

APTA RELEASES 2016 FIRST QUARTER RIDERSHIP REPORT

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) recently released its quarterly transit ridership report for U.S. and Canadian transit agencies. The report contains overall quarterly and year-to-date transit ridership estimates broken out by transit mode. The report also includes ridership estimates by mode and by agency for participating transit agencies. Ridership is reported as the number of unlinked passenger trips, meaning that the number of trips is computed by considering every time a passenger boards a transit vehicle as a unique trip.

According to the report, approximately 2.6 billion transit trips were taken in the first quarter of 2016 in the U.S., which is a 0.4% increase in ridership compared to the first quarter of 2015. All modes of transit experienced increases in ridership from the previous first quarter except for trolleybus and bus. Light rail had the largest increase (about 3.0%) in ridership from the previous



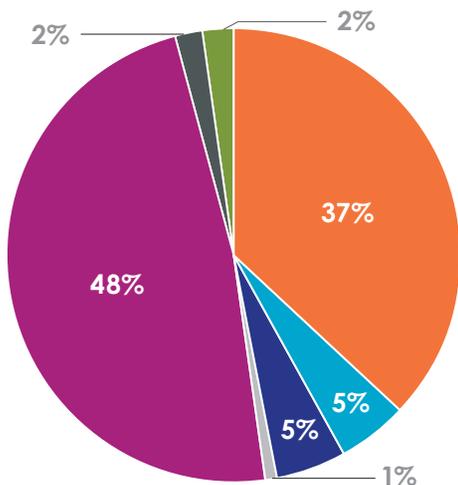
year's first quarter, while trolleybus and bus ridership both decreased by roughly 1.9%.

Ridership for bus systems that operated in areas with populations less than 100,000 increased slightly

by 0.2% to a total of roughly 54.6 million. Overall, the bulk of most transit trips occurred on just two modes: 48% of total transit trips were estimated to be bus trips, while 37% were heavy rail trips.

In a press release by APTA, it was noted that roughly 60% of public transportation trips were commuter trips to and from work, which suggests that recent ridership increases may be a result of a growing economy. APTA also noted that national average gas prices have dropped by 18% since the first quarter of 2015. Despite the relatively lower cost to drive an automobile in 2016, most large public transportation agencies in the U.S. still experienced an encouraging uptick in ridership.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)



Q1 Ridership by Mode (Natl.)

- Heavy Rail
- Light Rail
- Commuter Rail
- Trolleybus
- Fixed Route Bus
- Demand Response
- Other

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NOTES FROM THE TOP

BY DONNA LAVIGNE

Dear Transit Friends,

I hope everyone had a wonderful spring and is enjoying the start of the summer months. We had a busy spring with various trainings throughout the state and are looking forward to catching up with all of you later this summer at the Executive Director's meetings. The Executive Director's meetings will be held in Vidalia on July 20; Marksville on July 26; and Baton Rouge on July 28. We will cover a variety of topics during the meetings on program requirements and compliance issues. We will also be hosting two Drug and Alcohol Trainings, August 8-9 in Baton Rouge, and August 11-12 in Shreveport. Keycha Alexander-Green, our RTAP Program Manager, will be sending more information on the meetings soon.



We have finalized the review of all applications submitted for funding and are preparing contractual agreements. Please ensure that you review your contract, provide required signatures, and return to the program manager by the deadline for further processing and execution.

Please mark your calendars for the 2016 Annual Public Transportation Conference scheduled for November 14-16, 2016, in Lake Charles, Louisiana at the Lauberge Conference Center. We are excited to return to this location. The Public Transportation staff and the LPTA will be working on the agenda and look forward to providing training opportunities that will support the future challenges facing transportation.

Remember that we always want to hear from you. Please feel free to contact me at donna.lavigne@la.gov or Keycha Alexander-Green at Keycha.alexander-green@la.gov or by phone at 225-379-3060 if you have any specific training needs or know of any training opportunities you would like us to sponsor. We encourage you to share innovative ideas, techniques and uplifting stories about your transit agency and/or a special client.

Thanks for your continued support of public transit. We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming events, and thanks for all you do to enhance the mobility options of the Louisiana citizens in your area!



