

THE ZERO FARES PILOT PROGRAM

ABQRIDE. **QUARTERLY REPORT**

JANUARY – MARCH 2022

Our Mission:

To be the first choice in transportation services for the Albuquerque Metropolitan area.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....3

Introduction.....4

Background: ABQ Ride Before Zero Fares.....5

Implementation.....6

Data:

 Ridership.....7-10

 Paratransit & Customer Service.....11-12

 Safety & Security.....13-19

 Program Costs.....20

Ensuring Success of Zero Fares.....21

Community Feedback.....22-23

Appendix A.....24

Appendix B.....25-26

Zero Fares Quarterly Report: January 2022 - March 2022

Executive Summary

Throughout this report, each section of zero fares data is provided in order from 2019 to present, with an exception to both ridership by route, reporting data from first quarter of 2021 and 2022, and security data, reporting data from October 2021 to present. This is intended to demonstrate pre-pandemic trends as COVID-19 made a significant impact on the department. As the spread of the virus eases and people return to normal, it is important to note that ABQ Ride is anticipating an increase in certain areas including ridership and calls to customer service. In addition, other key factors such as an increase in gas prices and inclement weather events have also contributed to changes in final data points in several categories.

Ridership:

January 2022 - March 2022

- Total ridership for all fixed routes, including ART, has increased 16.54%
- ART services have seen a 20.02% increase
- Sun Van services have seen a 5.85% increase

Sun Van & Customer Service:

January 2022 - March 2022

- Calls for Sun Van reservations have increased 40.04%
- Total calls to Customer Service have increased 44.48%
- Total Sun Van applications received have increased 18.92%

Security:

January 2022 - March 2022

- March 2022 recorded a total of 600 calls for service, up from 451 at the start of the program

Cost:

- The cost for implementation, operations, and maintaining all revenue vehicles throughout the first quarter of the program was \$700,916.62 (see page 20)
- Operating cost per revenue vehicle hour is \$4.54

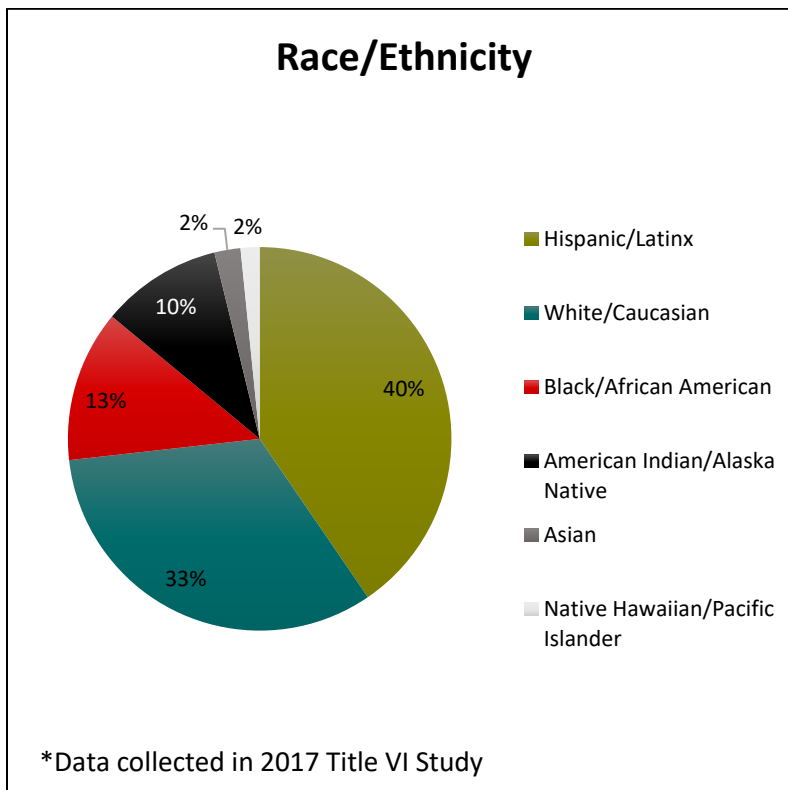
Introduction

In June 2021, City Councilors introduced legislation [O-21-67](#), proposing an amendment to the Transit System Ordinance to provide for a Zero Fares Pilot Program for City of Albuquerque transportation services. For the 2022 calendar year, the City of Albuquerque Transit Department (ABQ Ride) will complete quarterly reports which will include ridership data for fixed routes, ART, and Sun Van services, a breakdown of security calls by type and route, driver safety, calls to customer service, a total count of applications received for the Sun Van service, and a total cost analysis for the program. In addition, we have also included feedback from riders, collected by local community organizations. The goal of these reports is to analyze data and provide a clear snapshot of how the Zero Fares Pilot Project affects Albuquerque’s transit system.



Background: ABQ Ride Before Zero Fares

Prior to the passing of O-21-67, ABQ Ride took steps to ensure availability of its services to its diverse customer base. A study conducted in 2017 analyzed the execution of the Title VI program within the Transit Department in terms of ridership demographics, travel patterns, and availability of various fare assistance programs. Ridership demographics were analyzed in several different categories including race/ethnicity, annual household income, and vehicle availability. The breakdown of race/ethnicity among riders is shown in the figure below. Of these categories, 84% of those surveyed reported an annual household income of less than \$35,000, and nearly 46% reported not owning a vehicle.



For several years, the City of Albuquerque had been in conversation with a number of community groups and the Transit Advisory Board regarding the need for affordable, reliable public transportation for all. In the summers of 2018 and 2019, the multi-departmental group Youth Connect, in collaboration with the Transit Department, was able to acquire and distribute free bus passes to youth across the metro. In addition to this milestone, the Keller administration approved free fares for adults over the age of 60 and students under the age of 25 starting March 1, 2021. These programs were highly successful, especially for youth participating in the many summer youth programs the City of Albuquerque offers.

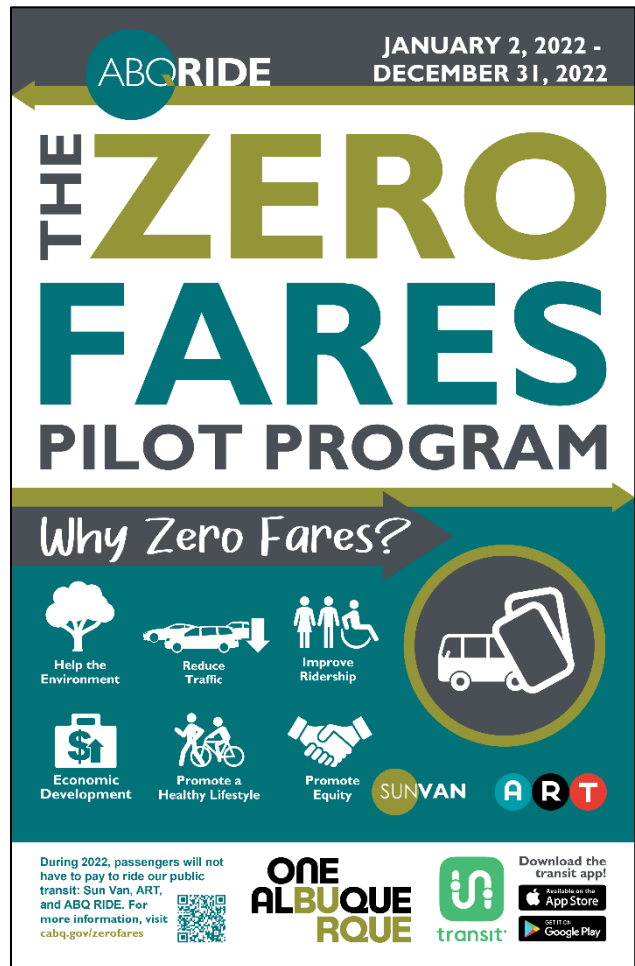
Implementation

The Transit Department created an outreach plan to prepare for the changes and impacts Zero Fares would have on the department, ABQ Ride and Sun Van users, and the City of Albuquerque as a whole. The purpose of the outreach plan was to map out goals related to advertising and data tracking for the zero fares program. The goals listed in the plan include:

1. Pursue a public awareness campaign highlighting the availability and benefits of zero fares.
2. Work collectively with internal departments, community stakeholders, and organizations to disseminate information and collect both quantitative and qualitative data related to zero fares.

At the end of 2021, ABQ Ride created informational graphics, updated the Transit Department website, and shared information on print and social media to get the word out that services would be free beginning January 2, 2022. Additionally, Interim Director Stephanie Dominguez was interviewed by New Mexico Living to answer questions and inform viewers about the new pilot program.

Over the last few months, the Transit Department has been working with a number of safety groups including the City’s Metro Security Division to track specific data and identify areas that may need additional support as a result of the zero fares program. This quarterly report will present data and information for the Zero Fares Pilot Program. Data and information will include ridership, security, paratransit services, customer service, and the overall cost of the program. Additionally, our team will collect input and feedback from drivers, riders, and community groups.



Zero Fares Quarterly Report: January 2022 - March 2022

Zero Fares Data: Ridership

Prior to the implementation of the Zero Fares Pilot Program, a majority of ridership data was collected via fare boxes. Ridership data is now collected manually by Motorcoach Operators and Sun Van Chauffeurs, and on ART buses by automated passenger counters.

Included in this section are charts showing total fixed route ridership as well as those demonstrating a breakdown of ridership by route.

