



FY 2025 Annual Report

Williamsburg Area Transit Authority

COMING IN AUGUST 2026



WATA

Bus Transfer Center

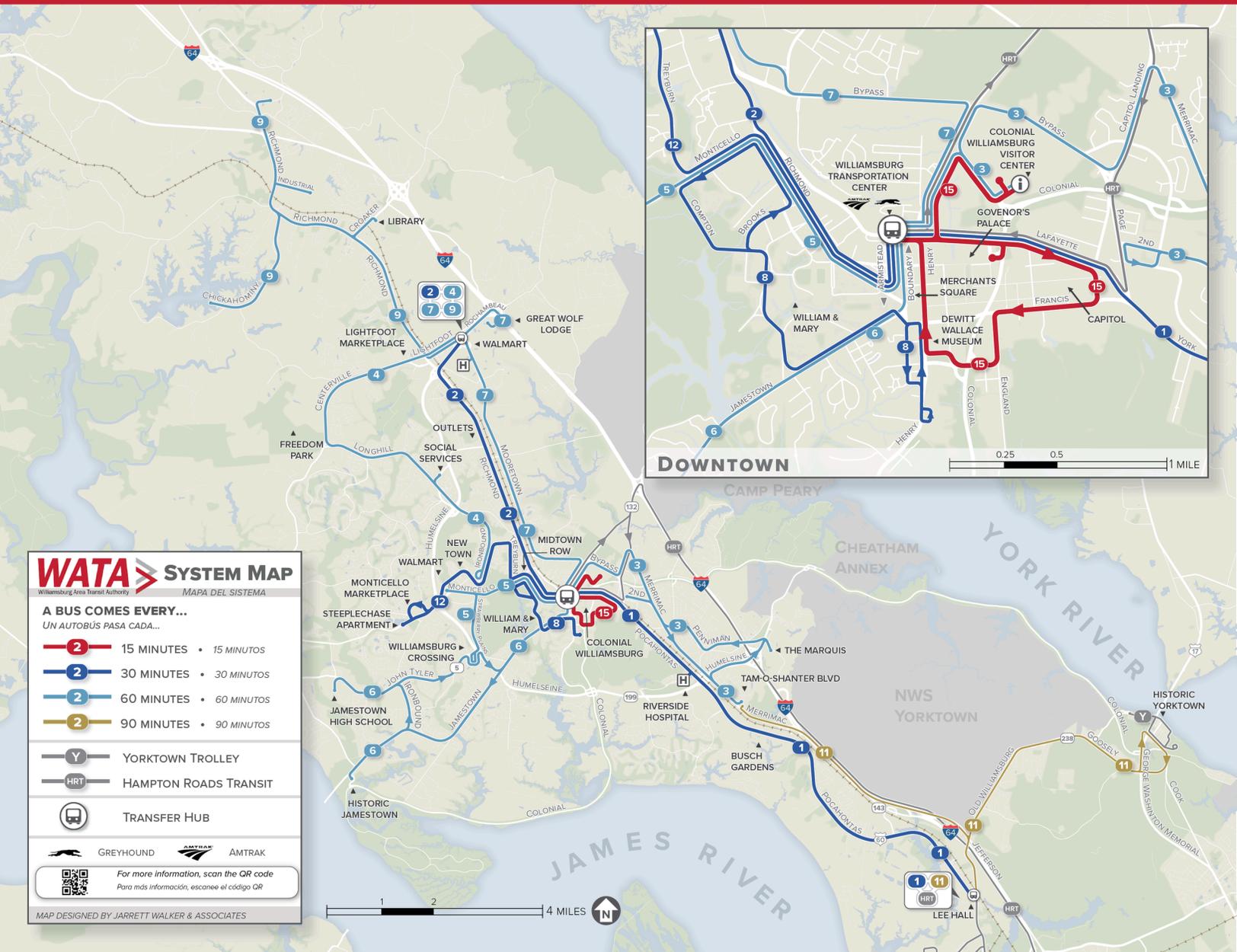
6166 Old Mooretown Rd.
Williamsburg, VA 23188



Table of Contents

WATA Transit System	4
Letter from the Executive Director	5
Mission, Vision, and Values	6
Services	7
Operations	9
Financials	12
In the Community	13
Moving Forward	15

WATA Transit System



The Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA) provides public transportation services throughout the Historic Triangle, connecting residents, workers, students, and visitors to destinations across Williamsburg, James City County, and York County. Operating 362 days each year, WATA runs a core network of ten fixed routes Monday through Saturday from 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM, and Sunday service from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

In addition to its core network, WATA operates two specialty routes, Route 8, which services the College of William & Mary community, and Route 15, which services the Colonial Williamsburg area.

