



SORTA/Metro
Board Meeting
March 24, 2026
9:00 am-10:00 am Eastern Time

SORTA BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 24th, 2026 – 9:00 A.M.
SORTA BOARD ROOM 6th FLOOR
525 VINE STREET,
CINCINNATI, OHIO, 45202

General Items:

- Call to order
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Hearings from citizens
- Chair Update

Action Item:

- 1 Approval of Board Minutes February 24th, 2026

Briefing Item:

- 2 Financial Results for February 28th, 2026 (Tim Walker)

Procurement Action Items:

- 3 Proposed Resolution: Contract Award for 128-2025 Bus Lifts (Jeff Mundstock)
 - 3.1 Action Item:
- 4 Proposed Resolution: Contract Award for 015-2026 Access Paratransit Vans (Jeff Mundstock)
 - 4.1 Action Item:

Briefing Items:

- 5 Good News (Executive Team)
- 6 Ridership and Service Quality Report as of February 28th, 2026 (Khaled Shammout/Bill Spraul)
- 7 MetroRapid Update(Sharyn Lacombe/Khaled Shammout)
- 8 Government Square Update (Executive Team)
- 9 Ridership Development Initiative (John Ravasio)
- 10 Quarter 1 Marketing Update (Dave Etienne)
- 11 Progress and Priorities (Andy Aiello)
- 12 New Business

Other Items:

Adjournment

The next regular meeting of the SORTA Board of Trustees is scheduled for

Tuesday, April 28th, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

SORTA BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SOUTHWEST OHIO REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
SORTA/METRO AT HUNTINGTON CENTER
SORTA BOARD ROOM-6th FLOOR
525 VINE STREET, CINCINNATI OHIO 45202

MINUTES OF: Regular Meeting of the SORTA Board of Trustees

DATE: Tuesday, February 24th 2026, 6:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Tianay Amat, Tony Brice, Chelsea Clark, Dan Driehaus, Blake Ethridge, Kala Gibson, Pete Metz, Briana Moss, Sara Sheets, Greg Simpson, Rickell Smith and Sonja Taylor

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Jay Bedi, Trent Emenecker, Neil Kelly and KZ Smith

STAFF MEMBERS: Andy Aiello, Patrick Giblin, Adriene Hairston, Brandy Jones, Natalie Krusling, Alyssa Lasheid, Brad Mason, Bre Rahe, John Ravasio, Jason Roe, Khaled Shammout, Bill Spraul, Tim Walker and Mike Weil

LEGAL COUNSEL: Kim Schaefer (Vory's)

GUEST/PUBLIC PRESENT: Ern Tan, Rowan Grisez, Tony Johnson, Rox Raley, Mackenzie Mason, Jacob Hutson, Tamar Sella, Lauralee Thatch, Leif Benner, Bekal Sadler, Anshul Sukhlecka and Ryan Watson (Better Bus Initiative) and Matt Smeal CTSD

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Ethridge SORTA Board Chair, called the meeting to order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

HEARING FROM CITIZENS

Ern Tan, Better Bus Initiative asked for benches at each bus stop by 2030. Invited board members and Mr. Aiello to meet at Governance Square B on March 10th at 6:00 p.m.

Rowan Grisez, Better Bus Initiative asked for benches at each bus stop by 2030. Invited board members and Mr. Aiello to meet at Governance Square B on March 10th at 6:00 p.m.

Tony Johnson, Better Bus Initiative asked for benches at each bus stop by 2030. Invited board members and Mr. Aiello to meet at Governance Square B on March 10th at 6:00 p.m.

Rox Raley, Better Bus Initiative asked for benches at each bus stop by 2030. Invited board members and Mr. Aiello to meet at Governance Square B on March 10th at 6:00 p.m.

Jacob Hutson, Better Bus Initiative asked for benches at each bus stop by 2030. Invited board members and Mr. Aiello to meet at Governance Square B on March 10th at 6:00 p.m.

Tamar Sella, Better Bus Initiative asked for benches at each bus stop by 2030. Invited board members and Mr. Aiello to meet at Governance Square B on March 10th at 6:00 p.m.

Lauralee Thatch, Better Bus Initiative asked for benches at each bus stop by 2030. Invited board members and Mr. Aiello to meet at Governance Square B on March 10th at 6:00 p.m.

Leif Benner, Better Bus Initiative asked for benches at each bus stop by 2030. Invited board members and Mr. Aiello to meet at Governance Square B on March 10th at 6:00 p.m.

Anshul Sukhlecka, Better Bus Initiative asked for benches at each bus stop by 2030. Invited board members and Mr. Aiello to meet at Governance Square B on March 10th at 6:00 p.m.

Ryan Watson, Better Bus Initiative asked for benches at each bus stop by 2030. Invited board members and Mr. Aiello to meet at Governance Square B on March 10th at 6:00 p.m.

Matt Smeal, CTSD thanked Steve Anderson for bus route 52x. Asked SORTA staff to stop selling rail assets.

CHAIR UPDATE

Mr. Ethridge asked everyone to take a moment of silence to remember previous Gwen Robinson, previous SORTA Board Vice Chair.

MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Ethridge made a motion that the minutes of the January 20th, 2026, board meeting be approved as previously mailed and Ms. Clark seconded the motion. Ms. Smith abstained.

By voice vote, the SORTA Board approved the minutes.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Ms. Clark reported on the Finance Committee meeting held on February 17th 2026, and there were items(s) to present for Board Approval.

FINANCIAL REPORTS AS OF JANUARY 31ST, 2026

Mr. Walker presented the January financial results. Total revenues were \$13.4 million, which was unfavorable to budget by \$129K. Total expenses were \$14.4 million, which is favorable to budget by \$492k. Operating Capital Contribution was \$1.1 million, which was favorable to budget by \$363k. Ridership was 1,020k, which was unfavorable to budget by 3k. Mr. Walker then reviewed the contributing factors to these variances.

The SORTA Board accepted the report as presented.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO: 66: APPROVAL OF UPDATED FUEL HEDGING POLICY

Ms. Clark moved for adoption and Mr. Metz seconded the motion. The approval is to the updated fuel hedging policy.

By roll call, the Board approved the resolution.

PLANNING AND OPS COMMITTEE

Mr. Metz reported on the Planning and Ops Committee meeting held on January 20th 2026, and there were items(s) to present for Board Approval.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO: 67: APPROVAL OF CONTRACT AWARD FOR 099-2024-SS RIDER REWARDS PROGRAM

Mr. Metz moved for adoption and Ms. Clark seconded the motion. The contract will approve contract no. 099-2024-SS on behalf of Metro and Velocia, Inc., with a not to exceed value increasing the total not to exceed value from \$314,500 to \$614,500, an increase of \$300,000.

By roll call, the Board approved the resolution.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO: 68: APPROVAL OF 005-2026-SS SERVICE VEHICLE & CELL SERVICE

Mr. Metz moved for adoption and Ms. Clark seconded the motion. The contract will approve contract no. 055-2026-SS on behalf of Metro and Verizon Wireless, with a total not to exceed value of \$785,044.

By roll call, the Board approved the resolution.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO: 69: APPROVAL OF 006-2026-SS KINGS ISLAND FAMILY DAY

Mr. Metz moved for adoption and Ms. Clark seconded the motion. The contract will approve contract no. 006-2026-SS on behalf of Metro and Kings Island Company, with a not to exceed value of \$354,000.

By roll call, the Board approved the resolution.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO: 70: APPROVAL OF 135-2025-RFP BRT INDEPENDENT COST ESTIMATING SERVICE

Mr. Metz moved for adoption and Ms. Clark seconded the motion. The contract will approve contract no. 135-2025-RFP on behalf of Metro and SRF Consulting Group. with a not to exceed value of \$1,597,138.

By roll call, the Board approved the resolution.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Ethridge reported on the Executive Committee meeting held on February 24th 2026, and there were no items(s) to present for Board Approval.

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Ethridge, Mr. Ravasio, Mr. Shammout and Mr. Aiello presented the Strategic Plan Update. They reviewed the process, values, mission, vision, strategic priorities, KPI's and 5-year financial plan.

The SORTA Board accepted the report as presented.

PROGRESS AND PRIORITIES

Mr. Aiello presented the progress and priorities report and reviewed the Federal Legislative Updates, Ohio Loves Transit, Partnering for Growth, Building a Highly Informed Workforce and Advancing our AI Strategy.

The SORTA Board accepted the report as presented.

NEW BUSINESS

N/A

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the SORTA Board of Trustees has been scheduled for **March 17th, 2026, at 9:00 A.M.** the SORTA/Metro Board Room, at 525 Vine Street, Cincinnati, Ohio.

APPROVED:



Blake Ethridge
Chair, SORTA Board

ATTESTED:



Andy Aiello
CEO/General Manager/Secretary-

Treasurer



Financial Summary

February 2026



metro
your way to go

Agenda – Financial Summary

- Statement of Operations for February '26
 - Key Drivers
 - Detail Profit & Loss Statement
 - County Sales Tax Trend
- Cashflow and Obligation Report
- Investment Balance Update

Profit & Loss – Summary / Key Drivers

Summary

- Total Revenue \$12.9M - unfavorable to Budget (\$293k) or (2.2%)
- Total Expense \$13.3M - favorable to Budget \$86k or 0.6%
- Operating Capital Contribution (\$0.5M) - unfavorable to Budget (\$207k)
- Note: Ridership total is 1,038k – unfavorable to Budget (59k) or (5.4%)

Revenue

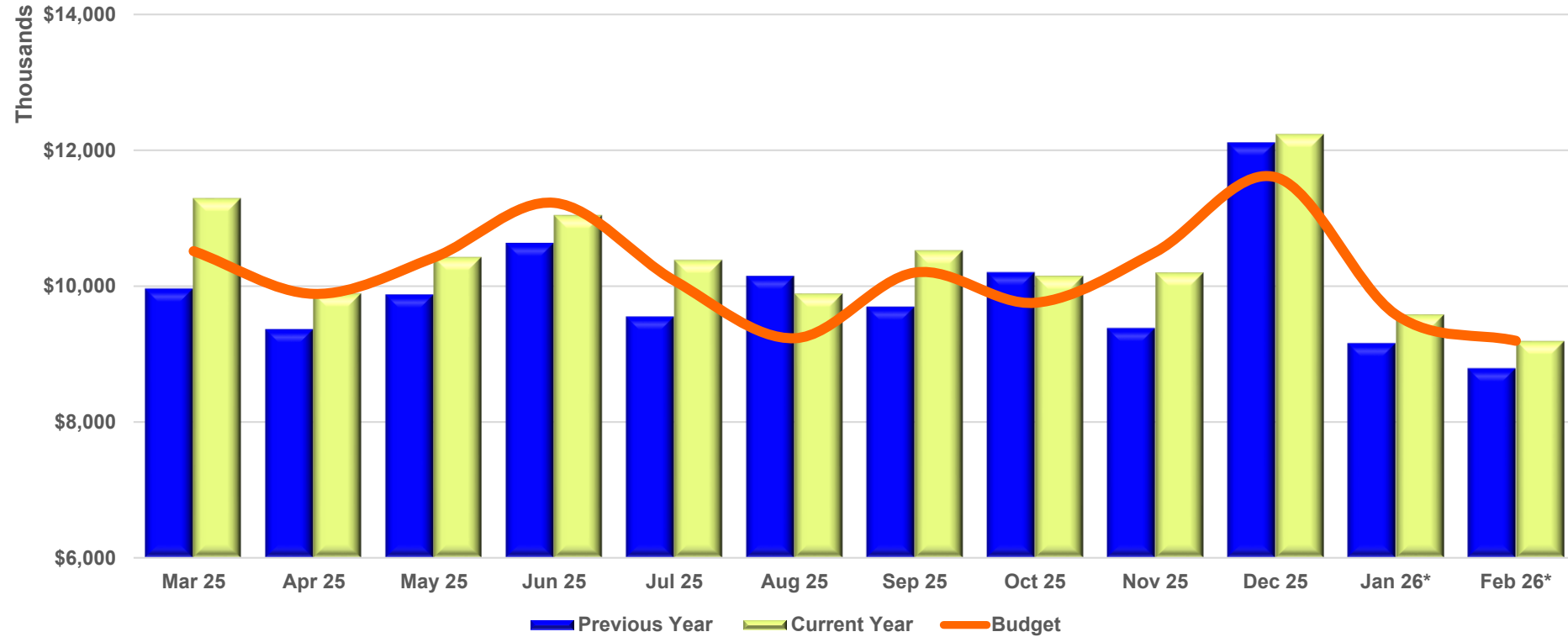
- Total Operating Revenue \$1.7M - unfavorable to Budget (\$269k) or (13.6%)
- Non-Transportation \$0.5M – unfavorable to Budget (\$25k) or (4.7%)
- County Sales Tax \$9.2M – accrued to Budget due to timing of actual receipts
- Federal Grants \$1.5M - on Budget

