

S A S K A T O O N
transit
Access



2012 Annual Report

Saskatoon Transit
Utility Services Department
July 2013

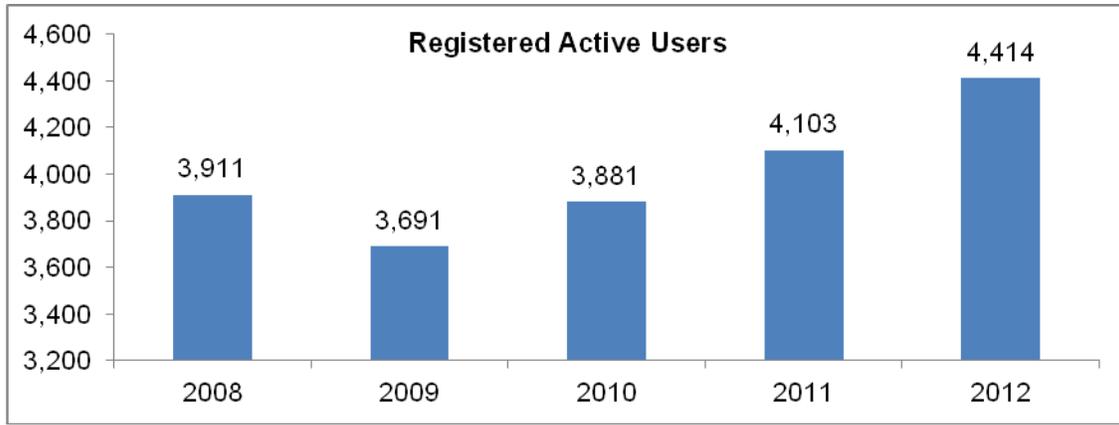
Introduction

Access Transit provides public transportation for people who by reason of a disability are unable to use regular transit with safety and/or dignity. It is not a taxi service (direct trip from A to B), but a shared ride service within Saskatoon city limits. Trip booking and scheduling decisions are made strategically to allow as many people to use the system as possible, while staying within our time constraints and budgetary guidelines. Trip booking requests for work, school, church, medical appointments, social outings, etc are provided on a first come first served basis depending on available capacity. Capacity is limited; the Access Transit fleet consists of 26 lift equipped buses in total.

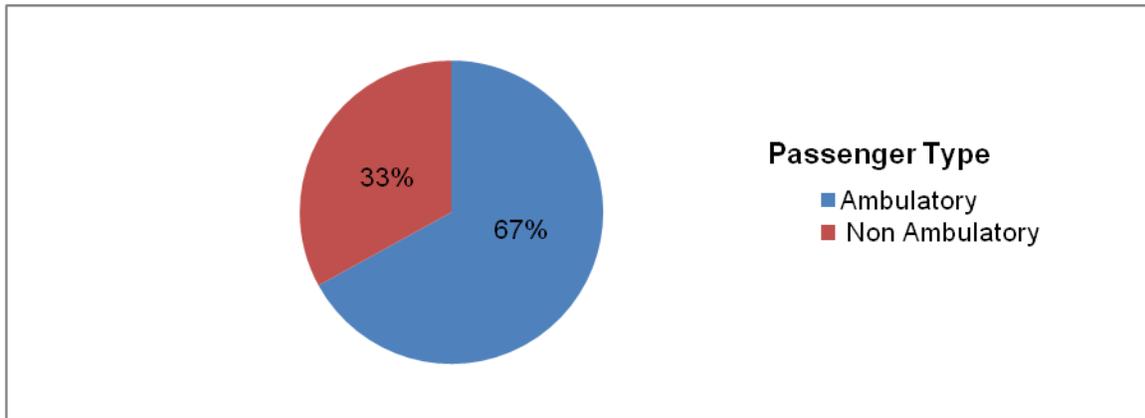
Access Transit is essential for people with little or no family support who may have no other means of transportation. For many of our customers, Access Transit is not just a service; it is their lifeline to the outside world. It is a key component which enables our customers to be active members of our community.

