



Connect Transit will livestream the Board of Trustees meetings when a YouTube link is provided on the agenda. Anyone who attends the meeting or addresses a public meeting during Public Comment time will be heard and may be seen on the livestream. Any audio and video captured will be in the recording.

If you are experiencing COVID symptoms, please do not attend the meeting.

AGENDA

Connect Transit Board of Trustees, Regular Session

August 26, 2025 – 4:30 p.m.

Connect Transit Board Room, 351 Wylie Drive, Normal, IL 61761

[YouTube Link for August 26, 2025](#)

- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call
 - a. Attendance by Other Means/Virtual – Roll Call Vote
- C. Pledge of Allegiance and Mission Statement
- D. Public Comments
- E. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval of Minutes for July 22, 2025, 2025 – Regular Session
 - b. ~~Approval of Financial Information for June 2025~~ – delayed due to year end closing
 - c. ~~Approval of Financial Information for July 2025~~ – delayed due to year end closing
 - d. Monthly Statistical Reports for July 2025
 - e. Cardinal Infrastructure; Federal Report
 - f. Cornerstone; Illinois Weekly Update
- F. New Business
 - a. Recommendation for Additional Check Signatory – Roll Call Vote
 - b. Regular Committee Meetings and Upcoming Topics – Informational
 - c. Year-End Ridership Analysis – Informational
 - d. Connect GO Update – Informational
 - e. Federal and State Funding Update – Informational
- G. Committee Reports
- H. Chairman’s Report
- I. Managing Director’s Report
- J. Trustee Comments
- K. Executive Session
- L. Adjournment

Mission:

Connect Transit provides safe, reliable transportation and access to opportunity to strengthen and enrich individual lives, our community, the economy, and the environment.





July 2025	Current Month	Month in Prior Year	Percent Change	Year to Date	Prior Year to Date	% Change YTD
System Statistics:						
System Ridership	137,128	130,309	5.23%	137,128	130,309	5.23%
Fixed Ridership	122,298	116,352	5.11%	122,298	116,352	5.11%
Mobility Ridership	9,275	8,976	3.33%	9,275	8,976	3.33%
FLEX Ridership	5,555	4,981	11.52%	5,555	4,981	11.52%
System Service Hours	13,369	14,300	-6.51%	13,369	14,300	-6.51%
Fixed Service Hours	8,244	9,237	-10.75%	8,244	9,237	-10.75%
Mobility Service Hours	4,149	3,996	3.83%	4,149	3,996	3.83%
FLEX Service Hours	976	1,067	-8.49%	976	1,067	-8.49%
System Service Miles	174,240	174,871	-0.36%	174,240	174,871	-0.36%
Fixed Service Miles	109,166	114,102	-4.33%	109,166	114,102	-4.33%
Mobility Service Miles	50,938	47,493	7.25%	50,938	47,493	7.25%
FLEX Service Miles	14,136	13,276	6.48%	14,136	13,276	6.48%
System Revenue Vehicles	49	56	-12.50%	49	56	-12.50%
Fixed Revenue Vehicles	27	31	-12.90%	27	31	-12.90%
Mobility Revenue Vehicles	17	20	-15.00%	17	20	-15.00%
FLEX Revenue Vehicles	5	5	0.00%	5	5	0.00%
System Miles/Revenue Vehicle	3,556	3,123	13.87%	3,556	3,123	13.87%
Fixed Miles/Revenue Vehicle	4,043	3,681	9.85%	4,043	3,681	9.85%
Mobility Miles/Revenue Vehicle	2,996	2,375	26.18%	2,996	2,375	26.18%
FLEX Miles/Revenue Vehicle	2,827	2,655	6.48%	2,827	2,655	6.48%
System Efficiencies:						
System Ridership/Service Hour	10.26	9.11	12.56%	10.26	9.11	12.56%
Fixed Ridership/Revenue Hour	14.83	12.60	17.77%	14.83	12.60	17.77%
Mobility Ridership/Revenue Hour	2.24	2.25	-0.48%	2.24	2.25	-0.48%
FLEX Ridership/Revenue Hour	5.69	4.67	21.87%	5.69	4.67	21.87%
System Percent On-Time Trips	92.38%	92.74%	-0.39%	92.38%	92.74%	-0.39%
Fixed Percent On-Time Trips	93%	93%	0.00%	93%	93%	0.00%
Mobility Percent On-Time Trips	97%	97%	0.00%	97%	97%	0.00%
FLEX Percent On-Time Trips	71%	79%	-10.13%	71%	79%	-10.13%
System Subsidy/Passenger	*	\$10.65	*	*	\$10.65	*
Fixed Subsidy/Passenger	*	\$7.94	*	*	\$7.94	*
Mobility Subsidy/Passenger	*	\$40.68	*	*	\$40.68	*
FLEX Subsidy/Passenger	*	\$19.81	*	*	\$19.81	*
Operator Pay Hours/Service Hour	1.44	1.31	9.53%	1.44	1.31	9.53%
Vehicle Maintenance Expense/Mile	*	\$1.27	*	*	\$1.27	*



600 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20001

Federal Update for Connect Transit

Prepared August 21st, 2025

Appropriations Update

The House and Senate Appropriations Committees have each passed their chamber's FY 2026 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) bill. The House bill fully funds transit formula programs with \$14.6 billion available. FTA's discretionary programs continue to be funded through advance appropriations included in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, but largely did not receive additional money in this bill. Connect Transit resubmitted its FY 2025 Community Project Funding request to Rep. LaHood's office; Rep. LaHood did not advance this project.

The Senate's Transportation, Housing and Urban Development bill also fully funds FTA's formula programs. Other discretionary grant programs are funded at similar levels to the House bill. Connect Transit's Community Project Funding application to Senator Durbin's office for pedestrian access improvements at Connect's Downtown Transportation Center was successfully included in the Senate THUD bill. These projects are normally advanced from a chamber's bill to the final legislation without issue. However, for Connect to receive this funding, Congress must avoid a year-long Continuing Resolution (CR).

Both the Senate and House legislation include measures addressing delays in property acquisition for FTA grantees. The House bill asks FTA to prepare a report on its implementation of a provision Section 5323(q), which allows for acquisition of right-of-way before NEPA and other review processes are complete. The Senate bill expands 5323(q) to allow agencies to acquire any property rather than just property within an existing right-of-way.

Congress will likely pass a short-term CR to give themselves more time to pass the 2026 appropriations bills. Just one of the twelve annual appropriations bills - the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs funding legislation - has passed both the House and Senate, and most bills have not yet received approval from either chamber. It is also important to note that the Senate and House will need to pass an identical THUD bill for it to become law, meaning that the differences in funding levels between the two must be ironed out. Typically, the Senate wins these fights due to the chamber's higher threshold for passage.

Reconciliation Bill Passes

President Trump signed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act into law last month. This legislation extends the tax cuts from the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, with new temporary cuts for tips and overtime. The bill's direct impacts on transportation are minimal, with the most significant coming from changes made to tax credits from the Inflation Reduction Act. The 30C Alternative Fuel Vehicle Refueling Property Credit will now only be claimable for infrastructure placed into service before June 30, 2026, while the IRA's Commercial Clean Vehicles credit will not apply to vehicles acquired after September 30th, 2025.



600 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20001

Molinaro Confirmed as FTA Administrator

The Senate has confirmed Marc Molinaro to serve as Federal Transit Administrator in a 71-23 vote. Molinaro is a former Congressman and county executive from Dutchess County, New York. His tenure at FTA will likely emphasize safety, accessibility, and fiscal responsibility.

FTA Memo on Changing Propulsion Types for Bus Grants

Last month, FTA sent a memo to agencies with unobligated competitive grant awards with zero emission buses (ZEBs) or components. At a minimum, the memo gives grant recipients the opportunity to redirect previously awarded competitive grants for ZEBs or ZEB infrastructure to other propulsion technologies.

FTA to hold webinar on charter bus regulations

FTA will hold a webinar on charter bus regulations for transit agencies on Thursday, September 11th at 1:00 pm ET. If interested, you can register [here](#).

FTA Announces TAM Roundtable

FTA's Transit Asset Management (TAM) program will host its 2025 TAM roundtable this September. The virtual event will run from September 17th to September 18th, and is focused on those new to their TAM role. If interested, you can register [here](#).

FTA Sees Large Losses From DOT Deferred Resignation Program

DOT's [latest round of deferred resignation offers](#) has led to substantial reductions in force at FTA and FHWA. Roughly one third of FTA staff will leave the agency.

IRS Offering Office Hours for Elective Pay

The IRS will hold office hours via Microsoft Teams to help eligible entities, including local governments and transit agencies, with pre-filing registration. This is a required step if you plan to take advantage of [elective payment for certain tax credits](#). Office hours will be held on [September 17th](#), [October 15th](#), [November 19th](#), [December 17th](#), and [January 21st](#), all from 1-2 p.m. ET.

House GOP Plans to Pursue Permitting Reform

House Majority Leader Steve Scalise has said that GOP leadership will attempt to pass a permitting reform bill this fall. Their current approach is to pass it as a standalone bipartisan bill. Republicans had previously attempted to reform permitting through the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, but their efforts were ruled out of line with reconciliation rules and struck from the legislation.



