



Mountain Rides Transportation Authority

Public Notice

Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors

Wednesday, September 16, 2026, 1:00 pm

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Meeting ID: 290 333 730 320 03

Passcode: 6xh6Tw6G

Mountain Rides Board of Directors

Chair Grady Burnett (Sun Valley), Vice-Chair Tom Blanchard (at-large), Secretary Kristin Derrig (Ketchum), Mike Burchmore (Sun Valley), Muffy Davis (Blaine Co.), Martha Burke (Hailey), Pete Prekeges (Ketchum), Christina Giordani (Bellevue)

Agenda

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Comments** from the Chair, Members, and Staff
3. **Public Comment** re: Items not on the Agenda (and questions from the press)
4. **Action item:** Consent Agenda **(Pg 2)**
 - a. Approve/file: Minutes of Regular Board Meeting, August 19, 2026 **(Pg 3-6)**
 - b. Receive/file Performance Dashboard, August 2026 **(7-34)**
 - c. Receive/file: Report from Director, Fleet, Maintenance & Facilities; Director, Community Transportation; Manager, Finance & Administration; Director, Transit Operations; Manager, Marketing & Communications; Executive Director **(Pg 35-40)**
5. **Discussion item:** ITD-PT Video Re: Mountain Rides **(Pg 41)**
6. **Discussion Item:** Items of Interest to the Members **(Pg 42)**
7. **Adjourn**

Public information regarding agenda items is available from Mountain Rides at 800 1st Ave. North, Ketchum, or 208-788-7433. Anyone needing special accommodation to attend the above-noticed meeting should contact Mountain Rides, at 208-788-7433, two days prior to the meeting.

Mountain Rides Agenda Action Item Summary

Date:

September 16, 2026

From:

Board of Directors

Action Item:

4. Consent Agenda

Committee Review:

☐

Yes

☒

No

Committee
Purview:

Previously
discussed at board
level:

☐

Yes

☒

No

Recommended
Motion:

I move to receive, approve, adopt, and file the Consent Agenda.

Fiscal Impact:

NA

Related Policy or
Procedural Impact:

NA

Background:

- a. Approve/file: Minutes of Regular Board Meeting, August 19, 2026
- b. Receive/file: Performance Dashboard, August 2026
- c. Receive/file: Report from:
 - 1) Director, Fleet, Maintenance & Facilities (Carlos Tellez)
 - 2) Director, Community Transport (Jamie Canfield)
 - 3) Manager, Finance & Administration (Liz Ruiz)
 - 4) Director, Transit Operations (Raul Romero Campos)
 - 5) Manager, Marketing & Communications (Andrea Hernandez)
 - 6) Executive Director (Wally Morgus)



**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MOUNTAIN RIDES TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
Wednesday, August 19, 2026, 1:00 pm
Hailey City Hall, 115 Main Street South, Hailey, Idaho**

The Mountain Rides Transportation Authority's Board of Directors met in a Regular Meeting in person and via conference call.

PRESENT: Grady Burnett, Tom Blanchard, Kristin Derrig, Mike Burchmore, Muffy Davis, Martha Burke

ALSO PRESENT: Wally Morgus, Jamie Canfield, Andrea Hernandez, Raul Romero, Liz Ruiz, Carlos Tellez, Andrea Loera, Eric Humbach, Andrew Theophilus, Mike Pohanka, Susan Pohanka

1. CALL TO ORDER

Grady Burnett called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. Kristin Derrig took attendance and confirmed that a quorum was present.

2. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR, BOARD MEMBERS, and STAFF

Grady Burnett thanked Vice Chair Tom Blanchard for leading the previous month's meeting in his absence and commented that operations appeared to be running well during the busy summer season.

Wally Morgus provided an update regarding a previously awarded \$4.5 million federal Low or No Emission Vehicle Program grant. The grant, awarded about two years ago, was originally intended to fund three battery-electric buses and supporting infrastructure but had not yet been obligated by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Wally explained that, after conversations with the Idaho Transportation Department's Public Transportation Office and Senator Mike Crapo's office, Mountain Rides learned that the grant would need to be rescoped away from battery-electric buses and infrastructure toward diesel-powered vehicles for the funding to be released.

Wally explained that Mountain Rides' decision to transition toward an electric fleet was based on long-term financial and operational considerations, particularly total cost of ownership. Although battery-electric buses have a higher initial purchase price, the cost of electricity compared with diesel fuel in Idaho makes the electric vehicles more economical over their expected useful life.

Because Mountain Rides has already made substantial progress toward fleet electrification and strategy continues to make financial sense for the organization, Wally determined that changing the

grant scope to diesel vehicles would not be appropriate. As a result, Mountain Rides does not expect to receive the \$4.5 million award. Wally has asked ITD to determine whether another Idaho transit agency could potentially use the funding under the revised federal requirements.

Wally noted that Mountain Rides has received another grant through ITD that is expected to support the purchase of two additional electric buses. While the loss of the \$4.5 million award is disappointing, he stated that the agency remains in a position to continue its long-term fleet replacement strategy by consistently pursuing future funding opportunities.

Wally also discussed the importance of maintaining a long-term capital replacement plan and pursuing smaller, regular vehicle replacement grants rather than allowing a fleet to age to the point where numerous vehicles must be replaced simultaneously. He noted, however, that Mountain Rides will not pursue an upcoming federal competitive grant opportunity because of uncertainty around current federal funding priorities and the significant staff time required to prepare an application.

Wally welcomed Idaho State Representative Mike Pohanka and his wife, Susan, who attended the meeting.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Representative Mike Pohanka addressed the Board. He explained that he had reached out to Mountain Rides as part of his preparation for an upcoming transportation panel discussion in Boise. He has also been learning about the transportation system in Twin Falls and wanted to better understand the needs and operations of local public transportation agencies.

Mike encouraged Mountain Rides to contact him about state-level issues that could positively or negatively affect the agency and emphasized his willingness to serve as a resource for the district.

No additional public comments or questions from the press were received.

4. ACTION ITEM: *Approve Consent Agenda*

- a) Approve/file: Minutes of Regular Board Meeting, July 15, 2026*
- b) Approve/file: Minutes of Planning & Marketing Committee, August 5, 2026*
- c) Approve/file: Minutes of Finance & Performance Committee, August 5, 2026*
- d) Receive/file: Performance Dashboard, July 2026*
- e) Receive/file: June 2026 Operating Fund Financial Statement and FY26-Q3 Quarterly Capital, Facilities, Workforce Housing and Contingency Financial Statements and Bills Paid.*
- f) Receive/file: Report from Director, Fleet, Maintenance & Facilities; Director, Community Transportation; Manager, Finance & Administration; Director, Transit Operations; Manager, Marketing & Communications; Executive Director*

Grady asked about the status of potential microtransit service. Wally stated that, considering current funding conditions and other agency priorities, the project has been placed on hold. Mountain Rides remains interested in microtransit as a longer-term option but does not anticipate moving forward before FY28 at the earliest.

Grady also asked about the SHARK Driver Recognition Program. Andrea Hernandez explained that riders can scan QR codes posted inside Mountain Rides buses to rate and recognize drivers. Responses provide information about individual driver performance and the overall rider experience. Operations staff reviews the results monthly and recognizes drivers receiving strong ratings and positive feedback. Almost 200 rider responses had been received. Wally reported that drivers responded positively to the program and that it appears to reinforce customer service and expectations.

Grady expressed support for the program and emphasized the importance of recognizing drivers for positive customer interactions and strong performance.

Mike Burchmore noted that the Finance & Performance Committee had previously discussed an issue involving Window Welder and that it appears to have been resolved.

Wally also reported that he had recently conducted a detailed review of historical ridership data and identified errors that had overstated ridership in some previous years. The Performance Dashboard has been updated with corrected historical figures.

Wally said he has been reviewing county employment figures and ITD traffic-count data to identify factors that may be contributing to the Valley Route ridership decline. County employment levels have remained relatively consistent, while traffic counts south of the Valley Club indicate an increase in daily vehicle trips during recent years, particularly during commuting hours.

While the available data is not sufficient to establish a definitive cause, staff discussed the possibility that some former transit riders have shifted to personal vehicles. Ongoing highway construction and congestion may be contributing to that shift because driving provides commuters with greater flexibility to change routes or respond to delays. The Board also noted increased use of bicycles and e-bikes as another possible factor.

The Board discussed the opportunity to increase marketing efforts once major construction projects are completed and transit travel times become more predictable, emphasizing the convenience and reliability of returning to the bus.

Mike Burchmore moved to approve the consent agenda, and Tom Blanchard seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

5. ACTION ITEM: *Approve & Adopt FY27 Transit Service Plan*

The Board considered the proposed FY27 Transit Service Plan. Wally noted that the plan had previously been reviewed in committee meetings and incorporated service adjustments made in response to reduced funding and current ridership patterns.

Martha Burke moved to approve and adopt the FY27 Transit Service Plan, and Tom Blanchard seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

6. ACTION ITEM: *Approve & Adopt FY27 Org Chart and PayScale*

The Board considered the proposed FY27 Organizational Chart and PayScale.

Mike asked for clarification regarding the percentage adjustment shown on the pay scale. Wally clarified that employee wage increases are 3.25%, while the overall pay scale was adjusted by 3.0%, noting that the two are separate adjustments.

Mike Burchmore moved to approve and adopt the FY27 Organizational Chart and PayScale, and Kristin Derrig seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

7. ACTION ITEM: *Approve & Adopt FY27 Budget*

Wally noted that the proposed FY27 Budget had been properly noticed for public hearing, and Grady noted it had previously been reviewed in both Board committees.

Wally explained that despite significant reductions in federal funding, Mountain Rides has developed a balanced budget that can support the FY27 Transit Service Plan. The agency does not anticipate using its contingency fund to balance the budget. Instead, unspent FY26 operating funds will carry forward into the fund balance, and a portion of that balance will support FY27 operations.

Wally also reviewed service reductions incorporated into the FY27 plan, particularly reductions to low-productivity late-night service on the Valley and Blue Routes. He noted that the one positive outcome of the funding reduction was that it prompted a comprehensive review of route schedules and productivity, allowing staff to identify service periods with comparatively low ridership. He also stated that future demand for the eliminated service periods will continue to be monitored, and service could be reconsidered if demand and available funding support doing so.

Chair Grady Burnett opened the public hearing for comments regarding the FY27 Budget.

No public comments were received.

Chair Grady Burnett closed the public hearing.

Kristin Derrig moved to approve and adopt the FY27 Operating, Capital, Facilities, Workforce Housing, and Contingency Budgets, and Martha Burke seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

8. DISCUSSION ITEM: *Items of Interest to the Members*

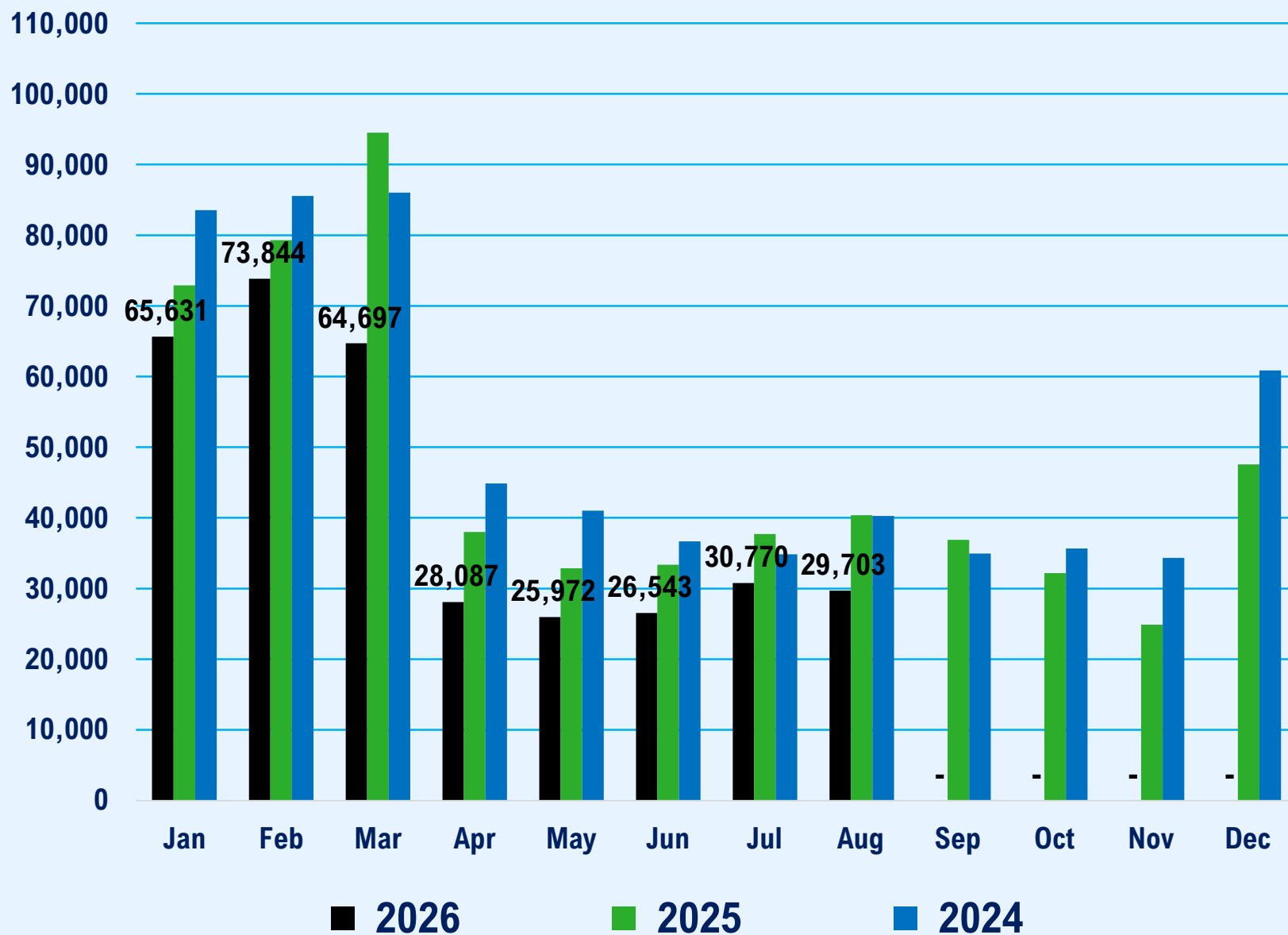
Grady expressed appreciation for the Mountain Rides staff and noted that the Board's ability to operate effectively reflects the organization's strong leadership, management, and frontline employees.

9. ADJOURN

Martha Burke moved to adjourn the meeting, and Tom Blanchard seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 1:36 pm.

