



Moving our region forward, together.

Regional Service Guidelines

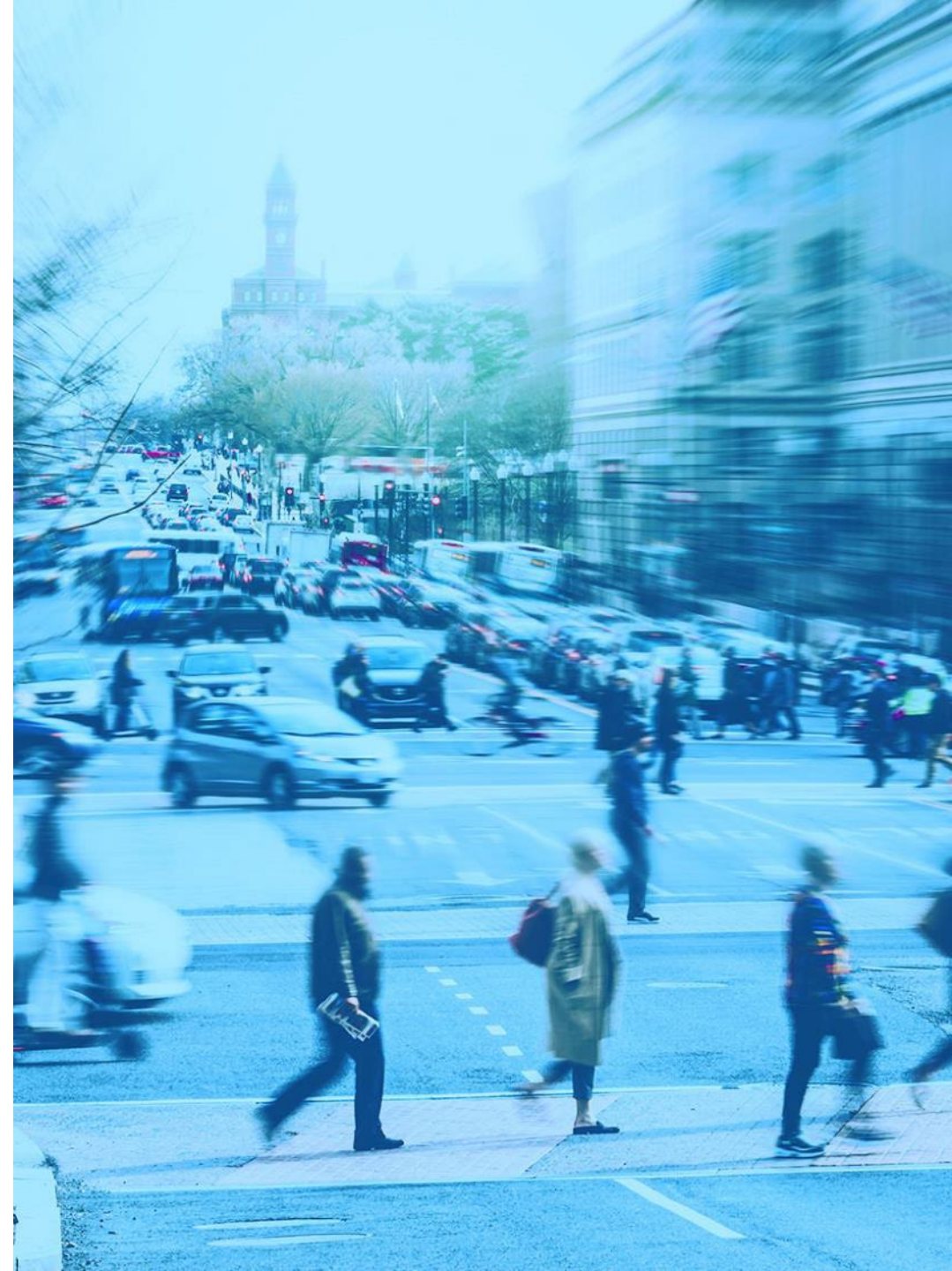
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Transportation Planning Board

July 15, 2026

Agenda Item 9



DMVMoves Service Guidelines

- DMVMoves Plan and Regional Integration
- Service Guidelines
 - Purpose
 - Activity Tiers
 - Service Guidelines
 - Use Statement
 - Next Steps
- Performance and Reporting
 - Developing Performance Measures
 - Use Statement
- Next Steps

DMVMoves Regional Integration

- The [DMVMoves Plan](#) calls for the region's governments to take action to improve regional integration and includes a detailed Action Plan
- TPB Resolution in January accepted the Plan and called for action in support
 - ***TPB to adopt regional service guidelines, creating consistent expectations for customers across jurisdictions.***

