



## MTA Press Releases

[Select Language](#) | ▼

Press Release

February 7, 2008

[NYC Transit](#)

IMMEDIATE

### NYC Transit Ridership Shows Continued Gains In 2007

*Subway Ridership Highest Since 1951  
Strong Local Economy and MetroCard Discounts Fuel Growth*

The efficiency, value and convenience of MTA New York City Transit's network of subways and buses drew 2.3 billion riders last year, the highest annual ridership since 1969 and an increase of 2.7 percent or 60.1 million trips over 2006. Over the past five years alone, NYC Transit's annual ridership has increased 6.1 percent. On average, weekday ridership was a combined 7.4 million, a 2.1 percent gain over 2006. Weekend ridership - Saturday and Sunday combined - also showed impressive gains up to 7.7 million, the highest annual weekend ridership in more than 35 years.

"The continued investment in new subway cars and buses is not going unnoticed by our customers who are responding by increased usage of our system," said MTA NYC Transit President Howard H. Roberts, Jr. "These historic ridership gains do, however, point out the increasing need for additional funding for continued infrastructure upgrades."

Helping fuel the growth in ridership was a strong City economy including record tourism and MetroCard discounts, specifically use of the 30-day MetroCard which had a 31.3 percent market share, the highest ever for the 30-day pass which was first introduced in July 1998. The use of discounted unlimited ride and bonus MetroCards reached a record 85.8 percent in 2007 - 49.4 percent using unlimited ride passes and 36.4 percent using bonus pay-per-ride MetroCards. Taken together, MetroCard discounts yielded an average non-student subway and bus fare of \$1.29.

Subway ridership of 1.56 billion accounted for more than two-thirds of NYC Transit's ridership, and was the highest annual subway ridership since 1951. Subway ridership jumped 4.2 percent or 63.6 million trips from 2006. Weekday subway ridership in 2007 averaged more than 5 million, the first time it has done so since 1952. In 2007, average weekend subway ridership was 5.1 million, an increase of 6.3 percent or 304,000 trips from 2006 and the highest weekend ridership in over 35 years. Annual subway ridership increased 10.6% from 2002 to 2007.

"There is more and more pressure on our streets and roadways from the use of private automobiles," added Roberts. "Increased utilization of mass transit helps to relieve some of that pressure by reducing the amount of automobile traffic. Of course, the reduction in traffic also helps reduce pollution levels around the region."

Overall, bus ridership remained almost level in 2007 with an annual ridership of 738 million, a decrease of 0.5 percent or 3.4 million trips from 2006. Average weekday bus ridership was 2.4 million, a decline of 24,000 trips or 1 percent, while average weekend bus ridership was 2.5 million, an increase of 1.2 percent or 31,000 trips. Between 2002 and 2007, annual bus ridership decreased 2.2 percent.

Looking at the ridership data closely, average weekday subway ridership grew every month from 2006 to 2007 with the most growth coming in the high tourism months of July and August. Conversely, the lowest growth was in December, due in part to low holiday ridership on December 24th and December 31st.

Brooklyn's Canarsie L train was the fastest growing line segment with an 8% increase in average weekday ridership in 2007. In 2007, NYC Transit added 23 weekday, 30 Saturday, and 34 Sunday round trips to L service. This included two round trips in the rush hour (October 2007), midday and evening off peak service weekdays (December 2007) and extra service "all day" Saturday and Sunday.

The additional service added on the L was not in response to one year's growth, but to several years' continuous steady growth which NYC Transit has been monitoring since the last major service increases on the L in 2003 and 2004. Service was not added between February 2004 and October 2007 due to ongoing CBTC construction and wayside signal system restrictions.

While bus ridership remained at or close to level, several routes did experience significant growth in 2007. The BX5, which operates between Pelham Bay Park and Hunts Point, had the highest percentage and absolute average weekday ridership gain in 2007, up 10.8 percent, or an average of 1,258 additional rides per day. The S53/93, which operates between the Port Richmond/Willowbrook sections of Staten Island and Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, had the second highest percentage ridership increase (up 9.4 percent) and the third highest absolute increase (854 riders per weekday).

Several routes that provide service to local airports also saw increases in ridership. The M60 bus, which operates between Upper Manhattan and LaGuardia Airport, was up 5.5 percent or 751 riders per weekday. The Q3, which operates between Jamaica and JFK Airport, was up 4.8 percent in 2007, or 440 riders per weekday. Ridership on the B15, which operates between Bedford-Stuyvesant and JFK Airport, was up 3.0 percent or 663 riders per weekday.

On Staten Island, there was a 9% increase in Staten Island Railway (SIR) ridership from 2006 to 2007, from 3.78 million to 4.13 million trips per year. This is in addition to a 9% increase in ridership in 2006. The growth is largely attributed to the development of a Strategic Business Plan to respond to changing markets and a comprehensive service improvement program initiated in 2005. The most recent growth is also a result of construction related

congestion on area highways. The Railway responded in the fall of 2007 with additional increases in peak period express service which have proven to be very popular among south shore customers. The operation of longer, five-car trains was also initiated on select rush hour trips to reduce crowding.

"We are hopeful that these most recent service improvements will set the stage for additional ridership growth in 2008," said John G. Gaul, Chief Officer, Staten Island Railway. "These service improvements, along with ongoing capital investments such as the planned new station and Park-and-Ride facility at Arthur Kill Road will give riders even more reasons to use SIR next year and beyond," added Gaul.