

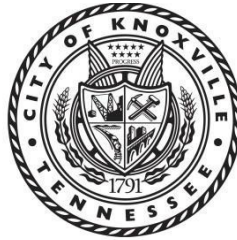
Knoxville Transportation Authority

Meeting Date: Thursday, October 16, 2025



Monthly Report
September 2025

Indya Kincannon
MAYOR
(865) 215-2040



CITY OF KNOXVILLE

Knoxville Transportation Authority

Debbie Helsley
CHAIR

Dustin Durham
VICE-CHAIR

Bethany Starritt
RECORDING SECRETARY

Beth Miller
Rick Whitted
Aly Taylor
Mary Thom-Adams
Nancy Nabors
Eboni Winford
Zach Roskop

John Lawhorn
ATTORNEY TO KTA

AGENDA

Thursday, October 16, 2025

City-County Building, Main Assembly Room

- I. Determination of Quorum
- II. Approval of Minutes – September
- III. Public Hearing- Downtown Connector Zero-Fare Recommendation
- IV. Reports
 - a. KTA Chair
 - b. Commissioner's Comments
 - c. Staff
 - i. City of Knoxville's Executive Director of Transit
Service Adjustments for December 1st
 - ii. TPO Transit Planner
- V. New Business
- VI. Old Business- Downtown Connector Zero-Fare Recommendation
- VII. Public Comments
- VIII. Set the next meeting for November 23, 2025, & Adjourn

I. Determination of Quorum

Chair Helsley called the meeting to order. She stated there was a quorum.

Commissioners in attendance:

Chair Helsley

Vice-Chair Durham

Commissioner Taylor

Commissioner Nabors

Commissioner Roskop

Commissioner Miller

Commissioner Thom Adams

II. Approval of Minutes

Chair Helsley asked if there were any questions regarding the September minutes. There were none.

Commissioner Taylor gave the 1st motion, and Vice-Chair Durham gave the 2nd motion. All were in favor, none opposed.

III. Reports

a. KTA Chair

Chair Helsey stated she did not have a report.

b. Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Roskop stated that he and his friends had an idea to have businesses and non-profit organizations partner with KAT to design the bus stops on the same street for a tourist and public attraction for a day to a week. He stated that it could be ten stops, all with their own aesthetic, such as wood, beer cans, and so on.

Mr. Mercer stated that Commissioner Roskop can send his friends to him and that they can talk out the logistics, as it all depends on what their plans are.

Mr. Burton stated that this idea was something that someone had wanted to do before, but that it stopped because of budgeting problems. Mr. Thorne then

stated that yes, neighborhoods had wanted to do it before, but as Mr. Burton had stated, it got pretty pricy and was stopped.

Vice-Chair Durham stated that starting next month, every Thursday before the KTA meeting, he wanted to start 'Ride with a Commissioner' where they would ride different routes and that passengers can ask questions and they could answer concerns.

Mr. Lawhorn stated that as long as Vice-Chair Durham plans to just advocate for taking the bus for transportation and not speak on behalf of the KTA board.

Vice-Chair Durham stated that it would be just a listening session and ask questions such as, "Can we get a bus shelter here?" and to answer that they want shelters everywhere, as that is just general advocacy. He stated he wanted to make sure it was okay to do so.

Mr. Lawhorn stated that Vice-Chair Durham can run any ideas by him and that if they are okay, he is happy to turn him loose.

Vice-Chair Durham stated that he would keep everyone notified regarding this idea, as he thinks it would be a fun thing to do once a month.

Chair Helsley then stated that she would like to welcome Commissioner Miller to the board as the newest commissioner.

i. City of Knoxville Director of Transit

Mr. Thorne stated he had two updates to give to the board. He continued that he would like to welcome Commissioner Miller as well, and that he had the chance to meet her a couple of weeks before. Additionally, he is happy to have her on board and is looking forward to working with her.

Mr. Thorne continued stating that he had one recommendation that KAT is making this month, and that the board would not vote on it until next month. He stated that the recommendation is to make the Downtown Connector zero-fare for a period of six months. The reasoning for this recommendation is to promote visitors and residents of Knoxville to ride the Downtown Connector. He stated he believed it would be perfect timing to begin in November, as there is always something happening throughout downtown Knoxville. Even more so around the holidays, and

not only downtown but near the stadium as well. He continued he thinks this would be a great initiative to bring more riders to the downtown area. Lastly, he stated again that he is making the recommendation and that the board would not vote on it until after a public hearing next month.

Vice-Chair Durham asked if this 6-month program was intended to make the Downtown Connector fare-free like the trolleys, if it were successful, or only during the six months selected every year. Mr. Thorne stated that yes, they would make it free like the trolleys. He continued that at the moment they are looking for ways to get the route subsidized as well, and make up for the loss of fare.

Commissioner Roskop then asked for clarification that if the program is successful that the Downtown Connector would remain free, and if it is not successful, would the route go away or back to normal.

Mr. Thorne stated that it would go back to charging fare. But again, they are looking for ways to subsidize the cost. Commissioner Roskop then asked if that meant like advertising or grants, which Mr. Thorne stated it was more like business partnerships or business chipping in. He continued that he understood that it wouldn't be completely subsidized, and that he thinks that if fares could be covered, it would be great. He then stated that he is already having those conversations with businesses and organizations to find out how they can subsidize this route.

Commissioner Taylor then asked if there had been any initiatives similar to this, and then how would KAT get the word out for this initiative if it is becoming permanent or during the pilot.

Mr. Thorne stated that once the board votes yes or no on this initiative, if it were voted yes, it would be posted on KAT's website as well as advertised on social media.

Commissioner Thom Adams then asked what determines success and how would KAT know. Mr. Thorne stated they had seen increases in ridership and stated the Planning Department could talk more about that. He continued that they want to get back to 25,000 in ridership numbers and that currently they are at 10,000-12,000 in ridership per month.

Mr. McCroskey stated that they have data from the trolley and use that as a comparison and as a starting point to do an analysis based off of the ridership patterns.

Vice-Chair Durham then asked how KAT got the figure of 25,000 in ridership from the trolley system. Mr. Thorne stated they are looking at the Blue Line trolley, and he believes they were at 20,000-25,000 a month on just this trolley.

Commissioner Roskop then asked if we had the same number of buses running on the Downtown Connector as we did with the trolleys, to which Mr. Thorne stated no, only three buses currently run, and he believed it was around eight buses that were just running trolleys. He continued stating that it is a 15-minute service for the Downtown Connector currently, which is similar to the Blue Line trolley.

Mr. McCroskey then stated that one factor that KAT will have to take out is the orange line trolley, which went over to UT and had a lot of student ridership. He continued, they will be taking out that data and then see where the numbers are currently versus what the route covers now.

Vice-Chair Durham then asked if the amount the Downtown Connector fare brings is a fairly minimal amount of the overall budget. Mr. Thorne stated it was 15% of the overall budget. Vice-Chair Durham then asked if KAT can differentiate the revenue cost on a per route basis or does KAT only view systemwide, to which Mr. Thorne stated they can look at it per route. Vice-Chair Durham then asked if KAT could send an email for the Downtown Connector on a route basis, as he believed it would be interesting to know, and would be a good sale to let everyone know that it is free because it is only 1% of what it costs to run.

Mr. Thorne stated that it is also important for the commissioner to know that KAT has twenty routes, and that 80% of our ridership comes from eight routes, and the other twelve bring in the rest of the 20% percent of ridership.

