

Agenda Item 7 – Ridership vs. Farebox Recovery Strategy

November 15, 2023



Pandemic Recovery Strategies

- **Ridership Strategy**
 - Restore service
 - Add service
 - Reduce fares
 - Goal: Increase ridership
- **Farebox Strategy**
 - Reduce service levels
 - Decrease operating cost
 - Maintain or increase fares
 - Goal: Maximize farebox recovery ratio

SMART House

VISION

Smarter transportation for a smarter future.

MISSION

We connect communities.

RIDERSHIP



PATHWAYS



EXTENSIONS



FREIGHT



VALUES

Safety · Integrity · Stewardship · Continuous Improvement

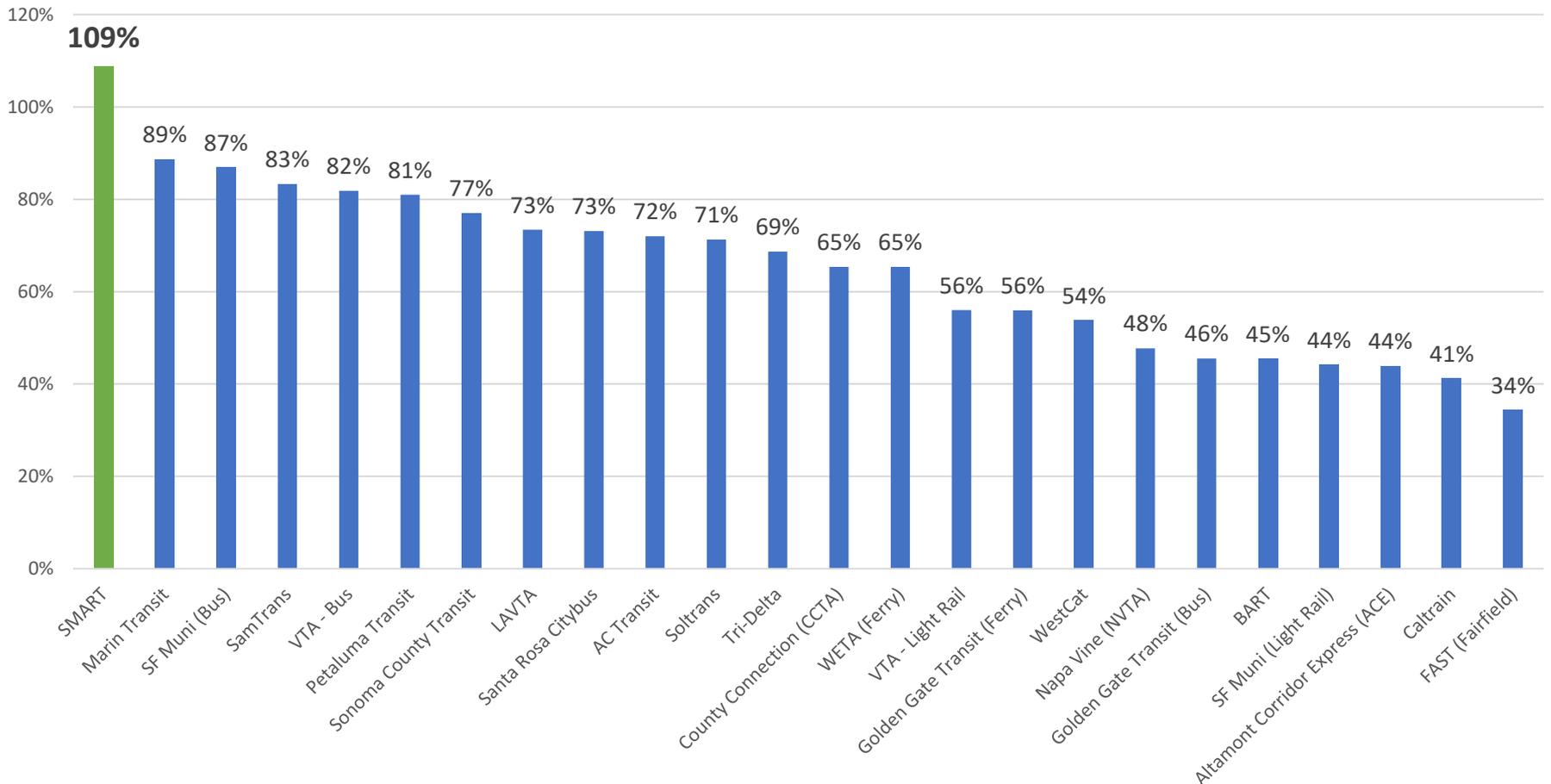
Recent Initiatives

- ✓ Fully restored weekday service levels (38 Trips per day)
- ✓ Expanded weekend service (16 trips per day)
- ✓ Extended 40% discount on fares (\$1.50 per zone)
- ✓ Developed 31-day pass based on a 3-day commute
- ✓ Implemented free summer youth program June – August
- ✓ Implemented Free Field Trips for K-12 Students
- ✓ Adjusted schedule to maximize ferry connections
- ✓ Launched Microtransit Pilot Project at Airport Station

