

County Connection

2477 Arnold Industrial Way Concord, CA 94520-5326 (925) 676-7500 countyconnection.com

OPERATIONS & SCHEDULING COMMITTEE

MEETING AGENDA

Friday, January 3, 2025

8:30 a.m.

**Small Community Meeting Room
100 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill, CA**

The committee may take action on each item on the agenda, even items that are listed as “information only”. The action may consist of the recommended action, a related action or no action. Staff recommendations are subject to action and/or change by the committee.

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Public Communication
3. Approval of Minutes of December 1, 2024*
4. School calendars and regional transit schedule coordination – Information Only *
(Staff will provide update on school schedules impacting County Connection operations)
5. Transit Corridor Study Update – Information Only*
(Staff will provide an update on the ongoing Transit Corridor Study)
6. Automated Driving Systems (ADS) Demonstration Project Update – Verbal Update
(Staff will provide an update on the ADS Project in Martinez)
7. Monthly Reports – Information Only
 - a. Fixed Route*
 - b. Paratransit*
8. Committee Comments
9. Future Agenda Items
10. Next Scheduled Meeting – February 7, 2025 (8:30am at 100 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill, CA)
11. Adjournment

*Enclosure

**The enclosure will be available at the time of the meeting.

FY2024/2025 O&S Committee

Dave Hudson – San Ramon, Robert Storer – Danville, Jay Howard – Martinez

Clayton • Concord • Contra Costa County • Danville • Lafayette • Martinez
Moraga • Orinda • Pleasant Hill • San Ramon • Walnut Creek

CENTRAL CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

General Information

Public Comment: Each person wishing to address the committee is requested to complete a Speakers Card for submittal to the Committee Chair before the meeting convenes or the applicable agenda item is discussed. Persons who address the Committee are also asked to furnish a copy of any written statement to the Committee Chair. Persons who wish to speak on matters set for Public Hearings will be heard when the Chair calls for comments from the public. After individuals have spoken, the Public Hearing is closed and the matter is subject to discussion and action by the Committee.

A period of thirty (30) minutes has been allocated for public comments concerning items of interest within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Committee. Each individual will be allotted three minutes, which may be extended at the discretion of the Committee Chair.

Consent Items: All matters listed under the Consent Calendar are considered by the committee to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless requested by a committee member or a member of the public prior to when the committee votes on the motion to adopt.

Availability of Public Records: The agenda and enclosures for this meeting are posted also on our website at www.countyconnection.com.

Accessible Public Meetings: Upon request, County Connection will provide written agenda materials in appropriate alternative formats, or disability-related modification or accommodation, including auxiliary aids or services, to enable individuals with disabilities to participate in public meetings and provide comments at/related to public meetings. Please submit a request, including your name, phone number and/or email address, and a description of the modification, accommodation, auxiliary aid, service, or alternative format requested at least two days before the meeting. Requests should be sent to the Assistant to the General Manager, Lathina Hill, at 2477 Arnold Industrial Way, Concord, CA 94520 or hill@cccta.org. Requests made by mail must be received at least two days before the meeting. Requests will be granted whenever possible and resolved in favor of accessibility.

Shuttle Service: With advance notice, a County Connection LINK shuttle can be available at the BART station nearest the meeting location for individuals who want to attend the meeting. To arrange for the shuttle service, please call (925) 938-7433 between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm at least one day before the meeting.

Currently Scheduled Board and Committee Meetings

Board of Directors:	Thursday, January 16, 9:00 a.m., County Connection Board Room
Administration & Finance:	Wednesday, January 8, 9:00 a.m., 3rd Floor Conference Room
Advisory Committee:	Thursday, January 9, 2:00 p.m., County Connection Board Room
Marketing, Planning & Legislative:	Thursday, January 9, 8:30 a.m., 3338 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette

The above meeting schedules are subject to change. Please check the County Connection Website (www.countyconnection.com) or contact County Connection staff at (925) 676-1976 to verify date, time and location prior to attending a meeting.

This agenda is posted on County Connection's Website (www.countyconnection.com) and at the County Connection Administrative Offices, 2477 Arnold Industrial Way, Concord, California

Summary Minutes
Operations & Scheduling Committee
Friday, December 6, 8:30 a.m.

Directors: Robert Storer, Dave Hudson, Jay Howard
Staff: Ruby Horta, Andrew Smith, John Sanderson, Pranjali Dixit
Public: None

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Director Storer.

1. Approval of Agenda

The Committee approved the agenda.

2. Public Communication

None.

3. Approval of Minutes of November 1, 2024

The Committee approved the minutes.

4. Monument Free Program Update

Mr. Dixit reported on the Monument Free program, launched in July 2019 with weekday service on routes 11, 14, and 16, and expanded to include weekend service on routes 311, 314, and 316 in July 2022. This program serves communities facing significant socioeconomic challenges, with a high proportion of essential workers. He noted that the program is being funded by the California Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) and has experienced a stronger recovery compared to other free route services. Mr. Dixit emphasized that the program's long-term sustainability relies on continued LCTOP funding or the identification of alternative funding sources. Director Storer requested that information regarding the Title VI equity analysis be included for the Board's consideration.

5. Choice in Aging MOU Extension

Mr. Sanderson informed the committee that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Choice in Aging (CiA), an adult social service agency, accounted for a significant portion of County Connection's paratransit ridership, leading to the 2019 pilot program utilizing SilverRide, an accessible Transportation Network Company (TNC), to address service challenges for CiA clients unable to use traditional paratransit. He noted that following a successful pilot, the program became permanent in 2023, with County Connection reimbursing CiA. He added that the program has demonstrated positive outcomes, including improved on-time service, reduced no-shows for CiA programs, and decreased demand on County Connection's LINK paratransit, while also offering a lower cost per trip compared to LINK. The Committee forwarded to the Board the staff's request for approving a one-year extension of the contract with SilverRide.

6. Spring Bid Update

Mr. Dixit provided a brief overview of the Spring Bid changes, highlighting increased run times to address traffic congestion, and to improve on-time performance and operator breaks, particularly during weekday peak hours and weekends. He noted that most schedule adjustments stem from increased traffic congestion. He also pointed out that Route 301 is being extended to Safeway in Shadelands to provide weekend access to the grocery store for residents in that area.

Director Howard inquired about the operator shortage and strategies to address it. Mr. Smith discussed the "Faces" campaign aimed at attracting new operators, while Ms. Horta highlighted the renewal of the employee referral program and the signing bonus approved by the Board in November.

7. Approval of Revised Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP)

Ms. Horta reported that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires transit agencies to develop and maintain Safety Management Systems (SMS) through their Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASP). County Connection's PTASP, approved in 2020, is updated annually. She highlighted that the latest update incorporates policies addressing assaults on transit workers, including measures such as passenger suspension policies and training programs. The Committee forwarded to the Board the staff's request for approving the revised Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP).

8. Automated Driving Systems (ADS) Demonstration Project Update

Mr. Sanderson noted that ridership on this demonstration project remains low, reaching only 117 rides since its inception last September. He attributed this low ridership in part to the lack of morning and early afternoon service to/from the County Hospital and explained that the project team is moving forward with plans to add earlier service.