Notable Dates/Inclement Weather:

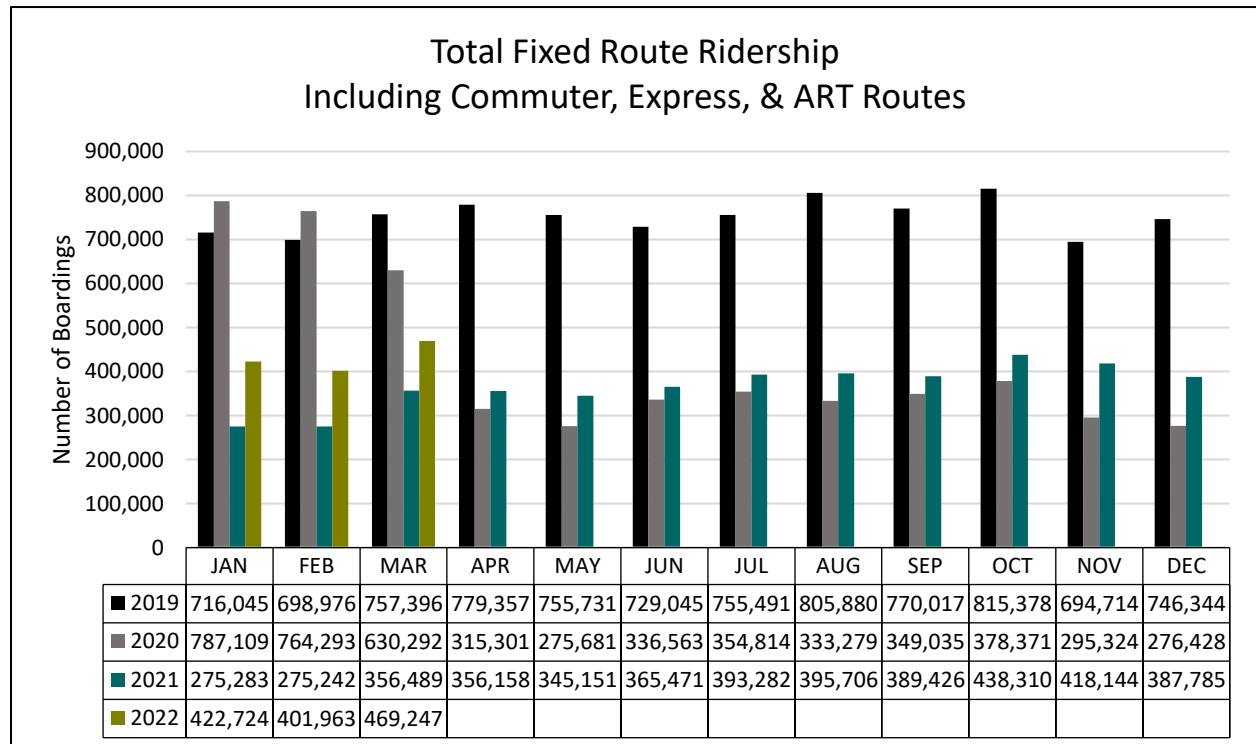
February 2, 2022—service suspended at 6:00pm

February 3, 2022 – service delays; ART service suspended

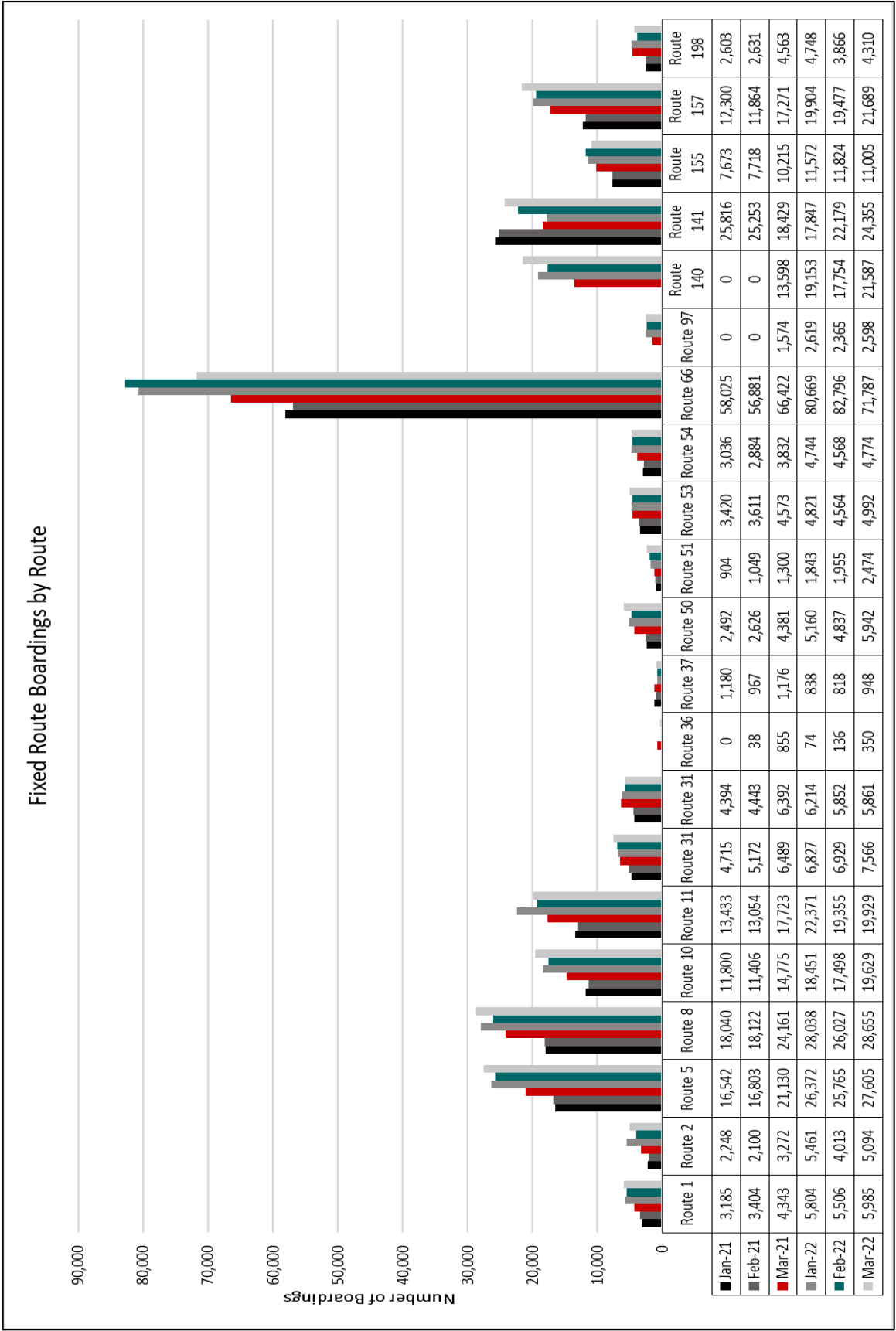
February 17, 2022 – two hour delay for ART service

February 24, 2022 – one hour delay for ART service

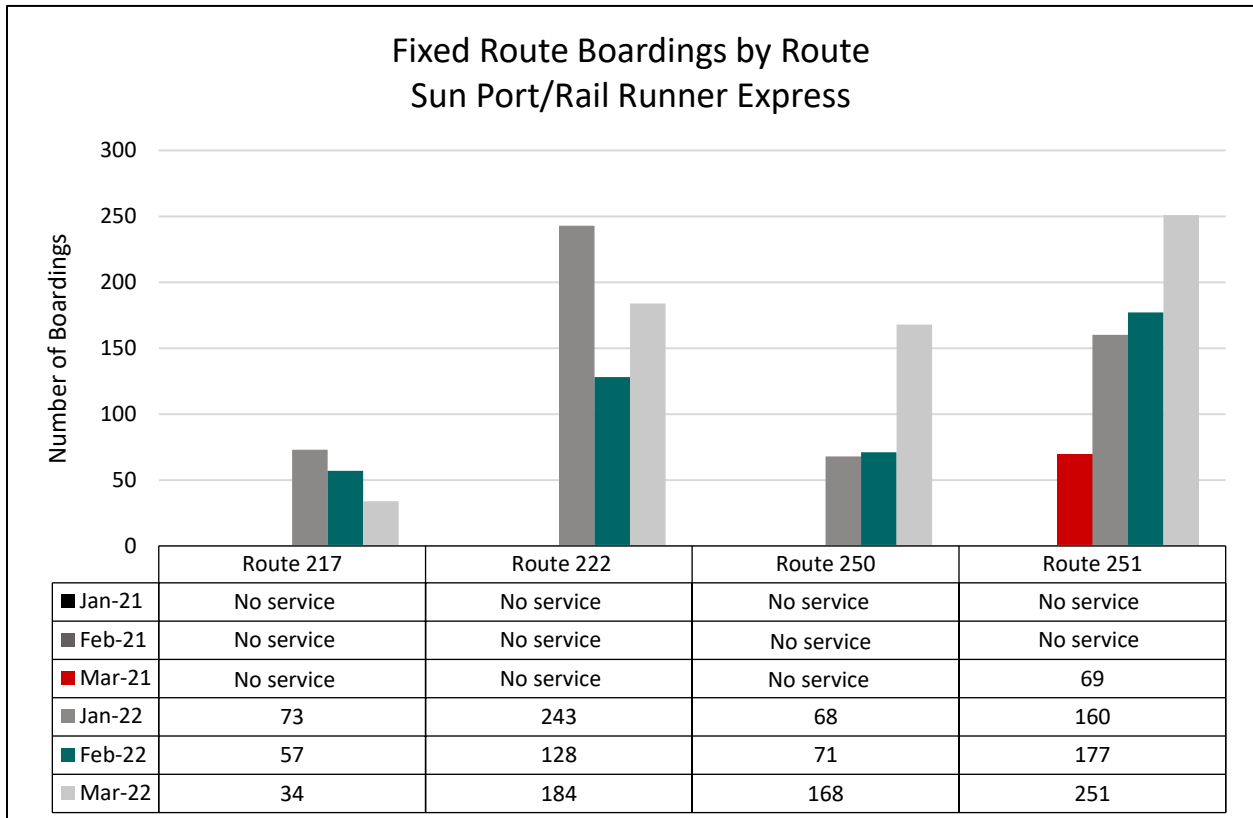
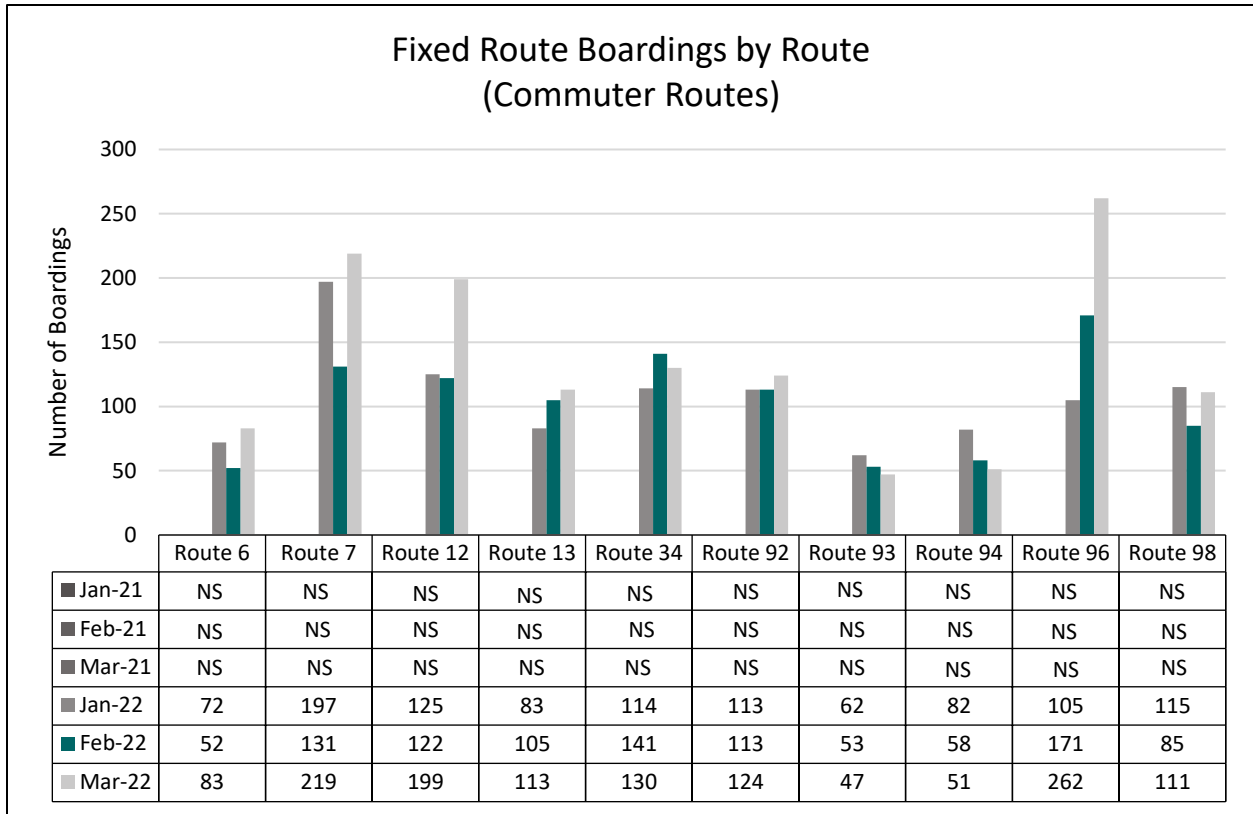
*February has fewer days in the month, resulting in lower ridership overall.