Our Customer

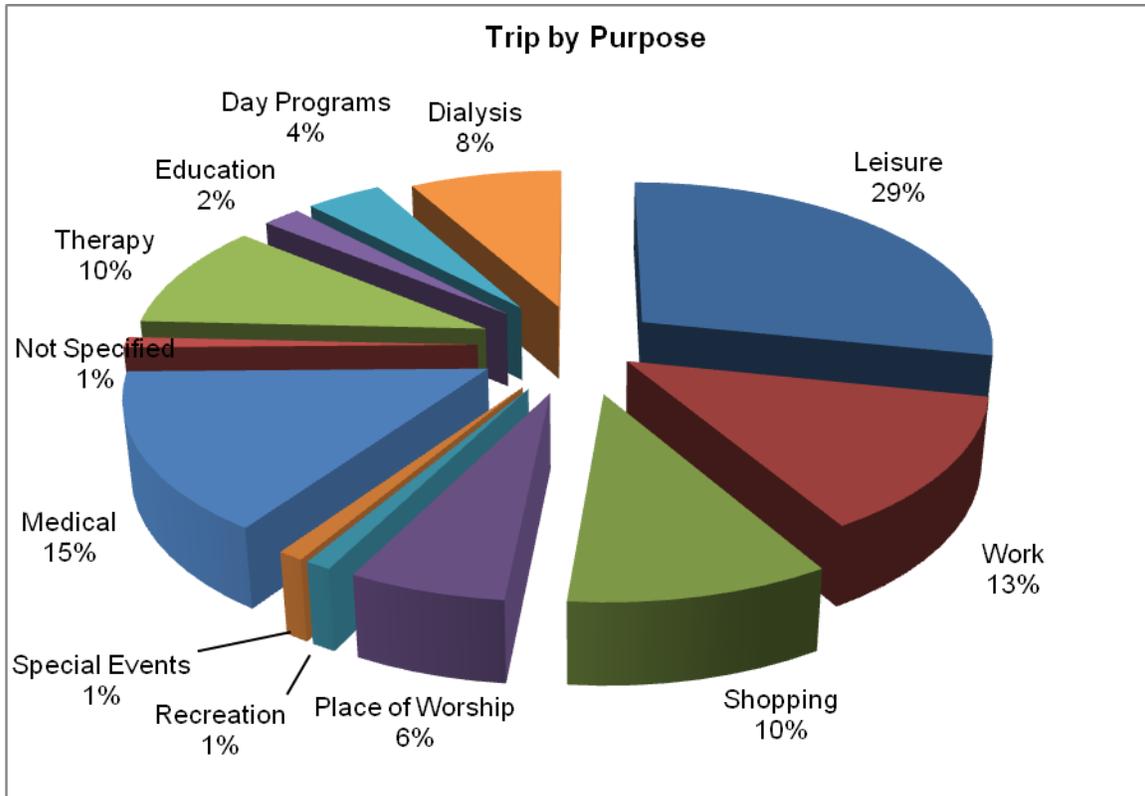
The number of active registered customers increased by 7.6% or 311, from 4,103 in 2011 to 4,414 in 2012. Since 2009, our customer base has grown between 5% and 8% per year, which is on par with demographic projections stated in a report entitled “The City of Saskatoon & The Saskatoon Health Region Populations Projections (2006-2026) Report”.



Ambulatory trips (passengers who do not require a mobility device like a wheelchair or scooter) increased by 5%. Non-Ambulatory trips decreased by 8% in 2012. It is our hope that more Ambulatory Access customers will use regular Transit low floor routes when the weather permits to help ease the demand and create more capacity on Access Transit buses.



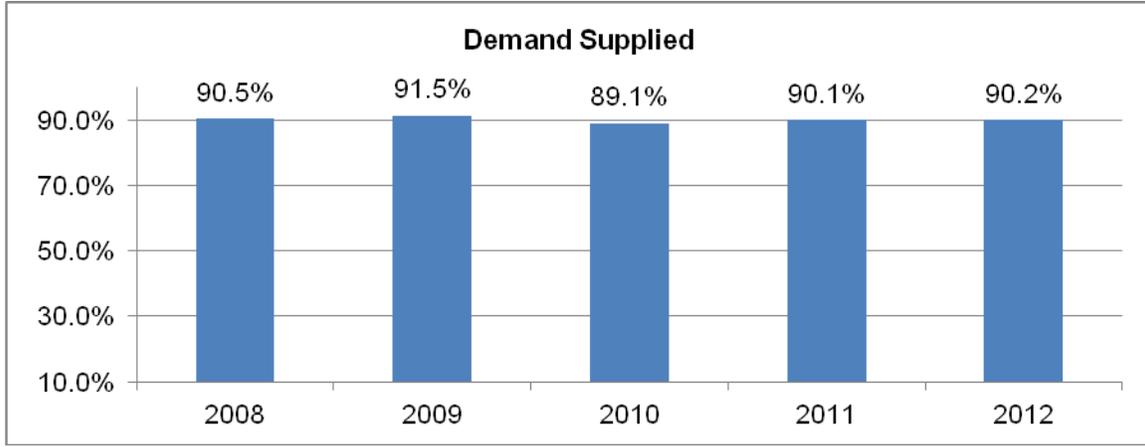
There was very little change in trips by purpose when comparing 2012 to the previous year. The most noticeable changes were a 3% decrease in leisure trips and a 3% increase in shopping trips. Education and Recreation trips were up by 1% while Work trips decreased by 1%. The remainder of the trip purpose categories remained the same when compared to 2011 travel patterns.



Service Demand

Access Transit service demand is calculated by the sum of Revenue Trips (one-way trips from point A to B), plus the number of Denials (trip requests that could not be accommodated), plus the number of No-shows (customers who are absent at the pickup location when the bus arrives, thus wasting a trip). In other words, demand for service is the total amount of trips that could have possibly been provided, had all variables been optimal.

