ridership data) to look for correlations between interventions and ridership increases. This methodology is not exhaustive and does not account for potential compounding factors and was intended to allow for quick identification of interventions.

General Findings

1. Passenger safety is the main focus of these efforts.
 - a. Hiring more staff to improve safety and customer experience, including fare inspectors, security guards, social workers, and various forms of customer service agents.
 - b. Naming between jobs isn't consistent across agencies, but the tasks these workers complete are largely the same: use increased visibility to deter fare evasion but also provide support to passengers who aren't evading fare.
2. Existing projects opening helped encourage ridership.
 - a. In Seattle and Los Angeles in particular, new lines going to high ridership destinations (Seattle) and/or bridging key corridors (LA) helped drive more ridership.
 - b. These systems have less riders/mile, but more riders in total.
3. Agencies seeing the most recovery are the agencies who move most swiftly to respond to changes in passenger demand.
 - a. Generally, this has been a shift to serving riders not traveling into city centers, so typically cross-town routes that capture non-commute travel.

American Examples

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LA Metro)

Location: Los Angeles, CA and Los Angeles County/Metro Area

LA Metro provides light rail, subway, and bus service to Los Angeles County, and is in the process of significantly expanding Los Angeles' rapid rail network.

Effort Implemented

- Hired +1000 bus operators since Feb 2022
- Fully restored pre-pandemic service in Dec 2022

- +30 miles of bus priority lanes across LA
- +300 Metro Ambassadors to help customers navigate the system
- Multi-layered public safety approach increasing visibility of armed and unarmed security and customer care personnel on the system
- Drug-Free Metro campaign, targeting hotspots, partnering with law enforcement
- Efforts to publicize free fare programs by LA mayor Karen Bass¹
 - LIFE (Low-Income Fare is Easy) program gives free rides & reduced fares to qualifying customers
 - GoPass pilot program gives free transit passes to K-12 and community college students

Impact

- Ridership in June 2023 grew 13.3% from June 2022,² with ridership driven in part by the following special events: Pride Parade, Pride Night at Dodger Stadium, Pride in the Park, and CicLAvia South L.A.
 - Average weekday ridership: 76% of pre-pandemic
 - Average weekend ridership: 91% of pre-pandemic
 - The Regional Connector system expansion (downtown light rail tunnel) opening also drove an opening day use surge (over 100,000 passengers on the new lines on opening day), with a 26% increase in ridership
- Ridership in July 2023 grew 15% from July 2022,³ with ridership driven in part by the following special events: Anime Expo (A Line), NoHo Summer Nights (B Line), Riverfest (A Line), Rock the Block (K Line), and a soccer match-up between the LA Galaxy and LAFC at the Rose Bowl (A Line)
 - Average weekday ridership: 72% of pre-pandemic
 - Average weekend ridership: 88% of pre-pandemic

Outcome

With service restored to pre-pandemic levels and a system expansion project opening, LA Metro has seen transit ridership grow year-over-year.

New Jersey Transit

Location: New Jersey, state-wide

New Jersey Transit provides regional rail, light rail, commuter bus, and local bus service across the entire state of New Jersey.

Effort Implemented:

- Ride to Recovery: NJ Transit's COVID-19 Response & Path Forward plan put into effect during the pandemic⁴

¹ Tracy Smith, "L.A. METRO'S JULY RIDERSHIP GROWTH FUELED BY NEW A, E LINES," LA Metro, August 28, 2023, <https://www.metro.net/about/l-a-metros-july-ridership-growth-fueled-by-new-a-e-lines/>.

² Tracy Smith, "L.A. METRO CONTINUES TO INCREASE RIDERSHIP WITH WEEKEND RIDERS DRIVING GROWTH," LA Metro, July 25, 2023, <https://www.metro.net/about/metro-increased-ridership/>.

³ Smith, "L.A. METRO'S JULY RIDERSHIP GROWTH FUELED BY NEW A, E LINES."

⁴ Toni Medina, "NJ TRANSIT: Your Ride To Recovery," NJ TRANSIT, accessed September 12, 2023, <https://www.njtransit.com>.

