

MASS TRANSIT

BEST PRACTICES FOR INTEGRATED MOBILITY

MOBILITY OUTLOOK 2024

This annual survey aims to gain an overview of what is on the horizon for budgets, procurement, as well as general sentiment about the year. PAGE 12

OUTREACH

Community
Feedback Key
to Increasing
Ridership

PAGE 20

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2024 Mobility Outlook

ANNUAL SPECIAL REPORT

This annual survey aims to gain an overview of what is ahead by asking subscribers about budgets, procurement, as well as their general sentiment about the year.

On the cover: 1479214800 | jamesteohart | Getty Images



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Five transit trends to watch in 2024

Mass Transit's editors believe these five topics will bring new challenges, opportunities and generate discussion among transit industry peers.

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Community feedback key to increasing transit ridership

TransLink, Community Transit and VCTC have seen positive results from campaigns surrounding community outreach as the agencies have seen a steady increase in ridership during the past two years.

24 What three agencies are doing to build awareness of human trafficking

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28 SFMTA's Fix It Week shows agency's commitment to infrastructure

The goal of SFMTA's Fix It Week is to take seven to 10 days once a quarter and focus on completing many projects at once instead of constantly delaying service for repairs.

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ONLINE EXCLUSIVES



Navigating the zero-emissions landscape: A comparative analysis of battery-electric and hydrogen fuel-cell buses

▶ As transit agencies continue to transition to zero-emission fleets, the two primary technologies, battery-electric and hydrogen-fuel-cell buses, pose a range of challenges and opportunities for transit agencies deciding between them. [MassTransitmag.com/53095127](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53095127)

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CDC report finds 5.7 percent of adults lacked reliable transportation

The analysis notes the lack of access to reliable transportation can lead to reduced access to health care.

A recent report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shares the percentage of adults in the U.S. who lack access to reliable transportation for daily living. CDC used data from the 2022 National Health Interview Survey to determine who lacked access to transportation and where they lived.

The CDC's analysis found in 2022, 5.7 percent of adults lacked reliable transportation for daily living in the past 12 months. A lack of reliable transportation was more likely to impact women (6.1 percent) than men (5.3 percent). The analysis also found as age increased, the percentage of adults who lacked reliable transportation decreased, from seven percent among adults ages 18–34 to 4.5 percent among adults ages 65 and older.

CDC found adults living in the West North Central region of the United States, which includes the states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska, were more likely to lack reliable transportation (7.5 percent) than the national average of 5.7 percent while adults in New England were less likely at 4.1 percent.

Another factor was education and income. The analysis found as education and income levels increase, there was a decrease in the level of adults who lacked access to reliable transportation.

The analysis also broke down which populations were more likely to be impacted. American Indian and Alaska Native non-Hispanic adults were more likely to lack reliable transportation for daily living in the past 12 months (17.1 percent) compared with Asian non-Hispanic (3.6 percent), White non-Hispanic (4.8 percent), Hispanic (6.9 percent) and Other or multiple-race non-Hispanic (7.6 percent) adults.

Lack of access to transportation can mean a lack of access to employment opportunities and basic needs. CDC noted in its analysis that “previous research suggests that a lack of transportation, especially among adults who are older, uninsured and have lower incomes, leads to reduced access to health care, which may then lead to adverse health outcomes.”

Elsewhere on its website, CDC notes that “rural Americans are more likely to die from heart disease, cancer, unintentional injury, chronic lower respiratory disease and stroke than their urban counterparts.”

While the analysis did not editorialize greater meaning beyond the data, it does shine a spotlight on the vital role rural and tribal transit systems play in mobility – both geographic and economic. A 2014 U.S. Government Accountability Office analysis found federal support for these programs was essential to their continuing operation. The report also determined without federal support, rural and tribal transit operators would be required to reduce or eliminate services.

As we start an election year, advocacy efforts for the transit industry will increase. Please make sure the value rural and tribal systems bring to their communities is shared with elected officials at every level of government. These systems are lifelines and, based on the CDC analysis linking transportation access to healthcare access, this is a literal statement.

“Lack of access to transportation can mean a lack of access to employment opportunities and basic needs.”

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Mischa Wanek-Libman

Mischa Wanek-Libman,
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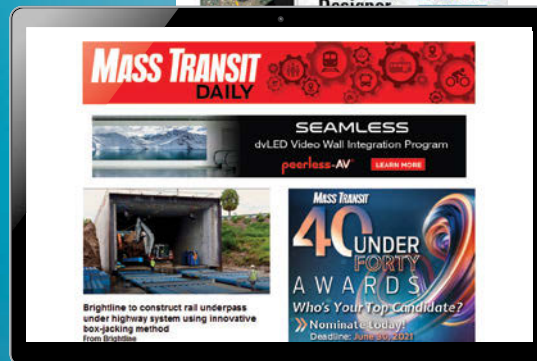


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MASS TRANSIT

BEST PRACTICES FOR INTEGRATED MOBILITY

People & Places



Valley Metro celebrates the opening of the Northwest Phase II extension.

Photo: Valley Metro

Valley Metro celebrates opening of Northwest Phase II extension

Valley Metro celebrated the opening of the Northwest Phase II extension of light rail in Phoenix, Ariz., on Jan. 27. The project includes a series of “firsts” for Valley Metro, including the first elevated station, rail-only bridge over I-17 and a multi-modal transit center named after regional transit champion, former Phoenix Mayor and Councilmember Thelda Williams. The 1.6-mile light-rail extension includes three stations and, with its crossing over I-17, the project gives greater transit access to the West Valley, connecting current and future riders with opportunities in central Phoenix, Tempe and Mesa. The extension was funded through the Federal Transit Administration’s Capital Investment Grants program, as well as with city of Phoenix T2050 funds and regional transportation funds from Proposition 400.

[MassTransitmag.com/53083895](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53083895)



BART’s Fleet of the Future project is estimated to come in under budget.

Photo: BART

BART Fleet of the Future project to come in \$394 million under budget

► Bay Area Rapid Transit’s (BART) Fleet of the Future project is expected to come in \$394 million under budget. A revised schedule and an accelerated monthly delivery rate of the new rail cars is what led to the project

coming in under budget. The original contract awarded for 775 cars in 2012 forecast a project cost of \$2.58 billion but an October 2023 financial update lowered the forecast by 15 percent to \$2.19 billion. The original delivery schedule called for the delivery of 10 cars per month. This was increased to 16 cars per month after BART worked with the manufacturer of the cars, Alstom, resulting in savings of more than \$100 million.

[MassTransitmag.com/53082448](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53082448)



Pace’s first battery-electric bus.

Photo: Pace Suburban Bus

Pace, Broward County Transit debut electric buses

► Pace Suburban Bus introduced the agency’s inaugural battery-electric bus while Broward County Transit (BCT) cut the ribbon on its inaugural electric express coach bus. Pace’s Gillig bus is operating on Route 381 95th St., serving riders in the southwest suburbs, including Evergreen Park, Oak Lawn, Chicago Ridge, Bridgeview, Hickory Hills, and Palos Hills, Ill., and providing connections between the Chicago Transit Authority’s Red Line and Moraine Valley College. BCT’s electric coach bus began service on Jan. 22, transporting riders between Broward and Miami-Dade County, Fla. The bus, which is in partnership with the Florida Department of Transportation, can seat up to 54 passengers, provides free Wi-Fi and is estimated to travel up to 230 miles per charge.

[MassTransitmag.com/53083145](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53083145)

Caltrain completes 1,000 miles of testing on three electric trains

► Caltrain has completed 1,000 miles of testing along its corridor on three



Caltrain has completed 1,000 miles of testing along its corridor on three of its eventual 23 electric train sets.

Photo: Caltrain

of its eventual 23 electric train sets. The entirety of the new fleet must meet all safety and quality standards prior to the launch of electrified service in fall 2024. The 1,000-mile testing process is required to ensure all safety and quality standards are met to ensure the trains can safely operate on Caltrain's tracks. The trainsets will continue to undergo additional testing before they can be deemed ready for passenger service in 2024. Caltrain currently has six train sets on property, with the remainder expected to arrive from the Stadler U.S. manufacturing facility in Utah during the next year.

[MassTransitmag.com/53082034](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53082034)

Metra adopts Passenger Code of Conduct, set to permanently allow bikes on trains Feb. 1

► On Jan. 17, Metra adopted a Passenger Code of Conduct and made permanent a COVID-era policy that allows bikes on all trains. The Passenger Code of Conduct identifies prohibited behaviors for anyone using Metra facilities or trains and allows for the suspension of riding privileges and/or confiscation of the fare media of passengers whose behavior threatens the safety of train crews, other employees and fellow riders. The creation of the new bike policy and installation of new racks was aided by bicycle advocates who lobbied the Metra Board of Directors, contributed to a working group that drafted the new policy and tested the new racks.

[MassTransitmag.com/53082882](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53082882)

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

C-TRAN



Leann M. Caver will assume her new role as C-TRAN's new CEO, effective March 1, 2024. Caver will take over for outgoing CEO Shawn M. Donaghy, who was recently appointed CEO of the North County Transit District in San Diego County, Calif. Caver will become the sixth CEO in C-TRAN's 43-year history. Caver spent 17 years at TriMet in various roles before joining C-TRAN's Operations team in 2021. While at C-TRAN, Caver has also served as manager of operations, director of diversity, equity and inclusion/organizational development, COO and deputy CEO.

[MassTransitmag.com/53095267](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53095267)

The Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (The COMET)



The COMET Board of Directors appointed **Maurice Pearl** as its new executive director/CEO. Pearl brings more than 20 years of public transit experience, with a strong operational background highlighting safety and labor relations. Pearl will work closely with LeRoy DesChamps, who earlier had agreed to serve in the interim executive director/CEO role until a successor was identified by the board after the death of former interim executive director/CEO Derrick Huggins in October 2022.

