

# Ridership Committee

February 28, 2023 | 3:30 – 4:30pm



## Onsite:

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

## Remote:

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87474514366?pwd=RWZTWlBmTEZRVExEaEFUSkdjQTVEZz09>

Webinar ID: 874 7451 4366 | Passcode 880326 |

Phone: (301) 715-8592 | Telephone participants: \*9 to raise hand, \*6 to unmute

## MEETING AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER	ACTION or INFORMATION
<b>1. Call Meeting to Order (3:30)</b>	Hope Cahan, Chair	N/A
<b>2. Public Comment (3:30-3:35)</b> 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)	Hope Cahan, Chair	Information
<b>3. Approval of Meeting Minutes (3:35-3:40)</b> Review and approve the minutes from the October 2023 meeting of the Ridership Committee.	Hope Cahan, Chair	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>4. Selection of Ridership Committee Vice Chair (3:40-3:50)</b> Discuss, nominate, and take action on electing a Vice Chair for the Ridership Committee.	Hope Cahan, Chair	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>5. Ridership Update (3:50-4:05)</b> Staff will provide news on the status of the Southern Maine Transit Tracker and considerations for enhancing real-time information on Metro.	Mike Tremblay, Transit Dev. Director	Information
<b>6. Ongoing Projects Update (4:05-4:25)</b> Staff will provide an update on the status of procurements related to CAD/AVL and Microtransit, and provide an update on ARPA-funded service improvements.	Mike Tremblay, Transit Dev. Director	Information

<p><b>7. Future Agenda Items (4:25-4:30)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnering with bicycling entities</li> <li>• Route 1 on Munjoy Hill</li> <li>• Adding RTP to the DiriGo partnership</li> <li>• Bus shelters and bus inventory</li> <li>• Microtransit vendor and marketing strategy</li> </ul>	<p>Hope Cahan, Chair</p>	<p>Information</p>
<p><b>8. Upcoming Meetings (4:30)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Directors – February 29, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.</li> <li>• Finance Committee – March 6, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.</li> <li>• Executive Committee – March 13, 2024 at 3:30 p.m.</li> <li>• Ridership Committee – March 20, 2024 at 3:30 p.m.</li> </ul>	<p>Hope Cahan, Chair</p>	<p>Information</p>
<p><b>9. Adjournment (4:30)</b></p>	<p>Hope Cahan, Chair</p>	<p>N/A</p>

*As of November 9, 2022 Greater Portland Metro is holding meetings of the Board of Directors (and its committees) 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

October 18, 2023 | 4:00pm -5:30pm



**DRAFT**

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## Draft Minutes of the Metro Ridership Committee Meeting Wednesday, October 18, 2023 from 4:00-5:30 PM

### Onsite:

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

<p><b>Committee Members Present:</b> Hope Cahan (Chair) Ed Suslovic Merrill Barter Bill Rixon</p> <p><b>Committee Members Not present</b> Pious Ali Prosper Lohomboli Andrew Zarro</p>	<p><b>Non-Committee Board Members present:</b> None</p> <p><b>Staff and Others Present:</b> Greg Jordan, Executive Director, Metro Mike Tremblay, Transit Development Director, Metro Denise Beck, Marketing Manager, Metro Chris Chop, Greater Portland Council of Governments</p> <p><b>Members of Public:</b> Eamonn Dundon, Portland Regional Chamber</p>
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### 1. Call Meeting to Order

Hope Cahan called the Ridership Committee meeting to order at 4:02pm

### 2. Public Comment – None

**3. Approval of Meeting Minutes** - Ed Suslovic motioned to accept minutes. Seconded by Hope, approved unanimously as amended regarding Bill Rixon’s attendance at the Sept. meeting.

### 4. Gorham-Westbrook-Portland Rapid Transit Study

Chris Chop of GPCOG updated the group on the Rapid Transit Study, noting that this BRT service would be more frequent and have more stops and amenities than existing service. Greg Jordan said that there are still things to work out, particularly regarding transit stop priority access on the route. He added, that If Metro is the project sponsor, the Board and communities would need to support the project. For planning and funding, we would need endorsements before we apply. Hope asked about the local match. Chris said he would expect 30% needed for local match, which would need to be non-federal funding.

Ed asked why this corridor was identified (and not another) and if the Maine Turnpike Authority could be a funding source. Chris answered that the corridor was decided based on a density of jobs, people, and activity centers and said the MTA could provide funding for local match. Ed. S offered a motion to recommend Alternative 1, Motion was seconded by Bill Rixon.

Prior to a vote, Greg added that there is still discussion that Alternative 3 may work in Portland and include Forest Ave; they see more development there. That route would eliminate Maine Med. He said it’s ok to go ahead and recommend Alternative 1, but to be aware that there are other discussions. Ed said we should include MMC and USM since they are our partners. Hope took a roll call of votes. Vote was unanimous to recommend Alternative 1.

## **5. Ridership and Fare Revenue Update**

Mike Tremblay presented a ridership and fare revenue update, noting that ridership was up in Sept., with an 86% recovery rate compared to 2019, adding that as of Oct. 4, Metro reached last year's ridership peak. He said Metro had a good summer and spring and that coincided with the Fare Deal campaign.

