The State of Transit 2025

RIDE

WORLD CLASS TRANSIT FOR NEW ORLEANS

About our organization

Ride New Orleans is an independent advocacy nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. We envision a region in which taking transit enables full access to jobs, education, health care, and other needs that ensure the equitable, thriving community that all residents deserve. Our mission is to win world-class and equitable public transportation that works for all residents across the New Orleans region.

Visit rideneworleans.org for more information.

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Thank you to our 2025 Sponsors and Organizational Supporters:

Executive Director's Note

COURTNEY JACKSON

How do we build a healthy transit system?

A healthy transit system is not just a part of, but the backbone of a thriving, equitable city. It is the lifeline that connects residents to jobs, education, healthcare, and opportunity. It is the thread that binds communities, families, and friends. It is the solution that reduces congestion, improves air quality, and fosters economic growth. For New Orleans, building and maintaining this healthy system is not just a goal, but a necessity. It requires a coordinated effort to address longstanding challenges in funding, infrastructure, narrative, policy, and governance while seizing new opportunities for innovation and growth.

For too long, New Orleans has waited in vain for its systems to adequately support and reflect the needs of the people who live and work here. Our public transit system is a prime example of how ignoring our vital public resources can have catastrophic effects on our community.

This report is the result of a collective effort to examine the state of our transit system, undertaken by a group of individuals who understand the pivotal role public transit plays in every part of New Orleans' civic, cultural, and economic life. Each of us has contributed to reviewing the progress of the past year and outlining the critical steps needed to build the frequent, reliable, equitable, and accessible network that our city and region deserve.

This year's State of Transit is an analysis of the system conducted by transit riders — those who understand our city and its transit needs best. Grounding our work in the rider's voice, we hope to present a comprehensive and insightful review to the people of New Orleans and to the decision-makers and elected officials who will shape its future. We offer it to them as a road map, one centered on the needs of the people they are here to serve.

Table of Contents

2025 In Review

RIDE's Year in review.....6
Agencies' Year in review.....9
New Orleans Transit: 20 years after Katrina.....13

Why Grow the System?

Most Jobs Remain Inaccessible by Transit.....15
Riders Need a Quality Transit Network.....19
Transit Can Be a Job Creator.....22

How Do We Build a Healthy Transit System?

Coordinate City Departments.....24
Improve Access to Jobs.....26
Identify and Implement Stable Funding Sources.....27
The Path Forward: Bridging the Ideal and the Reality.....30

Recommendations: Agencies Must Make Improvements

Communication.....33
Accessibility.....36
Open Data.....40
Regional Coordination 42

Conclusion.....46

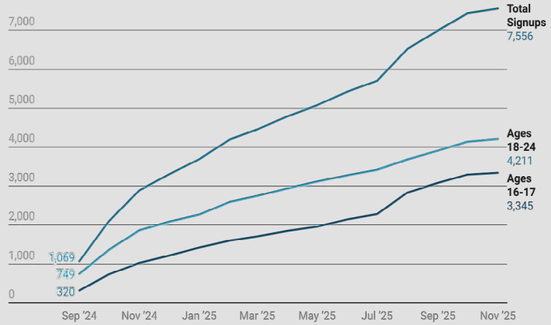
2025 In Review

RIDE'S Year In Review

Youth Lead the Way with the Opportunity Pass

The Opportunity Pass Pilot Program has successfully entered its second year, underscoring a significant victory for youth mobility in New Orleans. The program provides free, unlimited Regional Transit Authority (RTA) access to Orleans Parish youth aged 16-24, and with **more than 7,500 young people** already enrolled as of November, its impact is undeniable. This initiative—a collaborative effort between Ride New Orleans (RIDE), RTA, the New Orleans Public Library, and the New Orleans Children and Youth Planning Board, powered by a one-time allotment of $2.5 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds—is a testament to what goal-oriented partnership can achieve.

Growth of Opportunity Pass Over Time



The Opportunity Pass Program provides youth with reliable access to work, school, social activities, and healthcare, among other necessities. Data from the program's first year is clear: it is being used by those who need it most. Over half of all Opportunity Pass users self-identify as daily transit riders, with the highest pass activations consistently recorded during early morning and midday hours. Youth aged 18-24 have enrolled in the program at higher rates than any other age group, and more than 50% of pass users self-identify as Black or African-American.

Crucially, the program has been conceived, designed, and implemented by and for the youth it serves. From the logo to the enrollment process, every step was guided by the youth rider experience. Through feedback gathered by RIDE's Youth Transit Ambassadors in surveys, focus groups, and community outreach, the program continues to evolve.

The next few months will be pivotal in determining the future of the Opportunity Pass Program. Currently, the City faces a significant budget deficit. It has announced urgent plans to explore all options to meet payroll, includinging allocated American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds– such as those designated for the Opportunity Pass Program. However, RIDE and the City's Chief Administrative Office (CAO) recently completed a second round of financial projections for the program. It was determined that the program will only require $1.8 million in support to continue, meaning $700,000 of the initial allotment has already been reallocated. The program and the youth who depend on it cannot afford to lose any additional funding. RIDE has called upon youth-serving organizations, decision-makers, and the community at large to help ensure the program remains intact. As we move forward, RIDE will continue to analyze the pilot data to build the case for sustainable, permanent funding for the program, ensuring this vital resource continues to connect young people to their futures.

> *"By having the Opportunity Pass, I feel more comfortable exploring my city."*
>
> **- YOUTH RIDER**

Centering the Rider's Voice Through Outreach

RIDE continues to focus our advocacy on what transit riders need most, and that means reaching out to riders of all kinds to better understand how they use the system and how it can be improved to better meet their needs. Our rider-led organizing arm, the Coalition for Quality Transit, continues to meet monthly to address emerging issues and needs in public transit across the greater New Orleans area. The Coalition assists RIDE in developing policy recommendations that guide RIDE's advocacy work and campaigns. Through our Youth Transit Ambassadors and our new full-time Youth Programs Coordinator & Policy Associate, Sam Strait, our youth outreach continues to be led and driven by young transit riders.

We have also significantly grown our senior engagement and outreach efforts. This year, RIDE hired a temporary Senior Outreach Ambassador to expand our programming and to build partnerships with senior-serving organizations, including the New Orleans Council on Aging, Providence Community Housing, and the New Orleans Health Department. Through outreach and a survey of senior riders, RIDE has developed a set of forthcoming policy recommendations to better serve the city's aging population.

Additionally, 2025 marked the execution of our third *New Orleans Hotel Worker Transit Survey and Report*. Following up on surveys carried out in 2018-19 and 2022, the 2025 survey once again demonstrated that hotel and hospitality workers rely on transit at rates significantly higher than the region's workforce as a whole (48% of surveyed workers) and that the system falls markedly short in delivering the service these essential workers rely on. The forthcoming report features substantive recommendations for the agency and other stakeholders to improve service and support for the workforce that keeps New Orleans' tourism economy afloat, most notably improvements in system reliability, night and weekend service, and regional connectivity.

Transit Literacy Workshops Create Confident Riders

To ensure all residents can navigate our transit system independently and with confidence, RIDE has developed a uniquely curated transit literacy program led by our Transit Ambassadors. This year, **our team visited nearly 100 schools, youth-serving organizations, senior homes, recreation centers, and career centers** to provide transit literacy resources and deliver tailored workshops for youth, seniors, and individuals with disabilities.

As part of our programming, we developed the *RIDE Guide*, an accessible and pocket-sized A-Z instructional manual for riding transit in New Orleans that includes multilingual smart rider tips, resources, and a regional map. Our workshops and resources equip participants with the soft skills needed to plan a door-to-door transit trip.

RIDE's one-of-a-kind programming demystifies every aspect of the rider journey, from trip planning and fare purchasing to bridging the digital divide. By providing personalized training, we are empowering our community's most vulnerable riders to take transit independently and with ease.

Driving Transit Policy Through Research and Stakeholder Engagement

In addition to the reports derived from RIDE's outreach and engagement work, we also continue to drive the region's transit policy through research-oriented reports and stakeholder engagement events. March marked the release of *Better Transit Through Open Data: The Case for Open Transit Data Reporting in the Greater New Orleans Region*, which explores the decisive role that accessible, open data can play in transforming public transit by driving greater transparency, equity, and accountability. In September, RIDE welcomed its new Policy Manager, Bob Danton, to the team to lead policy and data analysis efforts, bringing a research and activism background in geospatial analysis, urban equity, and transit-oriented communities.

In October, RIDE released *Fast Lane to the Future: The Case for Equitable, High-Quality Transit for New Orleans*, a short report aimed towards educating stakeholders and the greater community about the RTA's forthcoming Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project and other transit priority treatments. In November, the report's release was followed by a robustly attended stakeholder engagement event, including a breakfast briefing and a practitioner workshop, held in collaboration with the Greater New Orleans Foundation and featuring visiting experts from Birmingham's BRT implementation team.

The Urgent Case for Transit Funding

At the dawn of the 21st century, New Orleans boasted one of the most robust public transit systems for a city of its size. Today, service levels have plummeted by over 40%, a stark decline driven by the dual impacts of Hurricane Katrina and the COVID-19 pandemic.[1] These service cuts have created a less equitable transportation landscape, diminishing mobility for countless residents. Building on our 2024 report, *Why Public Transit Must Grow*, RIDE has continued its urgent transit funding campaign. By expanding our coalition and engaging directly with stakeholders and decision-makers, we are championing realistic funding solutions and a data-driven vision for network growth that can restore public transit as a reliable and viable option for all.

Agencies' Year in Review

Return to Stability on the Board of Commissioners

In RIDE's 2024 *State of Transit report*, we identified as a critical issue the lack of functional RTA governance resulting from a Board of Commissioners that was short several members following a series of major shake-ups and resignations earlier last year, including the departure of Jefferson Parish from the agency. An incomplete board prevented the convening of a quorum able to vote on regular business, resulting in the cancellation of all Board meetings from August through October of 2024, hindering the agency's ability to conduct regular business and hampering transparency and the public's ability to stay informed. Shortly after the release of last year's report, the RTA Board met on November 26, 2024, to end the deadlock, swearing in City Council appointee Mitch Guidry Jr. and State Rep. Delisha Boyd's appointee Louis Colin to the Board, followed by the Board's election of commissioner Fred Neal Jr. as Board Chair. In February 2025, Mayor Cantrell's appointee, Mariah Moore, was sworn in, marking the first time all Board seats have been filled with permanent members since last year's restructuring. Since then, as of November 2025, there have been no cancellations of full Board meetings or of Operations or Finance Committee meetings. This return to stability means the RTA is once again able to conduct regular business, and the public once again has some measure of transparency into the agency's activities. As the City enters a new administration, we emphasize the need for stability and consistency in agency oversight and leadership to maintain basic operational functionality.

> *"Achieving world-class transit will require not only the expenditure of operating funds, but a decision to allocate the resources and public space necessary to create transit priority on our roads– a necessary commitment in order for service to run quickly and efficiently. RIDE encourages transit decision makers and policy makers to move this conversation forward sooner rather than later, and to begin building political support for new operating funds for transit now."*
>
> **- RIDE, *WHY PUBLIC TRANSIT MUST GROW: FUNDING PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE IN GREATER NEW ORLEANS***

Ridership

There are many ways to measure the success of improvements to transit service, but few are more illustrative than ridership. Simply put, the better the service, the more people will use the service. To this end, the RTA has seen year-to-date ridership increase in 2025 compared to 2024. Based on the latest RTA Board of Commissioners report, RTA year-to-date ridership through September 30, 2025, is 10,717,827, up from 9,841,495 for the same 9-month period of 2024, an **8.9% increase**. This is despite operating slightly fewer platform hours (total hours vehicle operators are behind the wheel) in 2025 to date compared to 2024.[2] As the city continues to experience population decline,[3] this indicates that remaining residents and visitors are using transit more, both overall and per capita. If growth continues at current rates, the system should soon return to 2019 pre-pandemic ridership levels (with bus ridership already well exceeding 2019 levels[4]), a clear indication that public transit is as essential now as it ever has been for the Greater New Orleans region.