[MassTransitmag.com/53079478](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53079478)

Sound Transit



The Sound Transit Board of Directors approved the one-year appointment of **Goran Sparrman** as its interim CEO. Sparrman brings more than 30 years of experience in the public and private sector. His most recent position had been as business development officer and vice president at HNTB Corporation.

[MassTransitmag.com/53082452](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53082452)

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)



The SANDAG Board of Directors appointed **Coleen Clementson** as the agency's interim CEO. Clementson began serving as interim CEO in January 2024, replacing Hasan Ikhata, who had led SANDAG since 2018. Prior to her new position, Clementson played a pivotal role in shaping the future of the San Diego region. Her work involved overseeing community engagement, an \$800 million capital improvement program and the implementation of the Regional Plan.

[MassTransitmag.com/53080395](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53080395)

STM deploys safety ambassadors on Métro network

► The Société de transport de Montréal (STM) has deployed safety ambassadors on the Métro network to help maintain a sense of

safety for all customers. STM says the two-person safety ambassador teams act as a reassuring presence to customers, answering their questions and providing guidance. Safety ambassadors are also trained to identify potentially dangerous situations and report them to the security

People & Places

teams. Safety ambassadors have received 80 hours of specific training to prepare them for a variety of situations that they may be called upon to handle, including identifying safety issues, supporting major events and providing customer assistance.

[MassTransitmag.com/53083679](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53083679)



Maryland Transit Administration installs safety barriers on subway platforms.

Photo: MDOT

Maryland Transit Administration installs safety barriers on subway platforms

► To increase station safety, the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration began installing safety bollards — short, sturdy vertical posts that serve as physical barriers — at all of the agency's 14 Metro subway stations from Owings Mills to Johns Hopkins. The bright yellow bollards create a barrier to prevent passengers from stepping off the platform between railcars. The bollards are positioned in front of the gaps between railcars and prevent riders, especially those with visual impairment, from mistaking the gap for a train door opening. The new train control system allows trains to stop at a precise location in each station so that the gap between cars will align with the new barriers.

[MassTransitmag.com/53081269](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53081269)

CTA resumes operations on Yellow Line after Nov. 16 incident

► The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) resumed operations on the Yellow Line Jan. 5. CTA's Yellow Line had been closed since Nov. 16 when a CTA Yellow Line train collided with snow equipment in an accident that injured

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Cape Girardeau County Transit Authority (CGCTA)



CGCTA named **Ginny Smith** as executive director, succeeding the retired Tom Mogelnicki. The agency's board of directors selected Smith, who served since June 2015 as director of operations/safety management for Fredericktown, Mo., based Southeast Missouri

Transit Service. [MassTransitmag.com/53079619](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53079619)

Akron Metro Regional Transit Authority (Akron Metro)



Akron Metro brought on **Gert Wilms** as its new legal and government affairs officer. The role requires Wilms to ensure agency compliance with local and federal regulations and assist with the development and implementation of public policies and programs. Wilms has been a prosecutor for more than 20 years as an advocate for the Battered Women's Shelter of Summit County and, most recently, as Akron Mayor Daniel Horri-gan's chief of staff, where she was a founding member of the Akron Pride Festival and oversaw strategic initiatives and special projects out of the mayor's office.

[MassTransitmag.com/53081731](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53081731)

Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA)



Brad Mason joined SORTA as director of communications. Mason will oversee internal and external communications, implement strategies to enhance awareness of the agency's initiatives and activities while contributing to the development of the organization's comprehensive communications and public relations strategy.

[MassTransitmag.com/53083910](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53083910)



CTA President Carter meets with operations and safety staff at the site of the Nov. 16 incident on the Yellow Line tracks near Howard station.

Photo: CTA

38 people, including six employees who were on the snow equipment. Since the accident, CTA worked closely with the National Transportation Safety Board, providing full cooperation with its entire investigation while reviewing and re-evaluating safety

protocols to ensure the safest and most comfortable service possible for its riders. CTA tested several trains across the Yellow Line in various weather conditions before declaring the line was ready to return to service.

[MassTransitmag.com/53081947](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53081947)

City of Loveland Transit opens new transit center

► On Jan. 4, the City of Loveland Transit in Colorado opened its new Loveland Transit Center. Bus service from the new location began on the same day as the opening of the new center. The Loveland Transit Center provides a Park-N-Ride that includes 74 parking spaces. Of the 74 spaces, there are eight electric vehicle charging stalls and three ADA access points on site. The move to the new transit center marks the first time

the city of Loveland has owned its transit center.

[MassTransitmag.com/53082033](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53082033)

CUTA signs three-year MoU with APTA

► The Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) has signed a new memorandum of understanding (MoU) with its sister association, the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). The associations say the three-year MoU reconfirms the close partnership between CUTA and APTA in their efforts to advance public transportation in North America. Leaders for the associations shared hopes the organizations could share best practices and solutions to improve public transit in both countries.

[MassTransitmag.com/53082603](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53082603)

MORE NEWS AT A GLANCE

► Aecon Infrastructure Management has been awarded a contract by Metrolinx to design and build the guideway for the Eglinton Crosstown West Extension.

[MassTransitmag.com/53080934](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53080934)

► Complete Coach Works has been awarded a contract for the refurbishment of two 2008 40-foot Gillig buses by Eagle County Transit.

[MassTransitmag.com/53082306](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53082306)

► Nuvve Holding Corp. was selected by the Board of the Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission (Fresno EOC) to implement fleet electrification program for Fresno EOC's 50-shuttle fleet.

[MassTransitmag.com/53083396](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53083396)

► Keolis North America was awarded a three-year contract, with options, to operate and maintain CapMetro's fixed route bus service.

[MassTransitmag.com/53081329](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53081329)

► Community Transit renewed its contract with Transdev will continue its that includes operations and maintenance for Community Transit's commuter bus and Sound Transit ST Express service.

[MassTransitmag.com/53082867](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53082867)

► Nova Bus has been awarded a five-year contract for up to 53 LFSe+ by the city of Regina, Saskatchewan.

[MassTransitmag.com/53083561](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53083561)

► The Routing Company (TRC) and Swiftly have launched a joint partnership that leverages the real time transit feed specification data usage across more transit modes in TRC's customer

deployments, enabling TRC's Transit Connect™ feature to work.

[MassTransitmag.com/53081638](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53081638)

► Montgomery County Department of Transportation selected STV to serve as program management consultant for the county's expansive bus rapid transit implementation plan.

[MassTransitmag.com/53083041](https://www.masstransitmag.com/53083041)

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2024 Mobility Outlook

This annual survey aims to gain an overview of what is ahead by asking subscribers about budgets, procurement, as well as their general sentiment about the year.

BY MISCHA WANEK-LIBMAN, EDITOR IN CHIEF

Respondents to the fifth iteration of *Mass Transit's* annual Mobility Outlook survey paint dueling scenarios of how 2024 could play out. While transit agency respondents see opportunities in technology advancements and service enhancements, challenges surrounding residual pandemic impacts to ridership, supply chain issues and persistent concerns with recruitment and retention remain. As one transit agency respondent added to a comment section, “we’re just trying to get through 2024.”

Survey respondents said budgets for 2024 have increased, with more than 70 percent of transit agency respondents reporting slightly higher or significantly higher budgets. However, agency budget shortfalls are a worry, with 21 percent of agency respondents reporting a budget shortfall in 2024 and another 36 percent anticipating a budget shortfall within the next two years. More than half of respondents from business community companies and non-transit agency companies report increased budgets in 2024 and more than 60 percent of these respondents say they do not anticipate cutting costs this year.

Top challenges cited among transit agency respondents include recruitment, supply chain and inflation issues. The business community shared the same concerns regarding supply chain and inflation challenges with one respondent, calling 2024 a “rebuilding year.”

How was this information gathered?

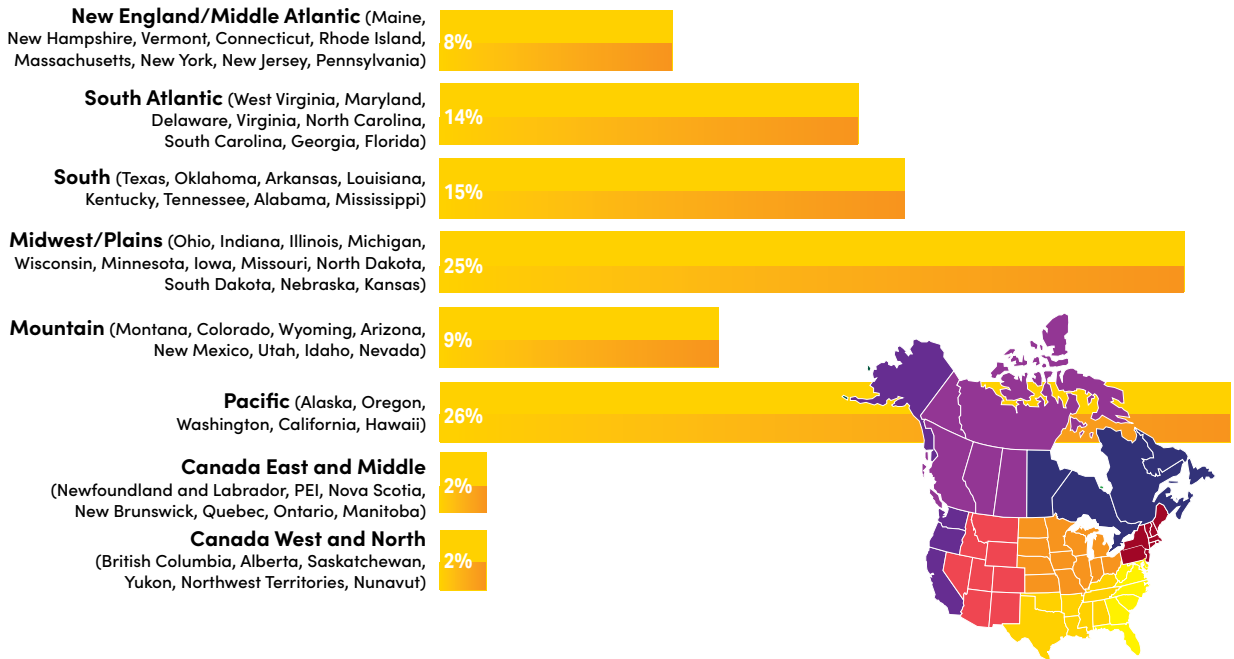
Mass Transit queried subscribers who identify as working for a transit agency or for a business supporting transit agencies (suppliers, manufacturers, consultants, engineers) during a two-week period in January 2024. The survey received 123 responses, with 61 from transit professionals and 62 from non-transit agency professionals. The survey included intelligence with separate questions being asked of the two groups.