CORNERSTONE

— AN EMPLOYEE-OWNED COMPANY —

TO: Connect Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Cornerstone Government Affairs – Illinois Team
SUBJECT: Legislative Update
DATE: August 25, 2025

Summary

This month, our team continued ongoing efforts to support the release of the \$3 million in funding allocated to Connect in the FY26 state budget. We are maintaining communication with relevant stakeholders and agencies to track the release process and will share updates as we receive them.

We are also continuing to work through a legislative strategy to advance eMirror language this fall. Our team has maintained outreach to House staff and is actively working to identify a suitable shell bill for potential use during the upcoming Veto Session.

In addition, we are continuing to monitor ongoing public transit reform discussions and related activity occurring outside of legislative session that may impact Connect's work. We will continue to track these conversations and provide updates as they evolve leading into the fall.

Bill Tracking

Below are bills of interest in your filed that passed this session and have now been signed into law by the Governor.

[HB 1616](#)

Short Description: ORGAN DONOR LEAVE-PART-TIME

House Sponsors

Rep. [Nabeela Syed](#), [Camille Y. Lilly](#), [Katie Stuart](#), [Elizabeth "Lisa" Hernandez](#), [Joyce Mason](#), [Harry Benton](#), [Jaime M. Andrade, Jr.](#), [Barbara Hernandez](#), [Emanuel "Chris" Welch](#), [Jay Hoffman](#), [Nicolle Grasse](#), [Tracy Katz Muhl](#), [Maura Hirschauer](#), [Kevin John Olickal](#), [Bob Morgan](#), [Hoan Huynh](#), [Abdelnasser Rashid](#), [Anna Moeller](#) and [Janet Yang Rohr](#)

Senate Sponsors

(Sen. [Christopher Belt](#), [Mattie Hunter](#), [Lakesia Collins](#), [Paul Faraci](#), [Emil Jones, III](#), [Adriane Johnson](#), [Mike Simmons](#), [Michael E. Hastings](#), [Patrick J. Joyce](#), [Karina Villa](#), [Doris Turner](#) and [Mary Edly-Allen](#))

Statutes Amended In Order of Appearance

[820 ILCS 149/10](#)

Synopsis As Introduced

Amends the Employee Blood and Organ Donation Leave Act. Provides that a participating employee or part-time employee (rather than an employee) may use up to 10 days of leave in any 12-month period to serve as an organ donor. Provides that, for a part-time employee using leave to serve as an organ donor, the employer shall calculate the daily average pay the part-time employee received during his or her previous 2 months of employment and compensate the part-time employee in the amount of the daily average pay for the leave days used.

Last Action

Date	Chamber	Action
8/15/2025	House	Public Act - 104-0193

[HB 2978](#)

Short Description: NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE LEAVE

House Sponsors

Rep. [Laura Faver Dias](#), [Nicole La Ha](#), [Kimberly Du Buclet](#), [Mary Beth Canty](#), [Barbara Hernandez](#), [Maura Hirschauer](#), [Dagmara Avelar](#), [Maurice A. West, II](#), [Elizabeth "Lisa" Hernandez](#), [Will Guzzardi](#), [Edgar González, Jr.](#), [Kelly M. Cassidy](#), [Nicolle Grasse](#), [Nabeela Syed](#), [Abdelnasser Rashid](#), [Justin Slaughter](#), [Kevin John Olickal](#), [Sonya M. Harper](#), [Martha Deuter](#), [Diane Blair-Sherlock](#), [Jennifer Sanalitra](#), [Anna Moeller](#), [Sue Scherer](#), [Camille Y. Lilly](#) and [Hoan Huynh](#)

Senate Sponsors

(Sen. [Bill Cunningham](#), [Julie A. Morrison](#) and [Meg Loughran Cappel](#))

Statutes Amended In Order of Appearance

New Act

30 ILCS 105/5.1030 new

Synopsis As Introduced

Creates the Family Neonatal Intensive Care Leave Act. Provides that an employee of an employer with 16 or more employees and no more than 50 employees shall be entitled to use a maximum of 10 days of unpaid neonatal intensive care leave while any child of the employee is a patient in a neonatal intensive care unit. Provides that an employee of an employer with 51 or more employees shall be entitled to use 20 days of unpaid neonatal intensive care leave while a child of the employee is a patient in a neonatal intensive care unit. Provides that, upon the conclusion of leave taken under the Act, an employee shall be reinstated to his or her former position or a substantially equivalent one with no loss of benefits held or accrued prior to taking leave. Sets forth provisions concerning unlawful employer practices;

Department of Labor responsibilities; and enforcement. Amends the State Finance Act to create the Neonatal Intensive Care Leave Fund.

Last Action

Date	Chamber	Action
8/15/2025	House	Public Act - 104-0259

[SB 1976](#)

Short Description: WORKERS RIGHTS AND SAFETY

House Sponsors

(Rep. [Marcus C. Evans, Jr.](#) - [Harry Benton](#) - [Stephanie A. Kifowit](#) - [Jawaharial Williams](#), [Rick Ryan](#), [Gregg Johnson](#), [Lisa Davis](#), [Diane Blair-Sherlock](#), [Matt Hanson](#) and [Jaime M. Andrade, Jr.](#))

Senate Sponsors

Sen. [Robert Peters](#) - [Graciela Guzmán](#) - [Celina Villanueva](#), [Mark L. Walker](#), [Mike Simmons](#), [Mike Porfirio](#) and [Adriane Johnson](#)

Statutes Amended In Order of Appearance

[820 ILCS 219/25](#)

Synopsis As Introduced

Creates the Workers' Rights and Worker Safety Act. Provides that, except as authorized by State law enacted after April 28, 2025, a State agency may not amend or revise the State agency's rules in a manner that is less stringent in its protection of workers' rights or worker safety than requirements established under federal wage and hour law or federal coal mine safety law as the federal law existed on April 28, 2025. Creates the Illinois Safe and Healthy Workplace Act. Provides that the Department of Labor shall adopt rules to incorporate federal occupational health or safety standards that are repealed or revoked to address occupational safety or health issues. Sets forth rights of action and penalties. Amends the Occupational Safety and Health Act. Provides that the Director Labor may adopt a standard that incorporates a federal occupational health or safety standard as it existed prior to being repealed, revoked, amended, or newly interpreted and addresses the occupational safety or health issue that the repealed, revoked, amended, or newly interpreted federal Occupational Safety and Health Act standard had addressed.

Last Action

Date	Chamber	Action
8/15/2025	House	Public Act - 104-0259

General Legislative Updates

104th ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

The Illinois General Assembly remains on summer break. Both chambers return in October for a two-week Veto Session.

Energy Committee Hearing: Illinois lawmakers held a virtual committee meeting on Monday to discuss the rising energy prices. According to the Illinois Environmental Council, since June 1, Ameren prices across the state have increased by an average of \$46 per month, while ComEd prices have risen by \$8 per month. The committee heard testimony about the impact of data centers, which power AI technology and consume a substantial amount of electricity. A spokesperson for ComEd mentioned that they have received requests from data centers that could potentially draw gigawatts of energy from the grid.

The committee heard several ideas to address energy in Illinois, including the use of battery storage, the construction of additional nuclear power plants, and legislation that would require data centers to build their own power plants. More information is [here](#).

Insurance Rate Hearing: The Senate Insurance Committee held a virtual hearing on homeowners' and property insurance rates this week, during which industry leaders warned that state regulation could lead to higher costs and fewer consumer options. Former Illinois Director of Insurance Nat Shapo noted that Illinois has sound regulation with lower-than-average rates, attributing recent rate increases to an increase in claims filed by homeowners. Robert Gordon from the American Property Casualty Insurance Association highlighted the rising property losses resulting from inflation, severe weather, and the costs associated with state mandates. Meanwhile, Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias proposed banning insurers from using factors like age and credit scores to set premiums. State Senator Dave Syverson emphasized that Illinois insurers remain in the market due to confidence in the regulatory system, unlike in other states facing pullbacks. He suggested improving consumer information to facilitate easier rate comparisons.

Upcoming Committee Hearings: The House scheduled two subject matter hearings for September. The House International Relations, Tourism, and Trade Committee will hold a hearing on September 16 at 12:30 pm in the Bilandic Building in Chicago to discuss how Illinois can respond and lead on tariff policy.

The House Gun Violence Prevention Committee will hold a hearing on September 22 at 11:00 am in the Bilandic Building in Chicago to discuss gun violence prevention and community violence intervention.

GOVERNOR'S HIGHLIGHTS:

New Laws: Governor Pritzker signed 268 bills into law late Friday afternoon. Read the full list of new laws [here](#).

The Governor also signed legislation this week to create the Digital Assets and Consumer Protection Act and the Digital Asset Kiosk Act, as well as legislation to prevent schools from issuing monetary fines or fees, tickets, or citations as a disciplinary measure or for a municipal code violation on school grounds during school hours and another to protect media from SLAPP lawsuits. Read more [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

Veto: Governor Pritzker vetoed SB 246, an initiative of the Illinois Treasurer, which would have allowed Frerichs' office to create an investment pool for Illinois nonprofits. The treasurer's office would invest the funds and provide the returns on those investments back to the nonprofits. The Governor vetoed the measure, saying it would have "had harmful unintended consequences" by potentially allowing extremist groups to take advantage of the program. Read the veto message [here](#).

