

To: Operations & Scheduling Committee

Date: 5/30/2025

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, but have begun to stabilize in 2025, as shown in Figure 1. This positive trend is particularly pronounced for weekend and school ridership. 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. As of April 2025, ridership on our 600-series school routes has reached 94% of pre-pandemic levels, while ridership on weekday local routes sits at 75% of pre-pandemic levels, and weekday express routes are at 52% of pre-pandemic levels. Systemwide ridership is at 85% of pre-pandemic level.

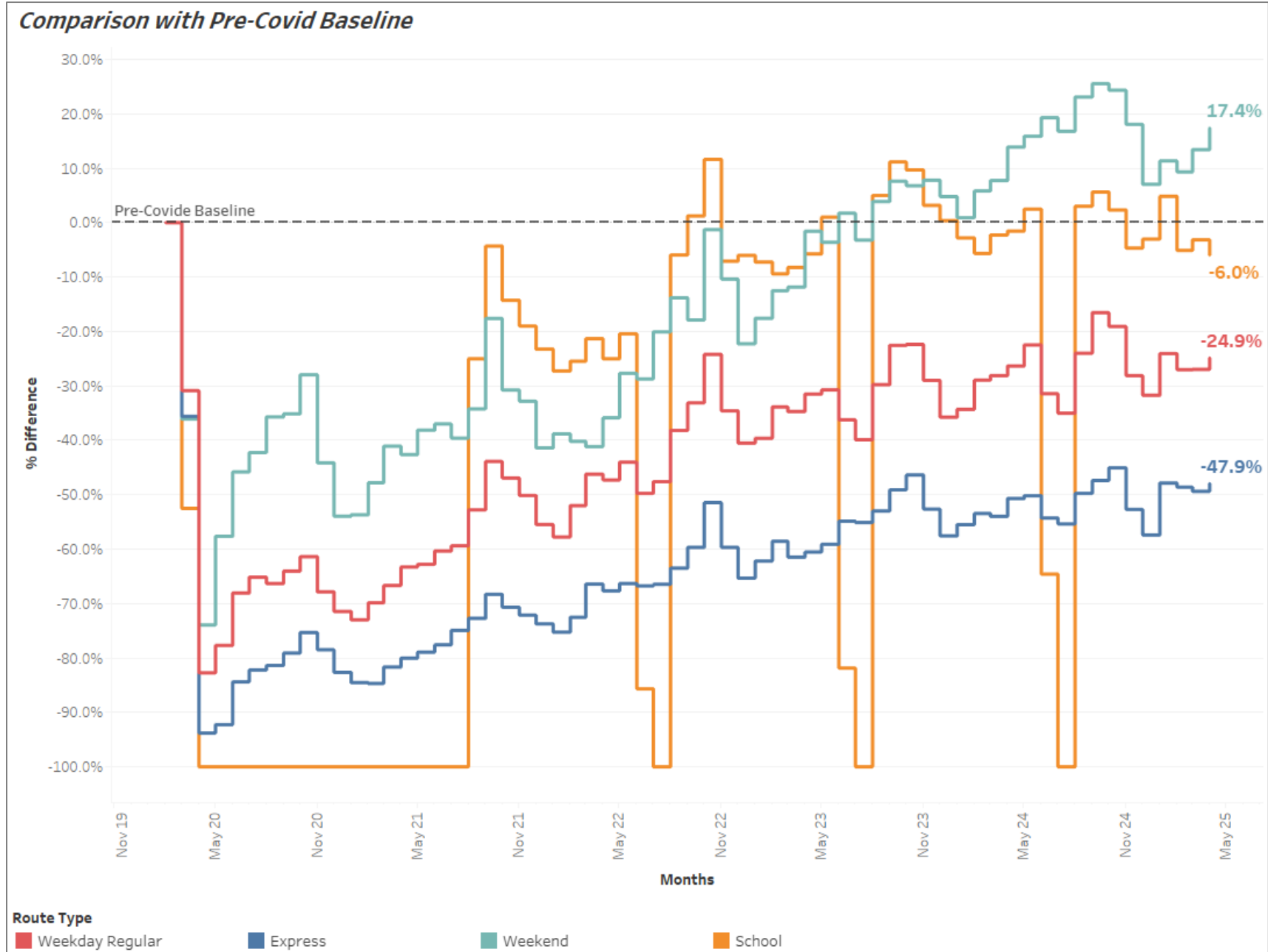
On-Time Performance Trends:

The Spring Bid, which began on January 12, 2025, included several service adjustments to improve on-time performance and address feedback from our operators. These changes primarily affected the following routes:

- Weekday Routes: 7, 11 and 15 serving Concord and Walnut Creek
- Weekend Routes: 301, 311 and 315 serving Concord and Walnut Creek
- Express Routes: 99X serving Concord and Martinez

Compared to last year's Fall Bid, these routes have seen a 7.2% increase in on-time performance during (from 72.1% to 79.3%). Staff will continue to monitor the performance for any future service changes.

Figure 1: Comparison with Pre-Covid Ridership



Bay Area TRANSFER Plan:

The Summer Bid, effective June 8, 2025, will introduce several service adjustments on the weekend routes. These changes are a result of the Bay Area TRANSFER Plan, a regional schedule coordination effort aimed at improving transfer timings for customers at key hubs. This MTC-led initiative began in December 2023 and involved staff from various transit agencies, as well as a consultant team from Jarrett Walker + Associates.

A key recommendation of the Bay Area TRANSFER Plan was regional coordination of service changes, particularly aligning with BART's schedule due to its extensive network. County Connection's August and January service change dates are also coordinated with BART. While the Bay Area TRANSFER Plan offered recommendations for various weekday and weekend County Connection routes at Concord BART, we are initially prioritizing weekend bus-to-bus transfers at Concord BART, as implementing the weekday recommendations would necessitate a more extensive schedule realignment across routes serving multiple BART connections to preserve existing bus-to-bus transfers.

Summer Bid:

- Routes 310, 320 and 314, serving Clayton, Concord and Pleasant Hill, will undergo modifications to improve connections with other bus routes at Concord BART.
- Route 6, serving Lamorinda, will undergo modifications to improve on-time performance and operator recovery times, while also providing an additional hour of evening service.

Financial Implications:

None. The service levels for the Summer Bid are consistent with the proposed FY 2025 budget.

Recommendation:

None, for information only.

Action Requested:

None, for information only.

Attachments:

None