Service Standards
Final Draft Review and Update

Review of Service Standards

- A blueprint for network and route design
  (our **core** product!)

- An on-going guide to help keep our bus network healthy, reliable, and responsive to customer needs

Why update the Service Standards?

- Compliance with Board Policy 100 policy review timeframes

- Apply today's best practices

- Incorporate feedback about community needs from Realign into the future

Key Changes

- Changes to On-Time Performance Metrics include:
  goal raised to 75%, and new 95% first timepoint departure.

- Added aspirational frequency and span goals

- Retooled Priority Route Network as an aspirational goal

- Service Operated Goal consistent with today

- % of Service Area Residents Covered

- Frequency and Span Minimums

- Removed Microtransit benchmarks

Performance Comparisons
(Existing versus proposed standards)

Percent of Service Area Residents Covered

- Realign increased residents' access (1/4 mi. walk) to frequent service (fifteen minute or better) significantly with minor impacts on overall coverage levels.

- A greater percentage of Equity Priority Community (EPC) residents have access to frequent service than the general population; Realign increased that percentage.

- Methodology uses data from American Community Survey.

		Fall 2024	Fall 2025
	Service Area Overall Population	1,582,617	1,582,617
	Service Area EPC Population	586,550	586,550
Min. 40%	EPC Residents near Frequent Local Service	220,297	266,852
	% of District	37.6%	45.5%
	Percent Change		21.1%
Min. 25%	Residents near Frequent Local Service	424,923	542,981
	% of District	26.8%	34.3%
	Percent Change		27.8%
Min. 85%	EPC Residents near Local Service	517,438	513,829
	% of District	88.2%	87.6%
	Percent Change		-0.7%
Min. 70%	Residents near Local Service	1,190,754	1,175,063
	% of District	75.2%	74.2%
	Percent Change		-1.3%

Primary Route Network (PRN) Goals

The aspirational goal for a robust Primary Route Network includes the following, measured relative to the Fall 2025 network:

Weekdays:

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.

Weekends:

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.

Existing resources are not enough to meet this goal.

PRN Frequency by Day Type and Time of Day	Meets Standard	Does not Meet Standard
Weekday		
7am - 7pm	4	16
other times	3	17
Saturday		
7am - 7pm	6	14
other times	12	8
Sunday		
7am - 7pm	6	14
other times	11	9

PRN Span by Day Type	Meets Standard	Does not Meet Standard
Weekday	7	17
Saturday	11	12
Sunday	12	11

The **Primary Route Network** (relative to the existing pre-Fall 2025 network) includes the following lines: 1T, 6, 10, 12, 14, 18, shared 20/21 corridor, 36, 40, 51A, 51B, 52, 54, 57, 62, shared 72/72M/72R corridor, 73, 76, 79, 88, 97, 99, 210, F, and NL.

Frequency Compliance by Classification*

- The chart at right counts routes by day type and category and assesses whether they meet the frequency standards articulated in the second draft of Board Policy 545.

- In Fall 2025 most lines in most service types are meeting the proposed frequency standards.

- A handful of infrequent local lines had timetables with at least one headway throughout the day that slightly exceeds 60 minutes (i.e. maintaining 62-63 minute headways for efficiency), and the 72L has a few headways during transitions that exceed 30 minutes.

- The O, F, and NL had a few trips where the headway slightly exceeds 30.

Day Type and Service Type	Minimum Standard	Meets Standard	Does not Meet Standard
Weekday		**69**	**5**
BRT	10 min	1	
Local	60 min	50	2
Rapid/Limited	30 min	1	
Freeway Express (All Day)	60 min	2	1
Freeway Express (Peak Only)	Min. 3 trips	9	2
All-Nighter (Owl)	60 min	6	
Saturday		**56**	**5**
BRT	10 min	1	
Local	60 min	46	3
Rapid/Limited	30 min	1	
Freeway Express (All Day)	60 min	2	1
All-Nighter (Owl)	60 min	6	
Sunday		**57**	**5**
BRT	10 min	1	
Local	60 min	46	3
Rapid/Limited	30 min	1	
Freeway Express (All Day)	60 min	3	
All-Nighter (Owl)	60 min	6	

*Post-Realign data through 10/8/25

Span Compliance by Classification*

- The chart at right counts routes by day type and category and assesses whether they meet the service span standards articulated in the second draft of Board Policy 545.

- Most time periods on most service types meet our proposed span standards.

