



HandyDART Service Performance Review 2021

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A Message from the CEO of TransLink



HandyDART remains an essential part of Metro Vancouver's transportation ecosystem.

Providing reliable services for people who are unable to navigate conventional public transit without assistance remains a key component of TransLink's services. Despite continued challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic this past year, HandyDART provided its customers trips to critical medical services, such as dialysis appointments and cancer treatments.

We helped keep our customers safe by:

- Pre-screening customers and requiring masks on-board,
- Providing enhanced cleaning of high-touch surfaces,
- Physical distancing on-board vehicles,
- Improving ventilation on 339 vehicles,
- Delivering 2,210 meals to customers in need, and
- Providing 1,064 wellness calls to check in on our customers.

In 2021, we made improvements with the launch of the HandyDART Modernization Program.

The demand for HandyDART grew as public health restrictions relaxed throughout 2021. In total, nearly 700,000 HandyDART trips were delivered throughout the year. We also saw an uptick in the number of trips young customers, aged 20 to 34, were taking.

We are committed to improving the HandyDART experience for those who need it now and in the future. In the fall of 2021, after consultation and public engagement, we introduced two new changes designed to ensure the service continues to be accessible:

- Brought Compass to HandyDART for a more convenient payment option that enables customers to more easily access both HandyDART and the conventional system.
- Implemented changes to fares with concession rates for customers under 18 and over 65, to create a more affordable trip for customers that need it.

These changes were well received, and we look forward to seeing the positive impacts of these initiatives throughout 2022.

I'd also like to take a moment to highlight the excellence that we see from HandyDART employees. With the reputation of going above and beyond, HandyDART drivers' special connection with their customers is evident in this report's findings.

The insights from this report and the improvements over the last year will help us to continue to provide a service that is transparent, data-driven, resilient, and continues to meet the needs of HandyDART customers.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Quinn', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kevin Quinn

Chief Executive Officer
TransLink

HandyDART in 2021 at a Glance

This report focuses on the performance of the HandyDART system, TransLink's door-to-door, shared-ride service for people who are unable to navigate the conventional public transit system without assistance. The following provides a summary of the key findings from this report, which includes a review and analysis of performance metrics related to usage and delivery of HandyDART services.

While the COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect demand for trips in 2021, the HandyDART system continued to transport customers to their destinations safely. The pandemic also prompted the introduction of new practices in 2020 that were continued into 2021.



HandyDART demand grew throughout 2021 as COVID-19 public health restrictions were eased in the spring and summer and as vaccination rates increased.

- HandyDART provided 43,000 trips in January, growing to 68,000 trips in the month of December. In total, 695,642 HandyDART trips were delivered in 2021, up 12% from 2020. A total of 647,123 trips (93%) were delivered by HandyDART vehicles and 48,519 trips (7%) were delivered by Supplemental Taxi.
- HandyDART vehicles provided 415,278 service hours, delivering 77% of budgeted service in 2021 while meeting demand, which remains lower.
- Customers aged 20-34 had the highest average trip rates on average in 2021, while older customers comprised the largest proportion of HandyDART customers overall.

HandyDART registrations grew by 11% in 2021.

- New customer registrations increased in 2021 to 5,328, 11% more than 2020's 4,792 registrations. Over 70% of these registrations were customers over the age of 65.

Throughout 2021, at least 90% of all HandyDART trips were delivered on time.

- Trips are considered on-time when the HandyDART vehicle arrives before the end of the pick-up window, or 15 minutes after the scheduled time.

Customer call wait times decreased overall from 2020.

- In 2021, customers calling the HandyDART line waited on hold an average of 30 seconds in January. Once answered by an agent, calls lasted between two and three minutes, on average. Hold times have decreased from the same period in 2020, where customers waited an average of over two minutes before speaking with an agent.

HandyDART customers made longer trips in 2021.

- Continuing the trend from 2020, in 2021 the average trip distance was 12.7km – a historically high average distance.

Customers continue to use HandyDART for a variety of trip purposes including important health-related trips.

- The majority of trips made by HandyDART customers in 2021 were for three purposes: dialysis (24% of trips), medical appointments (22% of trips), and day programs (25% of trips).

Customer satisfaction with HandyDART service continues to be high.

- In 2021, customer ratings¹ for both HandyDART and for Supplemental Taxi were high on the following measures:
 - » Overall service
 - » On-time performance
 - » Ease of booking
 - » Value for money
 - » Cleanliness and good repair of vehicles

TransLink prioritized safety through the COVID-19 pandemic to support HandyDART customers on trips.

- In 2021, HandyDART customers were pre-screened for COVID-19 symptoms as part of the booking process and continued to be required to wear masks while on-board HandyDART vehicles. High-touch surfaces, such as the yellow grab rails and seatbelts on HandyDART vehicles, were disinfected daily. Operators also spaced out customers on-board vehicles, conducting single-passenger trips wherever possible, until vehicle passenger capacities were restored mid-2021.

¹2021 HandyDART Customer Service Performance Report.

Introduction and Background

Report Objectives and Approach

The objectives of this HandyDART Service Performance Review are:

- Meet annual reporting requirements for HandyDART performance.
- Identify and advance understanding of HandyDART performance trends using available data sources.
- Pinpoint performance challenges to inform future policy, planning or procedural changes to continue to improve the HandyDART experience for existing and future customers.

This report identifies metrics that provide insights about the effectiveness and efficiency of the service and the customer experience across the HandyDART service. This includes key trends in performance, highlighting areas of high performance that should be maintained and challenges that require attention.

Other TransLink reporting on HandyDART performance includes:

- **Transit Service Performance Review (TSPR)** – HandyDART service is included in the system-wide Transit Service Performance Review, an annual comprehensive summary report on ridership and performance of TransLink's services.
- **HandyDART Customer Service Performance Reports** – Annual survey of experience and satisfaction for HandyDART customers. The primary objectives of the research are to evaluate the quality of service provided by HandyDART (including Supplemental Taxi), determine the reasons for change in usage, and identify areas for improvement.
- **Accountability Centre** – Since 2017, information about HandyDART service has been available on TransLink's Accountability Centre. Transit performance tracking includes customer satisfaction and some HandyDART performance indicators.
- **Corporate Reports** – TransLink produces annual Statutory and Accountability reports, featuring HandyDART, that provide a summary of operations and highlight strategic, service, capital, and operational plan successes.

What is HandyDART?

This section provides an overview of HandyDART and definitions that are helpful to understand some of the metrics later in the review.

HandyDART is TransLink's brand name for custom transit. The service is provided when registered customers are unable to navigate conventional transit services without assistance for part or all of their travel requirements. Trips are delivered in different ways:

- **HandyDART vehicles** – trips provided with HandyDART branded, accessible vehicles, operated for TransLink by First Transit. In this review when we refer to HandyDART vehicles we usually mean this service unless we specifically say that we are referring to the whole HandyDART service.
- **Supplemental Taxis** – taxis sent to provide service when HandyDART vehicles are not available. Reasons may include periods of high demand or serving customers when HandyDART vehicles are delayed in traffic or other circumstances. Customers pay a regular HandyDART fare and TransLink pays the rest of the taxi fare.
- **Multimodal trips** – Trips involving HandyDART and conventional transit.

As part of our commitment to delivering a world-class transit customer experience throughout the region, TransLink is committed to transparency and performance improvement. An annual program of performance reporting supports this with reporting for conventional transit. Since 2019, TransLink has produced this customized report for HandyDART, recognizing the unique nature of this service. Some features of HandyDART that don't apply to conventional transit include:

- Customers must be registered and eligible to use the HandyDART service.
- Customers must book and cancel trips in advance.
- Trips, including schedules and routes, are created in response to customer requests.
- Service is door-to-door.
- Drivers will accompany customers to and from the vehicle to the entrance of their origin and destination.

TransLink provides other accessibility programs and accessible services that are not included in this review:

- **HandyCard** – an identification card that enables eligible customers to travel on conventional transit at concession fares with their required attendant who travels for free.
- **TaxiSaver** – a taxi voucher program for HandyCard holders. Customers can purchase a limited number of taxi fare discount vouchers and use them for taxi trips they book themselves.
- **Conventional Transit** – the scheduled, fixed-route bus, SkyTrain, SeaBus and West Coast Express service that makes up the rest of the transit system. Much of Metro Vancouver’s conventional transit system has accessibility features such as:
 - » Vehicles with low or level floors, boarding ramps, and lifts for high-floor vehicles;
 - » At SkyTrain stations, Universal Faregate Access offering hands-free access to the gated SkyTrain system and elevators.
 - » Accessible bus stops that facilitate ramp deployment and have curb cuts and shelters. In 2021, nearly 7,000 bus stops (around 81% of all in-service stops) were wheelchair accessible. By the end of 2021, installation of dual format braille/tactile signs began. These signs will be installed at all in-service bus stops across the region, and tactile walking surface indicators (TWSIs) will be installed at in-service stops and bays on TransLink-owned property.
 - » Other features such as audible stop announcements and passenger information displays.



2021 HandyDART Service Performance Review

To prepare this report, the study team reviewed existing data and operational reporting, including reports from several existing systems including the HandyDART trip scheduling system ('Trapeze'), the call management system used by First Transit, and TransLink's annual survey of HandyDART customers.

TransLink's HandyDART Customer Service Performance Report

TransLink conducts an annual survey contacting 'past-month users' (who used HandyDART vehicles or Supplemental Taxi at least once in the past month) to gather their opinions about:

- the quality of service provided
- the reasons for changes in their usage
- areas for improvement.

Ipsos conducted 473 telephone interviews between October 26 and November 16, 2021 with customers aged 18 or older. Customers were first informed about the upcoming survey in a letter so that they would understand and feel comfortable participating in the survey. The total user sample was split between North of Fraser and South of Fraser residents, and the results were weighted against the regional distribution of HandyDART customers. Full details are available in the 2021 HandyDART Customer Service Performance Report.

For each question, results are reported in terms of the average score from 1 (least favourable) to 10 (most favourable), and in terms of the share of people answering the survey that gave scores of Good to Excellent (8 – 10).



Reporting on the COVID-19 Pandemic

In 2021, British Columbia was still in a state of emergency as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Public health orders evolved throughout the year to mitigate spread. The Province's vaccine program was launched in early 2021, with nearly 90% of residents receiving at least one dose of the two-dose vaccine by the end of 2021². Like in 2020, changing restrictions for gatherings, schools, and workplaces impacted travel patterns and overall demand.

COVID-19 Safety & Wellness

The COVID-19 pandemic directly impacted seniors and people with disabilities— the demographics that rely on HandyDART. Given the specific needs of HandyDART customers, the close assistance provided by HandyDART operators to customers, and the proximity between customers on-board, additional safety protocols were put in place to enhance safety of operators and customers. In addition, due to lower demand, the HandyDART service had capacity to support local food deliveries for vulnerable populations. Access Transit Customer Care and HandyDART representatives also regularly called customers to check in on their personal wellness. These programs were started in 2020 and continued into 2021.

