

# Ridership Committee

November 20, 2024 | 3:30 – 5:00pm



## Onsite:

Greater Portland Transit District  
114 Valley Street, Administration Conference Room | Portland, ME 04102

## Remote:

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87474514366?pwd=RWZTWlBmTEZRVEExEaEFUSkdjQTVEZz09>

Webinar ID: 874 7451 4366 | Passcode 880326 |

Phone: (301) 715-8592 | Telephone participants: \*9 to raise hand, \*6 to unmute

## MEETING AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER	ACTION or INFORMATION
<b>1. Call Meeting to Order (3:30)</b>	Julie Dubovsky, Vice Chair	N/A
<b>2. Public Comment (3:30-3:35)</b> The Metro Board's Ridership Committee welcomes public comment for items not listed on this agenda at this time. For items listed on the agenda, the chair will allow members of the public to comment following staff presentation. There is a <i>three-minute time limit</i> per citizen at each point. (Comments will be paraphrased in the meeting minutes)	Julie Dubovsky, Vice Chair	Information
<b>3. Approval of Meeting Minutes (3:35-3:40)</b> Review and approve the minutes from the August 2024 meeting of the Ridership Committee.	Julie Dubovsky, Vice Chair	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>4. Route 1 Service in Munjoy Hill (3:40-4:10)</b> Residents of Munjoy Hill recently submitted a petition to the Board of Directors asking for a route segment on Eastern Promenade and Fore Street to be restored. The committee will discuss this request and possibly recommend a course of action to staff.	Mike Tremblay, Transit Dev. Director	Information/ possible <b>ACTION</b>
<b>5. Ridership and Project Update (4:10-4:25)</b> Staff will provide an update on ridership, projects, and other updates related to service development.	Mike Tremblay, Transit Dev. Director	Information
<b>6. Review of Requests for Metro Service (4:25-4:40)</b> Staff will review all requests for new and expanded bus service with the Committee.	Mike Tremblay, Transit Dev. Director	Information

<p><b>7. Request for Improvements to Husky Line Service in Gorham (4:40-4:50)</b></p> <p>The Committee will be briefed on a recent action by Gorham Town Council to explore improvements that may improve Husky Line ridership in Gorham.</p>	<p>Seven Siegel, Committee Member, Town of Gorham</p>	<p>Information</p>
<p><b>8. Future Agenda Items (4:50-4:55)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus shelters and bus inventory</li> <li>• South Portland service integration</li> </ul>	<p>Julie Dubovsky, Vice Chair</p>	<p>Information</p>
<p><b>9. Upcoming Meetings (4:55-5:00)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Directors – December 2, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.</li> <li>• Finance Committee – TBD</li> <li>• Executive Committee – TBD</li> <li>• Ridership Committee – TBD</li> </ul>	<p>Julie Dubovsky, Vice Chair</p>	<p>Information</p>
<p><b>10. Adjournment (5:00)</b></p>	<p>Julie Dubovsky, Vice Chair</p>	<p>N/A</p>

*As of November 9, 2022 Greater Portland Metro is holding meetings of the Board of Directors (and its committees) in hybrid format, both in person at Metro’s offices and via webinar. The remote portions of all meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of [Metro’s Remote Participation Policy](#) (adopted August 25, 2022) as well as LD 1772, PL 2022 Ch. 666, and 1 MRSA Chapter 13, Subchapter 1.*

DRAFT



Greater Portland Metro Ridership Committee
Wednesday, October 16 2024:
DRAFT Meeting Minutes:

Table with 5 columns: Member, Municipality, Role, Voting Weight, Status. Lists members such as Hope Cahan, Pious Ali, Julie Dubovsky, etc.

Table with 2 columns: Staff Present, Identified Members of the Public. Lists staff like Mike Tremblay and public members like Helene Anderson.

- 1. With a Quorum in place, this meeting was called to Order By: Hope Cahan at: 3:31 pm
2. Public Forum: There were no public comments for items not on the agenda.
3. Approval of September 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes: Julie Dubovsky (Yarmouth) moved to approve the September 18, 2024 meeting minutes.
4. Citizen request update: Auburn St./Summit St. Bus Stop Hope Cahan asked to move this item up on the agenda (from Item 6 to Item 4) as it pertained to a member of the public who was attending the meeting.