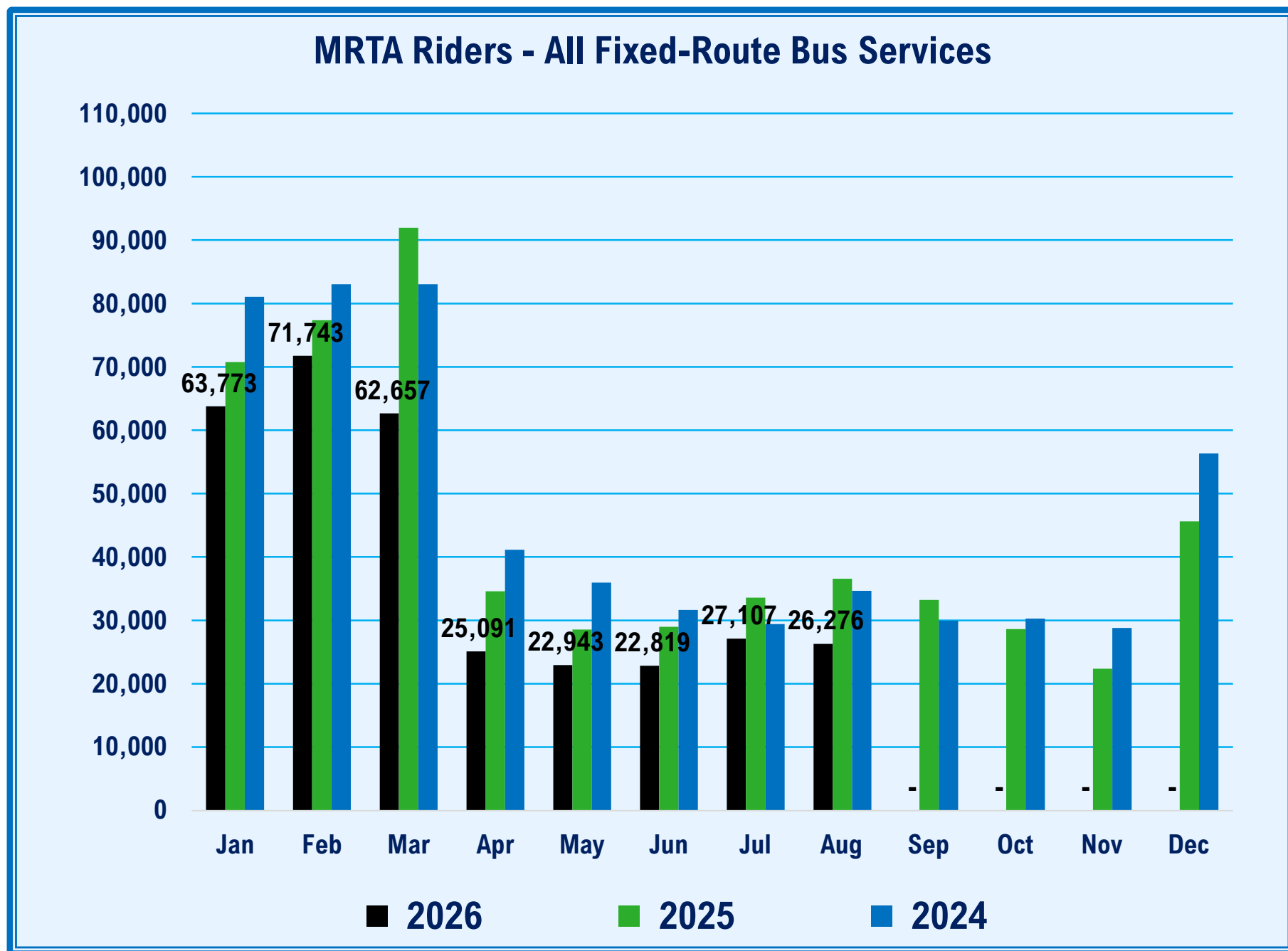
Chair Grady Burnett

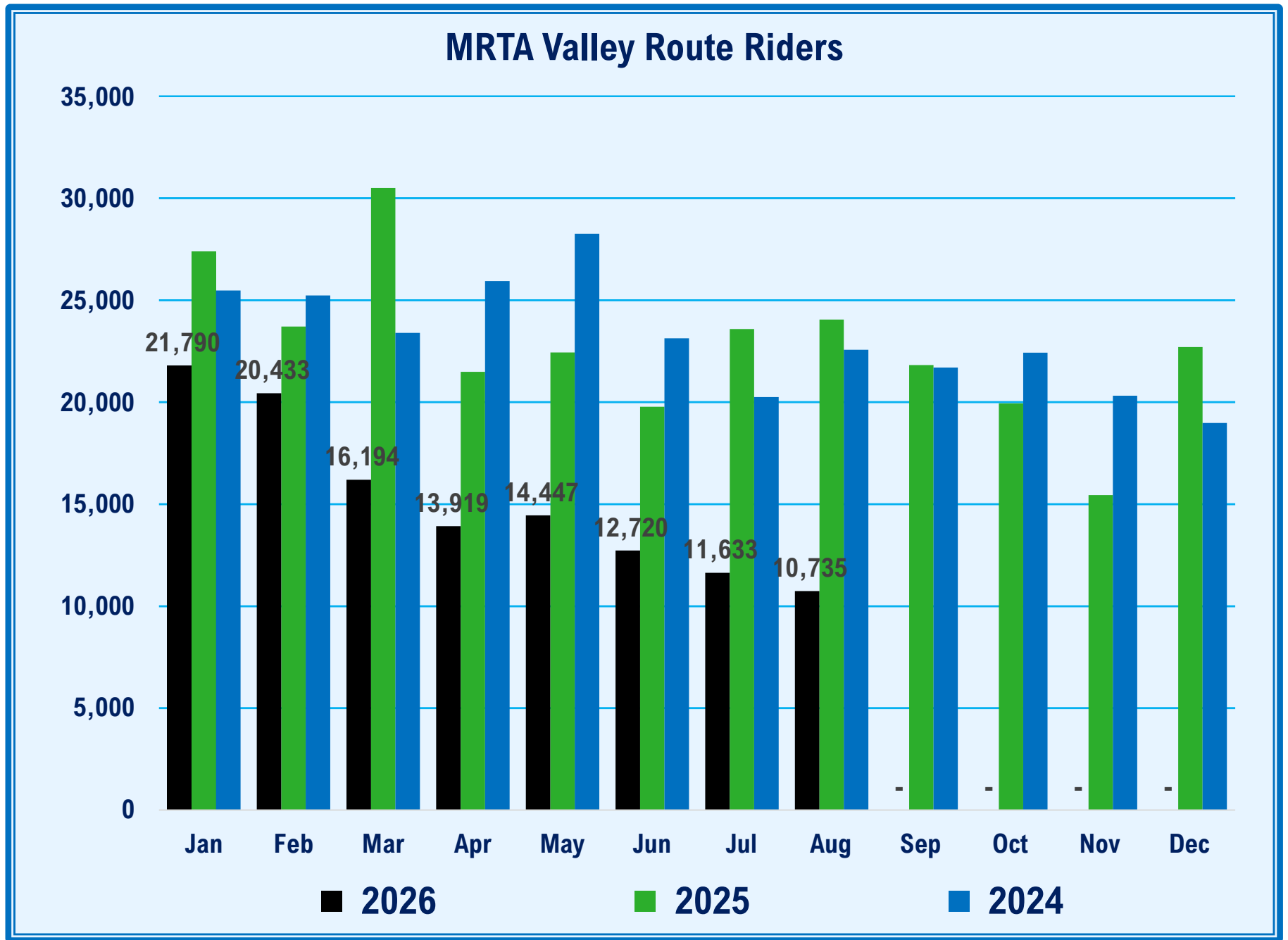
MRTA Total Riders - All Services (Bus, Vanpool, ADA, CHT)

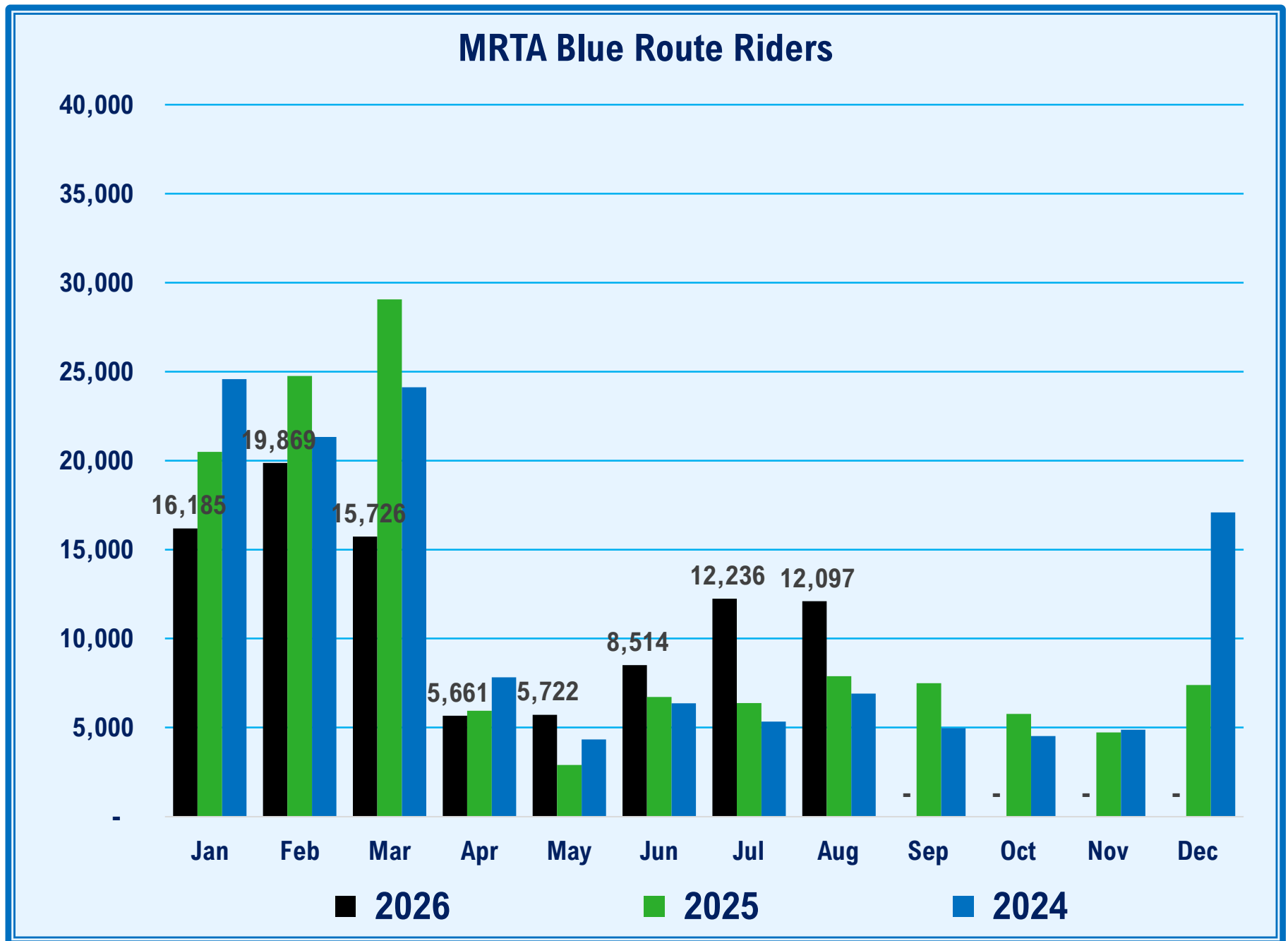


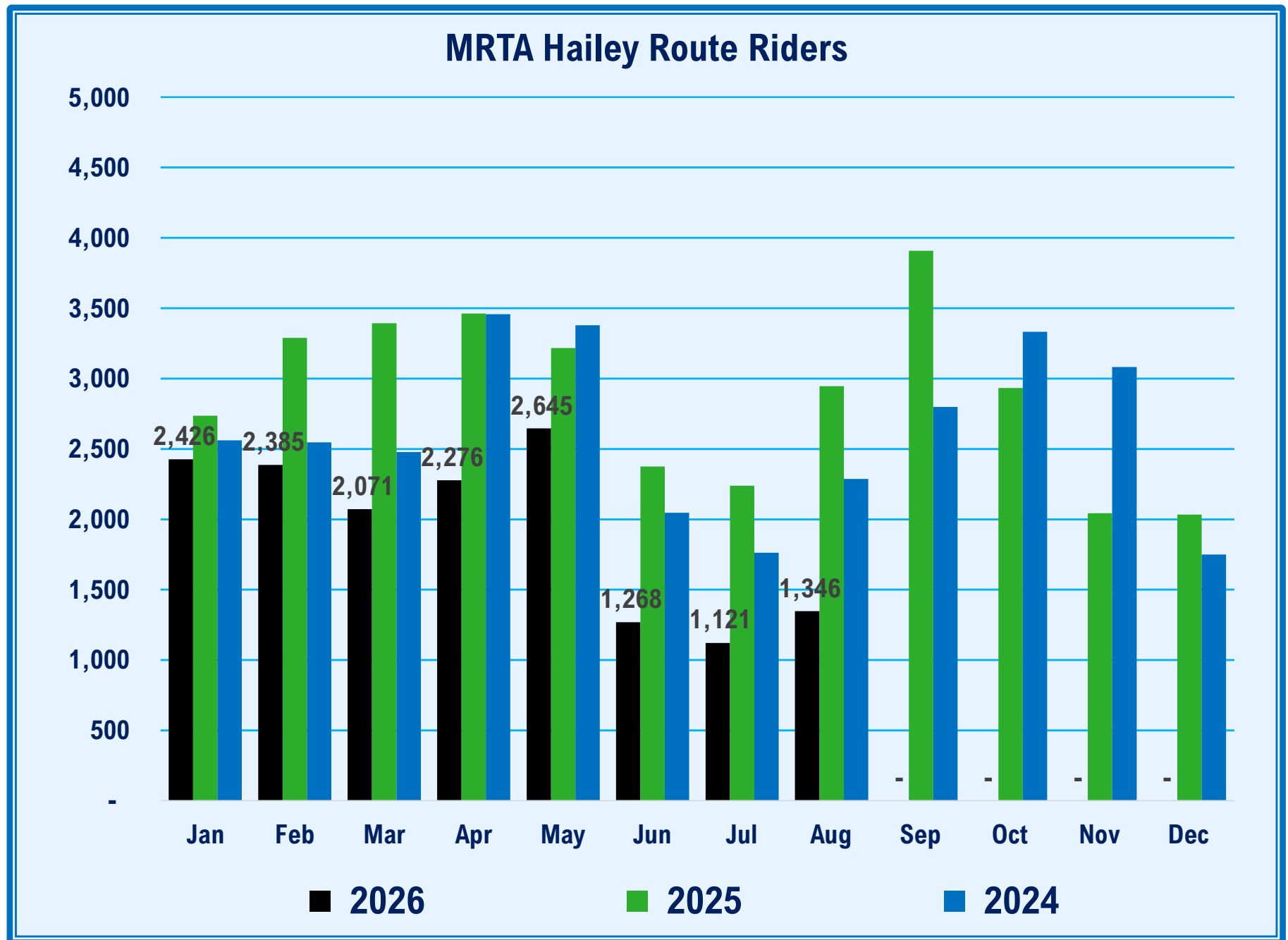
Ridership by Route Trailing Twelve Months+ (TTM+1)

