New York City Independent Budget Office

Louisa Chafee, Director

Infrastructure

# Next Stop: An Updated Cost Estimate for Fare-Free Bus Service


Prepared By:
Jan Mendez
Emily Pramik

June 2026

New York City Independent Budget Office

# Table of Contents

# Executive Summary

Mayor Mamdani has called for making all New York City buses free as a key aspect of his affordability agenda for New Yorkers. In this report, IBO estimates the cost to make New York City buses fare-free starting in 2027. This analysis—an update and expansion of IBO's 2023 publication Estimating the Cost of Fare-Free Local Bus Service—uses 2025 ridership and farebox revenue data from the MTA. In estimating a range of possible scenarios, IBO considers: changes in rider behavior and its interaction with farebox revenue across the bus, subway, and paratransit systems; costs associated with adding users and drivers; and savings resulting from lower fare enforcement costs, including fare collection equipment.

IBO's primary estimate for the annual cost of fare-free bus service for 2027 is just over $1.1 billion. This estimate assumes a 25% ridership increase on buses, a figure that is informed by the weekday ridership increase (net of systemwide ridership growth) from the MTA's fare-free bus pilot. This primary estimate assumes that all forms of bus service, including Express bus service, would be made fare-free as indicated by the Mayor.

In addition to its primary estimate, IBO also models a range of alternative scenarios, depending on the jump in ridership and whether Express buses are included. If ridership increases by 15% and Express buses are excluded from the fare-free program, IBO estimates the annual cost to be about $900 million. If ridership increases by 35% and Express buses are included, the annual cost estimate rises to about $1.3 billion.

# Introduction

Public bus service is a critical component of the City's public transit system. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) runs over 300 bus routes across New York City's five boroughs. In many areas of New York City, particularly outside of Manhattan, a bus is often the only mode of public transit. Additionally, buses are more accessible than the subway system to riders with limited mobility, given that all buses are required to have accessible ramps or lifts while many subway stations do not have elevators. (The MTA has invested substantially in expanding station accessibility.[1])

Mayor Mamdani campaigned on a call to make the City's public buses "fast and free" and continues to make this policy a priority as Mayor, appointing a Senior Adviser for Fast and Free Buses in April 2026. IBO has reported on challenges to speeding up buses, addressing the "fast" part of Mayor Mamdani's commitment to the bus system. In this report, IBO estimates the cost to provide fare-free bus service in place of the current $3.00 fare, the "free" part of that Mayoral commitment.

The MTA is a State authority. Any decision on whether or how to make bus service free in New York City would need to be negotiated between the MTA, the State, and the City. In addition to funding agreements, the decision to make bus service free would also likely require public hearings, an MTA Board vote, and approval by the Capital Program Review Board. In his proposal, the Mayor has claimed that the City could cover the total annual farebox revenue the MTA receives from buses, which amounted to around $844 million in 2025. (All years refer to calendar years.) However, the total cost of fare-free bus service goes beyond the cost of replacing current bus farebox revenue, as it also includes the costs associated with increased ridership. This can include adding new buses to the bus fleet, increasing overtime or hiring new bus operators, and loss of revenue from the subway. Many of these additional costs are also likely to grow over time.

## Types of MTA Bus Service

The MTA's bus network is divided into three main types of service:

- Local routes provide service to all stops along a route, while Limited buses skip certain stops. Local and Limited routes often travel through busy commercial and residential corridors and are termed "Local/Limited" buses.
- Select-Bus Service (SBS) routes are like Limited buses in that they skip certain stops but are designed to increase efficiency and speeds through additional features such as all-door boarding and dedicated bus lanes.
- Express buses travel between boroughs, mostly on major roads and highways, with few (if any) stops in between. Express buses are primarily designed to bring commuters to and from central business districts.

