



Board Policy No. 545

Service Standards and Design Policy

ADOPTED: 6/94

RECENT AMENDMENT: 7/04;

1/08; proposed [11/25/26](#)

SEE ALSO: 501, 544, 546

SUBJECT CATEGORY: SECTION 500, PLANNING AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

SUBSECTION: SERVICE PLANNING

CONTROL DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND ENGINEERING

I. PURPOSE

AC Transit's mission is to deliver safe, reliable, sustainable transit service that is responsive to the needs of our customers and communities. To accomplish this goal and attract and retain bus riders, it is essential that the District establish minimum standards and targets for how the District should design and allocate transit service. It is equally important for the District to set minimum standards for how transit service should perform and actively monitor service performance for the District to continuously improve service in the communities we serve.

II. PERSONS AFFECTED

This policy affects members of the general public and bus riders within the District's service area. District departments and staff affected include those involved in service performance monitoring and the creation and implementation of service adjustments, including the Board of Directors.

III. DEFINITIONS

"Service Classifications" means an outline of the distinctive services, service tiers, service attributes, and the network responsibilities. Service classifications encompass the unique characteristics and roles within the overall transportation network.

"Service Warrants" means clear criteria for why existing service should be maintained and new proposed service should be added, which enables AC Transit to respond proactively and transparently to future community requests for new service coverage expansions.

"Service Design Standards" means guidelines governing the operation and design of transit services, which includes the service, design, and operation of both existing and new service offerings

"Service Performance Standards" means AC Transit's established benchmarks for measuring and ensuring the quality and efficiency of the services provided.

"Service Evaluation" means a comprehensive process evaluating service plan performance, addressing financial viability, and meeting the evolving mobility needs of residents, employees, and visitors, to ensure service sustainability.

IV. POLICY

A. Service Classification

1. Route Classifications

Route classifications define the kinds of service provided throughout the District. AC Transit categorizes its services into seven distinct categories: **BRT**, **Rapid/Limited**, **Local**, **Freeway Express**, **All-Nighter (Owl)**, and **Supplementary Service**.

Table 1

| Service Type | Description |
|------------------------------|---|
| BRT | This service type is generally characterized by high frequencies, limited stop spacing, corridors with most of their alignment having dedicated transit lanes, transit signal priority, all-door boarding, level boarding, and off-board fare payment. |
| Rapid/Limited | This service type is characterized by limited stop spacing (per Board Policy 501, with stops placed between 1,300 and 1,900 feet apart for Rapid and Limited services operating without an underlying local service and stop spacing between every 1,700 and 2,600 feet apart for services operating with underlying local service). Rapid is generally differentiated from Limited service by transit signal priority, all-door boarding, and/or level boarding. |
| Local | This is the core service type that makes up most AC Transit services. Local lines operate throughout the AC Transit service area, providing service to all member jurisdictions, and generally have stops placed between 800 and 1,300 feet apart to provide service that serves travel both within and between neighborhoods and connects with regional transit services like the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART). |
| Freeway Express | This service type is generally characterized by one or more freeway segments that make up a significant share of the route alignment, including Transbay services that traverse San Francisco Bay crossings. While many of these lines today focus on peak-direction commute service to job centers, future services could provide regional connections where existing transit travel times compete poorly with private vehicle travel times. |
| All-Nighter (Owl) | These provide service between 12 midnight and 6 a.m. All-Nighter routes operate as a lifeline service during the “owl gap” period. |
| Supplementary Service | These are special services operated to meet common carrier requirements of Federal and State laws and accommodate school bell times. |

2. Primary Route Network ([Current Standard and Aspirational GoalGoals](#))

The **Primary Route Network** ([PRN](#)) refers to an aspirational frequent service network, subject to resource availability, that would run every 15 minutes or better throughout the day on weekdays and provide minimum levels of service throughout the week. As of 2025, this vision falls well beyond AC Transit's resources but is enshrined in this document so that the District can regularly measure its incremental progress towards full implementation of these weekday and weekend frequency and span improvements. In the near-term, the standards set a 30-minute frequency minimum for these lines, [along with more robust span of service minimums than for Local lines outside the PRN](#), which generally perform better than other lines within the AC Transit network.

