Access Paratransit Service Update

August 28, 2025

King County

Contents

List of Figures

I.   Proviso Text

PROVISO P3 PROVIDED FURTHER THAT:

Of this appropriation, $50,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the executive transmits an Access paratransit service update report. The report shall include, but not be limited, to:

A. The contractor's compliance with contract terms.

B. Performance metrics and trends for 2024, including, but not limited to:

1. On-time performance.
2. Pickup window, including early pickups, late pickups, and excessively late pickups, as defined in the existing Access paratransit service contract with MV Transportation.
3. Missed trips.
4. Drop-off window, including early drop-offs and late drop-offs.
5. Onboard time and excessively long trips; and
6. Will call.

C. Areas of deficiency or improvement during 2024.

D. Potential service improvements or innovations, including information about the costs to implement these improvements or innovations.

The executive should electronically file the report required by this proviso August 31, 2025, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the lead staff for the transportation, economy, and environment committee or its successor. [1]

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[1] [Link to Ordinance 19861](#)

II.   Executive Summary

This report is provided in response to Proviso P3 of Ordinance 19861. This report documents the performance of Access Paratransit service from January 2024 to December 2024, including the contractor's (MV Transportation) compliance with contract terms, performance metrics, areas of deficiency, potential service improvements, and potential service innovations.

Background

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires transit agencies like King County Metro (Metro) ensure their transportation systems are accessible for people with disabilities. The ADA also mandates that transit systems have a complementary paratransit service when riders can't take the bus or rail because of barriers they face due to their disabilities. Access Transportation (Access) is the complementary ADA paratransit service provided by Metro, designed to meet the eligibility and service criteria established by the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA).

Historically, Access service has been provided by private transportation companies and non-profits who contract with Metro, overseeing day-to-day operations and staffing to include operators, supervisors, maintenance, control center, and reservation staff and support. The current contractor, MV Transportation, has been solely responsible for providing paratransit service for the Access program since November 2019. Due to the size and scope of this contract, Metro monitors vast amounts of data to ensure safe and efficient service to the most vulnerable population in King County, holding the contractor accountable for all non-performance issues while simultaneously innovating service.

Ridership

Ridership continues to recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, with steady year over year growth and average annual ridership reaching 77 percent (based on 2019) of pre-pandemic numbers in 2024.

Access Ridership 2019 - 2024
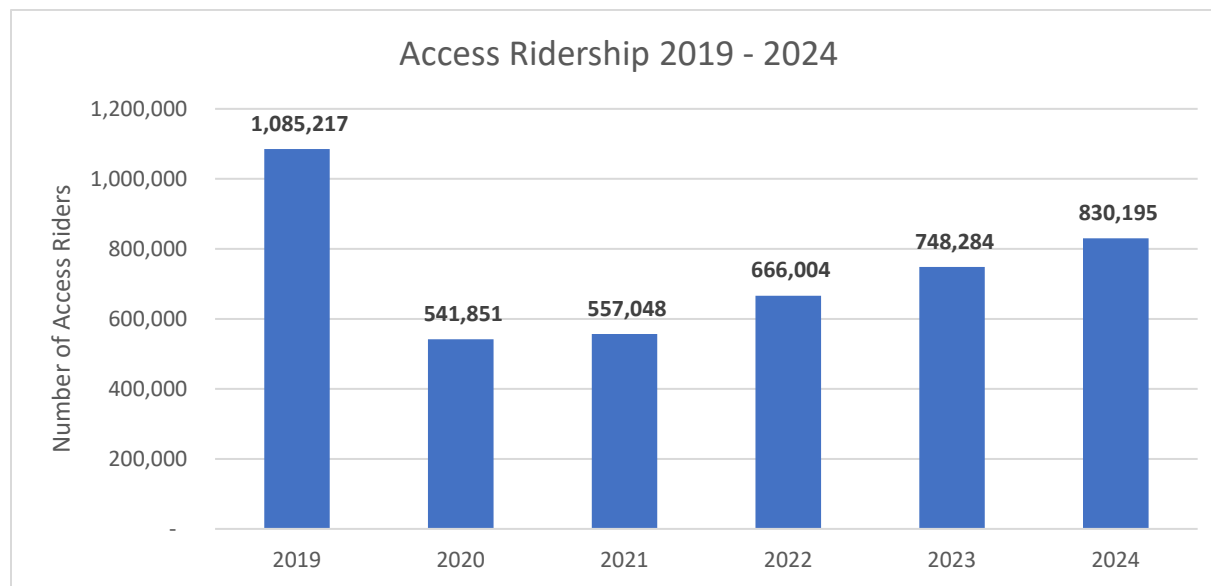
Compliance with Contract Terms

In 2019, MV Transit was awarded the paratransit service contract using a single contractor (turn-key service) model to provide all aspects of service. This included the call center, reservations, dispatching and operations functions for the provision of paratransit services. MV was in compliance with contract terms during the 2024 period and remains so currently.

Performance Metrics Improvements and Deficiencies

Metro monitors 11 metrics as part of the department's performance management practices. Of these 11 performance metrics covered in this report, five have defined performance standards. Of these, only one met the performance standard for the entire report period of January 2024 through December 2024. Two of the remaining four have a standard of zero incidents, a typically unreachable standard. Other significant findings for this report include the following:

On-time performance includes two associated performance metrics: On-time Performance Appointment (OTP-A) and On-time Performance Pick-up (OTP-P).

On-time Performance Appointment **(dropping off for appointments) did not reach its performance standard for the report period.**

Developing and maintaining the standard for On-time performance for appointments is an ongoing challenge. This is a new metric that is not commonly tracked by other paratransit services. Metro is continuously researching ways to improve performance on this metric.

On-time performance Pick-up performed just below standard for the months of the report period, showing improvement in the latter part of the report period.

- Of the three KPIs associated with the **Pick-up Window,** all three showed a fluctuation in performance between the first and fourth quarter of the report period with an improvement overall for the year.
- Of the two KPIs associated with **Missed Trips**, both showed a decrease in performance between the first and fourth quarter of the report period. Neither reached the performance standard of zero instances during a month.
- Of the two KPIs associated with the **Drop-off Window**, both showed a decrease in performance between the first and fourth quarter of the report period.
- Average **On Board Time** for Access was shorter than comparable fixed route On-Board times for the entire report period.
- **Excessively Long Trips** (a KPI associated with on board time) performed above the performance standard for the entire report period.
- **Will Call Trip** response times fluctuated during the report period, ending with an increase in response time between the first and fourth quarters.

Incentives and disincentives were established in this contract to promote higher service quality performance. Contract incentives are provided when the contractor exceeds minimum performance targets and disincentives are assessed when the contractor falls short of performance targets.

Potential Service Improvements and Innovations

The Access operations contract with MV Transportation ends in 2026, with an option to extend the contract through 2029. Metro regularly meets with the contractor to monitor and review service delivery. Through a series of weekly, monthly, and quarterly meetings, Metro reviews contract-specific key performance indicators that carry monetary incentives and disincentives, holding the contractor accountable for service delivery related metrics that missed standards.

Metro is currently evaluating King County's contracting options and soliciting customer feedback to inform the future of the Access program. This project, known as the Future of Paratransit (FoP) is evaluating how to align Access's future contract structure to drive efficiency, excellent customer service, and program innovation. Concurrently, Metro is undertaking the Integrated Services Planning (ISP) project to organize services, including Access, into a more unified, efficient, and user-friendly system to better serve its customers. With both efforts, the Access Program is committed to continuous improvement and further integration across Metro's mobility services to meet the changing needs of its customers.

III.   Background

Department Overview

King County Metro is the Puget Sound region's largest public transportation agency. Metro provides bus, paratransit, vanpool, and water taxi services, and operates Seattle Streetcar, Sound Transit Link light rail, and Sound Transit Express bus service. Metro is committed to providing safe, equitable, and sustainable mobility, and prioritizing service where needs are greatest.

Key Historical Conditions

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires transit agencies like Metro to ensure its transportation systems are accessible for people with disabilities. The ADA also mandates that transit systems have a complementary paratransit service for riders who cannot take the bus or rail because of barriers they face due to their disabilities. Access is the complementary ADA paratransit service provided by Metro and is designed to meet the eligibility and service criteria established by the FTA. Under pre-COVID-19 service conditions, Access provided approximately 1,000,000 trips for upwards of 12,000 registered users annually; as of December 2024, Access ridership has recovered to almost 80 percent of pre-pandemic levels.