An ideal world would allow the survey to be answered by every transit provider in North America but this is not practical. We do believe the data found within this survey offers valuable insight, as the industry continues to emerge from under the umbrella of the pandemic.

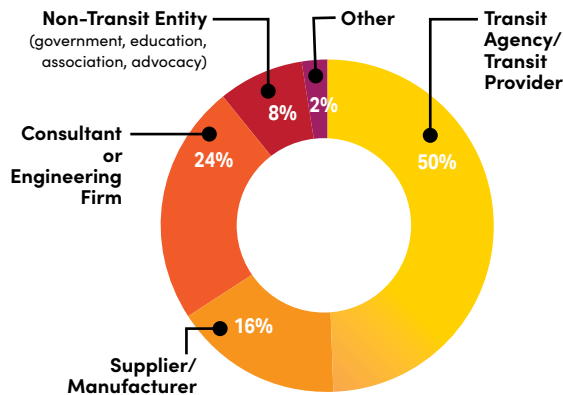
The following pages are a sample of the full report, which can be viewed at MassTransitmag.com/53095207.

Demographics

Where responding agencies are located

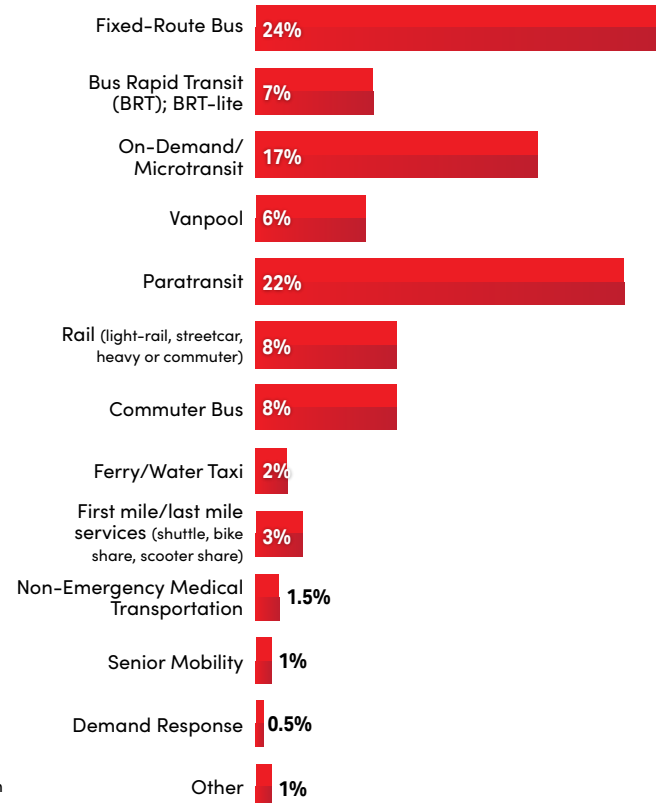


For which type of entity do you work?

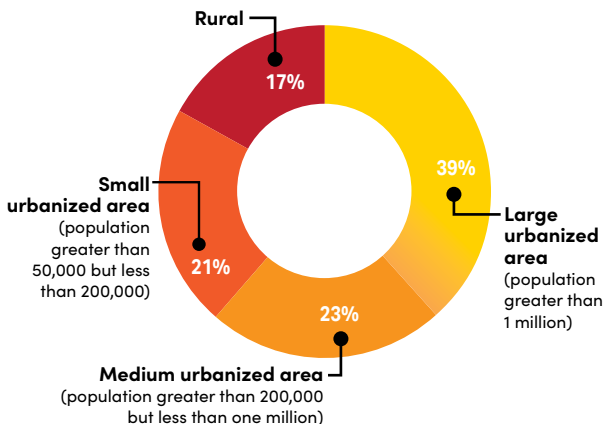


What services does your agency provide?

(select all that apply)

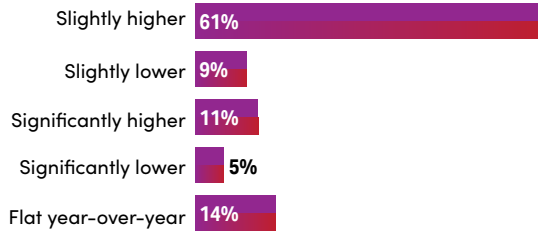


What is the population of your service area?



Budgets: 2024 budgets compared to 2023

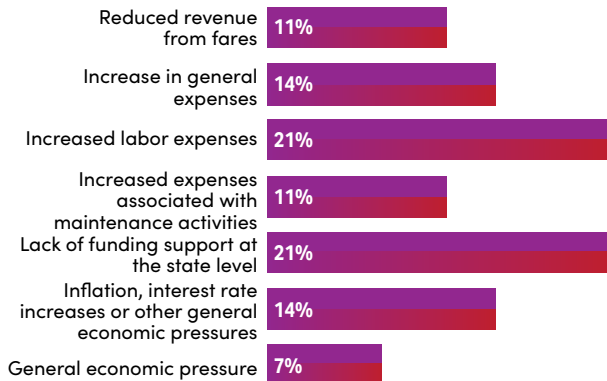
TRANSIT AGENCIES: How does your anticipated 2024 budget, both operating and capital, compare to 2023?



While 72% of respondents report higher budgets in 2024, 37% anticipate budget shortfalls within the next two years.

21% of respondents report facing a budget shortfall between \$10 million and \$100 million in 2024.

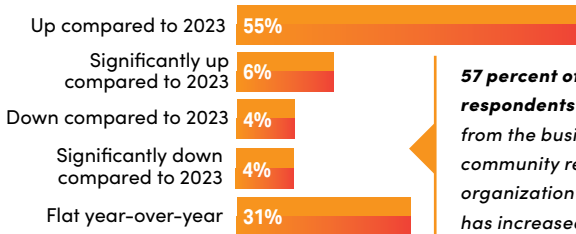
TRANSIT AGENCIES: For those agencies reporting budget shortfalls in 2024, what are the contributing factors?



More than 46 percent of respondents from small urban and medium urban agencies report no budget shortfall is anticipated within the next two years.

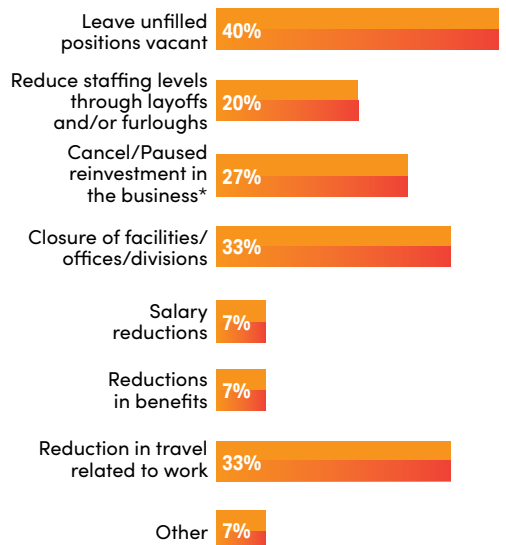


BUSINESS COMMUNITY: Where do you believe revenues will be in 2024?

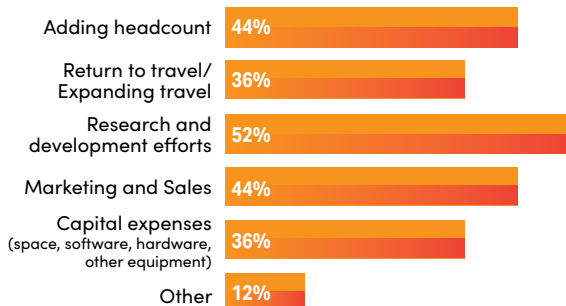


57 percent of respondents from the business community report their organization's budget has increased in 2024.

BUSINESS COMMUNITY: Where will any cost savings be realized in 2024?



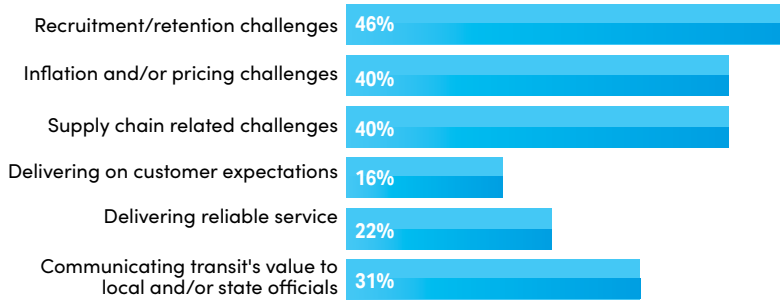
BUSINESS COMMUNITY: For anticipated budget increases in 2024, where will the increase be seen?



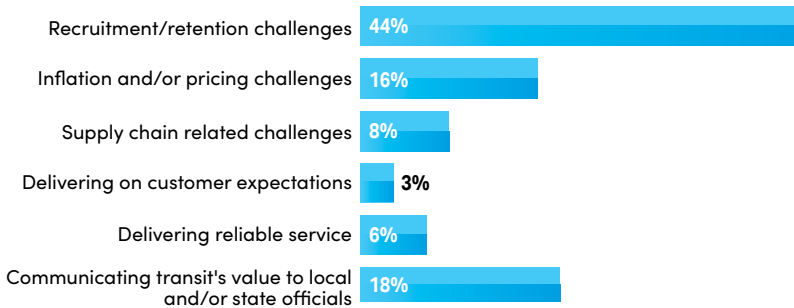
*For example through facility expansion, pausing technology upgrades, etc.

