

# Public Transit Advisory Board

## 2023 Annual Report

### **Technology and Rider Experience:**

Transit technology and the customer experience was the focus of the 2023 Sioux Area Metro, PTAB and City of Sioux Falls mission. A technology plan was drafted to include the mission and vision of this focus.

The IT Department, led by Kamie Clauson-Livermore, took inventory and assessment of the network, hardware and software utilized by SAM. Improved system security, updating of hardware and implementation of technology to improve efficiencies was recommended and plans being put in place.

CradlePoints to support WiFi and Real-Time GPS on the buses was approved. Software that is due for upgrading included Paratransit scheduling/dispatch systems.

The COSF is updating the city's website. Review of SAM's content and customer experience opportunities were considered in this update. Further updates to this website have been tabled for the management transition, with all federally required information to remain on the city's webpage, as well as any future website that may be developed. Social media platforms have been turned over to the SAM team for updating and content.

### **Transit Development Plan:**

This document is updated on a five-year basis. This update went through the PTAB review, community participation and stakeholder engagements throughout 2022. The plan was approved by PTAB on 2/21/2023 and the City Council 2/22/2023.

### **FTA 5310 Capital Grant Recommendations:**

The annual review of applications for the FTA 5310 funding was completed by PTAB, TCC, CAC, TAC and UDC. The 2022 apportionment was \$372,521, with \$341,410 being awarded and a carryover of \$31,111 will be applied to 2023 apportionment. Grants were awarded to three agencies for operations, camera system, and two vehicles.

### **Sam on Demand:**

SAM On-Demand Saturday Pilot continued to be monitored with the SAM Team and Pantonium's support team. The goal of implementing On-Demand service to six days per week was not possible due to the continued driver shortage.

With the challenges put forth by the driver shortage, the overall concept and implementation of the On-Demand system was seeing growth and acceptance by the community and the SAM Team.

### **Service Reduction and Changes:**

Service reductions due to driver shortage has been SAM's reality, along with the rest of the nation. SAM did experience a greater number of applicants in 2023, bringing the system closer to full driver capacity.

The 41<sup>st</sup> Street and I-29 Interchange construction project will impact routes 10 and 11 for approximately two years. Work was done to mitigate the impact for those traveling to Roosevelt High School.

### **Management Agreement RFP:**

After considerable review and collaboration with several city departments, an RFP for the management services for Sioux Area Metro was released in July 2023. J. Tschetter and J. Johannsen, PTAB members, served on the RFP selection process.

First Transit (now TransDev) has provided management services for over 30 years. The direction the RFP was focusing on was for a 'turnkey' operation, with a focus on technology and data-driven decision making.

There were two proposals submitted under this RFP, TransDev and Via Transportation. In-person interviews took place with the selection team and supporting city team members. There was an opportunity for a joint venture, if either or both entities were interested, such as one company contracting with the Fixed Route system, the other with Paratransit and Microtransit services.

The contract was awarded to Via Transportation as a turnkey operation in September 2023, for a management change on 1/1/2024. Via Transportation choose to retain the entire system services under their management. Contract negotiations were based on service hours per system (Fixed Route, Paratransit, and Microtransit), with KPI's to be determined.

### **Annual Meeting – May 2023**

The 2022 Annual Report was provided to PTAB recapping the previous transit year.

Election of PTAB Officers for 2023-2024:

- Chair Erik Nelson
- V. Chair Bailey Abbott
- 2023 Expiring PTAB Board Positions held by Abbott (first term), Abbott agreed to remain for a second term per board offer.

A history of Transit was presented by Sam Trebilcock.

### **Annual Audit:**

The annual audit was completed by Eide Bailly for SAM. This is included as part of the city-wide audit. No major violations were found.

### **Site Selection Study:**

Through an RFP process, TSP of Sioux Falls was awarded the Site Selection project August 2022. This scope of work includes finding the best location for the future building site for the SAM facility. This study was completed, and draft results are being considered for further action. Future sites decisions and action will be contingent on the city's Downtown Plan, site availability that meets FTA and local requirements, as well as include it in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Including this project in the CIP will assist with the future FTA funding request process.

### **PTAB Bus Tour:**

June's monthly meeting was held at Sioux Area Metro, with a brief business meeting held in their meeting room, followed by a bus tour of a route. This was advertised and open to the public. It gave great opportunity for board members to experience the transit system and was well received.

