

To: Operations & Scheduling Committee

Date: 6/23/2025

From: Pranjal Dixit, Manager of Planning

Reviewed by: AMS

SUBJECT: Fall Bid Update

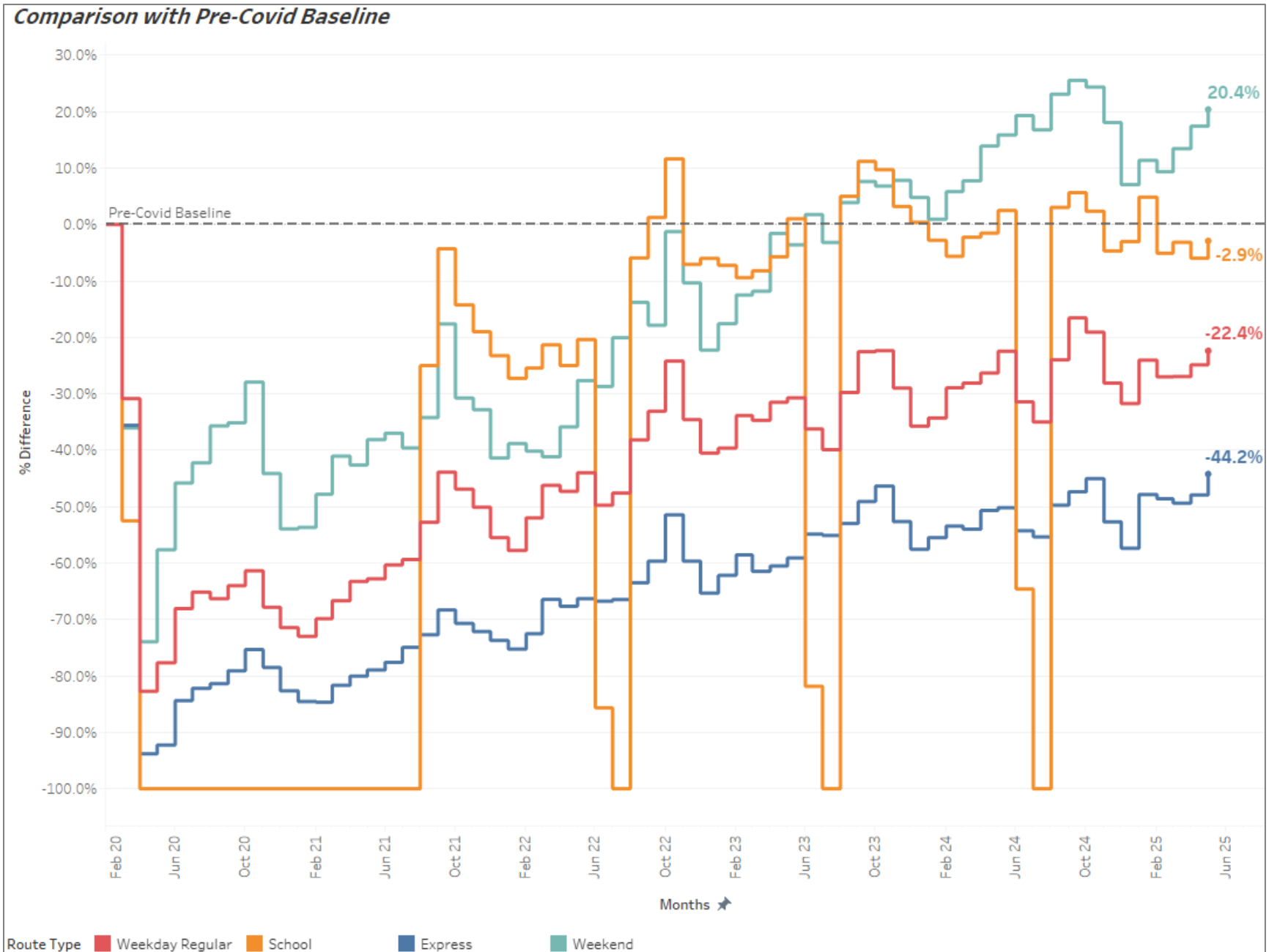
Background:

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, 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 our weekend and school services. 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 May 2025, ridership on our 600-series school routes has reached 97% of pre-pandemic levels, while ridership on weekday local routes sits at 78% of pre-pandemic levels, and weekday express routes are at 56% of pre-pandemic levels. Systemwide ridership is at 85% of pre-pandemic level.

Figure 1: Comparison with Pre-Covid Ridership



Fall Bid:

During the Summer Bid, we successfully implemented service changes on several weekend routes at the Concord BART station to significantly improve bus-to-bus transfers for our riders. These adjustments are a direct outcome of the Bay Area TRANSFER Plan, a regional initiative spearheaded by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). Launched in December 2023, this plan aims to optimize transfer timings at critical transit hubs and involved collaboration between various transit agencies, MTC staff, and consultants from Jarrett Walker + Associates.

The Fall Bid, effective August 10, 2025, will see further improvements stemming from the TRANSFER Plan, specifically at the Dublin-Pleasanton BART station. Here, we're enhancing transfer times between County Connection, Wheels (LAVTA), and BART.

Below is a summary of the routes undergoing adjustments:

- **Route 35 (San Ramon and Dublin):** Changes to departure times are being made that will improve connections with BART and LAVTA at Dublin/Pleasanton BART, as recommended by the TRANSFER Plan.
- **Route 21 (San Ramon, Danville, and Walnut Creek):** Changes to departure times are being made with an aim to enhance connections with Route 35 at the San Ramon Transit Center. Additionally, running times are being changed to improve on-time performance around school bell times
- **Routes 19 (Concord and Martinez) and 98X (Walnut Creek and Martinez):** Departure times and running times are being changed to address on-time performance and operator break concerns.
- **School Routes 605, 606, 622, 623, and 635:** Minor trip departure times are being made to align with new school bell schedules and improve on-time performance.

Financial Implications:

None. The service levels for the Fall Bid are consistent with the proposed FY 2026 budget.

Recommendation:

None, for information only.

Action Requested:

None, for information only.

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Route Map of Service Changes

