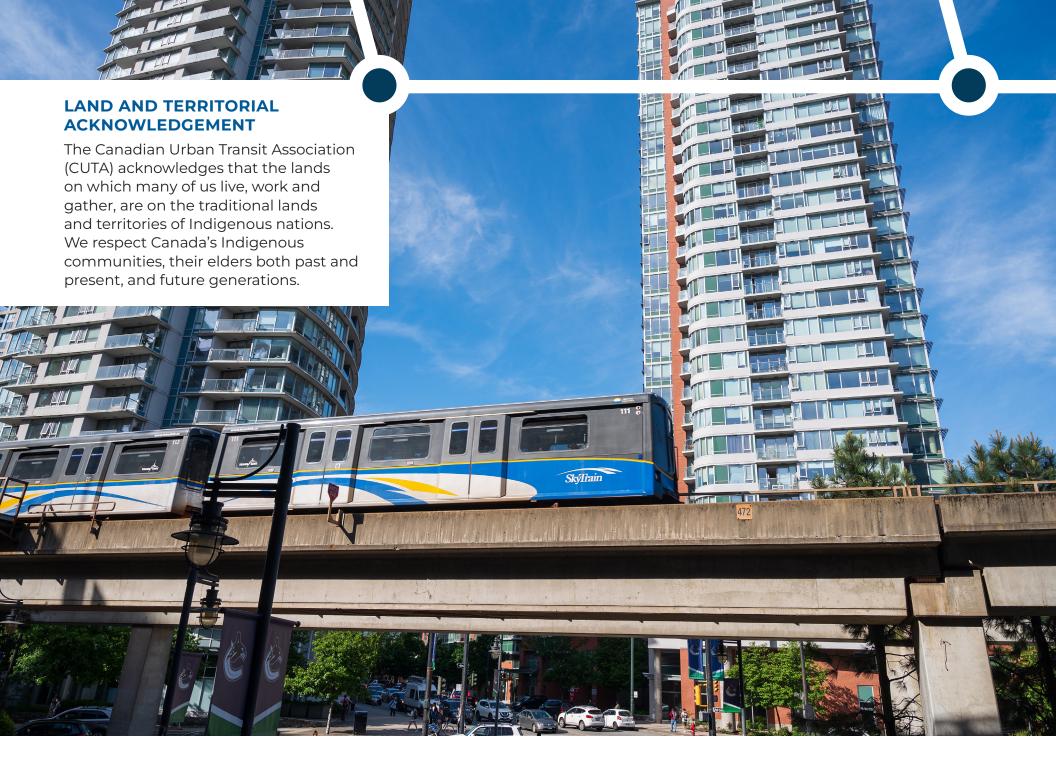


CUTA 2025–2027 I STRATEGIC PLAN





LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Millions of Canadians rely on CUTA members to deliver safe, reliable transit every day. It is fundamental in maintaining the quality of life we enjoy as well as building vibrant, sustainable and prosperous communities.

After successfully delivering the transit services that were essential in helping our communities through the pandemic, our members face new challenges.

As the national association representing system operators, manufacturers and other transit stakeholders, CUTA is uniquely positioned to help our members meet the challenges they face today and secure the future for transit.

This strategic plan provides a direction forward, with actionable pillars and goals that will put our association in a strong position to meet the changing needs of public transit and urban mobility as we enter the mid-2020s.

In addition to meeting the short- and long-term goals of our members, this plan will provide the tools and support our members need to increase awareness of the value that public transit services provide to the communities they serve as well as the vital contributions they make to the economy and quality of life in their communities.

Our members have an unparalleled depth of industry experience, expertise and information that is unique in Canada. The data and best practices that we share helps make Canadian transit systems some of the most efficient in the world.

Our success depends on the active, ongoing support and engagement of all our members. This plan builds on our collective strengths while increasing opportunities to share knowledge and work together to achieve our goals.

I'd like to thank CUTA's staff for their effort and dedication as well as our members for their continuing support of this association. You are helping us to make our vision for public transit in Canada a reality.

A MEMBER-**DRIVEN PLAN**

This plan was developed with input from CUTA members, staff and key external stakeholders. Their views were obtained through a comprehensive consultation process conducted by an independent third party that included interviews, videoconference meetings and town halls. Group consultations included a virtual survey that collected both quantitative and qualitative data. Respondents provided insights through open- and closed-ended questions on:

- The most pressing challenges facing communities across Canada.
- The sharing of information and data by CUTA.
- The value-added benefits of a CUTA membership.
- CUTA representation and advocacy across the country.
- Areas of focus for future development.