Expense

- Wages & Benefits \$9.9M - unfavorable to budget (\$230k) or (2.4%)
- Fuel and Lubricants \$578k - favorable to budget \$38k or 6.2%
- Parts & Supplies \$947k – favorable to Budget \$65k or 6.4%
- All Other \$1.9M – favorable to Budget \$200k

| 2 Mos Ending Feb 28, 2026 (\$ In Thousands) | Month | | | | Year to Date | | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|
| | Actual | Budget | Fav(Unfav) | | Actual | Budget | Fav(Unfav) | | Prior Year |
| Ridership | | | | | | | | | |
| Regular | 841,471 | 872,274 | (30,803) | (3.5%) | 1,694,713 | 1,741,680 | (46,967) | (2.7%) | 1,673,621 |
| CPS | 168,709 | 195,000 | (26,291) | (13.5%) | 308,024 | 320,000 | (11,976) | (3.7%) | 314,379 |
| Subtotal Fixed Route | 1,010,180 | 1,067,274 | (57,094) | (5.3%) | 2,002,737 | 2,061,680 | (58,943) | (2.9%) | 1,988,000 |
| Access | 14,105 | 14,149 | (44) | (0.3%) | 27,756 | 27,386 | 370 | 1.4% | 26,414 |
| MetroNow! | 13,477 | 15,500 | (2,023) | (13.1%) | 27,091 | 30,300 | (3,209) | (10.6%) | 19,003 |
| Total Ridership | 1,037,762 | 1,096,923 | (59,161) | (5.4%) | 2,057,584 | 2,119,366 | (61,782) | (2.9%) | 2,033,417 |
| Operating Revenue | | | | | | | | | |
| Metro Fares | \$ 986 | \$ 1,208 | \$ (222) | (18.4%) | \$ 2,029 | \$ 2,302 | \$ (273) | (11.9%) | \$ 2,074 |
| Access Fares | 59 | 55 | 4 | 7.4% | 118 | 107 | 11 | 10.0% | 97 |
| MetroNow! Fares | 34 | 35 | (1) | (3.7%) | 72 | 70 | 2 | 3.5% | 38 |
| CPS Fares | 432 | 497 | (65) | (13.1%) | 834 | 953 | (119) | (12.5%) | 868 |
| Other Contract Revenue | 199 | 184 | 16 | 8.5% | 405 | 374 | 31 | 8.4% | 372 |
| Total Operating Revenue | 1,711 | 1,979 | (269) | (13.6%) | 3,459 | 3,806 | (348) | (9.1%) | 3,449 |
| Non-Operating Revenue | | | | | | | | | |
| County Sales Tax | 9,196 | 9,196 | - | - | 18,780 | 18,780 | - | - | 18,434 |
| Federal Subsidies | 1,476 | 1,476 | - | - | 2,952 | 2,952 | - | - | 3,026 |
| Non Transportation | 499 | 524 | (25) | (4.7%) | 1,044 | 1,119 | (75) | (6.7%) | 1,339 |
| Total Non-Operating Revenue | 11,171 | 11,196 | (25) | (0.2%) | 22,776 | 22,851 | (75) | (0.3%) | 22,799 |
| Total Revenue | 12,882 | 13,175 | (293) | (2.2%) | 26,234 | 26,657 | (422) | (1.6%) | 26,248 |
| Expenses | | | | | | | | | |
| Employee Wages & Benefits | 9,883 | 9,654 | (230) | (2.4%) | 20,984 | 20,777 | (207) | (1.0%) | 19,888 |
| Fuel & Lubricants | 578 | 616 | 38 | 6.2% | 1,161 | 1,282 | 121 | 9.4% | 1,189 |
| Parts & Supplies | 947 | 1,012 | 65 | 6.4% | 1,849 | 2,009 | 159 | 7.9% | 1,699 |
| Everybody Rides Metro Fund | 23 | 35 | 12 | 33.8% | 46 | 70 | 24 | 34.3% | 42 |
| Other | 1,907 | 2,107 | 200 | 9.5% | 3,701 | 4,181 | 480 | 11.5% | 3,642 |
| Total Expenses | 13,339 | 13,425 | 86 | 0.6% | 27,741 | 28,318 | 577 | 2.0% | 26,460 |
| Operating Capital Contribution | \$ (457) | \$ (250) | \$ (207) | | \$ (1,507) | \$ (1,662) | \$ 155 | | \$ (212) |

County Sales Tax – Year to Date



| (\$000's) | Mar 25 | Apr 25 | May 25 | Jun 25 | Jul 25 | Aug 25 | Sep 25 | Oct 25 | Nov 25 | Dec 25 | Jan 26 * | Feb 26 * |
|---------------|----------|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Current Year | \$11,291 | \$9,895 | \$10,429 | \$11,042 | \$10,384 | \$9,891 | \$10,526 | \$10,151 | \$10,201 | \$12,230 | \$9,584 | \$9,196 |
| Budget | \$10,516 | \$9,887 | \$10,423 | \$11,227 | \$10,081 | \$9,234 | \$10,201 | \$9,756 | \$10,501 | \$11,605 | \$9,584 | \$9,196 |
| Previous Year | \$9,963 | \$9,366 | \$9,875 | \$10,636 | \$9,551 | \$10,149 | \$9,696 | \$10,205 | \$9,380 | \$12,116 | \$9,159 | \$8,788 |

* January through February of 2026 are recorded at estimates based on current year trends due to the delay in reporting from State Office

Cashflow and Obligation Report

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| Overnight Investments | \$11,774,100 |
| Securities & CD's | \$116,212,272 |

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| Total All Securities (2/28/2026) | \$127,986,372 |
|---|----------------------|

Current Capital Reserve Obligations

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| <i>BRT Project Development (Hamilton & Reading Corridors) - Amts Pd</i> | \$26,869,327 |
| <i>Future BRT Capital Match (Fed 70% & Local 30%)</i> | \$40,500,000 |
| Total BRT | \$67,369,327 |
| Local Match - FTA and ODOT Grants | \$9,736,639 |
| 100% Local Projects (Prior Years Open + Current Year) | \$28,459,531 |
| 2 Months of Operating Expenses | \$26,000,000 |
| All Other Obligations | \$3,500,000 |
| Total Current Capital Reserve Obligations | \$135,065,497 |

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Net Unrestricted Securities Available | (\$7,079,125) |
|--|----------------------|

| | |
|---|-------------|
| 2026 Remaining Operating Budget Surplus (Deficit) Mar-Dec | \$7,990,000 |
|---|-------------|

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Net Unrestricted Securities + '26 Operating Budget Surplus | \$910,875 |
|---|------------------|

| Project | Method | Vendor | Award | Term | Funding |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|--|
| 128-2025 Lift Replacement Highly Effective Organization** | Invitation For Bid (IFB) | Ott Equipment Services Inc. | \$1,926,539 | 1 year Apr 2026 – Mar 2027 | Budgeted Local Capital |
| 015-2026-SS* Access Vehicles Grow Ridership** Connect the Region** | Sole Source Award | Transportation Equipment Sales Corp. | \$1,140,980 | 1 year Apr 2026 – Mar 2027 | FTA Grants (80%) Budgeted Local Capital (20%) |

*denotes non-competitive or non-negotiable award
 **denotes the strategic priority the contract supports

**Metro MAX Spend Summary
 (Maximizing Access for XBE's)**

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Total Awards for Month | \$3,067,519 |
| Total MAX Spend for Month | \$0 |
| Addressable Awards | \$0 |
| Effective MAX Participation Rate | 0% |
| 2026 Total Spend | \$21,871,192 |
| 2026 MAX Spend | \$0 |
| 2026 Total Addressable Spend | \$0 |
| 2026 Effective MAX Part. Rate | 0% |



BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACTION ITEM

DATE: March 24, 2026
FROM: Jason Roe, Director of Procurement
 Jeff Mundstock, Director of Maintenance Technical Services
PROJECT NO.: 128-2025, Lift Replacement
STRATEGIC: Highly Effective Organization
REQUEST: Contract Award

BACKGROUND

The Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA) operates more than 300 buses that require ongoing maintenance and repair to maintain their useful life benefit. As part of ongoing efforts to modernize infrastructure, improve operational safety, and maintain compliance with current industry standards, we have a capital replacement plan that includes removing and replacing existing vehicle lifts.

BUSINESS PURPOSE

In support of Metro's Fleet Maintenance Operations, we intend to replace seven (7) existing bus lifts that have reached the end of their useful life at the Queensgate Garage facility. These bus lifts no longer meet the performance and reliability requirements and replacing these lifts is critical to ensure that maintenance staff can safely perform inspections, repairs, and preventative maintenance on heavy-duty transit buses and other fleet vehicles.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Highly Effective Organization

PROJECT FINANCING

The budget for this project is \$1,926,539.00 and is included in the approved FY2026 Capital budget.

Local Capital funding will be allocated, and no other funding will be utilized.

PROJECT PROCUREMENT

Based on the exact specifications and limited variables to consider, Procurement staff determined that an Invitation for Bid ("IFB") was the appropriate method of procurement. Under this method, the contract is awarded to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder.

Staff targeted 11 contractors suspected of having the capacity to deliver on the requirements of the contract in addition to those notified through Metro's e-procurement platform. We received a single bid from Ott Equipment Services Inc. in the amount of \$1,969,881.50. Through Procurement negotiations Ott Equipment Services Inc. submitted a negotiated bid of \$1,834,799. SORTA is applying a 5% contingency in the amount of \$91,740 to the project.

Price has been determined to be fair and reasonable based on the independent cost estimate, a price analysis, confirming current market conditions, and a negotiated savings of 6.86% (\$135,082.50). Price



and all other factors considered, Ott Equipment Services Inc. submitted a bid that will provide the best value to SORTA.

SMALL BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

Staff determined that the nature of the work to be performed did not present ample subcontracting opportunities. As a result, no diverse vendor participation goal was established for the award.

No XBE vendors responded to the solicitation.

RECOMMENDED BOARD ACTION

Staff recommends the Board of Trustees approve a resolution authorizing the CEO/General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer or the Director of Procurement to execute Contract No.128-2025, on behalf of Metro with Ott Equipment Services Inc., with a not to exceed value of \$1,926,539.00.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACTION ITEM

DATE: March 24, 2026

FROM: Jason Roe, Director of Procurement
 Jeff Mundstock, Director of Maintenance Technical Services

PROJECT NO.: 15-2026 Access Vehicles

STRATEGIC: Grow Ridership and Connect the Region

REQUEST: Contract Award

BACKGROUND

Metro's Access program is a shared-ride public transportation service providing origin-to-destination transportation in small buses for people with disabilities who cannot use the fixed-route service.

BUSINESS PURPOSE

In support of Metro's Access Operations, we intend to purchase five (5) vehicles to replace Access fleet vehicles that are beyond their useful life.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Grow Ridership and Connect the Region

PROJECT FINANCING

The budget for this project is \$1,140,980.00 and will be financed using a combination of \$912,784 of FTA funding (80%) and \$228,196 of local capital funds (20%).

The final project cost is flat to budget.

