

Service by Type

There are five basic types of transit service:

Urban Local: fixed route radial and cross-town bus routes that operate primarily in the central cities.

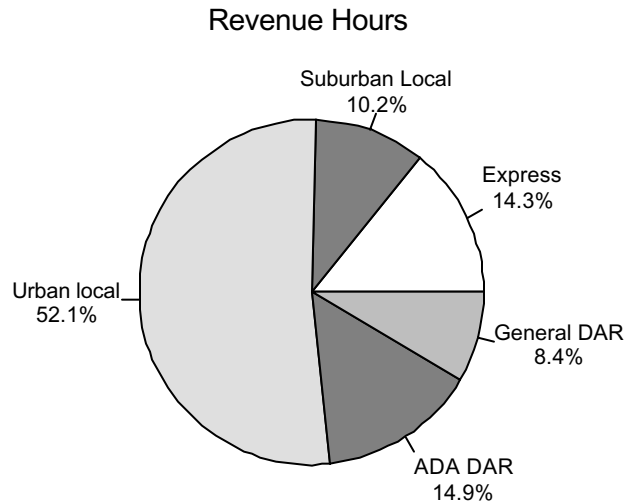
Suburban Local: fixed route radial and cross-town bus routes that operate primarily in the suburban areas.

Express Service: routes that travel non-stop on highways for four or more miles.

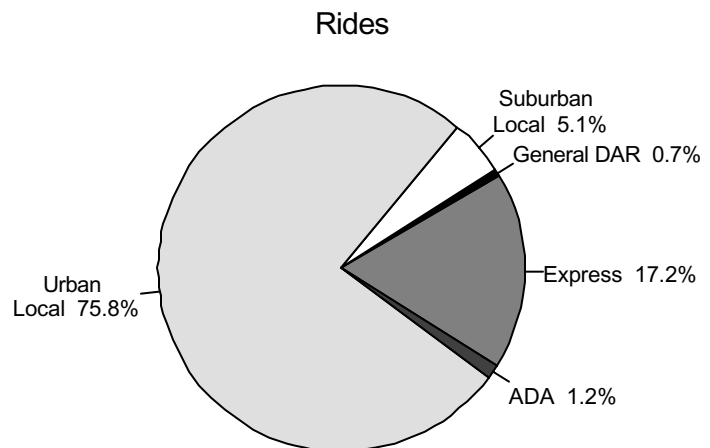
General Purpose Dial-a-Ride: services where passengers board and arrive at pre-arranged times at any location within the system's service area. In the Twin Cities, these services are provided in areas with densities too low to be served with regular route service or in cities that have chosen specifically to provide this service.

ADA Dial-a-Ride: services provided especially for persons with disabilities that prevent them from using the regular route transit system. Passengers board and arrive at pre-arranged times at any location within the system's service area.

Revenue hours are the number of hours that buses are in service to the public. About half of transit hours are for urban local service and about half for all other types of service.



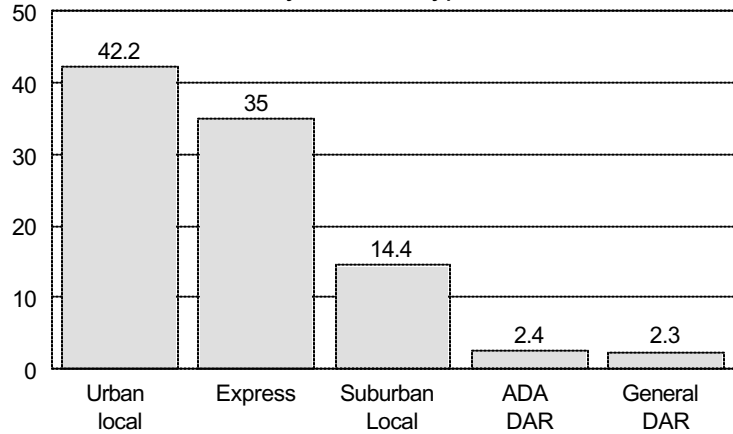
Although only about half of the revenue hours are for urban local service, urban local service generates about three-quarters of the passenger trips.



About half of transit service is urban local service. This service currently generates about 75% of transit ridership. Express service is currently about 14% of transit service but generates 17% of ridership and is the fastest growing segment of ridership.

These types of service carry different numbers of passengers per hour of service. Efficiencies are highest in urban locations where population and job densities are the highest and where the highest numbers of transit-dependent populations live. Express service has the next highest efficiency, as riders typically gather at a park-and-ride location, but have long line haul trips. Suburban local efficiency is much lower than urban local service due to the lower densities of population, jobs, and persons who are dependent on transit. Dial-a-ride service has the lowest productivity due to the point-to-point nature of the service. General dial-a-ride service is also provided in rural areas, which can result in long trip lengths.

Passengers Per Revenue Hour
By Service Type



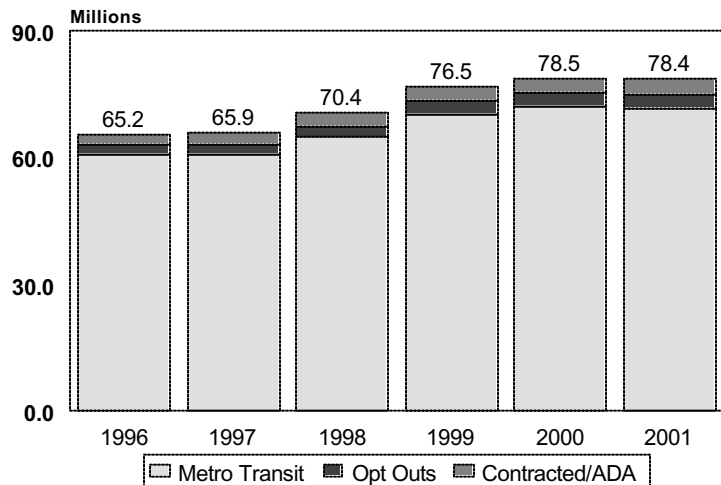
Metropolitan Council

Service efficiency depends on the type of service and area served. Local service in denser urban areas generates more passengers than local service in less dense suburban areas. Express service is less efficient due to its longer trip lengths. Dial-a-ride service is least efficient due to the point-to-point nature of its service.