Lines within the **Primary Route Network** generally serve AC Transit Equity Priority Communities (EPC's) and denser, higher ridership supporting line segments. They may have shared line segments or are on major transit corridors identified by the AC Transit Major Corridors Study. These route classifications establish a well-rounded service framework for the community when employed effectively. Taken together, these segments make up 63 percent of the service AC Transit provides each weekday and 76 percent of its ridership as of Fall 2023.

The **Primary Route Network** includes the following lines (as of October 2025): 1T, 6, 9, 12, 14, 18, shared 30/31 corridor, 27, 36, 40, 51A, 51B, 52, 54, 57, 62, shared 72/72M/72L corridor, 73, 76, 88, 97, shared 210/211 corridor, F, and NL.

On weekdays, lines within the **Primary Route Network** would operate at least between 5:00 a.m. and 12:00 a.m. and at least as frequently as every 15 minutes between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. On weekends, lines within the **Primary Route Network** would operate at least between 6:00 a.m. and 12:00 a.m. and at least as frequently as every 20 minutes between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

B. Service Warrants

1. Role of Service Warrants

AC Transit lines cover neighborhoods that include residential areas, business districts, and key destinations like educational institutions. Service warrants provide clear criteria for existing and new proposed services and enable AC Transit to respond proactively and transparently to future community requests for new service coverage expansions.

2. Financial Viability

New services should be financially sustainable, meeting or surpassing system averages in terms of service productivity and the cost per passenger boarding.

3. Network Role

New services should be evaluated in the context of the broader transit network. Each new line should assume a unique role, be it enabling transfers with existing services, extending coverage to recent developments, or facilitating connections between routes and major destinations. While integration with existing services is vital, redundancy or competition for passengers with current services should be avoided.

4. Unmet Needs/Market Opportunities

High-performing transit service is associated with high population and employment densities. Service should prioritize areas with higher populations, mixed-use neighborhoods, and transit-friendly demographics such as students, seniors, and low-income groups.

5. Period of Performance

If a new line is approved and established, its performance will be evaluated during the first two years of service to determine whether it meets the standards established in this policy. If a line fails to perform up to standards after the first two years, it may be discontinued. This period of performance does not supplant the federal Title VI compliance obligations for pilot services lasting longer than 12 months covered within Board Policy 518.

C. Service Design Standards

6. Network Design

The design of a route network defines the overall success of the system. How routes interact with one another impacts the ease with which passengers can travel throughout the network.

Network Structure considerations are important and should correspond with the varying levels of population and employment densities that make up the AC Transit service area, focusing on where densities are highest, like in business districts and mixed-use corridors. Outside of city centers, densities decrease, making fixed route bus service less effective. Given limited resources, AC Transit must design services to meet mobility needs, supporting ridership growth and long-term sustainability.

[In locations with lower population and employment densities, first-and-last mile transportation access issues tend to be most acute and difficult to serve with fixed-route transit efficiently or effectively. The District encourages partnerships with municipalities and](#)

[regional funding partners on shortening walk distances to transit, improved pedestrian safety, as well as supporting micromobility options like scooter and bikeshare, and carpooling and vanpooling programs which can help support reduced car dependence at the fringes of the AC Transit fixed-route transit network.](#)

Regional Connectivity is important. AC Transit should continue to work with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and connecting regional and local transit providers. Strategies include schedule coordination and transfer mechanisms. Improving regional connections will help make transit a more attractive option to the automobile, increasing transit ridership and reducing automobile use.

7. Route Design

Route Design encompasses route alignment, route and bus stop spacing and placement, and service characteristics such as frequencies and spans.

Route Alignments should be designed to serve origins and destinations directly, minimizing route deviations. Straighter, more direct routes give customers shorter travel times while minimizing operating costs. Deviations that serve high volumes of passengers may occasionally be warranted. An acceptable delay threshold for an out-of-direction deviation is five minutes or less for through-riders per passenger gained along the deviation. The formula for calculating this impact is below:

$$\frac{(Customer Load) * (Time of Deviation)}{Boardings Gained Along Deviation} \leq 5$$

Route Spacing and Placement standards should generally ensure that bus routes serve major arterial streets with a good pedestrian environment, avoiding smaller neighborhood streets when possible. Routes should be spaced no closer than half a mile apart. Industry surveys of consumer behavior have found that people will walk further to service with better frequency, extending the effective service walk access area for a bus from a quarter mile to a half mile. This means that frequent routes spaced more widely apart will attract more ridership (and farebox revenue) than less frequent services spaced closer together. Routes spaced too close together compete for ridership and use resources that could be more effective if placed elsewhere.