PROJECT PROCUREMENT

The vehicles will be purchased through Ohio Department of Transportation contract 248-24 LTL. As such, no market competition is required, and no vendor outreach was conducted.

This is a fixed-fee contract with a 1-year period of performance, expiring in March 2027.

SMALL BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

This project is a sole source award with no subcontracting opportunities. As such, no small business engagement goal has been established.

RECOMMENDED BOARD ACTION



Staff recommends the Board of Trustees approve a resolution authorizing the CEO/General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer or the Director of Procurement to execute Contract No. 15-2026, on behalf of Metro with Transportation Equipment Sales Corp. ("TESCO"), with a not to exceed value of \$1,140,980.00.



Planning & Operations: Good News

March 24, 2026





January Silver Wheel Award Recipients



Administrative & Support
Employee of the Month
Greg Toyegas



Access
Employee of the Month
Darla Powell



January Silver Wheel Award Recipients



Queensgate
Operator of the Month
Corbin Frith



Queensgate Maintenance
Employee of the Month
Verna White



January Silver Wheel Award Recipients



Bond Hill
Operator of the Month
Zachariah Shepherd



Bond Hill Maintenance
Employee of the Month
Matthew Steele

Golden Bus Award Winners



Congratulations to this year's Golden Bus Award recipients: **Dispatcher Kymberly Jackson, Marketing & Customer Experience Manager Alyssa Lascheid, Operators Keith Wright, Jeffrey Oliver and Marcus Nelson, and Maintenance employees Arnold Odame and Daniel Elfers.**

Congrats for your continued dedication and commitment towards moving Metro and our region forward every day.

Business Courier's "Bosses to Watch"

Congratulations to **CEO Andy Aiello** on being recognized by the Cincinnati Business Courier as part of their February 26 cover feature, "Bosses to Watch."

The newspaper highlighted 25 new leaders "who will guide their companies, and our city in the year to come."



Metro Receives Excellence Award for Financial Reporting



**Government Finance
Officers Association**

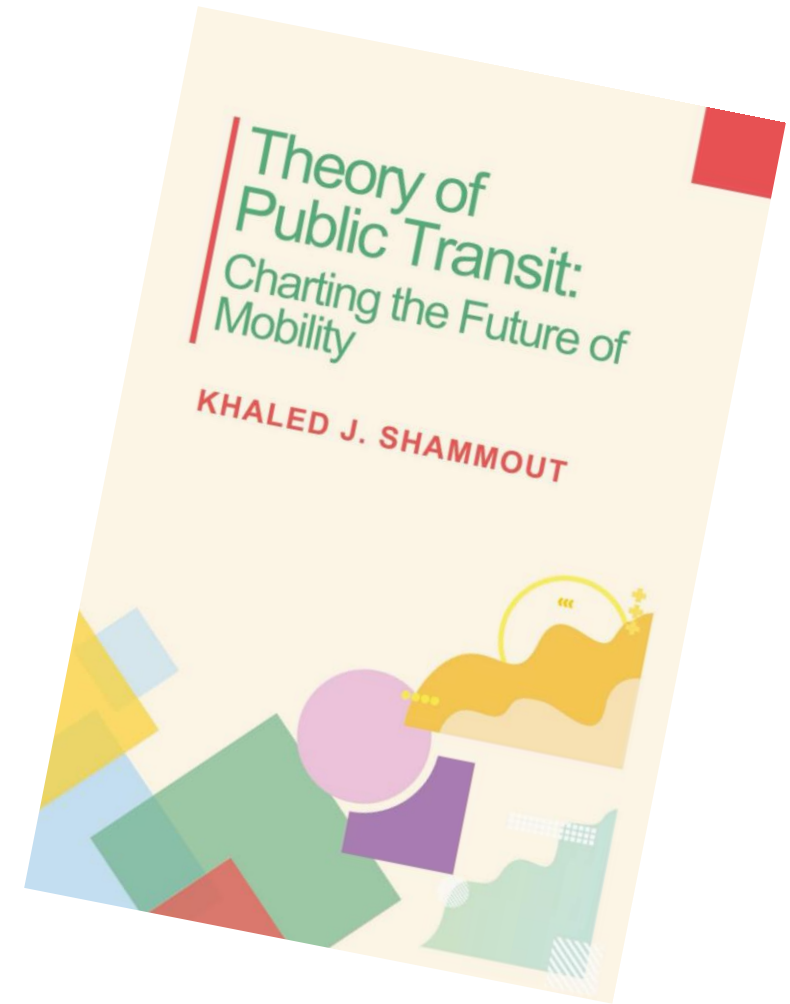
Metro has once again received the Government Finance Officers Association's "Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting" for our annual comprehensive financial report.

The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in government accounting and financial reporting and represents significant accomplishment by management. Well done to our Finance team!

Khaled Authors New Book

Congratulations to **Deputy Vision & Innovation Officer Khaled Shammout** on the recent publication of his new book, “Theory of Public Transit: Charting the Future of Mobility.”

The book explains how a focused theory of transit planning can redefine transit’s mission, raise quality of service, and improve the image and use of public transportation.



Metro's Marketing & Communications Leaders Present at APTA

Metro's Marketing & Communications strategies were on full display during last month's APTA Marketing & Communications Workshop. **Chief Communications & Marketing Officer Brandy Jones** presented on a panel discussing the impact of customer-centered storytelling to showcase the impact of service improvements, while **Marketing Director Dave Etienne** presented on the psychology of the rider.



Rounding Third and Heading for Metro

Reds Opening Day in Cincinnati is March 26 and we are encouraging the community to skip the parking hassles and enjoy **fare-free rides** on Metro's fixed-route and Access services!

Opening Day Parade

Look for Metro's baby bus, Evie, and the Metro team, friends and family in the Findlay Market Reds Opening Day Parade, which steps off at noon downtown.

ALERT: Government Square will be closed 11 a.m.-3 p.m. during the Opening Day Parade, which travels across Fifth Street. Due to street closures throughout downtown, we encourage customers to visit our website or download the Transit app for temporary boarding locations and detours during the parade.



Cincy Reads Challenge

Metro has partnered with the Imagination Library of Cincinnati Children's and City Hall to promote accessible reading during National Reading Month.

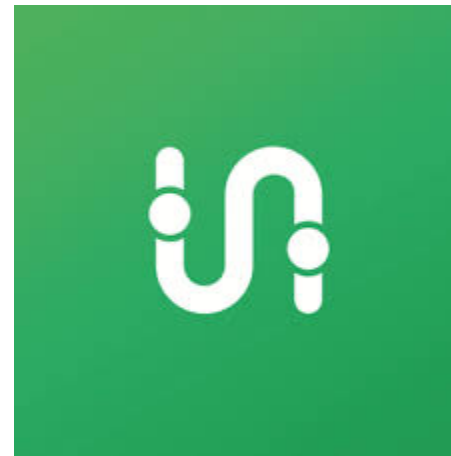
Register and log your reading minutes to earn prizes for reading milestones and help Cincinnati reach our 513,000 minute goal.



Cincy Red Bike Now Live in Transit App

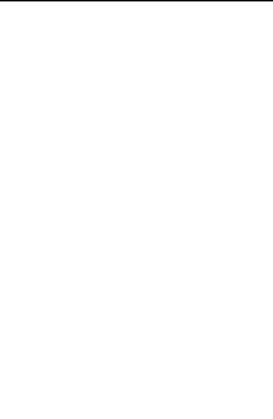
Transit App users can now purchase Red Bike passes and plan trips in the app the same way they would with Metro and other regional transit providers, helping to facilitate a more multimodal customer base.

This integration will also allow Metro to better capture data regarding customers who use both services. These insights will help us make more informed service plans on how best to serve customers who bike and ride.

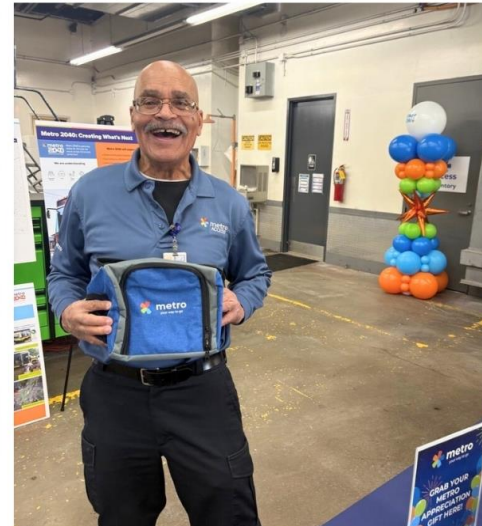


...And That's the News!

Golden Bus Awards 2026



Town Halls & Transit Employee Appreciation





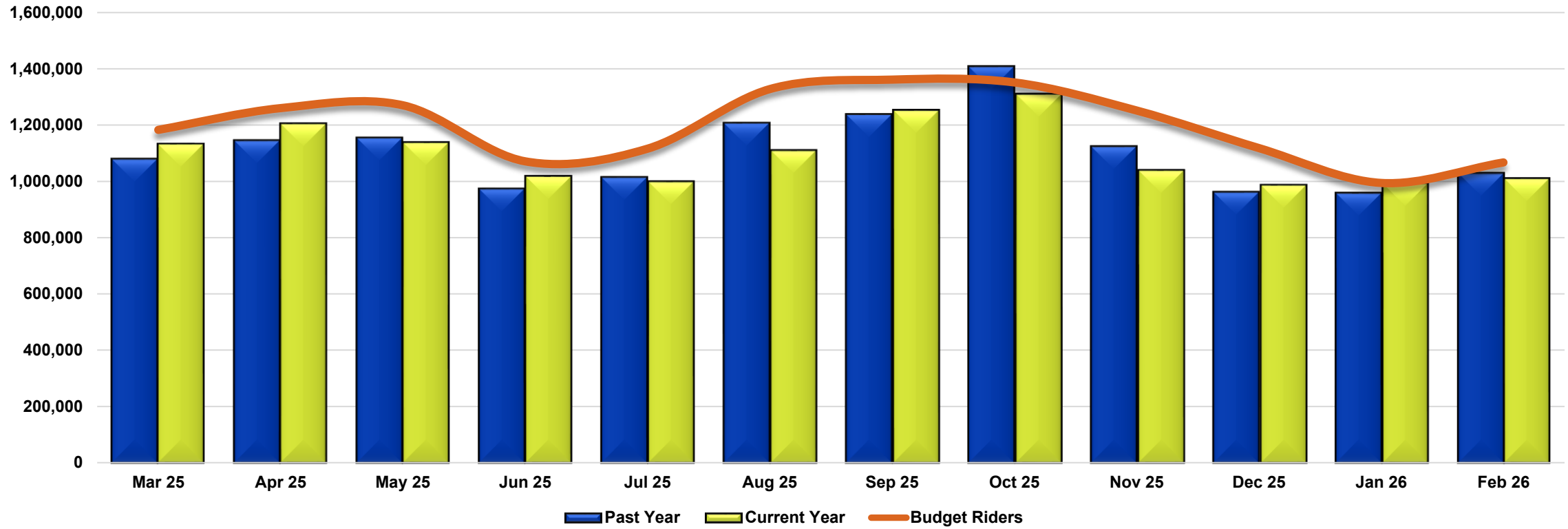
February 2026 Ridership and Service Quality Report

