



COMMONWEALTH OFFICE OF TRANSIT AUTHORITY CITIZEN CENTRIC REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2025

ABOUT COTA

The Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority (COTA) was established by CNMI Public Law 17-43 on May 27, 2011. COTA opened on January 28, 2013 and is responsible for the development and establishment of public transportation in the Commonwealth.

COTA is administered by the Special Assistant for Public Transportation who is appointed by the Governor.

Under Public Law 18-51, the COTA has a six-member Commonwealth Public Transportation Advisory Board.



OUR MISSION

The Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority shall provide the citizens of our communities with a dependable, reliable, safe, and cost-effective public transit system in order to reduce energy consumption, strengthen cultural values, and contribute economic development for the residents of the Commonwealth.



OUR VISION

Transportation is always the link, and never the barrier, to accessing training, employment, childcare, and related destinations. We shall be recognized as the premier island-wide public transit provider committed to safety, courtesy, quality, responsiveness, efficiency, and innovation.

MESSAGE FROM THE SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Serving the people of the CNMI is a privilege we carry with pride every day. Our buses connect families, workers, students, and visitors, helping residents reach schools, jobs, medical appointments, and community services. We are grateful to our community for trusting us to be a part of their daily lives and for allowing us to serve in ways that strengthen the bonds of our islands.

In FY2025, the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority (COTA) achieved major milestones, including receiving the **CNMI Government Agency of the Year Award from the Saipan Chamber of Commerce** and the **2025 Community Transportation System of the Year (Small System) Award**, a national award from the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA). These honors recognize our team's dedication and the trust of every community member who relies on our services. They also reflect the resilience of our community and our shared commitment to enhancing mobility, improving access to essential services, and keeping the CNMI connected. We remain focused on building upon this momentum, innovating, and ensuring public transportation continues to serve all residents and visitors.



Alfreda Camacho Maratita
Special Assistant for Public Transportation

I am constantly inspired by the dedication of our team, whose hard work, professionalism, and care ensure that every ride is safe, reliable, and efficient. Their effort fuels our mission to keep the CNMI moving and connected. Together with our community, we will continue to innovate, improve, and provide transit services that support opportunity, independence, and the quality of life for everyone in our islands.

As we look ahead to FY2026, we remain focused on enhancing our transit infrastructure, including bus shelters, covered bus parking, and transit transfer stations, while expanding routes and continuing our service growth on Rota and Tinian.

I also extend my sincere gratitude to Governor David M. Apatang and Lt. Governor Dennis C. Mendiola for their continued support and guidance. Their leadership enables me to advance COTA's mission and ensures that public transportation in the CNMI continues to grow, improve, and serve our community effectively.

We are honored by the trust and support of our community. Each day you ride with us, you remind us why our work matters, and your confidence fuels our commitment to providing transit services that empower, connect, and uplift every resident and visitor across the CNMI.

Serving you will always be our greatest honor. Thank you, CNMI.

Yours In Transit,

/s/ Alfreda Camacho Maratita
Special Assistant for Public Transportation
Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority
CNMI Office of the Governor & Lt. Governor

OUR SERVICES

- TransitCNMI - Fixed Route Shared Ride Services
 - Blue Line 1B - Beach Road
- Demand Responsive Shared Ride Services
 - Call-A-Ride Saipan (CARS)
 - Call-A-Ride Rota (CARR)