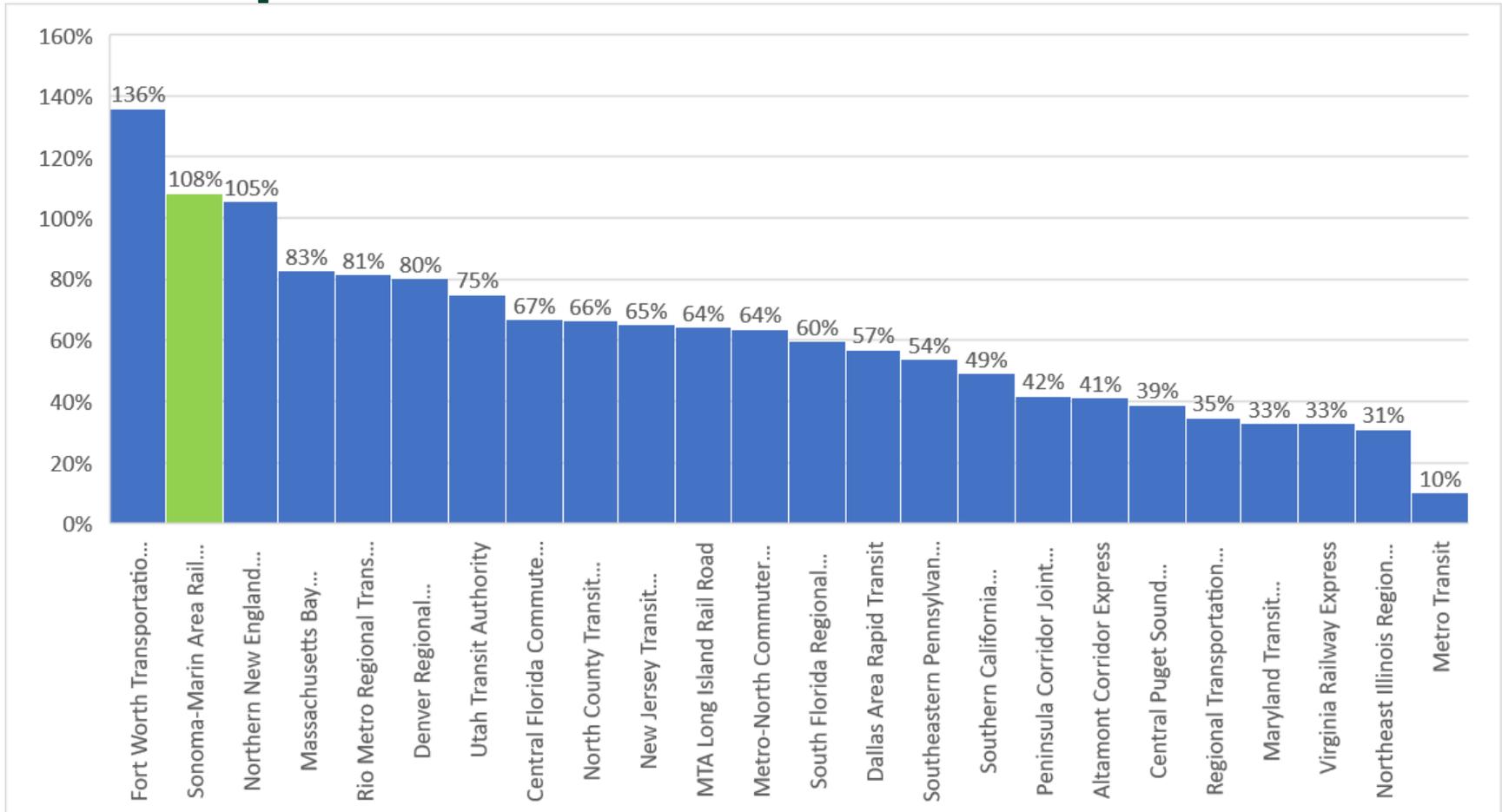


Ridership Recovery (Sept 2019 v Sept 2023)

SMART had the highest ridership recovery ratio in the Bay Area for 7th month in a row.