ADA paratransit has specific eligibility and service criteria set forth by the FTA. The FTA mandates that paratransit must be comparable to fixed route in regard to service area (at least three-fourths of a mile on either side of a fixed route); fares (not more than twice the regular fixed-route fare for a comparable trip); no restrictions on trip purpose, hours, and days of service (at least the same as fixed route); and no capacity constraints (factors that limit Access to produce or deliver services, such as the number of vehicles available for service). Access adheres to these federal criteria and, in alignment with King County Council directives, provides service that goes above and beyond FTA minimum requirements through an expanded service area (providing service outside three-fourths of a mile from fixed routes) and increased hours of service in select areas.

Historically, Access service has been provided by private companies and non-profits which contract with Metro, overseeing day-to-day operations and staffing to include operators, supervisors, maintenance, control center, and reservation staff and support. The current contractor, MV Transportation, has been solely responsible for providing paratransit service for the Access program since November 2019 and subcontracts with Solid Ground, taxi services, and others, to provide paratransit services for this contract.

Key Current Conditions

Access provides transportation for people with disabilities who are unable to use mainline/fixed-route public transportation. For many Access riders, the service is their primary or only source of reliable transportation. Access provides transportation to work, medical, social, and leisure activities. Access advances the King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021-2031 mobility goal, "Customers can rely on mobility services to get them where they want to go, when they want to go."[2]

Access is a shared-ride service. By combining passengers on wheelchair-accessible vehicles and providing a point-to-point pick-up and delivery service, it has the potential to reduce single-occupancy car trips for those who qualify for the service. By providing first-mile and last-mile transportation to fixed route, light rail, and commuter rail, the service also can increase access to other mass transit options.

Access advances several goals and objectives set forth by the King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021-2031 to invest where needs are the greatest, improve access to mobility, provide fast, reliable, and integrated services, and innovate to improve mobility. Metro's continued refinement of contract management includes quality assurance processes with holistic approaches to service quality

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[2] King County Metro Strategic Plan for Public Transportation 2021-2031 [LINK] https://kingcountymetro.blog/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/King-County-Metro-Strategic-Plan-for-Public-Transportation-2021-2023-July-2021.pdf

paired with robust rider feedback. Such tools align with the strategic goal of providing excellent, customer-centered service, efficient and effective operations, and innovative mobility options that meet the needs of the community.

As an example of innovation, approximately 25 percent of the Access fleet transitioned from traditional propane to renewable propane in early 2024. This work furthers the King County Strategic Plan goal of Healthy Environment by helping reduce countywide greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent by 2030. Access also supports the King County Strategic Climate Action Plan's focus on prioritizing frontline communities that are in greatest need of public transit in transit accessibility policies and practices.[3]

Metro continues to engage Access riders through numerous customer feedback and outreach opportunities, aimed at addressing service challenges and increasing system satisfaction and optimization. During this report period, Metro worked with the Access Paratransit Advisory Committee (APAC) to collect feedback on rider issues and complaints and to utilize feedback gained in ongoing and post-trip survey programs. Robust rider engagement supports Access's commitment to public engagement and transparency by promoting diverse public outreach that informs, involves, and empowers people and communities served by the program.

Report Methodology

The Access team regularly meets internally and with the MV Team to monitor performance. Typical cadence consists of weekly, monthly, and quarterly check-ins and strategic discussions on both contract compliance and performance measures to ensure quality service delivery. To produce this report, Metro staff analyzed performance from a variety of systems as well as monthly and quarterly performance reports. The report was developed by Metro's Accessible Services staff with assistance from others across Metro.

IV.   Report Requirements

A. Contractor Compliance with Contract Terms

Items that are highlighted during this service update include the following:

- Service Level Agreement: No trips were denied and riders were able to book their trips. No issues of non-compliance were identified.
- Software Maintenance Policy: The contractor has been compliant with the Software Maintenance Agreement. No issues of non-compliance were identified during this report period.
- Pricing: Contract negotiations resulted in the first two-year contract extension, expiring in November 2026. The extension established updated pricing sheets that were implemented in November of 2023 and scaled actual service demand to accurately reflect current market costs.
- Contract Amendment: During this report period, Metro and MV Transportation agreed to two contract amendments. One amendment refined terms for bailment of vehicles, which describes

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[3] King County Climate Action Team (eds.). 2020 King County Strategic Climate Action Plan. King County, Washington [LINK]

the use, maintenance, and return of King County-owned vehicles. The other amendment focused on real estate lease transfer roles and responsibilities/processes updating contract language specifically addressing "rights, liabilities, and obligations from the tenant to the County at any time during the Lease."

- **Audits:** Metro and Sound Transit staff conducted audits of records as part of contract oversight. No issues of non-compliance were identified during this report period.

Contract Incentives and Disincentives: Contract incentives and disincentives for the Access program instituted as part of the strategy for the contractor to improve services, continued to be levied during this report period. Amendment 14 reinstated the cost per boarding for cost containment strategy.

B. Performance metrics and trends for 2024

Metro monitors 11 metrics as part of the department's performance management practices. This section includes detailed descriptions of these metrics for the reporting period.

On-time performance

On-time performance includes two associated performance metrics: *On-time Performance Appointment (OTP-A)* and *On-time Performance Pick-up (OTP-P). On-Time Performance Appointment (OTP-A)* is a new KPI for Access, established in November 2019 in the signed contract with MV. There is a glossary for Key Performance indicators (KPIs) in Appendix A. Tables for all the metrics are in Appendix B.

Figure 2: On Time Performance - Appointments
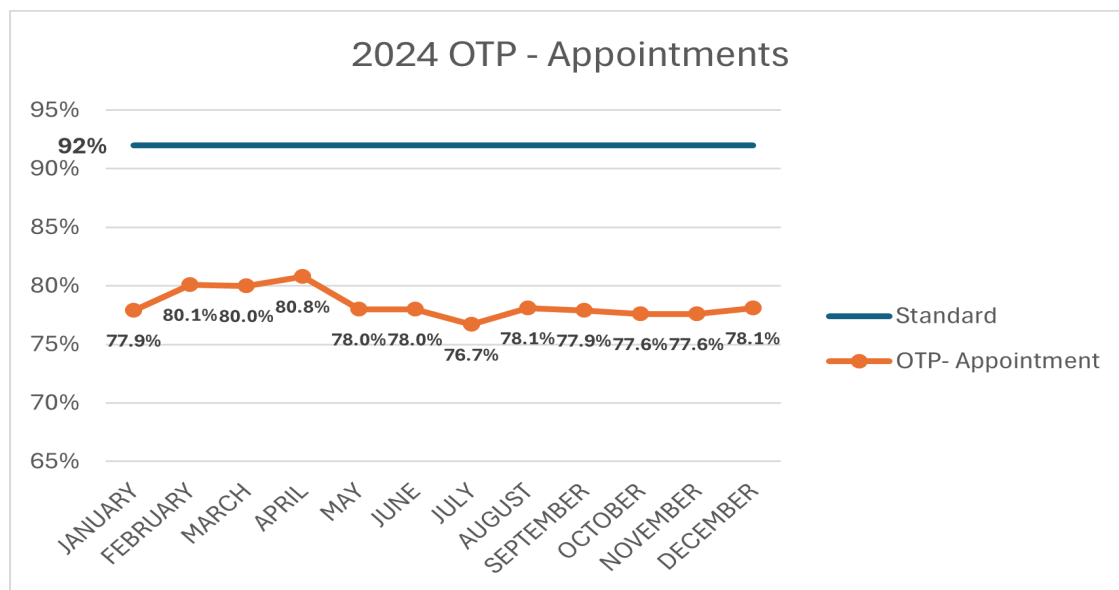
On-time Performance Appointment (OTP-A) is defined as the percentage of total appointment-based trips (including No-shows and Cancel at Door appointments) where the vehicle arrived at their destination between zero and 30 minutes before the customer's scheduled appointment time. Riders who would like to be dropped off earlier than their scheduled time for their appointment are able to opt out of being dropped off at their scheduled time. Riders who opt out are not included in the calculation for OTP-A. The performance standard for OTP-A is 92 percent.

Access Paratransit Service Update

- Overall OTP-A average for the period was 78.4 percent, well below the performance standard. MV reached a high of 80 percent OTP-A in the months of February, March, and April of 2024. The rest of the year was an average of 77.7 percent, with the lowest in July 2024 at 76.7 percent.
- Meeting the OTP-A KPI is an ongoing challenge. OTP-A is a new KPI added to this contract as a recommendation from community input. This was a response to riders who were dropped off too early for their appointments and if the destination was not open, created a safety concern. OTP-A has many factors that contribute to the challenge of meeting this metric. This is primarily due to the conflict between the program's need to allow enough travel time to allow for ridesharing and the realities of service delivery. For example: If a rider cancels a trip on a shared vehicle, other riders on that vehicle may arrive earlier than expected because the driver can go straight to the next destination. Similarly, if traffic is lighter than usual, a vehicle may arrive earlier than expected.
- The contractor was assessed applicable contract-based disincentives during this review period for not meeting performance standards.