² BCCDC COVID-19 Surveillance Dashboard

Enhanced Cleaning

First Transit, TransLink's third-party HandyDART service operator, continued to implement enhanced cleaning protocols onboard vehicles in 2021. High touch points – such as the yellow grab rails and seatbelts – were wiped down with disinfectant daily. HandyDART operators were also provided spray bottles for supplemental cleaning between trips.

Personal Protective Equipment

HandyDART helped enhance COVID-19 safety by providing personal protective equipment (PPE) to all HandyDART operators including masks, gloves, face shields, and disposable coveralls if requested. In addition, operators maintained a supply of disposable masks to provide to any customer who did not have one.

Physical distancing

Physical distancing on-board HandyDART vehicles was an important aspect of maintaining COVID-19 safety early in 2021. For trips from January to June, 95% carried two or fewer passengers at any given time. In response to public health guidance, TransLink removed capacity restrictions on HandyDART vehicles on July 1. From July to September, 87% of trips carried two or fewer passengers, and 79% of trips did the same from October to December. As physical distancing requirements were relaxed, more trips could be served using the same number of operators and vehicles.

Ventilation

The ventilation upgrade program on HandyDART vehicles started in 2020 with about 50 wind-powered roof vents (Flettner Vents) installed and tested. In 2021, all remaining vehicles were upgraded, resulting in a full fleet of 348 vehicles with upgraded ventilation. All new replacement buses arriving in the future will have vents installed prior to delivery.

Customer Satisfaction for Cleanliness and Good Repair

This continued emphasis on cleanliness was reflected in the annual Customer Satisfaction Survey scores. In 2021, survey respondents gave an average score of 9.3 out of 10 for cleanliness and good repair of HandyDART vehicles, up from 9.1 in 2020.

Food Delivery Support

Although HandyDART demand continued to grow back toward pre-COVID levels, staff had capacity to support other community initiatives and recovery efforts. Through the City of Vancouver Emergency Food Task Force and word of mouth, TransLink connected with community organizations across the city to aid in food delivery to vulnerable individuals. In 2021, this program continued, and 2,210 food deliveries were made.

Wellness Calls

To help support our customers through the challenges of the pandemic, the wellness call program established in 2020 continued into 2021. Call centre employees connected with 1,064 customers to discuss pandemic impacts and gauge customer comfort levels with travel on HandyDART. These efforts were well-received by customers and caregivers of those who found themselves dealing with isolation due to pandemic restrictions.

Ridership Impacts

As Metro Vancouver's rate of vaccine uptake grew in mid-2021, customers started to return to HandyDART. Trips delivered on both HandyDART vehicles and Supplemental Taxi grew steadily from February to November, and following traditional annual patterns due to holidays, shrank slightly in December. During the month of November, the month with the highest ridership, HandyDART delivered 76,000 trips – 64% of November 2019 volumes.

To maintain physical distancing on-board HandyDART vehicles, seating capacity was limited throughout the first half of 2021. This meant the same number of vehicles and drivers was needed to deliver significantly reduced ridership. In June, capacity restrictions were removed consistent with public health recommendations.

Summary of Key Findings

The following sections present the analysis of HandyDART data. The first section – The Customer Experience – follows the journey of a customer taking a HandyDART trip, from booking and waiting for a ride, to paying a fare and taking the trip. Each sub-section presents data related to each segment of the trip.

The second section presents Operational Insights. These are operational elements that a customer may not be aware of in their day-to-day experience with the service but that are nevertheless important metrics when examining the overall performance of the service.

The Customer Experience

In this section, metrics are assessed that focus on the customer experience for each segment of a HandyDART trip. This includes information on who HandyDART customers are, where trips start and end, the booking experience, trip purposes, and customer satisfaction.

HandyDART Customers

Customers with physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities who cannot use conventional public transit without assistance for all or part of their trip are eligible to use HandyDART.



Trip Rates by Customer Age

In September 2021, the service's eligibility criteria were expanded to include children under 12 years old. Future reporting will include data relevant to this newly-added demographic.

Customers over the age of 65 averaged 20 trips per person in 2021. Customers in the oldest age brackets (90-110) made an average of 12 HandyDART trips in 2021.

The 20 to 34 age bracket had the highest per-customer average trip rate at 83 trips per person over the course of the year—up from 2020's 68 trips, as the region re-opened at various points throughout the pandemic in 2021. In contrast, older age brackets had fewer average trips per customer but had a higher number of *total* trips than younger age brackets due to there being a larger number of older HandyDART customers overall.

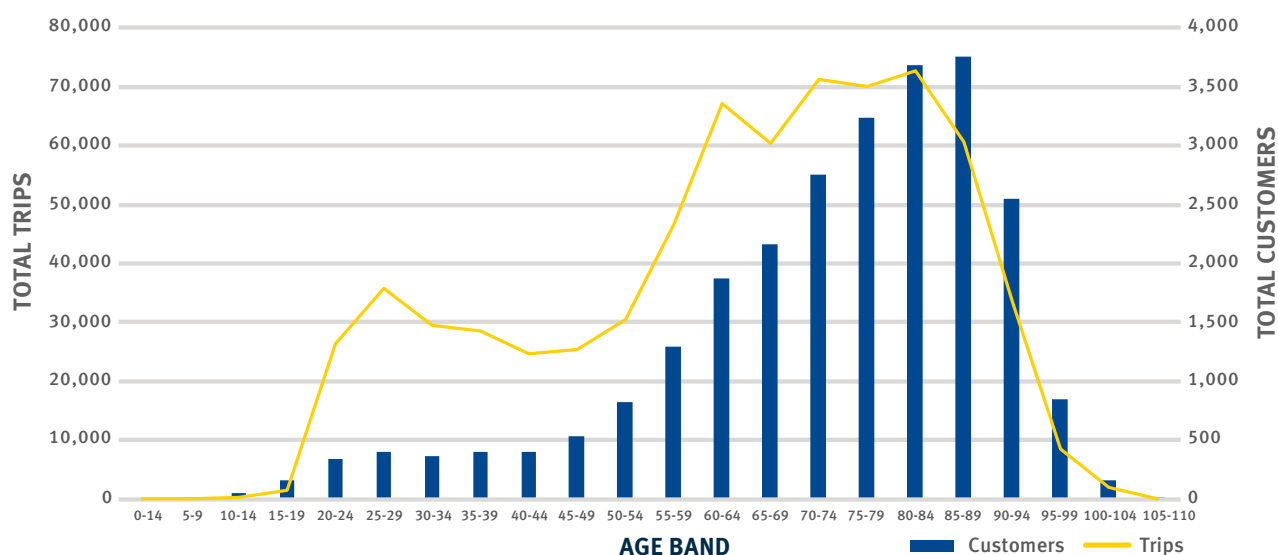


Figure 1 – Customers and Trips by Age Band

We expanded HandyDART eligibility to children ages 12 and under in fall 2021.

As of September 2021, children under 12 years old were able to apply to register as a HandyDART customer. Customers 12 and under who are registered HandyDART users or children who are accompanied by a registered HandyDART user can travel for free on HandyDART without requiring a fare product payment or identification. As of the end of 2021, HandyDART had twelve registered customers 12 or under.

For more information on customer eligibility and registration, visit our HandyDART webpage.

HandyDART Service Area & Service Patterns

HandyDART provides service for customers in TransLink’s service area, which includes most of Metro Vancouver. Like in 2020, the majority of trips started and ended in the South of Fraser sub-region. Figure 2 shows the percentages of trips that originated in each sub-region.

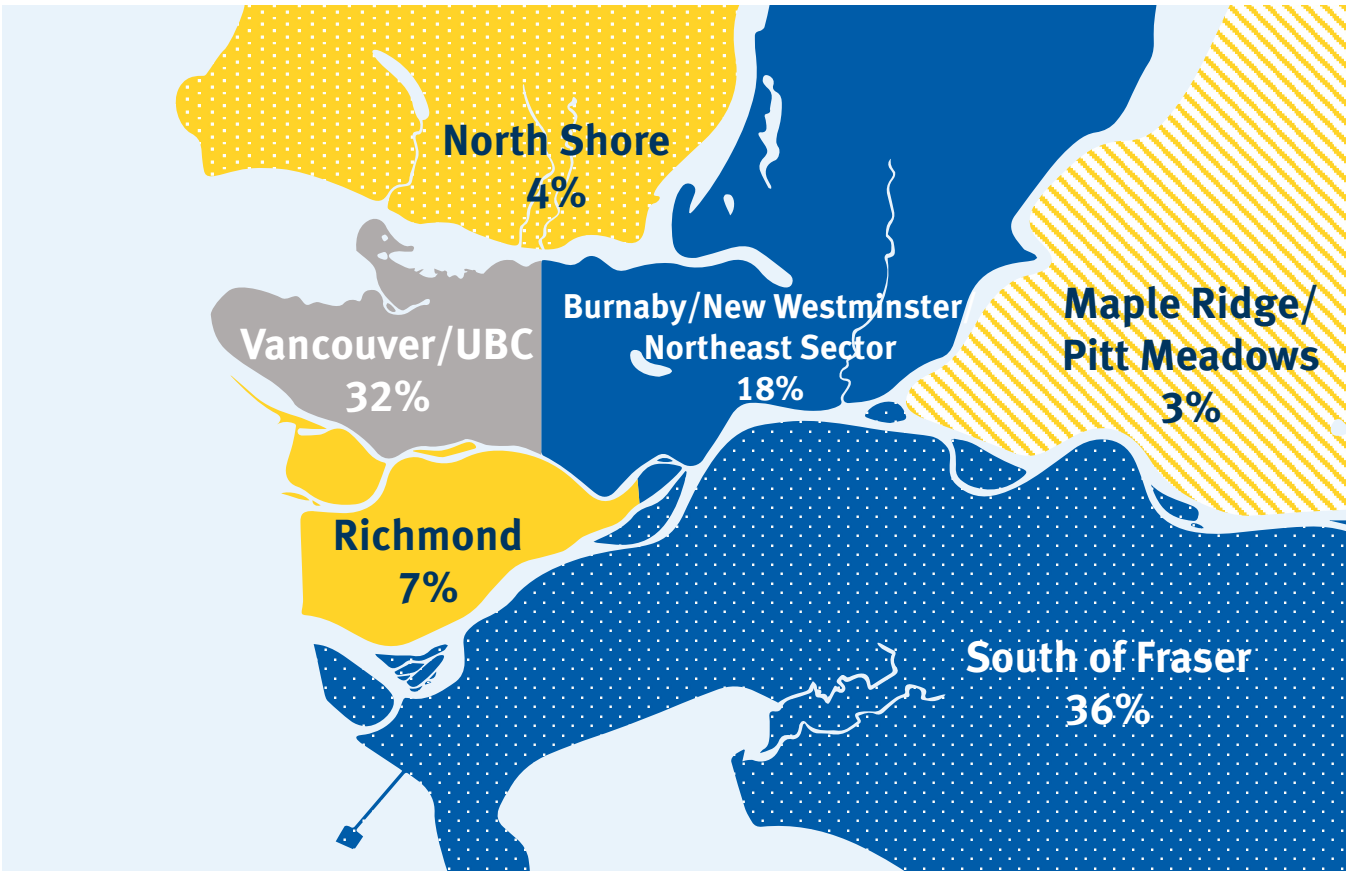


Figure 2 – Distribution of HandyDART Trip Origins in 2021

Trip Distance

From 2010 to 2019, the average HandyDART vehicle trip distance ranged between 8 and 9 kilometres. In 2020, that increased to 12.5km, and again in 2021 to 12.7km. This increase may be attributable to customers continuing to require the HandyDART service to complete longer trips, while finding alternative means for shorter trips during the pandemic.