Commissioner Taylor asked that, aside from the students, if there were any other groups that were using the trolleys more than others or living in certain demographics. Mr. McCroskey stated he did not have the answer at that moment, but that he would get back to them. Mr. Thorne then stated he knows at least one or two rides a day on the Downtown Connector is affiliated with UT, as they are required to show their ID, and that operators will enter in the numbers. He continued, he knows it is not a large number of UT staff and students that take the Downtown Connector now. Vice-Chair Durham then asked if we knew if a similar

number of passengers that were riding the Orange Line trolley or taking the Cumberland Avenue bus to downtown is around the same as the Downtown trolley. Mr. Thorne stated he did not know, but that a lot of UT staff and students are taking routes 11, 17, and 10.

Commissioner Taylor then asked how KAT would advertise to those without or limited to the website. Mr. Thorne stated that another way that KAT will spread this information is through advertising racks, which are only on KAT buses. He stated they regularly hang up flyers and memos for new information, public hearings, and will be doing the same to advertise the free fare. He continued stating that they also have TVs that the marketing manager can set information on, which will catch a lot of people's attention.

Vice-Chair Durham then asked if we knew what had happened in March that caused a spike in the ridership for the Downtown Connector? Mr. Thorne stated there were a lot of tournaments, such as AU tournaments for basketball, volleyball, and others. He stated that people who were staying downtown would keep their cars parked at the hotels and would take the Downtown Connector to travel.

Commissioner Roskop then stated that he was asked if KAT could consider placing an official bus stop at the end of the Gay St. Bridge, when it officially becomes pedestrian-friendly. He stated that there is already a stop about a block away from the bridge, but that he knows it is tough because of the turn. Lastly, he stated that he just wanted to mention it for consideration for when everything becomes official.

ii. TPO Transit Planner

Mr. Burton introduced himself to Commissioner Miller and stated that he is a part of Knoxville Planning and that they do different types of transportation planning and also help with CAC and ETHRA, as well as KAT.

He stated that part of his meetings that week had been about Knox County's unified development ordinance and that there would be two more meetings about this. He stated that they were having meetings that day at 5:30 pm at the Powell Middle School and New Hopewell Elementary School. He stated that when they went through Advance Knox Planning, a lot of the public stated they wished we had transit out in

the county. He stated that Advance Knox is trying to have a land use plan that would develop more density on the main corridors and that if they can accomplish that, it would make it more viable to serve those areas with transit. He stated that he knew it was short notice, letting everyone know the meetings were that day at 5:30 pm, but that it would also be on Advance Knox's website, as there was a virtual meeting earlier that week. He continued that they would post the following day and that it is the same information that will be at the workshops. He also stated that it would have all the materials virtual, so that the public can comment.

Vice-Chair Durham asked Mr. Burton if the meetings were just informational or would the public would be giving input too. Mr. Burton stated that there is an opportunity for input and that he believes they are doing a presentation in the front, and that there are stations the public can go through and provide input.

Commissioner Taylor asked if the meeting today would be recorded, to which Mr. Burton stated that the virtual meeting was the one recorded and would be posted.

IV. New Business

Mr. Thorne stated that there was only one item for new business. First, he stated that KAT was happy that they would be hosting the Tennessee Public Transportation Association's (TPTA) annual conference in Knoxville. He continued because of this, he would be making a recommendation to change the October KTA Meeting from October 23 to October 16, as the TPTA conference would be going on the week of the 23rd. He stated it would be very difficult for staff to attend the meeting as well as the conference.

Chair Helsley asked if there was a motion to approve. Vice-Chair Durham made the first motion, Commissioner Roskop made the second motion. All were in favor, none opposed.

Mr. Thorne then stated a reminder that for the last three months of this year, the KTA meeting would be held on the third Thursday of each month. He then stated that typically, the meetings would be held on the third Thursday for November and December, but because of the approval of the meeting change, it will be all three remaining months.

V. Old Business

There was no old business.

VI. Public Comments

There were no public comments

VII. Set the Next Meeting and Adjourn

Chair Helsley set the meetings for October 16th, 2025, at the City County Building at 3:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Bethany H. Starritt

KTA Recording Secretary

KAT
KNOXVILLE AREA TRANSIT
ROUTE PERFORMANCE REPORT
September, 2025

ROUTE NUMBER	ROUTE NAME	RIDERSHIP	Percentage of Ridership	MILES	Percentage of Miles	HOURS	Percentage of Hours	Passg/ Mile	Passg/ Hour
1	Downtown Connector	6,459	2.9%	7,155	2.9%	1,000	5.3%	0.90	6.46
10	Sequoyah Hills	656	0.3%	1,323	0.5%	122	0.6%	0.50	5.39
11	Kingston Pike	28,753	13.0%	23,962	9.6%	1,859	9.8%	1.20	15.47
12	Western Ave	10,839	4.9%	22,896	9.2%	1,464	7.7%	0.47	7.40
15	Woodland Crosstown	12,720	5.7%	22,835	9.1%	1,813	9.5%	0.56	7.02
16	Cedar Bluff Connector	13,489	6.1%	21,882	8.8%	1,361	7.2%	0.62	9.91
17	Sutherland/Bearden	7,635	3.4%	7,539	3.0%	606	3.2%	1.01	12.60
20	Central Ave/Clinton Hwy	18,918	8.5%	20,283	8.1%	1,483	7.8%	0.93	12.76
22	Broadway	27,157	12.3%	16,320	6.5%	1,467	7.7%	1.66	18.52
23	Millertown	2,807	1.3%	5,690	2.3%	476	2.5%	0.49	5.90
24	Inskip/Breda Rd	4,030	1.8%	7,875	3.2%	649	3.4%	0.51	6.21
31	Magnolia Ave.	21,461	9.7%	15,935	6.4%	1,486	7.8%	1.35	14.45
32	Dandridge	3,802	1.7%	5,932	2.4%	429	2.3%	0.64	8.86
34	Burlington	16,152	7.3%	23,061	9.2%	1,469	7.7%	0.70	11.00
37	Morningside/Riverside	4,478	2.0%	4,219	1.7%	381	2.0%	1.06	11.74
40	South Knoxville	2,248	1.0%	7,807	3.1%	472	2.5%	0.29	4.76
41	Chapman Hwy	15,769	7.1%	19,627	7.9%	962	5.1%	0.80	16.40
42	UT/Ft Sanders Hospitals	5,326	2.4%	7,836	3.1%	956	5.0%	0.68	5.57
44	University Park	12,578	5.7%	604	0.2%	60	0.3%	20.84	209.63
45	Vestal	6,196	2.8%	7,108	2.8%	471	2.5%	0.87	13.15
	Other/ Unknown	0							
SUB TOTAL LINE SERVICE		221,473		249,888		18,984		0.89	11.67
LIFT SERVICE		6,844		40,890		3,440		0.17	1.99
TOTAL SCHEDULED SERVICES		228,317		290,778		22,424		0.79	10.18
TOTAL CHARTER SERVICES		18,469		1,441		371		12.81	49.83
GRAND TOTAL ALL KAT SERVICES		246,697		292,219		22,795		0.84	10.82



