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Technical Memorandum

July 4, 2023

Project# 21385.003

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1600 Franklin Street
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From: Transportation Management & Design, Inc.

CC: Laurence Lewis, Kittelson & Associates

RE: AC Transit Realign: Existing Service Profile

INTRODUCTION

AC Transit *Realign* (*Realign*) is a comprehensive operational analysis of the AC Transit system. The project will examine the current and prospective mobility and access needs of the AC Transit service area and develop a plan to better serve the East Bay over the next ten years. This memo provides a broad overview of AC Transit's service as it exists today, as well as a brief examination of how the pandemic has changed how the District provides service. This analysis will provide context for the planning study and provide a starting point for deeper analysis of the existing service.

The *Realign* project focuses on three types of service AC Transit provides: local, all-nighter, and Transbay. In addition, AC Transit also operates school-focused service which are not the focus of this study, but could undergo modifications consistent with changes to local service and BART Early Bird Express routes that will not be included in the project.

SERVICE AREA OVERVIEW

AC Transit is the primary bus transit provider for the inner East Bay of the San Francisco Bay Area, serving the western sections of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. The boundaries of the service area are the San Francisco Bay on the west, the range of hills commonly referred to by the name of the nearest city (e.g., Berkeley Hills) to the east and stretching from the northern boundaries of the cities of Richmond and San Pablo in the north to the Alameda/Santa Clara County Line in the south. The AC Transit service area is linear with a north-south length of approximately 45 miles, and the east-west width of the district ranges between over two miles to six miles. The service area has a population of approximately 1.5 million and encompasses 364 square miles.

The AC Transit service area is generally fully developed. Most new developments will be in the form of infill, increasing density in areas served by AC Transit and providing opportunities for new customers. BART Stations and corridors in which AC Transit currently provides frequent service, such as San Pablo Ave and MacArthur Blvd, are particular targets for high density infill housing and supportive commercial services. Some parts of the service area, primarily Oakland and Berkeley, are dense enough to support frequent, grid-type service. Cities to the north of Berkeley and south of Oakland have a mix of densities, with some

corridors able to support high frequency service complemented by less frequent (e.g., 30 minutes) service connecting at transit centers.

In addition to providing local fixed route service within the service area, AC Transit also provides Transbay express bus service to destinations outside the service area, primarily to the Salesforce Transit Center in San Francisco. It also operates a Transbay route between Fremont and Palo Alto and manages the Dumbarton Express service connecting Union City and Newark with Menlo Park and Palo Alto. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, it also operated service connecting Hayward with Foster City and San Mateo via the San Mateo-Hayward Bridge.

Union City, which is bordered by cities within the AC Transit District boundaries, opted to not join the District and operates its own transit system. However, both the Union City BART Station and Union Landing Shopping Center in Union City are hubs for AC Transit routes serving Hayward, Fremont, and Union City. As a result, AC Transit provides a significant amount of service in Union City in addition to the service provided by Union City Transit.

Other Transit Services in the AC Transit Service Area

The San Francisco Bay Area has a large number of transit providers, often with overlapping service areas. This is true of AC Transit's service area, which is also served by BART and a number of city and institutional shuttles that operate within the service area.

BART has 22 stations in the AC Transit service area. The Orange Line operates between Richmond and Berryessa in San Jose and serves the entirety of the AC Transit District. Customers traveling longer distances in the AC Transit service area are likely to use BART. AC Transit serves all 22 stations providing first/last mile connectivity for BART, and most stations also serve as hubs for AC Transit customers transferring between local routes. The other four BART lines serve stations in the AC Transit service area and provide access to San Francisco and northern San Mateo County. The BART Yellow Line provides access to Central and Eastern Contra Costa County. The BART Blue Line provides access to Dublin and Pleasanton in Eastern Alameda County. The BART Red Line connects Richmond to Millbrae via downtown Oakland and San Francisco. The BART Green Line connects Berryessa to Daly City via downtown Oakland and San Francisco.

In addition to Union City Transit and BART, there are free shuttles providing complimentary local service in some of the cities served by AC Transit. These include:

- Emery Go-Round connecting destinations in Emeryville with the MacArthur BART Station.
- West Berkeley Shuttle connecting destinations in West Berkeley with the Ashby BART Station.
- Bear Transit serving the University of California Berkeley campus and the Downtown Berkeley BART Station.
- Free Broadway Shuttle (currently suspended due to COVID-19) connecting BART, San Francisco Bay Ferry, and Amtrak with destinations in downtown Oakland.
- San Leandro Links Shuttle connecting destinations in San Leandro with the San Leandro BART Station.

This list is not exhaustive; in addition to these services, many institutions also provide shuttle services in the area. These shuttles generally connect to BART Stations, linking them to the AC Transit network at the same time.

Regional Connections

In addition to BART, AC Transit connects with several regional public transportation providers that provide access to destinations throughout the Bay Area. These include:

- San Francisco Bay Ferry providing service to San Francisco from Richmond and to San Francisco and South San Francisco from Oakland and Alameda.
- Solano Express connecting Solano County with the El Cerrito del Norte BART Station.
- WestCat providing service to destinations in Western Contra Costa County north of the AC Transit service area and connecting with AC Transit at Hilltop Mall, Contra Costa College, and the El Cerrito del Norte BART Station.
- Golden Gate Transit connecting Marin County with AC Transit at stops in the Richmond and El Cerrito del Norte BART Stations.
- SFMTA (Muni) and SamTrans connecting with AC Transit Transbay routes at the Salesforce Transit Center in San Francisco.
- Muni and AC Transit All-Nighter services also overlapping along the Mission Street corridor in San Francisco.
- SamTrans and VTA connecting with Dumbarton Express and Transbay U line in Palo Alto.
- VTA connecting with AC Transit in Milpitas.
- Amtrak Capitol Corridor providing access regional destinations including Sacramento, Davis, Santa Clara, and San Jose from several AC Transit-served stations.
- Amtrak San Joaquin Corridor providing access to Eastern Contra Costa County, Stockton, and the San Joaquin Valley from several AC Transit-served stations.
- ACE commuter trains providing connections to Santa Clara and San Jose from Fremont.

NETWORK OVERVIEW

In total, AC Transit currently operates 130 routes, 81 of which will be evaluated as part of this project. These routes are split across five classifications, each with their own network purpose. Three of these classifications (local, all-nighter, and transbay) will be evaluated in this project. **Figure 1** shows all project routes.

