



To: Chicago Transit Authority Board  
 From: Tom McKone, Chief Financial Officer  
 Re: Financial Results for March 2026  
 Date: May 13, 2026

**I. Summary**

CTA’s financial results for March show a favorable variance of \$1.0 million, mainly due to lower labor and traction power expenses. For the year-to-date results, the CTA is \$2.5 million favorable to budget, primarily driven by lower labor, traction power, and contractual services expenses. Public funding collected for 2026 year-to-date totaled \$246.6 million, which is \$26.4 million favorable to budget.

Ridership for the month was 28.4 million, which was 1.5 million higher than budget and 0.6 million higher than February 2025. Ridership year-to-date was 5 million higher than budget and 2.3 million higher than the prior year.

**II. Revenue**

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual	Variance to	Variance to	Actual	Variance to	Variance to
	Mar-26	Budget Mar-26	Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	2026	Budget 2026	Prior Year 2025
Fare & Pass Revenue	\$ 30,293	\$ (46)	\$ 477	\$ 81,378	\$ 192	\$ 1,154

In March, fare and pass revenue was slightly unfavorable to budget, primarily due to lower than expected full-fare bus revenue and 7-day pass revenue. This was mostly offset by higher than expected 30-day pass revenue. Compared to prior year, this reflects a revenue increase of \$0.5 million, primarily attributed to increases in 30-day pass and full-fare rail revenues. The average fare for the month was \$1.07 per ride, which was \$0.06 lower than the budgeted rate and \$0.01 lower than the average fare in the prior year. The unfavorable rate to budget was largely driven by an increase in unpaid rides related to a ridership reporting update implemented this year.

Year-to-date fare and pass revenue was \$0.2 million favorable to budget due to higher 30-day pass revenue. Compared to the previous year, revenue increased \$1.2 million, largely attributable to higher 30-day and 1-day pass revenue in addition to higher full-fare rail revenue. The average fare for the year was \$1.04, which was \$0.07 lower than the budgeted rate and \$0.02 lower than the average fare in the prior year. Excluding the impact of the change in reporting, the rate per rider was only \$0.01 below budget.

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual	Variance to	Variance to	Actual	Variance to	Variance to
	Mar-26	Budget Mar-26	Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	2026	Budget 2026	Prior Year 2025
Reduced Fare Subsidy	\$ 1,598	\$ -	\$ 145	\$ 4,794	\$ -	\$ 436

The Reduced Fare Subsidy was on par with budget for the month and year-to-date. It was \$0.1 million and \$0.4 million favorable over March 2025 and the year-to-date, respectively, due to a higher reimbursement from the State in 2026 compared to 2025.

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual	Variance to	Variance to	Actual	Variance to	Variance to
	Mar-26	Budget Mar-26	Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	2026	Budget 2026	Prior Year 2025
Advertising, Charter, Concession	\$ 2,467	\$ (380)	\$ 22	\$ 7,586	\$ (992)	\$ 204

Advertising, Charter, and Concessions Revenue was \$0.4 million and \$1.0 million unfavorable to budget for the month and year-to-date, respectively, primarily due to lower-than-expected vehicle and platform advertising revenue. Year-to-date, revenue was \$0.2 million higher than the prior year due to an increase in vehicle and platform advertising revenue.

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual	Variance to	Variance to	Actual	Variance to	Variance to
	Mar-26	Budget Mar-26	Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	2026	Budget 2026	Prior Year 2025
Investment income	\$ 1,291	\$ 150	\$ (1,371)	\$ 3,722	\$ (151)	\$ (4,394)

Investment income was \$0.2 million favorable to budget for the month and \$0.2 million unfavorable to budget for the year-to-date. In total, it was \$4.4 million lower than prior year due to a decrease in the cash and investments balance as CTA continues to draw down the designated operating reserve.

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual	Variance to	Variance to	Actual	Variance to	Variance to
	Mar-26	Budget Mar-26	Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	2026	Budget 2026	Prior Year 2025
Other Revenue	\$ 2,039	\$ 127	\$ 21	\$ 6,429	\$ 701	\$ (276)

Other Revenue was \$0.1 million and \$0.7 million favorable to budget for the month and year to date, respectively, due to higher-than-expected non-capital grant revenue. Compared to prior year, Other Revenue was slightly higher for the month and \$0.3 million lower year-to-date, primarily due to decreased rental and non-capital grant revenues. Non-capital grant revenue is balanced by a corresponding amount in non-capital grant expenses.