### **Transit Budget:**

The 2023 transit budget process has been reviewed using the current management contract, with the future of this contract being subject to the RFP process. Projected budget figures have been in alignment with the 2022 budget, with inflation factors considered. No solid budget figures were presented as it was evident that the management selection completed September 2023 would dictate the 2024 budget.

### **PASS It on Program:**

A delegation from Minnehaha County reported on this program collaboration with SAM. There are 40,000 rides allowed through this program provided to various nonprofit organizations for those they serve. Most of these rides include employment, job searches, medical and family visits.

This success of this program includes the ability to help launch and lift these passengers out of homelessness and into employment. Challenges include the inability to allow transfers, resulting in needing more passes.

An estimated \$472,000 in repaid debt from January through September of 2023 to the state of South Dakota has been seen due to access to employment through this transportation program, which includes fines, restitution, child support and other debt.

### **Program of Projects - Required Actions and Program Information:**

**5-22-2023:** Annual meeting with presentation of annual report for 2022, and election of officers.

**8-28-2023:** The required public hearing for the Program of Projects was held. These projects included:

- *2022 Operating Expenses – FTA:* *\$1,626,222*
- *2023 Operating Assistance – FTA* *\$1,400,000*

- *2017-2019 Capital – Rolling Stock FTA*      \$ 975,024
- *2020-2022 Capital – Rolling Stock FTA*      \$ 971,211
- *State of South Dakota Funding*              \$ 75,646.40

Motions were made to close the public hearing and approve the utilization of the FTA 5307, 5339, and State 5339 funding for transit operations with a unanimous vote.

**10-23-2023:** MPO Human Services / Public Transit Coordination Plan 5-Year Update. Final draft presented to PTAB. The purpose of this plan is to make recommendations to FTA for use of the 5310 funds for nonprofit organizations serving the elderly and disabled’s transportation needs. PTAB approved and adopted this updated plan.

**11-27-2023:** Contract renewals are in process for the Agency Ride Agreements with LifeScape, DakotAbilities and the Sioux Falls School District for the 2024 funding.

March and September meetings were cancelled.

## ***SAM Reimagined***

The Sioux Falls transit system has operated under the management of First Transit/TransDev for approximately 30 years with the management contract due for renewal on 1/1/2024. This business model includes First Transit as the management company for the deployment of the transit system, with the General Manager being an employee of First Transit, and the balance of the operations team as subsidiary corporation, Su Tran. Day-to-day operations, safety, security, and federal guidelines are their responsibility.

Under this model, the City of Sioux Falls (COSF) Planning and Development team has played a very direct and involved role in budget planning, route planning, statistical analysis, system improvements and opportunities, including introducing microtransit to Sioux Falls. Limited staff time, financial constraints, and understanding there was community demand for an improved system prompted the city of Sioux Falls to use this contract renewal opportunity to “Reimagine Transit”.

Through the RFP process, two proposals were submitted: First Transit/TransDev and Via Transportation. The RFP asked the proposers to think outside of the box, with a focus on improved technology, opportunity, and efficiencies.

This is an exciting journey to revamp COSF’s transit system with SAM Reimagined. Via Transportation’s turnkey proposal, focusing on microtransit integration and leveraging technology, presents a promising shift towards more efficient and accessible public transportation.

Retaining the existing SAM team demonstrates a commitment to continuity while embracing change. The addition of ADA vans for Phase 1 of Microtransit service shows a dedication to inclusivity and accessibility, crucial aspects of any modern transit system.

The Fixed Route Redesign, with its emphasis on more direct routes, increases frequency, and the integration of GIS technology through the SAM app, is a significant step towards improving the rider’s experience. Renaming routes with a color theme and updating signage/maps will enhance clarity and ease of use for passengers. This process has followed the required public engagement, implementation of feedback and will be fully deployed by fall of 2024.

Looking ahead to the Fall 2024 Plan, the full implementation of the Fixed Route Redesign and the integration of Microtransit across the city will further expand transit accessibility and convenience for residents. Diversifying the bus fleet to accommodate these changes reflects a forward-thinking approach to meeting evolving transportation needs.

Overall, SAM Reimagined holds great promise for enhancing public transportation in Sioux Falls, fostering community connectivity, and contributing to the city’s overall quality of life.