In 2025, Local/Limited and SBS ridership accounted for an estimated 96% of paid annual ridership, while Express ridership accounted for the remaining 4% of ridership.[2] Since January

2026, Local/Limited and SBS fares have been $3.00 and Express fares have been $7.25. New Yorkers aged 65 or older and New Yorkers with certain disabilities can qualify for MTA's Reduced-Fare program, which costs half the base fare. Similarly, low-income New Yorkers under age 65 can qualify for the City's Fair Fares program, which provides half-price tickets (subsidized by the City, not MTA). For more on the Fair Fares program, and estimated costs for various program expansions, see IBO's June 2026 report.

## Current MTA Bus Ridership

The MTA provides over 450 million rides annually.[3] As a point of comparison, the subway had just under 1.3 billion rides. (All ridership numbers are for paid or transferred rides—which excludes fare evasion—unless otherwise stated.) At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, ridership on both subways and buses dropped precipitously, with monthly bus ridership reaching as low as 23% of pre-pandemic rides in April 2020. Since 2021, bus ridership has slowly grown to around 82% of 2019 levels.[4] Figure 1 shows the annual trends in bus ridership, between Local/Limited/SBS and Express services since 2019.

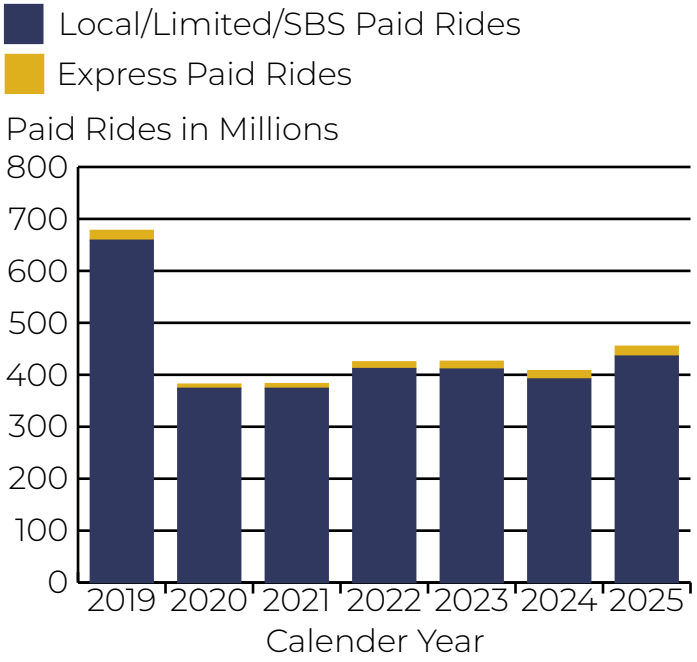
## MTA Free Buses Pilot

The concept of fare-free MTA buses has been tested. From September 2023 through August 2024, the MTA launched a fare-free bus pilot on one bus route in each borough, based on a State mandate. The five Local bus service routes were selected by the MTA based on factors including fare evasion rates, low service overlap, equity for economically disadvantaged communities, and access to employment and commercial activity, among other criteria set by the New York State Legislature. The total cost of the pilot, per the State Legislature, was not to exceed $15 million.

The MTA reported that pilot routes saw increased ridership across all lines, decreases in assaults against bus drivers, and no meaningful change in fare evasion on surrounding routes. The MTA also found that most of the fare-free pilot bus riders were pre-existing users of the route who used the route more frequently when it was fare-free. Around 12% of riders were new to the route. These new riders were more likely to travel for errands and leisure than pre-existing riders. Specifically, accounting for system-wide growth, weekday ridership from September 2023 to May 2024 increased by 24% when fares were

FIGURE 1

**MTA Paid Bus Ridership From 2019 Through 2025**




SOURCE: MTA Annual Ridership Reports
NOTE: Paid ridership only.

*New York City Independent Budget Office*

eliminated, suggesting some combination of riders' price sensitivity and excitement around trying a new free program.

The design of the pilot makes it difficult to draw conclusions about how changes in pilot ridership would translate to free buses across the full bus network. Compared with the five pilot bus routes, the full bus network includes routes that serve a broader range of income levels and travel patterns. Furthermore, riders on many other bus routes have subway alternatives that pilot riders did not. Also, because pilot routes were in lower-income neighborhoods, where fares may be a greater barrier than in higher-income areas, the increase in ridership observed on pilot routes may overstate what would be expected across the entire system.