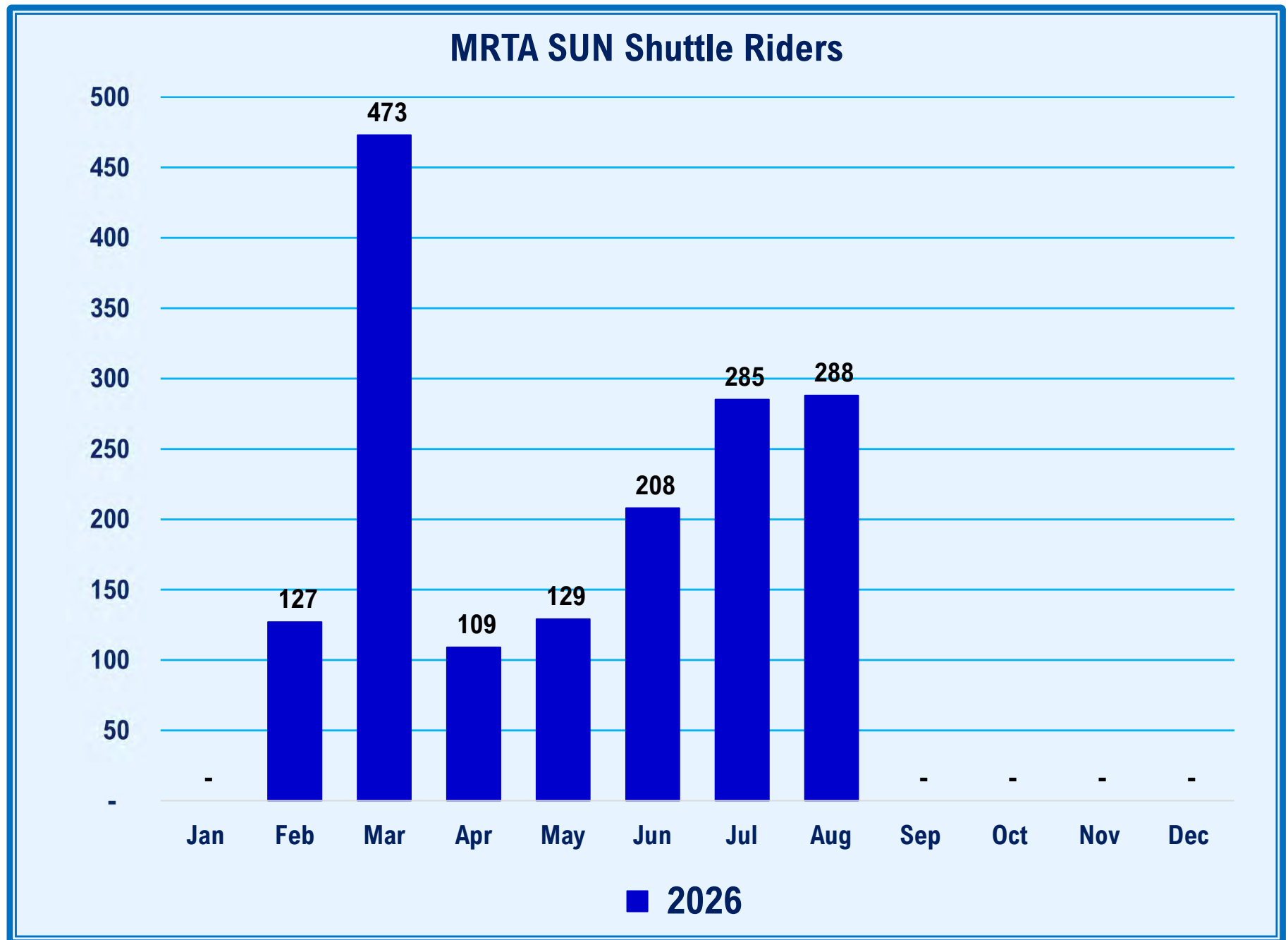


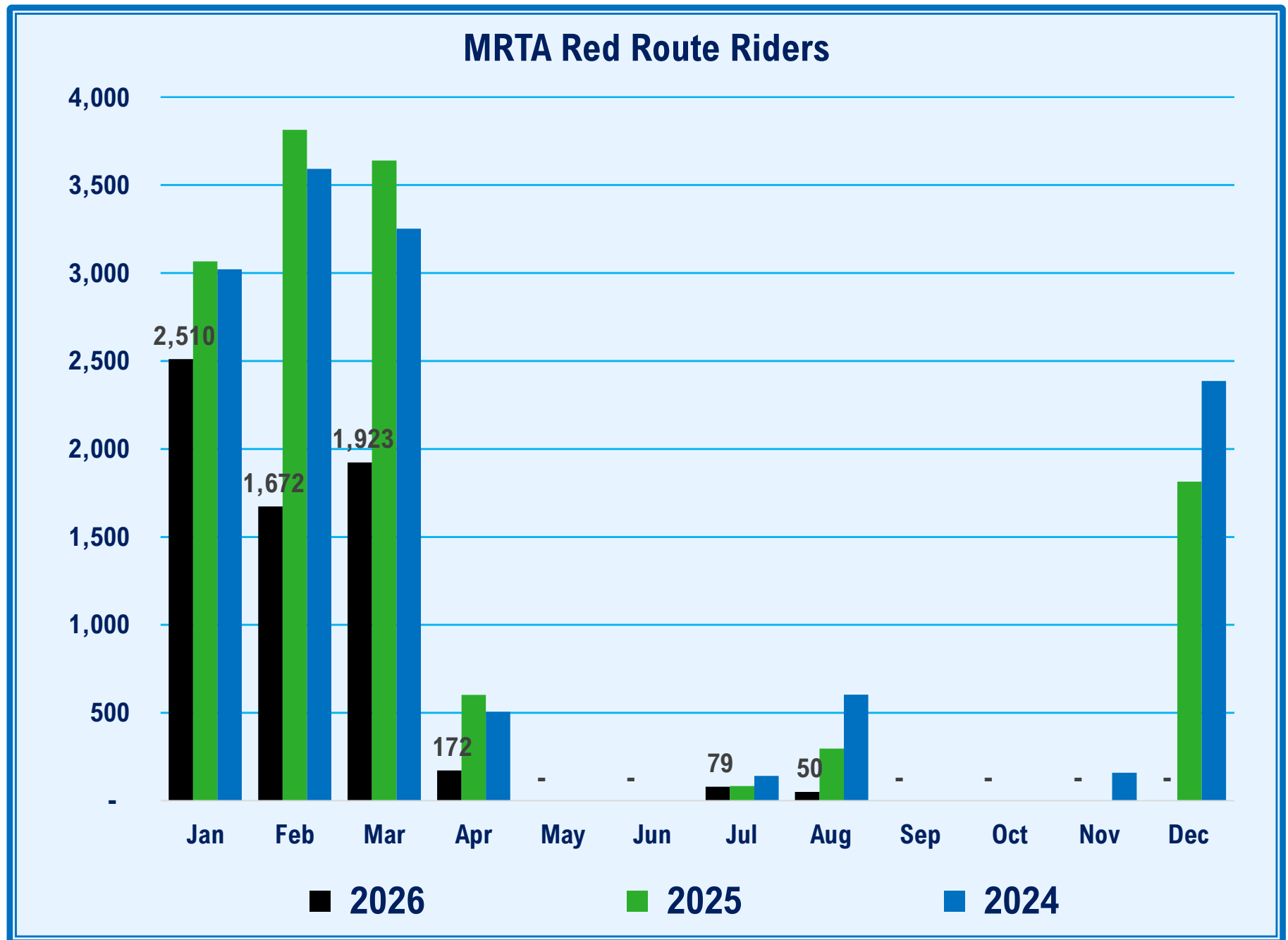


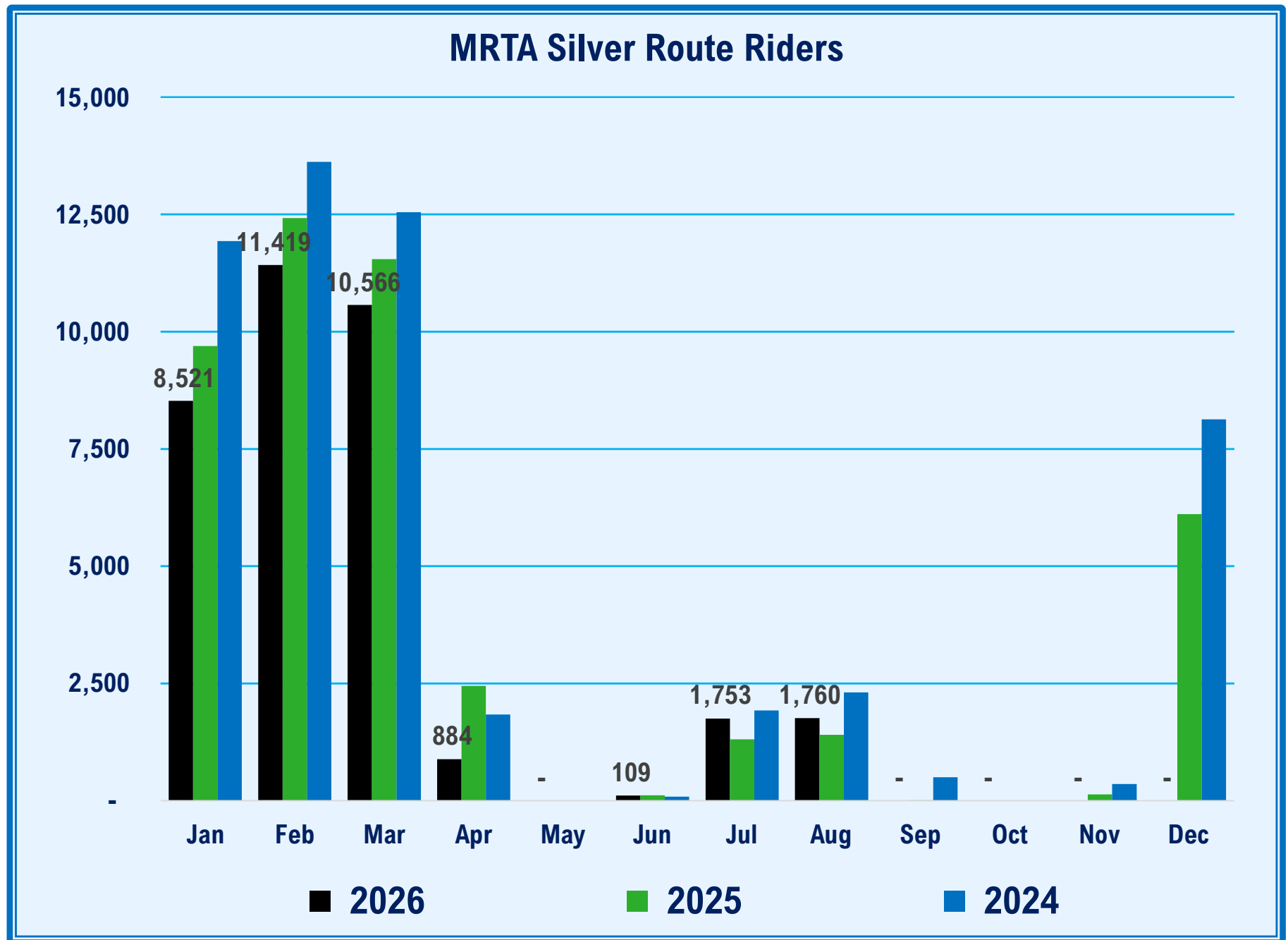


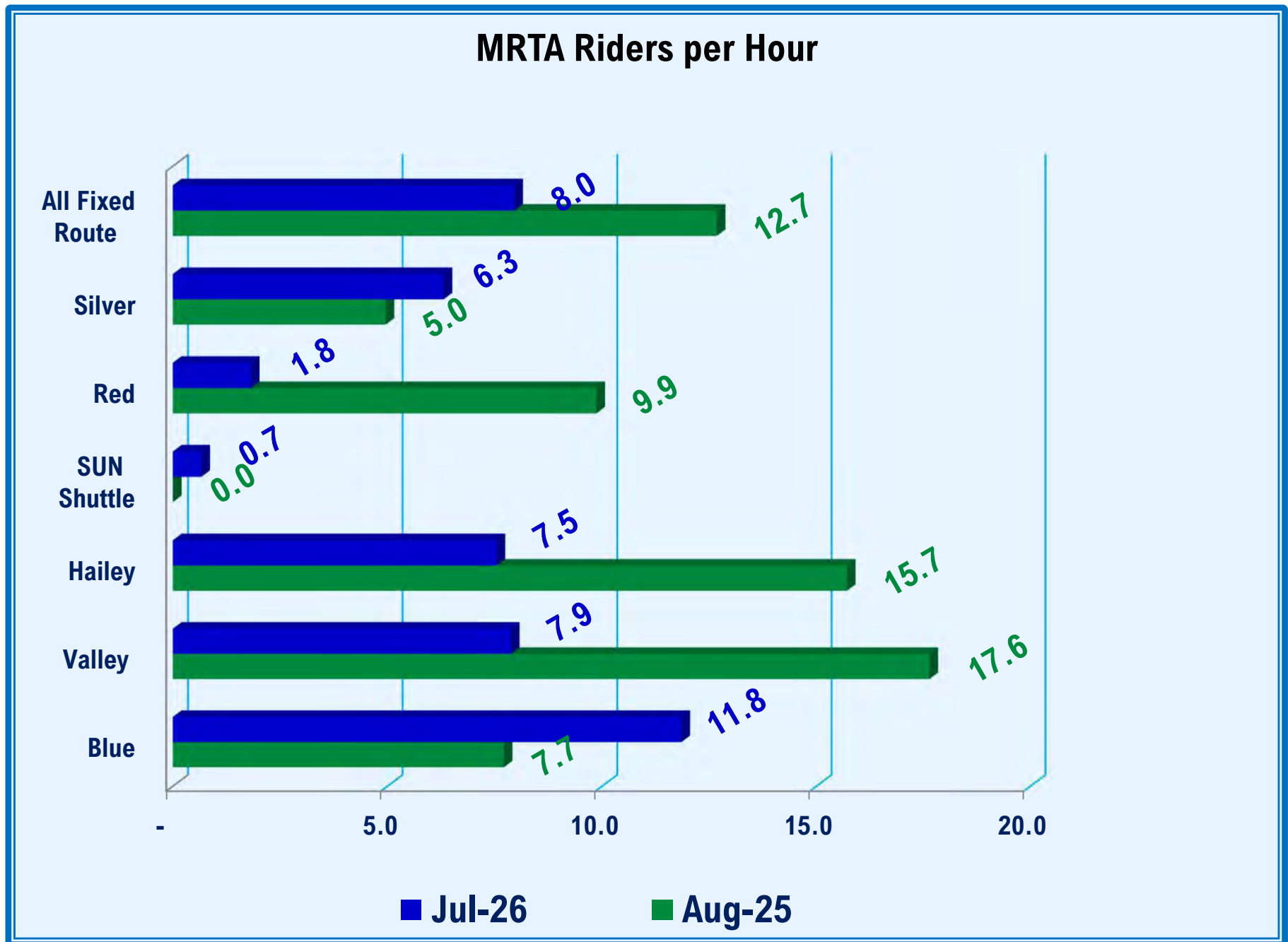