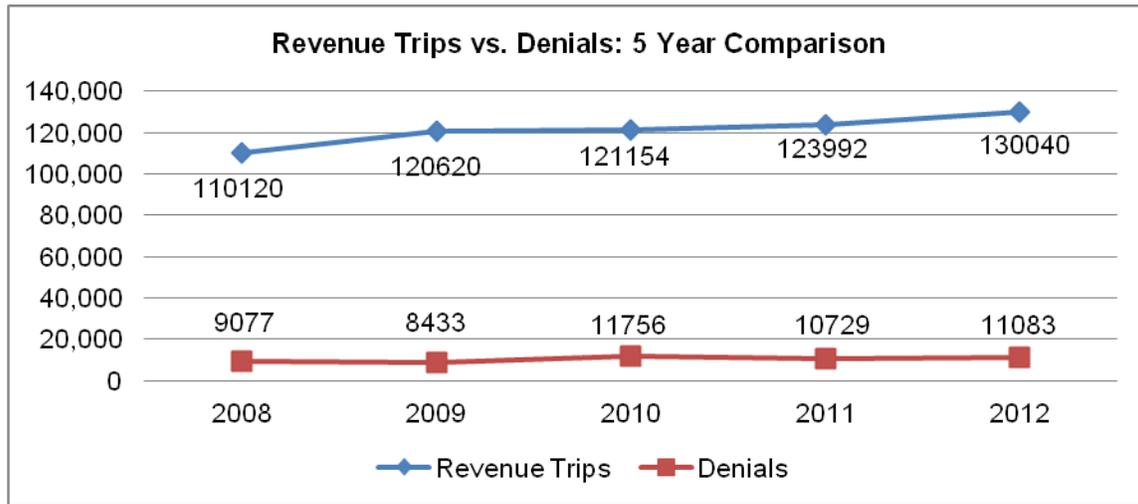
Our customer base increased by 7.6%, yet the overall demand for service increased by 4.8% in 2012. Weather is a significant contributing factor with regards to the demand for Access Transit service and directly impacts the number of revenue trips that we are able to provide. We experienced mild seasonal weather in 2012 which enabled Access Transit to provide service for 90% of our total demand.



Mild weather allows customers, especially those with mobility devices, to travel independently reducing the demand for Access Transit. This also helps to explain why there was only a 4.8% increase in service demand when our customer base increased by 7.6%. In short, our customers had more opportunities to travel on their own as opposed to using our service.

Revenue Trips

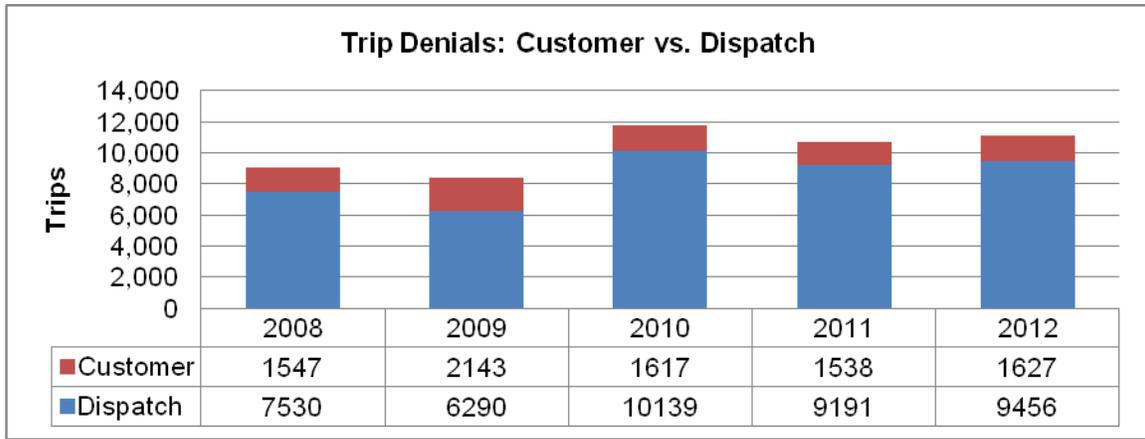
A Revenue Trip is defined as a one-way trip from point A to B. 2012 was our most successful year to date in terms of the number of trips provided to our customers.



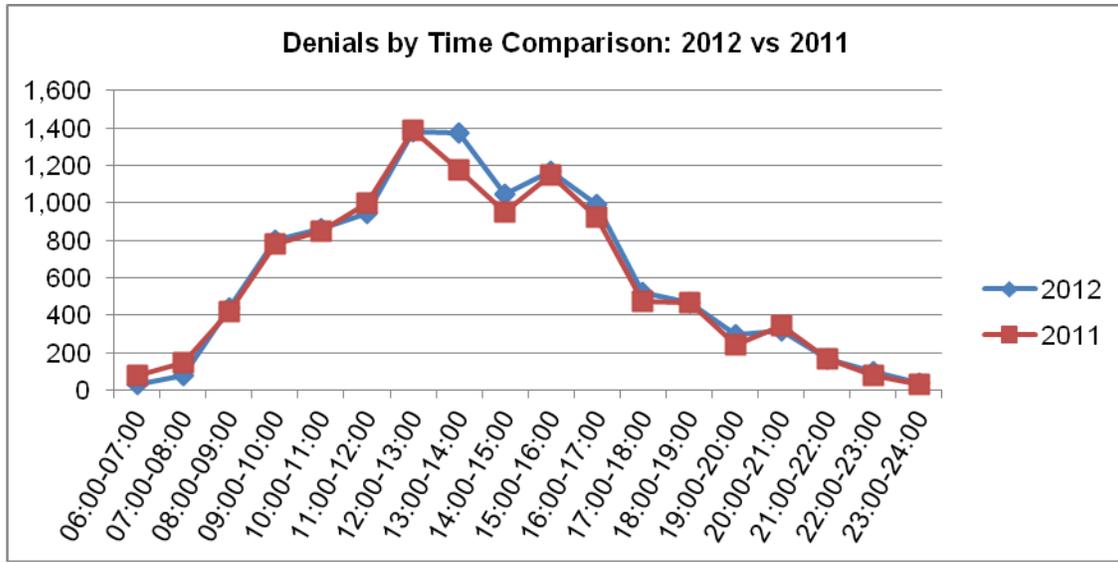
Access Transit provided 6,048 or 4.9% more Revenue Trips in 2012 compared to 2011. Some of the influential factors were the onset of an early winter, minor adjustments to operator shifts in conjunction with additional weekend service hours and increased taxi usage.