Ridership

Annual transit ridership in the seven county area increased 13.2 million rides from 1996 to 2001 even though ridership growth was flat from 2000 to 2001 due to a fare increase.

Transit Ridership



Twin Cities Ridership	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	1996-2001
Opt-Outs	2,319,129	2,446,142	2,687,314	3,020,546	3,245,370	3,377,941	45.7%
Contracted	864,579	1,240,096	1,528,923	1,723,089	1,817,635	1,872,129	116.5%
Community-based	366,463	388,161	367,123	361,245	380,978	369,365	0.8%
Metro Mobility/ADA	1,174,493	1,197,052	1,183,579	1,164,861	1,204,805	1,223,298	4.2%
Metro Transit	60,466,548	60,623,266	64,644,231	70,268,727	71,840,231	71,570,739	18.4%
Total	65,191,212	65,894,717	70,411,170	76,538,468	78,489,019	78,413,472	20.3%

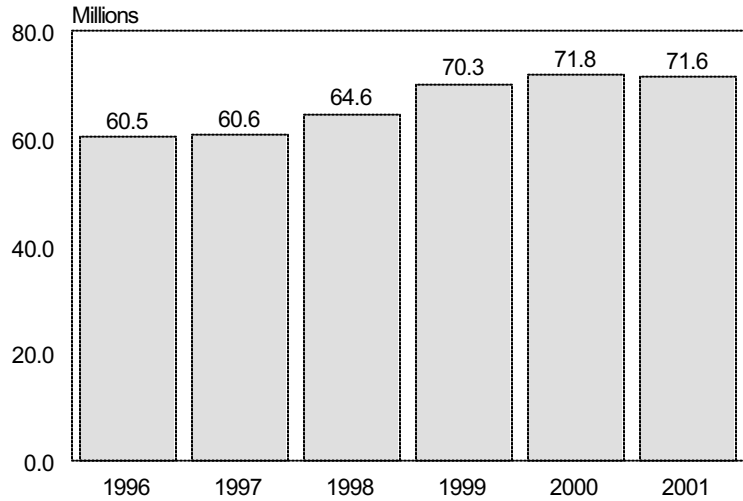
The region has seen substantial transit ridership growth.

Ridership by provider

Metro Transit has provided the majority of the increased ridership in the region by adding 11.1 million rides from 1996 to 2001. This is an 18.4% increase in ridership over the last six years.

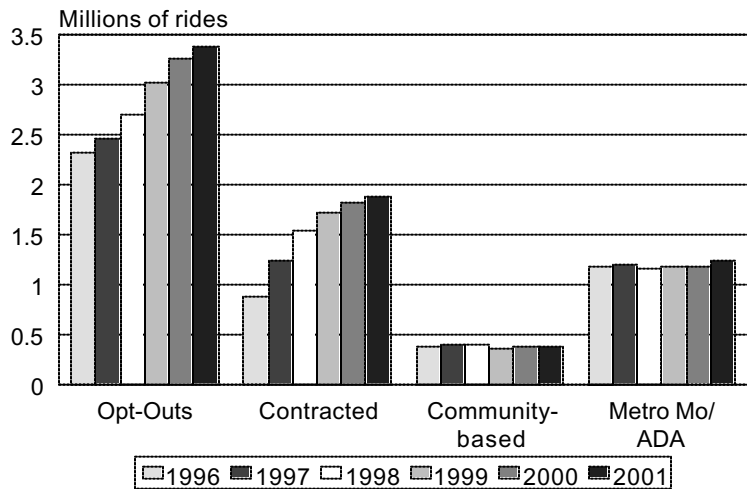
Ridership growth was flat from 2000 to 2001 due to a 25-cent fare increase offsetting ridership growth.

Metro Transit Ridership



Other parts of the transit system have also shown growth. Opt out and contracted services ridership has shown steady growth (46% for opt outs and 116% for contracted services) over the last six years for the same reasons that overall ridership has been increasing.

Regional Transit Ridership



Community-based dial-a-ride programs in rural areas and a selected number of cities have seen little growth in part because there has been relatively little population growth in rural areas. In addition, new regular routes have met some demand. Also, funding levels have not increased appreciably, maintaining flat levels of carrying capacity.

Metro Mobility and ADA programs have also seen little growth during this time. Federal regulations have required all regular route buses to be accessible to persons with disabilities, providing an alternative to the Metro Mobility program. By 2004, the total bus system will be accessible to persons with disabilities.

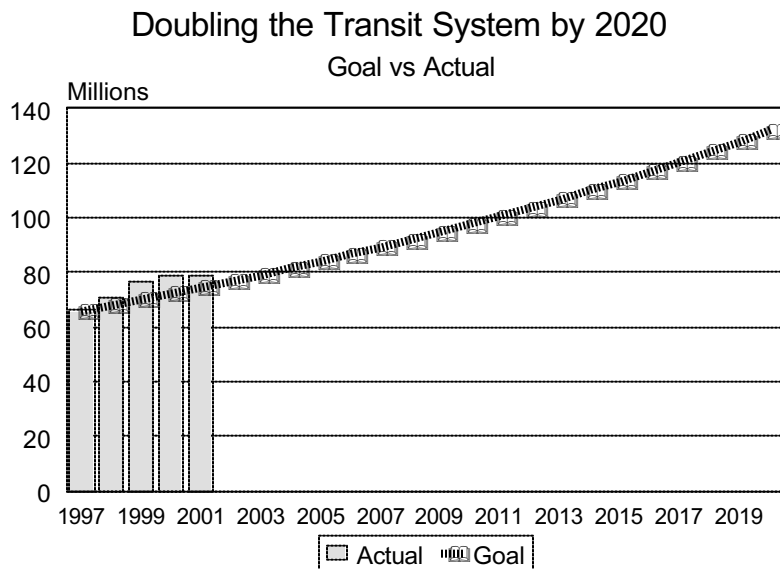
Metro Transit has provided the largest amount of ridership growth in the region over the last six years. Opt Out and Contracted services have also seen substantial growth while Metro Mobility and Community-based programs have had stable ridership levels.

