# Regional Transit Coordination (RTC) Subcommittee Houston-Galveston Area Council Special Call Online Meeting Thursday, February 1, 2024 11:00 AM

# Agenda

- 1. Introductions and Certification of Quorum (9) Ruthanne Haut, The Woodlands Township, Chair
- 2. Public Comments
- 3. Action Items:
  - 3.1 Approval of RTC Subcommittee Meeting Minutes of January 11, 2024
  - 3.2 Endorsement of Transit Asset Management Targets Chris Whaley, H-GAC
- 4. Information Items: (10 minutes or less each)
  - 4.1 Coordinated Planning
    - 4.1a Regional Transit Ridership Update Thomas Gray, H-GAC

2024 RTC Subcommittee Meeting Dates:

April 11, 2024

July 11, 2024

October 10, 2024

#### REGIONAL TRANSIT COORDINATION SUBCOMMITTEE

#### SPECIAL CALL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, January 11, 2024 – 9:30-11:00am Houston-Galveston Area Council Virtual Meeting

#### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Ruthanne Haut (Chair) – The Woodlands Township
Melanie Beaman – City of Sugar Land
Angel Ponce – City of Houston
Philip Salerno – Greater Inwood Super Neighborhood
Thomas Holstein – BakerRipley
Vernon Chambers – Harris County Transit
Perri D'Armond – Fort Bend County Transit
Jo Marlow – Brazos Transit District
Claudia Wicks – Colorado Valley Transit
James Oliver – City of Galveston/Island Transit

#### ALTERNATES PRESENT

Brandon Mosely – City of Houston
Huey German -Wilson – Northeast Houston
Redevelopment Council
Ashley Newell – Mounting Horizons
Tatyana Luttenschlager – METRO
Shekeylia Douglas – Harris County Transit
Kaitlyn Mack – Brazos Transit District

# **OTHERS PRESENT**

Arnold Vowles – TxDOT Carol Crapanzano – TxDOT Bul Mabil - TxDOT Sharon Moses-Burnside – City of Houston Planning Denise Wendler – METRO Reggie Brown – METRO Jim Thompson – The Center for Pursuit

#### H-GAC STAFF PRESENT

Jamila Owens
Thomas Gray
Chris Whaley
Sandy Klanfer
Eric Belmar
Vishu Lingala
Lucinda Martinez

#### **BRIEFING**

#### Overview

RTCS Members and Alternates met virtually by teleconference. At this Special Call meeting, the Subcommittee endorsed proposed changes to the RTCP's Transit Need Index (TNI) and an application for planning grant assistance. The Subcommittee received updates on updates on Transit Asset Management (TAM) plans and targets, the progress of the regional transit connectivity project and the TIP project selection process.

#### INTRODUCTIONS AND CERTIFICATION OF QUORUM

**ITEM 1** – Ruthanne Haut, Chair, The Woodlands Township, convened the meeting at 9:32 AM. Roll was called by H-GAC staff and a quorum was certified.

# **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**ITEM 2** – There were no public comments presented to the Subcommittee.

#### INFORMATION ITEM (TAKEN OUT OF ORDER)

Due to Mr. Lingala's need to leave the meeting early, H-GAC staff requested that his information item be taken out of order. Ms. Haut agreed.

#### ITEM 5.1b – TIP Project Selection Process Update – Vishu Lingala, H-GAC

Mr. Lingala presented the Subcommittee with the TIP Project Selection Process, including investment categories, the amount of available funding by category, how agencies wishing to submit projects can access evaluation criteria, and a timeline of next steps.

There were no questions or comments. Ms. Haut thanked Mr. Lingala and returned to the agenda's regular order.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

# ITEM 3.1 – Approval of RTC Subcommittee Meeting Minutes of November 2, 2023

Ms. Haut requested a motion to approve the minutes of the November 2, 2023 meeting of the Subcommittee.

Action Item Motion: moved by Vernon Chambers, seconded by Perri D'Armond. Action Item approved.

