

To: Operations & Scheduling Committee

Date: 11/29/2024

From: Pranjal Dixit, Manager of Planning

Reviewed by: AMS

SUBJECT: Spring Bid Update

Background:

The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated significant service changes to maintain transit accessibility across the service area in response to fluctuating ridership. As businesses have reopened and more in-office work has resumed, ridership has shown steady growth. This growth has been further supported by system-wide and regional fare promotions like Monument Free, Summer Youth Pass, Pass2Class, and Clipper START.

However, despite dedicated recruitment and training efforts, a shortage of operators remains a significant barrier to expanding service levels. Additionally, continually increasing traffic congestion has necessitated frequent schedule adjustments to ensure reliable service delivery.

Ridership Trends:

Ridership has been growing steadily year-over-year as seen in Figure 1. This positive trend is particularly pronounced for weekend and school ridership, as illustrated in Figure 1. Notably, weekend ridership has exceeded pre-pandemic levels for over a year, likely due in part to the expansion of the Monument Free program and a shift in travel patterns. Meanwhile, school ridership has also shown a significant recovery, reaching 102% of pre-pandemic levels as of October 2024. Weekday ridership currently sits at 81% of pre-pandemic levels for local routes and 55% for express routes. Overall ridership was at 82% of pre-pandemic level in October 2024.

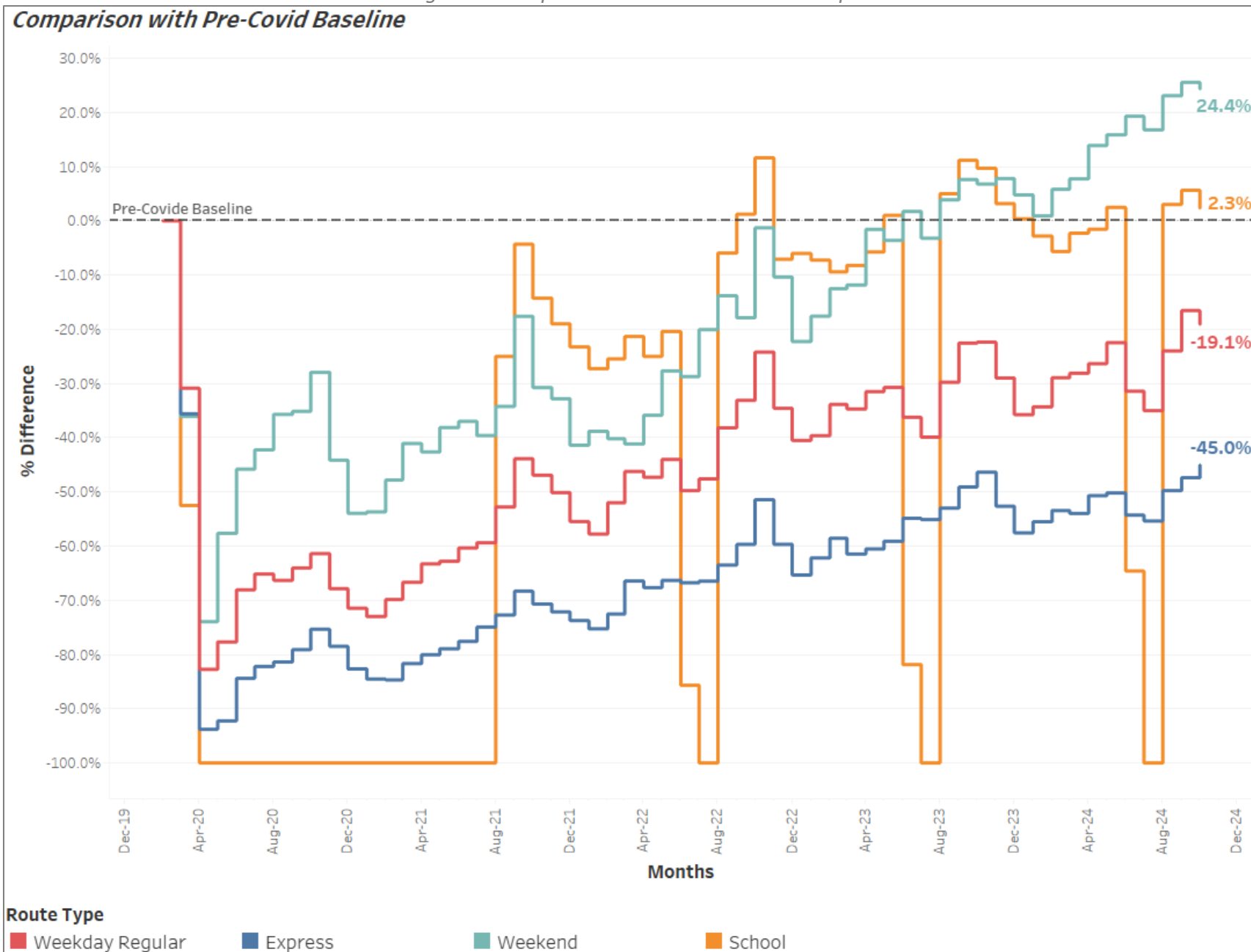
On-Time Performance Trends:

The Winter Bid included several service adjustments to improve on-time performance and address feedback from our operators. These changes primarily affected the following routes:

- Weekday Routes: 10, 17, 20, and 28 serving Concord, Pleasant Hill, and Martinez.
- Weekend Routes: 321 and 335 serving Walnut Creek, Danville, and San Ramon.
- School Routes: 601, 602, 605 serving Walnut Creek Intermediate School, and 612 serving Pine Hollow Middle School.

Compared to the Fall Bid, these routes have seen an 8.7% increase in on-time performance during the Winter Bid (from 74.5% to 81.2%). Staff will continue to monitor the performance for any future service changes.

Figure 1: Comparison with Pre-Covid Ridership



Spring Bid:

The Spring Bid, effective January 12, 2025, will introduce several service adjustments. These changes are informed by an analysis of current schedules, ridership levels, passenger feedback, operator recommendations, and resource optimization.

Weekday Adjustments:

- Routes 7, 11 and 15 that serve Concord and Walnut Creek will see schedule modifications to enhance on-time performance and operator recovery times during peak hours.
- Route 99X, which connects the North Concord BART station with the Martinez Amtrak station, will undergo route modifications due to a change in location of the VistAbility (formerly Contra Costa ARC) Commercial Support Services facility. This facility provides jobs to adults with developmental disabilities, and represents a significant portion of the ridership on this route.

School Adjustments:

- Route 623, serving Monte Vista High School in Danville, and Route 636, serving Iron Horse Middle School and California High School in San Ramon, will undergo schedule adjustments to improve on-time performance.

Weekend Adjustments:

- Routes 311 and 315, serving Concord and Walnut Creek, will undergo modifications to improve on-time performance and operator recovery times.
- Route 301, serving Walnut Creek, will be extended to Safeway in the Shadelands area, improving weekend access to grocery stores.

Financial Implications:

None. The service levels for the Spring bid are consistent with the proposed FY 2025 budget.

Recommendation:

None, for information only.

Action Requested:

None, for information only.

Attachments:

None