- Implemented a 10-year strategic plan⁵

Impact:

- Return to 80% of pre-pandemic ridership in March 2023⁶
- FY2022 vs. FY2019 On-Time Performance:
 - Rail improved from 90.0% in FY19 to 92.5% in FY22.⁷
 - Bus improved from 91.3% in FY19 to 95.0% in FY22.⁸
 - Light Rail maintained 96.3% in FY21.⁹
- Rail cancellations down 13% in FY22 vs. FY19.¹⁰

Outcome:

NJ Transit received the 2023 Outstanding System Award from the American Public Transportation Association (APTA).

Central Puget Sound Regional Transit (Sound Transit)

Location: Seattle, WA

Sound Transit manages the Link Light Rail, the Sounder commuter rail, and the Sound Transit Express Bus Network, and is currently constructing significant expansions to the region's light rail network.

Effort Implemented:

- Pilot program dispatching station agents at the busiest stations on the system¹¹
- Increase of service levels in 2021 to increase capacity (move from 12 min peak, 15 min off peak, 30 mins late night headways to 8 min peak, 10 min off peak, 15 late night headways)¹²
- Northgate Extension (3 new stations at U District, Roosevelt, and Northgate)
- Adoption of the Transit Development Plan 2023-2028¹³
- Greater emphasis on cleaning stations and improving access to wastebaskets¹⁴

⁵ "NJ Transit 2030: A 10-Year Strategic Plan," June 2020.

⁶ "New Jersey Transit Corporation - Track the Public Transit Recovery," accessed September 12, 2023, <https://transitrecovery.com/agency/?id=20080>.

⁷ Toni Medina, "NJ TRANSIT Performance Dashboard - Rail," NJ TRANSIT, accessed September 12, 2023, <https://www.njtransit.com>.

⁸ "CTA Continues Partnership with University of Chicago to Provide Bus Service," CTA, accessed September 11, 2023, <https://www.transitchicago.com/cta-continues-partnership-with-university-of-chicago-to-provide-bus-service/>.

⁹ Toni Medina, "NJ TRANSIT ON-TIME PERFORMANCE - LIGHT RAIL," NJ TRANSIT, accessed September 12, 2023, <https://www.njtransit.com>.

¹⁰ Medina, "NJ TRANSIT Performance Dashboard - Rail."

¹¹ "Improving the Rider Experience in 2023 | Sound Transit," accessed September 12, 2023, <https://www.soundtransit.org/blog/platform/improving-rider-experience-2023>.

¹² "Link Light Rail to Increase Frequency Starting June 12 | Sound Transit," accessed September 12, 2023, <https://www.soundtransit.org/get-to-know-us/news-events/news-releases/link-light-rail-to-increase-frequency-starting-june-12>.

¹³ Sound Transit, "Transit Development Plan 2023-2028 and 2022 Annual Report," August 3, 2023.

¹⁴ *Improving the Passenger Experience in 2023*, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_8Lj6aizNY.

Impact:

- Link Line 1 ridership in June exceeded 2019's top month
 - 2.30M system riders in July/August 2019
 - 2.36M system riders in June 2023

Outcome:

Opening of an existing system expansion project to Northgate that reaches dense areas and serves key demographics (University of Washington campus and surrounding area) drove strong ridership recovery.

Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART)

Location: Tampa, FL

Tampa's TECO streetcar system consists of a single 2.7-mile-long streetcar line running historic streetcars that focuses on serving tourists and special events.

Effort Implemented:

- Long-term development efforts along the streetcar corridor in Downtown
- Return of Tourism to Tampa in 2022-2023
- Major events such as the Tampa Bay Lightning playoff in June 2022¹⁵
- TECO has been free to ride since 2018¹⁶ and continues to be fare-free¹⁷
- Transit Development Plan introduced by HART in Tampa, strategic guide for improving public transit over the next decade¹⁸

Impact:

- Rail ridership recovery: 25% increase in 2022 over 2019 ridership¹⁹
- Larger increases in 2023, July 2023 all-time record breaking²⁰

Outcome:

High ridership and operational success have inspired long term plans to expand the system an additional 1.3 miles and modernization of the stations and rolling stock²¹

¹⁵ "TECO Line Streetcar Sees Record Ridership," accessed September 11, 2023, <https://baynews9.com/fl/tampa/news/2022/07/07/teco-line-streetcar-sees-record-ridership>.

¹⁶ Andrew Harlan, "Tampa Streetcar on Track to Surpass One Million Riders in 2022," *That's So Tampa* (blog), August 8, 2022, <https://thatsotampa.com/tampa-streetcar-ridership-2022/>.

