



Service Implementation Plan FY2023 - FY2032



Presented June 2022

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Service Implementation Plan (SIP) outlines North County Transit District’s (NCTD, District) plans to provide multimodal transit services over the next ten (10) years. The SIP is a requirement under the Master Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) and is used to inform NCTD’s annual operating budget.

The SIP development process consists of the compilation and review of historic service levels, ridership, and studies that outline capital and operating investments for the District. Planning coordinates with Finance, Bus Operations, Rail Operations, and the Executive Director to review and develop the assumptions. Finance staff calculates the cost associated with the proposed services. The costs are then included in the proposed NCTD annual operating budget for Board approval.

COVID-19’s negative impacts to service, customer revenue, and ridership are ongoing and have now spanned multiple fiscal years. On May 29, 2021, NCTD ended temporary weekday service reductions on the COASTER and restored its weekend service that had been suspended since late March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. NCTD was able to maintain pre-COVID employment levels based on federal funding that was provided to mitigate and support recovery from the impacts of COVID-19. However, in early FY2022, NCTD began to be impacted by the national labor shortage, which significantly impacted the District’s ability to provide full scheduled service. This labor shortage, which has impacted transit agencies and other industries nationwide, led to cancelled trips primarily on its BREEZE fixed-route bus service. On April 3, 2022, NCTD reduced BREEZE service levels by approximately 10% due to the shortage of bus operators.

As of March 2022, year-to-date (YTD) systemwide ridership is at 53.9% of pre-pandemic levels, up from 42.9% in FY2021 and 27.5% in April 2020, the first full month of the pandemic. COASTER ridership recovery remains comparatively low at 37.2% due to changing commute patterns. However, due to an expanded schedule and increased weekend ridership, that figure is up from 11.6% in FY2021. Similarly, LIFT ridership remains at 41% of pre-pandemic ridership, up from 34% in FY2021. BREEZE, SPRINTER, and FLEX continue to see higher rates of recovery at 60.1%, 48.5%, and 74% respectively. National public transit ridership experienced similar trends as NCTD. **Table 1** compares Quarter 2 YTD ridership recovery by mode between NCTD, peer agencies, and national averages.

Table 1. Ridership Recovery Comparison FY2022 Q2 YTD vs FY2019 Q2 YTD

Mode	Nationally ¹	Peer Agencies ²	NCTD
Motorbus ³	58.8%	55.3%	58.7%
Hybrid Rail	51.3%	50.2%	54.2%
Commuter Rail	42.0%	36.1%	36.6%
Demand Response ⁴	66.4%	68.4%	41.0%

¹ Federal Transit Administration: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/ntd/data-product/monthly-module-raw-data-release>

² Peer agencies based on demographic information and selected using the Urban Integrated National Transit Database system’s peer selection module

³ Motorbus, as defined by the FTA, includes BREEZE routes plus FLEX 371, 392, and 395

⁴ Demand Response, as defined by the FTA, includes LIFT paratransit and FLEX 372

San Diego County continues its gradual recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. As of March 16, 2022, approximately 6.93 million COVID-19 vaccine doses had been administered in San Diego County with 82.1% of County residents (5 years or older) fully vaccinated and 55.3% of eligible residents boosted.⁵ On June 15, 2021, the state of California ended its Stay Home Order and the County tier system. This change ended most restrictions and only continued limited restrictions related to masking, large events, and settings serving children and youth.⁶ The state's recovery, however, has been disrupted by a third wave of infections due to the Delta variant in the summer of 2021 and a fourth wave of infections due to two Omicron variants in early 2022.

On January 29, 2021 (FY2021), the Center for Disease Control (CDC) issued an order that required face masks to be worn while traveling on public transportation and while at transportation hubs. In FY2022, the CDC's mask requirement was no longer active effective April 18, 2022 as a result of a federal court order.

Public transit agencies around the country are conducting passenger surveys to forecast ridership demand when COVID-19 restrictions ease. The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) in Chicago determined that 80% of transit users who stopped riding during the pandemic plan on returning to the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Metra, and PACE; and 81% of Metrolink riders in Southern California said they were likely to ride again after the end of restrictions. Long-term implications for public transit may include higher levels of telecommuting and flexible work schedules. According to a 2021 True North Research study commissioned by SANDAG, 27% of businesses in the San Diego region offered a remote work option prior to the pandemic compared to 47% during the pandemic. The study anticipates 40% of businesses will continue to offer remote work options once the pandemic is over.⁷

Prior to the pandemic, NCTD was advancing major studies and initiatives to attract new passengers. The short-term and long-term impacts of COVID-19 require significant analysis and financial investment. NCTD will need to proactively engage businesses, residents, and commuters over a 12 to 24-month period after the nation begins to re-open.

In response to the uncertainties of COVID-19, NCTD launched a market research and analysis project in October 2021, which is intended to provide a detailed understanding of post-COVID-19 market trends, possible outcomes, and potential new service delivery models and technologies in order to properly inform key business decisions over the next three to five years. The market research and analysis project includes the following work effort:

- **Strategic Scenario Planning:** Develop key scenarios based on mobility trends and local market insights to support mobility innovation post-COVID-19.
- **Human-Centered Design and Research:** Identify key profiles in the NCTD market and conduct human-centered research to support customers' post-COVID-19 needs and travel behaviors.
- **Modeling and Impact Analysis:** Rapidly and iteratively evaluate and test the impact of proposed NCTD initiatives, regional policies, and scenario dependencies.

⁵ County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency. <https://sdcounty.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/c0f4b16356b840478dfdd50d1630ff2a>

⁶ State of California Executive Order N-07-21. <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/6.11.21-EO-N-07-21-signed.pdf>; State of California Executive Order N-08-21. <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/6.11.21-EO-N-08-21-signed.pdf>

⁷ True North Research, *Remote Work Policies and Practices, Surveys of Businesses and Employees in the San Diego Region*, 22

- **Strategy, Roadmap, and Implementation Plan:** Define key initiatives and “no-regret” moves post-COVID-19 to support NCTD in executing its strategy over the next three to five years.

This work effort will provide NCTD with valuable quantitative and qualitative data that is necessary to make informed decisions about the post-COVID-19 environment. This market research will serve as a key component of NCTD’s efforts to recover and grow ridership across the system.

II. KEY ASSUMPTIONS

NCTD used conservative estimates to forecast ridership. The conservative projection is consistent with Board Policy No. 17 - *Budget Development*, which requires staff to conservatively estimate revenues and expenses. The conservative forecast allows NCTD to stress test and confirm that the budget for FY2023 will be balanced under the assumed worst-case scenario.