Operations: Challenges and opportunities foreseen in 2024

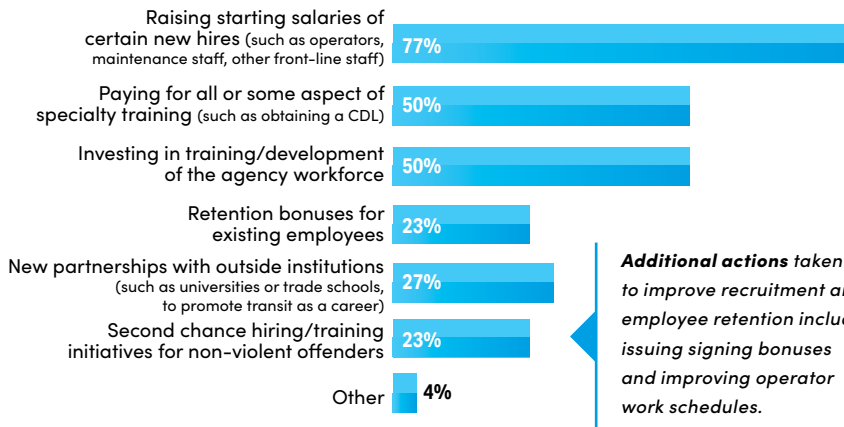
TRANSIT AGENCIES: What challenges are anticipated in 2024?



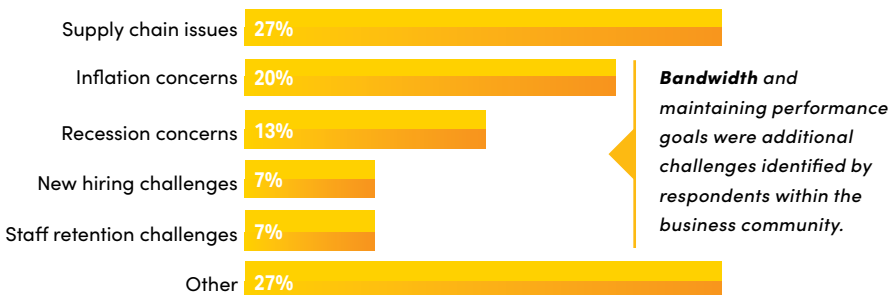
TRANSIT AGENCIES: Which would classify as the most pressing challenge?



Of those respondents who selected recruitment/retention as the most pressing challenge, what efforts has your agency taken to remedy this?

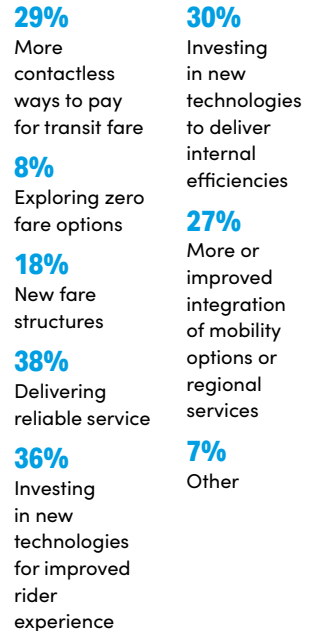


BUSINESS COMMUNITY: What is the main challenge anticipated in 2024?



TRANSIT AGENCIES:

Where do you see opportunities for your agency in 2024?



BUSINESS COMMUNITY:

Where does your organization see opportunities in 2024?



Five Transit Trends to Watch in 2024

Mass Transit's editors believe these five topics will bring new challenges, opportunities and generate discussion among transit industry peers.

BY MISCHA WANEK-LIBMAN, EDITOR IN CHIEF



Several factors will influence the development of the transit industry during the next 12 months. The topics on this list, including the embracing of data management, a continuing transition to lower emission fleets, a shift in the bus manufacturing landscape and the November election in the U.S., provide a glimpse of what subjects could shape the industry in 2024.

Sustainability efforts and climate change

The North American transit industry continues to move toward more sustainable fleets and business practices. In the most recent CALSTART “Zeroing in on ZEBs” report from February 2023, full-size transit zero-emission buses (ZEBs) increased 66 percent over the report’s 2021 count to 5,480 buses nationally. Fuel cell electric buses saw a 64 percent increase in adoption since 2021 and adoptions of small ZEBs grew by 42 percent across the country. In Canada, the total number of ZEBs grew to 859, including 219 new full-size buses.

This growth in ZEB deliveries is confirmed by OEMs. In a Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Quarter 3 earnings call, NFI Group Inc. reported its zero-emission bus deliveries had increased from

eight percent in 2020 to 23 percent in the third quarter of 2023. The company says it expects zero-emission buses to be at least 40 percent, and even up to 50 percent of its deliveries in 2025.

Encouraging people to take transit is also a key factor in supporting sustainability goals. In Colorado, the state’s Zero Fare for Better Air program was designed to reduce ground-level ozone by increasing the use of public transit across the state. Colorado’s largest transit provider, the Denver Regional Transportation District (Denver RTD), published a final evaluation report outlining the overall impact of the initiative. The final report shows an increase in customer boardings and estimates a reduction of approximately 9 million vehicle miles traveled during July and August 2023.



Denver RTD reports for July and August 2023, transit riders during the Zero Fare for Cleaner Air initiative resulted in an estimated reduction of approximately 9 million vehicle miles traveled.

Photo: Denver RTD

Additionally, estimates show more than 6 million pounds of greenhouse gases were eliminated when individuals opted to use public transit instead of a single occupancy vehicle.

Data is king

Transit has rapidly morphed into a digital business during the past decade. It's a trend that will intensify as new fare systems come online, more mobility options are integrated into systems and artificial intelligence applications and smart city practices are better understood and applied.

The challenge with this quick pace of exploration and adoption will be to ensure the data collected is clean and that it is stored and managed in a secure way. While large urban agencies have brought

data scientists into their ranks, smaller agencies may not have the budgetary wiggle room to add expertise in data governance or data architecture. Pressure will be on the business community supporting transit agencies to develop tools and platforms that will help them parse through the data available to find useful information that can inform agencies' actionable outcomes.

Bus manufacturing teeters on edge of crisis

U.S. bus manufacturing has been on a slow march to the precipice of crisis driven by supply chain issues, inflation and a highly competitive market. Significant changes in the past six months brought shifts to the competitive landscape of the U.S. and Canada heavy duty OEM line up. In June 2023, Nova Bus announced it would cease U.S. bus production in early 2025, Proterra filed for bankruptcy in August 2023 and, ultimately, sold its transit business line to Phoenix Motor Inc. Most recently, REV Group announced plans to close its ELDorado National-California business by the end of FY 2024. This all comes as funding included in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) is fueling increased demand for buses.

The market for smaller transit vehicles is also fraught with issues, including price increases, delays and cancellation of orders. An August 2022 survey conducted by the Community Transportation Association of America found smaller transportation providers saw price increases between 30 and 70 percent, with 80 percent of survey respondents reporting they felt "highly concerned with the state of standard vehicle replacements."

While appropriately sized vehicles for smaller transit providers may be available globally, they do not always meet Buy America requirements federal grant recipients in the U.S. must adhere to. A consortium of 10 transit providers filed a temporary Buy America waiver for a low floor, 20-foot, zero-emission minibus with the Federal Transit Administration in August 2023. If approved, the temporary waiver would allow consortium members to procure a purpose-built minibus while the manufacturer works to bring its product in compliance with Buy America requirements.

The issues within the bus manufacturing market have been recognized by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), which created a Task Force on Bus Procurement to address strengthening the bus industry in the U.S. The task force - led by Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) President and APTA Immediate Past Chair Dorval Carter and New York City Transit President Rich Davey - will recommend immediate and near-term actions to help ensure a viable and competitive bus manufacturing environment. APTA says the recommendations are expected to be issued in early 2024.

Flexibility and reach of transit service

More than two-thirds of transit agency respondents to *Mass Transit's* Mobility Outlook survey, part of which is included in this issue on page 12, report reduced ridership continues to be a residual impact from the pandemic. Since hitting the bottom of the ridership trough in March 2020, weekly transit



Proterra's filing of bankruptcy in August of 2023 is part of a wider shake up among bus manufacturing.

Photo: Proterra

ridership has been on a slow, but steady increase, according to data from APTA. Between late August 2023 and mid-January 2024, weekly ridership in the U.S. stayed between 72 percent to 77 percent of pre-pandemic numbers.

To continue serving the changing mobility patterns of their communities, transit agencies have explored alternative services and integrated more travel options. This can be in the form of system

redesigns or strategic redesigns of busy routes, expanded microtransit or on-demand options, first and last-mile mobility options and expanded allowable times bikes or scooters can be brought onboard fixed route vehicles.

One example is FlexRide Milwaukee, which began service in 2022 as a pilot with routes to the north and northwest sides of the Milwaukee region. Additional funding and a new service provider saw FlexRide expand its reach. The service celebrated its 50,000th ride in early January 2024.

In addition to rethinking services, more systems are implementing fare capping, reevaluating fare structures or easing the barrier to access discounted passes.

In the Chicago region, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) of Northern Illinois, Metra

and Cook County launched the Access Pilot Program on Feb. 1, which extends reduced fares on the entire Metra system to riders experiencing low incomes. Anyone living in a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipient household within Metra's six-county service area is eligible for the pilot program. While the program is only valid on Metra, the region's other two transit providers – Pace Suburban Bus and the CTA – are exploring funding needed to expand the pilot to their systems.