## **6. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Update**

Greg presented the information about the CIP that will be presented at the October Board meeting. Merrill asked about the cost of replacement buses – diesel vs. electric. Greg answered that the cost is app. \$550,000 for diesel and \$900,000+ for an electric bus. Merrill said, we should research the actual improvements of electric over diesel, adding that we should be thoroughly educated before we spend more money on the electric buses. Mike said we're working with a national organization about the environmental impacts on electric vs. diesel buses. Bill asked why electric buses are \$400,000 more than diesel. Greg answered that the battery systems, sourcing of materials, and complexity of those systems increase the overall costs. Adding that there's only a handful of vendors for electric buses. The electric buses Metro purchased were custom built. Greg said that hopefully as the industry adopts these, electric buses will be more streamlined. He said he is surprised the costs haven't gone down more. Bill said removing diesel buses from roads would be a healthier alternative.

## **7. ARPA Service / Projects Update**

Mike provided a brief update on ARPA funded service improvements and capital projects. Bill said he was grateful that two trips were added to the BREEZ, as part of those service improvements. It's made a huge difference. He's heard positive things from people in Freeport.

## **8. Consideration of 2024 Service Changes**

Mike presented information on possible service changes, for 2024, related to underperforming route segments and budget capacity. Greg said we are returning to our cost allocation plan for 2024, adding that Westbrook and the BREEZ communities are facing increases in costs. Microtransit could be a much lower cost and might be a piece of Westbrook in addition to Falmouth. Hope asked that he also research if there are any cost changes to paratransit.

## **9. Future Agenda Items**

- Gorham-Westbrook-Portland Rapid Transit Study
- Partnering with bicycling entities, including Portland's proposed bicycle sharing program
- Bus shelters and bus inventory
- Microtransit and Route 7 improvements

Ed asked to add other transportation entities, such as Portland Trails, to future agenda items, and update on the partnership with the Roux Institute. Greg said we do have a proposal to them about extending the route. Hope asked for utilization from current partners -- including marketing, ridership, etc.

## **10. Upcoming Meetings**

- Board of Directors – October 26, 2023
- Finance Committee – November 1, 2023
- Executive Committee – November 8, 2023
- Ridership Committee – November 15, 2023

## **11. Adjournment**

Ed S. motioned to adjourn. Bill Rixon seconded. Unanimous vote for adjournment at 4:42PM

# Ridership Committee

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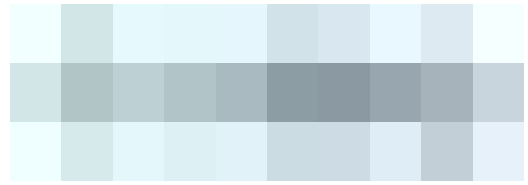
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## **RIDERSHIP COMMITTEE**

## **AGENDA ITEM 4**

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### **DATE**

February 28, 2024

### **SUBJECT**

Selection of Ridership Committee Vice Chair

### **PURPOSE**

To discuss, and possibly take action, on selecting a Vice Chair for the Ridership Committee

### **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

The Ridership Committee's former Vice Chair is now off-board. A new Vice Chair would provide support and backup to the Chair and be able to fill in for the Chair in case of absence.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

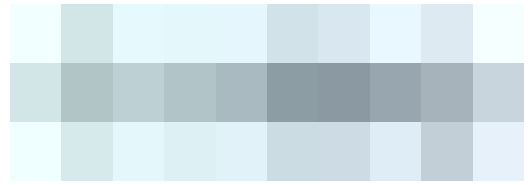
None.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the committee nominate and approve a Vice Chair.

### **CONTACT**

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



## **RIDERSHIP COMMITTEE**

## **AGENDA ITEM 5**

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### **DATE**

February 28, 2024

### **SUBJECT**

Ridership Update

### **PURPOSE**

To inform the Committee on ridership trends and revenue from 2023 and early 2024

### **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

Metro saw significant signs of ridership recovery in 2023, a trend that continues into 2024. Ridership increases were especially apparent on Route 2, due to opening of two shelters near Forest Avenue in Portland. Fare revenue reflected these ridership increases after taking the Fare Deal promotion into account. The average fare was \$1.20 in 2023, or \$1.43 excluding months where the Fare Deal was active.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This item is for information and discussion.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

This item is for information and discussion.

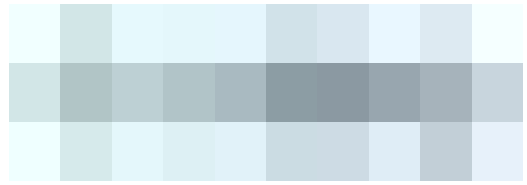
### **CONTACT**

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

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Ridership Committee slide deck





## **RIDERSHIP COMMITTEE**

## **AGENDA ITEM 6**

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### **DATE**

February 28, 2024

### **SUBJECT**

Ongoing Projects Update

### **PURPOSE**

To inform the Committee on ongoing procurement projects

### **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

Metro staff are currently in the bidding, evaluation, or pre-construction stages for several projects, including:

- Transit Stop Access Project (TSAP) – Bid forthcoming
- Transit Signal Priority – Equipment on order
- ITS CAD/AVL – Proposal evaluation and scoring
- Microtransit – Active RFP

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This item is for information and discussion.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

This item is for information and discussion.