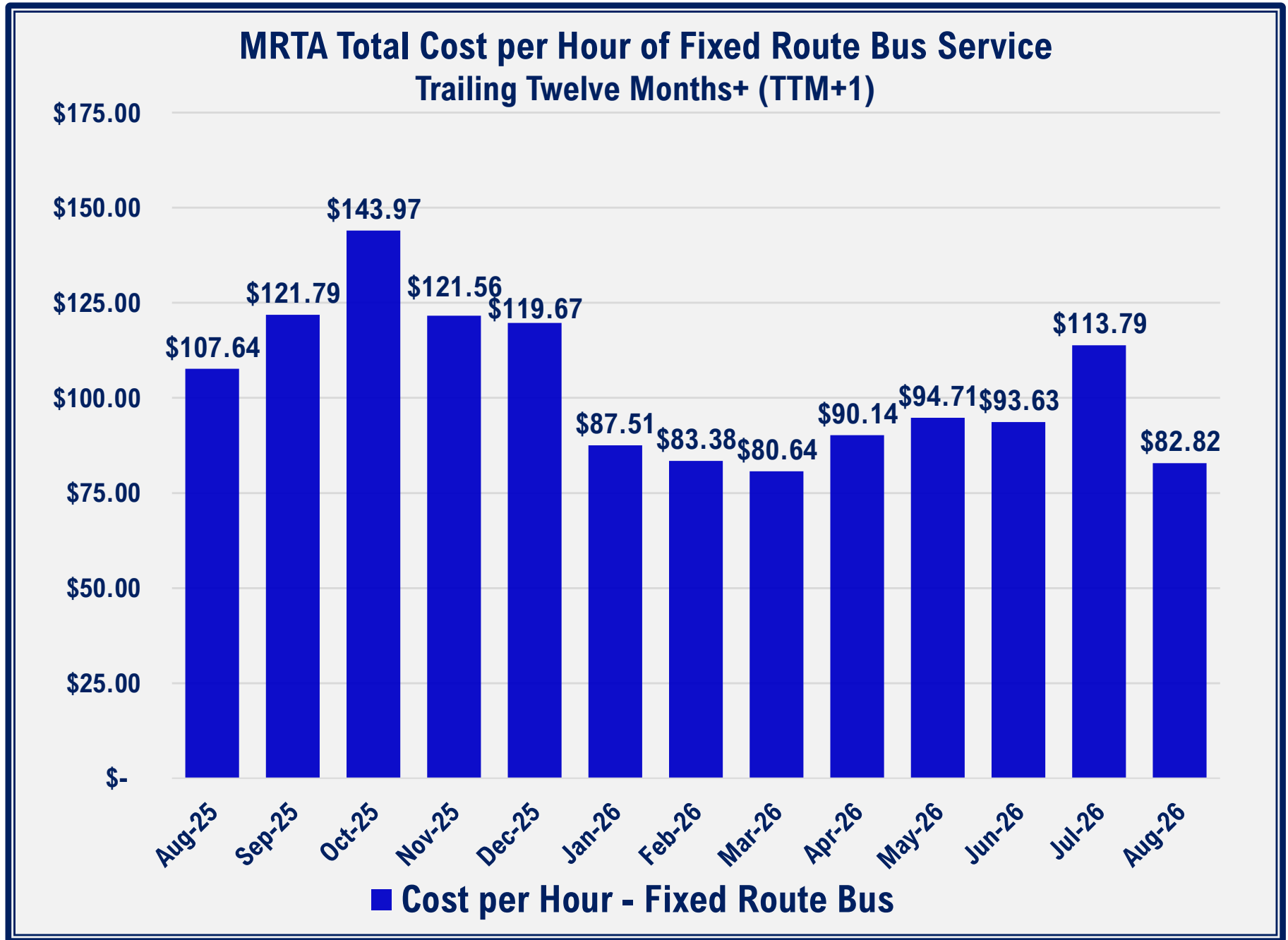


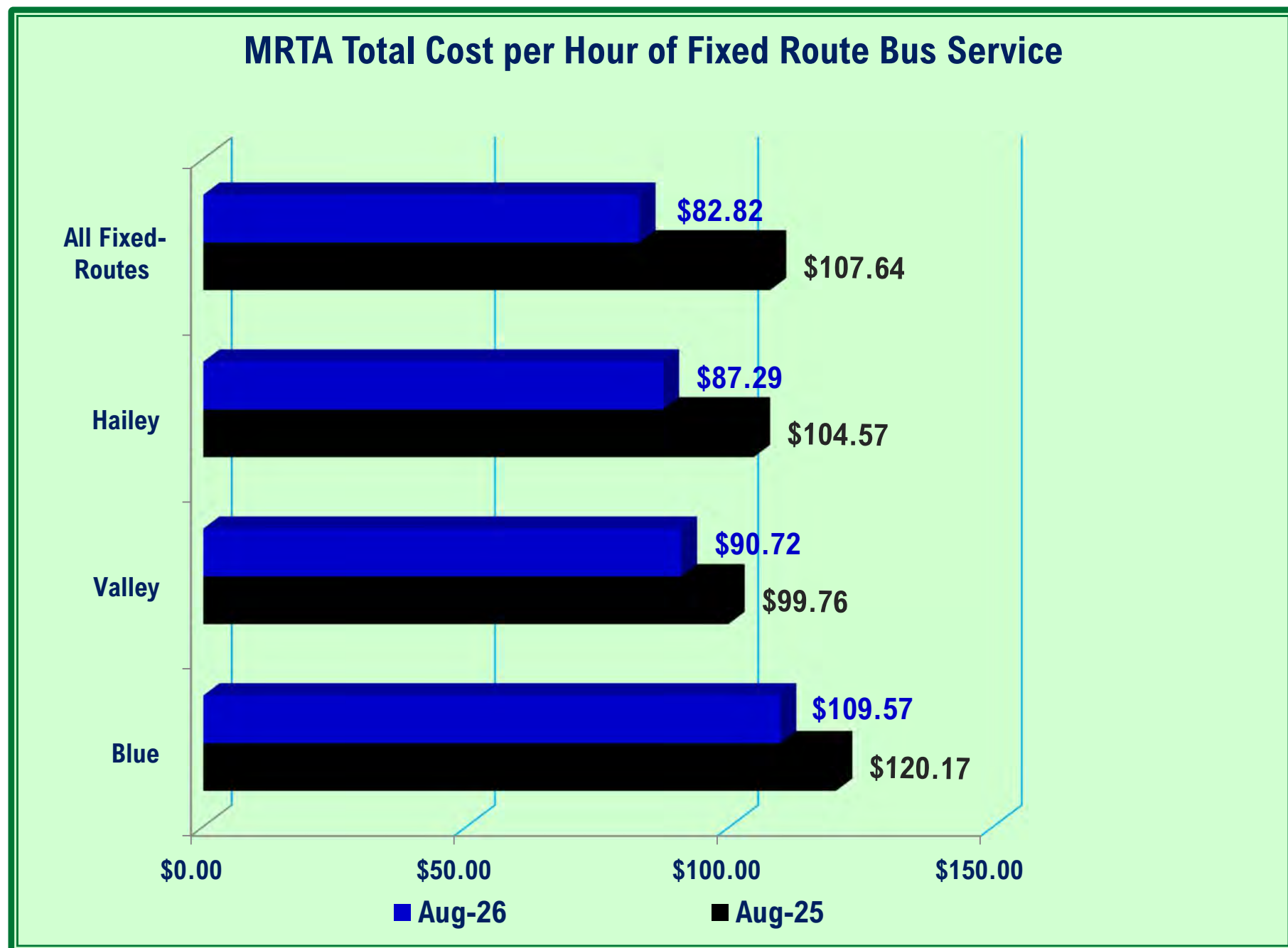


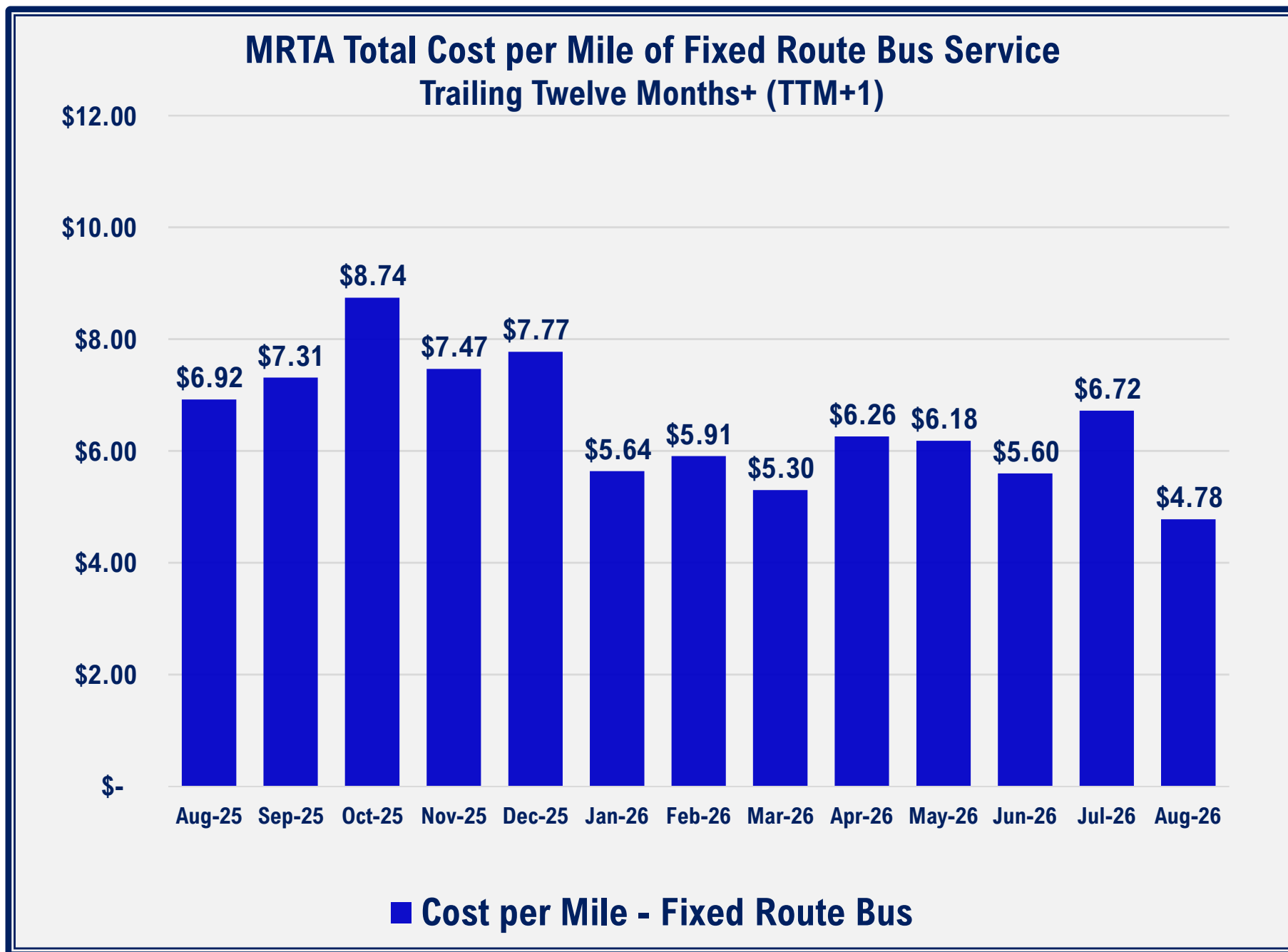




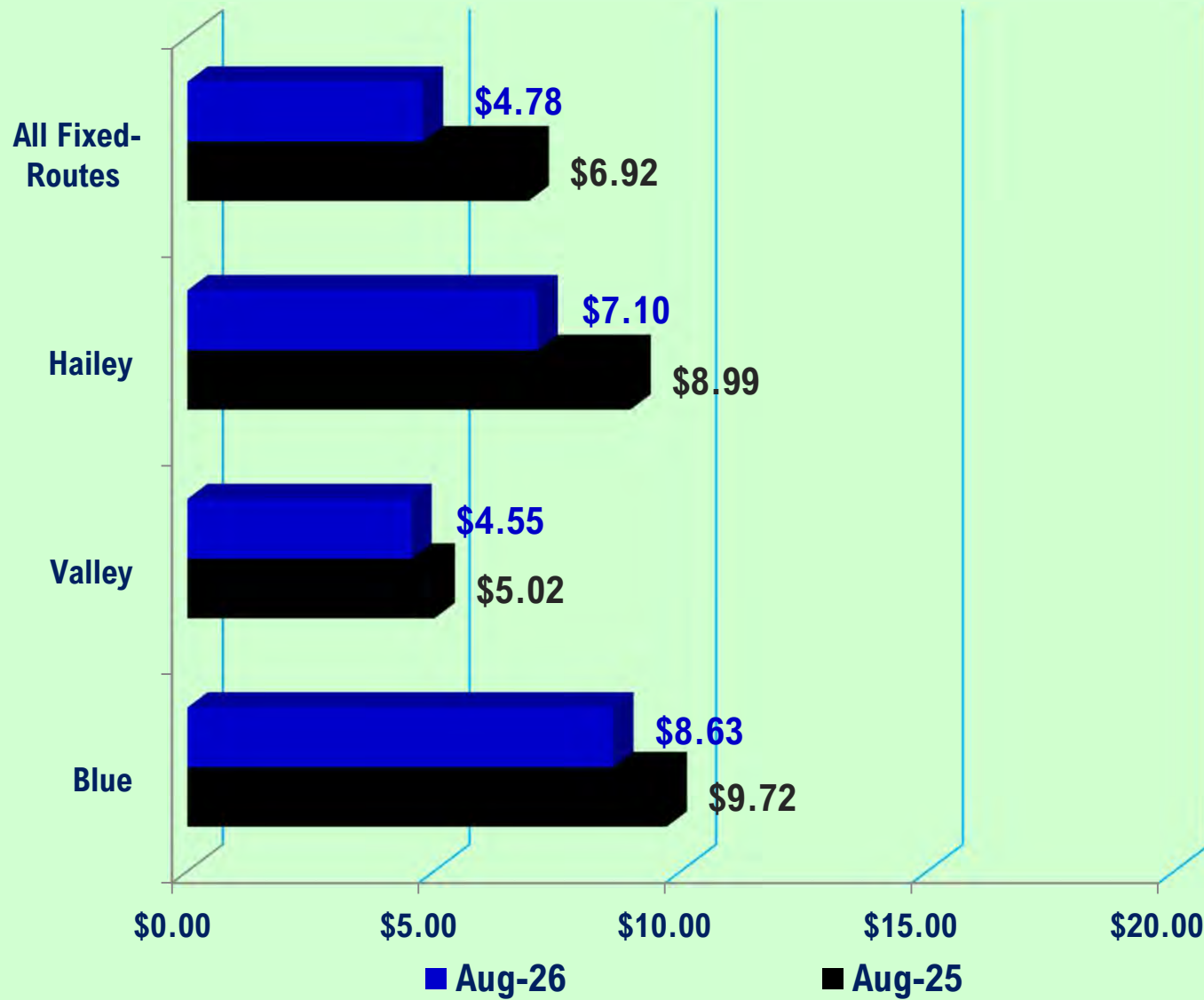