Figure 3: On Time Performance – Pick-Ups
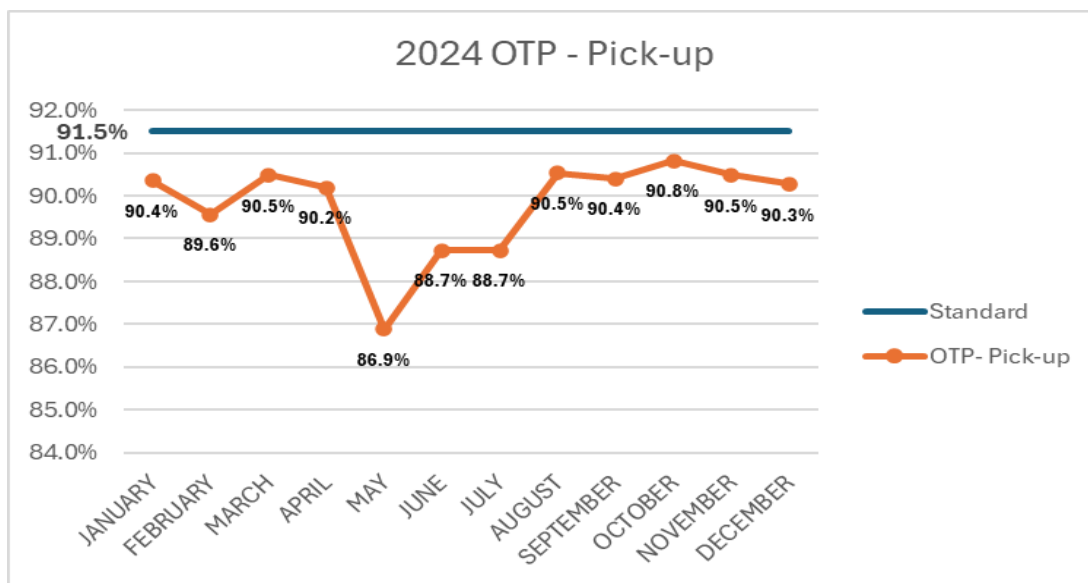
On-time Performance Pick-up (OTP-P) is defined as the percentage of total trips (including No-shows and Cancel at Door appointments) where the vehicle arrived between zero and 30 minutes in relation to the beginning of the pick-up window. The standard performance for OTP-P is 92 percent. OTP-P may operate in an acceptable range of 91.5-92.5 percent before incentives or disincentives are applied.

- Overall, OTP-P average for the period was 89.8 percent — just below performance standard. MV reached a high of 90 percent in the latter half of the year, averaging 90.2 percent from July through December. The lowest rate occurred in May at 86.9 percent.
- The contractor was assessed applicable contract-based disincentives during this review period for not meeting performance standards.

MV has been focused on improving OTP-P by analyzing the scheduling system's existing speed assumptions and adjusting assumed system speed to match current traffic patterns. When the system's assumed speeds do not match conditions on the ground, this can result in vehicles arriving too late or too early. This behavior can negatively impact on-time performance and system efficiency.

- Pick-up window, including early pick-ups, late pick-ups, and excessively late pick-ups, as defined in the existing Access paratransit service contract with MV Transportation.
    - The Pick-up window refers to the 30-minute time when a rider is scheduled to be picked up by the Access vehicle. There are three KPIs associated with the Pick-up Window: Early Pick-ups, Late Pick-ups, and Excessively Late Pick-ups; these three associated KPI's do not have contract standards, however, are monitored due to being integrated into the overall calculation for OTP-P.
    - Early Pick-up and Excessively Late Pick-up were established for the first time in November 2019.

Figure 4: Early Pick-ups
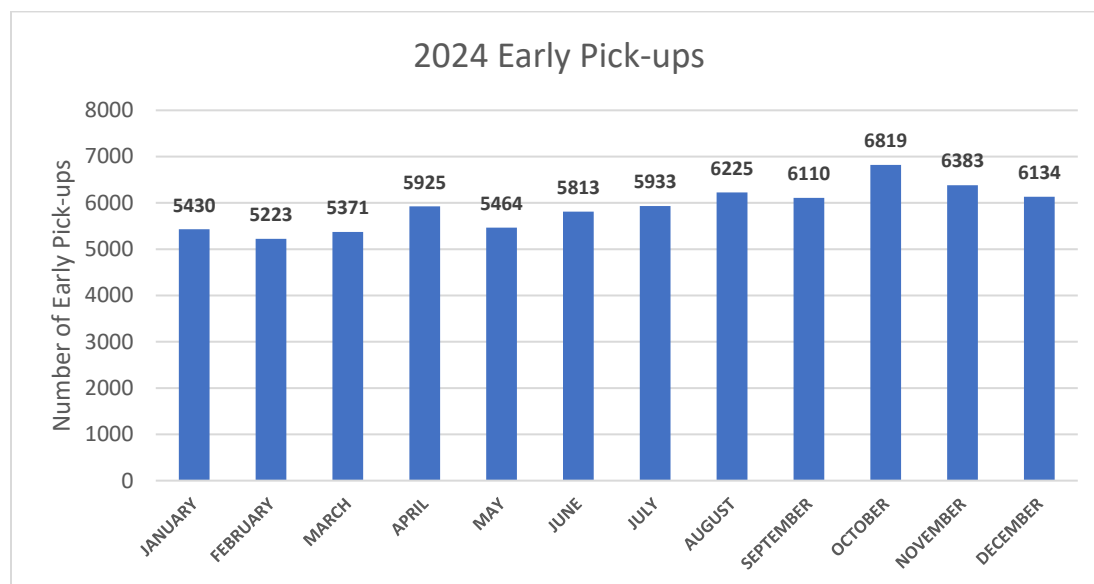
- **Early Pick-ups** are defined as when the vehicle arrives before the beginning of the pick-up window. This practice is discouraged, but these trips are counted as On-time. It is Access policy that riders are not required to board until the window opens. In January 2025, the start of the report period, instances of Early Pick-ups totaled 5,430, the 2nd lowest amount during this time.
- Early Pick-ups fluctuated before reaching a high of 6,819 in October and ending the report period with 6,134 instances in December with an average of 5,903.
- The majority of Early Pick-ups occurred when the trip was assigned to a non-dedicated service provider (taxi overflow, non-dedicated are not assigned any vehicle revenue hours).
- Overall, Early Pick-ups total an average of 8.54 percent of all boardings for the year.

Figure 5: Late Pick- Ups
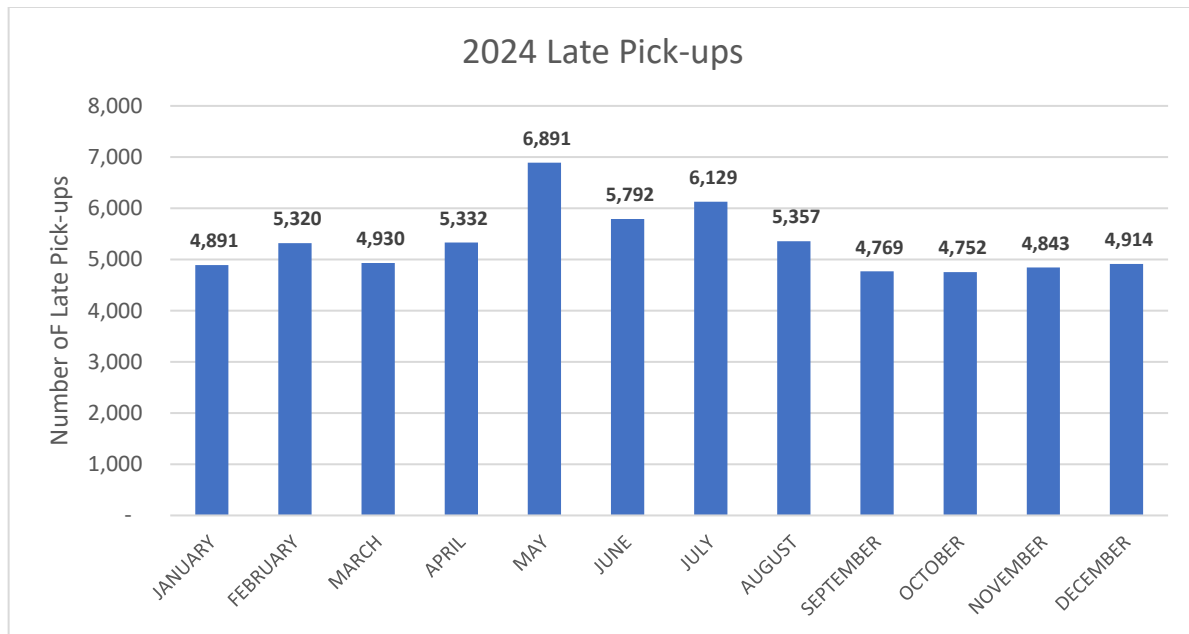
2024 Late Pick-ups

- **Late Pick-ups** is defined as a trip in which the vehicle arrived between zero and 30 minutes after the pick-up window, and the rider chooses to still take the trip. Access began the report period with 4,891 instances of Late Pick-Ups in January, the 4th lowest number for the report period.
- Late Pick-ups peaked in May with 6,891 instances before decreasing through the rest of the year with an average of 5,327.
- Late Pick-ups saw a decrease in occurrences for the final three months of the report period.
- Late Pick-ups totaled about 7.7 percent of all trips.