9. Monthly Ridership Reports

Mr. Dixit shared that ridership has continued to increase when compared to last year, with the largest percentage gains being seen in weekend service, and that systemwide productivity was above pre-COVID levels. Mr. Dixit observed a correlation between the increase in missed trips and the decrease in available bus operators. Director Howard inquired about Clipper 2.0, to which Mr. Dixit responded that all buses are equipped with the new machines and MTC has tentatively scheduled the Clipper 2.0 rollout for April 2025.

Mr. Sanderson shared that ridership remained flat year over year. He highlighted that productivity continued to exceed the standard of 1.5 passengers per hour and on-time performance reached 98% marking 26 consecutive months of exceeding the standards.

10. Committee Comments

None

11. Future Agenda Items

None

12. Next Scheduled Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for January 3 at 8:30 a.m. in the Small Community Meeting Room at the Pleasant Hill City Hall located at 100 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill, CA.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

Minutes prepared and submitted by: Pranjali Dixit, Manager of Planning

To: Operations & Scheduling Committee

Date: 12/27/2024

From: Andrew M. Smith, Director of Planning & Marketing

Reviewed by: WC.

SUBJECT: School calendars and regional transit schedule coordination

Background:

As part of its fixed route service, County Connection operates sixteen 600-series “school routes” serving 17 schools in six school districts (see Attachment 1), with a total combined ridership of approximately 1,300 passengers per school day. As these routes only operate on school days, we must adjust our schedules and operating assignments at the beginning and end of each school year. Specific to summertime operations, bus operators’ hours must be adjusted down to reflect the reduction in service, which usually coincides with increased bids for vacation time taken by the operators.

Starting this year, and in accordance with the policies of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), transit providers across the nine-county Bay Area region began synchronizing changes to their service schedules to two dates each year: the second Sunday each January and August. This way a passenger transferring between multiple providers (for example, County Connection to BART to SamTrans) will not miss a connection because one or more of the transit agencies modified their schedules on different dates. To accommodate the regional transit schedule synchronization program, County Connection adjusted its bid schedule to align the start of the Spring and Fall Bids with the regional synchronization dates in January and August.

Challenges with aligning school calendars:

The governing body of each school district sets their own school calendar, including the start and end dates for each school year. If the first day of school occurs prior to the regional transit schedule synchronization date in August (also the start of the Fall Bid), County Connection’s dispatch staff must search for extra operators who are available and willing to run the school routes on those first several days of the school year. This can be very challenging as there are usually not enough Extra Board operators to cover all the school routes, and if dispatch staff is unable to find enough volunteers, operators must be diverted from regular routes to cover the school routes, resulting in missed runs on the regular routes.

Were it not for the need to routinely adjust routes and schedules throughout the County Connection system, the start of the Fall Bid could be timed to the earliest start date of the six school districts served by school routes. However, due to the integration of both school routes and regular routes in the operators’ daily assignments, it is not feasible to schedule the start of the Fall Bid on a different date than the fall service/schedule changes.

Until this year, all six of the school districts served by County Connection started their school years during the week following the regional transit schedule synchronization date in August. However, for the 2024-2025 school year, Mt. Diablo Unified School District moved their first day of school to the week prior to the regional synchronization date. Unfortunately, the school district did not provide much advance notice of this change, and County Connection's dispatch staff had to move very quickly to ensure that the school routes would operate during the first week of school.

This situation remains unchanged for the 2025-2026 school year (see Attachment 2), with the Mt. Diablo School District Board of Education again adopting the early start dates for both the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years. Unfortunately, no notice of this change was provided to County Connection, and staff only became aware of the pending decision by the School Board on the evening prior to the School Board's hearing. Consequently, on December 18, 2024 (the day of the School Board's hearing on the item), County Connection staff sent a letter to the School Board expressing concerns with the early school start dates (Attachment 3). However, the School Board still adopted the early start dates as mentioned above.

While the early start date for schools in the Mt. Diablo Unified School District presents a challenge for the first week of operations on the six school routes serving the District, County Connection will continue to prioritize staffing on those routes, though this may come at the expense of missed runs on regular routes.

Financial Implications:

Additional operators will likely be required to provide service on the school routes in the Mt. Diablo Unified School District for the week prior to the regional transit schedule synchronization date (and start of the Fall Bid) in August. While this will result in additional costs for staff time and bus mileage, the costs are relatively minor and can be absorbed by the Operating & Capital Budget.

Recommendation:

None, for information only.

Action Requested:

None, for information only.

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Summary of school routes

Attachment 2: List of school districts served by school routes with start dates

Attachment 3: December 18, 2024, comment letter to the Mt. Diablo Unified School District Board of Education

County Connection 600-Series School Routes

Route	School District(s)	School(s)
601	Walnut Creek School District	Walnut Creek Intermediate School
602	Walnut Creek School District	Walnut Creek Intermediate School
605	Walnut Creek School District	Walnut Creek Intermediate School
606	Orinda Union School District Acalanes Union High School District	Orinda Intermediate School Miramonte High School
611	Mt. Diablo Unified School District	Oak Grove Middle School
612	Mt. Diablo Unified School District	Pine Hollow Middle School
613	Mt. Diablo Unified School District	Oak Grove Middle School
615	Mt. Diablo Unified School District	El Dorado Middle School Concord High School Olympic High School
616	Mt. Diablo Unified School District	Oak Grove Middle School
619	Mt. Diablo Unified School District	Oak Grove Middle School
622	San Ramon Valley Unified School District	Pine Valley Middle School California High School
623	San Ramon Valley Unified School District	Monte Vista High School
625	Acalanes Union High School District	Acalanes High School
626	Lafayette School District	Stanley Middle School (also serves Saint Mary's College)
635	San Ramon Valley Unified School District	Gale Ranch Middle School Windemere Middle School Dougherty Valley High School
636	San Ramon Valley Unified School District	Iron Horse Middle School Pine Valley Middle School California High School

**First Day of Instruction (Start of School Year)
School Districts Served by School Routes
2025-2026 School Year**

Start Date	School District	Route(s)
August 6, 2025	Mt. Diablo Unified School District	611, 612, 613, 615, 616, 619
August 10, 2025	REGIONAL SCHEDULE SYNCHRONIZATION	
August 12, 2025	Acalanes Union High School District	606, 625
August 12, 2025	Lafayette School District	626
August 12, 2025	Orinda Union School District	606
August 12, 2025	Walnut Creek School District	601, 602, 605
August 13, 2025	San Ramon Valley Unified School District	622, 623, 635, 636

December 18, 2024

Mt. Diablo Unified School District Board of Education
1936 Carlotta Drive
Concord, CA 94519
(sent via e-mail to boardComments@mdusd.org)

Subject: Board Item 19.4 - Review and Potential Approval of the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 School Year Calendar

Dear Board of Education:

On behalf of the Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (County Connection), I apologize for the lateness of these comments, however we just learned of this item's placement on tonight's meeting agenda.

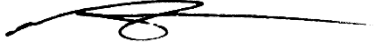
County Connection provides fixed route bus and paratransit service to Central Contra Costa County, San Ramon Valley, and Lamorinda, including several special routes serving area schools that are timed to their bell schedules and school year calendars. In the Mt. Diablo School District, we operate six such bus routes that serve El Dorado Middle School, Oak Grove Middle School, Pine Hollow Middle School, Concord High School, and Olympic High School. Combined, these routes carry an average of 225 students each school day. As these routes only operate on school days, we must adjust our schedules and operating assignments at the beginning and end of each school year.