Stop Spacing and Placement is guided by Board Policy 501. Bus stop spacing has an impact on average speed of service. The more stops a bus makes along its route, the lower the average speed of travel. Conversely, the farther apart the stops are placed, the farther riders must travel to access the service.

Stops should be placed on the far side of intersections wherever possible. Far-side stop placement improves bus speed by minimizing time spent at traffic signals and improves pedestrian and bicycle safety as passengers do not cross in front of the bus. It also maintains

a larger amount of curb space available for parking than near-side stop placement. AC Transit Board Policy 501 provides guidance on placing near-side and mid-block bus stops, along with guidance on stop lengths.

8. Service Level Standards

Service level design standards describe where service generally should operate throughout the District and minimum frequencies and spans of service for each type of service operated.

Percent of Service Area Residents Covered

The AC Transit service area, while having a mix of densities, has sufficient population and/or employment to warrant the provision of transit service. The table identifies the minimum percentage of population within walking distance of Local or BRT/Rapid service, the minimum percentage within walking distance of high-frequency Local or BRT/Rapid service, and a goal for coverage if additional resources can be obtained.

Service coverage indicators have both a standard and a goal. The standard represents the minimum transit service coverage for the AC Transit service area. The goal service coverage represents the desired targets for service coverage within the service area. These standards are depicted in Table 2 and incorporate standards both for the District's service area as a whole, as well as for EPCs that fall within the District.

Table 2

| | Minimum | | Aspirational Goal | |
|-----------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| | Percent Population within 1/4 Mile Local Service | Percent Population within 1/4 Mile Frequent Service | Percent Population within 1/4 Mile Local Service | Percent Population within 1/4 Mile Frequent Service |
| Service Area | 70% | 25% | 85% | 60% |
| Equity Priority Communities | 85% | 40% | 100% | 75% |

Based on work initially conducted by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), AC Transit's adaptation of the EPCs (tract geography) dataset is based upon eight demographic variables:

1. People of Color
2. Low-Income
3. Limited English Proficiency
4. Seniors 75 Years and Over
5. Zero-Vehicle Households
6. Single Parent Families
7. People with a Disability
8. Rent-Burdened Households

If a tract exceeds threshold values for both Low-Income and People of Color shares or exceeds threshold values for Low-Income and also exceeds the threshold values for three or more variables (#3 to #8), it is an Equity Priority Community. In addition, AC Transit staff further includes any Census Tracts or equivalent areas within AC Transit's Special Transit Service District #2 that have previously been included within previous MTC definitions of Equity Priority Community or Community of Concern.

Frequency

Service frequencies are the intervals between bus trips and define how long customers wait for bus service depending on how they arrive at the stop. Some riders plan their arrivals at the stop minutes before the trip time on the route schedule. Others behave more spontaneously and just walk to the stop when they are ready to travel without consulting the route timetable. Depending on the service frequency, the customer experience can vary significantly for these two groups with the former ("the trip planner") having an experience that does not vary significantly with the frequency, while the latter ("on-demand traveler") will only have a good experience if the service operates frequently – the average wait for a random arrival is half the interval between trips. Market research has found there are far more potential transit customers who want to travel "on-demand" than "plan" their trips, making frequent transit service highly desirable in increasing ridership and productivity. At 15-minute service, roughly half the riders plan their arrivals while the other half show up spontaneously. Table 3 includes frequency standards.

