

Whatcom Transportation Authority

Service Performance Report

2014



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Overview

Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) provides public transportation services throughout Whatcom County. Our services include fixed route, paratransit, zone service and a vanpool program.





WTA's fixed route service features 30 bus routes, including four high-frequency corridors within Bellingham. Service is offered seven days a week, with more limited service on Saturdays and Sundays.

Paratransit service provides curb-to-curb mini-bus service for people whose disability prevents them from riding fixed route buses.

Zone service provides limited transit service to rural areas of Whatcom County. Service is only available to each zone on certain days of the week and anyone within the designated area can request a ride.

The vanpool program allows groups of commuters to "lease" a WTA van on a regular, ongoing basis. Fares are based on the number of daily round-trip miles and cover all expenses, including fuel, insurance, maintenance, etc.

The table below shows the 2014 totals for each type of service WTA offers.

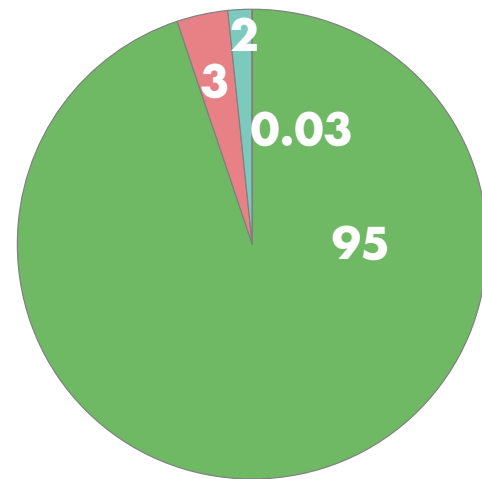
2014	Fixed Route	Paratransit	Zone	Vanpool
				
Boardings	4,972,217	191,487	1,824	77,324
Revenue Hours	129,869	59,551	1,106	11,089
Revenue Miles	1,788,497	813,181	27,015	613,789
Passenger Miles	17,592,201	1,108,273	36,840	3,270,066
Boardings per Hour	38.3	3.2	1.7	7.0
Passenger Miles per Hour	135.5	18.6	33.3	294.9
Passenger Miles per Boarding	3.5	5.8	20.2	42.3

Percentage of Total

Boardings

A boarding is counted each time a passenger steps onto a fixed route, paratransit, vanpool or zone service vehicle. Fixed route service represents 95% of all boardings.

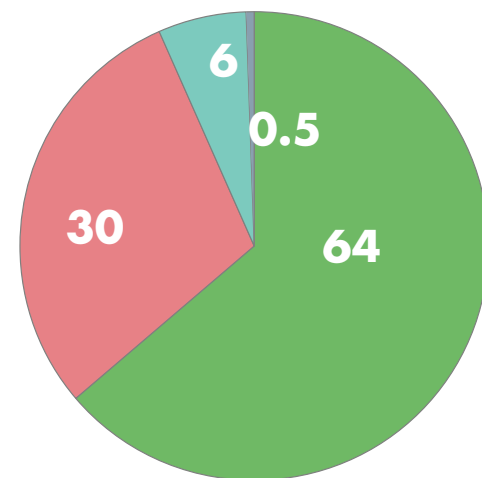
2014



Boardings

Revenue Hours

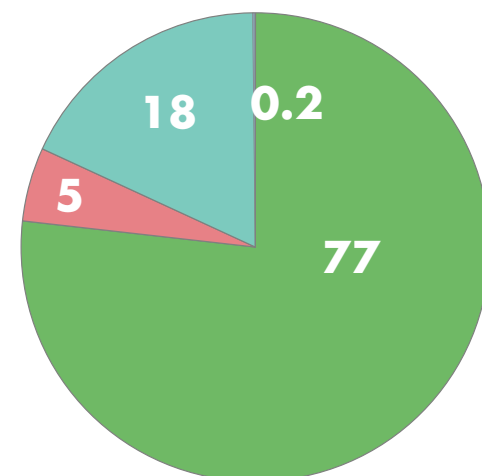
Revenue hours are number of hours the bus is in service, including layover time. Paratransit accounts for 3% of all boardings, yet it provides 30% of all revenue hours.



Revenue Hours

Passenger Miles

Passenger Miles is the distance ridden by passengers. For example, ten passengers riding for two miles equals 20 passenger miles. Although vanpool makes up only 2% of all boardings, it equals 18% of all passenger miles.



Passenger Miles

% of total



Boardings Comparison

2014 vs. 2013

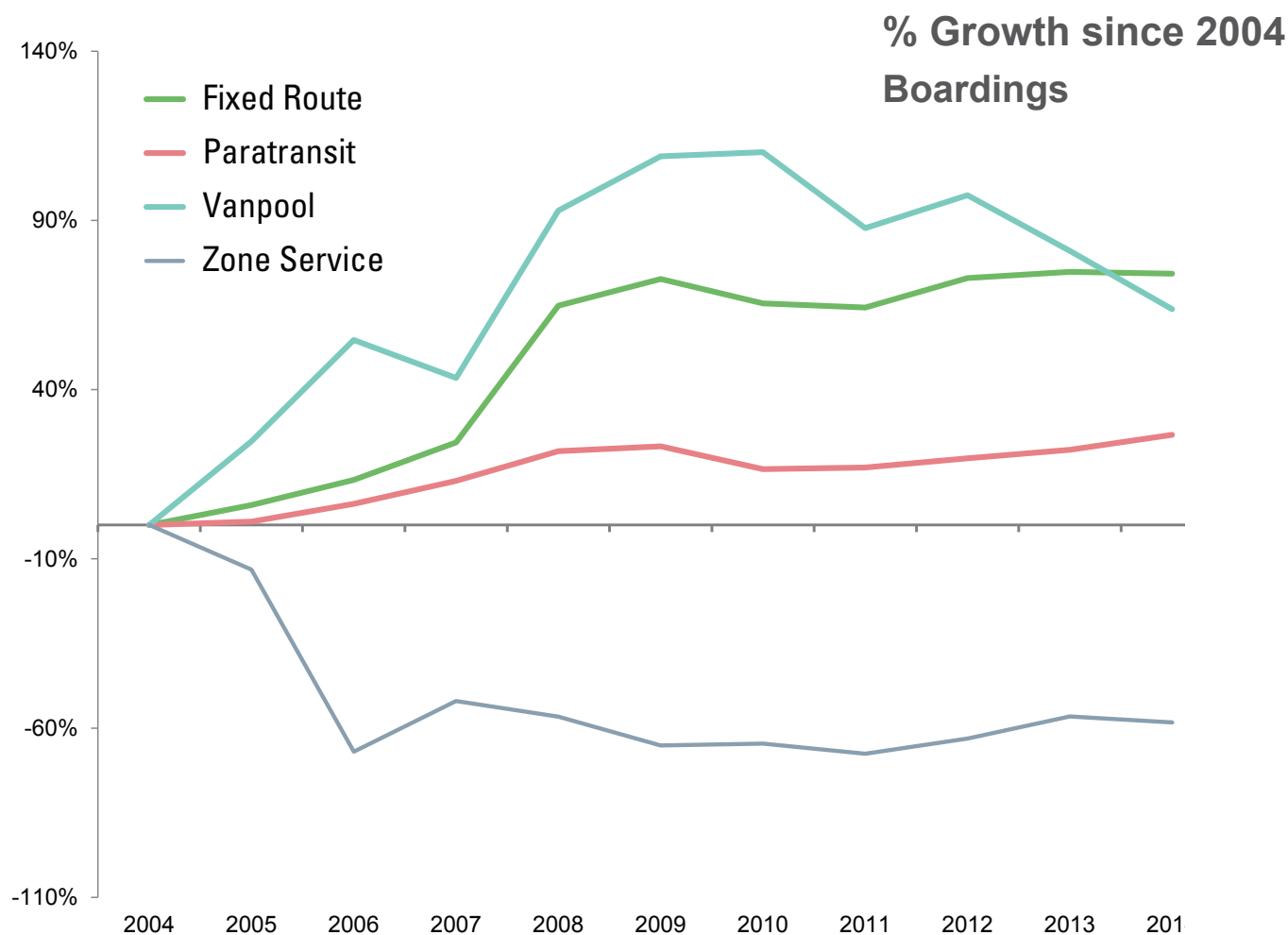
Paratransit boardings increased by 5% while the other modes had decreases in boardings. Fixed route boardings were down -0.3%, vanpool boardings were down -9% and zone service boardings were down -4%.