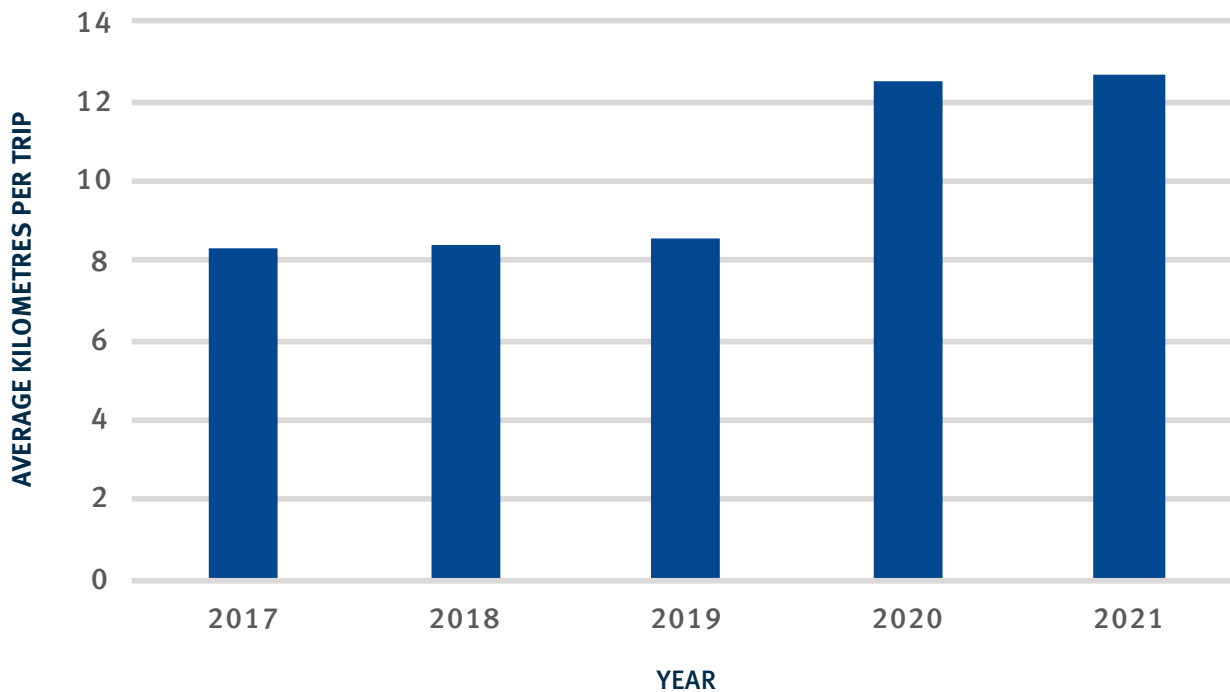


Figure 3 – Average Kilometres per Trip by Year (HandyDART Vehicles Only)

Trip Purpose

As Figure 4 demonstrates, the majority of the approximately 696,000 trips were for kidney dialysis (24%), medical appointments (22%), and day programs (25%). The remaining trips supported work, education, and miscellaneous purposes. Many customers rely on HandyDART to get them to and from critical appointments.

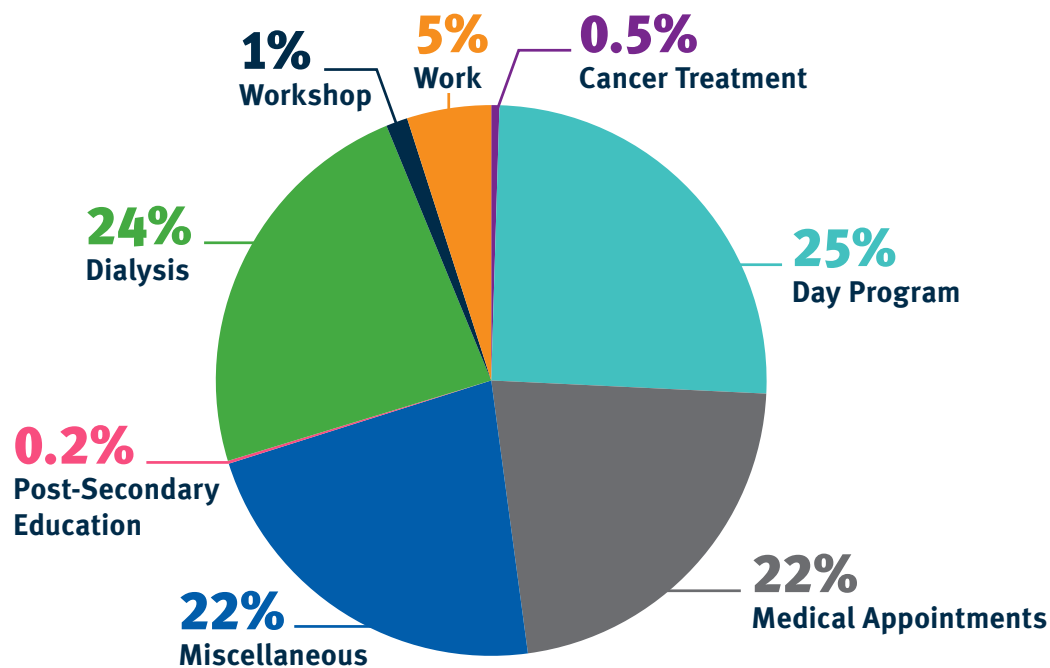


Figure 4 – 2021 HandyDART Trips by Purpose

Multimodal Trips

A very small share of trips are provided as multimodal trips, where HandyDART connects customers with conventional transit (such as SkyTrain, SeaBus, bus, or West Coast Express) for part of a customer's journey. Multimodal trips increase the efficiency of HandyDART by allowing vehicles to serve more trips in a local area. In addition, multimodal trips can provide customers greater spontaneity of travel, independence, and reduced travel times. When surveyed, 19% of customers reported that they use HandyDART in combination with other forms of transit – an increase from 17% in 2020 but still below pre-pandemic levels (23% in 2019). However, given HandyDART doesn't collect data on multimodal trips coordinated independently by the customer, only 0.6% of trips were formally identified as multimodal in 2021.

Booking the Trip

To book a trip, a customer must call HandyDART and make a reservation. Customers can book an on-demand casual trip – i.e., one-off trips – up to seven days in advance but not later than 4:00 p.m. the day before. Customers can also make subscription trips, which are repeated trips to and from the same location on a daily or weekly basis. In total, the HandyDART system responded to 877,438 trip requests in 2021.

To start 2021, customers calling the HandyDART line in January waited an average of 31 seconds on hold, with a talk time of 2.5 minutes. By December, ridership and call volumes had increased and resulted in an average hold time of 4.4 minutes with a talk time of 3.4 minutes.

In total, 30,325 calls were abandoned by the customer before connecting with a booking agent. Reasons for abandoned calls are not reported. Of these calls, 62% were abandoned at two minutes wait time or less, and 38% were abandoned after longer than two minutes. Figure 5 showcases that abandoned calls increased throughout 2021 as booking agents dealt with higher volumes of calls.

With the planned introduction of online trip booking to complement continued call-in booking, call wait times and abandoned calls are expected to go down.

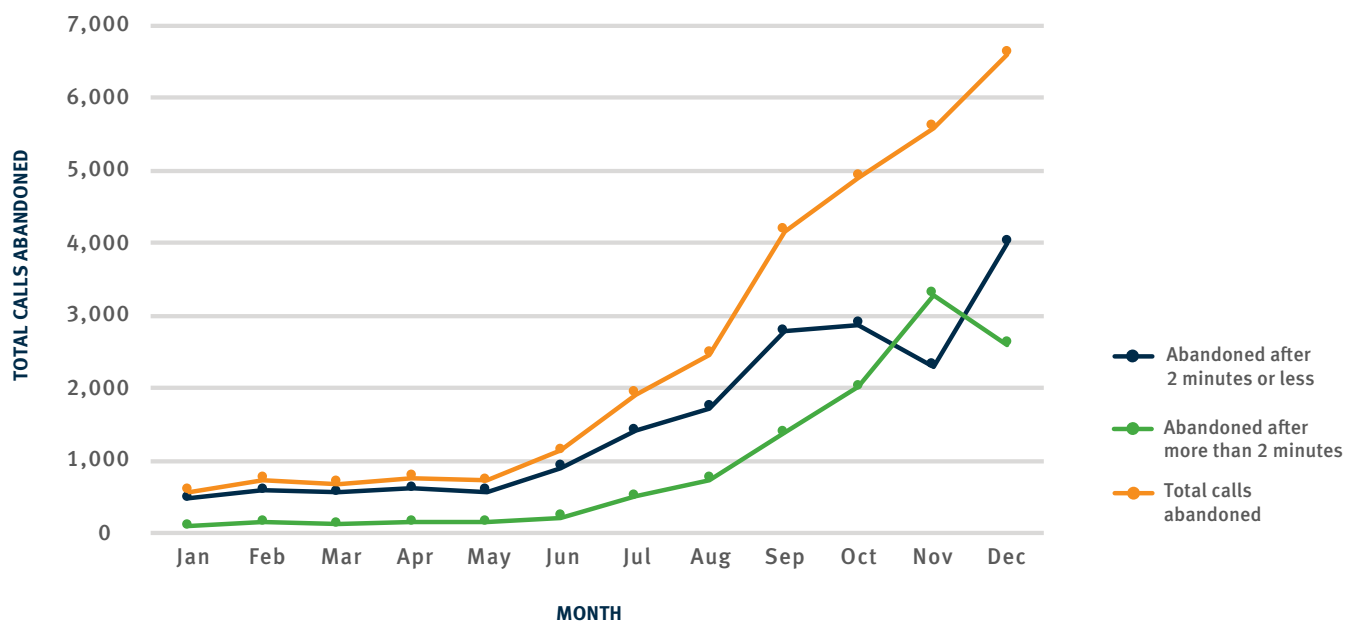


Figure 5 – Rates of Calls Abandoned - 2021

Customer Satisfaction on Ease of Booking

Customers rated ease of booking a trip as 8.9 out of 10 in 2021 and their ability to book trips when they want them—the ‘availability’ of HandyDART—as 8.8 out of 10. Both metrics continue to reflect a high degree of customer satisfaction, however with a slight decrease from 2020 as shown in Figure 6. Further improvements to the trip-booking experience are underway. As mentioned previously, an online trip booking option is planned for 2023 to complement the phone booking service.

