



Metropolitan Transportation Authority: Ridership Trends

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Highlights

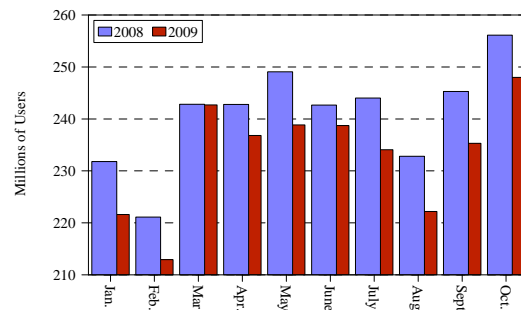
- In 2008, more than 2.6 billion riders used the MTA's network of subways, buses, and railroads, and some 300 million vehicles crossed the MTA's bridges and tunnels.
- Through October 2009, 75 million fewer customers (3.1 percent) used the MTA's facilities compared with the same period a year earlier.
- Lower utilization has cost the MTA more than \$100 million in lost fare and toll revenue.
- During the first ten months of 2009, subway ridership declined by 3.2 percent compared to the same period in 2008, a loss of 44 million rides.
- Average weekday subway ridership in Manhattan declined by 3.9 percent during the first ten months of 2009, although the decline eased in October. (Ridership fell by more than 6 percent in Midtown Manhattan.)
- Bridge and tunnel crossings declined by 4.3 percent during the first ten months of 2009 compared with the same period two years earlier, when fuel prices began to rise. The Brooklyn Battery Tunnel and the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge (to and from Manhattan) experienced the largest declines.
- Ridership on the Long Island Rail Road declined by 5.5 percent during the first ten months of 2009 compared with the same period a year earlier.
- Ridership on the Metro-North Railroad declined by 4.8 percent during the first ten months of 2009 compared with the same period a year earlier.
- Ridership on New York City Transit buses declined by 2.9 percent during the first ten months of 2009 compared with the same period a year earlier, a loss of 18 million riders.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is responsible for operating the largest mass transit system in the nation. The MTA's ridership is inextricably linked to the economy of New York City—especially ridership to the central business district, where the majority of jobs are located. New York City lost 110,000 jobs (2.9 percent) between October 2008 and October 2009, which has caused a sharp drop in utilization of the MTA's transit facilities (e.g., subways, buses, and bridges and tunnels).

Through October 2009, MTA utilization was lower in every month of 2009 compared with the same month in 2008 (see Figure 1). As of October 2009, 75 million fewer customers had used the MTA's facilities since the beginning of 2009, compared with the same period last year. Lower utilization has cost the MTA more than \$100 million in lost fare and toll revenue.

Figure 1

Total MTA Utilization

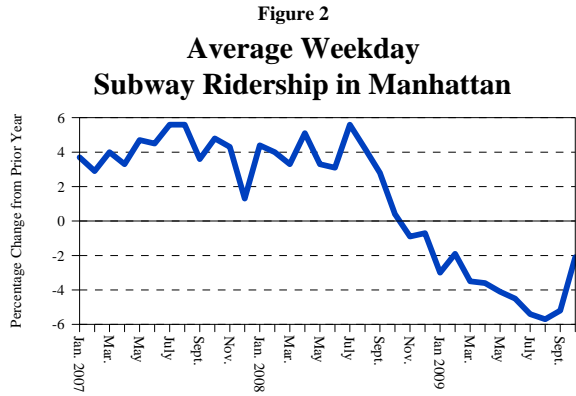


Sources: Metropolitan Transportation Authority; OSC analysis

Subway Ridership

Subway ridership grew by 242 million trips (17.5 percent) between 2000 and 2008, when ridership reached its highest level since 1950. For the first ten months of 2009, however, subway ridership declined by 3.2 percent compared with the same period a year earlier—a loss of 44 million riders. Average weekday Manhattan ridership increased by 4.4 percent between

January 2007 and September 2008, but since then ridership has been slipping. The average weekday ridership declined by 3.9 percent during the first ten months of 2009, compared to a year earlier (see Figure 2) although the decline eased in October—an encouraging development.

