

Ridership Committee

August 16, 2023 | 4:00 – 5:30pm



Onsite:

Greater Portland Transit District
114 Valley Street, Operations Conference Room | Portland, ME 04102

Remote:

Please click the link below to join the webinar:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83891311302?pwd=bUpsRk9JU3A2djVhOGZuMUU5UVROQT09>
Webinar ID: 838 9131 1302 | Passcode 950935 |
Phone: (301) 715-8592 | Telephone participants: *9 to raise hand, *6 to unmute

MEETING AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER	ACTION or INFORMATION
1. Call Meeting to Order (4:00)	Andrew Zarro, Vice Chair	N/A
2. Public Comment (4:00-4:05) The METRO Board's Ridership Committee welcomes public comment for items not listed on this agenda at this time. For items listed on the agenda, the chair will allow members of the public to comment following staff presentation. There is a <i>three-minute time limit</i> per citizen at each point. (Comments will be paraphrased in the meeting minutes)	Andrew Zarro, Vice Chair	Information
3. Approval of Meeting Minutes (4:05-4:10) Review and approve the minutes from the June 2023 meeting of the Ridership Committee.	Andrew Zarro, Vice Chair	ACTION
4. Ridership and Fare Revenue Update (4:10-4:30) Staff will provide information on the public outreach and implementation status of the Transit Together project and ARPA-funded service improvements	Mike Tremblay, Transit Dev. Director	ACTION
5. August 2023 Service Changes (4:30-4:45) Staff will provide information on ridership and fare revenue trends for calendar year 2022 and January 2023.	Mike Tremblay, Transit Dev. Director	Information
6. Proterra Update (4:45-5:00) Staff will provide an update on the status of Proterra, the manufacturer of our battery electric buses.	Mike Tremblay, Transit Dev. Director Glen Fenton, Chief Transp. Officer	Information

<p>7. Fare Policy Update (5:00-5:15) Staff will present the proposed 10-ride pass option, planned for October 1, 2023 rollout, for recommendation to the full Board.</p>	Mike Tremblay, Transit Dev. Director	ACTION
<p>8. Future Agenda Items (5:15-5:20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fare Deal ending and 10 Ride Pass Rollout • Rock Row Transit Service Development (2022) • Proposed UNE Medical Center (2022) • Partnering with bicycling entities, including Portland’s proposed bicycle sharing program 	Andrew Zarro, Vice Chair	Information
<p>9. Upcoming Meetings (5:20-5:25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Directors – August 24, 2023 • Finance Committee – T.B.D. • Executive Committee – September 13, 2023 • Ridership Committee – September 20, 2023 	Andrew Zarro, Vice Chair	Information
<p>10. Adjournment (5:30)</p>	Andrew Zarro, Vice Chair	N/A

As of November 9, 2022 Greater Portland Metro is holding meetings of the Board of Directors (and its committ4ees) in hybrid format, both in person at Metro’s offices and via webinar. The remote portions of all meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of [Metro’s Remote Participation Policy](#) (adopted August 25, 2022) as well as LD 1772, PL 2022 Ch. 666, and 1 MRSA Chapter 13, Subchapter 1.

Ridership Committee

June 14, 2023 | 4:00pm -5:00pm



DRAFT

Draft Minutes of the Metro Ridership Committee Meeting on Wednesday, June 14 at 4:00pm via Zoom and in person

Onsite:

Greater Portland Transit District, 114 Valley Street, Conference Room A | Portland, ME 04102

Remote: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85271681358?pwd=S2lFMm1zeXdDT3pFTVBZaTcyMVVYz09>

Committee Members Present: Ed Suslovic Andrew Zarro Pious Ali Prosper Lohomboli	Non-Committee Board Members present: None
Committee Members Not present Hope Cahan Merrill Barter Bill Rixon	Staff and Others Present: Greg Jordan, Executive Director Mike Tremblay, Transit Development Director Glenn Fenton, Chief Transportation Officer
	Public: No members of the public were present.

1. Andrew Zarro called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

2. Public Comment – No members of the public were present.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The February and March 2023 meeting minutes were approved unanimously of those present.

4. Transit Together and ARPA Implementation Plan

Mike Tremblay presented Metro’s plan for rollout of improvements identified in Transit Together and funded with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The plan was recommended for adoption by the full Board unanimously of those present.

5. Ridership and Fare Revenue Updates

Mike Tremblay presented an update on ridership and fare revenue through May 2023. **Ed Suslovich** noted that a recent [letter to the editor](#) in the Press Herald falsely claimed no one is riding the bus, and recommended that Metro staff respond, which was generally agreed upon by the other attending committee members ([a response letter was published on June 27](#))

6. Performance Metrics

Mike provided information on performance metrics, including performance of our two battery electric buses.