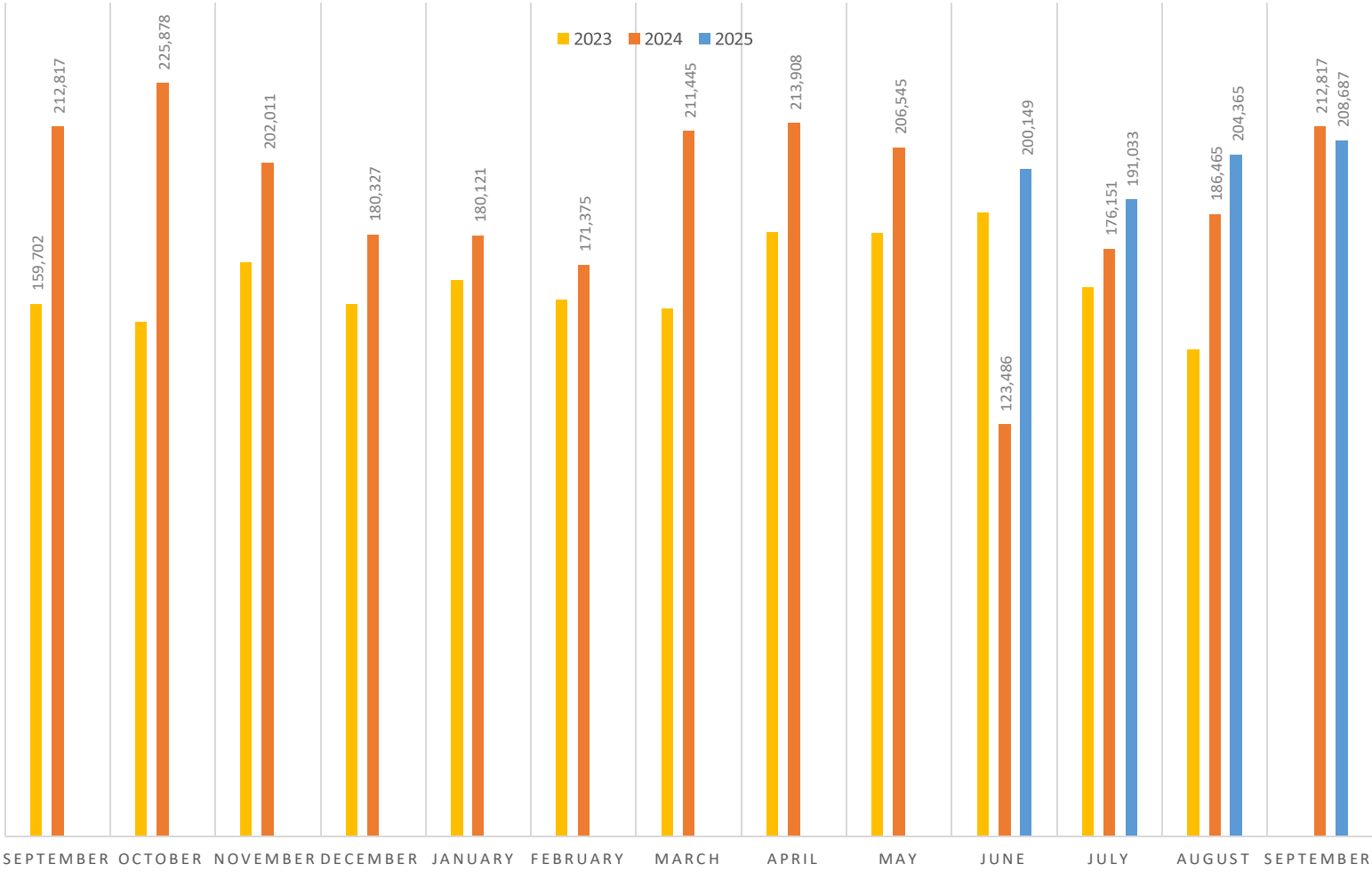
KNOXVILLE AREA TRANSIT

SYSTEM PERFORMANCE REPORT

September, 2025

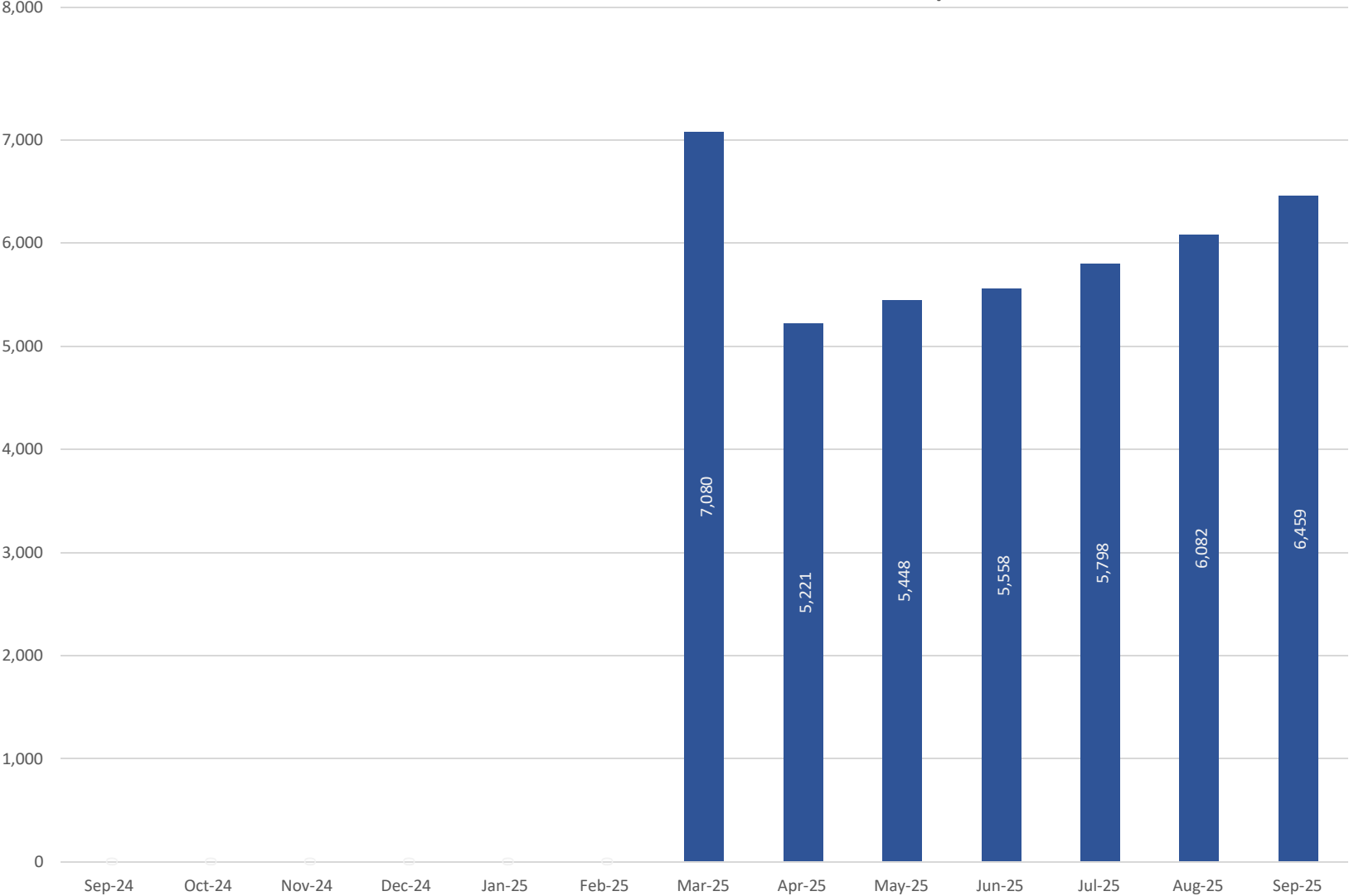
	<u>THIS MONTH</u>			<u>FISCAL YEAR-TO-DATE</u>		
	This Year	Last Year	Change	This Year	Last Year	Change
FIXED ROUTE SERVICE						
Total Passengers	221,473	162,689	36%	636,243	488,067	30%
System Generated Revenue				\$0	\$298,758	-100%
Revenue Veh. Miles	249,888	209,309	19%	757,806	627,928	21%
Revenue Veh. Hours	18,984	16,536	15%	58,265	49,609	17%
Passengers/Mile	0.89	0.78	14%	0.84	0.78	8%
Passengers/Hour	11.67	9.84	19%	10.92	9.84	11%
Preventable Accidents	5	3	67%	12	9	33%
Mechanical Road Calls	34	33	3%	180	99	82%
Accidents/100,000 Miles	2.00	1.43	40%	1.58	1.43	10%
Miles/Road Failure	7,350	6,343	16%	4,210	6,343	-34%
DEMAND RESPONSE					0	
Total Passengers	6,844	5,990	14%	20,106	17,970	12%
System Generated Revenue				\$0	\$28,991	-100%
Revenue Veh. Miles	40,890	41,156	-1%	127,491	123,468	3%
Revenue Veh. Hours	3,440	3,053	13%	9,535	9,159	4%
Passengers/Mile	0.17	0.15	15%	0.16	0.15	8%
Passengers/Hour	1.99	1.96	1%	2.11	1.96	7%
Preventable Accidents	0.00	0.00	0%	0	0	0%
Mechanical Road Calls	1.00	2.00	-50%	9	6	50%
Accidents/100,000 Miles	0.00	0.00	0%	0.00	0.00	0%
Miles/Road Failure	40,890	20,578	99%	14,166	20,578	-31%
CHARTER SERVICE					0	
Charters	0	121	-100%	0	363	-100%
Sports Charters	6,604	0	660400%	41,682	0	0%
Total Passengers	6,604	121	5358%	41,682	363	11383%
Revenue						0%
Football Shuttle Charters				\$0	-\$300	-100%
Trolley Charters				\$0	\$3,500	-100%
Total Miles	1,441	79	1725%	4,240	237	1689%
Total Hours	370.7	14.8	2413%	1,066	44	2309%