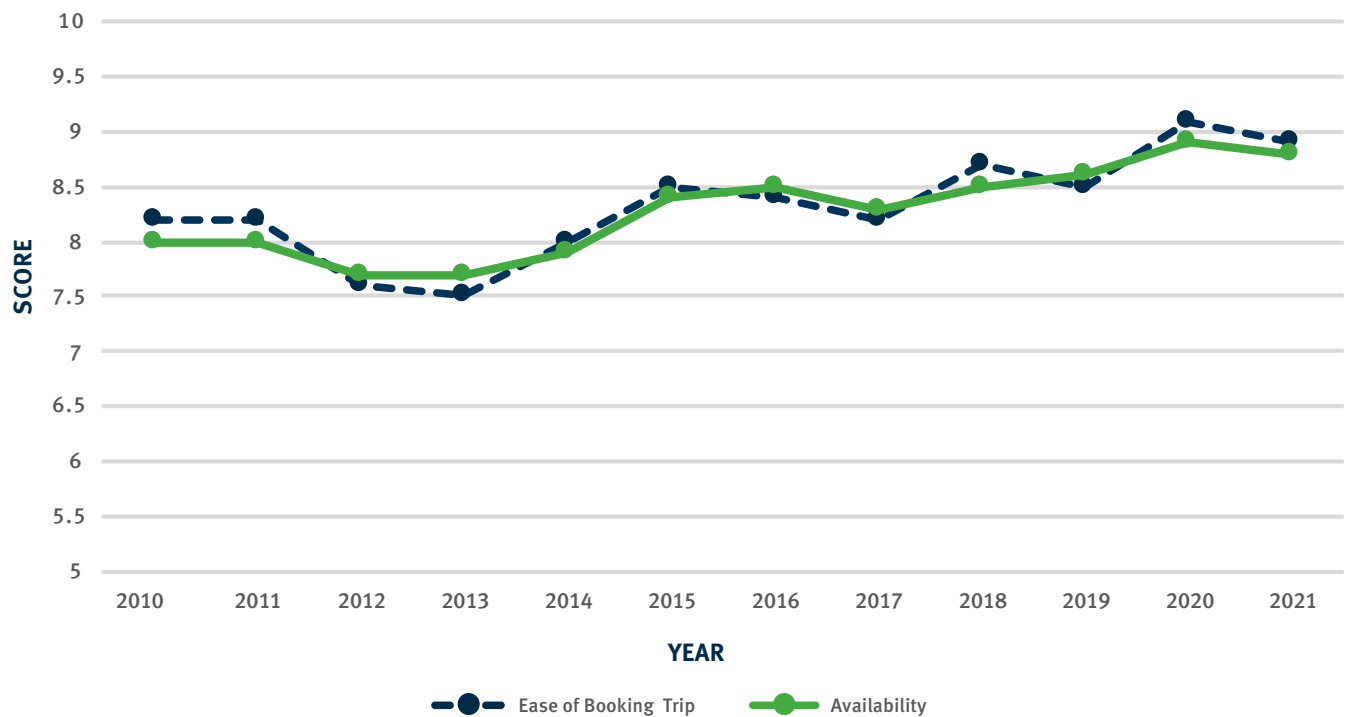


Figure 6 – Average Customer Satisfaction Scores for Ease of Booking a Trip and Availability

Denials and Refusals

Trips that are requested and not booked are tracked in two categories, Denials and Refusals.

Denial – A HandyDART customer trip request that is not accommodated. Denials occur because requests for trips cannot be accommodated in the schedule when they are received close to the desired travel day, for peak travel times with high demand for service or for some long trips that cannot be served.

Refusal – A HandyDART trip that a customer refuses when offered. Trip refusals occur when a requested trip time is unavailable, an alternative time is offered (up to an hour before or after the requested time) and the proposed time is not agreeable to the customer.

In a request for a round trip, if the trip in one direction is agreeable to the customer and the trip in the other direction is not, the customer may refuse the entire trip. This is recorded as one refusal and one denial.

In 2021, there were 119 denials (0.01% of requests) and 1,058 refusals (0.14% of requests). Despite the growth in demand for HandyDART throughout 2021, denials and refusals remained at levels lower than 2020 (405 denials, 1,258 refusals) with a peak in December. Unexpectedly high demand during the December holidays led to an increase in denials. Despite this slight uptick at the end of the year, the overall rate of denials and refusals has been decreasing year-over-year, as illustrated in Figure 7.

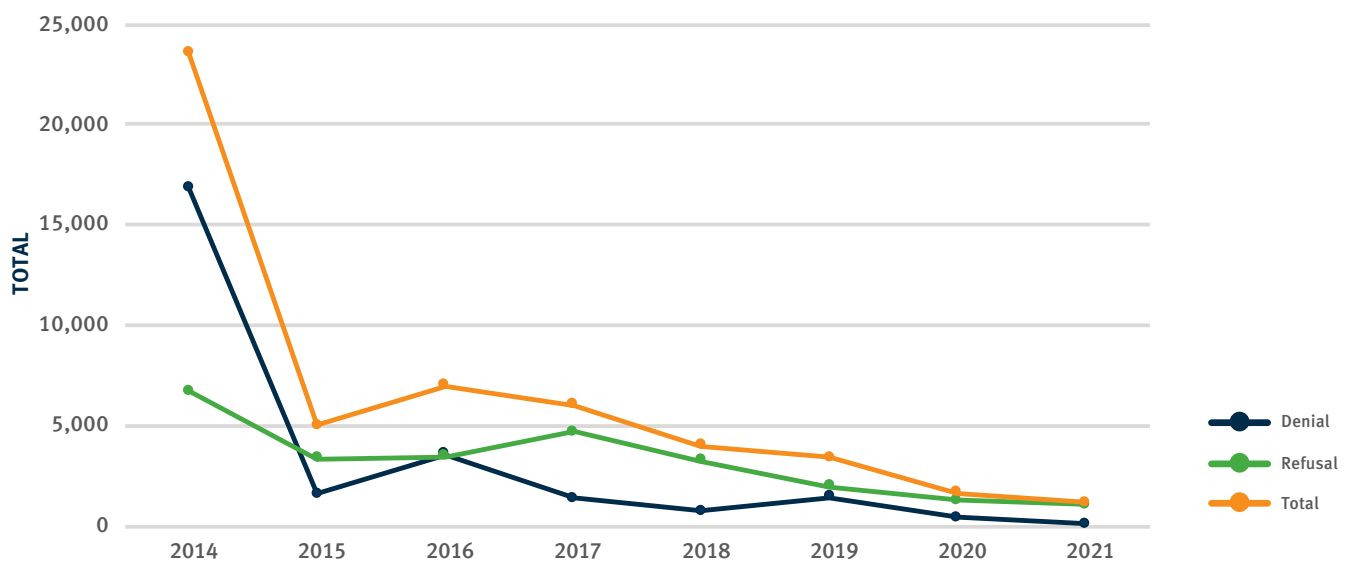


Figure 7 – Denials and Refusals by Year

Trip Cancellations

Most cancellations are the result of customers cancelling their own trip (as opposed to inclement weather or statutory holidays, for example), but specific reasons are not reported. Late cancellations (within 2 hours of the trip), cancellations at the door, and no-shows can have impacts on vehicle schedules and other customers' experiences. Customers are encouraged to inform HandyDART as soon as they decide to not take a booked trip, particularly if they're feeling unwell, so that the scheduled time may be used for others requiring service. In 2021, approximately 176,000 trips were cancelled – with 9 in 10 (or 159,000) being cancelled at the request of the customer.

Cancellation categories include the following:

	CANCEL TYPES	DEFINITION
BY CUSTOMER	Advance Cancel	All cancellations that are made prior to the day of service
	Cancel Late	A cancellation that is made within 2 hour of the scheduled trip time
	Cancel at Door	A cancellation that is made when the driver comes to the accessible entrance of the pick-up
	Same Day Cancel	A cancellation that is made on the day of service but more than 2 hours in advance
	No Show	The customer does not show up for their scheduled trip
EXTERNAL FACTOR	Site Closure Cancel	A cancellation of multiple customers as the result of a closure of workshop, adult day program, etc.
	Weather Cancel	Cancellations due to inclement weather
	Statutory Holiday Cancel	All subscription trips other than dialysis are cancelled on statutory holidays
	Missed Trip	HandyDART fails to pick up the customer. The driver arrives at the pick-up too late for the customer to go or misses the trip completely

Table 1 – Summary of Trip Cancellation Types

Also recorded are Standby Trips, where customers make late requests after the booking window has closed. These are not guaranteed but may be accommodated if space becomes available, such as by cancellations. In 2021, HandyDART accommodated 15,030 Standby Trips, 2% of total trips delivered.

Waiting for the Ride (On-Time Performance)

For service reliability, TransLink measures the arrival times of HandyDART vehicles compared with the time promised at the time of booking. A trip is considered on-time if HandyDART arrives within the pick-up window, i.e., within 15 minutes before or after the scheduled time. For example, if a trip is requested for 11:00 a.m. and the vehicle arrives anytime between 10:45 a.m. and 11:15 a.m., the trip is considered on-time.

The categories for arrival times (also illustrated in Figure 8) are:

- **Early** – Arriving more than 15 minutes before the scheduled time. The customer does not need to board the vehicle until the start of their scheduled pick-up window.
- **On-Time (Prior)** – Arriving up to 15 minutes before the scheduled time.
- **On-Time (After)** – Arriving 1-15 minutes after the scheduled time.
- **Late** – 15-30 minutes after the scheduled time.
- **Excessively Late** – More than 30 minutes after the scheduled time.
- **Missed** – HandyDART fails to pick up the customer or arrives past the on-time window and the customer is no longer waiting or declines the trip. Incidents where HandyDART arrives more than 60 minutes after scheduled time and the customer still accepts the trip are also recorded as “missed”.