Despite these limitations, the pilot provides the most City-specific estimates of the ridership reaction to fare-free buses. IBO uses the observed changes in ridership on the pilot routes to inform its primary cost estimate. IBO also priced out other ridership scenarios as a sensitivity analysis to help inform a range of possible outcomes.

## Estimating the Cost of Fare-Free Buses

### IBO's 2023 Estimate

In February 2023, at the request of Council Member Chi Ossé, IBO published Estimating the Cost of Fare-Free Local Bus Service. IBO modeled the annual cost of introducing fare-free Local/Limited/SBS buses under three scenarios, including fare-free service for:

- All riders
- Riders who are 65 or older or who have disabilities
- Lower-income New Yorkers, defined as riders who would be eligible for the City's Fair Fares program, which used the federal poverty line as an income limit at the time (it has since been increased to 150% of the federal poverty line)

IBO's 2023 estimates were based on the MTA's 2022 reported annual ridership and farebox revenue and focused on the cost for the City to replace lost farebox revenue to the MTA under those three scenarios. For its 2026 analysis, IBO includes a more comprehensive breakdown of cost and savings factors related to the implementation of fare-free bus service using the latest available data and incorporates Express buses in the primary cost estimate.[5]

### Data

IBO estimated the cost of fare-free bus service with a start date of January 1, 2027. IBO used 2025 ridership and farebox revenue data, the latest available from the MTA. Public data from MTA's Open Data program, budget and fiscal statements, and service guidelines informed how IBO estimated costs and savings related to the implementation of fare-free bus

FIGURE 2

**IBO Primary Cost Estimate for Fare-Free Bus Service for 2027**

*Dollars in Millions*

| | (Cost)/Savings |
|---|---|
| Forgone Bus Farebox Revenue | ($945) |
| Increased Labor, Maintenance, and Capital Expenses | ($203) |
| Revenue Lost From Riders Shifting From Subway to Free Buses | ($119) |
| Forgone Paratransit Revenue | ($44) |
| Revenue Transferred from Buses to Subway | $131 |
| Fare-Related Enforcement Savings | $32 |
| Fare-Related Administration and Infrastructure Savings | $11 |
| **Total** | **($1,137)** |

SOURCES: IBO analysis of MTA, Federal Transit Administration, and American Public Transportation Association data

NOTE: See the Alternative Fare-Free Bus Service Cost Scenarios section for factors that could change these estimates substantially, including different levels of ridership increases in response to fare-free buses and excluding Express buses from the fare-free system.

*New York City Independent Budget Office*

service. IBO also relied on operational and financial data from Federal Transit Administration's National Transit Database.

## IBO's Primary Cost Estimate For Fare-Free Bus Service

IBO's primary estimate of the cost of fare-free bus service for 2027 assumes a 25% immediate ridership increase on buses. This is a system-wide average; ridership changes will likely differ between individual routes, but there is not sufficient data to model the relative impact on each route. This assumption is informed by the MTA's fare-free bus service pilot finding a weekday ridership increase of 24%, net of systemwide ridership growth on non-fare-free bus routes. It also assumes that all forms of bus service, including Express bus service, would be fare-free.

IBO estimates that the annual net cost to make all buses fare-free is about $1.1 billion. This takes account of lost farebox revenue, increased expenses related to expanding ridership, and savings resulting from needing less farebox enforcement and infrastructure. Figure 2 breaks down the factors considered in IBO's primary estimate; the next section contains a description of each line item.

## Costs of Implementing Fare-Free Bus Service

### Forgone Bus Farebox Revenue

IBO estimates farebox revenue to the MTA from bus service for 2027 to be $945 million. This is the largest single cost of implementing fare-free buses. It represents IBO's estimate of expected 2027 bus revenues under the existing paid bus system.