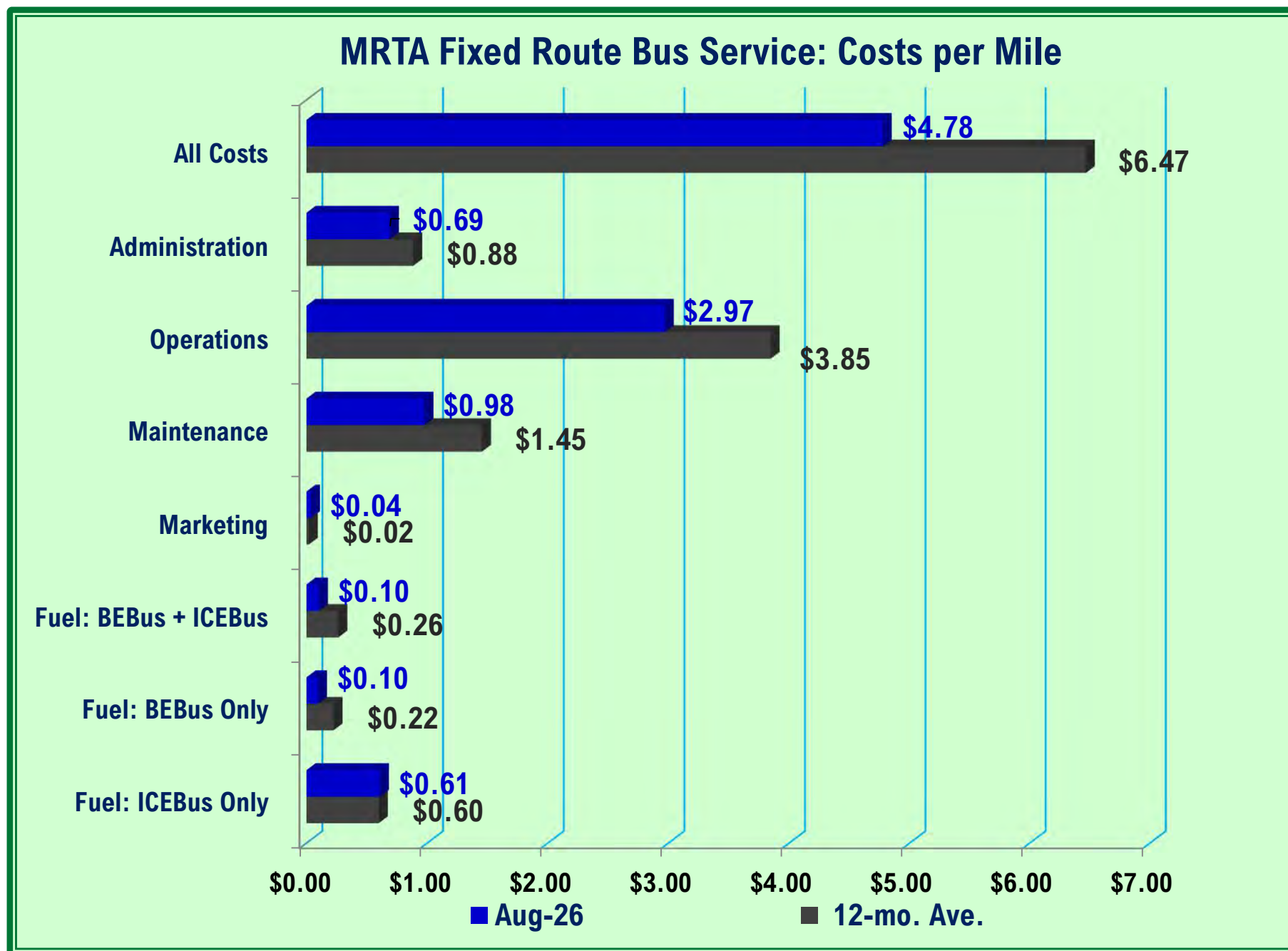


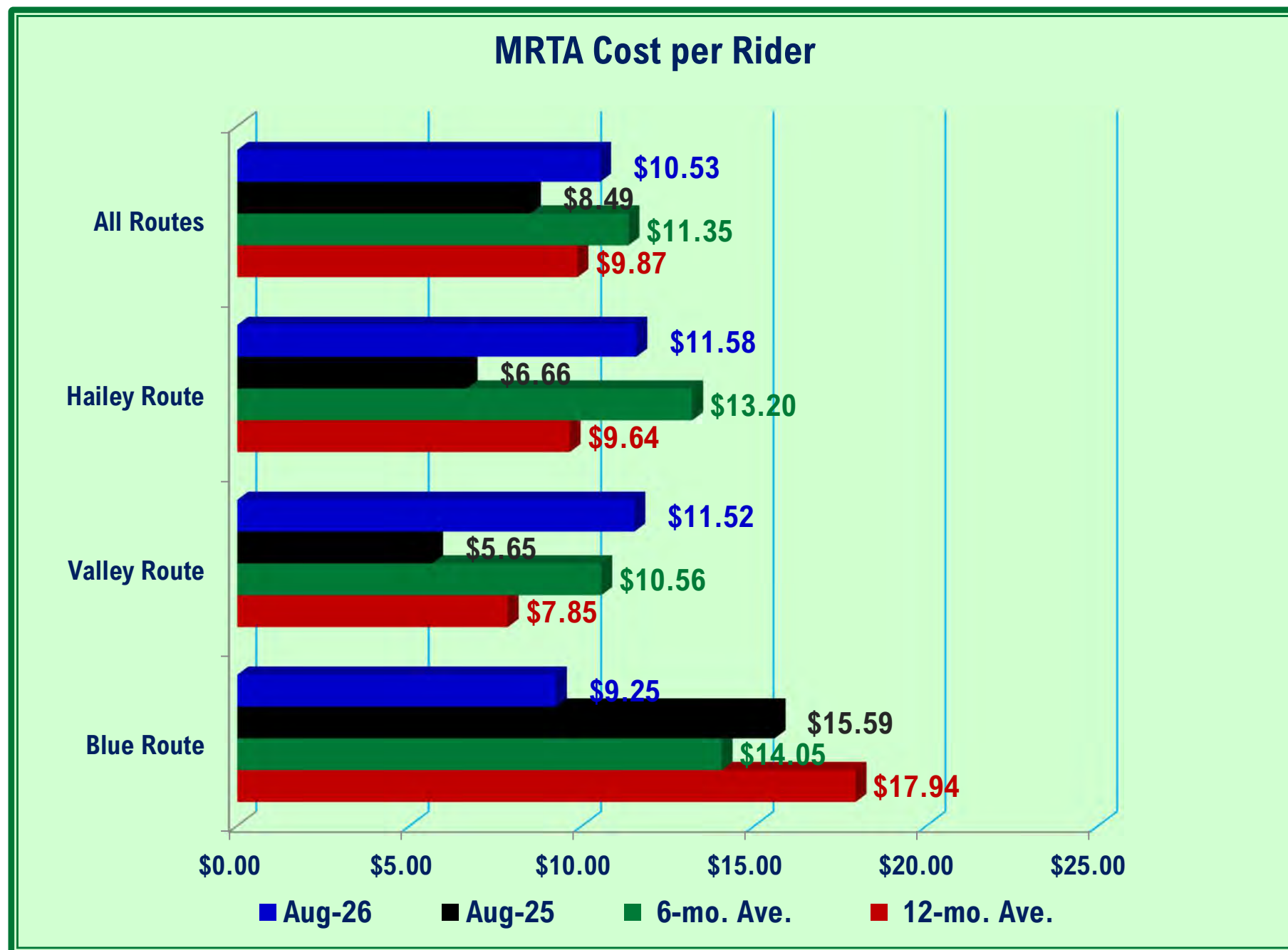




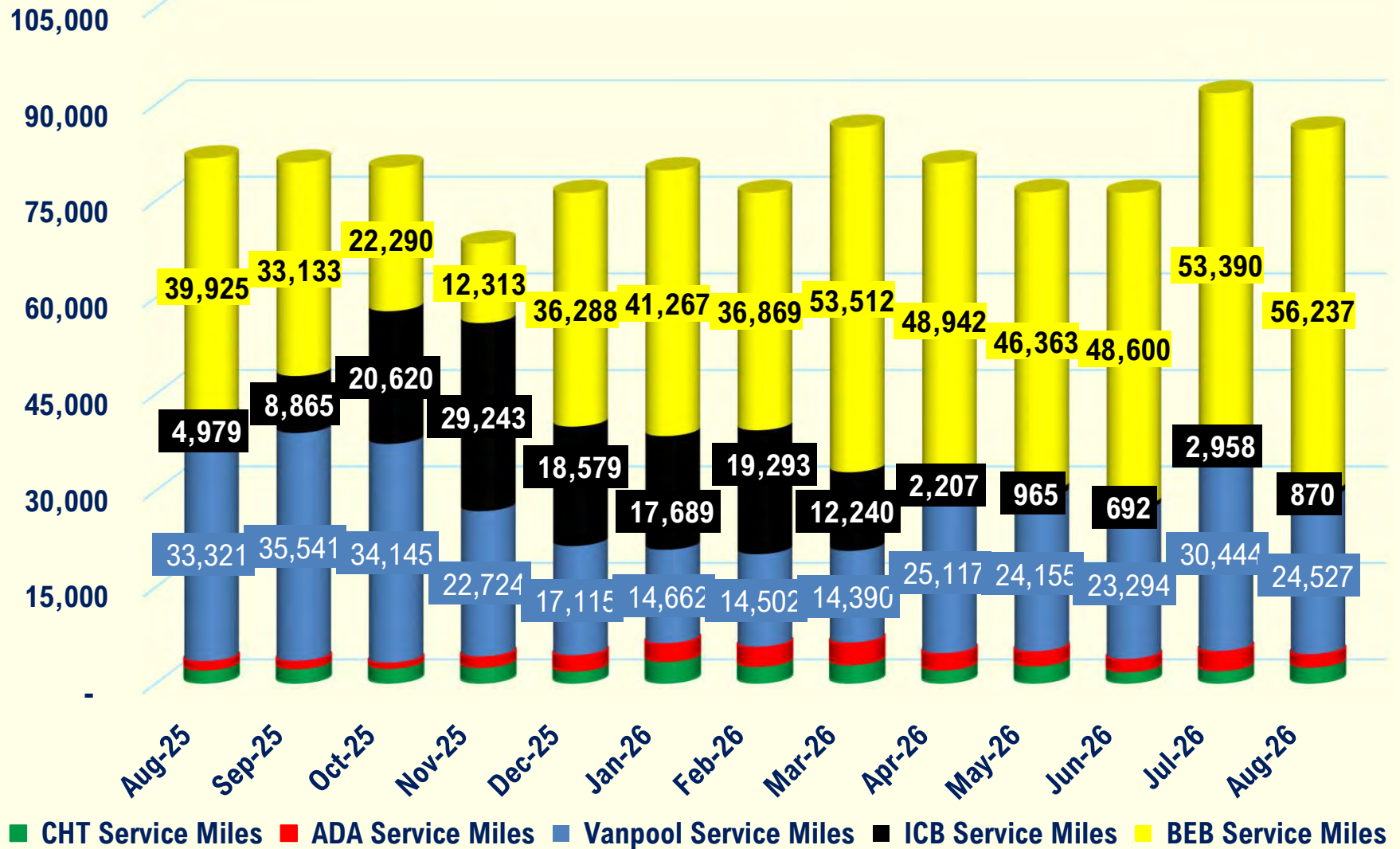
MRTA Total Cost per Mile of Fixed Route Bus Service