TPB R9-2026
January 21, 2026

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE DMVMOVES REGIONAL TRANSIT INITIATIVE

WHEREAS, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), as the federally

Detailed Action Plan for
Regional Transit Integration

Washington region, has the
ce Transportation (FAST) Act,
vestment and Jobs Act (IIJA)
continuing, cooperative and
litan area; and

in the region's transit assets
repair; and

e frequency and capacity of
ng travel times on all public
ail and commuter rail; and

ty (WMATA) faces a capital
e of good repair which could
additional, dedicated capital

hallenges including, but not
ng gaps, raising the potential
progress on economic growth,

gh the 2024 launch of the
il of Governments (COG) and
establishing DMVMoves as a
planning for regional transit;

ials, assisted by two Advisory
and developed a shared vision
on of sustainable, long-term,



REGIONAL BUS GUIDELINES

Why Set Regional Guidelines?

- Sets clear, consistent expectations for customers across the region, with flexibility to meet local needs
- Supports more seamless, coordinated service planning
- Enhances customer understanding and confidence in the system and encourage increased ridership
- Enhances transparency and accountability

Developing the Guidelines

DMVMoves Working Group of regional transit providers has met biweekly since March

- ✓ Defined common service classifications and activity tiers
 - ✓ Three activity tier land use context criteria
 - ✓ Four service type classification criteria: core, coverage, peak, and other
 - ✓ Two service criteria: span (hours per day) of service and service frequency
 - ✓ Established minimum span and frequencies for each grouping
- ✓ Developed “use” statement for guidelines

Activity Tiers and Route Classifications Help Unify Levels of Service Across the Region

Activity Tier 1

Activity Tier 2

Activity Tier 3

Higher Density Requires More Service

Lower Density Requires Less Service



Proposed Regional Bus Service Guidelines

At least 50% of bus stops along a route are within a census block that has populations and employment density of:

Core routes

Serve major corridors with moderate frequency and all day service. Tend to be more direct

Coverage routes

Serve lower density residential communities with lower access to transit and connect them to higher density areas, activity centers, and/or transit hubs.

Peak routes

Use regular buses to provide service or connections to transit hubs/high frequency lines, central business districts, or employment centers

Other routes

Don't meet above definitions

Minimum Hours of Service and Frequency Standards		
Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
30 or more units (residents+ jobs per acre)	15 or more units (residents+ jobs per acre)	5 or more units (residents+ jobs per acre)
16 hrs per day Bus every 15 mins	14 hrs per day Bus every 20 mins	12 hrs per day Bus every 30 mins
14 hrs per day Bus every 30 mins	12 hrs per day Bus every 30 mins	10 hrs per day Bus every 60 mins
4 hrs per weekday As needed	4 hrs per weekday As needed	4 hrs per weekday As needed
No regional standards		

Eliminate different standards for peak and off-peak, applying one frequency standard for all day service.

“Use” Statement for Service Guidelines

- A. Service guidelines set expectations [standards] for frequency and span by route purpose and the density of the areas the routes serve.
- B. They are used by transit agency staff to design or restructure service, to inform resource requests, and to prioritize improvements when resources become available.
- C. Resource limitations may require transit staff to make trade-offs between meeting these route-level guidelines and meeting standards for network accessibility – i.e., ensuring that most of the service area has access to at least some level of transit service within walking distance.
- D. As a result, transit agencies operate routes for different goals; therefore, there may be cases where certain routes do not meet the service guidelines, but do meet other agency-specific goals or legal requirements.
- E. It can be valuable to track adherence to the guidelines to (1) understand the level of additional resources that would be needed for the existing network to comply and (2) establish priorities for future investments.

Service Guidelines – Next Steps

- The TPB will be asked to adopt the Regional Bus Service Guidelines at its September 16 meeting
- The Resolution will also include the “Use” Statement for the Guidelines
- Local transit agencies across the region will be asked to adopt the guidelines
 - TPB Resolution could serve as a template for local agencies
 - Multiple paths for adoption
 - Formal adoption
 - Transit Strategic Plan update
 - Internal guidance

	Minimum Hours of Service and Frequency Standards		
	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
At least 50% of bus stops along a route are within a census block that has populations and employment density of:	30 or more units (residents+ jobs per acre)	15 or more units (residents+ jobs per acre)	5 or more units (residents+ jobs per acre)
Core routes <i>Serve major corridors with moderate frequency and all day service. Tend to be more direct</i>	16 hrs per day Bus every 15 mins	14 hrs per day Bus every 20 mins	12 hrs per day Bus every 30 mins
Coverage routes <i>Serve lower density residential communities with lower access to transit and connect them to higher density areas, activity centers, and/or transit hubs.</i>	14 hrs per day Bus every 30 mins	12 hrs per day Bus every 30 mins	10 hrs per day Bus every 60 mins
Peak routes <i>Use regular buses to provide service or connections to transit hubs/high frequency lines, central business districts, or employment centers</i>	4 hrs per weekday As needed	4 hrs per weekday As needed	4 hrs per weekday As needed
Other routes <i>Don't meet above definitions</i>	No regional standards		

Eliminate different standards for peak and off-peak, applying one frequency standard for all day service.

