



# Transit Service Performance Review 2024



# Table of Contents

<b>Land Acknowledgement</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>A Message from TransLink’s CEO</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>About this report</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Key findings</b>	<b>4</b>
Ridership growth returned to pre-pandemic levels in 2024	4
Ridership increased the most in 2024 in areas with strong population growth, fast and frequent services, and transit-oriented development.	6
Service reallocation and new investments have helped ease severe overcrowding in some areas.	9
As available transit service resources were reallocated across the region, ridership in affected areas declined in 2024.	11
Targeted transit priority investments are improving reliability and allowing us to use our fleet to the fullest.	12
<b>Looking ahead to 2025</b>	<b>13</b>
Only with more reliable and sustainable funding can we deliver a future-ready system that works for everyone.	13





## Land Acknowledgement

TransLink respects the Indigenous Nations within Metro Vancouver and acknowledges all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples for their continued resilience, sustainable stewardship, and as active members of the community for generations to come. We recognize that in planning and managing the region's transportation system we have a role to play in supporting reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.





## A Message from TransLink's CEO

**Public transit continues to play a vital role in supporting Metro Vancouver's economy, helping people and goods move efficiently across the region.**

In fall 2024, 420,000 people relied on transit each weekday to access jobs, schools, and activities. Despite another surge in the region's population, ridership growth stabilized with system-wide journeys increasing by three per cent over 2023 to reach nearly 241 million.

Even with a steadier pace of ridership growth, Metro Vancouver ranked second in Canada for per capita transit ridership, surpassing the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area and closely trailing Greater Montreal. Communities like Surrey and Langley saw the highest ridership growth in the region, driven by significant population increases, access to fast and frequent service, and transit-oriented development.

While we know population growth may slow in the future, we need to do our part to keep up with the growth we've already experienced and support the newcomers who are here today by providing convenient and reliable transit options.

Although we added new service hours and continued to reallocate existing service across the region, overcrowding remained a challenge in 2024. Overcrowding is particularly pronounced in communities located south of the Fraser River, home to nine of Metro Vancouver's 20 most overcrowded routes. TransLink is committed to continued investment in transit service, prioritizing areas most affected by overcrowding.

**As ridership continues to increase, additional transit investment and service is essential to support our growing population and thriving communities.**

Through the 2025 Investment Plan we will expand bus service, reduce overcrowding, and advance key projects that will improve our region's transportation system. Transit is essential to keeping Metro Vancouver and its economy moving – connecting people to jobs, education, and services, and acting as a catalyst for growth, resilience, and long-term prosperity.

Kevin Quinn  
Chief Executive Officer, TransLink

# About this report

**TransLink plans and manages Metro Vancouver’s regional transit network. We strive to deliver a reliable, sustainable, and efficient transit system to support our regional mobility and prosperity.**

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The annual Transit Service Performance Review (TSPR) is a key tool for tracking transit ridership trends, evaluating service adjustments, and identifying emerging needs across the network. By comparing 2024 ridership and utilization patterns to 2023 and other broader historical trends, this report provides data and information needed to support decisions about how we plan and operate the region’s transit network to support the goals outlined in *Transport 2050*, our regional transportation strategy, and the *Access for Everyone Plan*.

Most ridership information in this report is based on boardings from Compass Card taps on buses and at fare gates. Boardings have been adjusted to account for lower tap rates on all-door boarding routes, cash users, and customers aged 12 and under who travel for free. Passenger load and overcrowding metrics are derived from Automated Passenger Counter (APC) and turnstile data, offering a detailed view of system performance.

A **BOARDING** is each time a customer enters a fare paid zone, e.g., boarding a bus or tapping a fare gate.

A **JOURNEY** is a completed transit trip, regardless of the number of boardings or transfers. A customer starting their journey at Ladner Exchange, taking a bus to Bridgeport Station, and then boarding the Canada Line to Langara-49th Avenue Station is taking one journey with two boardings.