March 17, 2026 | SPDI



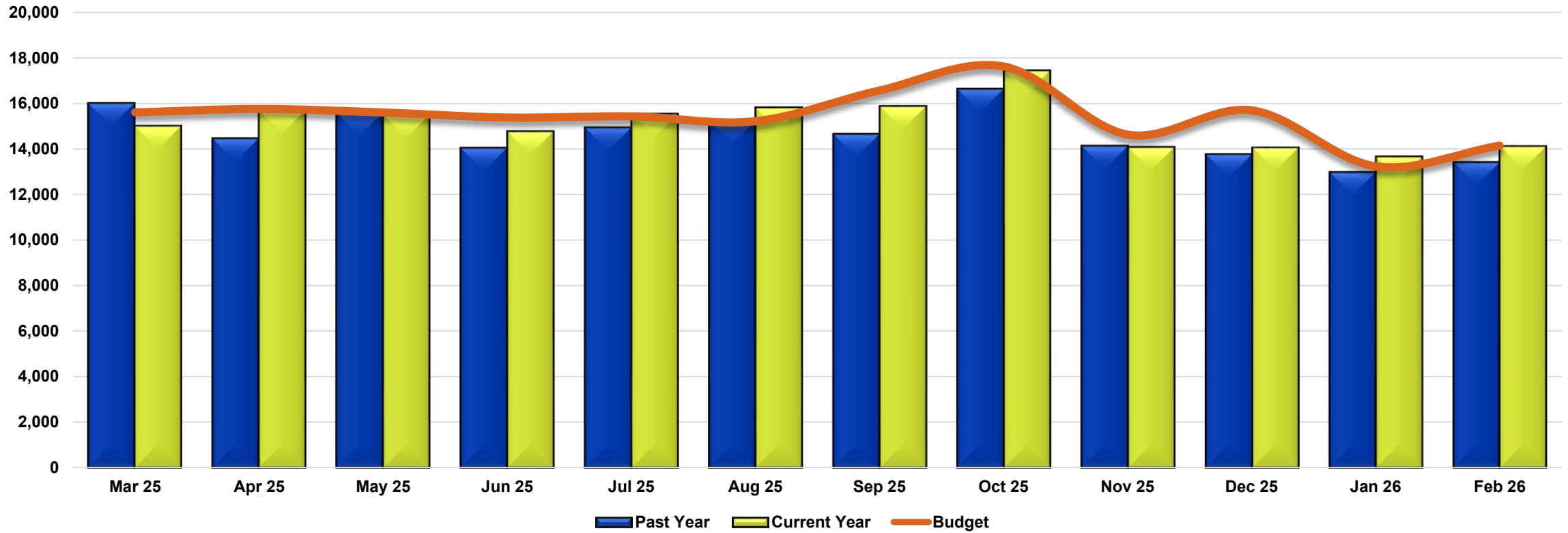
metro
your way to go

Total Fixed Route Ridership YoY & Budget by Month



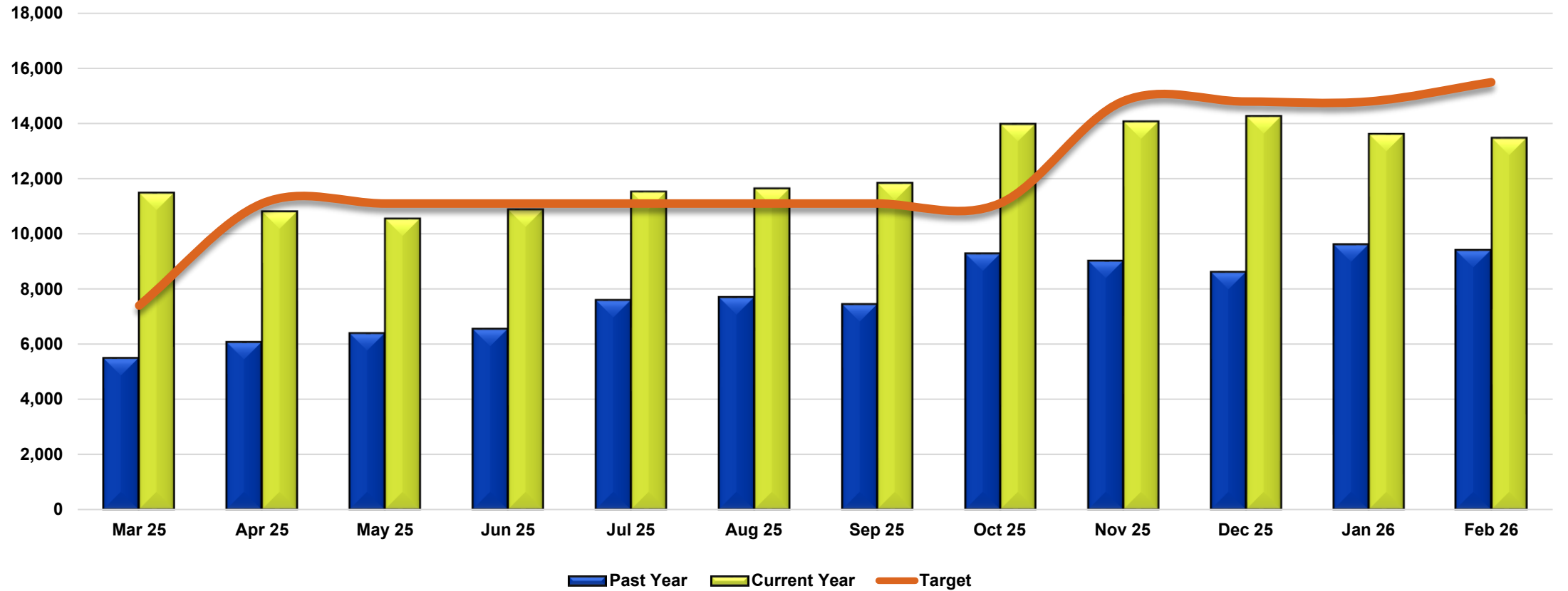
| Service | Feb 26 Ridership | Feb 26 Budget | % Budget Variance | Feb 25 Ridership | Feb 26 vs. 25 % Variance |
|-------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Fixed-Route | 1,010,180 | 1,067,274 | -5.3% | 1,029,190 | -1.8% |
| Total (YTD) | 2,002,737 | 2,061,680 | -2.9% | 1,988,000 | 0.7% |

Total Access Ridership



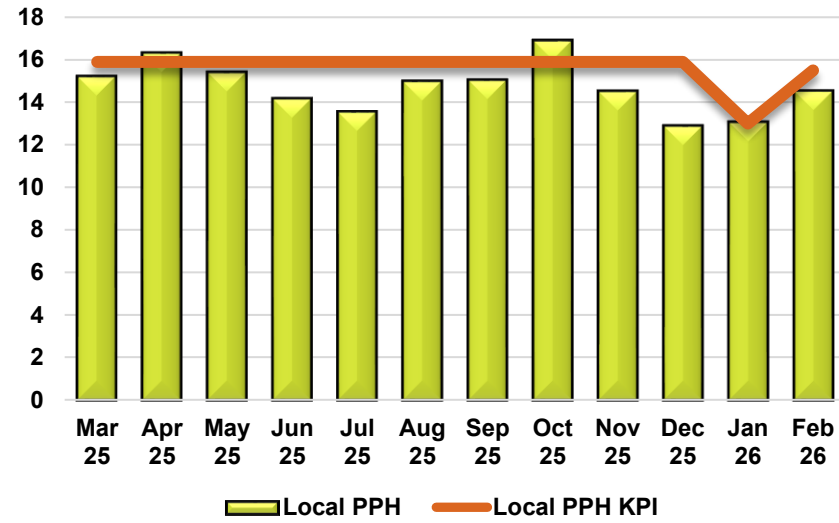
| Access | Feb 26 Ridership | Feb 26 Budget | % Budget Variance | Feb 25 Ridership | Feb 26 vs. 25 % Variance |
|-------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Total | 14,105 | 14,149 | -0.3% | 13,427 | 5.0% |
| Total (YTD) | 27,760 | 27,386 | 1.4% | 26,414 | 5.1% |

Total MetroNow Ridership

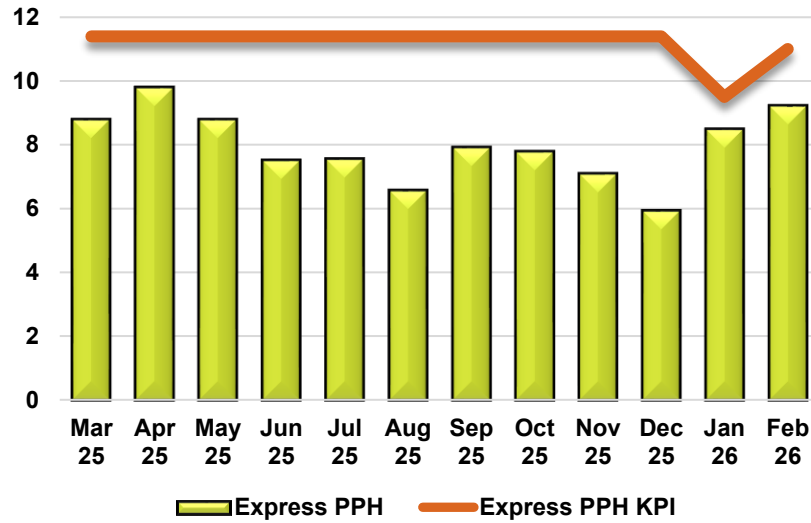


| MetroNow | Feb 26 Ridership | Feb 26 Budget | % Budget Variance | Feb 25 Ridership | Feb 26 vs. 25 % Variance |
|-------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Total | 13,477 | 15,500 | -13.1% | 9,406 | 43.3% |
| Total (YTD) | 27,091 | 31,700 | -14.5% | 19,003 | 42.6% |