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual	Variance to	Variance to	Actual	Variance to	Variance to
	Mar-26	Budget Mar-26	Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	2026	Budget 2026	Prior Year 2025
Total System Generated Revenue	\$ 37,687	\$ (150)	\$ (706)	\$ 103,910	\$ (249)	\$ (2,877)

Total System-Generated Revenue was \$0.2 million unfavorable to budget for the month, primarily due to lower-than-anticipated vehicle and platform advertising revenue. For the year-to-date, total system revenue was also \$0.2 million unfavorable to budget. Compared to 2025, system generated revenue decreased by \$0.7 million for the month and \$2.9 million year-to-date due to lower investment income, as anticipated.

### III. Expenses

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual	Variance to	Variance to	Actual	Variance to	Variance to
	Mar-26	Budget Mar-26	Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	2026	Budget 2026	Prior Year 2025
Labor	\$ 129,886	\$ 3,398	\$ (10,519)	\$ 376,464	\$ 3,979	\$ (23,571)

Labor expense was \$3.4 million favorable to budget for the month and \$4.0 million favorable year-to-date due to the timing of filling open positions. Labor expense was \$10.5 million higher than March 2025 and \$23.6 million higher than prior year-to-date primarily due to contractual wage rate increases and increased staffing necessary for service delivery, resulting in a 4% increase in scheduled Transit Operation (STO) hours worked over the prior year. In particular, the increase in service with the Frequent Bus Network rolled out gradually in 2025 is now fully in place.

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual	Variance to	Variance to	Actual	Variance to	Variance to
	Mar-26	Budget Mar-26	Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	2026	Budget 2026	Prior Year 2025
Material	\$ 13,146	\$ (976)	\$ (2,459)	\$ 38,543	\$ (1,086)	\$ (5,934)

Material expense was \$1.0 million unfavorable to budget for the month and \$1.1 million unfavorable to budget for the year-to-date due to the timing of bus vehicle parts utilization. Material expense was \$2.5 million higher than in March 2025 and \$5.9 million higher than the prior year-to-date due to higher than anticipated bus vehicle parts utilization.

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual	Variance to	Variance to	Actual	Variance to	Variance to
	Mar-26	Budget Mar-26	Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	2026	Budget 2026	Prior Year 2025
Fuel	\$ 4,498	\$ (762)	\$ (945)	\$ 12,264	\$ (914)	\$ (1,140)

Fuel for Revenue Equipment expense was \$0.8 million unfavorable to budget for the month, and \$0.9 million unfavorable year-to-date driven by higher-than-expected usage and higher fuel rate. Compared to prior year, fuel is \$0.9 million higher for March and \$1.1 million higher year-to-date driven by higher rate, along with higher usage related to additional service, increasing fuel

consumption 0.3 million gallons over prior year-to-date. Actual rate per gallon was \$3.02 in March compared to the budgeted rate of \$2.75 per gallon and prior year rate of \$2.78. Year-to-date actual rate per gallon was \$2.87 compared to the budgeted rate of \$2.77 per gallon and prior year rate of \$2.80.

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual	Variance to	Variance to	Actual	Variance to	Variance to
	Mar-26	Budget Mar-26	Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	2026	Budget 2026	Prior Year 2025
Power	\$ 2,569	\$ 1,345	\$ 1,044	\$ 9,283	\$ 4,084	\$ 4,666

Traction Power for Revenue Equipment expense was favorable to budget by \$1.3 million for the month and \$4.1 million year-to-date, primarily due to lower-than-expected ComEd rates. Compared to prior periods, traction power expense decreased by \$1.0 million versus March 2025 and by \$4.7 million year-to-date.

The actual year-to-date rate was \$85.25 per MWh, which is \$36.66 below the budgeted rate of \$121.92 per MWh. This favorable variance is largely attributable to year-to-date CFRA credits of \$28.17 per MWh.

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual	Variance to	Variance to	Actual	Variance to	Variance to
	Mar-26	Budget Mar-26	Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	2026	Budget 2026	Prior Year 2025
Provision for Injuries & Damages	\$ 2,903	\$ -	\$ (1,048)	\$ 8,710	\$ -	\$ (3,144)

The Provision for Injuries & Damages expense was on par with budget for both the month and the year-to-date. The expense was \$3.1 million unfavorable to the prior year-to-date due to funding requirements.

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual	Variance to	Variance to	Actual	Variance to	Variance to
	Mar-26	Budget Mar-26	Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	2026	Budget 2026	Prior Year 2025
Purchase of Security Services	\$ 9,856	\$ (3,010)	\$ (3,129)	\$ 27,655	\$ (7,118)	\$ (5,305)

Purchase of Security Services was \$3.0 million and \$7.1 million unfavorable to budget for the month and year-to-date, respectively, driven by an increase in police and security guard expenses consistent with CTA's security plan. Compared to 2025, expenses were \$3.1 million higher for the month and \$5.3 million higher for the year-to-date due to additional police and private security deployments on the system in 2026.