	2014	2013	Diff.
Fixed Route	4,972,217	4,986,650	-0.3%
Paratransit	191,487	182,892	5%
Vanpool	77,324	85,439	-9%
Zone Service	1,824	1,901	-4%

10-Year Growth

Of the four types of service, fixed route has seen the largest percentage increase in boardings compared to 2004. The graph below shows the growth in boardings since 2004.

	2014	2004	Diff.
Fixed Route	4,972,217	2,853,050	74%
Paratransit	191,487	146,808	30%
Vanpool	77,324	47,206	64%
Zone Service	1,824	4,374	-58%



Fixed Route Overview

Fixed routes provide service to designated bus stops using large transit buses. WTA offers 30 fixed routes. Service is offered seven days a week, with more limited service on Saturdays and Sundays.

In 2014, there were 14,433 fewer boardings than 2013. This is not surprising since we have not expanded the total number of revenue hours and the average gas price was lower in 2014.

The data for passenger miles is collected by surveyors through a random sampling of all trips. In 2014, passenger miles were up 11% most likely due to a higher number of long distance routes that were randomly selected.

	2014	2013	Diff.
Boardings	4,972,217	4,986,650	-0.3%
Revenue Hours	129,869	130,117	-0.2%
Revenue Miles	1,788,497	1,777,273	0.6%
Passenger Miles	17,592,201	15,833,752	11%
Boardings per Hour	38.3	38.3	0.0%
Pass. Mi. per Hour	135.5	121.7	11%
Pass. Mi. per Boarding	3.5	3.18	10%

-0.3%

decrease in
boardings
from 2013.

38.3

boardings
per hour in
2014.

3.5

pax. miles per
boardings in
2014.



Fixed Route History

In 2002, voters approved a WTA sales tax increase of 0.6 percent which offset lost revenue from Motor Vehicle Excise taxes.

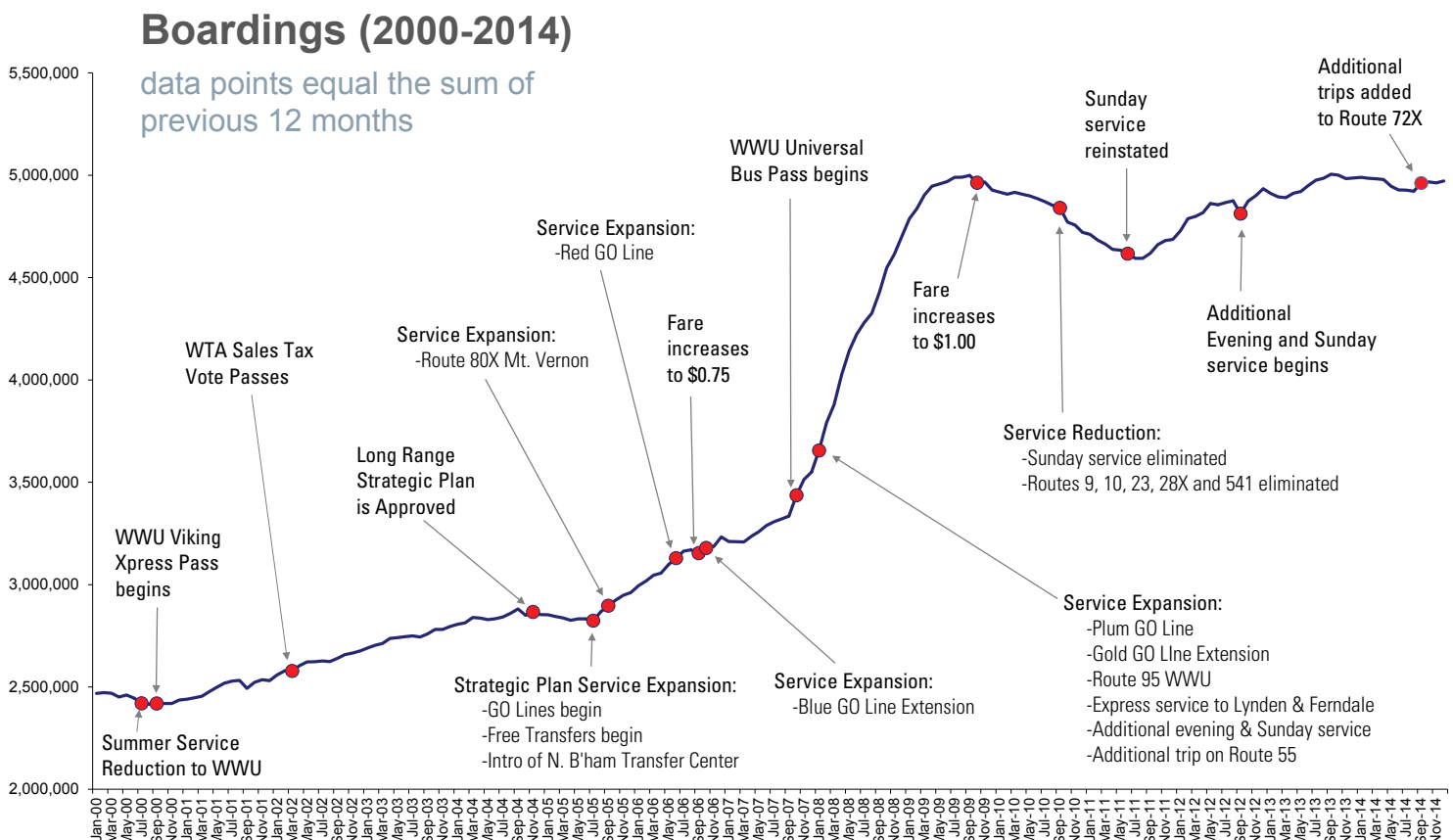
In 2005, WTA introduced major changes to its service, including the introduction of high frequency corridors (Go Lines) and expanded service to a number of areas.

In 2007, Western Washington University (WWU) and WTA entered into an agreement for a universal bus pass for students.

In 2008, WTA expanded service by 10%. This included creation of a new GO Line, extension of an existing GO Line, and additional service to WWU, Blaine, Birch Bay, Lynden and Ferndale.

In 2010, a 14% service cut was necessitated by reduced revenues due to the recession. Approximately half of that was restored less than a year later due to funding from Bellingham's Transportation Benefit District.

On the graph below, each data point represents the total boardings for the previous 12 months.

