

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 3702



The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Durham Region Transit Executive Committee
From: General Manager, Durham Region Transit
Report: #2024-DRT-16
Date: November 6, 2024

Subject:

General Manager's Report – November 2024

Recommendation:

That the Transit Executive Committee recommends

That this report be received for information.

Report:

1. Purpose

1.1 This report is submitted at each Transit Executive Committee (TEC), for information.

2. Background

2.1 The General Manager Report provides regular updates on key performance measures and summaries of current activities and transit issues in Attachment #1.

3. Previous Reports and Decisions

3.1 Not applicable

4. Financial

4.1 There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

5. Relationship to Strategic Plan

5.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:

- a. Service Excellence

6. Conclusion

6.1 For additional information, contact: Bill Holmes, General Manager, at 905-668-7711, extension 3700.

7. Attachments

Attachment #1: General Manager's Report – November 2024

Attachment #2: Pathways 2 Employment letter

Attachment #3: Letter from Principal Alicia Russell of Ajax High School

Respectfully submitted,

Original Signed by

Bill Holmes
General Manager, DRT

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original Signed by

Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair
Chief Administrative Officer



General Manager's Report
November 6, 2024
TEC
Attachment #1

Performance Measures Dashboard	<u>2</u>
Safety	<u>3</u>
Ridership	<u>4</u>
Service Delivery	<u>7</u>
Updates	<u>11</u>
General	<u>18</u>

Performance Measures Dashboard







Safety

Key performance indicator	Description	Latest Measure	Current	Target ¹	Current Variance to Target (per cent)	YTD Status ² (per cent)
Collisions	Number preventable collisions per 100,000 km	September	0.59	0.07	✗ 751	✗ 36.2

Ridership

Ridership (x1,000)	Number passengers	September	1,219	1,134	✓ 7.5	✓ 25.4
PRESTO Ridership	Customers paying using PRESTO (per cent)	September	94.3	92.0	✓ 2.3	✓ 2.0
Bus full occurrences	Number operator reported occurrences	September	1,015	900	✗ 12.8	✗ 41.6
Demand Responsive						
Ridership - Specialized	Number customer trips	September	12,585	10,624	✓ 18.5	✓ 23.7
Unaccommodated Rate - Specialized	Trip requests not scheduled (per cent)	September	18.3	1.5	✗ 16.8	✗ 13.3
Ridership – On Demand	Number customer trips	September	8,744	12,056	✗ -27.5	✗ -7.6
Unaccommodated Rate – On Demand	Trip requests not scheduled (per cent)	September	44.2	N/A	N/A	N/A

Service Delivery

Scheduled						
On time performance	On-time departures from all stops (per cent)	Service Period 3 ⁴	70.0	69.1	 0.9	 -2.0
Service availability	Scheduled service delivered (per cent)	Service Period 3 ⁴	98.5	96.7	 1.8	 0.4
Mean Distance Between Failure (MDBF)	Average number of revenue service kilometres between occurrences of vehicle defects impacting service (revenue service kilometers)	September	12,105	16,354	 -26.0	 -14.1

Demand Responsive						
Service Availability – Demand Response	Planned Service Delivered (per cent)	September	95.4	N/A	N/A	N/A
On time performance – Specialized	On-time customer pickups (per cent)	September	75.2	N/A	N/A	N/A
On time performance – On Demand	On-time customer pickups (per cent)	September	85.5	N/A	N/A	N/A
Service availability – Specialized	Average difference in requested trip time vs. booked trip time (minutes)	September	14:34	N/A	N/A	N/A
Service availability – On Demand	Average difference in requested trip time vs. booked trip time (minutes)	September	20:40	N/A	N/A	N/A

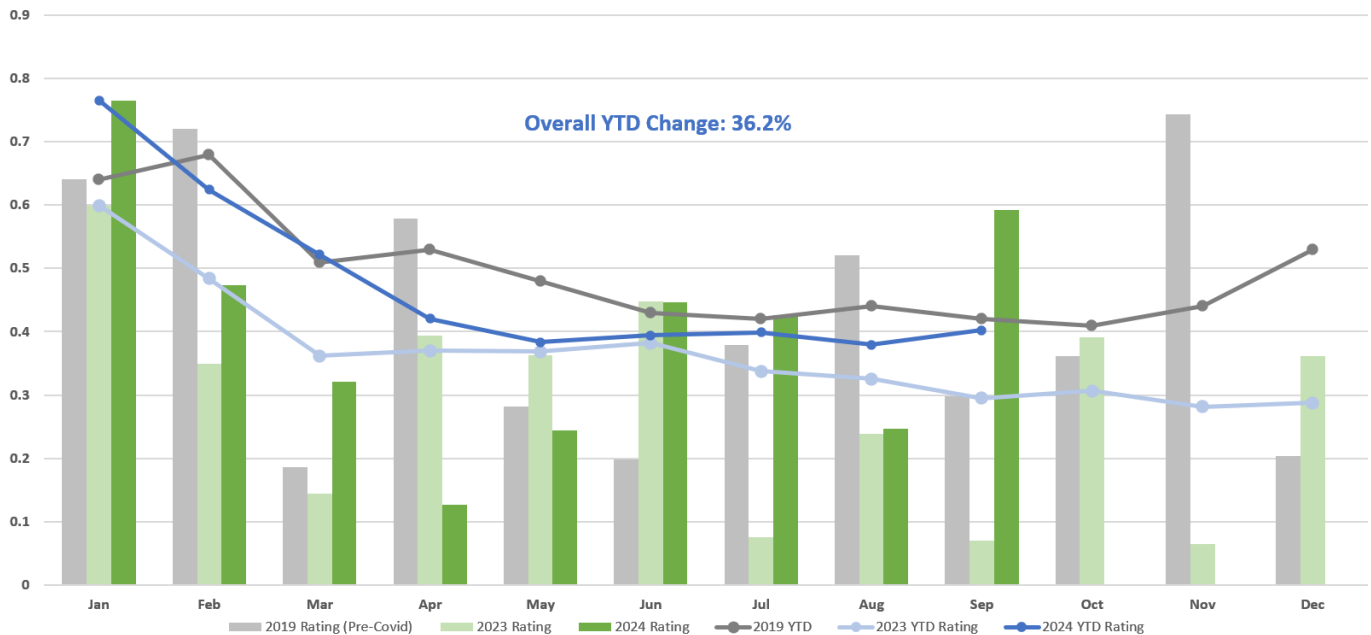
¹Target is 2023 measure for the same period

²Year to Date (YTD) compared to previous year

⁴June 24, 2024 through September 2, 2024

Safety

Preventable collisions rate per 100,000 km



Definition: A preventable collision is one in which the driver failed to do everything reasonable to avoid the collision. The preventable collision rate is the number of preventable collisions per 100,000 kilometres of travel for all Durham Region Transit (DRT) vehicles.

A collision may not be reportable to police based on the Highway Traffic Act, but for DRT purposes all collisions are documented and investigated. DRT's objective is to reduce annual preventable collisions by ten per cent relative to the previous year.