Denials

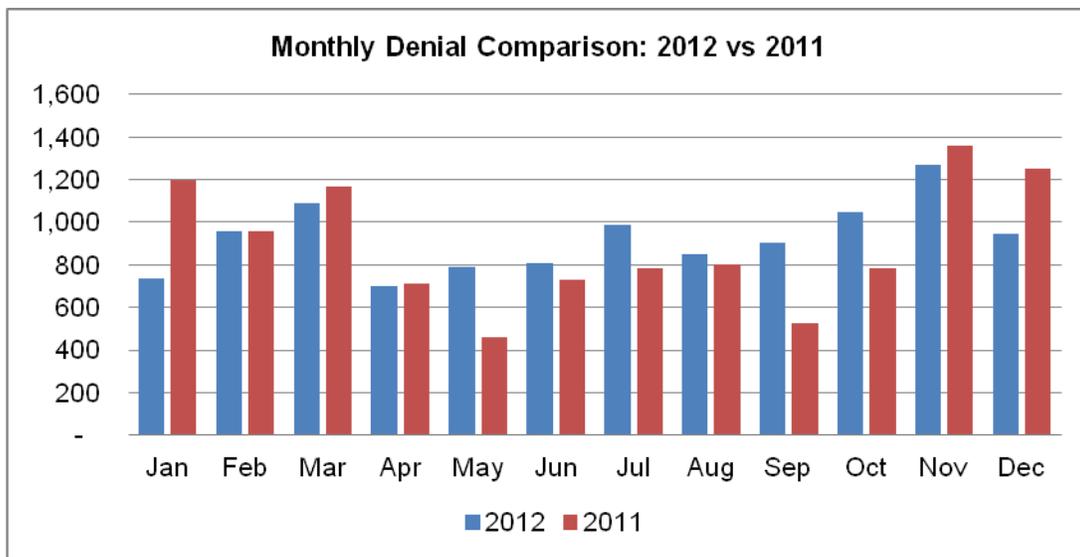
A Denial is a trip request by a customer that cannot be accommodated. There are two types of Denials; Customer Denials and Dispatch Denials. A Customer Denial is when a customer refuses an optional trip time offered to them by a Dispatcher regardless of the proximity to the time to the original request. A Dispatch Denial is a trip request that cannot be accommodated due to insufficient resources (insufficient run time, buses/capacity). Our denial rate decreased slightly in 2012 when compared to 2011. In 2012, Access Transit had a denial rate of 7.9% compared to an 8.0% denial rate in 2011. This represents the third lowest denial rate since Access Transit was brought in house in 2004.



The majority of the increase in Denials was realized in the 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. timeframe. This timeframe is during our peak hours when we have 19 buses on the road. To maintain our spare ratio and allow for an effective preventative maintenance program we will need to expand our fleet to add additional capacity during this timeframe.