WATA also provides curb-to-curb paratransit service for individuals with disabilities who are unable to utilize fixed route services and live within 3/4 mile of WATA's service area.

Letter From The Executive Director

Dear WATA Stakeholders,

In reviewing this past year, I am proud of what WATA has accomplished and encouraged for its future in providing a key service to our community.

After increasing for three consecutive years (FY22-FY24), our ridership surpassed pre-COVID (FY19) numbers. Even more indicative of our success and value to the community is our growth relative to other transit agencies in the state and nationwide, most of which are still below their pre-COVID numbers. I attribute this success to our staff and operators being steadfast in our values, especially teamwork and reliability.

We continued to improve the rider experience by rolling out mobile ticketing, allowing passengers to pay through their mobile phones. This isn't just more convenient for passengers; it saves time by reducing on-bus ticket purchases. We also broke ground on two major construction projects, including the WATA North Transit Center, which will be the first facility in the Historic Triangle solely for WATA passengers, providing them with a safe, comfortable, and convenient bus transfer location.

Underpinning our FY25 accomplishments were our successes in hiring and maintaining talented bus operators. We ended the year with 20% more operators than the previous year. This allowed us to maintain all scheduled services, reduce driver fatigue, and improve reliability. Moreover, we nearly tripled our retention of new hires. Our newest operators highlight WATA's welcoming environment, quality on-board training, and predictable work schedules.

All these successes are setting conditions for improved service in the coming years and in line with our transit strategic plan, Evolving WATA. We are postured to improve convenience by increasing route frequency, thereby attracting more choice-riders and becoming more popular with more people in the community.

Our success in FY25 would not have been possible without the support of the counties and city we serve, our Board of Directors, and most especially our dedicated operators and staff. I remain grateful to their collective dedication to our mission.



Matthew Scalia
Executive Director

WATA Board of Directors

Michele Mixner DeWitt, City of Williamsburg
Paul Holt, James City County
Diane Finney, James City County
Brian Fuller, York County
Sarah Jones, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
Bill Horacio III, William & Mary
Avery Daughtry, Virginia Department of Rail
and Public Transportation

Mission, Vision, and Values

OUR MISSION

WATA provides safe, reliable, and accessible transit services to the diverse population of residents and tourists of the Historic Triangle.

OUR VISION

Evolving public transit to meet the goals of our community, connect people, grow our economy, and improve our quality of life.