Zero Fares Quarterly Report: January 2022 - March 2022



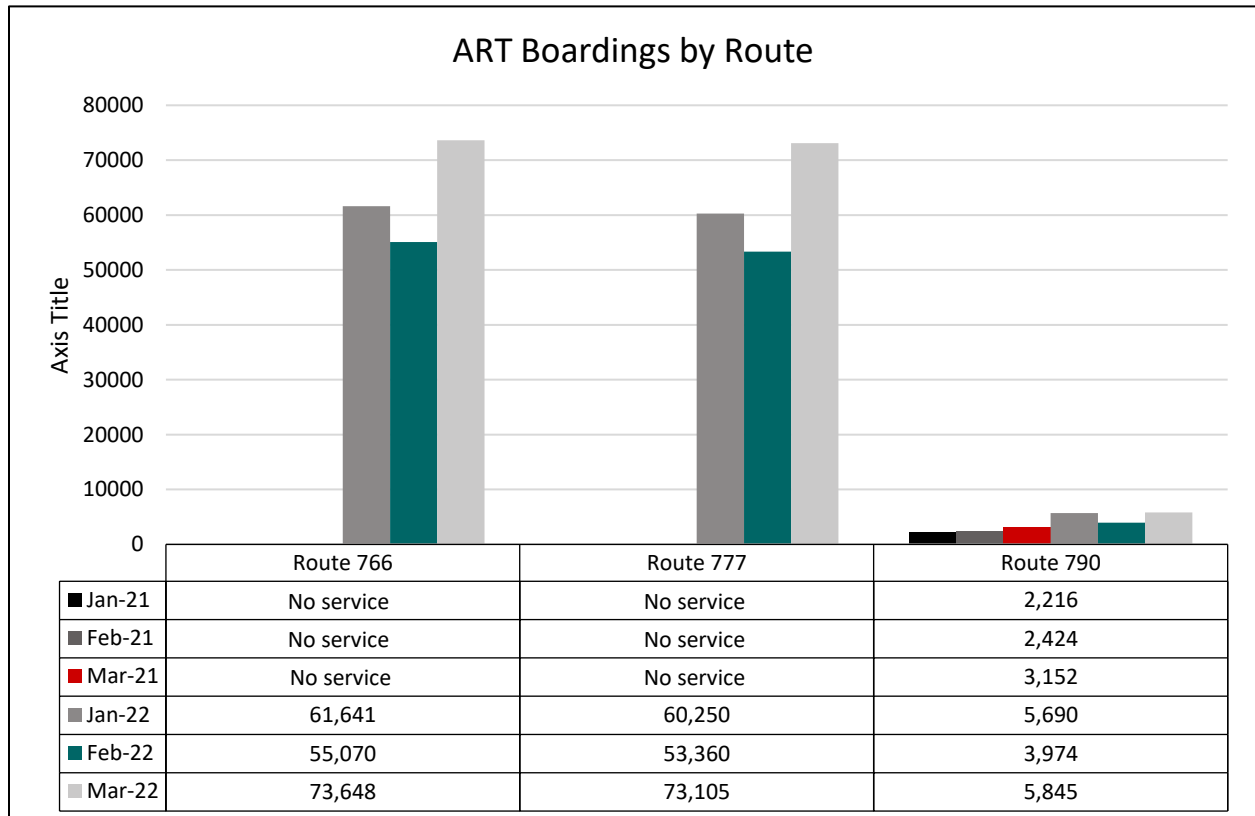
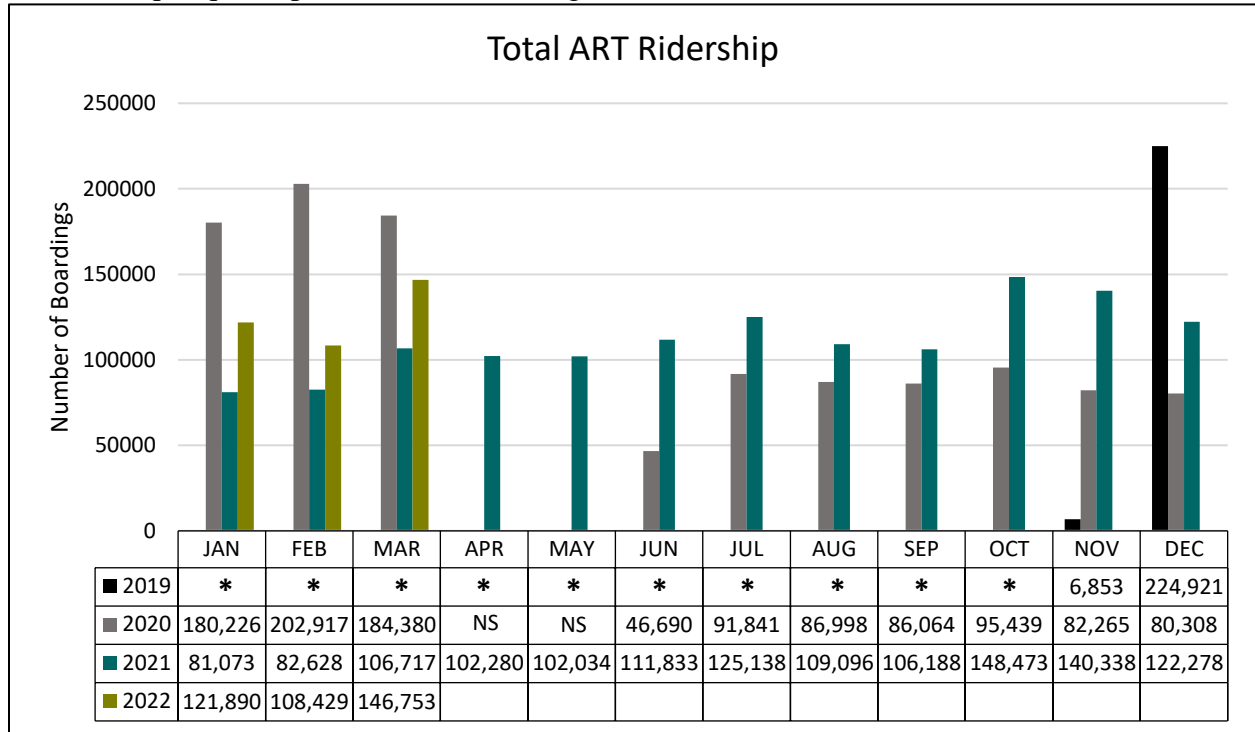
Zero Fares Quarterly Report: January 2022 - March 2022



Zero Fares Quarterly Report: January 2022 - March 2022

Albuquerque Rapid Transit Ridership:

* Albuquerque Rapid Transit service began November 2019



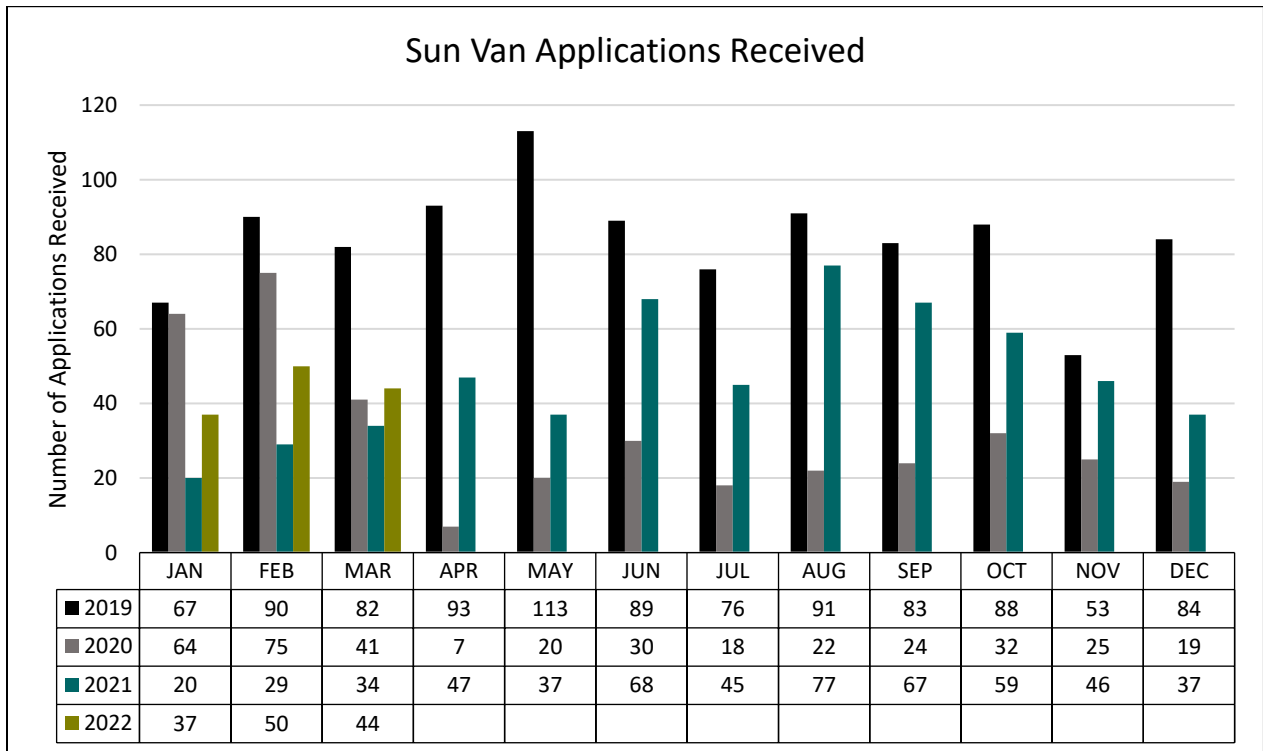
Zero Fares Quarterly Report: January 2022 - March 2022



Zero Fares Data: Paratransit & Customer Service

ABQ Ride’s paratransit service, Sun Van, provides a vital resource for residents of the Albuquerque metro area who are unable to utilize regular fixed route services due to a disability or impairment. In order to receive Sun Van services, riders must go through an application and interview process. If approved, riders are then given either conditional or unconditional access to the service.