- Some timetables in Fall 2025 may need small adjustments to operating hours to fully comply with 7:00 start time outlined by standards.

Day Type and Service Type	Standard	Meets Standard	Does not Meet Standard
Weekday		**72**	**8**
BRT	5:00 AM – 12:00 AM	1	
Local	7:00 AM – 7:00 PM	49	7
Rapid/Limited	7:00 AM – 7:00 PM	1	
Freeway Express	Demand Based	16	
All-Nighter (Owl)	1:00 AM – 5:00 AM	5	1
Saturday		**54**	**7**
BRT	6:00 AM – 12:00 AM	1	
Local	7:00 AM – 7:00 PM	45	5
Rapid/Limited	7:00 AM – 7:00 PM		1
Freeway Express	Demand Based	3	
All-Nighter (Owl)	1:00 AM – 5:00 AM	5	1
Sunday		**54**	**7**
BRT	6:00 AM – 12:00 AM	1	
Local	7:00 AM – 7:00 PM	45	5
Rapid/Limited	7:00 AM – 7:00 PM		1
Freeway Express	Demand Based	3	
All-Nighter (Owl)	1:00 AM – 5:00 AM	5	1

*Post-Realign data through 10/8/25

Crowding Compliance by Classification*

- The chart at right counts the number of time periods in a day by route, direction, and service type and if they're crowded.

- Most time periods on most service types meet our proposed crowding standards.

- Example: If weekday trips on Line 51A going towards Rockridge in the 11:00 a.m. hour see 85th percentile loads below 125% of the number of seats on weekdays, then that would add 1 to the Local "Meets Standard" count.

Day Type and Service Type	Standard*	Meets Standard	Does not Meet Standard
Weekday		**2,358**	**90**
BRT	2.0 x seats	48	
Local	1.25 x seats	1,845	35
Rapid/Limited	1.25 x seats	28	
Freeway Express (All Day)	1.0 x seats	98	14
Freeway Express (Peak Only)	1.0 x seats	47	15
All-Nighter (Owl)	1.25 x seats	73	
Supplementary Service	1.25 x seats	115	42
Saturday		**1,970**	**23**
BRT	2.0 x seats	48	
Local	1.25 x seats	1,719	19
Rapid/Limited	1.25 x seats	28	
Freeway Express (All Day)	1.0 x seats	102	4
All-Nighter (Owl)	1.25 x seats	73	
Sunday		**1,983**	**12**
BRT	2.0 x seats	48	
Local	1.25 x seats	1,726	13
Rapid/Limited	1.25 x seats	28	
Freeway Express (All Day)	1.0 x seats	109	2
All-Nighter (Owl)	1.25 x seats	72	

*Post-Realign data through 10/8/25

**Numbers vary based on number of seats on actual buses deployed

Productivity Monitoring

- Routes performing at below 75% of a category target fall within the "consider corrective action" bucket.

- Routes performing at or above 125% of a category target fall within the "consider increased investment" bucket.

- Data are from FY24 Annual Service Performance Report.

- More work to regularly integrate ridership and service statistics necessary; numbers reflect proof of concept.

Day Type and Service Type	Target**	> 125% of target; consider increased investment	at or above target	Below target	< 75% of target; consider corrective action
Weekday		29	15	22	16
Local	15 PPH	19	9	17	14
BRT	55 PPH		1		
Rapid/Limited	23 PPH			1	
All-Nighter (Owl)	2 PPH	6			
Freeway Express	15 PPH	4	5	4	2
Saturday		16	9	14	22
BRT	55 PPH			1	
Local	15 PPH	9	9	11	21
Rapid/Limited	23 PPH			1	
All-Nighter (Owl)	2 PPH	6			
Freeway Express	15 PPH	1		1	1
Sunday		12	8	10	31
BRT	55 PPH			1	
Local	15 PPH	6	7	8	29
Rapid/Limited	23 PPH			1	
All-Nighter (Owl)	2 PPH	6			
Freeway Express	15 PPH		1		2

**PPH refers to passengers per revenue hour.

Cost Monitoring

- Routes performing at above 125% of a category target fall within the "consider corrective action" bucket.

- Routes performing at or below 75% of a category target fall within the "consider increased investment" bucket.

- Data are from FY24 Annual Service Performance Report.

- More work on more responsive cost allocation needed; numbers reflect proof of concept.