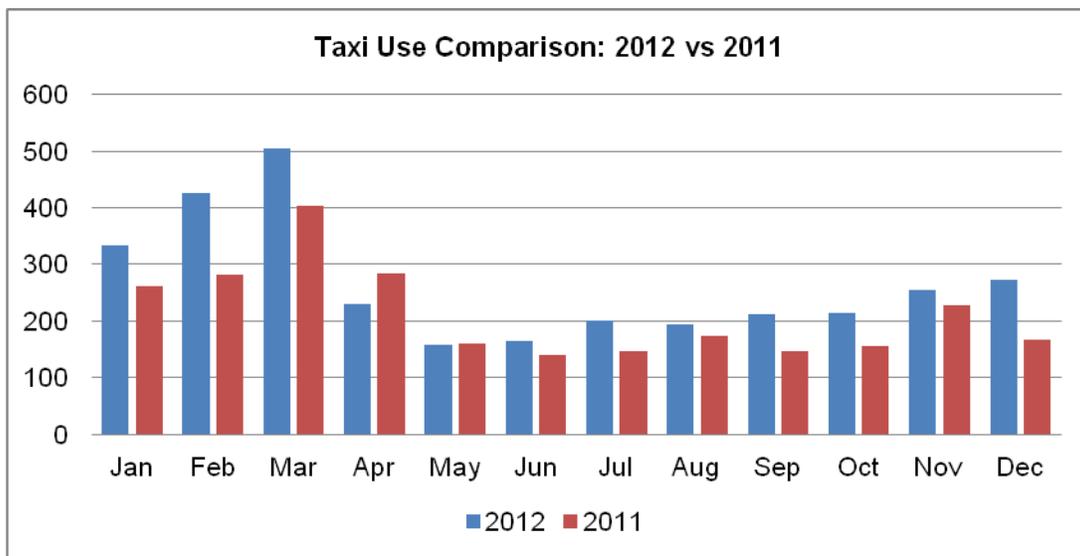


As illustrated by the graph below, it is during the winter months of the year where independent travel for people with disabilities is the most challenging. As a result, it is during these months that the demand for Access Transit services is the highest. Access Transit uses the majority of the taxi budget to assist with the extra demand for service during these months. However during extreme weather conditions such as blizzards, freezing rain, extreme temperatures, etc obtaining taxi service can be just as challenging for Access Transit as it is for the general public.



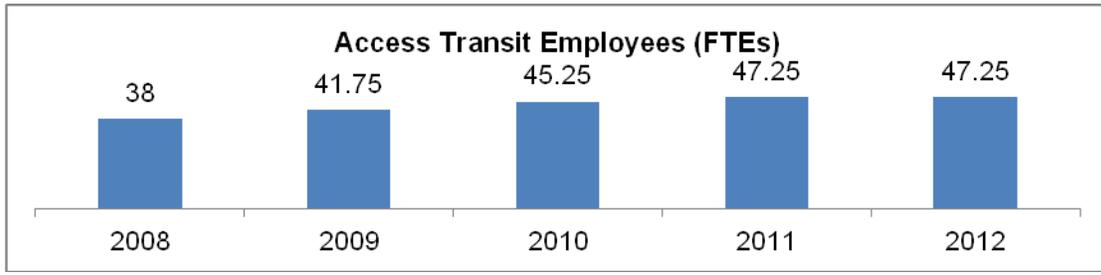
Taxi Cab Usage

Access Transit uses an alternative service delivery model which engages the taxi cab industry in the provision of service. In 2012, 3,171 revenue trips were provided via taxi cab. This represents a 24.6% increase compared to 2011. Taxi cabs are instrumental, especially in the winter months, assisting with providing service to our customers. Due to the finite capacity of service available the alternative service delivery model allows for a flexible, cost effective solution to help manage seasonal demand fluctuations. Cumulatively taxi cab use represented 2.4% of the total revenue trips provided in 2012. Access Transit buses are still the preferred mode of transportation by the vast majority of our customers.



Staffing

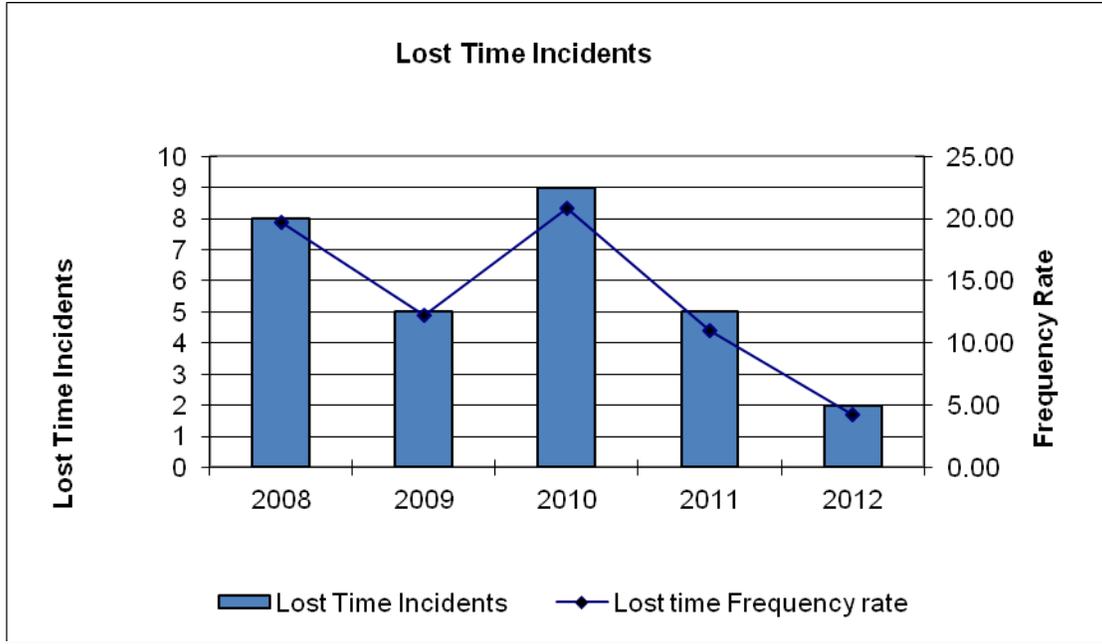
Access Transit provides service from 6:15 a.m. to 11:45 p.m., Monday through Friday and from 8:15 a.m. to 11:45 p.m. on weekends and holidays, 365 days a year regardless of weather and road conditions. However, when weather and/or road conditions are extremely severe, with safety as our primary concern, we reduce our service to essential trips only: Dialysis, Cancer Treatments, Specialist appointments, etc. Access Transit staffing levels remained the same in 2012 compared to 2011.