FIXED ROUTE RIDERSHIP BY MONTH



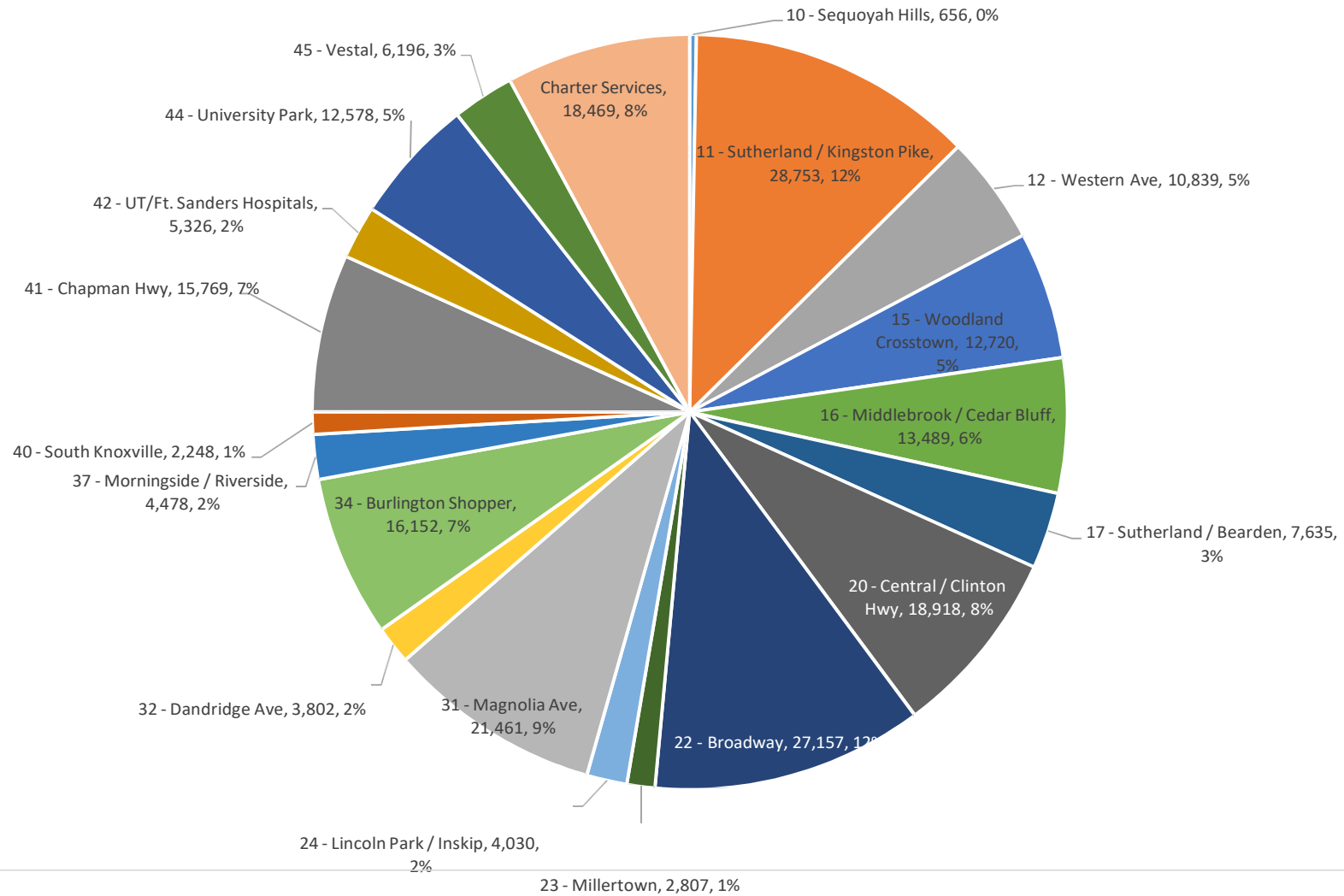
*updated to include 2025 monthly data

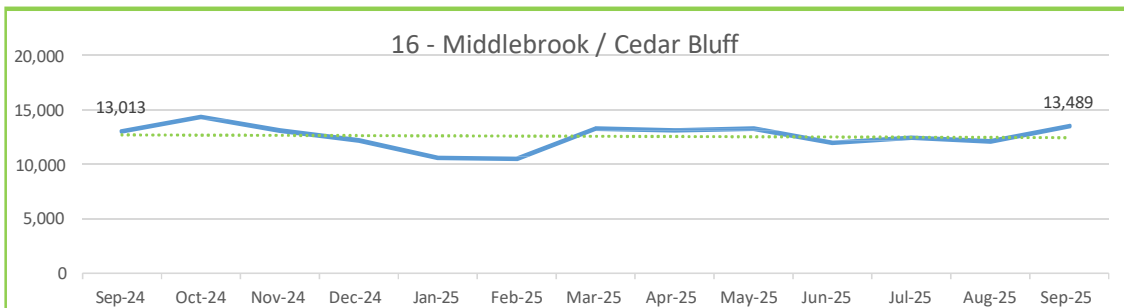
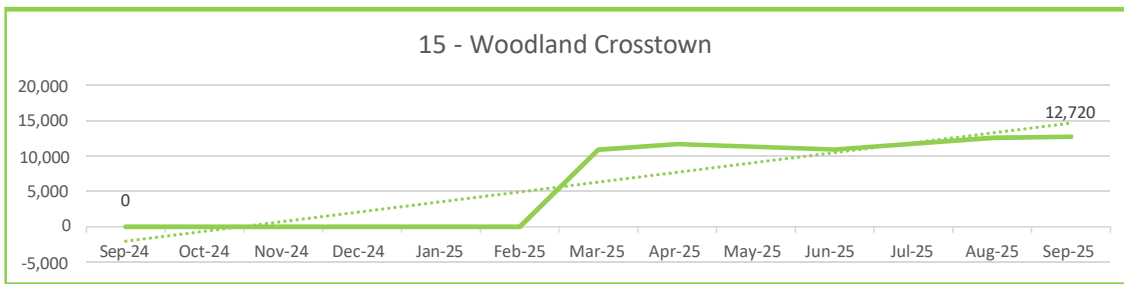
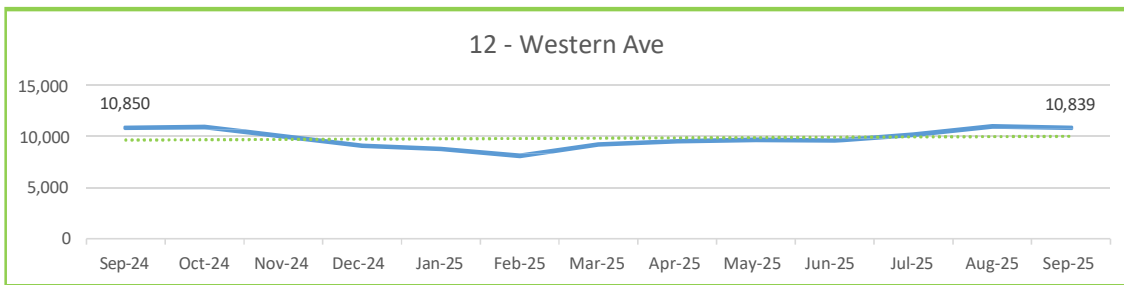
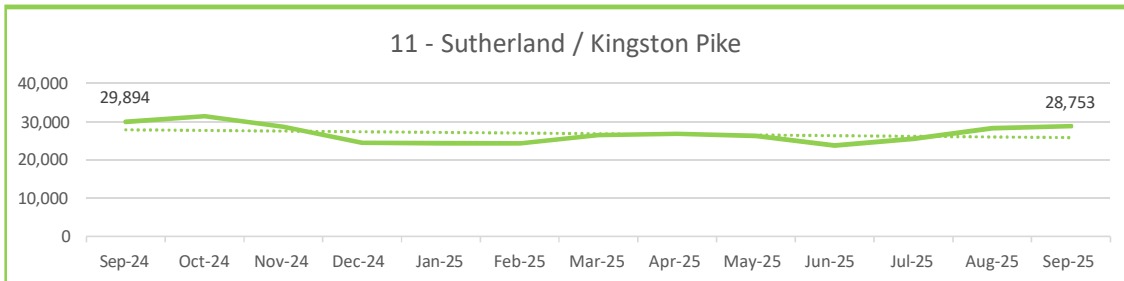
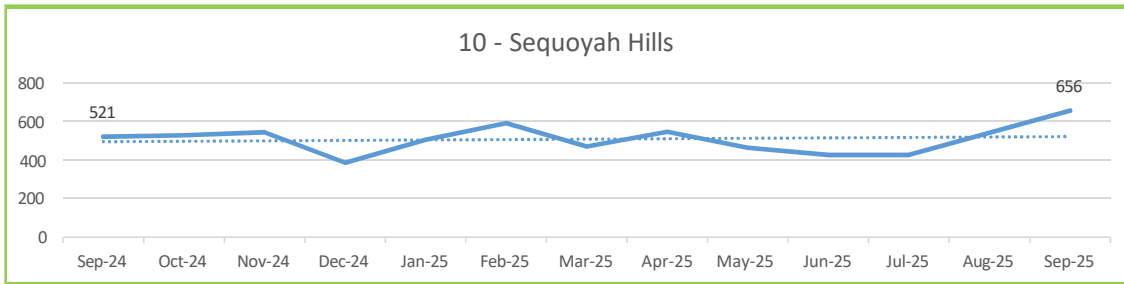
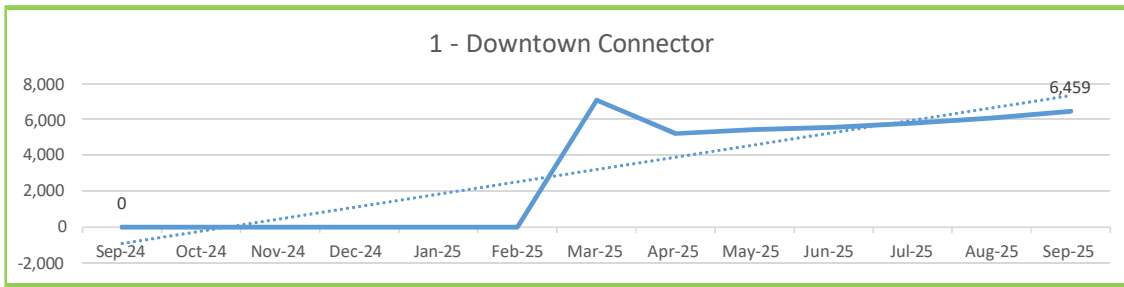
1 - Downtown Connector Ridership