This comprehensive approach ensured that a wide range of perspectives is reflected in shaping this strategic plan.



THE PILLARS OF THIS STRATEGIC PLAN

This strategic plan is built on three actionable pillars that will put CUTA in a strong position to meet the needs of public transit and urban mobility as we enter the mid-2020s:



Meet Today's Challenges

We will push for innovative solutions to tackle today's pressing public transit needs.



Secure the future

We will support the creation of sustainable and resilient transit systems that will thrive in the years ahead with the support of our partners in the private sector.



Engage and re-engage our members

We will deepen our connections with current members and actively bring new members into our community.

ENABLING OUR SUCCESS

In acting and achieving our goals under each strategic pillar, we will use the following enablers for an integrated approach:



Share information and data that our members and governments need and only CUTA is well positioned to provide.



Reinforce existing and develop new strategic partnerships with international peer associations, stakeholder organizations and the academic community to support the case for urban transit and improve services to members.



Ensure **CUTA's financial stability** by pursuing opportunities to generate revenue and determine best practices to deliver on the action items under each strategic pillar.



Advocate for transit, with CUTA taking the lead federally and actively supporting transit in partnership with associations and system operators provincially and municipally.



Build the **CUTA brand** as the national voice and trusted source of information on urban transit by stakeholders and media as well as decision makers and influencers at all levels of government.





reliable and affordable service.

put upward pressure on costs.

governments at all levels to act.

HOW WF WILL MEET TODAY'S CHALLENGES



INFORMATION SHARING AND DATA

We have a robust data program and regularly provides technical guidance regarding topical issues. There is a strong need from the industry to enhance and expand these offerings to help need industry challenges and collectively become more resilient and efficient.

We will review how we collect and share data to standardize our approach. We will work with our members to ensure that data we collect and present are relevant to each of our member groups: large, mid-size, small and rural system operators, manufacturers and business members.

Information and data will be provided in a timely manner on the CUTA Members Only site, which will be built according to best user interface and user experience to ensure information is easily accessible.

Three goals will guide this process:

- 1. Making data more accessible
- 2. Collecting relevant types of data
- 3. Release of more technical guidance

This will be facilitated by the development of an advisory group on data sharing who will review CUTA data by subject on suitability for release onto the members-only site and to the public.



- Develop a plan to review all current data offerings (Timeline: Q1 2025).
- Prioritize areas of focus that should be reviewed to develop new data programs and technical guidance (Timeline: Q2 2025).
- Address one new area of focus per year
 - Select 3 areas of focus per year (1 in 2025).
- Provide ongoing updates to the CUTA data dashboard (Timeline: begin Q2 2025 with ongoing development).

HOW WF WILL MEET TODAY'S CHALLENGES



CUTA will proactively advocate for solutions to the critical challenges facing Canada's public transit systems today with a strategic focus on adapting to potential shifts in federal government priorities. CUTA will work to build relationships with the incoming administration, ensuring that public transit remains a key focus.

Through regular meetings and policy briefings with key political figures, we will advocate for increased provincial support to address operating shortfalls, highlighting the role of transit in enhancing affordability and contributing to economic stability. Our efforts will also aim to protect federal infrastructure funding for state-of-goodrepair (SOGR) and capital expansion projects, emphasizing transit's importance to housing expansion, congestion reduction, economic development and productivity.

Safety and security on transit systems will remain a top priority, with CUTA advocating for enhanced measures to ensure public confidence. As the industry transitions to zero-emission vehicles, we will push for comprehensive policies and funding to support fleet electrification and decarbonization, addressing both vehicle procurement and necessary infrastructure.

CUTA will also prepare for the future political landscape by developing a prioritized list of urban transit challenges and releasing position papers that align with the priorities of the provincial and federal governments. We will tailor our government relations, media relations and social media plans to effectively communicate the critical role of transit in achieving broader public policy objectives.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Create a prioritized list of urban transit challenges, addressing operating shortfalls, SOGR, capital expansion, safety and security, fleet electrification and other potential issues (Timeline: Q1 2025).
Formally review and update the prioritized list annually while continuing to develop and public position papers and observe how the needs of the transit industry change and evolve (Timeline: Ongoing).
Develop and publish position papers/white papers on these challenges, ensuring their release prior to the next federal election if possible and updated post-election as needed (Timeline: Ongoing).
☐ Emphasize public transit's role in affordability through the use of economic impact studies and local success stories to create compelling arguments for increased provincial funding that address operating shortfalls (Timeline: Q1 2025).
Develop and share communications toolkit for each position/ white paper with CUTA members and make it available on the CUTA members' only website (Timeline: Ongoing).
 Develop comprehensive government relations, media relations, and social media plans to engage with the current and future federal government (Timeline: Q3 2025).
Develop a "relationship management" database to track interactions and transit issues with parliamentarians across the political spectrum to ensure continuity on advocacy efforts and a proactive, consistent approach (Timeline: Ongoing).