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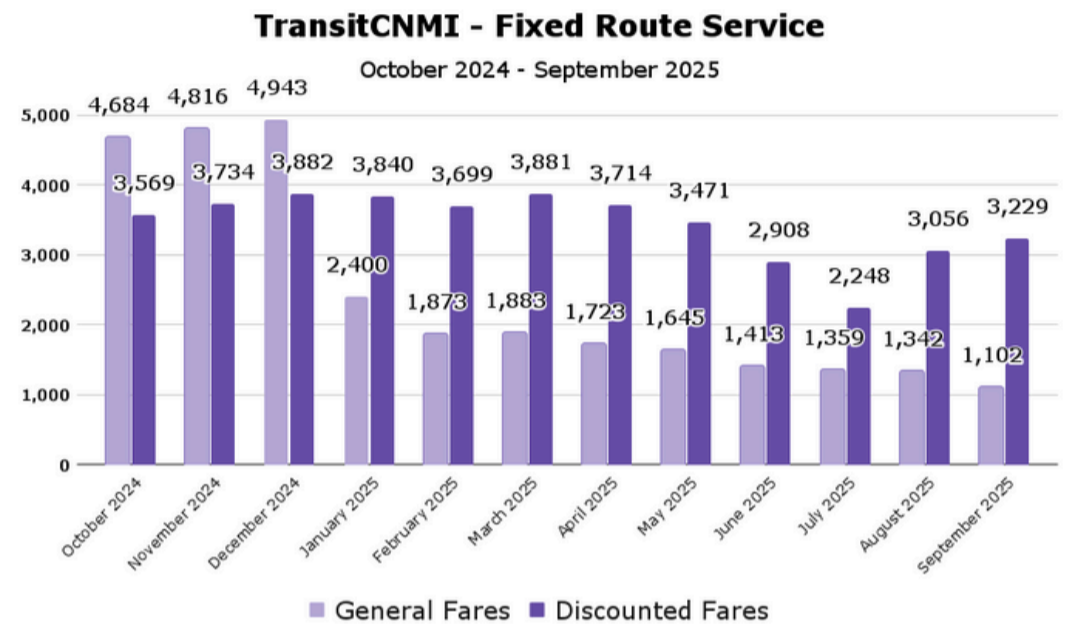
PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS

CITIZEN CENTRIC REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2025

TRANSITCNMI - FIXED ROUTE

After successfully launching the Fixed Route Service: TransitCNMI, the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority (COTA) has maintained operations, providing accessible transportation to the community. The Blue Line 1B route connects residents from the Paseo De Marianas to the Northern Marianas College.

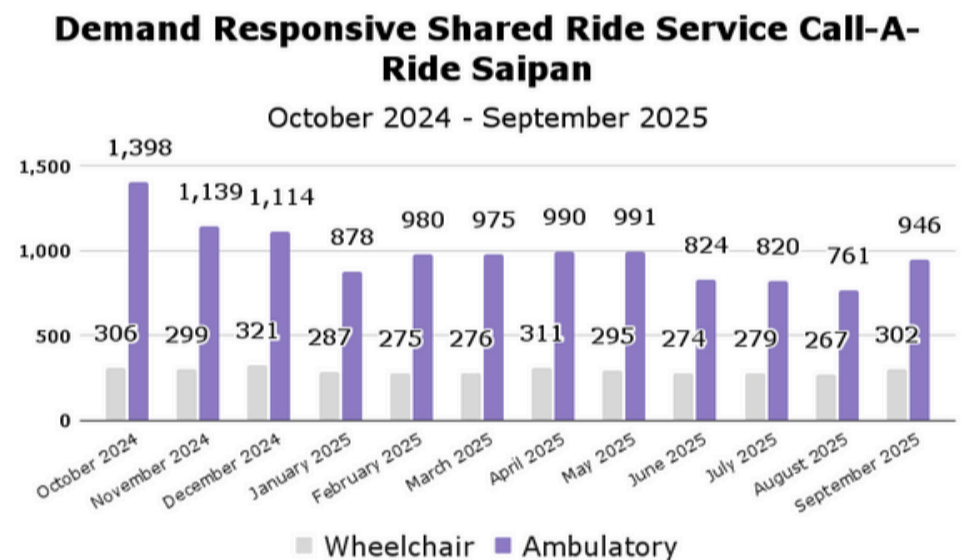
From October 2024 to September 2025, the Fixed Route ridership has a total of **70,414** riders.