7. Future Agenda Items

- Rock Row Transit Service Development
- Proposed UNE Medical Center

- Partnering with bicycling entities, including Portland’s proposed bicycle sharing program

8. Upcoming Meetings

- Board of Directors – June 22, 2023
- Finance Committee – August 16, 2023
- Executive Committee – August 9, 2023
- Ridership Committee – August 16, 2023

9. Adjournment – 4:58pm

RIDERSHIP COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM 4

DATE

August 10, 2023

SUBJECT

Ridership and Fare Revenue Update

PURPOSE

Staff updating the committee on ridership trends, including data on the ongoing Fare Deal promotion

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

Ridership has continued to show strong improvement compared to 2022 over the summer, with year-over-year ridership improvements of over 45% in May, June, and July. Ridership recovery peaked at 88% of 2019 ridership in June before settling to 83% in July; however, Metro is optimistic that this ridership recovery will continue to climb as summer turns to autumn.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for information and discussion.

CONTACT

Mike Tremblay
Director of Transit Development
(207) 517-3023
mtremblay@gpmetro.org

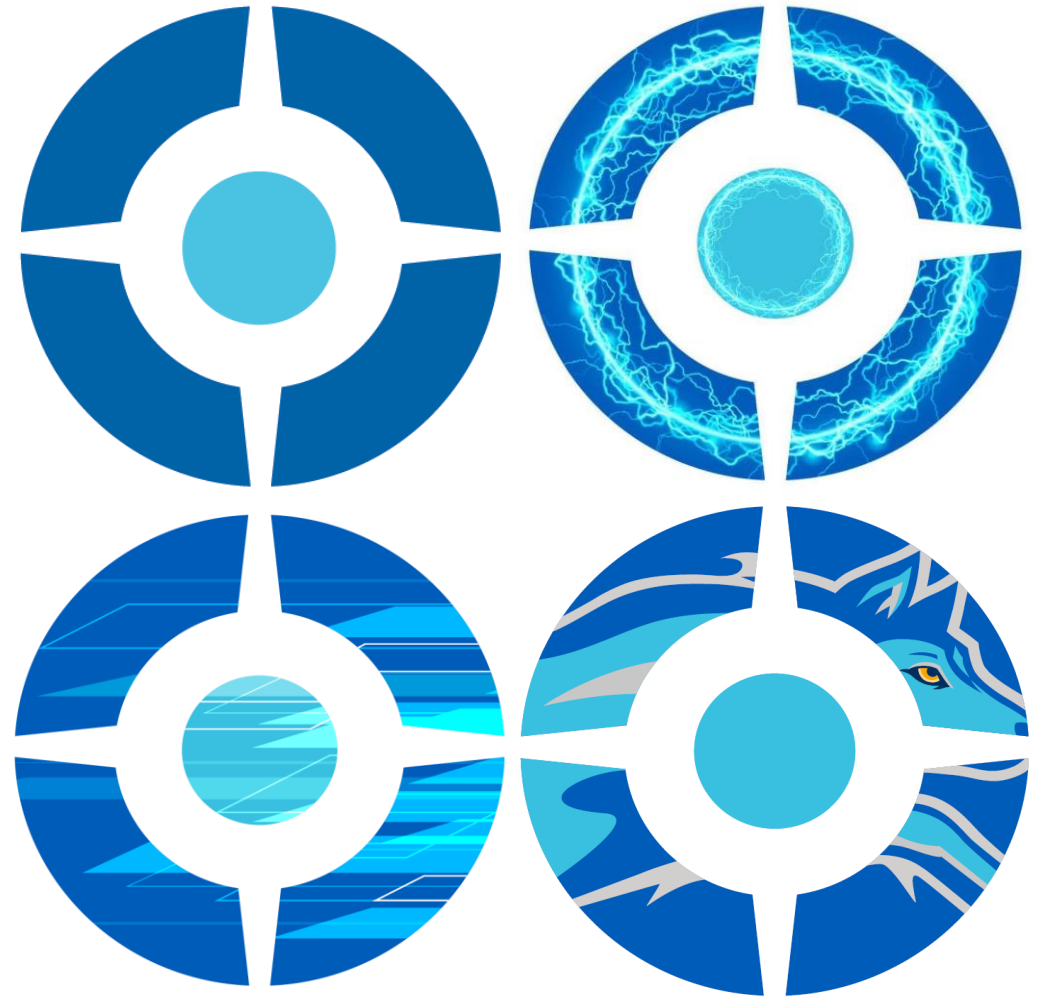
ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Ridership committee slide deck

