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## QuickPoint! - TriMet's decreasing ridership makes the SW Corridor project obsolete

By Rachel Dawson

TriMet's weekly system boardings were down [68% in May](#) compared to last year due to the Coronavirus, and ridership will likely stay down since the CDC is recommending that people avoid transit altogether. But it's not just the pandemic; ridership has been dropping for years.

TriMet's revenues have increased by 171 percent since 2000, while the agency's ridership (number of originating rides) has increased by only 18 percent. [However, ridership peaked in 2012 and has since dropped by 7 percent between 2012 and 2019.](#)

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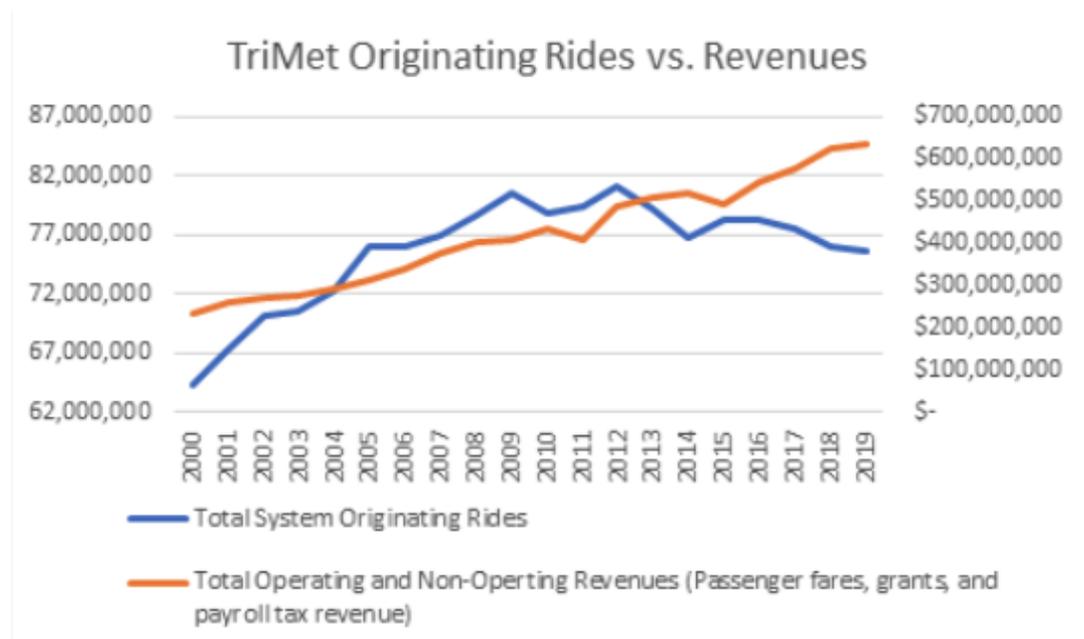
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The negative trend for ridership is primarily due to a drop in light rail utilization. Since the peak in 2012, bus ridership has decreased by 2% while light rail has decreased by 12% (a difference of just under one million for bus and 4.2 million for light rail).

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Since 2000, TriMet has constructed four new light rail lines: the Red Line (2001), Yellow Line (2004), Green Line (2009), and Orange Line (2015). However, the costly increase in light rail capacity has not corresponded with a similar increase in ridership.

TriMet seems to have learned the wrong lesson from this underperformance. The agency is proposing a \$2.6-2.8 billion light rail line from Downtown Portland to the Bridgeport Village mall, nearly \$1 billion of which TriMet expects will be paid for by Metro's [Get Moving 2020](#) transportation measure.

The Southwest Corridor project is the wrong investment for our region. Portland Metro area voters should vote "no" on Metro's transportation measure this fall.

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