¹⁷ "TECO Streetcar," accessed September 11, 2023, <http://www.tecolinestreetcar.org/howtoride.html>.

¹⁸ "About Transit Development Plan | HART," accessed September 11, 2023, <https://www.gohart.org/pages/about-transit-dev-plan.aspx>.

¹⁹ Abubakr Ziedan, Candace Brakewood, and Kari Watkins, "Will Transit Recover? A Retrospective Study of Nationwide Ridership in the United States during the COVID-19 Pandemic," *Journal of Public Transportation* 25 (2023): 100046, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubtr.2023.100046>.

²⁰ Andrew Harlan, "Tampa Streetcar Has Biggest Month in Modern History in July," *That's So Tampa* (blog), August 10, 2023, <https://thatsotampa.com/tampa-streetcar-ridership-record-july/>.

²¹ "InVision: Tampa Streetcar," City of Tampa, September 13, 2016, <https://www.tampa.gov/mobility/transportation/projects/streetcar>.

Tucson Transit Management LLC (Sun Tran)

Location: Tucson, AZ.

Sun Trans offers streetcar (a single 3.9-mile line), local bus, and express bus service to the Tucson area, and has provided fare-free service since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Effort Implemented:

Fare-free rides implemented on all transit lines and modes (bus, streetcar, paratransit) during the COVID-19 Pandemic.²²

- The Mayor and Council of Tucson have directed that fares remain free on the Sun Link, as well as on the Sun Tran, Sun Van, Sun On Demand, Sun Express and Sun Shuttle²³
- Funding comes from the City Council approving extensions of temporary funding year by year, and the City Council is creating a stakeholder group to secure long-term funding in an effort to make the fare-free network permanent.²⁴

Impact:

- Dramatic increase in ridership compared to pre-pandemic (+3% in 2021, +61% in 2022).²⁵

Outcome:

Strong ridership growth and efforts by Tucson's City Council to provide long-term funding for fare-free service indicates general popularity and success for Tucson's fare and payment intervention.

Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)

Location: Chicago, IL

CTA provides 'L' metro rail and local bus services to Chicago and the surrounding metro area.

Effort Implemented:

- The "Open Chicago" initiative to reopen the city and restart events, festivals, dining, and other activities reduced prices on 3 existing unlimited ride pass products in the summer of 2021.²⁶
- Free rides for K-12 on first day of school 2023²⁷
- Free CTA rides after games on Sunday 9/10 thanks to a partnership with Molson Coors, available between 6:30 to 9:30pm²⁸

²² Jake Steinberg, "Sun Tran Regains Riders, but Faces an Uncertain Future," accessed August 9, 2024, <https://news.azpm.org/p/newsfeature/2020/8/7/178152-sun-tran-regains-riders-but-faces-an-uncertain-future/>.

²³ "Sun Link Streetcar," Sun Tran, accessed September 11, 2023, <https://www.suntran.com/how-to-ride/sun-link-streetcar/>.

²⁴ "Sun Tran Fares Will Be Free through December 31st, 2023," KGUN 9 Tucson News, May 11, 2023, <https://www.kgun9.com/news/local-news/sun-tran-fares-will-be-free-through-december-31st-2023>.

²⁵ Ziedan, Brakewood, and Watkins, "Will Transit Recover?"

²⁶ "More Fun, Less Fare!," CTA, accessed August 9, 2024, <https://www.transitchicago.com/summer-2021-passes/>.

²⁷ "CTA Offers K-12 Students Free Rides on First Day of School," CTA, accessed September 11, 2023, <https://www.transitchicago.com/cta-offers-k-12-students-free-rides-on-first-day-of-school/>.

²⁸ "Everyone Wins with Free CTA Rides After Sunday's Bears Game," CTA, accessed September 11, 2023, <https://www.transitchicago.com/everyone-wins-with-free-cta-rides-after-sundays-bears-game/>.