Starting this year, transit providers across the nine-county Bay Area region began synchronizing when they make changes to their service schedules to two dates each year: the second Sunday in both January and August. This way a passenger transferring between multiple providers (for example, County Connection to BART to SamTrans) will not miss a connection because one or more of the transit agencies modified their schedules on different dates. Changes to transit schedules is a monthlong process that involves community outreach, equity analyses, route planning and synchronization, bidding on operating assignments by union-represented transit operators, and the printing, posting, and publication of new timetables.

Specific to summertime operations, operators' hours must be adjusted down to reflect the reduction in service, which usually coincides with increased bids for vacation time taken by the operators. Consequently, providing service on school routes prior to the Bay Area-wide schedule change synchronization date on the second Sunday in August is extremely difficult, and can result in missed runs on some routes due to a lack of transit operators reporting for work.

Therefore, I kindly ask you to amend the proposed 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school year calendars such that the first day of school begin no earlier than **August 11, 2025**, and **August 10, 2026**. Your consideration in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Andrew M. Smith
Director of Planning & Marketing

cc: President Erin McFerrin (sent via e-mail to mcferrine@mdusd.org)
Vice President Linda Mayo (sent via e-mail to mayol@mdusd.org)
Trustee Cherise Khaund (sent via e-mail to khaundc@mdusd.org)
Trustee Debra Mason (sent via e-mail to masond@mdusd.org)
Trustee Keisha Nzewi (sent via e-mail to nzewik@mdusd.org)
Student Board Member Crystal Ochoa (sent via e-mail to ochoac@mdusd.org)

Bill Churchill, General Manager, County Connection
Ruby Horta, Assistant General Manager, County Connection

To: Operations & Scheduling Committee

Date: 12/27/2024

From: Pranjal Dixit, Manager of Planning

Reviewed by: AMS

SUBJECT: Transit Corridor Study Update

Background:

In October 2022, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) announced the FY 2022-23 Transit Performance Initiative (TPI) grant program, which funds low-cost capital investments to improve transit operations and customer experience on major corridors and systems. The program prioritizes improvements that increase bus speed and reliability, particularly on high-ridership, high-frequency routes experiencing traffic delays. County Connection submitted a successful application for a study analyzing four major corridors within its service area to identify such improvements. MTC approved the full funding request of \$400,000 on March 22, 2023, and the Board approved the use of these funds in April 2023.

Corridor Study:

In October 2024, staff and County Connection's on-call planning consultants, Transportation Design & Management (TMD), launched the Transit Corridor Study, a comprehensive analysis of four key corridors: Clayton Road, Monument Boulevard, Treat Boulevard, and Ygnacio Valley Road. The study will evaluate existing conditions, identify and implement strategies to improve speed and reliability, prioritize recommended projects, and engage stakeholders and the community.

County Connection has identified these corridors as offering the greatest potential benefit from transit priority improvements, aiming to:

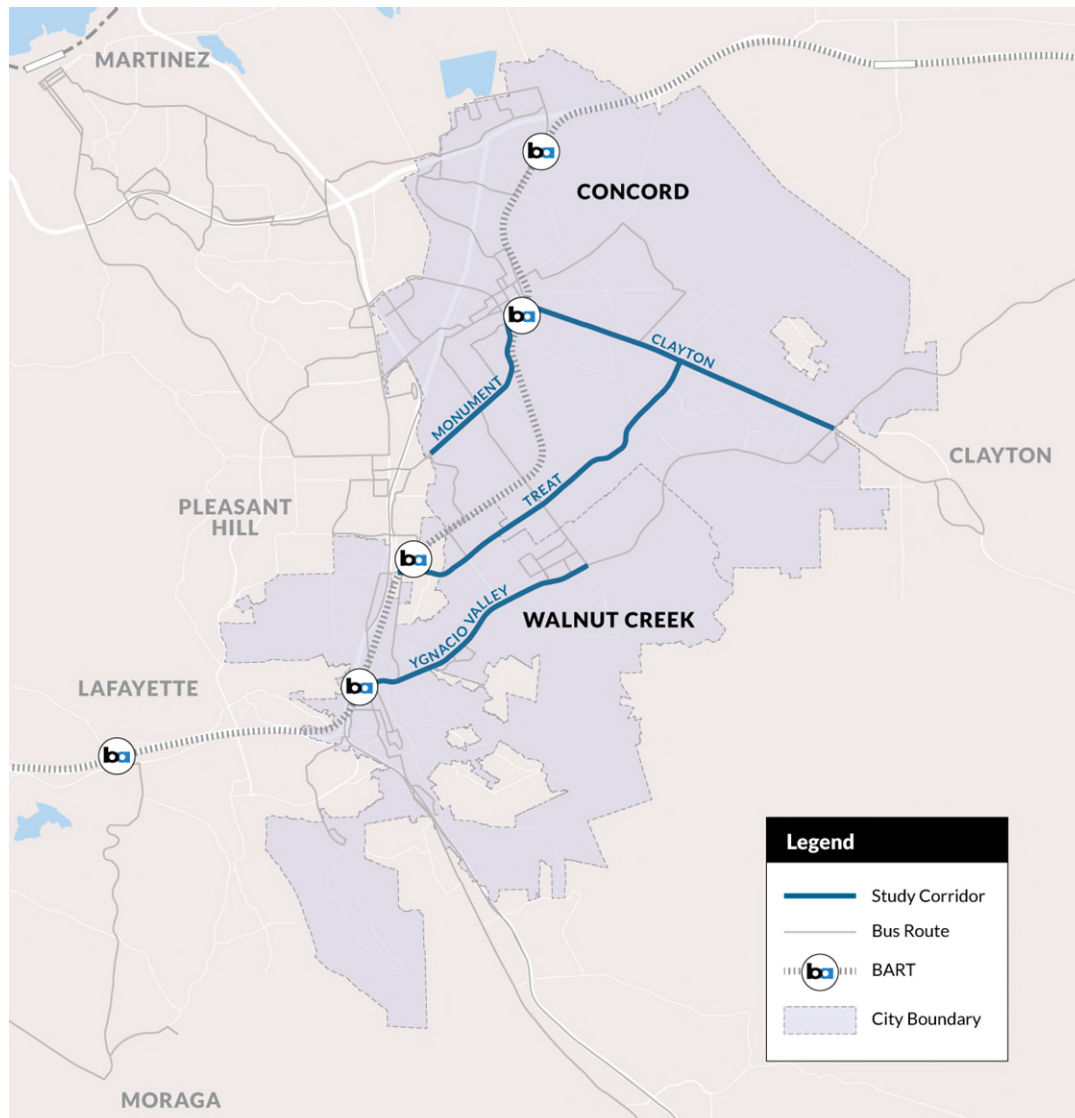
- Increase bus speeds and reduce delays, shortening passenger travel times.
- Improve schedule reliability by reducing travel time variability, enhancing the passenger experience.
- Enhance bus stop siting, security, and amenities to reduce dwell time and increase passenger appeal.
- Improve ADA accessibility at bus stops while seamlessly integrating into the surrounding pedestrian infrastructure..
- Improve customer satisfaction and increase ridership.
- Improve cost-effectiveness through faster, more reliable service.

Each corridor's distinct characteristics justify its inclusion:

- **Clayton Road (Routes 10, 310):** Served by the second-highest ridership route.
- **Monument Boulevard (Routes 14, 16, 314):** High transit propensity, serving an Equity Priority Community and an SB 535 Disadvantaged Community.