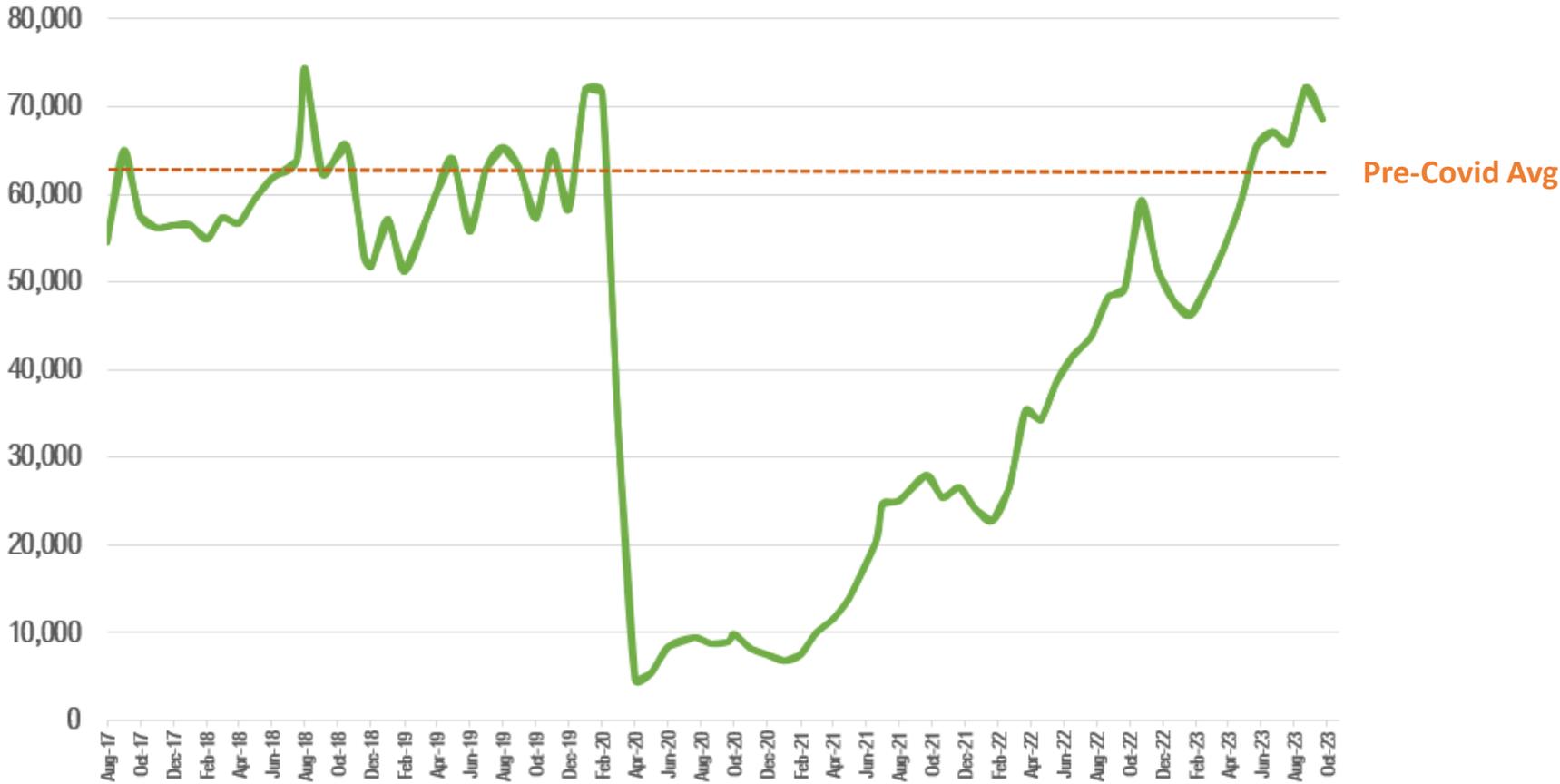
Commuter Rail Ridership Recovery Jul-Sep 2023 vs 2019



SMART has the #2 Commuter Rail ridership recovery rate in the country!