The MTA reported 2025 bus fare revenue of $844 million in its February 2026 Financial Plan. To estimate 2027 revenue under the current system, IBO applied a 2.5% ridership growth rate (informed by MTA's April 2022 estimates of bus ridership recovery between 2025 and 2026 and more recent ridership data) and planned fare increases of 4% in 2026 and 2027, respectively.

For reference, this represents an estimated increase from 456 million paid rides in 2025 to 479 million paid rides in 2027 and an estimated fare of $3.15.

This naturally incorporates the MTA's fare cap—which automatically makes free all MTA rides after a rider's 12th paid trip in a 7-day period—because farebox revenue represents the amount received by the MTA. Similarly, using actual farebox revenue excludes the unpaid riders from fare evasion; the MTA would not lose revenue from unpaid rides because those rides are not currently contributing to farebox revenue anyway.

## Increased Labor, Maintenance, and Capital Expenses

IBO estimates labor, maintenance, and capital expenses to the MTA would increase by $203 million in 2027. Of this total, $164 million would cover the cost of new buses; the remaining $39 million would cover non-capital costs such as overtime for bus operators, maintenance, and fuel.

IBO expects that the implementation of fare-free bus service would lead to increases in ridership. This is based on comparable implementations of fare-free bus service across the United States and the MTA's own fare-free bus service pilot, which all saw increases in ridership. IBO assumes the MTA would aim to meet its existing "service guidelines," the MTA-devised benchmarks for how often buses should run given ridership demand. Under fare-free buses, the anticipated increase in ridership would lead to a need for more buses along at least some existing routes. There are not sufficient data to model which specific routes would have the greatest ridership increases or need additional buses.

IBO assumes that the main capital cost related to fare-free buses is the purchase of new buses. For IBO's primary estimate, with a 25% increase in ridership, and using the MTA's service guidelines of 36 riders on Local/Limited/SBS buses maximum every 30 minutes and 55 riders for Express buses, the MTA would need to add 165 buses to its fleet. Given the average cost of about $976,000 for a 40-foot clean diesel bus (estimated from the December 2025 purchase of 100 such buses), IBO estimates a cost of $164 million for new buses. The addition and cost of new buses is contingent upon the MTA's procurement process and prices at the time of purchase. Additionally, the construction of new bus garages may eventually need to accommodate increases in service, but IBO does not have data on existing bus capacity and assumes this would not occur in year one of a fare-free bus program. The MTA constructed a new Jamaica Bus Depot in 2023, which had a total cost of $480 million and created space for up to 300 buses.

Adding buses would also require more overtime for or hiring more bus operators to operate additional buses. Per the MTA, in the short-term, the MTA would likely need to rely primarily on overtime from existing bus operators to meet demand. IBO estimates each new bus requires 2.4 full-time equivalent bus operators, calculated by dividing the total budgeted bus operators by the number of buses in the MTA fleet.[7] Using MTA payroll data, a one and a half multiplier for overtime, and applying a 35% overtime fringe cost, the annual cost per full-time equivalent bus operator would be about $70,000 annually to meet the new need in 2027, all of which would be overtime.[8] Lastly, fuel and maintenance are assumed to be 7% of bus operating costs, per the Federal Transit Authority's 2024 database on several transit systems. These assumptions

translate to approximately $39 million in new operating costs. In the long-run, the MTA would likely hire more bus operators, increasing regular personnel costs but reducing overtime.

IBO assumes that this part of its estimate captures costs related to hiring and training new bus operators, salaries, fringe benefits, and increasing replacement parts and fuel stocks.[9] IBO's estimate assumes that the MTA would adjust its service patterns to fit the new ridership demand because of fare-free buses. If so, the timeliness of the procurement process for new buses to service the additional new ridership might lead to higher maintenance costs in the near term, as the existing fleet of buses runs more frequently.

## Revenue Lost from Riders Shifting from Subway to Free Bus

IBO also estimated that the MTA would lose $119 million in farebox revenue from passengers substituting paid subway rides with fare-free bus rides under the primary estimate. This is particularly relevant for bus routes that share a similar route with a subway line.