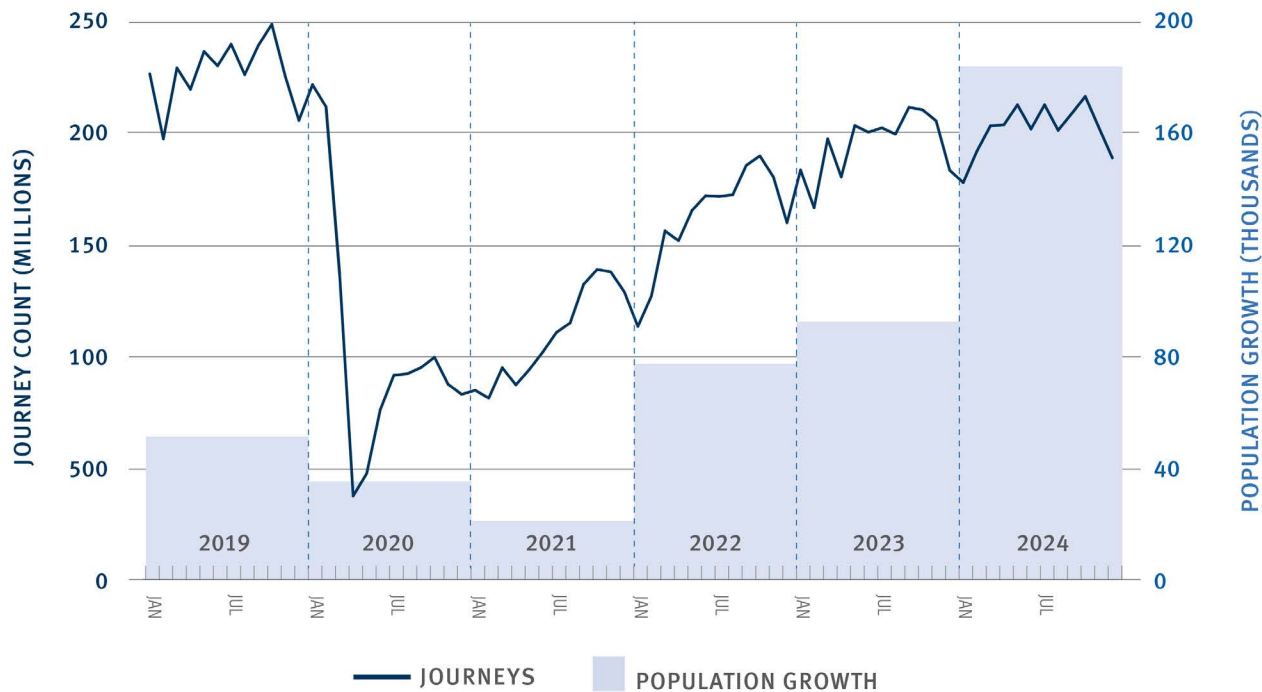
For more detailed data and insight on ridership trends and patterns in 2024 by service type and route, please visit the interactive data dashboards at [translink.ca/tspr](https://translink.ca/tspr).

# Key findings

## Ridership growth returned to pre-pandemic levels in 2024

Following several years of rapid ridership recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic, system-wide transit growth rates in 2024 returned to more typical levels closely aligned with year-over-year trends seen before the pandemic. Total ridership reached 240.9 million annual journeys in 2024—a 3% increase from 2023. System-wide ridership growth was highest in the first half of the year (6%) and became more moderate in the second half of the year (2%).

Figure 1: System-Wide Monthly Journeys and Regional Population Growth, 2019-2024



In 2024, our services moved the equivalent of more than 2,600 full narrow-body commercial airline flights every single day, and over the course of the year, travelled a combined distance equal to a round trip between the Earth and the Sun. On a typical fall weekday in 2024, over 420,000 people used the transit system.

Metro Vancouver moved into second in Canada for per capita transit ridership in 2024, surpassing the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area<sup>1</sup> and closely following Greater Montreal<sup>2</sup>. TransLink also recorded the third-highest bus ridership across all Canadian and American transit agencies. Both metrics are significant considering that Metro Vancouver has 60% of the population of Greater Montreal and only 36% of the population of the GTHA.

Ridership across our system grew faster in 2024 than the investments we were able to make—such as expanding our bus fleet and increasing overall service levels—with available funding and resources. As demand continued to outpace our capacity to respond, the gap between what customers need and what we can deliver is widening.