Figure 6: Excessively Late Pick-Ups

2024 Excessively Late Pick-ups
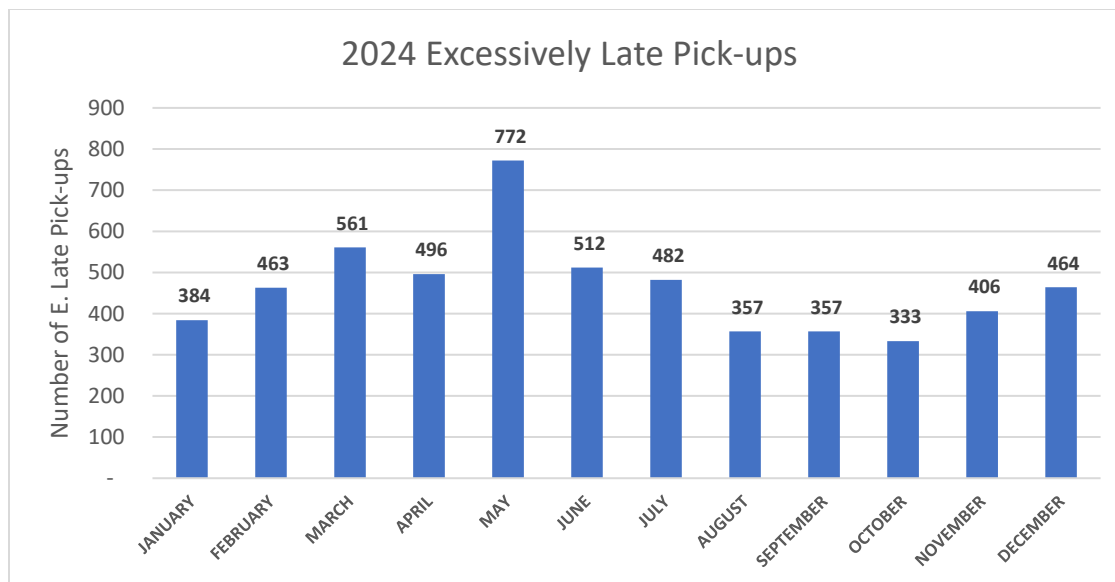
- **Excessively Late Pick-ups** is defined as a trip where the vehicle arrived between 30 and 60 minutes past the end of the pick-up window and the rider chooses to still take the trip. Access began the report period with 384 instances of Excessively Late Pick-ups in January, the third lowest amount during this time.
- Performance fluctuated throughout the report period, peaked at 772 in May, and decreased the rest of the year, with an average of 466.
- The contractor was assessed applicable contract-based disincentives during this review period for not meeting performance standards.

1. Missed trips

There are two KPIs associated with missed trips: *Missed Trip Pick-ups (MT-P)* and *Missed Trip Appointment (MT-A)*. Missed Trip Appointment was established for the first time in November 2019.

Figure 7: Missed Trips Pick-Ups
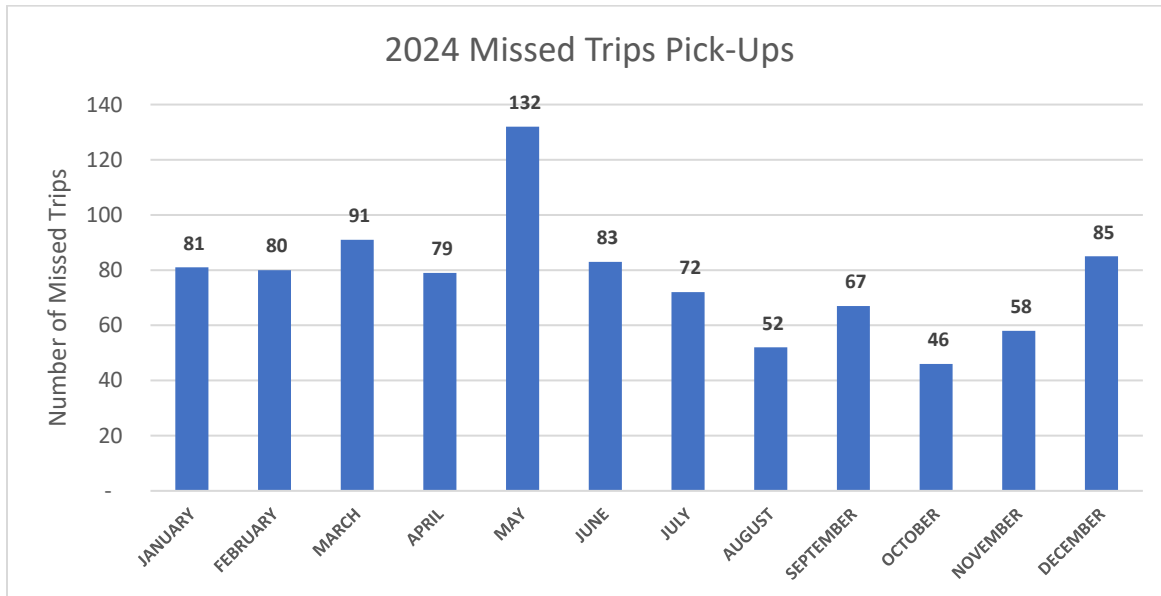
Missed Trip Pick-ups (MT-P) is defined as a trip in which the vehicle arrived more than 60 minutes after the pick-up window, regardless of whether the rider chooses to take the trip. The performance standard for Missed Trip Pick-ups is zero instances per month.

- Access began the report period in January with 81 instances of Missed Trip Pick-ups.
- Missed Trip Pick-up's fluctuated with a peak of 132 occurrences in May and subsequently decreasing to a low of 46 in October with an average of 77.
- Access did not meet the performance standard of zero Missed Trip Pick-ups during this period.
- The contractor was assessed applicable contract-based disincentives during this review period for not meeting performance standards.

Figure 8: Missed Trips - Appointment

2024 Missed Trips Appointment

Missed Trip Appointment (MT-A) is defined as a trip in which the vehicle arrives more than ten minutes late for the customer's scheduled appointment time. The performance standard for Missed Trip Appointments is zero instances per month.

- Access began the report period with 696 instances of Missed Trip Appointments in January.
- Missed Trip Appointments fluctuated to a peak high in May with 1,301 instances and July with 1,150 instances before decreasing for the rest of the year with an average of 881.
- Access did not meet the performance standard during this report period of zero Missed Trip Appointments during this period.
- The contractor was assessed applicable contract-based disincentives during this review period for not meeting performance standards.

2. **Drop-off window, including early drop-offs and late drop offs.**
   The Drop-off Window refers to the 30-minute window riders are given prior to their appointment. KPIs for this section include Early Drop-off and Late Drop-off. Both KPIs were implemented for the first time in November 2019.