# DRAFT

At the September 18, 2024 meeting, Helene Anderson, a resident of Portland, asked that Metro consider moving the bus stop at Auburn St./Summit St -- bus riders were walking through her yard and driveway to get to the bus stop. Some were also leaving trash on the yard.

Mike Tremblay leads this item, providing several possible outcomes for the request, which ranged from doing nothing, to moving the stop, working with the City to provide sidewalks, to eliminating the stop, which is not recommended since it has decent ridership and is currently in the best location for Summit Street residents.

Board members asked about route frequency, walking distance from the closest stop, signage on bus stops to stop people from littering, and if building a fence would solve the problem.

Helene said her biggest concern is safety at the corner where the stop is located. During the winter, snow is piled and there is a huge snowbank. She's seen accidents and near accidents at the location. She said we could leave it the way it is and hope no one gets hit (by a snow truck). Mike added that that Metro staff is working to advance accessibility for all stops and will continue the discussion to improve this stop. Hope suggested that Helene stay in touch with Mike.

## 5. **Ridership and Project Update:**

Mike Tremblay leads item 5 ridership and project updates. The presentation includes ridership trends, discussion of action items for South Portland merger, timeline for CAD/AVL rollout, and updates for Metro Connect, the new, on-demand service scheduled to launch in November. The new vehicle for the on-demand service is scheduled to arrive the week of November 4 and the mobile app should be available any day.

## 6. **South Portland integration**

Mike Tremblay leads this item, South Portland Integration, noting that there are at least 64 action items to work through as part of the proposed merger. The vote to for South Portland to merge with Greater Portland Metro is scheduled for the next Metro Board of Director's meeting on October 24, 2024. Mike said that if the Board votes to merge bus systems, a press release will be sent out following the meeting, Ed Suslovic asked that a special recognition take place at the board meeting.

## 7. **Shelter and Bench Inventory Discussion**

This item was moved to a future meeting TBD, following the vote to merge with South Portland. This decision was made so South Portland board members could be involved in this discussion.

## 8. **Future Agenda Items**

- South Portland integration
- Metro Connect, on-demand service launch
- Metro's new website

# DRAFT

## 9. **Upcoming Meetings**

- Board of Directors – October 24, 2024 at 4:00 pm
- Finance Committee – TBD
- Executive Committee – TBD
- Ridership Committee – November 20, 2024 at 3:30 pm

## 10. **Adjournment: Hope adjourns at 4:31 pm.**

**DATE**

November 20, 2024

**SUBJECT**

Route 1 in Munjoy Hill

**PURPOSE**

To update the Committee on the status of the service change to Route 1 in Munjoy Hill, and a potential pilot on restored service

**BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

In August 2023, Metro made the decision to modify the Route 1 service on Munjoy Hill, removing a segment of the route on Eastern Promenade/Fore Street from Congress Street to Atlantic Street; as well as the segment on Atlantic Street. The route currently turns from Eastern Promenade directly onto Congress Street. The change eliminated three stops and relocated a fourth, to Congress Street/Emerson Street. This change was made for the following reasons:

- Operability – The segment of route along Atlantic Avenue was difficult to navigate safely due to the narrow nature of the street, two-way traffic, and street parking on both sides.
- Route speed – Using Congress Street makes the route faster, improving on-time performance for the one-hour round trip.
- Ridership – Ridership along the discontinued segment was the lowest along the entire Route 1 alignment.
- Access to transit – While discontinuing the Fore Street and Atlantic Street segments of the route increases the distance some people need to walk in order to get to a bus stop – and thus likely reduces ridership among that population – the entirety of Munjoy Hill remains within a ¼ mile walk of a bus stop, which is considered transit-accessible.

Metro updated the Ridership Committee on the status of the service change in August 2024, including:

- Boardings in the affected area have risen by 10%, compared to an 11% increase on the route as a whole
- On-time performance on Route 1 has improved in eight of the nine months

Several members of the public have advocated continuously for the restoration of Route 1 to its previous alignment. In October 2024, they presented the Board of Directors with a petition with 200+ signatures of residents and visitors interested in restoring the route.

A fair-weather pilot of restored service is currently being considered by staff. Staff is interested in the Ridership Committee's input on expectations of this service, which may include: ridership at restored stops as well as in Munjoy Hill overall; tolerable reductions in on-time performance; operational incidents, safety incidents on Atlantic Street, etc. Staff proposes that action on a pilot, and key performance indicators be discussed at a Ridership Committee meeting in January 2025.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

None.