GREATER PORTLAND METRO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ridership Committee

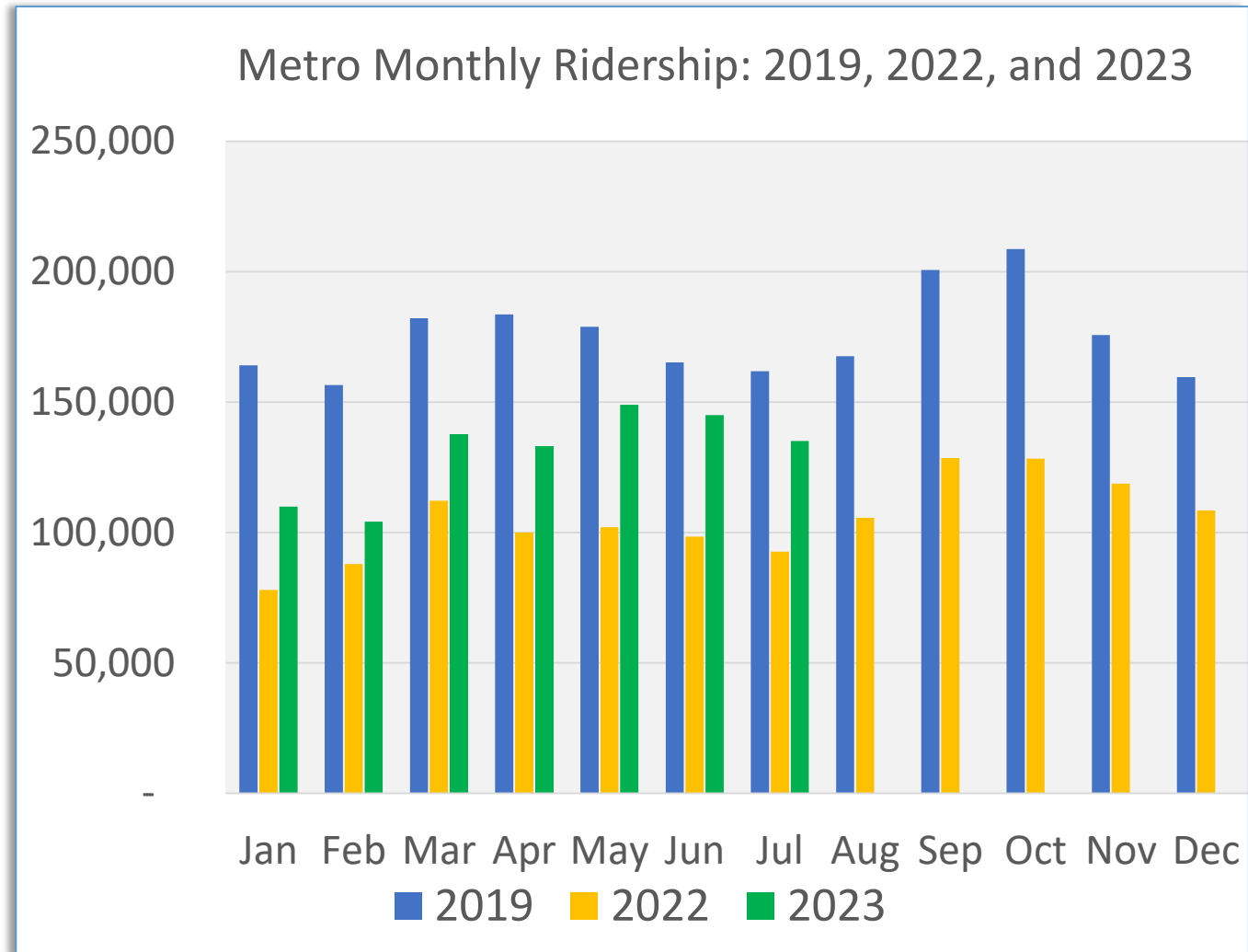
June 14, 2023



Item 4 – Ridership and Fare Revenue

Ridership Update

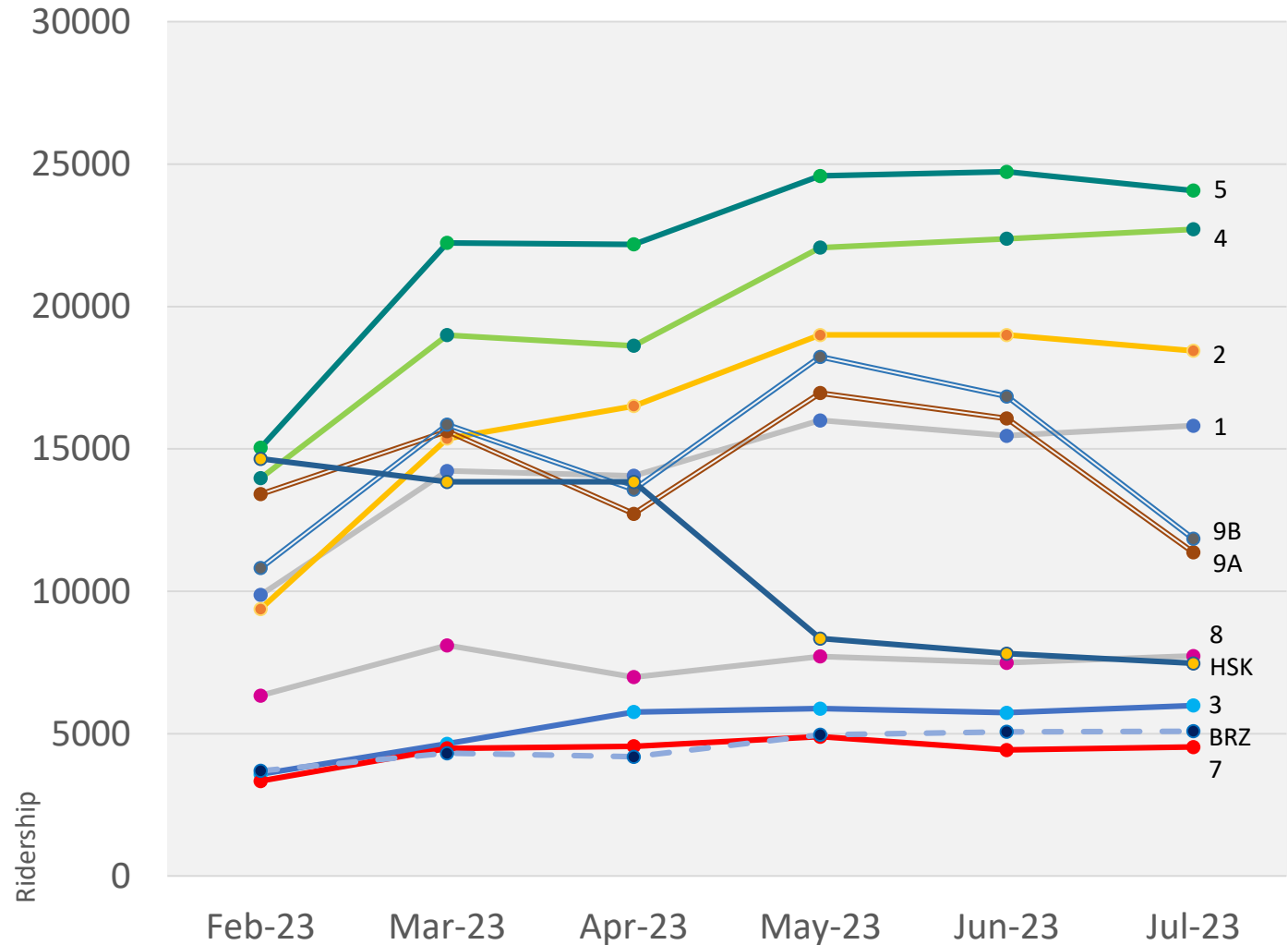
- Metro continues to see strong ridership through the summer of 2023
 - +47% YOY, 88% recovery rate in June
 - +46% YOY, 82% recovery rate in July
- Fare revenue lower due to Fare Deal
 - Average fares range from \$1.02 to \$1.18 since March 2023, typically \$1.30-\$1.50