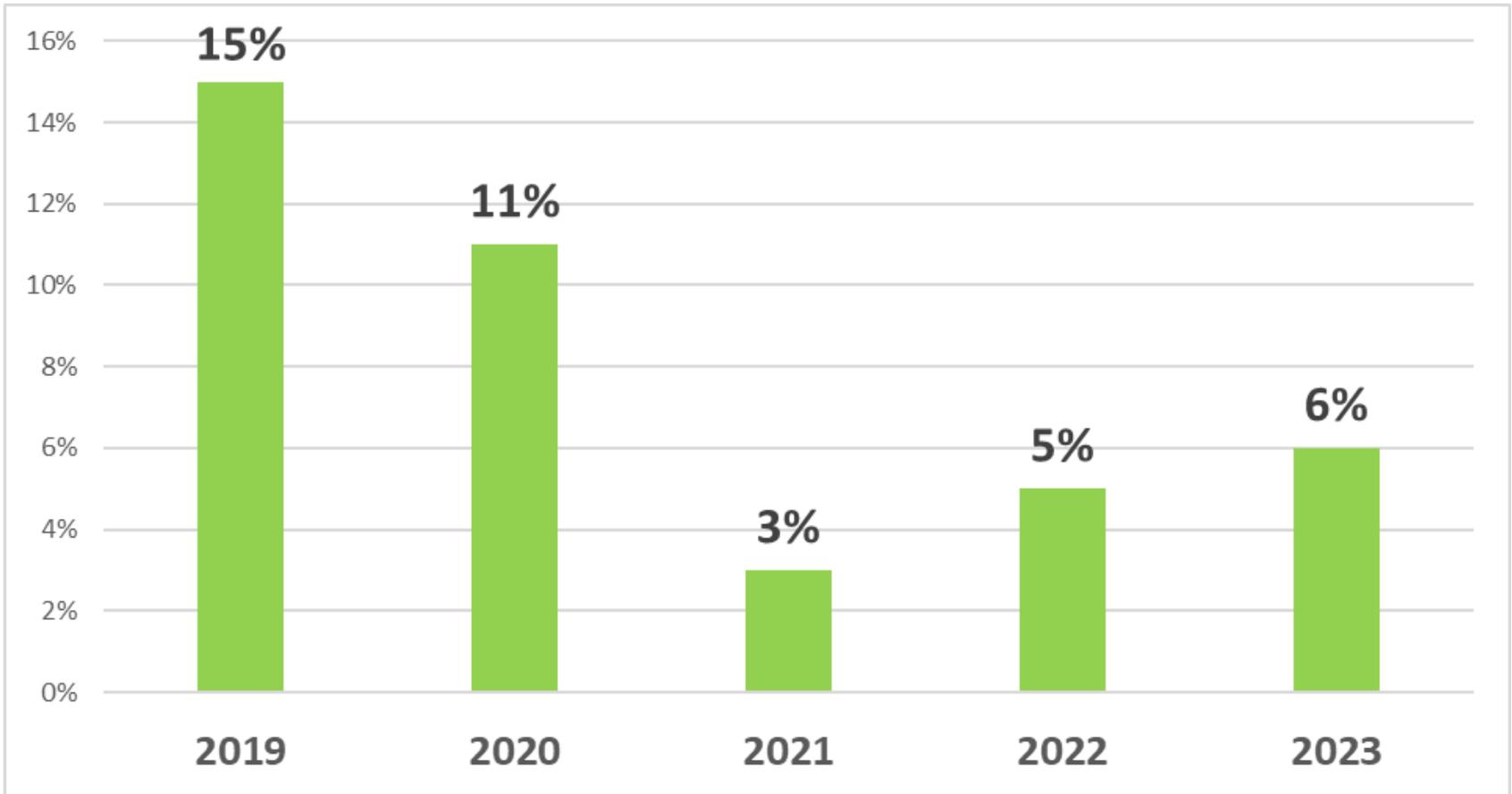
SMART Ridership Recovery



Ridership exceeded pre-COVID average past 4-months



SMART Farebox Recovery %



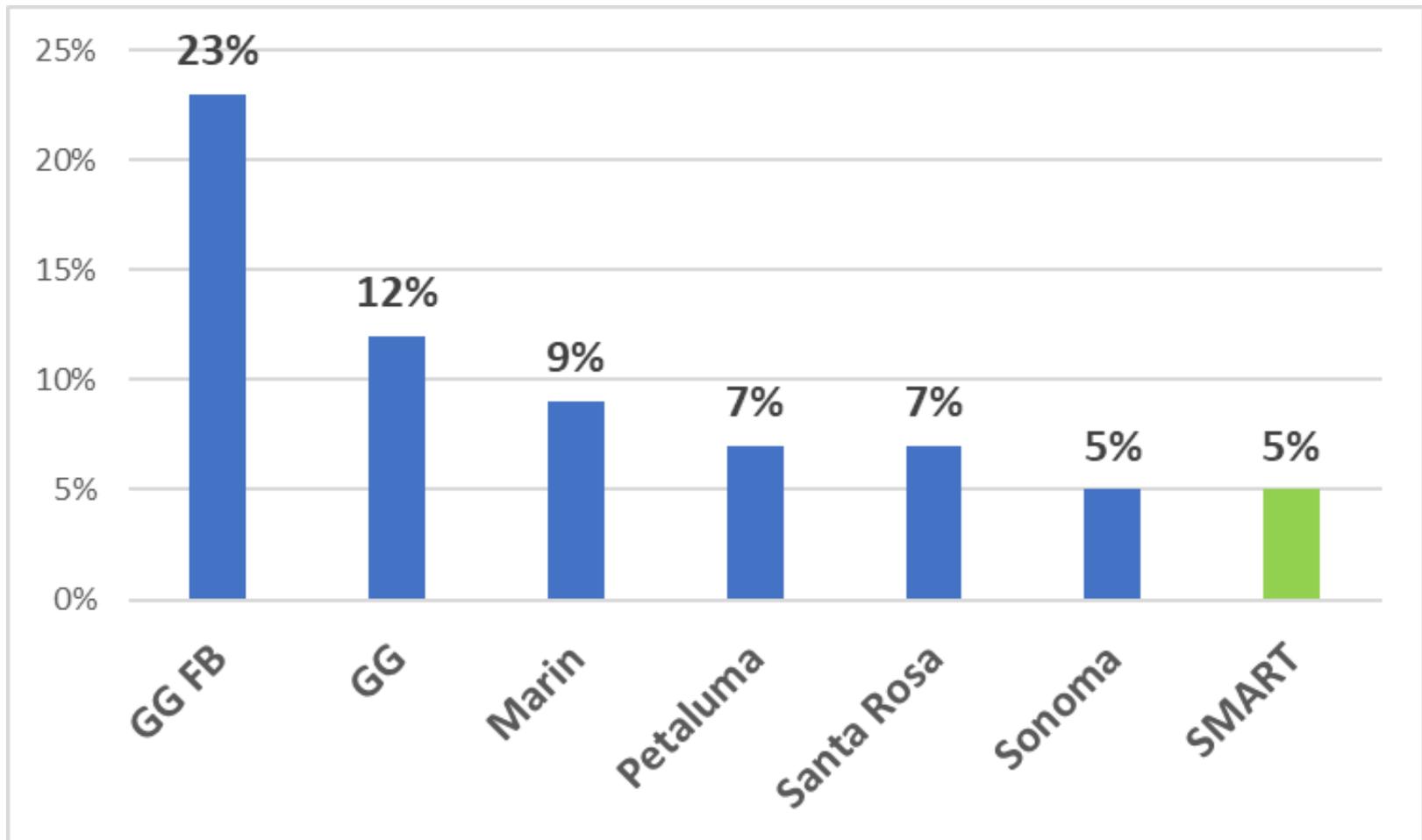
SMART Farebox Recovery Calculation

Fare Revenue / Operating Cost = Farebox Recovery %

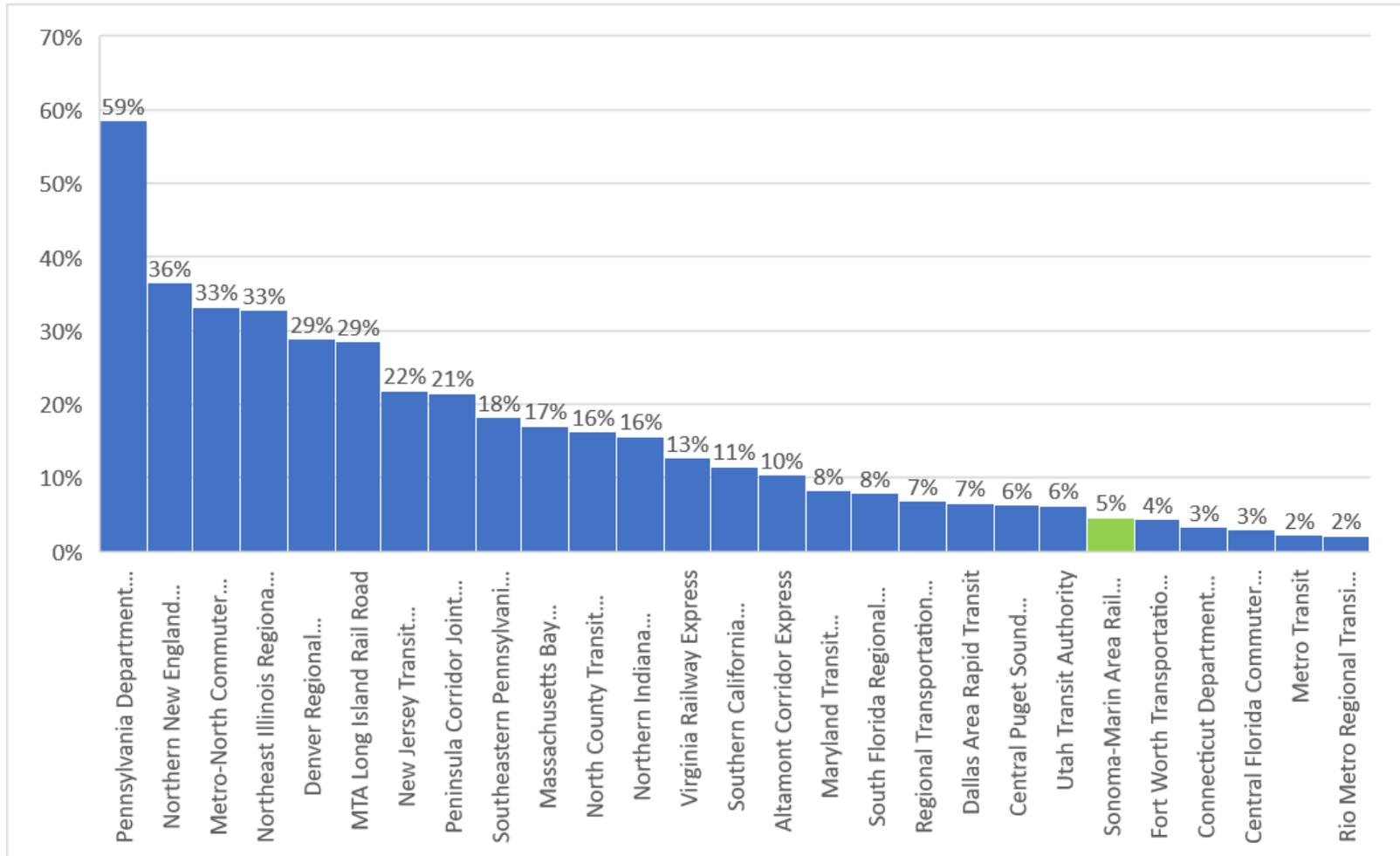
SMART Example:

FY23 Operating Cost	FY23 Fare Revenue	Farebox Recovery %
\$ 30,604,990	\$ 1,800,099.00	6%

2022 Sonoma/Marin Farebox



2022 Commuter Rail Farebox %



NPR Article

Public transit systems try to avoid ‘death spiral’ as remote work hurts ridership

“Now a combination of ridership declines and inflation has left some major transit agencies with massive budget deficits — including systems in Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Philadelphia.”