Ridership estimates for this year’s SIP were based on observed ridership trends on a mode-specific level to reflect the unique factors that impact each mode to varying degrees. These influences may include factors such as in-person schooling, commute patterns, and labor availability, among others. **Table 2** summarizes NCTD’s recovery projections relative to a FY2019 baseline.

Table 2. FY2023 Projected Pre-Pandemic Recovery by Mode

Mode	Q2	Q4
BREEZE	60%	65%
SPRINTER	65%	70%
COASTER⁸	55%	60%
LIFT	60%	60%
FLEX	60%	60%
Systemwide	60%	63%

Accordingly, the FY2023 forecasts remain below FY2019 and FY2020 ridership. The conservative projection is consistent with Board Policy 17 - Budget Development, which requires staff to conservatively estimate revenues. The conservative forecast allows NCTD to stress test and confirm that the budget for FY2023 will be balanced under the assumed worst-case scenario. NCTD plans to conduct targeted surveys over the next fiscal year which in combination with business intelligence, will provide more targeted assumptions for post-pandemic ridership. This information will support the development FY2024 SIP and future years.

⁸ COASTER recovery is based on service expansion schedule.

III. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The FY2023 budget has been developed to support strategic investments that can be implemented over five and ten-year periods that will increase ridership, increase customer revenues, support the Zero Delay program, and address state of good repair and capital priority needs. NCTD's Zero Delay program promotes important initiatives such as improving service quality and frequency, modernizing revenue vehicles, enhancing the customer service experience, and supporting transit-oriented development. Key strategic service priorities that are relevant to the ten-year horizon of the Service Implementation Plan include:

- Implement 30-minute frequencies on the COASTER
- Implement 15-minute frequencies on the SPRINTER
- Implement improved BREEZE bus service frequencies
- Implement new first/last-mile services

NCTD has advanced and is currently advancing a series of studies that will result in transformative capital and operating investments. These studies, which are outlined below, provide a path forward for NCTD's operations, and provide a framework for regional operations on the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Corridor. These studies build upon those completed in previous fiscal years. These strategic planning efforts include:

- **Market Research and Analysis of Post-COVID-19 Trends:** In late 2021, NCTD kicked off a robust study that combines quantitative and qualitative information to properly inform key business decisions over the next three to five years. This work effort will include strategic scenario planning to identify key scenarios based on mobility trends and local market insights post COVID-19; conduct human-centered design and research to support customers' needs and travel behaviors; and modeling and impact analysis of proposed initiatives and policies. Ultimately, this work effort will result in a defined strategy, roadmap, and implementation plan for the District over the next three-to-five years.
- **BREEZE Speed and Reliability Study:** The BREEZE Speed and Reliability Study will build upon the work conducted by the SMTIP by developing a phased infrastructure and technology implementation plan that will support improved BREEZE bus speed and reliability for ten high-priority BREEZE routes and their associated corridors. The completion of this plan and phased implementation will support NCTD's ambitious 5-Year Plan to increase frequency on its core BREEZE bus network to provide fast, frequent, and reliable service on its highest ridership routes combined with shifting lower ridership routes to on-demand service.
- **SPRINTER Corridor 15-Minute Headways Project Study Report:** In 2020, NCTD advanced an evaluation of strategic infrastructure investments along the SPRINTER corridor that would enable NCTD to improve service levels from 30-minute frequencies to 15-minute frequencies. This conceptual study indicated that approximately 9.5 miles of additional double track is needed to achieve this frequency improvement. Based upon this modeling exercise, NCTD has advanced a Project Study Report (PSR) to build upon the study and identify critical phasing for SPRINTER infrastructure investments. The PSR is anticipated to be complete in early FY2023 and will advance the project to 5% design.

Other completed studies that help to inform the SIP include the following:

- **LOSSAN Corridor Optimization Study:** The LOSSAN Optimization Study was completed in December 2021 and provides operating concepts for the corridor across a 10-year planning timeframe, including near-term (2022), mid-term (2024), and long-term (2028) operating plans. The study envisions new passenger service operating concepts in which trains operate on pulse schedules, providing regular, reliable, and intuitive connections between different service tiers. In San Diego specifically, this optimized corridor provides a dependable framework for connecting transit services at several Mobility Hubs throughout the region and streamlines connectivity to Orange and Los Angeles Counties. Building upon this effort, NCTD completed the COASTER Operating and Financial Plan in FY2022, which provided a phased operations roadmap for expanded COASTER service to 30 and 42 trips per day. In coordination with LOSSAN, NCTD and LOSSAN implemented the near-term pulse schedule on October 25, 2021.
- **NCTD and BNSF Freight Pathing and Passenger Service Extension Study:** In connection to the LOSSAN Corridor Optimization Study, BNSF and NCTD advanced a study to evaluate how capacity on the San Diego Subdivision can be improved to accommodate greater passenger and freight service levels. The study specifically evaluated freight pathing between Control Point (CP) Atwood and the Port of San Diego and passenger service extensions south of downtown San Diego to the Convention Center and National City. As a mid-term (2025) concept, NCTD plans to extend COASTER services to San Diego's Convention Center and Amtrak's Pacific Surfliner service may operate south of Santa Fe Depot to a new maintenance facility. NCTD and BNSF will continue to build upon this study in FY2023 to evaluate key opportunities for grade crossing and grade separation improvements that will complement greater train activity in the downtown San Diego area.
- **Strategic Multimodal Transit Implementation Plan (SMTIP):** The SMTIP was completed in FY2022 and is a ten-year strategic plan that identifies service and capital improvements that will support NCTD's efforts to provide high-quality transit services, including the expansion of microtransit service and investment in key BREEZE corridors. This study utilized high-quality data in the form of location-based cell phone data and robust public outreach.

NCTD staff began incorporating the phasing and implementation recommendations associated with these completed plans in the FY2022 SIP. These critical studies along with significant market analysis that will be funded in the FY2022 budget will support the development of an updated 10-Year Plan for the District that achieves the goals established in the 5-Year Plan.

IV. FY2022 PERFORMANCE

With each budget cycle, the key transit operations budget metrics are adjusted to reflect actual performance compared to budgeted assumptions. **Appendix A** provides historical performance information about NCTD's services and performance analysis to support the development of the SIP. FY2023 projections are comprised of actual hours, miles, and ridership from July 2021 through March 2022.

