

Urban public transit, July 2021

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Highlights

Public transit ridership increased in July, as COVID-19 restrictions eased in many provinces and vaccination rates continue to climb. However, recovery toward pre-pandemic levels remains slow with ridership currently sitting at 40.5% of the number from the same month in 2019.

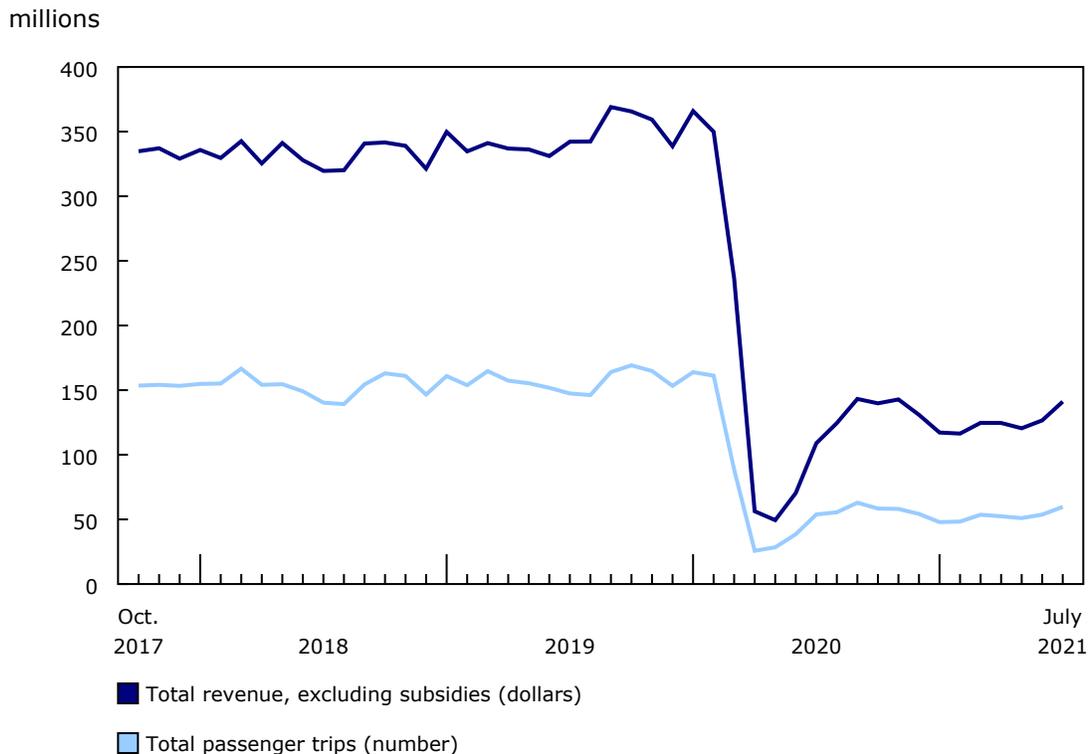
Ridership still trails pre-pandemic levels

In July, an estimated 59.7 million passenger trips were made on Canada's urban transit networks, an increase of 11.0%, or 5.9 million trips, from July 2020. This marked the fourth straight month with a year-over-year increase and the highest number of passengers in 10 months.

More passengers used public transit in July as restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic were eased in many provinces. Despite this growth, ridership remained well below July 2019, at 87.7 million fewer passengers.

On a monthly basis, ridership typically declines from June to July with more vacations and fewer students. In July 2021, however, ridership rose by nearly 6.0 million from June, a 11.2% increase. With the easing of COVID-19-related restrictions in Quebec and Ontario, these two provinces accounted for 4.8 million (80.0%) of this growth.

Chart 1
Urban public transit operating revenue and passenger trips, monthly, 2017 to 2021



Source(s): Table 23-10-0251-01.

The financial situation remains fragile

With ridership well below pre-pandemic levels, the financial situation remains fragile for transit agencies. Total operating revenues (excluding subsidies) reached \$141.1 million in July, up 29.6% from July 2020. Despite the growth, this represents just over 41 cents for every dollar of operating revenue earned in July 2019.

For more information on the transit industry, such as salaries and fuel types, please see the [Passenger bus and urban transit infographic](#).

Note to readers

Data for the most recent quarter are subject to revision. The data in this release are not seasonally adjusted.

This survey collects data on operating revenue (excluding subsidies) and the number of passenger trips from a panel of urban transit companies that represents at least 75% of revenues in each province and territory. Users should note that the panel is adjusted annually to maintain the 75% coverage and could differ slightly from what it was in the same month a year earlier.

Data prior to January 2017 can be found in table 23-10-0078-01.

The [Transportation Data and Information Hub](#), a web portal developed jointly by Statistics Canada and Transport Canada, provides Canadians with online access to comprehensive statistics and measures on the country's transportation sector.

Available tables: table [23-10-0251-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [2745](#).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).