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual	Variance to	Variance to	Actual	Variance to	Variance to
	Mar-26	Budget Mar-26	Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	2026	Budget 2026	Prior Year 2025
Other Expenses	\$ 27,534	\$ 1,121	\$ (4,469)	\$ 78,865	\$ 3,796	\$ 1,007

Other expenses were \$1.1 million favorable to budget for the month. The favorable variance was spread across all the categories, primarily due to the timing of invoice payments. On a year-to-date basis, other expenses were \$3.8 million favorable to budget, primarily due to timing of invoice payments for contractual services.

The other expense category includes the pension obligation bond expense, utilities, maintenance contracts, services, and other expenses.

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual Mar-26	Variance to Budget Mar-26	Variance to Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	Actual 2026	Variance to Budget 2026	Variance to Prior Year 2025
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 190,393	\$ 1,115	\$ (21,524)	\$ 551,784	\$ 2,741	\$ (33,422)

Operating Expenses were \$1.1 million favorable to budget for the month due to lower labor costs, traction power expense, and other expenses. For the year-to-date, expenses were \$2.7 million favorable due to lower traction power, other expenses, and labor costs. Compared to the prior year, expenses were \$21.5 million higher for the month and \$33.4 million higher year-to-date, mainly due to increased labor costs as detailed above.

#### IV. Recovery Ratio

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual Mar-26	Variance to Budget Mar-26	Variance to Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	Actual 2026	Variance to Budget 2026	Variance to Prior Year 2025
Recovery Ratio	22.44%	0.36		21.39%	0.32	

Recovery Ratio, which measures the percentage of operating expenses CTA funds from internally generated revenues against overall expenses, was 22.44% for the month. This was favorable to budget by 0.36 percentage points for the month. Year-to-date, the recovery ratio was 21.39%, which was favorable to budget by 0.32 percentage points and favorable to the RTA required recovery ratio of 20.00% by 1.39 percentage points. For 2026, the Northern Illinois Transit Authority Act waives the statutory recovery ratio requirement.

#### V. Ridership

Category	Current Month			Full Year		
	Actual Mar-26	Variance to Budget Mar-26	Variance to Prior Year Mar26 vs. Mar25	Actual 2026	Variance to Budget 2026	Variance to Prior Year 2025
Bus	17,008	1,110	85	47,449	3,909	872
Rail	9,814	405	525	26,398	1,320	1,460
Rail to Rail Transfers	1,618	28	(15)	4,318	121	(18)
Total	28,440	1,542	595	78,165	5,350	2,314

- Ridership for March was 28.4 million, 1.5 million higher than budget and 0.6 million higher than prior year. Excluding free rides and transfers, ridership was on par with budget.
- Calendar adjusted ridership was up 1.2% from prior year due to increased ridership from CTA's continued expansion of service delivery.

- Ridership for the year-to-date was 78.2 million, 5.4 million higher than budget and 2.3 million higher than the prior year-to-date. Excluding free rides and transfers, ridership was 0.6 million higher than budget.
- Calendar adjusted ridership was up 3.2% from the prior year-to-date.
- More details on ridership can be found in the March Ridership Report.