The MTA's fare-free bus pilot showed that approximately 27% of new bus rides substituted a different MTA paid mode of transit with the free bus, which would translate to a 2.4% system-wide substitution rate from subways to buses. This is likely a low estimate because the pilot aimed to choose routes that minimized redundancy with the subway network, meaning there were fewer opportunities to substitute subway rides with free bus rides. Therefore, IBO applied the same assumption used in its 2023 paper for the new primary estimate, expecting 4% of current subway riders to shift to using the fare-free buses. Applied citywide, this would represent a total shift of around 52 million rides from the subway to the bus under a systemwide fare-free bus model.[10]

## Forgone Paratransit Fares

If buses were made fare-free, there is discussion about whether the MTA's Access-A-Ride paratransit service would also be made fare-free under the Americans with Disabilities Act. As a conservative cost estimate, IBO assumes paratransit service would also be made fare-free, adding $44 million of costs for 2027. This $44 million reflects the MTA's Access-A-Ride program revenues projected for 2027, including expected growth for ridership under the current program.[11]

This estimate excludes increases to Access-A-Ride ridership caused by the free fare, above current program projections. If ridership increases under fare-free paratransit, operating costs to contract more drivers and accessible vehicles may increase. IBO does not have sufficient information to estimate potential Access-A-Ride ridership growth or the relationship between ridership growth and the MTA's paratransit operating costs.[12]

The ultimate cost share between the City and MTA for paratransit would be subject to negotiation. The City currently subsidizes paratransit operating costs after fares and dedicated taxes at a rate of 80%, subject to an annual cap of 50% of net costs plus $165 million.[13] This rate is legislated by the State and is set to drop from an 80% to a 50% City subsidy rate at the end of City fiscal year 2027.

# Revenue and Savings from Fare-Free Bus Service

## Revenue Transferred from Buses to Subway

IBO projects that $131 million in bus farebox revenue would transfer to subway farebox revenue under fare-free bus service. Under current fare rules, MTA riders receive one free transfer within two hours of paying their fare. This transfer could be used for a transfer from subway to bus, or bus to subway.[14] IBO assumes that free transfers would no longer be honored between fare-free buses and the paid subway. Passengers who used to pay for a bus ride and then transfer for free to the subway would now ride the fare-free bus and pay at the subway faregate instead. This changes the point of payment for such rides from buses to the subway, ultimately offsetting lost bus revenue from making buses fare-free. IBO's estimate is based on data from the MTA's 2018 Travel Survey, which shows that around 16% of MTA riders take a bus before taking the subway. IBO assumes these riders will continue riding the bus then the subway even if buses are made fare-free because subways are often faster and bus routes do not perfectly align with subway routes.

## Fare-Related Enforcement Savings

IBO expects that the MTA could save around $32 million by removing the MTA's Evasion and Graffiti Lawlessness Eradication (EAGLE) teams. EAGLE is responsible for inspecting fare payment on Local and SBS bus routes. The MTA's ability to eliminate these teams and realize savings would be subject to collective bargaining agreements. IBO's analysis focuses on the cost relationship between the MTA and the City, therefore it does not estimate any cost impact to City agencies, such as changes to enforcement for the Police Department.

## Fare-Related Administration and Infrastructure Savings

IBO estimates that transitioning to fare-free bus service could save the MTA around $11 million every year in savings from not being required to operate, maintain, and install new OMNY machines in its fleet of local, articulated, and commuter buses. This is based on financial data from the MTA November 2025 Financial Plan and assumes that the fare collection machines would be completely removed rather than repurposed.