## ITEM 3.2 - Endorsement of Updated RCTP Transit Needs Index - Sandy Klanfer, H-GAC

Mr. Klanfer presented the Subcommittee with a proposal to revise the Transit Need Index being used for the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan, to more accurately analyze transit need and availability within the region. The proposed new TNI would focus on transit availability by frequency and get away from the concept of "met" and "unmet" need. H-GAC staff spent several months developing and refining the proposed methodology, which was previously presented to the Subcommittee in the fall of 2023. The new methodology classifies service types by frequency and more specifically defines public transportation. H-GAC staff will document all services provided by local governments and transit agencies, and create separate maps for services provided to the general public and services reserved for select populations.

Klanfer also reported on the regional mid-day trip evaluation, which focused on regional connectivity needs by analyzing weekday mid-day (i.e. off-peak) trips to major activity centers such as Downtown Houston and the Texas Medical Center. Some counties generate enough mid-day demand to and from these activity centers warrant additional study.

Klanfer asked for the Subcommittee to endorse H-GAC staff's proposed new methodology for the Transit Need Index as well as the methodology for the mid-day trip evaluation.

Philip Salerno asked if the frequency definitions being used by the new TNI methodology were based on previous H-GAC efforts such has the High-Capacity Transit Task Force. Klanfer said they were based on definitions previously generated by H-GAC. Thomas Gray added that the classifications were used in the in the High-Capacity Transit Task Force, but originated in earlier efforts such has the Regional Transit Framework Study.

Vernon Chambers asked why the Energy Corridor wasn't identified as an activity center meriting further study in the miday trip evaluation. Klanfer answered that the Energy Corridor didn't exhibit as much mid-day demand as downtown and the Texas Medical Center when the analysis was conducted, but staff could look at it further. Ruthanne Haut added that the Energy Corridor showed up as an important destination in travel data analysis The Woodlands Township conducted.

Action Item Motion: moved by Philip Salerno, Seconded by James Oliver. Action Item approved.

# ITEM 3.3 - Endorsement of H-GAC Application for Planning Grant Assistance - Sandy Klanfer, H-GAC

Mr. Klanfer informed the Subcommittee of a TxDOT call for FTA Section 5304 planning grant funds. These funds are distributed every two years and must fund projects that "connect to goals, objectives, or recommendations from region's most recent Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan." Klanfer noted that these funds present an opportunity to acquire planning fans that can be used across the entire 13-county region, rather than just the eight-county MPO. Suggested projects that could be funded by this grant include an expansion of the planned Regional Bus study to cover the 13-county region and a plan to help the region transition to a full mobility management program.

Klanfer asked that the Subcommittee authorize Chairman Haut to sign a letter of support for H-GAC's application for 5305 planning grant funds from TxDOT. A draft of the letter was shown to RTCS members.

James Oliver asked if new Urbanized Area designations would affect the proposed studies. Klanfer answered that the grant being requested would be unaffected by changes to UZA boundaries. Philip Salerno noted that the language contained in the draft letter appeared to be standard and unobjectionable.

Action Item Motion: moved by Vernon Chambers, seconded by Perri D'Armond. Action Item approved.

#### INFORMATION (AND POTENTIAL ACTION) ITEMS

#### ITEM 4.1a – Transit Asset Management Update – Chris Whaley, H-GAC

Mr. Whaley provided an overview of the Transit Asset Management (TAM) process, which is designed to ensure a State of Good Repair for the region's transit providers. Whaley described the performance measures used for each asset category and listed the current disposition of the TAM plans collected from the region's transit providers. Whaley then presented a history of the region's TAM performance (targets and actuals) by yea as well las the proposed targets for 2026. Based on the data currently available to H-GAC, the region has met only one of four performance targets for 2024.

Ms. Jamila Owens continued the presentation by highlighting "transit investments to watch" in coming years, including \$514 million in capital transit projects programmed into the TIP and \$231 million in "carry over/spend down" projects recently approved by the Transportation Policy Council. Owens suggested that this pipeline of projects could improve the region's overall State of Good Repair. Owens also noted some questions that the Subcommittee should consider for future TAM updates and presented a timeline for approval of the 2026 TAM targets.

Perri D'Armond noted that Fort Bend Transit will have its TAM plan updated this week and asked if it could be submitted. H-GAC staff replied that they would be happy to accept the updated plan, as it might allow the 2026 targets to be further refined.