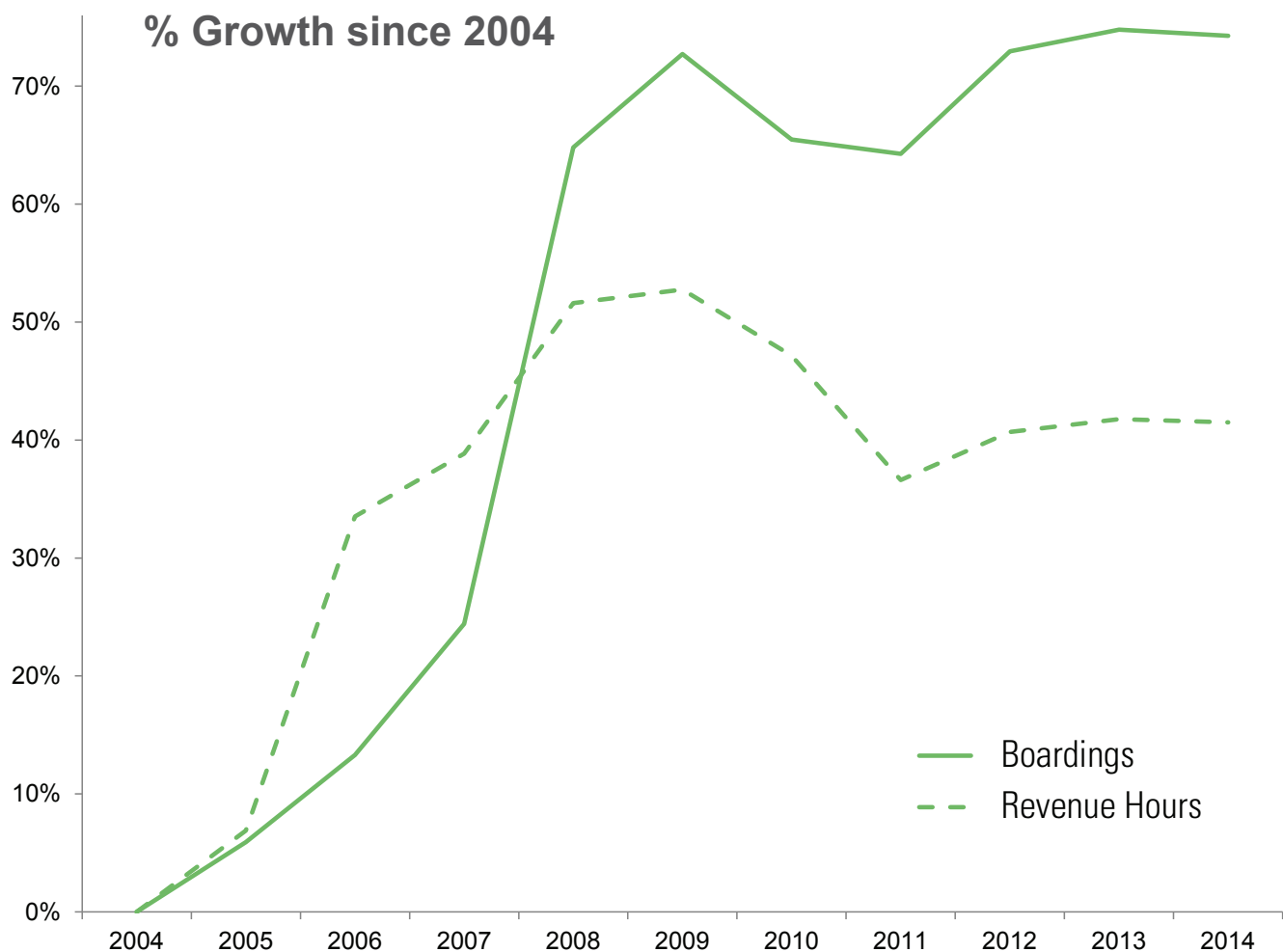


Fixed Route Growth

10-Year Growth

The strategic plan was implemented in 2005 which included a large increase in revenue hours. As shown in the graph below, it took several years for the growth in boardings to increase at a faster rate than revenue hours. The large increase in boardings from 2007 to 2008 is due to the introduction of the WWU universal bus pass.

	2014	2004	Diff.
Boardings	4,972,217	2,853,050	74%
Rev. Hours	129,869	91,785	41%



Fixed Route Productivity

Productivity is monitored for each route, as well as the system as a whole, in two ways: boardings per revenue hour and passenger miles per hour.

Boardings per revenue hour is a good measure of how efficient a route is in urban areas. Passenger miles per hour is an important measurement for routes that travel through rural areas. Rural routes have passengers traveling long distances and fewer passengers getting on and off.

Below is a route productivity matrix which evaluates each route by both standards.

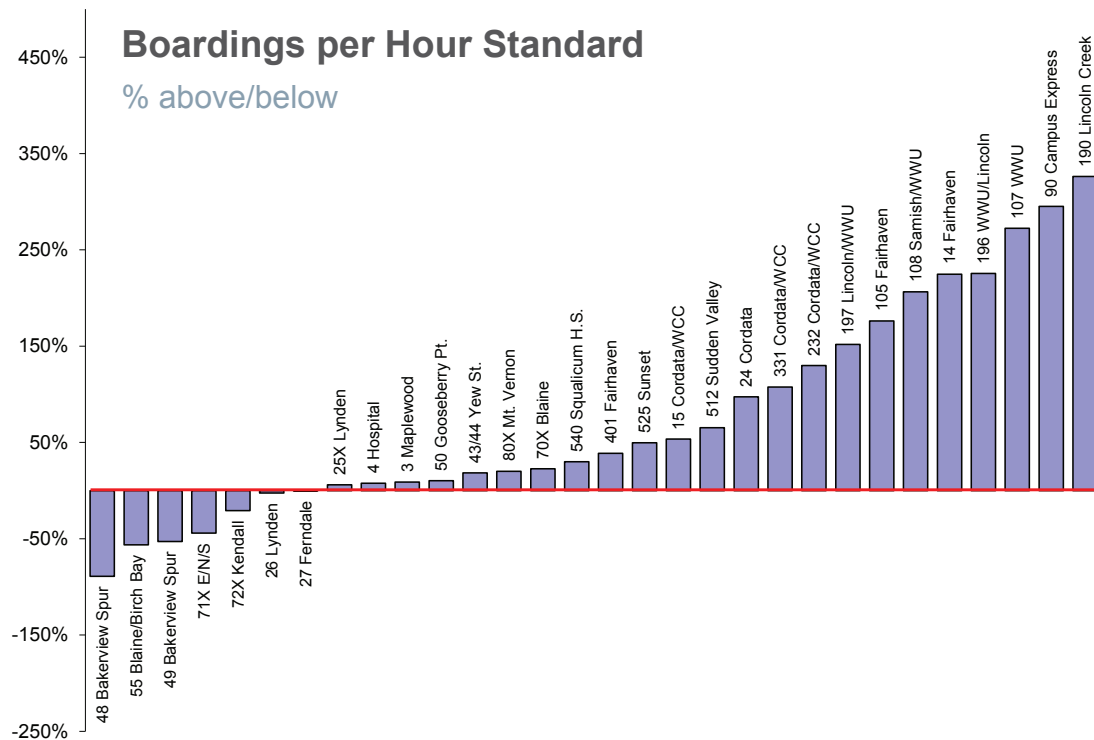
As stated in the 2005 Strategic Plan, a route is considered failing if it is below both 50% of average boardings per revenue hour *and* 75% of average passenger miles per revenue hour for a given year. The routes in the black box are those routes that are considered failing.

Routes displayed in the grey boxes are considered on the "watch list". A route is on the watch list if it is below both 75% of average boardings per revenue hour *and* 100% of average passenger miles per revenue hour.

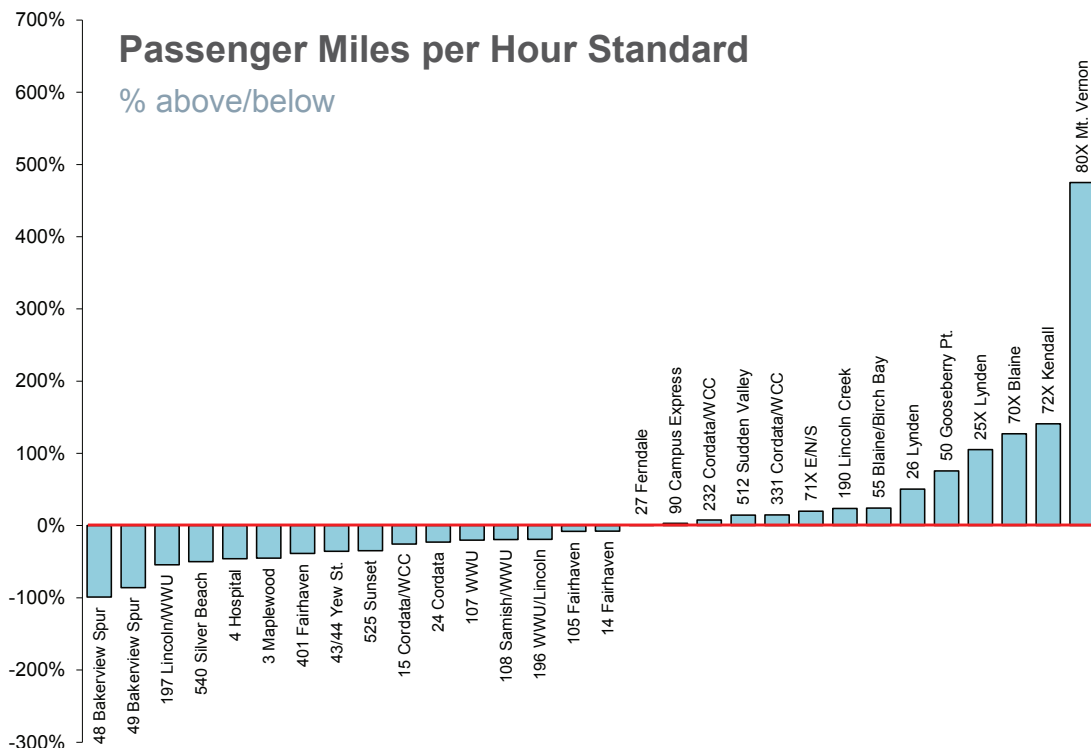
		Boardings per Hour		
% of System Average		Less than 50% (0-19.1)	Between 50-74% (19.2-28.6)	75% & Above (28.7+)
Passenger Miles per Hour	100% & Above (135.5)	26 Lynden 72X Kendall	25X Lynden 50 Gooseberry Pt 70X Blaine 80X Mt. Vernon	NONE
	Between 75-99% (101.6-135.4)	27 Ferndale 55 Blaine/Birch Bay 71X E/N/S	NONE	90 WWU 190 Lincoln Creek 232 Cordata/WCC 331 Cordata/WCC 512 Sudden Valley
	Less than 75% (0-101.5)	48 Bakerview Spur 49 Bakerview Spur	3 Maplewood/Hospital 4 Hospital/Maplewood 43/44 Yew St 401 Fairhaven 540 Squalicum H.S.	14 Fairhaven 15 Cordata/WCC 24 Cordata 105 Fairhaven 107 WWU/Samish 108 Samish/WWU 196 WWU/Lincoln 197 Lincoln/WWU 525 Sunset