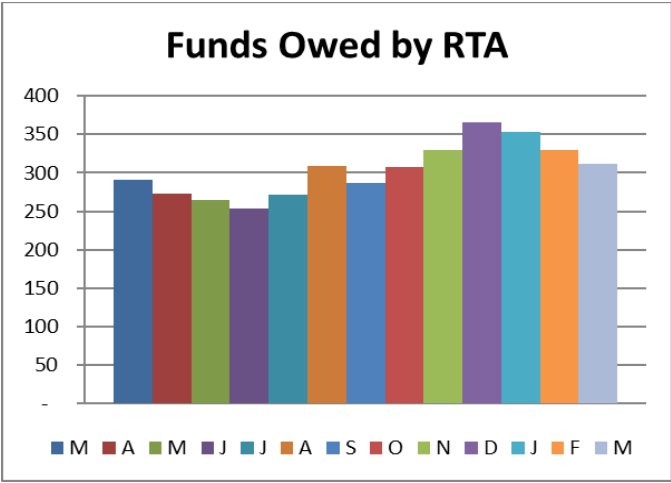
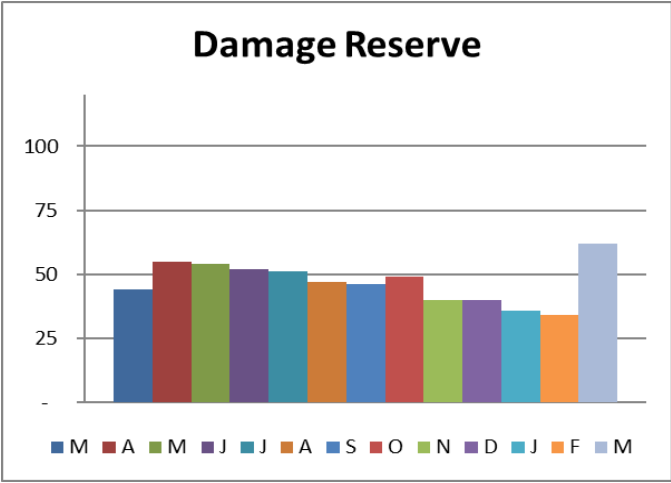
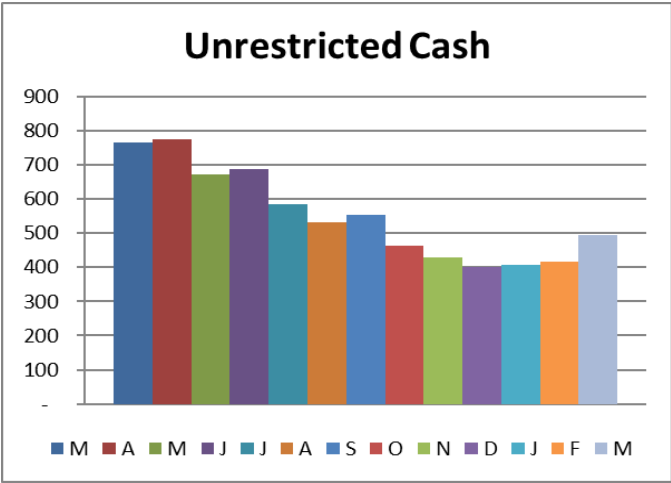
## VI. Cash & Liquidity

The chart below highlights CTA's cash position in March 2026 compared to March 2025.

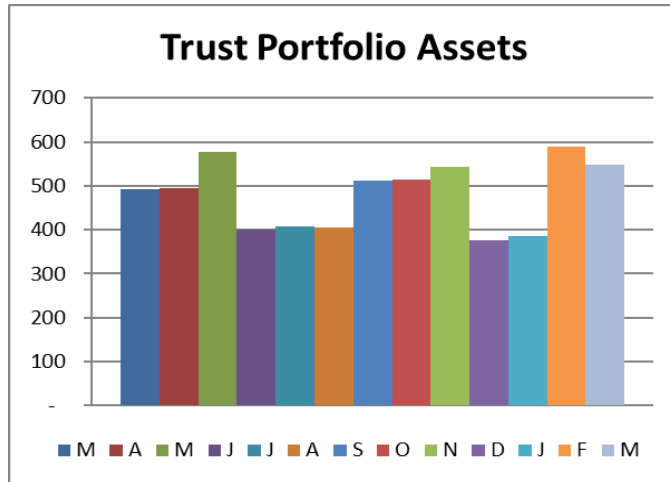
	March 2026	March 2025	Increase (Decrease)
Unrestricted Cash	\$ 494,460	\$ 764,992	\$ (270,532)
Damage Reserve	62,060	44,086	\$ 17,974
Funds Owed by RTA	311,714	290,532	\$ 21,182
Trust Portfolio Assets	546,774	492,961	\$ 53,813
Total Cash and Receivables	\$ 1,415,008	\$ 1,592,571	\$ (177,563)

CTA's total cash/receivables balance was \$1.4 billion. Unrestricted cash was \$270.5 million lower than the prior year, primarily due to the drawdown of designated relief funds as they were utilized throughout 2025, in addition to the timing of cash receipts and invoice payments. A total of \$37.7 million was used from the designated reserve in March, with a remaining balance of \$142.5 million at the end of March. The Damage Reserve fund was \$18.0 million higher than last year due to deposits into the fund, partially offset by settlement payments in 2025 and 2026, including YTD payments totaling \$6.5 million. Funds owed by the RTA were approximately \$311.7 million, which was \$21.2 million higher than the prior year due to the timing of payments from the State. CTA continues to work closely with the RTA to monitor their receivable balance owed; Trust Portfolio Assets represent bond proceeds held in Trust for funding capital projects and making required debt service payments and therefore decrease when payments are made.