- **Treat Boulevard (Routes 7, 11, 14, 15, 311):** Serves multiple schools and retail destinations.
- **Ygnacio Valley Road (Routes 1, 92X, 93X, 301):** A congested corridor with healthcare, employment, retail, and some high-density housing, offering strong potential for transit development.

All four corridors are anchored by a BART station: Concord (Clayton Road and Monument Boulevard), Pleasant Hill/Contra Costa Centre (Treat Boulevard), and Walnut Creek (Ygnacio Valley Road).



A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), including representatives from the Cities of Concord and Walnut Creek, Contra Costa County, and the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), has been established to provide input throughout the study. Feedback will also be gathered from riders and operators throughout the study process.

The study will begin with an analysis of existing conditions, including traffic speeds, ridership, signal delays, origin-destination patterns, and demographics. Based on this analysis, a toolbox of improvement strategies—such as transit signal priority, enhanced bus stops, and queue jump lanes—will be developed. These improvements will then be prioritized based on documented benefits, including

impacts on wait times, travel times, and the customer experience. The study is scheduled to be completed by end of June 2025.

On November 20, 2024, MTC awarded County Connection an Innovative Deployments to Enhance Arterials (IDEA) grant to support the development of a comprehensive implementation plan for the Transit Corridor Study recommendations. This will include detailed designs for transit signal priority installations, enhanced bus stops, and potential queue jump lanes, along with a robust funding strategy to secure future project construction.

Financial Implications:

None. Staff is using the Transit Performance Initiative (TPI) grant to conduct this study.

Recommendation:

None, for information only.

Action Requested:

None, for information only.

Attachments:

None

To: Operations & Scheduling Committee

Date: 12/27/2024

From: Pranjal Dixit, Manager of Planning

Reviewed by: AMS

SUBJECT: Fixed Route Operating Reports for November 2024

Background:

The following represent the numbers that are most important to staff in evaluating the performance of the fixed route system:

	FY24-25		Goal*
	Current Month	YTD Avg	
Total Passengers	214,335	230,591	
Average Weekday Passengers	9,428	9,606	
Productivity	14.1	14.7	> 17.0
Missed Trips	0.61%	0.38%	< 0.25%
Average Miles Between Road Calls	31,294	45,693	> 18,000

* Based on current standards from updated SRTP

Analysis

Average weekday ridership was lower in November 2024 (9,428 passengers) than the previous month of October 2024 (10,548 passengers) and is 11% higher than November 2023 (8,495 passengers).

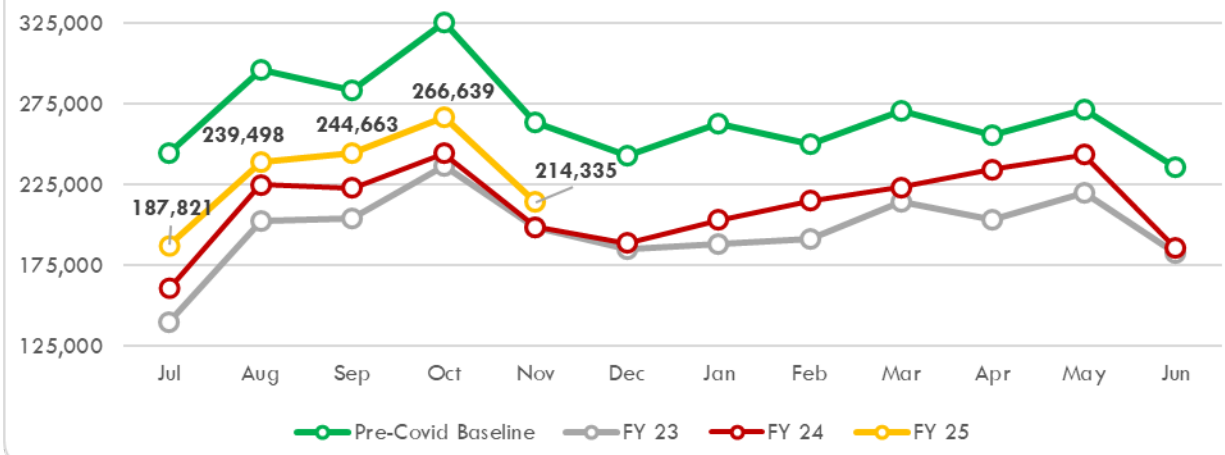
Productivity is a measurement of the average number of passengers per hour of revenue service. In November this was 14.1, which is lower than the prior month of October (16.0) but higher than November 2023 (12.8).

Missed trips are those which have been cancelled due to mechanical issues, the lack of available operators, or other reasons. The percentage of missed trips in November was 0.61%, which is lower than the prior month when it was 0.66%.

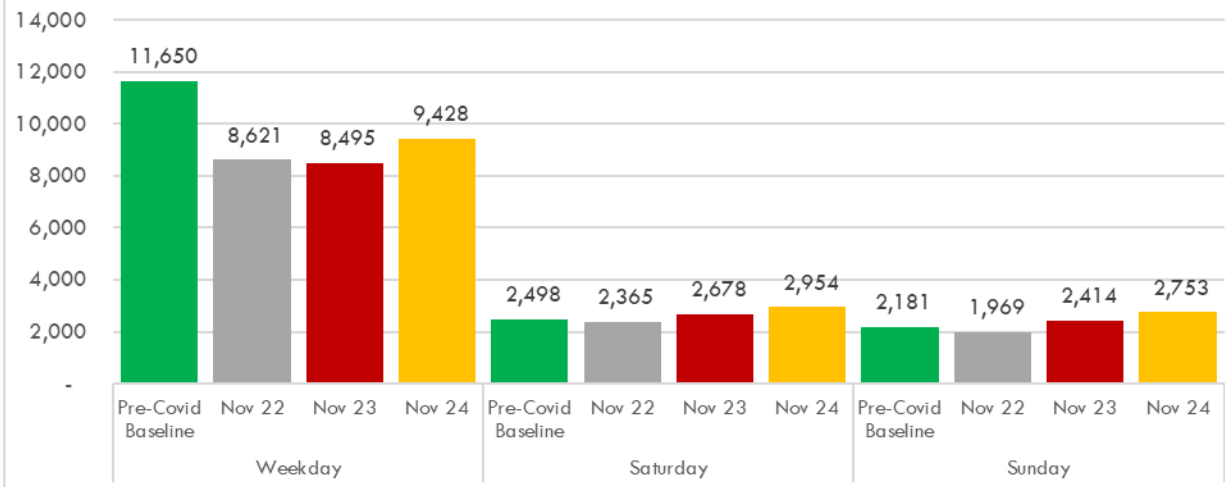
The number of miles between road calls (a bus going out of service due to mechanical issues) was 31,294 miles in November, lower than the prior month in which there were 56,553 miles between road calls. The rolling 12-month average is 36,620 miles between road calls.

Out of 214,335 total passengers in November, 119,042 had the potential to use a Clipper card for payment (the remainder either used an employer or school pass or were on a free route). About 81.3% of these potential Clipper card users paid using Clipper, rather than cash.