Ruthanne Haut asked where Subcommittee members could get updates on the "transit investments to watch" listed by H-GAC staff. Staff replied that the best way to stay updated would be to follow TAC and TPC proceedings as well as the Project Selection Process previously discussed by Mr. Lingala.

H-GAC staff will send updated TAM targets to Subcommittee members. Since this item was being presented to the Subcommittee for the first time today, no action on this item was expected. However, a Special Call meeting on February 1<sup>st</sup> will be required to approve the targets.

There were no questions or comments.

#### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

# ITEM 5.1a Regional Transit Connectivity Update - Reggie Brown, METRO

Mr. Brown updated the Subcommittee as to the progress in implementing the regional fare system. Harris County and Fort Bend County Transit went live in the Q Ticketing app last September, but additional partner integrations will be suspended until after the new fare system (which replaces Q Ticketing) goes live later this year. The new system will include a central management function that allows regional partners to consolidate fare structures and manage customer accounts. METRO and its fare system contractor will conduct follow-up meetings with each agency to confirm current position and identify future considerations. Brown provided additional information about the current status of the fare collection system as well as expected next steps.

Perri D'Armond congratulated Brown and METRO for all the work accomplished on the regional fare system so far. She noted that the new buses intended to be used for Fort Bend Transit's planned service to downtown Houston are arriving soon and she will coordinate with METRO on validator installation. Ruthanne Haut remarked that the region has come very far in the regional fare effort but there was still a lot work left to do.

#### **AGENCY REPORTS**

## ITEM 6 – Transit and Human Service Agency Reports

Ms. Haut invited Subcommittee members to briefly give updates on their agency efforts.

Perri D'Armond noted that, in addition to the buses intended to be used for new commuter transit service to downtown Houston arriving next week, groundbreaking on the Westpark Park and Ride facility is expected to occur soon as well. The project will take about a year to complete. D'Armond thanked H-GAC for their support in advancing all of their transit expansion projects.

Ruthanne Haut announced that a third year of CMAQ funding for The Woodlands Express service to the Energy Corridor has been secured. The Township is also wrapping up the study funded by a route planning grant and will hopefully be able to provide final results to the Subcommittee at the April meeting. Finally, the Township is expanding their annual service to the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo in February and March, with new trips on Thursdays and during spring break week added to the weekend-only service provided in previous years.

Thomas Gray informed Subcommittee members about the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant that H-GAC has received from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). H-GAC is seeking project ideas and proposals to include in regional climate action plans. Gray instructed Subcommittee members to the flyer in meeting packet for further details. The application process is open until January 14<sup>th</sup>.

Gray also alerted transit agencies to a pair of upcoming surveys: the quarterly ridership survey for the fourth quarter of 2023, and the Clean Cities annual survey regarding buses in transit fleets that were powered by alternative fuels. Both surveys should be sent out to transit providers in the coming weeks.

Sandy Klanfer noted that H-GAC is in the process of updating its Title VI plan and provided a link to a survey that members could complete as part of that process.

Travis Madison reminded Subcommittee members that TxDOT's Public Transportation Division will be holding its operators meeting in Austin on January 24.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Gray reminded Subcommittee members of the Special Call meeting on February 1<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Haut adjourned the meeting at 11:04 AM.

Next RTCS Meeting – 11:00 AM on Thursday, February 1, 2024 (Special Call)



# **Transit Asset Management (TAM)**



- Purpose: Ensure State of Good Repair
- Overview:
  - Each transit agency has a Transit Asset Management
    Plan
  - Each MPO sets regional targets
  - H-GAC sets the regional targets (biennially) for asset management using the information in each Agency's TAM Plan

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# **Transit Asset Management (TAM)**

Age - % of Revenue Vehicles exceeding their Useful Life
Benchmark (ULB)
Age - % of Non-revenue Vehicles exceeding their Useful Life Benchmark (ULB)
<b>Condition</b> - % of Facilities with a condition rating below 3 on the TERM scale (Marginal or Poor)
<b>Performance</b> - % of Rail track segments, signals and systems with performance restrictions

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# **Transit Asset Management (TAM)**



- Current Process:
  - Collect updated agency TAM Plans
  - Use most recent actual data in these plans to help set regional targets