Productivity Standards

The service standard for boardings per hour is at least **50%** of the system average of **38.3**.

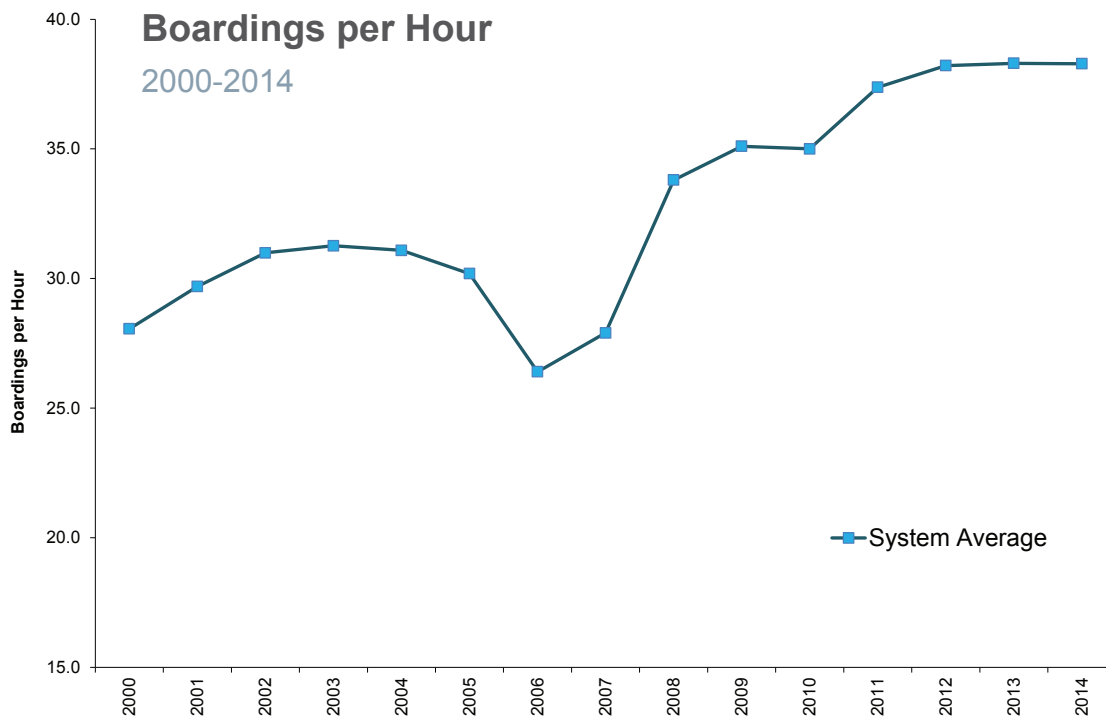


The service standard for passenger miles per hour is at least **75%** of the system average of **135.5**.

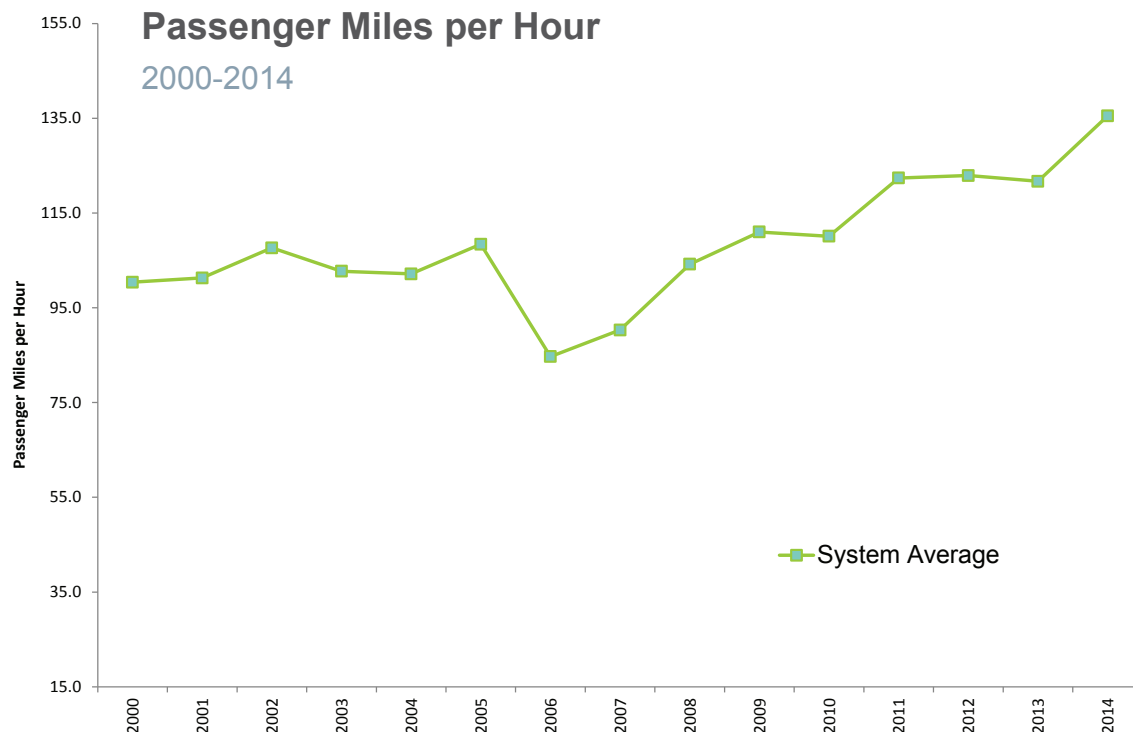


Productivity History

In 2014, the fixed route system average was **38.3** boardings per hour, the same as 2013.



In 2014, the fixed route system average was **135.5** passenger miles per hour.



Fixed Route Fares

The fixed route cash fare is \$1.00 per ride. WTA offers reduced cost bus passes for seniors (65 and older) and people with disabilities. Those who qualify for reduced fare also receive a 50% cash fare discount.

The student bus pass is for students age 8 through college. Every WWU student registered for six or more credits is assessed a quarterly transportation fee of \$25.00. The fee covers a WTA bus pass and a WWU-operated late night shuttle service.

