

Ridership Report

The transit industry defines ridership as the number of passengers who board public transportation vehicles—called unlinked passenger trips. Ridership measures transit utilization at the system, route, mode and service type level.

A passenger is counted each time when boarding a vehicle no matter how many vehicles are used to travel from trip origin to destination. Riders are counted whether a fare is paid or not. For example, a rider not required to pay a fare such as a personal care attendant or a young child is counted in the ridership totals.

Factors that Affect Fixed-Route Ridership

The following provides some of the major factors that effect a travelers decision to ride fixed-route transit:

- **Frequency**—What is the waiting time between buses? Can I walk to the bus stop and expect a vehicle to arrive within a short time?
- **Connections and accessibility**—How well does the system network across the service area? Will I be able to easily connect to other routes in a timely manner? Is there a safe, connected, accessible sidewalk available?
- **Travel time**—How long will it take to get there (including the time I have to wait)? How does the travel time compare to other modes of travel options available to me?
- **Travel cost**—What does the service cost compared to other travel mode options?
- **Service area coverage**—Where does service go? Does the service go where there are lots of people and places? Are people able to access transit easily?
- **Reliability**—Is the service on-time? How likely is the bus to arrive at the time scheduled?
- **Span of service**—What is the duration of the service? Will I be able to go when I want and get back when I want?
- **Comfort, safety and other amenities**—How comfortable is the ride (seating, cleanliness)? Are there safe places to wait that are well lit? Is there access to WiFi and other services?

VIA Fixed-route and Vanpool Ridership Goals

VIA's goals for fixed-route and vanpool service ridership are to increase ridership by retaining existing customers and attracting new riders.

Factors that Effect ADA Complementary Paratransit Ridership

VIAtrans is provided for people whose disability prevents them from riding the fixed route services as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Ridership is heavily effected by the ADA service requirements. ADA complementary paratransit requirements are as follows:

- **Eligibility**—ADA complementary paratransit is for:
 - People whose disability prevents them from using the fixed route service
 - People who can use the fixed route but the fixed route vehicle, or the bus stop is inaccessible
 - People whose disability prevents them from traveling to or from the bus stop or station due to obstacles that impede them
- **Travel cost**—ADA provides that the fare for paratransit cannot exceed twice (2 times) the non-discounted adult fare for a similar trip at the same time of day on the regular fixed-route system. A personal care attendant (someone who provides assistance to the ADA eligible rider) shall not be charged a fare. The fare for a companion is the same as for the ADA eligible paratransit rider. VIAtrans fare is \$2.00. VIA's non-discounted adult fixed-route fare is \$1.30.
- **Service area and span of service**—ADA regulations require transit agencies that operate fixed-route transit to also provide ADA complementary paratransit service within the same service area as the local fixed-routes. Service area generally includes a 3/4 -mile corridor on either side of local bus routes and around transit centers. ADA regulations also require transit agencies to provide complementary paratransit the same hours and days of service (span of service) as the local fixed-routes.
- **Advanced reservation**—ADA states that complementary paratransit service must be scheduled at least one (1) day in advance. Real-time/ same day scheduling is permitted but not required. ADA allows a premium (higher) fare to be charged for same day trips.
- **Reliability and capacity**—Transit agencies must not have an operational pattern or practice that limits the availability of complementary paratransit service to ADA eligible customers. Transit agencies must serve requests for all trip purposes. Transit agencies must operate without a substantial number of untimely pick-ups, missed trips, excessive trip-lengths, and excessive telephone hold times.

VIA ADA Complementary Paratransit Ridership Goals

VIA's goal for ADA complementary paratransit ridership is to balance service quality with service sustainability, ensuring that all trip requests are provided for qualified individuals.