### **CONTACT**

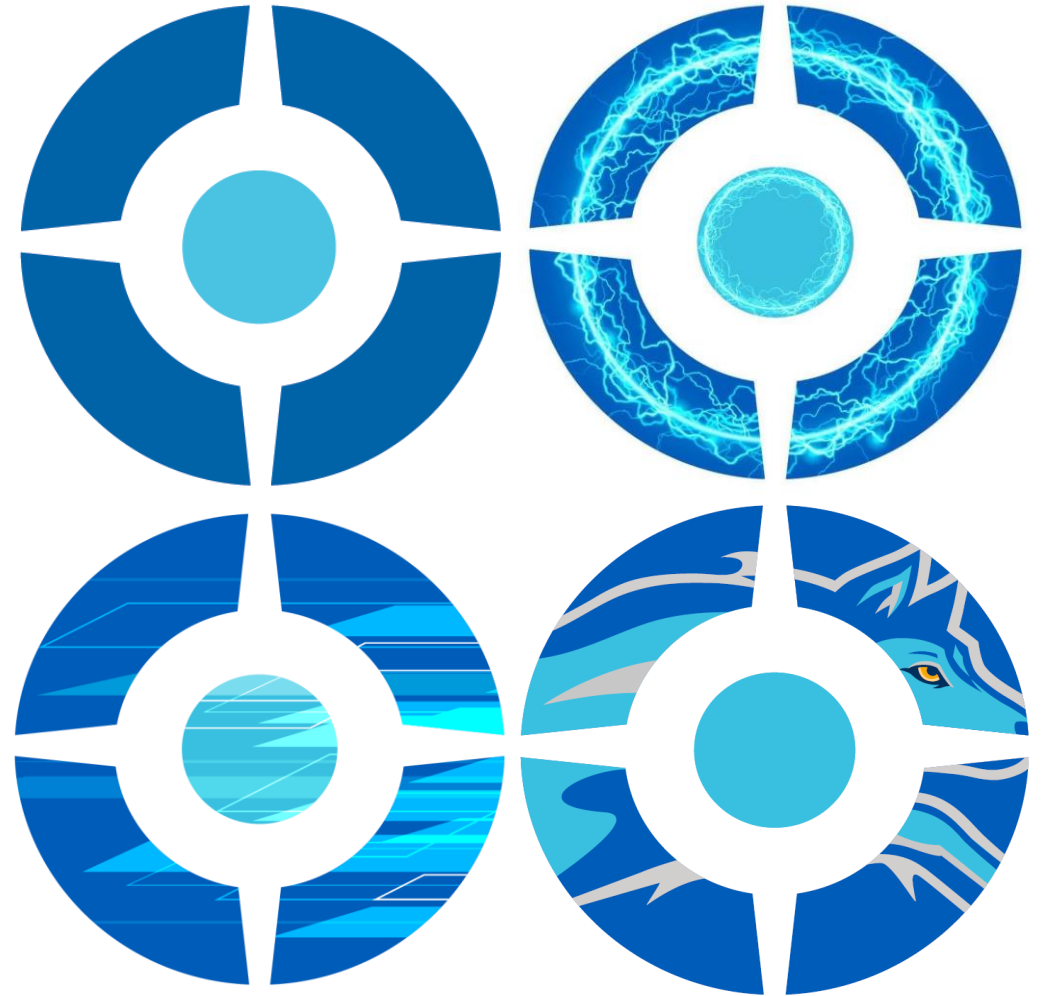
Mike Tremblay  
Director of Transit Development  
(207) 517-3023  
mtremblay@gpmetro.org