Fares

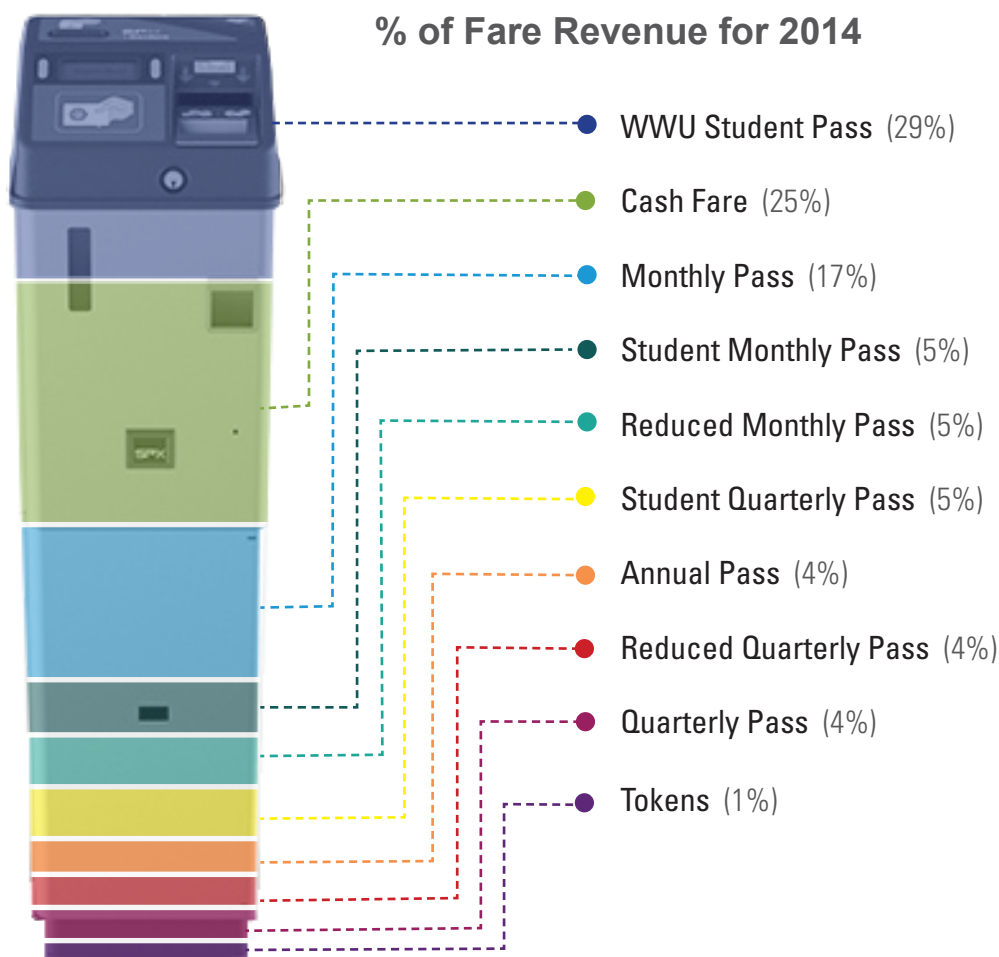
Single Ride	\$1
Reduced Fare Single Ride	\$0.50
Ages under 8 and 75+	Free
Monthly Pass	\$25
Quarterly Pass	\$70
Reduced Monthly Pass	\$13
Reduced Quarterly Pass	\$35
Student Monthly Pass	\$15
Student Quarterly Pass	\$40
Annual Pass	\$250
WWU Pass	*

* Every WWU student registered for six or more credits is assessed a quarterly transportation fee of \$25.00. The fee covers a WTA bus pass and a WWU-operated late night shuttle service.



Revenue by Fare Type

	2014	2013	Diff.
Cash Fare	\$677,780	\$684,249	-1%
WWU Student Pass	\$790,172	\$792,464	0%
Monthly Pass	\$452,450	\$462,300	-2%
Quarterly Pass	\$101,715	\$94,473	8%
Annual Pass	\$104,920	\$104,750	0.2%
Student Monthly Pass	\$140,550	\$148,245	-5%
Student Quarterly Pass	\$139,760	\$144,800	-3%
Reduced Monthly Pass	\$140,907	\$143,078	-2%
Reduced Quarterly Pass	\$112,490	\$105,490	7%
Tokens	\$33,270	\$51,530	-35%
Total	\$2,694,014	\$2,731,378	-1%



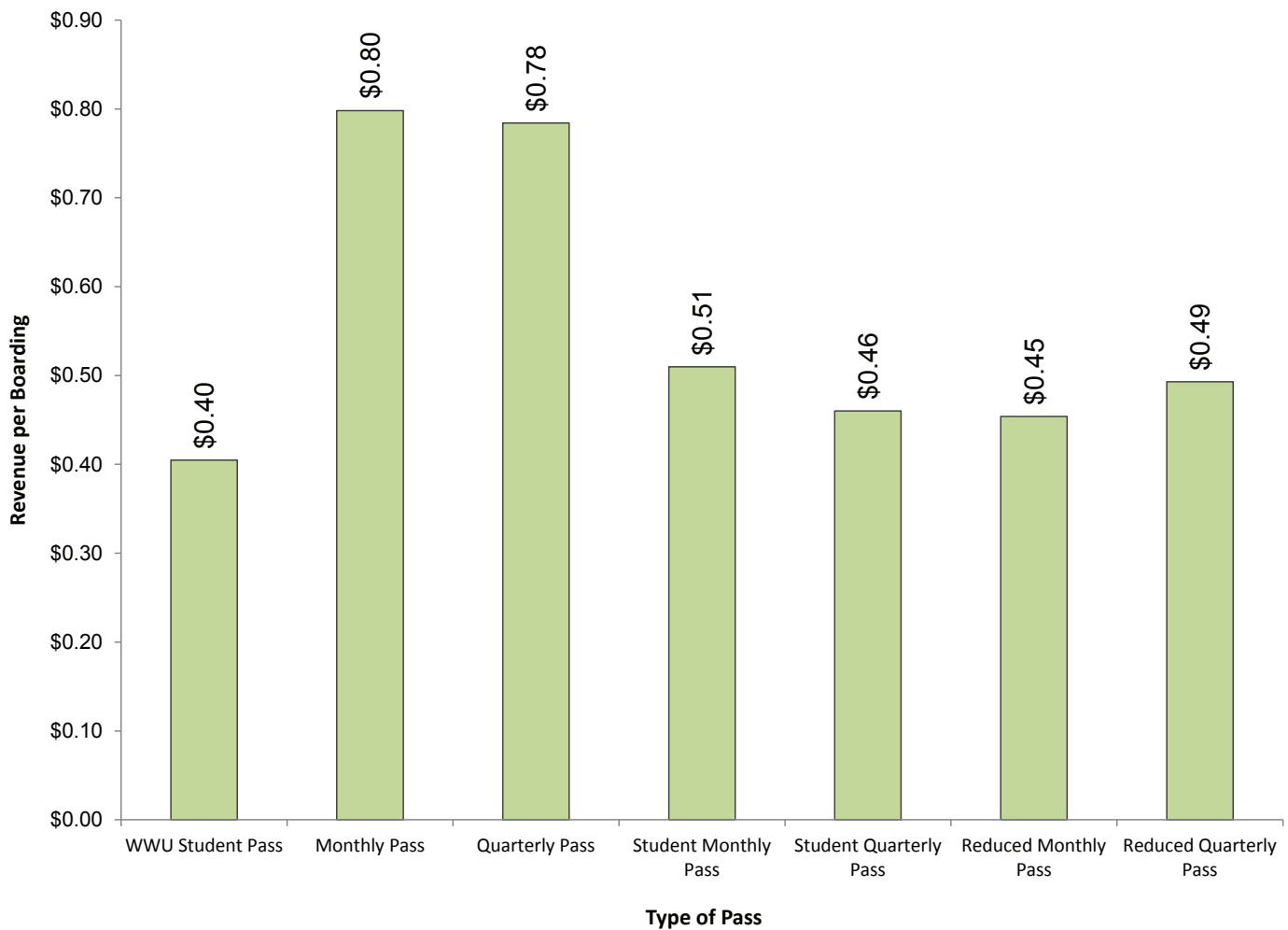
Revenue per Boarding

The graph below shows how much revenue is collected per boarding for each type of pass. The more times a person uses their pass, the cheaper each ride becomes.