Local Routes

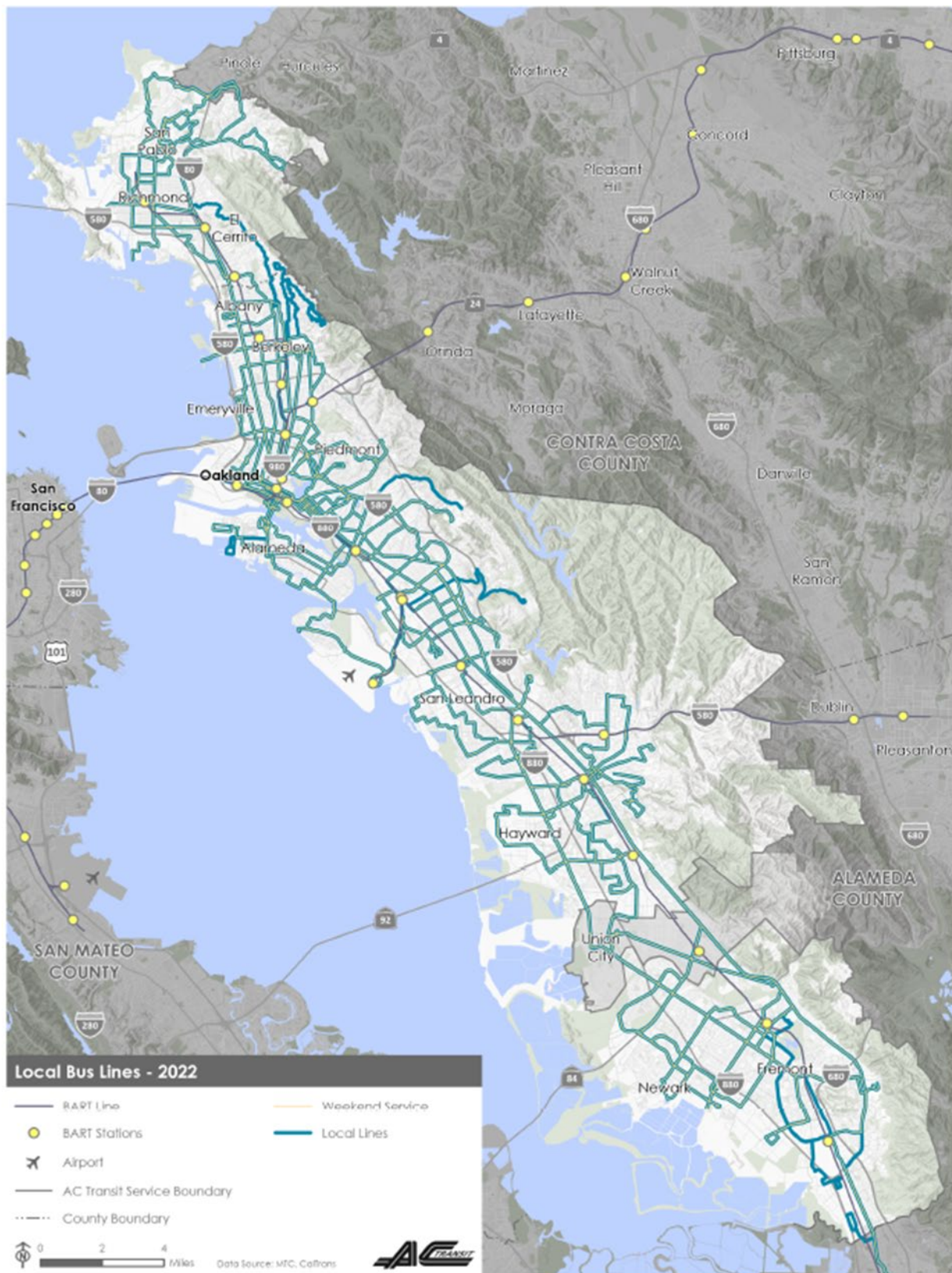
AC Transit operates 60 local routes. Local routes come in a variety of forms, encompassing a variety of service types and service areas. On the busiest corridors, routes in this category provide direct, frequent service, including a BRT route (1T) and a rapid route (72R). In less dense areas, local routes provide community circulation and connections to major destinations such as transit centers. **Figure 2** shows the local route network. **Table 1** lists the weekday frequency and span of all local routes based on Fall 2022 GTFS data. Almost all local lines run on weekends. Only a few parts of the local network, primarily in outlying areas, do not have service on weekends.

Table 1: Local Routes Frequency and Span

Route	PM Peak Frequency	Midday Frequency	Weekday Span	Weekend Frequency	Weekend Span
1T	10	10	12:00 AM - 12:00 AM	10	12:00 AM - 12:00 AM
6	12	12	5:00 AM - 1:00 AM	15	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM
7	30	30	7:00 AM - 7:00 PM		
10	15	15	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM	20	6:00 AM - 12:00 AM
12	20	20	6:00 AM - 12:00 AM	30	6:00 AM - 11:00 PM
14	15	15	5:00 AM - 10:00 PM	30	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM
18	15	15	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM	20	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM
19	60	60	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM	60	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM
20	30	30	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM	30	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM
21	30	30	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM	30	6:00 AM - 9:00 PM
28	60	60	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM	60	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM
29	20	30	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM	30	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM
33	15	20	5:00 AM - 11:00 PM	20	5:00 AM - 11:00 PM
34	60	60	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM	60	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM
35	60	60	6:00 AM - 11:00 PM	60	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM
36	30	30	6:00 AM - 12:00 AM	30	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM
39	60	60	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM		
40	20	20	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM	30	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM
41	60	60	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM	60	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM
45	15	30	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM	30	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM
46L	60	60	6:00 AM - 8:00 PM		
51A	10	12	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM	15	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM
51B	20	20	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM	30	5:00 AM - 11:00 PM
52	15	15	6:00 AM - 11:00 PM	20	8:00 AM - 7:00 PM
54	15	15	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM	30	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM
56	60	60	6:00 AM - 11:00 PM	60	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM
57	15	15	5:00 AM - 1:00 AM	15	4:00 AM - 12:00 AM
60	30	30	6:00 AM - 12:00 AM	30	6:00 AM - 11:00 PM
62	20	20	6:00 AM - 12:00 AM	30	6:00 AM - 12:00 AM
65	60	60	7:00 AM - 8:00 PM		
67	30	30	8:00 AM - 7:00 PM		
70	60	60	7:00 AM - 9:00 PM	60	6:00 AM - 8:00 PM
71	30	30	6:00 AM - 9:00 PM	60	6:00 AM - 8:00 PM
72	30	30	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM	30	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM
72M	30	30	5:00 AM - 1:00 AM	30	4:00 AM - 12:00 AM
72R	12	12	6:00 AM - 7:00 PM	15	6:00 AM - 7:00 PM

Route	PM Peak Frequency	Midday Frequency	Weekday Span	Weekend Frequency	Weekend Span
73	15	15	2:00 AM - 12:00 AM	15	1:00 AM - 12:00 AM
74	30	30	4:00 AM - 10:00 PM	60	6:00 AM - 7:00 PM
76	30	30	5:00 AM - 9:00 PM	30	6:00 AM - 7:00 PM
78	60	0	6:00 AM - 11:00 PM		
79	30	30	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM	30	6:00 AM - 8:00 PM
86	30	30	4:00 AM - 12:00 AM	30	3:00 AM - 11:00 PM
88	15	20	5:00 AM - 11:00 PM	20	5:00 AM - 11:00 PM
90	15	20	6:00 AM - 11:00 PM	30	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM
93	30	60	6:00 AM - 11:00 PM	60	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM
95	30	30	6:00 AM - 8:00 PM	30	6:00 AM - 7:00 PM
96	30	30	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM	30	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM
97	15	20	6:00 AM - 12:00 AM	30	6:00 AM - 11:00 PM
98	20	20	6:00 AM - 11:00 PM	30	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM
99	20	20	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM	30	6:00 AM - 11:00 PM
200	20	20	6:00 AM - 12:00 AM	20	6:00 AM - 12:00 AM
210	30	30	5:00 AM - 11:00 PM	30	7:00 AM - 8:00 PM
212	30	30	6:00 AM - 8:00 PM	30	6:00 AM - 8:00 PM
215	60	60	6:00 AM - 9:00 PM		
216	60	60	7:00 AM - 7:00 PM	60	7:00 AM - 7:00 PM
217	30	30	6:00 AM - 10:00 PM	30	7:00 AM - 9:00 PM
232	60	60	7:00 AM - 8:00 PM	60	7:00 AM - 8:00 PM
239	30	30	5:00 AM - 10:00 PM		
251	60	60	7:00 AM - 7:00 PM	60	6:00 AM - 7:00 PM