The FY2022 SIP was developed in the spring of 2021 during the early weeks of COVID-19 and before the impacts of the pandemic were fully known. At that time, NCTD projected ridership to remain 75% below baseline figures and then recover to below 10% of pre-pandemic norms in the second half of FY2021 based on information that assumed a recovery by mid-2020. NCTD planned to increase the number of COASTER trips, implement new FLEX Demand Response service, and discontinue FLEX Routes 372, 392 and 395 in FY2021. As the pandemic progressed through the remainder of 2020 and into 2021, NCTD paused service enhancements and eliminations except for maintaining temporary reduction of COASTER trips. Full COASTER service was restored in May 2021, and further expanded in October 2021.

When the FY2022 SIP projections were developed, the effects of the national labor shortage had not fully materialized. NCTD began to experience operator staffing constraints in April 2021, which led to varying degrees of service cancellations on NCTD's BREEZE service throughout FY2022. NCTD implemented various measures to attract and retain its BREEZE operator workforce, including increased wages, sign-on bonuses, and performance-based incentives.

V. RIDERSHIP RECOVERY ACTIVITIES

NCTD is advancing and exploring additional initiatives to attract new customers as the negative impacts from COVID-19 ease. NCTD plans to launch micro-transit service in Carlsbad and San Marcos in FY2023 to serve as a critical first/last mile connection to higher-frequency corridors. The FY2023 service levels and ridership forecasts by mode are summarized in **Table 3** below.

Table 3. Proposed Operating Statistics and Ridership FY2023

Mode	Vehicle Revenue Miles	Total Miles	Vehicle Revenue Hours	Total Hours	Ridership
BREEZE	5,044,988	5,691,100	410,066	442,011	4,001,104
SPRINTER	519,924	523,122	23,627	23,772	1,635,632
COASTER	418,234	441,830	12,837	14,036	804,219
LIFT	963,464	1,142,086	56,873	70,513	102,132
FLEX - Deviated Fixed	314,245	327,932	16,948	17,731	19,561
FLEX - Demand Response	425,608	477,577	32,739	35,267	107,542
Systemwide	7,686,462	8,601,284	553,090	603,222	6,670,190

BREEZE

NCTD began to experience operator staffing constraints in April 2021, which led to varying degrees of service cancellations on NCTD’s BREEZE service throughout FY2022. As a result of the operator shortage, NCTD had to temporarily reduce peak frequencies on several BREEZE routes effective April 3, 2022. This measure is considered temporary and was implemented to allow NCTD to communicate service cancellations in advance to its customers. NCTD is actively working with its service Contractor to hire and retain operators so that service can be restored. For the purposes of the FY2023 SIP, NCTD has assumed that this reduced BREEZE service will be in place through Q1 of FY2023 (July through September 2022). NCTD continues to work closely with MV Transportation to improve operator staffing levels in an effort to restore service. NCTD staff will provide updates to the Board at regular intervals on this progress.

In FY2023, NCTD will reclassify BREEZE routes with school tripper deviations as Supplemental Routes and assign them to a new 600-numbering series. These routes include: 304, 308, 309, 332, 334, and 445. The changes are expected to improve communication with riders and parents and simplify internal operations and tracking functions. This change will be complemented by the region’s Youth Opportunity Pass pilot program, which provides free transit in San Diego County for youth ages 18 and under through June 30, 2023.

For FY2023, NCTD is projecting BREEZE ridership to recover to 60% of FY2019 levels in the first half of the fiscal year and 65% of FY2019 levels in the second half of the fiscal year. **Figure 1** shows BREEZE actual ridership for FY2019 through FY2021 and projected ridership for FY2022 and FY2023.

Figure 1. BREEZE Ridership - Actuals and Projected

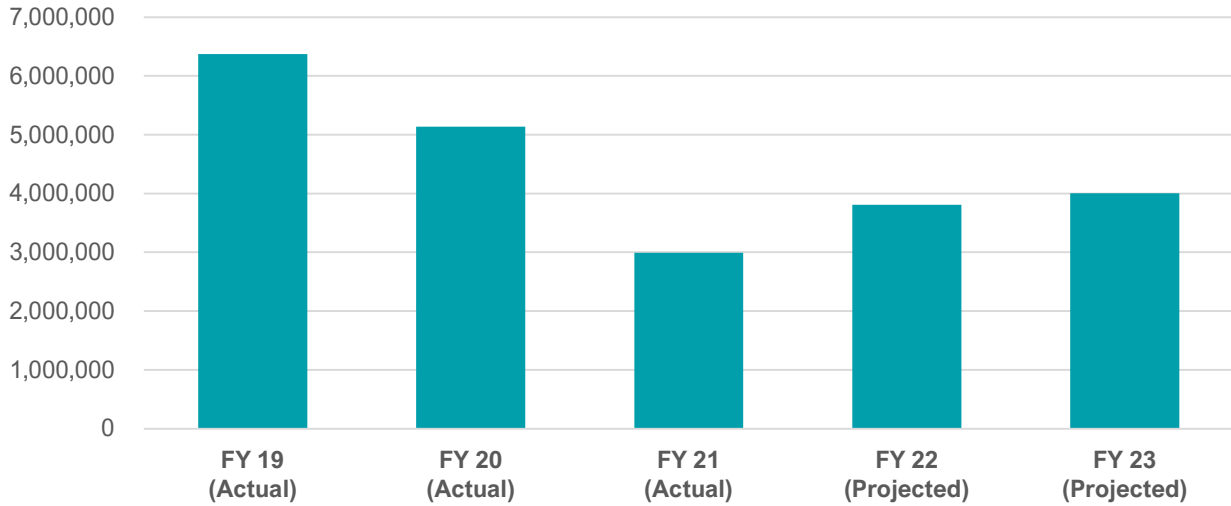


Table 4 compares the BREEZE FY2023 proposed statistics to the FY2021 Actuals and to the FY2022 Projected. BREEZE hours and miles in FY2023 are based on scheduled daily service and applied to the number of weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Ridership is expected to increase by 4.8% from FY2022 to FY2023.