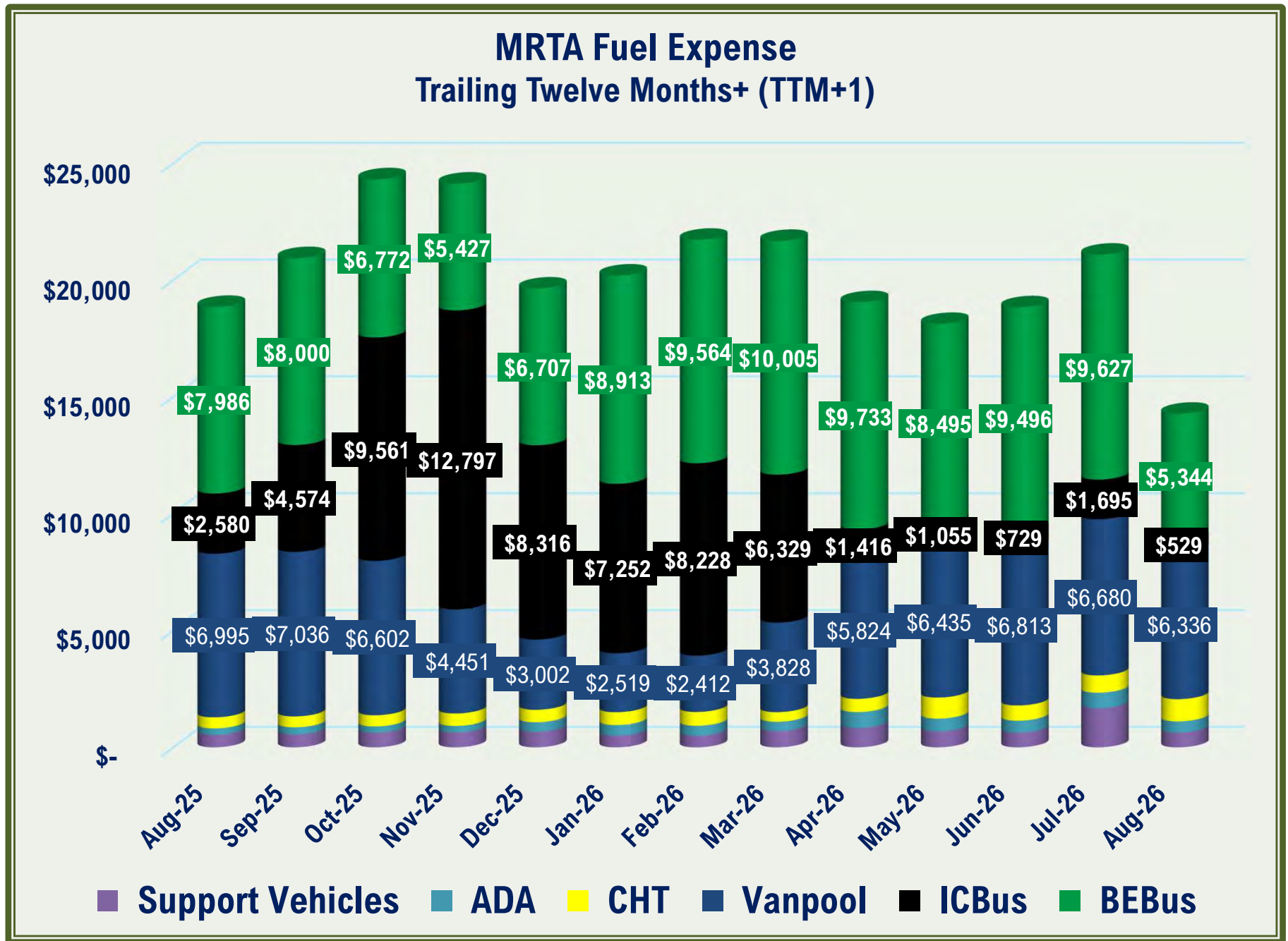




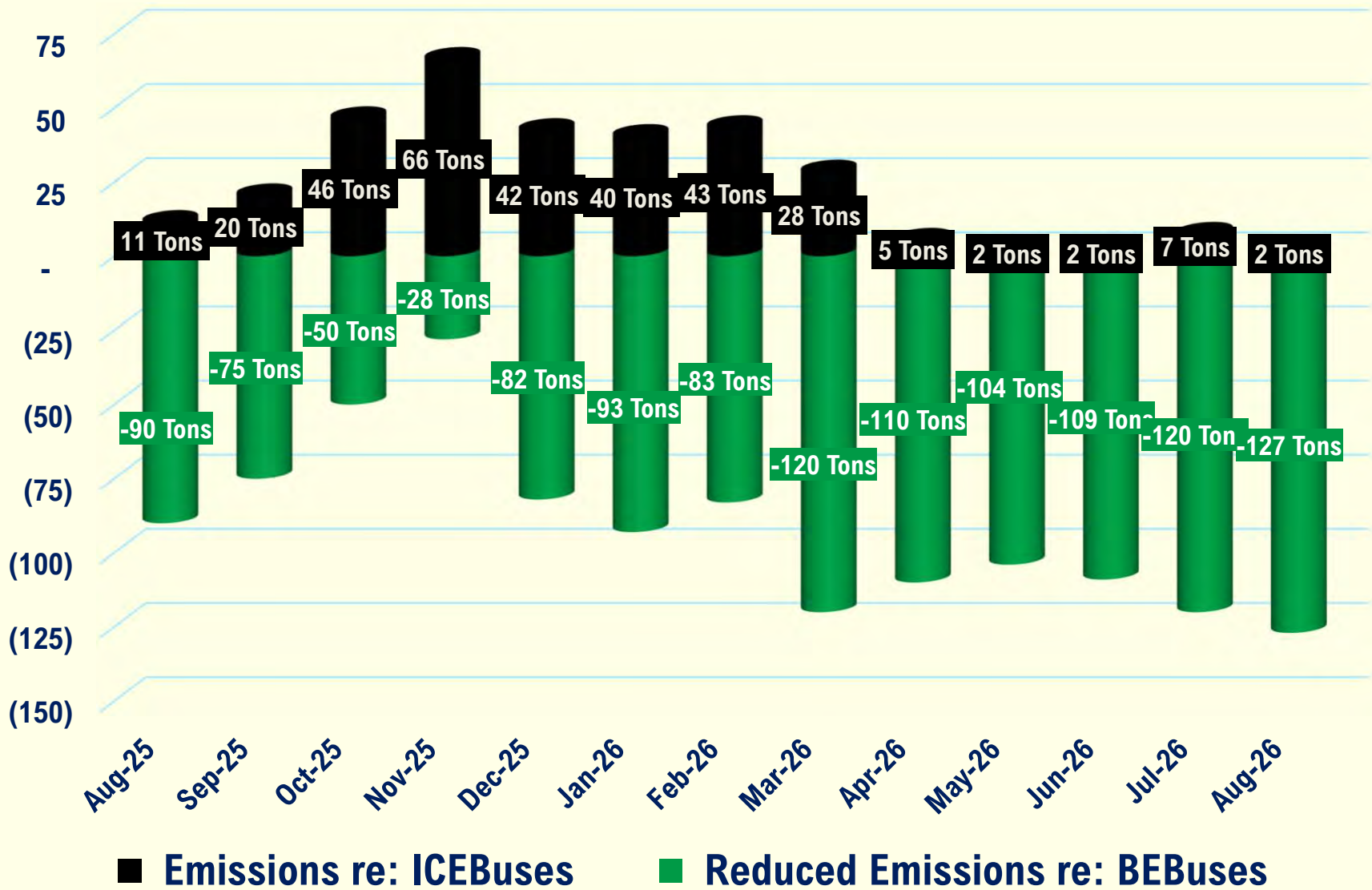


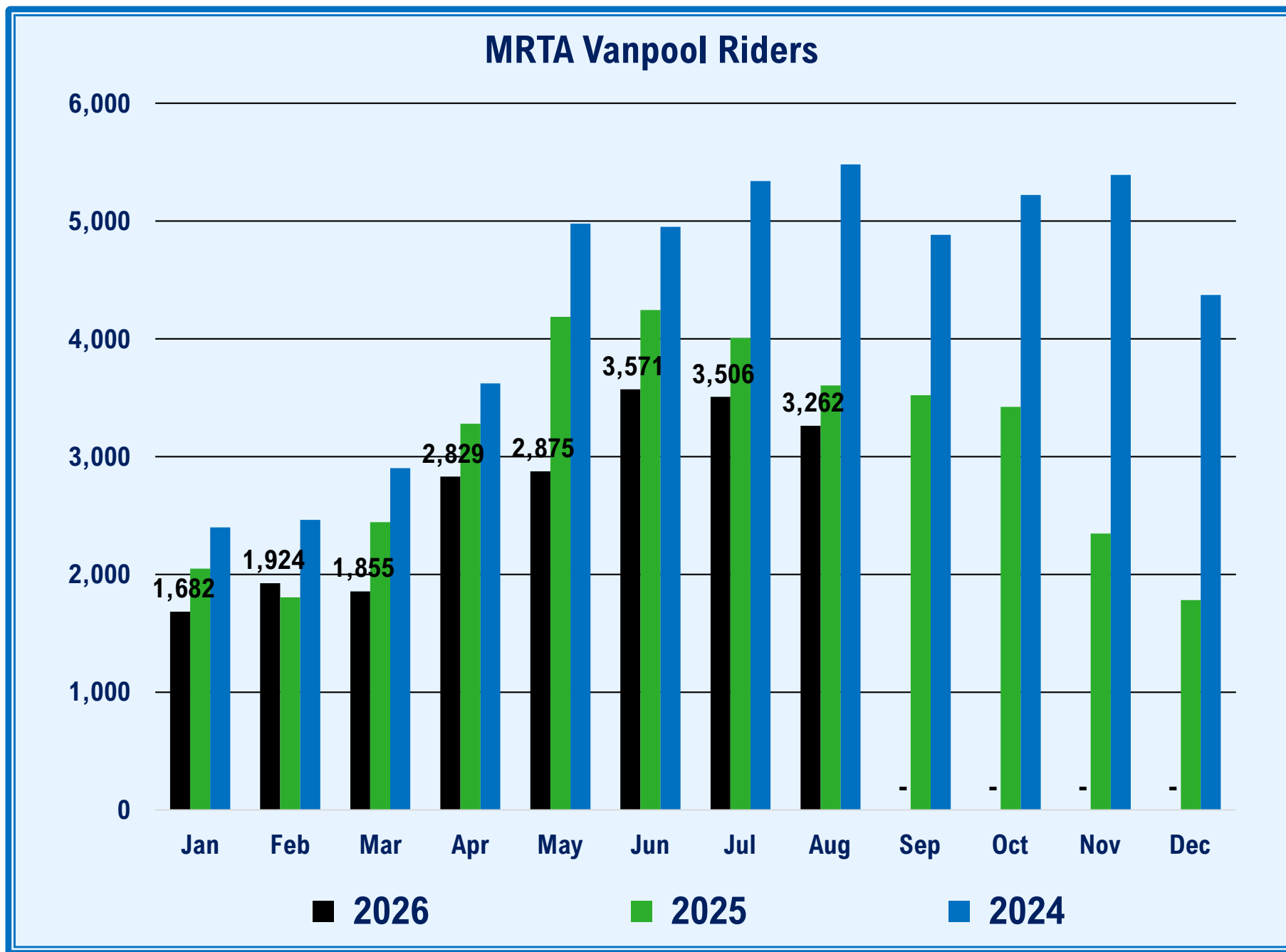
MRTA Service Miles by Vehicle/Service Type Trailing Twelve Months+ (TTM+1)

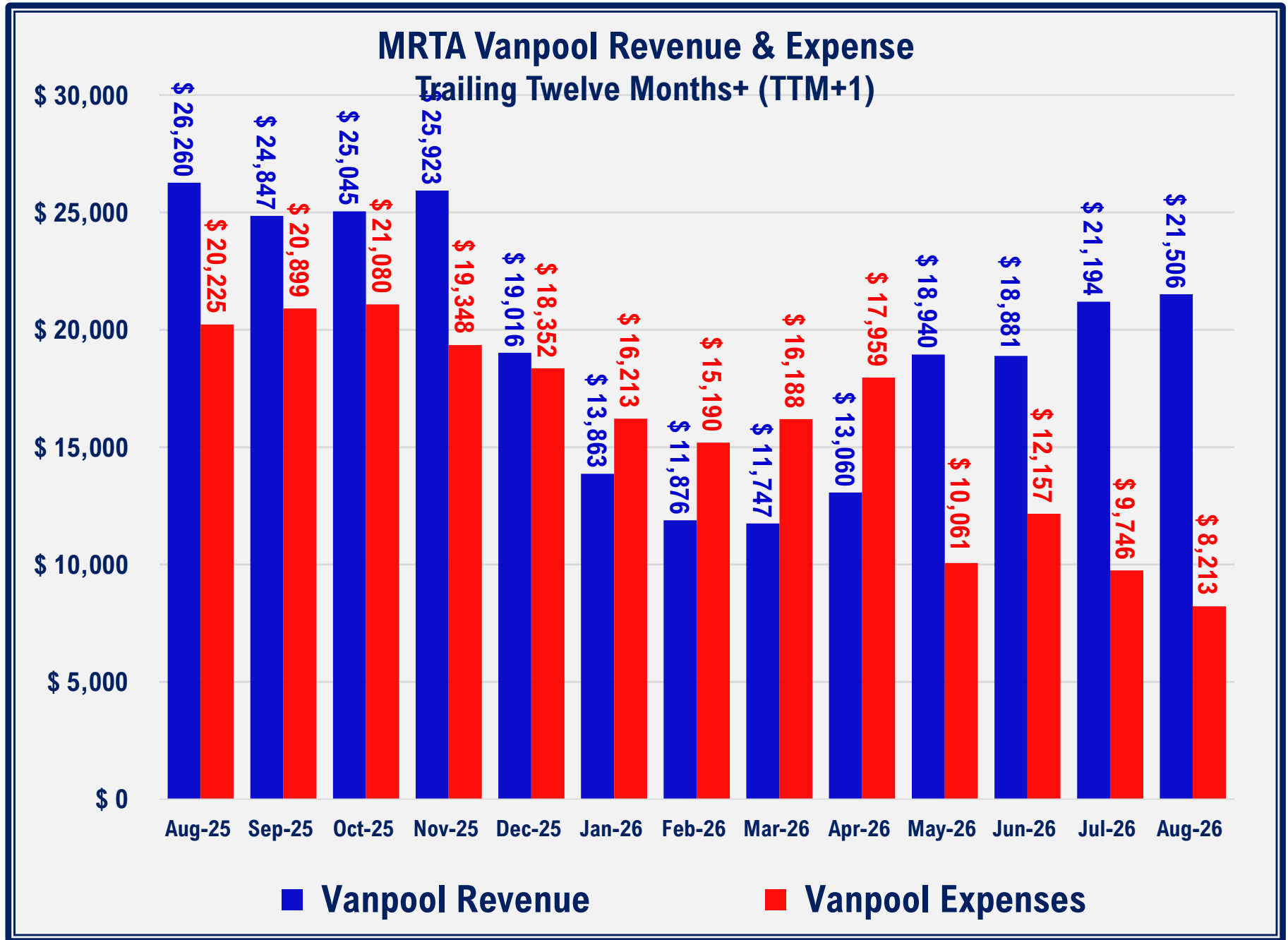




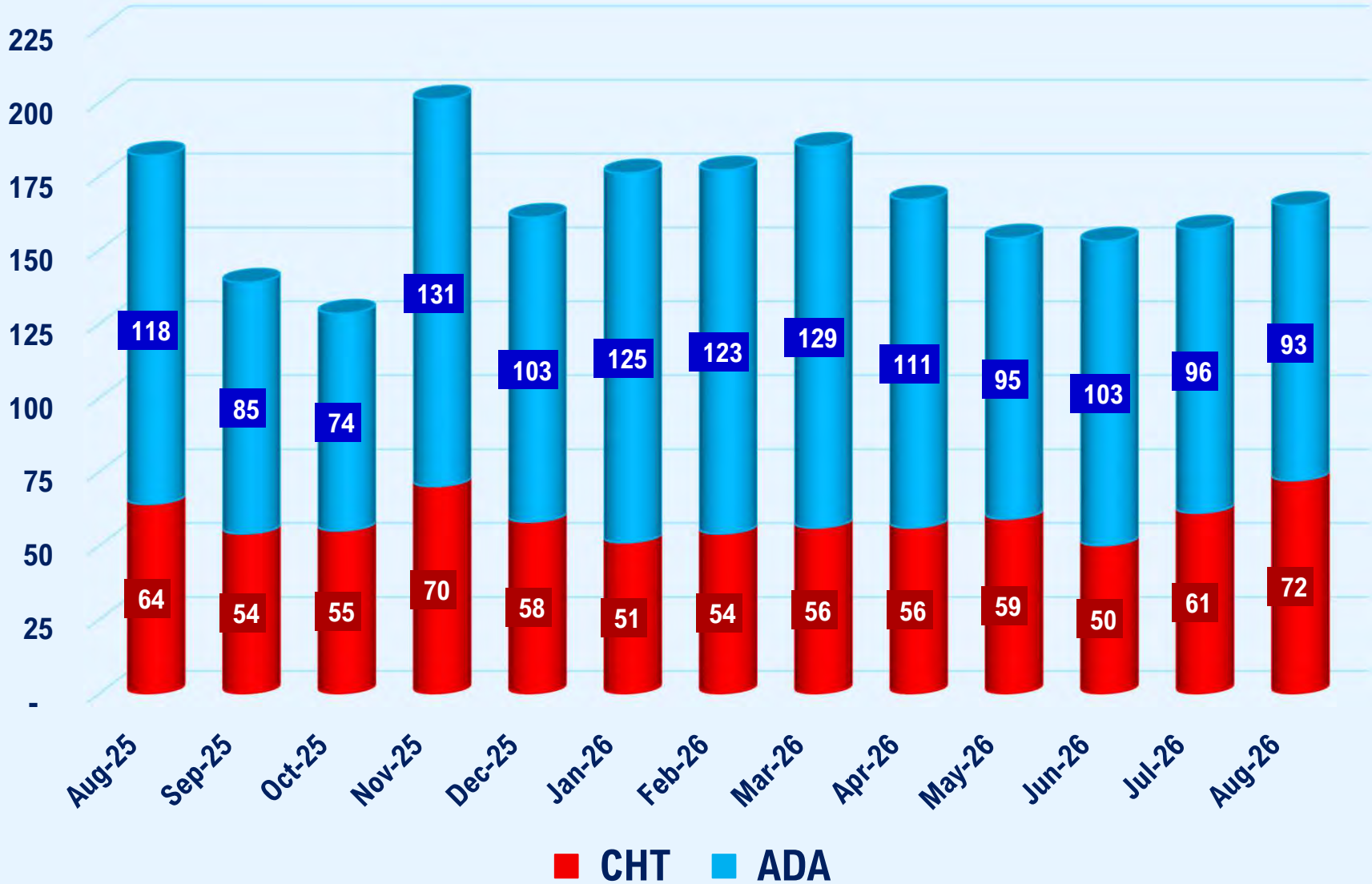
MRTA CO2 (GHG) Emissions: Bus Fleet Trailing Twelve Months+ (TTM+1)