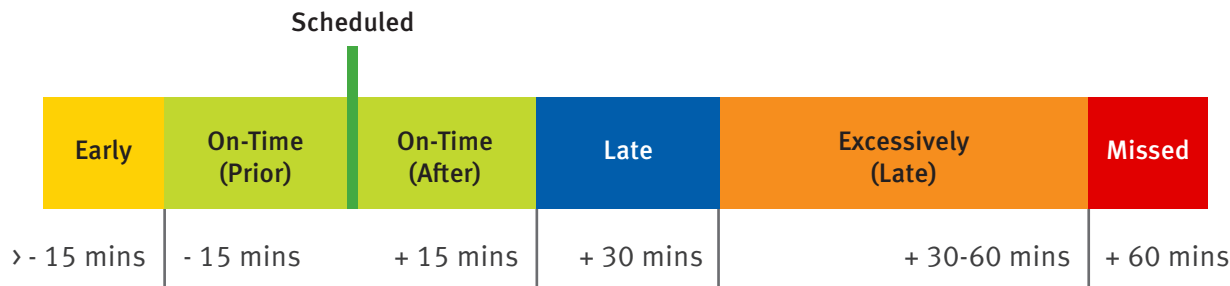


Figure 8 – On-Time Performance Categories

Building on the previous year's historic high of 93% trips reported as early or on-time, in 2021, this number reached a new record of 94% of trips. Earlier in 2021, while pandemic-related restrictions continued to reduce customer requests and traffic volumes, early and on-time performance reached 97%, but dropped to 91% in December. Figure 9 shows 2019, 2020, and 2021 early and on-time performance by month. Maintaining on-time performance continues to be a priority for HandyDART.

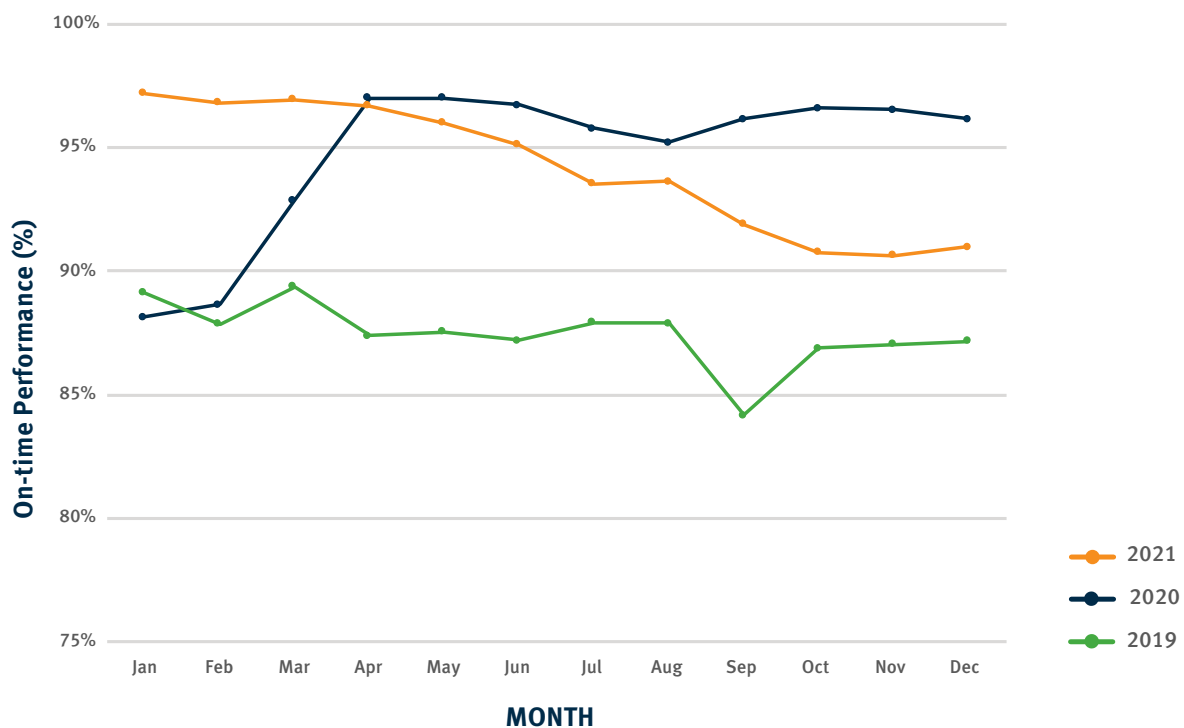


Figure 9 – Average Monthly HandyDART Early and On-Time Performance

Some notable findings related to on-time performance were:

- In January, 97% of trips were early or on-time within the 30-minute pick-up window, with 78% of trips arriving before the scheduled pick-up time and 19% of trips arriving in the 15 minutes after. This remained consistent through to December, with 91% of trips early or on-time within the pickup window.
- Late trips, where the HandyDART operator arrived more than 15 minutes after the stated pick-up time, increased from 3% in January to 8% in December. As trip requests grew throughout 2021 and more customers were allowed on a single trip, HandyDART had more multi-stop trips, impacting on-time performance.

Overall, 700 trips were excessively late out of the 695,462 trips provided (0.1%). Of these excessively late trips, 261 were HandyDART and 439 were Supplemental Taxi. Note that taxi trips are deployed as a supplemental service used for relief, overflow, or emergency purposes in order to complete HandyDART trip requests and can, therefore, receive less notice to fulfill a trip.

The HandyDART service also ‘missed’ 326 scheduled trips in 2021, meaning the vehicle arrived more than 60 minutes after the scheduled time and the customer either declined or accepted the trip. Of these missed trips, 47% were by HandyDART and 53% were by Supplemental Taxi. Every missed and excessively late trip is followed by an investigation, with the goal of minimizing recurrence.

Customer satisfaction scores for on-time reliable service on HandyDART and Supplemental Taxi continued to remain high in 2021. In 2021, HandyDART scored 8.5 and Supplemental Taxi scored 8.3; 79% of customers scored HandyDART’s on-time, reliable service as good to excellent (8 – 10 out of 10) while 73% of customers score Supplemental Taxi service as 8 – 10 out of 10.

The slight decline in satisfaction scores for HandyDART since 2020 is likely attributable to increased demand for the service and the return of traffic congestion after the initial pandemic drop-off in 2020; greater congestion on the region’s roads can lead to decreased reliability of on-road transit service.

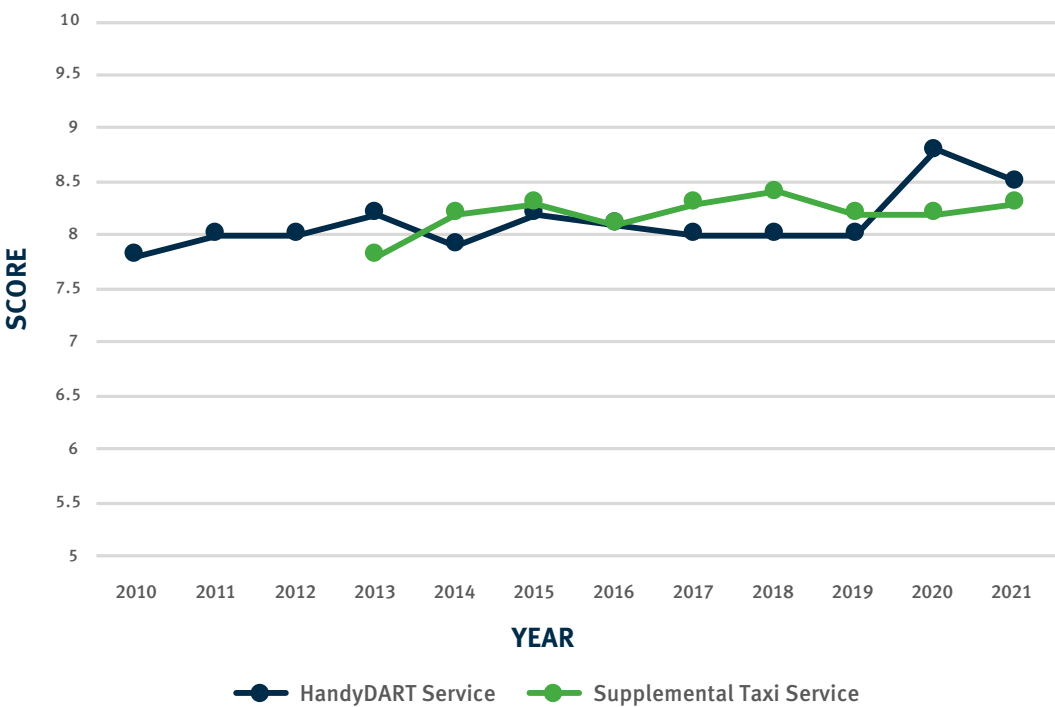


Figure 10– Customer Satisfaction Scores for On-Time Reliable Service

Paying for the Ride (Fare Payment by Fare Media)

Fare payment options for HandyDART customers changed in 2021. Customers had the option of using several methods:

- **FareSaver** – prepaid discount fare single-trip paper tickets purchased in books of 10. Faresaver sales were discontinued in November 2021 but are still accepted as valid fares for travel.
- **Compass Monthly Pass** – monthly, prepaid, unlimited ride pass loaded on a blue Compass Card purchased and loaded from the HandyDART office. Compass Monthly Pass sales were phased out in October 2021 with the introduction of Compass Card.
- **Compass Card** – launched in October 2021, customers can tap or use contactless credit cards to pay for their trips; this also allows for transfers to the conventional transit system.
- **U-Pass** – monthly unlimited ride pass for full-time post-secondary students paid through student fees.
- **Cash** – currency paid to the driver at full fare rates.

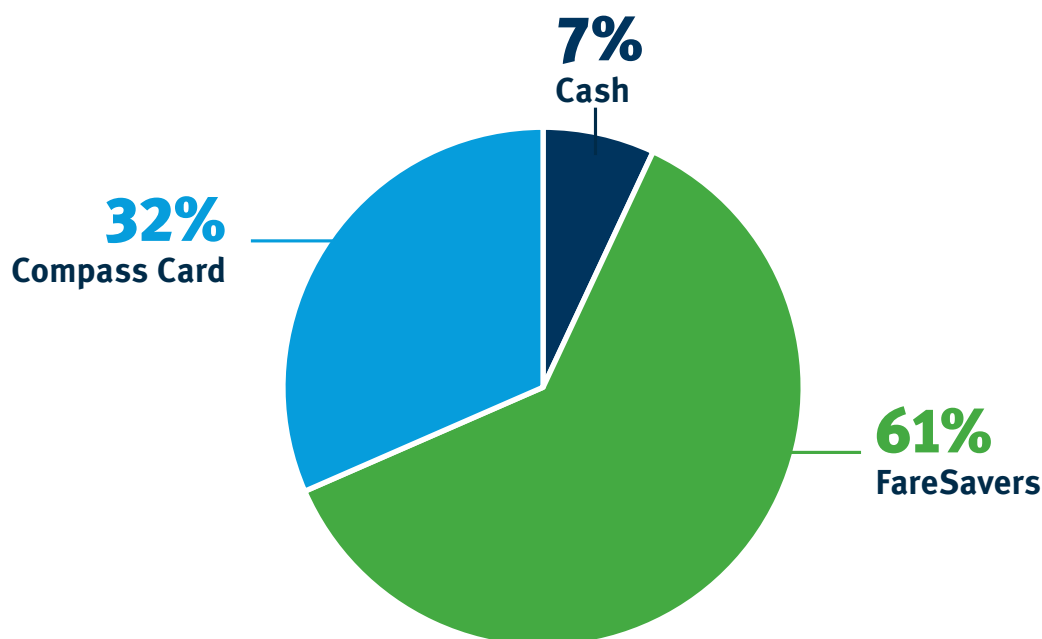


Figure 11– Fare Payment Types - 2021

Customers predominantly used FareSavers in 2021, comprising 61% of payments. FareSavers were phased out later in the year with the introduction of Compass. In 2021, Compass usage grew to 32%, an increase over 2020's 16%, when Compass Monthly Passes were the only Compass fare product available on HandyDART. Only 7% of customers paid with cash..