Table 3

| | Service Classification | Weekday Frequency | Weekend Frequency |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Minimum | Primary Route Network | 30 min | 30 min |
| | BRT | 10 min | 10 min |
| | Rapid/Limited | 30 min | 30 min |
| | Local | 60 min | 60 min |
| | Freeway Express | All Day Lines: 60 min Peak-only Lines: Minimum 3 trips | 60 min |
| | All-Nighter (Owl) | 60 min | 60 min |
| | Supplementary Service | Demand Based | Demand Based |
| Aspirational Goal | Primary Route Network | 15 min | 15 min |
| | BRT | 5 min | 5 min |
| | Rapid/Limited | 15 min | 15 min |
| | Local | 30 min | 30 min |
| | Freeway Express | All-Day Lines: 30 min Peak-Only Lines: 30 min | All Day Lines: 30 min |
| | All-Nighter (Owl) | 20 min | 20 min |

Whenever possible, headways should be designed as “clock-face” where the same times repeat each hour (i.e., headways that divide into 60, where service operates every 10, 12, 15, 20, or 30 minutes) at key timepoints. This makes the service easier for customers to remember and use without consulting schedules and makes it easier to coordinate timed transfers. Exceptions are permitted where a route (usually with longer headways) will be operationally inefficient (e.g., require an additional vehicle resource) with a clock-face headway.

Span of Service

The span of service, the hours of operation, refers to the start and end time of a route. Depending on the route classification (e.g., local, rapid bus/BRT, Freeway Express), the span of service will vary depending on the demand in the community. In denser, more urbanized areas, bus service is expected to start earlier and end later in the day, whereas, in more suburban areas the demand for earlier and later service may not be present. The days of operation also contribute to when bus service will be provided.

The minimum service hours for AC Transit services are described below as a range of the first and last trip start time for each service classification. Certain routes may have exceptions where they serve specific rider markets. Minimum standards and aspirational goals are depicted in Table 4.

Table 4

| | Service Classification | Weekday Span | Saturday Span | Sunday Span |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Minimum | Primary Route Network | 7 6:00 AM – 7 10:00 PM | 7:00 AM – 7 10:00 PM | 7:00 AM – 7 10:00 PM |
| | BRT | 5:00 AM – 12:00 AM | 6:00 AM – 12:00 AM | 6:00 AM – 12:00 AM |
| | Rapid/Limited | 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM | 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM | 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM |
| | Local | 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM | 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM | 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM |
| | Freeway Express | Based on ridership demand | Based on ridership demand | Based on ridership demand |
| | All-Nighter (Owl) | 1:00 AM – 5:00 AM | 1:00 AM – 5:00 AM | 1:00 AM – 5:00 AM |
| | Supplementary Service | Based on ridership demand | No Service | No Service |
| Aspirational Goal | Primary Route Network | 5:00 AM – 12:00 AM | 6:00 AM – 12:00 AM | 6:00 AM – 12:00 AM |
| | BRT | 5:00 AM – 12:00 AM | 5:00 AM – 12:00 AM | 5:00 AM – 12:00 AM |
| | Rapid/Limited | 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM | 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM | 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM |
| | Local | 6:00 AM – 10:00 PM | 6:00 AM – 10:00 PM | 6:00 AM – 10:00 PM |
| | Freeway Express | Based on ridership demand | Based on ridership demand | Based on ridership demand |

| | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | All-Nighter (Owl) | 1:00 AM – 5:00 AM | 1:00 AM – 5:00 AM | 1:00 AM – 5:00 AM |
| | Supplementary Service | Based on ridership demand | Based on ridership demand | Based on ridership demand |

9. Employee Safety, Health, and Wellness

Employee health, safety, and wellness are pillars of AC Transit’s service design process. Routes and schedules are to be designed proactively to guarantee line employees receive their allotted meal and rest breaks and have access to quality restroom facilities and hydration opportunities in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements (CBAs), occupational health and safety standards, and applicable laws.

D. Service Performance Standards

1. Efficiency and Effectiveness Measures

Passenger Boardings per Revenue Hour (PPH)

This performance indicator measures service effectiveness or productivity based on ridership (unlinked boardings) generated for each hour of service operated. Service classifications should, on average, meet the stated average productivity standard. Looking at the classification acknowledges that routes will have varied performance based on their service area, level of demand, and service levels. If the classification overall meets the standard, individual routes should be compared against their classification average. Routes performing at 75% of their service classification average may be subject to corrective action while routes performing at 125% may be candidates for increased service investment. Thresholds by service classification are depicted in Table 5. See the “Service Evaluation Process” section for more details.