Analysis

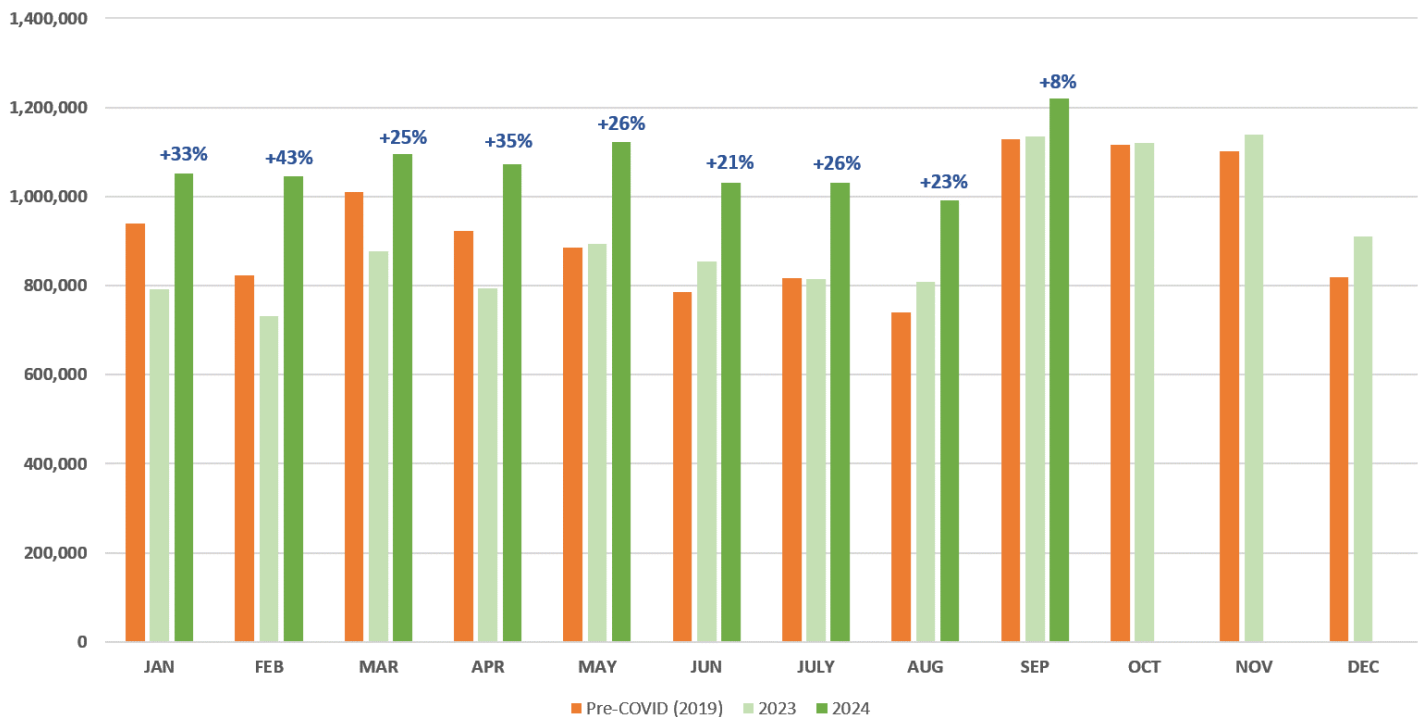
The preventable collision rate for September was 0.43 compared to 0.07 for the same month in 2023. year to date rate remains higher than last year by 36.2 per cent. 2023 data indicates that over 50 per cent of preventable collisions are attributed to bus operators with five years or less experience. Over the past year, DRT has graduated 97 new bus operators, which represents 24 per cent of the current complement of bus operators.

Action Plan

Starting in October, Operations Supervisors began performing audits across all stations and terminals to monitor bus movements, and coaching Operators as appropriate. Supervisors are also engaging in proactive conversations with Operators to reinforce positive performance and areas for improvement. Cyclical training for bus operators, which was suspended at the start of the pandemic, will resume January 2025, resources permitting.

Ridership

Scheduled transit



Definition: Ridership is the sum of all passenger trips. A passenger trip is a one-way trip from origin to destination regardless of the number of transfers that may be required.

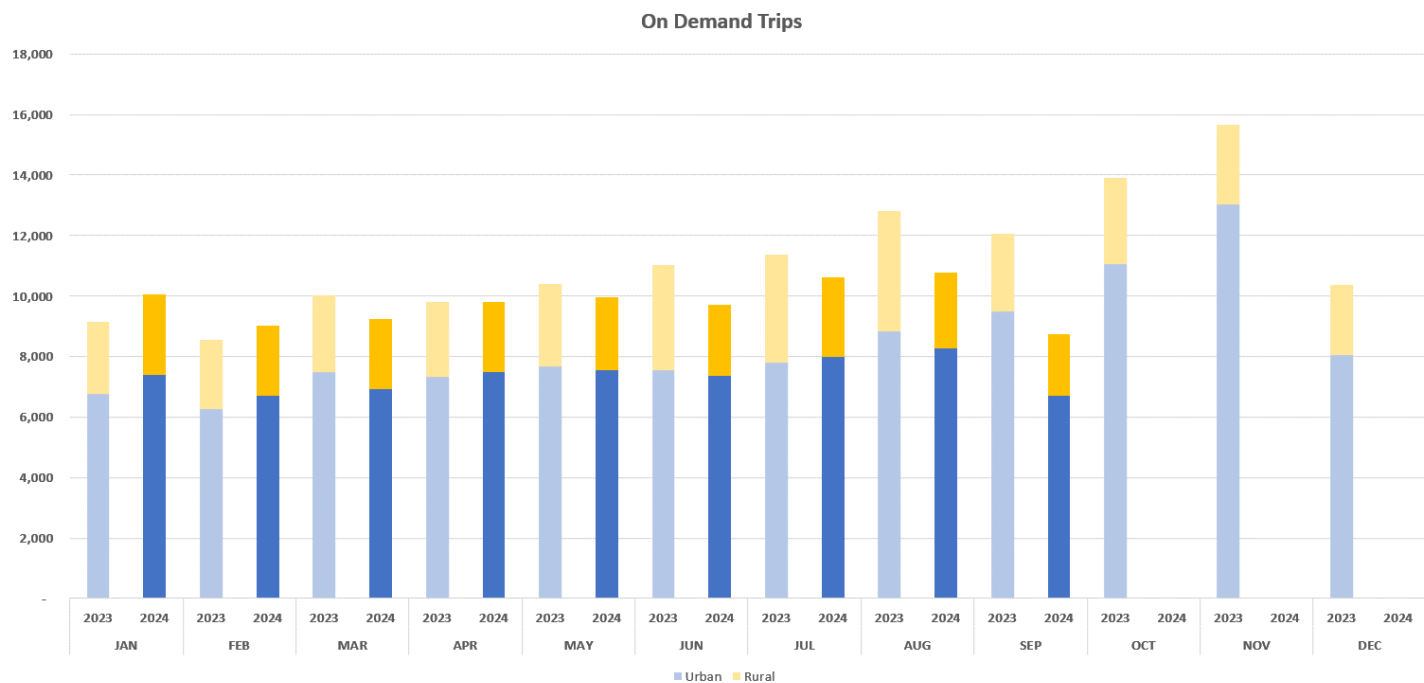
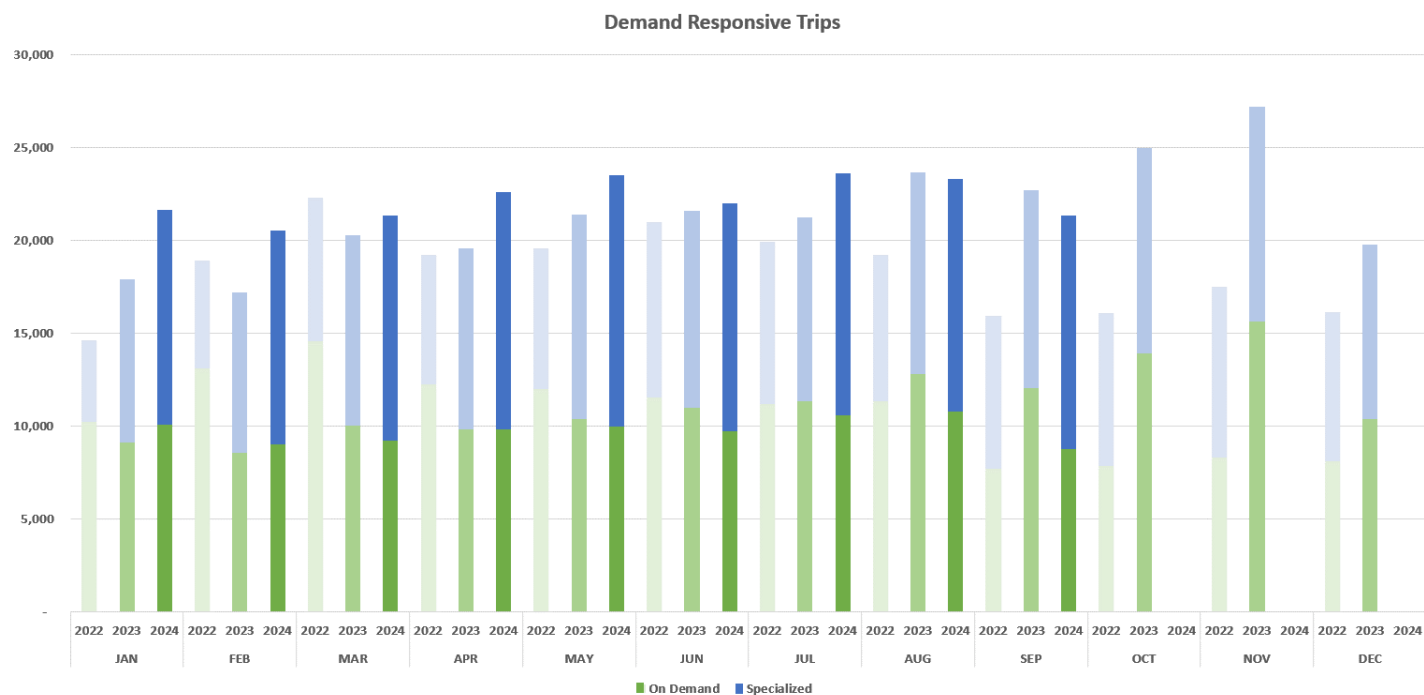
Results