Employee Safety

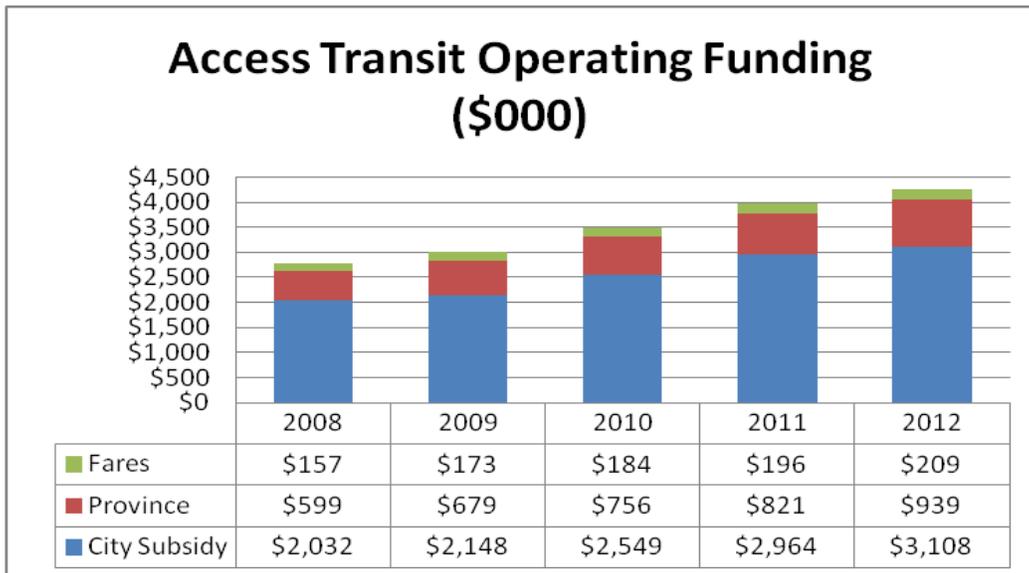
Access Transit Operators have a very physically demanding job. There are many occasions when operators are required to manoeuvre heavy manual wheelchairs up and down ramps and narrow winding sidewalks during all kinds of weather conditions. The safety of our customers and staff is paramount. Access Transit has introduced proactive safety initiatives including safe work observations and worksite inspections with the intent of reducing and eventually eliminating accidents in the workplace. We have improved over our 2012 statistics; however, improvements still need to be made.



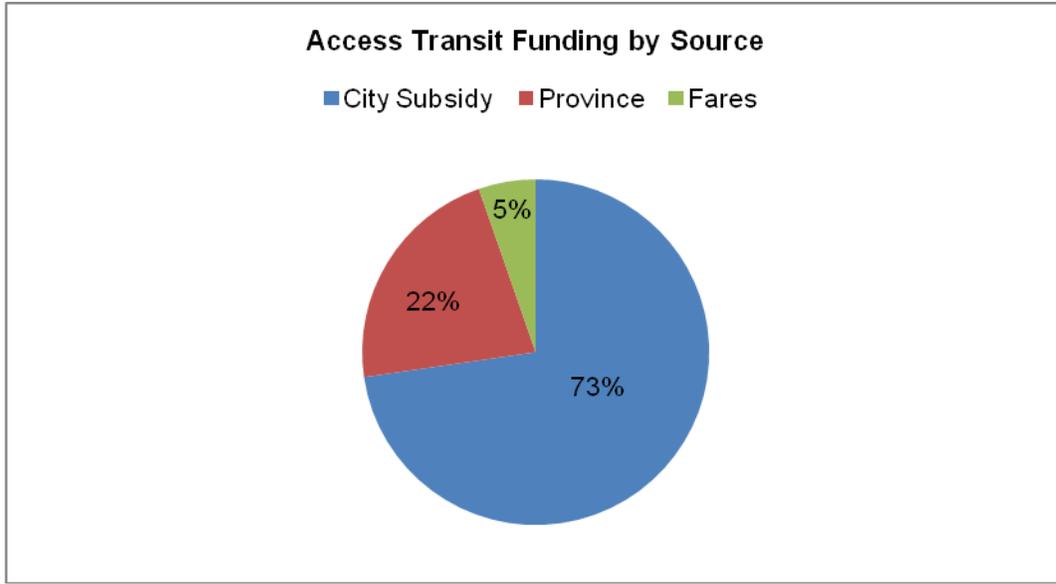


Financial

Operating and Capital funding to run Access Transit is provided by the City of Saskatoon, The Province of Saskatchewan, through the Transit Assistance for People with Disabilities (TAPD) Fund, and customer revenue.



The majority of the total funding (73%) is provided by the City of Saskatoon. There has been some additional TAPD program funding increases in the last several years, however, as demand for paratransit services increase, so does the need for additional provincial funding.