Day Type and Service Type	Target	< 75% of target; consider increased investment	at or below target	Above target	> 125% of target; consider corrective action
Weekday		**37**	**23**	**15**	**7**
BRT	$5/boarding		1		
Local	$20/boarding	27	16	9	7
Rapid/Limited	$10/boarding			1	
All-Nighter (Owl)	$30/boarding	1	2	3	
Freeway Express	$20/boarding	9	4	2	
Saturday		**18**	**14**	**16**	**13**
BRT	$5/boarding			1	
Local	$20/boarding	16	11	11	12
Rapid/Limited	$10/boarding			1	
All-Nighter (Owl)	$30/boarding	1	2	2	1
Freeway Express	$20/boarding	1	1	1	
Sunday		**13**	**11**	**15**	**22**
BRT	$5/boarding			1	
Local	$20/boarding	11	10	11	18
Rapid/Limited	$10/boarding				1
All-Nighter (Owl)	$30/boarding	1	1	2	2
Freeway Express	$20/boarding	1		1	1

*Post-Realign data through 10/8/25

Peer Review: On-Time Performance

Agency	Standard for Bus Service	Actual (FY 23-24)	OTP Standard vs. AC Transit	OTP Performance vs. AC Transit
samTrans	85 % 0 to 5 minutes late	80.5%	Higher	Higher
VTA	90 % -3 to 5 minutes late	77.4%	Higher	Higher
Metro	80 % -1 to 5 minutes late	73.2%	Higher	Lower
MTS	85% Frequent/Rapid 90% Local 0 to 5 minutes late	between 82.4% - 85.5% for each month in FY24	Higher	Higher
OCTA	80 % 0 to 5 minutes late	All months >75%, three months of FY exceeding standard	Higher	Higher
RTA Riverside Transit Agency	85 % 0 to 6 minutes late	All months between 86% - 92%	Higher	Higher
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority	80 % Key Bus 75 % Other Bus 0 to 5 minutes late	78% Key Bus* 66% Other Bus*	Higher	Higher (for Key Bus)
AC Transit	72% -1 to 5 minutes late	74.5%		

*Available MBTA stats from FY 22-23
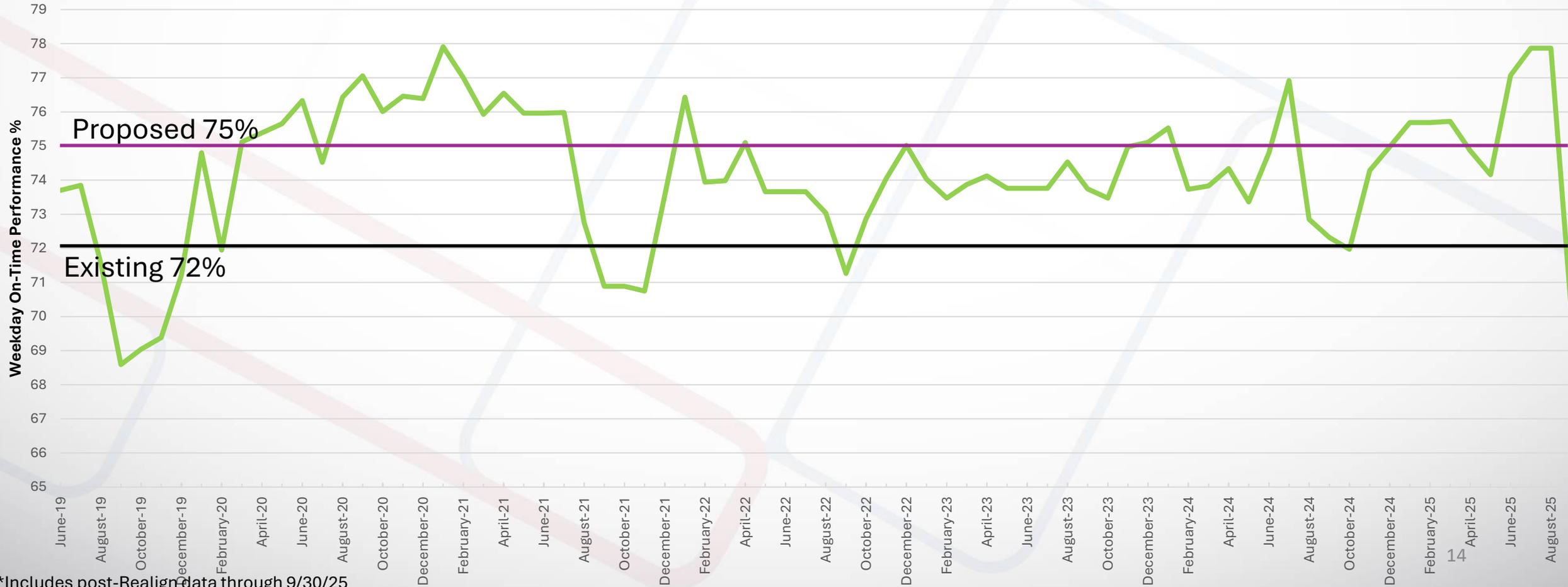
First Timepoint Standard – Why?