September ridership on scheduled service reached a monthly record at 1.2 million, eight per cent higher than the same month in 2023. Year to date, 2024 ridership is 20.6 per cent higher than 2019, and 25.9 per cent higher than 2023.

Action Plan

The remaining new service hours approved in the 2024 budget were implemented during the October scheduled service change. In anticipation of additional revenue service hours being approved in the 2025 budget, DRT continue to recruit and train staff to implement the additional service as soon as possible in 2025.

Demand Response Transit



On Demand Trip Service Areas Breakdown

		JUL 2024	YTD 2024
R U R A L	Uxbridge	198	1,708
	Brock	631	4,504
	Scugog	508	3,331
	Pickering	293	2,099
	Ajax	23	159
	Whitby	32	149
	Oshawa	34	280
	Clarington	894	4,761

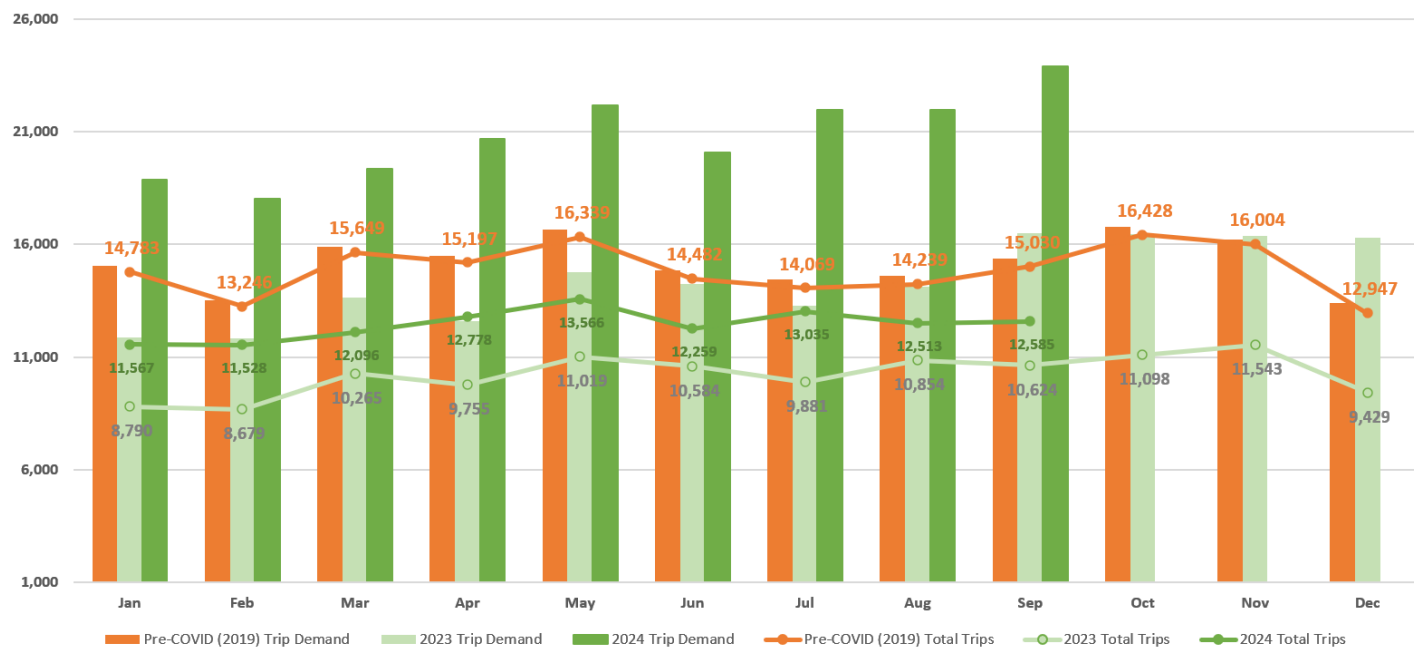
		JUL 2024	YTD 2024
U R B A N	Uxbridge	393	3,127
	Scugog	535	3,911
	Pickering	923	6,763
	Ajax	729	5,571
	Whitby	1,873	10,797
	Oshawa	1,564	9,022
	Clarington	1,972	12,206

Specialized Trip Service Areas Breakdown

		SEP 2024	YTD 2024
R U R A L	Uxbridge	19	155
	Brock	53	454
	Scugog	108	961
	Pickering	19	144
	Ajax	1	9
	Whitby	77	753
	Oshawa	9	66
	Clarington	149	1,204

		SEP 2024	YTD 2024
U R B A N	Uxbridge	79	553
	Scugog	102	906
	Pickering	1,559	14,024
	Ajax	2,406	20,563
	Whitby	2,814	25,266
	Oshawa	3,999	35,845
	Clarington	385	8,371
	Toronto-Yo	356	2,653

Specialized Transit Trips



Definitions:

Trips: A trip is considered a one-way passenger trip from origin to destination, regardless of the number of transfers that may be required.

Results

On Demand services delivered a total of 21,329 trips in September 2024, including 12,585 trips for customers registered with Specialized transit. Total trips delivered in September 2024 were six per cent lower than September 2023, and eight per cent lower than August 2024. The number of On Demand trips is the lowest monthly total in 2024, with Specialized Transit trips continuing to increase month over month.