Item 4 – Ridership and Fare Revenue

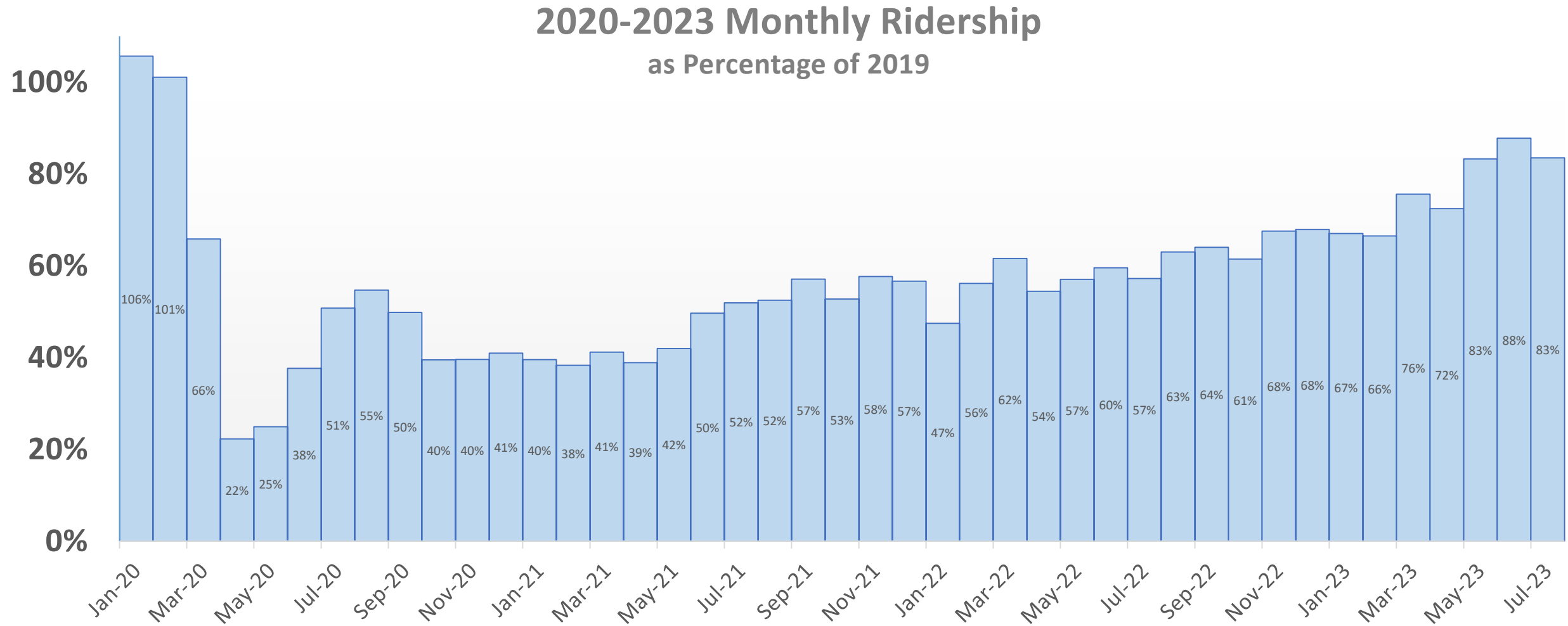
Ridership Update

- Since February 2023...
 - Overall ridership up 30%
 - Route 2 ridership up 97%
 - Route 1, 3, 4, 5 ridership up 60-70%
 - BREEZ ridership up 38%



Item 4 – Ridership and Fare Revenue

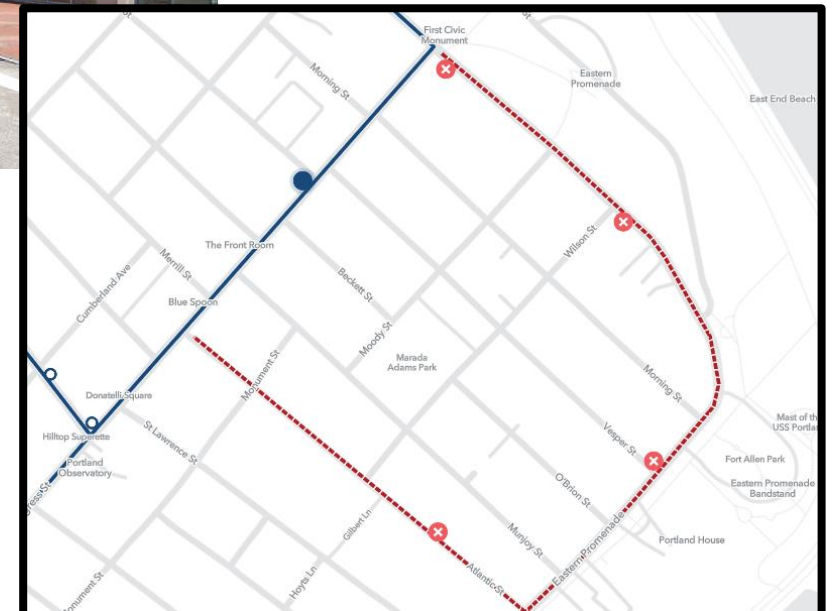
Ridership Update



Item 5 – August 2023 Service Changes

ARPA/Transit Together Improvements

- Service Improvements Coming Soon
 - Husky Line extension to Hancock/Thames
 - Route 9A/9B off-peak and Saturday frequency improvements
 - BREEZ weekday headway improvements
 - Route 1 modification on Munjoy Hill