There are many reasons for this substantial transit ridership growth:

- Population growth – In 1990, the region had 2,288,000 people. In 2000, it had 2,642,000, a growth of 640,000 people, or 15% (1.5% annual growth).
- Employment growth – From 1996 to 2000, employment increased 10.2%, from 1,452,316 to 1,599,914 persons, or an increase of 147,598 persons employed.
- Increasing congestion providing an incentive for person to take transit – From 1996 to 1999, the number of freeway lane miles that are congested increased from 45% to 55%. Per capita hours of delay increased 13-fold between 1982 and 1999.
- Business transit incentives – The Metropolitan Council began an aggressive plan of enrolling businesses to provide discount bus passes to employees as part of their benefit packages. This program was funded through a combination of federal and state funds.
- Transit can be faster than driving – The region has invested in changes to the freeway system, which result in time advantages for transit. This includes 29 locations with shoulder bus lanes, 113 ramp meter bypasses, and two high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes. These advantages allow buses to bypass congestion and move faster than automobile traffic.
- Substantial improvements in transit service - Transit funding has been increased which has allowed the addition of transit service. A systematic program of reviewing and improving transit service has produced more efficient, faster service. More varied types of service have also been added such as night service, local circulators, small and mid-sized buses, local limited stop service, and local express service to better meet customer needs. Service has also been added to meet demand on high-ridership routes that have been experiencing overload conditions.

Progress towards Doubling Ridership by 2020

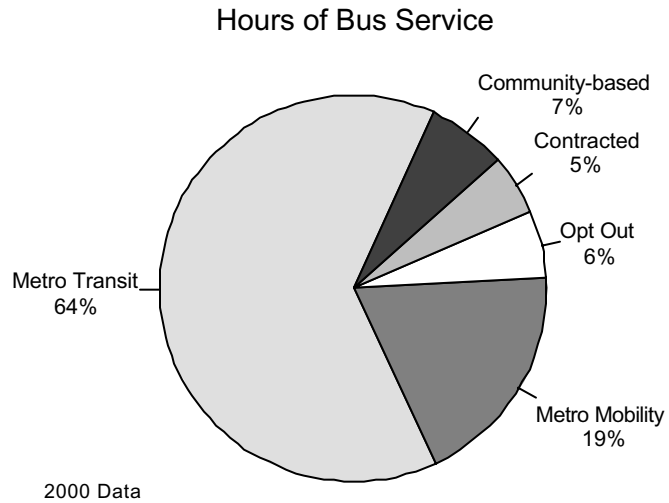
In 1997, the Metropolitan Council set the goal of doubling overall transit ridership by 2020. At the end of the year 2001, the Council was approximately four million rides ahead of this goal. While this is significant, these increases will need to be sustained over many years for this goal to be achieved.



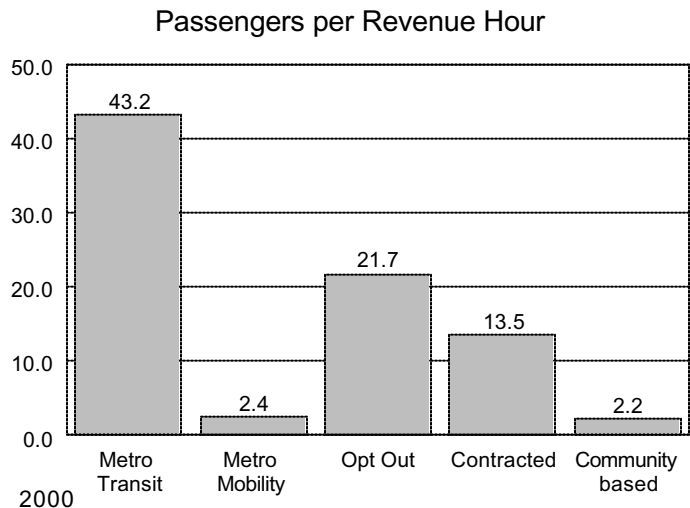
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Performance among Various Regional Providers and Services

Metro Transit provides almost two-thirds of the hours of bus service in the region. Metro Mobility is the second largest provider, providing about 20% of service.

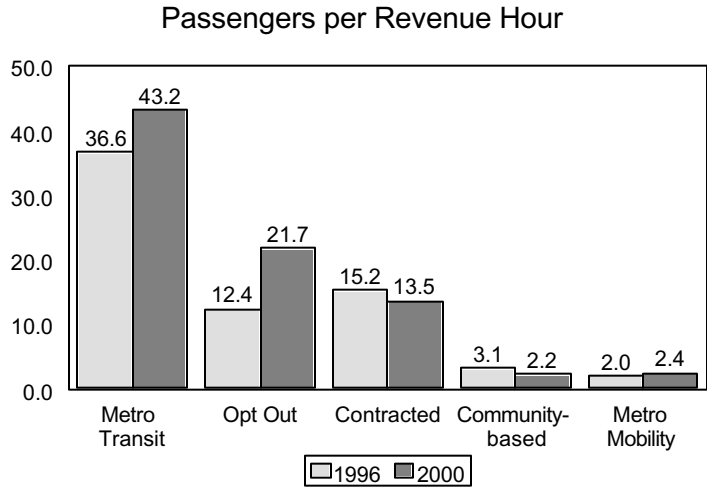


Passenger productivity varies among the various types of providers. This is a reflection of their different operating environments and programs. Passenger productivity is affected by factors such as geographic markets (density of development), trip length (longer passenger trips do not “turn over” their passenger loads as quickly) and type of service. For example, dial-a-ride service serves fewer passengers per hour than regular route service because of the point-to-point nature of dial-a-ride service. Express service serves fewer passengers per hour because it is a one way service.



- Metro Transit provides transit service in the core urban area, the highest density service area, and thus the most efficient area in the region to provide service to. In addition, it also provides by far the highest percentage of urban local service, with 81% of its service hours being urban local service. This is the most efficient service to provide.
- In contrast, contracted routes are comprised of 61% suburban local routes, which serve a much lower density area-and therefore produce fewer passengers per hour. In addition, 27% of routes are express routes that are less productive than urban local service.
- Opt Out communities provide express and suburban local services. Since these communities provide a higher percentage of more productive express service than do contracted services, their productivity falls somewhere between Metro Transit and Contracted Services.
- Metro Mobility and Community-based programs are dial-a-ride services. These point-to-point services have average trip lengths of approximately ten miles. Because of the nature of these programs, their passenger productivity is substantially less than regular route services.