OUR VALUES

RELIABILITY	SAFETY	TEAMWORK
FRIENDLY SERVICE		COMMUNICATION



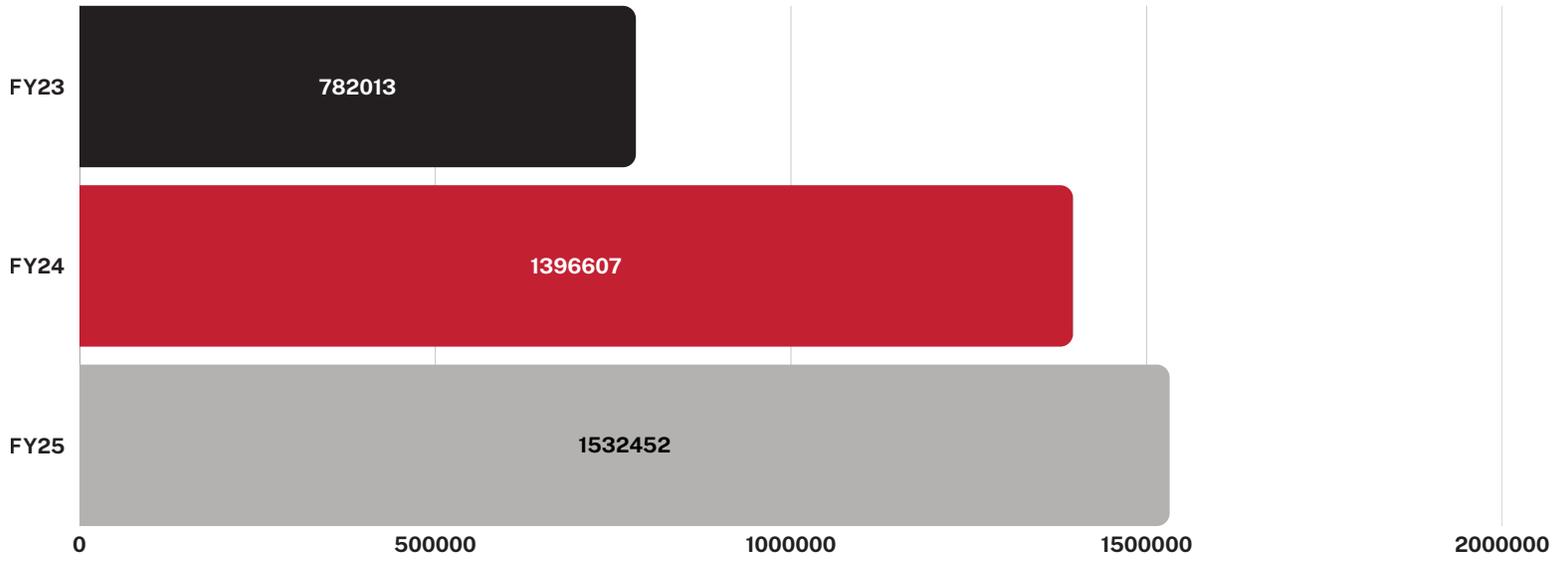
Bus Operator Lee Whitby

Services

Ridership

In FY 2025, WATA provided more than **1.5 million passenger trips**, marking a full return to pre-pandemic ridership levels. WATA also provided **16,122 paratransit trips**, maintaining consistent service levels compared to prior years.

Fixed Route



Paratransit



Services

➤ Transit App

In FY 2025, *Transit* usage continued to grow in WATA's service area. Passengers used *Transit* over **1.1 million times**, representing a 52% increase from FY24, and planned over **217,000 trips**, a 48% increase from FY24.

Transit also gained over **3,700 new downloads** within WATA's service area, a 40% increase from FY24. On average, WATA had over **2,100 monthly active users** planning trips, a 35% increase from FY24.

➤ Launch of Mobile Ticketing

In February 2025, WATA, in partnership with *Transit* and Masabi, launched fare payments through the *Transit* app, allowing passengers to purchase daily, weekly, and monthly bus passes in the same app passengers use to plan their trips. In the first two months of its launch, WATA grossed over \$8,200 with over 3,200 ticket activations.

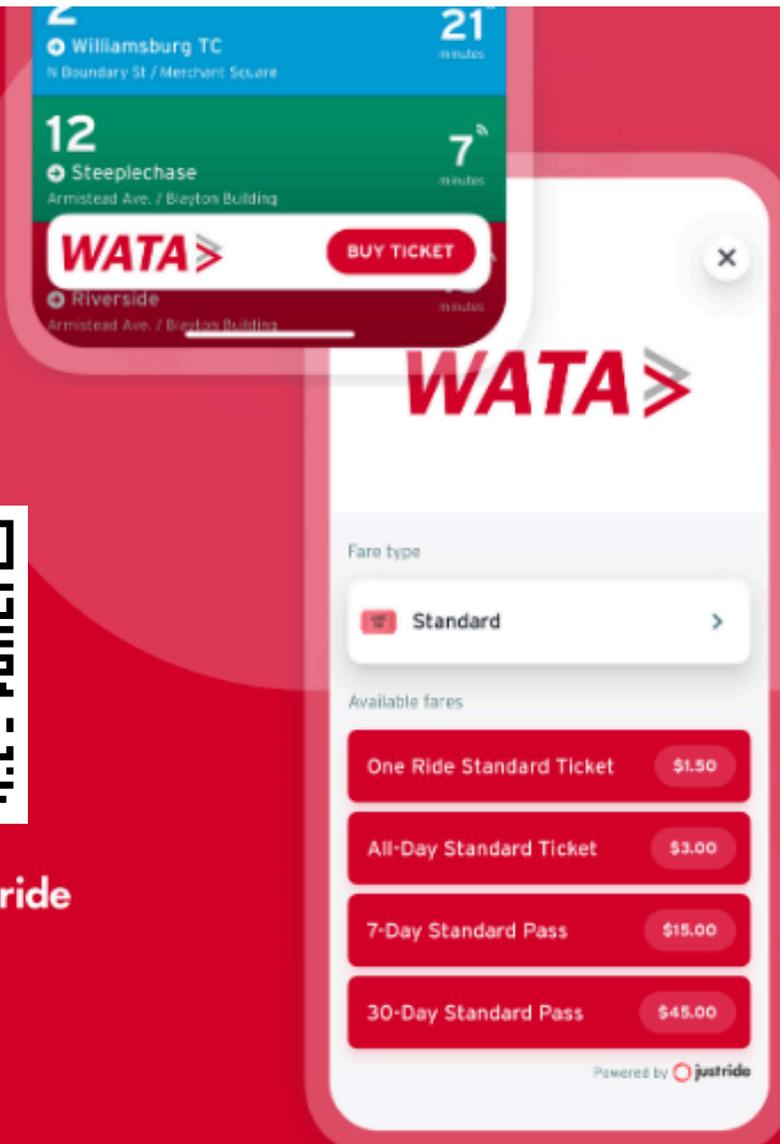
Plan your trip.
Pay your fare.
All with one app.