Metro has adopted Regional Guidelines

Guidelines for Metrobus as well as Metrorail adopted on June 25

Updated Classifications and Activity Tiers to Use Consistent Definitions		Updated <u>Minimum</u> Hours of Service and Frequency Standards		
		Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Eliminate different standards for peak and off-peak, applying one frequency standard for all day service.				
Framework Major corridors, direct connections	→ Major Core	17 → 16 hrs per day Bus every 6-12 mins	17 → 16 hrs per day Bus every 6-12 mins	
	→ Core	17 → 16 hrs per day Bus every 15 mins	13 → 14 hrs per day Bus every 20 mins	13 → 12 hrs per day Bus every 30 mins
Coverage Arterial corridors, provide access	→ Coverage	14 hrs per day Bus every 30 mins	12 hrs per day Bus every 30 mins	12 → 10 hrs per day Bus every 60 mins
Commuter Rush hour service to activity centers	→ Peak	4 hrs per weekday As needed	4 hrs per weekday As needed	4 hrs per weekday As needed

REGIONAL PERFORMANCE METRICS

Regional Performance Measures and Reporting

Recommendation: Annual Performance Reporting

- Transit agencies establish and use a common set of performance measures to improve transparency in transit decision-making across the region.
- TPB reports system results through the annual State of Public Transportation Report.

To Date

- ▶ Regional working group has continued biweekly meetings into Summer 2026 to finalize and agree on performance measure attributes and discuss/determine which other measures make sense to include
- ▶ Discussed performance measures, definitions, sources, reporting levels, and time periods
- ▶ Measures will be reported on annually in TPB's State of Public Transportation report

Network Measures

- Access to jobs/destinations
- Population (riders) within X miles of a stop
- Commute mode share
- Fatality, Collision, or Injury Rate

Mode/Agency/Route/Corridor Measures

- Ridership
- Passenger miles travelled
- Passengers per revenue hour
- Operating Cost per revenue hour
- Customer Satisfaction
- On-Time Performance
- Vehicle load
- Bus speeds [Vehicle speeds]
- Adherence to frequency guidelines

Regional Performance Measures and Reporting

Completed:

- ✓ Defined three core audiences for performance reporting (transit agency leadership, broader public/ DMV residents, elected officials) and recommendations for how information is used
- ✓ Identified a core set of performance measures with recommendations for how they will be displayed in the annual TPB State of Public Transportation Report
 - ✓ Leverage existing data sets to minimize costs of collection
 - ✓ Align with TCRP Transit Capacity and Quality of Service Manual – 4th edition

To do:

- Discussing opportunities to further align around common definitions for measures like on-time performance, vehicle load
- Final product: written recommendations

“Use” Statement for Performance Measures

- A. Performance measures can communicate the role that different modes and service types play as part of a network providing access to jobs/destinations and effective regional connectivity.
- B. Trends over time are useful to understand the impact of regional investments in transit and changes in mobility patterns.
- C. Context to understand regional connectivity and differences between modes (e.g. rail or bus), service areas (e.g., downtown or suburb), and service types (e.g., peak period commuter) is critical to inform opportunities for improvement.
- D. Each transit agency has unique priorities and operating parameters, therefore agency-to-agency comparisons are not an effective use of these metrics.

Performance Measures - Next Steps

Service Guidelines

- ▶ Adoption of guidelines by each transit agency (Fall 2026)
- ▶ Implementation and use of guidelines in regional reporting

Performance Measures

- ▶ Regional working group will continue biweekly meetings into Fall 2026 to finalize and agree on regional methodology/definitions for initial performance measure attributes
- ▶ Continue to discuss/determine which other measures make sense to include in the future
- ▶ Development of regional reporting process and data collection

TPB Next Steps

- ✓ Brief Regional Bus Service Guidelines – July 15
- Adopt Regional Bus Service Guidelines – September
- DMVMoves Annual Progress Report – November
 - Will include initial set of regional Performance Measures
- Bus Priority Network Plan – November

Thank you!