The science tells us action at the start of the route can have an outsized impact on reliability and bunching

Study	Headway variability at the beginning of the route	Scheduled frequency	Distance travelled	Passenger demand	Number of stops	Off-board payment stops	Right of way	Congestion	Traffic signals	Incidents	Driver behaviour or experience	Type of fleet
Hammerle et al. (2005)	+							+				
El-Geneidy et al. (2011)	+++	+	+	+	+						+	
Albright and Figliozzi (2012)	++		+	+			+					
Figliozzi et al. (2012)	+	+	+	+								
Feng and Figliozzi (2015)	+	++	+									
Diab et al. (2016)	+++	++	+	++			+		+			
Rashidi, Ranjitkar, Csaba, and Hooper (2017)		+	+	+	+		NS		NS			
Arriagada et al. (2019)	+++	+++	+++	++	+++	NS	+	NS	+	+		+
Soza-Parra et al. (2021)	+++	+	+	+		++	++		+			
Likely overall influence	+++	+++	++/+++	++	++	++	+/++	+/++	+/++	+/++	+	+

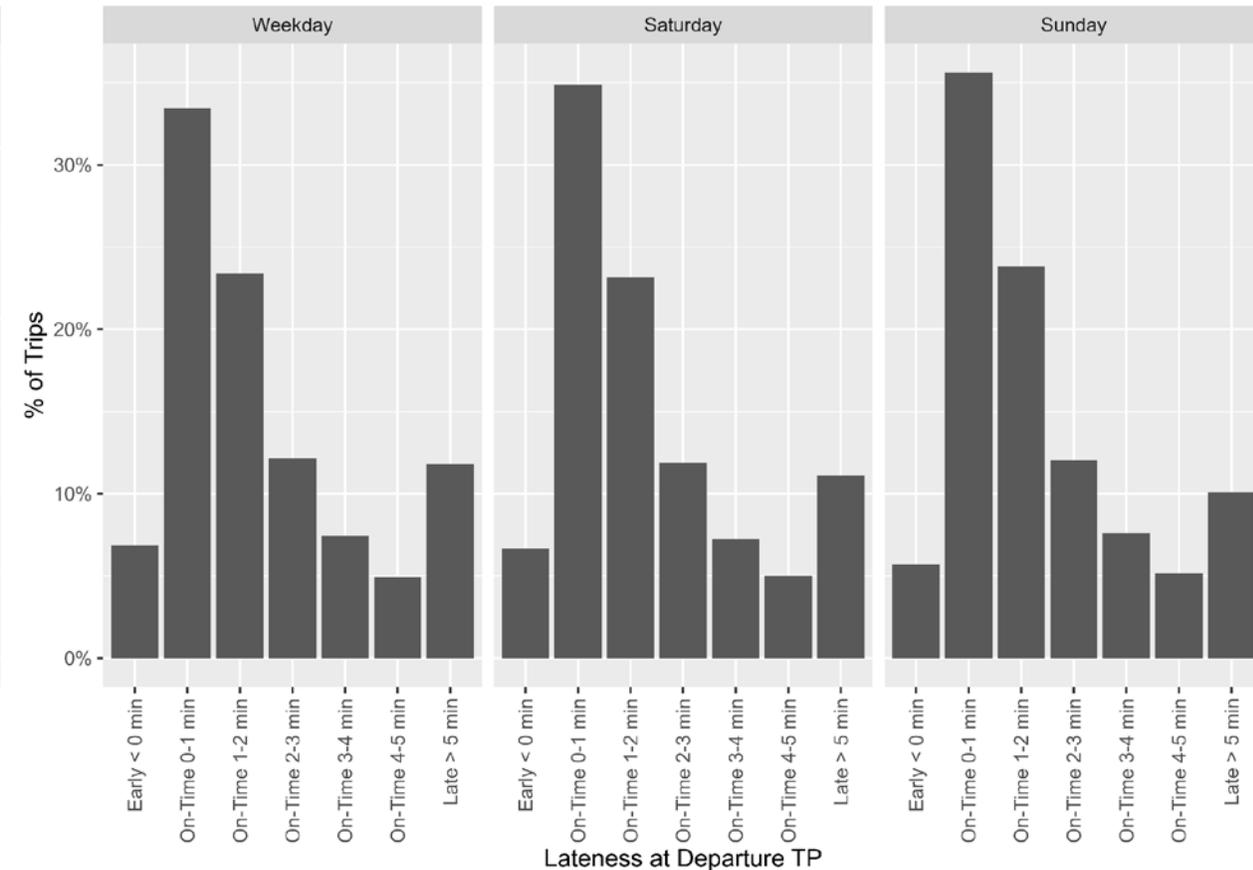*Explanatory variables for headway variability along routes*