Download *Transit*



PARTNER APP FOR **WATA** ➤

FARES POWERED BY **justride**

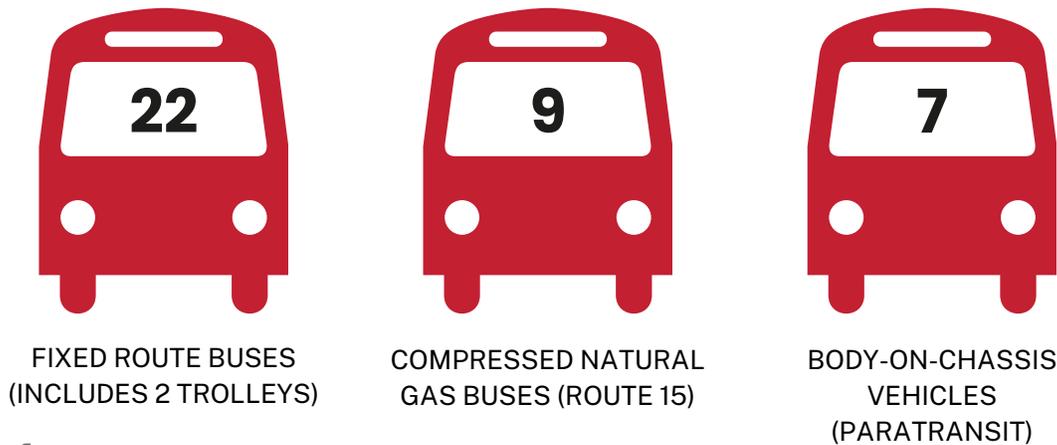


Operations

> Fleet

In FY 2025, WATA added two new Body-On-Chassis (BOC) vehicles to support paratransit services, along with the purchase six new buses, four of which are compressed natural gas (CNG) buses as part of an effort to modernize its current CNG fleet. Currently, the existing CNG buses are limited to operation on Route 15, and don't include the full range of onboard technology available on the rest of WATA's fixed route fleet.

The new CNG buses will be equipped with updated technology and will be able to operate on all routes, improving both operational flexibility and service reliability. The average age of WATA's revenue fleet is 7 years, with the CNG vehicles representing the oldest assets at an average age of 15.5 years.