Infrastructure & Capital Projects

The RTA continues to make steady, if slow, progress on several infrastructure and capital projects. Several years after the RTA redesigned service routes across the network, the majority of stops now feature signage indicating the routes they serve, addressing a critical rider accessibility issue raised by RIDE in recent years. Much-needed fleet replacements began in 2024 and continued into the early part of this year. Work on the agency's zero-emission vehicle pilot has progressed, with charger installation underway in late 2025 in preparation for the arrival of 3 fully electric buses in early 2026. Projects for the renovations and modernization of the Algiers Ferry Terminal and its ferry barges, the East-West Bank BRT corridor, and a modernization and ADA-compliance program for the streetcar system are all in various stages of planning, design, and/or procurement.

Planning & Outreach

The 2025 initiation of the *Algiers Service Improvement Plan* represents the first phase of an assessment of the system's ability to serve riders in areas where service accessibility remains low and ridership is high. Initial survey results, as indicated by RTA staff, have been largely positive; however, there are substantive suggestions for improvement in this area. RTA staff indicated that the most frequent feedback was requests for more frequent service, better access to downtown, and the installation of shelters and benches. Other, more specific recommendations include better access to specific destinations within Algiers, such as the Walmart on Behrman. Next steps involve developing specific service scenarios to bring back to the community for evaluation, with a timeline goal of implementation in the summer of 2026. The RTA plans to subsequently perform a similar outreach and evaluation process in New Orleans East. We applaud this process and urge the RTA to ensure that community outreach surrounding these evaluations is extensive, accessible, and equitable. With new agency leadership in Outreach and External Communications, we hope to see a renewed commitment to meaningful public engagement and effective rider communications in the new year.

Consent Decree & Accessibility

In February 2025, the RTA entered into a second federal consent decree related to ADA accessibility on the St. Charles streetcar line, the result of a lawsuit filed in 2023 by the parents of Oscar Edmunds, a then 7-year-old boy with multiple disabilities who was denied access to one of the line's few ADA-accessible streetcars because the stop was not an "ADA stop."[5] This 2017 decree followed an earlier one stemming from a previous lawsuit, which prompted the agency to install the minimal number of ADA-accessible cars and stops currently available on the line.

As a result, in part, of the consent decrees, the agency has begun work on two studies: the *Streetcar Modernization Master Plan* and the *Universal Accessibility Study*. While the streetcar plan process has only just kicked off, the *Universal Accessibility Study* is now well underway. The study was initially outlined in the RTA's *Strategic Mobility Plan*, which had indicated a timeline of 2023-2024. A survey was finally conducted in fall 2025, and WSP was hired as the contractor for the study. RIDE is deeply concerned about the effectiveness of the survey outreach in engaging the system's most vulnerable riders and those with a wide range of accessibility needs; the number of survey responses received was significantly below the intended target. RTA board meetings and engagement opportunities remain inaccessible to many riders, including deaf riders, who gathered in large numbers at a combined Riders Advisory Committee and *Universal Accessibility Study* informational meeting with their own sign language interpreters to voice their frustrations with the agency. Strangely, the RTA has repeatedly pointed to this, and several other events, as successful outreach efforts, even as interpretation services remain unavailable at public meetings. RIDE plans to closely monitor the study process and hold the RTA accountable for implementing its recommendations.

Paratransit

Paratransit, a specialized transportation option for individuals with disabilities who cannot use fixed-route service, remains a significant challenge for riders. Both RTA and Jefferson Parish provide shared-ride paratransit services, offering origin-to-destination transportation for eligible riders who apply and are approved for the program. In the course of our community outreach, particularly with seniors, we have repeatedly heard about patrons being denied access to the RTA's system without a clear reason, experiencing extreme wait times, receiving poor customer service, and facing confusing and inconsistent rules and regulations regarding patrons' ability to bring groceries and

> *They don't let us bring our grocery crates on the van. This is a new rule and means I can't get groceries. Sometimes the van takes a long time to pick me up—hours. Especially after appointments.*
>
> **-SENIOR PARATRANSIT RIDER**

other items on board. RTA's paratransit on-time performance remains dismally low, averaging just 54.4% across the first seven months of 2025.[6] Over a third (35.6%) of senior paratransit riders surveyed by RIDE in 2025 indicated that they experienced average wait times of over an hour.[7]

Furthermore, paratransit service has suffered from a lack of consistent leadership for the last few years. In July of 2025, following turnover in the position and inconsistent leadership, the agency appointed long-time RTA employee and former paratransit operator Oscar Duplessis to the Director of Paratransit role. With new leadership in place, we are hopeful for renewed focus and commitment to improving paratransit service. We hope to see specialized training for operators and customer service staff, a more streamlined and accessible application process, and more reliable trip scheduling. We also continue to watch and advocate for stronger regional coordination to ensure that paratransit users traveling between Orleans and Jefferson parishes can do so safely, efficiently, and with dignity.

The agency has consistently pointed to outdated software as a cause of many of the service's shortcomings. It has recently indicated that it is evaluating options to upgrade to a modern scheduling and deployment system, with a contract expected to go out for bid in late 2025. RIDE will closely monitor these developments and hold the agency accountable for making meaningful improvements to the system that serves many of our region's most vulnerable riders.

Jefferson Parish

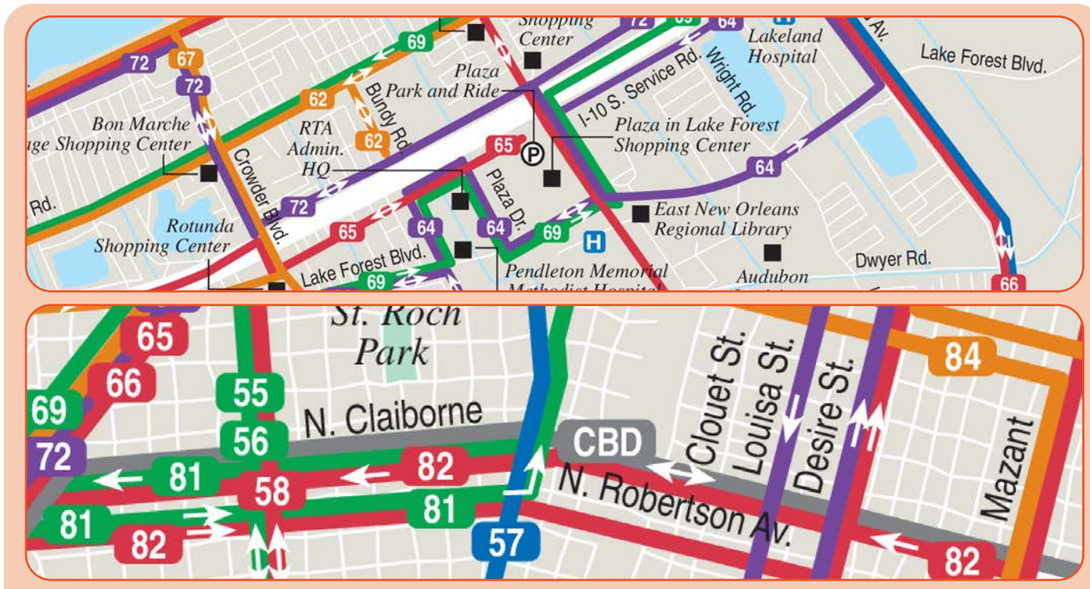
At present, Jefferson Parish Transit is without a permanent Director, following the departure of former Director Ninette Barrios in August of 2025. Currently, the Chief Administrative Assistant to the Parish President, Mario Bazile, serves as the acting Director. Day-to-day operations are overseen by TransDev's General Manager for Jefferson Parish Transit, Eric Weissborn. The agency has engaged in fleet upgrades in 2025, including the procurement of 5 new hybrid buses and a new fleet of paratransit vehicles. It is beginning to implement ADA improvements across the system, district by district. Heading into 2026, RIDE hopes to see a return of permanent Parish leadership to the agency and hopes to work more closely with both the agency and Jefferson Parish government to advocate for substantive improvements to the system and increased regional collaboration with the RTA and the City of New Orleans.

New Orleans Transit: 20 Years After Katrina

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, and the story of transit in New Orleans is one of two distinct eras: before and after the storm.

The pre-Katrina system was defined by its sheer scale. With 315 buses in peak service, the network was highly **effective** and useful, enabling riders to get from point A to point B with relative ease. This was achieved through a high quantity of service, including many redundant and overlapping routes. While this approach prioritized convenient one-seat rides for users, it was **not particularly efficient**, as it did not optimize the agency's resources. It was instead a system built without the constraints of limited resources, which forces hard decisions and real considerations of trade-offs.

In the post-Katrina landscape, the RTA operates with a fraction of its former fleet—around 80 buses at peak service. This dramatic reduction in resources necessitates a pivot from effectiveness through volume to effectiveness through efficiency. It is impossible to replicate the level of service of a 315-bus network with ~25% of the vehicles. The city's demographics have also shifted, with the suburbanization of poverty pushing many transit-dependent residents further from job centers.[8] Most people agree with the general desire for better transit. There does, however, need to be widespread understanding



Close-ups of the 2004 RTA service map. RTA's Pre-Katrina service had many overlapping and redundant lines. That level of redundancy is impossible with current transit resources.

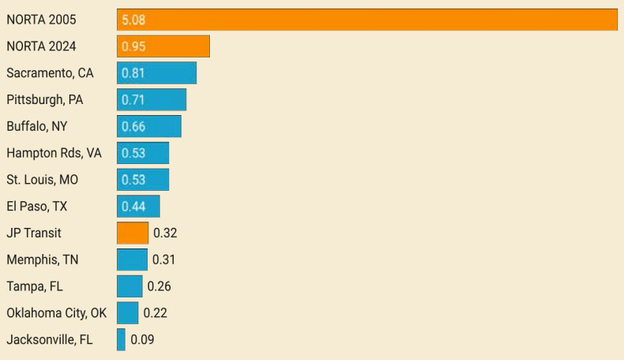
throughout New Orleans, especially among community leaders, that **replicating a pre-Katrina system is both impossible and unlikely to yield the desired results**. A modern, healthy system cannot simply be a scaled-down version of the past; it must be a smarter, more efficient network designed for the New Orleans of today.

The *New Links* redesign was a significant step in that direction, aimed at reimagining the transit network to better serve people today, rather than attempting to rebuild a system from 2005. Unfortunately, that redesign was never fully implemented as intended due to significant, unforeseen vehicle shortages stemming from fleet mismanagement under TransDev's operation of the agency. Additional funding for more buses (capital) and services (operations) is undoubtedly needed. Still, we will also need a more precise, shared understanding of what an efficient and effective system can look like.

CASE STUDY

The effectiveness of the pre-Katrina system was mainly based on the fact that the RTA serviced a service area of only 75 square miles, but operated about 315 buses in peak service. In contrast, IndyGo, which serves Indianapolis, IN, serves an area of 396 square miles with a fleet of 114 standard buses and 22 bus rapid transit vehicles during peak service. In 2024, the RTA serviced an area of 103 square miles (due to slightly increased service into Jefferson and St. Bernard Parishes), but did so with only 75 buses and 23 streetcars in maximum service. Comparing the RTA to its closest peers (based on 15 service and urban area characteristics) reveals that despite having less than 20% the number of vehicles per service area square mile served than it had pre-Katrina, the agency is still above all ten of its closest peer agencies in terms of operating vehicle density across the area served at peak service. JP Transit's vehicle density is substantially lower, despite the agency's service area covering only a small fraction of Jefferson Parish's land area.[9]

Vehicles in Peak Service per Service Area Square Mile: New Orleans RTA 2005/2024, JP Transit, & RTA Peer Agencies



In contrast, New York's MTA, often considered a gold standard for public transit in the United States, services over 30 vehicles per service area square mile when both subway and bus are taken into account. More vehicles will undoubtedly improve our system, and fighting for funding to expand the fleet should remain a priority. In the short term, however, efficient scheduling and planning are crucial for delivering the most effective service within current resource constraints.

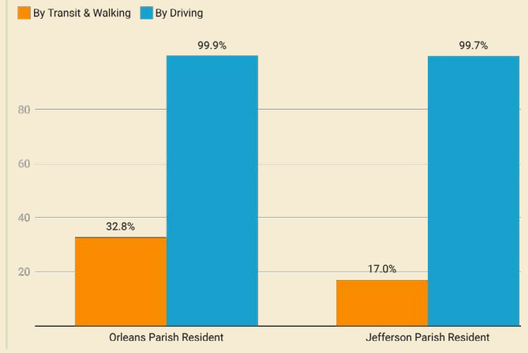
Why Grow The System?