**RECOMMENDATION**

This item is for information and discussion.

**CONTACT**

Mike Tremblay, Director of Transit Development  
(207) 517-3023  
[mtremblay@gpmetro.org](mailto:mtremblay@gpmetro.org)

**ATTACHMENTS**

Ridership Committee Slide Deck

**DATE**

November 20, 2024

**SUBJECT**

Ridership and Project Update

**PURPOSE**

To update the Committee on ridership trends and project status

**BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

Metro staff continues to track ridership trends and other key performance indicators. In October 2024, ridership exceeded 176,000 rides, the most ridership in a single month since October 2019, amounting to an 87% recovery rate compared to 2019. Ridership is trending down in November.

Metro's microtransit pilot launch date has been delayed somewhat due to later than anticipated vehicle delivery and staffing. The new tentative soft launch date is December 9, with full service expected by the end of the year.

Metro is working with a new website designer, Planeteria. A new Metro website is expected to launch in mid-February. Continuing with our current vendor, CivicPlus, was not possible as they did not agree to certain FTA-required contract clauses. Planeteria has designed dozens of transit-specific websites. Metro can anticipate some improved functionality in our future website, including a trip planner, real-time mapping, dynamic alerts, and more logical navigation between relevant information such as fares, schedules, and detour information.

Finally, Metro staff is considering a minor expansion in holiday service in 2025. Agencies of a similar size as Metro often have No Service holidays on major holidays, often including Easter. South Portland has been operating their service on Easter, despite Metro service being closed on that day. Proceeding without operating on Easter would represent a service cut for South Portland. Adding service on Easter for 2025 is possible, though has not been included in our 2025 budget. Like any improvement to service, additional holiday service should be considered among the universe of possible service improvements, in the context of its cost.



**FISCAL IMPACT**

None.

**RECOMMENDATION**

This item is for information and discussion.

**CONTACT**

Mike Tremblay, Director of Transit Development

(207) 517-3023

[mtremblay@gpmetro.org](mailto:mtremblay@gpmetro.org)

**ATTACHMENTS**

Ridership Committee Slide Deck

**DATE**

November 20, 2024

**SUBJECT**

Requests for Additional Metro Service

**PURPOSE**

To update the Committee on concepts for Metro service from Metro communities, the public, and internally

**BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

Metro naturally receives requests for new service from the public, and occasionally, from our member communities. Metro staff also conceptualizes service changes and improvements as part of our service planning process. None of these suggestions represent an imminent change to service. Any service improvement needs to be considered, as funding becomes available, as a whole, balancing new service with enhancements to existing service.

Two service extensions have been suggested from stakeholders, including:

- Expanding Route 7 to Yarmouth via Cumberland along Route 1. This was first discussed with Cumberland and Yarmouth leadership in Fall 2023, and discussed again with Yarmouth leadership in October 2024.
- An extension of the BREEZ to Bath Iron Works. Metro staff is meeting with BIW staff in December 2024 to discuss where a stop may be located near BIW. If implemented, this would likely begin as a targeted expansion to serve BIW shift changes, but this could lead to an all-day extension to Bath in the future. BIW is a likely funding partner, and targeting BIW shift changes would help ensure ridership on the routes that extend to Bath.

Additionally, Metro is already planning on extending Route 5 service to the Roux Institute in or around 2027, when the campus in East Deering is expected to open, with the Roux as a funding partner.

Metro also collects public requests for service expansion. Some of these suggestions would be easier to implement than others, and some are likely not viable without significant changes to land use or the roadway network. Recent suggestions for service improvements include:

- Service to the VA clinic on West Commercial Street. Staff met with VA staff in Summer 2024 to discuss the challenges of providing this service. Metro staff agrees that, ideally, Metro would serve this site; however, the topography of the area and the existing

service alignments of nearby routes, namely Route 1 and Route 8, do not allow for a simple deviation to serve the VA clinic site. Any change in existing service on either route to serve the VA clinic would result in significant service cuts elsewhere. Metro staff will continue to look for opportunities to serve this site.