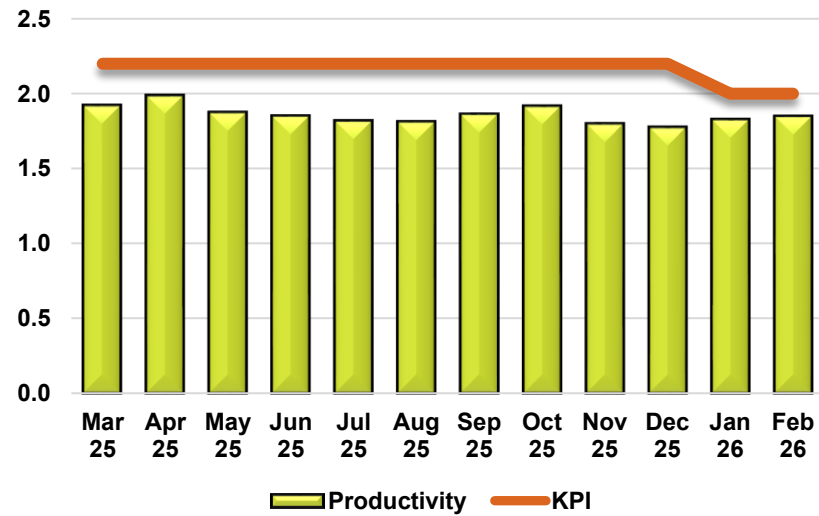
Local Service Productivity



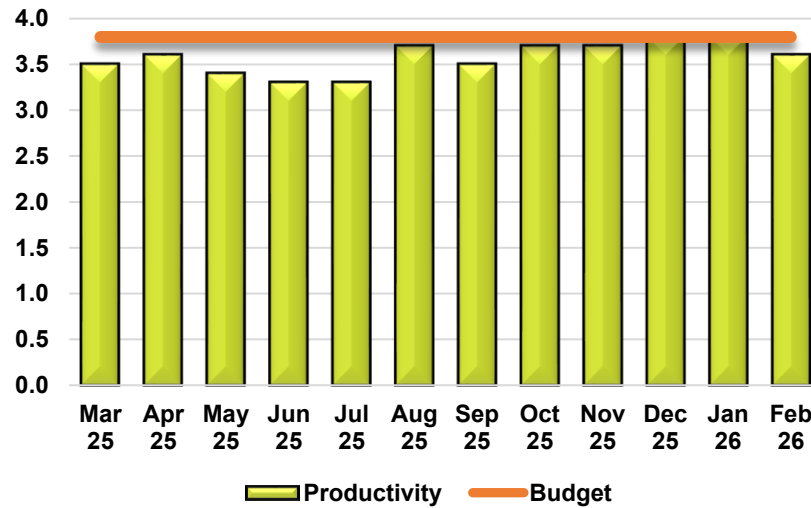
Express Service Productivity



Access Service Productivity



MetroNow Service Productivity



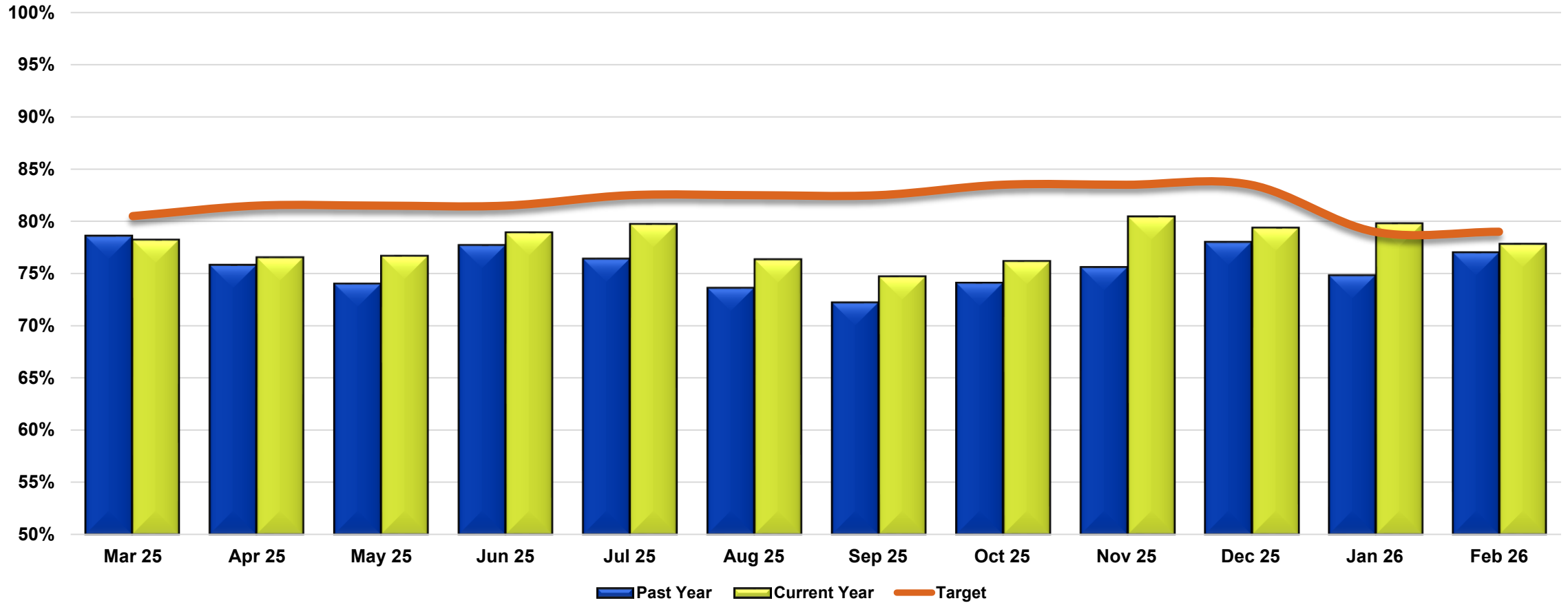
Productivity by Service Type

| Service Type | Feb 26 Actual | Feb 26 Budget | Variance |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|----------|
| Local Pass/Hour | 14.5 | 15.5 | -1.0 |
| Express Pass/Hour | 9.2 | 11.0 | -1.8 |
| Access Pass/Hour | 1.85 | 2 | -0.2 |
| MetroNow Pass/Hour | 3.6 * | 3.8 | -0.2 |

*Mature zones reported

**As of Jan 2026, Express productivity will be expressed as passengers/hour like the other modes

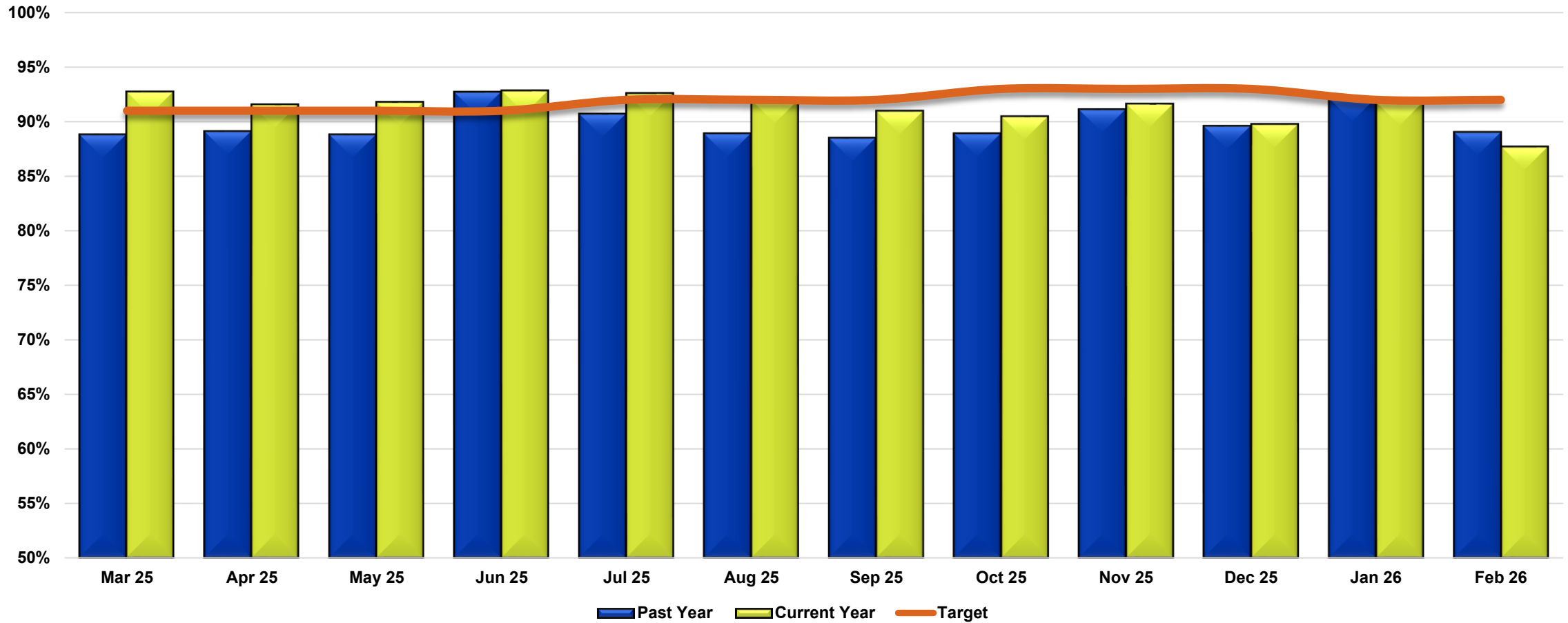
Fixed-Route On-Time Performance



| Fixed-Route Service | Feb 26 Actual | Feb 26 KPI Target | Target Variance |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| On-Time Performance | 77.8% | 79.0% | -1.2% |

**percentage points*

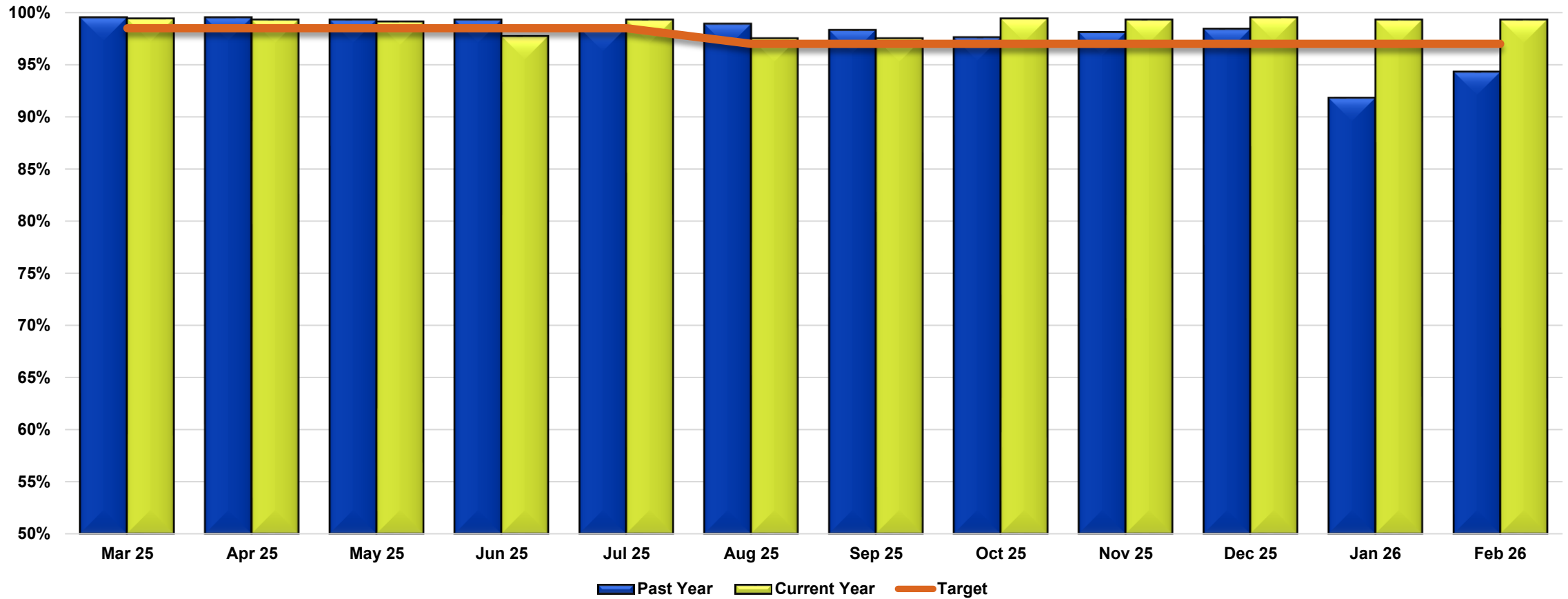
Access On-Time Performance



| Access Service | Feb 26 Actual | Feb 26 KPI Target | Target Variance |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| On-Time Performance | 87.7% | 92.0% | -4.3% |