Most Jobs Remain Inaccessible by Transit

Since 2016, RIDE has annually calculated the share of jobs accessible within an hour by transit compared to those accessible by private vehicle within the same timeframe, as an assessment of the overall quality of the public transit system and the level of access disparity experienced by transit riders. Over the past decade, despite variations in the results stemming from changes to transit service and shifts in population and employment, the overarching narrative remains essentially the same: **the average Orleans Parish resident can only reach about a third of the region's jobs within an hour via public transportation, compared with nearly all of them by personal vehicle**. For Jefferson Parish residents, on average, transit accessibility to jobs hovers around 17%. Furthermore, accessibility remains highly unbalanced spatially, with residents closer to the downtown core having access to half or more of the region's jobs within an hour by transit while many of those living in outlying areas such as New Orleans East, the Westbank of Jefferson Parish, Lower Algiers, and St. Bernard Parish have access to less than 5% of the region's jobs in the same timeframe.

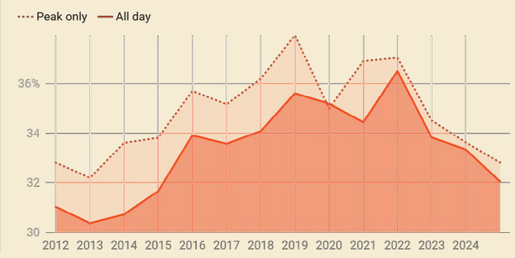
As regional trends continue to show rising housing costs in the city's urban core and the suburbanization of poverty, equity of access will continue to decrease, even if changes to the transit network itself remain relatively minor as they have since 2022.

Share of Jobs Accessible Within An Hour or Less



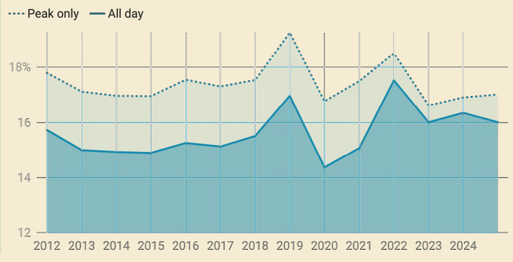
Orleans Parish Job Access 2012-2025

Share of jobs within 60 minutes by transit for Orleans Parish workers (7am-9am and 11am-1pm averages)

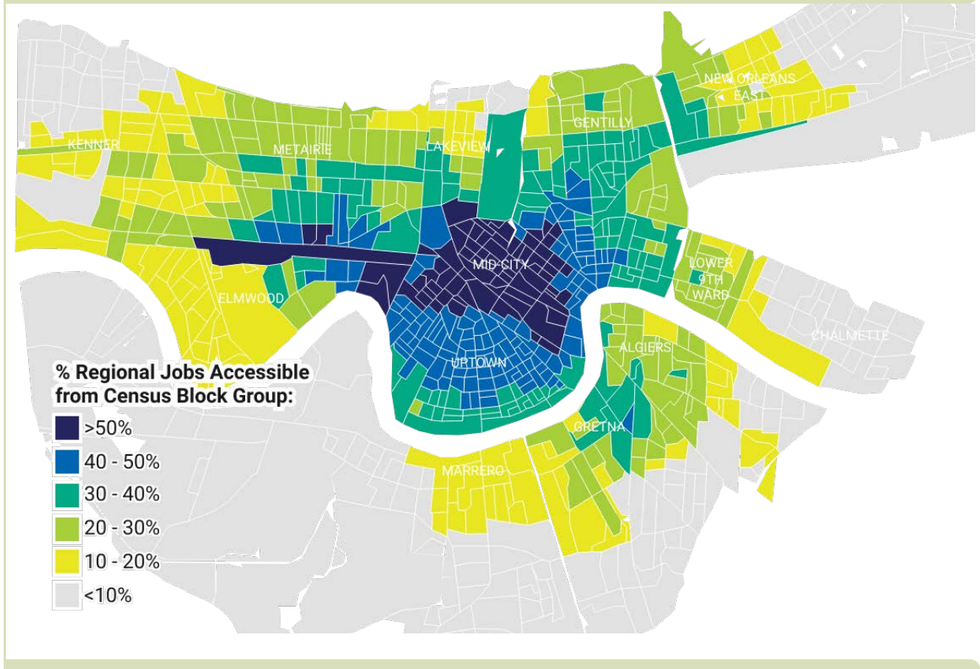


Jefferson Parish Job Access 2012-2025

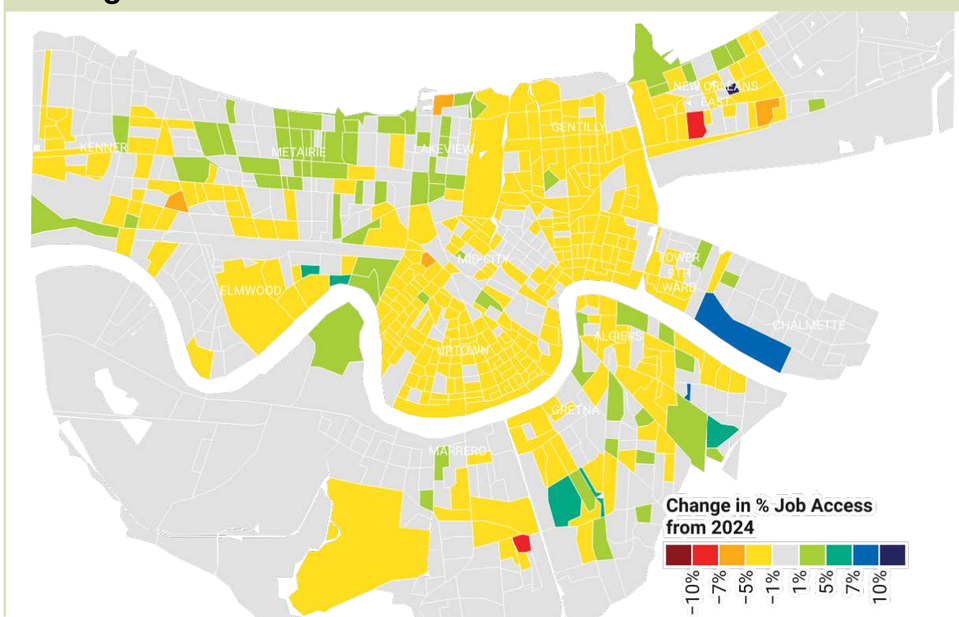
Share of jobs within 60 minutes by transit for Jefferson Parish workers (7am-9am and 11am-1pm averages)



Jobs accessible by transit in < 60 min 2025



Change in access: 2024 to 2025



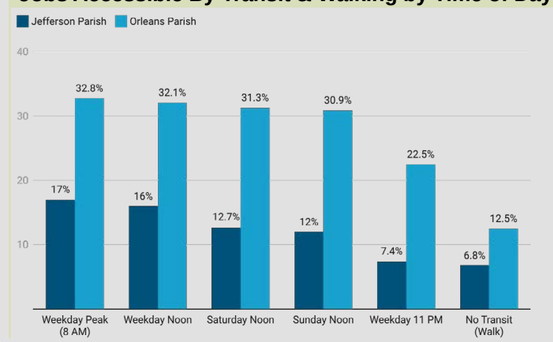
Map Sources: Ride New Orleans analysis; 2024 & 2025 RTA GTFS feeds (2025); 2024 & 2025 JP Transit GTFS feeds (2025); 2023 OpenStreetMap data from Geofabrik (2023); 2019 & 2022 Census Bureau LODES Version 8.0 & 8.3 (2025). Refer to rideneworleans.org/opendata/jobaccess for additional information on sources and methodology.

This year, our hospitality worker outreach illuminated critical gaps in access for the area's service industry, hotel, and tourism workers during off-peak hours. We found that these workers, who rely on transit at rates far exceeding the region's average, face major gaps in access during nighttime hours and on weekends.[10] Our region's hospitality industry is the backbone of our economy- in 2024, visitors to our city spent over 10 billion dollars.[11] This keystone industry is made possible by the contributions of a dedicated, yet often underappreciated workforce- one which comprises 1 in every 5 jobs in Orleans Parish and represents 12% of all workers in the wider metropolitan area.[12] By nature, this industry and its heavily transit-reliant workforce operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. However, many lines in our region's transportation network, including those relied on heavily by this workforce, do not.

> *"Reliable [public] transportation impacts the success of my department."*
>
> **-HOTEL SUPERVISOR**

To better understand and address this critical gap, we expanded our job access analysis this year to examine the reductions in access to jobs by transit on nights and weekends. For workers commuting from Jefferson Parish the dropoff in access on weekends and evenings is especially stark. With no late evening service on JP Transit, almost all of the 7.4% of jobs accessible to a Jefferson Parish resident at 11 pm- a major second-shift end time for hospitality- are those they can walk to. For the workers we surveyed in New Orleans' downtown, we know these are not the jobs they work. The remaining evening access comes from the minimal RTA service extending into Jefferson Parish. Weekends are nearly as bad, with many JP Transit lines running

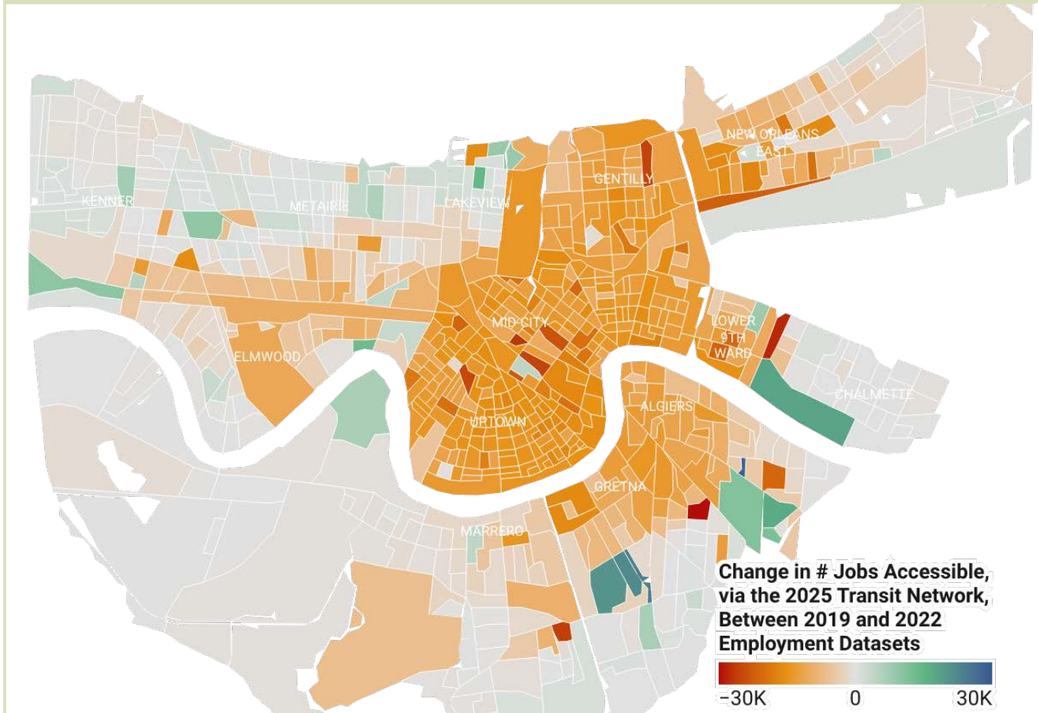
Jobs Accessible By Transit & Walking by Time of Day



very limited service or none at all on Saturdays and Sundays. Even within Orleans Parish (where weekend service tends to be less frequent but still available) access diminishes on Saturdays and Sundays, and drops considerably (from 32.8% to 22.5%) during the evenings.

In 2025, changes to the transit network itself were relatively minimal. Between 2024 and 2025, our analysis shows slight decreases in average access for most of the region's residents, despite somewhat significant increases in certain areas. These shifts are primarily due to changes in regional residential and employment patterns, rather than to changes in the transit system. It is important to note that our 2025 analysis uses Census Bureau LODES data, Version 8.3 (the most recent), which incorporates residential and employment data from 2022. This marks the first time RIDE's access analysis has used post-pandemic employment data, as we chose to skip the previous LODES version (2021 data) based on an assumption that the intense dropoff in employment represented in peak-pandemic data would be largely temporary, and would shift our results in ways that might skew our representation of the transit system's efficacy. Mapping differences in access to jobs via the current transit system across the two LODES datasets reveals that changes in our accessibility map since 2024 largely track shifts in the region's employment patterns, including an overall job loss between 2019 and 2022.