Start of Line Lateness and Overall OTP*

Trips that leave between 0 - 1 min. late have 85% OTP;
the later you leave the first timepoint, the worse reliability gets.
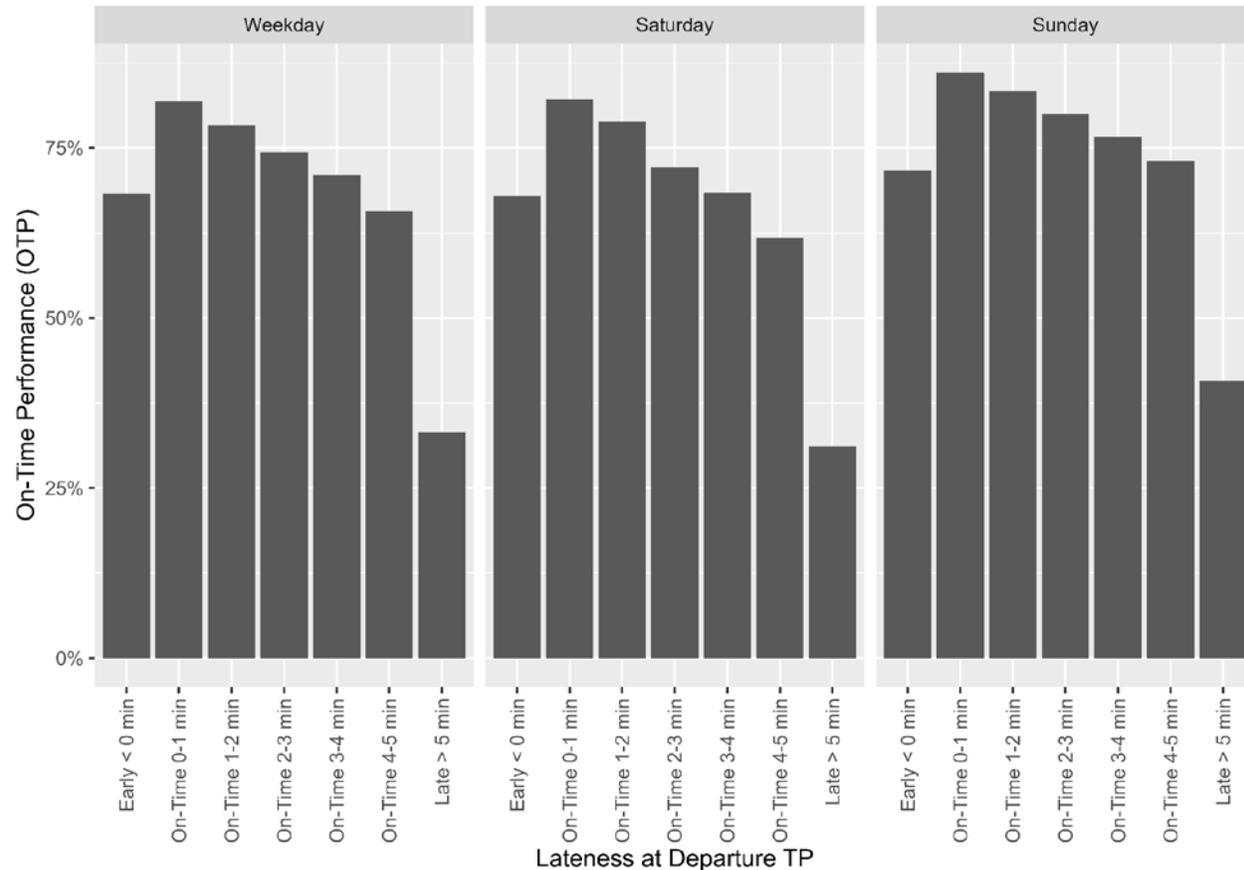
Proposed First Timepoint Standard*

AC Transit doesn't currently track this metric actively, meaning there is room for growth; *recommended standard is 95%* for departing the beginning of the line between 0 and 1 minutes. As of Spring 2025, the median regular service weekday route complied *only 31.9% of the time* in Fall 2025 through the beginning of October. Trunk routes are highlighted in orange.