This challenge is especially pressing given the region’s continued population growth. In 2024, Metro Vancouver welcomed 183,000 new residents—more than twice the number added in 2023.<sup>3</sup> The impacts of this growing gap are explored further in this report.

**...Ready For It!:** Over three days in December 2024, TransLink recorded over 1.9 million transit journeys across Metro Vancouver as Taylor Swift’s Eras Tour brought more than 160,000 fans to BC Place. Ridership at Stadium–Chinatown Station during this period was 116% greater than comparable weekends, while SeaBus boardings were 64% greater than previous weekends. Those three days were a clear example of the impact that transit has on our region, because when it comes to moving Metro Vancouver, we’ll never go out of style.

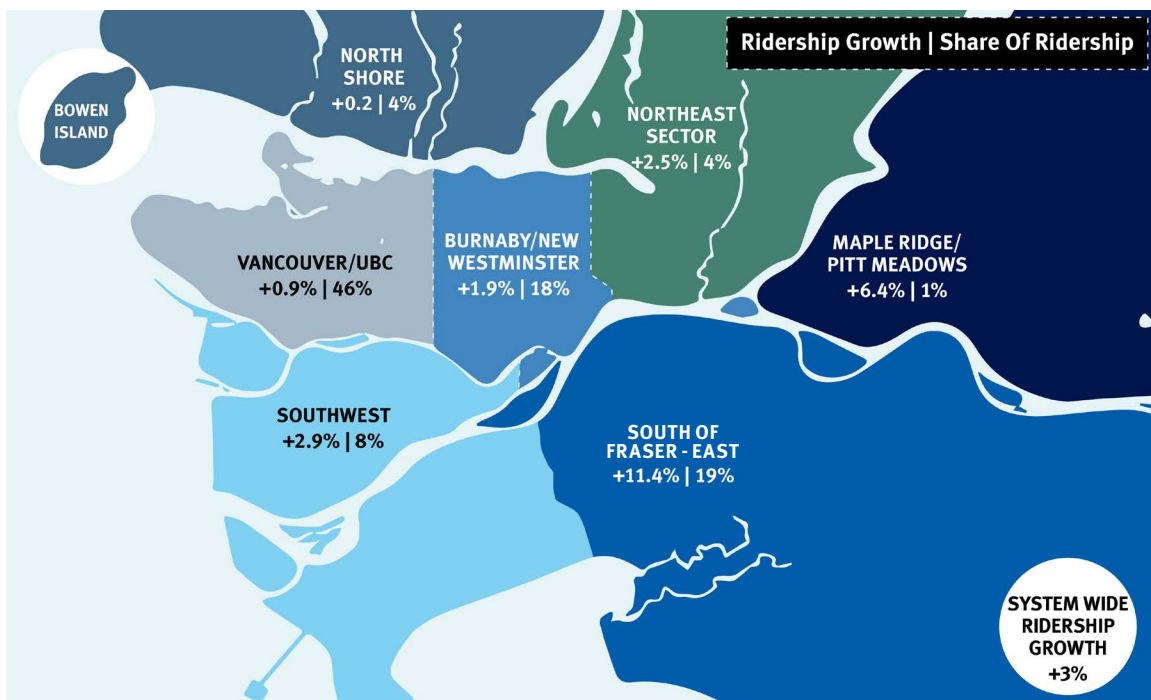


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- 1 Includes Toronto Transit Commission, GO Transit, York Region Transit, MiWay, Durham Region Transit, Brampton Transit, and Burlington Transit.
  - 2 Includes Société de transport de Montréal, Société de transport de Laval, Réseau de transport de Longueuil, and EXO.
  - 3 Population data from Environics

## Ridership increased the most in 2024 in areas with strong population growth, fast and frequent services, and transit-oriented development.

Transit ridership grew across all sub-regions in 2024, though the pace and pattern of growth varied within each. The South of Fraser–East sub-region, which includes Surrey and Langley, remained Metro Vancouver’s fastest-growing transit market in 2024, with an 11.4% increase in total boardings compared to 2023. Bus boardings accounted for 80% of this growth. Strong population growth continues to drive ridership increases in the area, with over 100,000 new residents in 2024—representing 57% of Metro Vancouver’s total population growth.<sup>4</sup> The sub-region also received the highest level of new and reallocated transit service investments in 2024, further supporting its strong ridership gains. Ridership growth in other areas—like the Northeast and Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows sub-regions—in 2024 was comparable to levels seen pre-pandemic. The Vancouver/UBC sub-region continued to generate the largest total ridership in the region, accounting for 46% of system-wide boardings in 2024 – a level similar to 2023.