Item 5 – August 2023 Service Changes

Other Adjustments

- Route 3
 - About 40% of weekday trips will run “short” to Westbrook Community Center – no service to Riverton Hannaford (On-time performance for Rtes. 3 and 5)
- Route 4
 - Reduced Hannaford service on Saturday (On-time performance)
- Route 5
 - Modified schedule on weekdays
 - Eliminated service to Hutchins Drive on Saturdays (On-time performance)

Item 7 – Fare Policy Update

The 10-Ride Pass Returns

Metro, South Portland, and BSOOB plan to re-introduce the 10-ride pass beginning October 1, 2023

- Coincides with end of the Fare Deal
- 10-ride pass would be available through Dirigo smartcards or Umo app only -- **no paper tickets**
- Reduced fare and express versions would be available
- Allows passbacks and transfers – great for groups
- No fare capping



Item 7 – Fare Policy Update

The 10-Ride Pass Returns

Benefits

- Easier boarding for groups, who currently may be discouraged from riding, or pay in cash
- For infrequent riders, a 10-ride pass presents a discount
- A per-ride pass may be more intuitive than stored value for some riders
- May encourage more people to switch to Dirigo from cash

Considerations

- Will likely reduce systemwide average fare slightly, resulting in reduced fare revenue unless there is a corresponding increase in ridership
- Groups with some people who are reduced-fare eligible would still require a separate pass to take advantage



RIDERSHIP COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM 5

DATE

August 10, 2023

SUBJECT

August 2023 Service Changes

PURPOSE

Staff updating the committee service changes scheduled for August 27, 2023

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

Metro is beginning our Transit Together implementation beginning this month, with several improvements aimed at improving ridership.

The Husky Line will be extended to the Eastern Waterfront, terminating at Hancock Street at Thames Street. Metro is interested in finding a permanent “mini-hub” on Thames Street in the future, which will involve discussions with, and action from, City of Portland staff and/or City Council. Stops will also be added on Franklin Street at Fore Street.

Route 9 will run with continuous 30-minute headways from morning until evening, Monday, through Saturday. Additionally, an extra hour of nighttime service will be added to the Route 9B on weekdays and Saturdays, aligning it with Route 9A service.

The BREEZ will run with two extra round trips on weekdays, and with a more regular off-peak schedule. Buses will run about once every 75 minutes on weekdays, with additional buses during peak hours.

Route 1’s alignment will no longer run along the south side of Munjoy Hill (Eastern Promenade and Atlantic Avenue), and will instead turn directly from Eastern Promenade to Congress Street. A new bus stop will be placed at Congress/Emerson streets

Some weekday Route 3 trips will turn around at Westbrook Community Center, shortening the runtime and allowing the Route 3 and Route 5 to run on time with more consistency.

On Saturdays, Route 4 inbound service to Hannaford will be eliminated on some trips, and Route 5 will no longer serve Hutchins Drive; this will help improve the on-time performance on these routes.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for information and discussion.

CONTACT

Mike Tremblay
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(207) 517-3023
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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Ridership Committee slide deck



RIDERSHIP COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM 6

DATE

August 10, 2023

SUBJECT

Proterra Update

PURPOSE

Staff updating the committee on the status of Proterra, the manufacturer of our two 2022 Battery Electric Buses

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

On Monday, August 7, Metro learned that Proterra, the manufacturer of our two battery electric buses that were delivered in 2022, voluntarily filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. Metro staff is in communication with Proterra representatives and we have been assured that Proterra will continue to support the buses that Metro has on site.

Metro will be closely monitoring this situation and will inform the Board of any major updates.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for information and discussion.

CONTACT

Mike Tremblay
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ATTACHMENTS

None.

RIDERSHIP COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM 7

DATE

August 10, 2023

SUBJECT

Fare Policy Update

PURPOSE

To discuss a proposed fare policy update for possible recommendation to the full Board

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

Since the introduction of the DiriGo pass and the sunsetting of paper ticketing, Metro, South Portland Bus Service (SPBS), and Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Beach Transit (BSOOB) have lacked a way for customers to pay for multiple using a cashless payment method. Because pass-backs are not allowed due to our fare capping system, someone boarding with a guest or a family member who does not have their own DiriGo account must use cash to pay for the additional members of the group. This can be exacerbated by our exact change policy. Metro staff have received numerous complaints about the inability to easily board with a group of people since 2020.