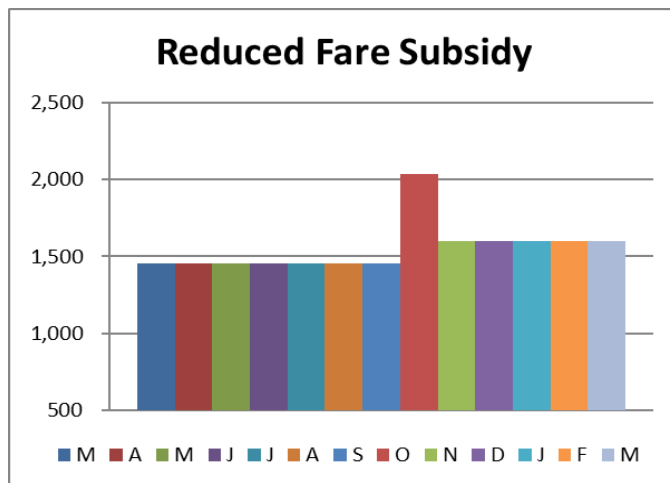
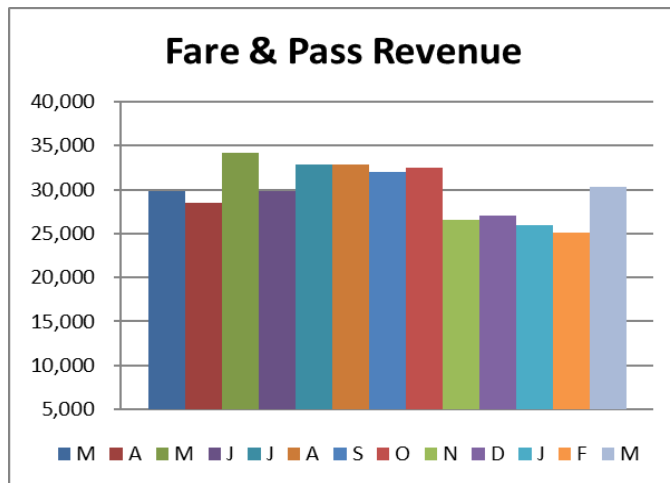
Cash & Liquidity