From 1996 to 2000, the two services that are primarily large bus, regular route service had substantial increases in passengers per revenue hour (Metro Transit had an 18% increase and Opt Outs had a 75% increase). This is because ridership increased substantially on many existing routes that had extra capacity and, therefore, did not require significant increases in service hours.



Metropolitan Council Reports

Contracted services include a variety of types of buses. Over the last four years several small bus services have been added, changing the mix of buses used by this kind of service. These smaller bus services cannot carry as many passengers as a large or articulated bus can, which has reduced the number of passengers per hour.

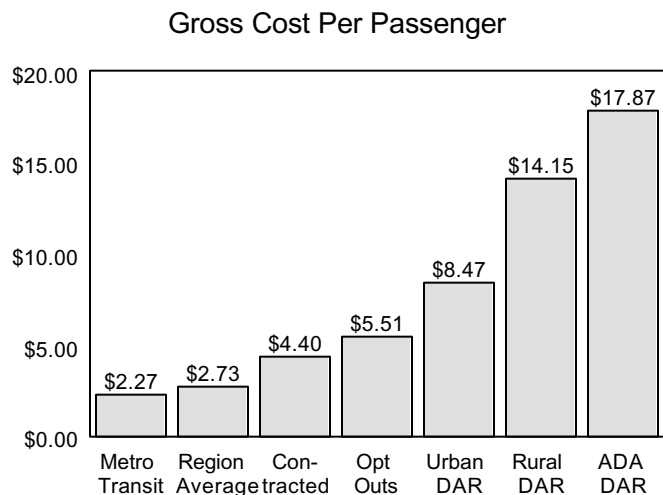
In some areas, community-based programs have been replaced with regular route service, leaving less dense and harder to serve areas. This has reduced the number of passengers per revenue hour for the services left even though it results overall improved efficiencies in the system. I

Metro Mobility has been working to shift as many trips to group trips as possible. This increased service productivity by 20 percent — a significant improvement.

Metro Transit, Opt Out Communities, and Metro Mobility have seen substantial increases in productivity as measured by the number of passengers per revenue hour.

Gross Cost Per Passenger

These different passenger productivities translate into widely varying costs for the different types of transit service. On a cost-per-passenger basis, services that carry more passengers per hour have a lower gross cost per passenger than those that carry fewer do. In addition, dial-a-ride programs, due to their point-to-point nature, are more expensive than regular route service on a per passenger basis. Opt out and contracted services provide service almost completely in suburban areas, which have a lower density of passengers and a higher percentage of express service.

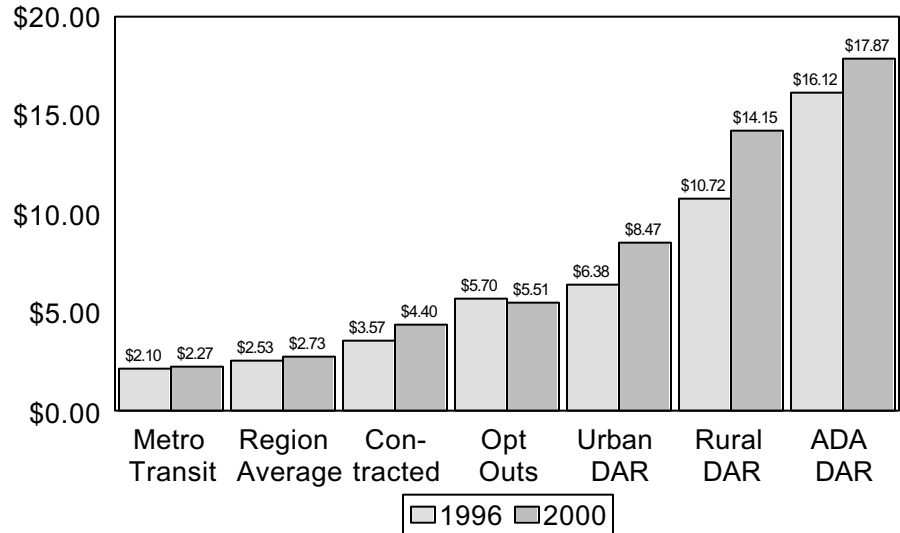


Costs per passenger vary depending on the type of service and the areas served.

Gross cost per passenger for all parts of the system have increased 1996 to 2000 but at a rate lower than inflation. The Consumer Price Index increased 2.4% per year from 1996 to 2000 while the gross cost per passenger grew only 2% per year.

Opt out system ridership growth resulted in a decrease in the cost per passenger from 1996 to 2000.

Gross Cost Per Passenger 1996 vs 2000



1996 Transit Services Audit/Metropolitan Council Data

Gross cost per passenger increased at a rate lower than the rate of inflation from 1996 to 2000.

Peer Transit Systems

The area's performance is assessed, in part, through a comparison to transit systems in regions comparable to those in the Twin Cities. Twelve peer regions were identified as part of the 1997 Transportation Audit and for the 1999 Transit System Performance Audit. This group was selected based on comparability of urban area characteristics, such as population, transit system size and modes, and highway system development. The comparisons include all of the transit services in each region, including dial-a-ride and rail but excluding ferry service, for a total regional perspective.

Eight of twelve peer transit systems operate some form of rail and did do prior to 1997, when the last audit was done. The passenger, cost, revenue, and services statistics for all modes operated by the peer systems are compared to the seven-county totals, not solely Metro Transit.