Effect of Post-COVID Employment Data



Map Sources: Ride New Orleans analysis; 2025 RTA GTFS feeds (2025); 2025 JP Transit GTFS feeds (2025); 2023 OpenStreetMap data from Geofabrik (2023); 2019 & 2022 Census Bureau LODES Version 8.0 & 8.3 (2025). Refer to rideneworleans.org/opendata/jobaccess for additional information on sources and methodology.

Methodology: Access to Jobs

The methodology used for this study reflects the cumulative opportunity metric in the *Access Across America* report produced by the University of Minnesota's Accessibility Observatory.[13] Data is obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau's Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program 2022. The calculations are based on the travel times observed between every US Census Block Group (CBG) in Jefferson Parish, Orleans Parish, and St. Bernard Parish. To calculate trip origins and destinations, weighted centroids are used to reflect where workers reside and where they are employed within each CBG. Travel times are calculated in ArcGIS Pro using the Network Analyst toolset, road network data obtained from OpenStreetMap, and General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) schedule data published by the RTA and JP Transit. Driving times assume that vehicles encounter no congestion and travel at the speed limit. Transit travel times assume perfect schedule adherence. These travel times also assume that portions of a trip not on board a transit vehicle are walked at 3 miles per hour along sidewalks, trails, or other designated pedestrian facilities. To reflect the influence of transit service frequency on accessibility, travel times are calculated every 11 minutes for each origin-destination pair, with departure times at 7:00 AM and 8:59 AM (for "peak" service) and at 11:00 AM and 12:59 PM (for "midday" service). Accessibility is averaged across the three parishes, with the number of jobs accessible from each CBG weighted by the percentage of workers residing in that CBG. The result is a single metric that represents the accessibility value experienced by an average worker in each of the three parishes. The following formula describes how the weighted average is calculated:

- Weighted Average = (w1/a)j1 + (w2/a)j2 ... wn/a)jn, where:
- w = workers residing in CBG
- a = all workers residing in Orleans Parish
- j = jobs accessible from CBG
- n = Each CBG in Orleans Parish

LOOKING FORWARD:

Access Beyond Employment

Access to jobs is a valuable and convenient metric for assessing the overall health of the transit system and its ability to get riders to destinations. Travel to and from work accounts for the largest share of trips by purpose in most US markets, and employment centers often serve as effective proxies for other popular destinations, such as retail, restaurants, and social venues. However, over half of all transit trips nationally are nevertheless estimated to be for various non-work purposes.[14] Some critical destinations may not be co-located with denser job centers, including medical facilities and offices, schools, parks and recreational spaces, and places of worship. Working towards a more nuanced understanding of a transit system's ability to deliver access where riders need to go involves analyzing rider needs and mapping the system's ability to transport riders to a variety of destinations effectively. RIDE hopes to continue expanding our access metrics and analysis in the coming years, working closely with riders to understand their destinations and needs.

> *"It is difficult to commute to work on weekends because the buses start later and only come hourly. The last bus that leaves to go to the westbank leaves at 9:30 PM. I get off at midnight and Uber & Lyft is volatile and costly."*
>
> **-RIDER FROM MARRERO**

Riders Need a Quality Transit Network

Expanding the transit system is not merely about adding more buses to the road; it is about strategically building a network that achieves two core goals: *access* and *quality*.

First, the system must provide equitable **access** to jobs, services, and opportunities for everyone, especially those who rely most on transit. This extends beyond routes and schedules to include affordability, as demonstrated by the success of the Youth Opportunity Pass program. Second, a healthy system is defined by its **quality**. High-quality transit is frequent, reliable, and holds itself to a high standard of performance. We must measure success not just by coverage, but by how many residents have access to high-capacity service arriving every 15-20 minutes or less. Furthermore, quality means holding the agency accountable for on-time performance and for missed trips, while providing a safe, comfortable, and dignified rider experience, complete with amenities such as shelters and seamless pedestrian connections.

System Metrics and Targets

A successful transit system not only provides access to jobs, services, and opportunities but also offers an affordable, high-quality, reliable user experience. Across these two essential system goals - access and quality - are several priorities for our region:

- Sustainably fund transit to expand transit access.
- Commit to building new shelters, stations,

and transit priority corridors.

- Support ongoing funding for and implementation of the Opportunity Pass program.
- Deliver frequent, reliable transit service that works for all New Orleanians.

RIDE has long analyzed and reported job access as a key indicator of transit system growth, and has evaluated the equity impacts of proposed changes. Transit quality also includes a safe, comfortable, and dignified rider experience through shelters and pedestrian connectivity, for which RIDE developed initial benchmark data in 2024. In collaboration with the New Orleans Complete Streets Coalition, in 2025, we expanded our core performance benchmark metrics to emphasize progress toward the above policy goals, particularly to advance new tools for measuring transit quality of service. The initial 2025 benchmarks are shown in the table below.

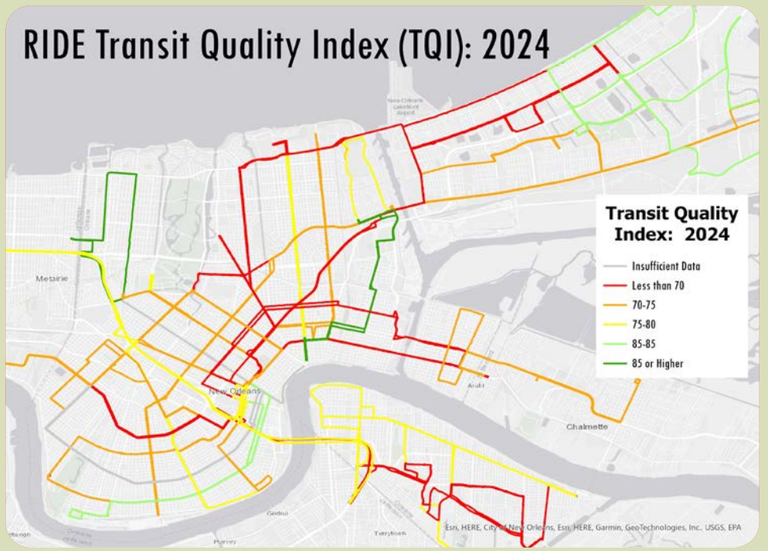
New Orleans Complete Streets Coalition 2025 Report Card Transit Metrics

DIMENSION	PRIORITY POLICY	METRIC	DATA SOURCE	BENCHMARK- 2025 REPORT CARD
ACCESS	Sustainably fund trans it so total service and overall access indicator can be expanded	Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours (VRH)	FTA - *Annual Agency Profile* (2023)	774,202 - not yet back to 2019 level
		Percentage of jobs within 60 minutes by transit for workers	RIDE (2025)	Orleans Parish: 32.8% Jefferson Parish: 17%
	Commit to building new shelters and transit priority corridors	# and % of stops with shelters	RIDE (2025)	293 out of 1,930 (15%)
		Mileage, dedicated transit ROW or transit priority lanes	UNOTI (2024)	26.71 lane miles streetcar .53 lane miles bus
	Support permanent funding for Opportunity Pass Program	# of opportunity pass users	RIDE (2025)	Year 1 (Preliminary data): -Over 6,000 regis-tered -Over 200,000 rides -75% of users report riding weekly or daily
QUALITY	Deliver high-quality transit service that works for our city	On-Time Performance	RTA (2024)	Overall: 76% OTP
		% of scheduled service delivered	RTA (2024)	Overall: 96.6% of scheduled service delivered (excluding long-term planned closures)
		Transit Reliability Index	UNOTI (2025)	Index Score: 73

In collaboration with the New Orleans Complete Streets Coalition, RIDE has developed a set of preliminary metrics to track progress toward our core policy priorities for transit access and quality.

Basic measures of on-time perform ance (OTP) reported by transit agencies fail to account for missed trips, scheduled service not delivered, and the disparate impact on residents' lives when such service gaps affect routes that are already infrequent. A resilient transit system is prepared to handle detours, breakdowns, staff shortages, and other disruptions—and responds quickly. In recent years, the gap between the level of service scheduled and the level actually delivered has been significant. The Transit Quality Index (TQI) aims to incorporate this gap into our assessment of the state of transit. From 2023 to 2024, service adjustments and additions to the vehicle fleet improved the TQI from 70 to 73. However, this still indicates that RTA has a long way to go to deliver a reliable, on-time trip.

Moreover, transit quality is not uniform across the system. In 2024, while a handful of routes delivered relatively reliable rides (45-Lakeview, 80-Desire/Louisa, 11-Magazine, and 67-Michoud Loop), many more experienced significant service quality shortfalls (e.g., 8-St. Claude, 84-Galvez, 9-Broad, 66-Hayne Loop, 51-St. Bernard/Claiborne, 114A-Garden Oaks/Sullen, and 114B-Garden Oaks/Woodland). Some of these routes are among the highest-ridership lines in the system, while others serve the city's most distant neighborhoods, where access to jobs and services via transit is already challenging.



The TQI presents a composite value from 0 - 100 representing overall transit reliability, combining on-time performance with the percent of scheduled service that is actually delivered. The higher the TQI, the more likely that your bus will show up on time, as scheduled.

> *"The level of service in Uptown & Magazine St is VERY DIFFERENT than the level of service in Bywater & Lower 9 or Galvez … The differences are astounding & measurably worse for mixed working class neighborhoods where people NEED public transport for daily life."*
>
> **-SENIOR RIDER**

Transit Can Be a Job Creator

Creating quality public transit requires a well-trained, experienced, reliable, and safe transit workforce.

Five years after the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the transit industry in New Orleans and beyond continues to face significant workforce shortages across many positions, including transit driver and mechanic roles. This shortage contributes to service and reliability issues. In 2022, 96% of transit agencies surveyed by the American Public Transportation Association were facing workforce shortages.[15] Having enough drivers and mechanics is crucial to providing reliable, on-time service. Driver shortages make it difficult to schedule service and fill shifts, even when other resources are available. A shortage of experienced, qualified mechanics leads to significant backlogs and delays in vehicle repairs. In the RTA's case, this reality has contributed to a maintenance crisis for its transit fleet.

The workforce is also aging – nationally, in 2024, 42% of all transit workers were over the age of 55, compared with just 23% of U.S. workers as a whole.[16]

> **96% of US transit agencies are facing workforce shortages.**
>
> **42% of all transit workers are over the age of 55, compared with just 23% of U.S. workers as a whole.**

Where We Are Now

Many experienced drivers and mechanics retired during and after the pandemic, and there are now growing numbers of vacancies in the national transit workforce, indicating a crucial need to train and hire a younger workforce to operate and maintain the country's transportation system. New Orleans will be competing, not only with other employers, but also with the national job market when recruiting transit workers to fill these positions. To restore and expand its regional network, New Orleans, the RTA, and Jefferson Parish must proactively develop a sustainable workforce for the transit system of today and tomorrow. The City can significantly assist the RTA by allocating resources to develop and expand training programs. These programs would create pipelines of qualified drivers, mechanics, and administrative staff, training New Orleans residents and providing pathways to high-quality jobs while ensuring the RTA has the workforce needed to run the level of service our region requires.

What Needs to Happen Next

Fortunately, there are resources to help expand and maintain a pool of qualified workers. We recommend that the City and the RTA work together with local workforce development programs, and existing, scalable programs developed by unions and transit support organizations, such as the Transit Workforce Center, to establish and fund training programs for commercial driver's licenses (CDL), bus and streetcar mechanics, and scheduler/planners.

Transit drivers must hold a CDL to operate buses, making it a prerequisite for applying to work as an RTA driver. This requirement poses a significant barrier for those seeking to become drivers. The RTA previously offered an in-house CDL program, but it was discontinued after Hurricane Katrina. Currently, applicants without a CDL must obtain one through community college programs or private programs such as trucking schools-- a process that can be difficult, time-consuming, and expensive, with costs reaching upwards of $5,000.[17]

To mitigate this barrier, the City and RTA can collaborate in several ways. The City or agency could provide financial support, such as scholarships or reimbursable loans, to Orleans Parish residents obtaining a CDL. This financial support would be contingent upon the licensee working a certain number of years as a transit operator. Additionally, the City and RTA should partner with Delgado Community College to integrate their existing CDL program into the RTA's workforce development efforts and better highlight and advertise the need for transit operators and available opportunities at the agency to current and prospective students. Such an initiative would greatly benefit the RTA by expanding its pool of qualified applicants and the city's residents by offering affordable workforce training in a constantly growing career field.