- Service to the Stroudwater neighborhood of Portland on Westbrook Street. Metro staff met with resident advocates in September 2024 to discuss this concept. Serving Stroudwater would likely require a lengthy deviation of Route 5 or Route 7, which is undesirable, or a new route running between Congress Street and Westbrook via Westbrook Street, which likely would not have significant ridership potential.
- Clark’s Pond Road in South Portland. This could potentially be served by any of the four routes that serve the Maine Mall area, and/or by a future mall-area circulator or microtransit service.
- Route 100 in West Falmouth. Metro staff believes that all of Falmouth, as well as parts of Westbrook, would be best served by a microtransit zone rather than fixed route spurs that currently exist in these areas.
- Direct service between Portland Transportation Center and Westbrook. Similar suggestions have also been made including Casco Bay Lines. A route serving all regional transportation hubs has been envisioned, but has not yet been prioritized for new service.

Metro staff will continue to collect this feedback from the public and from stakeholders, and look for creative ways to fund and launch the service that aligns with the goals set by Metro’s Board.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

None.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

This item is for information and discussion.

#### **CONTACT**

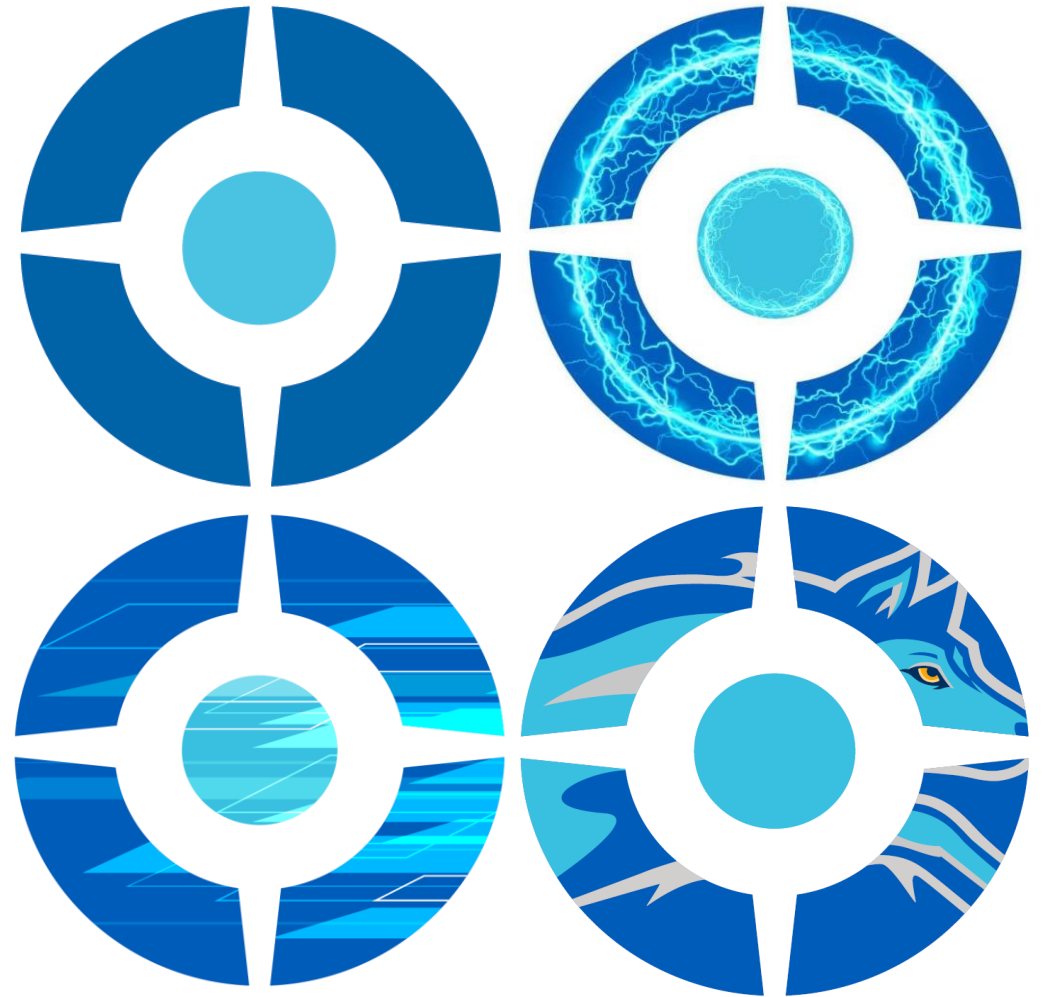
Mike Tremblay, Director of Transit Development  
(207) 517-3023  
[mtremblay@gpmetro.org](mailto:mtremblay@gpmetro.org)