Table 4. BREEZE Operating Statistics and Ridership

BREEZE	FY2021 Actuals	FY2022 Actuals & Projected	FY2023 Proposed	Change from FY2021 to FY2023	Change from FY2022 to FY2023
Total Ridership	2,990,643	3,807,840	4,001,104	25.3%	4.8%
Total Revenue Miles	5,056,999	5,064,620	5,044,988	-0.2%	-0.4%
Total Miles	5,703,626	5,659,794	5,691,100	-0.2%	0.6%
Total Revenue Hours	420,426	418,816	410,066	-2.5%	-2.1%
Total Hours	452,855	476,989	442,011	-2.5%	-7.9%

SPRINTER

No SPRINTER service changes are proposed for FY2023. All hours and miles are based upon scheduled daily service and applied to the number of weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays in FY2023. SPRINTER provides direct service to Cal State San Marcos and Palomar College. Student ridership is expected to return in FY2023 as schools return to in-person learning in the Fall. In FY2023, NCTD projects SPRINTER ridership to recover to 65% of FY2019 levels in the first half of the fiscal year and to 70% of FY2019 levels in the second half of the fiscal year.

Figure 2 shows SPRINTER actual ridership for FY2019 through FY2021 and projected ridership for FY2022 and FY2023. **Table 5** compares the SPRINTER FY2023 proposed statistics to the FY2021 Actuals and to the FY2022 Projected. Ridership is expected to grow by 21.6% from FY2022 to FY2023 and service levels will remain relatively unchanged.

Figure 2. SPRINTER Ridership - Actuals and Projected

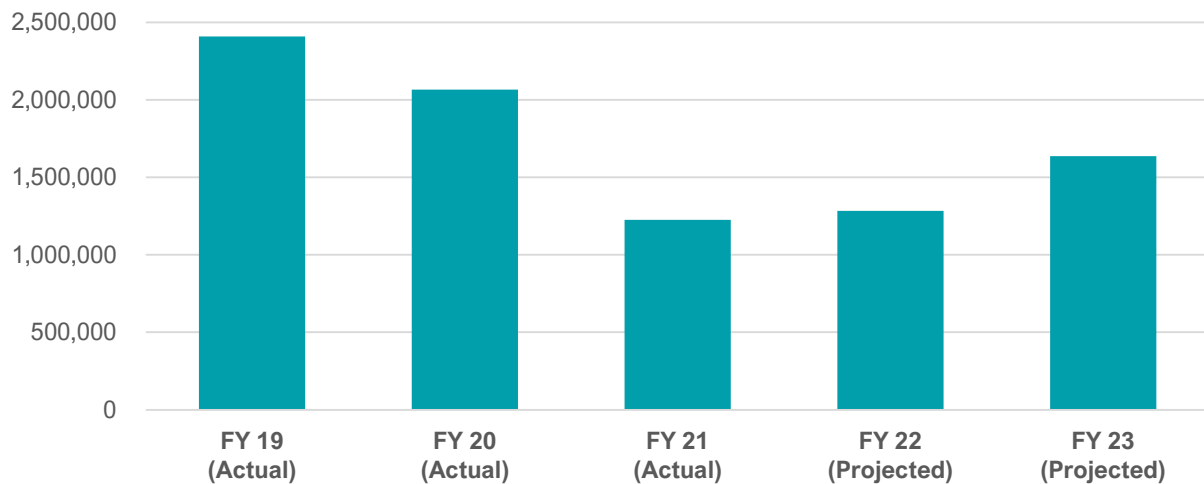


Table 5. SPRINTER Operating Statistics and Ridership

SPRINTER	FY2021 Actuals	FY2022 Actuals & Projected	FY2023 Proposed	Change from FY2021 to FY2023	Change from FY2022 to FY2023
Total Ridership	1,225,435	1,282,724	1,635,632	25.1%	21.6%
Total Revenue Miles	516,818	517,471	519,924	0.6%	0.5%
Total Miles	520,111	521,668	523,122	0.6%	0.3%
Total Revenue Hours	23,489	23,515	23,627	0.6%	0.5%
Total Hours	23,638	23,684	23,772	0.6%	0.4%

COASTER

Throughout the past decade, the region has advanced and completed several major capital projects that enabled NCTD to expand COASTER service for the first time since the COASTER’s inception in 1995. On October 25, 2021, the District increased weekday and weekend COASTER service to better serve riders who may travel during the mid-day and/or weekend for leisure trips or flexible work schedules, which may comprise a larger share of the passenger market going forward. A summary of the service change is included in **Table 6**.

Table 6. October 2021 COASTER Service Increases

Day Type	Prior Schedule Daily Trips	Service Expansion Daily Trips	% Change
Weekday	22	30	36%
Saturday (Summer)	12	20	67%
Saturday (Winter)	8	20	150%
Sunday	8	20	150%

While the effects of COVID-19 and its variants continue to impact COASTER ridership, NCTD has seen a steady growth in daily ridership since the service expansion. This ridership increase is especially evident in NCTD’s growing weekend market. NCTD recognizes that the traditional commuter market for COASTER and other services may continue to be impacted as employers allow workers more flexible schedules.⁹ However, initial ridership data in FY2022 shows a strong demand for COASTER service to weekend, late night, and special events (i.e. Padres games and concerts).

In 2019, NCTD’s Board of Directors approved the purchase of two new COASTER trainsets. These trainsets are expected to arrive in late FY2023 and will enable NCTD to expand COASTER service to 36 weekday trips per day. The FY2023 SIP assumes this expanded service beginning in April 2023, but is subject to delivery and acceptance of the trainsets prior to service launch.

Based upon FY2022 ridership, NCTD is projecting FY2023 ridership to recover to 60% of FY2019 levels through April 2023 and grow to 65% of FY2019 levels after COASTER service is expanded to 36 weekday trips. **Figure 3** shows COASTER actual ridership for FY2019 through FY2021 and projected ridership for FY2022 and FY2023.

⁹ Pew Research Center, *COVID-19 Pandemic Continues To Reshape Work in America*.