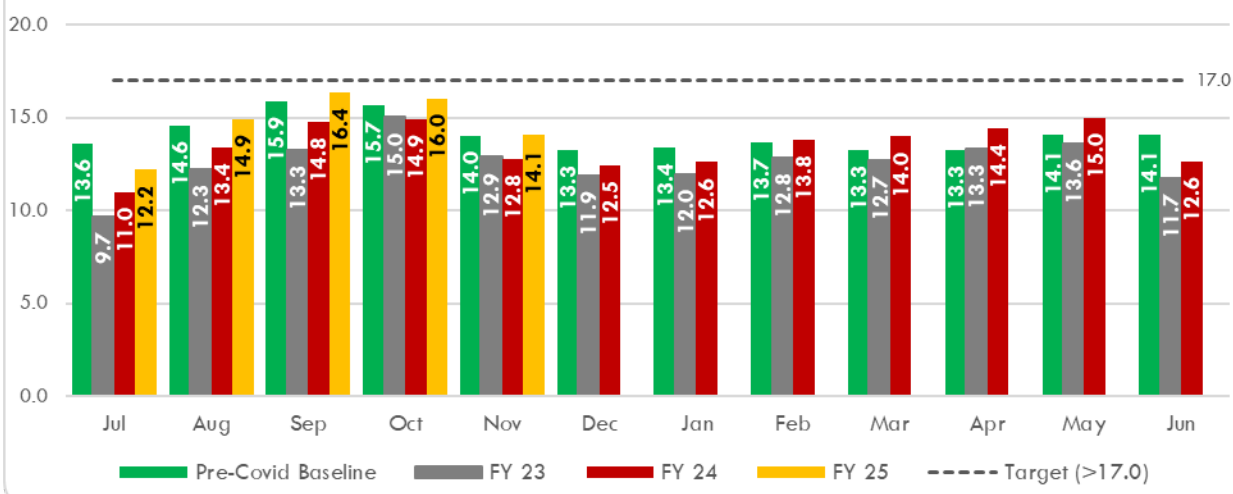
Total Monthly Fixed Route Ridership



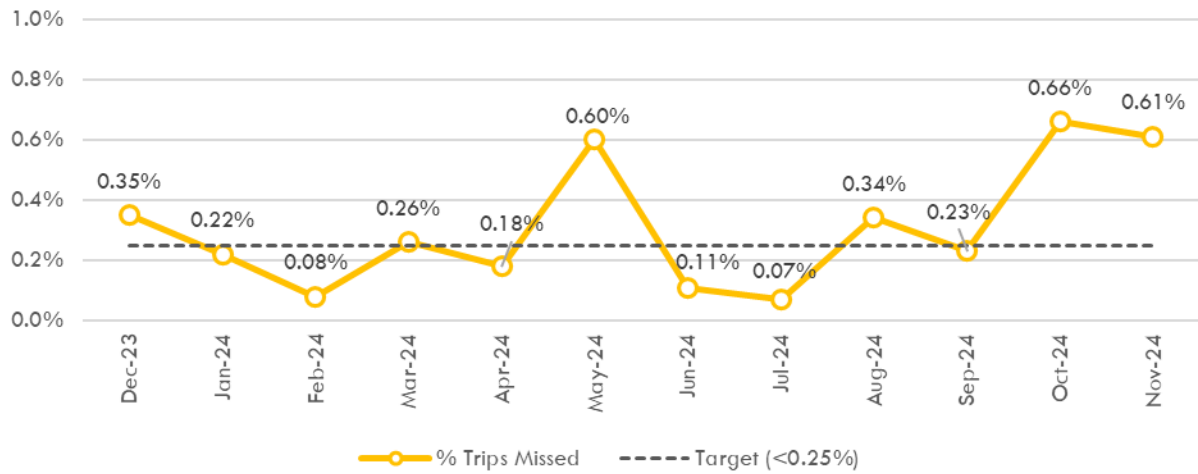
Average Daily Ridership Comparison



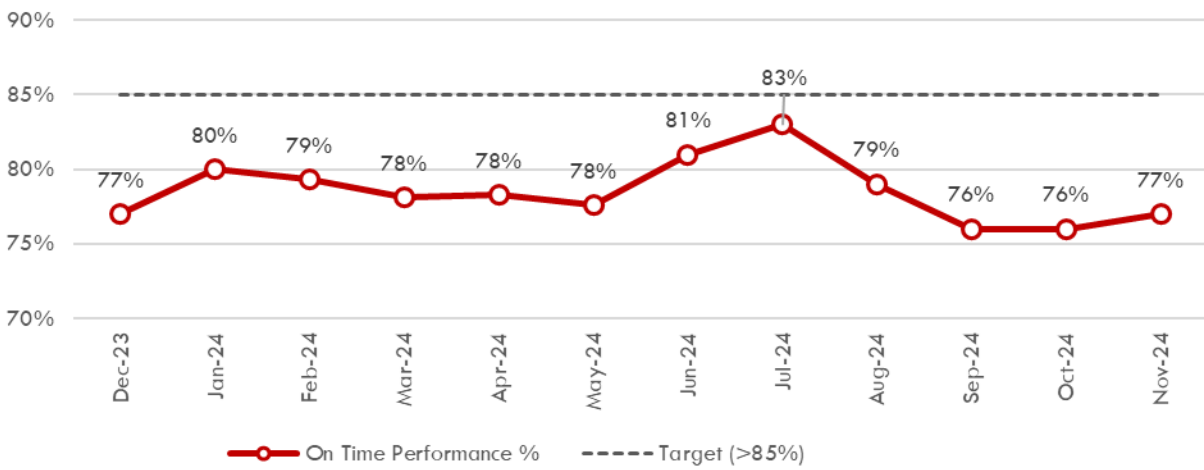
Passengers/Revenue Hour



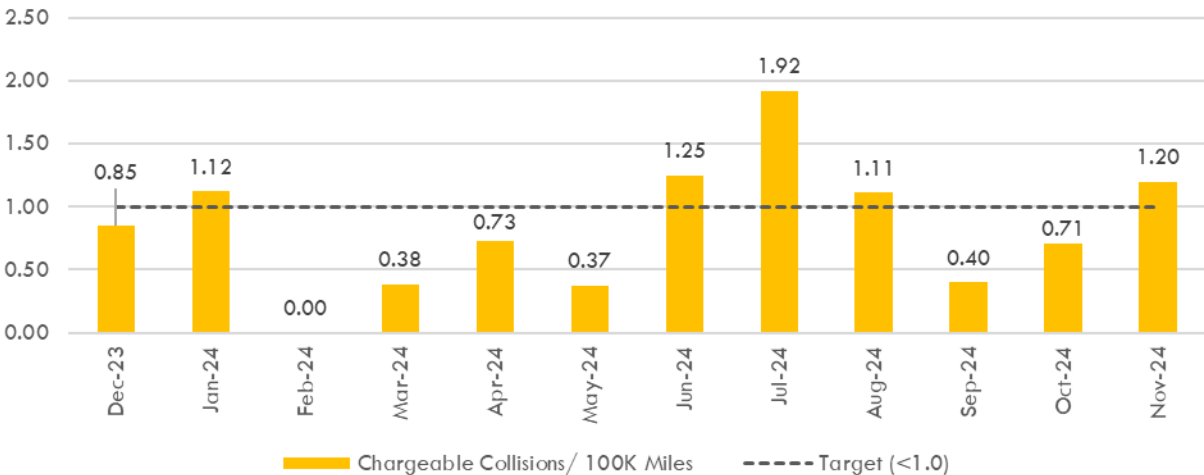
