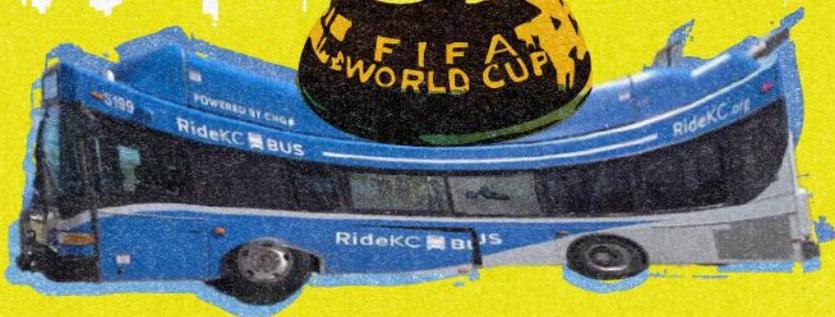


NOT A GAME

TO
US



a look at how the World Cup will impact local residents and public transportation





WHO IS
"WE"?





This summer, the World Cup is coming to Kansas City. Over 650,000 visitors will arrive for "the ultimate celebration of the beautiful game."

While Kansas City welcomes tourists from around the world, what will happen to those of us who already live here? How our city is being prepared and manicured for this celebration begs the question: Why are our leaders more motivated to look good than serve the people of Kansas City?

Hosting the World Cup intensifies already-existing harms that make our daily lives and our neighbors' lives difficult.

public money sent to private
corporate interests

gentrification & displacement

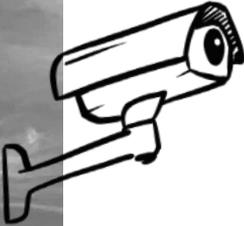
crumbling public transportation

housing insecurity/homelessness

immigration/deportation

environmental destruction

policing, incarceration,
militarization, surveillance



These harms are hidden behind promises of 'economic improvement' & 'international prestige.'

In the following pages, we discuss how this happens, why it's important, & what we can do about it. Not because we dislike soccer or occasions for community celebration, but because we can imagine a city that invests in its people over capital.

There will be winners and losers at the World Cup, but the rich and powerful have already decided who the first loser was before any formal kickoff: (us.)

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO OUR BUS SYSTEM?



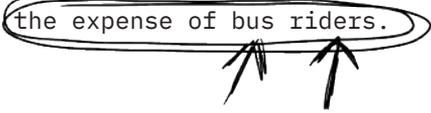
To understand how KC's public transportation system works, let's take a look at how it is run, where the money comes from, and where the money goes. The City of Kansas City uses revenue from two sales taxes and contracts bus service to the Kansas City Area Transit Authority (KCATA), and a budget signed each April gives funds to KCATA to run our bus system.

For years, there has been a cycle of city politicians complaining that KCATA isn't transparent with how it spends city money while

KCATA complains that the city wants more bus service than they receive funding for. This dynamic creates a scenario

where city officials and KCATA leaders treat each other as adversaries, rather than partners and collaborators working in the best interest of Kansas Citizens.

These political games led to 3 budget shortfalls for bus service in 2025. These budget shortfalls worsen the reliability and accessibility of the bus system, which comes at the expense of bus riders.





In the spring of 2025, with another budget shortfall looming, KCATA announced that one of its 'solutions' was to start charging \$2 bus fares, a higher charge than its pre-2020 price. In early 2026, KCATA announced full service cuts to two bus lines (19 & 29) and limited frequency on a dozen other lines. Despite their own estimates confirming that fares will not generate enough funding to prevent further cuts, fares are still set to return by June 1, 2026.

	Fare Level	2019	Proposed Fare
Single Ride	Full Fare	\$1.50	\$2.00
	Reduced (50%)	\$0.75	\$1.00
Daily Pass	Full Fare	\$3.00	\$4.00
	Reduced (50%)	\$1.50	\$2.00
Weekly Pass	Full Fare	NA	\$20.00
	Reduced (50%)	NA	\$10.00
Monthly Pass	Full Fare	\$50.00	\$62.50
	Reduced (50%)	\$25.00	\$31.25

Just in time for the World Cup.