Table 5

| Service Classification | Average Productivity |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| BRT | 55 passengers per hour |
| Rapid/Limited | 23 passengers per hour |
| Local | 15 passengers per hour |
| Freeway Express | 15 passengers per hour |
| All-Nighter (Owl) | 2 passengers per hour |

Cost per Passenger Boarding

This indicator measures the amount of cost of providing service on a per-passenger basis. The cost is driven by both hourly and mileage-based costs. Total marginal operating cost is equal to (revenue hours * cost per hour) + (revenue miles * cost per mile). This means that two routes with the same number of hours will have different costs if they operate at different speeds, covering a different number of miles per hour with varying fuel and

maintenance costs. Similarly to productivity, service classifications should meet these average standards, and individual routes should be compared against the classification averages. Routes with costs that are greater than 125% of the classification average should be revisited for potential corrective actions. Thresholds by service classification are depicted in Table 6.

Table 6

| Service Classification | Cost per Passenger Boarding |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| BRT | \$5 |
| Rapid/Limited | \$10 |
| Local | \$20 |
| Freeway Express | \$20 |
| All-Nighter (Owl) | \$30 |

2. Service Quality Measures

On-Time Performance measures the deviation of actual departure time from the timetable or schedule. AC Transit's target for conventionally timetabled service is for buses to leave their first timepoint on each trip between zero and one minute late and for buses generally to leave all other timepoints except for the last timepoint between one minute before and five minutes after the scheduled arrival time. These standards are depicted in Table 7.

Table 7

| On Time Performance | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| First Timepoint Departure Definition | Depart 0 to 1 minute late |
| Overall On-Time-Performance Definition | Depart -1 to 5 minutes late |
| On-Time Definition (Headway-based schedules) | +/- 3 minutes of scheduled headway |
| On-Time Target (First Timepoint) | 95% |
| On-Time Target (Overall) | 75% |

Industry best practices underscore how leaving a first timepoint on-time helps avoid downstream delays. On-time first timepoint departures also serve as an important tool to help the District pinpoint service reliability root causes and identify solutions. On-time timepoint departures, moreover, are particularly important for Freeway Express services, given the variability of freeway travel times associated with peak bridge traffic. Causes may include worsening roadway congestion and travel time variability, while solutions might include more active line management, runtime and layover changes, route alignment changes, roadway improvements like boarding islands and dedicated transit lanes, signal

optimizations like better coordination, transit signal priority, or investments in more conveniently accessible operator restrooms.

Although AC Transit does not currently (as of October 2025) employ any headway-based schedules or related line management strategies, for any future headway-based schedules, AC Transit would measure an on-time departure as one that falls within three minutes of the line's scheduled headway.

Service Completion metrics define what constitutes complete service delivery. In an ideal world, all trips would be completed as close to schedule as possible. However, many real-world factors, like roadway blockages and Acts of God, might prevent this ideal from being reached. Table 8 shows targets for maximizing service completion.

Table 8

| Service Completion Metrics | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Service Operated | 99.5% |
| Mean Distance Between Failures | >= 12,000 miles |
| Mean Distance Between Accidents | >=100,000 miles |

Customer Satisfaction metrics capture customer sentiments quantitatively. It is human nature that customers are more likely to register complaints about issues as compared to compliments. For this reason, AC Transit and other agency peers use as a metric the number of complaints normalized by ridership to measure customer satisfaction. The standard is 10 complaints per 100,000 boardings.

Passenger Load Factor metrics define acceptable levels of crowding for planning purposes, including standees. While dependent on specific fleet characteristics, the maximum number of passengers generally should not exceed 125 percent of the seated capacity more than 15 percent of trips. For the Tempo BRT sub-fleet, the maximum number of passengers should generally not exceed 200 percent of the seated capacity on more than 15 percent of trips. On routes that use freeways for service and owl service, loads should generally not exceed 100 percent of seated capacity (no standees).

AC Transit will monitor the load on all route classifications and consider adding service to mitigate trips with excessive loads.