During the month of March 2022, our Customer Service Division received a total of 44 applications, up from 34 in March of 2021 during the midst of statewide COVID-19 protocols and restrictions.



Zero Fares Quarterly Report: January 2022 - March 2022

Customer Service Calls:

Once a customer is certified to use the Sun Van service, ride reservations can be made by contacting Customer Service. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Transit Department's Customer Service Division has experienced a fluctuation in call volume and Sun Van application receipts but is beginning to see a steady increase in both since zero fares was implemented.

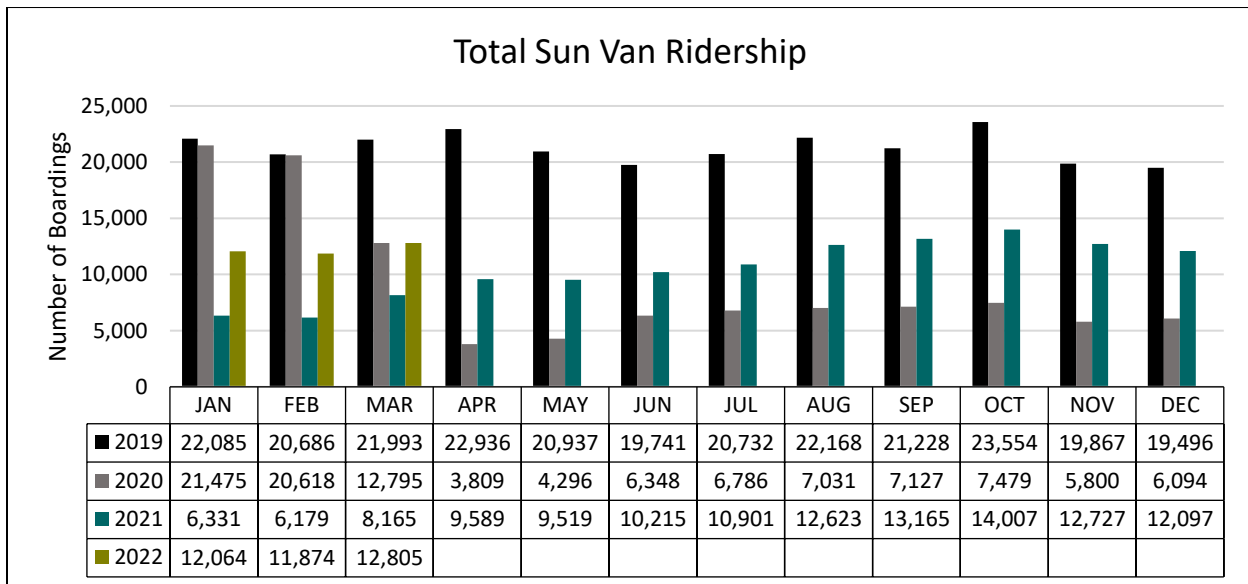
Customer Service Calls 2022									
Month	Plan Your Ride			Sun Van Reservations			Total Calls		
	Calls Presented	Calls Handled	%	Calls Presented	Calls Handled	%	Calls Presented	Calls Handled	%
January	956	920	96.23	10,421	10,080	96.73	11,377	11,000	96.69
February	1,030	993	96.41	10,903	10,602	97.24	11,933	11,595	97.17
March	1,414	1,002	70.86	13,303	11,921	89.61	14,717	12,923	87.81

Customer Service Calls 2021									
Month	Plan Your Ride			Sun Van Reservations			Total Calls		
	Calls Presented	Calls Handled	%	Calls Presented	Calls Handled	%	Calls Presented	Calls Handled	%
January	1,319	1,264	95.83	6,841	6,517	95.26	8,160	7,781	95.36
February	1,516	1,446	95.4	6,781	6,417	94.63	8,297	7,863	94.76
March	1,661	1,475	88.8	9,209	8,568	93.04	10,870	10,043	92.39

Customer Service Calls 2020									
Month	Plan Your Ride			Sun Van Reservations			Total Calls		
	Calls Presented	Calls Handled	%	Calls Presented	Calls Handled	%	Calls Presented	Calls Handled	%
January	1,623	1,559	96.06	18,775	18,010	95.93	20,398	19,569	95.94
February	1,632	1,279	78.37	18,734	17,317	92.44	20,366	18,596	91.31
March	1,525	1,335	87.54	12,091	11,374	94.07	13,616	12,709	93.34

Customer Service Calls 2019									
Month	Plan Your Ride			Sun Van Reservations			Total Calls		
	Calls Presented	Calls Handled	%	Calls Presented	Calls Handled	%	Calls Presented	Calls Handled	%
January	1,540	1,469	95.39	15,770	15,188	96.31	17,310	16,657	96.23
February	1,603	1,310	81.72	16,074	15,028	93.49	17,677	16,338	92.43
March	1,683	1,390	82.59	16,397	15,281	93.19	18,080	16,671	92.2

Sun Van Ridership:



Zero Fares Data: Safety & Security

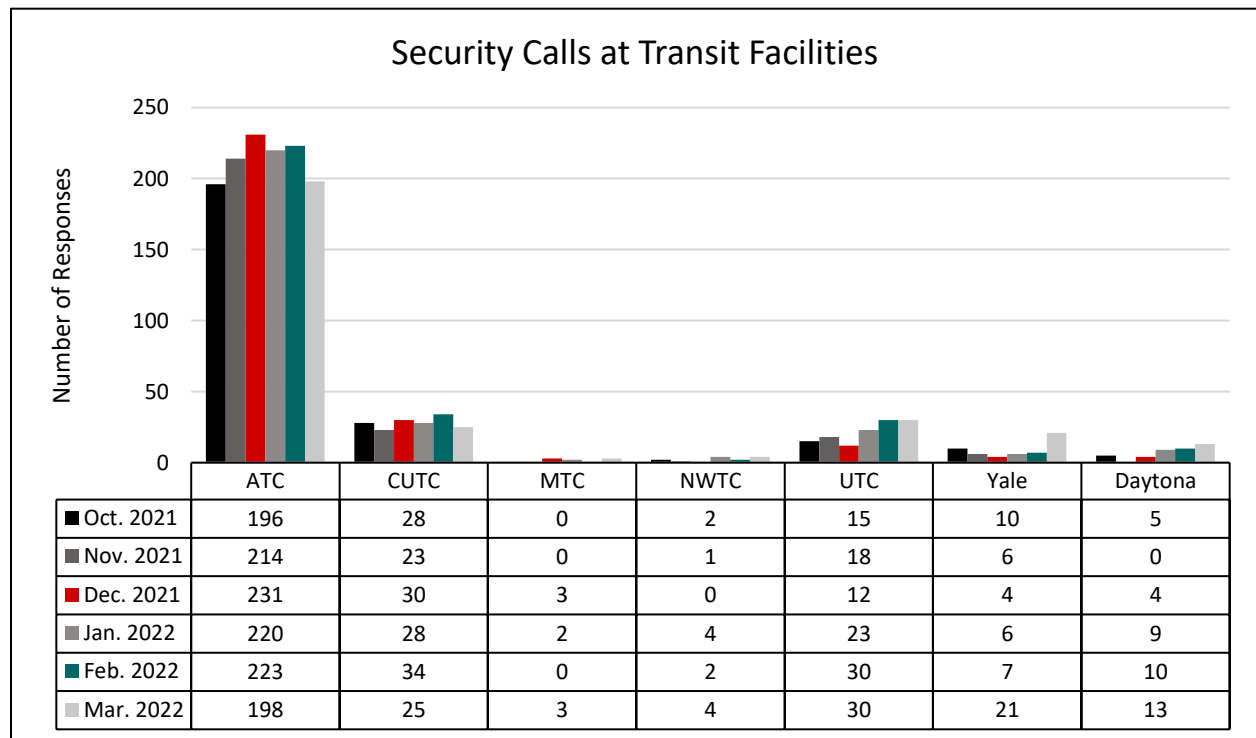
Safety and security data in this report has been provided by the City’s Metro Security Division as well as the Albuquerque Police Department’s Data Driven Policing Unit. Data is based on calls specific to the Transit Department or in close proximity to a bus stop or transit facility. Data regarding driver safety and battery towards Motorcoach Operators is provided by the Transit Department.