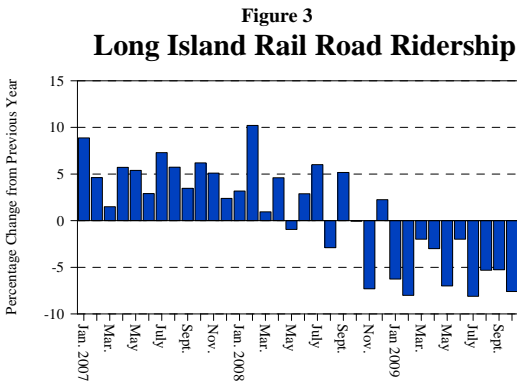


Sources: Metropolitan Transportation Authority; OSC analysis

Average weekday subway ridership in Midtown Manhattan fell by 6.2 percent (Lehman Brothers was located in Midtown). At the same time, ridership declined by 3.3 percent in Downtown Manhattan; by 2.6 percent in the area between Chambers and 33rd streets; and by 1.7 percent in Upper Manhattan.

Long Island Rail Road

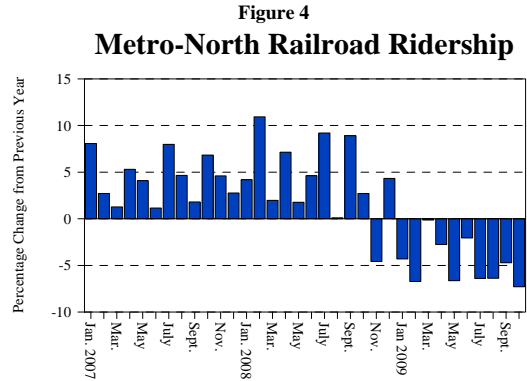
Between January 2007 and September 2008, the monthly ridership on the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) increased by an average of 4.1 percent compared to a year earlier—but then declined by 5.5 percent during the first ten months of 2009 compared to the same period in 2008 (see Figure 3). From January through October 2009, 4 million fewer riders used the LIRR compared with the same period in the previous year.



Sources: Metropolitan Transportation Authority; OSC analysis

Metro-North Railroad

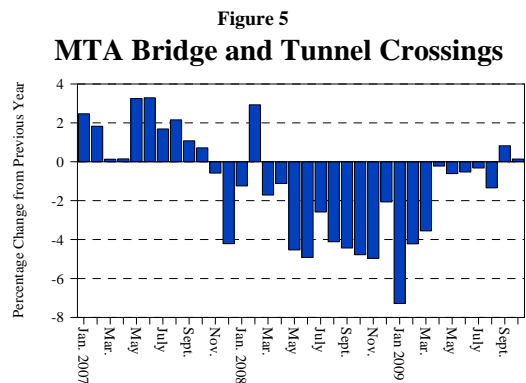
Ridership on the Metro-North Railroad has grown every year since 2005, and ridership peaked in 2008. Between January 2007 and September 2008, the monthly ridership increased by an average of 4.8 percent when compared to a year earlier, but then declined 4.8 percent during the first ten months of 2009 compared to the same period in 2008 (see Figure 4). Through October 2009, 3.2 million fewer riders have used Metro-North compared with the same period in 2008.



Sources: Metropolitan Transportation Authority; OSC analysis

Bridges and Tunnels

Vehicle crossings on the MTA's bridges and tunnels have been declining since late 2007, because of rising fuel prices and, more recently, the economic recession. When compared to the same period in 2008, crossings declined by 1.6 percent during the first ten months of 2009 (although crossings have increased recently). Over the same period, 4 million fewer vehicles used the MTA's bridges and tunnels compared with the same period in the previous year, which had already experienced a steep decline.



Sources: Metropolitan Transportation Authority; OSC analysis