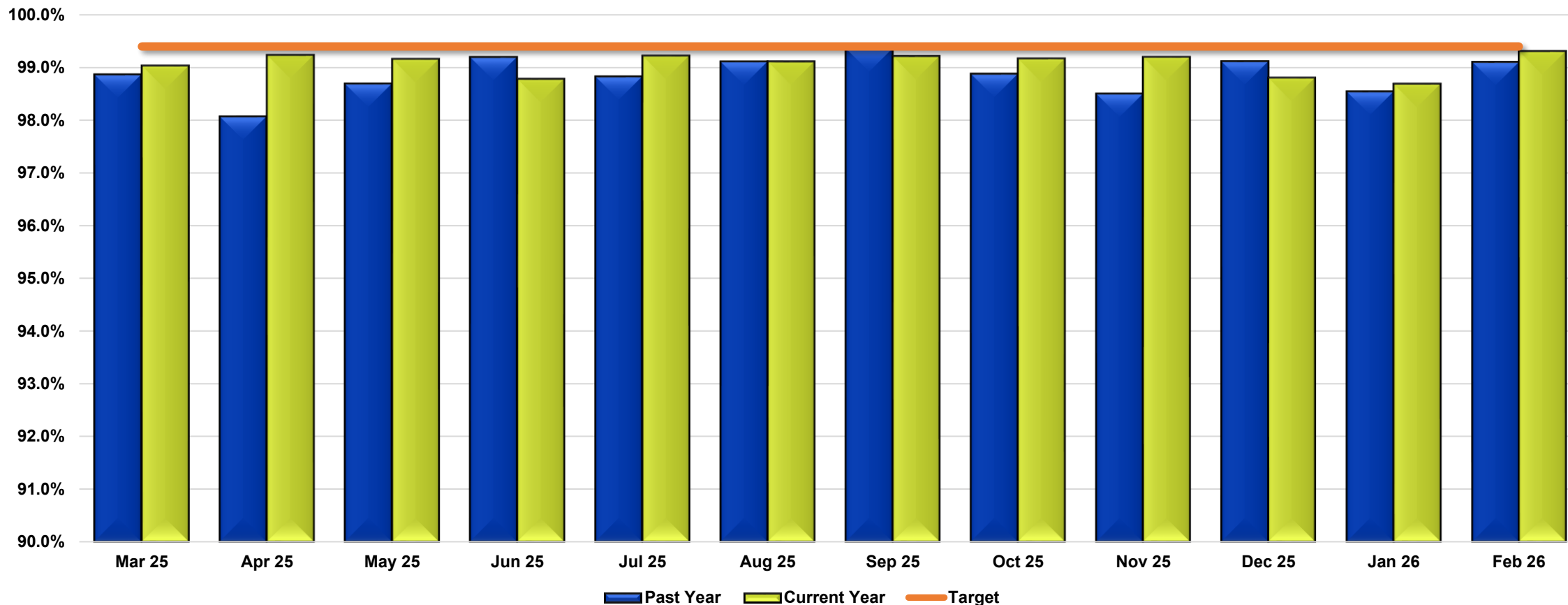
**percentage points*

MetroNow On-Time Performance



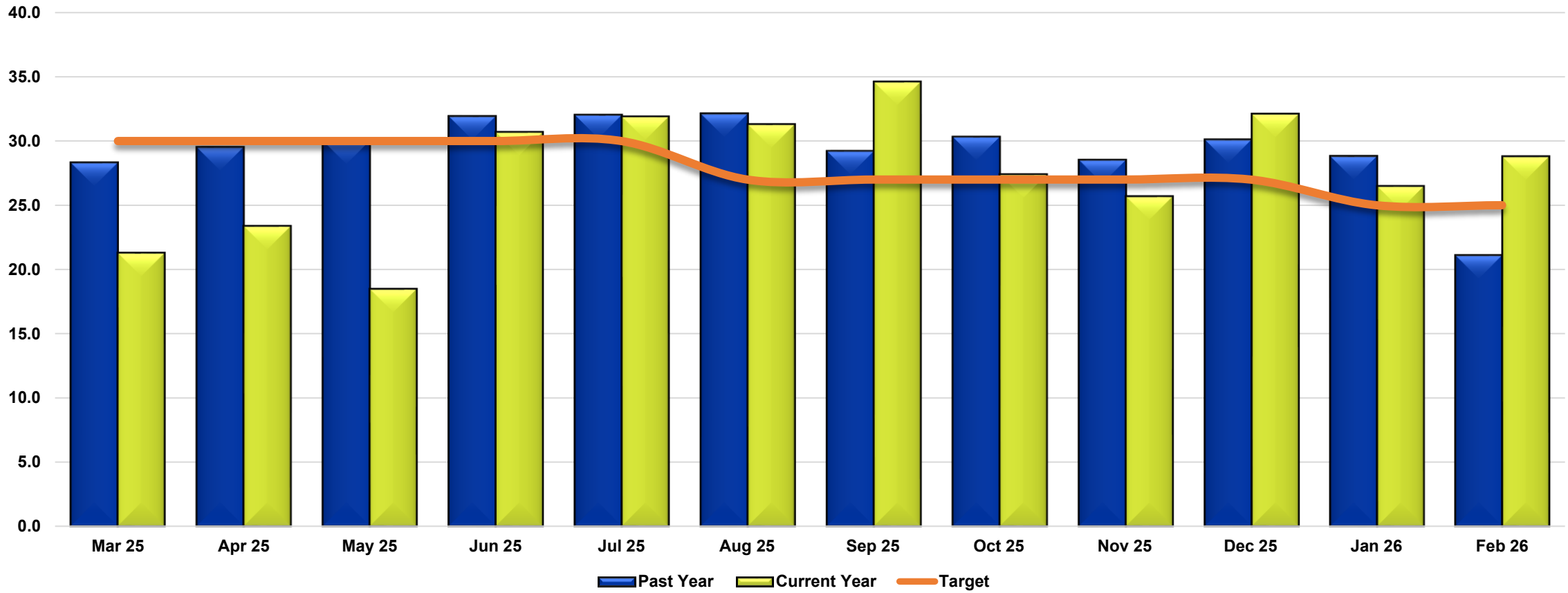
| MetroNow Service | Feb 26 Actual | Feb 26 KPI Target | Target Variance |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| On-Time Performance | 99.3% | 97.0% | 2.3% |

Fixed-Route Service Reliability



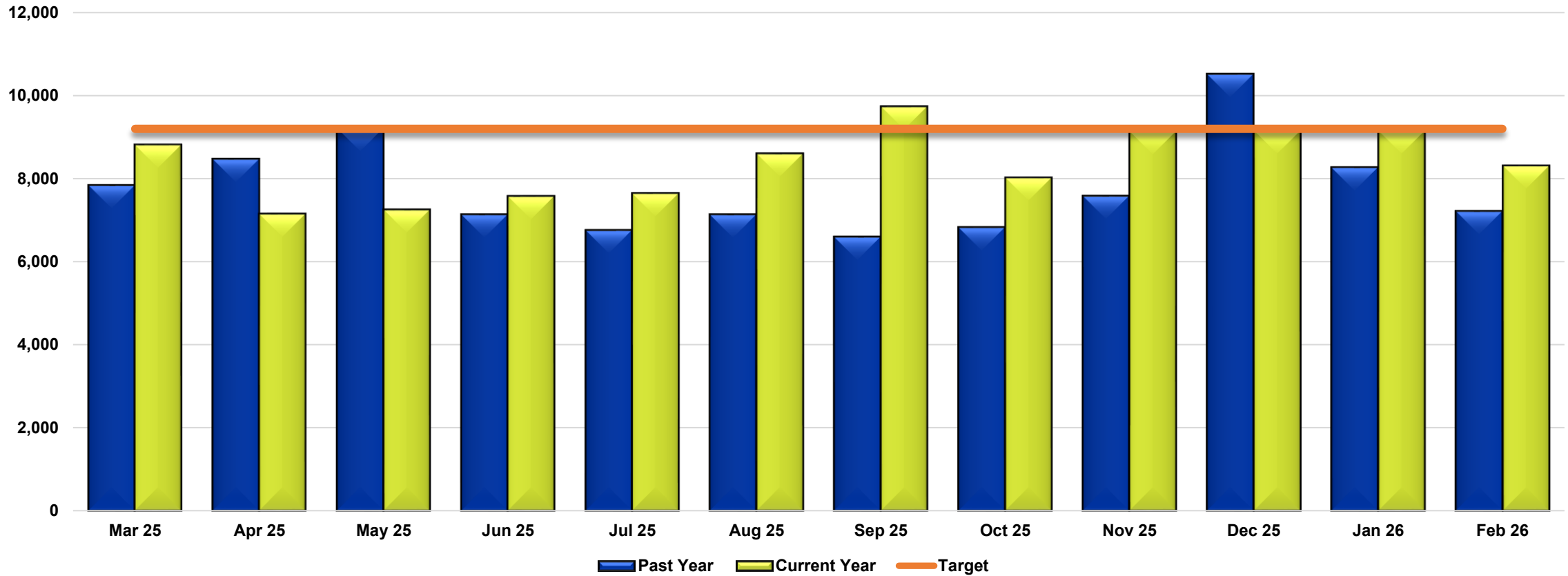
| Fixed-Route Service | Feb 26 Actual Missed Trips | Feb 26 Trips Scheduled | % of Trips Operated | Monthly Target |
|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Missed Trips | 480 | 69,136 | 99.3% | 99.4% |

Customer Service Reports per 100k Rides



| Fixed-Route Service | Feb 26 Reports Per 100k Rides Made | Feb 26 Reports Per 100k Rides Target | Feb 26 Target Per 100k Rides Variance | Feb 25 Reports Per 100k Rides Made | Feb 25 vs 25 Reports Per 100k Rides Variance |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Customer Service Reports | 28.8 | 25.0 | 3.8 | 21.1 | 7.7 |

Fixed-Route Miles between Mechanical Service Interruptions



| Fixed-Route Service | Feb 26 MSI Actual | Feb 26 MSI Target | Feb 26 Target Variance | Feb 25 MSI Actual | Feb 26 vs. 25 MSI Variance |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Miles Between Mechanical Service Interruptions (MSI) | 8,312 | 9,200 | -888 | 7,206 | 1,106 |

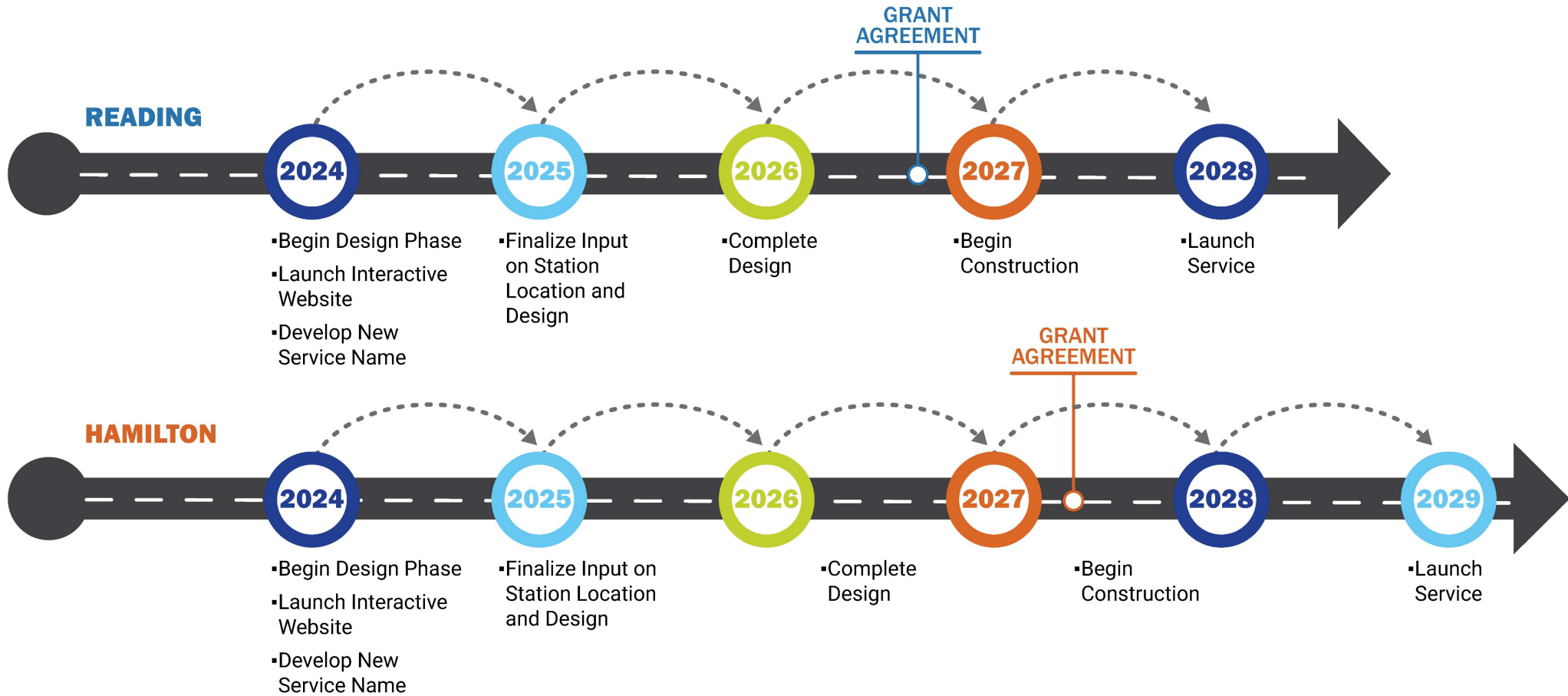


MetroRapid Update

March 2026



PROJECT TIMELINES



STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Internal MetroRapid Leadership Team Kick-Off
- Metro and City Steering Committee meeting with special guests
- State Historic Preservation Office
- 3CDC
- Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) meeting
- University of Cincinnati
- Utility Companies
- Clifton Town Meeting Special Meeting on BRT
- Clifton Town Meeting regular community council meeting
- City of Cincinnati Historic Preservation Commission
- TOD Technical Core Team
- TOD Developer Market Research Roundtable #2