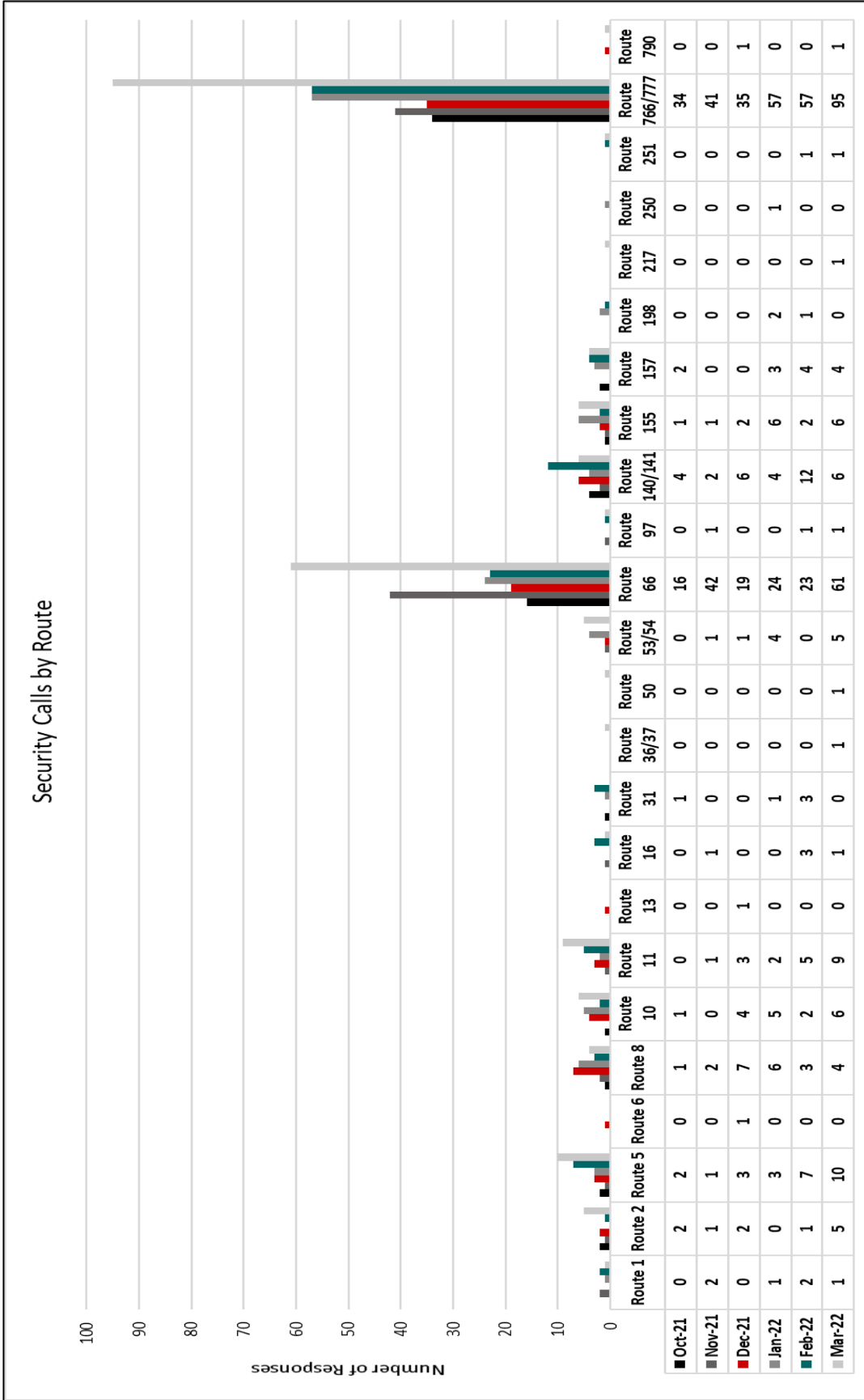
Metro Security Data:

The following charts provide a breakdown of calls for service to Metro Security by both route and call type. These calls are specific to the Transit Department and are typically initiated by Transit Dispatch, the 311 Community Contact Center, or directly from security officers working proactive routes in their assigned area.

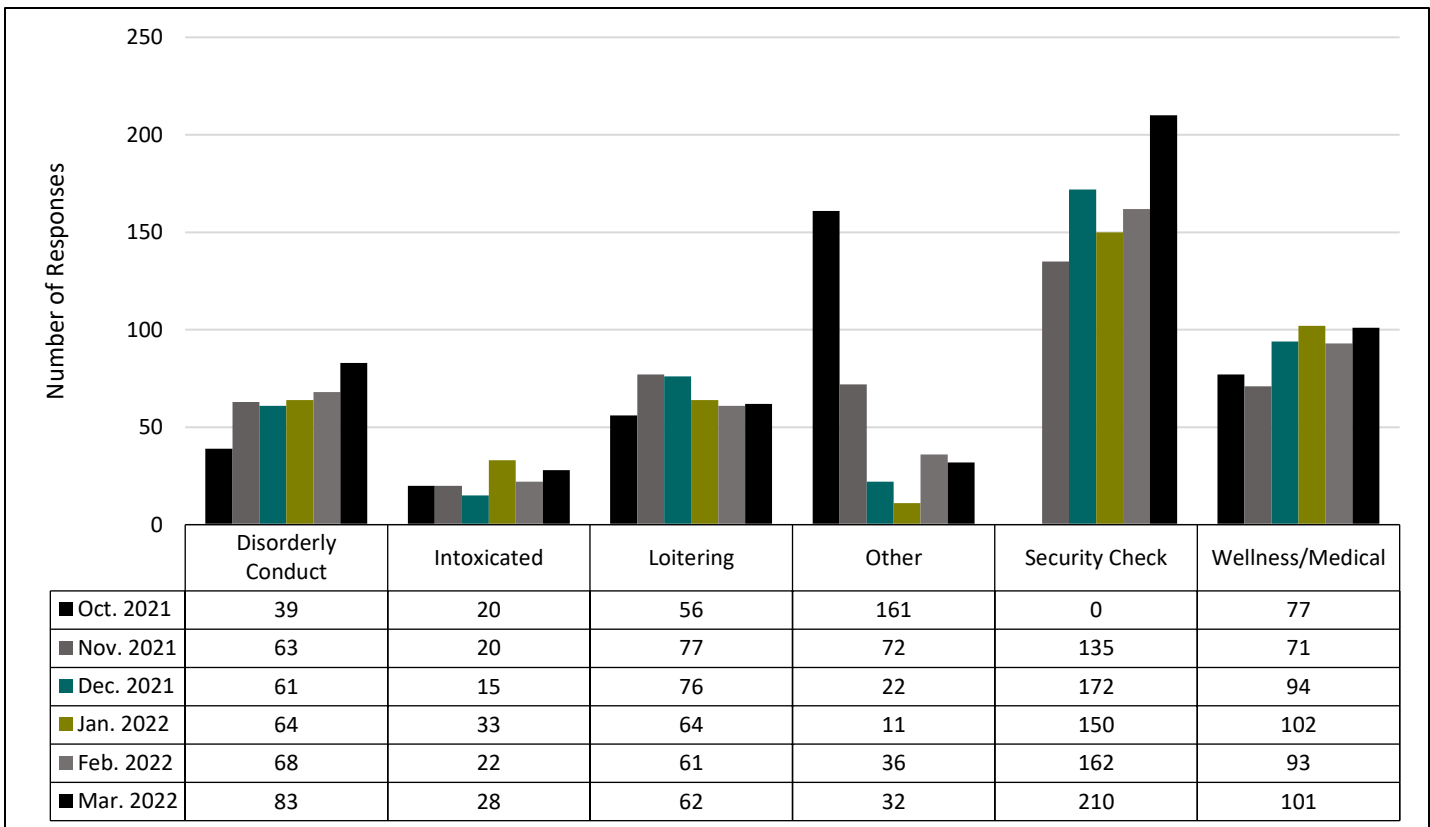
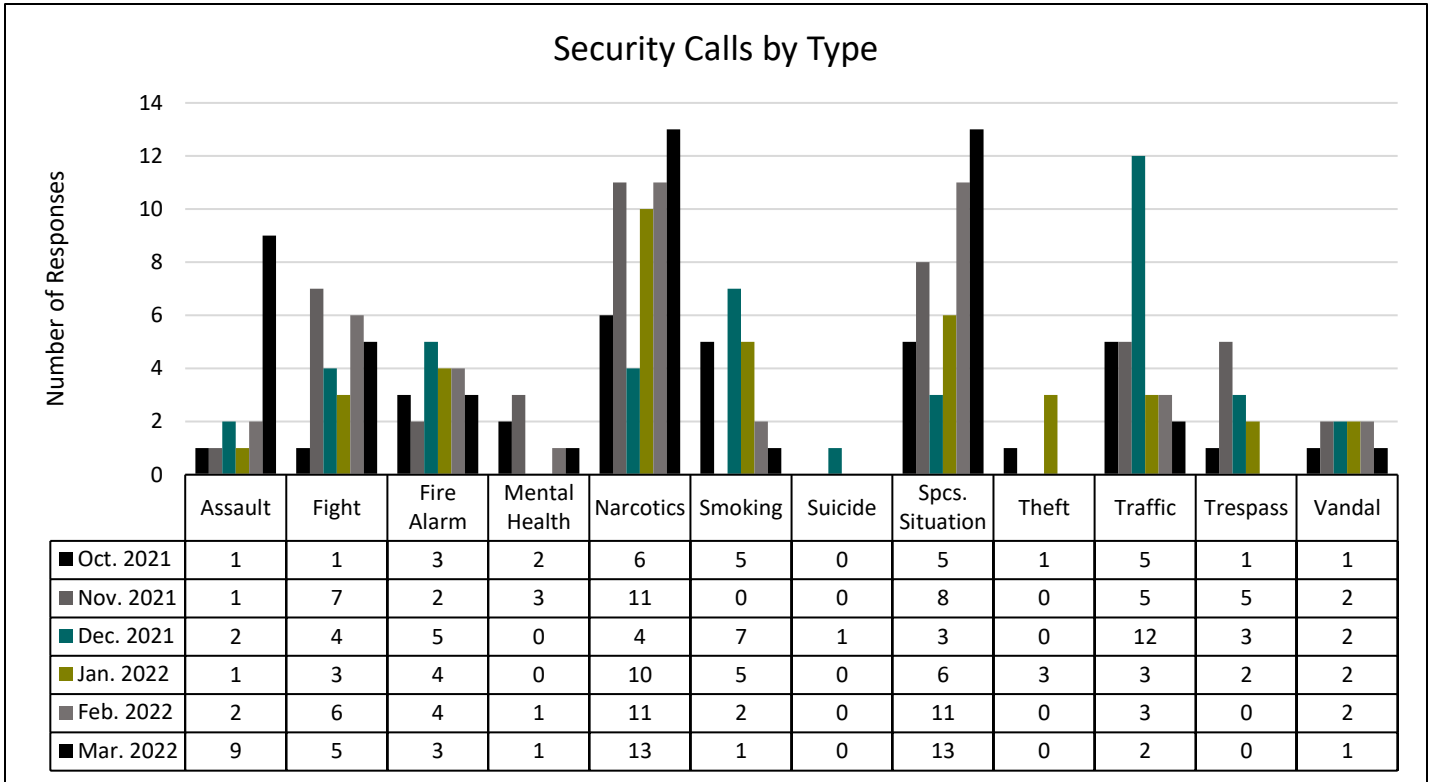
It is important to note that calls by route only include those which correspond to responses on buses or at bus stops and do not include those at transit centers or other locations.