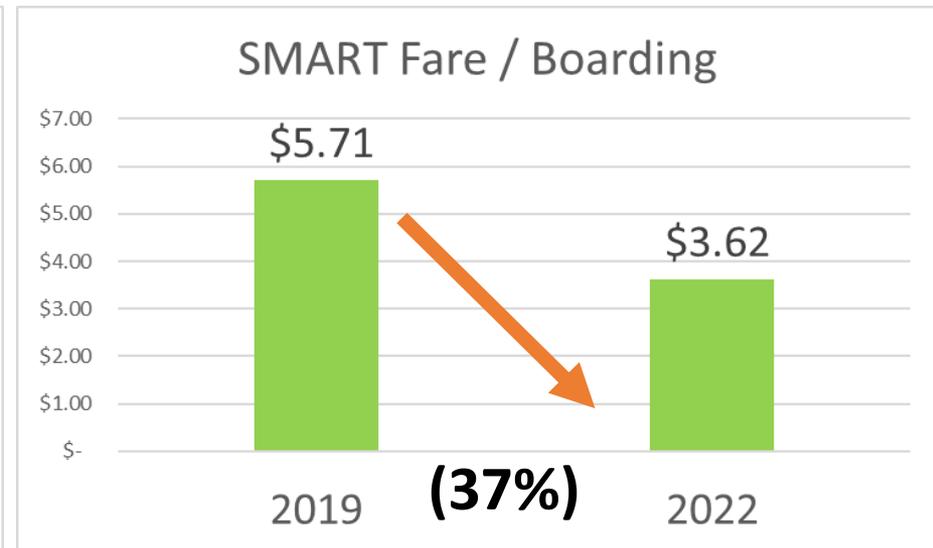
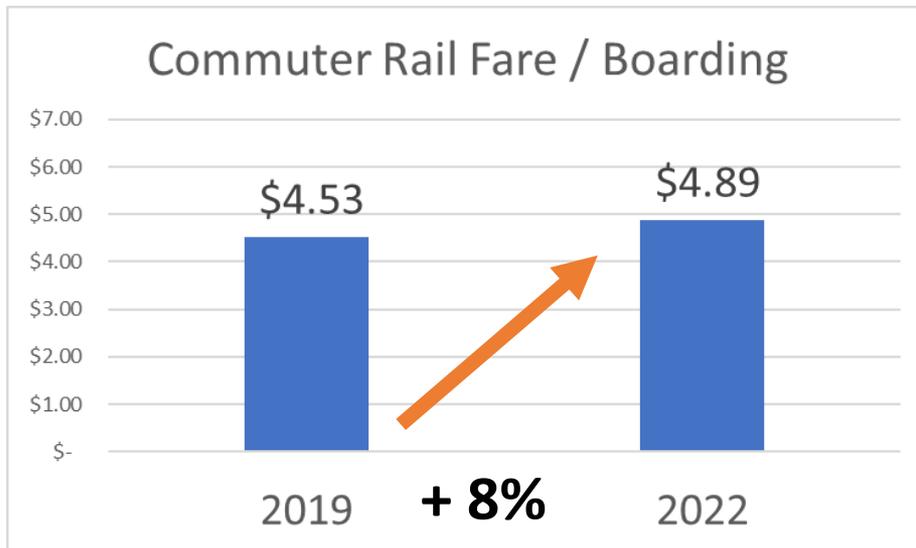
"The irony with transit is, for years the ones that were generating most of their revenue through passenger fares were the ones that were deemed to be the most successful," Puentes said. "But those agencies are having a more difficult financial challenge because they relied on those passenger fares."

Source:

[Public transit tries to avoid death spiral after COVID : NPR](#)

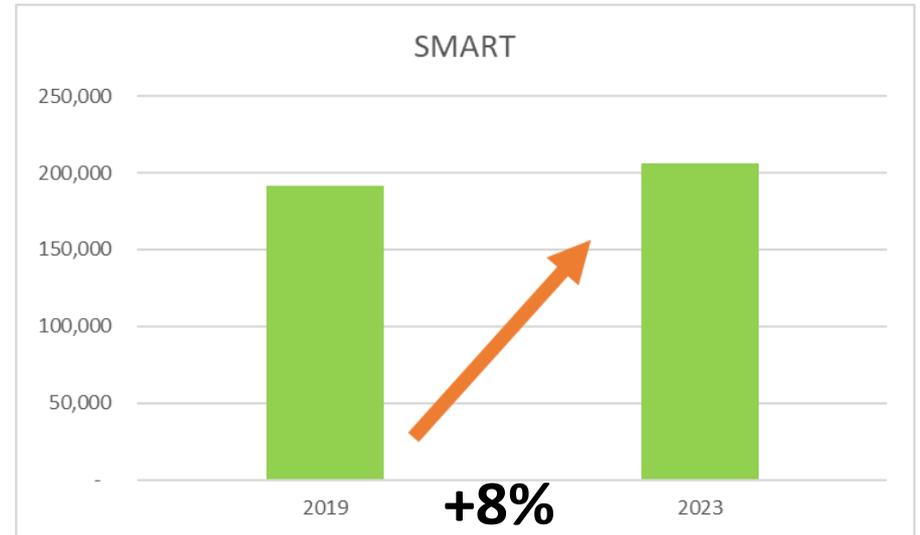
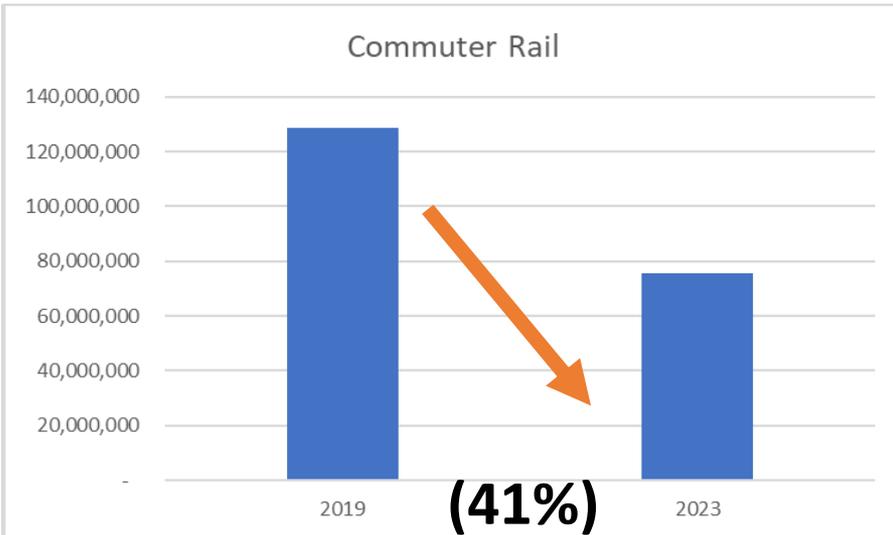


Fare per Boarding (2022 vs. 2019)