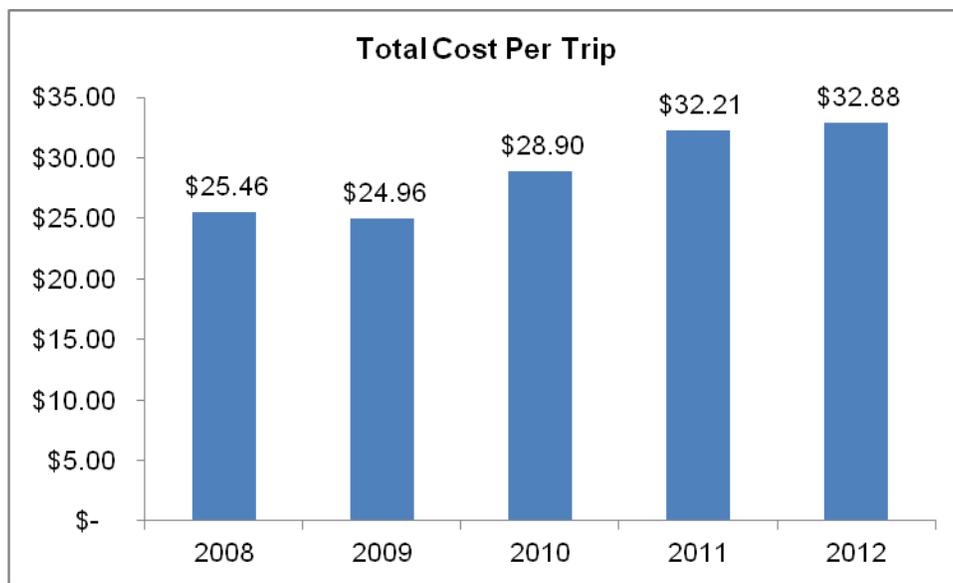


Access Transit experienced periods of being short staffed in 2012. Our primary goal is to provide as many trips as possible within our budgetary constraints. As a result of all of our trips being pre-booked, up to one week in advance, shifts must be filled to honor the commitments made to our customers. When short staffed it is common that we experience an increase in our overtime costs. This was the primary reason for exceeding our budget in 2012. On a positive note Access Transit exceeded fare revenue by 4% and realized a 6% increase in the operating grant from the Province of Saskatchewan as compared to the budgeted amounts. Yearend results show that the City subsidy will need to exceed the budget by \$149,000.

2012 Access Transit Operating Budget Variance (000's)

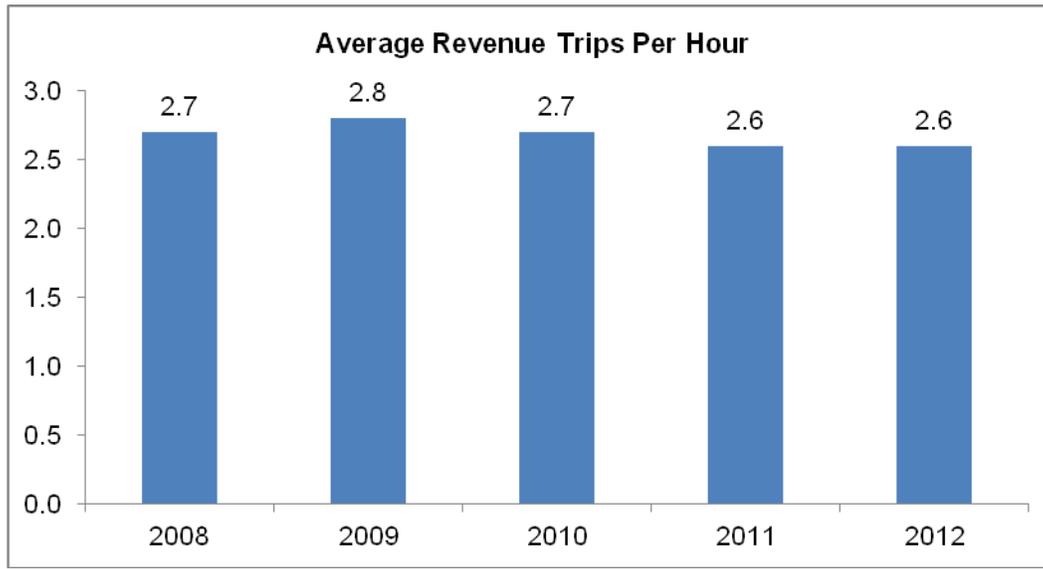
	Budget	Actual	Variance	%
City Subsidy	2,959	3,108	149	5.0%
Province of Sask grant	885	939	54	6.1%
Fares	219	228	9	4.1%
Revenue	<u>\$4,063</u>	<u>\$4,275</u>	<u>\$212</u>	<u>5.2%</u>
Expenses:				
Salaries & payroll	2,893	3,102	209	7.2%
Fuel,lube,oil	294	293	(1)	-0.3%
IS -Facilities services	214	214	0	0.0%
Maintenance equip & radio	198	205	7	3.5%
Debt cost	47	47	0	0.0%
Other expense	184	181	(3)	-1.6%
Transfer to reserves	233	233	0	0.0%
Total expense	<u>4,063</u>	<u>4,275</u>	<u>212</u>	<u>5.2%</u>
Revenue less expense	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	

Access Transit strives to provide maximum service as efficiently and cost effectively as possible. Due to increases in demand, labour, and capital costs the total cost per trip has been on the incline. Enhancing the accuracy of eligibility certifications is a proactive approach to managing demand, ensuring those who require our service receive it, and in doing so ensures that valuable budget dollars are used most effectively.