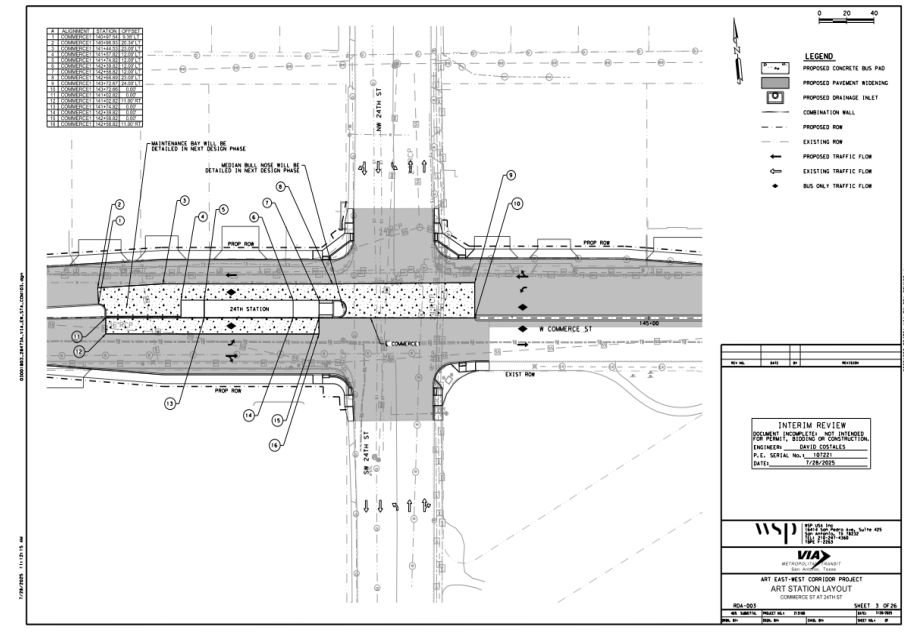
ADVANCING STATION DESIGN - READING

- Refining the prototypical station designs created at 30% design
- Designing each station at each final station location
- Choosing the size of the canopy length for each specific location
- Designing a combined Connector Fountain Square/BRT Government Square Station
- Making final decisions on station elements
 - Call boxes
 - Ticket vending
 - Security Cameras
 - Windscreens
 - Maps, Signage
 - Seating and Lean rails
 - Materials and colors
- Opportunities for Community Identity and/or Community Enhancements



ENGINEERING - READING

- **Geotechnical** coordination kickoff held on 2/26/2026
 - Internal kickoff with Terracon
 - Geotechnical work is needed to identify pavement design (road repair or resurfacing) and station foundations
 - City Permit filed
- **Apparent Right of Way and Right of Way Support**
 - Task order underway with Woolpert and Dunrobin
 - Knowledge of right of way process and corridor
 - Survey existing ROW
 - Begin Property Acquisition (post-NEPA)



Subconsultant Design Support

- ü Terracon
- ü Woolpert
- ü Dunrobin

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS PROCESS & CITY COORDINATION

1. Existing Traffic Counts Collected - weekday morning and afternoon rush during the school year
2. Existing Traffic Modeled and Calibrated - with field verification
3. Utilized Multiple Traffic Analysis Software to model future conditions
4. Analysis Reviewed by City of Cincinnati DOTE, Traffic Engineering Division

Red Time



20-50 seconds

Local Bus Dwell



20-30 seconds

Parking Maneuver



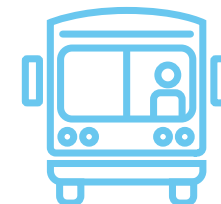
18 seconds

Ped Crossing



10-14 seconds

BRT Dwell



10-15 seconds

TRAFFIC - READING

McMicken/Clifton



- » Evaluation of Traffic Signal Timing Changes
- » Integration with Streetscape Plan

Jefferson Corridor



- » Re-evaluation of traffic analysis in coordination with edge front transit lanes

Clinton Springs Avenue



- » Incorporation of Neighborhood Study Recommendations

Victory Parkway



- » Removal of NB Bus Lanes
- » Reconfiguration of SB Lanes
- » Traffic Signal Timing Changes

Avon Road to SR 562



- » Removal of Bus Lanes to allow for 2 thru traffic lanes

California Avenue



- » Evaluation of Turn Lanes

Woodward to Losantiville

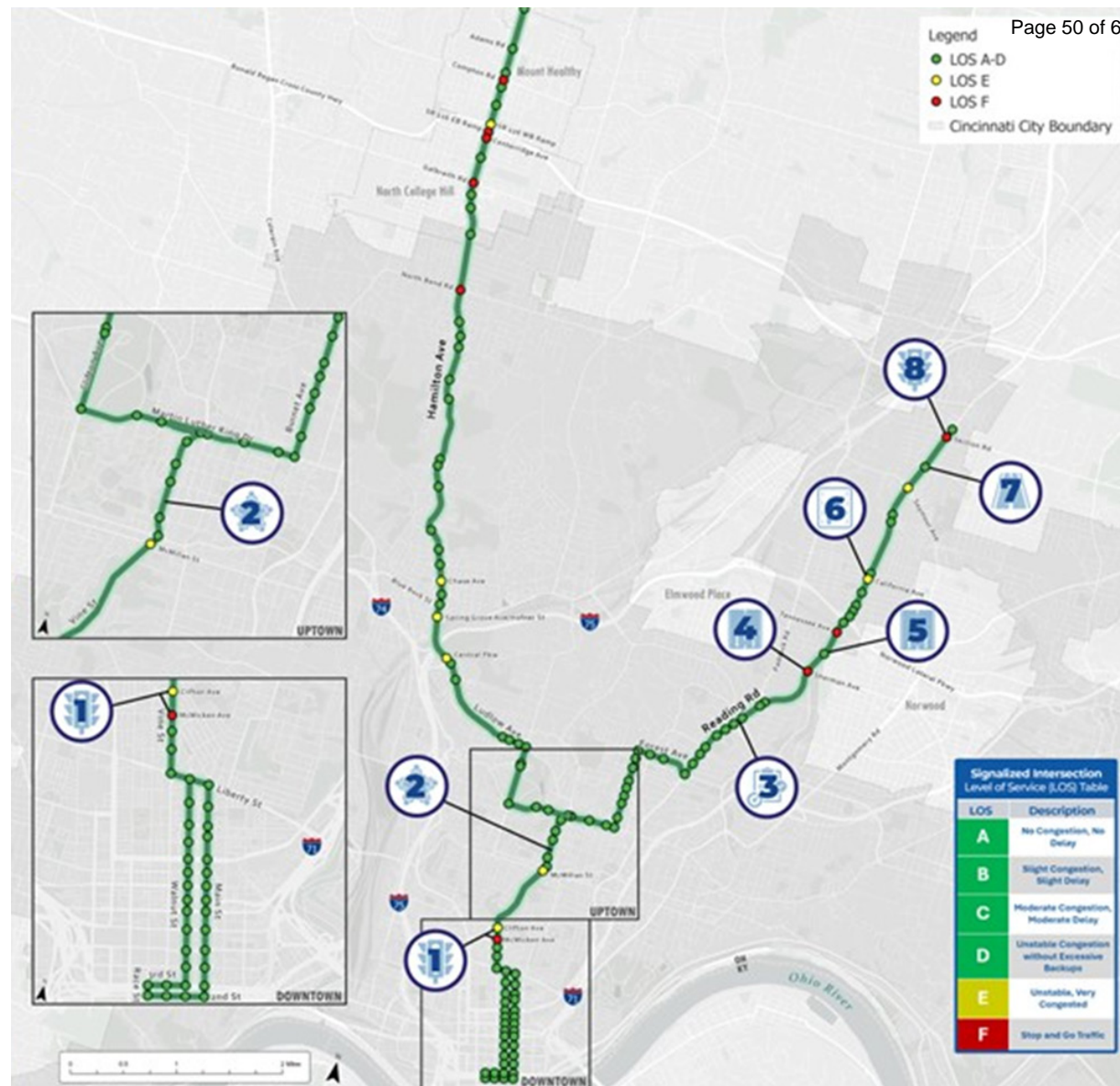


- » Evaluation of Roadway Widening

Section Road

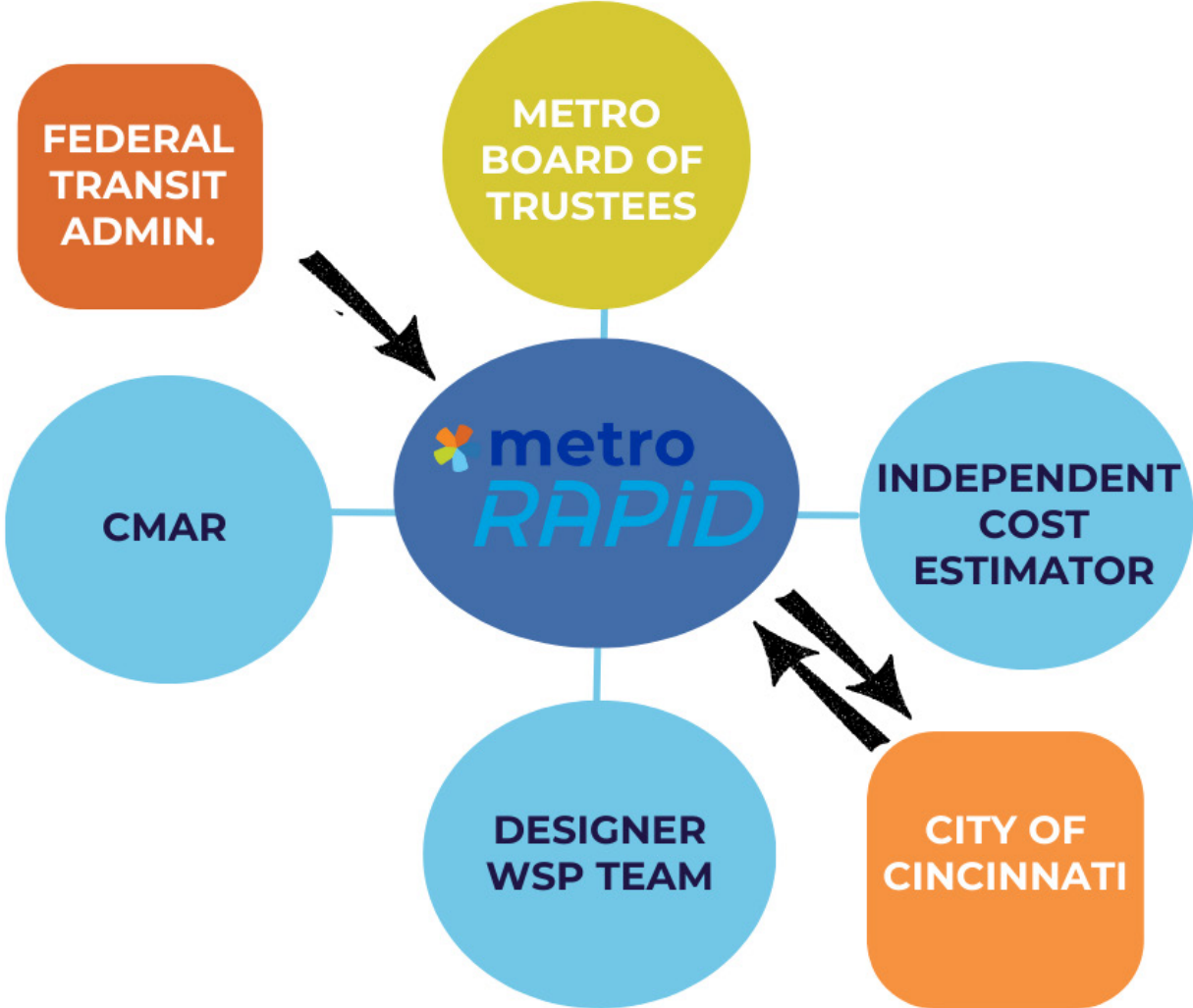


- » Evaluation of Traffic Signal Timing Changes



DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION TEAM

- Designers – WSP/HDR
- Construction Manager At-Risk (CMAR) – Herzog - Started
- Independent Cost Estimator (ICE) – SRF Consulting - NTP last week



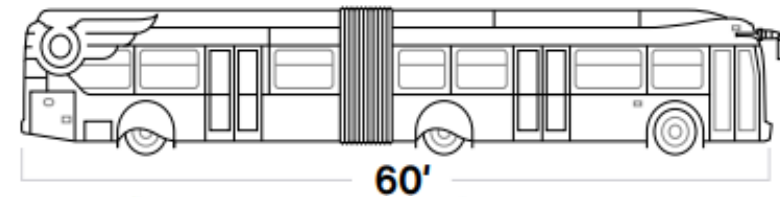
CONSTRUCTION

- Stations
- Repaving/repairing the roads
- Dedicated bus and right turn lanes



VEHICLE PROCUREMENT

- Specification Process underway
- Procurement planned by end of 2026





THANK YOU!