The ability to use Compass fare products to ride HandyDART makes it easier for customers to connect with other services and pay for their trips.

As demand continued to recover from the initial impacts of COVID-19, fare revenue in 2021 was \$1.54M, compared to 2020's \$1.41M, an increase of 10%.

We launched Compass on HandyDART and introduced age-based discounts.

For an improved transit experience, the Compass fare collection system was expanded to include HandyDART on October 1, 2021. The Compass reloadable farecard works everywhere on transit in Metro Vancouver, and provides access to discounted fares, DayPasses, Monthly Passes, and more. It also enables HandyDART customers to enjoy the convenience of Tap to Pay with contactless credit cards on HandyDART.

We also introduced aged-based discounts for customers aged 13 to 18 and 65 and older. Customers in these age groups now pay \$2.00 per one-zone trip compared to the regular adult fare of \$2.45 for a one-zone trip. As of September 2021, children under the age of 12 could ride free on all transit modes, including HandyDART.

One card. Many benefits.



Easy-to-Use

Compass makes it easier to pay with a tap of your card. Your attendant or HandyDART driver can help you tap if you need assistance.



Flexible

Access HandyDART, bus, SeaBus, SkyTrain, and West Coast Express with a single card.



Convenient

Never worry about your balance or renewing a Monthly Pass with the AutoLoad feature.



Safe and Secure

Register your card to protect your balance if your card is lost or stolen.

Customer Satisfaction of Value for Money

HandyDART is high performing on the value for money customer satisfaction metric. In 2021, survey respondents gave an average score of 9.2 out of 10, continuing a long-standing trend of customers reporting a score above 9 out of 10, on average. This metric does not distinguish between trips by HandyDART and by Supplemental Taxi.

Experiencing the Ride

Customer Scores for Overall HandyDART Service

This section focuses on feedback provided by customers on overall service quality and HandyDART and Supplemental Taxi driver performance.

Overall satisfaction for HandyDART remained strong. In 2021, the average score was 8.7 out of 10. Overall score for HandyDART Service provided by Supplemental Taxi increased in 2021, with an average score of 7.8 out of 10.

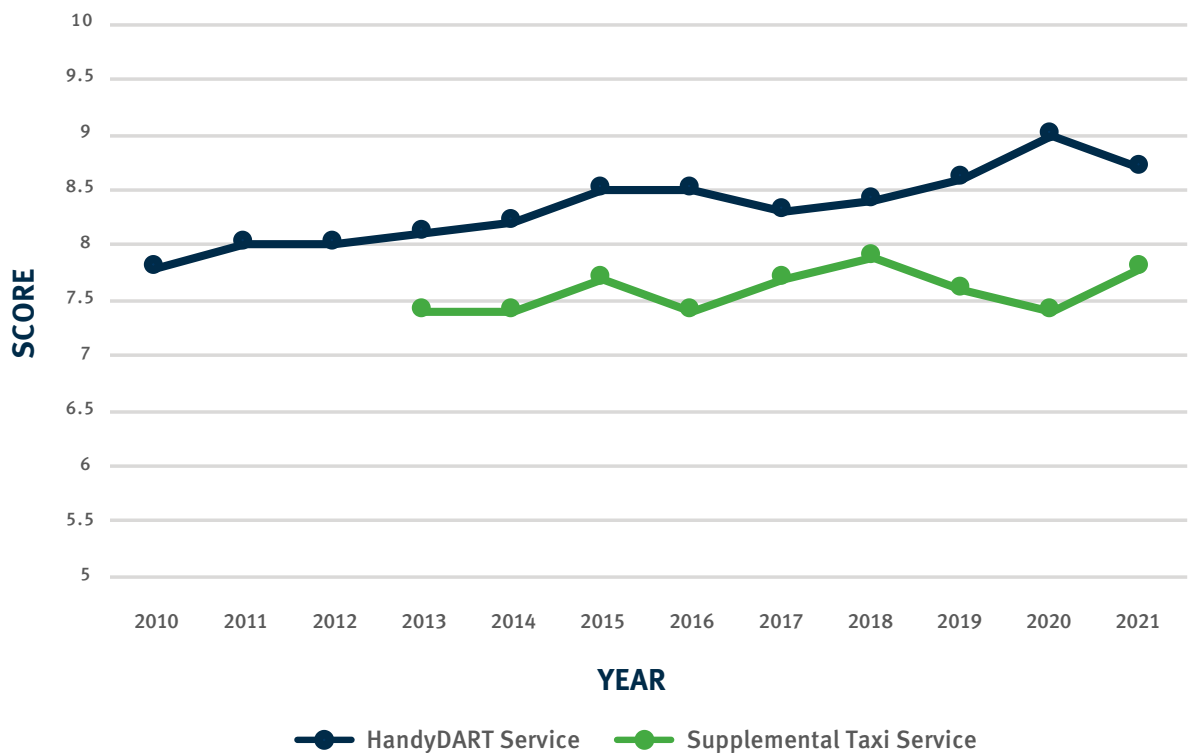


Figure 12 – Satisfaction Scores for Overall Service

HandyDART drivers continued to offer high-quality service throughout 2021. In 2021, the average satisfaction score for courteous, competent and helpful HandyDART drivers was 9.4, maintaining the trend of an average of at least 9 out of 10 since 2010.

Customer scores for drivers’ skills to assist passengers with a physical disability vary. HandyDART drivers consistently receive an average score of above 9 out of 10. In 2021, customers rated Supplemental Taxi Drivers an average of 7.4 out of 10. Although Supplemental Taxi drivers’ scores are lower than those of HandyDART drivers, we continue to see improvement year over year. Training programs for Supplemental Taxi drivers were impacted by COVID-19; sustained training for drivers will contribute to continuous improvement.

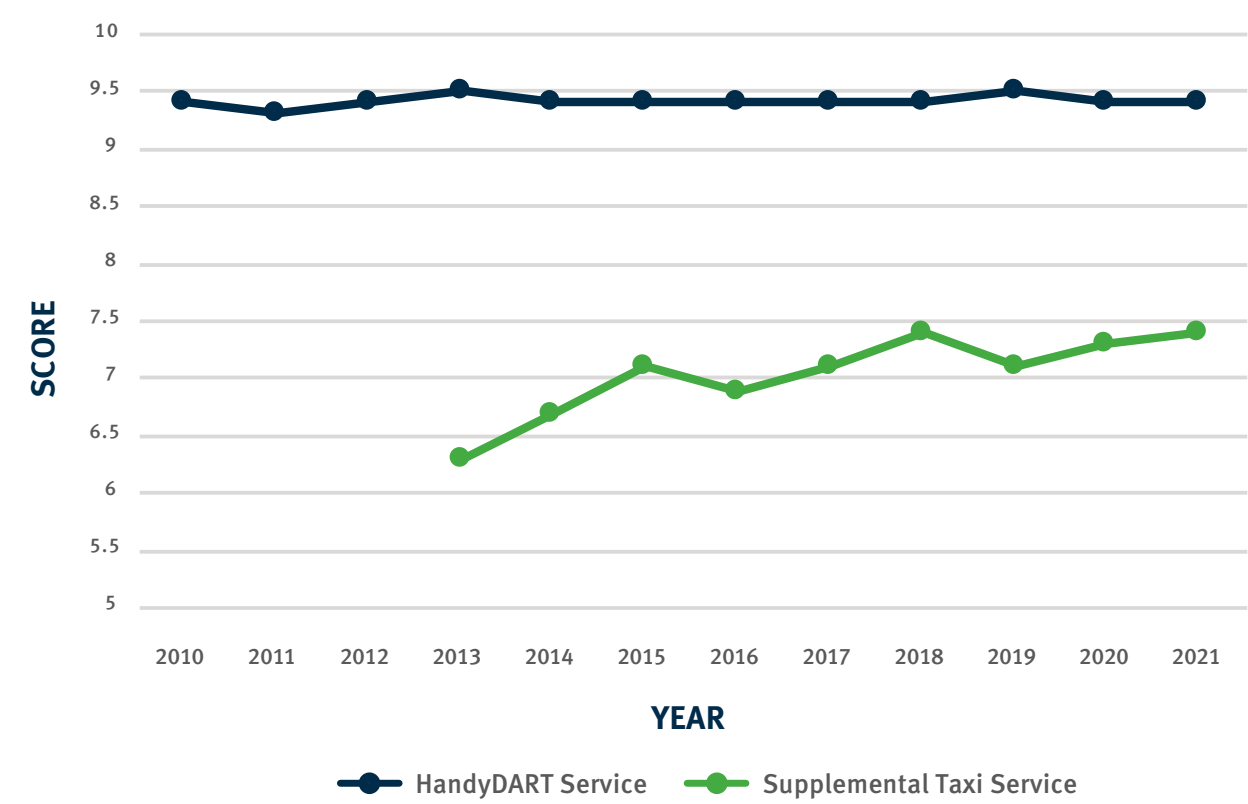


Figure 13 – Satisfaction Scores for Driver Skills to Assist Passengers with a Physical Disability

Supplemental Taxi drivers are expected to provide door-to-door service and to ensure seatbelts are secured before departing. In 2021, the number of customers indicating they received door-to-door service was 80%, a level maintained from 2020. There was a decline in customers reporting that drivers had checked that their seatbelts were secured, from 58% in 2020 to 53% in 2021.