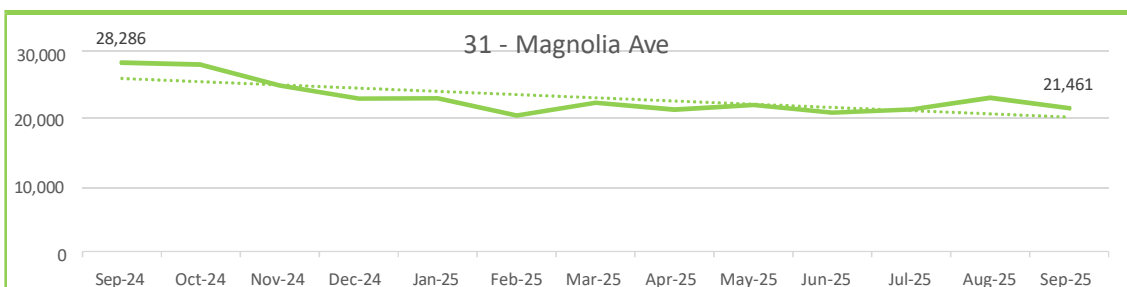
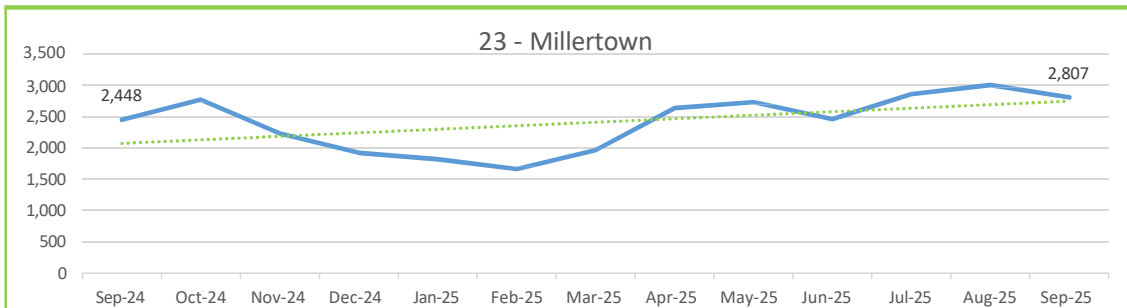
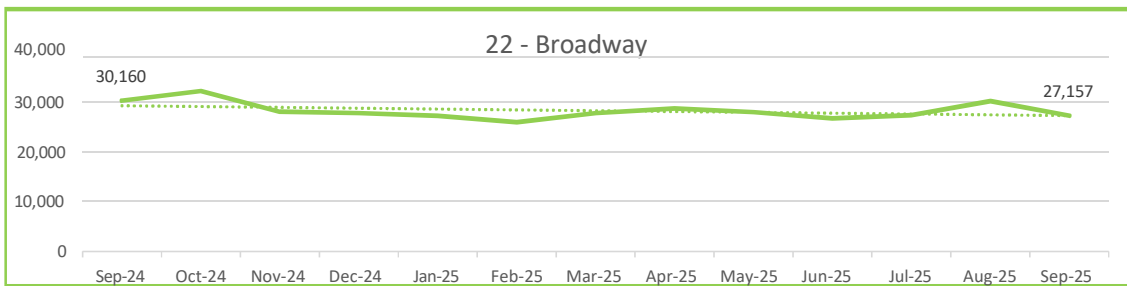
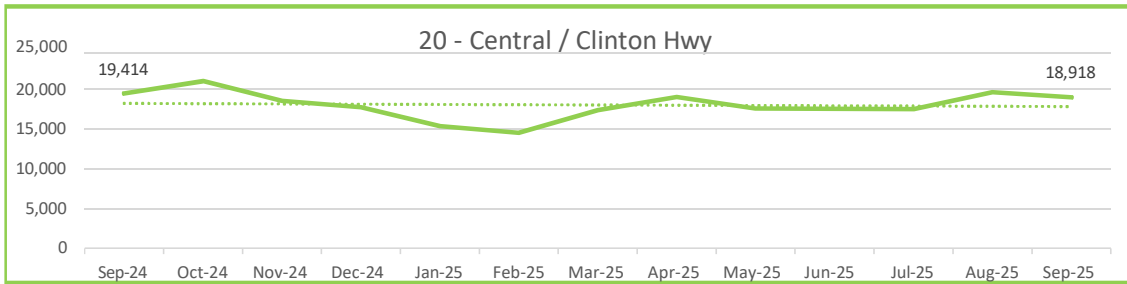
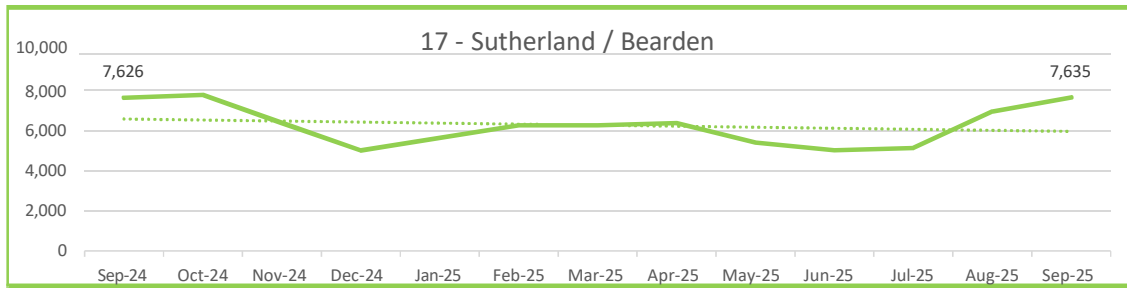


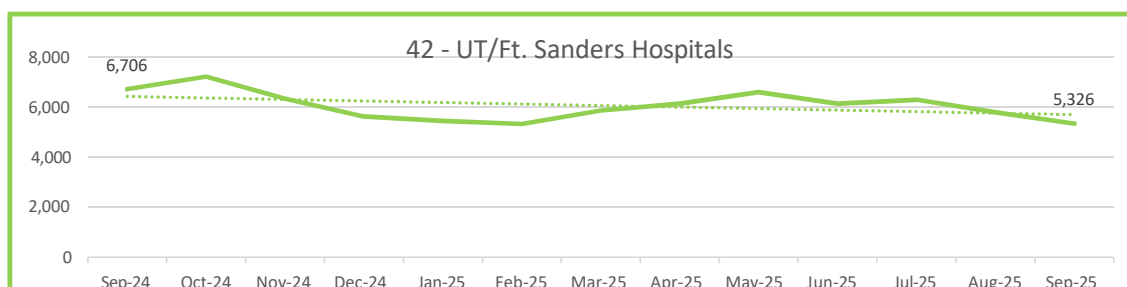