Figure 2: Local Routes



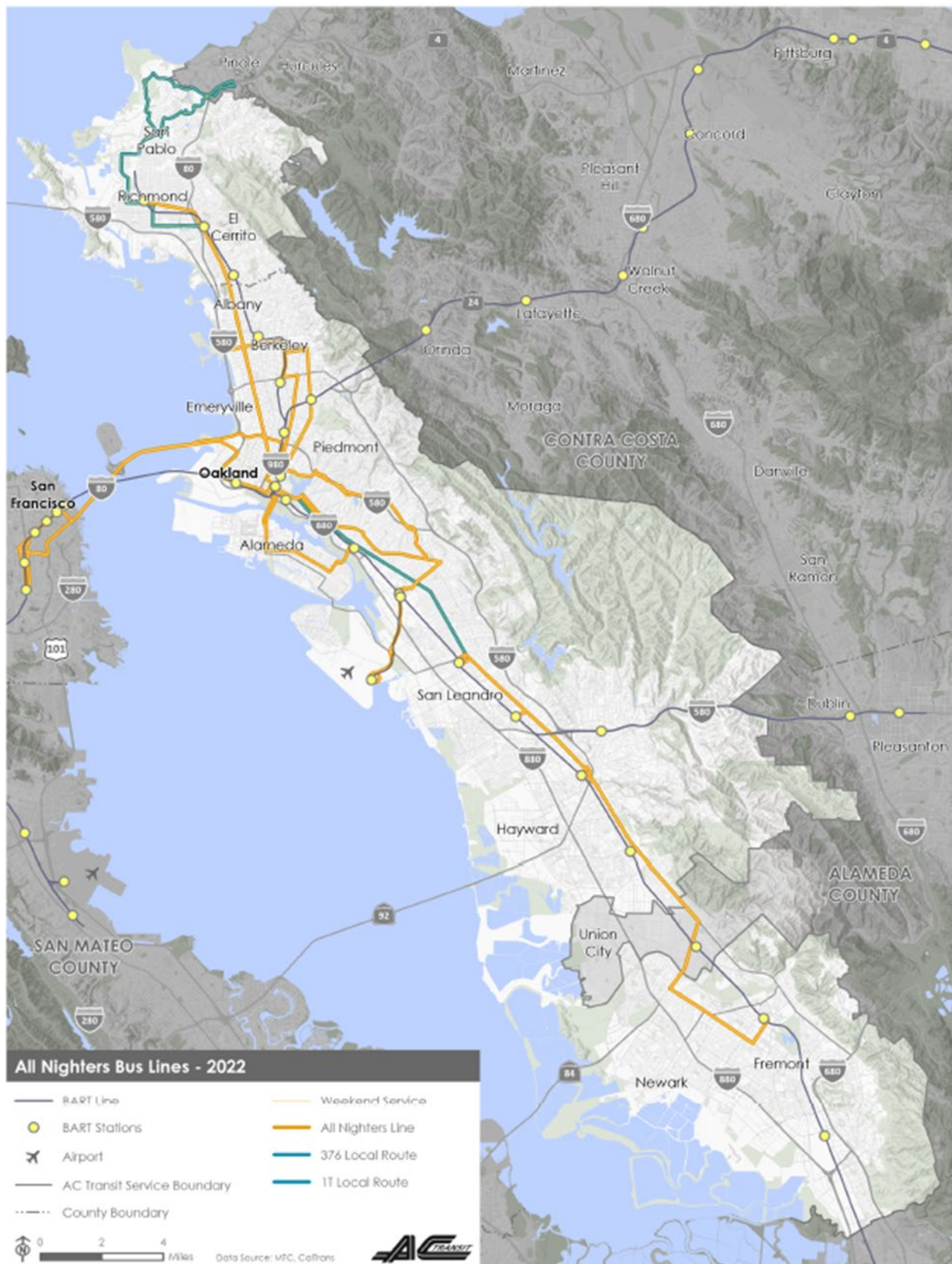
All-Nighter Routes

Six routes provide service after midnight until regular service begins. Numbered in the 800s, these routes primarily provide service on major local corridors. One route, 800, provides Transbay service during hours when BART and the regular Transbay routes are not operating. **Figure 3** shows the all-nighter network, plus Line 1T, which operates 24 hours a day. **Table 2** lists the weekday frequency and span of the six all-nighter routes based on Fall 2022 GTFS data. **Table 2** also includes Line 1T, which operates 24 hours a day, and Line 376, which operates from late evening to early morning but not the entire all-nighter span. All All-Nighter routes also operate on weekends.

Table 2: All-Nighter Frequency and Span

Route	Classification	Frequency	Span	Weekend Frequency	Weekend Span
800	Overnight	30	11:00 PM - 7:00 AM	30	12:00 AM - 7:00 AM
801	Overnight	30	12:00 AM - 6:00 AM	30	12:00 AM - 6:00 AM
802	Overnight	60	12:00 AM - 5:00 AM	60	12:00 AM - 5:00 AM
805	Overnight	60	12:00 AM - 5:00 AM	60	12:00 AM - 5:00 AM
840	Overnight	60	12:00 AM - 5:00 AM	60	12:00 AM - 5:00 AM
851	Overnight	60	12:00 AM - 4:00 AM	60	12:00 AM - 4:00 AM
1T	Local	60 (Overnight)	12:00 AM – 12:00 AM	60 (Overnight)	12:00 AM – 12:00 AM
376	Local	30	8:00 PM - 3:00 AM	30	8:00 PM - 3:00 AM

Figure 3: All-Nighter Routes



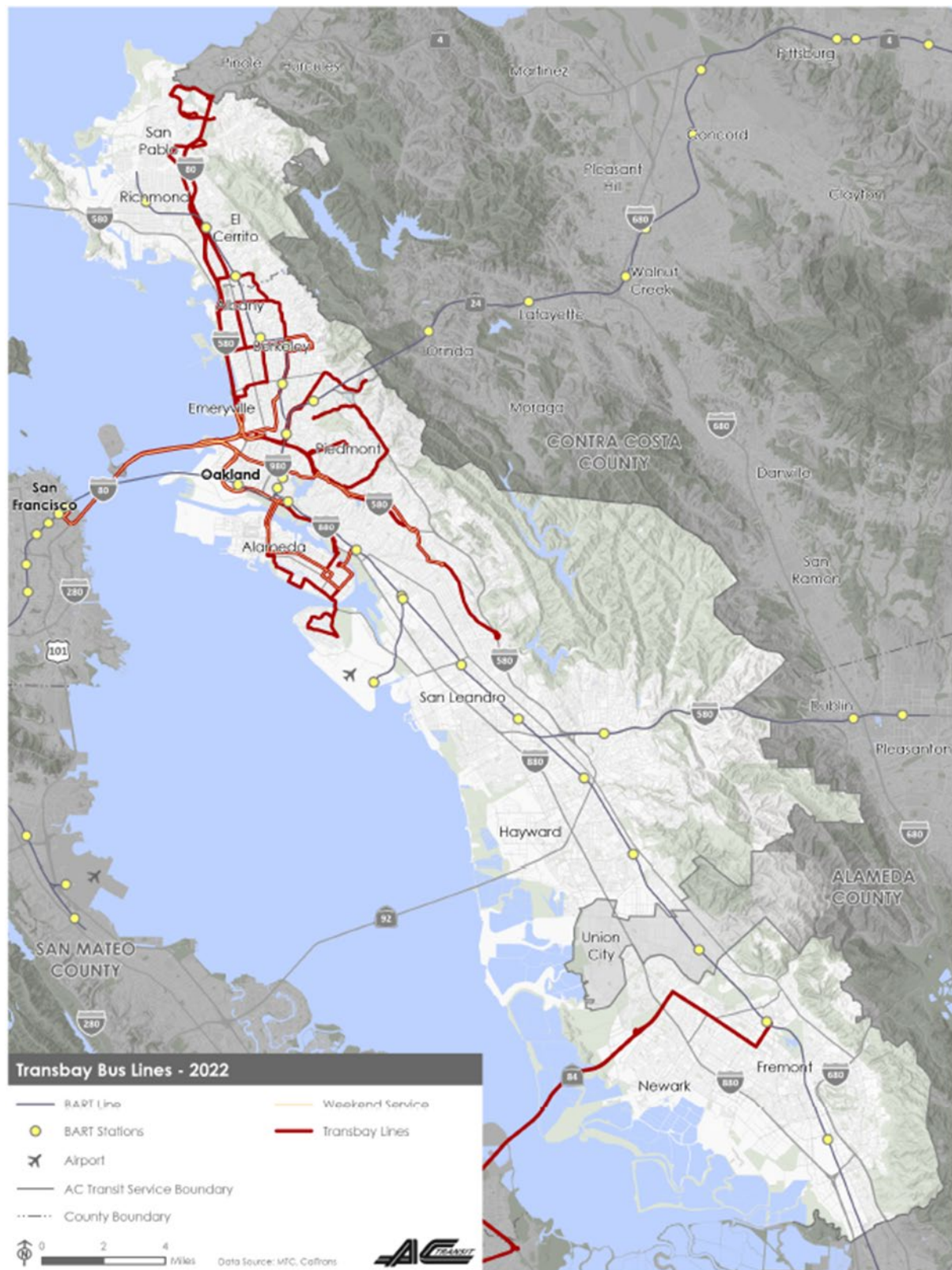
Transbay Routes

Sixteen routes provide service to the Salesforce Transit Center in San Francisco, and one route provides service from Fremont to Palo Alto. These routes primarily operate during the AM and PM peaks, bringing riders into San Francisco in the morning and out in the evenings. This does not include the Dumbarton Express, which is managed by AC Transit but not included in this analysis. **Figure 4** shows the Transbay network. **Table 3** lists the weekday frequency and span for all Transbay routes based on Fall 2022 GTFS data. Only a few Transbay routes (F, NL, and O) offer service midday and on weekends.