HOW WE WILL MEET TODAY'S CHALLENGES



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

We will identify new partners and work with existing partners including post-secondary institutions, private-sector mobility providers and other third-party groups to conduct research and develop perspectives, position papers or white papers on issues relating to urban transit.

Working with our national and international transit association partners, we will seek to collaborate with them to bring global knowledge and information to CUTA members, ensuring they benefit from cutting-edge practices and insights.

To that end, CUTA is working to support a Canadian bid to host the UITP 2028 Global Summit, and to host the 2026 UITP North America Forum, possibly with ATUQ.

We will also seek out additional opportunities with the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) and other key organizations to strengthen our international ties.

Additionally, we will engage with private mobility providers and associations to diversify our partnerships and expand our impact on the integrated mobility landscape.

To further these efforts, CUTA will continue building relationships with Destination / Tourism offices across Canada to attract and host events that align with CUTA's mission and provide significant benefits to our members.



HOW WF WILL MEET TODAY'S CHALLENGES



BUILDING THE CUTA BRAND

CUTA will reinforce its brand as the leading national voice for public transit, particularly in the context of a potentially shifting political landscape in 2025 and beyond. Our brand strategy will emphasize CUTA's commitment to addressing the most pressing challenges facing transit systems such as operating shortfalls, SOGR, capital expansion, safety and security, and fleet electrification, while aligning with the new government's priorities.

We will expand our partnerships with post-secondary institutions, peer associations, and other stakeholders to support our reach and influence. We will enhance its media relations and social media efforts, ensuring that our advocacy for public transit as a cornerstone of affordability, urban development, and economic wellbeing resonates with key stakeholders.



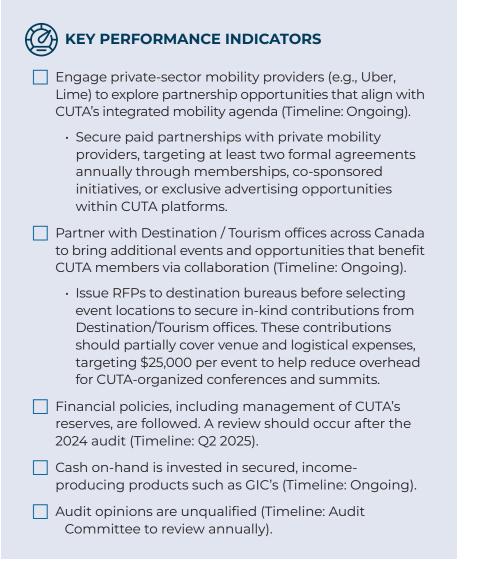
- Develop a social media and media relations plan to broaden CUTA's name recognition among key stakeholders and clarify issues facing transit operators, with an emphasis on post-election alignment (Timeline: Q3 2025).
- Identify and collaborate with new and existing external partners to develop position papers/white papers that support CUTA's brand and advocacy efforts in the new political context (Timeline: Q1 2026).

HOW WF WILL MEET TODAY'S CHALLENGES



ENSURING CUTA'S FINANCIAL STABILITY

We will provide CUTA's elected leadership with timely reports to show the financial and operational progress that CUTA has made in meeting today's challenges and securing the future for transit.







transit a vital element.

for federal funding and involvement.



INFORMATION SHARING AND DATA

We will collect information and data on long-term issues key to the needs and aspirations of our diverse membership.

We will determine what, if any, changes are required to how we collect and share data.

The CUTA website will provide an essential source of information regarding urban transit to decisionmakers, stakeholders and the public.

The publicly accessible pages of our website will be updated to ensure that they communicate our perspectives on current issues and the future of transit while sharing relevant information and data to support them.

We will make the CUTA Fact Book available at no charge.

We will foster and maintain relationships with staff in relevant federal and provincial ministries.