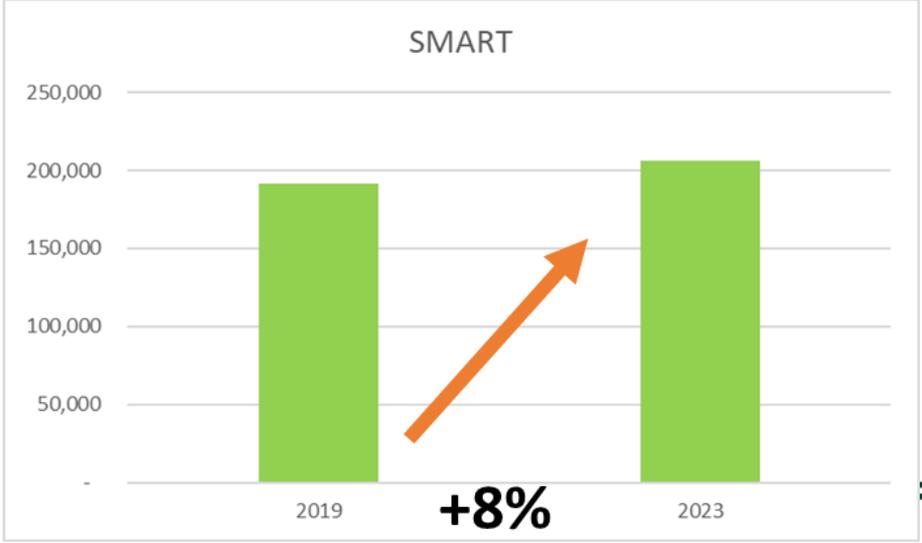
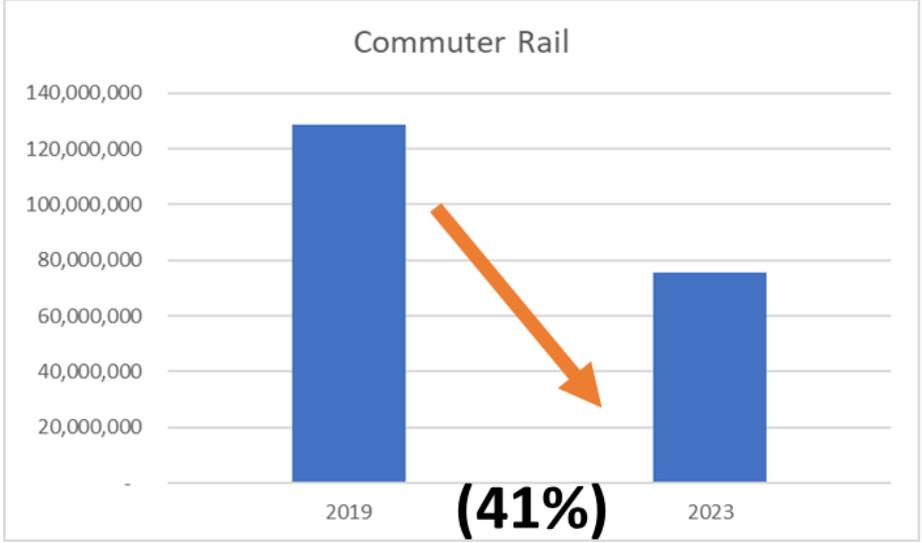
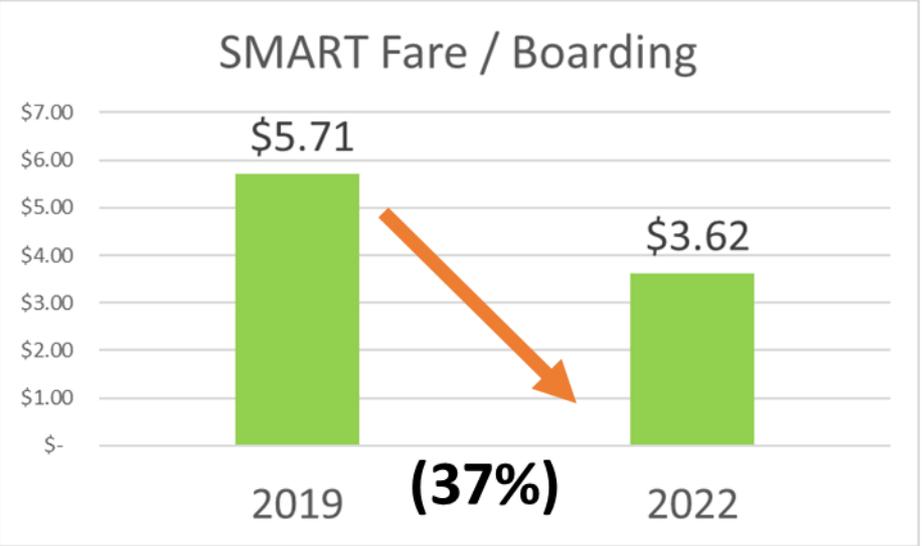
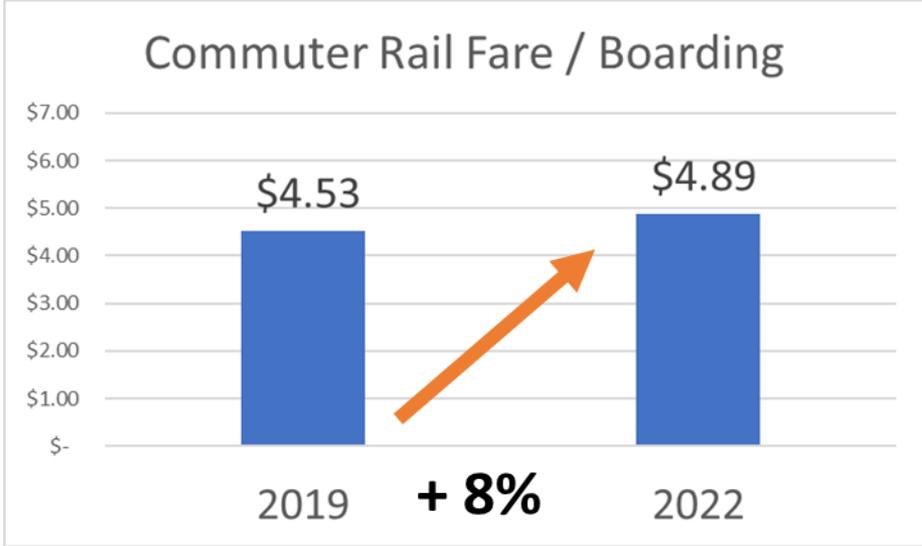