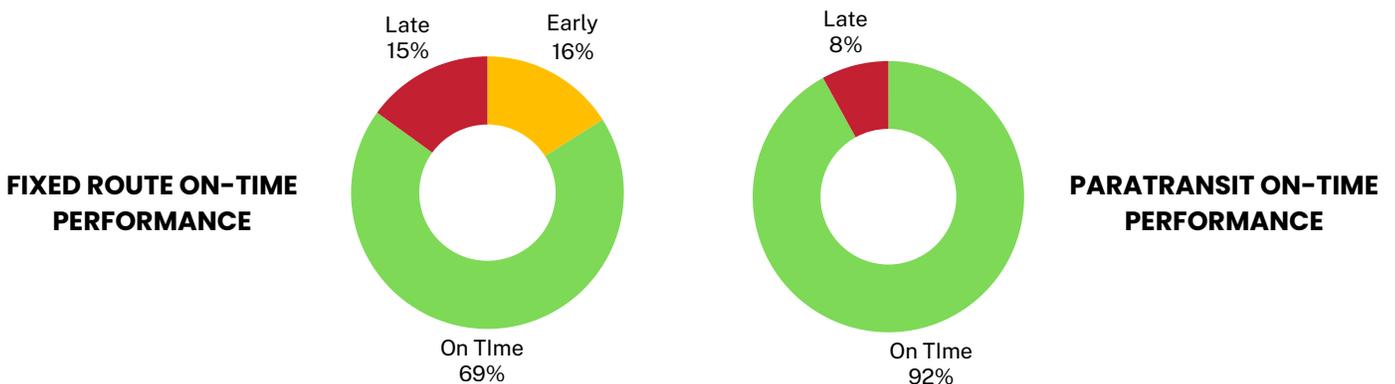


> On Time Performance

In FY25, WATA's paratransit achieved an excellent 92% on-time performance rating, but fixed route services showed areas for improvement. It is important to note that being late is often caused by external factors out of the bus operator's control such as traffic, detours, and accidents, whereas leaving a stop early is controlled by the operator. Early departures also risk stranding passengers at stops until the next bus, likely delaying them by an hour.

On-time performance is defined for fixed route services as a vehicle departing no earlier and not more than five minutes later than scheduled and paratransit services a 10-minute window before or a 20-minute window after the scheduled time.

WATA is improving its internal controls to increase fixed route on-time performance to 85% for FY26.

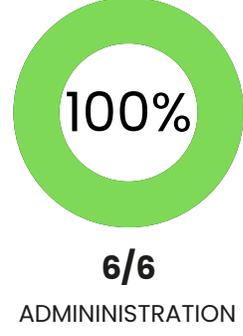
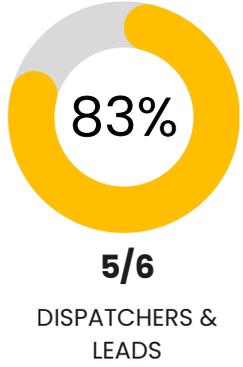
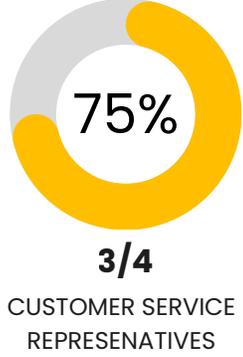
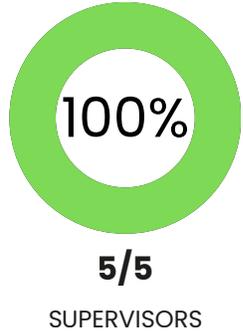
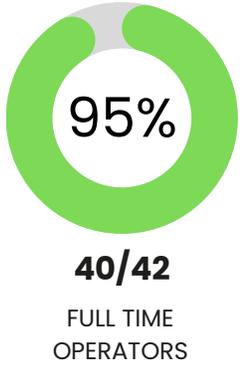


Operations

➤ Recruitment

In September 2024, WATA’s Board of Directors approved a resolution adopting new pay ranges and grade levels. This decision was based on a compensation study contracted by James City County. The study, which included WATA, showed that its current pay structure is aligned with the 50th percentile of the surveyed salaries. Accordingly, the WATA Board of Directors approved the proposed adjustments to its structure to reach the 65th percentile to recruit and retain a talented workforce. Under the new pay scale, WATA’s starting wage for bus operators increased to \$20.58 per hour.

WATA is also proud to report it was near full staffing by the end of FY25. Since 2020, WATA, among many other transit agencies in the United States, has faced economic challenges and operator shortages. Throughout this time, WATA has worked diligently to maintain service levels, strengthen recruitment efforts, and highlight the benefits of a career in public transit. These efforts are critical for WATA to execute its strategic planning efforts for new services.