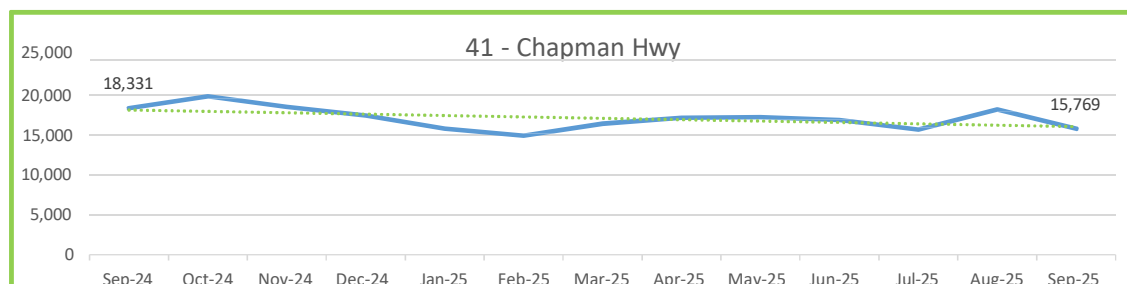
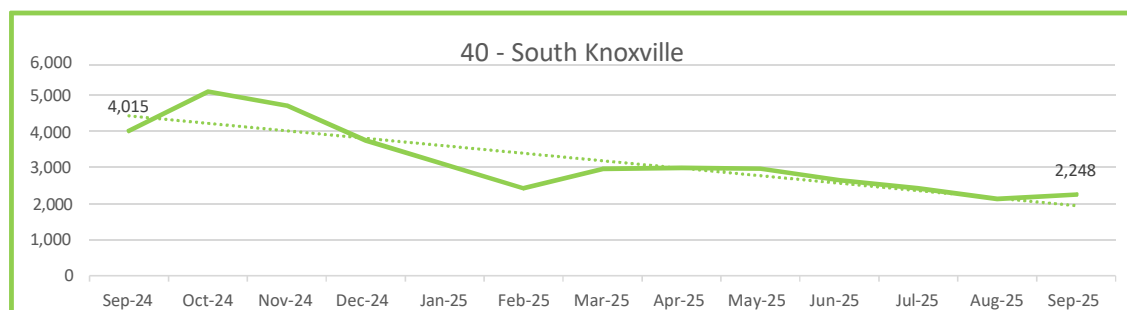
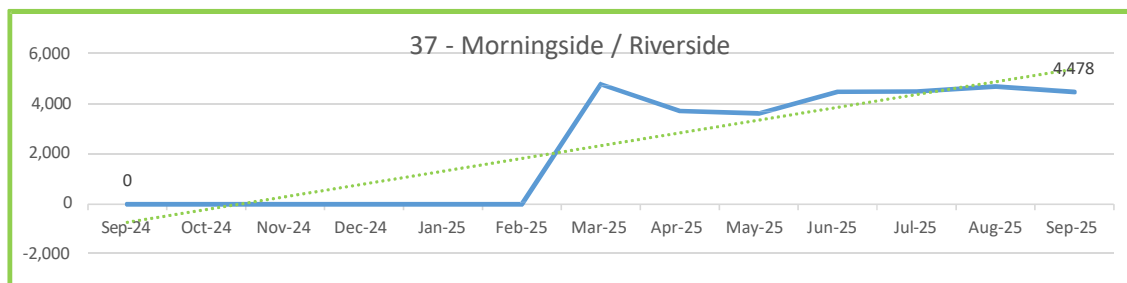
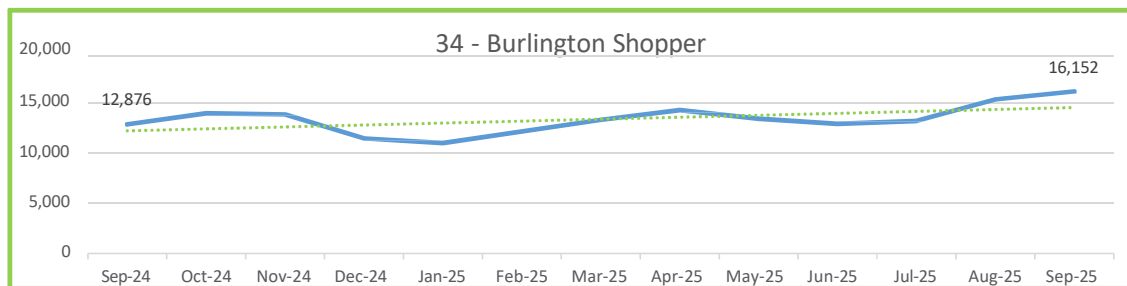
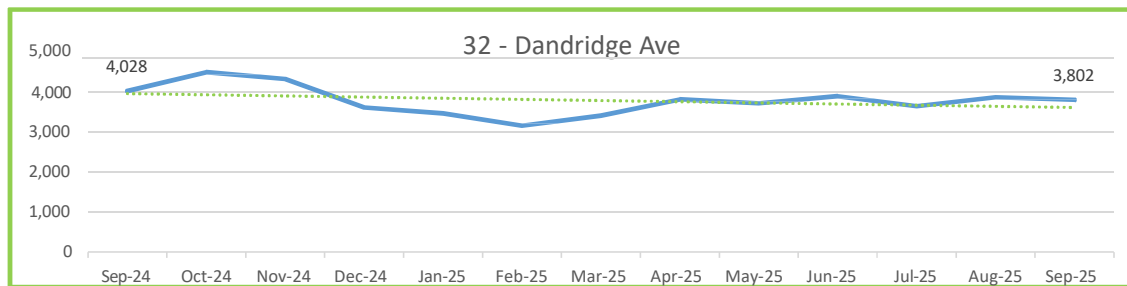
■ 1 - Downtown Connector