- In advance of key election dates we will review our plans for data collection to ensure they support the narrative that transit is fundamental to achieving public policy priorities housing and affordability as well as quality of life issues such as congestion and safety (Timeline: TBD, CUTA input needed).
- Finalize and launch the CUTA Members Only site (Timeline: Q1 2025).
- Ensure publicly accessible pages on the CUTA website are updated on a regular basis as new information becomes available (Timeline: Ongoing).
- Identify and utilize applications that are needed to support CUTA in the development and execution of grassroots campaigns (Timeline: TBD, based on update and relaunch of CUTA website).

ADVOCACY

Securing the future of Canada's public transit systems requires flexibility and an innovative spirit that is responsive to potential shifts in government priorities.

CUTA will advocate for long-term federal and provincial commitments to transit's funding program, the CPTF emphasizing the essential role of transit in achieving public policy goals related to affordability, affordable housing, and Canada's economic prosperity.

Events such as the annual Policy Forum and Lobby Day, in addition to government meeting through the year are essential. Of growing importance is the visibility and positioning of transit at various public events held by stakeholders and those interest groups with similar positions.

A severe operational financial crisis within the transit industry is here. In 2023, fares covered as little as 23% of costs of operating at OC Transpo and peaked at 43% in Toronto.

Pre-election, we will reinforce existing and develop new relationships with major federal parties and work to have CUTA positions adopted in their election platforms, obtaining their support and commitment to make transit funding a post-election priority.

Post-election, we will seek to align CUTA priorities with those of the federal government and be prepared to begin outreach as soon as a government is formed following the election.

We will adopt a similar approach following the formation of government in provincial capitals as where provincial engagements strategies are in place.



- Develop pre-election and post-election federal and provincial government relations plans, focusing on securing commitments to transit funding and policy priorities, particularly in the areas of family affordability, costs of congestion and economic wellbeing (Timeline: Ongoing).
- Highlight CUTA's government relations efforts at key opportunities such as the annual Policy Forum, ensuring alignment with the government's priorities while challenging governments for the duration of this Strategic Plan to share the CUTA vision of issues facing public transit and providing durable policy solutions (Timeline: Ongoing).
- Create a "State of Canadian Transit report" to present at forums and meetings and detailing the achievements and ongoing needs of the transit sector (Timeline: Ongoing).
- Continually provide legislators, their political staff and key contacts in within relevant government departments the very latest and reliable information regarding transit's operational funding crisis, the risk of not realizing the full potential of capital projects and the need to continue building to address the mobility needs of millions of new Canadians (Timeline: Q1 2025 and ongoing).
- Conduct ongoing advocacy research and polling to assess transit's unfunded needs and its ability to help achieve policy goals at all levels of government (Timeline: Ongoing).



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

We will identify and use strategic partnerships to add weight to our advocacy efforts and help build our brand.

These include partnerships with:

- Colleges and universities, several of which have expressed an interest in partnering with CUTA, to develop perspectives, position papers and white papers on key issues, support CUTA's thought leadership and leverage data-driven research and evidence-based decision-making in key innovative areas such as AI, data analytics and advanced machine-learning.
- The Federation of Canadian Municipalities and similar organizations whose members are impacted by federal and provincial government transit funding and policy decisions.
- Peer organizations including the American Public Transit
 Association (APTA), Canadian Urban Transit Research &
 Innovation Consortium (CUTRIC), Women in Transportation
 (WTS) and Coalition of Minority Transportation Officials
 (COMTO) among others that can be used to support our
 advocacy positions as well as share information on best
 operating and other practices.



- Collaborate with external partners to share and develop best practices for the urban transit industry (Timeline: Q2 2026).
- Identify and engage external partners in forums and other events to advance CUTA's public policy positions (Timeline: Q2 2026).



BUILDING THE CUTA BRAND

CUTA will build its brand as a forward-thinking leader in sustainable urban mobility with a focus on the future of transit in Canada. Our brand strategy will emphasize CUTA's leadership in advocating for transit's role in achieving affordability, city building and economic wellbeing.

We will enhance our public profile through high-profile public events and forums that showcase CUTA's thought leadership and advocacy efforts, particularly in areas critical to the shifting provincial and federal government goals.

CUTA is dedicated to ensuring that the public transit sector continues to attract, develop and support the next generation of leaders who will drive innovation and excellence in the industry. We recognize the importance of cultivating the next generation and we will enhance our efforts through existing initiatives as Leaders Building Leaders Mentorship Program and through our biennial Youth Summit.