Revenue per Boarding by Pass Type

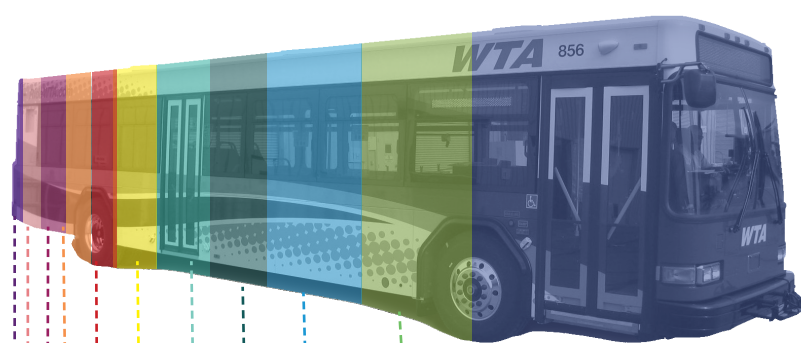
2014



Boardings by Fare Type

	2014	2013	Diff.
Cash Fare	617,511	616,086	0%
Reduced Fare	46,938	45,607	3%
Short Fare	17,393	16,233	7%
WWU Student Pass	1,951,982	1,932,383	1%
Monthly Pass	566,844	574,048	-1%
Quarterly Pass	129,714	127,784	2%
Annual Pass *	237,941	129,197	84%
Reduced Monthly Pass	310,385	319,287	-3%
Reduced Quarterly Pass	228,151	217,105	5%
Student Monthly Pass	275,688	294,105	-6%
Student Quarterly Pass	303,772	319,414	-5%
Free <8,>75, ST Pass	169,926	173,671	-2%
Pass Override	45,272	66,000	-31%
Tickets	23,619	56,009	-58%
Tokens	31,656	50,306	-37%
Other	15,425	49,415	-69%
Total	4,972,217	4,986,650	-0.3%

* The 2014 total boardings for the Annual Pass also included Free Day passes because of the change to our new farebox.



% of Boardings by Fare Type
2014

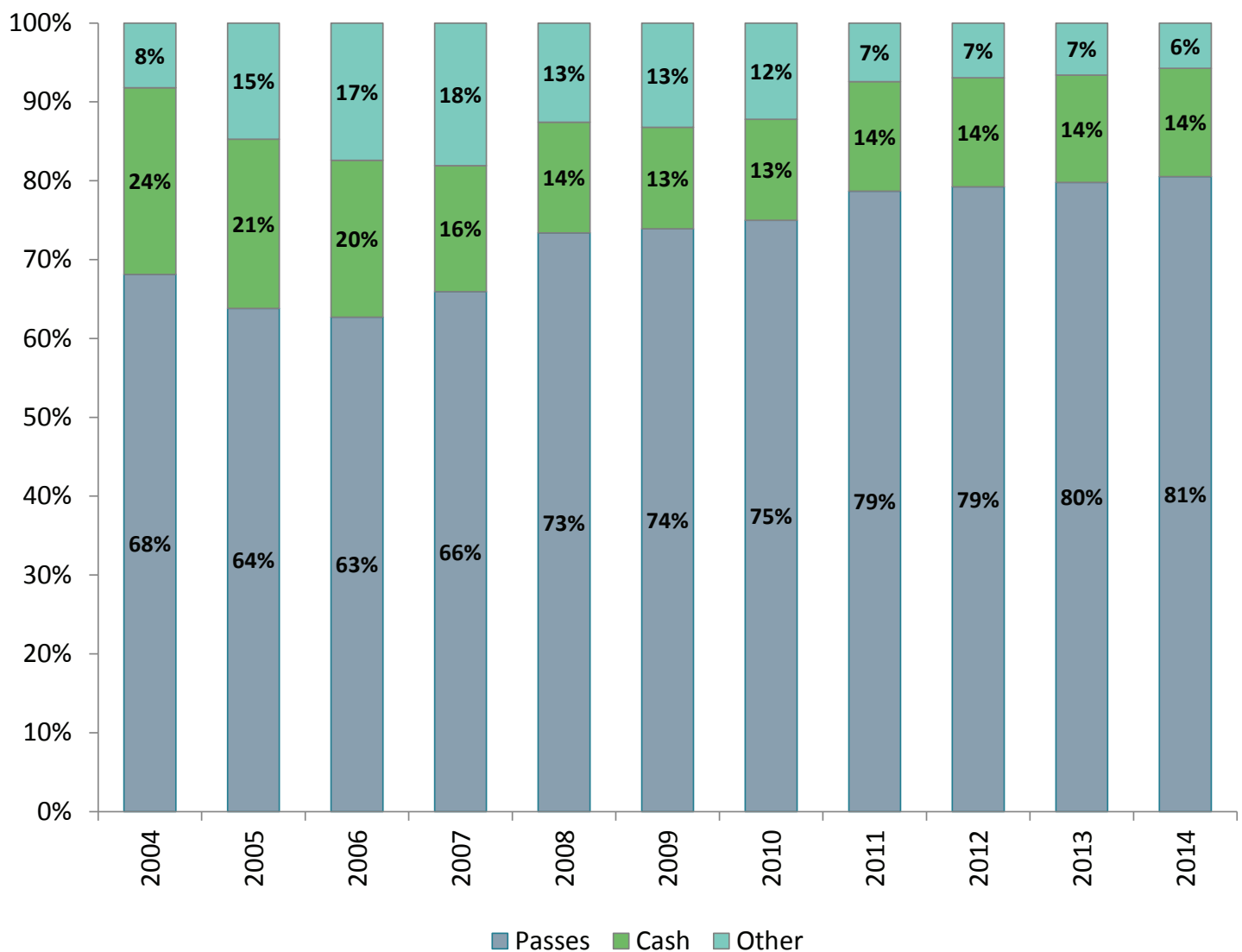
- WWU Student Pass (39%)
- Cash Fare (14%)
- Monthly Pass (11%)
- Student Monthly Pass (6%)
- Student Quarterly Pass (6%)
- Reduced Monthly Pass (6%)
- Reduced Quarterly Pass (5%)
- Annual Pass * (5%)
- Free (5%)
- Quarterly Pass (3%)
- Tokens (1%)

Cash vs Passes

The graph below shows the percentage of total boardings for passes, cash and all other boardings. The 'other' category includes tickets, tokens and free rides.

Boardings by Fare Type

(2004-2014)



On-Time Performance

Fixed route service standards for on-time performance were created in the 2005 Strategic Service Plan. The minimum standard for PM Peak trips (3 to 6 pm) is 90% on time. The minimum standard for AM Peak (7 to 10 am) and Non-Peak is 95% on time.

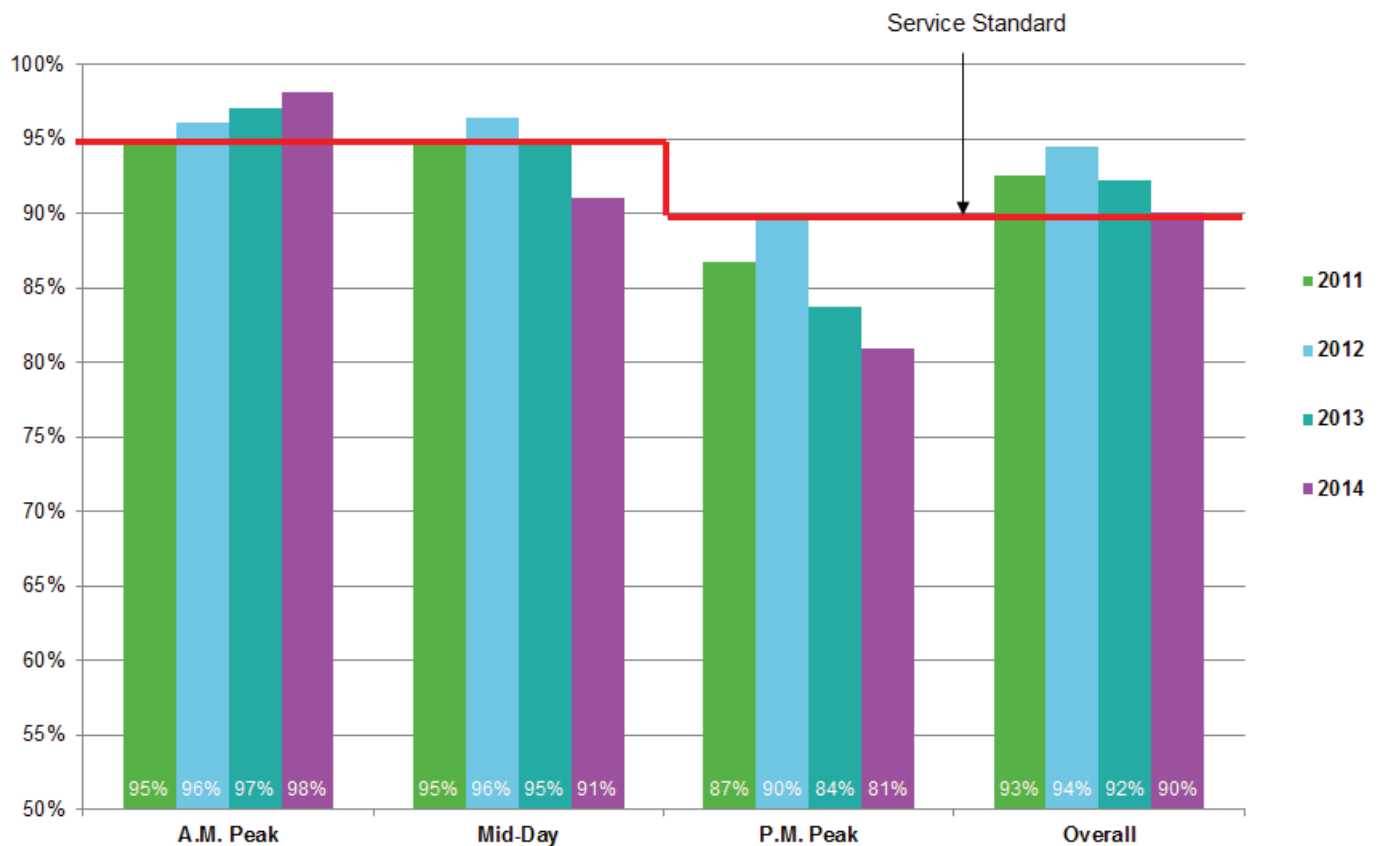
To be considered on time a bus must arrive at Bellingham Station or Cordata Station within five minutes of its scheduled arrival. Individual routes failing these standards are regularly re-viewed.