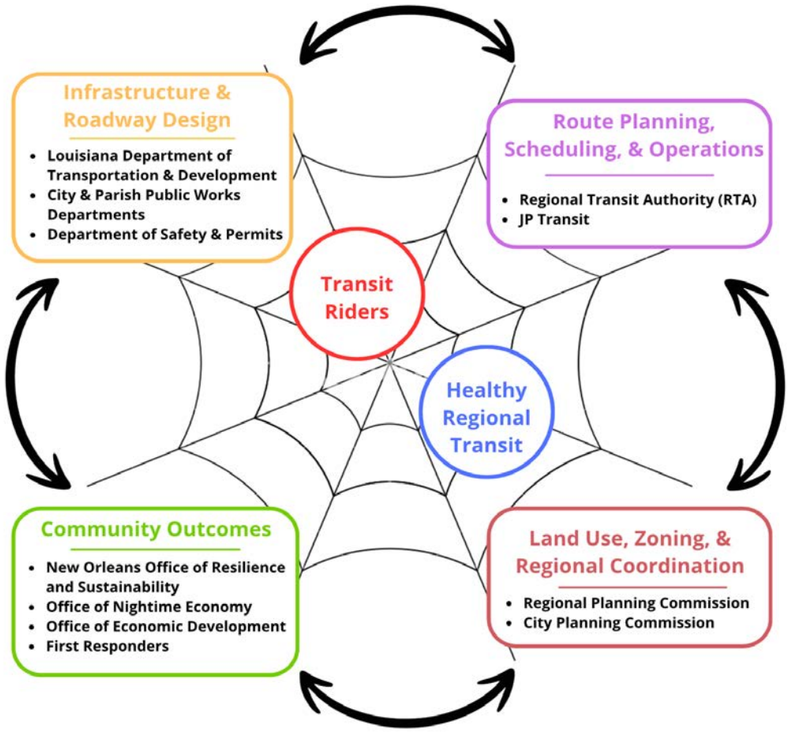
The City and RTA should also collaborate to support additional apprenticeship programs for mechanics and electricians. The RTA already offers some apprenticeship programs in partnership with Delgado Community College, the IBEW Local 130 Electrical Union, and others. These apprenticeships provide an essential avenue for the next generation of workers entering the RTA. Delgado also offers a Diesel Mechanic Training program as part of their non-credit Workforce Development offerings. The City should commit resources, in partnership with the RTA, to expand and promote these programs in anticipation of a growing transit network, which will rely on a greater number of electrical and mechanical staff. For both mechanics and driver-operators, there is a need to highlight the financial opportunities available in transit to current and prospective students, including targeting high-school-aged youth who may be interested in but not aware of these high-paying opportunities, which could be available to them without a four-year college education.

Further opportunities can be developed through outreach to and collaboration with the Transit Workforce Center (TWC) and the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1560, which represents RTA workers. Working together, ATU and TWC could provide pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, including youth- and student-focused training, to bring more young people into the transit workforce.

How Do We Build a Healthy Transit System?

Coordinate City Departments

Delivering a healthy transit system is not the sole responsibility of the RTA and JP Transit. A complex web of city, regional, and state agencies governs the policies and infrastructure that determine transit's success. Effective coordination is essential, and critically lacking under the current system.



Some of the many offices, agencies, and stakeholders involved in the planning, funding, operation, and oversight of the region's transit systems.

The City's **Department of Public Works (DPW)** designs our local roadways, installs ADA-compliant ramps, and manages traffic engineering, giving it direct control over the creation of bus lanes and safe pedestrian crossings. The **Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD)** does the same across the region's multitude of state highways, overseeing much of the roadway and right-of-way infrastructure in Orleans and Jefferson Parishes, and controlling permitting for stops and amenities on those state routes. The **City Planning Commission (CPC)** shapes our urban form through zoning and master planning, which can either support or undermine transit-oriented development. Other key players include the **Department of Safety and Permits**, which oversees construction and sidewalk use; regional bodies such as the **Regional Planning Commission (RPC)**, which coordinate regional projects; and City offices such as the **Offices of Resilience and Sustainability, Economic Development, and Nighttime Economy**, whose goals are directly supported by robust public transit. **Jefferson Parish** hosts an entirely separate and siloed set of departments and offices. Achieving a seamless, efficient system requires these entities to break out of their silos and work toward a unified vision for mobility that prioritizes public transit. Effective communication and collaboration among Orleans, Jefferson, and even St. Bernard Parish leadership is key to developing a regional system that efficiently allows residents to travel across parish boundaries.

To create a unified vision of mobility, we implore the newly elected Mayor and City Council to develop a clear, policy-backed regional transit vision that promotes regionalism and effectively streamlines communication and coordination among the city agencies managing infrastructure and capital projects that directly affect our transit system.

LOOKING FORWARD:

Advocacy For a Functional City

In September 2025 the Coalition for Quality Transit, the rider-led organizing arm of RIDE, gathered to discuss the state of transit policy and practice in New Orleans as the city headed into mayoral and council elections. Riders identified a lack of understanding, dedication to, and investment in public transportation as key failures of current City leadership and outlined policy goals for the incoming 2026 administration. Among these recommendations were the inclusion of a line item for public transit in the city budget, incentivized ridership for city and state employees, and a commitment to reinvest in city offices dealing with public transportation, including the Department of Public Works, the Office of Resilience and Sustainability, and increased transportation buy-in from the Office of Economic Development and the Office of Nighttime Economy. Functional interagency collaboration and coordination will be central to the efficacy of these investments.

To that end, the Coalition called for a return to monthly City Council Transportation Committee meetings, a commitment to addressing public transit issues, and the reinstatement of the Mayor's Office of Transportation, with at least one full-time staff member dedicated solely to public transit. Finally, the Coalition called for an advisory council of transit riders to work with both the Transportation Committee and the Office of Transportation and ensure they are aligned in their goals and priorities and remain centered on the needs of the riders. Instituting these changes will be a significant step towards facilitating functional interagency collaboration surrounding public transit planning and infrastructure. As RIDE looks forward to 2026, we plan to campaign for these changes and others, expanding on our existing partnership with the Complete Streets Coalition and Complete Streets Working Group. Effective interagency (and inter-parish) coordination will be crucial to the success of endeavors needed to meaningfully improve our city and region's transportation network, including the forthcoming Bus Rapid Transit project.

Improve Access to Jobs

Job access is simply the number of jobs a person can reach within a given time frame using a particular transportation mode. Increasing the number of jobs a person can access requires action in two categories: transit and housing/economic development.

Transit Changes:

To provide access to more jobs within 60 minutes via transit, transit services need to be faster and more frequent. Faster travel times mean a person can get farther within 60 minutes and thus access more jobs. Higher frequency means shorter wait times, reducing the time a rider spends waiting for the bus and moving towards their destination.

Transit-Oriented Communities and Economic Development:

Increasing job access cannot be achieved solely through transit investments. The other side of the equation is reducing the length of travel in the first place by advocating for transit-oriented communities—an urban planning strategy in which neighborhoods are built to prioritize taking transit, walking, and biking over driving a private vehicle. **Essentially, we can help people live closer to their jobs, or we can bring more jobs closer to where people live.** In the last 20 years, we have seen neighborhoods near job centers gentrify, pushing under-resourced families farther from employment opportunities. This suburbanization of poverty has disproportionately impacted Black and brown families. It means that people who rely on transit have to travel longer distances to reach jobs than they used to.

Build more affordable housing closer to job centers.

Pre-Katrina, many people who worked downtown lived in neighborhoods adjacent to downtown, reducing their commute time and making transit a more viable commuting option. Since Katrina, many of these neighborhoods have gentrified, pushing under-resourced residents farther from the region's primary job center. Reversing this trend by creating more affordable housing closer to downtown can go a long way to improving job access for people who rely on transit.

Create more jobs closer to where people live.

Economic development that focuses on creating quality jobs closer to where people live is another way to increase job access. For example, developing employment opportunities in New Orleans East would increase the number of jobs a person living in Little Woods can access within an hour, simply because there are now more jobs closer to them.

Incentivize affordable housing and density along high-quality, high-frequency transit routes.

The forthcoming BRT project connecting New Orleans East and Algiers to downtown presents a key opportunity to encourage transit-oriented development along the route. The City needs to assess and analyze available methods, including zoning changes and incentives, for encouraging equitable and affordable development along the route. Thoughtful transit-oriented planning can provide additional employment opportunities and other amenities for these neighborhoods, and facilitate economic growth that benefits current residents and maintains neighborhood character.

There are several ways to address this, including building housing near job centers, creating jobs near housing, and incentivizing affordable high-density development near transit.

In 2023, the City of New Orleans collaborated with the RTA and the Regional Planning Commission to publish its Transit Oriented Communities Study, which included recommendations and investment priorities reflecting broader sustainability and livability goals.[18] The study was intended to lay the groundwork for improved access to jobs, housing, necessities, and opportunities, while combating displacement. However, since its release, there has been little progress toward meeting the study's goals. Further work assessing opportunities for equitable transit-oriented development (including along the future BRT line) was underway in conjunction with the Center for Equitable Transit-Oriented Communities (CETOC) at the University of New Orleans. However, the work was abruptly halted earlier this year after the federal government defunded the Center. The City must prioritize resuming work on these assessments to ensure that future development occurs in ways that do not cause displacement and gentrification, and which support current residents' needs and a healthy, multi-modal transportation network.

Identify and Implement Stable Funding Sources

Transforming our transit system requires both political will and financial creativity. The City has direct opportunities to support transit infrastructure, transit operations, and other RTA functions. Among these are to:

Establish a dedicated line item for transit funding in the city budget.

A portion of the city budget should be set aside to support transit operations. Given the inherent volatility of sales tax revenue, which currently accounts for the majority of RTA funding, a dedicated funding line item in the city budget can help stabilize service levels from year to year. In 2023, the City Council established a youth fare transportation fund to receive American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. Similar funds can be created to support bus, streetcar, and ferry service. Jefferson Parish, for

example, lists approximately $25M in expenditures for transit functions, which has its own budget line item.[19] Across the country, voters continue to demonstrate their approval for transit funding; on election day 2025, 81% of pro-transit ballot measures across the country passed, an approval rate far exceeding other types of ballot initiatives.[20]

Incorporate transit stop improvements into city roadway projects to supplement RTA capital improvements budget.

The City, through the Department of Public Works (DPW), should incorporate transit stop improvements into its roadway projects. This can be more easily accomplished if stop improvements are considered when developing the project's scope during the initial planning phase, rather than treated as an add-on during the design phases. This will allow the cost of transit stop improvements, such as sidewalks and bus pads, to be incorporated into the City's project budget rather than requiring the RTA to pay for them after a project has already started. With the passage of the recent infrastructure bond, which dedicates millions to roadway repairs, there is a huge opportunity for transit-related roadway improvements, and a critical need for interagency coordination to ensure they are incorporated into these projects.

Add a transit fee to tickets and events at major downtown venues.

Every single ticket sold for events held at the Convention Center, Super Dome, and Smoothie King Arena should include a transit fee that covers the cost of a 1-Day Jazzy Pass, made available to the ticket buyer. This would provide additional revenue for the RTA and incentivize event goers to use transit, reducing event-related traffic congestion.

CASE STUDY

Seattle Offers Free Transit to All Publicly Ticketed Events at Climate Pledge Arena

In 2022, Seattle's Climate Pledge Arena began offering free transit passes to arena-goers with the purchase of a ticket for all Seattle Kraken (NHL) and Storm (WNBA) games. During the first year of the program, arena representatives reported that 25% of fans used public transit to get to games.

In 2023, the arena expanded the program by providing free transit passes for all publicly ticketed events, including concerts. The passes, which cover travel on King County Metro, Sound Transit, the Seattle Streetcar, and the Seattle Monorail, are activated and redeemed digitally through the transit agency's app and are valid from 2 hours before the arena opens until 2 hours after the event ends. Supported by its parent company, the Oak View Group, the arena funds this initiative through operations as part of its broader climate strategy.[21]

Include Jazzy Passes in the cost of hotel and motel rooms.

Providing visitors with Jazzy Passes, included in their room costs, will help generate revenue for the RTA and encourage visitors to explore the city using transit. Tourist-heavy lines, like the 12- St. Charles Streetcar, will benefit from reduced boarding times because visiting riders will already have their fare purchased. 19 million people visited New Orleans in 2024.[22] If even a modest portion of these visitors has a Jazzy Pass included in their hotel stay, it could generate millions in revenue for the RTA.