*Figure 2 - Annual Ridership Growth (2023-2024) and Share of Total System-Wide Boardings (2024) by Sub-Region*










Note: Includes bus and SeaBus boardings and Expo-Millennium Line, Canada Line, and West Coast Express station entries. HandyDART boardings are not included as the HandyDART service has different sub-regional boundaries. Bowen Island is part of the North Shore sub-region.

4 Population data from Environics.



Across the system, ridership increased at a higher rate along corridors with fast and frequent services. Boardings on the Expo and Millennium Lines grew by 6% in 2024, nearly double the system-wide rate, and Canada Line and SeaBus boardings grew by 5%.

Figure 3 - Annual Year-Over-Year Ridership Growth by Mode and Average Daily Boardings by Day of Week, 2023 to 2024

Transit Mode	 System Wide	 Bus	 Expo & Millennium Lines	 Canada Line	 SeaBus	 West Coast Express	 HandyDART
Ridership Growth (2024)	+3%	+2%	+6%	+4%	+5%	+20%	-0.3%
Average Daily Boardings (Mon-Fri)	1,551,339	797,980	348,907	132,307	16,633	6,821	2,859
Average Daily Boardings (Sat)	917,332	534,759	247,707	102,561	16,792	-	913
Average Daily Boardings (Sun/Hol)	753,891	447,254	193,053	86,454	13,045	-	783

\*HandyDART ridership was affected by job action in September 2024 which included an 18-day service disruption. Please refer to the HDSPR report for more information.

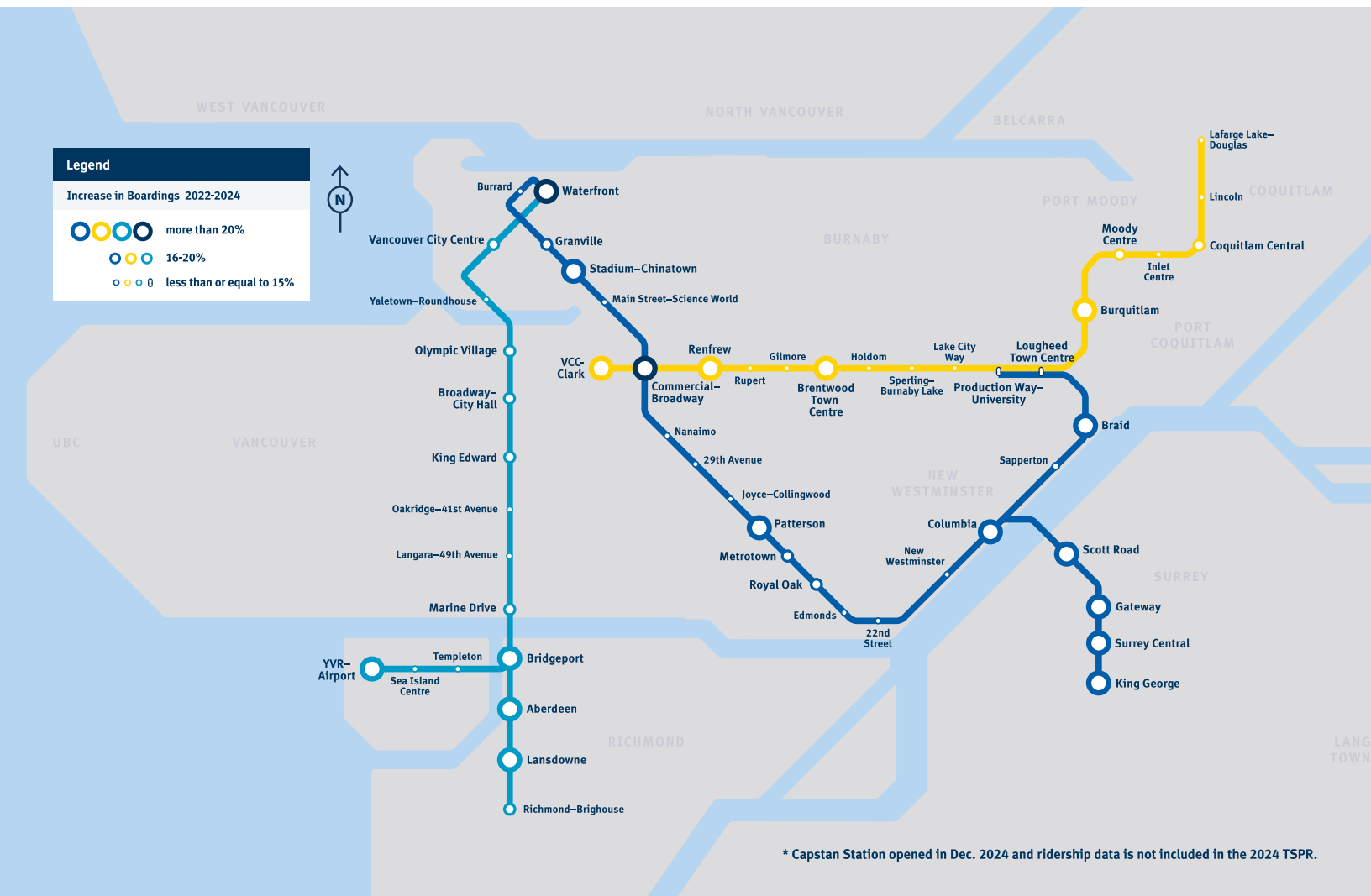
**Relying on RapidBus:** RapidBus is Metro Vancouver's frequent and limited-stop bus network that has grown to six routes since 2020. RapidBus routes averaged 20,600 daily boardings in 2024 – more than five times the average daily boardings of the average local bus route (3,900 boardings). Metro Vancouver's RapidBus routes accounted for 15% of system-wide bus ridership in 2024.