- Organize or participate in events featuring key speakers to discuss issues and opportunities facing the urban transit industry with a focus on evolving government priorities (Timeline: Ongoing).
- Organize a successful Youth Summit in conjunction with the 2025 Annual Conference & Transit Show in Montreal (Timeline: Q3 2025).
- Host pre-election forums, debates or roundtables with political candidates and local communities to discuss transit issues and reinforce CUTA's relationships and amplify on social media (Timeline: Q3 2025).



ENSURING CUTA'S FINANCIAL STABILITY

CUTA will look into using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to enhance staff productivity and member services. Our goals will be to automate routine tasks, allowing staff to focus on more strategic activities and provide personalized experiences for members by analyzing data to understand their preferences and needs. Aldriven insights will help in making informed decisions, improving overall efficiency and satisfaction.



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Identify where and how AI can be effectively used by CUTA and develop a roadmap to incorporate AI to increase productivity and refocus internal resources to support strategic objectives (Timeline: Q4 2025).

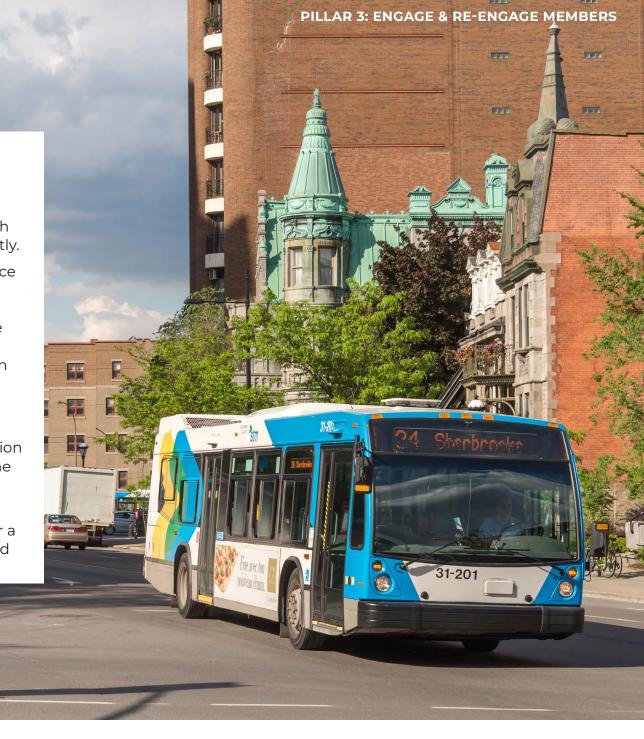


CUTA is the only national organization that represents all issues affecting urban transit at the federal level. It has a proven track record of securing federal funding for transit and is uniquely positioned to provide its members with information to help them operate more efficiently.

CUTA and its members recognize the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) for growing the membership and ensuring that under represented transit communities engage in advancing transit issues. CUTA members are developing DEI initiatives at various levels within the organization.

Additionally, rural and smaller system operators seek information and solutions that align with their aspirations. Members across the organization want more opportunities to meet closer to home and exchange information.

We will elevate the association's relevance, increase members' sense of inclusion and foster a member-centric culture by actively listening and communicating clearly and promptly.



HOW WF WILL ENGAGE AND RE-ENGAGE MEMBERS



INFORMATION SHARING AND DATA

We will review our current approach to member communication to determine how we can replace mass communication with a more personalized approach, offering information that is timely and tailored to specific member groups.

We will develop templates for reporting Board and committee discussions and decisions, which will allow us to share more information systematically and promptly.

We will create opportunities for CUTA members to meet and share knowledge including hosting smaller-scale, single-topic deep dive events on national issues or emerging technologies. We will explore and implement creative ways for remote participation and engagement at events using live broadcasting and interactive recaps.



- CUTA membership, DEI initiatives, and communications efforts will be assessed against best practices, with revisions to membership communications to ensure more targeted and inclusive outreach (Timeline: Ongoing).
- Increase transparency by developing a standardized approach for updates after Board and committee meetings to allow for timely communications with CUTA membership (Timeline: Q1 2026).
- Host an increased number of small-scale regional events focusing on more niche urban transit topics (Timeline: Ongoing).
- Explore new ways of allowing members to participate and engage with events remotely (Timeline: Q2 2026).

HOW WF WILL ENGAGE AND RE-ENGAGE MEMBERS



CUTA recognizes that provincial-level advocacy is crucial for ensuring that transit agencies receive adequate support from all levels of government. CUTA will work to expand its engagement with provincial governments, responding to requests from transit agencies for support.