DEMAND RESPONSE CALL-A-RIDE SAIPAN (CARS)

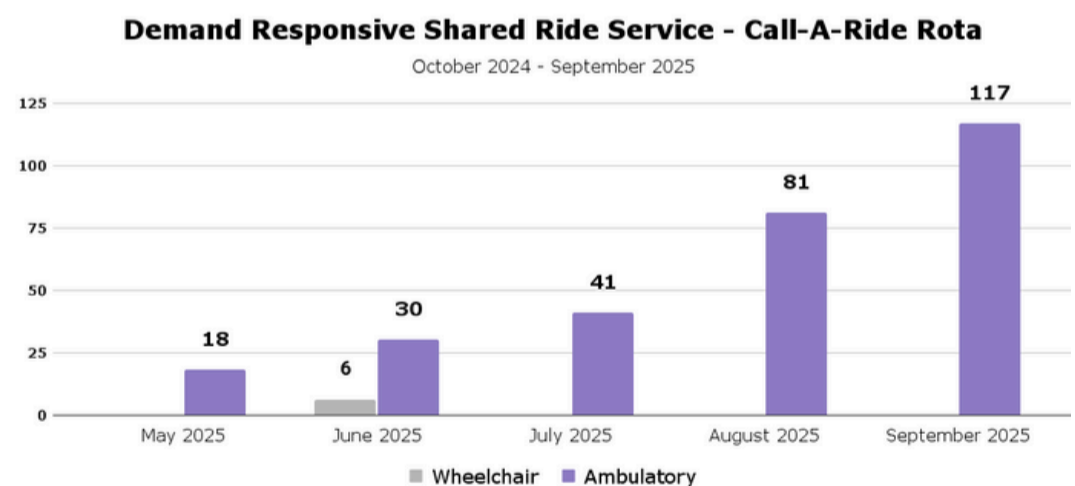
The Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority's Demand Responsive Shared Ride Service, Call-A-Ride Saipan (CARS) is a reservation based, curb-to-curb, and door to door service. All riders must apply for eligibility and call two days in advance to make reservations.

From October 2024 to September 2025, the Demand Responsive Shared Ride ridership on Saipan is the total of **15,308** riders.



DEMAND RESPONSE CALL-A-RIDE ROTA (CARR)

The Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority has conducted a pilot project on the island of Rota to determine the feasibility of transit in the CNMI. During this period, services were free and could accommodate all eligible individuals on the island of Rota. The total ridership from May 2025 to September 2025 is **293** riders.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- COTA received the CNMI Government Agency of the Year Award from the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.
- COTA attended the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) EXPO 2025 and the CALACT Spring Meeting in California.
- COTA received the 2025 Community Transportation System of the Year (Small System) Award.
- On July 9, 2025, COTA hosted their inaugural "ROLL OUT 5K!" We promoted the accessibility of public transportation as kick started the events for Rural Transit Week.
- On July 11, 2025, COTA spread awareness on our services through a road-side waving event across Ada Gym.
- On July 14, 2025, COTA proclaimed Rural Transit Week in the CNMI through the Proclamation Signing Ceremony. We were grateful to celebrate it with the late Governor Arnold I. Palacios and then Lieutenant Governor David M. Apatang.
- On July 16, 2025, COTA celebrated Rural Transit Day with free rides all day for everyone in the community.
- In July, 28 of COTA staff were trained and completed the Community Transportation Association of America - Passenger Assistance Safety Sensitivity (PASS) 7.0 certification with Mrs. Ginger Porter.
- In August, COTA published the Invitation to Bid for the Architecture and Engineering Design for Bus Shelters for the Fixed Route Services.



EXPENDITURES AND REVENUE

CITIZEN CENTRIC REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2025

EXPENDITURES

COTA's priority is to provide safe, reliable, and accessible public transportation. The following expenditures include: wages and salaries, repair and maintenance, utilities, communications, printing and photocopying, advertisement, fuel and lubrication, supplies operations, supplies office, cleaning supplies, technology equipment, machinery, tools, and equipment, rental equipment, rental office, insurance, and professional services.