State support (or lack of support) for transit systems

Emergency funding during the pandemic and the passage of the IIJA brought a significant boost in dedicated transit resources. However, the federal boost is

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The Rail Transit Seminar is devoted to examining wheel/rail, vehicle/track interaction on rail transit systems. This cross-disciplinary seminar includes presentations from experts in vehicle/track

dynamics, noise and vibration, vehicle/track design and maintenance, friction management, and State of Good Repair. Join a unique group of transit professionals, researchers and suppliers at this seminar to examine recent developments in research and technology, to participate in lively discussion and gain a better understanding of the complex interaction at the rail transit wheel/rail interface. Sample topics include:

- Rail Grinding/Rail Milling
- Wheel/Rail Interface Studies for Vehicle Procurement
- Practical Implementation of Friction Management Systems



The Principles of Wheel/Rail Interaction Course is an intensive, full-day course that provides fundamental coverage of the primary aspects of wheel/

rail, vehicle/track interaction. Drawing from both theory and practical application, the course covers contact mechanics, track geometry, vehicle suspension systems, vehicle/track dynamics, wheel/rail profile design, friction management, measurement technologies and more—all the elements that are required to promote a more complete understanding of vehicle/track dynamics and wheel/rail interaction. Typical topics include:

- Wheel-Rail Contact Mechanics
- Track Structures, Components and Geometry
- Vehicle Types, Suspensions and Components
- Vehicle-Track Measurement Technologies



The Heavy Haul Seminar is devoted to examining wheel/rail, vehicle/track interaction on rail freight and shared-track passenger systems. The Seminar brings together track and mechanical

users, researchers and suppliers in a positive, educational setting like no other in the industry. Information on where and how the latest technology is being used to improve wheel/rail interaction and overall performance on freight and passenger railways is presented by some of the best minds in railroading. Information is presented through a combination of seminar sessions, panel discussions, dedicated Q&A periods and "InfoZone" sessions. Sample Heavy Haul topics include:

- Lessons Learned from Derailment Investigations
- Reducing Rail Surface Defects through Rail Grinding
- Managing Longitudinal Forces Transmitted into the Rail
- Validating Effective Friction Management in Heavy Haul

Questions: Contact Brandon Koenig, Director of Operations 847-808-1818 or Brandon@wheel-rail-seminars.com

For more information, visit www.MassTransitmag.com/21252748

not enough for some systems to bridge budget gaps brought about by rising expenses and decreasing revenues. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority anticipates a \$750 million deficit in FY25 and New Jersey Transit is facing a \$119 million gap in FY25 and is considering a 15 percent fare increase.

The financial solvency of systems and the continued operation of their vital services could hinge on what level of support a state is willing to provide. The Maryland Department of Transportation was initially facing a \$3.3 billion deficit and proposed significant cuts to its FY 2024-2029 Capital Program, including the delay or cancellation of funding for bus upgrades, state of good repair projects and a delay in the Maryland Transit Administration's ZEB transition. Maryland Gov.

Wes Moore has proposed a one-time injection of \$150 million to restore proposed cuts, with more than half of the funding marked to restore transit cuts.

In New York state, Gov. Kathy Hochul and the State Legislature developed a budget with increased aid for transit that, when coupled with operating efficiencies at the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, allowed the authority to develop a balanced budget and stop a financial crisis.

Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro has proposed increasing the state share of public transit funding by 1.75 percent in his 2024-2025 budget proposal. The proposal would total \$282.8 million and comes as Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority reports it will face recurring structural deficits exceeding \$240 million starting in FY25.

However, not all states have taken the lead of the Pennsylvania, New York and Maryland governors. One example is a bill that targets IndyGo's Blue Line project by prohibiting new dedicated bus lanes until July 1, 2025. The bill passed the Indiana Senate and, as of press time, was headed to the Indiana House of Representatives. IndyGo told WRTV Indianapolis that if the bill passes, the Blue Line project, which would operate along 24 miles between Cumberland and the Indianapolis airport and includes transit signal priority and sidewalk upgrades, would be cancelled.

A final unknown element is the November 2024 election in the U.S. With the presidency, 33 Senate seats and 435 House seats up for election, the outcome has the potential to shake things up (or not) in the transit industry. L

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Community feed key to increasing transit ri



TransLink, Community Transit and VCTC have seen positive results from campaigns surrounding community outreach as the agencies have seen a steady increase in ridership during the past two years.

BY BRANDON LEWIS, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

For every transit agency, ridership is important. Every agency wants the community they serve to use public transit as their preferred form of transportation, as opposed to burning more fossil fuels with cars.

To increase awareness of the benefits of public transit, agencies rely on their communities to give critical feedback on its plans to boost their systems. Many of the outreach efforts are used as a way to connect to communities that could

be overlooked because of a language or economic barrier.

TransLink in Metro Vancouver, Canada, Community Transit in Everett, Wash., and the Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) in Ventura County, Calif., are three examples of transit agencies who have used feedback from the community to make changes to their operations in order to persuade residents in their region to use public transit instead of using their cars.

TransLink's Ride and Shine campaign

In summer 2022, TransLink launched the Ride and Shine campaign to help

back dership



promote the use of transit, as the region of Metro Vancouver was slowly starting to find its “new normal” in a post-COVID-19 world.

Steve Vanagas, TransLink’s vice president of customer communications brand and public affairs, explains the campaign was launched in summer due to the weather being nice and schools not being in session.

“People love to explore the city, especially during summer,” Vanagas said. “They like to go out with their friends. They go out with their families. They want to go to events and concerts and festivals and what better way to do that than taking transit? That’s the message we wanted to send.”

The campaign has led to a 10 percent increase in transit ridership for the agency post-pandemic, helping TransLink lead the way in ridership recovery in the U.S. and Canada. After the first year of the campaign, TransLink conducted intercept surveys, where the agency interviewed 370 people during the course of the campaign across the 15 key corridor

routes. The results from the Q&A style survey showed 24 percent of participants said the Ride and Shine campaign encouraged them to try those routes while 16 percent said the campaign increased their use of transit on those routes.

To promote the campaign, TransLink formed partnerships with businesses and organizations along 15 key corridors

A TransLink Ride and Shine Campaign event.

Photo: TransLink

throughout Metro Vancouver. The partnerships allowed the agency to offer incentives for using TransLink during the summer months. Incentives included transit passes, as well as non-transit related items such as concert tickets.

When the campaign first launched in summer 2022, TransLink also hosted seven car-free day festivals in communities around the region that attracted 650,000 people.

The Ride and Shine campaign begins when schools are dismissed for the summer break in June and ends when students return to school in September. Vanagas believes the timing of the campaign couldn't be better.

"No one wants to drive around the city during that time of year," Vanagas noted. "It's expensive. The cost of living is bad. People are feeling the sustainability challenge. We wanted to encourage people to get out of their cars and come back and use the transit system."

Community Transit's outreach efforts

In 2022 and 2023, respectively, Community Transit won awards from the American Public Transportation Association's Adwheel Grand Awards for its outreach efforts. In 2022, the agency won the award for its Video Series in Support of Mechanic Recruitment while in 2023, the agency won the award for its Campaign to Recruit Coach Operators for Workforce Development.

Both awards were part of the agency's outreach efforts for two big projects that will help advance transportation in the region in 2024:

1. Sound Transit's East Link light-rail extension project
2. Expansion of Community Transit's Swift Line to include the Orange Line

For each project, Community Transit engaged in community efforts through surveys, which featured a combination of multiple choice, short answer and comment sections, as well as a virtual open house that featured an interactive map that showed where the proposed station locations were. Participants in the open house could then drop a pin on the map and leave a comment, explaining why they would like a station in a certain area.

Chelsea Ongaro, Community Transit's community engagement program manager, noted the surveys results include 80 respondents whose native language is not English, something the agency puts an emphasis on, as Snohomish County, the county where Community Transit is located, is home to many Spanish-speaking residents.

"With the big changes coming to our community, we wanted to make sure the needs of those with low incomes and people who speak languages other than English here in Snohomish County were met," Ongaro said.

The agency conducts major and minor service changes. Major service changes include taking a route away, adding a new route or changing schedules by a significant amount of time while minor service changes include adjusting a schedule by a few minutes.

For major service changes, Community Transit conducts a proposal process six months before the changes occur. The public has an opportunity to comment during the proposal process to make sure their needs are met. For minor service changes, residents can call the agency's call center and suggest changes to routes.

In October 2022, Community Transit launched the Zip Alderwood Shuttle, which is part of

Community Transit's Innovative Services program, Innovative Services partners with local communities to test new transportation solutions. The programs often serve as a vital connection to existing transit systems, providing access closer to people's homes and destinations and expanding access to transit for more communities.

Ongaro noted the feedback process on the shuttle was an extensive one.

"That process involved a pretty in-depth community engagement process in three other communities in Snohomish County, Arlington Darrington and Lake Stevens," Ongaro explained. "In each of those communities, we set up a community working group of people from nonprofits, businesses and community members to help provide input on what the transportation needs are. Then, we did a survey about those needs with the whole community that the community working group provided input on the questions in the survey. Then, our teams evaluated all of that information and came up with some solutions for what transportation options could be in those communities."

A year after the Zip Alderwood Shuttle launched, Community Transit held an engagement period to gather public comment from riders about how they felt about the service, as it was transitioning the service from a pilot to regular service.

With all the surveys, open houses and public feedback Community Transit requests on its services, getting the word out to participate can be tricky. Ongaro notes the agency has found success with webinars.

"With our webinars, people can ask questions and we've seen a lot of success in recording them and sharing them later," Ongaro said.

VCTC's multiple outreach programs

In 2023, VCTC received the Transit Agency of the Year Award in the Small Operators Awards category by the California Transit Association for its Buenas con VCTC! program and its Youth Ride Free Program and its College Ride Free Program.

The Buenas con VCTC! Program is entirely in Spanish — the second most common language in Ventura County after English — and is based off the bingo-style game *loteria*. The program features *loteria*-esque cards with transit elements such as VCTC buses, bus seats and free Wi-Fi. The goal of the program is to promote transit use for Spanish-speaking individuals, including those who use transit regularly and those who have never ridden transit before.