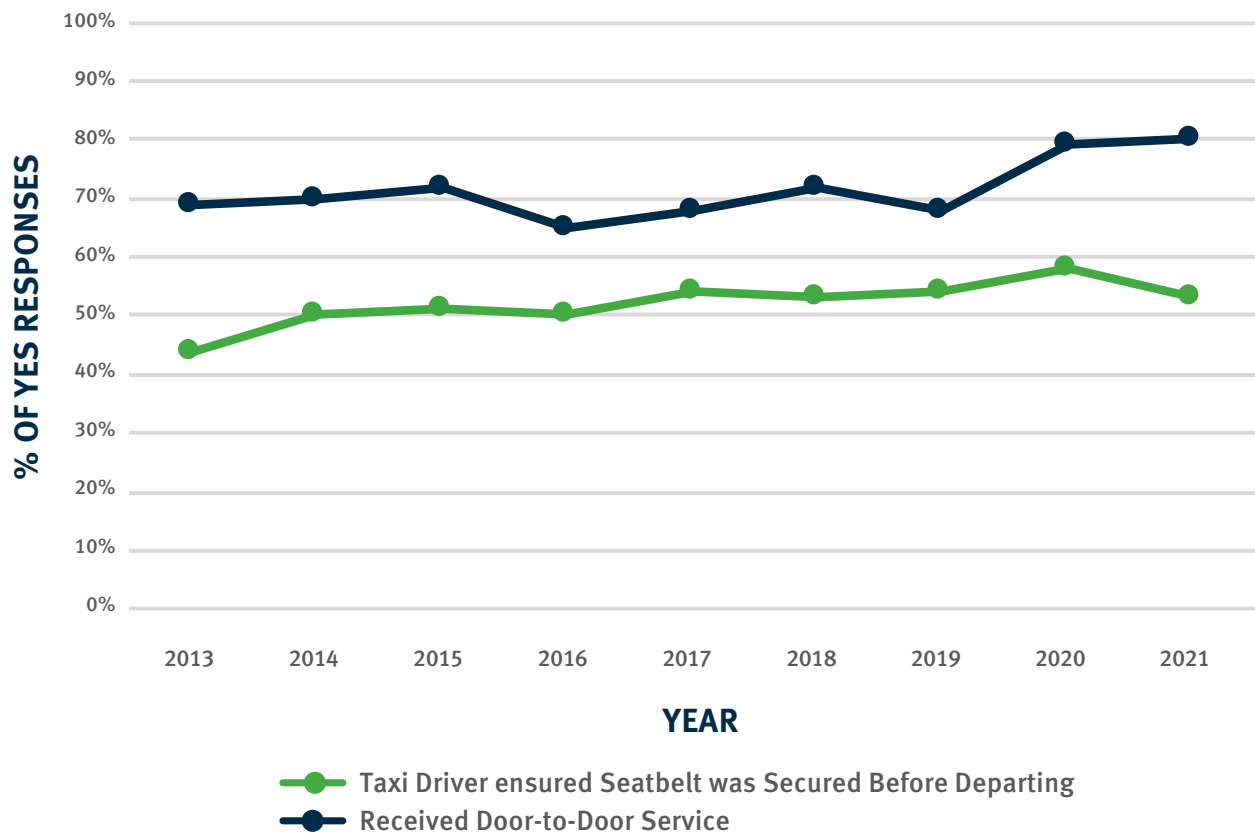


Figure 14 – Percent of “Yes” Responses to Receiving Door-to-Door Service and Ensuring Seatbelts are Secure – Supplemental Taxi Performance

The HandyDART service received 1,609 customer comments in 2021. Overall, the proportion of client comments that were complaints remained stable between 2020 and 2021 at 75%. Supplemental Taxi feedback also remained stable from the previous year: 94% of comments complaints and 6% commendations (305 comments total). HandyDART receives more comments overall, as the service provides significantly more trips than Supplemental Taxi.

Customer Safety

The HandyDART customer injury rate represents the number of confirmed injury instances which occur either while a customer is inside a vehicle, boarding or alighting, or as a result of a collision.

In 2021, the service had a slight increase in customer injuries, with 23 total (a rate of 3 per 100,000 boardings). The majority of injuries were minor in nature, with falls being ‘softened’ by the driver. Ongoing training on safe driving for HandyDART operators will aim to reduce the occurrence of injuries.

This relatively low injury rate is reflected in customer satisfaction about feeling safe onboard HandyDART. Customers answering the survey in 2021 gave an average score of 9.4 out of 10 for feeling safe, continuing the trend of annual average scores greater than 9 out of 10 since 2010.

About the HandyDART Users’ Advisory Committee

The HandyDART Users’ Advisory Committee (HDUAC) allows TransLink and CMBC to hear directly from customers and stakeholders. The committee provides advice and guidance on HandyDART plans, programs and other initiatives, and advises TransLink on matters to improve HandyDART service for customers. In addition, committee member perspectives provide valuable context and nuance to customer experience metrics reported in this review each year.

For more information on the HandyDART Users’ Advisory Committee, visit TransLink’s Access Transit webpage.



Operational Insights

In this section, performance metrics are presented that are related to the operation of HandyDART service. These include an in-depth examination of trips delivered with dedicated HandyDART vehicles and taxis, the cost of delivering HandyDART trips with dedicated vehicles, and the number of dedicated vehicles in service.

Delivery of HandyDART Service

Because HandyDART trips are provided on request, the total number of customer trips provided is linked to the total number of requests customers make. Customer trips provided may be lower if fewer customers make trip requests or if some requested trips are not delivered. In some cases, trips are cancelled because of breakdowns, traffic congestion, or poor weather and the HandyDART dispatcher may send a Supplemental Taxi to provide the trip.

Service delivered is measured in trips, hours, and kilometres.



A Service Hour is one hour a vehicle is engaged in providing HandyDART service to customer(s), which excludes operator breaks, training, and mechanical breakdowns.

A Trip is when a customer is transported to their desired destination by the HandyDART service.

A Service Kilometre is defined as distance travelled with one or more registered customer onboard.



Customer Boarding Trends

As Metro Vancouver continued to recover from the impacts of COVID-19, HandyDART ridership grew overall in 2021. Revolving public health orders throughout the year and changing customer comfort levels varied the demand for the service in any given month.

January and February had continued low demand owing to the prolonged impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. A slight uptick in March was followed by growth throughout the summer to peak boardings in November, with 83,856 boardings. December’s ridership followed typical seasonal patterns of lower demand, amplified by the onset of the Omicron COVID-19 variant, and was lower at 75,042 boardings.

In total, 695,642 trips were delivered by the HandyDART service in 2021. This includes 647,123 trips on dedicated HandyDART vehicles and 48,519 trips on Supplemental Taxi. Compared to 2020, dedicated HandyDART trips were up 11.6% and Supplemental Taxi trips were up 20%, a sign of a return to transit for the region.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
HandyDART Trips	1,094,500	1,104,900	1,095,000	1,120,400	1,166,100	1,198,300	579,725	647,123
YoY% Change		1.0%	-0.9%	2.3%	4.1%	2.8%	-51.6%	11.6%
Supplemental Taxi Trips	74,400	99,900	132,400	129,600	149,300	183,500	40,418	48,519
YoY% Change		34.3%	32.5%	-2.1%	15.2%	22.9%	-78.0%	20%
Total Trips	1,168,900	1,204,800	1,227,400	1,250,000	1,315,400	1,381,800	620,143	695,642
YoY% Change		3.1%	1.9%	1.8%	5.2%	5.0%	-55.1%	12.2%
Boardings	1,299,500	1,340,400	1,365,900	1,394,800	1,475,000	1,559,500	698,238	767,122
YoY% Change		3.1%	1.9%	2.1%	5.7%	5.7%	-55.2%	9.9%
Budgeted Trips	1,254,587	1,212,735	1,202,000	1,287,500	1,335,000	1,373,000	1,411,000	1,411,000
YoY% Change		-3.3%	-0.9%	7.1%	3.7%	2.8%	2.8%	0%
Percent of Budgeted Trips Delivered	93.2%	99.3%	102.1%	97.1%	98.5%	100.6%	44%	49%
YoY% Change		6.5%	2.8%	-4.9%	1.4%	2.1%	-56.3%	5%
Service Hours	553,100	557,100	560,500	587,300	548,900	518,900	421,141	415,278
YoY% Change		0.7%	0.6%	4.8%	-6.5%	-5.5%	-18.8%	-1%

Table 2 – Annual HandyDART Trips Delivered

As the region emerges from the challenges of the pandemic and the Metro Vancouver population continues to age, demand for HandyDART is expected to rebound and grow beyond existing budgeted trips.

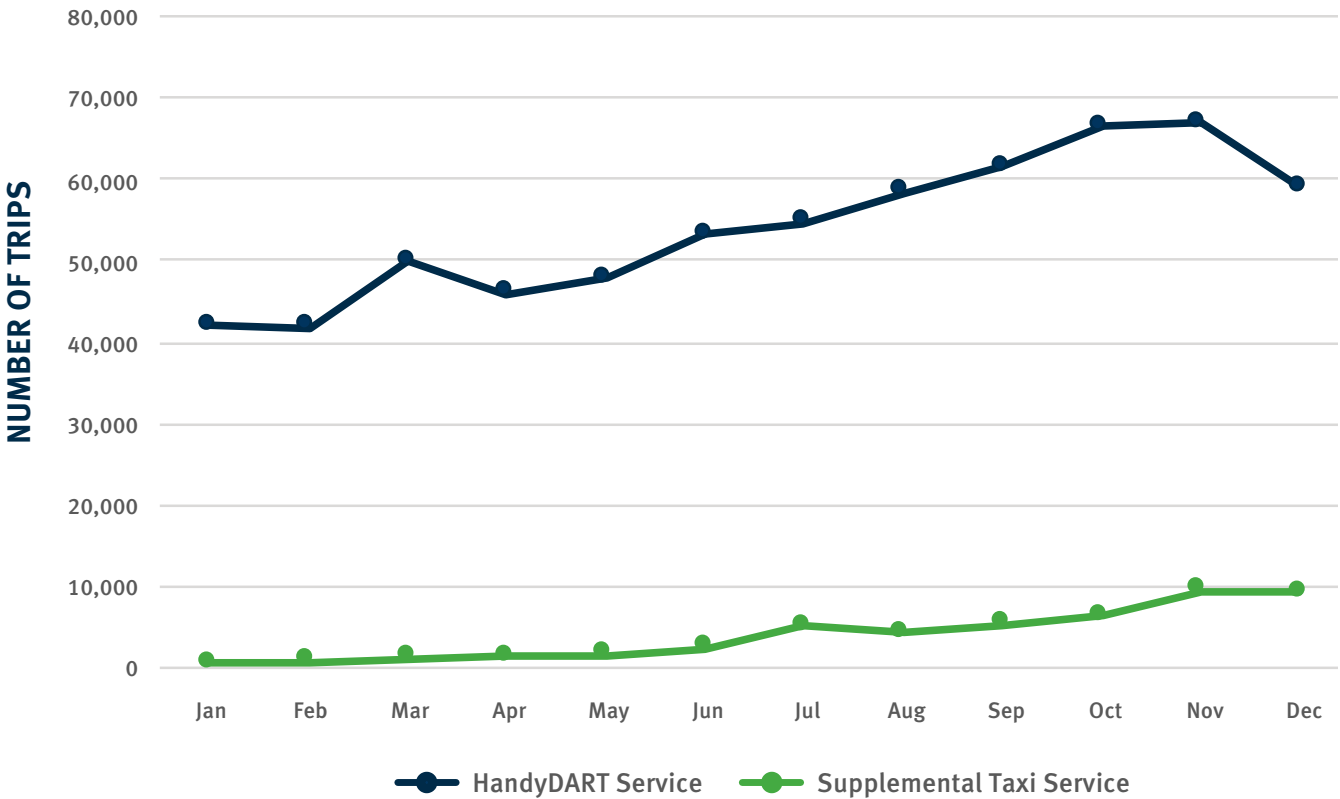


Figure 15 – Monthly Trips Delivered on HandyDART and Supplemental Taxi, 2021

Over 767,000 boardings were recorded on HandyDART service in 2021. These include customers, companions (someone who travels as a friend with a HandyDART customer), and attendants (who accompany and actively provide assistance to a HandyDART customer). As illustrated by Figure 16, the vast majority of boardings (89%) were by HandyDART customers themselves.