Table 3: Transbay Frequency and Span

Route	PM Peak Frequency	Midday Frequency	Weekday Span	Weekend Frequency	Weekend Span
E	60		7:00 AM - 8:35 AM 4:22 PM - 6:20 PM		
F	30	30	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM	30	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM
FS	60		6:10 AM - 7:52 AM 4:30 PM - 6:30 PM		
G	60		7:01 AM - 8:52 AM 4:10 PM - 5:40 PM		
J	60		7:07 AM - 9:27 AM 4:45 PM - 6:20 PM		
L	60		6:48 AM - 7:48 AM 5:15 PM - 6:35 PM		
LA	60		6:40 AM - 7:46 AM 5:10 PM - 6:35 PM		
NL	15	20	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM	30	5:00 AM - 12:00 AM
NX	60		6:55 AM - 7:42 AM 4:45 PM - 6:15 PM		
NX3	60		7:07 AM - 7:35 AM 4:35 PM - 6:25 PM		
O	30	30	5:00 AM - 10:00 PM	30	5:00 AM - 10:00 PM
OX	60		7:00 AM - 7:45 AM 4:50 PM - 6:20 PM		
P	60		7:30 AM - 9:10 AM 4:30 PM - 7:00 PM		
U	60		6:00 AM - 8:20 AM 2:45 PM - 5:55 PM		
V	60		6:44 AM - 7:55 AM 4:30 PM - 6:35 PM		
W	30		6:55 AM - 7:45 AM 4:25 PM - 6:10 PM		

Figure 4: Transbay Routes



Supplemental Routes

In addition to the project routes, AC Transit operates a total of 44 routes which operate only on school days providing access to education institutions. Generally, they operate on mornings and afternoons, and the schedules are linked to the school bell times. These are not included in the tables and maps that follow and are not the primary focus of the *Realign* effort, though impacts on school transportation will be considered carefully.

BART Early Bird Express Routes

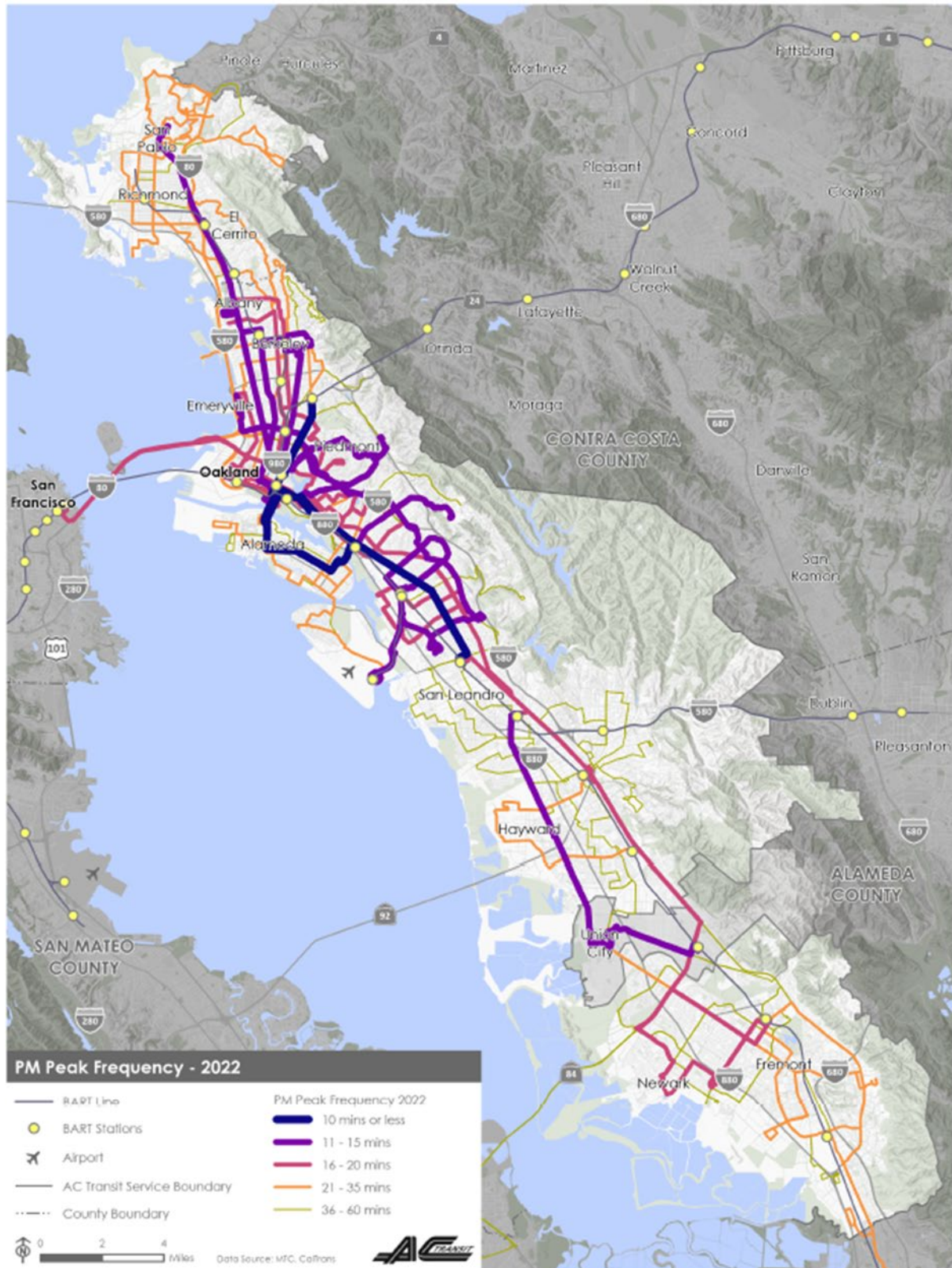
These five routes operate for BART under contract to provide early morning service replacing early morning BART trains discontinued to allow for track upgrade work. These are not included in the tables and maps that follow and will not be a part of the *Realign* effort.

SERVICE LEVELS

Frequency of service, or how many trips a route operates per hour, is the number one factor that attracts riders to use the bus. Riders want to be able to show up at a stop without consulting a schedule and have a bus arrive within a few minutes. When service is infrequent (trips are more than 15 minutes apart), most riders will not spontaneously use transit, but rather will plan their arrivals around the timetable to minimize wait time. This requires them to organize their plans around the bus schedule, making transit much less attractive.

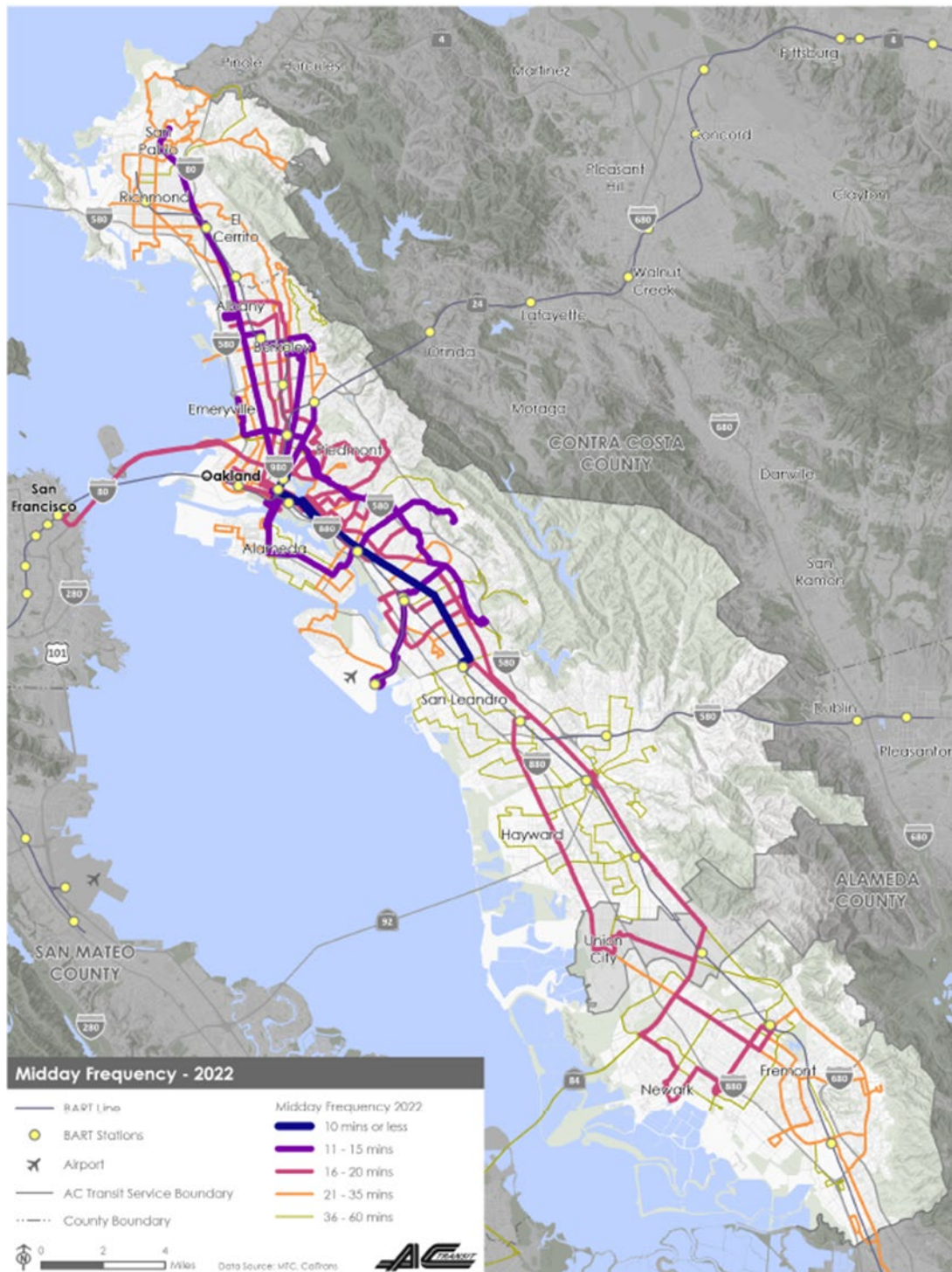
AC Transit operates the highest levels of service during the AM and PM peak, which have similar levels of service. There are 17 routes that operate every 15 minutes or better during the PM peak, primarily in the densest parts of the service area. In addition to those 17 routes, 31 routes operate every 30 minutes or better during the PM peak. The mix of densities in the AC Transit service area means that the District also operates 27 routes at frequencies worse than every 30 minutes, typically once an hour. These routes primarily serve low-density, suburban portions of the service area, or are Transbay Express lines. **Figure 5** shows PM peak frequency throughout the network.