College Admissions: Illinois launched [One Click College Admit](#), a new statewide direct admissions program for public universities and community colleges in the state. Under this initiative, high school seniors and community college transfer students in Illinois will automatically receive college acceptances to the state's public universities by meeting a single criterion: their grade point average (GPA).

The program eliminates the need for applications, application fees, essays, and letters of recommendation. High school seniors can begin to receive automatic acceptances for enrollment in the fall of 2026 through "One Click College Admit" by creating a Common App account and entering basic biographical information along with their GPA.

Richardson Electronics to Expand Manufacturing Headquarters: Governor JB Pritzker, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and Richardson Electronics, Ltd.—a prominent global manufacturer of engineered solutions, green energy products, power grid components, and microwave tubes—have announced that the company will expand its operations at its manufacturing headquarters in La Fox, Illinois. Richardson Electronics plans to make a capital investment of over \$8.5 million over the next four years, supported by the Reimagining Energy and Vehicles in Illinois (REV Illinois) program. The expansion will allow the company to retain nearly 200 skilled employees and create an additional 54 new full-time jobs in the region. Read more [here](#).

CIJA Releases Statewide Violence Prevention Plan: The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) released the [2025-2029 Statewide Violence Prevention Plan](#). The Plan provides a framework for grantmaking that aims to foster more resilient, safe, and thriving communities. This plan aligns with the Governor's objectives of breaking the cycles of violence stemming from years of ineffective criminal justice policies, overincarceration, and economic disinvestment in minority communities. Read more [here](#).

Gubernatorial Appointments: Governor Pritzker reappointed Karima Douglas as the Independent Juvenile Ombudsperson of the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice.

OTHER NEWS:

2026 Election Update: Candidates continue to announce their intentions for the 2026 election cycle.

2nd Congressional District: Illinois State Senator Willie Preston announced he will join the crowded field vying for the Democratic nomination in the 2nd Congressional District to replace Congresswoman Robin Kelly, who is running for the open US Senate seat.

5th Congressional District: Chicago Police District Councilman Anthony Tamez announced he will run in the Democratic primary in the 5th Congressional District represented by fellow Democrat Congressman Mike Quigley. Tamez first ran for office and won in 2023. He made history as the second Native person to hold an elected office in Illinois and one of the youngest Native people to hold an elected position in the U.S.

7th Congressional District: Danica Leigh, the former chief of staff of clinical affairs at the University of Chicago, joined the crowded Democratic primary race to replace retiring Congressman Danny Davis.

9th Congressional District: Sam Polan, a former policy adviser with the North American Aerospace Defense Command, joined the crowded Democratic field vying to replace retiring Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky. He served in the Army Air Defense and was later selected for special operations, deploying three times to the Middle East.

17th Congressional District: Julie Bickelhaupt, a farmer and community leader, announced her candidacy on the Republican ticket for Congress in the 17th District. Democratic Congressman Eric Sorensen now holds the seat.

36th Senate District: Retired State Police Master Sergeant Brad Beekman, a Republican, will challenge Senator Mike Halpin in the general election.

12th House District: The list of Democratic candidates seeking to replace Representative Margaret Croke continues to grow. Karim Lakhani, a Harvard-educated son of immigrant entrepreneurs, announced his candidacy this week. He runs the family business, Lakhani Hospitality, while also practicing law for small business owners. He's served on Skokie's Economic Development Commission and the South Asian American Chamber of Commerce of Illinois. Also running are Litcy Kurisinkal, Mac LeBuhn, and Paul Kendrick, who has Croke's endorsement.

21st House District: Republican Fitness Trainer Eric Su announced he will challenge Representative Abdelnasser Rashid.

111th House District: Alton City Council member Rosetta "Rosie" Brown announced she will challenge Republican Representative Amy Elik in the general election.

Redistricting Reform: A bipartisan group of former Obama administration officials and election lawyers wants to reform the state's legislative redistricting process by introducing a constitutional

amendment through a citizen ballot initiative in the 2026 general election. They argue that the current system leads to the overrepresentation of Democrats and fewer competitive districts, thereby diminishing politicians' accountability to their constituents.

The initiative is led by former U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood, a Republican, and Bill Daley, a Democrat, with support from former State Board of Elections Chair Bill Cadigan and election lawyer Michael Dorf. The proposal aims to create a 12-member Legislative Redistricting Commission, appointed by the top leaders of each legislative chamber, to ensure fairer district mapping. The amendment will require approximately 320,000 valid signatures to appear on the November 2026 ballot. Read more [here](#).

AG Raoul Seeks Court Order Blocking Trump Administration's Attempt to Share Private SNAP

Data: Attorney General Kwame Raoul, along with 21 other state attorneys general and the state of Kentucky, filed a motion to prevent the U.S. Department of Agriculture from compelling states to disclose personal and sensitive information about millions of recipients of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This action comes while legal challenges to the USDA's demand are ongoing. Read more [here](#).

AG Co-leads Lawsuit to Block Conditions on Victims of Crime Grants: Attorney General Kwame Raoul, along with the attorneys general of California, Delaware, New Jersey, and Rhode Island, co-led a multistate lawsuit challenging the illegal conditions imposed by the Trump administration on Congressionally authorized Victims of Crime Act grants.

Raoul and a coalition of 20 other attorneys general filed the lawsuit in response to the Trump administration's recent decision, which dictates that states will not be able to access funds meant to support victims and survivors of crimes unless they comply with the administration's stringent immigration enforcement demands. The lawsuit argues that the administration is ignoring both the letter of the law and the intent of Congress with this decision. Read more [here](#).

AG Sues to Block Funding Cap for Energy Programs: Attorney General Kwame Raoul, leading a coalition of 19 states, filed a lawsuit to block a new funding cap imposed by the U.S. Department of Energy that threatens state-run energy programs. The states claim this cap jeopardizes their ability to operate essential programs, such as those focused on energy efficiency and resiliency. In Illinois, specific programs affected include the Public Water Infrastructure Energy Efficiency Assessment Program and training for construction professionals on energy codes. Additionally, the cap could hinder investments in the Illinois Clean Energy Innovation Fund, which supports emerging technologies for grid modernization. The coalition is seeking to restore the required reimbursement rates for these energy initiatives. Read more [here](#).

AG Joins Bipartisan Letter in Support of National Youth Tobacco Survey: Attorney General Kwame Raoul, as part of a bipartisan coalition of 22 state attorneys general, submitted a comment letter to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Department of Health and Human Services

supporting the continuation of the National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS). The NYTS is an annual study that assesses the use of smoking and vaping among middle and high school students. According to the letter, the survey provides valuable insights into youth tobacco use and emerging products, and it has shaped efforts by attorneys general to reduce youth tobacco use for over two decades. Read more [here](#).

AG Bondi Threatens to Send in Federal Law Enforcement and Cut Illinois Funding: Attorney General Pam Bondi instructed Illinois Governor JB Pritzker, Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson, and Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle to end their "sanctuary" policies immediately and comply with federal immigration laws. They have until August 19 to outline the measures they have taken to eliminate practices that hinder federal enforcement. Ann Spillane, general counsel to the Governor, responded that the state is following the law. Bondi indicated that non-compliance could lead to cuts in federal funding and federal law enforcement intervention, similar to actions taken in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.



MEMO

Date: August 26, 2025
To: Board of Trustees
From: Patrick Kuebrich, Finance Director
CC: David Braun, Managing Director
Subject: Recommendation for Additional Authorized Check Signatory

Recommendation:

Approve Brady Lange, Deputy Managing Director, to be added as an additional authorized signatory for all Connect Transit bank accounts.

Background:

Connect Transit must have two (2) signatures on each written check. Currently Connect signatories are David Braun, Managing Director; Dave White, Safety and Training Director; and Steve Stockton, IT Manager.

Discussion:

Staff recommends four (4) bank account signatories, David Braun, Managing Director; Dave White, Safety and Training Director; Steven Stockton, IT Manager; and Brady Lange, Deputy Managing Director, to cover when staff are out of the office. Having these staff as signatories offers sufficient security through separation of duties to avoid a conflict of having procurement or finance involved in a purchase from beginning to end.

Financial Impact:

None



MEMO

Date: August 26, 2025
To: Board of Trustees
From: David Braun, Managing Director
Subject: Regular Committee Meetings and Upcoming Topics – Informational

Strategic Alignment:

This activity aligns with *Objective 2*: Expand the Board’s role to advocate on behalf of Connect Transit and *Activity*: Communicate “talking points” to the Board concerning Connect Transit services and issues facing Connect.