Institute transit impact fees for event and construction permits.

Permitted construction projects and events should include a fee if they impact transit services. The fee schedule can begin with a small fee per transit stop disrupted by the event or project, to cover the cost of signage and communications required to inform riders of the disruption. Higher fees can be assessed for major disruptions to an entire transit line, with fees increasing exponentially for each additional transit line disrupted. Such a fee structure can help offset the RTA's project and event costs and incentivize permit applicants to adjust their projects or events to mitigate their impacts on transit service.

> *"When I first started college I had no idea how I was going to get to school and work everyday. Then I got the Opportunity Pass ... ever since I have been able to use the passes for the buses and it has helped me in so many ways."*
>
> **-YOUTH RIDER**

Develop expanded pass programs.

Develop partnerships with OPSB, local universities, and major employers to provide funded transit passes to students and employees. This presents a potential long-term funding source for the Opportunity Pass program, as well as an opportunity to reduce inequities in transportation funding for major sectors like the service and hospitality industry, where drivers often receive subsidized parking while transit-dependent workers are forced to fully fund their transportation expenses. The provision of transit passes will further incentivize ridership, reduce congestion, and build buy-in for public transportation among the region's students and workforce.

The Path Forward: Bridging the Ideal and the Reality

The road to a healthy transit system is paved with the tension between our ambitious ideals and our current reality. Progress depends on bridging this gap across four key areas:

Overall, transit plans lack the funding and leadership to reach implementation. Governance and policy remain siloed. RTA leadership has displayed an ambition to resolve these obstacles and advance regional transit plans. However, further creativity and regionalism are needed to identify funding, implement plans, and incorporate transit planning in all aspects of public works and development to prioritize effectiveness through efficiency.

	POLICY	PLANNING	TRANSIT SYSTEM DESIGN	RIGHT-OF-WAY INFRASTRUCTURE
IDEAL:	A unified regional transit vision supported by dedicated funding and clear accountability.	A regionally integrated planning process that prioritizes transit, anticipates future growth, and blends transit access with objectives including increased affordable housing and urban development investments.	Bus stops and stations designed for safety, comfort, accessibility, and climate resilience. Transit routes that efficiently move residents to employment opportunities and other critical destinations, balancing ridership demand and accessibility.	A network of high-quality transit corridors with dedicated lanes, signal priority, and modern stations.
REALITY:	Governance remains siloed among RTA, JP Transit, and various city, state, and parish departments. RTA's operating budget relies heavily on volatile sales tax revenue, limiting flexibility for service expansion and capital investment.	RTA's strategic plans, such as the *Strategic Mobility Plan* (SMP), face implementation delays due to funding and jurisdictional barriers. Service planning is often reactive to resource constraints, and land use decisions frequently over-look transit access. Delayed implementation often restricts the ability to plan proactively and to integrate effectively with other economic opportunities.	Many stops lack basic amenities such as shelters, lighting, or ADA-compliant sidewalk connections, and design standards vary across jurisdictions. Access to employment by transit remains low across the region.	Systems grappling with limited capital budget capacity constrain progress. Streets remain primarily designed for private vehicles, slowing the rollout of transit-priority infrastructure. A lack of outreach and education efforts has stalled political will to make meaningful improvements.
OPPORTUNITIES:	Regional transit planning, activated under the new City of New Orleans administration, can be leveraged to remove siloes and integrate regional transit policies. Key pilot projects, like regional ferry operations, can be first-mover initiatives to rebuild relationships.	Stronger coordination among RTA, LADOTD, and local planning agencies could accelerate the implementation of key initiatives such as *New Links* and improve alignment among transit investments, housing, and climate adaptation strategies.	Developing a unified "mobility design guide" for the City and RTA, and simplifying federal compliance processes (e.g., Buy America, Altoona Test, and NTD definitions), would streamline project delivery and create a more consistent rider experience. Continuing, and expanding, outreach surrounding service improvement efforts and rider needs can continue to facilitate improvements to the system's usefulness, even within current resource constraints.	Maintaining at least 15% of Section 5339(b) discretionary funds for rural and small urban projects, and increasing the federal capital cost share to 80%, would expand RTA's ability to implement high-impact projects such as bus rapid transit (BRT), ferry modernization, and system electrification. Proactive engagement with community members and stakeholders about the benefits of high-quality transit can build political will to fund and implement critical projects swiftly.

CASE STUDY

Canal and Broad

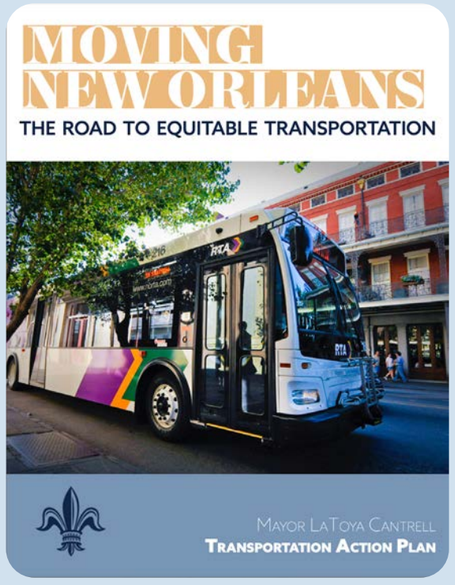
The bus stop at Canal and Broad, one of RTA's busiest transfer points, illustrates how overlapping authority can delay basic improvements. Despite plans for a new shelter and ADA-compliant upgrades, in addition to a novel far-side stop, progress has stalled due to jurisdictional complexity:

- RTA oversees service and stop assets.
- LADOTD controls curb design and signalization.
- The City manages sidewalks and right-of-way access.

Before road rehabilitation, a transit stop existed at this intersection, with a shelter for riders travelling in both directions. Following the road reconstruction, transit stops and shelters were removed. While road repavement could be viewed as a success, the removal of transit stops at a frequent node for riders clearly demonstrates the mismatched priorities of each governing authority, sacrificing transit for surface-level priorities.

Each entity requires permits or design approvals from the others, creating a loop where no single agency can act independently. The Canal and Broad case highlights the broader need for clear interagency agreements and streamlined permitting to advance even routine infrastructure upgrades and innovative solutions, such as far-side stops to improve safety.

CASE STUDY



Moving New Orleans Plan

The *Moving New Orleans Transportation Action Plans* (2019, updated 2021), created by the City's now-defunct Office of Transportation, established a blueprint for regional bus priority corridors, improved shelters, safety enhancements, and coordination between city street projects and RTA service design.[23] These plans represent an integrated vision that tied together policy, planning, design, and infrastructure. However, the *Moving New Orleans* plans have faced limited implementation due to funding uncertainty and siloed decision-making.

Reaffirming these plans, aligning them with RTA's *Strategic Mobility Plan*, and prioritizing their recommendations in capital programming would move the region closer to a cohesive, resilient, and equitable transit network. Reinstating the Office of Transportation would be a critical step towards that goal.

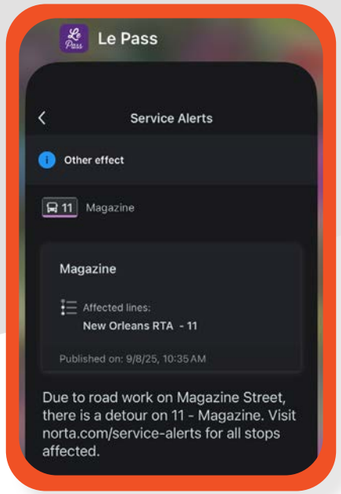
Recommendations: Agencies Must Make Improvements

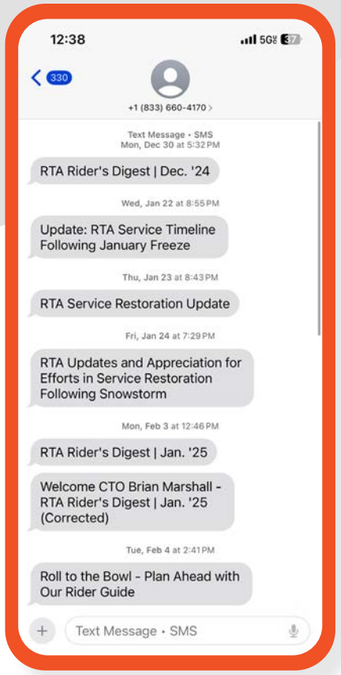
While funding and infrastructure are critical, the RTA must also improve its day-to-day operations, particularly in communication and accessibility.

Communication

Rider communications remain a significant point of frustration. Service alerts for detours and disruptions are often unclear, inconsistent, and written with internal jargon rather than with public clarity in mind. These alerts frequently lack essential details, such as which stops are closed, where to catch rerouted or alternate buses, and how long the disruption will last. Furthermore, the RTA relies almost exclusively on digital channels, leaving riders waiting at transit stops without smartphone or internet access, stranded and uninformed. Even within digital channels, information is often highly obscured, with the LePass app and RTA social media sending riders to the agency's website for information that is then poorly formatted for mobile devices, such as requiring a PDF download. Furthermore, the website is often inaccessible during significant events. Recent major events, such as the Super Bowl and Taylor Swift concerts, which were planned months or years in advance, were marked by central system dysfunction and communication breakdown between and within the RTA, city offices, and the general public, including instances of operators failing to follow planned detour routes even in cases where detours were communicated to riders. It is imperative that extended detours and disruptions be quickly and clearly communicated through all digital channels, labeled with physical signage along routes, and include clear information about alternative stops or routes, and that these notices are removed after detours end.

> *"We need ANY of our communications options to be functional .... Please consider on-board announcements, signage, and wayfinding at transfer points to help make [detours] a less stressful experience for riders, and for goodness sake at least keep the app up to date."*
>
> **-TRANSIT RIDER**





Examples of recent RTA communications. RTA texts consist of often oblique and bizarre statements lacking any detailed information. Service disruption notifications on social media lack information on affected routes and stops, alternative routes, and service restoration timelines. Service alerts in the LePass app do not provide any information on where detours occur or which stops are affected, and instead direct riders to the website (the link is not clickable).

> *The app could use some updates. It does not display any edited routes due to road closures, etc. and any detours are difficult to access unless you check the website directly. Notifications would also be great within the app!*
>
> **-TRANSIT RIDER**

Communication issues extend beyond service disruptions. Customer service issues continue to impact riders, with transit operators often perceived as rude to passengers, including those who are differently abled, or as unable or unwilling to assist riders with route and stop information. General communications regarding agency decision-making, such as when service is cut or reduced, are also not clearly communicated to the riding public in transparent ways, eroding trust in the agency and the transit system. Communications from riders to the RTA, including complaints and feedback, are often met with defensiveness or ignored, and streamlined feedback channels are lacking.

A draft communications plan has been developed internally at the RTA, but has not been released or implemented for months due to internal bureaucratic hurdles.

Without a cohesive standard operating procedure for communications, these issues will persist as reactionary, ad hoc decisions are made. We therefore call on the RTA to:

- Adopt and release a communications plan with clear standard operating procedures.
- Ensure all service disruptions are communicated promptly via multiple communication methods, including social media, the LePass App, the RTA website, text messaging, physical signage at affected stops, and direct communication with transit vehicle operators and Ride Line operators. For extended disruptions, emergencies, and planned special events, RTA should provide additional notification via television, radio, and print news sources.
- Ensure all service disruption notifications are complete and precise, detailing the affected lines and stops, the hours of disruption, and the locations of alternative stops or routes. Include graphic communications such as maps and infographics to provide additional clarity.
- Ensure that communication is accessible to people of all socioeconomic backgrounds, languages, literacy levels, and abilities. For example, provide information in various formats (e.g., large print, Braille, audio) and languages that reflect the community's diversity (e.g., Spanish, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole).
- Train transit operators and RTA staff in customer service and communication, centering professionalism and rider dignity. Ensure operators are trained on the communication needs of riders of all ages and abilities.
- Increase transparency in communications regarding decision-making processes. Proactively engage with riders, particularly in low-income communities, communities of color, people with disabilities, seniors, and other groups that may face barriers to accessing transit information. This can include conducting outreach in community centers, housing developments, and local schools.
- Implement an easy-to-use rider feedback form in the LePass App and ensure the relevant RTA leadership promptly addresses feedback. Ensure customer service options (e.g., phone support, online chat, or in-person help) are available in multiple languages and for people with different abilities. Offer feedback opportunities and customer services through SMS or video relay services for deaf and hard-of-hearing riders.