WANDA HAWKINS

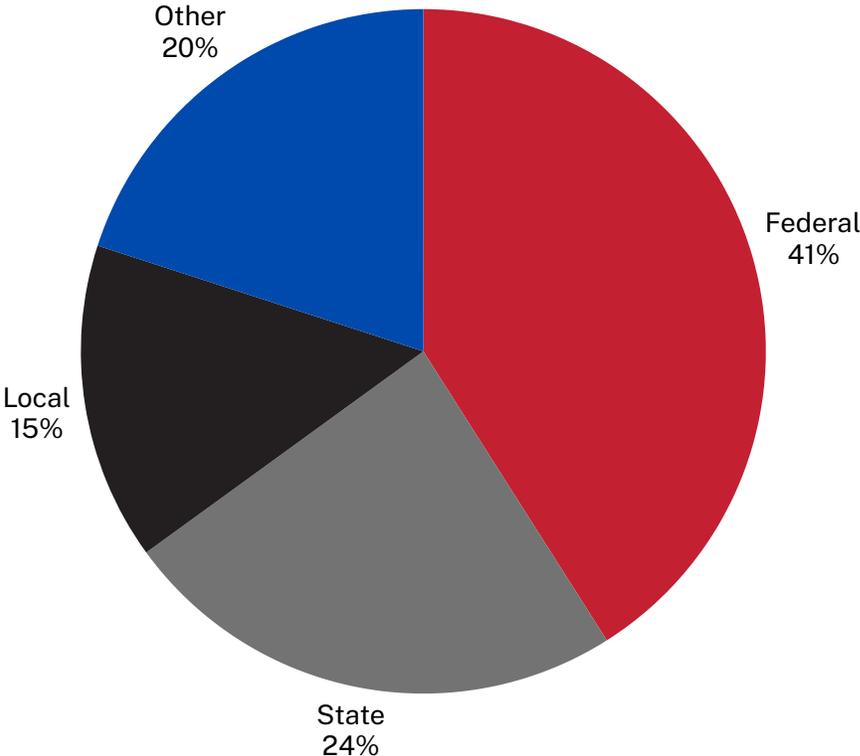
30 YEARS



Financials

WATA Operating Budget FY25

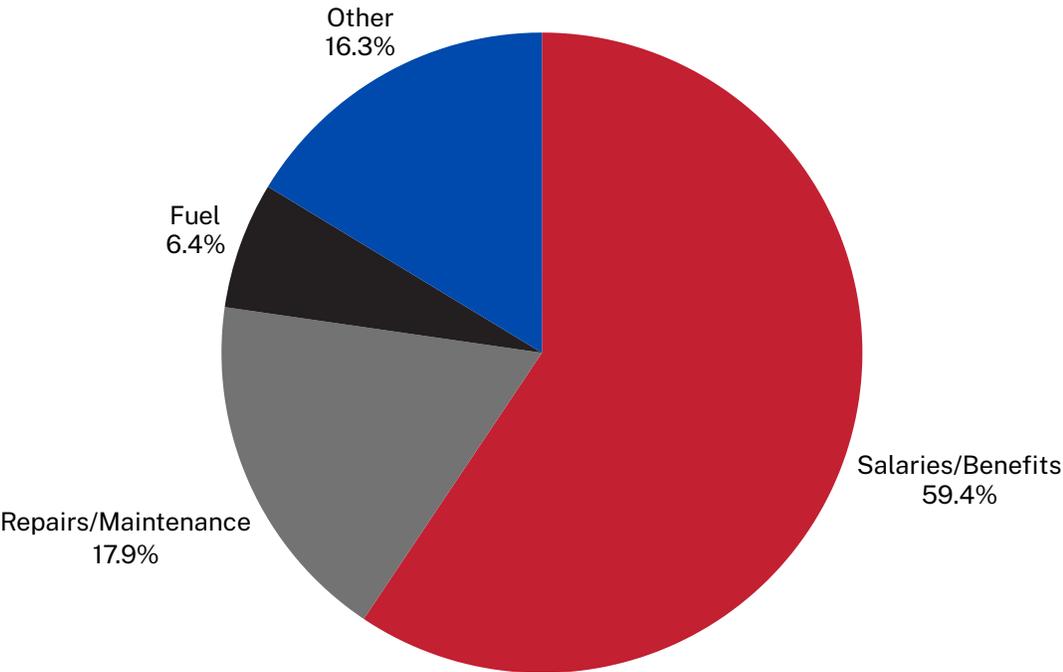
Revenues



WATA's total revenue for FY 2025 amounted to \$9,835,599. 41% came from federal funding, 24% from state funding, 15% sourced from the City of Williamsburg, James City County, and York County, and 20% from other sources such as William & Mary, the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, and fares.

Expenditures

WATA's total expenditures for FY 2025 also amounted to \$8,705,439. 59.4% was allocated to WATA's salaries and benefits, 17.9% to repairs and maintenance of WATA's bus fleet, 6.4% to fuel costs, and 16.3% to other expenses such as uniforms and administrative purchases.