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Ridership Committee slides

# GREATER PORTLAND METRO

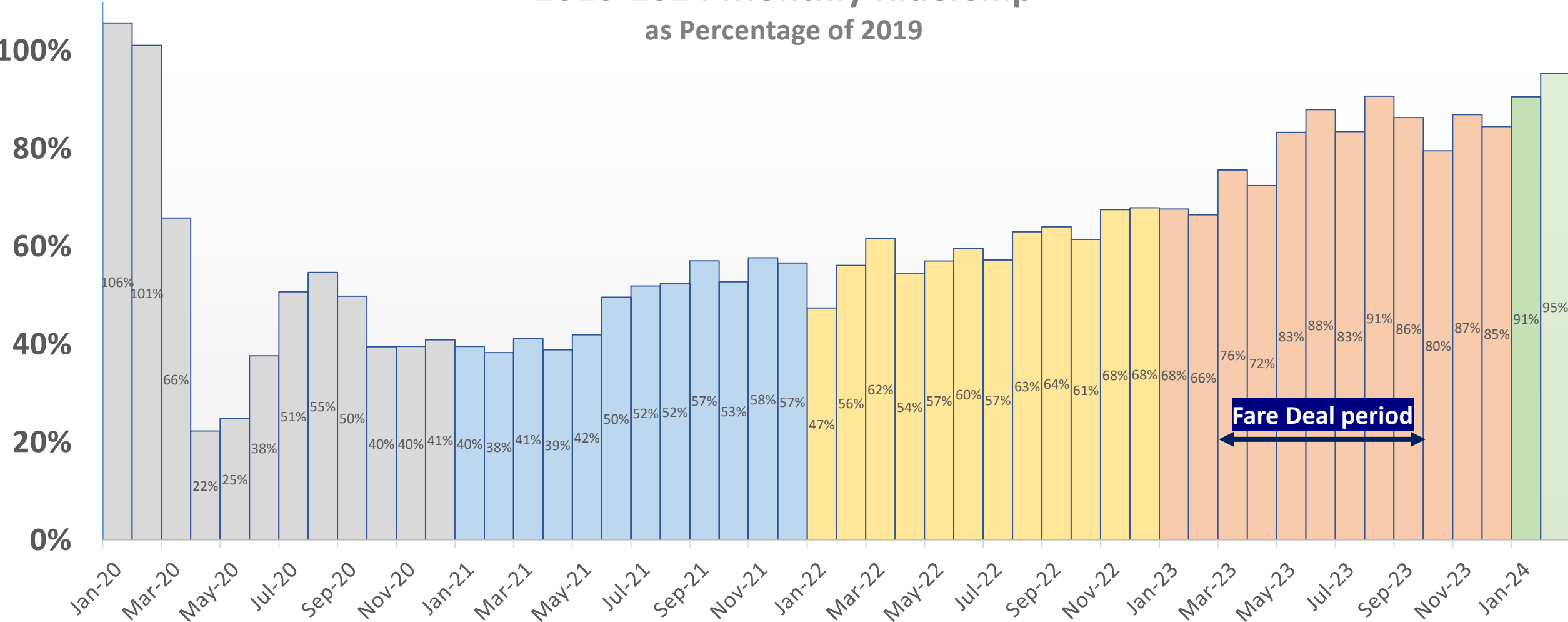
**Board of Directors**  
**Ridership Committee**  
**February 28, 2024**



# Ridership and Fare Revenue

## Recovery

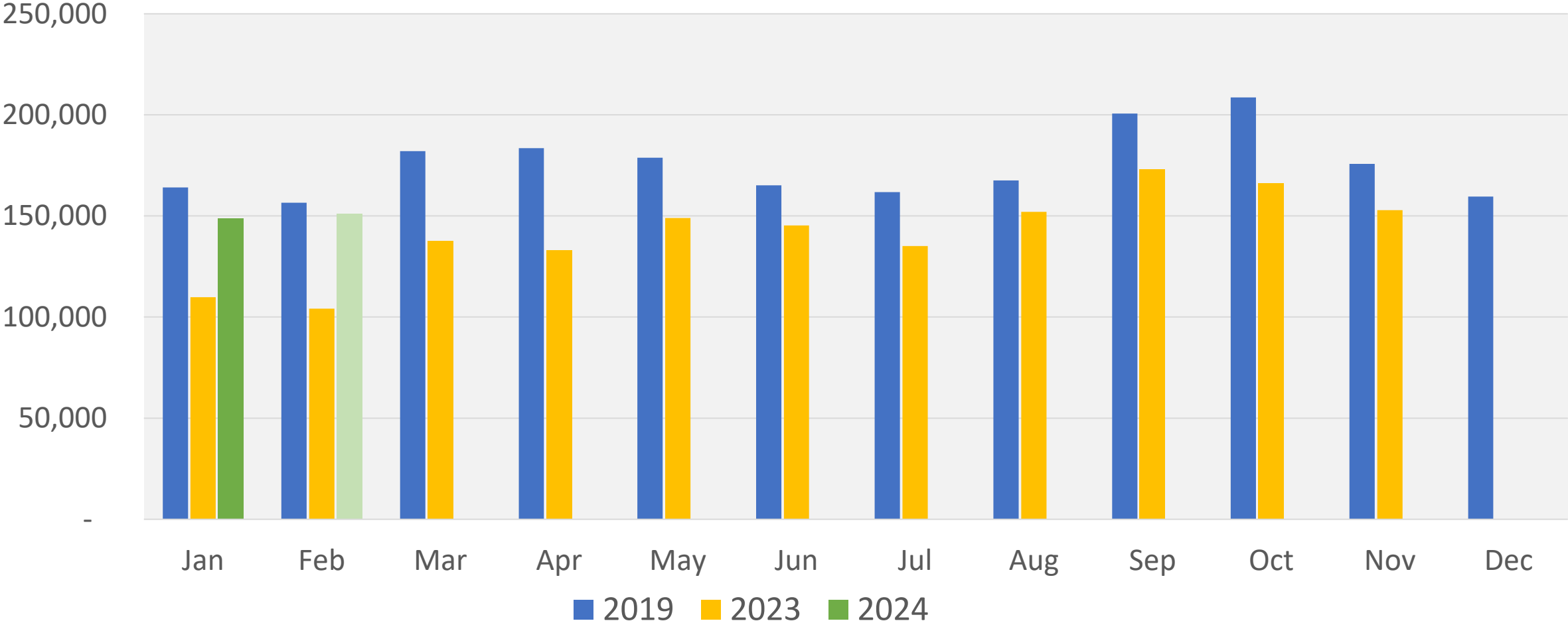
### 2020-2024 Monthly Ridership as Percentage of 2019