Accessibility

From paratransit concerns to stop and shelter infrastructure, accessibility remains a significant challenge for riders.

Many bus and streetcar stops are inaccessible to riders with disabilities, located on unsafe roads without sidewalks or safe crossings. Most vehicles on the historic St. Charles streetcar lines are still not ADA-accessible, creating an unreliable experience for those who need it most. Responsibility for accessibility is split: the transit agency manages the stop area itself, while the City and/or state are responsible for the connecting sidewalks. This means that even if every transit stop were accessible, the condition of the connecting infrastructure may still make it difficult for people with mobility concerns to use transit.

This jurisdictional gray area has allowed widespread inaccessibility to persist, with many people walking on inadequate sidewalks or in the road to reach transit stops. To truly serve all residents, New Orleans must follow the lead of cities like Denver and implement a comprehensive program to ensure every part of the transit journey is safe and accessible.

CASE STUDY

Denver's Sidewalk Program

Walkable neighborhoods with good sidewalks are the foundation of a complete transportation system.

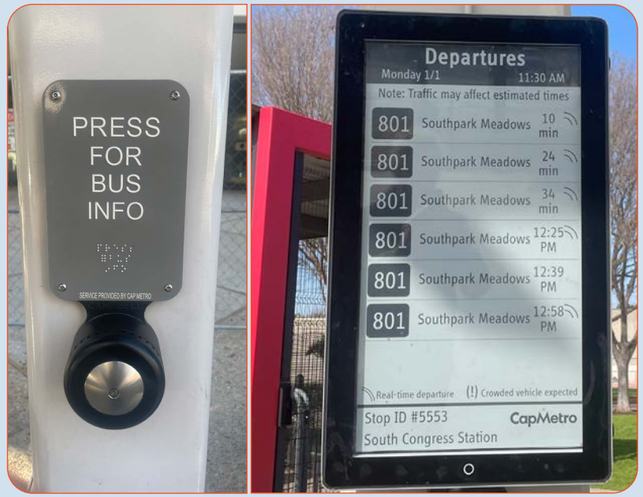
In 2022, the City of Denver passed a sidewalk ordinance, shifting responsibility for building and maintaining sidewalks in the public right-of-way away from the adjacent property owner to the city itself.

With a new fee approved by voters in 2025, Denver will begin creating a comprehensive program to repair hazardous sidewalks, reconstruct deficient sidewalks, and build sidewalks where they're missing. Since everyone benefits from a complete sidewalk network, all Denver property owners will pay a fee.

All property owners will pay a base rate of $150 for properties with up to 230 linear feet of street frontage. 96% of all property owners will only pay the base rate. An additional fee of $3.50 per linear foot will also be charged for frontage exceeding 230 feet. The Sidewalk Program includes an Affordability Program that provides rebates to property owners based on income and household size.[24] The fee is expected to generate approximately $41 million annually to build, repair, and maintain sidewalks.

Although the RTA doesn't manage the connecting infrastructure, the agency must make a concerted effort to improve accessibility atx stops and on vehicles. While we acknowledge RTA's efforts over the last year to replace signage, many stops still lack permanent signage, and some of the temporary signs installed last year are damaged or missing. Signage provides little information about where or when the bus will take riders, and some stops display outdated or inaccurate information. This lack of accurate, informative, and up-to-date signage results in an unreliable and confusing experience for all riders, especially for those new to transit, visitors, and those without a cell phone. Furthermore, signage is not accessible to riders of differing abilities or in languages beyond English.

CASE STUDY



CapMetro Accessible Bus Stops

Other transit agencies, like METRO Houston and Austin's CapMetro, have upgraded their transit stops with signage that displays frequency, live arrival times, audible announcements, and braille to provide accessible, comfortable waits for riders of all abilities.

In addition to confusing, incomplete, and inaccessible signage, most stops lack basic amenities like shelters or benches. In 2024, the Committee for a Better New Orleans, RIDE, the UNO Transportation Institute, and the RTA collaborated on the *Better Bus Stops* project to inventory and redesign transit stops for better accessibility and climate resilience. The study found that 83% of RTA bus stops lack shelter and 81% lack seating.[25] As severe weather and heat events become more common and unpredictable, waiting for the bus without shelter or seating can be dangerous for elderly and disabled people, making it critical that the RTA continue to collaborate on this project and implement necessary improvements as soon as possible.Wheelchair accessibility on the St. Charles streetcar is also a significant problem. Currently, only 6 inbound and 6 outbound stops are wheelchair accessible with ADA accessible vehicles arriving only once an hour, making it impossible for many wheelchair users along the corridor to access the service.[26] In 2023, the RTA was sued after a 7-year-old wheelchair user and his family were denied boarding at a non-ADA-designated stop along the St Charles streetcar line. The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana ruled in favor of the family, and the RTA subsequently entered into a consent decree earlier this year requiring them to improve wheelchair accessibility along the line. The decree includes both short-term and long-term improvements, including increasing the number of ADA accessible vehicles in service and indicating a vehicle's ADA status via the LePass app live tracking, with the eventual goal of making every stop and vehicle ADA accessible.[27]

> *The city of New Orleans can & needs to take notes from public transport in other cities like Houston, Charlotte, and Chicago. You can see they care about their citizens by the upkeep and upgrades provided at their bus stops!*
>
> **-TRANSIT RIDER**

To accomplish this, the RTA is currently conducting two accessibility studies: the *Universal Accessibility Study*, designed to understand the needs of disabled riders better and develop recommendations to address identified problems across the entire system, and the *Streetcar Modernization Master Plan* to study and improve accessibility, speed, and reliability of the streetcar system. RTA needs to ensure that all disabled riders' voices are considered in these studies, as accessibility goes beyond wheelchair users. Riders who have learning disabilities, neurological conditions, and vision or hearing conditions are often neglected when considering accessibility. RIDE calls on the RTA to work proactively with all disabled communities as these studies develop and to swiftly and equitably implement their findings.

Fixed-route riders aren't the only ones facing accessibility issues. Those who ride paratransit are encountering difficulties obtaining approval and using the service. In our outreach, riders consistently noted that the paratransit eligibility process is time-consuming and confusing. To ride paratransit, an individual must first pick up an eligibility form from RTA headquarters or request that one be mailed to them, a process that could take 14 days. Then they must complete and submit a multi-step eligibility form, which includes a section that their doctor completes and returns. The completed forms must be hand-delivered or mailed to RTA. Eligibility decisions are mailed to the applicant within 21 days. If approved, the applicant returns to RTA to get their paratransit card. If denied, the applicant can appeal the decision in writing. According to responses in RIDE's *Senior Survey*, applicants who were denied were often confused about the reasons for the denial and struggled to receive a clear response from the agency. Other applicants complained of not receiving mailed responses and of frustrating interactions with RTA staff who were not knowledgeable about the eligibility process or paratransit in general.

Besides the application and approval process, paratransit riders also voiced concerns about long wait times, which often caused them to miss necessary appointments, reschedule their pick-up, and endure additional waits at pick-up points. In addition, the enforcement of rules on paratransit vehicles emerged as a recurring point of contention. Riders experienced inconsistent enforcement regarding bringing their groceries and personal belongings into the vehicle, as well as inconsistent communication about whether they could bring a care assistant or aide with them. This led to confusion for riders when planning their trips and, sometimes, the inability to access healthcare, groceries, and other necessities they depend on paratransit to reach.

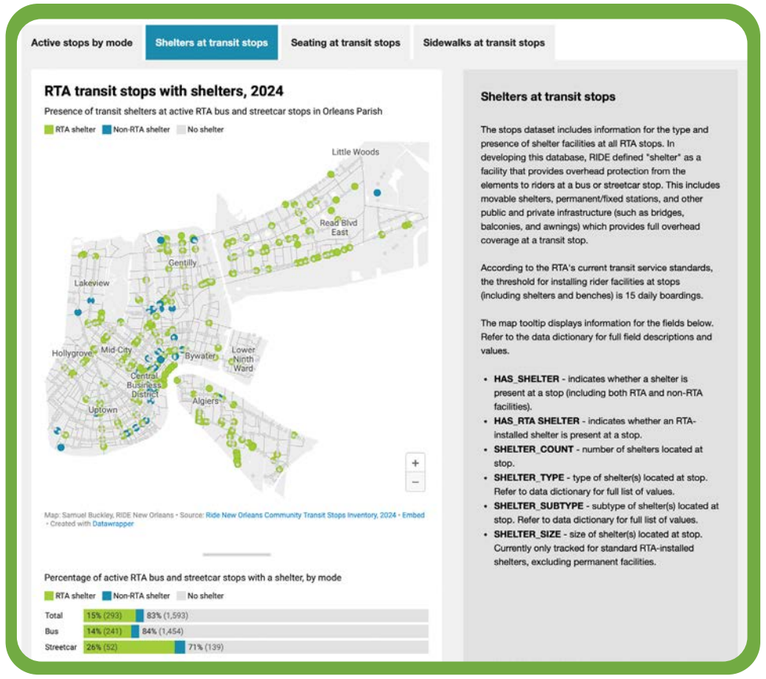
> *"The wait times for paratransit are too long and the schedules are weird. They'll reroute and go somewhere else first, making me wait."*
>
> **-SENIOR PARATRANSIT RIDER**

To make the transit system accessible and equitable for all riders, especially those with disabilities, we urge RTA to enact the following recommendations:

- **Implement new paratransit scheduling software to improve the reliability and efficiency of drop-offs and pick-ups, while also reducing rider wait times and travel durations.**
- **Streamline the paratransit eligibility/approval process by offering electronic submission and additional ways for applicants to contact the agency beyond mail.**
- **Provide specialized training around the paratransit process to RTA leadership and customer service. Also, ensure operators are consistent in their enforcement of rules when on paratransit vehicles.**
- **Provide regular and accessible platforms for riders to ask paratransit and ADA questions and learn more about the approval process.**
- **Implement the findings of the *Universal Accessibility Study* in a clear, phased, and transparent manner, and continue collaboration with the organizations involved in the study.**
- **Implement accessible wayfinding and information systems that work for all riders, including those with vision and hearing loss, and those who use mobility devices.**
- **Integrate findings from the *Better Bus Stops* project into long-term capital planning to ensure that climate-resilient, accessible stops with shade and seating are prioritized, fully funded, and implemented where they will have the most significant positive impact on riders.**
- **Collaborate with the City, LADOTD, and other agencies to improve bus stops' surrounding infrastructure, including creating accessible and safe connections for sidewalks, crossings, and curb ramps.**
- **Accelerate and prioritize ADA upgrades and modernization on the streetcar system.**
- **Ensure accessibility data is transparent, public, and regularly reported by the agency.**

Open Data

The RTA continues to fail to deliver on its promises of accessible,transparent data sharing. The RTA's *Strategic Mobility Plan* (originally adopted in 2018, updated in 2023) committed to the development and implementation of a "publicly available dashboard that shares up-to-date performance data, including plan metrics, on-time performance data, and ridership by route" by 2023.[28] As of 2025, no such dashboard exists. Furthermore, the RTA's *Fixed Route Service Standards Policy*, enacted as a Title VI requirement under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, establishes a performance and evaluation schedule that includes publishing an annual *Service Standards Report* for public review. As of 2025, neither the policy itself nor any reports were publicly available on the RTA's website.



RIDE Maintains an *Open Data Portal* to address the lack of data availability on the RTA website.

This year, RIDE expanded on our calls for open data in our March report, *Better Transit Through Open Data: The Case for Open Transit Data Reporting for the Greater New Orleans Region*. The paper highlights how data transparency benefits transit agencies by facilitating streamlined data collection, evaluation, and analysis; reducing costs associated with public information requests; and simplifying internal workflows. Furthermore, open data availability—including not only performance data but also financial and operational data—is crucial for implementing and monitoring equitable spending and planning processes within the public agency. Several data metrics outlined in the *Strategic Mobility Plan* (SMP) for collection and reporting on ridership and performance are currently tracked internally by the RTA but not publicly shared. While some of thesestatistics are presented at RTA Board Meetings, they are not made readily available in formats helpful to the general public, and historical data is not available in any form. Other data metrics promised for tracking in the SMP, including accessibility metrics, remain untracked by the RTA, even internally.