**Supporting Documents, Charts:**

The following are graphs, charts and information that help tell the story of transit in Sioux Falls.

With the transition of management planned for 2024, there were changes in budget processes as well as a shift bookkeeping staff in 2023.

The 2024 reports will reflect a difference in reporting statistics through data collected in the various software programs and Via’s focus on data and metrics.

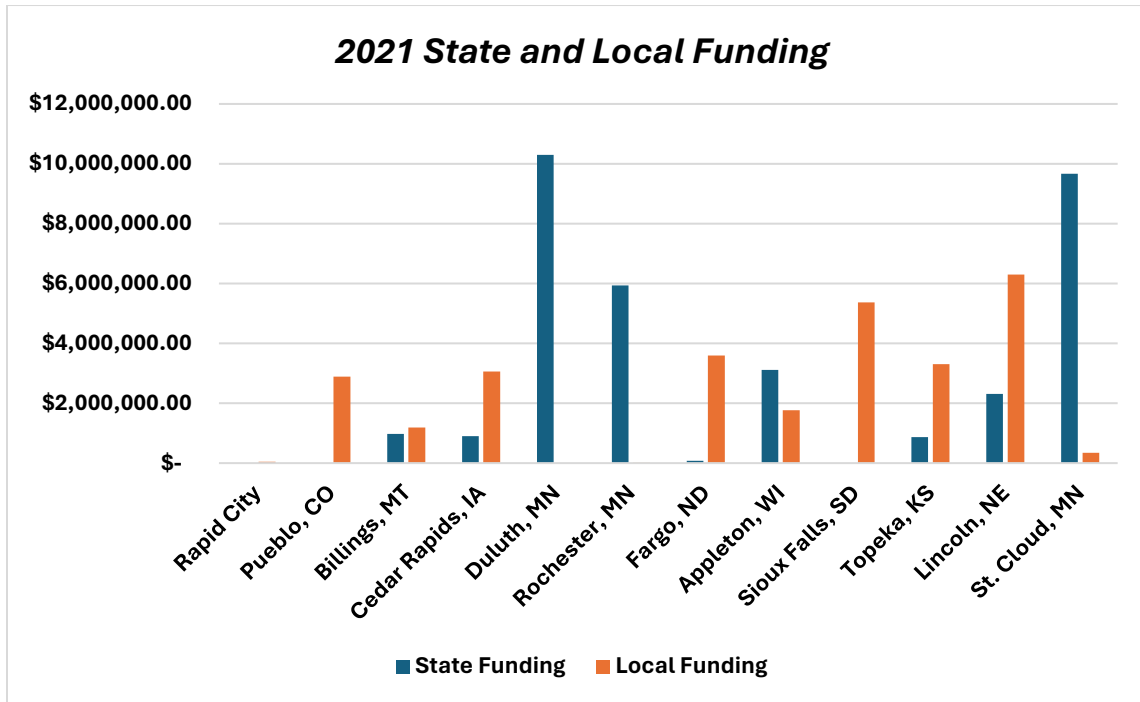


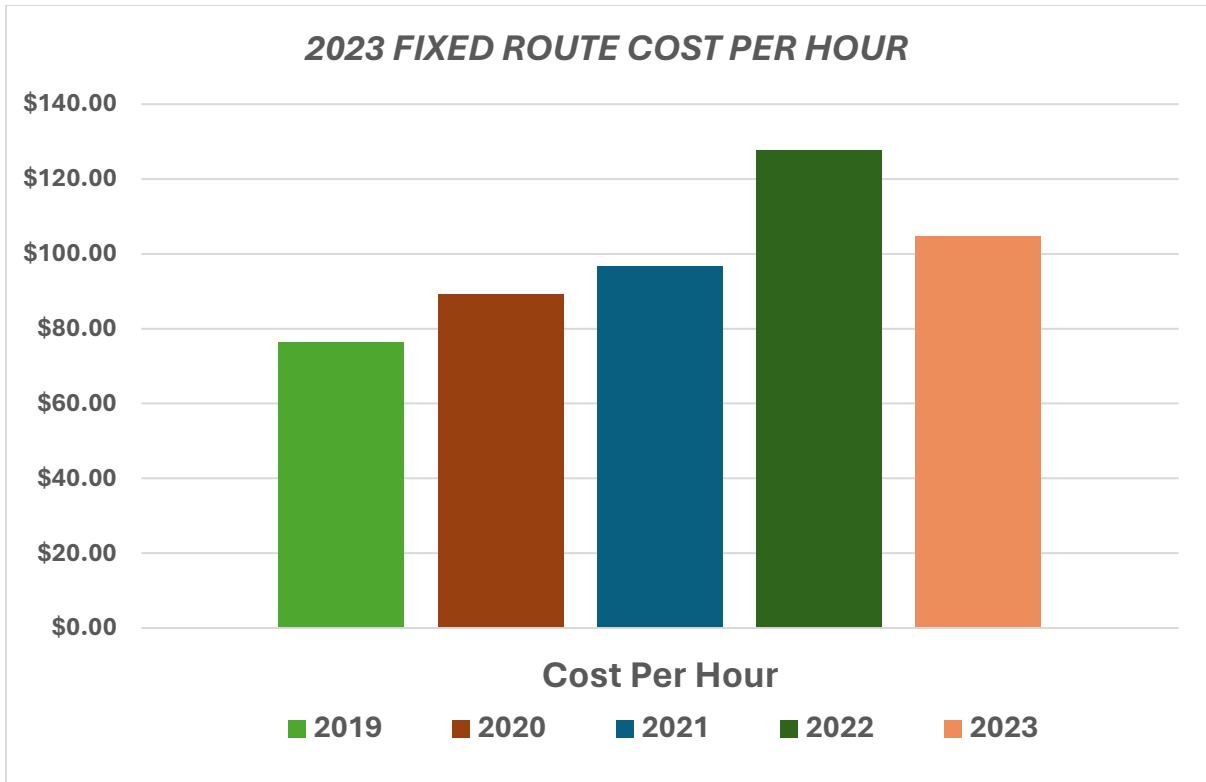
## Sioux Area Metro 2023 Budget

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>2023 Actuals</b>	<b>2023 Budget</b>	<b>% To Budget Collected</b>
Fixed Route	\$ 310,367.46	\$ 253,008.00	122.67%
Paratransit and On-Demand	\$ 136,226.75	\$ 133,392.00	102.13%
Medicaid-Paratransit	\$ 54,059.89	\$ 38,400.00	140.78%
Advertising / Other	\$ 60,499.28	\$ 16,200.00	373.45%
<b>Total Systems Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 561,153.38</b>	<b>\$ 441,000.00</b>	<b>127.25%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>2023 Actuals</b>	<b>2023 Budget</b>	<b>% To Budget Collected</b>
Fixed Route Operations	\$ 3,239,189.46	\$ 4,484,532.00	72.23%
Fixed Route Office	\$ 606,309.43	\$ 619,036.42	97.94%
Paratransit Operations	\$ 2,308,938.57	\$ 2,299,152.73	100.43%
Paratransit Office	\$ 646,991.79	\$ 547,311.30	118.21%
Overhead - VM	\$ 796,051.04	\$ 947,369.00	84.03%
Overhead - Non VM	\$ 694,447.87	\$ 720,357.00	96.40%
Overhead - Administration	\$ 1,545,703.02	\$ 1,727,045.00	89.50%
<b>Total Systems Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 9,837,631.18</b>	<b>\$ 11,344,803.45</b>	<b>86.71%</b>