# Ridership and Fare Revenue

## Ridership, 2021-2023

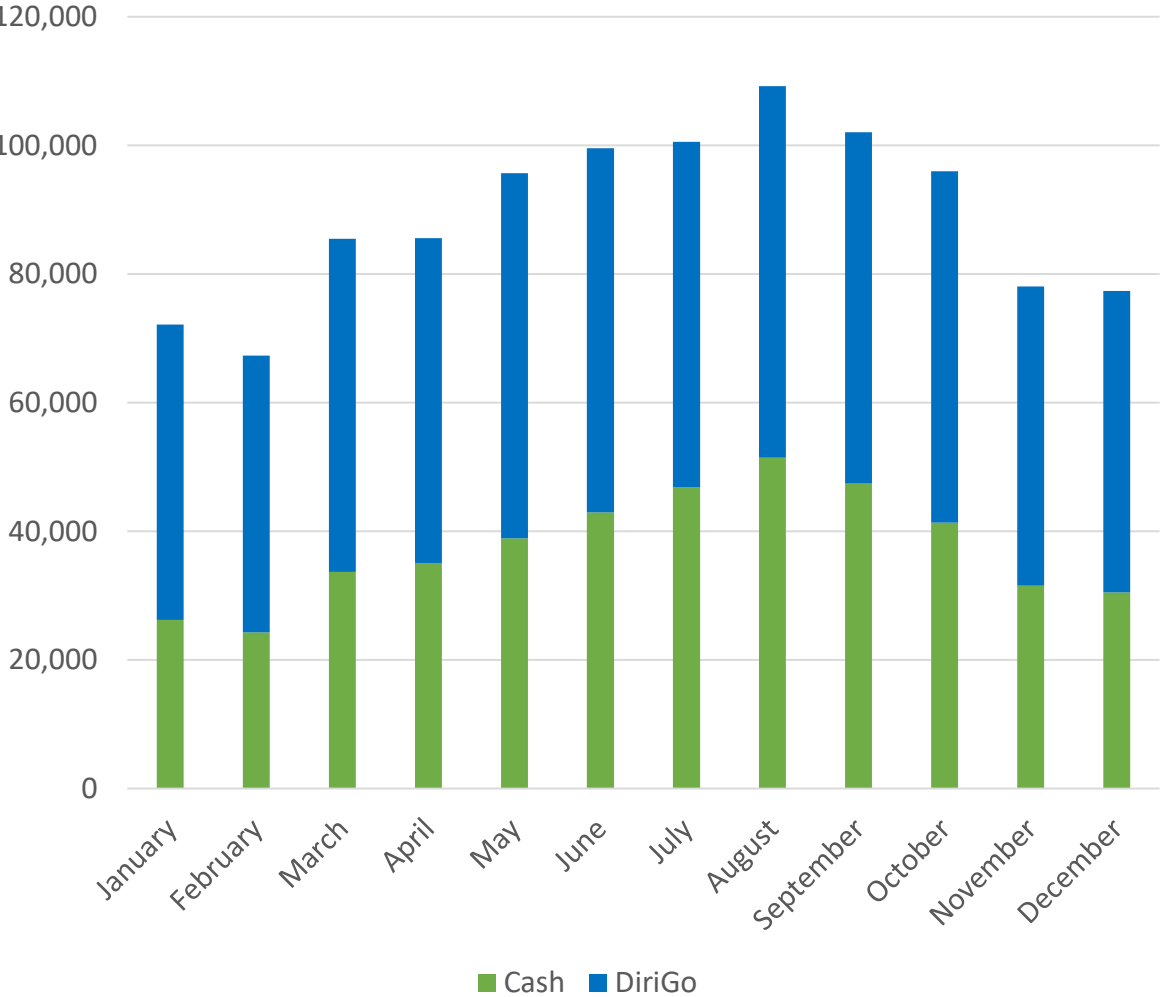
Metro Monthly Ridership: 2019, 2023, and 2024