The College Ride Free Program launched in 2019 while The Youth Ride Free Program was started in 2022. Both programs' goals are to promote transit use among the young population in Ventura County.

The College Ride Free Program has recently expanded to not only include Ventura County, but also two colleges in adjacent Santa Barbara County. The first year of the Youth Ride Free Program produced more than 1 million rides.

For all three programs, VCTC conducted various outreach campaigns through surveys. Martin Erickson, executive director at VCTC, notes surveys have been conducted by the agency long before the launch of the various programs.

"Approximately six or seven years ago, we wanted to dig a little deeper into finding out what the community really wanted and that led directly to the College Ride Program and the Youth Ride Program," Erickson said.



Participants at a Community Transit outreach campaign on the Swift Orange Line.

Photo: Community Transit

VCTC relies on social media to get the word out, noting the internet and social media is where the 18-22 demographic heavily lives to find news, but it's not the only source of promotion.

"When we started the Youth Ride Program, we attended a lot of back-to-school events at different schools throughout the county. We tried to go to elementary schools, middle schools and high schools. We worked with the [Ventura County] Office of Education. We went to all 10 cities in Ventura County. For the College Ride Program, we worked with a community college district. For both programs, we did a public comment for each of the city councils throughout our county and one of those led to a major electronic billboard in Ventura County," said Claire Grasty, director of public transit for VCTC.

VCTC presented a toolkit to the county's Office of Education to promote the Youth Ride Free Program, which included the program flyer, social media graphics, videos and suggested text the office could use on their own social media to promote the

program. VCTC's Program Manager for Government Community Relations Darrin Peschka noted promotion for the program was seen on social media by residents even prior to its launch.

VCTC is currently in the middle of planning its short-term transit plan. What is normally a five-year plan, the current plan that is being developed is for nine to 10 years and will take into account feedback from all nine transit operators in Ventura County.

"Doing outreach throughout the community for the short-term transit plan is critical because all these operators are different," Grasty noted. We recently completed our transit integration and efficiency study. We also have a fair study we'll be doing, along with a paratransit integration analysis. It does have a robust strategy. The plan for outreach will also include focus groups and affinity groups." L



Buenas con VCTC! graphic.

Photo: VCTC



What three agencies
are doing to build
**awareness of
human trafficking**



The ROC bus was donated by Oklahoma City Embark and retrofitted with new signage, digital screens and an educational interior setup.

Photos: Rolling Oklahoma Classroom



Transit agencies are strengthening their resolve to make public transit spaces safer for their riders by educating transit employees to recognize signs of trafficking.

BY EMAN ABU-KHALED,
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

January is National Human Trafficking Prevention Month and transit agencies are renewing their anti-trafficking policies and programs to better enable both their riders and employees to identify and respond to potential trafficking situations.

Human traffickers often times take advantage of public transit when transporting and recruiting their victims. The features designed to make transit a seamless mobility option for the public also provide lower cost and anonymity to traffickers.

In 2018, the Polaris Project, an organization working to combat and prevent sex and labor trafficking, issued a report that included a survey of 104 trafficking survivors. It was found 42 percent of the victims interviewed were trafficked on or using public buses. Part of transit agencies' essential role in communities is in educating and combating this crime.

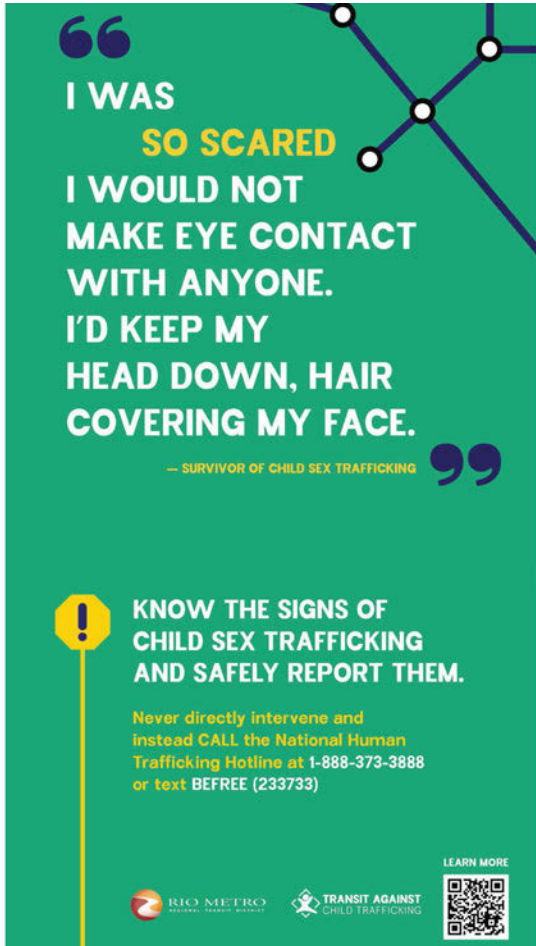
The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), Rio Metro Regional Transit District (Rio Metro) in New Mexico and the Oklahoma Transit Association are each taking a stronger stance to prevent human trafficking in and around their communities to make the public transit space an anti-trafficker zone.

NCDOT

North Carolina was ranked ninth in the nation as a state being more susceptible to human trafficking according to a report released by the Polaris run National Human Trafficking Hotline. NCDOT's transit agencies are working to strengthen their security and safety policies, with a focus on educating transit employees and operators throughout the state.

In 2020, NCDOT was awarded a \$120,000 federal grant by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to develop and deliver training on human trafficking for public transit providers statewide in a collective initiative.

"We felt like we were the ones that could best reach out to each of our 98 different transit agencies to make sure that it's something that is statewide, rather than accounted for by each individual agency," said Brennon Fuqua, NCDOT interim director for the Integrated Mobility Division (IMD).



The agency has since progressed its training into a full ad campaign and web training course, tailored for transit employees. The training will be required for all North Carolina public transportation agencies and will help to educate NCDOT employees on how to recognize and respond if they suspect human trafficking in or around a transit space.

NCDOT IMD also created posters to be distributed across the state and issued a public service announcement used with the online training program. These materials educate public transit employees and riders about the common warning signs of human trafficking, how to report concerns and how to be an active bystander.



Rio Metro’s TACT campaign utilizes the stories of trafficking survivors to bring awareness to riders and employees of the human trafficking issue on public transit.

Images: Rio Metro

NCDOT believes the state’s transit professionals are the best option to train their colleagues on this sensitive topic.

“We really wanted to create a ‘train the trainer’ environment, where we had our employees with NCDOT going out to each one of the agencies and hosting robust in-person training opportunities,” Fuqua said.

Fuqua noted allowing employees to teach one another helps to solidify the messaging within NCDOT’s system and establishes a consensus of practice. The peer-to-peer approach needed to be revised when the COVID-19 public health emergency was declared in the U.S. in March 2020.

“With COVID happening, we repurposed what the grant funds were going to be used for and created a virtual online training assessment required for each one of our transit operators,” Fuqua explained. “We also put together a central website that has information both about NCDOT and sex trafficking within our state or human trafficking within our state.”

The video training walks employees through the actual exper-

iences of trafficking survivors and explains what could have been done to prevent the trafficking through public transit.

As part of the training, transit employees must answer questions and pass with an 80 percent at the end of the video.

NCDOT reports 150 participating transit employees and operators from agencies across the state have taken the quiz.

Fuqua said the agency expects to have a much larger participation rate moving forward.

Rio Metro

Rio Metro launched an anti-trafficking campaign in partnership with the Preventing and Addressing Child Trafficking (PACT) Project at the start of January 2024. The agency, along with Capital District Transportation Authority in New York, was selected to participate in this program with PACT.

The Transit Against Child Trafficking (TACT) campaign uses systemwide advertising and verbiage that focuses on noticing the signs of child sex-trafficking on public tran-

sit. TACT works to enable riders and employees to pay attention to an unaccompanied or distressed child and identify signs of a child in harm or danger. Other signs are avoiding eye contact, being easily startled or afraid, providing scripted responses and being yelled at or intimidated.

Some public transit users are accustomed to zoning out after taking their seat on a bus or a train. Rio Metro is trying to utilize the crucial five to 10 minutes before riders disengage to activate their minds with educational advertisement that details the signs of child sex-trafficking with programs made in part by the PACT program.

Posters on buses and trains, digital screens with written prompts and social media posts discussing the experiences of trafficking survivors help to reach riders of all ages.

Two years prior to the TACT campaign, Rio Metro launched its evergreen anti-trafficking program, Busing on the Look-out, as a part of the operators' onboarding training. Operators must renew their anti-trafficking training every two years, keeping their training up to date.

Allyne Clarke, Rio Metro marketing director, brought PACT and the agency together. She had been inspired by other agencies' anti-trafficking programs and felt Rio Metro and its riders would benefit from this type of a campaign.

"I felt that there was a need in this market for a program like this because we are the only railway system in the state," Clarke said.

The PACT program ensured Rio Metro had the graphics, educational videos, talking points and resources in both English and Spanish to launch its TACT campaign systemwide.

Oklahoma Transit Association's ROC Bus

In Oklahoma, human-trafficking is a major issue statewide according to Andrea Ball, the Oklahoma Transit Association's executive director.

"Oklahoma has a lot of agriculture and you don't think of agriculture as a place where people would be trafficked," said Ball. "The reality is migrant labor is absolutely a front floor for trafficking."

The agency is working to educate its transit community by bringing training right to their doorstep.

The Rolling Oklahoma Classroom (ROC) is a safety and security education space on wheels, offering training designed to enhance awareness of public transit options in rural, tribal and urban communities.

The project utilizes an Oklahoma City Embark transit bus donated and retrofitted with digital screens and hands on practice lesson spaces that replicate possible situations that might occur on a transit bus.

The ROC provides the required training for operators in all aspects of bus management, security and customer service. Ball said that the program proved to be more cost-effective than taking all drivers to a location and spending money on a couple days of training out of the office.