Discussion:

In 2024, the Board of Trustees approved a committee structure to discuss and consider, on an ad-hoc basis, topics that require Board attention before they are raised with the full Board. This proposed structure allows us to regularly discuss and consider alternatives, potential concerns, and additional information required well before staff recommends initiatives to the full Board. Standing Committees and Committee Members include:

- Executive Committee:
 - Chairman Whitehouse
 - Vice Chair Hile
 - David Braun, Managing Director
- Finance Committee:
 - Vice Chair Hile
 - Trustee Rao
 - David Braun, Managing Director
 - Pat Kuebrich, Finance Director
- Planning and Operations Committee
 - Trustee Bianchi
 - Trustee Sanders
 - David Braun, Managing Director
 - Alex Giantamidis, Transit Planner – as needed
 - Open, Operations Manager – as needed
 - Jeff Mancil, Service Delivery Manager – as needed
- Messaging/Marketing Committee:

- Secretary Foster
- Trustee Buchanan
- David Braun, Managing Director
- Mark Huffman, Marketing Manager

Connect Transit staff have been working on several initiatives that will come to fruition during this fiscal year; a list of initiatives and expected timelines for discussion and development follows. Many of these initiatives will require Board consent or approval at some point of the year, and I believe that working in collaboration with the Trustees within the standing committee structure will allow us to provide richer information that has been considered from several perspectives.

Q1 (July – September)

- Initiatives
 - Connect Transit/Connect GO service coordination.
 - Operations and Planning Committee
 - Messaging/Marketing Committee
 - Transfer/Fare policy between Connect GO and other Connect services.
 - Finance Committee
 - Messaging/Marketing Committee
 - Fare policy considerations with new fare collection system.
 - All Committees
 - Collective Bargaining Agreement Proposal.
 - Executive Committee

Q2 (October – December)

- Initiatives
 - Transit Center funding discussions
 - Executive Committee
 - Finance Committee
 - Transit Center design and aesthetic considerations
 - Executive Committee
 - Messaging/Marketing Committee
 - Operations and Planning Committee
 - FY27 Budget
 - Operations and Planning Committee
 - Finance Committee
 - Replace Radio System
 - Finance Committee

Q3 (January-March)

- Initiatives
 - FY27 Budget
 - Operations and Planning Committee
 - Finance Committee
 - RFP/Award for Transit Center construction contractor
 - Executive Committee
 - Operations and Planning Committee
 - DT Transit Center construction progress/information website
 - Messaging/Marketing Committee
 - DT Transit Center groundbreaking ceremony
 - Messaging/Marketing Committee
 - Connect FLEX Zone discussions t
 - Operations and Planning
 - State funding initiative for Downstate Transit – Ramifications
 - Finance Committee
 - Messaging/Marketing Committee
 - Federal transportation funding reauthorization considerations.
 - Executive Committee
 - Messaging/Marketing Committee
 - New Connect FLEX Vehicle Delivery
 - Messaging/Marketing Committee
 - Via Paratransit Scheduling and Trip Planning Software Implementation
 - Messaging/Marketing Committee

Q4 (April – June)

- Initiatives
 - Potential Connect Transit Website Update (Contract expires 5/26)
 - Messaging/Marketing Committee
 - Continued FLEX Service discussions
 - Operations and Planning Committee
 - Implement a new Fare Collection system
 - Messaging/Marketing Committee
 - RFP for A&E Services for new storage and training facility on CT property and potential Partnerships
 - All Committees
 - Uptown Station Transit Center Wayfinding update in coordination with Downtown Transit Center equipment plans
 - Operations and Planning Committee
 - Messaging/Marketing Committee

- Route restructuring for Downtown Bloomington Transit Center access.
 - Operations and Planning Committee
- Initiation of public donations campaign for Downtown Transit Center (artwork and design elements that we cannot pay for with federal or state funding), like the Bloomington Public Library campaign during its reconstruction.
 - Executive Committee
 - Messaging/Marketing Committee



MEMO

Date: August 26, 2025
To: Board of Trustees
From: Alex Giantamidis, Transit Planner
CC: David Braun, Managing Director
Subject: Year-End Ridership Analysis

Strategic Alignment:

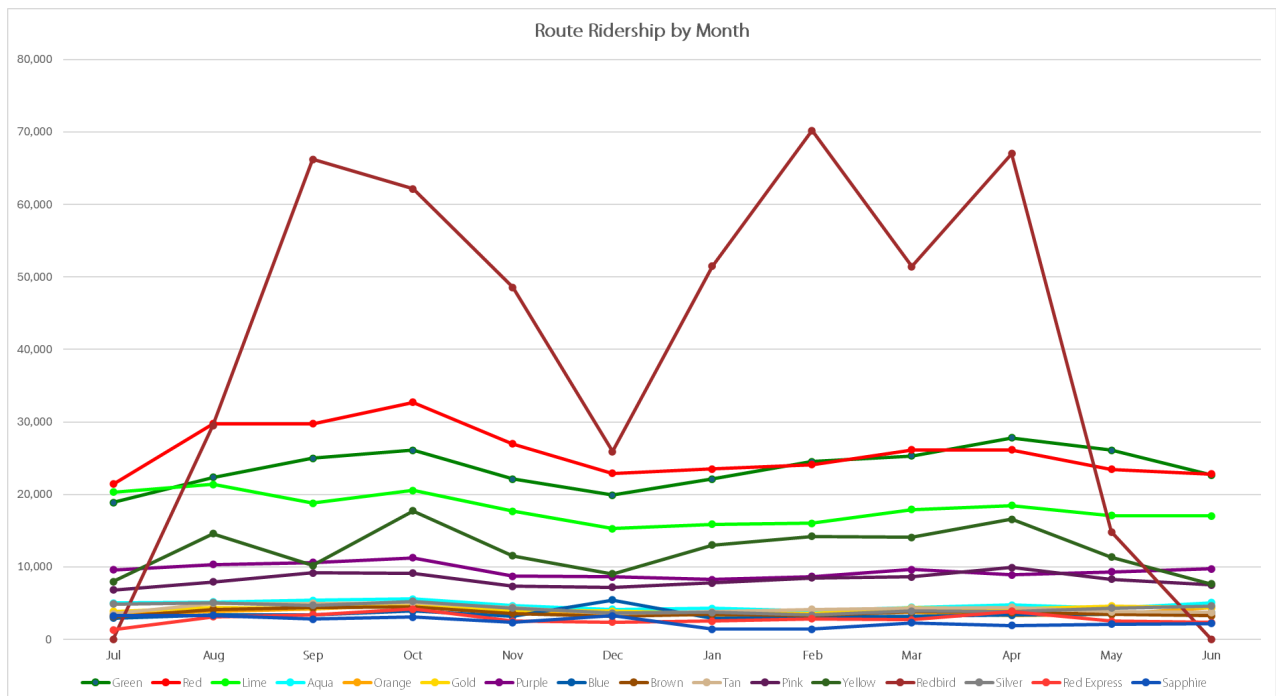
Goal 4: Operate efficiently without sacrificing quality.

Objective 3: Position Connect Transit to provide solutions for changing service demands.

Activity: Continually analyze service performance, City and Town growth plans, large employer locations and work shifts, and changing demographics to identify appropriate methods to meet various needs, as necessary and practical.

Discussion:

Connect Transit Fixed Route Ridership and Productivity

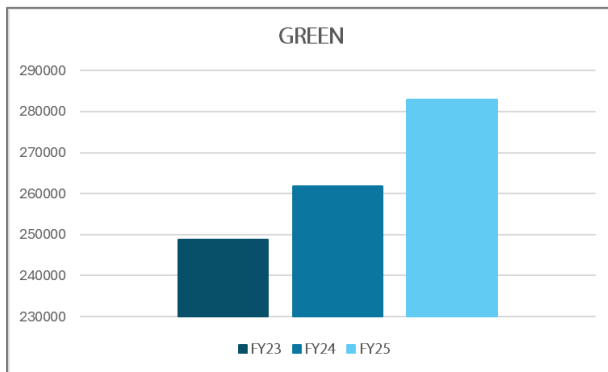


Route Ridership Changes

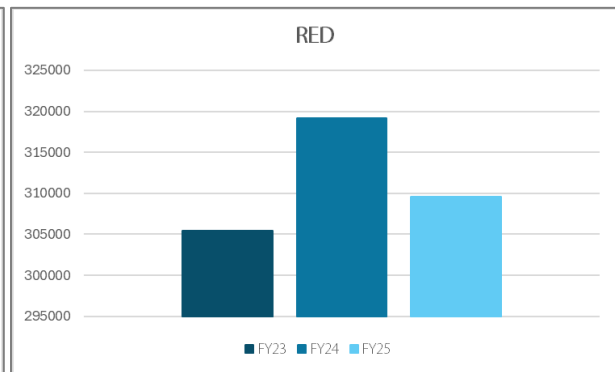
Route	FY25	FY24	% Change
Yellow	147,903	130,157	14%
Green	282,880	261,764	8%
Red Express	33,621	31,353	7%
Pink	98,141	93,792	5%
Gold	49,834	48,659	2%
Orange	45,305	44,604	2%
Brown	43,928	43,841	0%
Tan	50,603	51,626	-2%
Redbird	487,216	501,313	-3%
Red	309,627	319,135	-3%
Aqua	56,668	59,062	-4%
Purple	113,702	123,648	-8%
Blue	41,869	48,571	-14%
Silver	51,500	62,830	-18%
Lime	216,367	266,306	-19%
Sapphire	29,309	46,450	-37%

- Ridership by Route:

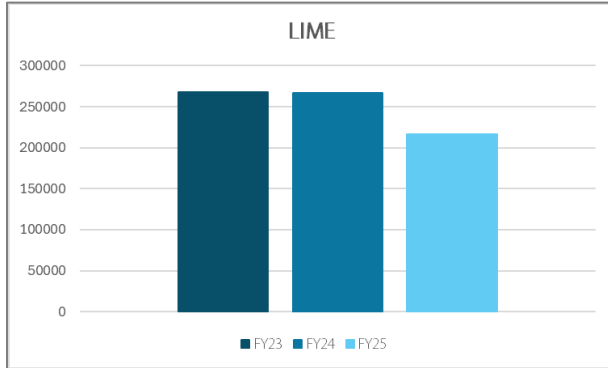
- Heavy promotion of the service



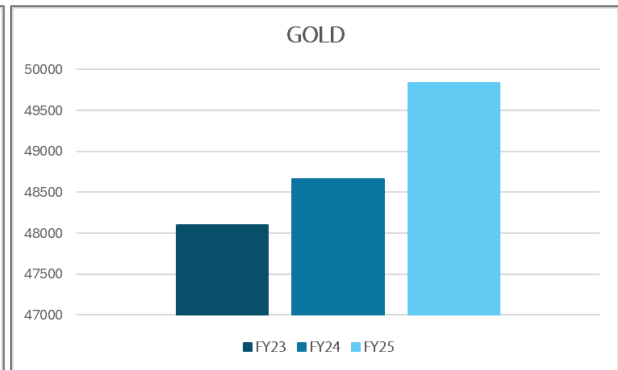
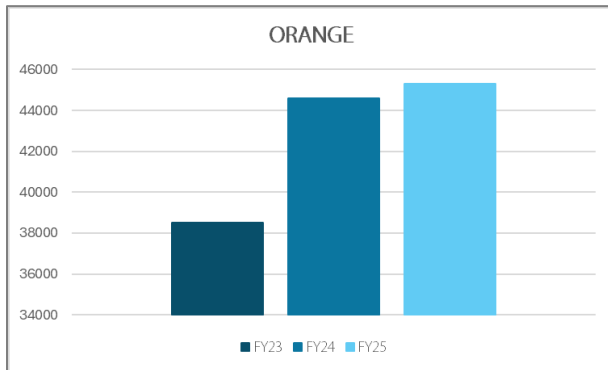
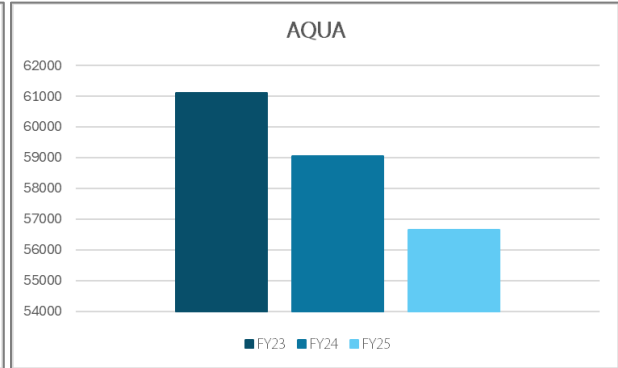
- Competes with Red Express



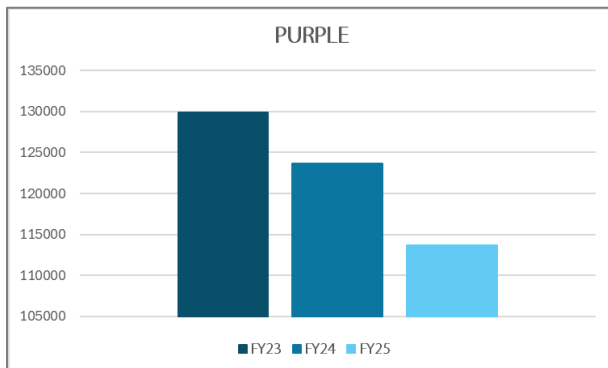
- College Detour; Market Street Construction



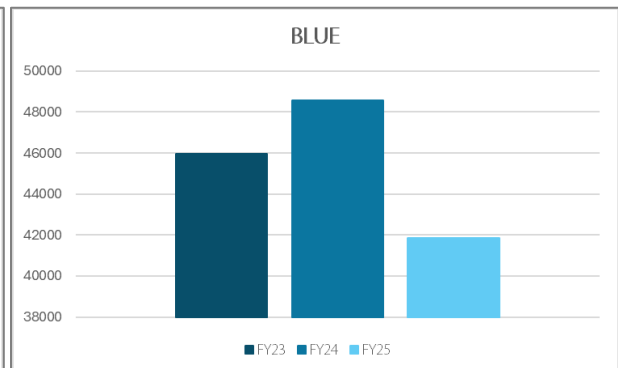
- Reduced Peak; Competes With FLEX

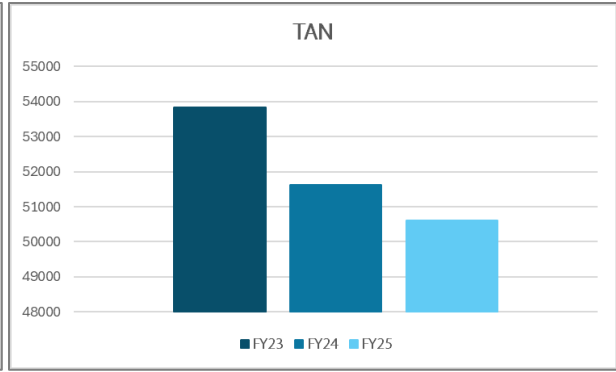
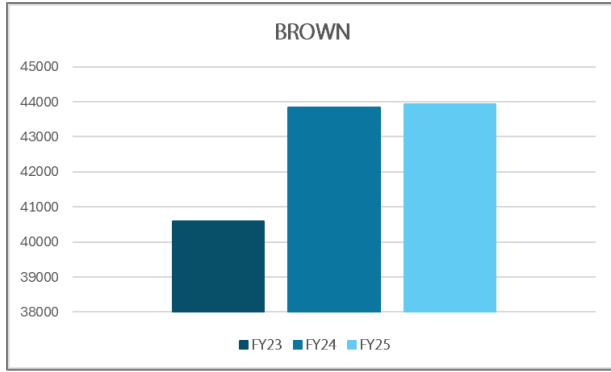


- Reduced Peak Service

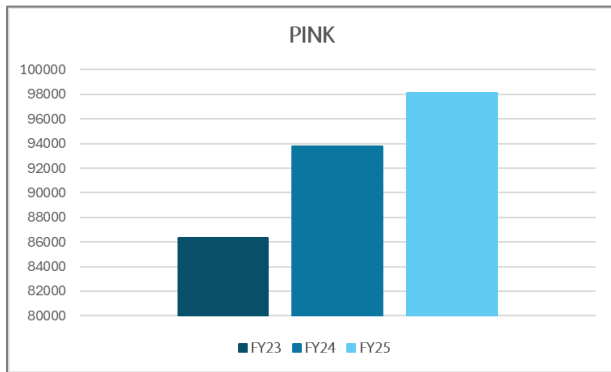


- Reduced Peak Service

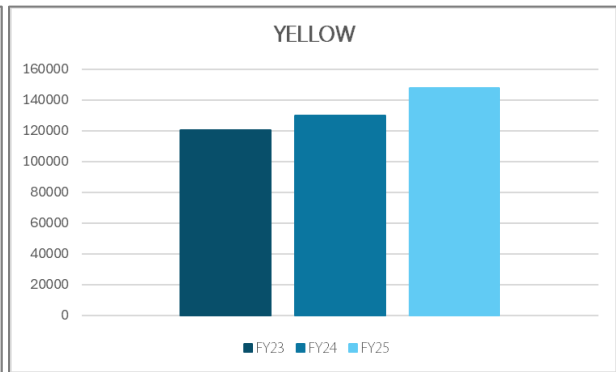




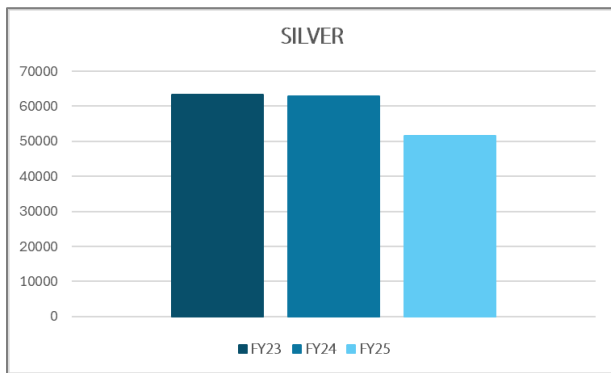
- Promotion of Route to Heartland CC



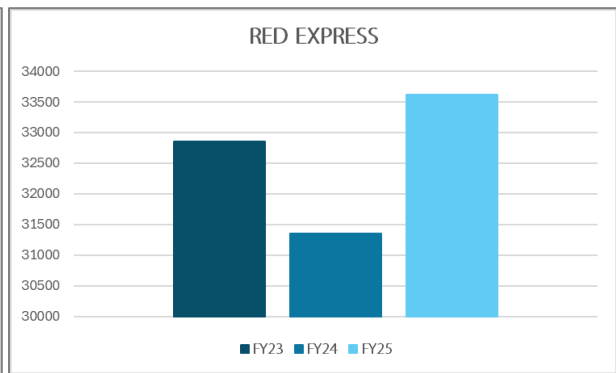
- Promotion of Route to Heartland CC



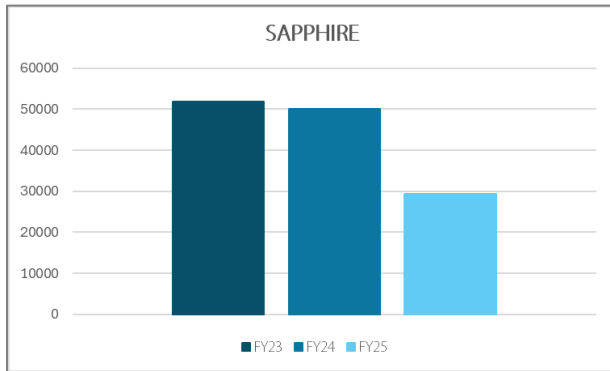
- Reduced Peak Service; Competes With FLEX