Zero Fares Quarterly Report: January 2022 - March 2022



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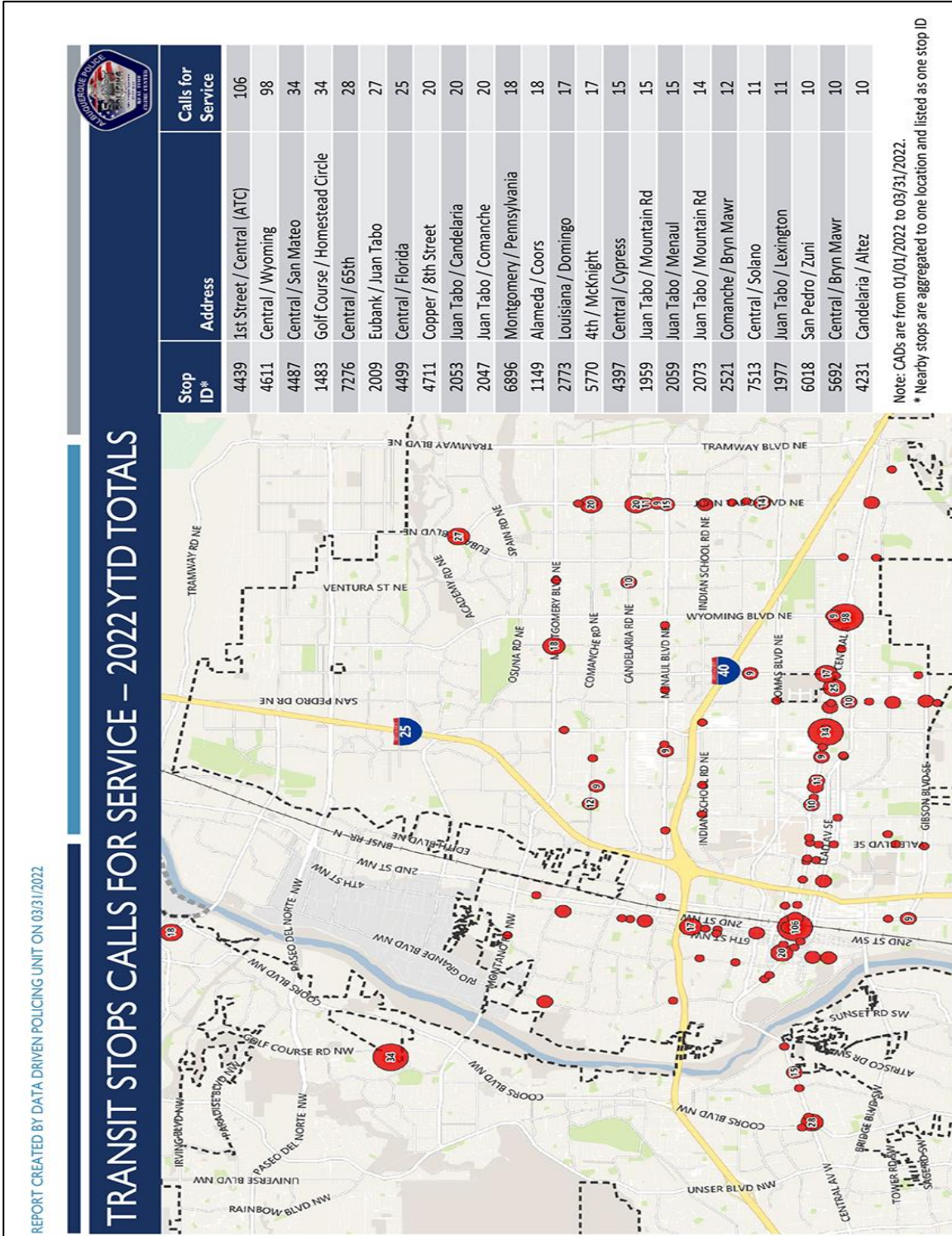


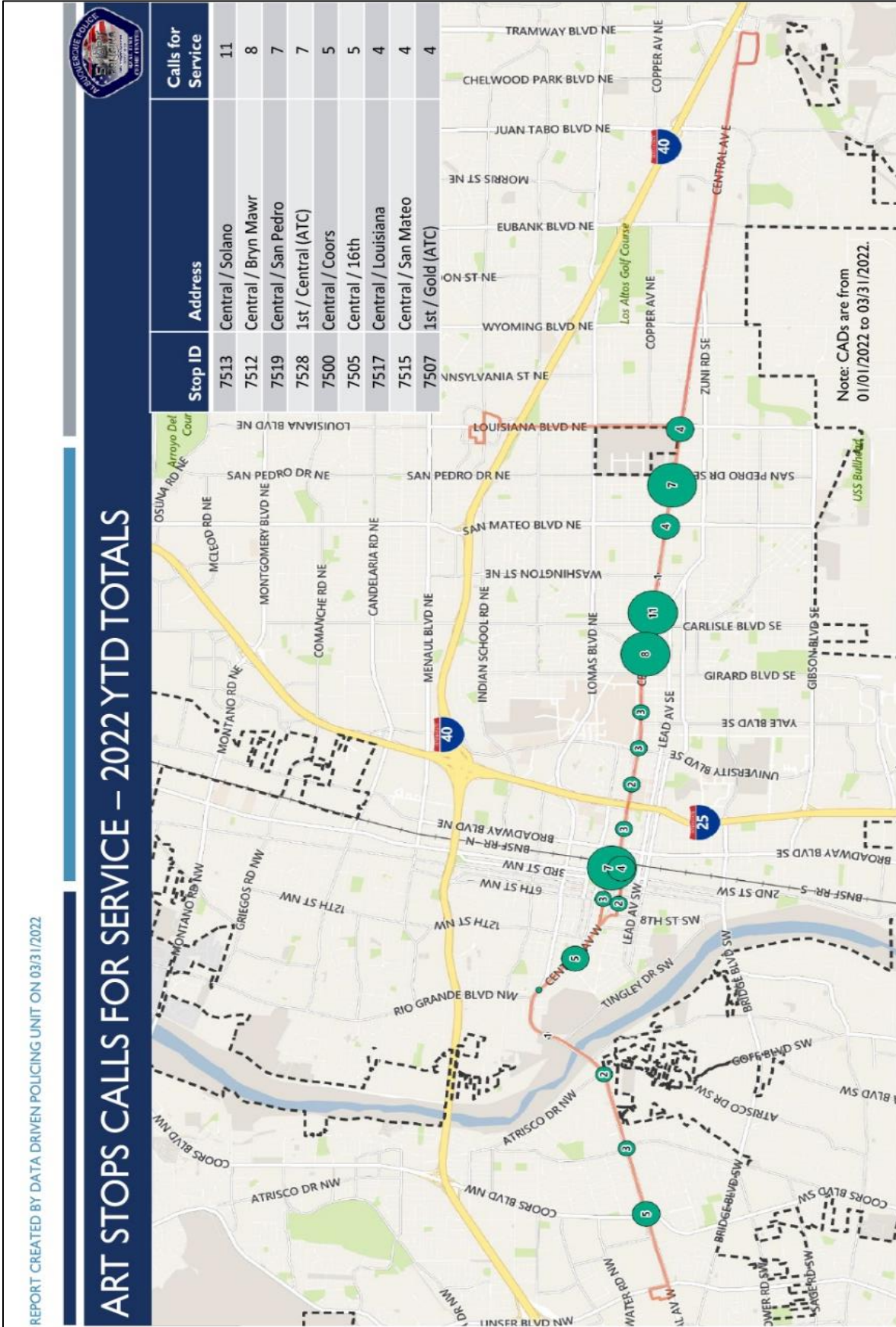
*Call type definitions can be found in Appendix, page 23.

Zero Fares Quarterly Report: January 2022 - March 2022

APD Calls for Service:

APD hot spot maps are based on calls for service within 50 ft. of a bus stop or ART station. These data sets represent separate calls for service from DMD Metro Security, however overlap between the two is possible and likely.