Ridership growth in 2024 was also higher than system-wide averages around transit hubs – like SkyTrain stations and bus exchanges – surrounded by higher-density housing, offices, and commercial development. Between 2022 and 2024, stations such as Gateway (+30%), Burquitlam (+29%), and Brentwood (+28%), where ridership is growing around the stations, saw ridership growing at a higher rate than the system-wide average of 19% weekday growth at Expo, Millennium, and Canada Line stations.

Transit hubs close to major shopping, sports, and entertainment destinations also saw strong ridership increases on weekends and holidays. Stadium–Chinatown Station (+29%) saw a significant increase in boardings, driven by major events at BC Place and Rogers Arena, while Aberdeen Station (+18%) benefited from proximity to Richmond’s malls and restaurants.

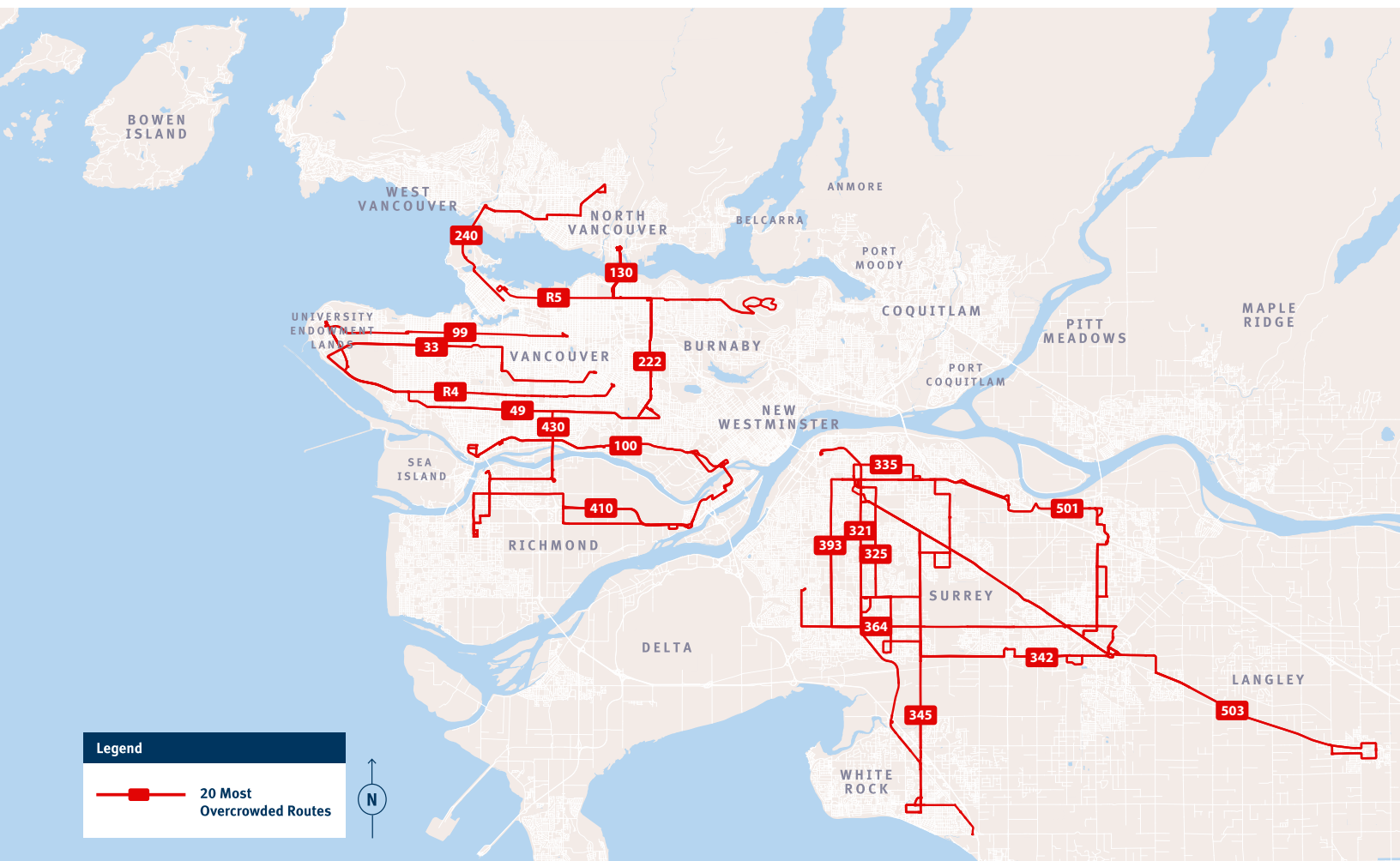
*Figure 4 – Weekday ridership Change By Stop for Expo, Millennium, and Canada Line Stations (2022-2024)*



## Service reallocation and new investments have helped ease severe overcrowding in some areas.

Overcrowding remained a system-wide challenge in 2024, with the most significant pressure seen on major east-west routes in the Vancouver/UBC area and key north-south routes in the South of Fraser—East sub-region.

Figure 5: Top 20 Overcrowded Bus Routes, Fall 2024



### How do we define overcrowding?

An overcrowded trip is when the number of passengers on a transit vehicle exceeds the vehicle target capacity at any point during the trip. On overcrowded trips, for at least part of the trip:

- All seats are full and standing space is fully occupied
- Accessing the doors may be difficult for some passengers
- Standing passengers need to step off the vehicle to let others exit
- Pass-ups are likely at some stops



To ease this pressure, we introduced 73,000 new service hours through our *2024 Investment Plan* and reallocated 23,000 existing service hours—representing 0.4% of all transit service—across the region. These improvements, implemented as part of our Fall Service Changes in September 2024, enhanced service on 47 bus routes.

These efforts led to a measurable improvement: the share of average weekday bus trips experiencing overcrowding dropped from 12% in 2023 to 11% in 2024. Ridership also increased as a result of these investments. Notable route-level outcomes included:

- **Route 49 (UBC/Metrotown):** Overcrowding dropped from 26% to 21% of trips, with a 15% increase in boardings compared to fall 2023.
- **Route 314 (Surrey Central/Sunbury):** Overcrowding dropped from 12% to 8% of trips, with a 9% increase in boardings compared to fall 2023.
- **Route 324 (Newton Exchange/Surrey Central):** Overcrowding dropped from 21% to 12% of trips, with an 11% increase in boardings to fall 2023.
- **Route 345 (King George/White Rock):** Overcrowding dropped from 32% to 25% of trips, with a 10% increase in boardings compared to fall 2023.