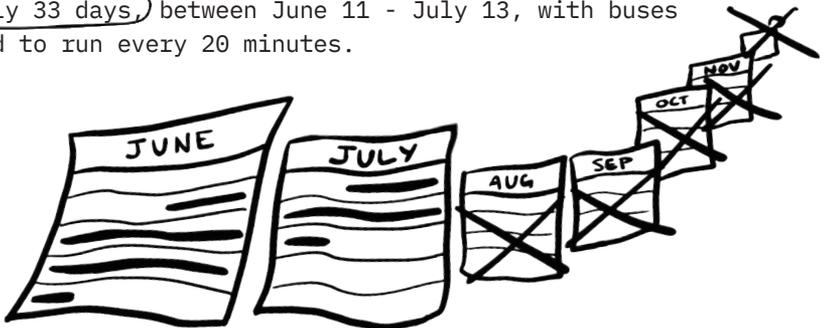


HERE COMES THE CUP!

FIFA requires (but doesn't help pay for) hosting cities to provide public transportation for visitors. KC2026—the group overseeing host city duties—formed a Transportation Task Force that includes Wyandotte and Johnson counties, along with KCATA.



Their transportation plans, dubbed “ConnectKC26” include leasing ~215 motorcoach buses to shuttle the 650,000+ visitors between MCI Airport, Fan Fest (at Liberty Memorial), and Arrowhead stadium, as well as ~15 additional entertainment or dining locations across the metro. The expanded reach will last only 33 days, between June 11 - July 13, with buses expected to run every 20 minutes.



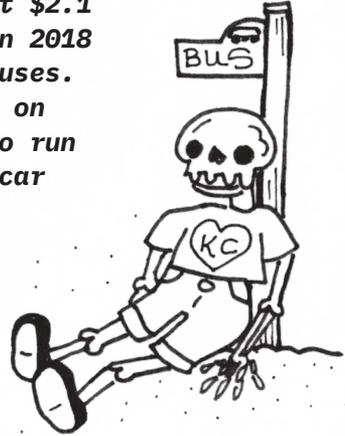


Question: Where does this money come from?

Answer: From our underfunded bus system!

"So the plan is to repurpose about \$2.1 million that the KCATA received in 2018 to purchase new energy efficient buses. Instead, the agency will spend it on operations during the World Cup to run some extra buses along the streetcar line to manage the flood of fans. Another \$387,500 would come from the Prospect MAX Grant."

Josh Merchant, The Beacon



Hosting the World Cup directly takes away vital funding from the already-strained budget of our bus system.

Instead, city & KCATA leaders would rather pay to expand bus service **to serve tourists in the short term.**

For 33 days this summer, KC's public transit will bloom; granting more routes and greater frequency to tourists and visitors, **all things that Kansas Citians deserve everyday.**

Long-term investments in our city's transit should not be sacrificed to accommodate any single event - no matter how 'monumental.'

For many Kansas Citians, buses are a lifeline. Yet, our elected leaders continue to put bus funding on the backburner. Their willingness to prioritize tourists robs you, me, and our community of a reliable and robust transit system. No matter how you get around KC, you are impacted.

"I am unable to drive and rely on our bus system ... When I see KCATA cutting routes, decreasing bus frequency, removing benches and bus shelters, botching talks with local governments, and prioritizing World Cup transportation over funding frequent, reliable everyday transit, it signals to me that they don't care about everyday working Kansas Citians who rely on bus service. They aren't treating transit as a necessity. It's a disgrace."

— Dayna Moth,
Midtown KC Resident

WHY
WON'T
THEY
LET US
HAVE
NICE
THINGS

LIKE TRANSIT?



Why make KC more accessible only during the World Cup, instead of investing in long-term, high-quality public transportation?