The graph below shows combined on-time performance data for Bellingham Station and Cordata Station.

Route 331 accounted for 28% of the late trips. In February 2015, we added time to Route 331's schedule to help address our on time problem.

On-Time Performance

(2011-2014)



Boardings by Route

Boardings	2014	2013	Diff.
3 Maplewood	75,256	73,569	2%
4 Hospital	75,148	74,606	1%
14 Fairhaven	493,083	491,160	0.4%
15 Cordata/WCC	223,301	233,723	-4%
24 Cordata	59,058	61,298	-4%
25X Lynden	13,191	11,672	13%
26 Lynden	70,548	73,592	-4%
27 Ferndale	97,160	95,045	2%
43/44 Yew St.	61,597	63,530	-3%
46 Squalicum Harbor	n/a	4,251	n/a
48 Bakerview Spur	873	982	-11%
49 Bakerview Spur	8,596	8,815	-2%
50 Gooseberry Pt.	73,648	79,326	-7%
55 Blaine/Birch Bay	25,315	26,951	-6%
70X Blaine	52,678	54,270	-3%
71X E/N/S	29,431	29,403	0.1%
72X Kendall	57,519	57,798	-0.5%
80X Mt. Vernon	50,418	51,798	-3%
80X Shuttle	23,436	23,357	0.3%
90 Lincoln Creek	262,308	263,934	-1%
105 Fairhaven	388,800	402,280	-3%
107 WWU	216,742	215,629	1%
108 Samish/WWU	153,197	142,354	8%
190 Lincoln Creek	500,598	496,830	1%
196 WWU/Lincoln	106,242	105,954	0.3%
197 Lincoln/WWU	38,517	38,228	1%
232 Cordata/WCC	561,529	554,994	1%
331 Cordata/WCC	712,731	705,020	1%
401 Fairhaven	210,713	216,832	-3%
512 Sudden Valley	118,223	123,366	-4%
525 Sunset	123,943	117,928	5%
540 Squalicum H.S.	88,418	88,155	0.3%
Total	4,972,217	4,986,650	-0.3%

Revenue Hours by Route

Revenue Hours	2014	2013	Diff.
3 Maplewood	3,609	3,609	0%
4 Hospital	3,647	3,647	0%
14 Fairhaven	7,415	7,529	-2%
15 Cordata/WCC	7,598	7,562	0.5%
24 Cordata	1,562	1,562	0%
25X Lynden	650	650	0%
26 Lynden	3,778	3,778	0%
27 Ferndale	5,083	5,129	-0.9%
43/44 Yew St.	2,717	2,890	-6%
46 Squalicum Harbor	n/a	524	n/a
48 Bakerview Spur	413	413	0%
49 Bakerview Spur	952	879	8%
50 Gooseberry Pt.	3,485	3,485	0%
55 Blaine/Birch Bay	3,028	2,985	1%
70X Blaine	2,241	2,240	0%
71X E/N/S	2,752	2,702	2%
72X Kendall	3,790	3,478	9%
80X Mt. Vernon	2,194	2,193	0%
80X Shuttle	311	369	-16%
90 Lincoln Creek	3,620	3,575	1%
105 Fairhaven	6,932	7,121	-3%
107 WWU	3,039	3,013	0.9%
108 Samish/WWU	2,550	2,275	12%
190 Lincoln Creek	5,765	6,070	-5%
196 WWU/Lincoln	1,704	1,664	2%
197 Lincoln/WWU	799	799	0%
232 Cordata/WCC	12,757	12,731	0.2%
331 Cordata/WCC	17,929	17,752	1%
401 Fairhaven	7,937	7,887	0.6%
512 Sudden Valley	3,734	3,733	0%
525 Sunset	4,323	4,320	0.1%
540 Squalicum H.S.	3,554	3,554	0%
Total	129,869	130,117	-0.2%

Paratransit Overview

As required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), WTA provides paratransit service within 0.75 miles of all fixed routes. Paratransit provides curb-to-curb minibus service for people whose disability prevents them from riding fixed route buses. You must qualify and be approved to ride.

There were 2,835 individual riders in 2013, 12 more than 2012, and on average they took 3 more trips per year.



	2014	2013	
Boardings	191,487	182,892	5%
Revenue Hours	59,551	59,211	1%
Revenue Miles	813,181	804,354	1%
Passenger Miles	1,108,273	1,011,564	10%
Boardings per Hour	3.2	3.1	4%
Pax Miles per Hour	18.6	17.1	9%
Pax Mi. per Boarding	5.8	5.5	5%

5%

increase in
boardings
from 2013.

340

additional
revenue hours
in 2014.