TOTAL EXPENDITURE:
\$986,297.52

REVENUE

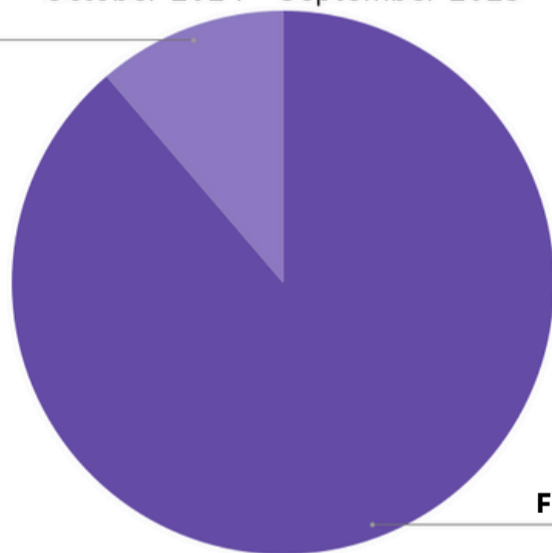
COTA's revenue includes the federal funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration. The revenue collected from our Demand Responsive Shared Ride Services, Call-A-Ride Saipan, and Call-A-Ride Rota, as well as our Fixed Route Services all contribute to the revenue for our Program Income Account, a revolving account for incoming and future expenses.