Figure 5: Weekday PM Peak Frequency



Midday frequencies remain relatively high: 11 routes operate every 15 minutes or better and an additional 35 routes operate every 30 minutes or better. Only 15 routes operate less than every 30 minutes. A number of routes, almost all of which are Transbay services, do not operate at all during midday. **Figure 6** shows midday frequencies throughout the network.

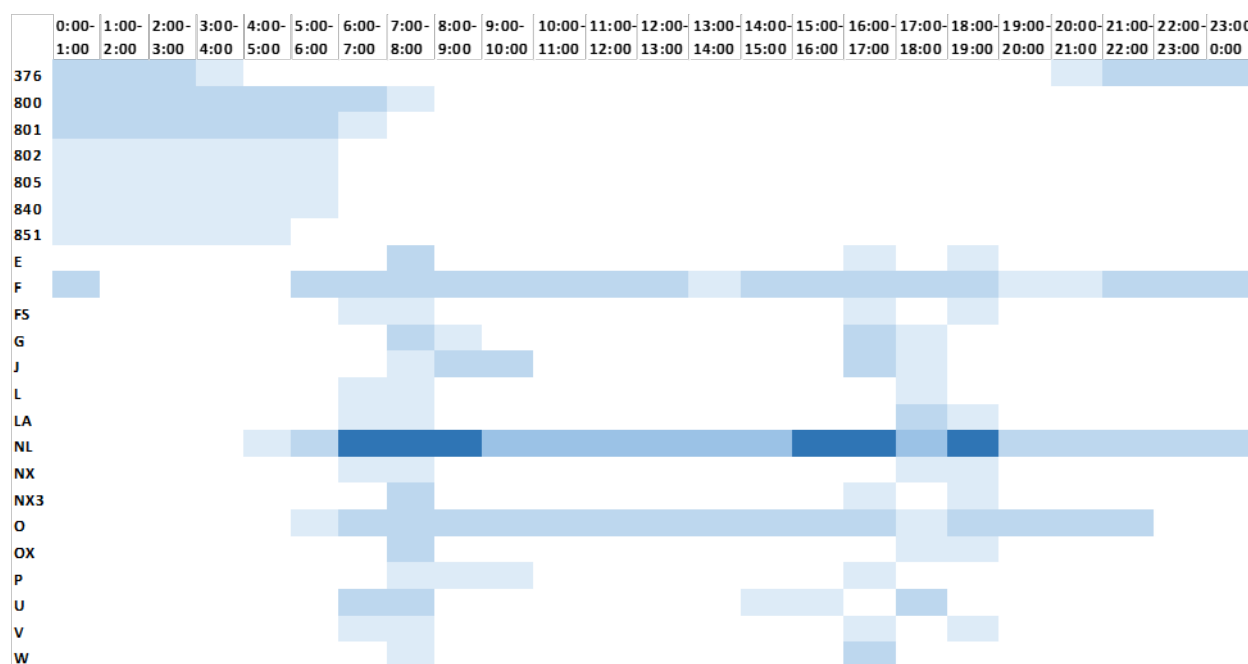
Figure 6: Weekday Midday Frequencies



AC Transit operates routes with a wide range of service characteristics, depending on context. **Figure 7** shows weekday frequency by hour for all project routes. Spans in the AC Transit network are generally long, beginning early in the morning and ending late in the evening. There are very few routes that operate very late at night. Instead, that role is occupied by the all-nighter routes, which span the gap.

Figure 7: Weekday Frequency by Hour for All Project Routes





Weekend service levels are below that of weekday service: some routes do not operate, and those that do generally run less frequently for shorter periods of time. Routes operate the same on Saturdays and Sundays. Only 6 routes operate at 15 minutes or better on the weekends. An additional 35 routes operate 30 minutes or better. Frequencies are generally more consistent on weekends, with many routes operating at a consistent frequency from morning to evening. **Figure 8** shows weekend frequencies throughout the network, and **Figure 9** shows frequency and spans on weekends.