Member-led advocacy at the provincial level is vital for the longterm sustainability of transit systems. We believe that CUTA can significantly support these efforts. We will actively engage and reengage our members, equipping them with the tools they need to advocate for local and provincial support, with a focus on the value of public transit.

Trends in vehicle manufacturing can significantly influence the direction of the Canadian transit industry. The availability of vehicles, based on their specialization, size and fuel type, can affect the services offered to Canadian commuters. CUTA will advocate for commuters and transit agencies by working closely with vehicle manufacturers and regulatory bodies to ensure a sufficient supply.



- Work with transit agencies to expand advocacy at the provincial level, with advocacy strategies developed for specific Canadian regions that account for regionspecific issues (Timeline: Ongoing).
- Develop materials outlining current urban transit priorities for members including advocacy tools for engaging with senior levels of government (Timeline: Ongoing).
- Participate in the North American vehicle manufacturing taskforce with representation from CUTA, APTA, manufacturers, transit agencies and regulatory bodies that works towards ensuring sufficient supply to meet the needs of Canada's commuters (Timeline: Q1 2025 & Ongoing).

HOW WE WILL ENGAGE AND RE-ENGAGE MEMBERS



BUILDING THE CUTA BRAND

CUTA will focus on creating a sense of community and shared purpose among our diverse membership. We will position CUTA as an essential partner in our members' success by providing the resources and support they need to thrive in a rapidly changing political and economic environment.

We will demonstrate how CUTA has made a difference in securing federal and provincial transit funding and driving policy changes.

We will explore new ways to enhance member engagement, such as using digital platforms for learning opportunities and CUTA National Committee meetings, delivering more targeted communications to segmented audiences and marketing our expanded training offerings.

CUTA's Members Only site will become a key location for transit professionals to collaborate and network with peers from across the country.



- Increase individual member engagement through more personalized and targeted member communications as well as holding regular webinars or virtual town halls to keep members informed and engaged (Timeline: Ongoing).
- Develop and implement a marketing strategy to further elevate CUTA's training programs including exploring partnerships with international transit organizations to provide diverse perspectives and unique training opportunities (Timeline: Q2 2025).
- Regularly solicit feedback from members using surveys and email blasts to ensure strategies and tools meet their needs and remain effective (Timeline: Ongoing).

HOW WF WILL ENGAGE AND RE-ENGAGE MEMBERS



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

We will actively search for partnerships that benefit our members such as exploring the delivery of training and other programs with agencies, our business members and postsecondary institutions.

CUTA will work with other transit organizations such as the Coalition of Minority Transportation Officials to identify opportunities to host events focused on DEI and continue support the existing Toronto chapter with an eye of supporting a second chapter.

We will finalize DEI initiatives that are already being developed including undertaking outreach, holding webinars and onboarding for our committees



- Update the Call for Nominations for the Board of Directors (Timeline Q1 2025.)
- Regularly acknowledge the contributions of diverse members through awards, profiles in CUTA publications and opportunities to take on leadership roles. These recognitions reinforce their value and encourage ongoing participation (Timeline Ongoing).
- Highlight Committee members in Expressions newsletter to celebrate individual members' unique contributions and reinforces the value of diverse perspectives within CUTA (Timeline: Ongoing.).
- Develop new training programs for CUTA members in partnership with external stakeholders (Timeline: Q2 2027).

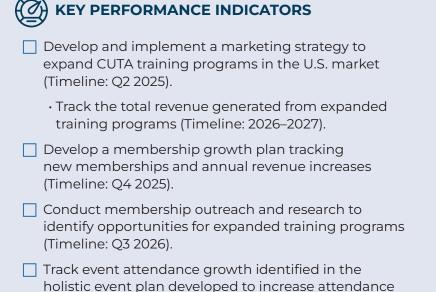
HOW WF WILL ENGAGE AND RE-ENGAGE MEMBERS



ENSURING CUTA'S FINANCIAL STABILITY

We will increase and diversify non-dues revenue by:

- Leveraging and diversifying our revenue.
- Reinvigorating and expanding our training program, offering it to system operators in the United States and the international community as well as Canada. A focus should be placed on the Transit Ambassador program.
- Developing a plan to increase event attendance that considers marketing, accommodation, space and other factors and includes clear year-over-year percentage growth targets.



Leverage surveys to measure member satisfaction with the benefits provided, aiming to maintain or improve this score annually (Timeline: 2026-2027 compared

(Timeline: 2026-2027).

with results from previous years).