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Ridership Committee Slide Deck

# GREATER PORTLAND METRO

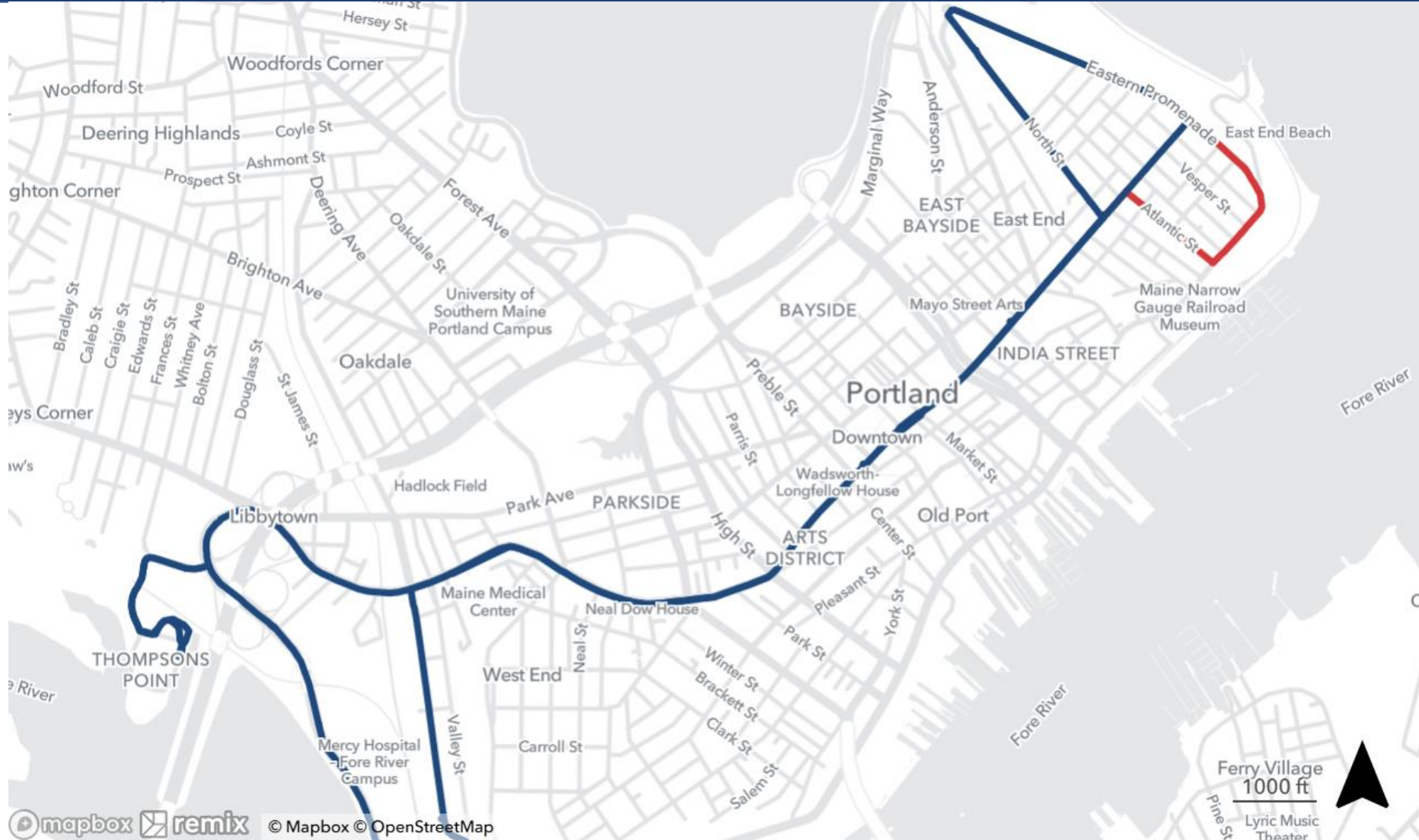
**Board of Directors**  
Ridership Committee  
November 20, 2024



# Item 4 – Route 1 Service in Munjoy Hill

## Timeline

- Summer 2022
  - Segment temporarily closed due to construction on Fore Street
- August 2023
  - Service removed from segment
- September 2024
  - KPI's reviewed at Ridership Committee
- October 2024
  - Petition to restore service submitted to Board of Directors