E. Service Evaluation

1. Data Needs for Service Evaluation Process

The performance measures discussed above require the regular collection and updating of the following data sources:

| Data Source | Description |
|--------------------------|---|
| Ridership | Total number of boardings and on-board load by route and day of the week will be consolidated monthly. Through regular collection of ridership data, trends over time can be examined as well as providing the detailed data needed to conduct in-depth analysis. |
| Resources | The number of vehicles, revenue miles and revenue hours per route by day of the week will be collected from the AC Transit scheduling system with each service change. |
| Costs | The cost of providing service will be monitored monthly for each service type. |
| On-Time Performance | Departure times at each timepoint (and arrival at final timepoint) are collected on a per trip basis and monitored through the District's Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) system. |
| Community Considerations | The locations of senior, disabled, minority, and lower-income populations are important to consider in transit service planning to ensure that these groups do not experience disparate or disproportionate impacts in access to and quality of mobility. AC Transit should use its transit planning software to access demographic data and Title VI analysis tools to ensure that transit service is equitable throughout the East Bay. This information is also available via US Census or American Community Survey data. Census tracts with concentrations of minority or low-income populations above the service area average are covered by Title VI regulations. Likewise, medical facilities, nursing homes and other community services are important connections to consider. This data will be collected through cooperation with local planning and development agencies. |
| Business Arrangements | Existing or proposed arrangements with employers, educational institutions and government entities are considered when evaluating route performance. |

2. Service Evaluation Schedule

The table below provides a summary of the Service Standards and how often they should be evaluated by staff. For performance standards evaluated more frequently than annually by staff, staff will provide semi-annual updates to the AC Transit Board, and an annual update to the Board for performance standards evaluated by staff annually.

| Service Design | | |
|----------------------|------|----------------------|
| Performance Standard | Goal | Evaluation Frequency |

| | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------|
| Headway | Varies by Service Classification | Annually |
| Service Span | Varies by Service Classification | Annually |
| Service Area | Varies by Service Classification | Annually |
| Employee Health, Safety, and Wellness | Compliance with applicable collective bargaining agreements (CBAs), occupational health and safety standards, and applicable laws. | Before each service change |
| | | |
| Performance Standard | Goal | Evaluation Frequency |
| Passenger Boardings per Revenue Hour (PPH) | Routes performing at 75% of their service classification average may be subject to corrective action. Routes performing at 125% may be candidates for increased service investment. AC Transit routes under 5 PPH should automatically be considered for elimination or significant restructuring | Before each service change |
| Cost per Passenger (CPP) | Routes at 75% of their service classification average may be candidates for increased service investment. Routes performing at greater than 125% are subject to corrective action. | Before each service change |
| Service Performance: Service Quality Measures | | |
| Performance Standard | Goal | Evaluation Frequency |
| On-Time Performance | 95% on-time measured as leaving the first time point between zero and one minute after the scheduled departure time and 75% generally for all timepoint between one minute before and five minutes after the scheduled departure time. For lines with headway-based schedules, this is measured as being within three minutes of the scheduled headway. | Monthly |
| Passenger Load Factor | For most service types, maximum number of passengers should not exceed 125% of the seating capacity for more than 15% of the trips. For BRT, the maximum number of passengers should not exceed 200% of the seating capacity for more than 15% of the trips. Owl service, and Freeway Express service should not exceed the number of seats of the vehicle. | Before each service change |

3. Route and Potential Improvement Actions

Along with minimum performance standards, routes will also be evaluated in comparison with each other for service efficiency and effectiveness. Routes in the low and high categories may warrant more intense action, while routes towards the middle are

adequately fulfilling their roles in the network and will generally only warrant action during regular systemwide reviews.

High-Performing Service (125% or higher of tier average PPH and 75% or lower of tier average CPP)

Routes ranking in this category suggests the need for greater investment, as high performance may signal the presence of significant latent demand as well as crowding that may deter continued ridership growth.

This category of routes constitutes the top-performing tier of the entire AC Transit system. It is particularly important to maintain high-quality service by engaging in on-going monitoring investment with an eye towards improvement. While creating new routes helps serve new markets and increases area coverage, upgrading high-performing lines directs investment where it will be most effective.