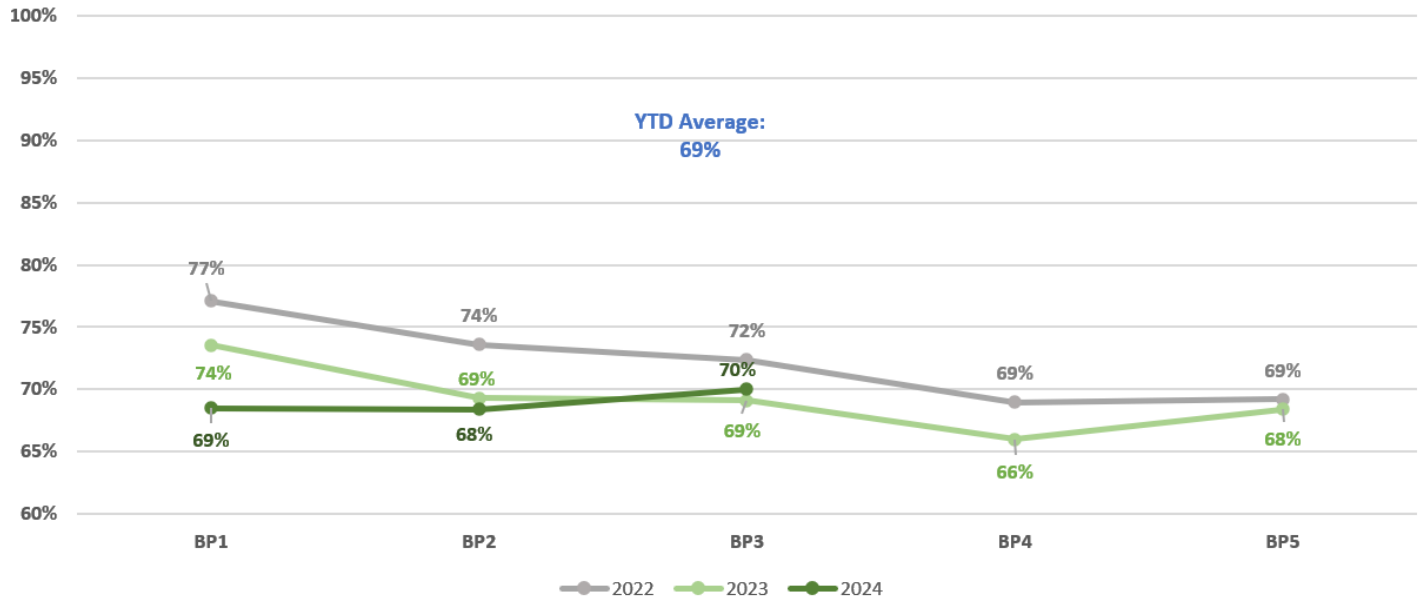
Action Plan

A reduction in Service Availability during September was the primary factor contributing to the lower number of trips delivered. The On Demand service provider has implemented contingency measures to enhance Service Availability. By November the vendor will fully implement the additional budgeted service hours.

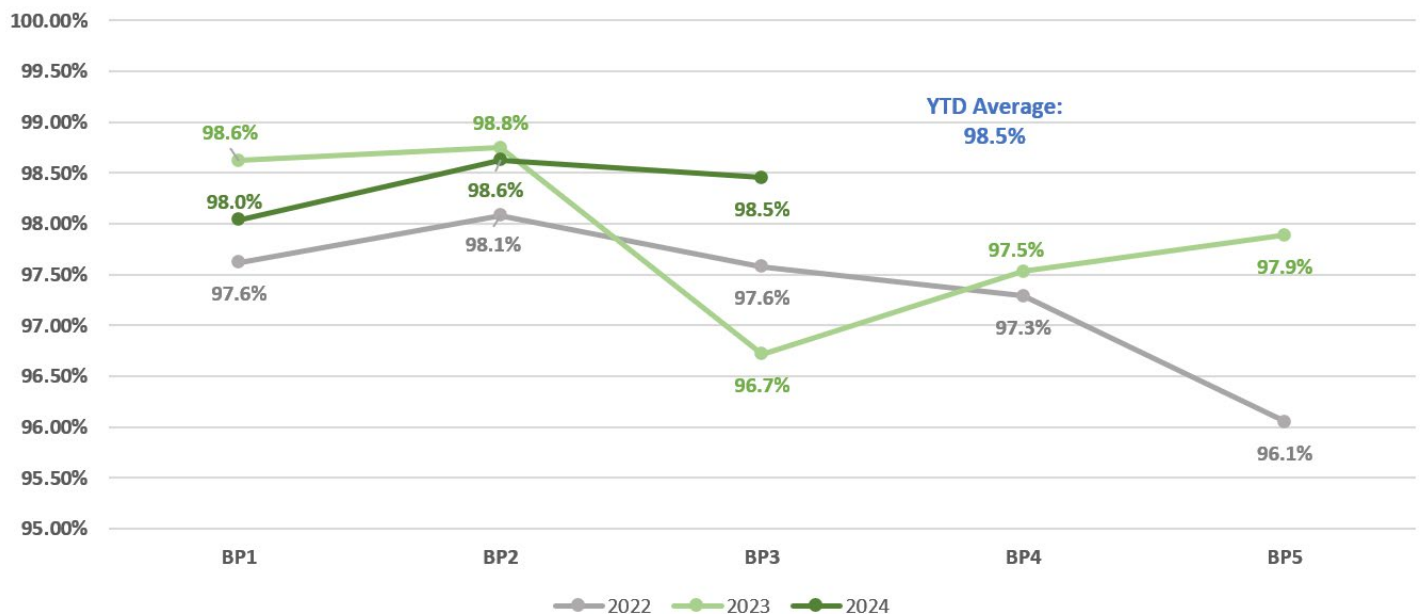
Service Delivery

On Time Performance and Availability (conventional)

Scheduled Service On-Time Performance



Scheduled Service Service Availability



Definition

On Time Performance (OTP) is a measure of the per centage of buses departing a bus stop no more than zero minutes early and five minutes late. The annual OTP target is 80 per cent. OTP is reported for each service period.

Service availability is a measure of the actual service delivered by DRT as a per centage of scheduled revenue service. The service availability target is 99.5 per cent. Service availability is reported for each service period.