Figure 9: Early Drop Offs
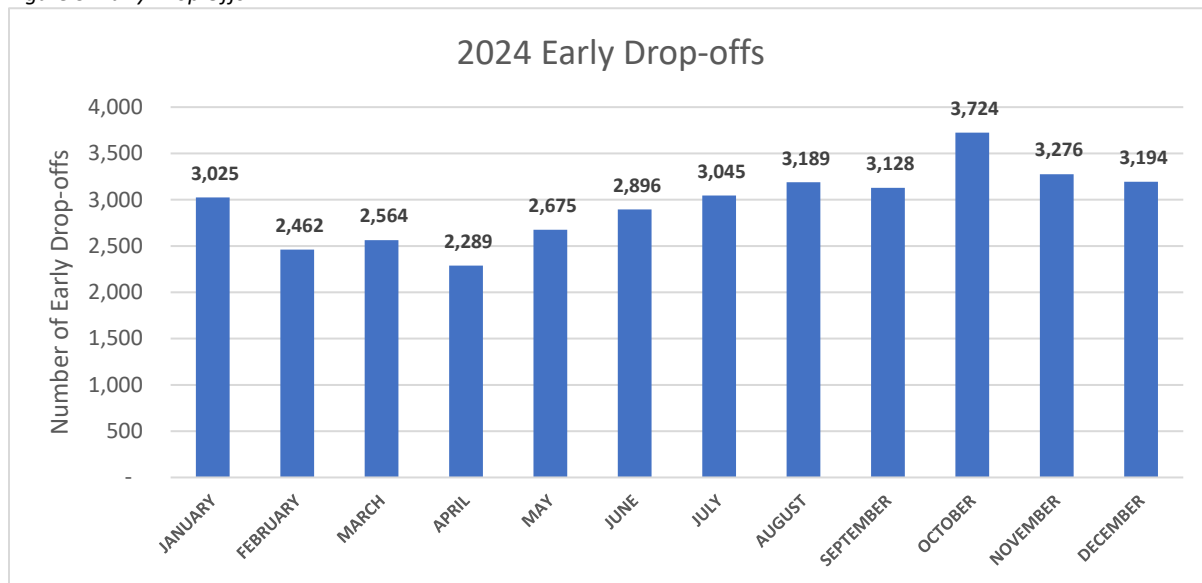
Early Drop-offs is a trip in which the vehicle arrives at a drop-off more than 60 minutes prior to the customer's scheduled appointment time, excluding trips where the customer has agreed to arrive early. The Rider's Choice program, which provides riders the opportunity to approve to arrive early for an appointment early, was developed after listening to customer feedback. There is no performance standard for Early Drop-offs, but this KPI is tracked and reported by the contractor and monitored by Access.

- Access began the report period with 3,025 instances of Early Drop-offs in January.
- Early Drop-offs peaked with 3,724 in October with 2,289 instances as the lowest in April.
- Average early drops off were 2,956.
- The contractor was assessed applicable contract-based disincentives during this review period for not meeting performance standards.

Figure 10: Late Drop-Offs

2024 Late Drop-offs

Number of Late Drop-offs

Month	Value
JANUARY	980
FEBRUARY	1,036
MARCH	1,090
APRIL	1,311
MAY	1,406
JUNE	1,276
JULY	1,409
AUGUST	1,189
SEPTEMBER	967
OCTOBER	1,097
NOVEMBER	1,136
DECEMBER	1,108
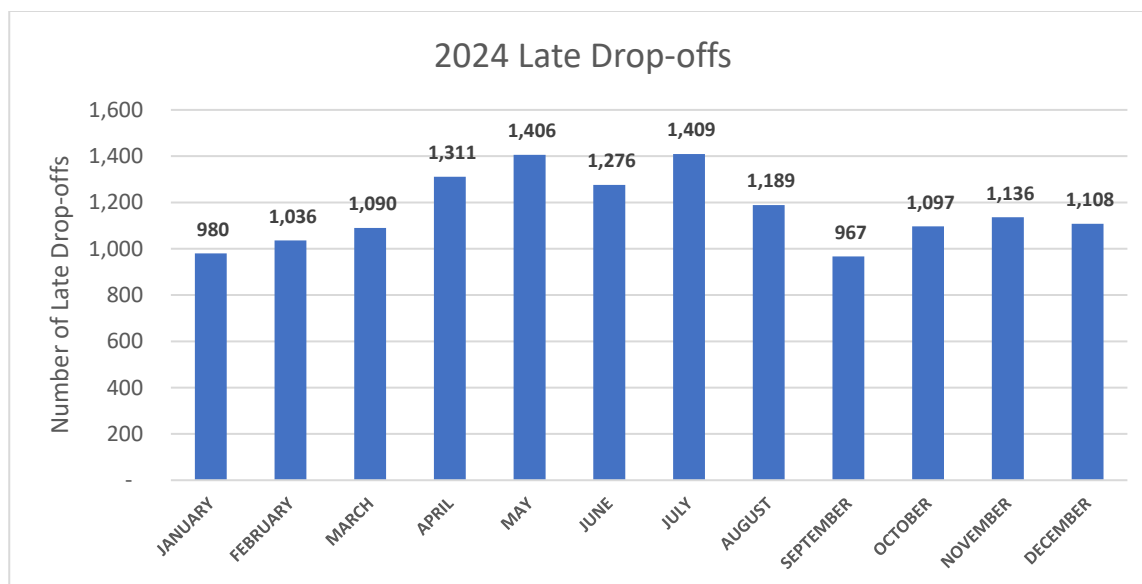
Late Drop-off is a trip in which the vehicle arrived between zero and 10 minutes late in relation to the customer's scheduled appointment time. Late Drop-offs are tracked and reported by the contractor and monitored by Access.

- Access began the report period with a low of 980 instances of Late Drop-offs in January, the second lowest number for this report period.
- Late Drop-offs increased with a peak high in July with 1,409 instances, before fluctuating with a low of 967 instances in September, the best performance of this reporting period.
- Average late drop offs were 1,167
- The contractor was assessed applicable contract-based disincentives during this review period for not meeting performance standards.

3. On-Board Time (OBT) is the amount of time a rider spends on the Access vehicle. Excessively Long Trip is the KPI used to measure OBT performance. FTA guidelines reflect that paratransit trips to be comparable to fixed route that includes waiting times, in-vehicle time, transfer times (if any), and walking time from the final stop to the destination.

- Riders on the Access system consistently arrive at their destinations much faster than riders using Metro's fixed-route bus system.
  - Across all trip lengths, Access trips are on average more than twice as fast, or less than 50 percent, of the comparable fixed-route itinerary.
  - The average trip time on dedicated service (Access van) ranges between 30-33 minutes throughout the year.

Figure 11: Average Access Trip Time Compared to Fixed Route Trip Time
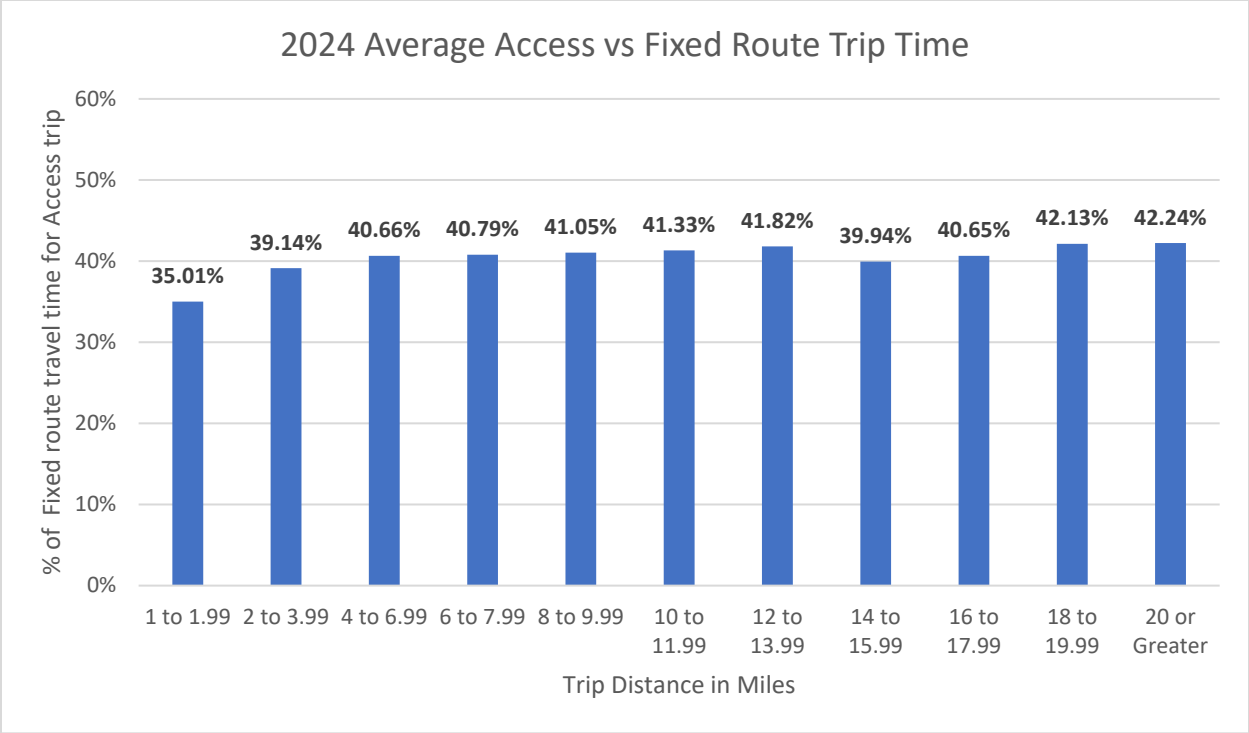
Figure 12: Access Average Time On Board