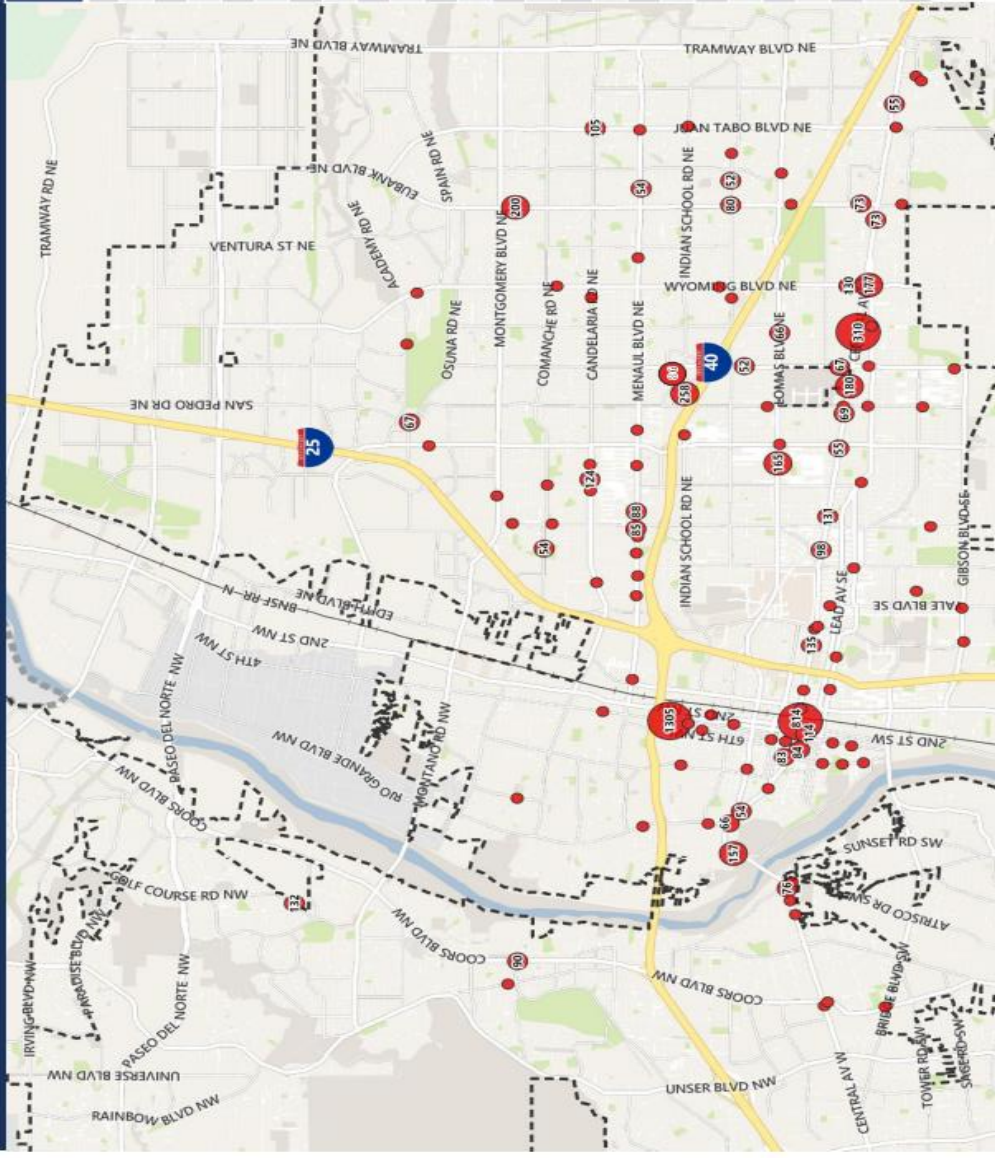


REPORT CREATED BY DATA DRIVEN POLICING UNIT ON 03/31/2022



TRANSIT STOPS CALLS FOR SERVICE – 2020/2021 TOTALS

Stop ID*	Address	Calls for Service
5770	4th / McKnight	1305
4439	1st Street / Central (ATC)	814
4513	Central / Charleston	310
3577	Indian School / Americas Parkway	258
2183	Eubank / Pitt	200
4499	Central / Florida	180
1251	Wyoming / Zuni	177
4883	Lomas / Monroe	165
4413	Central / New York	157
4687	Central / Sycamore	135
1483	Golf Course / Homestead Circle	132
7513	Central / Solano	131
1247	Wyoming / Chico	130
4283	Candelaria / Adams	124
6974	3rd Street / Silver	114
1979	Juan Tabo / Candelaria	105
5692	Central / Bryn Mawr	98
6948	Coors Blvd / St Joseph	90
3281	Menaul / Carlisle	88
4605	Uptown Transit Center	86
3285	Menaul / Carlisle	85
7506	Gold / 6th St	84
4711	Copper / 8th Street	83
2147	Eubank / Constitution	80
4327	Central / Atrisco	76



Note: CADs are from 01/01/2022 to 03/31/2022.

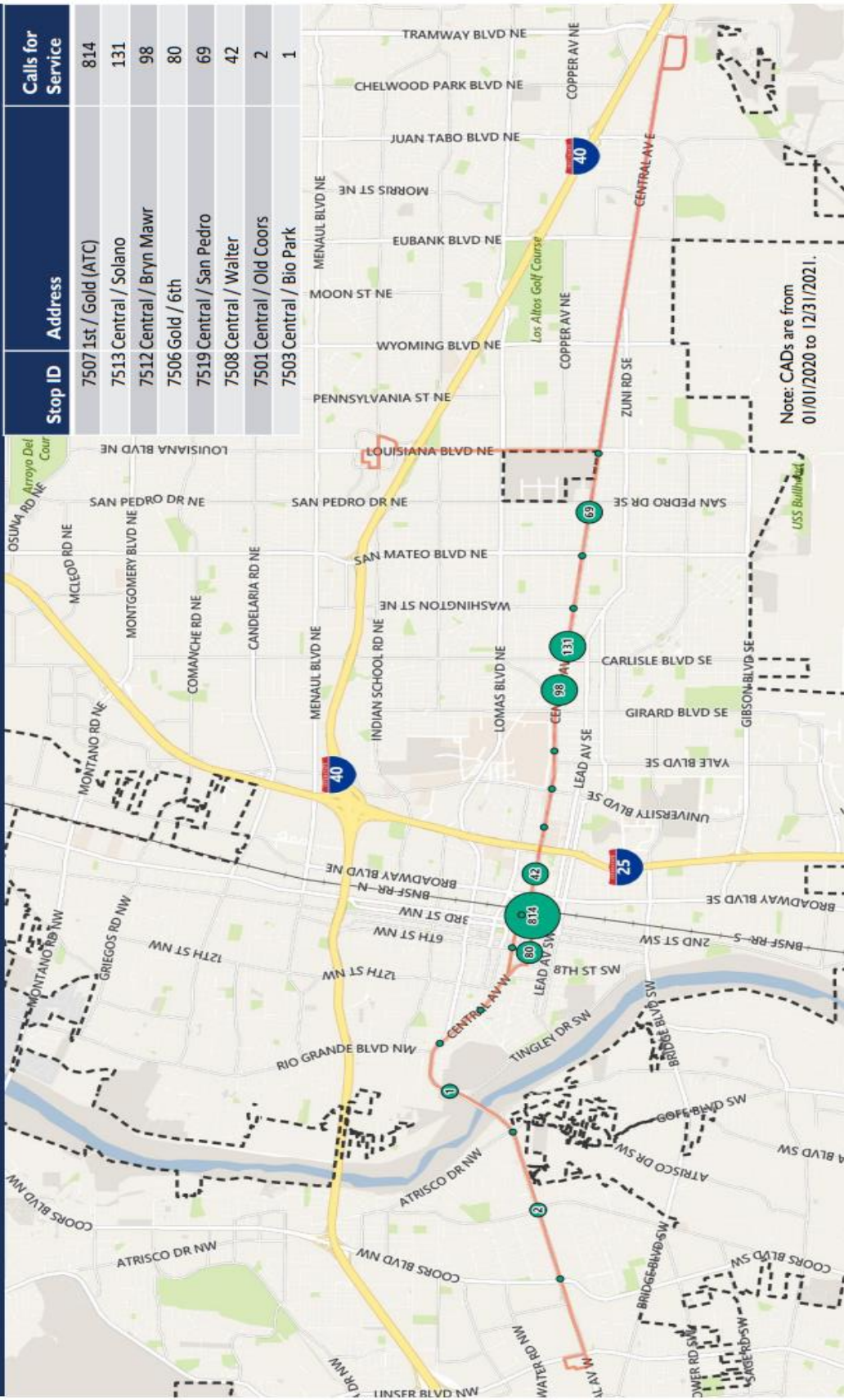
* Nearby stops are aggregated to one location and listed as one stop ID

REPORT CREATED BY DATA DRIVEN POLICING UNIT ON 03/31/2022



ART STOPS CALLS FOR SERVICE – 2020/2021 TOTALS

Stop ID	Address	Calls for Service
7507 1st / Gold (ATC)		814
7513 Central / Solano		131
7512 Central / Bryn Mawr		98
7506 Gold / 6th		80
7519 Central / San Pedro		69
7508 Central / Walter		42
7501 Central / Old Coors		2
7503 Central / Bio Park		1



Zero Fares Quarterly Report: January 2022 - March 2022

Zero Fares Data: Cost

The table shown below summarizes quarter one operating and maintenance costs as well as zero fare implementation costs.

Implementation Costs	\$79,480
Marketing & Media Promotions	\$79,005
Fare Box Covers	\$475
Maintenance Costs	\$107,205.75
January Maintenance Costs	\$35,152.39
February Maintenance Costs	\$44,477.25
March Maintenance Costs	\$27,576.11
Fixed Route Operating Costs	\$472,343.85
January Operating Costs	\$156,407.88
February Operating Costs	\$148,726.31
March Operating Costs	\$167,209.66
Paratransit Operating Costs	\$41,887.02
January Operating Costs	\$13,752.96
February Operating Costs	\$13,536.36
March Operating Costs	\$14,597.70
Total	\$700,916.62

Cost per operating hour (including fixed routes & Sun Van):

\$4.54



Ensuring Success of Zero Fares:

To ensure the success of the Zero Fares program, ABQ Ride continues to identify areas for improvement. Over the last several months, our department has implemented new practices and cultivated coordination with other City entities with zero fares in mind.

Our efforts include:

- Coordination with Albuquerque Community Safety Department on Homeless Population Needs Assessment to determine the need for an Outreach Coordinator position
- Creation of an Outreach Coordinator Position provided by Heading Home– The selected candidate will ride preselected routes to offer behavioral health, substance use, and housing resource options to passengers who may need them.
- Continued coordination with the City’s Metro Security Division and Albuquerque Police Department
- Visit to Kansas City & tour of the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority’s (KCATA) zero fares program

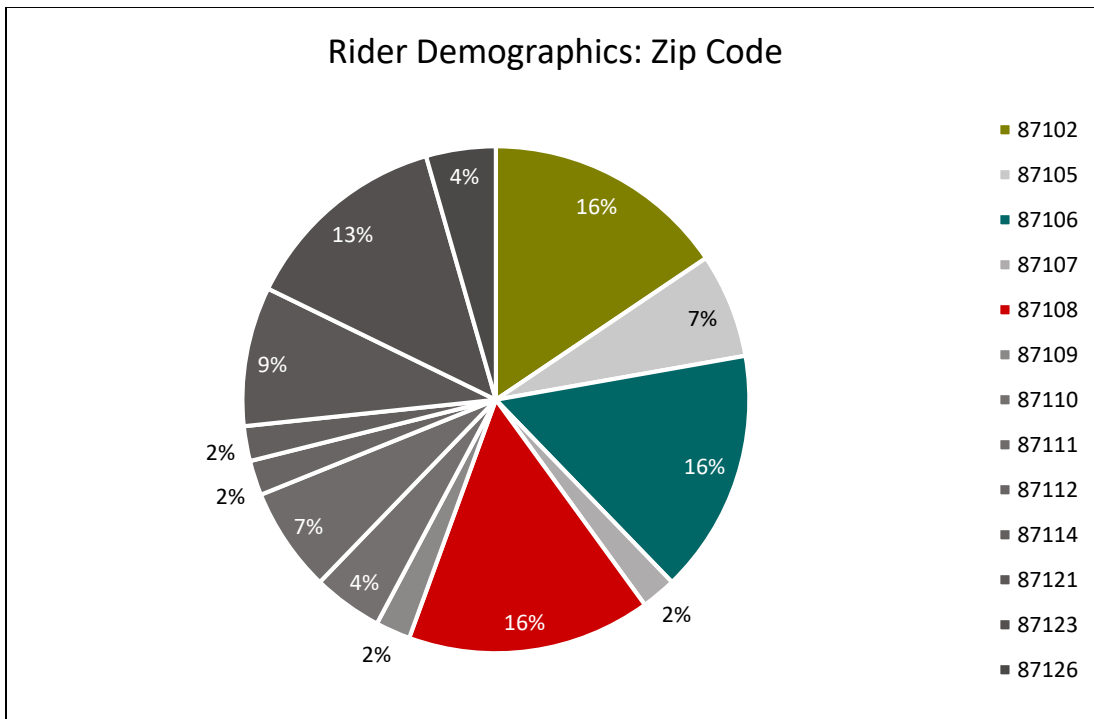
As the Zero Fare Pilot program progresses throughout the 2022 calendar year, we will continue to implement new initiatives and efforts aimed at improving overall rider experience as well as the safety and work satisfaction of our drivers.