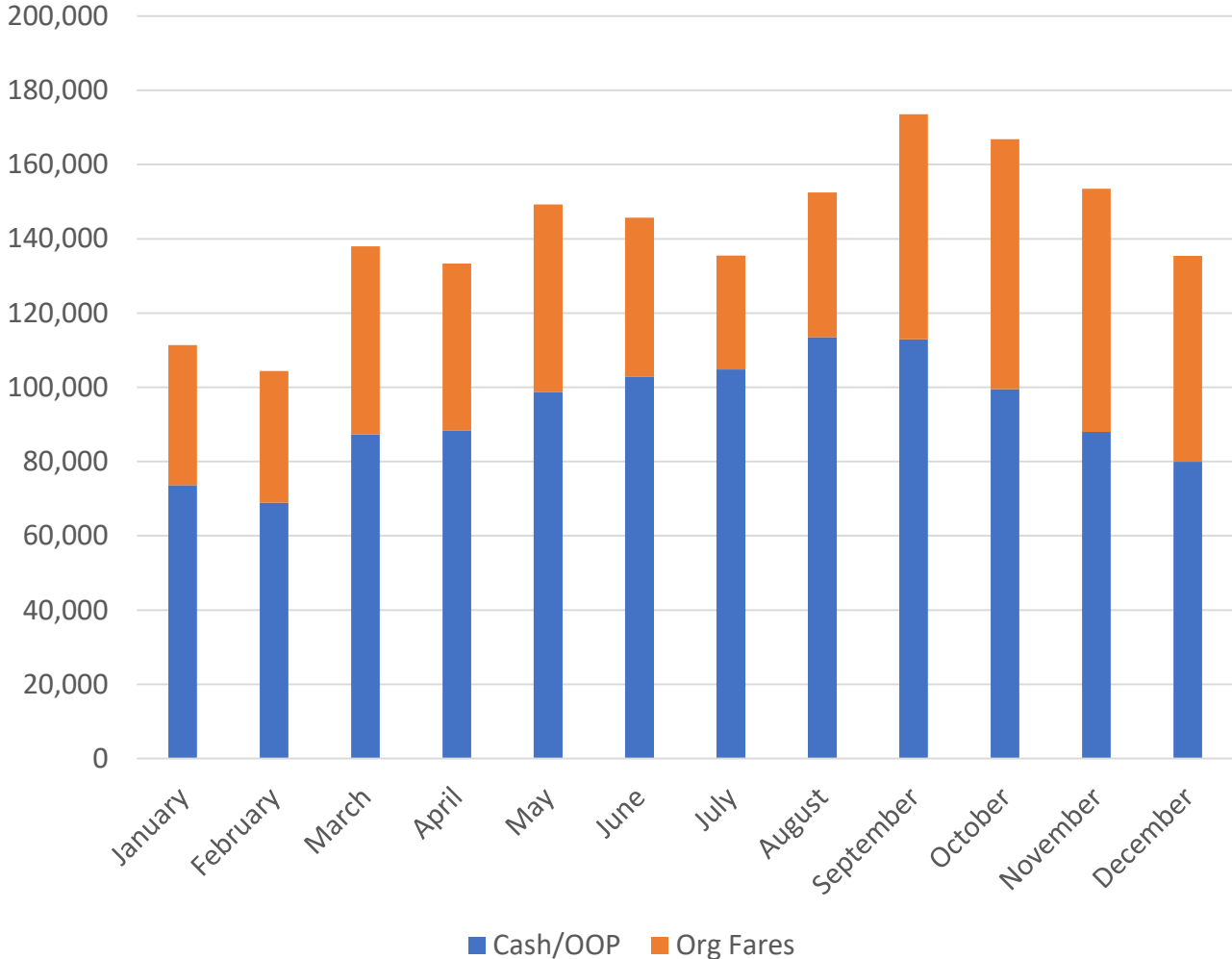
# Ridership and Fare Revenue

## Ridership, 2021-2023

Fare Payment Type by Out-of-Pocket Paying Passengers, 2023



Ridership by Fare Type, 2023



# Ridership and Fare Revenue

Testing new reader in 2024

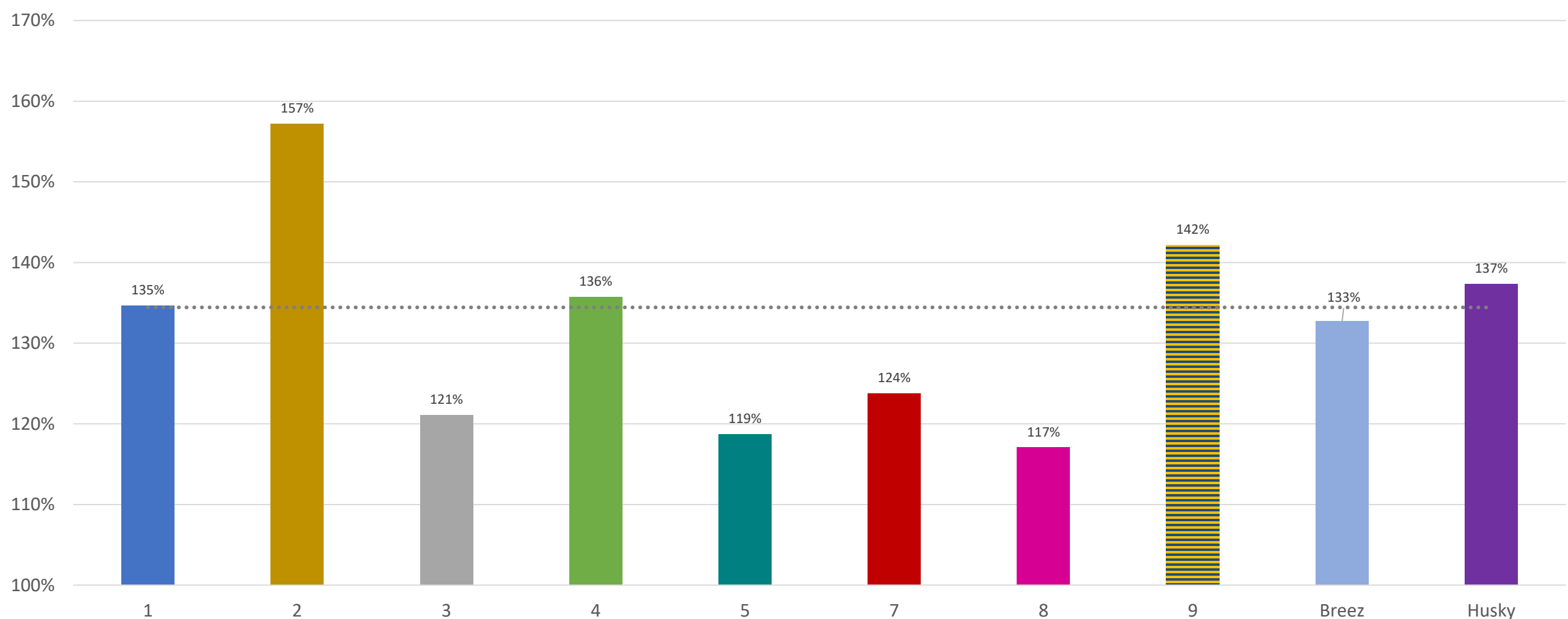
- Clever Devices provided prototype reader to Metro for testing in 2024
- Faster scan time for QR codes
  - Speeds up boarding process
- Potential to allow NFC payments
  - Apple Pay, Google Wallet
  - Most credit cards
- Target for regional full adoption in 2025