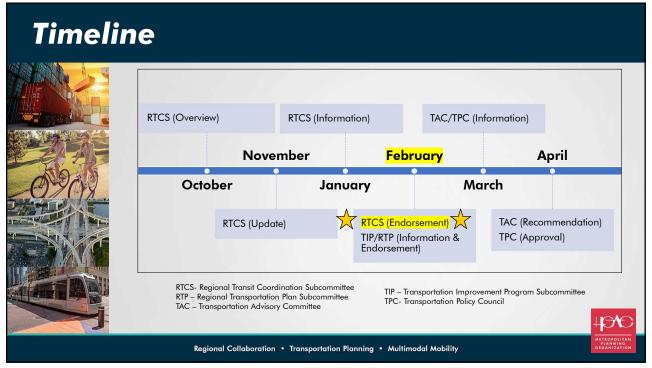
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Agency	Status
Brazos Transit District	N/A – Unable to separate performance measures fo H-GAC TMA
Colorado Valley Transit	N/A – Repots directly to TxDOT
Conroe Connection	Sent updated plan
Galveston Island Transit	Sent updated plan
Gulf Coast Transit District	Sent updated plan
Fort Bend Transit	Sent plan updated in Jan 2024
Harris County Transit	2022 plan is most current, will be updated later this year
METRO	Sent updated plan for 2022, and 2023 NTD data
The Woodlands Township Transit	Sent updated plan

Regional TAM Performance Targets											
Performance Targets and Actuals by Year											
Asset		2020			2022			Proposed Targets			
Category	Targets	Actuals	Met	Targets	Actuals	Met	Targets	Actuals	Met	2026	
Rolling Stock (revenue vehicles)	11%	10%	✓	10%	10%	1	10%	20%	×	20%	
Equipment (non-revenue vehicles)	46%	46%	✓	46%	46%	✓	46%	55%	×	55%	
Facilities (buildings and structures)	55%	55%	✓	54%	45%	✓	45%	28%	✓	28%	
Infrastructure (rail tracks, signals & systems)	0%	0%	<b>✓</b>	0%	0%	✓	0%	1%	×	1%	

TIP Transit Capital Projects (FY 24 - 26) (METRO, Conroe, Fort Bend County, Galveston, Gulf Coast Transit, The Woodlands)	\$514 M
Carry Over Spend Down Transit Projects (FY 24 – 25)	\$231 M
Project Selection Process Investment Category – Transit (2026 – 2034)	\$97 M
Project Selection Process Investment Category – Resiliency & State of Good Repair (2026 – 2034)	\$65 M







# PERFORMANCE REPORTING Transit Asset Management 2024

Performance Measure: Transit Asset Management Name: Christopher Whaley and Jamila Owens

Date: February 1, 2024

Staff worked with the two Tier I agencies (METRO and Island Transit) and five of the six Tier II regional agencies: Harris County Transit, Fort Bend Transit, Gulf Coast Transit District, City of Conroe, and The Woodlands Township. Colorado Valley, as a rural provider, chose to report its data to TxDOT. Brazos Transit District was not included because they are unable to itemize the condition data for applicable assets in the H-GAC Metropolitan Planning Area.

Transit Asset Management Plans were submitted by each agency. The Woodlands Township, Conroe, and Island Transit submitted 2023 Plans. METRO submitted their 2023 NTD data, Fort Bend submitted their 2024 plan. All other agencies submitted 2021 plans.

Below is a summary of data collected:

## **Rolling Stock**

Some Changes – Regional target not met for 2024

The regional target for 2024 was to have no more than 10% of rolling stock/vehicles in revenue service beyond their useful life. We did not meet this target as a region and most agencies showed an increase in the number of revenue vehicles beyond the useful life benchmark.

Of the seven transit agencies, five agencies saw increases in the number of rolling stock beyond their useful life, while one, The Woodlands Transit remained stable with no rolling stock past the useful life benchmark, and another, Gulf Coast Transit District seeing a reduction in rolling stock beyond the benchmark.

# Equipment

Minor Changes – Regional target not met for 2024

The regional equipment target was 46%, and the region did not meet the target. While many agencies did not have equipment changes, two agencies, including are largest agency did see large changes from their prior reports to H-GAC in their non-revenue vehicle count, including an increase in non-revenue vehicles that were beyond their useful life.