While results like this are encouraging, these and many other routes and corridors across the region continue to experience high levels of overcrowding—a trend that is expected to persist as population growth outpaces available investment. To continue addressing these challenges, we have rolled out additional service improvements from the 2024 Investment Plan through winter and spring 2025. These include more overcrowding relief, extended late-night service in the South of Fraser–East sub-region, and modest enhancements to improve overall convenience across the network.

#### Service reallocation, explained:

Without new funding to enable a net increase in bus service hours across the region, service reallocations are one of the key tools available to try to address growing customer demands across our region. Service reallocations are taken only from frequent services and involves identifying routes and time periods where there is available capacity and reducing the amount of service provided. We use these extra transit service resources and strategically redistribute them to higher demand routes and time periods.

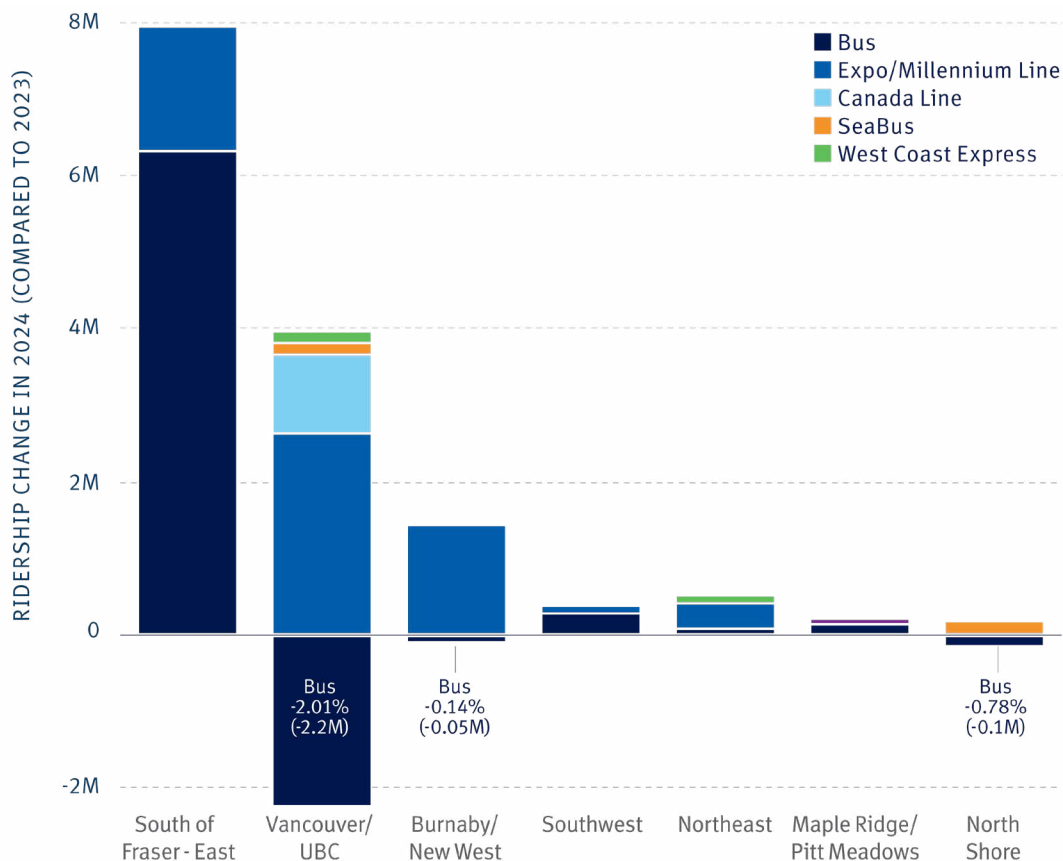
## As available transit service resources were reallocated across the region, ridership in affected areas declined in 2024.