- CTA continues 5 more years of a partnership with the University of Chicago where the school fully subsidizes service on 3 bus routes²⁹
- Chicago's "Meeting the Moment" plan³⁰ included clear pillars for an action plan: Deliver reliable and consistent service, enhance safety and security for riders, improve the customer experience at system facilities, upgrade digital tools to improve rider communication, and invest in employees.
- Changes to hiring process: bus operators can now be hired directly to full-time instead of starting part-time as they have in the past, commercial driver's license is no longer required to apply to the jobs (training for a CDL learner's permit is included in training), \$1000 hiring bonus + 6-month retention bonus through dec 2023 (about 2 year long program)

Impact:

- Comparing Q1 (January-March) ridership in 2023 to 2022, bus ridership grew by 12% and rail ridership grew by 11%, collectively reaching 58% of 2019 ridership³¹
- 2022 grew 25% year-over-year from 2021,³² reaching 53% of 2019 ridership levels.
- 300 part-time bus operators transition to FTE faster than possible before changes

Outcome:

Chicago's system ridership still lags significantly behind pre-pandemic levels, but continued growth year over year indicates that these programs contribute to long-term system recovery.

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

Location: Washington, D.C.

WMATA provides regional metro, local bus, and regional bus services to the Washington D.C. metro area.

Effort Implemented:

- WMATA adopted a COVID-19 Recovery Plan in May of 2020, focusing on safety and providing a blueprint for eventually ramping up service.³³
- WMATA adopted a frequent bus service network in September of 2021, providing increases to 12-minute headways on 20 lines and increases to 20-minute headways on 16 lines.³⁴

²⁹ "CTA Continues Partnership with University of Chicago to Provide Bus Service."

³⁰ "Meeting the Moment: Transforming CTA's Post-Pandemic Future," CTA, accessed September 11, 2023, <https://www.transitchicago.com/meetingthemoment/>.

³¹ Chicago Transit Authority, "Monthly Ridership Report: March 2023," April 11, 2023.

³² "CTA Ridership up 24% in 2022, but Still Far behind Pre-Pandemic - CBS Chicago," March 22, 2023, <https://www.cbsnews.com/chicago/news/cta-ridership-2022-covid-19-pandemic/>.

³³ "WMATA | Metro's Gradual Recovery Plan Promotes Safety First, While Ramping up Regional Mobility," WMATA, accessed August 16, 2024, <https://wmata.com/about/news/covid-19-gradual-recovery-plan.cfm>.

³⁴ "WMATA | Improved Frequency and Changes to Metrobus Service Begin Sunday, Sept. 5, 2021," WMATA, accessed August 16, 2024, <https://wmata.com/service/status/details/metrobus-service-changes-september-2021.cfm>.

- WMATA launched a marketing campaign in October of 2022 designed to deter fare evasion, informing passengers of civil penalties for fare evasion that would begin in November 2022.³⁵
- In February of 2022, WMATA offered a signing bonus to induce interest for open bus operator positions and launched a marketing campaign to inform the public.³⁶

Impact:

- In June 2023, WMATA revealed a ‘doomsday budget’ for a scenario where exhausted pandemic relief aid is not compensated with another funding source, leading to a projected \$750 million annual operating deficit in FY 2024.³⁷
- As of June 2024, WMATA’s system-wide ridership has recovered to 85% of 2019 levels.³⁸

Outcome:

WMATA’s aggressive investment in service reintroduction and expansion has resulted in the highest post-pandemic system-wide recovery figure of any major American metro area, but comes at an expensive cost which will need additional external funding to continue providing current service levels.

San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA)

Location: San Francisco, CA

SFMTA’s transit division Muni provides local and rapid bus and light rail rapid transit services as well as historic streetcar and cable car service to San Francisco.

Effort Implemented:

- Muni’s Transportation Recovery Plan was developed and implemented early in the pandemic, split into providing service on a core critical network starting in April 2020, data-driven and equity-focused increases in service, and implementing temporary transit only lanes.³⁹
- Muni’s 2022 Muni Service Network Plan was developed with community feedback and prioritized maximizing available staffing and resources, adapting to changes in travel demand, and serving Muni Service Equity Strategy neighborhoods.⁴⁰

³⁵ “WMATA | Metro to Launch Warning Campaign Aimed at Deterring Fare Evasion,” WMATA, accessed August 16, 2024, <https://wmata.com/about/news/Fare-evasion-campaign.cfm>.

³⁶ “WMATA | Metro Launches Campaign to Hire Bus Drivers Including Signing Bonus,” WMATA, accessed August 16, 2024, <https://wmata.com/about/news/Metro-bus-operator-hiring-incentive.cfm>.