2024 Average On Board Time for Access

Figure 13: Excessively Long Trips
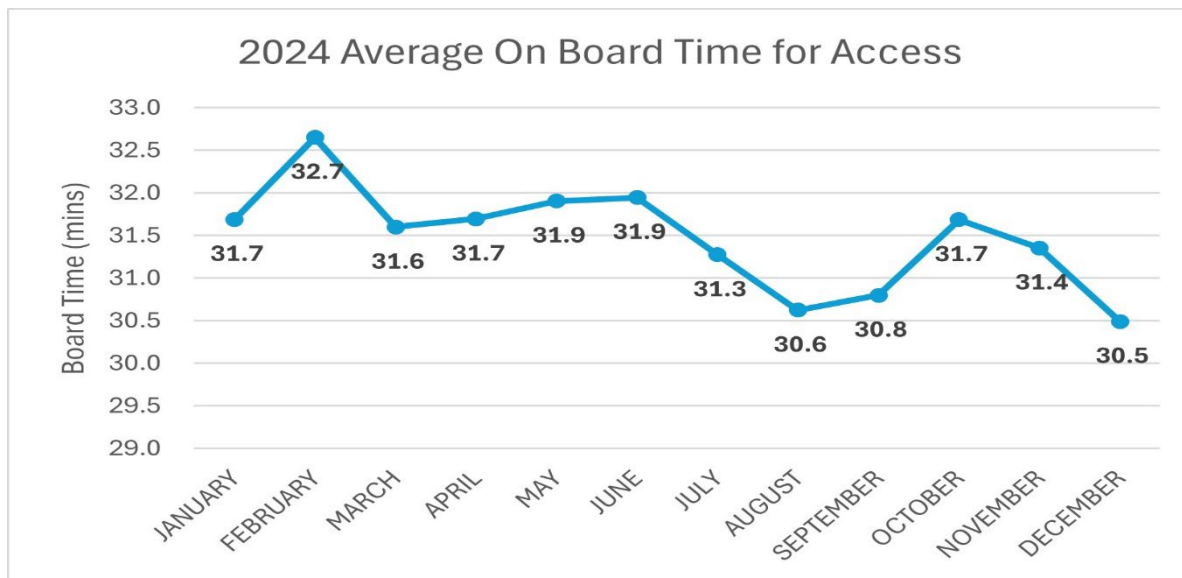
2024 Excessively Long Trips

4. Excessively Long Trip

Excessively Long Trip is defined as a trip where the customer's on-vehicle time from origin to destination is greater than an equivalent fixed route travel time (as defined by the ADA) plus 15 minutes. The performance standard for Excessively Long Trip is the total percentage of excessively long trips that are longer than the expected time on board and are not more than three percent of all trips delivered.

- For 2024, 1.75 percent of all trips were Excessively Long Trips (i.e. more than the equivalent fixed-route itinerary).
- The average number of Excessively Long Trips was 1,299 for this time period.
- Access began the report period with a low of 1.36 percent of trips Excessively Long in January, the lowest percentage and best performance for the report period. Excessively long trips increased throughout the report period, peaking with a high of 2.20 percent in July and trending down for the rest of the year.
- The performance standard for this KPI is that no more than 3 percent of trips to be excessively long. The standard was met for the entire report period.

5. **Will Call**

   The Will Call response time is the amount of time it takes for the vehicle to arrive after a rider requests a Will Call Trip.

Figure 14: Number of Will Calls & Will Call Response Time

Will-call rides can occur when a rider misses their original ride and needs to reschedule their missed trip on the same day of service. This may be due to an appointment that ended late, the rider didn't receive their notification, the rider was unable to meet the van, and other causes. Because Access has a "no stranded rider" policy, will-calls are made availa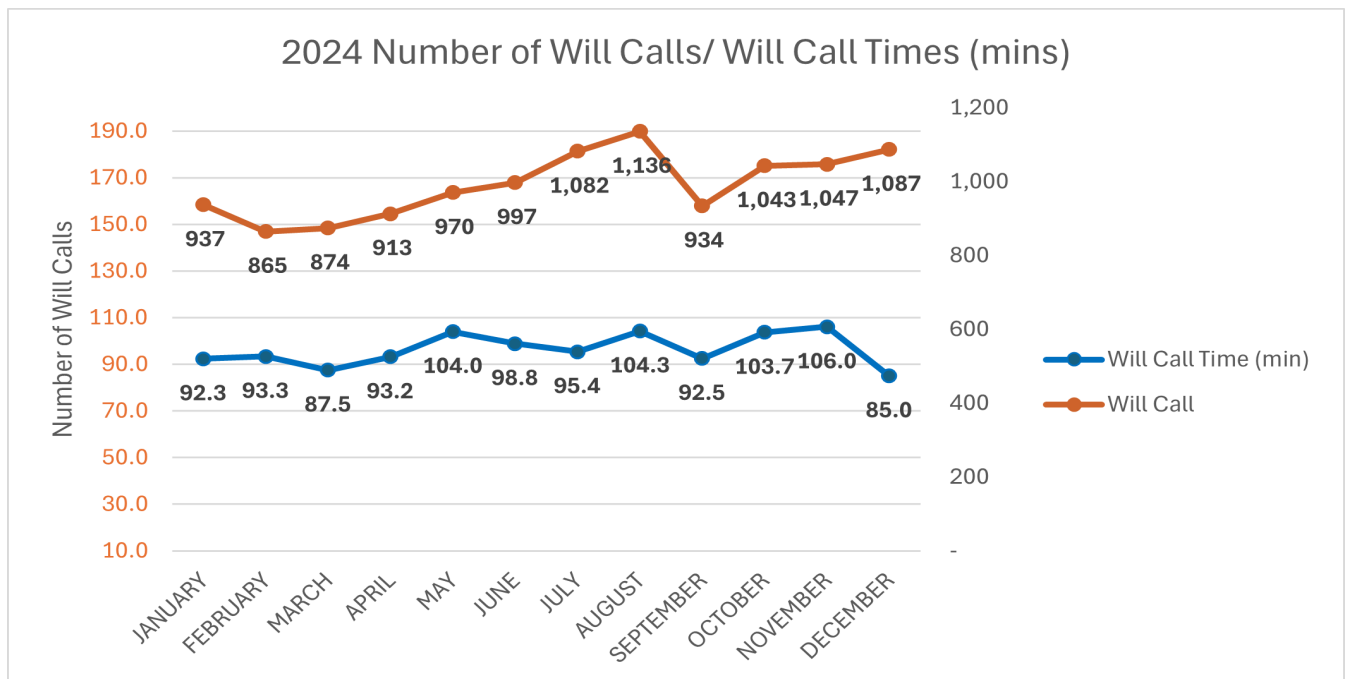ble but will need to fit as inserts into the day's scheduled rides. The average will-call time is 96.3 minutes for response. All will-calls were performed, and no one was left stranded, per the contract requirements under the "no stranded rider" policy.

C. Areas of deficiency or improvement during 2024

This section contains the response for King County Council's request for Areas of Deficiency or Improvement during the report period and covers the KPIs that either improved or failed to meet the performance standard during the report period. KPIs highlighted by the other measures described above are subsets to the KPIs listed below.

Figure 15: Performance Metrics

Metric	Standard or Target (Contract or FTA)	Highlighted Performance Measures		
		2024 Range (Low - High)	2024 Avg	Trend
On time performance - appointments	91.5-92% (Contract)	76.7%-80.8%	78.4%	Below standard but maintaining
On time performance - pick up	91.5% – 92% (Contract)	86.9%-90.8%	89.8%	Below standard but maintaining
Missed trip pick-ups	Zero missed pick ups (Contract)	46-132	77	Overall improvement
Missed trip appointment	Zero missed appointments (Contract)	614-1,301	881	Fluctuating, increased during the year but improving into the 4th quarter
Average on board time	Comparable to fixed route (FTA)	30.6 minutes-32.7 minutes	31.5 minutes	Trended level throughout the year
Will call response time	No rider to be left stranded (Contract)	85 minutes – 106 minutes	96.3 minutes	Fluctuated throughout the year No rider was left stranded

Actions taken to improve areas of deficiency

As part of regular contract monitoring processes, Metro works closely with MV Transportation to improve service performance in areas where KPIs are not performing to standard. The Access team regularly meets with the contractor to monitor and review service delivery. Through regular weekly, monthly and quarterly meetings to review key performance indicators, Metro works to hold the contractor responsible for service delivery related metrics that missed standards.