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ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS

Executive Director's meetings are coming up! They will be held:

July 20 in Vidalia

July 26 in Marksville

July 28 in Baton Rouge



LADOTD EVENTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT: wwwsp.dotd.la.gov

AUG 2-4	PASS Training.....	Lake Charles, LA
AUG 8-9	Drug and Alcohol Training.....	Baton Rouge, LA
AUG 11-12	Drug and Alcohol Training.....	Shreveport, LA

TRB EVENTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT: www.trb.org

SEP 26	International Conference on Demand Responsive Transportation.....	Breckenridge, CO
OCT 2-5	National Conference on Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation.....	Asheville, NC

APTA EVENTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT: www.apta.com

JUL 24-26	Sustainability & Public Transportation Workshop	Austin, TX
JUL 31 - AUG 3	Multimodal Operation Planning Workshop	Calgary, AB
SEP 11-14	Annual Meeting	Los Angeles, CA

SWTA EVENTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT: www.swta.org

AUG 21-23	Community Mobility Workshop.....	Denver, CO
SEP 25-27	Transit Marketing Workshop.....	Baton Rouge, LA

Louisiana Public Transit Conference 2016

**November 14-16, 2016
L'Auberge Hotel Resort
Lake Charles, LA**

SAVE THE DATE

SPOTLIGHT ON...

TECHNOLOGY AND TRANSIT (PART 1) | RIDE KC:BRIDJ

Bridj—an app-driven, demand-response ridesharing service that began in Boston in 2014—recently partnered with the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority and Ford to launch a new public-private micro transit service called **Ride KC: Bridj**. The app-based service, similar to Uber or Lyft, uses real-time mobile phone data from app users and proprietary algorithms to identify pop-up shuttle stations and create efficient routes to popular destinations.

Here's how it works: Riders make pick-up and drop-off location requests using the Bridj app up to 24 hours in advance, then Bridj provides individual passengers with itinerary and route options generated from aggregating other ride requests. The passenger is able to select a trip and reserve a seat by paying with a credit card through the app. Following payment, passengers are given directions to meetup locations where they, along with others requesting a ride, board the shuttle. Passengers are eventually dropped off at a convenient, central drop-off location. The service is direct and requires no transfers, and also provides free WiFi and guaranteed seating.

RideKC: Bridj service, which began as a one-year pilot program this past

March, operates Monday through Friday during peak hours within two service areas that include downtown Kansas City, the University of Kansas Medical Center, and other important attractions in the area (see map below). Initially, fares have been set at the same price (\$1.50) as local bus service. There is also a promotion available for new riders to get their first ten rides free. The pilot program, which was initiated by Bridj, will cost KCATA \$1.3 million.

The public-private partnership between KCATA and both Bridj and Ford has been pegged by some as the first of its kind in public transit. Ford was selected by Bridj as the exclusive vehicle provider due to its recent efforts to invest in and research urban mobility as a part of the Ford Smart Mobility plan. The initial fleet of vehicles will be ten Ford passenger vans that seat up to 14 people.

Despite optimism and excitement about the new service, concerns have been raised about its accessibility for those without cell phones. Some solutions Ride KC is considering include distributing phones that can only be used to request Bridj rides or installing request kiosks throughout the service areas. The program, however, is still in its early stages, and the agencies

involved have noted that the service is experimental. For instance, early last May, KCATA announced that the service area was being expanded to include more of the downtown area and the River Market. More service expansion is expected as more trip request data is collected.

Though this is the first public transit partnership for Bridj, the Boston-based company has been operating in Boston since 2014 and in Washington D.C. since 2015 as a private transportation service. Feedback about the service has been generally positive, and many believe it could fill in the gaps where traditional transit services have difficulty operating (e.g. late night service, first/last-mile service, or services in relatively low-density environments).

Outside of Bridj, other private, app-based, data-driven, demand-response ridesharing services are emerging in the transportation service industry.

In 2014, San Francisco-based Chariot began operating its first crowd-funded shuttle routes, where app users provide information about their daily trips and pre-order monthly trip passes to fund proposed routes that are based around the app data. New York ridesharing company Via is an app-based ridesharing service that uses smartphone data and algorithms to determine whether additional passengers can be picked up without inconveniencing current passengers.

As these companies continue to grow and emerge, they provide public transit agencies new opportunities to complement traditional bus services or provide alternative transportation options through partnerships or collaborations. The RideKC: Bridj pilot program will be the first to explore the results of this unique partnership between transit agency and a private app-based transportation service company, and the outcome bears observing by transit providers across the country.



DOTD ON THE GO...



One of the DOTD PT Section's mandates is to provide information and technical assistance to transit providers in Louisiana in order to assist them in meeting their requirements for FTA funding. These activities come in many different formats and venues. DOTD PT provides numerous training courses, workshops, and training materials, as well as a website and an annual conference. To keep all of our constituents up to date on DOTD PT's activities, DOTD On The Go features just a few selected items each quarter.

SITE VISITS

Part of the outreach and assistance that LaDOTD provides to the Rural Public Transportation (Section 5311) and Elderly and Disabled (Section 5310) providers are site visits from the program managers. LaDOTD conducted four site visits to 5310 providers in April (Shreveport, West Monroe, Natchitoches, and PACE of New Orleans), and two site visits to 5311 providers in St. Landry and St. Tammany parishes in May.