Metro, SPBS, and BSOOB have agreed in principle to bring back a version of the 10-ride pass, which was offered prior to rollout of the DiriGo Pass. This 10-ride pass would enable pass-backs for groups of people while also facilitating free transfers. The 10-ride pass would likely be sold at a 10% discount (\$18 for a full-fare, 10-ride pass, a \$20 value). Reduced fare passes will likely also be provided, though some logistical challenges regarding enforcement of the reduced fare will need to be clarified. Like the standard DiriGo pass, it would be applicable across all three DiriGo agencies.

Adoption of a 10-ride pass is expected to improve ridership. For some users, purchasing rides is more intuitive than stored value. For passengers who routinely travel in groups, such as families with children, a 10-ride pass may make transit a viable option.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of a 10-ride pass will depend on several factors, including how much passengers shift to the 10-ride pass from cash (the payment method with the highest average fare, due to the lack of transfer and fare capping discounts) and from the standard DiriGo pass. Some infrequent riders may benefit from the 10-ride pass's discount more than they benefit from fare capping. To the extent that the 10-ride pass increases ridership, it may result in increased fare revenue.

A sensitivity analysis is provided in Attachment A. Realistic assumptions for existing passenger behavior change and ridership generation result in a net fare revenue that is close to zero. Extreme changes, such as a mass adoption of the 10-ride pass over stored value combined with no significant ridership generation, may result in reduced revenue in the range of 2-3%, but this is unlikely. All of this assumes passengers act in their own best interest, e.g. using all trips purchased, utilizing fare capping when it makes more sense than the 10-ride pass, reduced-fare eligible passengers using a reduced-fare pass, etc.

A heavy adoption rate of the 10-ride pass by users currently paying cash, or buying single-ride tokens at our Customer Service office, may be beneficial to Metro despite resulting in slightly lower fare revenue. Shifting from cash to a cashless payment reduces boarding times and reduces the cash volume that needs to be counted by hand. Shifting away from heavy use of single-ride tokens purchased at Metro Pulse will reduce the burden on Customer Service staff, freeing up time to fulfill other duties.

RECOMMENDATION

Metro staff asks the Ridership Committee to discuss and recommend this fare policy update to the full Board.

CONTACT

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Ridership Committee Slide Deck
Attachment B: 10-Ride Pass Sensitivity Analysis

Ten-Ride Pass

Sensitivity Analysis - Baseline

Ridership Committee - 8/2023

Agenda Item 7

Attachment B.1

Passenger Behavior Change	% Change
Cash Payers Switching to 10-Ride	5%
Non-Fare Capping DiriGo users to 10-Ride	20%
New Ridership Generated	1%

September 2022 % of Annual Ridership

10%

Cash Payers Switching to 10-Ride	Percentage	Trips	Old Avg Fare	Transfer %	New Avg Fare	Revenue Change	Annualized
Reduced	5%	562	\$ 1.00	22%	\$ 0.78	(\$123.63)	(\$1,236.29)
Full	5%	1019	\$ 2.00	15%	\$ 1.70	(\$305.67)	(\$3,056.70)
Reduced - Express	5%	27	\$ 2.00	9%	\$ 1.82	(\$4.91)	(\$49.05)
Full - Express	5%	66	\$ 4.00	4%	\$ 3.84	(\$10.50)	(\$104.96)

Non-Fare Capping DiriGo users to 10-Ride	Percentage	Trips	Old Avg Fare	Transfer %	New Avg Fare	Revenue Change	Annualized
Reduced	20%	2376	\$ 0.59	Same as existing	\$ 0.53	(\$140.75)	(\$1,407.48)
Full	20%	5720	\$ 1.49		\$ 1.34	(\$853.43)	(\$8,534.30)
Reduced - Express	20%	55	\$ 1.68		\$ 1.51	(\$9.22)	(\$92.16)
Full - Express	20%	318	\$ 3.71		\$ 3.34	(\$118.09)	(\$1,180.95)

Ridership Generated	% of existing	New Trips	Transfer %	Average Fare	Revenue Change	Annualized
Reduced	1%	259	22%	\$ 0.70	\$ 181.57	\$ 1,815.65
Full	1%	524	15%	\$ 1.53	\$ 801.35	\$ 8,013.53
Reduced - Express	1%	8	9%	\$ 1.64	\$ 13.78	\$ 137.76
Full - Express	1%	30	4%	\$ 3.46	\$ 102.33	\$ 1,023.32