Figure 8: Weekend Frequency

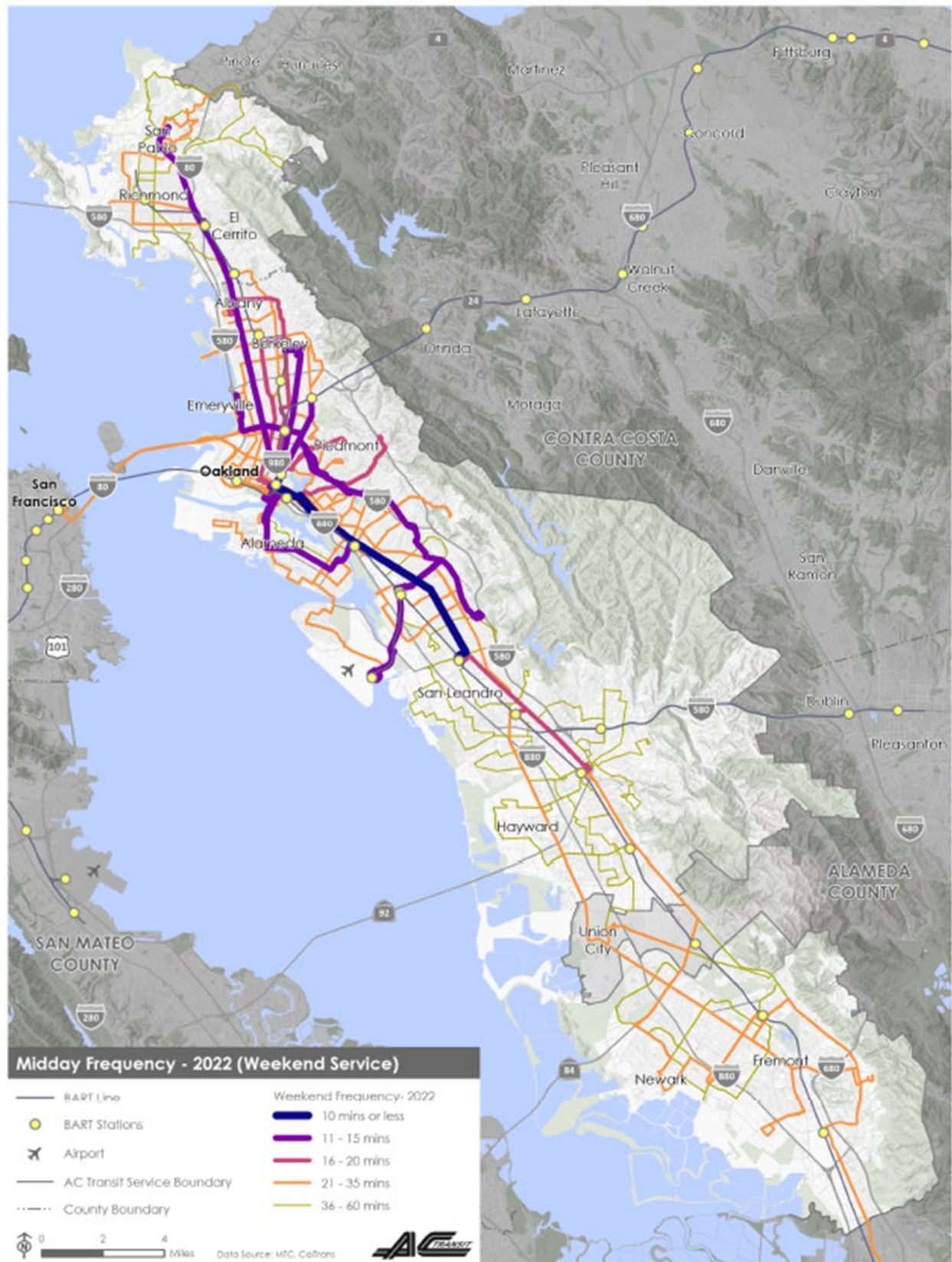
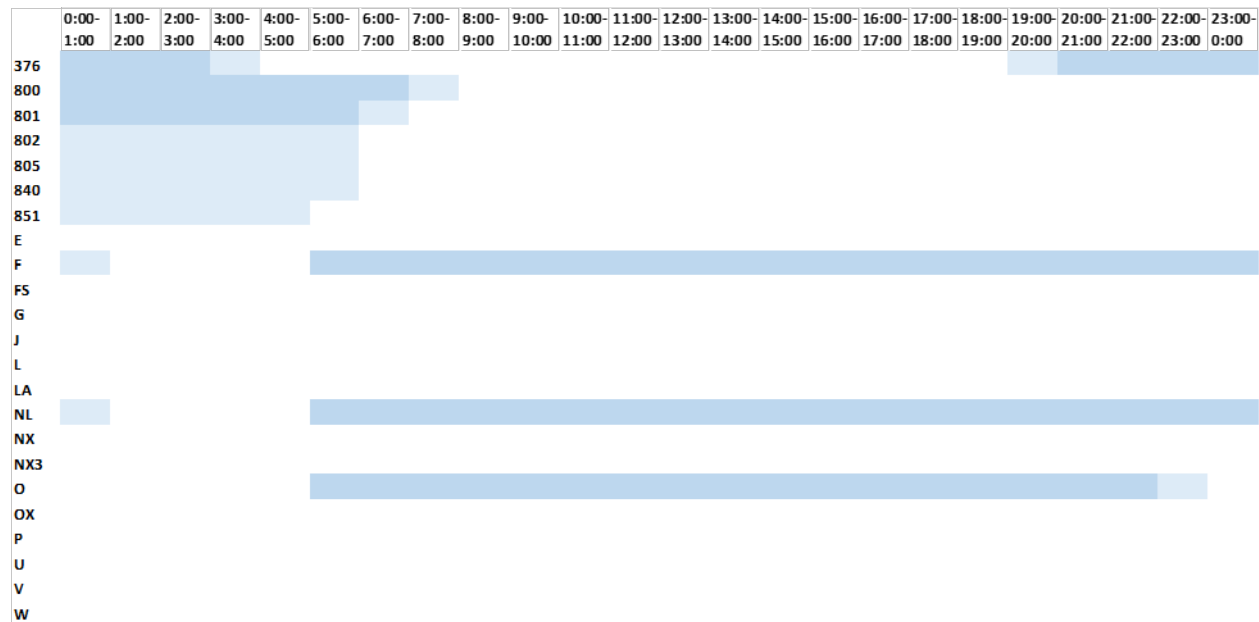


Figure 9: Weekend Frequency by Hour for All Project Routes





COMPARISON OF 2019 TO 2022

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on AC Transit's service. Following the onset of the pandemic, AC Transit, like most transit agencies across the county, dramatically reduced the level of service provided. These service reductions came after earlier service reductions in 2018, which were primarily aimed at trunk routes. Since the pandemic, the District has slowly been adding service back, although current levels of service still fall short of pre-pandemic service.

Although the level of service has not fully returned to pre-pandemic levels, there has been relatively little decline in coverage; most areas served pre-pandemic are served under current service. In cases where coverage has been lost, most areas are located very close to currently provided service. The *Realign* project will determine whether areas that lost coverage should have service restored. The change in coverage is shown in **Figure 10**.

Instead, most of the reductions in service have been reductions in frequency. These reductions have, for the most part, been distributed throughout the service area. The exception to this is Hayward, San Leandro and the surrounding Central Alameda County area, which saw reductions in frequencies across the board that have not yet been restored. The change in midday frequency is shown in **Figure 11**.

The *Realign* project is an opportunity to restore service to pre-pandemic levels. The project will examine changes in mobility patterns to redistribute those resources to better serve current mobility and access needs.