⁹ Dec. 2020

Figure 3. COASTER Ridership - Actuals and Projected

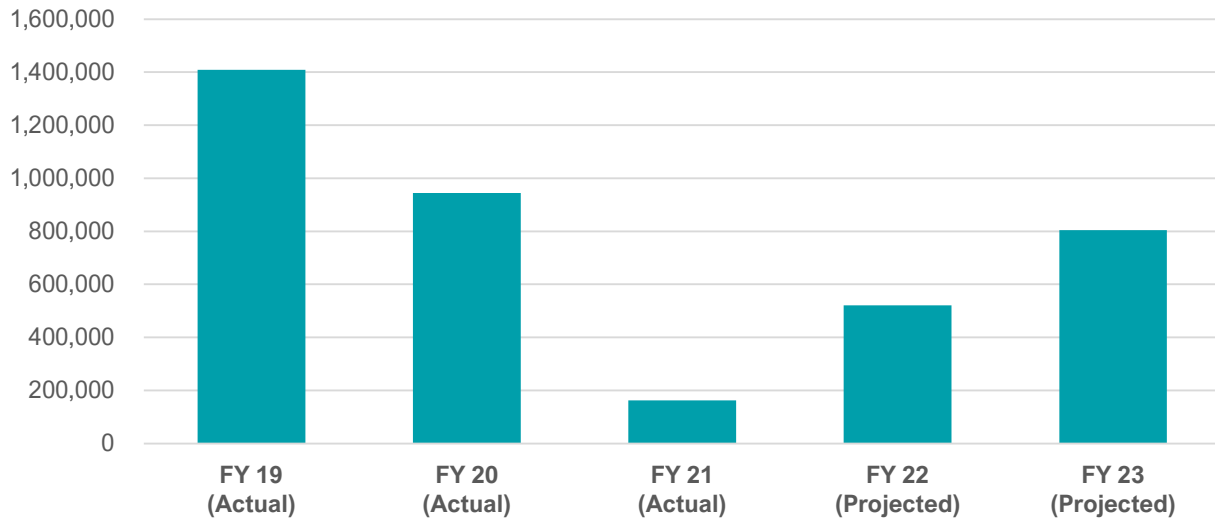


Table 7 compares the COASTER FY2023 proposed statistics to the FY2021 Actuals and to the FY2022 Projected. There is an increase in revenue, total miles, and ridership resulting from the next anticipated phase of COASTER service expansion occurring in Spring 2023, subject to delivery and acceptance of NCTD’s capacity-enhancing trainsets.

Table 7. COASTER Operating Statistics and Ridership

COASTER	FY2021 Actuals	FY2022 Actuals & Projected	FY2023 Proposed	Change from FY2021 to FY2023	Change from FY2022 to FY2023
Total Ridership	162,707	520,415	804,219	79.8%	35.3%
Total Revenue Miles	141,077	365,280	418,234	66.3%	12.7%
Total Miles	155,689	386,607	441,830	64.8%	12.5%
Total Revenue Hours	4,643	11,602	12,837	63.8%	9.6%
Total Hours	5,299	13,077	14,036	62.2%	6.8%

LIFT

LIFT ridership in FY2023 is projected to recover to 60% of FY2019 levels. **Figure 4** below shows LIFT actual ridership for FY2019 through FY2021 and projected ridership for FY2022 and FY2023.

Figure 4. LIFT Ridership - Actuals and Projected

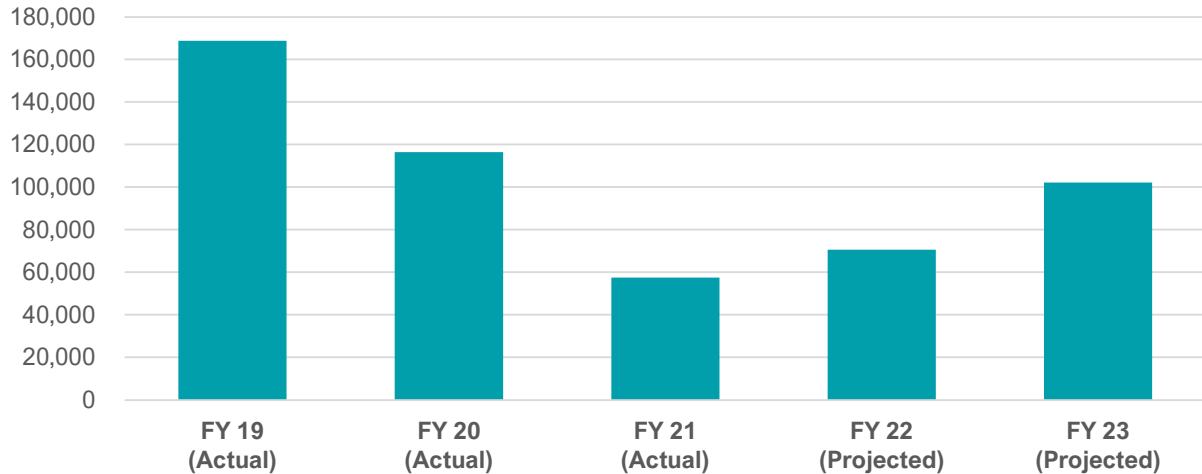


Table 8 compares the LIFT FY2023 proposed statistics to the FY2021 Actuals and to the FY2022 Projected. Revenue hours are expected to increase by 45.9% and ridership by 44.8% from FY2022 to FY2023. Because LIFT is a demand response service, any increase in ridership will result in an increase in hours and miles operated.

Table 8. LIFT Operating Statistics and Ridership

LIFT	FY2021 Actuals	FY2022 Actuals & Projected	FY2023 Proposed	Change from FY2021 to FY2023	Change from FY2022 to FY2023
Total Ridership	57,427	70,555	102,132	77.8%	44.8%
Total Revenue Miles	684,642	723,291	963,464	40.7%	33.2%
Total Miles	826,351	867,404	1,142,086	38.2%	31.7%
Total Revenue Hours	37,488	38,972	56,873	51.7%	45.9%
Total Hours	46,543	47,615	70,513	51.5%	48.1%

FLEX Deviated Fixed Routes

At the October 15, 2020 Regular NCTD Board of Directors (Board) meeting, staff proposed the elimination of FLEX Routes 392 and 395 in April 2021. The Board took action to set the public hearing for January 21, 2021 to consider the proposed elimination and authorized staff to conduct outreach and receive public input regarding the proposed changes in accordance with NCTD Board Policy No. 5 *Public Notice and Participation*. Based on public feedback (37 written and verbal comments) and internal discussions, NCTD staff determined that more time is needed to evaluate alternative service delivery options. NCTD intends to work with representatives from Camp Pendleton, relevant stakeholders, and the public to develop an alternative plan for service delivery that meets the region’s needs. **Appendix A** provides information regarding the substandard performance of these FLEX routes.

NCTD is projecting FY2023 ridership to recover to 60% of FY2019 levels in the first half of the fiscal year and to 65% of FY2019 levels in the second half of the fiscal year. **Figure 5** below shows FLEX Deviated Fixed Routes actual ridership for FY2019 through FY2021 and projected ridership for FY2022 and FY2023.