Actions for high-performing routes may include:

Increased service levels

Highly productive routes may warrant increased frequency, even without excessive loading. Increasing frequency, span of service, or days of the week can help make service more attractive to a wider pool of potential customers, including those who currently drive. High frequencies provide dependable service with minimal waits, encouraging passengers to arrive randomly without consulting a schedule. To maintain a high quality of service, adding frequency is also often important to prevent significant crowding on vehicles for high-demand routes.

New service types

High-performing corridors may warrant upgraded service quality to a limited or rapid service. Limited services provide faster speeds while still serving key destinations. Substantial time savings from reduced dwell delay help to increase ridership.

Transit Priority Improvements

High-performing routes can be further improved by providing enhanced, high-quality features along the route. Bus-only lanes, bus bulbs, and signal priority mechanisms are all methods for decreasing delay and travel time along a route. These methods make transit more attractive to potential riders as they give buses an advantage over automobile travel.

Average-Performing Service (75 to 125% of tier average)

Services in this category are adequately fulfilling their roles in the transit network, and no corrective action is required. These routes will be monitored on an ongoing basis to determine whether their performance improves, decreases, or remains steady. While no particular action is necessary, ranking in this category does not preclude service adjustments

at the discretion of AC Transit. These services should be reviewed during the next systemwide review.

Routes in this category perform well as a whole. Their average performance may point to conditions where performance is consistent equally throughout their length or conditions where there may be segments of very high and low performance. Routes in this category should undergo a trip-by-trip or segment-level analysis to determine whether they are average overall or include trips or segments that fall into the more extreme categories. Segments which would be considered low or very high performers are subject to the actions detailed in those sections.

Low-Performing Service (75% or lower of tier average PPH and 125% or higher of tier average CPP)

Routes that rank within this category will be reviewed to determine their potential for improvement. Routes in this category may still meet the expected minimum performance standards as identified earlier in the document – however, there may be room for improvement.

Corrective actions may include any or all of the following:

Segment Level Analysis

A segment level analysis of a low-performing service may highlight a specific portion of the route that significantly reduces the overall performance, causing it to perform below the standard for its service class. If a low-performing segment is identified, it can be modified to attempt to raise productivity for the entire route. If the results of a segment level analysis turn out to be inconclusive, however, modifications to the entire route should be considered.

Operational Analysis

Often the difference between meeting and failing minimum performance standards is inefficient use of vehicle resources. Creating more efficient cycle times can reduce resource requirements without reducing service. A decrease in revenue hours with no change in ridership will increase passengers per hour (productivity). More efficient cycle times can be achieved by streamlining route alignments, eliminating unnecessary delay caused by deviations or turning movements, and examining end-of-line layover/recovery time.

Change in Service Levels

Adjusting the service levels of a low-performing route – by any combination of frequency, span, or day of week changes – may help to tailor the transit product to its market, and subsequently increase productivity. Some low-performing routes may not warrant the frequencies currently scheduled, and reducing investment in the route may be an appropriate course of action.

Cost Sharing

Exploring cost sharing or public-private partnerships can reduce the amount of subsidy required on low-performing services. This is applicable for routes which do not meet minimum performance standards yet serve a need identified by businesses, schools, attractions, or other organizations that may be willing to assist with funding operations to continue service. Routes which have cost-sharing relationships will become Average Performing or High Performing in the Cost per Passenger Boarding metric but will still need to meet average performing standards on at least another metric to avoid further corrective actions.

Targeted Marketing

Marketing tactics can help to raise public awareness of a route in need of corrective action. Poor ridership may be a result of a lack of public knowledge of a route, and investing in marketing can reverse this trend, especially in concert with planned service adjustments. This is especially the case for concentrated market groups like employment centers, shopping districts, schools, hospitals, agencies, and other major destinations.

Rider Outreach

Onboard surveys and rider interviews are methods for gaining valuable information on how a route can be improved. These methods can reveal information about popular destinations that a route may bypass, or other aspects of a service that may be holding back ridership growth.

V. AUTHORITY**A. Board Authority**

The Board reserves the right to amend this policy from time to time as it deems appropriate.

B. General Manager's Authority

The General Manager shall issue any and all necessary administrative regulations required to implement this policy, including necessary ongoing internal monitoring procedures for the District to evaluate and make timely recommendations on service design and performance.