Strategic Priority: Grow Ridership



metro
your way to go

New Initiative: Ridership Development Team

Grow Ridership: strategic plan priority

- Challenge: multiple departments, initiatives, and functions address this priority

Solution: a cross-organizational structure to focus on this priority

- Chief of Staff will develop and lead this team

Our purpose: to achieve alignment and reach our goals

- SMART goal targets (monthly, annual, and 5-year plan ridership targets)
- Support our Strategic Plan Initiatives
- Reach even higher heights

| Short Term | Future |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Initial momentum and early wins | Remain aligned with our strategic plan |
| Activate the Deep Dive | Longer term ridership development strategies |



2026 Q1 Marketing Update

Background

- 3-year contract with new advertising agency – Gatesman
- Offices in Chicago and Pittsburgh
- Clients include PACE in Chicago and Pittsburgh Regional Transit
- Chosen to bring a fresh, new approach to Metro advertising
- Will manage all creative development, media buying, and analysis for paid marketing



Objectives – Express/Park & Ride Campaign

- Increase awareness of express services and park & rides
- Increase ridership by 3-5% on under-utilized express routes by focusing on:
 - Convenience – free parking, wide network of lots
 - Ease of use – real-time info, app payment, direct service to downtown, etc.
 - Savings – particularly on price of gas
 - Stress reduction – avoid traffic, better use of time, charging ports, free Wi-Fi service, etc.
- Strategies include improved signage and wayfinding at park & rides, digital and outdoor advertising geo-targeted to locations with service, bus and shelter ads, traffic sponsorships, and general marketing



Messaging

Ever see a 20 to 30-something's laptop
or water bottle?

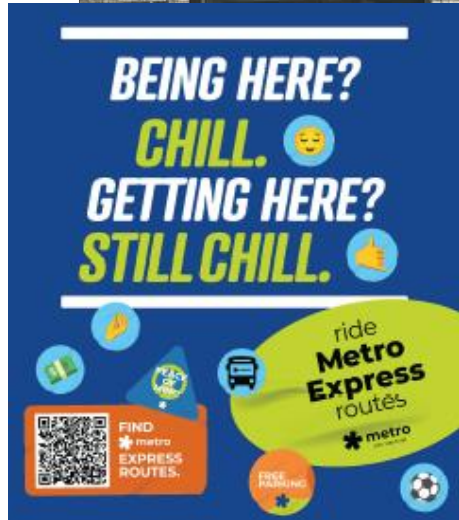
Messaging

It's covered in stickers!

Riding Metro is like a sticker (or bandaid) for your commute.



Creative



Objectives – Operator Recruiting Campaign

- Increase awareness that Metro is hiring
- Highlight perks of being a Metro operator (pay, benefits, hiring bonus, it's a long-term career, etc.)
- Provide a clear call to action – apply with QR code to special landing page
- Energize applicants with fresh approach using real operators and quotes
- Strategies include digital and outdoor advertising geo- and behavior-targeted to people looking for jobs, radio and TV general advertising, bus and shelter ads, jobs sites, and social media/streaming (Facebook, YouTube, Spotify, etc.)
- Maintain high level of operator applicants to meet expansion needs (2,500+)

Creative Messaging – Move Up with Metro

You've got the drive.

APPLY NOW metro your way to go

Make it pay off long term.

APPLY NOW metro your way to go

Metro is hiring bus operators.

Pay and benefits:

- Hiring bonus: **\$2,000**
- Paid CDL training: **\$5,000 value**
- Year one: **\$54,000 average**
- Year two: **\$63,000+**
- 14%** retirement match

APPLY NOW metro your way to go

Apply today and **Move Up with Metro.**

APPLY NOW metro your way to go

Move Up with Metro.
Become a bus operator.

Pay and benefits:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Hiring Bonus: \$2,000 | Paid CDL training: \$5,000 value |
| Year One: Avg. up to \$56,500 | Year Two: Avg. up to \$66,500+ |
| | 14% retirement match |

metro your way to go

“It’s a career, not a job.”
– Cindy, Bus Operator

Pay and benefits:

- Hiring bonus: **\$2,000**
- Paid CDL training: **\$5,000 value**
- Year one: Avg. up to **\$56,500**
- Year two: Avg. up to **\$66,500**
- 14%** retirement match

metro your way to go

Creative

General Audience (Video)

VO: You already know what responsibility feels like.

VFX: Bus doors open a gradient colored path starts at the bus operator and travels thru the video.

BALA VO: You're carrying people. Their life is on you. They're my number 1 priority.

VO: What if you found a role with more stability – and a real path forward?

VO: Metro is hiring bus operators.

VO: Earn fifty-four thousand your first year, sixty-three thousand your second, plus great benefits.

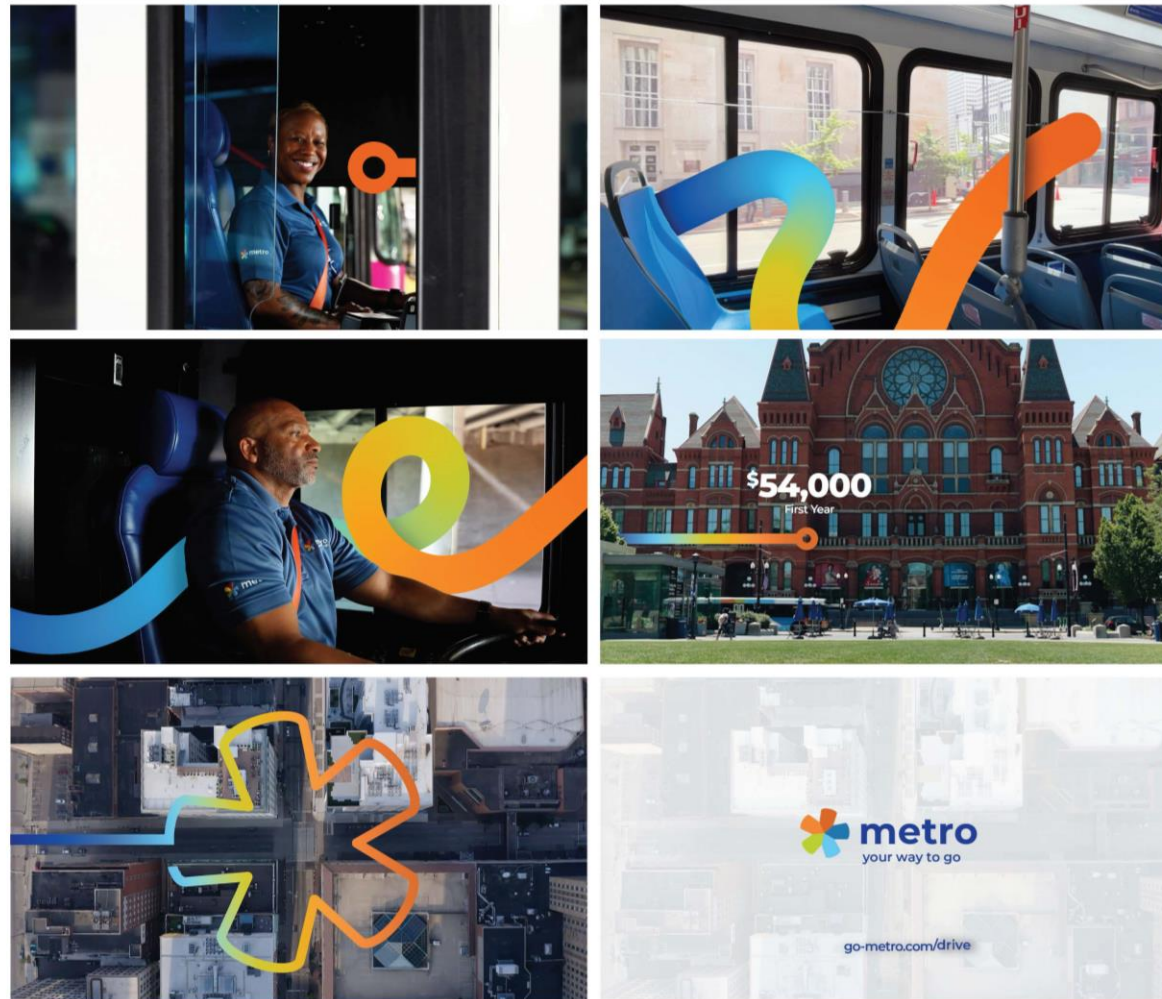
VFX: Stats appear above the gradient path as it follows the bus.

VO: Add a two-thousand-dollar hiring bonus, plus a 14% retirement match, and you've got a move worth making.

VO: Move Up with Metro.

VFX: Aerial shot of Cincinnati with the gradient line forming the Metro icon. The outlined shape fills in and shrinks into the full-color logo.

VO: Apply today at go-metro.com/drive.





Questions

Progress & Priorities

Spotlight on the top five

1

2

3

4

5

From **Andrew C. Aiello**, Metro CEO &
General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer



March 2026

This monthly report provides a high-level overview of several key initiatives currently being advanced by the Metro leadership team. The updates below reflect continued momentum and progress aligned with Metro's long-term priorities.

1. **Coordination with FTA Continues:** Metro staff continues its coordination effort with the Federal Transit Administration regarding the repayment of federal funds used to purchase rail right-of-way in the early 1990's. A general repayment plan has been established, and the first payment has been made. FTA is allowing Metro to reassess the value of some of the right-of-way to more accurately reflect the impact of active rail operating easements.
2. **Transit Employee Appreciation Week:** While National Transit Employee Appreciation Day was March 18, Metro celebrated our incredible workforce all week long. Team members enjoyed meals, games and Metro swag, along with opportunities to learn more about employee perks and benefits that support their well-being. We are grateful for every member of our team whose dedication and care help us serve our community each day.
3. **Employee Townhall Meetings:** A highly effective workforce starts with an informed workforce. That's why we host organization-wide Employee Townhall Meetings twice a year at each facility across all shifts. During last week's sessions, Metro's leadership team shared updated strategic priorities and highlighted key projects that will drive our progress. The meeting also gave members the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback on our plans.
4. **All signs point to the bus stop:** We appreciate the collaboration of the University of Cincinnati DAAP students and staff, along with input from our frontline team, in redesigning Metro's bus stop signs. We will celebrate the installation of the first of more than 4,000 new signs that will go across our service area on April 9 at 9:30 a.m. at 2800 Clifton Ave. Congressman Greg Landsman will join us as we recognize his support in helping Metro secure \$1 million in federal funding to advance this project.
5. **Go Reds, Go Metro:** Skip the hassle and ride Metro on Reds Opening Day, March 26. All fixed-route and Access services will be free to ride, making it a great time to try transit. Visit our website for detour information, as Government Square will be closed during the parade. And don't miss Evie and the Metro team as they join the parade, which steps off at noon.

All the best,

Andy Aiello