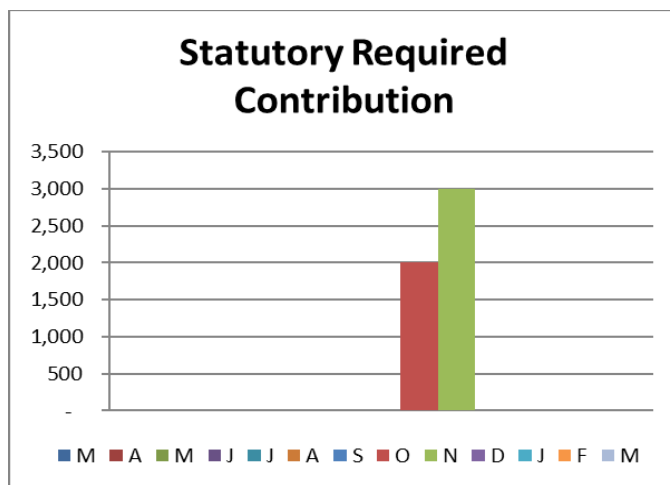
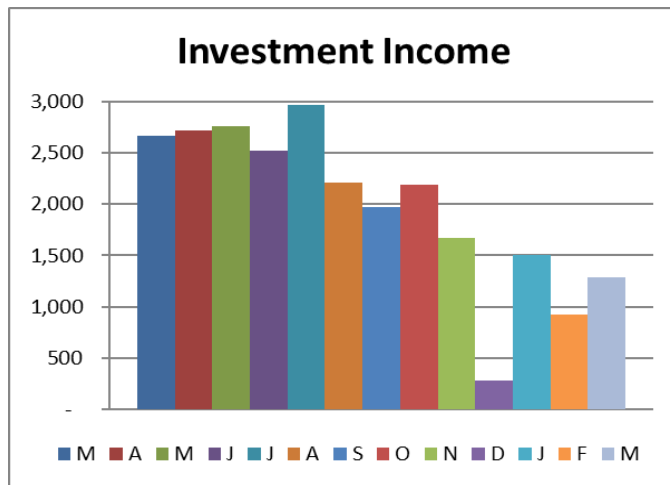
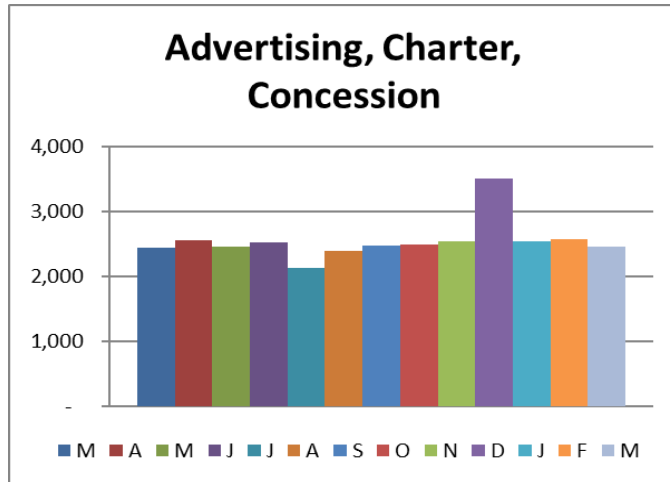
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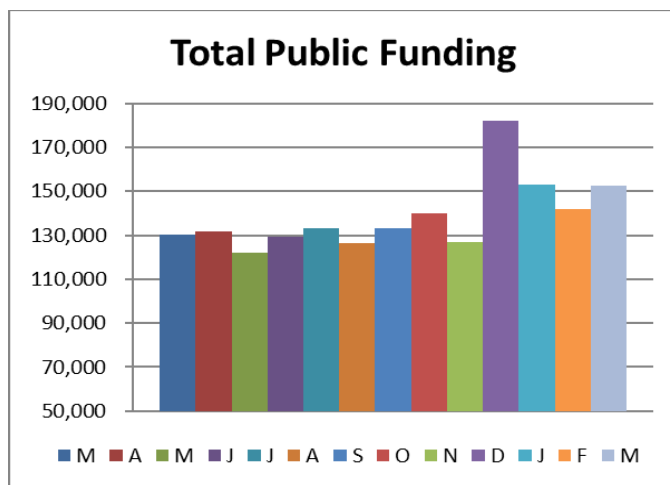
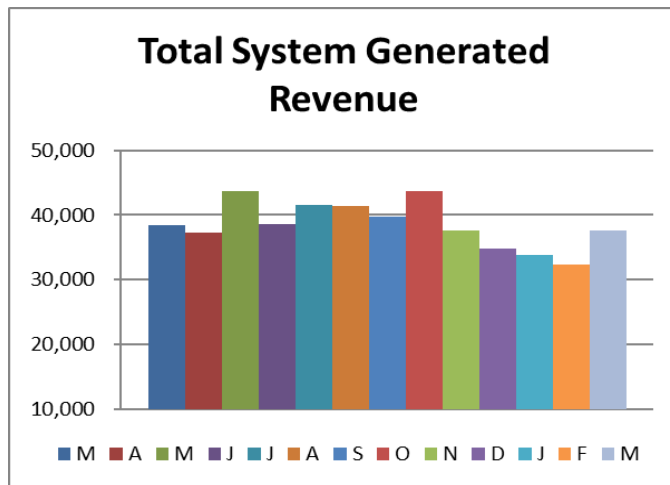
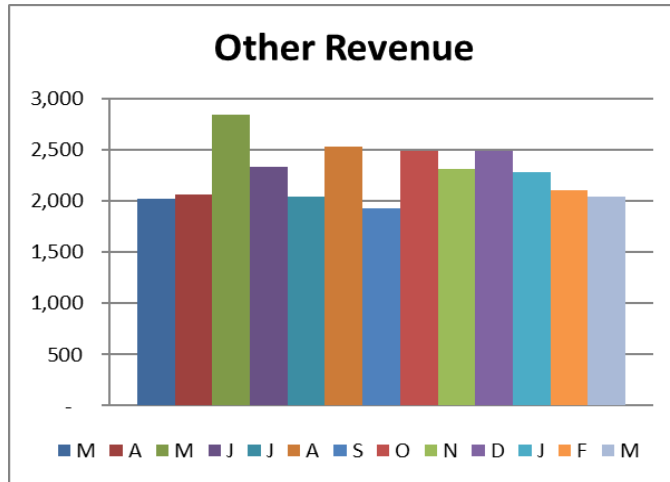
Revenue