RIDE continues to call on the RTA to deliver on the promises outlined in the *SMP* and the *Fixed Route Service Standards Policy*, and to implement a comprehensive data plan to promote transparency, efficiency, and accessibility. In particular, we call for the implementation of the following:

- Publish the *Fixed-Route Service Standards Policy* and Service Standards Reports on the RTA website.
- Publish open datasets to a portal accessible on the RTA website reflecting all data metrics for which the agency possesses dependable statistics. This includes metrics around ridership, service completion, average system speed, and on-time performance. Once public, data should be updated monthly.
- Conduct a needs assessment to identify necessary capabilities and resources around data tracking.
- Complete APC (Automatic Passenger Counter) validation on all streetcar lines except #12 St. Charles and install and validate APCs on the St. Charles line. Invest robustly in data infrastructure and capabilities, including hiring dedicated staff to manage, maintain, analyze, and publish data.
- Internally allocate data responsibilities, denoting specific staff member and team duties.
- Stress consistency, granularity, accuracy, and timeliness in developing strong and sustainable open data practices and policies.
- Clearly define data sources, especially network/access measures, and their calculation processes.
- Establish consistent data retrieval methods for metrics with identified methodological issues, such as dwell time and service completion.
- Expand and update the online portal consistently as data becomes available.

The RTA is far behind not only its own promises but also its peer agencies with respect to open data. Agencies such as Austin's CapMetro, Portland's TriMet, Reno and Las Vegas' RTCs, and numerous others maintain extremely robust public dashboards. RIDE's *Better Transit Through Open Data* paper included detailed case studies of these offerings, along with suggestions to inform the RTA's design and implementation choices. In the face of continued lack of open data sharing from RTA, RIDE also maintains its own *Open Data Portal*, with the limited data we can retrieve from RTA and JP transit, available at rideneworleans.org/opendata.

Reengaging in Regional Coordination

Despite Jefferson Parish's decision to leave the RTA, the need and opportunity for regional coordination remain as critical as ever. Our region's economy and residents' travel patterns do not stop at the parish line. A genuinely healthy transit system must look beyond jurisdictional boundaries to provide seamless, intuitive service for all citizens across the Greater New Orleans region.

One of JP Transit's primary goals outlined in its 2019 *Public Transit Strategic Plan* is to be "collaborative" and an "integral part of the New Orleans regional transit network." **To achieve this goal, they proposed six action items:**

- Implement a fare-sharing method in corridors where JP Transit and RTA overlap service.
- Continue operating the regional day pass ride with RTA and explore additional opportunities for regional fare integration.
- Establish mini-hub stations where JeT and RTA routes meet.
- Working with RTA on the development of the Downtown Transit Center.
- Work cooperatively with the RTA to implement potential high-capacity transit corridors between New Orleans and Jefferson Parish.
- Work with RPC and LADOTD to examine the impact of opening HOV lanes on the Mississippi River Bridge to transit only in both directions.[29]

Additionally, RTA's *Strategic Mobility Plan* calls for the agency to:

- Participate in technical coordination meetings with mobility providers in the region and include representatives from the airport, Regional Planning Commission, local governments, and other agencies as needed.
- Evaluate existing and potential opportunities for cost sharing within and across parishes, including JP Transit, SBURT, and ferry funding.
- Study options for making shared mobility in the region a seamless experience for the customer, including potential consolidation of services and inclusion of fare products on the RTA mobile app.
- Strengthen regional transit routing in coordination with Jefferson Parish and St. Bernard Parish, including through joint planning and scheduling activities as well as internal and external coordination.[30]

Although the RTA and JP Transit share the same stated goal of cooperation, there has been little action in the six years these plans have existed, with many of JP Transit's action items having since been seemingly abandoned altogether. There is a concerning lack of transparency from JP Transit regarding the follow-up and implementation of their strategic plan.

Jefferson Parish's decision to leave the RTA shouldn't prevent coordination between the agencies–RTA still shares corridors with JP Transit, and JP Transit's buses still serve Downtown New Orleans. RIDE calls on the RTA and JP Transit to re-engage in interagency cooperation and facilitate collaboration among the incoming mayoral administration, the City Council, and Jefferson Parish leaders to improve communication and coordination across the region.

Connectivity, collaboration, and the state of public transit in general are even worse in New Orleans' other next-door neighbor, St. Bernard Parish. St. Bernard's transit system, SBURT, currently operates just a single route with limited stops, no night or weekend service, no transferability or shared fare structure with RTA, and no attempts at regional coordination (notably, the RTA operates more service in St. Bernard Parish than SBURT does). Despite language in the *Strategic Mobility Plan* surrounding collaboration with St. Bernard Parish and SBURT, as well as a call to "explore regional connections with St. Tammany Parish" and to study intercity bus or rail to Baton Rouge, regional transit connectivity beyond Orleans and Jefferson parishes remains nonexistent aside from the minimal service available in St. Bernard.

Turning these opportunities and challenges into a reality of regional connectivity will require immense cooperation and communication between the two agencies and other decision-makers across the wider region, and our suggestions are not the final or only solutions to regional coordination. The RTA and JP Transit should renew their respective calls for cooperation, collaborate proactively to sustain improvements, and work together to build the transit system our entire region deserves.

CASE STUDY

Pudget Sound's ORCA Card Fare System

The ORCA card, used in the Seattle-Puget Sound region of Washington, is an excellent example of interagency fare coordination, with the fare media valid for use across 10+ transit agencies and 9 transit modes throughout the region.

Users can choose either physical or virtual phone-based cards and load a wide variety of fare products, including cash value, interagency Regional Passes, agency-specific passes, and reduced- and zero-fare passes for youth, low-income families, seniors, riders with disabilities, and recipients of certain state benefits programs. Passes can be reloaded at terminals located at transit stations and various retail locations, through the ORCA app, by telephone, and by mail.[31]

We have identified several potential opportunities that RTA and JP Transit can collaborate on to strengthen regional connectivity:

- **Coordinate schedules.** JP Transit and the RTA should coordinate their schedules to reduce wait times at key transfer points.

- **Consolidate the fare system.** The RTA seeks to upgrade and modernize its fare system. There is an opportunity here to collaborate on fares and technologies, including reducing the price of the Regional Pass, instituting reduced-cost or free transfers, implementing shared fares on shared corridors, etc. The agencies should design and implement a modern, refillable fare card, available as both a physical card (refillable at offboard terminals, retail locations, or digitally) and a virtual card on riders' phones, usable across all transit agencies in the Greater New Orleans area.

- **Adopt multi-parish communication and wayfinding guidelines.** Inconsistent and conflicting language between agencies creates a confusing, unreliable experience for riders transferring between the two services. For example, on JP Transit's system map, the Cemeteries transfer point is labeled "City Park and Canal." On RTA's system map, the same stop is labeled "Cemeteries Hub." Both maps also contain misleading information regarding connecting routes—RTA's map includes the E4, a JP Transit bus that hasn't existed in years, while JP Transit's map is missing major RTA connecting lines. Establishing clear, consistent language across agencies in way-finding tools and schedules would help minimize confusion and improve reliability for riders transferring between the two services.

- **Continue to expand systems beyond parish boundaries.** In recent years, the region has seen slow but steady improvements in regional connections, most notably the 3-Tulane extension to Elmwood and the introduction of the 86-St. Maurice/Chalmette serving St. Bernard parish. RTA, JP transit, and St. Bernard Parish's SBURT should continue to explore opportunities to expand beyond their respective parishes.

- **Continue developing and improving interagency transit centers, terminals, and hubs.** JP Transit should renew its commitment to collaboration on both the Downtown Transit Center and improving smaller existing hubs, such as Cemeteries and Wilty Terminal, as well as developing additional hubs. Both agencies should ensure these transfer stations are efficient, clean, and comfortable for riders.

- **Reinstate E1 to the CBD.** This line was cut and no longer serves the CBD. Riders commuting to downtown must now transfer to the 47-Canal/Cemeteries streetcar (which is very slow) or the 91-Jackson/Esplanade bus, which goes far out of the way. JP Transit should reverse this decision and ensure this line serves the Downtown Transit Center by the time it is completed.

- **Expand ferry service to places like Gretna and Westwego.** Additional ferry service would be transformative for many people living on the West Bank and could provide a much-needed funding opportunity for the ferry. Service expansion to Gretna is included in the RTA's *Strategic Mobility Plan*.

Conclusion

The Greater New Orleans Region's public transportation system is at a crossroads.

One road is paved with the potholes and congestion of continued inaction. It leads us to a roundabout, stuck in the status quo with no exit available except the one from which we came. The other road leads to the express lane, to progress and prosperity. For far too long, our region's leadership has hesitated to take that road, strangely stalled by fears of a brighter future, and our citizens have paid the price.

The bottom line is clear: **New Orleans needs a healthy, efficient transit system that reliably connects all our citizens to work, school, healthcare, and daily life.** Forward-thinking cities across the country and the world continue to demonstrate that real, tangible progress in transit development is possible for communities of all sizes and shapes. Our leaders have left us behind for too long. It is time now for action, for accountability, and for a commitment to our people and our future.

This report is a roadmap to that future. To get there together, leaders from across the city, our neighboring parishes, the region's transit agencies, the business and private sectors, and our communities must choose to prioritize progress, equity, and excellence. In doing so, we must remain focused on the needs of our rider-citizens, who have made clear that access, reliability, safety, dignity, and affordability must guide the decisions ahead.

Recent progress in rising ridership, leadership stability, and support for our region's youth has shown that progress is possible when the system is supported and decision makers work together. But we have a long way to go. Inadequate funding, poor accessibility and communication, and inconsistent implementation of plans have led to a stagnant system. To build the world class transit network our region deserves, one with fast, frequent service, quality shelters and pedestrian connections, regional connectivity and accessibility for all riders, we need stable funding, political will, accountability, and genuine leadership.

To move forward in the fast lane, decision-makers must act now. RIDE will continue organizing, monitoring, and advocating alongside riders to ensure our region's leaders commit to building the future we all deserve.

RIDE
WORLD CLASS TRANSIT FOR NEW ORLEANS

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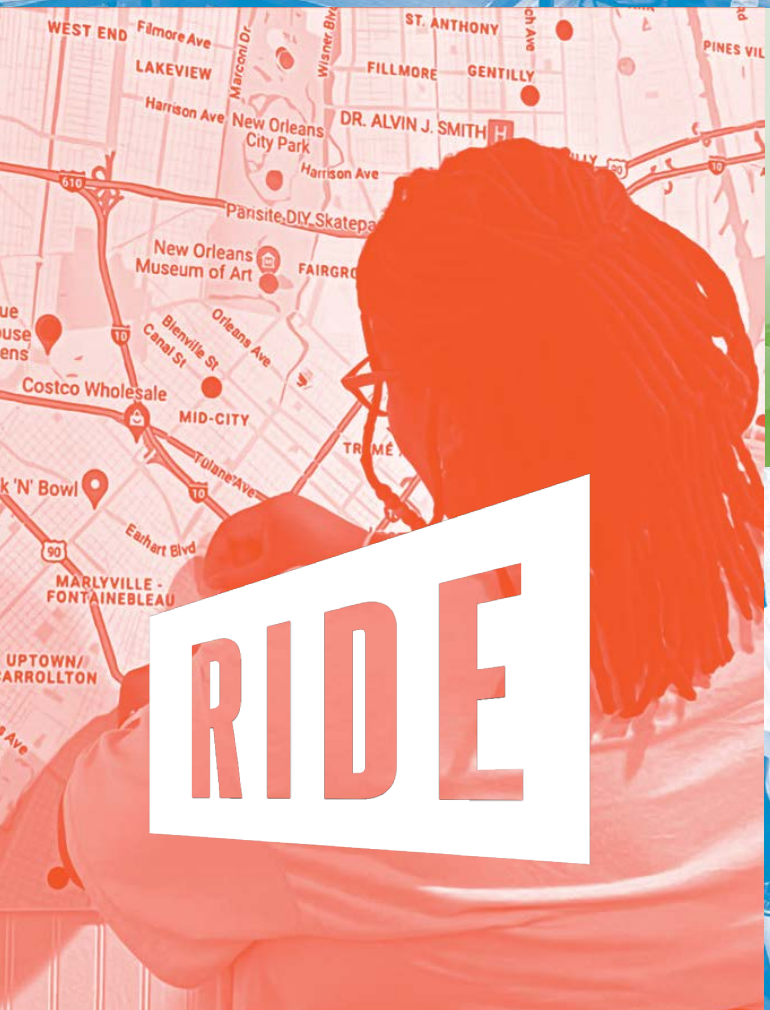
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