Pam Kramer, CEO of KC2026, has outlined the stark disparity between the ease and accessibility afforded to tourists and the reality of day-to-day bus riders' experience, boasting at a press conference held at Union Station:

"If you wanted to take public transportation from Olathe to Union Station, it would take you about an hour and 40 minutes [...] The network that we're going to stand up will cut that more than in half.

So it will take about 30 minutes on public transit"

Our leaders would rather make it easier for tourists to go between our stadiums, restaurants, and businesses than for the people working in those venues to get to and from their places of work.

The same tourist-first logic drives support for the KC Streetcar, a project that cost ~\$252 million in 2025, and explains why riding the streetcar remains free, while bus fares will soon return.



LEGEND

Use this map as a system from maps, schedules, to

MAP	SERVICE TYPE
	Streetcar
	MAX Regular
	MAX Extend
	Frequent Bus
	Regular Bus
	Park or Ride

Express Drive

HOW DO WE FROM HERE



We need you (yes, you!) to join our fight for better public transit in the KC area.

RIDE THE BUS

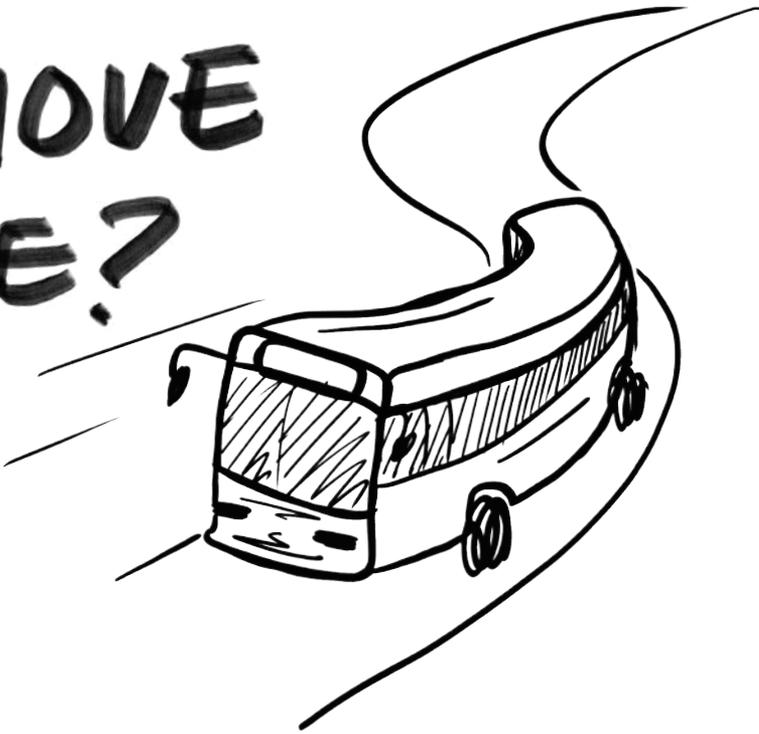


GET ANGRY

PRESSURE YOUR LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS



MOVE
RE?



You're not alone! **The Kansas City Bus Riders Union**, launched this February, is a grassroots coalition of bus riders and supporters from across the KC metro, fighting for reliable, free, and safe buses.

Let's get organized!

Visit kcbusriders.neocities.org
to learn more and get involved!



VIEW SOURCES



Sunrise Movement - Kansas City (SMKC)

We're a multi-racial, cross-class, anti-racist movement of young Kansas Citians, organizing to address the climate crisis of today and tomorrow. We build people power through direct action, local policies, mutual aid, deep democracy, and community relationships, in order to win a just transition for KC that ends our reliance on fossil fuels, abolishes the systems of racial capitalism, and centers the leadership and well-being of the most impacted communities.



Get involved with us: bit.ly/JoinSunriseKC

  @sunrisemvmtkc

Join the Kansas City Bus Riders Union

Everyone is welcome. Visit: bit.ly/kcbusriders

 @kcbusriders

 @kcbusriders.bsky.social



There is power in numbers.

Add your email to our mailing list to join the fight for a better future where Kansas City's frequent, free buses set the standard for public transportation across the country.