Total Revenue for Program Income Account

October 2024 - September 2025

Demand Response Service

11.3%



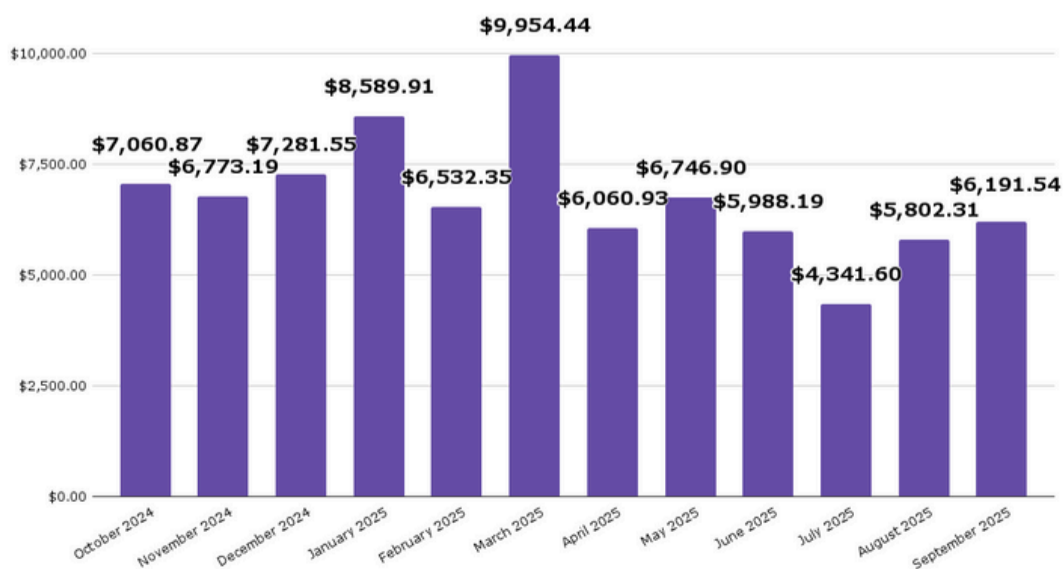
Fixed Route Service

88.7%

TOTAL REVENUE:
\$91,667.78

TransitCNMI - Fixed Route Service

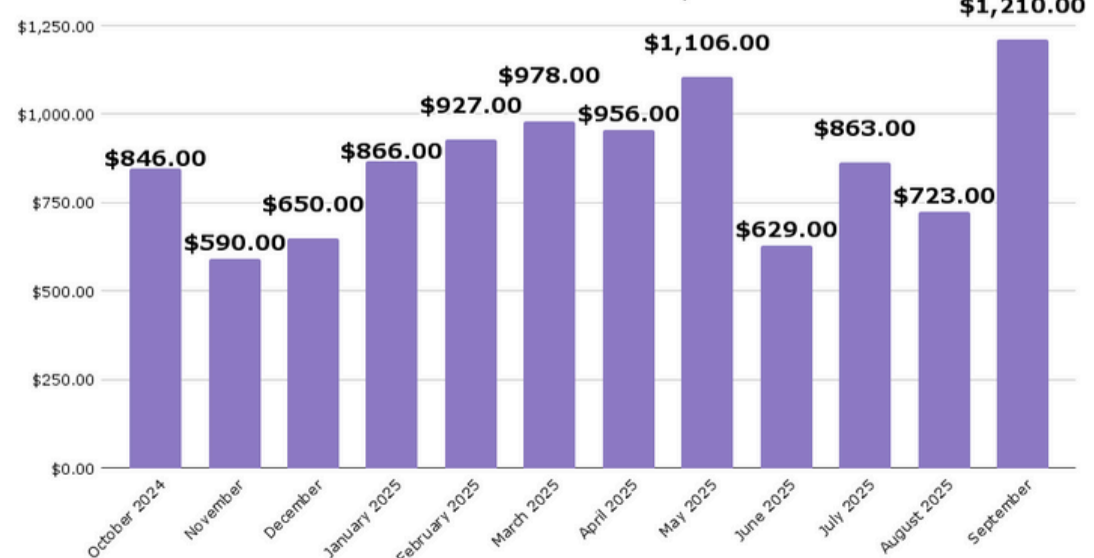
Revenue Collection: October 2024 - September 2025



TOTAL: \$81,323.78

Demand Responsive Shared Ride - Call-A-Ride Saipan

Revenue Collection: October 2024 - September 2025



TOTAL: \$10,344.00



LOOKING FORWARD: WHAT'S NEXT FOR COTA?

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EXPANSION OF FIXED ROUTE SERVICES

COTA is planning to expand the Fixed Route Services, which include new routes and bus stops on the Green Line to the North side of Saipan, and Blue Line 1A through Middle Road in the first half of FY2026.

FERRY FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Ferry Feasibility study was awarded to the contractor of WSP, USA, Inc., and will complete their research by the end of 2025. Their research on Saipan, Tinian and Rota will determine if a ferry service will be sustainable for the CNMI.

EXPANSION TO TINIAN AND ROTA

COTA was approved for \$207,027.00 through the Department of Interior, Office of Insular Affairs, Technical Assistant Program grant that will support expansion efforts to Tinian and Rota, CNMI. COTA will continue to expand the Demand Responsive Shared Ride Services to the island of Tinian within the first half of FY2026.



SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN

The Sustainable Transportation Master Plan was awarded to the contractor of WSP, USA, Inc. They will complete their research by the end of 2025, providing a Roadway Master Plan and Ferry Master Plan to implement into the COTA's public transportation systems.

A&E CONSTRUCTION: COVERED PARKING & TRANSFER STATIONS

COTA received \$3,000,000.00 through the FY2023 Marianas Earmarks from Congressman Gregorio Kilili Sablan's Office for a covered parking facility. This project is currently under the planning phase as we work with the Department of Public Works on building the specifications that is conducive to our administrative building and maintenance facility. The covered parking facility will house all COTA vehicles and new electric vehicles.



COTA received \$900,000.00 through the FY2023 Marianas Earmarks from Congressman Gregorio Kilili Sablan's Office. This project is in the drafting stages where plans are being finalized. Bus transfer stations are proposed to be located at the Northern Marianas College (NMC), and in the areas of Garapan and Kagman. These projects are projected to be carried out in the second half of FY2026.

A&E CONSTRUCTION: BUS SHELTERS

COTA has published the Invitation to Bid for Architectural and Engineering Services to design 187 bus shelters for the island of Saipan. Within the first quarter of FY2026, we plan on analyzing the bid proposals to select the preferred vendor. Within the second quarter of FY2026, COTA will move forward with the contract and construction of bus shelters for COTA's Blue Line 1B, Green Line, and Blue Line 1A.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES & CHARGING STATIONS

Acquisition of Electric Vehicles (EVs) & Charging Infrastructure: COTA received \$2,000,000.00 from the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration through the Low/No Competitive Grant Program. In collaboration with the Office of Grants Management & State Clearinghouse, COTA has published the Invitation to Bid for 7 electric buses within the first quarter of the fiscal year and are looking to publish an additional 2 electric buses within the second quarter of FY2026.