#### **Facilities**

Some Changes - Regional target met for 2024.

The regional facilities target was to have no more than 45% of the region's facilities to be below a TERM score of 3. The region met and surpassed the target with 28% of the facilities having a TERM score of 3 or above. Changes include facilities assets now being included in the TAM plan from the Woodlands Township and an additional facility coming on board for the Gulf Coast Transit District.

# Infrastructure – Tier I (only)

Minor changes – Regional targets not met for 2024.

Of the 46 miles of track, 0.26 miles are now restricted within the METRO service area.

Looking ahead, H-GAC expects asset conditions to remain stable or improve in the Houston-Galveston Area Council Metropolitan Planning Area. There will be over \$700 million in transit investments in the regional Transportation Improvement Program over the next few years. There are also additional asset investments expected through the ongoing project prioritization process.

# Regional Transit Ridership - Calendar Year 2023

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July A	Aug	Sept O	ct No	V	Dec	2023
BTD*													
DR/ADA	586	572	709	666	673	660	676	869	818	840	757	743	8,569
Local	752	756	997	329	826	767	618	528	581	541	657	883	8,235
GCTD													
DR/ADA	4,467	3,998	4,403	4,214	5,977	4,156	4,238	4,408	3,714	4,331	3,602	3,359	50,867
Local	18,111	18,089	18,380	19,300	19,645	19,768	19,249	20,119	19,952	19,984	18,503	18,533	229,633
Express	4,699	4,855	5,030	5,373	5,562	5,532	5,845	5,904	6,041	5,885	5,132	4,503	64,361
Conroe													
DR/ADA	766	715	809	700	747	779	743	716	718	704	713	586	8,696
Local	3,751	3,371	3,854	3,627	5,246	5,561	5,274	5,348	5774	5628	5356	4808	57,598
Express	1,458	1,612	1,771	1,499	1,865	1,934	1,871	2,175	1859	1966	1643	1402	21,055
Fort Bend													
DR/ADA	8,765	9,053	10,797	8,820	8,957	8,158	9,489	12,254	9,932	11,063	9,611	9,395	116,294
Express	11,689	12,191	13,882	11,842	13,699	13,664	12,835	15,112	13,184	15,108	12,842	11,095	157,143
Harris													
DR/ADA	5,350	4,768	5,187	5,090	4,960	5,010	4,743	4,989	6,312	4,687	4,143	5,485	60,724
Local	11,298	9,713	12,301	8,248	10,830	10,950	11,841	12,039	10,544	10,109	10,220	11,121	129,214
Express	222	213	237	267	275	290	262	269	342	320	242	242	3,181
Island/Galveston													
DR/ADA	1,181	1,057	1,250	1,092	1,180	1,156	1,277	1,303	1,065	1,223	1,035	1,107	13,926
Local	12,662	11,968	15,247	13,731	14,908	15,821	15,104	17,647	15,892	15,806	13,646	14,761	177,193
Seawall	1,923	1,914	2,287	2,368	1,795	3,256	2,976	1,938	1,573	1,624	2,309	2,328	26,291
Trolley	683	878	2,465	982	1,623	1,541	2,966	1,589	1,299	1,246	471	1,068	16,811
METRO													
DR/ADA	133,841	131,298	149,942	140,723	150,430	149,541	145,296	159,278	147,971	155,864	144,269	145,044	1,753,497
Local	3,902,947	3,771,449	4,265,211	4,072,573	4,327,106	4,131,447	4,108,743	4,480,706	4,531,832	4,763,634	4,381,297	4,473,405	51,210,350
Express	264,351	260,084	293,433	266,810	288,870	283,710	255,770	336,038	309,073	347,118	292,957	238,099	3,436,313
BRT	23,554	22,688	25,709	24,075	25,718	24,428	26,475	28,187	24,314	27,535	28,264	30,188	311,135
LRT	1,032,505	1,007,029	1,507,014	1,179,728	1,119,226	1,114,792	1,049,274	1,208,192	1,242,287	1,234,709	1,144,475	1,079,811	13,919,042
The Woodlands													
DR/ADA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-				-
Local	9,607	11,299	16,012	15,939	15,428	16,052	19,436	11,796	12,954	15,020	15,275	20,463	179,281
Express	23,939	22,587	24,607	22,060	24,187	24,011	22,477	28,078	23,256	26,626	22,067	16,484	280,379
Total													
Total DR/ADA	154,956	151,461	173,097	161,305	172,924	169,460	166,462	183,817	170,530	178,712	164,130	165,719	2,012,573
Total Local	3,961,051	3,828,559	4,334,289	4,136,115	4,395,784	4,203,622	4,183,241	4,550,121	4,599,102	4,832,346	4,447,263	4,546,302	52,017,795
Total Express	306,358	301,542	338,960	307,851	334,458	329,141	299,060	387,576	353,755	397,023	334,883	271,825	3,962,432
Total HCT	1,056,742	1,030,595	1,535,188	1,204,785	1,146,567	1,140,761	1,078,715	1,237,968	1,267,900	1,263,490	1,173,210	1,111,067	14,246,988
Total Fixed Route	5,324,151	5,160,696	6,208,437	5,648,751	5,876,809	5,673,524	5,561,016	6,175,665	6,220,757	6,492,859	5,955,356	5,929,194	70,227,215