In the Community

In FY 2025, WATA continued to strengthen connections within the Williamsburg area and beyond by participating in events across the Historic Triangle. From resource fairs and safety programs to local parades and presentations to organizations, WATA always finds ways to engage community members wherever they are.

City of Williamsburg National Night Out

City of Williamsburg Fire Department's Open House

City of Williamsburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority's "1st Annual Community Resource Fair."

Greater Williamsburg Chamber of Commerce 2024 Christmas Parade

Grove Community Block Party

The Gweedo Memorial Foundation 2025 Keepers Cup Distracted Driving Tournament

James City County Parks and Recreation Disability Awareness Trick or Treat

James City County Parks and Recreation Live Well Expo

Presentations to Virginia Organizing, Child Health Initiative, Child Development Resources, Rotary Club of Williamsburg, Rotary Club of James City County, and Capital Club of Williamsburg

William & Mary New Orientation Activities

Williamsburg Area Association of Realtors Presentation & Ride-Along

Virginia Transit Association Transit & Rail Advocacy Day

➤ Fare Free Days

WATA continued its free fare days tradition, providing free rides on Virginia's Election Day, Earth Day, Transit Equity Day, and Bike to Work day for passengers traveling with bicycles.

➤ Greater Williamsburg Transportation Assistance Fund

The Williamsburg Community Foundation established the Greater Williamsburg Transportation Assistance Fund (GWTAFF) to help public transit passengers in the Historic Triangle. The fund supports improvements to WATA bus stop amenities and provides grants for nonprofits or governmental organizations for the purchase of bus passes to those in need.





WATA
Wilmington Area Transit Authority

Route 1: Leo Hall
Mon-Sat: 6:00am - 9:00pm

Route 3: Merrimac Trl
Mon-Sat: 6:00am - 9:00pm

Route 6: Jamestown
Mon-Sat: 6:00am - 9:00pm
Sun: 8:00am - 4:00pm
Round Trip: 60 min

For questions or comments please contact us:
www.wata.org 781.228.5483 info@wata.org



BRING
ORS
NNING
UR
UR
WATA IN
A KID
TO
KID
WATA
WATA
WATA

Moving Forward

➤ Bus Stop Improvements

In FY26, WATA will increase coordination with the local governments of James City County, the City of Williamsburg, and York County, to improve bus stop amenities, with a goal of improving 20 stops each year for the next five years.

➤ Mobile Ticketing Expansion

In FY26, WATA will launch the next phase of WATA's mobile ticketing, allowing passengers to purchase mobile tickets from local convenience stores, improving accessibility and convenience.

➤ New Buses

In Spring 2026, WATA is scheduled to receive six new buses as part of its ongoing fleet modernization efforts. This includes four new CNG vehicles, which will further expand our low emission fleet.

➤ Opening of WATA North Transit Center

In Summer 2026, the WATA North Transit Center will officially open to the public, providing passengers and staff with improved amenities while waiting for their next bus.

➤ Phase 1 - Evolving WATA

In FY26, WATA anticipates launching Phase 1 of its Transit Strategic Plan: Evolving WATA. During this phase, Routes 1 and 2 will transition to 30-minute all-day service.

➤ Bus Art Competition

In early FY26, WATA will host a bus art competition themed around America's 250th Anniversary in 2026. This will be WATA's first independently hosted bus art contest.

➤ VA250

In anticipation of America's 250th Anniversary in 2026, WATA is proactively planning to ensure public transportation needs will be met as the Greater Williamsburg area gears up for increased tourist traffic.

Moving Forward

Construction Updates



By the end of FY25, WATA officially began construction on two major projects. The renovation of its Operations & Maintenance Facility will modernize the current facility, providing WATA's workforce with updated office space, breakrooms, wash bays and dispatch space. The development of the WATA North Transit Center will provide passengers a better experience while travelling, providing improved amenities and a more comfortable transfer stop.

Together, these projects represent major milestones in WATA's long term commitment to delivering safe, reliable, and accessible public transportation for the Historic Triangle.





WATA 
Williamsburg Area Transit Authority

11902



Kneeling
Bump
RAMP

11902

WATA 

153-92L

Thank you for your continued support!



www.gowata.org | info@wata.org | 757-220-5493