OUTREACH

To further the goal of providing some form of public transportation in all 64 parishes, as listed in the Louisiana Vision 2020 Plan, LaDOTD has been conducting educational visits to all the parishes in Louisiana that do not currently have some form of public transit service. LaDOTD completed outreach for FY 2016 in February.

TRAINING

DOTD staff provided STTARS training for 5311 and 5310 providers in late April and mid-June, conducted a coordination workshop in Shreveport in April, and provided Driver Safety and Drug and Alcohol Trainings in May and June. DOTD also participated in the CTA Expo in Portland, OR. In addition to upcoming Director's meetings in July, and Drug & Alcohol and PASS Trainings in August, DOTD will be conducting STTARS training on the 2nd Tuesday of each month for 5310 providers and the 2nd Wednesday of each month for 5311 providers starting July-October 2016. Both trainings will take place at the DOTD IT Classroom in Baton Rouge. 5310 providers contact Jessica Price to register; 5311 providers contact Stephanie Barthelemy. Hurry - space for both trainings is limited!

If your agency or someone within your agency deserves recognition for a job well done, or has already received recognition or an award, please let us know. Email or send a brief description, photos, and contact information to Donna.Lavigne@la.gov or to Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development/Public Transit Section, attn: Donna Lavigne, P.O. Box 94245, Baton Rouge, LA 70804.

The Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) National Transit Database (NTD) provides ridership data for agencies in urbanized areas that receive funding from the Urbanized Area Formula Program (5307), which sheds more light on public transportation ridership in Louisiana.

For the ten reporting agencies within Louisiana in the 1st quarter of 2016, total transit ridership (7,652,050 trips) made up just below 0.3% of total national transit ridership. In contrast to national trends, ridership for these agencies fell slightly by about 0.4%. Approximately 68% of total ridership occurred on bus modes, while 24% of trips were taken by streetcar. None of the reporting agencies in Louisiana provide light rail or commuter rail service.

The breakdown of ridership by mode reveals that the slight decrease in ridership observed in Louisiana from 2015 Q1 to 2016 Q1 is not necessarily contrary to national trends, as Louisiana bus ridership has actually decreased by a lower percentage than bus ridership in the U.S. overall – 0.7% in Louisiana vs. 1.9% nationally. Streetcar ridership, generated solely by the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority's streetcar service, fell by approximately 3.7% during the same time period.

Outside of the urbanized areas, the Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development's (LADOTD) Statewide Transit Tracking and Reporting System (STTARS) reports ridership data for the various 5310, 5311, and similar programs throughout the state.

Total ridership reported for the 72 agencies that provided information for the 2016 first quarter equaled 317,137 trips. Ridership increased 33.0% from the 2015 first quarter; however, three additional programs reported ridership in 2016, and the reporting agencies did not match from year to year. 53.4% of first quarter 2016 ridership originated with programs providing transit service for the elderly and disabled, while approximately 32.7% of ridership was from rural transit service programs. Average ridership for all programs for the quarter totaled 2,665 trips. Only eight programs reported 2016 first quarter ridership over 10,000.

More information about first quarter transit ridership around the country can be found at [APTA's website](#).

FROM CAPITOL HILL...

In late May, the House Appropriations Committee approved its Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (T-HUD) funding bill for the 2017 fiscal year after the Senate unanimously approved its version of T-HUD appropriations on May 19th. The bill allocates funding with the goal of prioritizing transportation infrastructure that improves commerce, efficiency, safety reliability, and quality of life. The bill appropriates \$19.2 billion for the Department of Transportation (DOT) – an increase of \$540 million from the last fiscal year but \$4.9 billion short of requested funding.

The Federal Transit Administration received \$12.5 billion in funding, which is a roughly 6% increase from the previous fiscal year but still \$7.4 billion short of requested funding. Formula grants comprise a majority of FTA's FY 2017 appropriations (\$9.7 billion). The New Starts, Core Capacity, and Small Starts grant programs received \$2.5 billion, \$332 million, and \$408 million in funding, respectively. Though most programs experienced an increase in available funding from 2016, funding for the DOT's TIGER program decreased by \$50 million to \$450 million for FY 2017. The bill also provides approximately \$1.8 billion for various transportation safety programs, including those addressing concerns about the transportation of energy products. Finally, the bill includes several legislative provisions specific to transportation, including a requirement for DOT to improve its collection of safety data.

The full House will likely consider the T-HUD appropriations bill in July. For more information on the FY 2017 DOT appropriations process, click here: <https://www.enotrans.org/etl-material/fy2017/>