³⁷ “WMATA Reveals Plans for ‘Fiscal Cliff’ Doomsday Budget One Year From Now,” *The Eno Center for Transportation* (blog), July 25, 2024, <https://enotrans.org/article/wmata-reveals-plans-for-fiscal-cliff-doomsday-budget-one-year-from-now/>.

³⁸ Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, “Metro Ridership Snapshot - June 2024,” June 2024, 9, <https://www.wmata.com/initiatives/ridership-portal/upload/June-2024-Ridership-Snapshot.pdf>.

³⁹ Kate McCarthy, “Transportation Recovery Plan | SFMTA,” accessed August 13, 2024, <https://www.sfmta.com/projects/transportation-recovery-plan>.

⁴⁰ Kate McCarthy, “2022 Muni Service Network | SFMTA,” accessed August 12, 2024, <https://www.sfmta.com/projects/2022-muni-service-network>.

- The Muni Moves You campaign welcomed riders back to Muni in May of 2022 as San Francisco recovered from the pandemic, with a focus on the many reasons to take transit and the many destinations and activities that Muni can take riders to.⁴¹

Impact:

- System-wide recovery reached 71% in 2023, and some cross-town routes like the 22 Fillmore have reached 138% ridership recovery (6.5 million total trips) in 2023 compared to the 2019 baseline⁴²
- 72% of Muni riders rated service as good or excellent in a 2024 survey⁴³
- Decreased travel times on completed Muni Forward projects such as a 35% travel time reduction along the Van Ness BRT corridor⁴⁴

Outcome:

Through a combination of service improvement efforts and a community-centric approach to immediate pandemic response, SFMTA has been able to recover more ridership than other Bay Area transit systems and continues to show signs of year-over-year ridership growth and customer satisfaction.

Canadian Examples

Edmonton Transit Service (ETS)

Location: Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

ETS operates bus and light rail transit services in Edmonton and the surrounding region.

Effort Implemented:

- In 2021, ETS implemented a Bus Network Redesign⁴⁵ which identified 5 types of bus service to provide: Crosstown (connect suburban destinations without a trip downtown), Frequent (headways of 15 minutes or better), Community (connect seniors' residences with nearby services), Local (provide neighborhood connections), and Rapid (express routes with limited stops that connect suburbs to downtown), as well as providing more On Demand Transit Services⁴⁶

⁴¹ Jeanne Brophy, "Muni Moves You! | SFMTA," accessed August 13, 2024, <https://www.sfmta.com/blog/muni-moves-you>.

⁴² Edward Wright, "Last Year Made It Clear: Muni Is Back, and Better | SFMTA," accessed August 13, 2024, <https://www.sfmta.com/blog/last-year-made-it-clear-muni-back-and-better>.

⁴³ "San Francisco's Muni Receives Highest Customer Rating in Over 20 Years | San Francisco," accessed August 13, 2024, <https://www.sf.gov/news/san-franciscos-muni-receives-highest-customer-rating-over-20-years>.

⁴⁴ By Ricardo Cano, "One Month after Its Debut, This Is How S.F.'s Van Ness BRT Is Performing," San Francisco Chronicle, April 28, 2022, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/sf/article/sf-van-ness-17134051.php>.

⁴⁵ "Bus Network Redesign | City of Edmonton," accessed September 13, 2023, https://www.edmonton.ca/projects_plans/transit/bus-network-redesign.

⁴⁶ Mischa Wanek-Libman, "Edmonton Transit Service Launches New Transit Options," Mass Transit, April 26, 2021, <https://www.masstransitmag.com/bus/article/21219985/edmonton-transit-service-launches-new-transit-options>.

- ETS' 2022 Annual Report⁴⁷ identifies plans to expand on-demand services to neighborhoods who want it, as well as an increased focus on providing special mass transit service on event days⁴⁸

Impact:

- From Q1 (January-March) of 2022 to Q1 of 2023, bus ridership grew by 45% and light rail ridership grew by 45%.²²

Outcome:

Identifying passenger needs and iterating to changes on a swift timeline helped ETS reprioritize efforts and service to where and when it was needed and wanted, helping rebound ridership. ETS' focus on crosstown routes serving passengers not traveling into and out of city centers and on responding to requests for increased on-demand services also helped encourage strong ridership recovery.

Toronto Transit Commission (TTC)

Location: Toronto, Ontario, Canada

TTC operates bus, streetcar, and subway transit services in Toronto and the surrounding region.