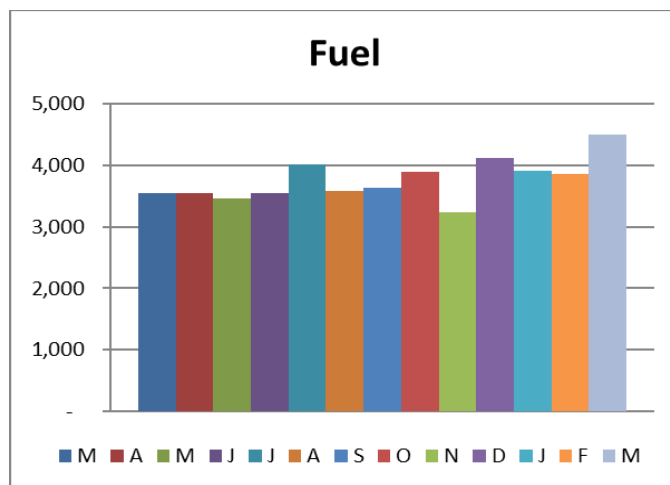
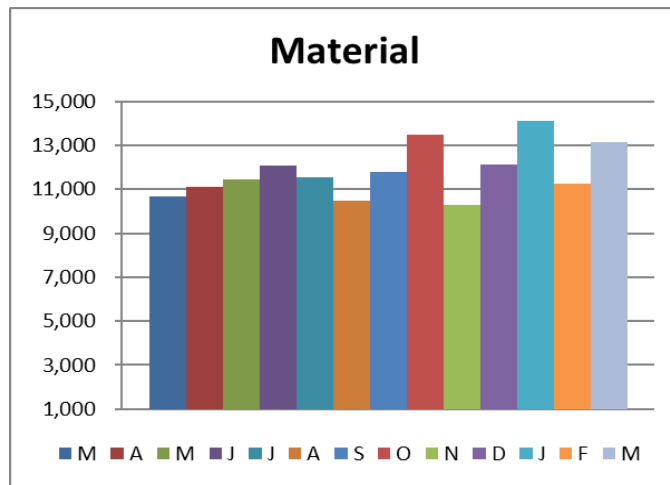
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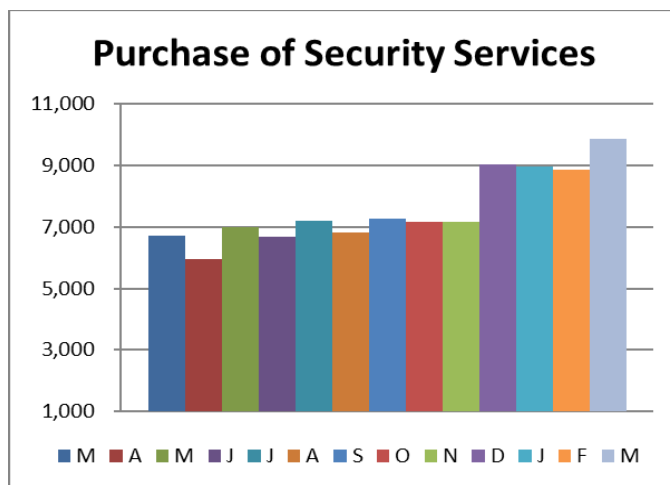
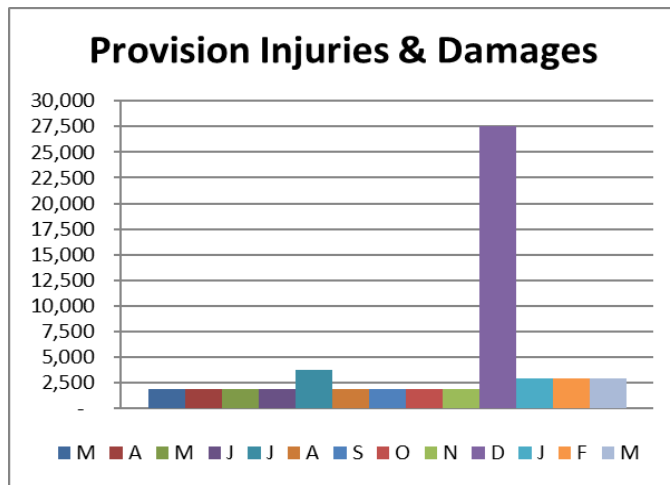
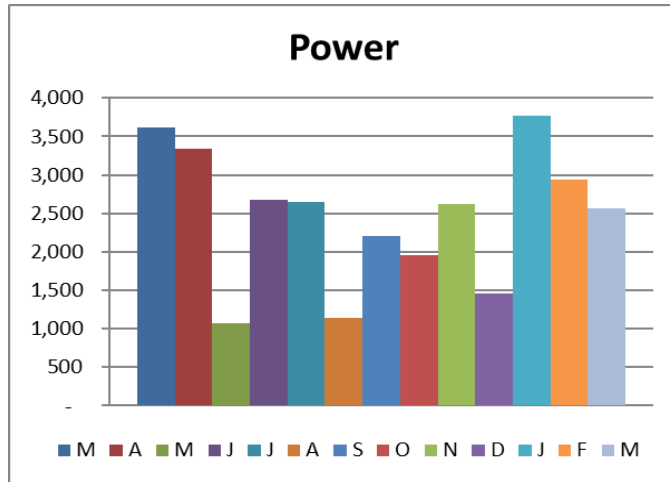
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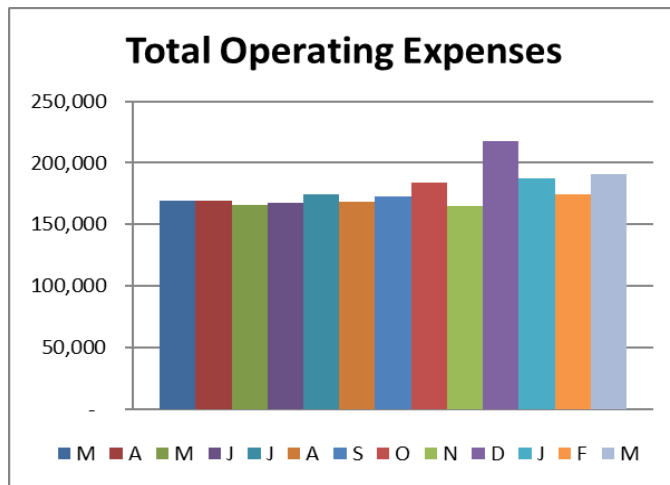
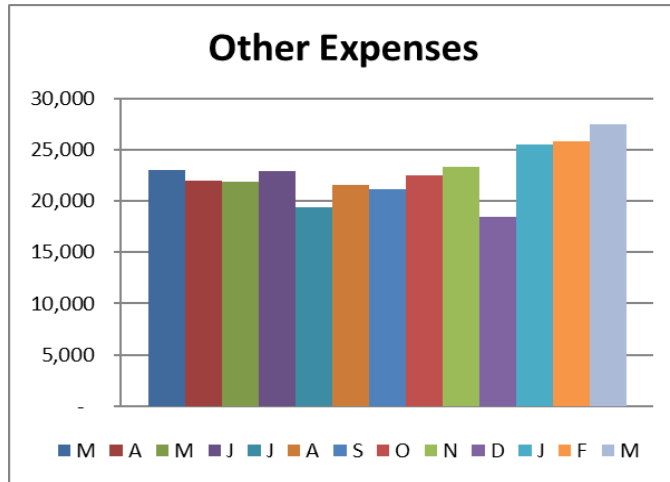
## Expenses