Figure 10: Change in Weekday Coverage Between 2019 and 2022

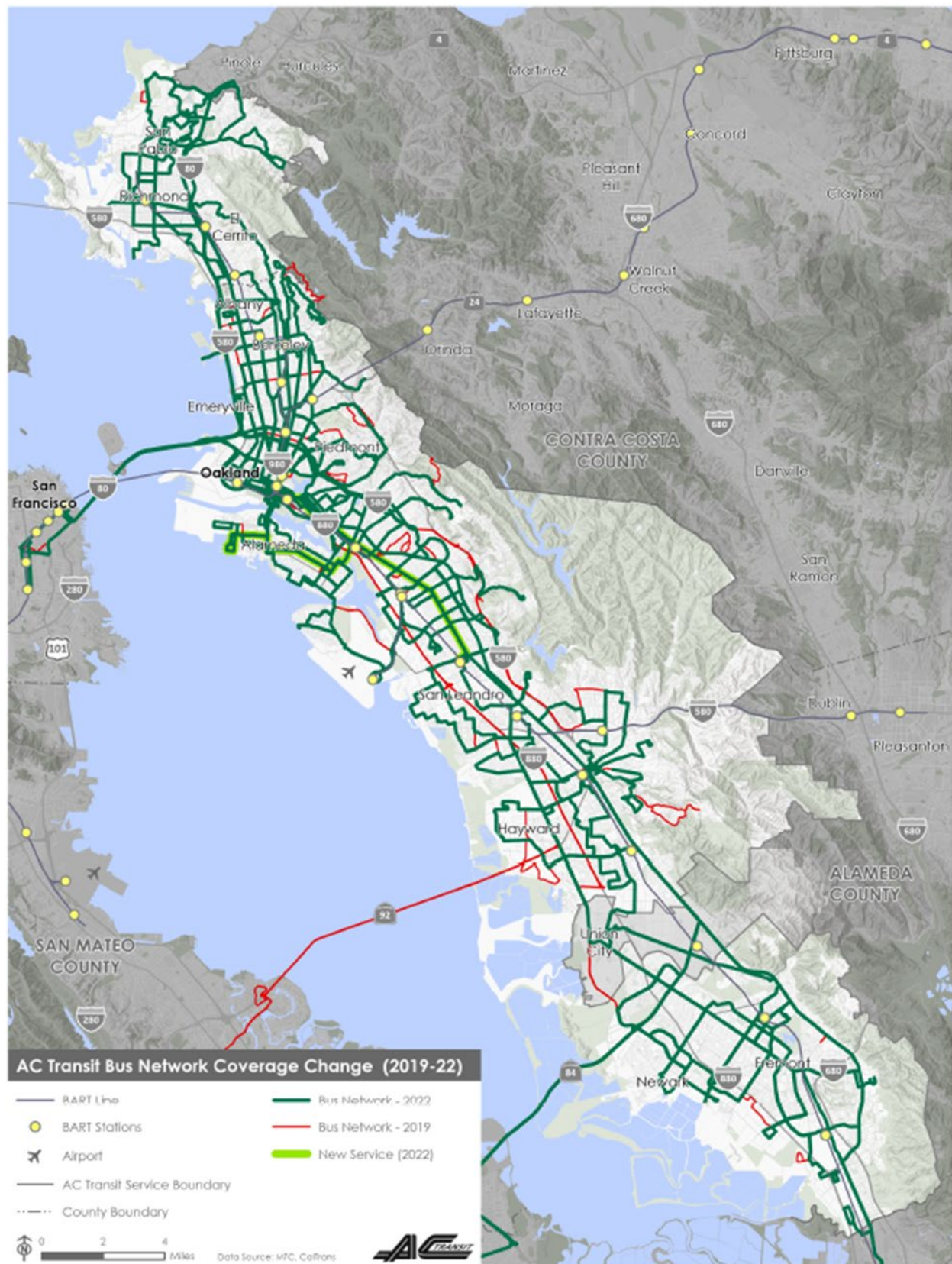
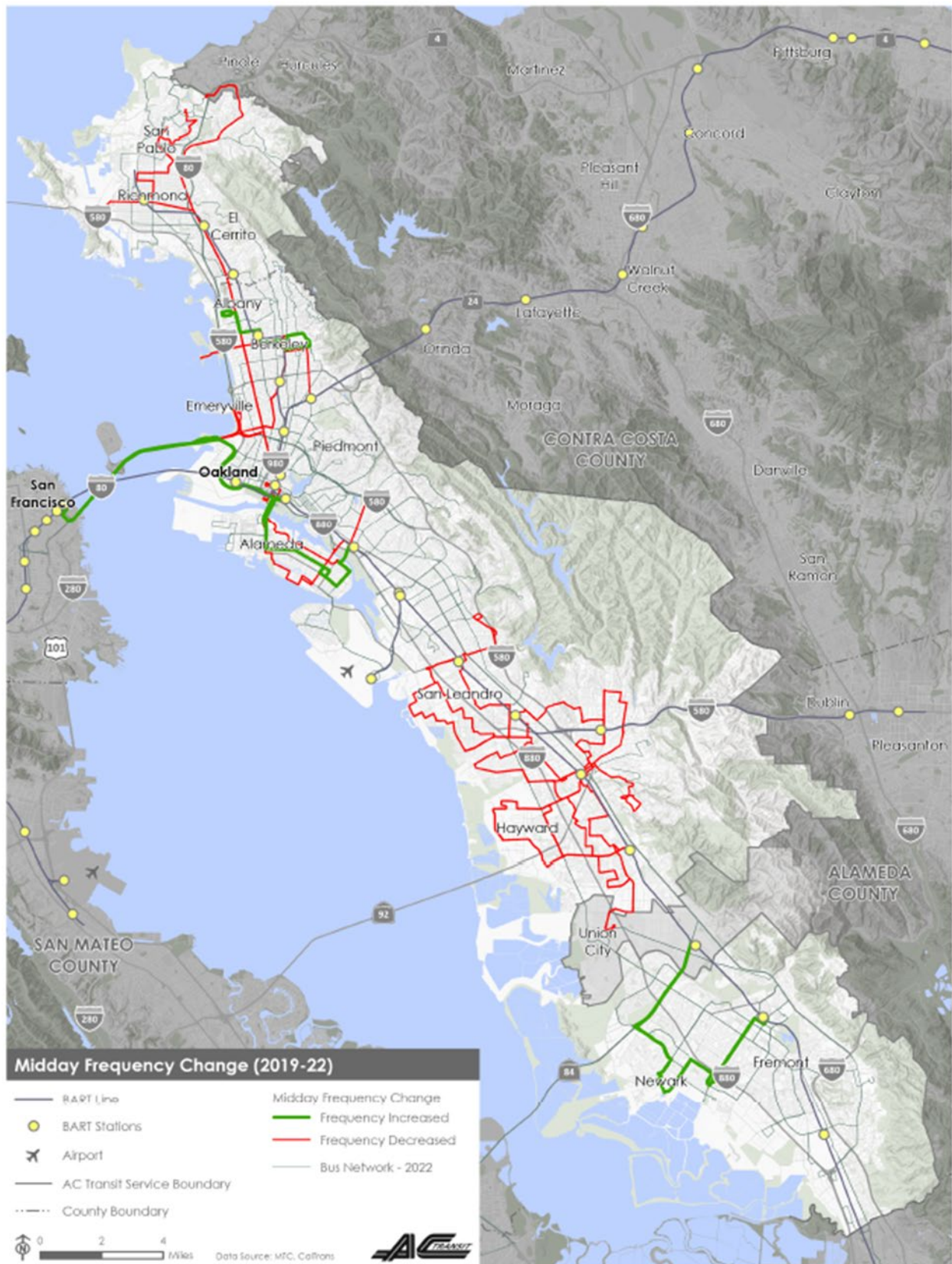


Figure 11: Change in Weekday Midday Frequency Between 2019 and 2022



Weekend coverage and frequency was generally less impacted by the pandemic compared to weekday coverage and frequency. Most of the locations that lost coverage are areas in the hills, which are more difficult to serve with transit. Weekend frequency on routes that were not discontinued is almost identical between 2019 and 2022. Changes to weekend coverage and frequency can be seen in **Figure 12** and **Figure 13**.