- 2019: SMART +26% vs average
- 2022: SMART (26%) vs average

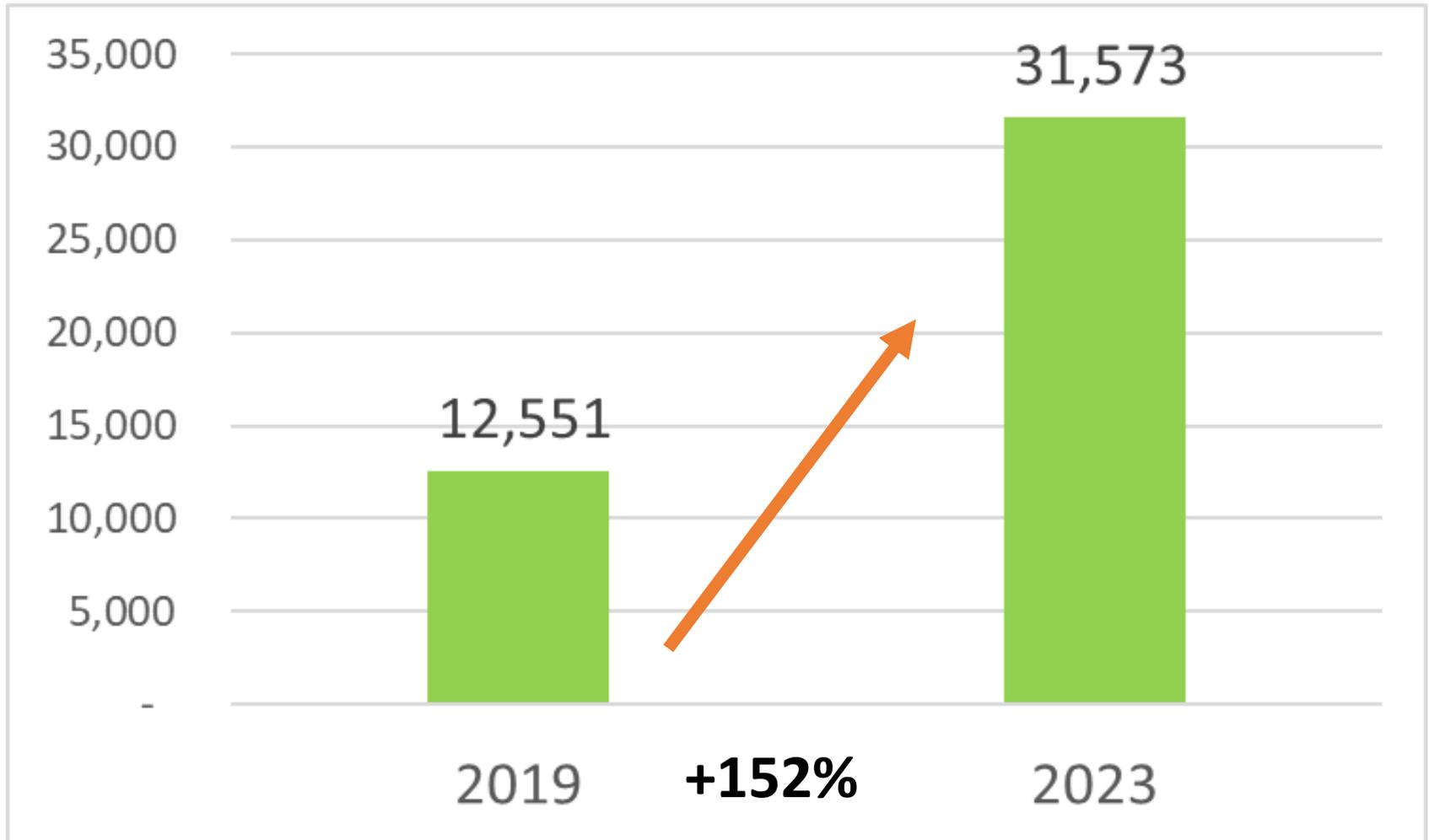
Ridership (Jul-Sep 2023 vs 2019)



Fare vs. Ridership



Free Summer Youth Program



2024 Strategic Plan

- **Ridership**

- Sustain or increase service levels
- Continue discounted fares
- Extend field trip program
- Offer 2024 free summer youth program
- Explore other ideas to generate ridership

- **Farebox**

- Consider cutting less productive trips
- Increase fares
- Discontinue field trip program
- Cancel 2024 free summer youth program
- Establish goals for farebox recovery percentage

Discussion

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