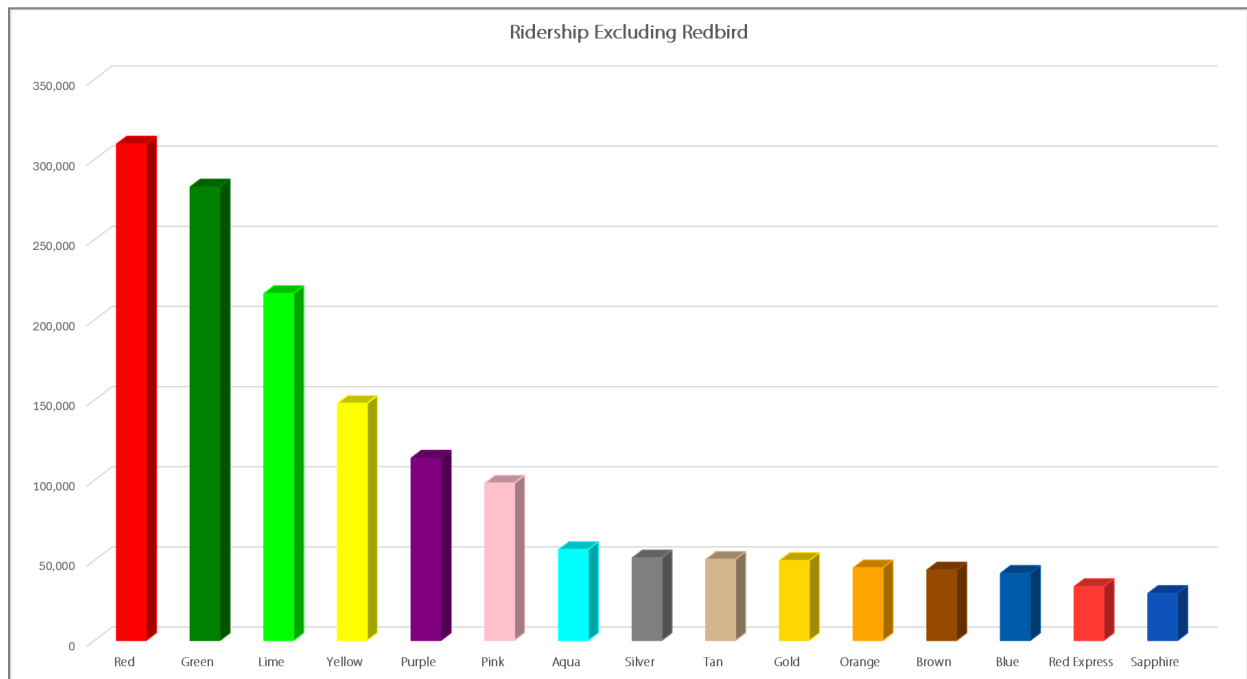
- Competes With Red



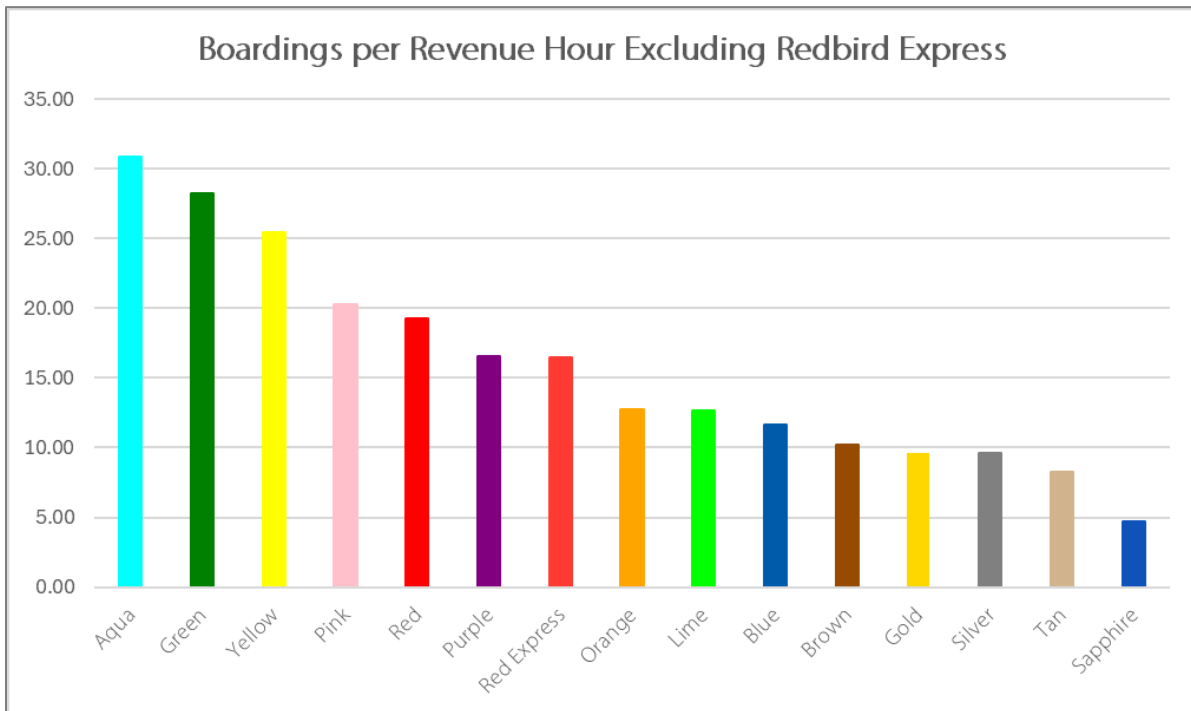
- Shift Changes; College Avenue Detour



- Route Ranking by Ridership:

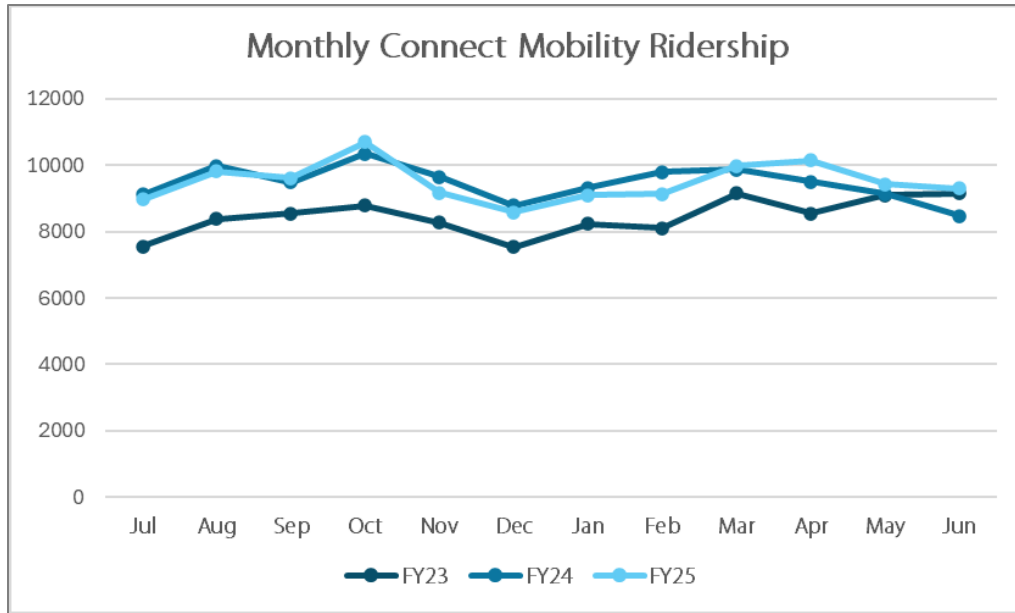


- Route Ranking by Efficiency:



- **Next Steps:** We will be exploring changes to the Brown, Silver, Sapphire, and Tan service areas and promote the Gold more effectively to demonstrate the ease of use of this clockwise/counter-clockwise loop route.