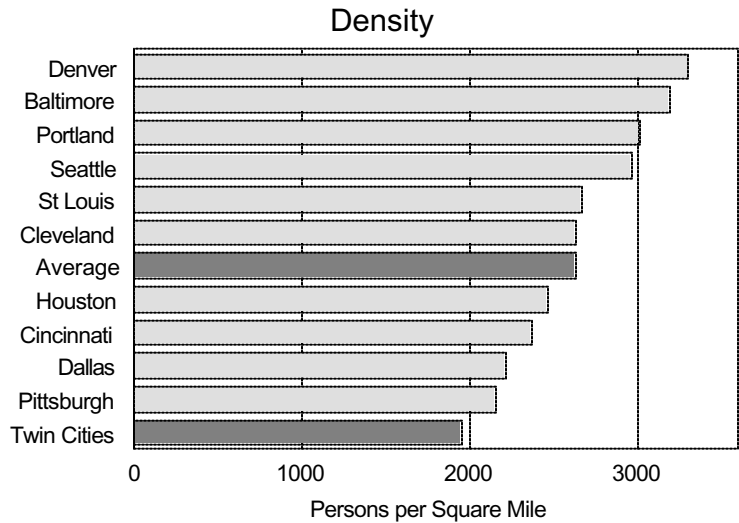
Peer regions used in the Transit Audit include:

- | | | |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| Baltimore | Dallas | Pittsburgh |
| Buffalo | Denver | Portland |
| Cincinnati | Houston | Seattle |
| Cleveland | Milwaukee | St Louis |

Density

One key difference among peer systems is density. On average, the Twin Cities is 34 % less dense than the average of its peers and is the least dense of the regions in the peer group.

Density affects transit service in the Twin Cities. Passengers are spaced out over a larger area, making transit service less efficient. Transit systems in the Twin Cities have had to work to overcome this disadvantage.

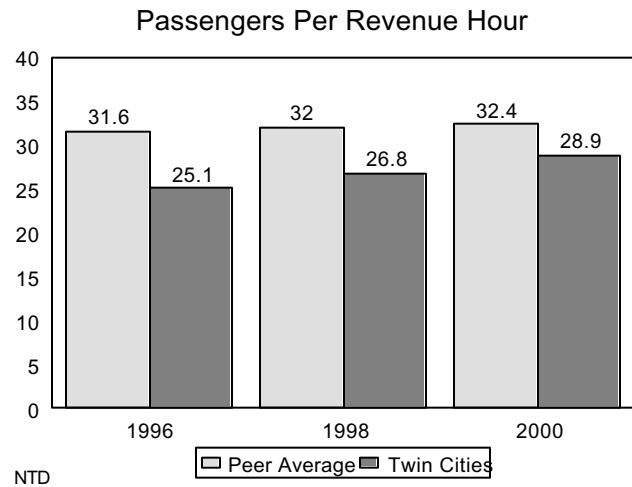


2000 Census - Buffalo data not available

The Twin Cities is less dense than its peers, making the provision of transit service less efficient than in peer regions.

Passengers per Revenue Hour

One measure of productivity is passengers per revenue hour. From 1996 to 2000, passengers per revenue hour for peer systems increased 2.5% while they increased 15.1% for Twin Cities systems overall. As a result, the Twin Cities systems moved from 79% to 89% of the peer average — a remarkable achievement.

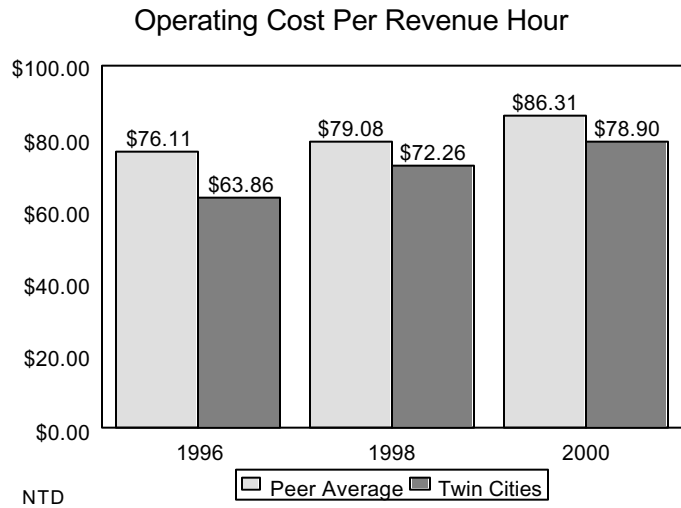


NTD

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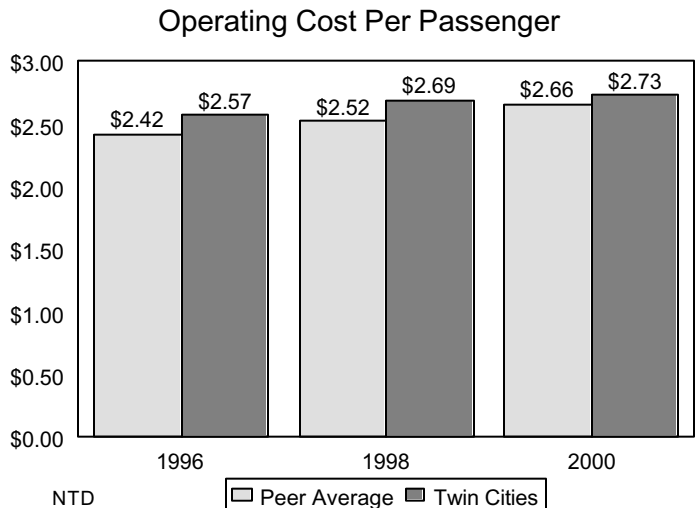
Operating costs

Cost efficiency can be assessed by two measures: operating costs per revenue hour and operating cost per passenger. Operating costs increased in the Twin Cities area. From 1996 to 2000, operating cost per revenue hour for peer systems increased 3.7% while they increased 23.6% for Twin Cities systems. Despite this increase in operating cost per revenue hour, the Twin Cities was still 9.4% lower than the peer average.



The Twin Cities cost to provide transit service was 9.4% less expensive than the peer average on a cost per hour

In terms of operating cost per passenger, the Twin Cities costs are almost the same as its peers (2.6% higher). However, its rate of increase between 1996 and 2000 was smaller (6.2% versus 10.0%). Cost efficiency on a per passenger basis is adversely affected by the significantly lower densities of the Twin Cities as compared to other regions.