A team of three with the inclusion of volunteers manages the bus, which, most of the time, requires them to drive the bus to agencies all over Oklahoma.

Andrea Ball, Oklahoma Transit Association's executive director, is one of those people.

The ultimate benefit of this program goes to the rider's safety. Ball believes that it is a part of a bus operator's duty to learn the warning signs of a person who



The NCDOT is working to ensure that its anti-human trafficking campaign is a system-wide initiative with widespread digital and paper fliers. Image: NCDOT

is in trouble.

"Any transit worker that is educated and has their passengers' best interest at heart is certainly benefiting from anything that we're able to provide," Ball said.

The ROC works to create a safe and comfortable environment for all riders. The program explores modules of wheelchair securement practice, conflict management and rider safety awareness in case of a possible trafficking situation. Participants practice with each other, helping to create an understanding with the operators of what a transit rider could be feeling in a situation.

The ROC bus has been made available to all public community organizations to prioritize safety and security everywhere.

Funding for the program came from an FTA grant in 2019 but the official launch of the ROC came in 2022 because of complications from the pandemic.

Ball noted that this type of a program has a "ripple effect" with the potential to spread awareness on the human trafficking issue as a whole, beyond the public transit space. L

“Any transit worker that is educated and has their passengers' best interest at heart is certainly benefiting from anything that we're able to provide.”

Andrea Ball, Oklahoma Transit Association's executive director

SFMTA's Fix It Week

shows agency's commitment to infras

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ne of the challenges rail transit operators face is finding the balance between performing critical work to maintain rail infrastructure while not inconveniencing riders with lengthy service delays and changes. A maintenance initiative developed by San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) finds harmony in its approach to fixing its aging infrastructure to deliver more reliable service without overburdening its riders.

In 2019, the agency launched Fix It Week, where service was limited during a period of seven to 10 days to focus

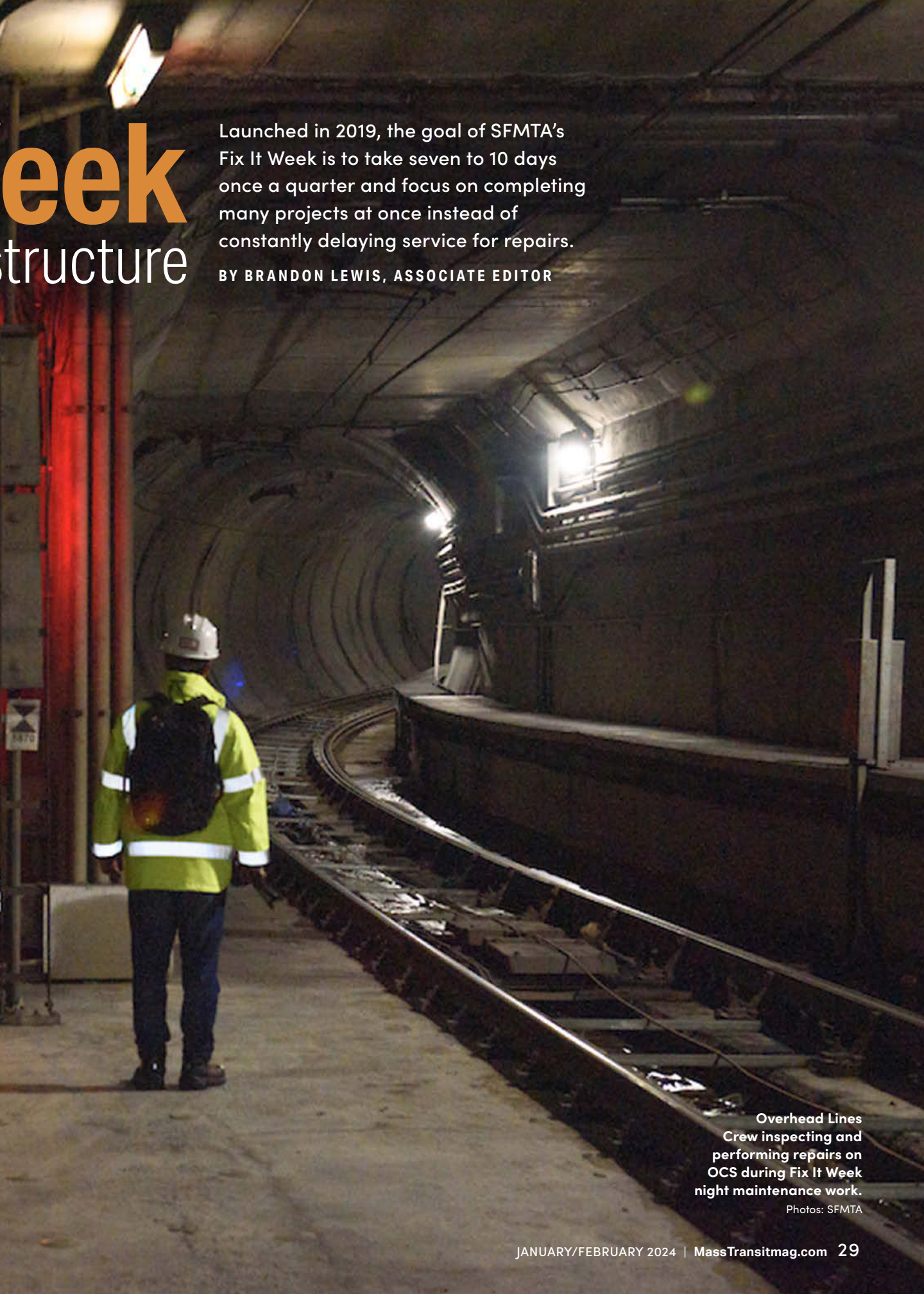
on completing many projects at once. SFMTA explains the idea driving Fix It Week is to take advantage of periods of reduced ridership, as opposed to continually starting and stopping service as repairs come up.

The region of San Francisco, Calif., heavily relies on transit to get from place to place. Fix It Week has mainly targeted SFMTA's Market Street subway, which

Week structure

Launched in 2019, the goal of SFMTA's Fix It Week is to take seven to 10 days once a quarter and focus on completing many projects at once instead of constantly delaying service for repairs.

BY BRANDON LEWIS, ASSOCIATE EDITOR



Overhead Lines
Crew inspecting and
performing repairs on
OCS during Fix It Week
night maintenance work.

Photos: SFMTA



Track crew power washing and removing trash from trackway during Fix It Week night maintenance work.

was built in 1975 and contains several original components. Every night after Market Street subway service hours, SFMTA

maintenance crews work to maintain the tracks and equipment underground, however, the team only has approximately

two hours to get the work done, which SFMTA says is insufficient to accomplish meaningful maintenance work. During extended Fix It Week work windows, maintenance crews from various specialties work simultaneously, which increases the effectiveness of their efforts.

“Fix It Week allows us to bring teams from multiple shifts and force multiply the number of teams and the number of projects,” said SFMTA Chief Maintenance Officer Charles Drane. “During a typical week, we may have 28 hours of closure time. During Fix It Week, we will double that up to about 56 hours but you’ll see anywhere from 2,000 to

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2,500 employee hours of maintenance done in the tunnel during that time.”

Drane notes most of the infrastructure work done during Fix It Week is work riders don't see, including replacing batteries and overhead contact wire, along with expanded inspections, track work, fastener replacements, tie replacements and structural inspections on the tunnel.

Drane meets with the nine Maintenance of Way (MOW) Teams (Track, Cable Car, Motive Power, Maintenance Engineering, Mechanical Systems, Overhead Lines, Underground, Paint Shop and Signal) that are involved in the maintenance work regularly, including custodial staff cleaning SFMTA stations. The meetings determine which areas the teams will attack during Fix It Week.

“We always have a constant revolving list of priorities to tackle when we're on a Fix It Week that we want to target,” Drane said. “Is the lighting good? Are the elevators operating well? We take everything into account and we fold that into some of those critical items that we go to target.”

SFMTA strategically schedules its Fix It Weeks throughout the calendar year. The agency tries to schedule the week around holidays or three-day weekends but there are a variety of factors in the scheduling, including sporting events and other activities. With the use of public transit being so high in the San Francisco area, SFMTA will adjust Fix It Week service hours if there is an event where public transportation is needed. The agency attempts to conduct a Fix It Week once a quarter but

Typical Fix It Week

By the Numbers:

- Fix It Week closure time: 56 hours
- Number of Maintenance Teams: 9
- Maintenance and inspections hours completed: 2,000 - 2,500 hours

with the pace of events in the area, it has not materialized to that level yet.

“The weeks are never identical,” Drane said. “We try to give ourselves about two months notice when we find a space in the calendar but we really are a partner to the community and try not to disrupt some of the civic activity that's happening in San Francisco.”

Drane notes Fix It Week days do not have to be consecutive, especially with sporting events with the city's professional teams happening almost year-round.

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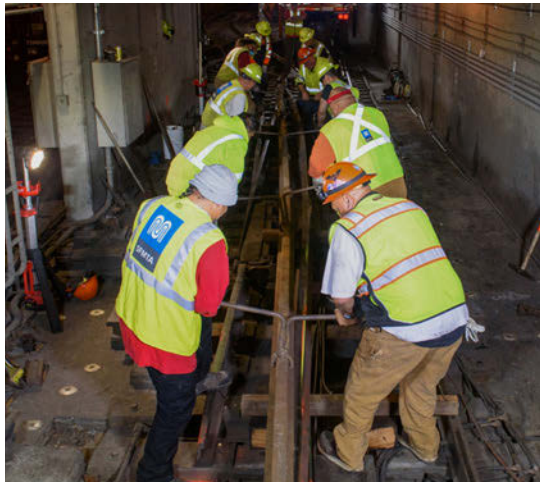


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Track crew power washing and removing trash from trackway during Fix It Week night maintenance work.



Track crew moving new rail into position by hand in Van Ness Crossover during a Fix It Week early subway shutdown.