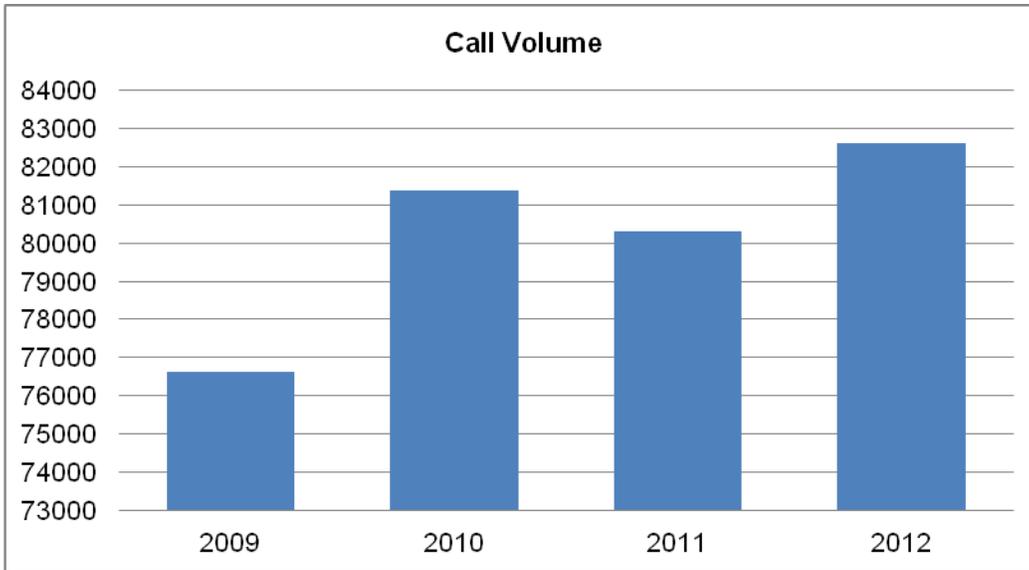
Productivity

Revenue Trips per Hour is a key performance indicator (KPI) in terms of productivity in the paratransit industry. In 2012 Access Transit provided 2.6 revenue trips per hour maintaining the level of productivity experienced in 2011. That stated, the city of Saskatoon continues to grow while traffic congestion and road conditions play an integral role with our overall productivity. Our operators do not have fixed routes; every day is different and is influenced by such factors as bridges, railroad crossings, and four seasons of distinct weather. Despite these challenges, our productivity remains high. The Canadian average is 2.5 Revenue Trips per Hour.



Phone Call Volume

Access Transit has 6 call stations in total. Due to technical difficulties call volume data from 2004-2008 was lost. However, we are able to report on call volume data from 2009 to the present. Access Transit customers can also send trip booking requests via email or fax. We have experienced an increase in the number of email bookings in 2012 and are identifying solutions to streamline this process. Needless to say our Booking and Scheduling Clerks are kept very busy.



Customer Complaints

There was a considerable decrease in the number of complaints received per 1,000 trips in 2012. In 2011, of the complaints received, approximately fifty percent were related to taxi cab use. In February, 2012 Access Transit met with taxi representatives to address and find solutions to the complaints received. This was largely successful and we noticed an immediate decrease in the number of complaints.



Summary

2012 was the most successful year Access Transit has had to date. That is not to say that it was without its challenges. A special thank you goes out to the staff

of Access Transit. Without their strong work ethic and dedication to our customers, Access Transit would not be successful.

The storage facility that was built in 2010 has been instrumental in keeping our fleet operational and reliable during seasonal weather extremes.

Access Transit replaced two buses in 2012 and will be replacing three buses in 2013. These replacement buses have a new air heating system as opposed to a coolant heating system that has proven to be quite successful. We hope that by the end of 2013 we will have retrofitted the entire fleet to ensure both passenger and operator comfort during the cold weather months.

In 2012 we slowed down our computerized booking and scheduling software due to traffic congestion, so that our travel times from point A to point B were realistic and attainable at safe operating speeds for our operators. We also worked closely with our vendor to optimize the way we book and schedule our trips to ensure that we can deliver the maximum number of trips possible. While this change technically slowed our system down, the efficiencies achieved enabled us to maintain our existing level of service.

It is important to note that our successes in 2012 were met and will continue to be met with challenges. We continue to experience an approximate 8% denial rate. An increasing customer base and demand for service continues to challenge our current resources. An increase in the number of lift equipped buses in the fleet will be required in the future to keep pace with our current level of service and meet the additional demand that we anticipate.

Looking forward, Access Transit plans to review and revise if necessary the current registration process and explore potential opportunities to involve private sector sponsorship in 2013.

Access Transit would like to take this opportunity to thank Saskatoon City Council, The Provincial Government, and the citizens of Saskatoon for your continued support for a very worthwhile service.