Specifically, Metro provides direct feedback to the contractor through letters of deficiency, regular Key Performance Metrics collaborative discussions, smaller operational group meetings, executive level briefings, and regular escalation sessions to address ongoing and complicated matters.

To improve service performance, the following actions have been taken by MV throughout 2024.

To improve OTP-P and OTP-A:
- Targeted scheduling adjustments to improve alignment with high-traffic and high-demand areas.
- Expanded predictive analytics to optimize routes and proactively address potential delays.
- Increased supervisory oversight during peak hours to help mitigate real-time delays.
- Hired service monitors to closely observe appointment placement to find solutions for improving OTP-A.
- Reallocated dispatch resources within the Call Center staff to ensure coverage during high-demand periods.
- Conducted ongoing driver and dispatcher training to reinforce trip recovery and escalation protocols.
- Performed real-time monitoring of high-risk trips, which allows for immediate escalation and resolution.
- Held pre-shift briefings to review high-priority trips and ensure close attention to potential challenges.
- Made dynamic route adjustments during service hours to help mitigate delays.
- Conducted testing by adding appointment buffer times to better address high-demand locations.
- Performed on-time pullout & shift monitoring to reinforce on-time pullout and lunch break tracking to minimize cascading delays.
- Used dispatch teams to monitor and flag late starts to prevent ripple effects.
- Accomplished Driver recruitment & retention by focused hiring to address shifts and routes with historically lower performance.
- Maintained ongoing mentorship programs to ensure new drivers are supported in their first year.
- Conducted Automated Notification System Implementation. The Interactive Voice Response (automated calls to riders) (IVR) system expanded to include taxi rides added to improve rider communication and reduce delays was implemented in 2024.
- Monitored customer experience & gathered rider feedback via ongoing outreach and monthly service improvements were enacted based on insights.

On Time Performance

On-Time Performance for Appointment is steady, maintaining an average of 78.4 percent in performance during this report period. OTP-A was below standard for the report period.

On Time Performance

On-Time Performance for Pick-up saw an increase in performance during this report period, just missing the performance standard of 91.5 percent for most of the year with an average of 89.8 percent for the year. OTP-P was below standard for the report period.

Missed Trips

Missed Trip Pick-Ups performance decreased from the first quarter of the report period to the fourth quarter of the period, with an average of 1.12 Missed Trip Pick-Ups per 1,000 boardings for

the report period. Missed Trip Pick-Up did not meet the performance standard of zero instances per month during this report period.

Missed Trip Appointment performance fluctuated throughout the report period, with an average of 12.74 missed trips for appointment per 1,000 boardings. Missed Trip Appointment did not meet the performance standard of zero instances per month during this report period.

D. Potential service improvements or innovations, including information about the costs to implement these improvements or innovations.

To better serve its communities, Metro is innovating its flexible services and integrating them into a more unified, efficient, and easy-to-use system. The Access Program will be part of this adaptation and will ensure Metro continues to meet its customers' changing needs seamlessly.

Recognizing the Access operations contract (currently held by MV Transportation) ends in 2026, Metro is also evaluating the County's contracting options and soliciting customer engagement into the future direction of the Access program. This project, known as the Future of Paratransit (FoP) is evaluating how to align Access's future service model to drive efficiency, excellent customer service, and program innovation, while also furthering the goals of Metro's Integrated Services Planning (ISP) initiative.

Lastly, technology has also changed and today can be part of the solution Metro is developing, with some exciting opportunities that may enable Metro to unify and streamline how mobility services are programed, scheduled and dispatched to customers. This report explores some of the options Metro is exploring from same day service, improvements to current programs, exploring new programs and technology. Costs for these projects are part of ongoing research.

The following provides a sample of service improvements or innovations Metro is exploring.

Access on Demand Pilot (AOD)
- In March 2024, Metro launched Phase 1 of Metro Flex Access On-Demand (AOD), an on-demand, accessible, and flexible mobility pilot for Access Transportation (Access) customers. Across the paratransit industry, there are a variety of service models and approaches that have been implemented to address same day service for paratransit riders, each tailored to fit the unique characteristics of the transit system providing the service.
- Access On-Demand is designed to provide Access customers with an affordable, accessible, and reliable option for taking spontaneous trips or trips that require flexibility. While with traditional Access, customers must reserve their trip at least one day in advance, Access On-Demand customers can book and take trips on the same day. In 2024, AOD piloted the program for 50 Access riders.

Taxi Scrip Reform and Mobility Wallet
- While the current Same Day Service Pilot delivers same-day trips by extending the parameters of an existing Metro service (Metro Flex), a different approach to meeting customer needs is to lower the financial burden for Access customers by subsidizing same-day trips taken using existing local

transportation providers. This approach has the potential to reach more customers, serve a broader set of customer needs, and create new opportunities in the local transportation market. In this model, the transit agency generally subsidizes a paratransit customer's trips on taxis and/or TNC (Transportation Network Companies such as Lyft and Uber) providers up to a defined per trip and per month limit. Currently, the taxi scrip program has been Metro's top approach. Metro is researching other options using this approach.

- One solution is to resolve ongoing challenges within the legacy Taxi Scrip program. The Taxi Scrip program offers low-income customers the opportunity to purchase agency-subsidized scrip, which can be used to pay for trips on local transportation providers. Unfortunately, very few providers in King County are willing to accept these vouchers due to an outmoded and antiquated scrip redemption process that imposes high overhead costs upon the transportation providers. Metro is continuing to explore alternative options to address this issue.

- Metro is exploring other options called a unified Mobility Wallet – an electronic wallet and payment system for transportation needs. This would provide access to agency trip subsidies on private providers and could serve both goals of providing same-day transportation access for Access customers. This could also increase transportation access for King County's low-income customers through greater transportation provider acceptance.

Commercial Delivery Services Pilot
- To reduce the demand for expensive paratransit trips, transit agencies have begun to experiment with offering commercial delivery services as an additional benefit for customers enrolled in their paratransit program. These types of services can give paratransit customers an alternative that improves convenience, saves customers time, and reduces paratransit trips.

- Metro is exploring a pilot program in 2025 to purchase annual Instacart+ memberships for ADA paratransit customers that allows these customers to make everyday purchases, get prescriptions, use EBT benefits, etc. without leaving their homes. Recent reports from TriMet in Portland, Oregon, who implemented this program, indicate that, on average, paratransit customers with this benefit reduced paratransit use by 8 trips per month. This resulted in an estimated savings to TriMet of nine million dollars for the year.

V.   Conclusion & Next steps

Over the course of this report period:
- Access ridership is increasing. Ridership for this service period totaled 830,212 annually, up by 81,911 boardings, a 10 percent increase from 2023. Each year following 2020, boardings have increased three percent from 2020 to 2021, 16 percent from 2021 to 2022, 11 percent from 2022 to 2023, and a ten percent increase from 2023 to 2024 to reach 80 percent of pre-pandemic ridership at the end of 2024.
- On time delivery of Access services is still a challenge. Key Performance Indicators OTP-P and OTP-A performed below standard for most of the entire report period. Every month, the contractor is fined for not meeting the OTP standards. Metro continues to keep the contractor

accountable to the KPIs for this contract. The Access team continued to levy contract specific key performance incentives and disincentives during this term to better influence contractor behavior and better service provision outcomes.

- King County and MV continue to work together to find innovative solutions to address the KPIs and the mobility needs of the customers. The changing landscape of ridership and outside impacts, such as traffic patterns and return to work mandates by agencies impacts paratransit services.

In looking to the future of the Access program, Metro will focus on the following challenges and goals.