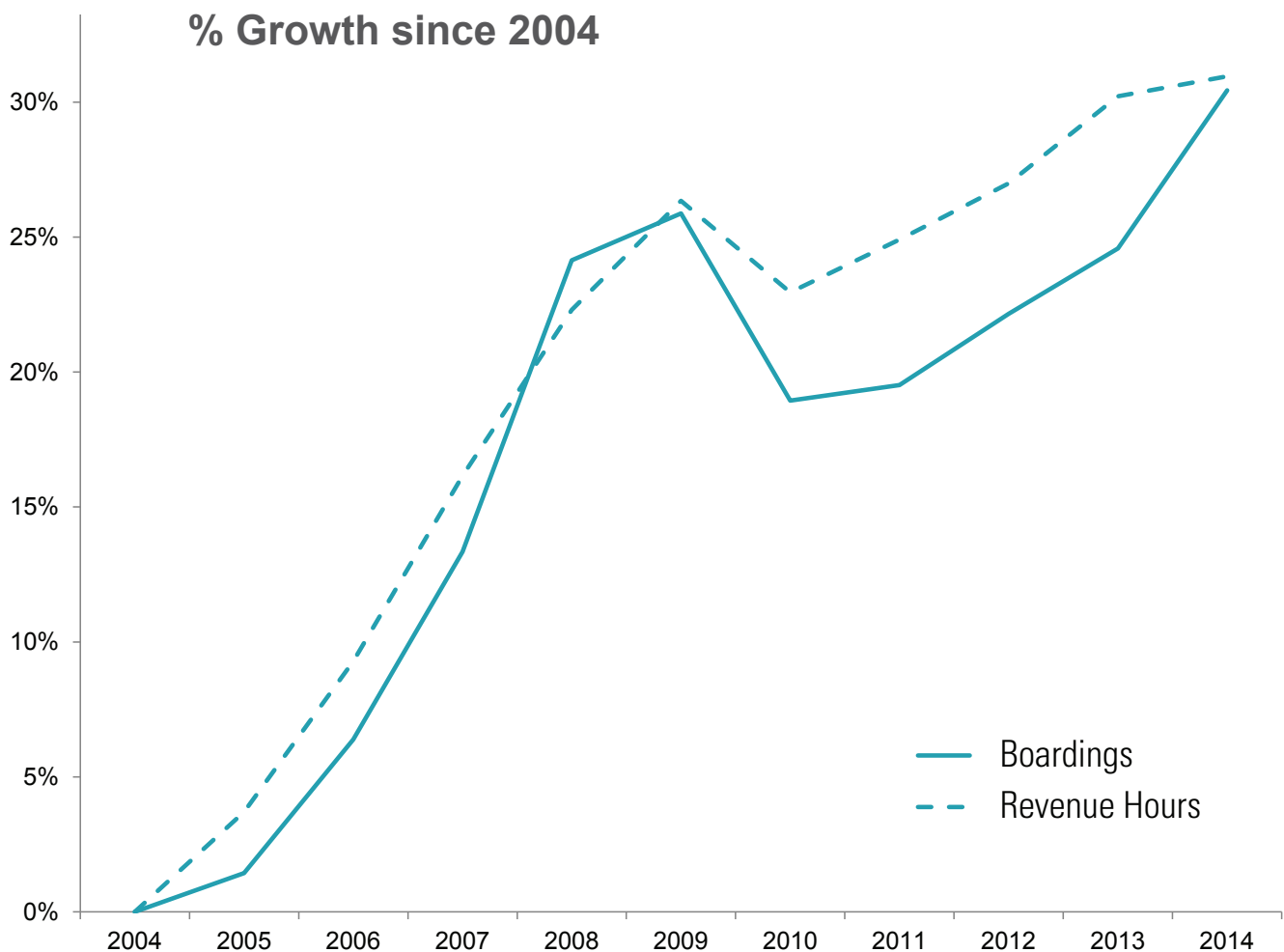
3.2

**boardings per
hour** in 2014.

10-Year Growth

Sunday paratransit service was eliminated September 19, 2010 and restored June 12, 2011 which accounts for the dip in ridership and revenue hours.

	2014	2004	Diff.
Boardings	191,487	146,808	30%
Rev. Hours	59,551	45,472	31%



Zone Service Overview

Zone service provides residents of rural Whatcom County with limited service to Cordata Station and Bellingham Station. There are no eligibility requirements; the service is available to everyone. Service to each zone is only offered on one or two days per week.



	2014	2013	Diff.
Boardings	1,824	1,901	-4%
Revenue Hours	1,106	1,220	-9%
Revenue Miles	27,015	30,352	-11%
Passenger Miles	36,840	39,912	-8%
Boardings per Hour	1.65	1.55	6%
Pax Miles per Hour	33.3	32.7	2%
Pax Mi. per Boarding	20	21	-4%

-4%

decrease in
boardings
from 2013.

20

passenger
miles per
boarding in
2014.

1.65

boardings per
hour in 2014.

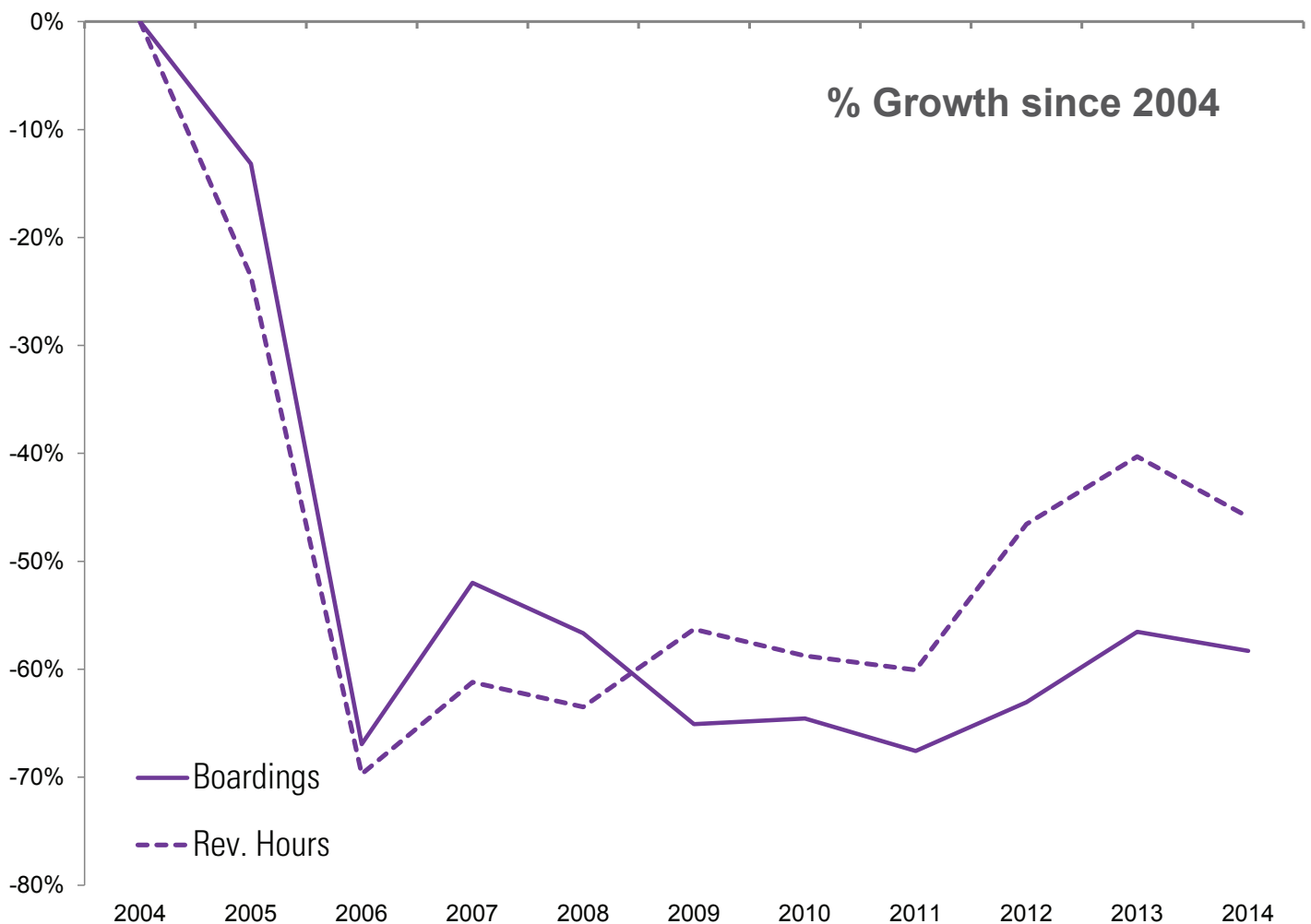


Zone Service Growth

10-Year Growth

When the strategic plan was implemented in 2005, Zone service was reduced.

	2014	2004	Diff.
Boardings	1,824	4,374	-58%
Rev. Hours	1,106	2,044	-46%



Vanpool Overview

WTA manages a fleet of passenger vans for vanpooling. These vans are leased to commuter groups who pay a fare based on monthly travel distance and the number of passengers. Fares cover all fuel, maintenance, insurance and vehicle costs.

WTA provides support services for vanpool group formation, vehicle maintenance and driver orientation.



	2014	2013	Diff.
Boardings	77,324	85,439	-9%
Revenue Hours	11,089	12,435	-11%
Revenue Miles	613,789	693,971	-12%
Passenger Miles	3,270,066	3,698,700	-12%
Boardings per Hour	7.0	6.9	1%
Pax Miles per Hour	295	297	-1%
Pax Mi. per Boarding	42.3	43.3	-2%

-9%

decrease in
boardings
from 2014.

42.3

passenger miles
per boarding in
2014.

295

passenger
miles per
hour in 2014.



10-Year Growth

The average vanpool commute was 85 miles round-trip in 2014. The average commute distance has grown over the years as vans commute out of Whatcom County. In the last 10 years, the average number of vans in service has grown from 13 to 31.

	2014	2004	Diff.
Boardings	77,324	47,206	64%
Rev. Hours	11,089	4,604	141%
Pax Mi. per Boarding	42	35	21%
Vans in Service	31	13	138%