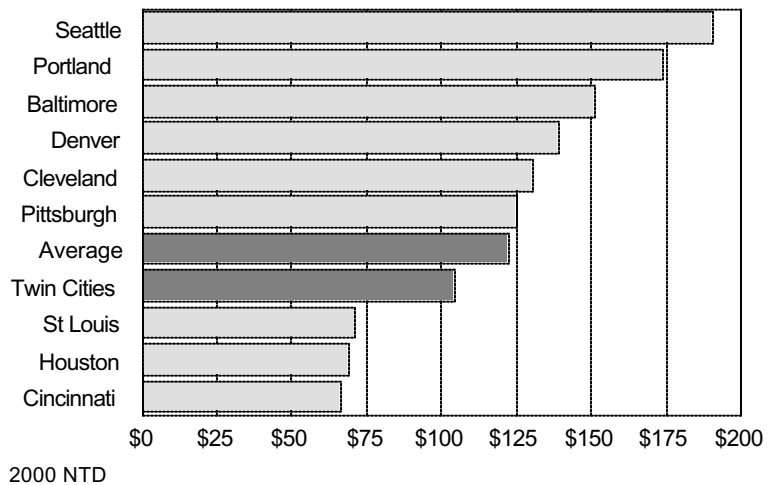


Twin Cities operating costs per passenger are on par with its peers.

Sources of Operating Revenue

Overall, Twin Cities total operating funding per capita is 15% lower than compared to peer cities.

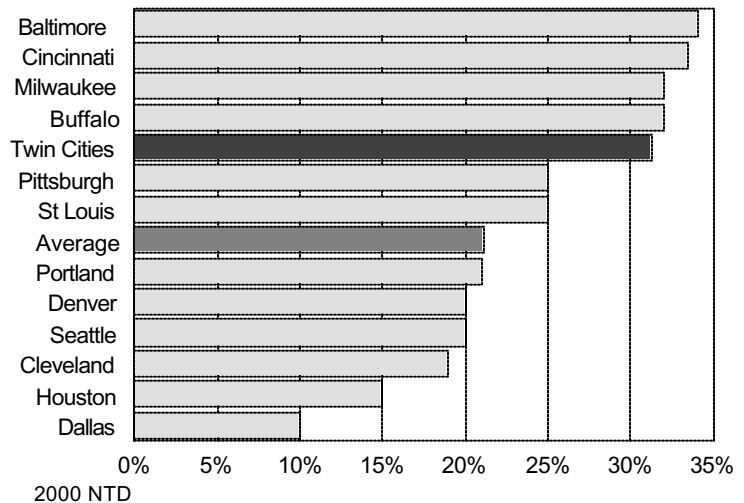
Total Operating Funding Per Capita



Twin Cities total operating funding per capita is 15% lower than the average for its peers or \$17.90 less per capita than the average for the region. The region would have to spend almost \$45 million per year more to reach the average for its peers. Because of the lower density of the region, however, this would still result in a lower level of service per capita than its peers have.

The Twin Cities ranks high in the percentage of costs that are recovered from fares. Fare recovery is 31.25%, higher than the average for the peers of 23.8%. This Twin Cities recovery rate is about one-third higher than the average for its peers.

Recovery of Costs Through Fares



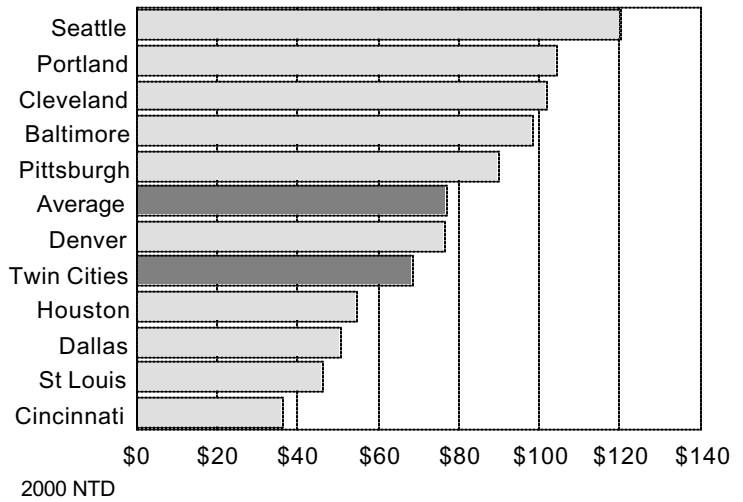
Although the Twin Cities recovery of cost through fares is very high, this 31.25% recovery rate is less than the 1996 rate of 37.4%, prompting a 25 cents fare increase in mid-2001. In 1996, this was the highest of all the peers and 55% higher than the peer average.

Transit use is sensitive to cost. The higher the cost to ride, the lower the transit use. Because of this, the level of fares has a direct impact on transit usage.

The Twin Cities ranks high in the percentage of costs recovered from fares. Fare recovery is 31% higher than the average for the peers.

Costs not recovered through fares are recovered through various government sources. The Twin Cities is 11% below the average for its peers in terms of subsidies from state and local sources.

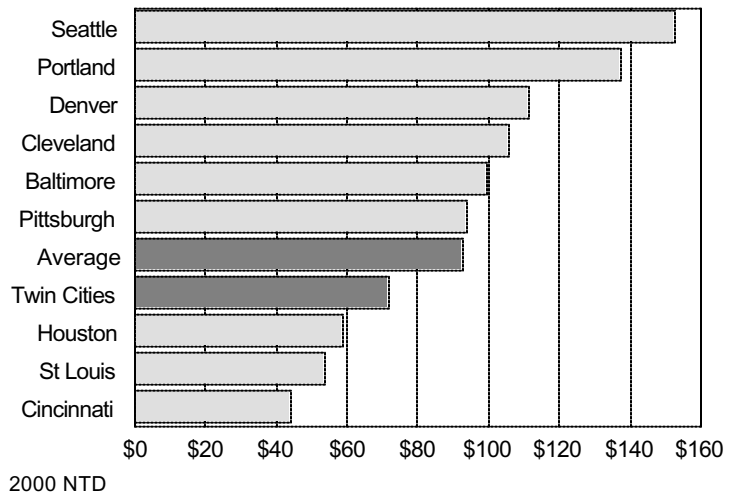
State and Local Funding Per Capita



The Twin Cities is 11% below the peer average in state and local subsidies.

Net government subsidy per capita is the cost made up by government sources after user revenues are deducted. Twin Cities subsidies are 23% lower than the average for the peers.