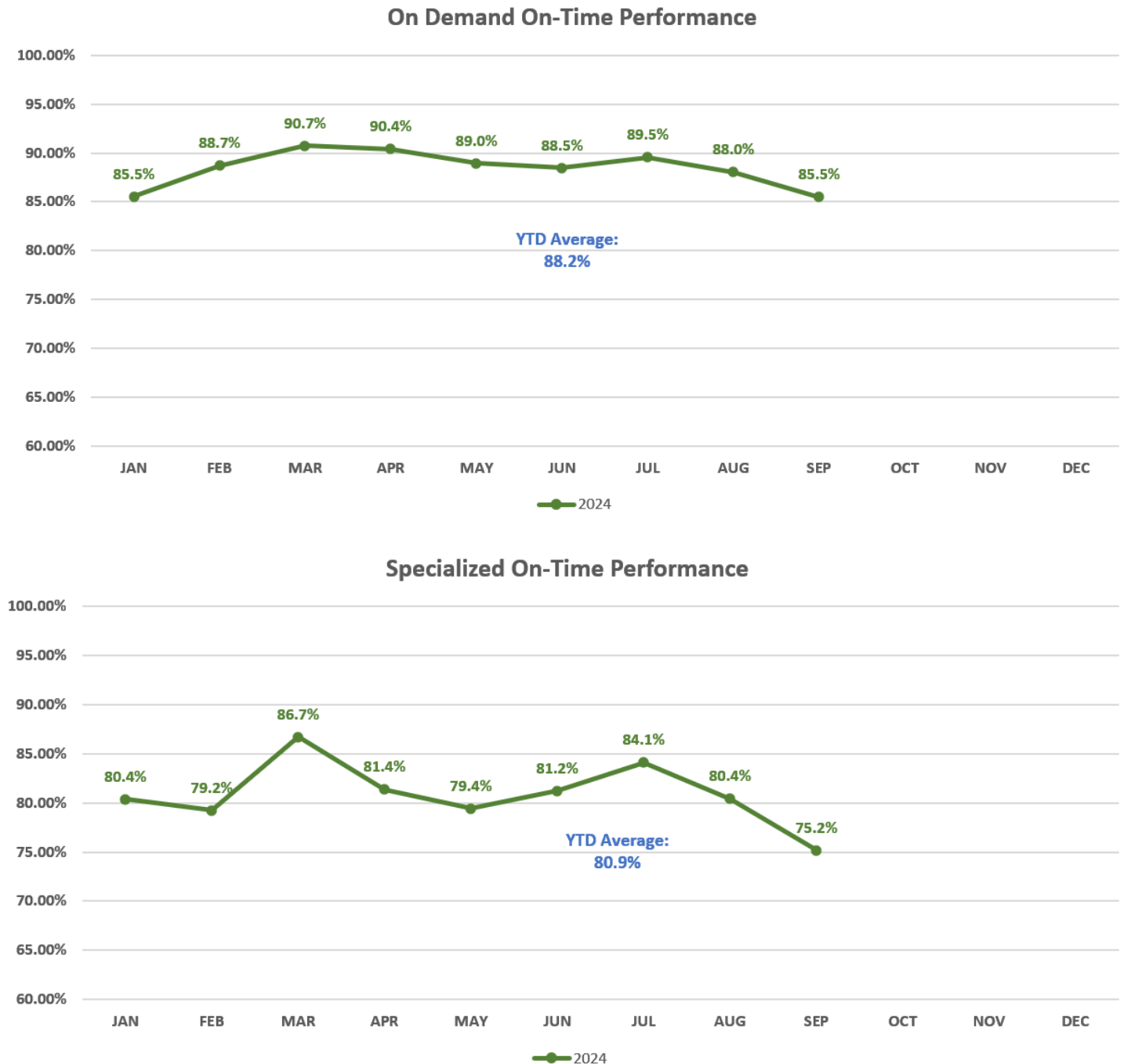
Results

OTP for board period three (June 24, 2024 – September 2, 2024) was 70.0 per cent, up from 68.4 per cent for board period two. Congestion on main traffic corridors continues to impact the transit network, with Service Availability for board period three at 98.5, relatively unchanged from 98.6 per cent for board period two.

Action Plan

DRT continue to experience service impacts from trips operating at maximum passenger capacity, and congestion and construction projects contributing to service delays. Some planned trips are cancelled when a route is operating excessively late to enable subsequent planned trips to remain on schedule. Trip cancellations, which reduces service availability, impact customers through less route capacity, longer wait times, and longer travel times due to missed connections. Starting with the September service change, a portion of the new 2024 revenue service hours have been utilized to improve reliability of the most problematic routes.

On Time Performance (Demand Responsive)



Definition

On Time Performance – Demand Response: Measures the percentage of customer pickups that occur as scheduled up to 5 minutes after the pick-up window. OTP – Demand Response is measured monthly, with a target of 80 per cent.

Results

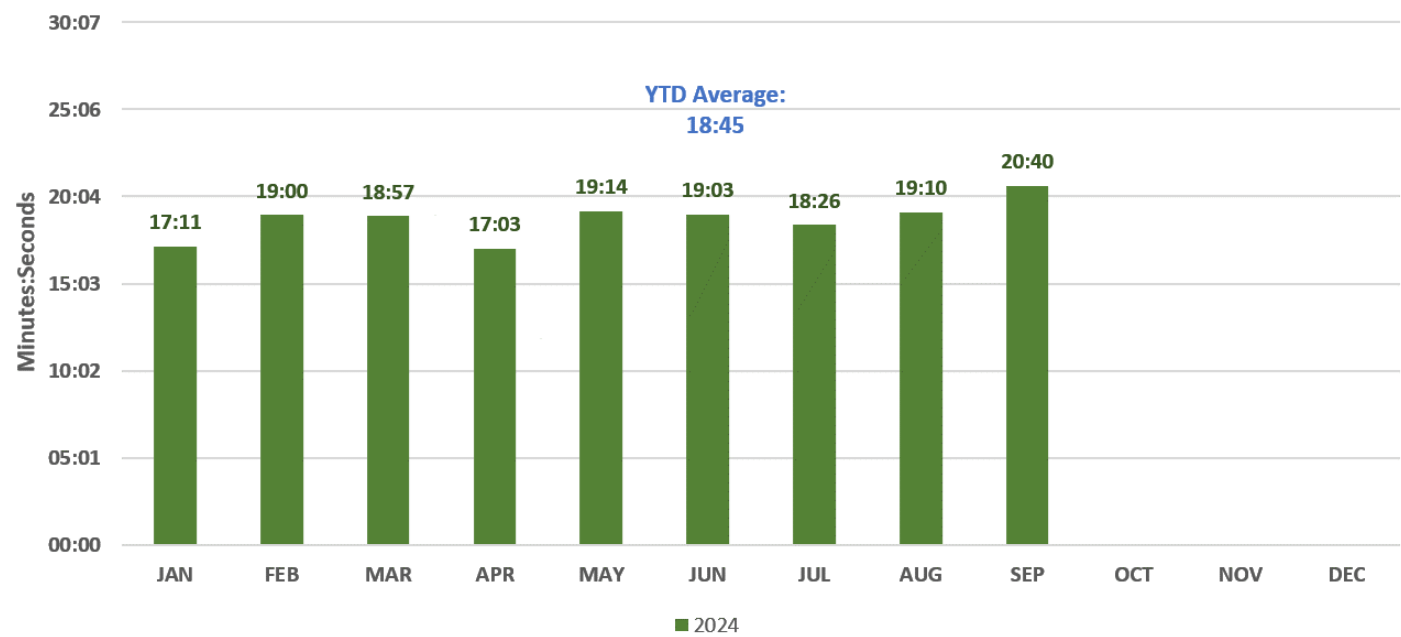
OTP – Demand Response for September was 85.5 per cent for On Demand trips, and 75.2 per cent for specialized transit trips.

Action Plan

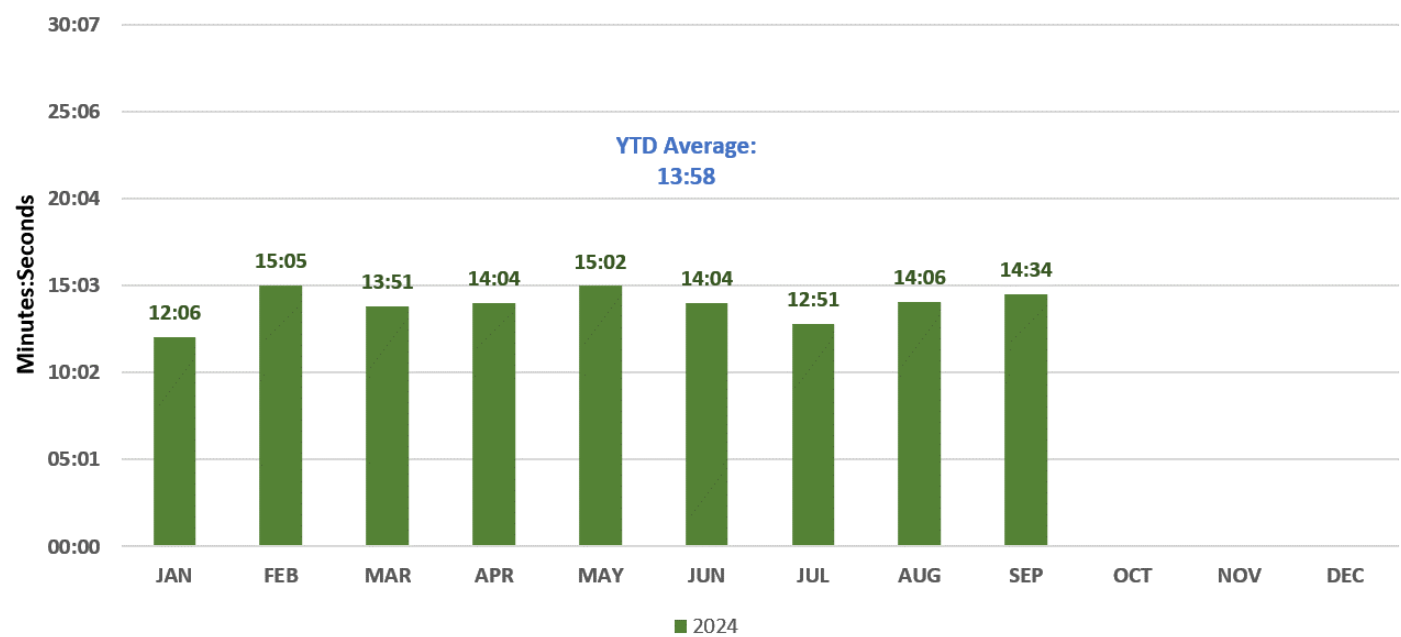
While there are less trips delivered following the January 2024 adjustments to system parameters, reliability of On Demands trips has improved. DRT continue to monitor OTP – Demand Response trends throughout 2024 and will review the current performance target for 2025.