Figure 5. FLEX Deviated Fixed Routes Ridership - Actuals and Projected

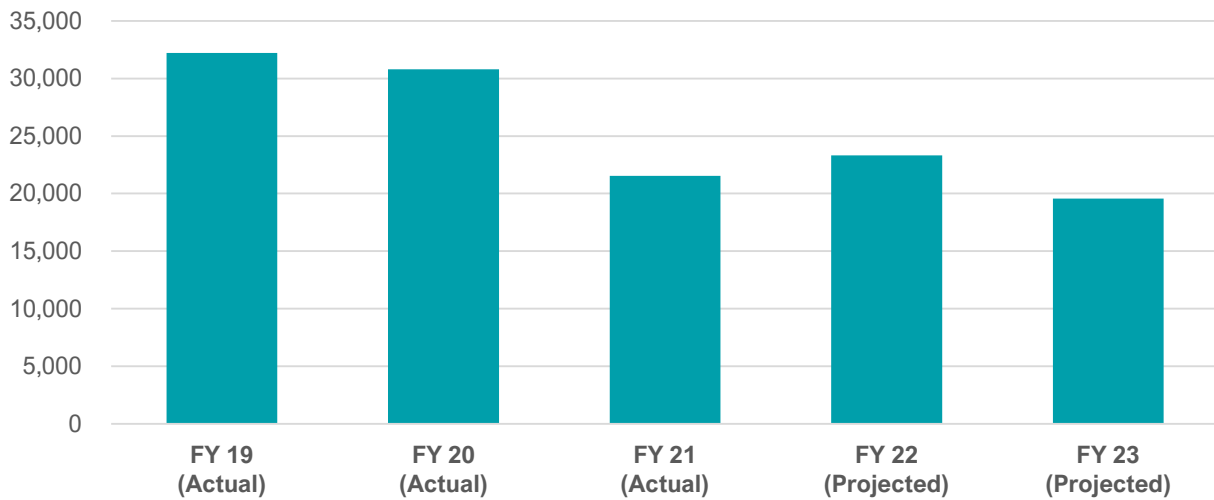


Table 9 compares the FLEX Deviated Fixed Routes proposed statistics to the FY2021 Actuals and to the FY2022 Projected. NCTD will continue to explore alternative service models to replace FLEX Routes 392 and 395 on Camp Pendleton.

Table 9. FLEX Deviated Fixed Routes Operating Statistics and Ridership

FLEX - Deviated Fixed Routes	FY2021 Actuals	FY2022 Actuals & Projected	FY2023 Proposed	Change from FY2021 to FY2023	Change from FY2022 to FY2023
Total Ridership	21,530	23,324	19,561	-9.1%	-16.1%
Total Revenue Miles	313,923	314,535	314,245	0.1%	-0.1%
Total Miles	330,701	328,820	327,932	-0.8%	-0.3%
Total Revenue Hours	17,206	16,963	16,948	-1.5%	-0.1%
Total Hours	18,087	17,750	17,731	-2.0%	-0.1%

FLEX Demand Response Zones

Existing FLEX Demand Response service ended in FY2022 with the discontinuation of FLEX Route 372 on October 25th, 2021. The midday demand response service connecting Escondido and Ramona had been in operation since 2011 but was approved for removal in January 2021 due to poor performance. NCTD intends to enhance its FLEX Demand Response brand in FY2023 by utilizing an on-demand application that supports real-time trip requests on 12-passenger vans. The intent of this service enhancement is to support phased implementation of improved BREEZE, COASTER, and SPRINTER frequencies by providing more efficient first-last mile connections and promoting shared rides within specified geographical areas. NCTD is proposing to implement expanded services in the City of Carlsbad and new service in the City of San Marcos in Fall 2022, pending operator availability.

Carlsbad Zone

In August 2019, NCTD, SANDAG, and the City of Carlsbad launched the Carlsbad Connector, a pilot demand response shuttle connecting passengers from the Carlsbad Poinsettia COASTER Station to nearby employment centers. The service operated between 7:00 AM and 6:00 PM Monday through Friday and provided connections to COASTER peak period and midday trains. Compared to the BREEZE Routes 444 and 445, the Carlsbad Connector provided improved travel time due to flexible routing and the ability for passengers to travel midday. The City of Carlsbad managed the service with financial and operational support from NCTD and SANDAG.

San Marcos Zone

The proposed San Marcos FLEX Demand Response service zone will provide access to key regional destinations, such as California State University San Marcos and Palomar College, as well as social service agencies that are not currently served by BREEZE routes. More than a half dozen middle and high schools will also be served within the San Marcos zone.

To project service levels and ridership for the new FLEX Demand Response zones, NCTD used data generated by software modeling exercises from the Carlsbad Connector service provider. This information was supplemented with average daily ridership and hours and miles between September 2019 and February 2020 for the Carlsbad Connector. While this data is pre-COVID, it serves as a quantifiable baseline for service that will be implemented once the economy reopens following the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to launch of the microtransit zones, NCTD will work with its selected software vendor to model demand and generate updated key performance indicators.

Figure 6. Demand Response Zones Projected Ridership

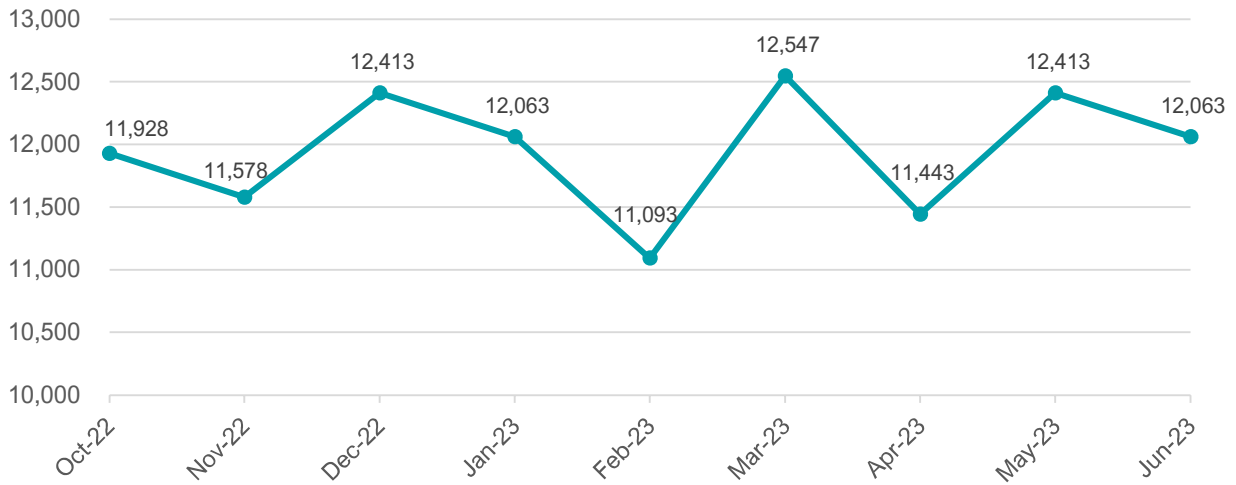


Table 9 shows operating statistics and estimated ridership for the Carlsbad and San Marcos FLEX Demand Response zones, proposed to begin service in October 2023. FY2021 Actuals represent FLEX 372 only.