# Alternative Fare-Free Bus Service Cost Scenarios

The primary net cost of $1.1 billion estimated above represents a middle ground scenario of a 25% increase in overall bus ridership in response to making all bus routes fare-free. IBO also analyzed alternative scenarios as set forth in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3

**IBO Estimates for Alternative Fare-Free Bus Scenarios for 2027**

*Dollars in Millions*

| Ridership Increase Scenario | All Buses | Excluding Express |
|---|---|---|
| Lower Estimate (15%) | $1,008 | $905 |
| Primary Estimate (25%) | $1,137 | $1,032 |
| Higher Estimate (35%) | $1,266 | $1,159 |

SOURCES: IBO analysis of MTA, Federal Transit Administration, and American Public Transportation Association data

*New York City Independent Budget Office*

### Ridership Increase as a Result of Fare-Free Bus Service

One of the most critical assumptions for estimating the cost of fare-free bus service is the expected increase in ridership resulting from the program. IBO's primary estimate assumed a 25% increase above expected 2027 ridership under the current, paid system. This estimate is informed by the net ridership increase seen in the MTA's fare-free bus pilot.

To illustrate how the cost estimate changes with this ridership jump, Figure 3 shows the primary estimate with plus and minus 10 percentage points. The estimates change by about $129 million with each 10 percentage point change. This is primarily driven by changes in the estimates for new buses and drivers, which changes by $81 million. Forgone subway revenue from current subway riders shifting to the fare-free buses accounts for the remaining $48 million.

The largest cost driver of all scenarios—the loss of existing fares from buses—does not change based on the size of the increase in ridership. This reflects that additional rides in response to fare-free buses would not have occurred if the fare was in place. The amount remains at the estimate of 2027 revenues under the current bus system of $945 million.

### Excluding Express Buses from Fare-Free Service

IBO's primary estimate assumes that all buses, including Express buses, would become fare-free. IBO's prior 2023 estimate assumed only Local, Limited, and SBS buses would be fare-free. To help inform policy discussions, IBO broke out the net cost under each ridership increase scenario for all buses being free and only Local, Limited, and SBS buses being free. As Express buses make up only 4% of ridership, but have a higher $7.25 fare, the cost difference to include fare-free Express buses ranges from $103 million to $107 million, depending on behavioral changes in ridership.

## Fair Fares Transit Affordability Proposal

As an alternative to systemwide fare-free buses, the MTA has suggested the City expand its Fair Fares program to address concerns around rider affordability. Under the current Fair Fares program, eligible New York City residents with income at or below 150% of the federal poverty level pay half fares on buses and subways, with the City subsidizing the fare difference to the MTA. The Fair Fares program currently requires an application and income documentation to qualify. IBO estimates that only about 41% of individuals who qualify for Fair Fares enrolled in the program as of December 2025. See IBO's report for discussion and cost estimates of potential Fair Fares expansions.

The City could expand the Fair Fares program through City Council legislation and without approval from the State government, as the responsibility to fund and administer the program falls solely on the City. In contrast, the implementation of fare-free bus service would remain subject to decisions made by State government, as the MTA is a State authority. Fare-free bus service could require the City to fully fund the MTA's cost of making MTA buses free or necessitate a cost sharing agreement—all subject to negotiation between the MTA, the City, and the State.

## Conclusion

The Mamdani administration has proposed fare-free bus service to help address concerns around the affordability in the City. As suggested by the MTA pilot and other examples of fare-free bus service pilots in cities such as Boston, Kansas City, and Albuquerque, fare-free bus service could increase ridership across the bus network. For New York City, however, there remain open questions on how the City, State, and MTA would implement a fare-free bus policy, especially in a tight budget environment. This includes questions around policy decisions, which entity would bear the costs, and ridership response that all impact the cost. In addition to the considerations IBO presents in this report, there may be additional future costs associated with infrastructure and procurement, such as adding additional garage capacity.

# Glossary

**Express Bus Service**: Express buses primarily serve commuters from the outer boroughs and provide a fast and efficient transportation alternative to the City's main commercial and business districts. These buses have few, if any, stops between their origin neighborhoods and their final destinations.

**Farebox Revenue:** Farebox revenue represents the total dollar value from all paid rides within the bus system. Although the MTA does provide a measure of fare evasion, for fiscal planning purposes, they only report paid ridership in their farebox revenue.