Effort Implemented:

- Safe TTC App⁴⁹ available for customers to report harassment, safety concerns, or other suspicious activity
- Increase in subway service to respond to a ridership increase⁵⁰
- A fare increase of 10 cents for standard PRESTO and single rides while freezing fares for seniors, Fair Pass program users, and PRESTO monthly/annual passholders⁵¹ (in January 2023)
- \$4M invested into safety, security, cleanliness, and hiring 10 Street to Homes outreach workers, 25 Transit Special Constables, and 25 other vacant positions
- \$3M to service improvements, including a focus on neighborhood improvement areas and policy changes to include 50,000 more lower income people to Fair Pass Program

Impact:

- TTC subway saw a 58% YOY increase in 2023 Q1 ridership compared to 2022 Q1⁵²

⁴⁷ Edmonton City Operations, "2022-2023-Edmonton-Transit-Service-Annual-Service-Plan.Pdf," March 2022.

⁴⁸ Edmonton City Operations, 17.

⁴⁹ "Safe TTC App," accessed September 12, 2023, <https://www.ttc.ca/riding-the-ttc/safety-and-security/safe-ttc-app>.

⁵⁰ "TTC Increasing Service as More Customers Return to Transit," accessed September 12, 2023, <https://www.ttc.ca/news/2023/August/TTC-increasing-service-as-more-customers-return-to-transit>.

⁵¹ "TTC's 2023 Budget Invests in Safety and Cleanliness While Maintaining Fares for Key Groups," accessed September 13, 2023, <https://www.ttc.ca/news/2023/January/TTC-2023-budget-invests-in-safety-and-cleanliness-while-maintaining-fares-for-key-groups>.

⁵² David Kahana, "PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION RIDERSHIP REPORT: First Quarter 2023," May 30, 2023.

- 20% drop in safety incidents after implementation of increased security⁵³

Outcome:

TTC's measures of service increases and safety improvements demonstrate an effective approach to recovering trust and ridership in a transit system.

Calgary Transit

Location: Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Calgary Transit provides local bus, Bus Rapid Transit, and Light Rail transit service in Calgary and the surrounding region.

Effort Implemented:

- Safety Improvements⁵⁴
 - 25% increase in Transit Peace Officers (14 new officers deployed in Feb 2023, +14 more in May)
 - 14 Station Safety Guards deployed in Oct 2022, +17 hired in May 2023
 - Transit Ambassador teams (20 ambassadors employed)
 - 1600 CCTV cameras deployed on the CTrain system monitored 24/7 by security agents in the Operations Control Centre
 - Calgary Transit Watch service,⁵⁵ accessible by text or phone/buttons on Ctrains to immediately report safety concerns while riding transit
- Calgary Transit's Community Outreach Team - Partnership with the Downtown Outreach Addiction Partnership (DOAP) team from ALPHA house and the Transit Peace Officers
- Hired 400 more bus operators and planning to hire an additional 400 throughout 2023⁵⁶
- Efforts to encourage off-peak ridership: a weekend group day pass, encouraging more weekend use of transit for recreational activities, includes up to 2 adults (18+) and 5 youth (13-17),⁵⁷ and a free fare program for youth 12 and under⁵⁸

Impact:

- Calgary Transit saw a 74% increase in ridership from Q1 2022 to Q1 2023, with a 100% increase in Light Rail ridership and a 39% increase in bus ridership⁵⁹

⁵³ "TTC Sees Fewer Safety Incidents after Beefing up Security: Report," CP24, April 10, 2023, <https://www.cp24.com/news/ttc-sees-fewer-safety-incidents-after-beefing-up-security-report-1.6348753?cache=yes>.

⁵⁴ Calgary Transit, "Safety on Transit," accessed September 13, 2023, <https://www.calgarytransit.com/content/transit/en/home/rider-information/safety-on-transit.html>.

⁵⁵ Calgary Transit, "Transit Watch - Text Service," accessed September 13, 2023, <https://www.calgarytransit.com/content/transit/en/home/rider-information/safety-on-transit/transitwatch-program.html>.

⁵⁶ "Calgary Transit Is on the Road to Recovery," Calgary Transit is on the road to recovery, accessed September 13, 2023, <https://newsroom.calgary.ca/calgary-transit-is-on-the-road-to-recovery/>.