Service Availability (Demand Responsive)

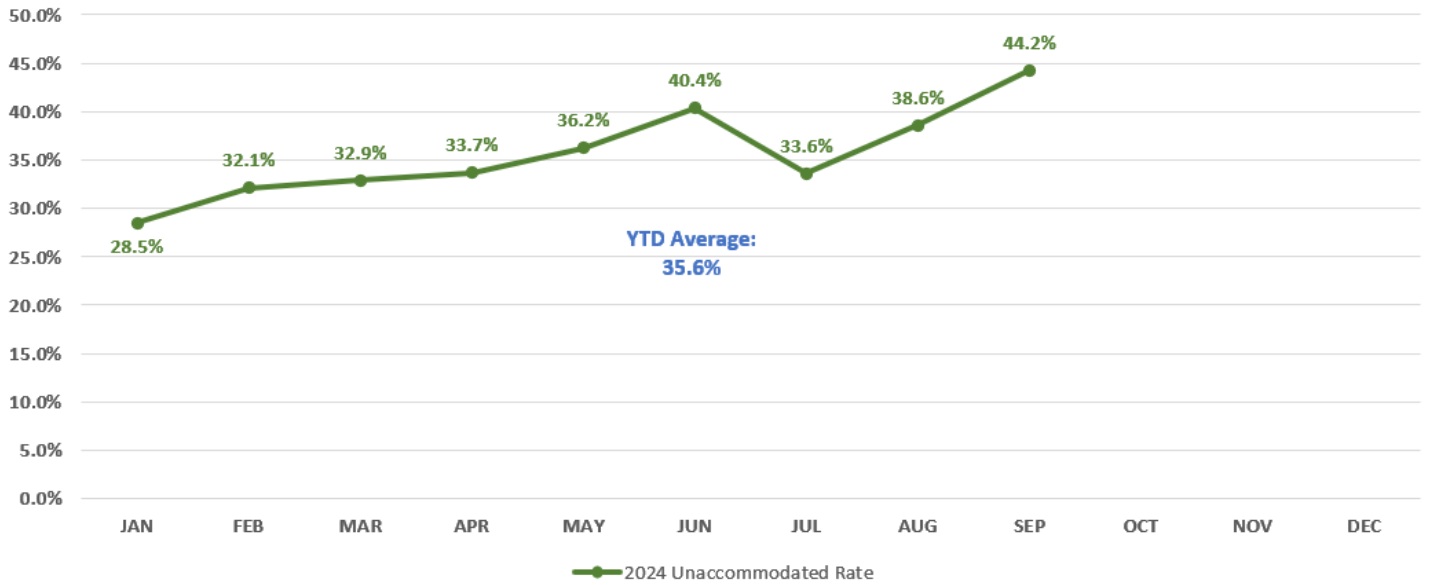
On Demand Average Difference in Requested Trip Time vs. Booked Trip Time



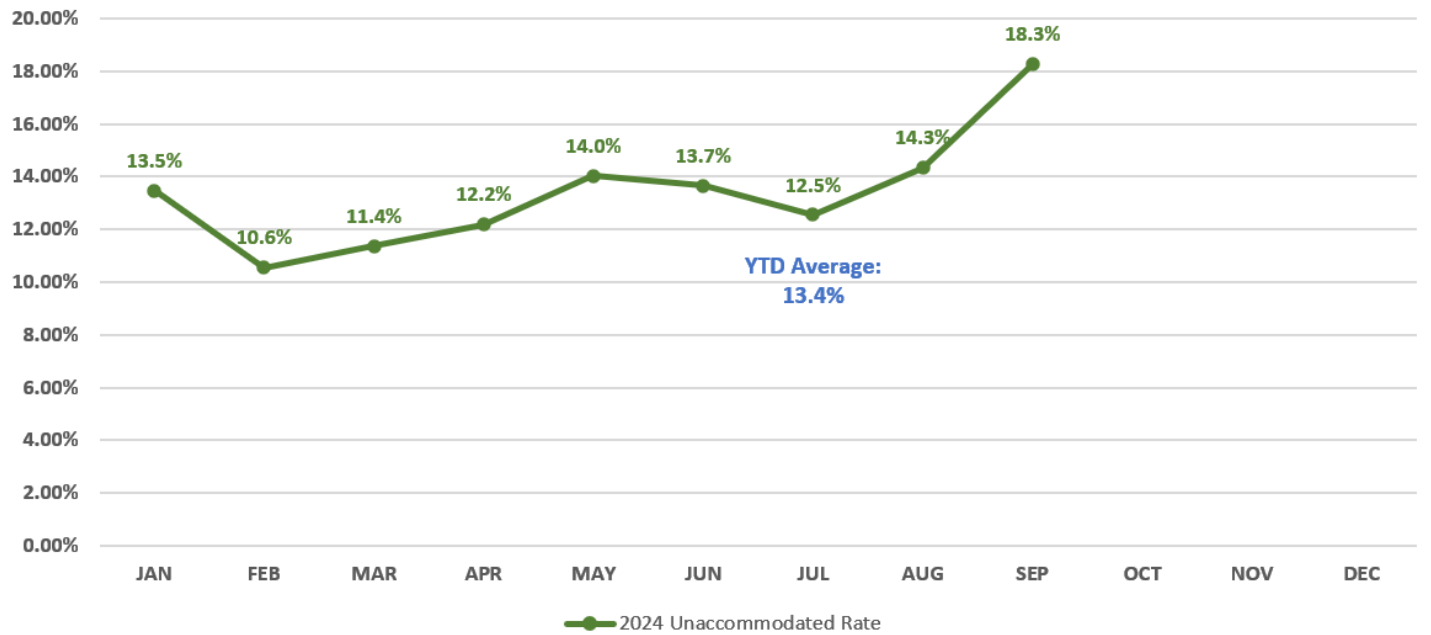
Specialized Average Difference in Requested Trip Time vs. Booked Trip Time