% Trips Missed



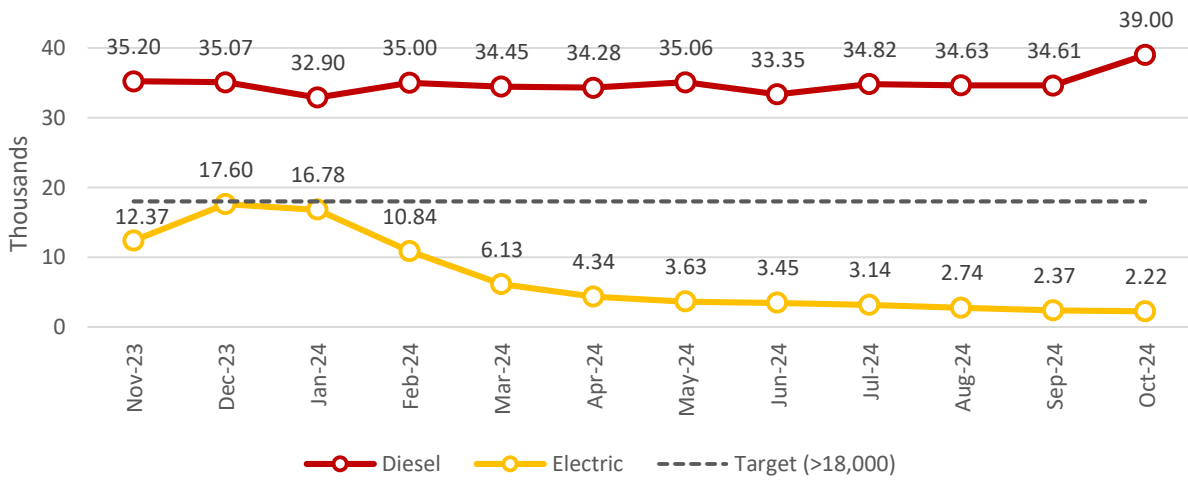
On Time Performance



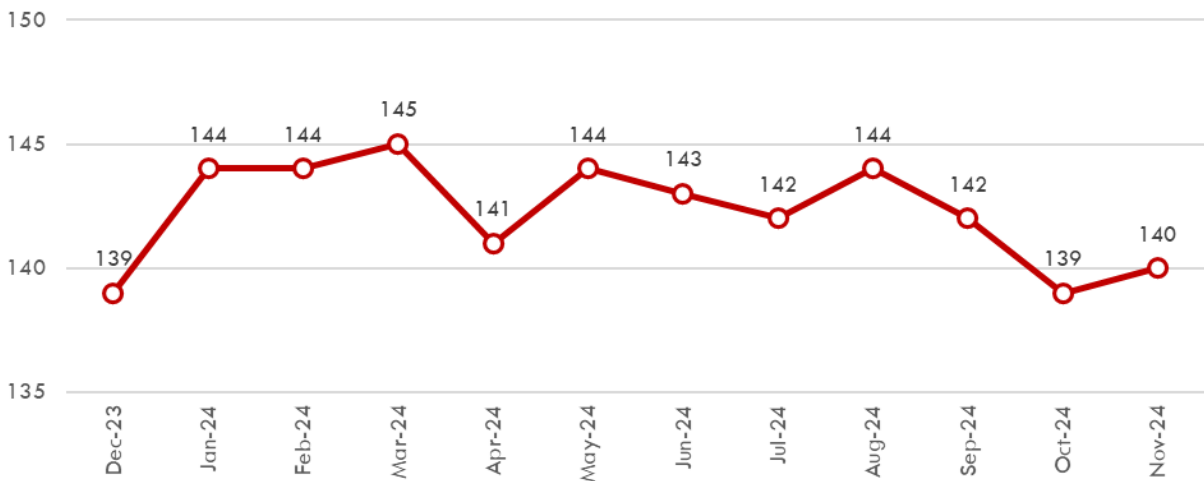
Accident Report



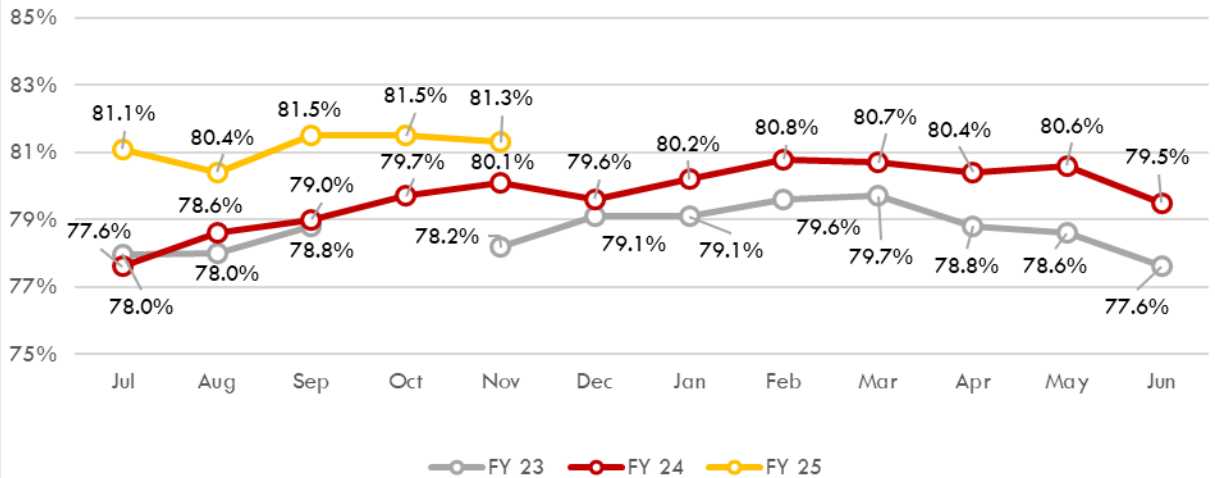
Trailing 12-Month Miles Between Mechanical Road Calls