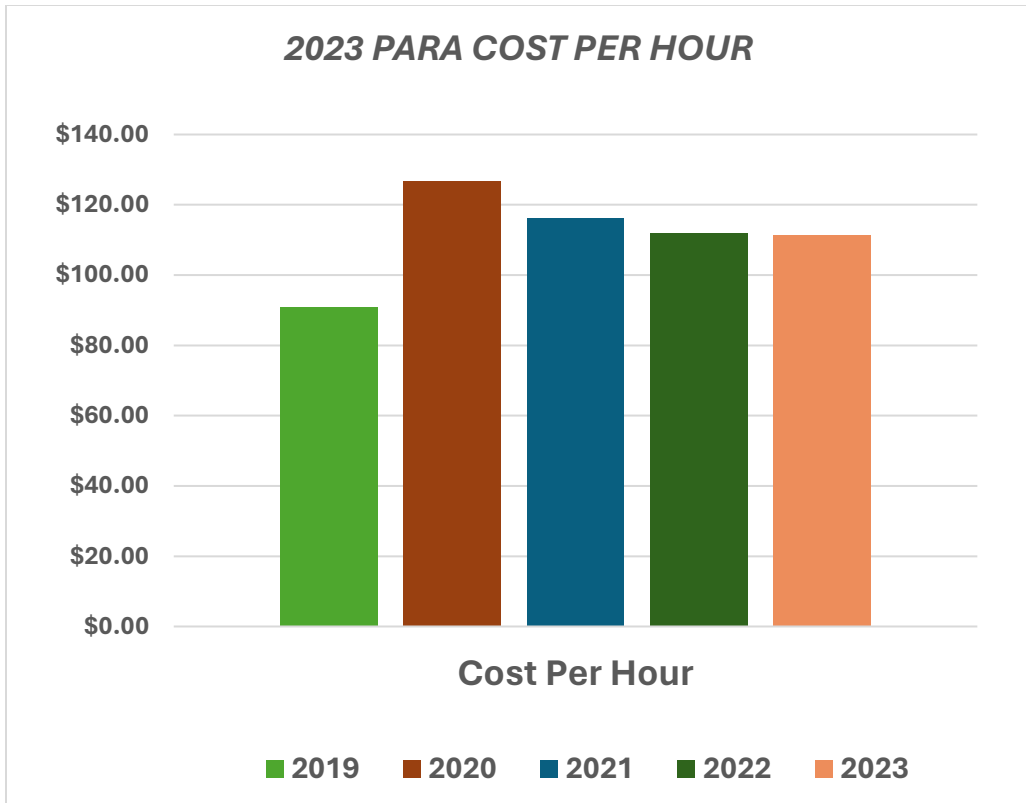


## Funding Levels and Sources for Peer Systems:



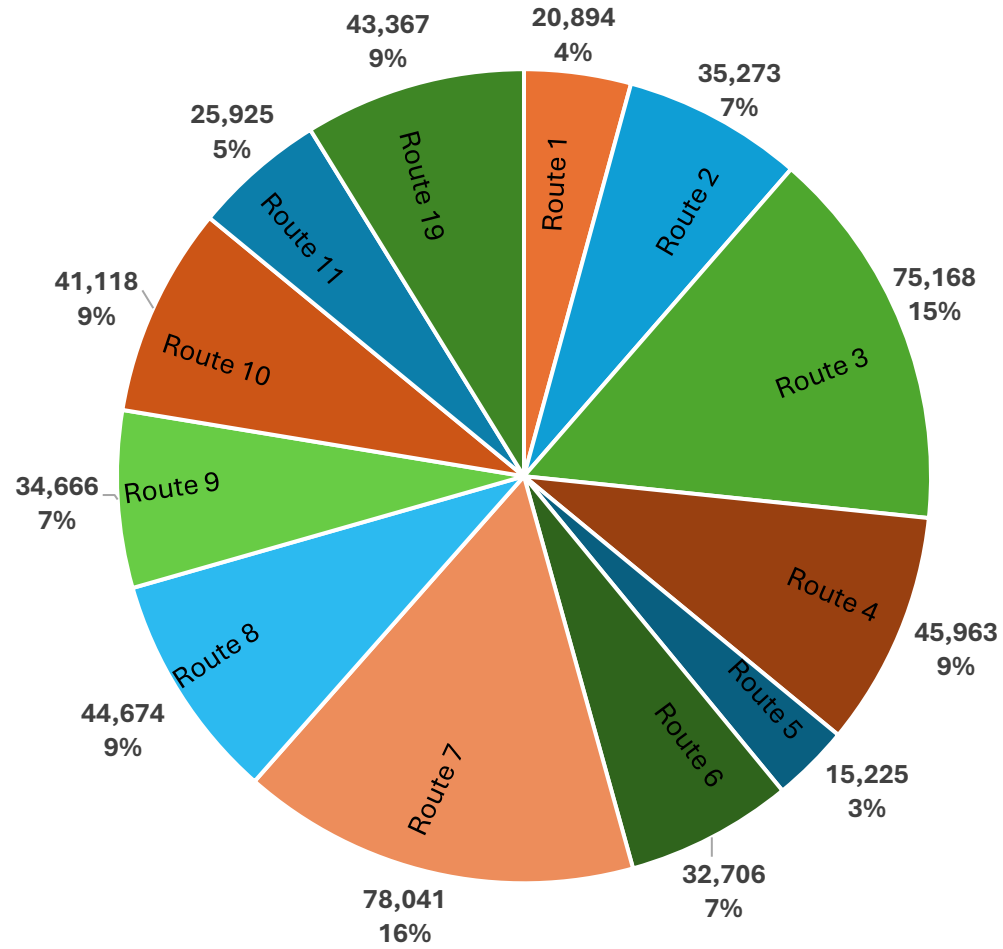


**\*2023 - \$104.62 Fixed Route Cost Per Hour**

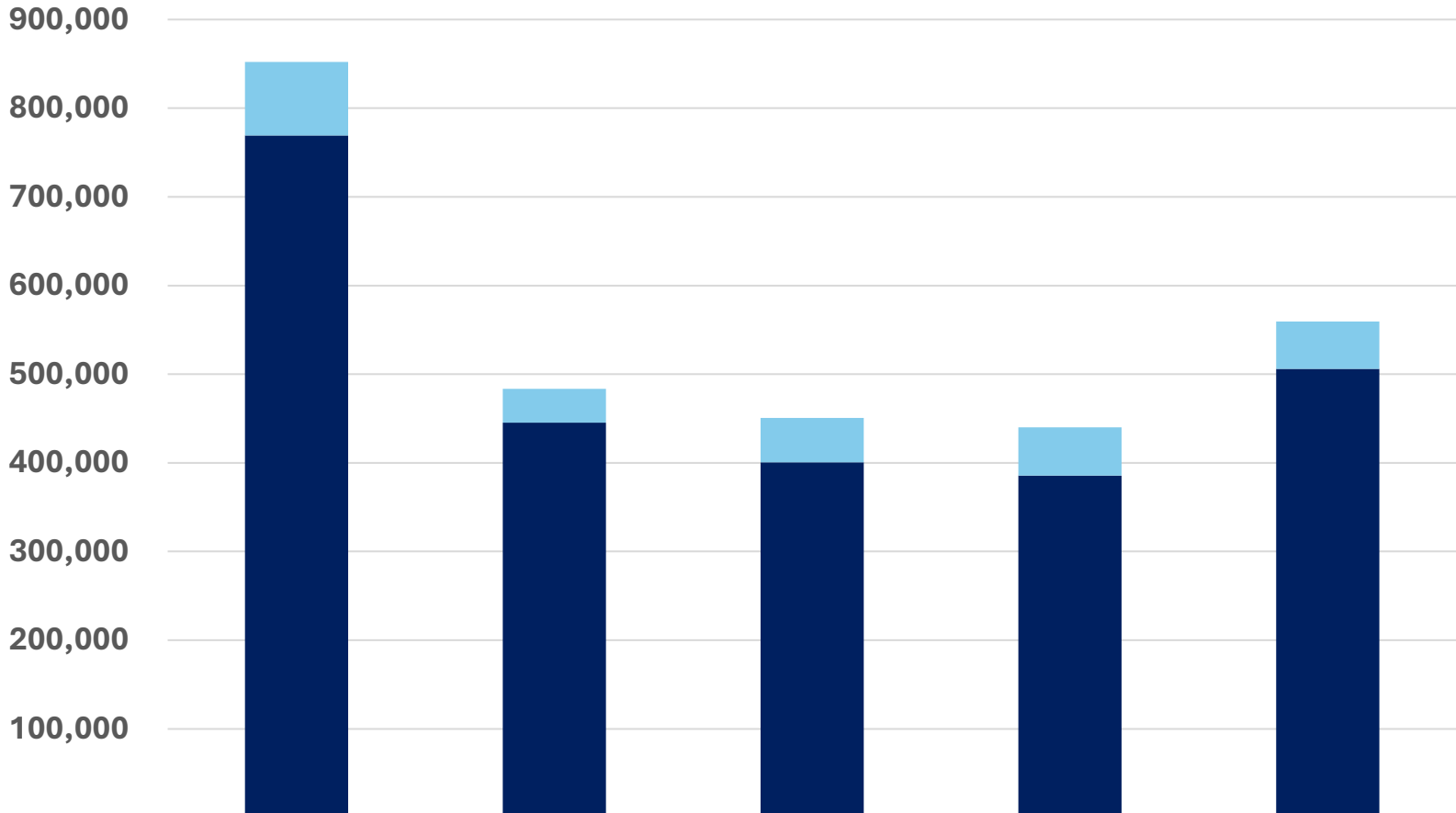


**2023 Paratransit Cost Per Hour \$111.34**

## 2023 Ridership By Route



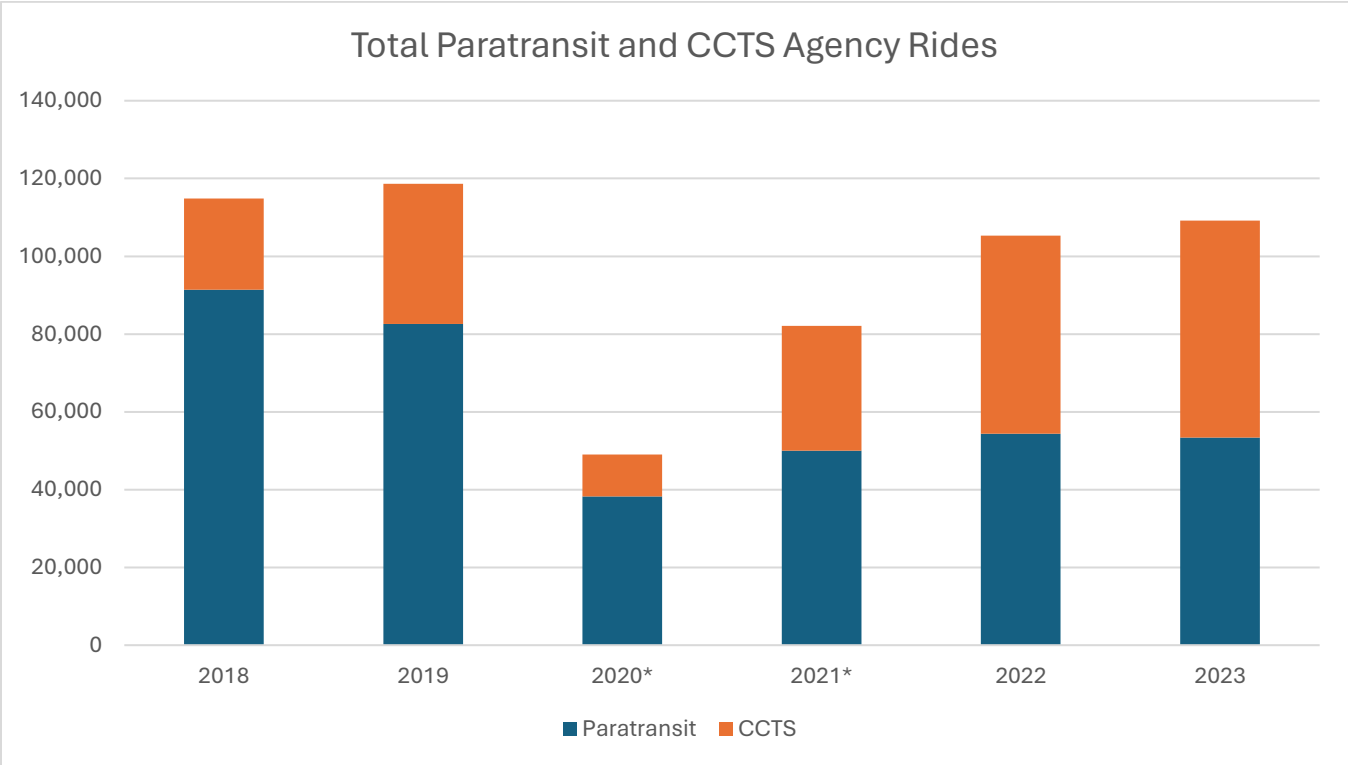
# 2023 Ridership



	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Paratransit	82,636	38,288	50,022	54,388	53,354
Fixed Route	769,437	445,205	400,692	385,565	506,020

Total Paratransit and CCTS Agency Rides						
	2018	2019	2020*	2021*	2022	2023
Paratransit	91,407	82,636	38,288	50,022	54,388	53,354
CCTS	23,460	35,992	10,746	32,096	50,939	55,790
<b>Total</b>	<b>114,867</b>	<b>118,628</b>	<b>49,034</b>	<b>82,118</b>	<b>105,327</b>	<b>109,144</b>

\*COVID Pademic significantly affected ride numbers during these years



**\*\*Agency Rides are not reflected in overall ridership reported to NTD.**