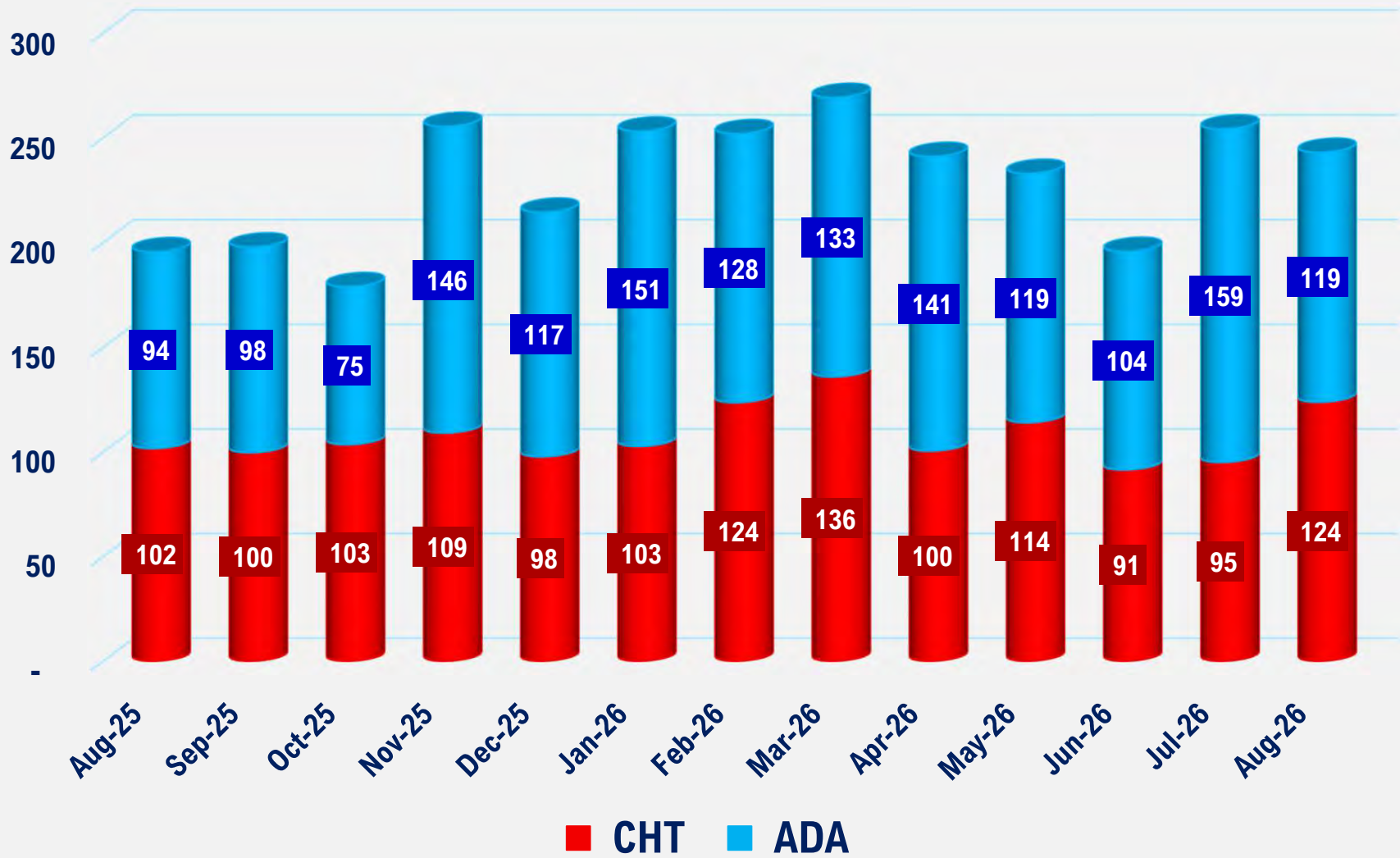




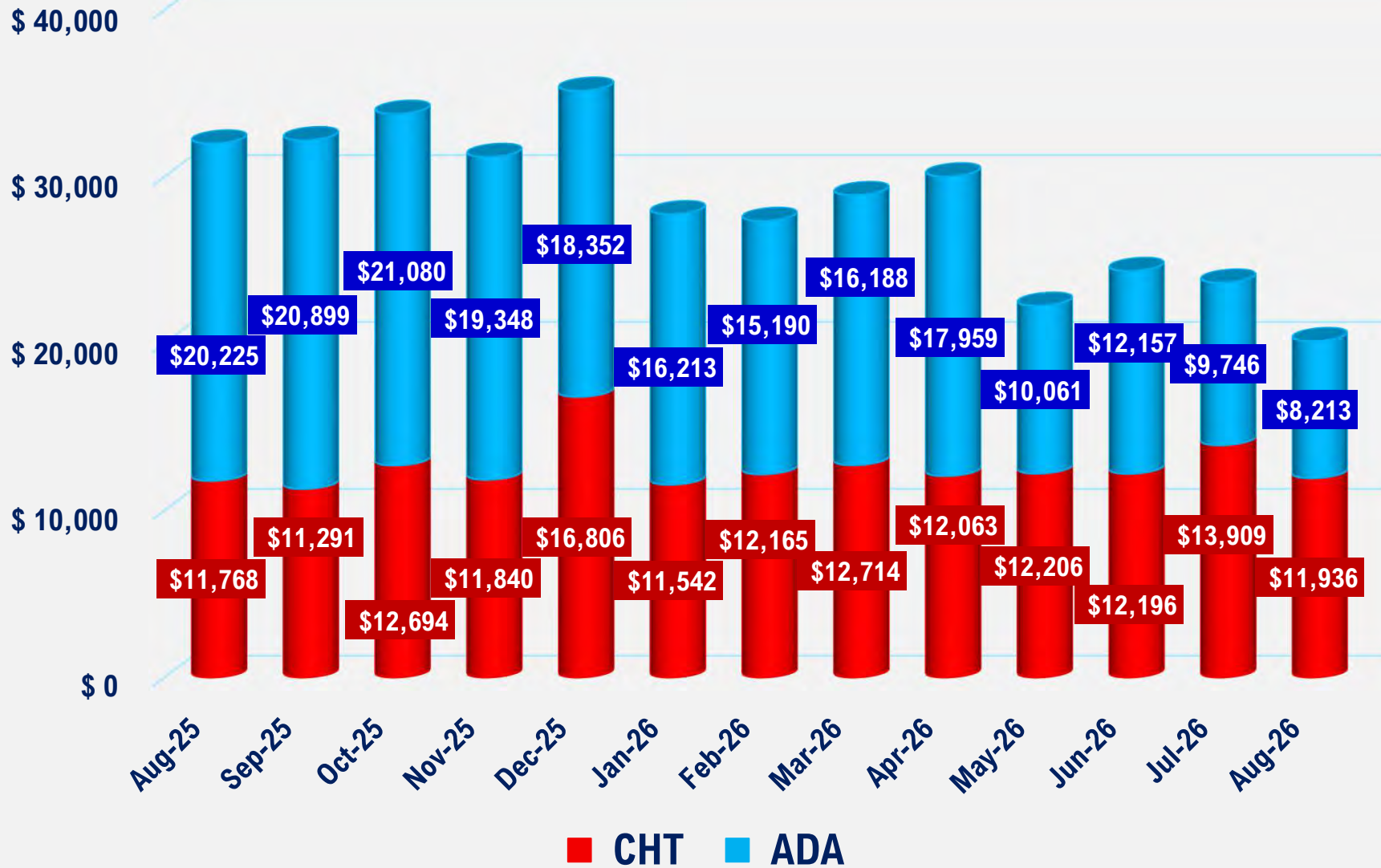
Ridership: Community Health Transportation & ADA Paratransit Trailing Twelve Months+ (TTM+1)

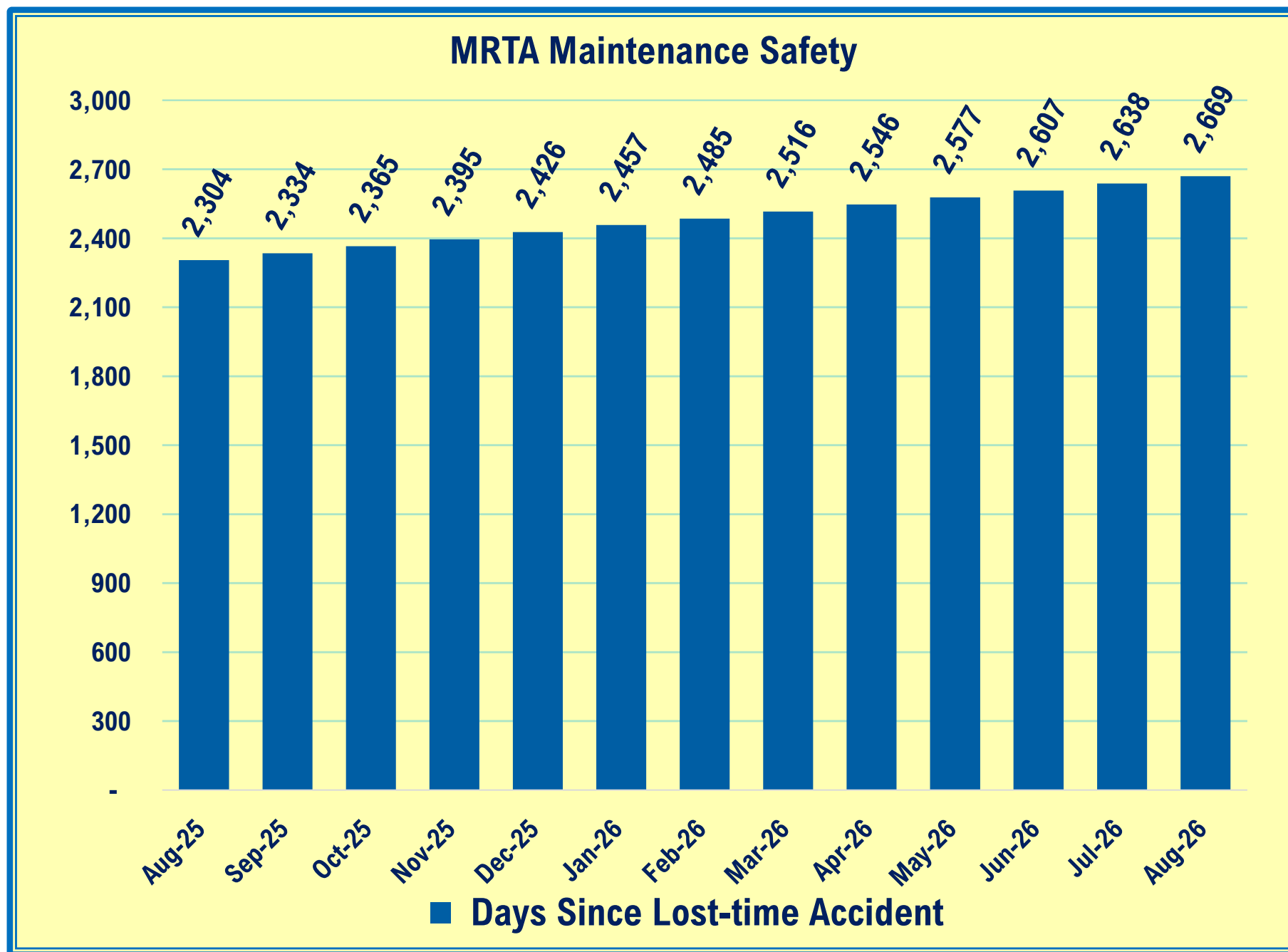


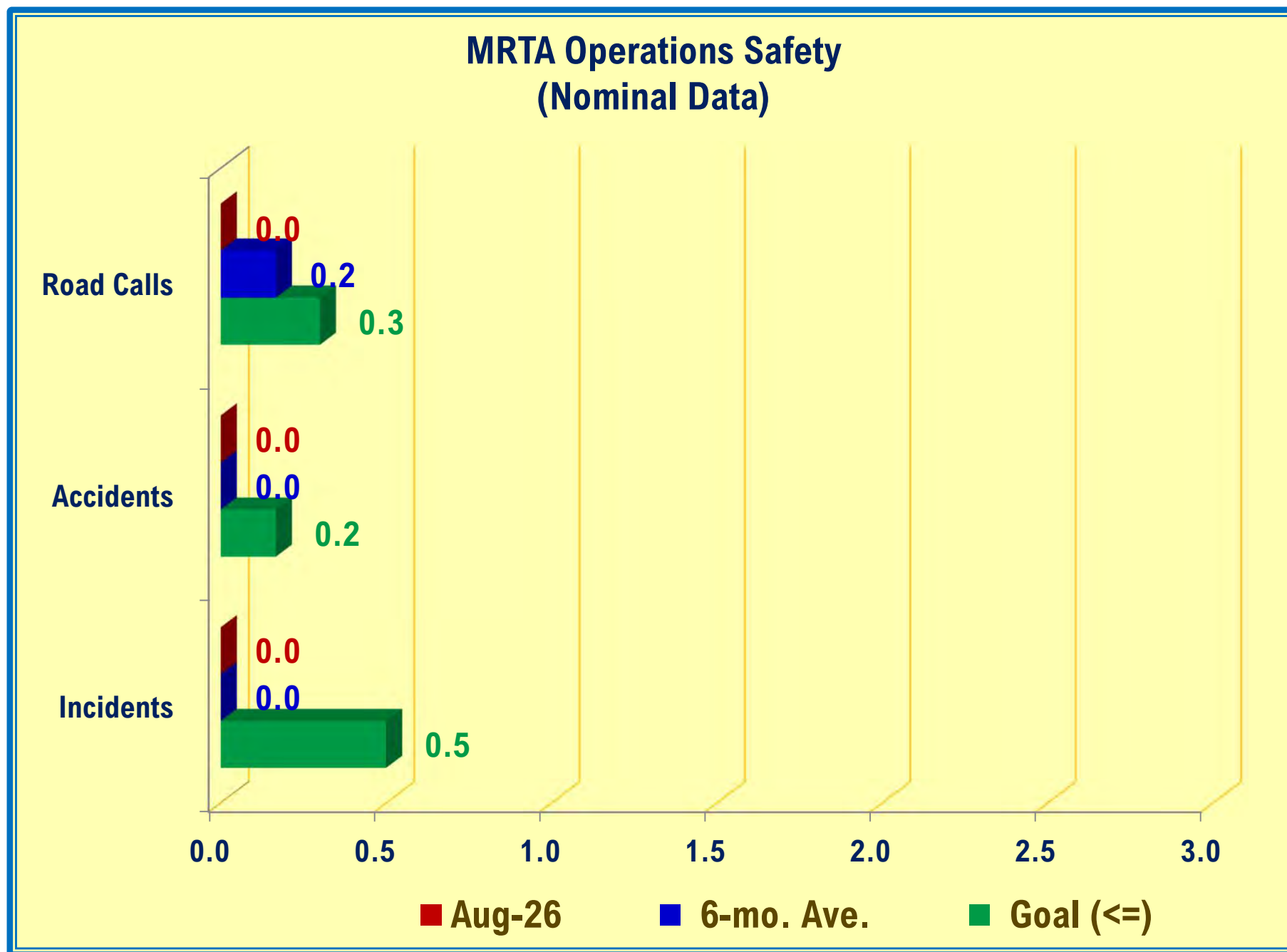
Service Hours: Community Health Transportation & ADA Paratransit Trailing Twelve Months+ (TTM+1)