# Ridership and Fare Revenue

## Fare Revenue by Month

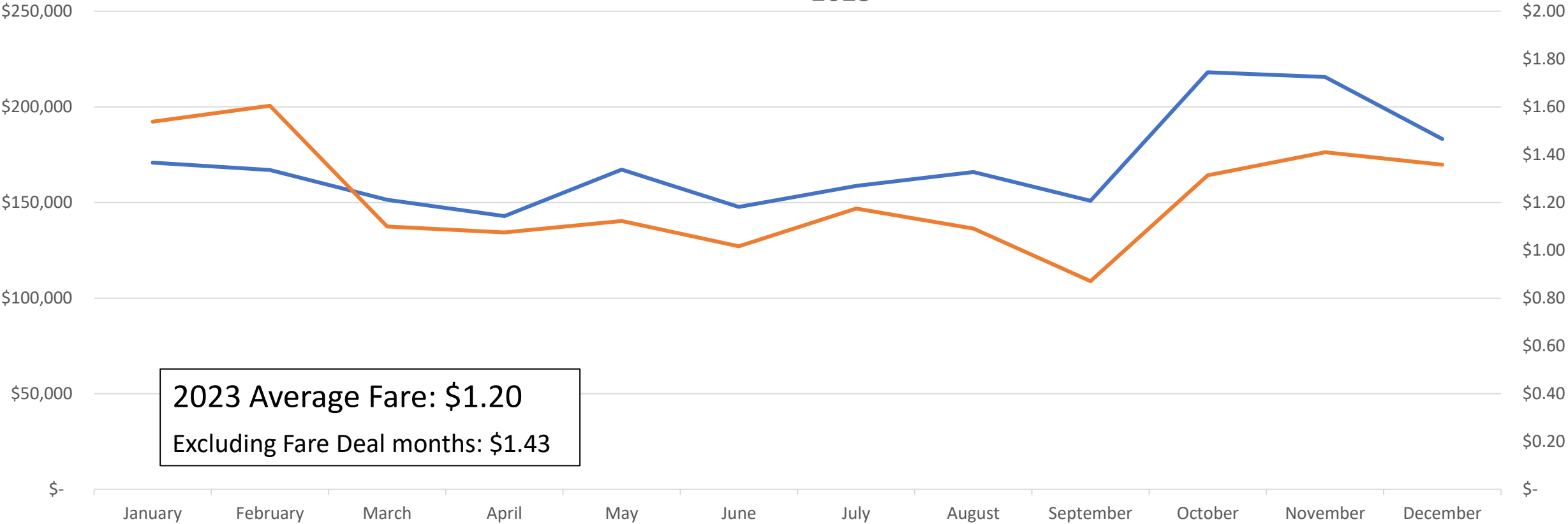
YOY Ridership by Route, 2022 to 2023



# Ridership and Fare Revenue

## Fare Revenue by Month

Metro Revenue and Average Fare,  
2023



— Revenue — Average Fare



# Ridership Committee

## Procurement Update

### ADA Bus Stop Improvements

- 23 stops in 2024
- 27 stops in 2025
- Bid being prepared

### Transit Signal Priority

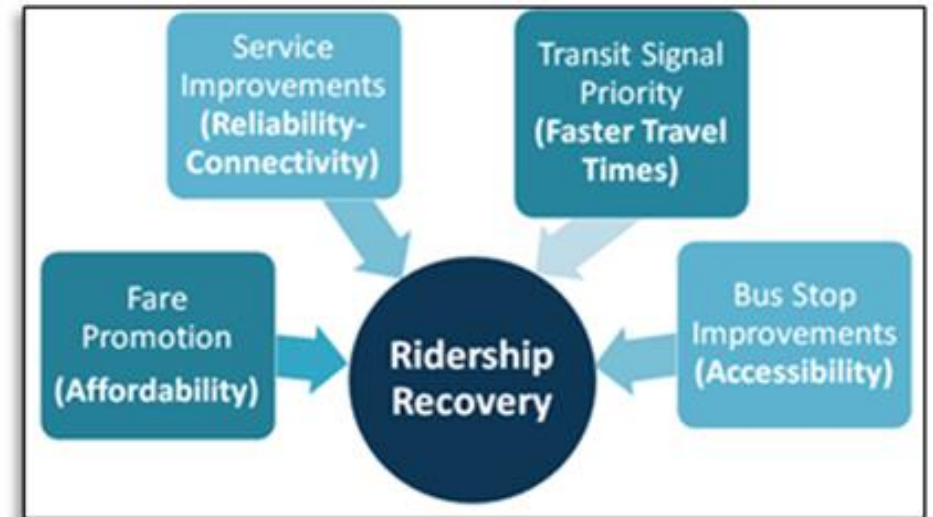
- Phase 1 (2024): Forest, Washington, key spots on Brighton, Congress
- Phase 2: Additional locations on Brighton, Congress, William Clarke
- Equipment being ordered for spring/summer deployment

### CAD/AVL

- 7 proposals received; in review
- Target implementation in Fall 2024

### Microtransit

- 5 vendors gave demos; proposals due March 14

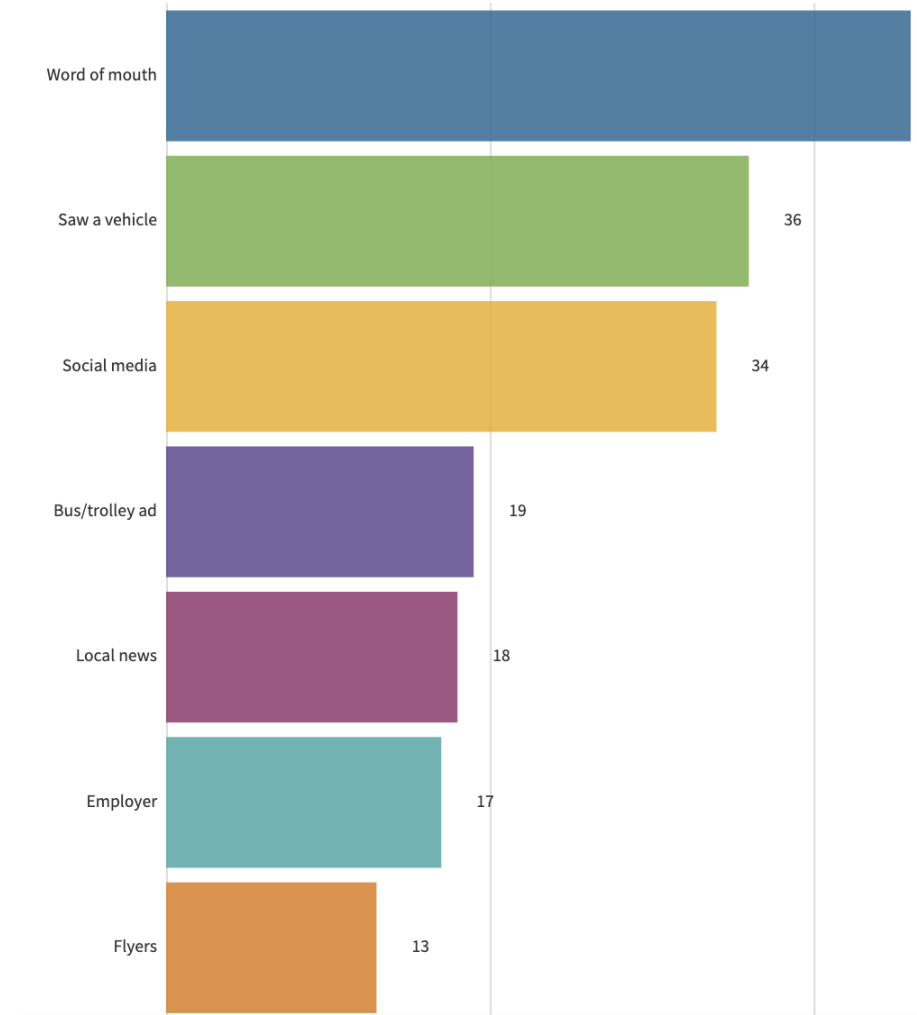


# Ridership Committee

## Procurement Update

### Microtransit Marketing

- Successful microtransit pilot in Falmouth will require early and continuous marketing
- Local, personal, targeted
  - Pop-ups, engagement at events like farmer's markets, partnerships with businesses & institutions
- Considerations
  - Should service schedule vary depending on weekday vs. weekend?
    - Later Saturday service to accommodate restaurants, movie theaters
  - Can microtransit zone serve Falmouth middle & high schools on school days?
    - May require a "dynamic" zone; may be more difficult to market, but good upside
    - Need to be careful not to overstretch system
  - Branding
    - Partner with BSOOB and South Portland on branding at the appropriate time
    - Capitalize on established DiriGo brand, or create new brand for microtransit



Source: GoZone 2021 rider marketing survey