Community Feedback:

Community feedback and rider demographic information was collected through collaboration with local groups and organizations such as Together for Brothers, The Energy Foundation, and Albuquerque Community Schools. These groups performed rider surveys to collect demographic information and riders thoughts about the pilot program. More information about these surveys can be found [here](#).



Zero Fares Quarterly Report: January 2022 - March 2022

Rider feedback:

“I’m a broke college student and having free buses has benefitted me because I don’t have a parking pass on campus so I usually have to park far.”

–Connor, Community Member/Student

“I am 22 years old and live downtown. I am unable to drive due to a long-term injury. I rely on public transport to get around. With the high prevalence of sexual assault in NM and the number of times I get harassed, I feel more comfortable getting on BJ’s where there’s usually other women.”

–Breanna, Community Member

“It really helps me get around when my own transportation fails. Free transportation is always very important to the public in Albuquerque in general since we have a lot of poverty.”

–Brandon, Community Member/Student

“My brother and I are struggling with money because of a car accident in which one of our vehicles have been totaled and we only had insurance to cover the other, leaving us with a money problem. We still make it on time to work every morning because of the free bus rides.”

–Anonymous Community Member

“It helps when gas prices are rising and I commute from both school and work and events outside of that so it takes up a lot of my car’s gas.”

–Anonymous, Community Member/Student

“I have been without a car for a year, and although I try to ride my bike, the transit system is still an absolute life saver.”

–Anonymous, Community Member/Student

“Teenager had his bike stolen. His transportation home. We then looked up the bus schedule and worked out this as a means for him. Coincidentally that was when the pilot began. I’m also a social worker and this impacted my patients receiving life sustaining treatment and their only transportation had been the Sun Van. It’s been positive in my work and personal life.”

–Anonymous Community Member

“There are four people in my household and only one of us works. We live in an apartment and can’t afford a car, but we also can barely afford bus transportation. The free bus transportation has given us more money to pay bills we need to survive like electricity and extra food. Plus my daughter and I have a lot of medical conditions so that means frequent visits to the doctor or urgent care. Visits we were having to cancel before because we couldn’t pay for the bus.”

–Anonymous Community Member

**January & February feedback found in Appendix B*

Appendix A

Metro Security Call Type Definitions:

Assault – The threat or attempt to strike another, whether successful or not, provided the target is aware of the danger. The assaulter must be reasonably capable of carrying through the attack.

Bomb/Threat – An explosion or threat to detonate an explosive or incendiary device to cause property damage, death, or injuries, whether or not such a device actually exists. All bomb threats are to be taken seriously.

Disorderly Conduct – Actions that disturb others, drunkenness, disturbing the peace, and loud threats or parties that don't fall into the specific categories listed below, i.e. Intoxicated, Loitering, Mentally Disturbed, Narcotics, etc.

Fight – A violent struggle involving the exchange of physical blows or the use of weapons.

Fire/Fire Alarm – Response to an audible fire alarm or visual evidence of a fire.

Intoxicated – Drunk or under the influence of drugs.

Loitering – To stand or wait around idly or without apparent purpose.

Mentally Disturbed – Experiencing or exhibiting emotional disturbance or agitation.

Narcotics – A drug or other substance that affects mood or behavior and is consumed for nonmedical purposes, especially one sold illegally.

Security Check – The activity of going around or through an area at regular or irregular intervals for security purposes.

Suicide – The threat to or act of an instance of taking one's own life voluntarily and intentionally.

Suspicious Situation – Suspicious activity can refer to any incident, event, individual or activity that seems unusual or out of place.

Theft – The action or crime of stealing.

Traffic – Any instance of assisting in traffic control.

Trespass – To enter the owner's land or property without permission.

Vandalism – Action involving deliberate destruction of or damage to public or private property.

Wellness/Medical – A response by an officer to a call for service that is unrelated to an allegation of criminal conduct, but is instead to determine whether a person requires assistance for a medical or mental health crisis.

Other – This will be used when none of the above instances have occurred, include a full description of the occurrence in the Description column.

Zero Fares Quarterly Report: January 2022 - March 2022

Appendix B

January & February Community Feedback Stories

Date	Story
2/1/2022	I think it's helpful for other people in the city like parents with children that have to go to school and not have to pay. As a student at UNM I get a pass so it doesn't really impact me that much.
2/1/2022	It effects me positively and it will help me to get around the town. Work and school.
2/3/2022	It impacts in a good way
2/3/2022	Sun Van alone and her parents or caretakers are not allowed to ride with her on the Sun Van. Her mom, Monique, and Clara have to ride the City bus or find a ride to her Dr appointments or to take her anywhere because they do not have a car. Free fares has given me and members of my family relief from many worries. Now lack of transports is something we dont have to stress out over. We can just walk up, get on the bus and go! Not worry about change or do we have enough money to go to this appointment. We need free fares, Clara will always have her disability there is no getting better she will always need someone to ride the bus with her. She deserves access. Thank you.
2/8/2022	Global warming, and we are causing it so the least we drive the better it is, so if we don't drive its better. Environment
2/8/2022	Get to go shopping and school, sometimes to go to the park. We have 1 car so it's hard for all of us to get ride so public transportation is helpful.
2/8/2022	Its relieves a burden to get around and transportation, housing, go to appointments, and transportation is highly and public transportation helps me get around
2/8/2022	Porque hay gente que no cuenta con transportation propia para moverse por la ciudad en sus diferentes actividades ni recursos economicos y los camiones urbanos son un gran apoyo para ellos
2/10/2022	Doesn't really affect since he is 62 and does that to pay, has been using the bus for free since last year. Has seen more people on the bus, especially people experiencing homelessness. Its always the best people and has seen some people that cause trouble on the bus. This mainly happens during the day. People use it to travel and stay warm. Has seem more people but people that also cause trouble and it's counter productive. It is convenient if you are going to work but people are causing a problem and people rather drive. 80 percent or 70 percent of the time he has rode has seen issues with the bus. Some people are very inconvenient since this happens. This might cause a 35 or 45 minute wait.
2/10/2022	Ride the both sometimes. Does this to save money. Bus has vehicles and is a choice rider
2/10/2022	Has effected him since he retired. Uses the bus every day. Sometimes has seen a fight that causes problems for people. Some bus drivers are aggressive with the people that ride it.
2/10/2022	I have a car, but gas prices are really high. I mostly use the bus to get to school (UNM) its been helping me save money and get to class on time. I also don't have to pay for parking space which can get really expensive
2/10/2022	Doesn't like the experience and it feels stressful. Just got here six months ago and feel like it's useful. Feels like more homeless people will get on the bus. Doesn't really see security guards and doesn't make him feel safe.
2/10/2022	It's hard to say, we all have hardships bus it doesn't make much sense for everyone to be paying for the bus, as I think the overall percentage of bus riders is low. 80% of tax subsidies for the bus company doesn't make a whole lot of sense to me.
2/10/2022	Thinks it is good bus need to donate some money to keep buses clean. Doesn't feel that it should be free since some people don't really care about the bus and when they do pay people value it more and they have to wear
2/10/2022	Not really because they are elderly and already have free buses
2/10/2022	Thinks a lot better and it used to be a pain. Specially since the bus passes where ever skinny and if you lost it you would be stranded. Uses it to go to doctor appointments and day shelter. Thinks it's more packed and notices that at night it's more full. Notice a very big difference
2/26/2022	It is good for me to get to school and home
2/26/2022	Zero fares has helped me personally a lot. I used to take the bus every day to school until I got my mo ped. It got me to school so I could educate myself
2/26/2022	Not much, but it would help people and I in moments where we need to catch the transit when we need.

Zero Fares Quarterly Report: January 2022 - March 2022

Date	Story
1/26/2022	Doesn't have to worry about getting around, used to only stick to central line and now can get to most of the city
1/26/2022	Love it because I can get back and forth to 12th street meetings and also get to grocery shopping
1/26/2022	It's very helpful if you have limited transportation with 1 vehicle in the household and not much money for a car and not having to bother sister for rides and as a student it makes it possible to get to school
1/26/2022	Greatly I like it. It does absolutely because sometimes I don't even have pocket change
1/26/2022	Impacts good and helps
1/26/2022	It's really good going to work and saves a lot of money and there is an issue on the schedule but it's better than taking Uber and of course through the whole pandemic people are still getting quarantined and so the buses need more support
1/26/2022	Helps get to campus and parking lot
1/26/2022	Could ride the bus at anytime, doesn't need to pay
1/26/2022	It really allows me to ride the bus without any dollar bills and not have to go pull out cash anywhere, it also makes it more convenient to take multiple routes to get where I need to be.
1/27/2022	We don't ride the bus but I am so happy for everyone who does that they don't have to miss riding a bus because they don't have the fare!
1/28/2022	Positive impact, does help to get around town and go to school
1/28/2022	It's better because of zero fare helps me go to work. I've been taking it for 20 years, I would like to use Sun Vans
1/28/2022	I'm a mom so getting to work, picking up my kid from school are extremely important. Zero fares has helped me get what I need done, done.
1/28/2022	It saves me a lot of money, I ride my bike everyday and it's hard to get to places like Rio Rancho without the bus. I'd like to get to outdoor places more often like La Luz trail and the only way I'd get there is on the bus. It's hard in the winter to bike places especially at night
1/28/2022	It helps a lot, public transportation should always be free because it's for the public. I'm from LA and the buses out there are free and easy to ride.
1/28/2022	Positive, going to work and going back home
1/28/2022	It's struggle but matters
1/28/2022	Brothers. We live in Laguna and get dropped off in town and are able to take the bus and we don't have to pay so it encourages to ride the bus. Reducing our carbon footprint.
1/28/2022	(Spanish speaker) I'm not currently working so it's a huge help, service has also been fast and the no cost helps me get to the laundry mat, financially, get to the grocery store, clinic and gives me the ability to still live my life despite my current unemployment situation.