Given TransLink's challenging funding situation in 2024, we were limited in the resources available to expand overall service across the region. One of our only available tools to address severe overcrowding – particularly in faster-growing areas like the South of Fraser - East sub-region – was to reallocate service from less crowded routes to those under the most pressure.

While interventions like service reallocations have been effective in improving service quality on some routes, this has come at the expense of reduced service quality in other parts of Metro Vancouver. To add capacity in faster-growing areas, service has been reallocated from existing routes, which can reduce service reliability and quality in certain areas.

Last year marked the first time that bus ridership declined in sub-regions that had service hours reallocated away from them over the last number of years. Bus boardings in Vancouver/UBC decreased by 2% in 2024, leading to 2.2 million fewer boardings compared to 2023. The North Shore also saw a 1% decline (-112,000 boardings), while Burnaby/New Westminster experienced a 0.14% decline (-51,000 boardings).

Figure 6: Sub-Regional Ridership Change by Mode in 2024 (Compared to 2023)



## Targeted transit priority investments are improving reliability and allowing us to use our fleet to the fullest.

TransLink continued to take other steps in 2024 to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of our existing transit network to meet the needs of a growing region. Investments in bus priority measures, intersection improvements, and transit signal coordination have played a key role in keeping transit moving efficiently despite increasing traffic and road congestion. These measures ensure that buses and other high-capacity transit services can operate at their full potential—moving more people more reliably with the resources already available. In 2024, several targeted projects were completed in partnership with local governments and road authorities across the region to improve bus travel times and reduce delays. These include:

- **Richmond:** Signal coordination at Great Canadian Way and Bridgeport Road improved bus departure reliability from Bridgeport Station, a major bus exchange for bus routes serving Richmond, South Delta, and South Surrey.
- **North Vancouver:** New transit signal priority at Marine Drive and Fell Avenue enhanced R2 RapidBus performance and reduced travel time variability, making transit more reliable.
- **Surrey:** A southbound bus lane on 152 Street between 98 Avenue and 96 Avenue was introduced, reducing peak-hour travel delays for multiple bus routes.



**R6 RapidBus - A Key Success Story:** The launch of the R6 RapidBus in 2024 significantly improved service between Scott Road Station and Newton Exchange, increasing ridership along the corridor by over 25% for weekday passengers—an annual increase of 1.5 million. Many riders transitioned from the local 319, with the R6 carrying over two-thirds of the corridor ridership by the end of 2024, demonstrating the appeal of faster, higher-capacity service. The R6 also delivered major travel time benefits, particularly in the southbound afternoon peak, where a near-continuous bus priority lane reduced variability and cut the longest trip times by 20%.



# Looking ahead to 2025

## Only with more reliable and sustainable funding can we deliver a future-ready system that works for everyone.

Our regional transit system reached a turning point in 2024. Ridership has stabilized, returning to the steady growth patterns we saw before the COVID-19 pandemic. However, even at these more consistent levels, demand is exceeding our available resources, placing increasing pressure on the system.

In the absence of significant new funding and resources, we continued to rely on reallocating service across the region to address issues like overcrowding in 2024. But this approach has reached its limit. These stopgap measures are now causing service quality to decline and ridership to drop in the areas losing service. Meanwhile, other unmet customer needs are growing. Many new and expanding neighbourhoods still have no transit access. Industrial areas remain underserved, and in some regions, early morning and late-night service is limited or unavailable.

## We know what we need to do. The *Access for Everyone Plan* is our blueprint for building a stronger, more reliable transit network.

Key priorities from *Access for Everyone* that are funded in the *2025 Investment Plan* include:

- **Expansion of service and addressing overcrowding** to support more reliable access across the region.
- **Expansion of transit service into historically underserved communities** to improve access and advance reconciliation and social equity.
- **Expanding into new communities** to create connections to economic opportunities and green space.

TransLink's *2025 Investment Plan* will significantly reduce our structural funding deficit, keeping operations fully funded through 2027 while delivering early investments for the *Access for Everyone Plan*. While this is important progress, future investment plans will require all levels of government to work together to address the remaining structural deficit and help us fully realize *Access for Everyone*.

Transit is essential to keeping Metro Vancouver moving. We're continuing to work to make our system more convenient, reliable, and safe for everyone – supporting a growing population and a thriving region.