⁵⁷ "Calgary Transit Is on the Road to Recovery."

⁵⁸ Calgary Transit, "Fares & Passes," accessed September 13, 2023, <https://www.calgarytransit.com/content/transit/en/home/fares---passes.html>.

⁵⁹ Kahana, "PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION RIDERSHIP REPORT: First Quarter 2023."

- Ridership reached 70% of pre-pandemic levels of bus boardings and up to 100% of pre-pandemic levels of CTrain (light rail)⁶⁰

Outcome:

Calgary's comprehensive approach of increasing staffing for both vehicle operators and system support staff, introducing creative, equitable, and enforceable fare programs, and improving system security has been effective in pushing system and ridership recovery.

South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority (TransLink)

Location: Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

TransLink provides bus, automated metro (SkyTrain), commuter rail, and ferry transit service to Vancouver and the greater Vancouver region.

Effort Implemented:

- 2022-2027 Customer Experience Action Plan⁶¹ introduces 5 priority areas for next 5 years:
 - More Personalized: Transit Volunteer Program, Dynamic Schedules, Contactless Debit Payment (Open Loop), Incentive & Rewards program for frequent transit users, Compass Modernization & Wearables, Improved Text alerts⁶²
 - Easier to Use: PA/Station Voice replacement, Onboard Information Displays, Special Season buses, Online booking for HandyDART, +50 vans to an existing vanpool program, Multimodal hubs, Expand Bus passenger information Displays on bus stops, Open Loop/Compass modernization allows for fare integration with other modes, Updated Wayfinding to include multiple languages⁶³
 - Timely & Reliable: Bus Fleet expansion, Enterprise Asset Management System, Add more RapidBus service⁶⁴
 - Safe & Pleasant: Enhanced Art & Culture, Bus Facilities Customer Amenities Program, Bus Shelter Improvement program, Cleaning & maintenance Hotline/QR Codes – customer reporting of needed cleaning or maintenance attention, Community Safety Officers, new tier of transit police for visibility and customer engagement, SkyTrain Fleet Upgrade, Wifi on Transit⁶⁵
 - A Better Reason to Ride: Electrification of fleet (ongoing), Climate Action Strategy, Indigenous Culture Recognition Policy, Carbon Footprint Calculator, Low Carbon Fleet Strategy⁶⁶

Impact:

⁶⁰ "Calgary Transit Is on the Road to Recovery."

⁶¹ TransLink, "TransLink's 2022-2027 Customer Experience Action Plan," March 2022.

⁶² TransLink, 20.

⁶³ TransLink, 22.

⁶⁴ TransLink, 24.

⁶⁵ TransLink, 26.

⁶⁶ TransLink, 28.

- TransLink ridership reached 80% of pre-pandemic ridership by the end of 2022⁶⁷
- Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority saw a 36% YOY increase in ridership from Q1 2022 to Q1 2023, with a 34% increase in bus ridership, a 39% increase in SkyTrain ridership, a 79% increase in West Coast Express commuter rail ridership, and a 43% increase in Ferry boat ridership⁶⁸

Outcome:

The large scope of Vancouver’s action plans, coupled with a focus on the customer experience and responding to the changing demands of their user base, has allowed the agency to make significant gains in recovering pre-pandemic ridership.

Société de transport de Montréal (STM)

Location: Montréal, Quebec, Canada

STM provides local bus, Bus Rapid Transit, and subway transit service to Montréal.

Effort Implemented:

- STM Increased bus service on key routes, including the 18-Beaubien (cross-town), the 24-Sherbrooke (downtown-serving), the 196-Parc-Industriel-Lachine (cross-town), and the 211-Bord-du-Lac (cross-town/suburban)⁶⁹
- STM launched the “Let’s reconnect” campaign launched in March of 2022, lasting for 8 weeks to promote STM and remind customers of public transit’s potential to reconnect them with their pre-pandemic routines⁷⁰

Impact:

- Montreal Metro ridership saw a 51% increase during Q1 2023 YOY to Q1 of 2022
- In 2022, a 43.2% increase in ridership compared to 2021, reaching 70% of pre-pandemic ridership

Outcome:

A shift of bus service to prioritize lines which serve areas beyond Downtown Montreal have most likely helped increase ridership, and STM continues to record and respond to the demands of their user base.

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