“If the Warriors are playing or we have a certain event with the Giants, we might have to do five days and then leave the service available for the Giants for people to finish up the baseball game and get home to commute to and from and then continue another five days,” Drane said.

Drane stressed the Fix It Week service interruptions are not service shutdowns, but that they are early system closures, noting that instead of a closing time of 12:30

a.m., service may stop three hours earlier at 9:30 p.m. The agency also provides shuttles in replacement of some of the rail service hours during Fix It Week.

With Fix It Week affecting service hours over a longer period than a traditional service delay, SFMTA makes sure the community is aware long in advance before each Fix It Week takes place so residents have time to make transportation plans.

“We not only inform the media about Fix It Week, but we inform the public as well,” said Steven Chun, SFMTA deputy spokesperson. “We do a lot of messaging in advance on social media, as well as signs in the tunnel and around the station.”

The agency conducted two Fix It Week’s in 2019 before the March 2020 COVID-19 public health emergency was declared in the U.S., causing Fix It Week to be suspended until it was restarted in 2022. SFMTA has now conducted a total of seven Fix It Week’s. The results have been overall positive, with SFMTA

reducing major delays in the Market Street subway by more than 70 percent since the launch of Fix It Week.

The seventh Fix It Week occurred over the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday (Jan. 15) in the U.S. The agency viewed the week as successful, as it continued infrastructure work on the Market Street subway.

Drane says Fix It Week can be used as a training course for the nine MOW Teams. He states he uses Fix It Week as a “springboard [for] manager and supervisor training,” while pointing out everybody has a role during Fix It Week. Said roles change every Fix It Week, giving employers opportunities to be versatile in their management experience overseeing various projects. Drane acknowledged Fix It Week would not be a success without support from not just the teams that do the work, but the entire SFMTA.

“Success does not happen without everybody involved at the agency,” Drane explained. “It’s our security enforcement teams, our station agents assisting us with kind of opening the stations, closing the stations, passing out information because it can be a little confusing. It can be different because we’re closing early, having our transit management center and how they control and help us get everything closed up. It’s an entire agency effort through communicating, through support, through coordination. The maintenance teams are planning and doing the maintenance but the broader agency is helping us with so much support.”

The next Fix It Week is scheduled to take place between March 8 and March 16, 2024. The focus will continue to be on the Market Street subway. SFMTA is hoping to reach its goal of completing at least one Fix It Week every quarter during 2024. **L**

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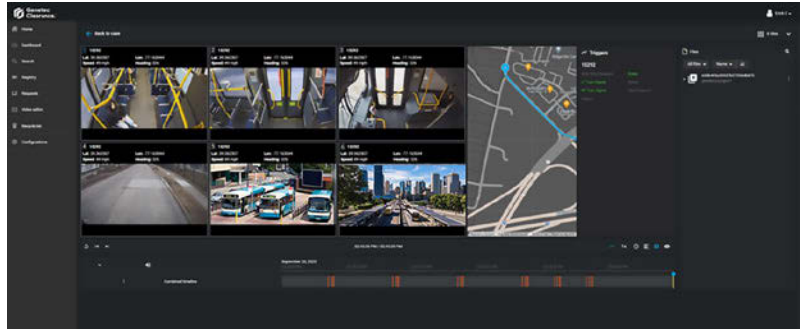
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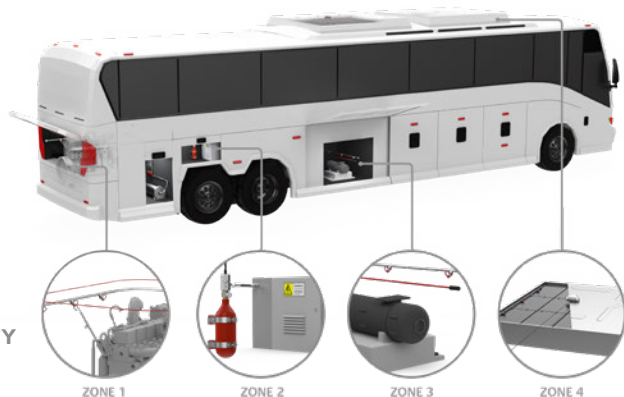
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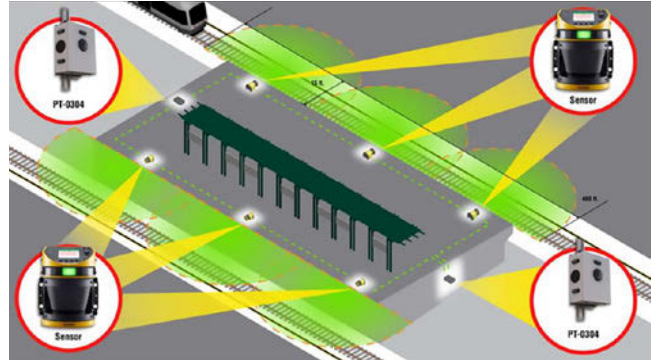
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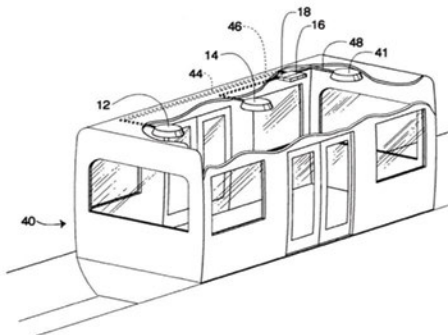
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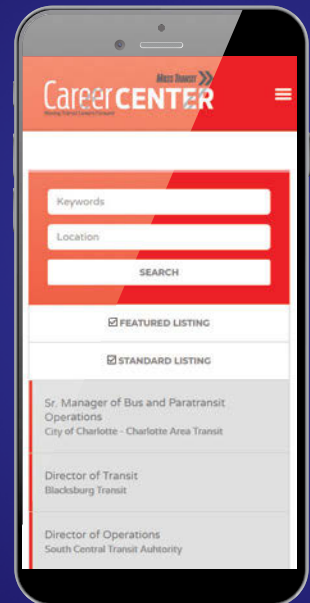
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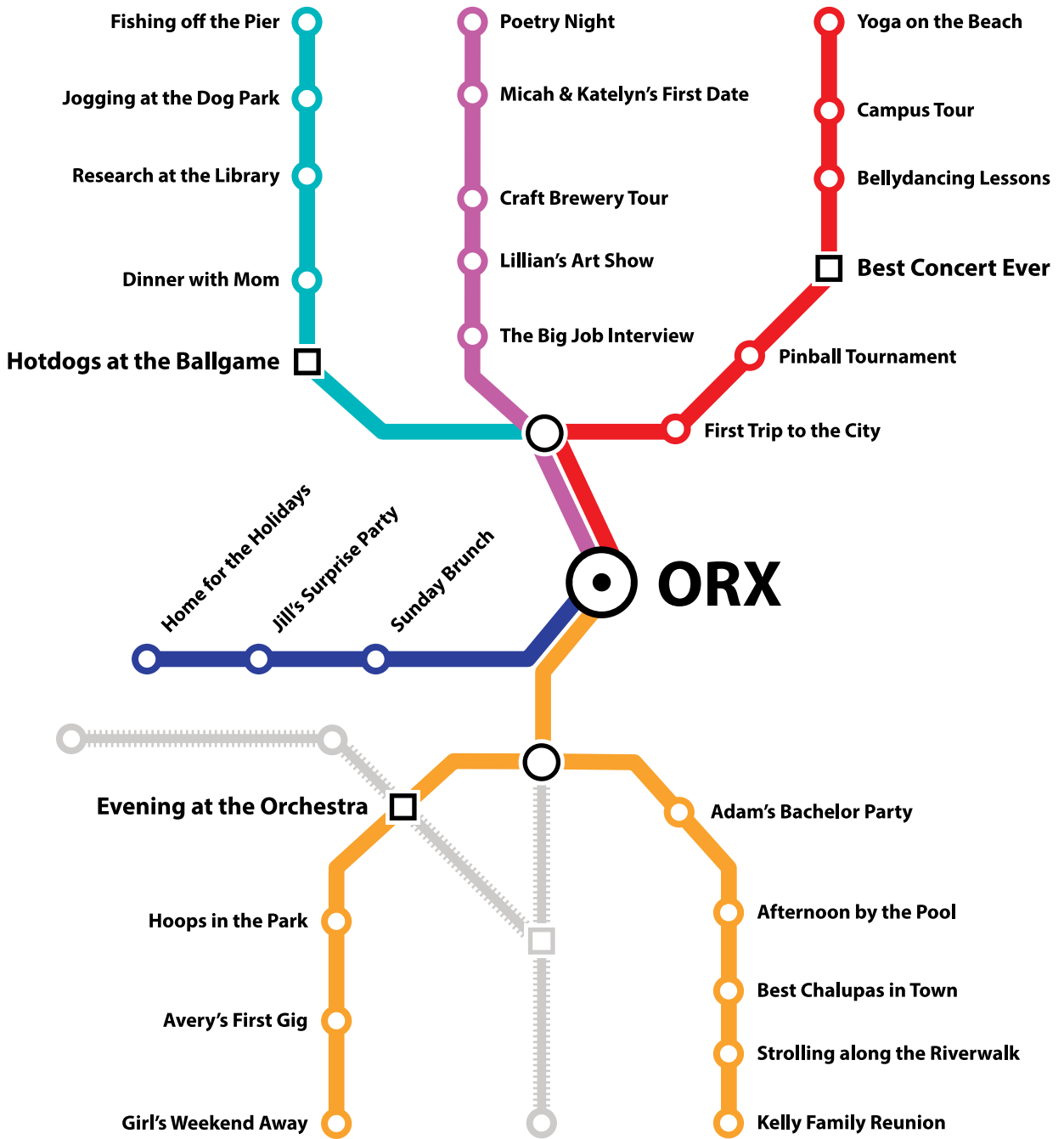
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