Figure 12: Change in Weekend Coverage Between 2019 and 2022

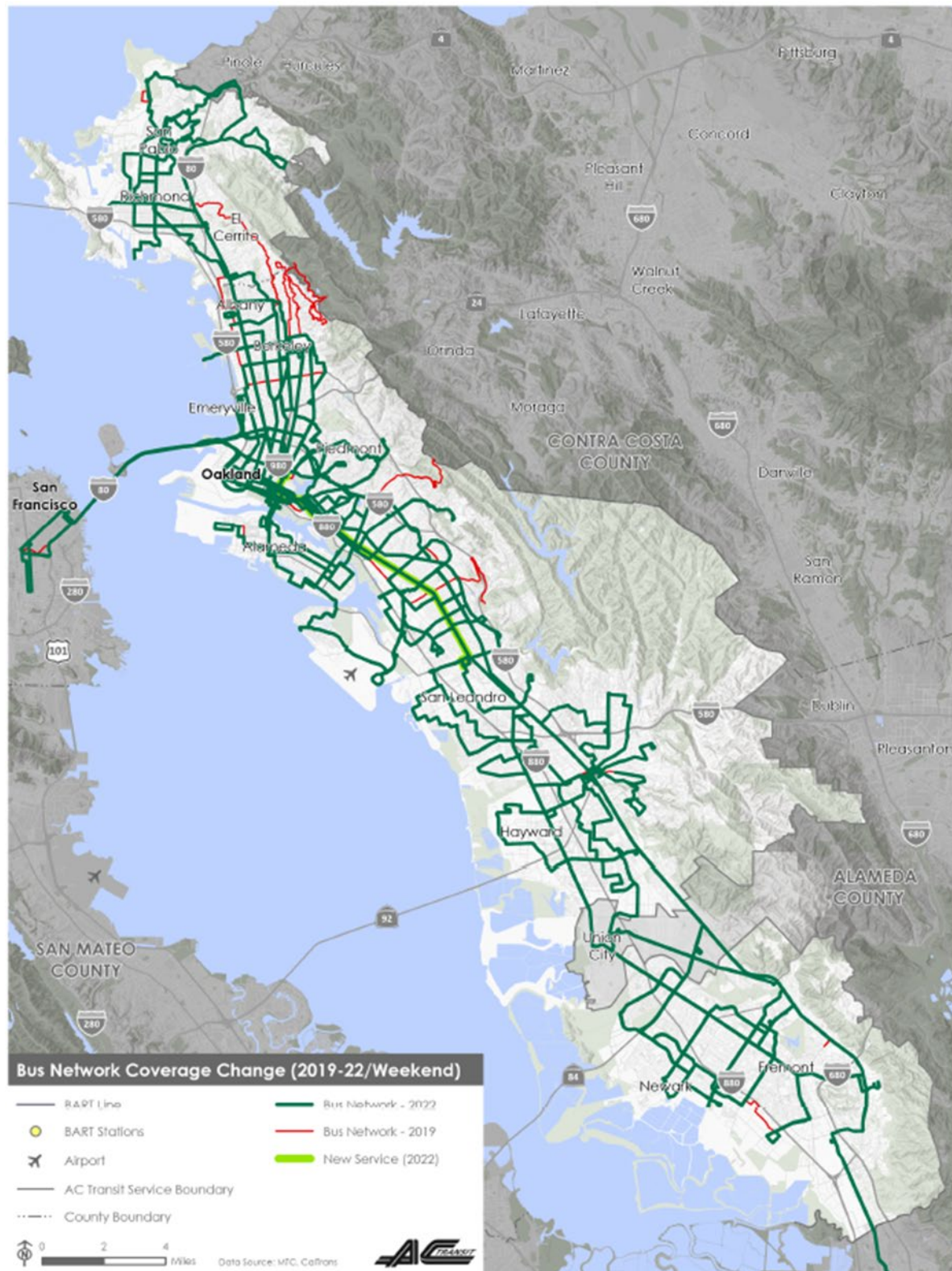
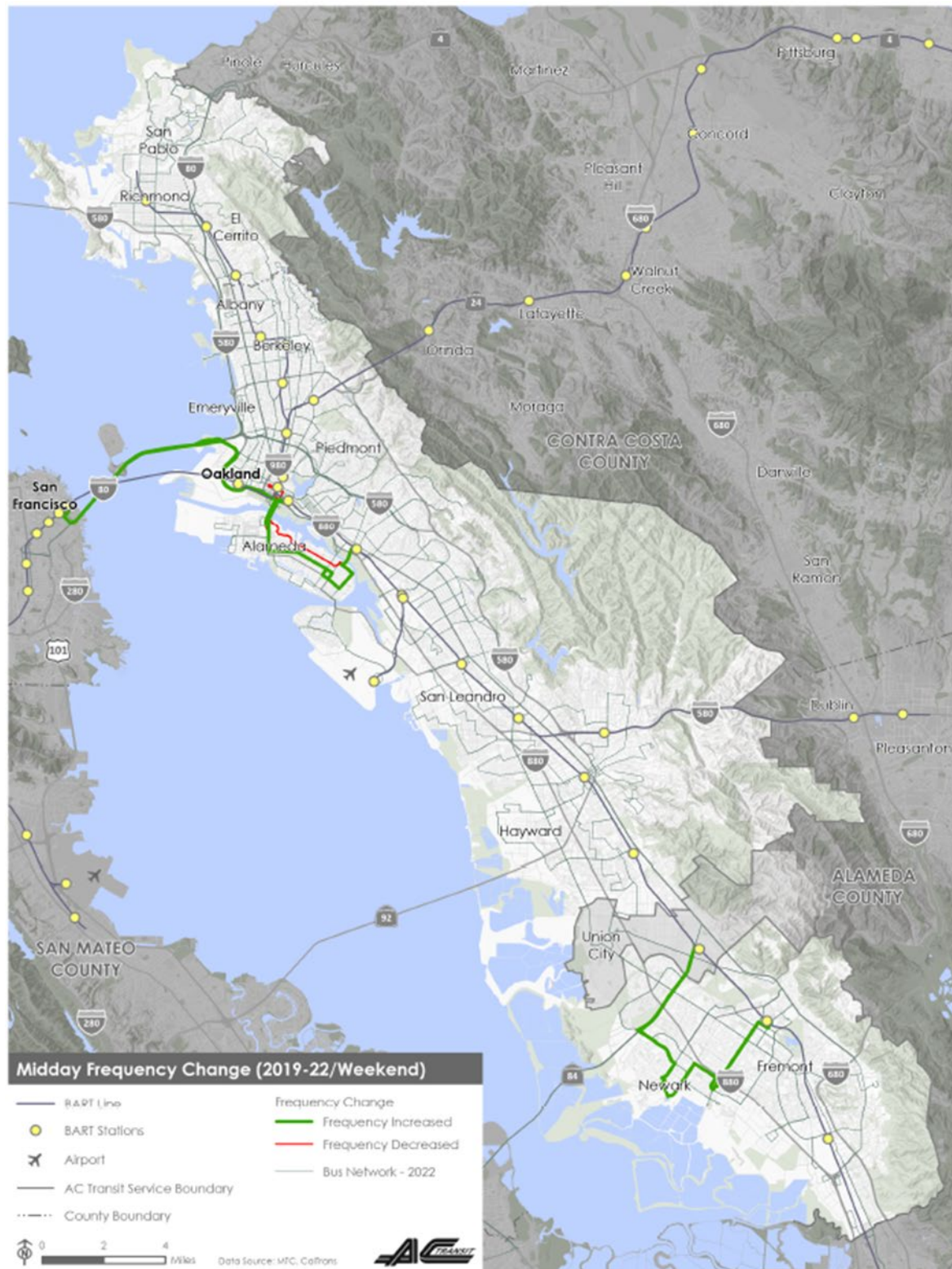


Figure 13: Change in Weekend Frequency Between 2019 and 2022



FARE POLICY CHANGE

The AC Transit adopted Board Policy 333: Fare Policy Goals and Methodology in 2011 and amended it in 2020. This document identifies the goals of fare policy, fare structure, fare products, local fare pricing, and Transbay fare pricing.

The goals of fare policy are:

- **Goal 1 – Simplicity:** Fares, the fare structure, and fare payment methods should be easy to use for passengers, and easy to operate for the District.
- **Goal 2 – Appropriateness:** Fares, the fare structure, and fare payment methods should provide a good value for passengers.
- **Goal 3 – Equity:** Fares, the fare structure, and fare payment methods should be fair for all passengers.
- **Goal 4 – Transparency:** Fares, the fare structure, and fare payment methods should result in predictable costs and cost increases for passengers, and predictable revenue increases for the District.
- **Goal 5 – Policy Supportiveness:** Fares, the fare structure, and fare payment methods should be supportive of other District goals – service, land use, and social goals – and compliant with other regulatory mandates.
- **Goal 6 – Affordability:** Fares should be affordable to all passengers to ensure their full access to bus service and to prevent adverse impacts on socially vulnerable populations.
- **Goal 7 – Fiscal Responsibility:** Fares should keep pace with inflationary costs.

The current fare structure, shown in **Table 4**, was adopted by the Board in 2019 and took effect July 1, 2019.

Table 4: Current Fare Policy

Fare Type	Pay with Clipper Card/ Clipper Mobile	Pay with AC Transit Mobile Fares	Pay with Cash
Local Single Ride	\$2.25	\$2.25	\$2.50
Transbay Single Ride	\$6	\$6	\$6
Local to Transbay Upgrade	\$3.75	--	\$3.50
Day Pass	Available as Pay-as-you-go fare up to \$5	Available as Pay-as-you-go fare up to \$5	\$5.50
7-day Pass	--	Available as Pay-as-you-go fare up to \$22.50	--
31-day Local Pass	\$84.60	Available as Pay-as-you-go fare up to \$84.60	--
31-day Transbay Pass	\$216	Available as Pay-as-you-go fare up to \$216	--

Youth (5-18), Senior (ages 65 and up), and disabled fares are discounted at 50 percent the adult fares listed in **Table 4** with the following exceptions. The 31-day local pass and Pay-as-you-go fare is capped at \$34, and there is no 31-day Transbay pass discount.

When the Board adopted these fare changes in 2019, they also adopted fare increases to take effect on July 1, 2021, and July 1, 2023. This would have involved the following changes:

- Increases would be based on staff projections for the five-year period beginning in 2019 using the urban Consumer Price Index.
- Increases in the Adult Single Local Fare would be in \$0.25 increments after an initial increase of \$0.15 to bring the fare to \$2.50 and keep fares at multiples of \$0.25.
- Clipper incidences would be set at \$0.25 for the Adult single fare.
- A mobile ticket application would be introduced.

However, the Board deferred the 2021 fare increase to 2022 and again to 2023. It is anticipated that they will defer the fare increase again in 2023. Therefore, the fares in effect have not changed since July 1, 2019.

The one element of fare policy that has the most impact on *Realign* recommendations is the impact of transferring. Changes in route structures can result in some customers needing to make a transfer whereas they previously did not. Maximizing the number of destinations that can be reached without significant out of direction travel often results in transfers for many trips. A fare structure that does not add cost when a customer transfers between vehicles or modes is ideal. If there are fare penalties for transferring, it could result in less than optimum route recommendations to address equity concerns.

AC Transit adopted a \$0.25 transfer charge over 30 years ago. In 2014, AC Transit abolished transfers and replaced them with a day pass priced at double the base fare plus \$0.25. However, customers who only ride one way and need to transfer end up paying double the base fare to complete their trip. In 2022, the AC Transit Board approved instituting free intraagency transfers once Clipper 2.0 is introduced, and MTC is developing a Bay Area wide interagency transfer designed to eliminate transfer penalties for multi-agency trips. These changes will ensure that any recommended service changes will not result in a customer paying a higher fare.