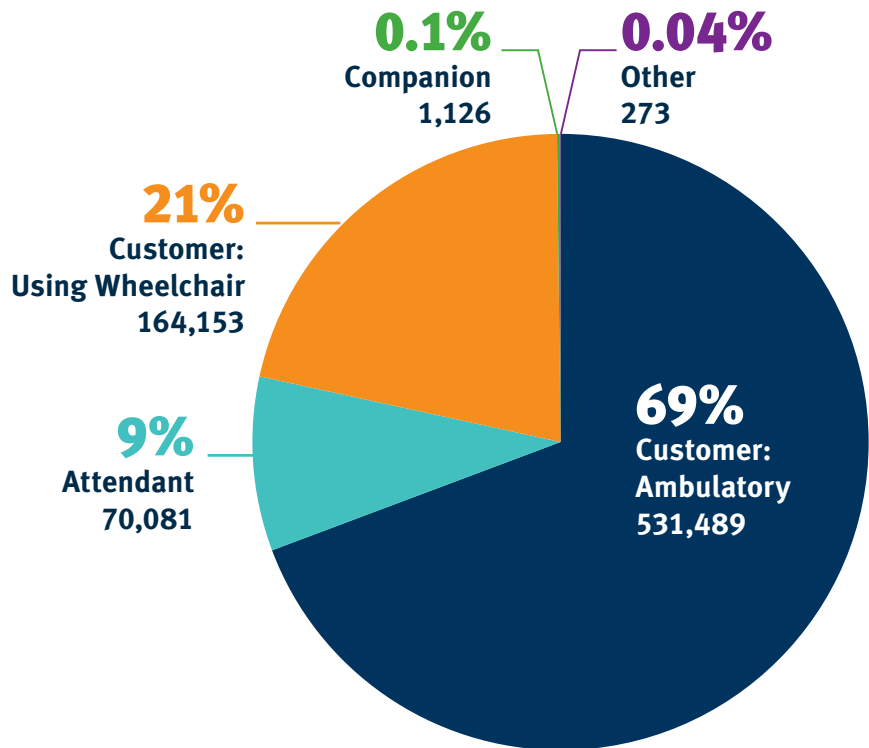


Figure 16 – HandyDART Ridership Types, 2021

Cost

The cost per trip in 2021 shrank in comparison to 2020. In June 2021 as a result of improving pandemic conditions and consistent with public health guidance, vehicle capacity limits were lifted, improving efficiency of the service by allowing more than one HandyDART customer to be served by a vehicle at a time. The reduced capacity targets in place earlier in the year meant the same number of vehicles and drivers could move fewer customers, translating to a higher cost to TransLink to deliver each trip.

As the COVID-19 pandemic reaches late and end stages, it is anticipated that rider comfort will grow and we expect trip costs to resume a downward trend.

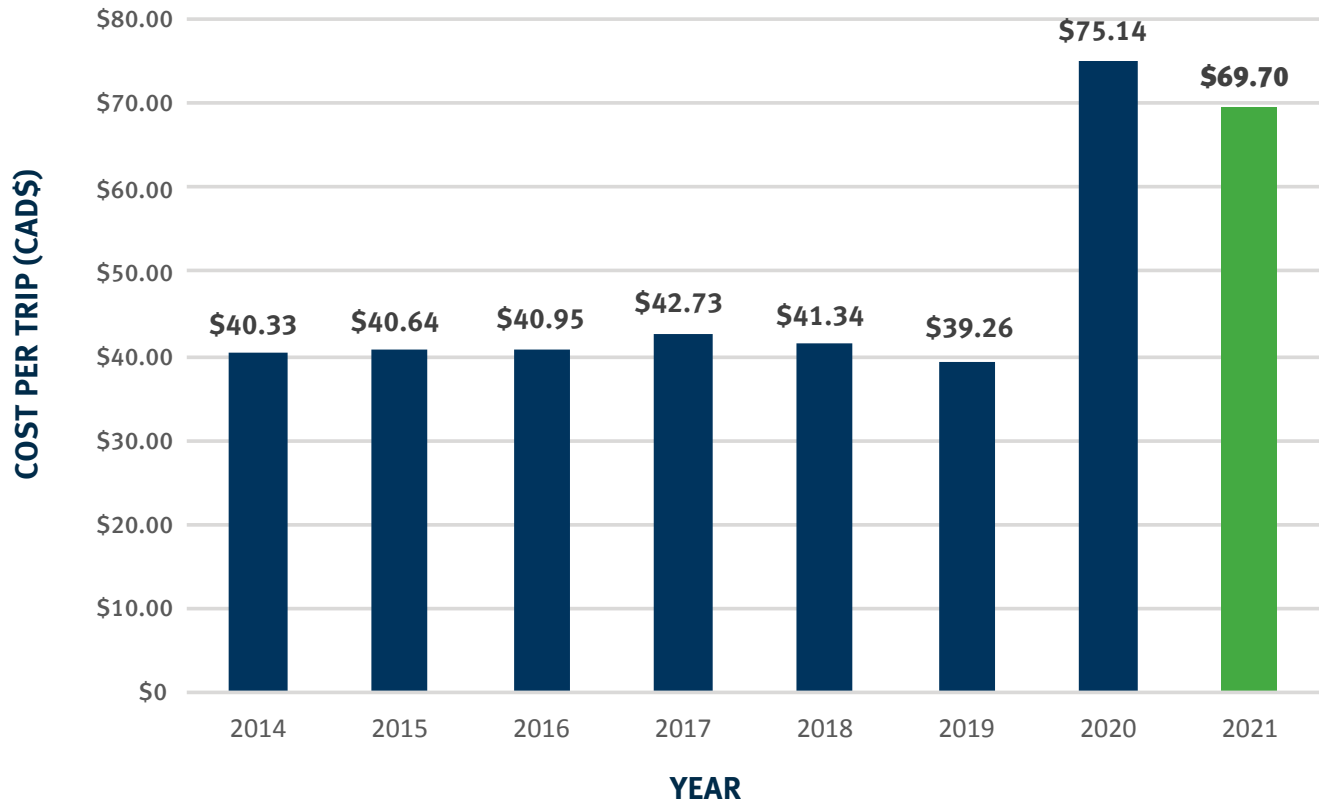


Figure 17 – HandyDART Trip Cost Trends

Vehicles

Number of Vehicles

HandyDART's fleet of 348 vehicles went unchanged between 2020 and 2021. The HandyDART service will continue its program of replacing vehicles as they reach the end of their service life and undertake forecasting for future fleet expansion as the region's population and demographic of HandyDART users grows.

Vehicles in Service by Weekday and Weekend

On weekdays, there were 224 vehicles in service (on average, in the peak period when demand was highest). On Saturdays, an average of 73 vehicles were in service, and on Sundays, an average of 66 vehicles were in service as illustrated in Figure 18. These numbers are slightly lower compared to 2020, with average peak period vehicles in service at 231 on weekdays, 73 on Saturdays, and 68 on Sundays.

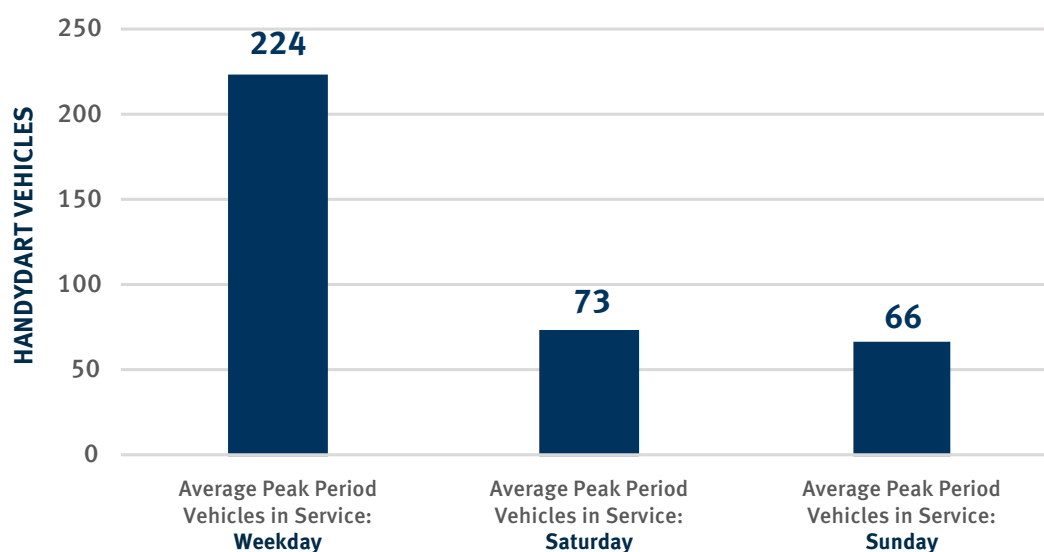


Figure 18 – Average Peak-Period Vehicles in Service

Vehicle Reliability

In 2021, HandyDART service had a total of 35 “road calls” – requests for on-street maintenance assistance – or, one road call every 234,000 km. The main reason for a road call is to assist with a battery jump start.

Conclusion

In 2021, HandyDART continued to provide an essential service for registered customers who are unable to use the conventional transit system without assistance. Ridership saw continued increases from 2020, with overall customer satisfaction remaining strong with a score of 8.7 out of 10 for HandyDART and of 7.8 out of 10 for Supplemental Taxi.

Key program enhancements in 2021 include expanded eligibility of HandyDART service to children under 12 in September, and the introduction of age-based discounts and Compass fare payment options in October.



Future Program Enhancements

TransLink is planning for future program enhancements to meet growing demand while supporting regional equity, making it easy, safe, and comfortable for everyone of all ages and abilities to get around our region.

Further enhancements planned include:

- launch of an online HandyDART platform with real-time information, trip confirmation, and booking functionality, anticipated in 2023
- engagement and consultation to inform plans for an updated registration process will take place throughout 2022 and 2023
- continued accessibility improvements on the conventional system, which support as many people as possible to travel independently on conventional transit. Upcoming accessibility improvements include completing installation of dual format braille/tactile signs at all in-service bus stops across the region, and the installation of tactile walking surface indicators at in-service stops and bays on TransLink-owned property.

With a growing and aging population in Metro Vancouver, demand for HandyDART is expected to increase in the coming years, especially as COVID-19 recovery continues. This annual review of the service will support transparency and help ensure service quality continues to meet the expectations of HandyDART's diverse and expanding customer base.