**Local Bus Service**: Local bus service represents the MTA's standard bus service. Local buses are the most common form of bus service in New York City, serving almost all neighborhoods across the City.

**Limited Bus Service**: Similar to Local bus service, but with routing that skips certain stops. These routes typically serve longer commutes.

**Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA)**: The Metropolitan Transportation Authority is the State agency responsible for operating and maintaining subways and buses in New York City, the Long Island Rail Road, the Metro-North Railroad, and New York City bridges and tunnels.

**One Metro New York (OMNY)**: Contactless fare-payment system used to pay for fares at MTA's subways and buses.

**Select Bus Service (SBS)**: Select Bus Service is New York City's version of Bus Rapid Transit. These buses make fewer stops, travel on priority routes, and board at all doors.

# Endnotes

[1]For more information on MTA's accessibility improvements, visit Station accessibility projects.

[2]The MTA reports ridership by routes classified as Local (which includes Limited and SBS) and Express, not allowing IBO to break out Local, Limited, and SBS individually.

[3]Ridership estimates are based on the 2025 final ridership estimates from the February 2026 MTA Financial Plan.

[4]It is difficult to estimate actual ridership including unpaid rides. The MTA estimated that weekly ridership in mid-December 2025 reached 103% of 2019 levels when including unpaid riders. See 2025 in Data, December Ridership Recovery, page 4.

[5]The MTA fare-free bus pilot only included Local routes in the evaluation. IBO applied the same ridership growth for Express service based on the assumption that riders would utilize the service more if made fare-free. In the absence of a pilot of fare-free Express buses, or demographic information for Express bus riders, the Local bus pilot is the only evidence to inform IBO's assumption.

[6]The MTA 4% fare increases are estimates based on statements provided by the MTA in their financial documents. The actual fares will be determined later by the MTA, and they might not exactly amount to a 4% increase.

[7]IBO does not have data on bus driver shifts, or an ability to model how many new drivers would be needed for individual routes.

[8]On bus operator salaries: the contract between the MTA and the bus drivers' union (TWU) expired on May 15, 2026. Parties are in the process of negotiating a new contract. On fringe costs: per MTA financial statements, the MTA spends around 70% of their regular (non-overtime) payroll expenses on fringe benefits, primarily including health insurance and pensions. Fringe rates for overtime are typically less than regular fringe; City employee overtime fringe rates are around 30 to 40 percentage points lower than regular fringe. Therefore, IBO assumes the overtime fringe rate of 35% in the primary estimate.

[9]IBO assumes fuel will remain at current prices; while there has been recent volatility in fuel prices, increases in fuel costs would not substantially change IBO's estimates.

[10]In IBO's 2023 fare-free bus cost estimate, IBO assumed a 4% substitution rate, based on other pilots of fare-free bus service around the country.

[11]Revenue estimates for Access-A-Ride are based on the MTA's own projections from their February 2026 MTA Financial Plan.

[12]In recent years, paratransit ridership has grown at about the same rate as costs, but this could be due to many factors in addition to ridership, such as changes to carrier services, insurance, or fuel costs. See MTA February Financial Plan 2026-2029, Paratransit Operations, page III-22.

[13]The MTA projects a total of $1.073 billion in paratransit operating costs for calendar year 2027. See MTA February Financial Plan 2026-2029, Paratransit Operations, page III-22.

[14]Transfers from bus to bus are free, however transfers from subway to subway are only free if riders can transfer without exiting and re-entering a turnstile.

New York City Independent Budget Office

**IBO's mission** is to enhance understanding of New York City's budget, public policy, and economy through independent analysis.


Prepared by:
**Jan Mendez**
**Emily Pramik**

Supervised by:
**Brian Galán**
**Sarah Parker**

Produced by:
**Tara V. Swanson**

Other Contributors:
**Cameron Chapman**
**Maham Hassan***

**IBO Intern*


Cover Photo: Pixabay/ArtisticOperations


info@ibo.nyc.gov

www.ibo.nyc.gov

**Follow IBO**
@nycibo