Table 10. FLEX Demand Response Operating Statistics and Ridership

FLEX - Demand Response	FY2021 Actuals	FY2022 Actuals & Projected	FY2023 Proposed	Change from FY2021 to FY2023	Change from FY2022 to FY2023
Total Ridership	17	-	107,542	632,497.1%	N/A
Total Revenue Miles	248	-	425,608	171,516.2%	N/A
Total Miles	455	-	477,577	104,862.0%	N/A
Total Revenue Hours	83	-	32,739	39,344.7%	N/A
Total Hours	105	-	35,267	33,487.2%	N/A

VI. SERVICES SUPPORTED BY NCTD

In addition to the services outlined in the SIP, NCTD supports the provision of services by other operators that allow NCTD passengers greater flexibility and access to key destinations.

Sorrento Valley COASTER Connections

MTS, through an agreement with NCTD, operates Sorrento Valley COASTER Connection (SVCC) shuttle service during weekday peak periods between the Sorrento Valley COASTER Station and surrounding employment areas. Per the agreement, NCTD pays MTS half the annual operating cost, plus \$1 per rider. FY2021 total annual ridership was 9,935, which was 85% lower than FY2020 ridership of 64,569. Like COASTER ridership, SVCC ridership has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In FY2020, a partnership between UCSD, MTS, and NCTD was established to provide service between the Sorrento Valley COASTER Station and UCSD to replace the eliminated UCSD-operated shuttles. Per the agreement, MTS operates the shuttle service serving the same COASTER trips that other SVCC routes do, and NCTD reimburses MTS for the operating cost of the service. As of November 15, 2021, UCSD ended its obligations under the agreement and no longer subsidizes the service. NCTD and MTS continue to provide the service as a critical COASTER connection to UCSD.

NCTD+ Transit Network Company Partnership

NCTD launched the NCTD+ pilot program with Lyft, Uber, and TripShot on January 6, 2022. The program provides discounted first and last mile connections for commuters using the Sorrento Valley and Carlsbad Poinsettia COASTER stations. The pilot gives riders a \$7.50 credit toward trips to or from the Sorrento Valley or Carlsbad Poinsettia COASTER stations within defined geographic zones. This pilot program is part of the District's broader mobility-as-a-service program.

Amtrak Rail-2-Rail Service

NCTD and Amtrak's Rail-2-Rail program allows COASTER day and monthly pass holders to ride any Amtrak Pacific Surfliner train at no extra cost (blackout days apply). This provides NCTD COASTER customers additional options without the additional costs of operating more COASTER trains. Per the agreement, NCTD reimburses Amtrak \$4.44 per rider. Ridership was 383 in FY2021 which was 91% below FY2020 ridership of 4,102. Ridership along the corridor has been impacted by COVID-19 but is expected to increase as San Diego County recovers from the pandemic.

VII. TEN-YEAR OUTLOOK

Each year, the Executive Director develops the proposed budget guidance and strategic areas of focus for the District. This framework is reviewed and approved by NCTD's Executive Committee and Board of Directors each Spring, which supports the development of the annual operating and capital budget. Consistent with this framework, the SIP includes the following objectives:

- **Strengthen network foundations**
 - **BREEZE:** Increase off-peak BREEZE frequencies beginning in FY2024.
 - **BREEZE:** Increase BREEZE frequencies from every 30-minutes to 15-minutes on core BREEZE routes beginning in FY2025.
 - **BREEZE:** Identify specific transit-supportive capital and service improvements to increase reliability on NCTD's core BREEZE routes through the BREEZE Speed and Reliability Study.
 - **SPRINTER:** Increase SPRINTER frequencies from 30-minutes to 15-minutes, commensurate with double-tracking investments.
 - **COASTER:** Increase COASTER frequencies through FY2024 with expanded peak, midday, and weekend trips.
 - **COASTER:** Provide direct connections to key activity centers, such as construction of the fully-funded Convention Center Station that will provide a one-seat ride to the Gaslamp Quarter, Convention Center, and Petco Ballpark. COASTER extension to Convention Center is anticipated to occur in late FY2025.
- **Fill in network gaps with on-demand service**
 - **FLEX:** Pilot on-demand microtransit service to fulfill first/last mile connections to high-frequency corridors.
 - **LIFT:** Maintain quality LIFT service as demand is expected to grow with an aging population.

Figure 7 shows pre-pandemic ridership and service levels from FY2019, pandemic-related declines in FY2020 through FY2022, and projected ridership and service growth through FY2032.