- Continue to implement the King County Strategic Plan's mobility objective to "preserve and optimize the mobility system," through service improvements and system optimization projects. These include:
  - o Continue planning and preparing for the transition to a future contract structure that will drive program efficiency, deliver excellent customer service, and foster program innovation (i.e. Future of Paratransit).
  - o Foster the long-term alignment of program resources and systems with the Mobility Division's goals of creating a unified mobility ecosystem that's as easy to understand and use as a regular bus route.
- Continue to advance the King County Strategic Plan goals and principles.
- Address service demands as ridership increases, and service is restored to full capacity.
- Continue to engage and collaborate with riders through the Access Paratransit Advisory Committee and explore additional ways to focus on assuring that King County and MV are providing excellent service to the customers.
- Accomplish adjustments to system parameters, policies, and procedures in coordination with increased ridership and possible future regulatory changes.
- Continue current efforts to modernize the customer experience, including projects to digitize the paratransit application process and integrate Access into the next phase of the ORCA payment system.
- Explore innovative ways to meet Access customers' needs by piloting new service concepts and technology opportunities.

The service that Access Transportation provides is critical to meeting the mobility goals and values outlined in King County's Strategic Plan. Metro will continue to work tirelessly to "Deliver a safe, reliable, and seamless network of transportation options to get people and goods where they need to go, when they need to get there."[4]

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[4] King County Strategic Plan, https://kingcounty.gov/depts/executive/performance-strategy-budget/performance-strategy/Strategic-Planning/2015-strategic-plan-update.aspx

VI. Appendices:

Appendix A: KPI Definition Tier Chart

Measure	Tier 1
On-Time Performance	A rider can expect to be picked up and dropped off within or before the pick-up and/or drop-off window 92% of the time (change from past)
Pick-Up Window	A rider is given a 30-minute pick-up window
Early Pick-Ups	Early pick-ups are counted as on-time and monitored
Late Pick-Ups	Pick-up is late if the vehicle arrives >0.0 and <30 minutes after the end of the pick-up window
Excessively Late Pick-Ups	Pick-up is excessively late if the vehicle arrives >=30 and <=60 minutes after the end of the pick-up window.
Missed Trips	Trip is missed if the vehicle arrives >60 minutes after the end of the window
Drop-Off Window	A rider is given a 30-minute appointment drop-off window
Early Drop-Offs	Early drop-offs are when a rider is dropped off >=60 minutes before the scheduled appointment time (change from past contract)
Late Drop-Offs	Late drop-offs are when a rider is dropped off >0.0 and <10.0 minutes after the end of the window (change from past)
Missed Trips	Trip is missed when a rider arrives >=10 minutes after appointment time (change from past)
On-Board Time	On-board time (OBT) is fixed route travel time plus 15 minutes
Excessively Long Trips	Excessively long trips are longer than OBT no more than 3% of the time.
Will Call	Access has a "no strand policy" and negotiates a will call ride home for customers as schedule permits

Appendix B

Year	Ridership
2019	1,085,217
2020	541,851
2021	557,048
2022	666,004
2023	748,284
2024	830,195

Table 1: Access Ridership 2019–2024

Month	On-time Performance Appointment
Jan-24	77.9
Feb-24	80.1%
Mar-24	80.0%
Apr-24	80.8%
May-24	78%
Jun-24	78%
Jul-24	76.7%
Aug-24	78.1%
Sep-24	77.9%
Oct-24	77.6%
Nov-24	77.6%
Dec-24	78.1%

Table 2: On-time Performance Appointment Jan 2024–Dec 2024

Month	On-time Performance Pick-up
Jan-24	90.4
Feb-24	89.6%
Mar-24	90.5%
Apr-24	90.2%
May-24	86.9%
Jun-24	88.7%
Jul-24	88.7%
Aug-24	90.5%
Sep-24	90.4%
Oct-24	90.8%
Nov-24	90.5%
Dec-24	90.3%

Table 3: On-time Performance Pick-up Jan 2024–Dec 2024

Month	Early Pick-ups
Jan-24	5,430
Feb-24	5,223
Mar-24	5,371
Apr-24	5,925
May-24	5,464
Jun-24	5,813
Jul-24	5,933
Aug-24	6,225
Sep-24	6,110
Oct-24	6,819
Nov-24	6,383
Dec-24	6,134

Table 4: Early Pick-ups Jan 2024–Dec 2024

Month	Late Pick-ups
Jan-24	4,891
Feb-24	5,320
Mar-24	4,930
Apr-24	5,332
May-24	6,891
Jun-24	5,792
Jul-24	6,129
Aug-24	5,357
Sep-24	4,769
Oct-24	4,752
Nov-24	4,843
Dec-24	4,914

Table 5: Late Pick-ups Jan 2024–Dec 2024

Month	Excessively Late Pick-ups
Jan-24	384
Feb-24	463
Mar-24	561
Apr-24	496
May-24	772
Jun-24	512
Jul-24	482
Aug-24	357
Sep-24	357
Oct-24	333
Nov-24	406
Dec-24	464

Table 6: Excessively Late Pick-up Jan 2024–Dec 2024

Month	Missed Trips Pick-ups
Jan-24	81
Feb-24	80
Mar-24	91
Apr-24	79
May-24	132
Jun-24	83
Jul-24	72
Aug-24	52
Sep-24	67
Oct-24	46
Nov-24	58
Dec-24	82

Table 7: Missed Trips Pick-ups
Jan 2024–Dec 2024

Month	Missed Trips Appointments
Jan-24	696
Feb-24	793
Mar-24	918
Apr-24	1,041
May-24	1,301
Jun-24	911
Jul-24	1,150
Aug-24	841
Sep-24	681
Oct-24	614
Nov-24	789
Dec-24	840

Table 8: Missed Trips Appointments
Jan 2024–Dec 2024

Month	Early Drop-offs
Jan-24	3,025
Feb-24	2,462
Mar-24	2,564
Apr-24	2,289
May-24	2,675
Jun-24	2,896
Jul-24	3,045
Aug-24	3,189
Sep-24	3,128
Oct-24	3,724
Nov-24	3.276
Dec-24	3.194

Table 9: Early Drop-offs
Jan 2024–Dec 2024

Month	Late Drop-offs
Jan-24	980
Feb-24	1,036
Mar-24	1,090
Apr-24	1,311
May-24	1,406
Jun-24	1,276
Jul-24	1,409
Aug-24	1,189
Sep-24	967
Oct-24	1,097
Nov-24	1,136
Dec-24	1,108

Table 10: Late Drop-offs
Jan 2024–Dec 2024

Month	Average Access vs. Fixed Route Travel Time
0 – 1.99	4,891
2 – 3.99	5,320
4 – 5.99	4,930
6 – 7.99	5,332
8 – 9.99	6,891
10 – 11.99	5,792
12 – 13.99	6,129
14 – 15.99	5,357
16 – 17.99	4,769
18 – 19.99	4,752
20+	4,843

Table 11: Average Access vs. Fixed Route Travel Time
Jan 2024–Dec 2024

Month	Average Board Time
Jan-24	31.7
Feb-24	32.7
Mar-24	31.6
Apr-24	31.7
May-24	31.9
Jun-24	31.9
Jul-24	31.3
Aug-24	30.6
Sep-24	30.8
Oct-24	31.7
Nov-24	31.4
Dec-24	30.5

Table 12: Average Board Time
Jan 2024–Dec 2024

Month	Excessively Long Trip
Jan-24	869
Feb-24	959
Mar-24	1,102
Apr-24	1,164
May-24	1,311
Jun-24	1,291
Jul-24	1,543
Aug-24	1,347
Sep-24	1,337
Oct-24	1,458
Nov-24	1,259
Dec-24	896

Table 13: Excessively Long Trips Jan 2024–Dec 2024

Month	Will Call	Response Time
Jan-24	937	92.3
Feb-24	865	93.3
Mar-24	874	87.5
Apr-24	913	93.2
May-24	970	104
Jun-24	997	98.8
Jul-24	1,082	95.4
Aug-24	1,136	104.3
Sep-24	934	92.5
Oct-24	1.043	103.7
Nov-24	1.047	106
Dec-24	1.087	85

Table 14: Will Call and Will Call Response Times Jan 2024–Dec 2024

	Highlighted Performance Measures			
Metric	Standard or Target (Contract or FTA)	2024 Range (Low - High)	2024 Avg	Trend
On time performance - appointments	91.5-92% Contract	76.7%-80.8%	78.4%	Below standard but maintaining
On time performance - pick up	91.5% – 92% Contract	86.9%-90.8%	89.8%	Below standard but maintaining
Missed trip pick-ups	Zero missed pick ups Contract	46-132	77	Overall improvement
Missed trip appointment	Zero missed appointments Contract	614-1,301	881	Fluctuating, increased during the year but improving into the 4th quarter
Average on board time	Comparable to fixed-route FTA	30.6 minutes-32.7 minutes	31.5 minutes	Trended level throughout the year
Will call response time	No rider to be left stranded Contract	85minutes-106 minutes	96.3 minutes	Fluctuated throughout the year No rider was left stranded