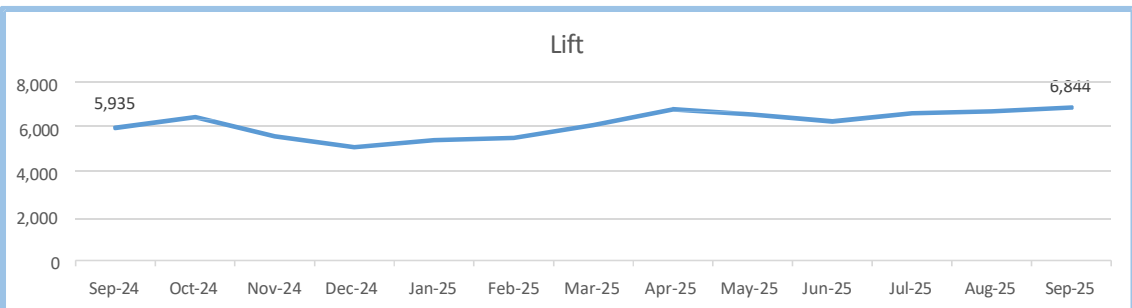
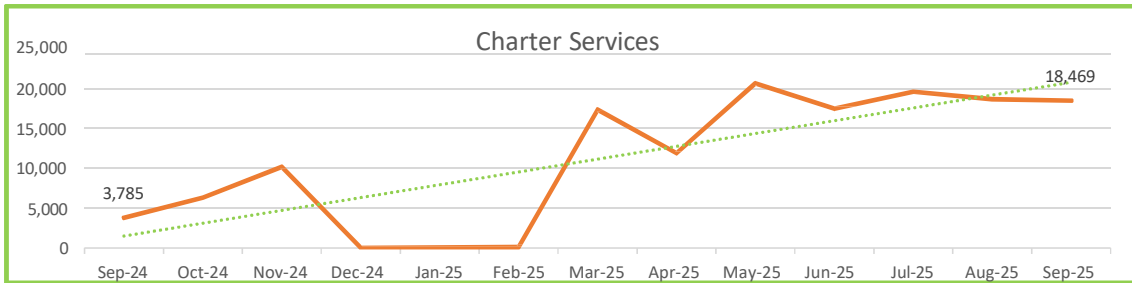
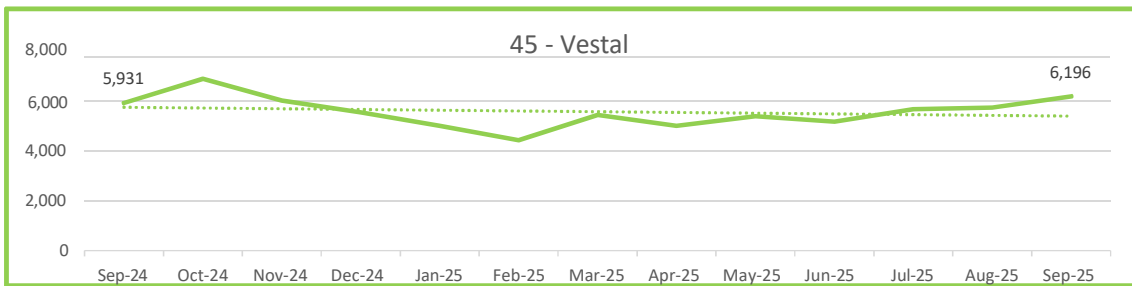
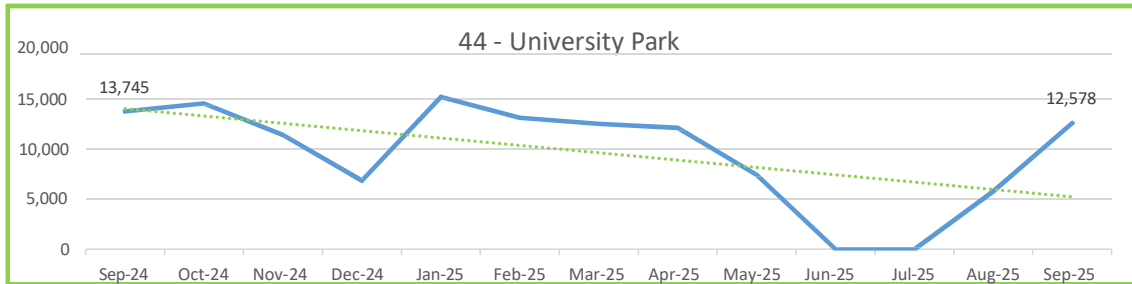
September 2025 System Ridership by Route