Expenses Cont'd



Expenses Cont'd



Cash	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26
Unrestricted Cash	765	775	672	687	586	532	553	463	430	402	406	416	494
Damage Reserve	44	55	54	52	51	47	46	49	40	40	36	34	62
Funds Owed by RTA	291	273	264	253	272	309	286	308	330	366	353	330	312
Trust Portfolio Assets	493	495	577	401	407	406	511	513	542	375	386	590	547

Revenue	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26
Fare & Pass Revenue	29,816	28,537	34,147	29,774	32,880	32,844	31,974	32,514	26,531	27,003	25,948	25,137	30,293
Reduced Fare Subsidy	1,453	1,453	1,453	1,453	1,453	1,453	1,453	2,034	1,598	1,598	1,598	1,598	1,598
Advertising, Charter, Concession	2,445	2,566	2,461	2,531	2,134	2,389	2,482	2,487	2,534	3,508	2,542	2,578	2,467
Investment Income	2,662	2,720	2,757	2,523	2,969	2,207	1,973	2,194	1,673	275	1,507	925	1,291
Statutory Required Contribution	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,000	3,000	-	-	-	-
Other Revenue	2,018	2,059	2,841	2,333	2,039	2,532	1,923	2,487	2,308	2,492	2,283	2,107	2,039
Total System Generated Revenue	38,393	37,334	43,659	38,614	41,474	41,424	39,805	43,716	37,645	34,875	33,878	32,345	37,687
Total Public Funding	130,476	131,937	122,210	129,165	133,126	126,485	133,119	139,851	126,848	182,343	153,276	141,893	152,706

Expenses	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26
Labor	119,367	121,444	119,140	118,042	126,116	122,508	125,013	132,680	116,060	144,502	127,976	118,602	129,886
Material	10,687	11,118	11,446	12,076	11,551	10,504	11,768	13,464	10,280	12,115	14,136	11,261	13,146
Fuel	3,553	3,549	3,458	3,555	4,014	3,582	3,628	3,902	3,235	4,126	3,906	3,859	4,498
Power	3,613	3,334	1,069	2,673	2,651	1,141	2,212	1,957	2,618	1,460	3,776	2,938	2,569
Provision Injuries & Damages	1,855	1,855	1,855	1,855	3,710	1,855	1,855	1,855	1,855	27,560	2,903	2,903	2,903
Purchase of Security Services	6,728	5,942	7,001	6,666	7,203	6,804	7,274	7,168	7,150	9,016	8,947	8,853	9,856
Other Expenses	23,066	22,028	21,900	22,911	19,354	21,515	21,174	22,541	23,295	18,438	25,509	25,822	27,534
Total Operating Expenses	168,869	169,271	165,869	167,778	174,600	167,909	172,924	183,567	164,493	217,218	187,154	174,238	190,393