<sup>\*</sup> Liberty and Montgomery Counties only

All Modes Total: 72,239,788

#### Significant Regional Transit Service Adjustments - Calendar Year 2023

First Quarter METRO:

Quarterly service change occurred on January 22, which included a variety of route, schedule and frequency adjustments for local and Park and Ride routes, including:

- Increased peak frequency of 151 Westpark Express to 30 minutes

- Extended 40 Telephone/Heights to Monroe Park and Ride

- increased Red Line LRT daytime frequency between Northline Transit Center and Burnett Transit Center to 6 minutes

NOTE: February and March 2023 ridership include: 1) Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo; and 2) first day of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Men's Division I Basketball Final Four.

Second Quarter

Fort Bend: Suspended three DR and one commuter run in May; reinstated the three DR runs in June

METRO: Quarterly service change occurred on June 4, which included a variety of route, schedule and frequency adjustments for local and Park and Ride routes

Third Quarter

Conroe: Completed transitioning services from third-party vendor to in-house on August 1, 2023

METRO: Quarterly service change occurred on August 22, which included a variety of route, schedule and frequency adjustments for local and Park and Ride routes, including:

- Restoration of the 212 Seton Lake Park and Ride

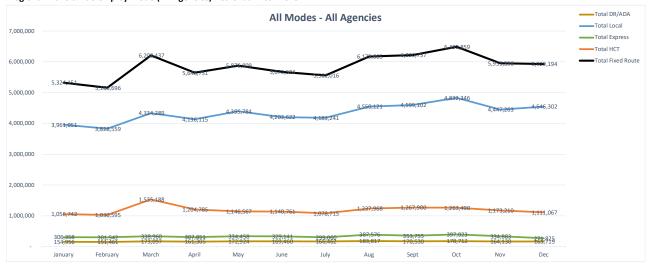
- Restoration of midday service on several park and ride routes

- Conversion of 54 Scott to a single operating pattern ("blue" section between MLK Health Center and Hiram Clarke TC converted to "red")

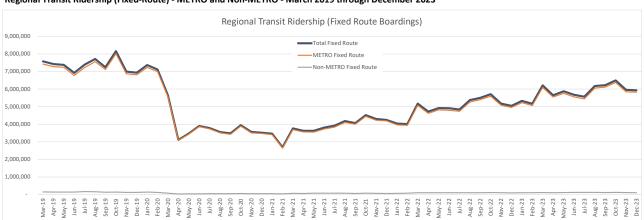
Fourth Quarter:

The Woodlands: Research Forest Park and Ride: shifted 3:15pm run to 3:40; Sterling Ridge Park and Ride: added 7:00am and 3:45pm runs; Sawdust Park and Ride: removed 5:45pm run

#### Regional Transit Ridership by Mode (All Agencies) - Calendar Year 2023



#### Regional Transit Ridership (Fixed-Route) - METRO and Non-METRO - March 2019 through December 2023



#### Regional Transit Ridership (Fixed-Route) - Non-METRO Agencies - March 2019 through December 2023