Number of Operators



% Clipper Usage



To: Operations & Scheduling Committee

Date: 12/27/2024

From: John Sanderson, Director of ADA & Specialized Services

Reviewed by: *WC.*

SUBJECT: LINK Paratransit Monthly Report - November 2024

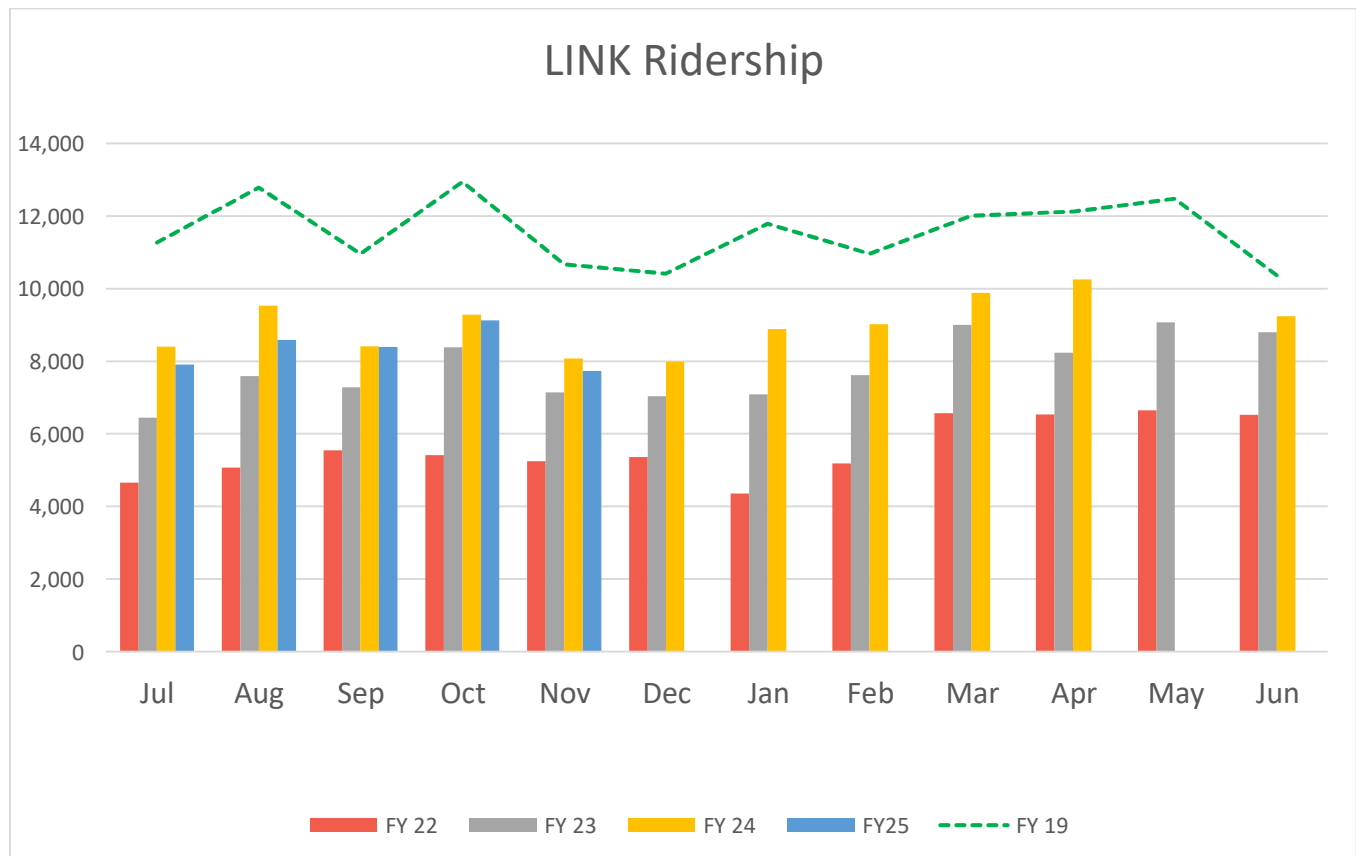
Background:

County Connection offers Paratransit services in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) via its LINK Paratransit program. Presented here is an overview of the Paratransit services through November 2024.

November 2024 Performance Report:

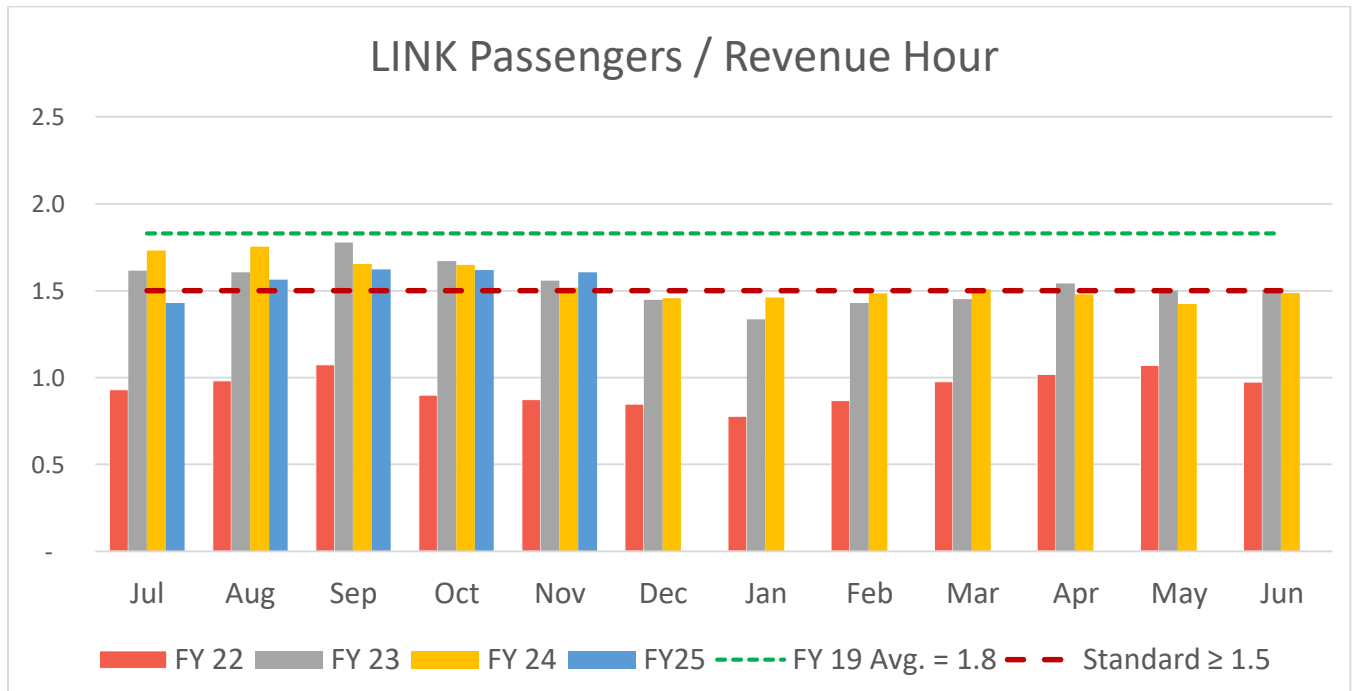
Ridership:

In November LINK provided trips to 7,735 passengers, showing a decrease of 4.3% from the 8,080 trips provided in November 2023. While the total number of trips is down year over year, the seasonal fluctuation month over month is consistent with historical norms.