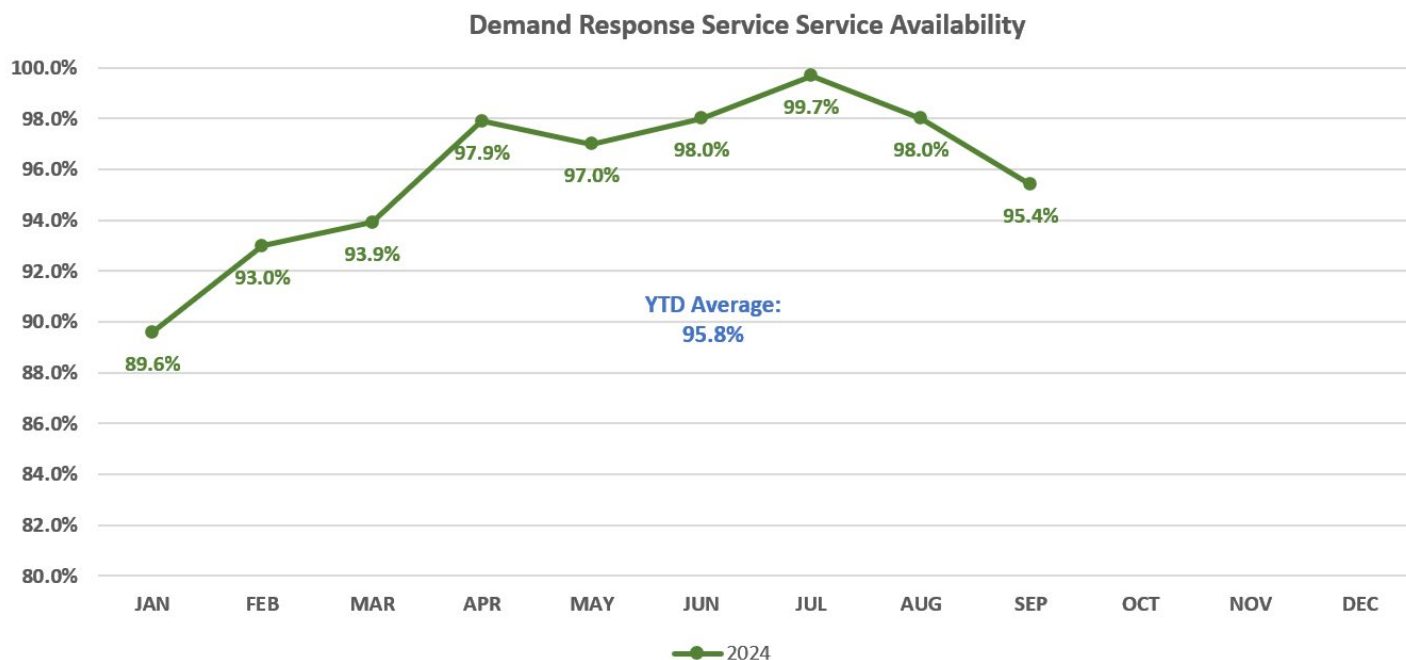


On Demand Unaccommodated Rate



Specialized Service Unaccommodated Rate





Definition

Service Availability – Demand Response: Service Availability – Demand Response is reflected through three metrics.

Variance between Requested and Actual Booked Pick-up Time: Average difference between the pick-up time requested and actual booked pick-up time. This metric measures how closely a trip can be scheduled to the customer's preferred time. This metric is measured monthly, with a target of 15 minutes.

Unaccommodated Rate: Per cent of requested customer trips that were unable to be scheduled due to lack of capacity, within the service guideline trip scheduling parameter of 30 minutes for Urban and 60 minutes for Rural service areas (relative to pick-up time requested by customer).

An appropriate target for this metric is being developed in consideration of the investments planned in the DRT Transit Service and Financing Strategy (2023-2032), and the approved 2024 budget.

Service Availability: Actual On Demand service hours delivered as a per centage of scheduled On Demand service hours. The service availability target is 99.5 per cent. Service availability for Demand Response service is reported monthly.

Results

Variance between Requested and Actual Booked Pick-up Time

The variance between requested and actual booked pick-up time in September for On Demand trips was 20.7 minutes. For specialized transit trips, the variance was 14.5 minutes. The increasing variance between requested and actual pick-up times for September is attributed to reduced service availability resulting in last minute trip adjustments and maximizing the number of customer trips within available capacity.

Unaccommodated Rate

The unaccommodated rate in September for On Demand trips was 44.2 per cent, and 18.3 per cent for specialized transit trips. The continued high unaccommodated rates are influenced by the increase in demand for transit services and current service capacity. The increased rates in September are also the result of reduced Service Availability.

Service Availability

Service availability for September was 95.4 per cent, down from the record 99.7 per cent in July, and 98.0 per cent for August.

Action Plan

Staff continue to review the new metrics for On Demand and are actively engaged with the service provider to improve service performance. A reduction in Service Availability in September was the primary factor contributing to the lower number of trips delivered and longer wait times for pick-ups. The On Demand service provider has implemented contingency measures to enhance Service Availability. By November the vendor will fully implement the additional budgeted service hours.

Implementation of the full 15,260 additional annual On Demand service hours approved in the 2024 budget will occur by November and will improve capacity and significantly influence reliability.

1. Canada Public Transit Fund (CPTF)

On July 29, 2022, the federal government launched public consultations on the design and implementation of a Permanent Public Transit fund that would include \$3 billion per year in predictable federal funding for public transit and active transportation infrastructure over a ten year period beginning in 2026-27. The CPTF was announced on July 17, 2024, with highlights summarized below.

Metro-Region Agreement Stream

- \$2 billion per year
- Funding will support diverse projects, both from planning and feasibility studies to major and capital expansion projects, based on priorities identified in an Integrated Regional Plan
- On September 24, 2024, the Region was informed by the Minister of Transportation, that the CPTF offers the opportunity for provincial and municipal governments to solidify a long-term partnership with the federal government through a Metro Region Agreement, aimed at strengthening transportation infrastructure and building homes faster
 - The Minister further advised that the Ministry of Transportation intends to submit a comprehensive Metro Region Agreement proposal that covers the Greater Golden Horseshoe region, including Durham Region
 - It is expected that the proposal from the Ministry of Transportation will be based on the provincial report Connecting the GGH: A Transportation Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (developed in consultation with municipalities towards a vision out to 2051)
 - Municipalities are responsible for the cost share of projects selected under the fund, details of which are unknown at this time
- Applicants for funding through Metro-Region Agreements and Baseline Funding are required to take actions aimed to unlock housing supply, based on best practices from the Housing Accelerator Fund
 - Eliminate all mandatory minimum parking requirements within 800 metres of a high-frequency transit line
 - Allow high-density housing within 800 metres of a high-frequency transit line
 - Allow high-density housing within 800 metres of post-secondary institutions
 - Complete a Housing Needs Assessment for all communities with a population greater than 30,000
- Receiving funding through the Metro-Region Agreement stream of the CPTF is an incremental process including an Expression-of-Interest (EOI), Integration Regional Plan submission, Project Funding Applications, and Contribution Agreement(s).

Baseline Stream

- \$500 million per year
- Predictable support to communities seeking transit-related funds for routine growth and rehabilitation and active transportation
- Requires multi-year capital plans to secure funding
- Federal and municipal cost sharing program
 - Capital Projects: Up to 40% of eligible costs
 - Non-capital projects: Up to 80% of eligible costs
- Stackable with Canada Community Building Fund or Canada Infrastructure Bank funding, but not with Zero Emissions Transit Fund (ZETF)

- Requires commitment to completing a Housing Needs Assessment
- The required Expression of Interest (EOI) was submitted in early September 2023
- On October 9, 2024, the Region was informed by the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, that the Regions EOI was deemed an eligible recipient for Baseline Funding.
 - When the EOI intake process is closed, Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada (HICC) will provide eligible applicants a notional funding allocation and invite them to submit a Capital Plan application
 - The Capital Plan application may be subject to environmental assessment and Indigenous consultation requirements, climate resilience and greenhouse gas assessments, and housing conditions

Targeted Funding Stream

- \$500 million per year
- Single project agreements
- Targeted funding intakes, including active transportation, rural and remote transit, transit solutions in Indigenous communities, as well as electrifying public transit and school transportation
- Target funding stream is intended to replace current funding programs
 - The Rural Transit Solutions Fund supports locally-driven transit solutions for rural and remote communities, with flexibility to support the development of local transit system innovations from fixed route to on-demand services and ride-shares
 - The Zero Emission Transit Fund supports public transit and school bus operators plans for electrification, supports the purchase of zero emission buses and invests in the construction of supporting infrastructure
 - The Active Transportation Fund invests in projects that build new and expanded networks of pathways, bike lanes, trails and pedestrian bridges, in addition to supporting active transportation planning activities
- Further program details expected in the coming months

2. CUTA Federal Lobby Day, September 26, 2024

On September 26, representatives from the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) gathered in Ottawa for a federal lobby day, meeting with Members of Parliament, Senators, and key government staff to address the pressing issues affecting public transit across Canada.

A Call for Safety and Security on Public Transit

One of the central discussions of the day focused on enhancing safety and security for transit workers and riders. CUTA emphasized the need for the federal government to pass Bill C-395, which strengthens penalties for assaults on transit workers and expands the current definition of transit operators to include all transit employees. CUTA also called for the establishment of a Transit Safety and Security Fund, allotting \$75 million per year for two years to help transit agencies implement safety measures such as staffing, training, and station enhancements.