Figure 7. Systemwide Actual and Projected Ridership FY2019 - 2032

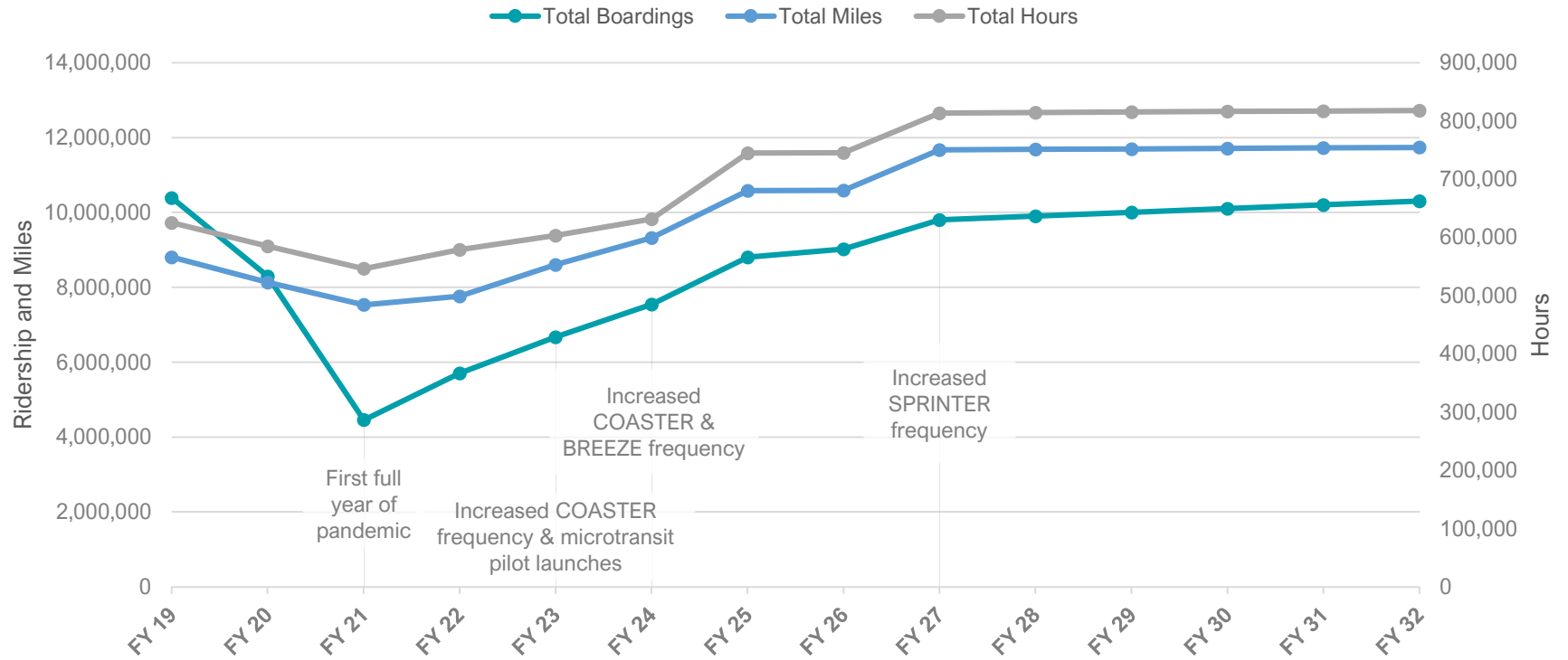


Table 11. BREEZE Operating Statistics FY2023 - FY2032

BREEZE	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031	FY2032
Total Ridership	4,001,104	4,750,055	5,713,771	5,770,909	5,828,618	5,886,904	5,945,774	6,005,231	6,065,284	6,125,936
Total Revenue Miles	5,044,988	5,423,914	5,507,967	5,507,967	5,507,967	5,507,967	5,507,967	5,507,967	5,507,967	5,507,967
Total Miles	5,691,100	6,089,172	6,213,374	6,213,374	6,213,374	6,213,374	6,213,374	6,213,374	6,213,374	6,213,374
Total Revenue Hours	410,066	418,843	447,698	447,698	447,698	447,698	447,698	447,698	447,698	447,698
Total Hours	442,011	450,177	482,575	482,575	482,575	482,575	482,575	482,575	482,575	482,575

Table 12. SPRINTER Operating Statistics FY2023 - FY2032

SPRINTER	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031	FY2032
Total Ridership	1,635,632	1,673,978	1,690,718	1,707,625	2,363,717	2,387,354	2,411,228	2,435,340	2,459,694	2,484,291
Total Revenue Miles	519,924	533,765	533,765	533,765	929,294	929,294	929,294	929,294	929,294	929,294
Total Miles	523,122	537,049	537,049	537,049	935,011	935,011	935,011	935,011	935,011	935,011
Total Revenue Hours	23,627	24,256	24,256	24,256	42,230	42,230	42,230	42,230	42,230	42,230
Total Hours	23,772	24,405	24,405	24,405	42,490	42,490	42,490	42,490	42,490	42,490

Table 13. COASTER Operating Statistics FY2023 - FY2032

COASTER	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031	FY2032
Total Ridership	804,219	872,219	1,030,507	1,172,410	1,184,135	1,195,976	1,207,936	1,220,015	1,232,215	1,244,537
Total Revenue Miles	418,234	480,336	522,874	522,874	522,874	522,874	522,874	522,874	522,874	522,874
Total Miles	441,830	507,308	552,169	552,169	552,169	552,169	552,169	552,169	552,169	552,169
Total Revenue Hours	12,837	15,318	16,666	16,666	16,666	16,666	16,666	16,666	16,666	16,666
Total Hours	14,036	16,736	18,201	18,201	18,201	18,201	18,201	18,201	18,201	18,201

Table 14. LIFT Operating Statistics FY2023 - FY2032

LIFT	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031	FY2032
Total Ridership	102,132	101,548	118,577	120,361	122,173	124,011	125,878	127,772	129,695	131,647
Total Revenue Miles	963,464	1,038,692	1,119,241	1,130,120	1,141,421	1,152,835	1,164,363	1,176,007	1,187,767	1,199,645
Total Miles	1,142,086	1,231,280	1,326,395	1,339,639	1,353,036	1,366,566	1,380,232	1,394,034	1,407,974	1,422,054
Total Revenue Hours	56,873	61,267	66,050	66,710	67,377	68,051	68,731	69,419	70,113	70,814
Total Hours	70,513	75,968	81,858	82,710	83,537	84,372	85,216	86,068	86,929	87,798

Table 15. FLEX Deviated Fixed Routes Operating Statistics FY2023 - FY2032

FLEX Deviated Fixed Routes	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031	FY2032
Total Ridership	19,561	22,728	22,955	23,184	23,416	23,650	23,887	24,126	24,367	24,611
Total Revenue Miles	314,245	313,016	314,034	314,034	314,034	314,034	314,034	314,034	314,034	314,034
Total Miles	327,932	326,729	327,712	327,712	327,712	327,712	327,712	327,712	327,712	327,712
Total Revenue Hours	16,948	16,937	16,937	16,937	16,937	16,937	16,937	16,937	16,937	16,937
Total Hours	17,731	17,720	17,719	17,719	17,719	17,719	17,719	17,719	17,719	17,719

Table 16. FLEX Demand Response Operating Statistics FY2023 - FY2032

FLEX Demand Response	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031	FY2032
Total Ridership	107,542	126,116	227,544	229,819	279,752	282,550	285,375	288,229	291,111	294,022
Total Revenue Miles	425,608	562,746	1,447,810	1,447,810	2,042,040	2,042,040	2,042,040	2,042,040	2,042,040	2,042,040
Total Miles	477,577	631,394	1,624,425	1,624,425	2,291,144	2,291,144	2,291,144	2,291,144	2,291,144	2,291,144
Total Revenue Hours	32,739	43,288	111,370	111,370	157,080	157,080	157,080	157,080	157,080	157,080
Total Hours	35,267	46,628	119,962	119,962	169,199	169,199	169,199	169,199	169,199	169,199