Connect Mobility Ridership, Service, and Productivity



CM Applications	
Approved	274
Denied	20
Pending Doctor verification	26
Total applications	320

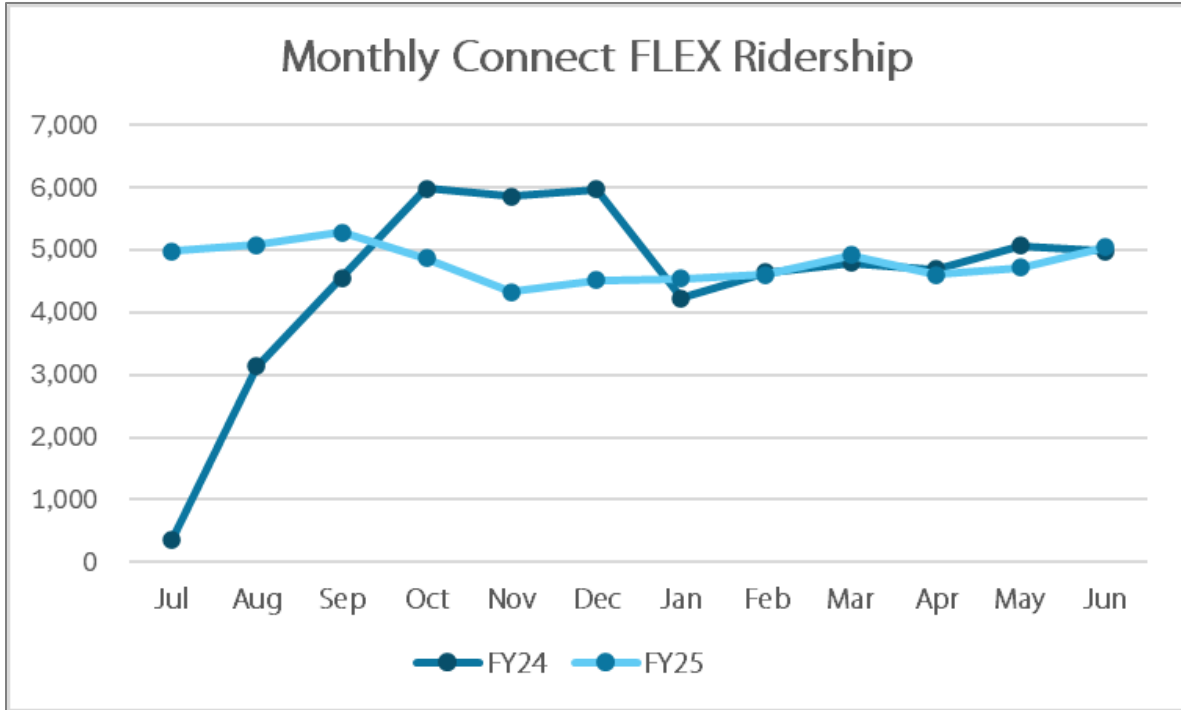
CM Efficiency		
FY23	FY24	FY25
2.55	2.71	2.65

Average Distance Travelled
5.78 miles

Average Trip Duration
25 minutes

- **Next Steps:** The FY26 focus for Mobility is to improve passenger per hour efficiency by changing scheduling software and analyzing the service daily.

Connect FLEX Ridership, Service and Productivity



FLEX Efficiency		
FY23	FY24	FY25
0	5.53	5.28

Average Distance Travelled
2.95 miles

Average Trip Duration
8.37 minutes

of Riders With at Least One
1,888

of Riders with 100+ Rides
132

- Next Steps:** The FY26 focus for Connect FLEX is zone efficiency in the southwest zone to limit FLEX from competing with other routes in that zone; and zone expansion to other areas that cannot be well-served by fixed route service due to pedestrian/passenger safety, distance from the main service area, population density, or circuitous streets.



MEMO

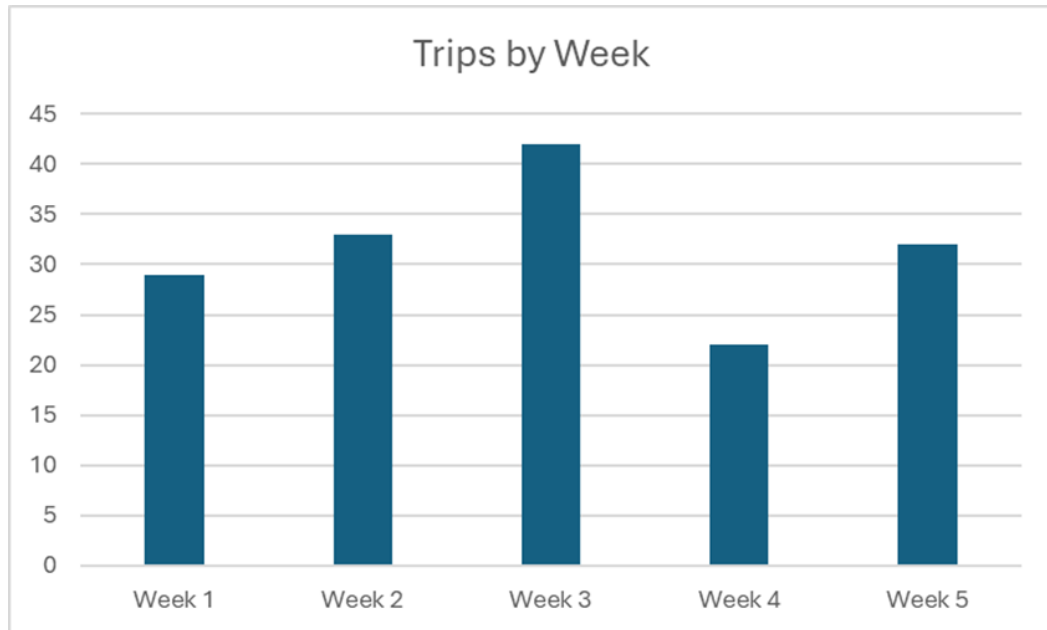
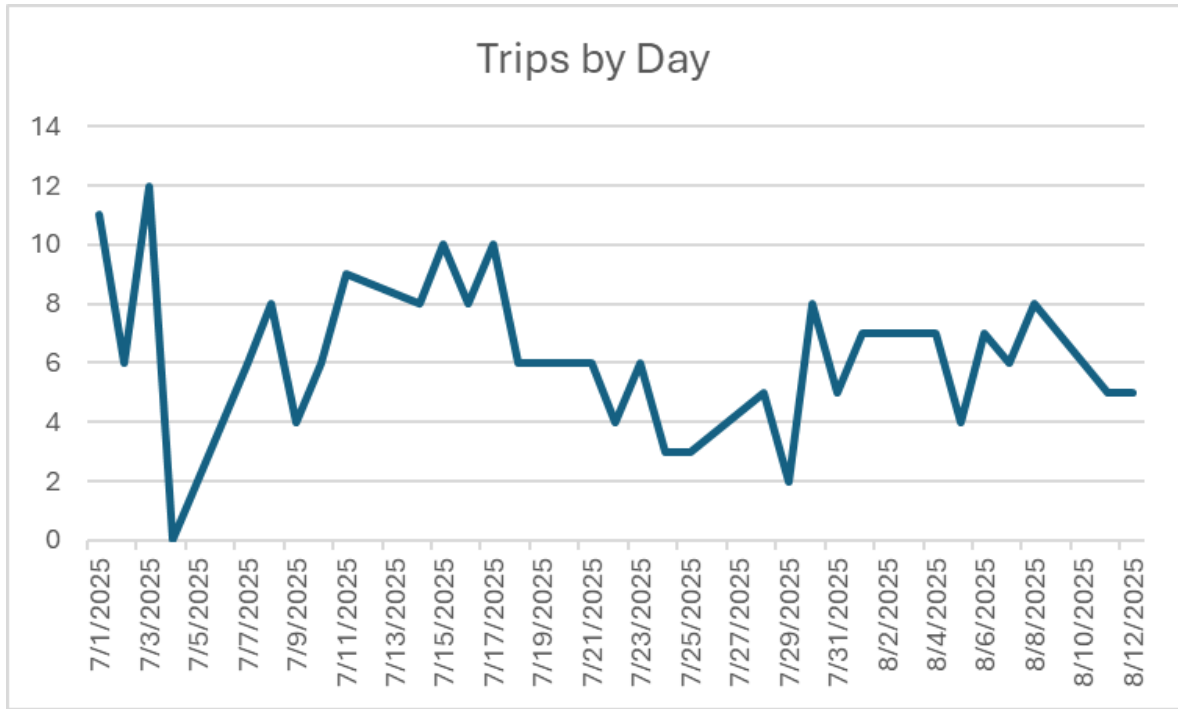
Date: August 26, 2025
To: Board of Trustees
From: Brandon Miles, Rural Transit Coordinator
CC: David Braun, Managing Director
Subject: Connect GO Update – Informational