Subsidy Per Capita

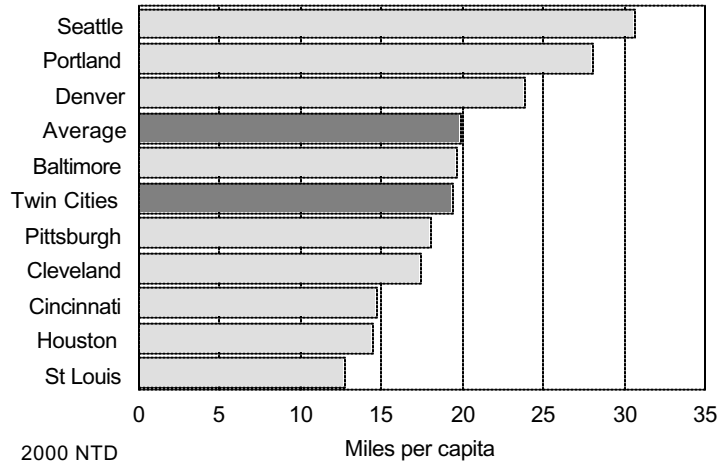


Twin Cities subsidies per capita are 23% lower than average for its peers.

Transit Service Per Capita

The amount of transit service that can be provided is directly linked to funding levels and the efficiency of the system providing service. The Twin Cities has about the median level of service per capita because the higher than average fares and lower than average costs in the area compensate for the lower than average government subsidy levels.

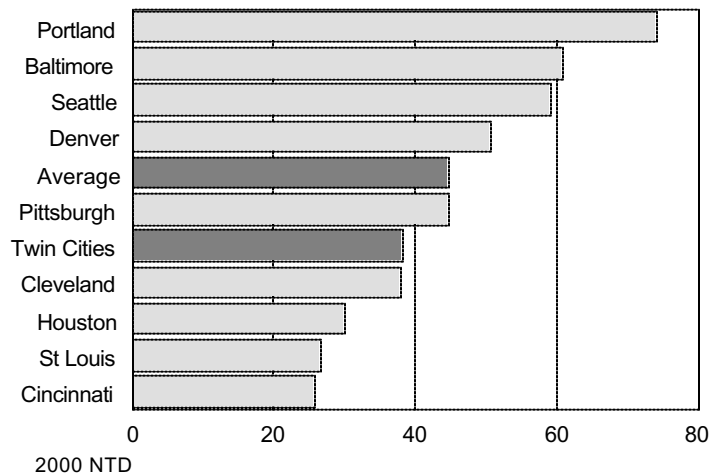
Miles of Transit Service Per Capita



The Twin Cities has a low number of rides per capita — 8.5% lower than the peer average. Several factors already cited contribute to this:

- Higher than average fares
- Lower density
- Lower service miles per capita

Rides per capita

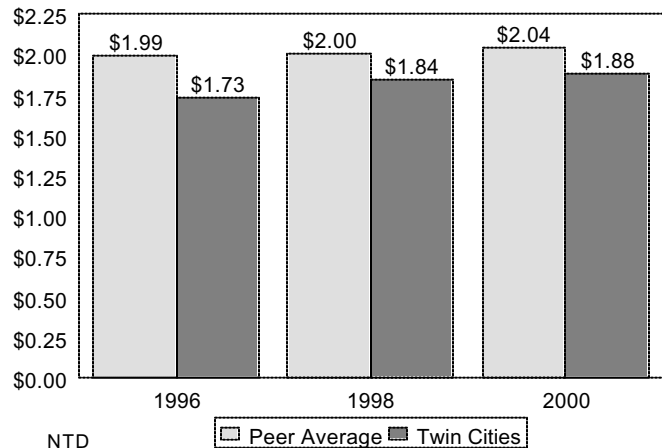


The Twin Cities provides a lower number of rides per capita than its peer cities.

Subsidy per Passenger

Passenger subsidy costs have increased in the Twin Cities area. From 1996 to 2000, subsidy cost per passenger for peer systems increased 2.5% while they increased 8.7% for Twin Cities systems overall. Nonetheless, in 2000, the Twin Cities subsidy per passenger was 7.8% lower than the peer average.

Subsidy Per Passenger



Transit Advantages

In cooperation with MN/DOT, counties, and cities, Metro Transit has created numerous transit advantages throughout the metro area that free buses from traffic congestion. Perhaps the most important have been bus-only shoulders that permit buses to bypass congestion by driving on the road shoulder. The result is higher speeds and greater reliability for transit.

The first one opened in 1991. As of January 2002, there are 175 miles of bus-only shoulders, far more than in any other metro area. Typically, 15 – 25 miles are added each year. Almost all express buses use at least one segment of shoulder lanes. Some express routes use up to five.

There are over 70 HOV ramp meter bypasses, most built during the last ten years. Metro Transit has the use of seven exclusive bus lanes in downtown Minneapolis and four in downtown St. Paul. Finally, there are several locations where buses get special turning privileges that permit them to bypass traffic at crowded intersections.

Metro Mobility

Metro Mobility services are provided for persons with disabilities that prevent them from using the regular route transit system. These services can be examined several dimensions including user characteristics, ridership, availability of accessible regular route service, scheduling efficiency, and trip denials.

Metro Mobility User Characteristics

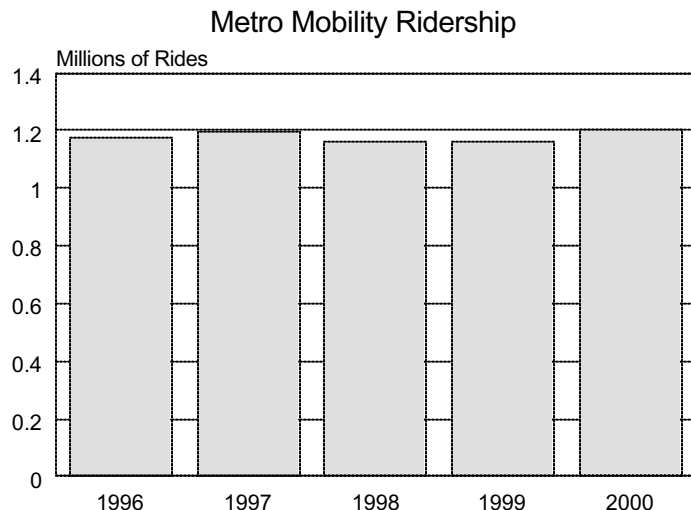
Metro Mobility serves a variety of users in the Twin Cities area. Over 40% percent of users are nearing retirement or are retired (over 60 years old) with 17% over 80 years old. For these users, Metro Mobility provides needed access to medial services and shopping.