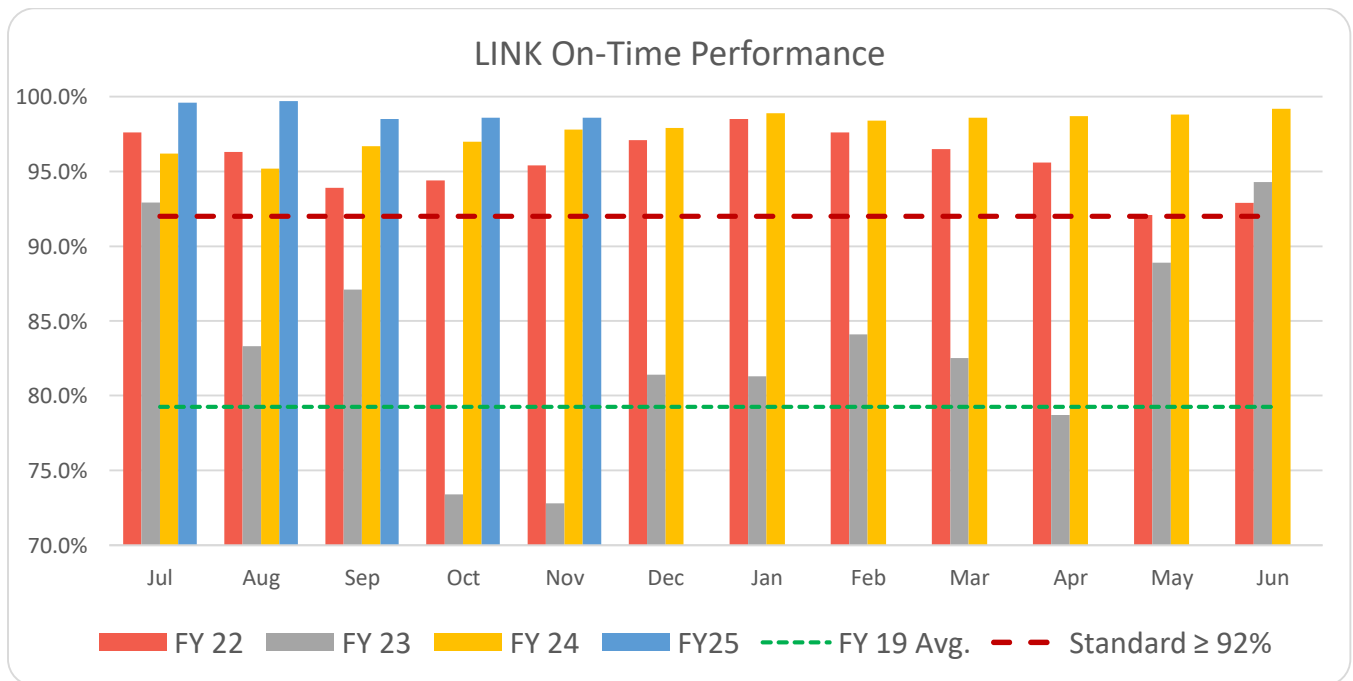
Productivity:

In November, LINK transported approximately 1.6 passengers per revenue hour, slightly exceeding the contract standard of at least 1.5 passengers per hour for the fourth consecutive month.



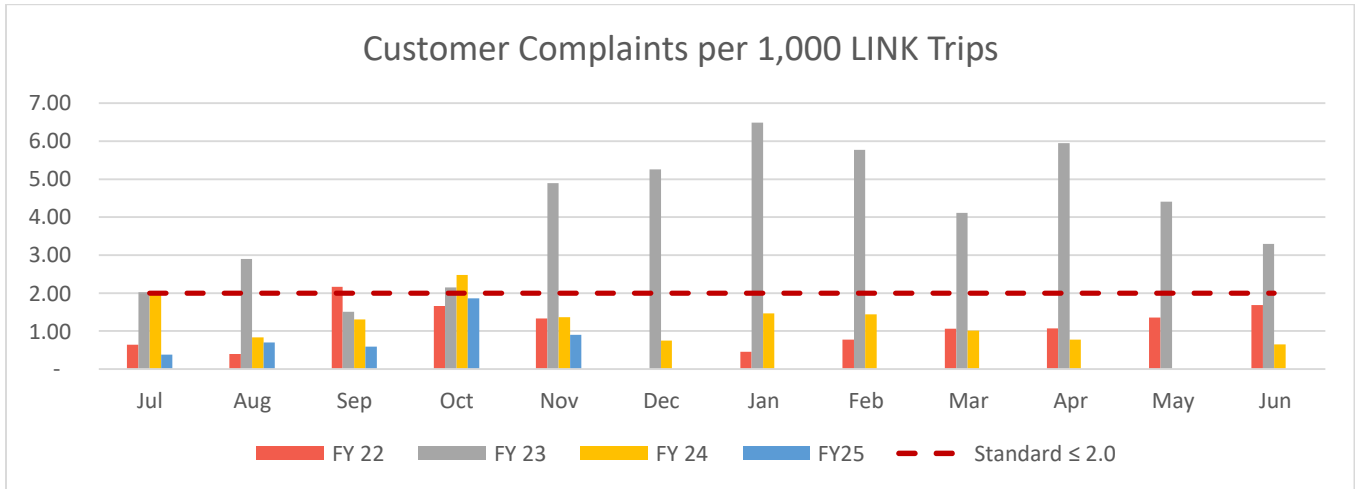
On-time Performance:

In November, the on-time performance of trips averaged 98.6%, handily exceeding the contract standard of 92% for the eighteenth consecutive month.



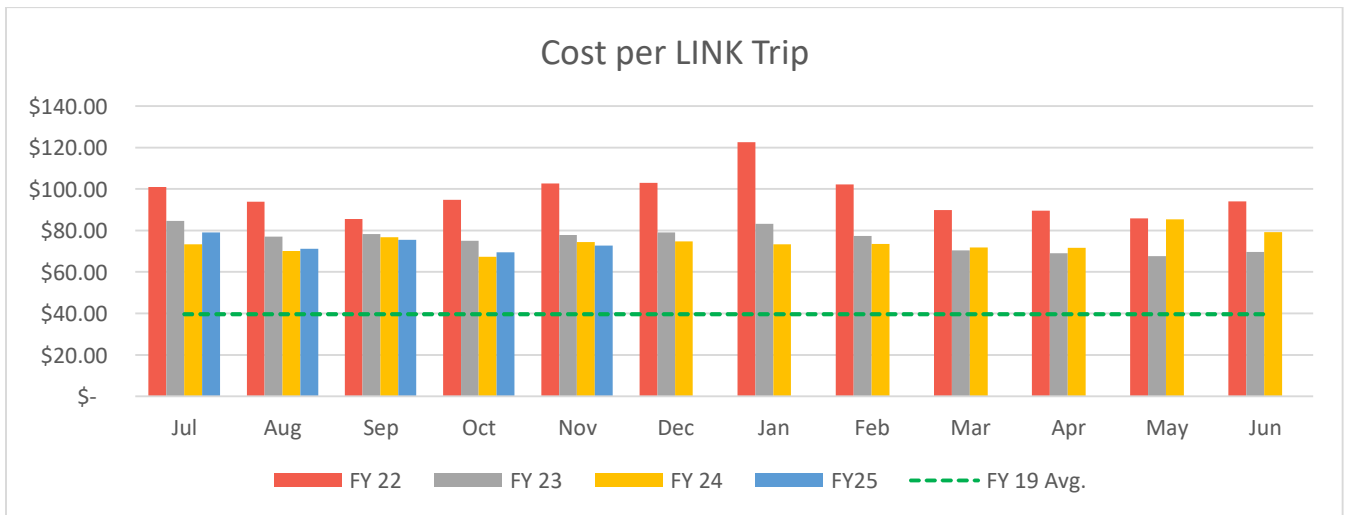
Customer Satisfaction:

Customer satisfaction with the LINK service remains consistently high, as evidenced by the number of commendations received from customers compared to the number of complaints. Verified complaints of 0.9 per 1,000 LINK passenger trips in November fell well under the contract standard of 2.0 per 1,000 rides. In addition, the rate of positive customer feedback has exceeded the rate of complaints by a factor of approximately eighteen to one, since data became available nearly three years ago.



Financial Implications:

In November, the cost per LINK passenger trip was \$72.70, marking a decrease of 2.3% from the same month last year.



Recommendation:

None, for Information only.

Action Requested:

None, for information only.

Attachments:

None.