KAT RIDERSHIP_APC

September 2025



ROUTE #	ROUTE NAME	FY26	FY25	% CHANGE	YTD/FY26	YTD/FY25	% CHANGE
1	Downtown Connector	6,459	10,781	-40.1%	18,339	13,629	34.6%
10	Sequoyah Hills	656	521	25.9%	1,623	631	157.2%
11	Kingston Pike	28,753	29,894	-3.8%	82,474	85,395	-3.4%
12	Western Ave	10,839	10,850	-0.1%	32,004	46,528	-31.2%
13	Beaumont	-	-	0.0%	-	3,809	-100.0%
15	Woodland Crosstown	12,720	11,985	6.1%	37,024	14,618	153.3%
16	Cedar Bluff Connector	13,489	13,013	3.7%	38,008	23,074	64.7%
17	Sutherland/Bearden	7,635	7,626	0.1%	19,704	28,317	-30.4%
20	Central Ave/Clinton Hwy	18,918	19,414	-2.6%	55,916	47,898	16.7%
21	Lincoln Park	-	-	0.0%	-	6,692	-100.0%
22	Broadway	27,157	30,160	-10.0%	84,474	90,722	-6.9%
23	Millertown	2,807	2,448	14.7%	8,668	13,851	-37.4%
24	Inskip/Breda Rd	4,030	4,973	-19.0%	12,809	12,531	2.2%
30	Parkridge	-	-	0.0%	-	6,594	-100.0%
31	Magnolia Ave.	21,461	28,286	-24.1%	65,761	76,393	-13.9%
32	Dandridge	3,802	4,028	-5.6%	11,314	17,141	-34.0%
33	M.L.K.	-	-	0.0%	-	9,017	-100.0%
34	Burlington	16,152	12,876	25.4%	44,699	32,906	35.8%
37	Morningside/Riverside	4,478	5,175	-13.5%	13,676	6,556	108.6%
40	South Knoxville	2,248	4,015	-44.0%	6,798	11,286	-39.8%
41	Chapman Hwy	15,769	18,331	-14.0%	49,596	55,422	-10.5%
42	UT/Ft Sanders Hospitals	5,326	6,706	-20.6%	17,387	21,130	-17.7%
44	University Park	12,578	13,745	-8.5%	18,347	31,552	-41.9%
45	Vestal	6,196	5,931	4.5%	17,622	16,304	8.1%
90	Crosstown	-	-	0.0%	-	15,926	-100.0%
	Other	-	-	0.0%	-	-	0.0%
SUBTOTAL		221,473	240,758	-8.0%	636,243	687,922	-7.5%
82	Orange Line Trolley	-	-	0.0%	-	12,543	-100.0%
84	Green Line Trolley	-	-	0.0%	-	15,801	-100.0%
86	Blue Line Trolley	-	-	0.0%	-	37,053	-100.0%
SUBTOTAL		-	-	0.0%	-	65,397	-100.0%
TOTAL PASSENGERS WITH TROLLEYS		221,473	240,758	-8.0%	636,243	753,319	-15.5%
LIFT SERVICE		6,844	5,557	23.2%	20,106	18,819	6.8%
KAT CONNECT		1	5	-80.0%	19	5	280.0%
TOTAL SCHEDULED SERVICES		228,318	246,320	-7.3%	656,349	772,138	-15.0%
TOTAL CHARTER SERVICES		18,469	3,785	388.0%	32,634	7,657	326.2%
GRAND TOTAL ALL KAT SERVICES		246,787	250,105	-1.3%	688,983	779,795	-11.6%

SEPTEMBER 2025

RIDERSHIP

Ridership

Total Boardings:

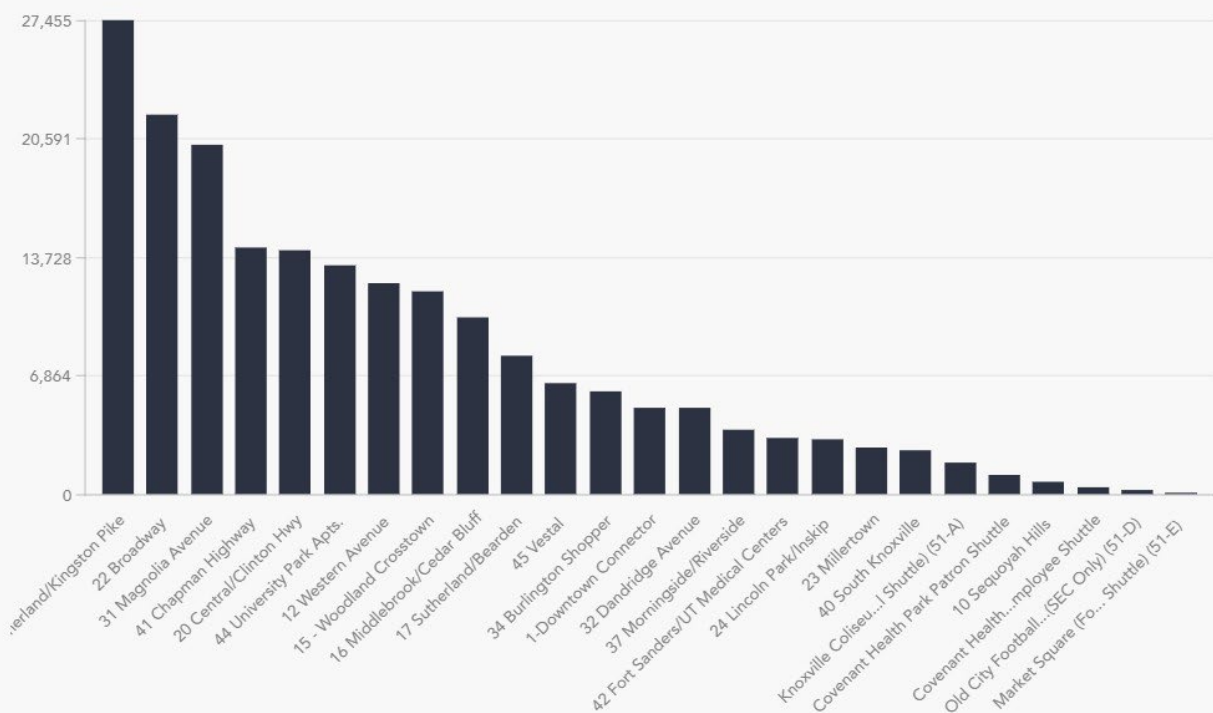
195,558

Change from
previous period:

+8%

Change from same
period last year:

-16%





MONTHLY RIDERSHIP
SEPTEMBER REPORT FY2026

Month	Booked Trips	Completed Trips	No-Show/Cancel	Unique Riders	Connected w/ Route 12	Connected w/ Route 20	Ineligible Trip Requests	On-Time Performance
July	14	3	11	9	2	4	8	100%
August	20	13	7	1	8	5	0	76.92%
September	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	100%

SEPTEMBER 2025

ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

Route Performance

ON TIME: 80.1%

EARLY: 4.0%

LATE: 15.9%