% of Weekday Trips Departing 0-1 min of First TP Time

Median - 31.9%
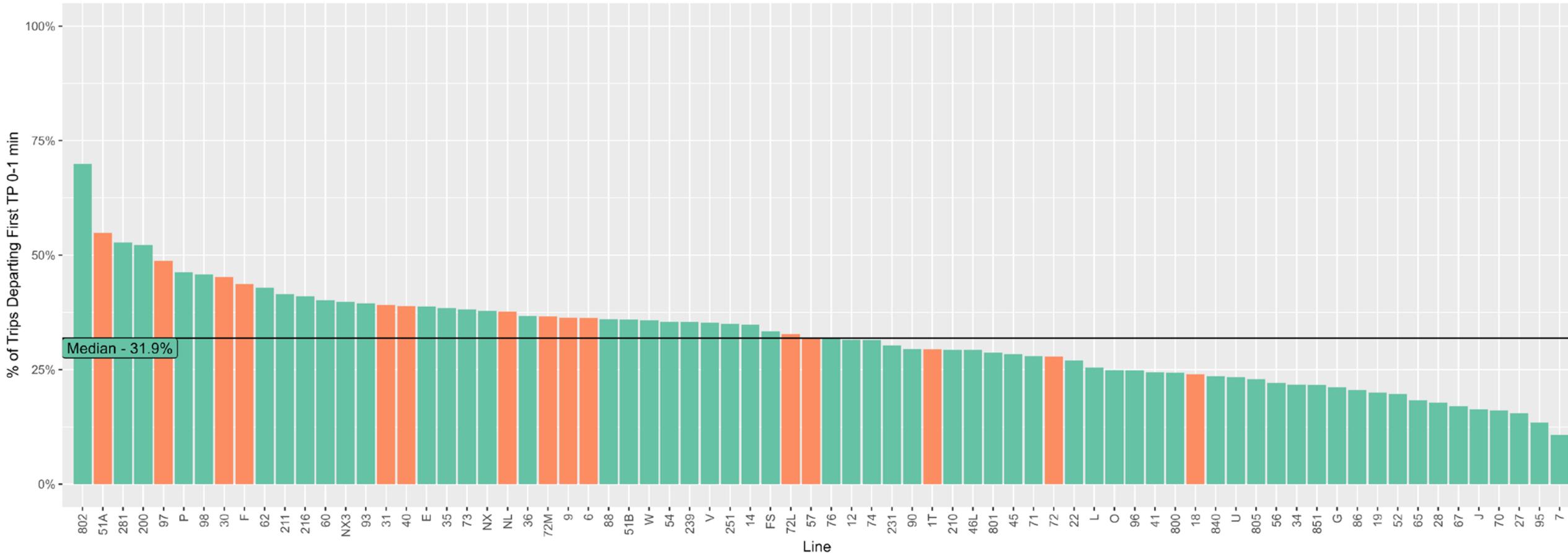
*Post-Realign data through 10/8/25

Key Service Quality Metric Changes

Significant increases proposed based on literature review and consultant team findings.

Literature review suggests mean distance and customer satisfaction standards lag industry peers and the District should target aggressive improvement.

	Service Quality Measures		
	Current Standard	**Actuals (Nov. 24)**	**Draft Standards**
Trip Completion/ Service Operated	99.5%	94.74%	99.5%
Mean Distance between Failures	>= 7,500 mi. (chargeable road calls)	10,084 mi.	>= 12,000 mi.
Mean Distance between Accidents	>= 25k miles (collisions) >= 30.8k miles (passenger falls)	21,052 mi. (collisions) (4.75 / 100k mi.) 38,167 mi. (passenger falls) (2.62 / 100k mi.)	>= 100k miles
Customer Satisfaction (complaints / 100k boardings)	18 / 100k boardings	15.3 / 100k boardings	10 / 100k boardings