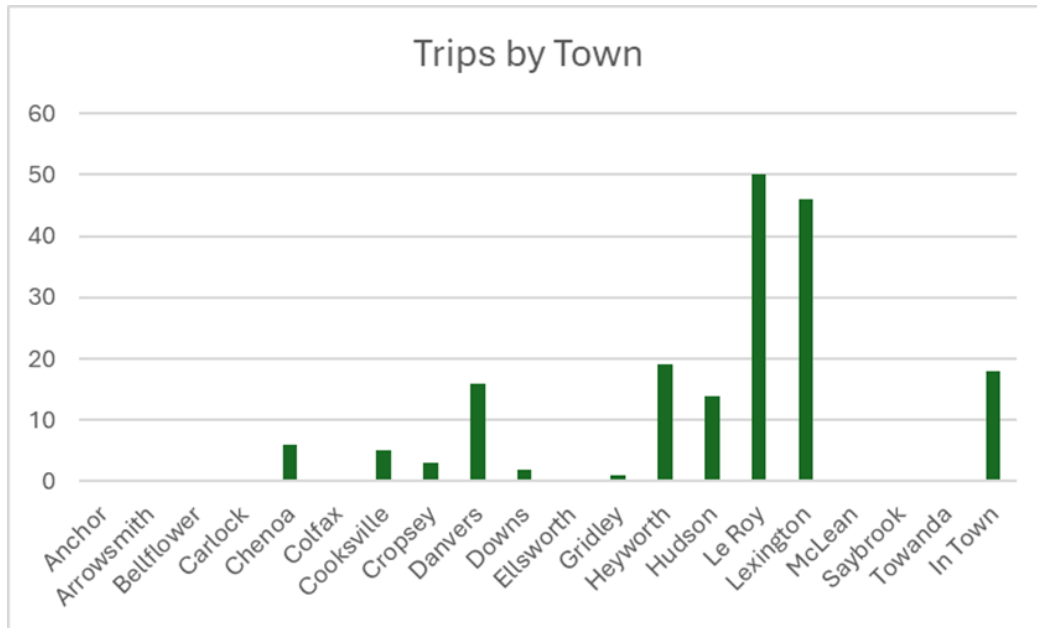
Strategic Alignment:

These activities align with Goal 1: Gain Public and Political Support, *Objective 3: Develop and Expand Community Partnerships; Activity: Identify opportunities or partnerships that benefit Connect Transit, partners, and our community* and Goal 2: Ensure Long-Term Financial Sustainability; *Activity: Use federal and state funds to provide broader benefits to more constituents.*

Discussion:

Connect Transit has been operating the Connect GO rural McLean County service since July 1, 2025. We purposely did not actively market the service to ensure that we had the resources needed to provide the service and understand the demand for services.





Our next steps will be to provide information about the service at outlets throughout McLean County, including churches, libraries, post offices, and grocery stores, as allowed. We are actively discussing contract opportunities that would benefit local care providers and the residents of McLean County and would allow us to provide more hours of service. We are also considering making a fare recommendation to the County Board, and what that fare should be. For each \$1 in revenue collected in fares, we would be able to draw down \$1.86 in State reimbursement for a total revenue of \$2.86.

Finally, in the next few months we will be discussing how the urban system and rural system can better interact and how we can encourage passengers to use the urban system to access employment, shopping, medical or educational opportunities throughout Bloomington and Normal.



MEMO

Date: August 26, 2025
To: Board of Trustees
From: David Braun, Managing Director
Subject: Federal and State Funding Outlook – Informational

Strategic Alignment:

This activity aligns with Goal 1, *Objective 2*: Expand the Board’s role to advocate on behalf of Connect Transit and *Activity*: Communicate “talking points” to the Board concerning Connect Transit services and issues facing Connect and Goal 2, *Objective 1*: Continue to secure Federal, State and Local Dollars and *Activity*: Aggressively pursue funding opportunities from federal, state, and local funding agencies, as well as non-traditional sources.

Discussion:

The current outlook for federal and state funding continues to be in a holding pattern, waiting to determine the impact of decisions made by our elected officials. When we discuss funding, we need to consider operating funding from Federal 5307 formula funding and State Downstate Operating Assistance Program (DOAP) funding, as well as capital funding from Federal 5307 formula funding, Federal discretionary program (Bus and Bus Facilities Grant Program), and special state capital programs (Rebuild Illinois funding).

- Federal Formula Funding: May be used for Operating or Capital
 - Positive: The Administration’s FY26 Budget and Senate FY26 Budget slightly increases the amount of funding from FY25. The House FY26 Budget reduces transit funding, but mainly in rail and non-bus projects.
 - Concern: As a “small urban” transit system, our funding is directed through the State of Illinois, who allows us to act as the direct grantee, however, due to our size, we are not truly a direct grantee. Executive Order 14287 directs federal agency heads, in coordination with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), to “identify appropriate Federal funds to sanctuary jurisdictions, including grants and contracts, for suspension or termination, as appropriate.” The Administration has not yet announced how they will enforce this provision. The State of Illinois is on the list of sanctuary jurisdictions, as are Cook County and the City of Chicago.

What We Know: We anticipate that Secretary Duffy will clarify the impact of this order on transportation grant recipients across all the modal agencies. The text of the Executive Order provides discretion to Secretary Duffy to determine which funding may or may not be withheld from offending jurisdictions.

What We Don't Know: While all federal funding is on the table, it is conceivable that DOT could distinguish between federal funds by the type of funds and the recipient of the funds. Will DOT treat formula funds differently than discretionary grants? And will DOT treat transit agencies that have no control over their sanctuary status differently than the city or state that creates those policies? For local governments located within Sanctuary States, DOT could choose to target only the grants going to state agencies, and leave local grantees alone, however, as mentioned, we are technically funded through the state, and not considered a local grantee.

An ongoing lawsuit on withholding federal funds also complicates this matter. A judge issued an injunction in April barring the Trump Administration from withholding funds to 15 cities and counties over immigration enforcement. Additional cities, counties, and states have since joined on to the lawsuit, which includes Illinois. The Administration has appealed the original injunction.

- Federal Discretionary Funding
 - Positive: The Administration wants to build “big, beautiful things” as reiterated by the Secretary of Transportation and Deputy Secretary at a recent APTA Legislative Conference. To do that, they will need to continue to fund programs that allow agencies to meet this objective. Their emphasis on families and economic development favors the projects we have initiated.
 - Concern: The transportation reauthorization bill is currently being developed and will be considered in 2026. The current transit funding allocates funds between formula funding, which is stable and based on population, low-income population, and population density; and discretionary funding, which is competitive. To appeal to the Administration’s priorities, industry advocates are proposing that Congress increases the percentage of funding in the stable and consistent formula funding program and decreases the amount in discretionary funding.

On the face of it, this seems like a positive with more stable funding. However, our major capital purchases (buses, facilities) are funded through discretionary funding and a reduction in that funding opportunity will increase competition and reduce our chances

of being awarded grants when competing with large systems and municipalities whose needs are much larger. Logically, we would simply need to reserve our formula dollars and plan for major capital purchases, however, our formula dollars would expire before enough was reserved to purchase several buses at a time and purchasing one or two buses is inefficient for procurement, inventory, and maintenance.

- Positive: Senator Durbin, under Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS), has advanced our project (\$1.6 million for accessibility features for the Downtown Transit Center) for funding in the FY26 Federal Budget.
- Concern: In FY25, all CDS (Senate) and Community Project Funding (CPF) (House) funding was stripped from the budget. We are not sure if they will survive the budget process for FY26.
- State Downstate Operating Assistance Program (DOAP)
 - DOAP funding comes from the Downstate Public Transportation Fund (DPTF), that receives its funding from 80% of 3/32 of the State Sales Tax. DOAP is allocated by IDOT based on population and other factors. The revenue to the DPTF is less than the amount allocated each year by IDOT, so by 2029, the fund will be depleted and unable to provide the 65% operating reimbursement what we have used to fund most of our service since 2010. Prior to 2010, the reimbursement level was 55%.

The transit providers in the Northeastern Illinois RTA Region (CTA, METRA Rail and Pace Bus) are facing a significant “fiscal cliff” in 2026 requiring \$771 million to sustain service and an estimated \$1.2 billion to improve services. The RTA is working with the State to fund this shortfall, and Downstate transit systems have combined efforts to resolve both issues under one bill, leveraging the interests of Chicago area legislators with those of Downstate legislators.

In addition to the shortfall in the DPTF, many Downstate Transit Systems receive a property tax to provide the local match (35%) to fund their services. As the population of many of these smaller urban areas has decreased since the last census, they are facing challenges funding the local match. As part of the proposed transit funding solution, Downstate transit systems are also recommending a reduction in the local match requirement to 25% for urban systems, and 20% for rural systems. These changes would be transformative for Downstate transit systems.

For Connect Transit, using FY26 budget estimates, if all other revenues (Federal, local, contracts, fares, etc.) were equal, a 75% reimbursement rate would raise revenue from

the State by over \$2 million. This would equal over 18,000 hours of additional service per year. As a comparison, the Green route that operates 15-minute service between Bloomington and Normal operates 10,300 hours per year.

For Connect GO, rural McLean County service, using FY26 budget estimates, an 80% reimbursement rate would raise revenue by over \$121,600 or 675 hours, and would allow three additional hours per day of service, or 13 hours per weekend.

- State Capital Funding
 - IDOT Capital funding opportunities are not consistent and are competitive. We recently responded to a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for projects that are shovel-ready but underfunded due to cost escalations in materials and labor. We hope to hear the results of our request in the next few months. IDOT is considering another call for projects in FY26.