Supporting Economic Prosperity and Growth

CUTA highlighted the role of public transit in supporting national economic growth and addressing the housing crisis. The Canada Public Transit Fund (CPTF), which CUTA is advocating to enshrine in legislation, is a pivotal tool for promoting high-density housing developments around transit hubs, reducing congestion, and creating job opportunities. Accelerating the rollout of the CPTF's baseline

stream from April 2026 to budget 2025 will allow transit agencies to access much-needed capital funding sooner, enabling them to meet the needs of Canadian communities today and in the future.

Addressing Operational Shortfalls

Many transit agencies across Canada are facing unprecedented operational deficits. CUTA representatives called on the government to collaborate with provincial and municipal governments to develop a long-term, sustainable funding strategy that supports operational needs while keeping transit services accessible and reliable for Canadians. The establishment of a national public transit strategy is critical to ensuring that the growing demand for transit services can be met without compromising on quality.

3. Collaboration with Pathways to Employment program

Since the spring of 2023, DRT's Community Ambassador Program has collaborated with the Pathways 2 Employment program at the Abilities Centre to enhance participants' understanding and confidence in using public transit. This initiative involves DRT Transit Ambassadors delivering tailored travel training on various aspects of public transit including trip planning, fares, stops, safety, using mobile apps, and route navigation. Participants are taught how to safely wait for a bus, board it, and request a stop. Additionally, they are introduced to the different accessible features available on the buses, such as ramps, kneeling functions, priority seating, next stop audio announcements, and digital displays.

One of the most appreciated parts of the presentation is the re-enactment segment, where participants take a bus trip and the Ambassadors explain each step of the process. This hands-on approach has significantly contributed to increasing the confidence of the participants. The interactive nature of the presentations allows participants to practice and familiarize themselves with the transit system in a supportive environment, leading to a noticeable improvement in their comfort and self-assurance when using public transit.

The collaboration has provided valuable transit exposure and fostered a sense of independence and empowerment among the participants, aligning with the goals of the Pathways 2 Employment program to support individuals in their journey towards employment and self-sufficiency.

DRT are pleased to be able to support these residents and look forward to the next three sessions scheduled in November.

4. DRT Student Ambassadors

Durham Region Transit (DRT) has kicked off its High School Ambassador Program (HSAP) for the 2024-2025 school year at Ajax High School. Designed as a fun and educational volunteer opportunity, HSAP enables students to partner with DRT to promote the benefits of public transit. The program will help the High School Ambassador students gain confidence and advance their advocacy and engagement skills and provide a meaningful way for them to earn their 40 hours of community service. The High School Ambassadors will be sharing information with their school community about the positive impacts of public transit including the economic and social benefits to the region, and the community advantages of affordability, quality of life, and climate resilience.

DRT is very please that Ajax High School, and through the leadership of the principal, Alicia Russell, came forward to be the pilot school. DRT is also very excited to be working with the very first High School Ambassadors, Saom Javaid and Zahra Zariwala. Soam and Zahara are grade 10 students

who are public transit riders themselves and extremely excited about getting their peers involved and helping them become comfortable with taking and learning about Durham Region Transit.

The first phase of the program has been completed, "Knowing My Routes and Fares" at Ajax High School, which included the following activities.

- Introducing High School Transit Ambassadors to peers and staff
- Providing maps for the four major routes near Ajax High School with QR codes linking to the DRT website
- Displaying a visual list of student fare prices and payment methods, including the Y10 pass
- Engaging students to find out how many use public transit for travel to and from school
- Hosting a fun activity involving a "Transit Wheel" for a chance to win a PRESTO scratch ticket

The two in-school events saw a great turnout, with 260 students and staff participating and asking questions. Looking forward, DRT staff will join the HSTAs at an evening event hosted by the Durham District School Board called "Life Beyond High School" where they'll engage in discussions with participants and provide information about transit accessibility for students with disabilities, as they prepare for life after high school.

5. DRT Annual Accessibility Forum

Building on the success of the 2023 event, DRT will be hosting the next DRT Accessibility Forum on January 14, 2025. The event will take place at the Oshawa Convention Centre from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm and will be a hybrid event for those unable to join in person. The event venue is located in an area easily accessible by public transit from across the Region. The forum will be open to all residents who will be joining staff and talk through transit accessibility issues, understand DRT's accessibility program, and share ideas and suggestions.

Full details and registration information will be widely communicated closer to the event.

6. Ontario Transit Investment Fund

The provincial government has recently launched the Ontario Transit Investment Fund (OTIF), a \$5 million annual investment to help build safe and reliable transit services in small, rural and underserved communities. This new fund replaces the former Community Transportation Grant Program. The OTIF provides time-limited, application-based funding for up to 5 years to support the start-up and growth of transit services. Eligible applicants are municipalities, non-profit organizations and indigenous communities.

At the end of the OTIF funding period, the applicant is expected to fully fund the established transit service.

Projects must fill a transit service gap to be eligible for funding, will not qualify for funding and will not be approved if they duplicate an existing service. While network capacity remains a challenge, DRT provides an existing transit service across the Region, and DRT, the Region, and local municipalities are unlikely to be eligible for funding through the program. Staff continue to investigate the OTIF for project opportunities and will submit applications for funding where applicable.



Dear Chris and the team at Durham Region Transit,

Thank you for your ongoing collaboration with Abilities Centre's Pathways 2 Employment program. At the end of each session, we complete a debrief alongside our research department to gain a full understanding of the progress and learnings our jobseekers are taking away from the program. I am happy to share with you the positive impact your visit had on our jobseekers.

Your time spent in Pathways 2 Employment helped support the growth of jobseeker confidence in their skills of independently using public transit, finding stop IDs and bus route numbers, and paying for public transit. This growth in confidence is explored in more detail below. By the end of the Summer 2024 Session of Pathways 2 Employment:

- There was a 71% increase in overall confidence regarding independent travel, navigation, and payment from the beginning of Pathways 2 Employment to the end of the program.
- 54.5% of jobseekers had a 50% or higher increase in confidence accessing public transit independently, including 36% of jobseekers who had a 100%-300% increase in confidence from the beginning to the end of the program.
- There was an 84.8% increase in confidence identifying stop IDs and bus route numbers, including 45% of jobseekers who had a 100%-300% increase in confidence.
- There was a 65% increase in confidence for jobseekers independently paying for transit from the beginning of Pathways 2 Employment to the end of the program. The number of job seekers that reported they felt confident or very confident about this skill increased from 64% to 90%.

The collaboration between the Pathways 2 Employment program and Durham Region Transit has made an ongoing impact on the lives of our jobseekers and has equipped them with the self-confidence they need to go on to their next step in their employment journeys.

On behalf of the Abilities Centre Employment Team, I am grateful you were able to play a role in these amazing outcomes for our jobseekers. I am looking forward to continuing this collaboration with Durham Region Transit in the future!

Kindly,

Morgan Bowles

Manager, Employment Services





Ajax High School

105 Bayly Street East, Ajax, Ontario L1S 1P2
905-683-1610 www.ajaxhs.ca

October 2024

DRT High School Ambassador Pilot Program

Dear Durham Region Transit Executive Committee,

As Principal of Ajax High School, I was presented with the opportunity to support the DRT High School Ambassador Pilot Program. This experience allowed selected students to hone their advocacy, leadership and civic engagement skills.

By educating and spreading awareness amongst their peers about the benefits of public transit, students were able to attend council meetings, create and share social media content and learn more about their community.

At Ajax High School, we pride ourselves on our ability to connect with our community partners in an authentic way. Partnering with Durham Region Transit was an experiential learning opportunity that was well thought out and presented in a way that was easily implemented in the school and created impact for our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Alicia Russell'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alicia Russell

Principal

Ajax High School