Almost 60% of the users are less than 60 years old and are working age. For many of these users, Metro Mobility is the principal mode of commuting to work. Over 45% of total trips provided by Metro Mobility are for travel to and from work.

Metro Mobility Ridership

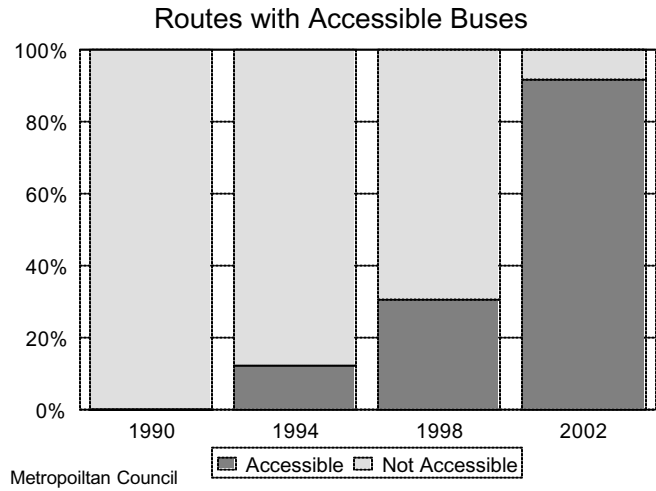
Metro Mobility riders must be ADA-paratransit eligible and have gone through a certification process to use Metro Mobility. There are approximately 18,000 certified riders in the region, typically with 12,000 active riders.

Ridership for Metro Mobility has remained fairly stable over the last five years.



Accessible Regular Route Service

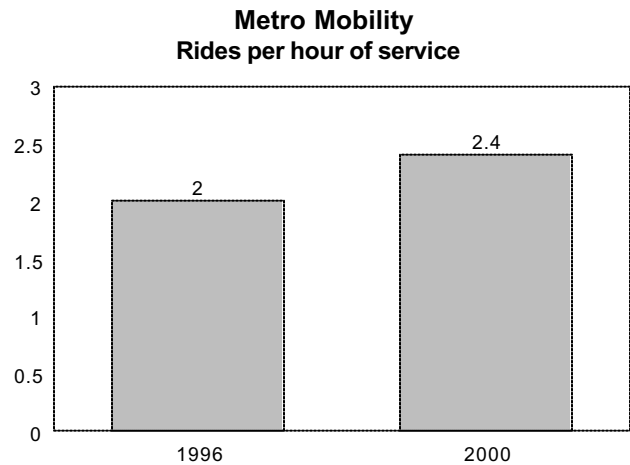
In 1990, the region adopted a policy that all buses would be accessible to persons with disabilities. Since that time, the region has purchased vehicles with lifts, with the goal of having all vehicles accessible by 2004. In 2002, approximately 92% of vehicles will be equipped with lifts. In addition, there has been a change setting fares at fifty cents for persons with disabilities riding on regular routes. This achievement has helped “mainstream” many former Metro Mobility users on the regular routes system. It has helped control Metro Mobility costs while still meeting the needs of persons with disabilities.



One of the things that has affected demand for Metro Mobility services has been the change to lift-equipped buses for regular route transit service. In 1990, the region adopted a policy that all buses would be accessible to persons with disabilities. Since that time, the region has purchased vehicles with lifts, with the goal of having all vehicles accessible by 2004. In 2002, approximately 92% of vehicles will be equipped with lifts.

Scheduling Efficiencies

There are three basic types of services provided by Metro Mobility. Demand services are when individuals call in and schedule an individual trip. These trips are provided directly by the two Metro Mobility service providers. Three county programs also provide ADA rides. These three are Dakota County (DARTS), Anoka County (Anoka County Traveler), and Washington County (HSI). The third kind of service is Agency service. Agency services take advantage of several persons going to one destination to gain efficiencies.



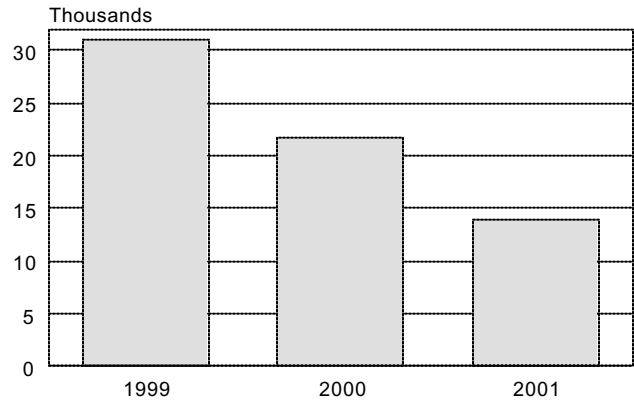
Bringing more than one individual per trip is more efficient than bringing a single individual. Metro Mobility demand trips typically average an efficiency of 1.6 persons per hour as opposed to group trips which have an average efficiency of four passengers per hour. Over the last several years, an effort has been made to move more trips to group trips whenever possible, which has increased the efficiency of the system overall from 2 passengers per hour to 2.4 passengers per hour.

The efficiency of Metro Mobility service has increased 20% from 1996 to 2000.

Metro Mobility Trip Denials

There are two basic reasons why a request for a trip may be denied. The first reason is that the trip or individual is not eligible for ADA service. This can be because the person is not ADA certified, the trip is not within the geographical boundaries of the ADA service area, or not within the time boundaries of ADA service. These types of trip denials are called non-capacity denials. The second reason that a trip request may be denied is that there are not vehicles available to provide the service. These types of denials are called trip denials due to capacity. From 1999 to 2001, the number of trips denied due to capacity declined by 55%.

Trip Denials Due to Capacity



A trip request may be denied because there are not vehicles available to provide the requested service; these types of denials are called trip denials due to capacity. From 1999 to 2001, the number of trips denied due to capacity declined by 55%.