Monthly Net Revenue	(\$467.16)
Annualized Net Revenue	(\$4,671.63)
Revenue Change	-0.26%

Ten-Ride Pass

Ridership Committee - 8/2023

Agenda Item 7

Attachment B.2

Sensitivity Analysis - Heavy adoption, no ridership generation

Passenger Behavior Change	% Change
Cash Payers Switching to 10-Ride	20%
Non-Fare Capping DiriGo users to 10-Ride	50%
New Ridership Generated	0%

September 2022 % of Annual Ridership

10%

Cash Payers Switching to 10-Ride	Percentage	Trips	Old Avg Fare	Transfer %	New Avg Fare	Revenue Change	Annualized
Reduced	20%	2248	\$ 1.00	22%	\$ 0.78	(\$494.52)	(\$4,945.16)
Full	20%	4076	\$ 2.00	15%	\$ 1.70	(\$1,222.68)	(\$12,226.80)
Reduced - Express	20%	109	\$ 2.00	9%	\$ 1.82	(\$19.62)	(\$196.20)
Full - Express	20%	262	\$ 4.00	4%	\$ 3.84	(\$41.98)	(\$419.84)

Non-Fare Capping DiriGo users to 10-Ride	Percentage	Trips	Old Avg Fare	Transfer %	New Avg Fare	Revenue Change	Annualized
Reduced	50%	5941	\$ 0.59	Same as existing	\$ 0.53	(\$351.87)	(\$3,518.70)
Full	50%	14301	\$ 1.49		\$ 1.34	(\$2,133.57)	(\$21,335.74)
Reduced - Express	50%	138	\$ 1.68		\$ 1.51	(\$23.04)	(\$230.41)
Full - Express	50%	796	\$ 3.71		\$ 3.34	(\$295.24)	(\$2,952.37)

Ridership Generated	% of existing	New Trips	Transfer %	Average Fare	Revenue Change	Annualized
Reduced	0%	0	22%	\$ 0.70	\$ -	\$ -
Full	0%	0	15%	\$ 1.53	\$ -	\$ -
Reduced - Express	0%	0	9%	\$ 1.64	\$ -	\$ -
Full - Express	0%	0	4%	\$ 3.46	\$ -	\$ -

Monthly Net Revenue	(\$4,582.52)
Annualized Net Revenue	(\$45,825.22)
Revenue Change	-2.53%

Ten-Ride Pass

Ridership Committee - 8/2023

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Attachment B.3

Sensitivity Analysis - High Ridership Generation

Passenger Behavior Change	% Change
Cash Payers Switching to 10-Ride	2%
Non-Fare Capping DiriGo users to 10-Ride	10%
New Ridership Generated	2%

September 2022 % of Annual Ridership

10%

Cash Payers Switching to 10-Ride	Percentage	Trips	Old Avg Fare	Transfer %	New Avg Fare	Revenue Change	Annualized
Reduced	2%	225	\$ 1.00	22%	\$ 0.78	(\$49.45)	(\$494.52)
Full	2%	408	\$ 2.00	15%	\$ 1.70	(\$122.27)	(\$1,222.68)
Reduced - Express	2%	11	\$ 2.00	9%	\$ 1.82	(\$1.96)	(\$19.62)
Full - Express	2%	26	\$ 4.00	4%	\$ 3.84	(\$4.20)	(\$41.98)

Non-Fare Capping DiriGo users to 10-Ride	Percentage	Trips	Old Avg Fare	Transfer %	New Avg Fare	Revenue Change	Annualized
Reduced	10%	1188	\$ 0.59	Same as existing	\$ 0.53	(\$70.37)	(\$703.74)
Full	10%	2860	\$ 1.49		\$ 1.34	(\$426.71)	(\$4,267.15)
Reduced - Express	10%	28	\$ 1.68		\$ 1.51	(\$4.61)	(\$46.08)
Full - Express	10%	159	\$ 3.71		\$ 3.34	(\$59.05)	(\$590.47)

Ridership Generated	% of existing	New Trips	Transfer %	Average Fare	Revenue Change	Annualized
Reduced	2%	517	22%	\$ 0.70	\$ 363.13	\$ 3,631.31
Full	2%	1048	15%	\$ 1.53	\$ 1,602.71	\$ 16,027.06
Reduced - Express	2%	17	9%	\$ 1.64	\$ 27.55	\$ 275.51
Full - Express	2%	59	4%	\$ 3.46	\$ 204.66	\$ 2,046.64

Monthly Net Revenue	\$1,459.43
Annualized Net Revenue	\$14,594.27
Revenue Change	0.81%