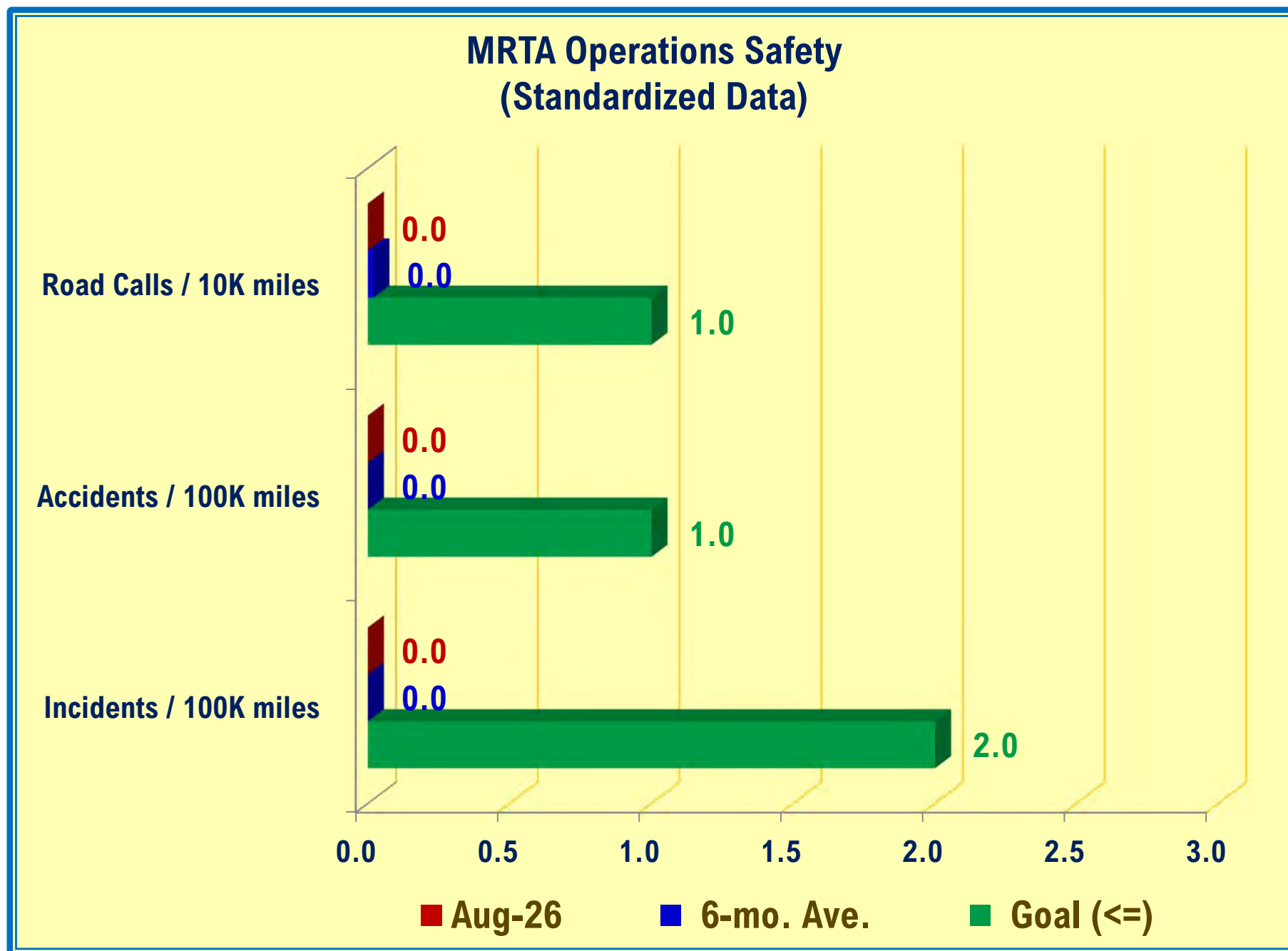


Expenses: Community Health Transportation & ADA Paratransit Trailing Twelve Months+ (TTM+1)



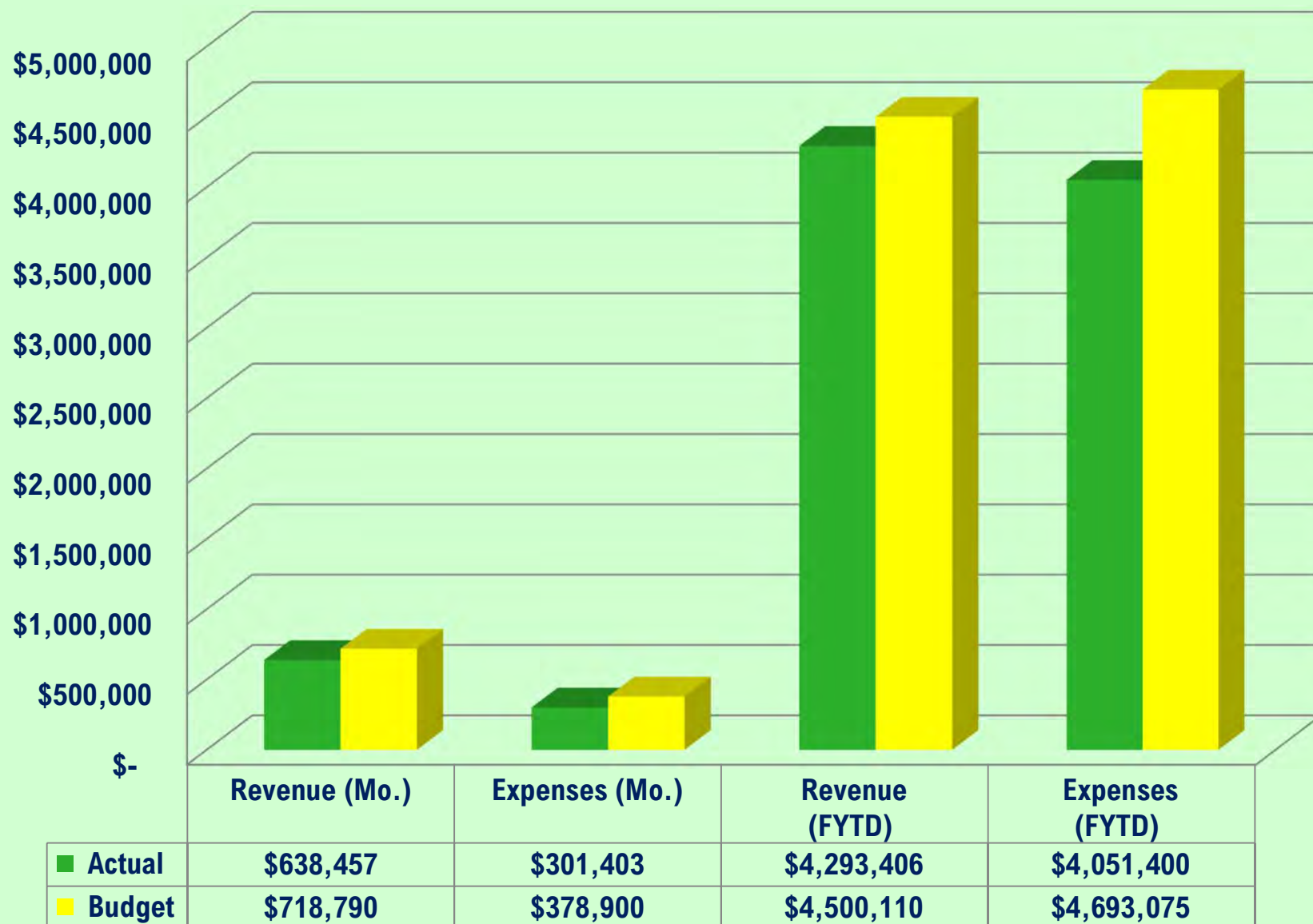






MRTA Revenue & Expenses, Budget v Actual

August 2026



Mountain Rides Staff Report

Date: September 16, 2026

Staff Member: Carlos Tellez

Department: Maintenance, Fleet & Facilities

Department Highlights from the Previous Month:

Maintenance team finally can catch up with PMIs and repairs, since the team doesn't spend as much time working on the 22-series buses.

Progress on projects/initiatives:

We have submitted a purchase order to Gillig for a new electric bus, which we hope will be deliver in 10 to 11 months. Once we get the new bus, we likely won't need to use diesel buses unless more that two electric buses are down during peak season.

Challenges/ Opportunities:

New Flyer finally installed a new software program on the 22-series buses. While not perfect, it actually woks and is much better than the previous version. Buses now will start much easier then before. We are still on schedule for battery retrofit by mid-April, 2027.

Mountain Rides Staff Report

<u>Date:</u>	September 16, 2026
<u>Staff Member:</u>	Jamie Canfield
<u>Department:</u>	Community Transportation
<u>Department Highlights from the Previous Month:</u>	Numbers are up across the board--ADA, CHT and Sun Shuttle. Community Transportation is running on all cylinders. We got another E-Van to add to the arsenal of vehicles.
<u>Progress on projects/initiatives:</u>	I attended an ADA Compliance Seminar and learned that we are in compliance with all ADA services. I am tweaking the MRTA ADA Policies a bit to make sure all the bases are covered, but for the most part, we have been in compliance.
<u>Challenges/ Opportunities:</u>	Getting ready for the new Sun Shuttle schedule which will start October 1st.

Mountain Rides Staff Report

<u>Date:</u>	September 16, 2026
<u>Staff Member:</u>	Liz Ruiz
<u>Department:</u>	Finance and Administration
<u>Department Highlights from the Previous Month:</u>	Attended the 2026 ITD-PT Summit.
<u>Progress on projects/initiatives:</u>	The final draft FY2027 Budget was presented to the Finance and Performance Committee and the Marketing and Planning Committee for review. No concerns were noted by either committee. The budget was subsequently presented at the regular meeting of the Board of Directors on August 19, where it was approved and adopted.
<u>Challenges/ Opportunities:</u>	

Mountain Rides Staff Report

<u>Date:</u>	September 16, 2026
<u>Staff Member:</u>	Raul Romero Campos
<u>Department:</u>	Operations Director
<u>Department Highlights from the Previous Month:</u>	The final day of the Red Route Symphony was August 20, following a run of 15 concert dates. The Silver Route also concluded on September 7 and will return on Thanksgiving.
<u>Progress on projects/initiatives:</u>	Drivers continue taking their PTO and getting ready for the new season.
<u>Challenges/ Opportunities:</u>	Work continues on updating the software to ensure the proper operation of the electric buses.

Mountain Rides Staff Report

Date:

September 16, 2026

Staff Member:

Andrea Hernandez, Manager, Marketing & Communications

Department:

Marketing & Communications

Department Highlights
from
the Previous Month:

SHARK Program still running strong!
Advertising for Labor Day Weekend
Participated in the EV Event and in the Labor Day parade
Attended the ITD Summit
Created preview links for schedules beginning on October 5th

Progress
on projects/initiatives:

Continue tweaking website as needed to keep improving
Getting ready to print more schedules
Working on our advertising for major events/holidays (print and social media)
Increasing our social media presence
Having multiple ways to get important messages out to riders in a timely manner

Challenges/
Opportunities:

Continue strengthening the communications between MRTA and the public
Focus on marketing our services on social media during other events as well,
not just major holidays.

Mountain Rides Staff Report

Date:

September 16, 2026

Staff Member:

Wally Morgus, Executive Director

Department:

Executive Director / Administration

Department Highlights from the Previous Month:

Due to circumstances precluding our using our 2025 Grant Award for BEBs, re-scoped the grant to purchase hybrid electric buses (HEBs). Continuing research on HEBs. Early analysis: Given the price of an HEB, which is about 80% of a BEB's price, and the higher costs of and lower benefits from operating an HEB, relative to a BEB, we are unlikely to purchase HEBs. We will keep the grant in place for as long as we can with an eye towards re-scoping it back to BEBs at some future time. The probability of our being able to do so is low.

SHARK (Safe...Helpful...Alert...Respectful...Knowledgeable)

Awards for August: Jesus Ortiz (driver/trainer); Gerhard Hoechtl (driver); Armando Vargas (driver); Deya Garcia (CTS driver - SUN Shuttle); Martin Iniguez (Maintenance & Facilities)

Attended and engaged with peers from around the State and others at the ITD-PT Summit, Sep 1-3, 2026.

Progress on projects/initiatives:

Department Heads continue doing an excellent job of controlling expenses, aka belt tightening, as we strive to build as big a carry forward of FY26 funding into FY27 to offset the reduction in 5311 Federal Funding. We are aiming, and on course, to carry forward at least \$165,000 (as in the Budget for FY27).

Awaiting receipt of FY27 executed contracts from Joint Powers: Sun Valley, Ketchum, Hailey, Bellevue, Blaine County. Anticipate receipt of same in mid-to-late-September and early October.

Challenges/ Opportunities:

Current (0-2 years):

- RAISE Grant-funded transit infrastructure along SH-75, mid-valley: A) Ohio Gulch bus stops & ped tunnel; B) The Meadows bus stops & ped tunnel. Work scheduled to begin Summer 2027, per ITD.
- Fleet electrification: year-round 100% battery electric operations by 2/2026 (revised to 2/2027, due to delays in procuring small BEBs for the Red Route).
- Explore on-demand micro transit as a complement to MRTA's fixed route service. Integrate this service into MRTA's service plan and thereby enhance efficiency, accessibility, and the economics of MRTA's service offerings. Update, June 2026: We are engaging in a measured process for evaluating micro transit, likely pushing out any implementation of a micro transit program at least 18 months or more.
- Dedicated, consistent, comprehensive airport service. Update, June 2024: Anticipate this comprehensive service being in place as of 10/1/2026.

Near-term (2-4 years):

- Optimizing routes, routing, and bus schedules, including options for underserved neighborhoods (in the cities and county).

Longer term (4+ years):

- MRTA Vision 2035 (Journey 2035?) Long-term Plan.
- Develop a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) plan for the Wood River Valley.

Mountain Rides Agenda Discussion Item Summary

<u>Date:</u>	September 16, 2026	<u>From:</u>	Andrea Hernandez
<u>Discussion Item:</u>	5. ITD-PT Video re: Mountain Rides		
<u>Committee Review:</u>	☐ yes ☒ no	<u>Committee Purview:</u>	
<u>Fiscal Impact:</u>			
<u>Related Policy or Procedural Impact:</u>			
<u>Background:</u>	Showing of ITD-PT Video highlighting Mountain Rides and discussion, if any.		

Mountain Rides Agenda Discussion Item Summary

Date:

September 16, 2026

From:

MRTA Board of Directors

Discussion Item:

6. Items of Interest to the Members.

Committee Review:

☐ yes

☒ no

Committee

Purview:

Fiscal Impact:

Related Policy or
Procedural Impact:

Background:

The Members may discuss any item(s) of interest.