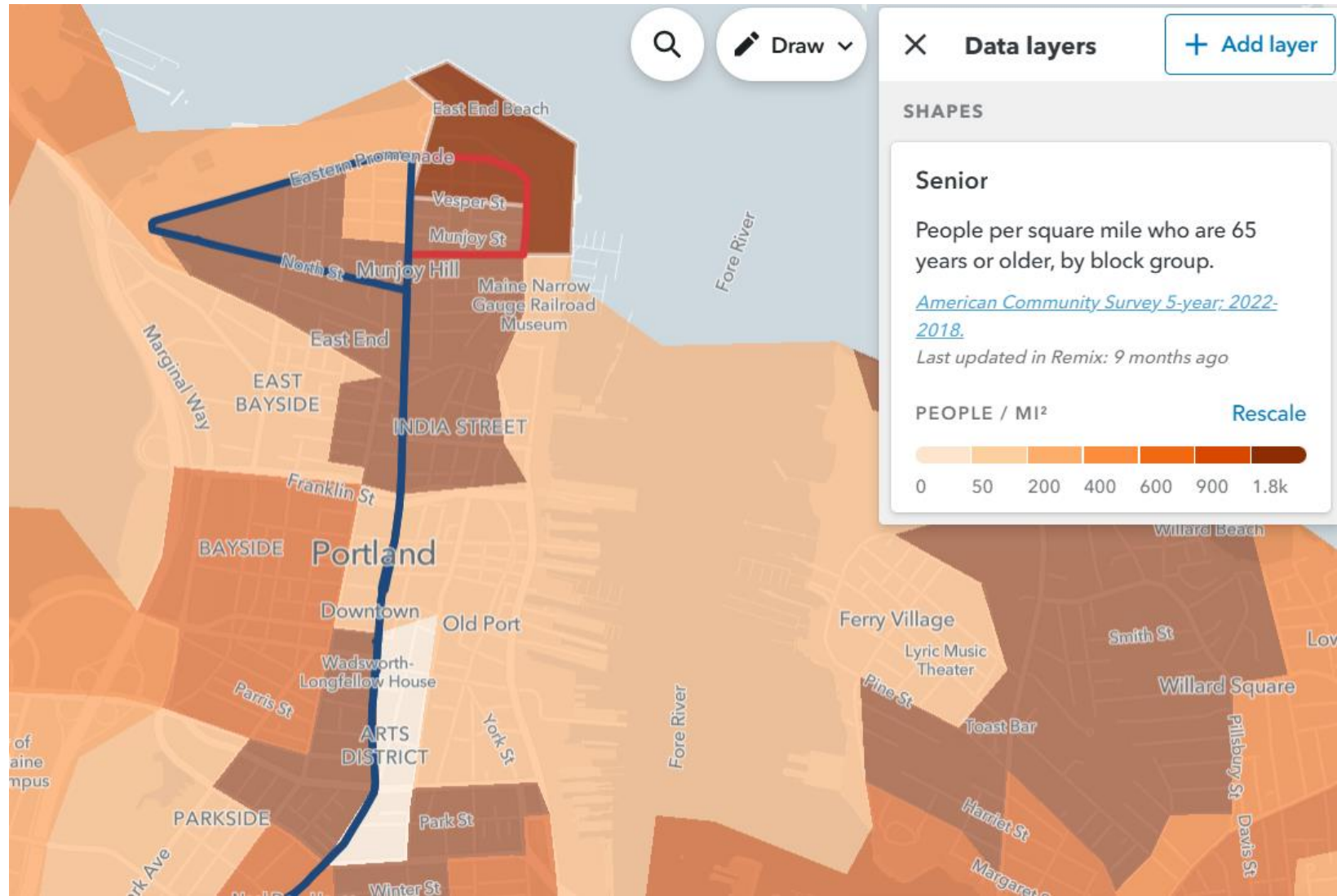


# Item 4 – Route 1 Service in Munjoy Hill

## Resident Concerns

Resident concerns include:

- High concentration of seniors living in affected area of Munjoy Hill
- Stops along Congress Street are ~1/4 mile away
- Topography and sidewalk conditions of Atlantic Street



# Item 4 – Route 1 Service in Munjoy Hill

## Reasons for Removal and KPI Review

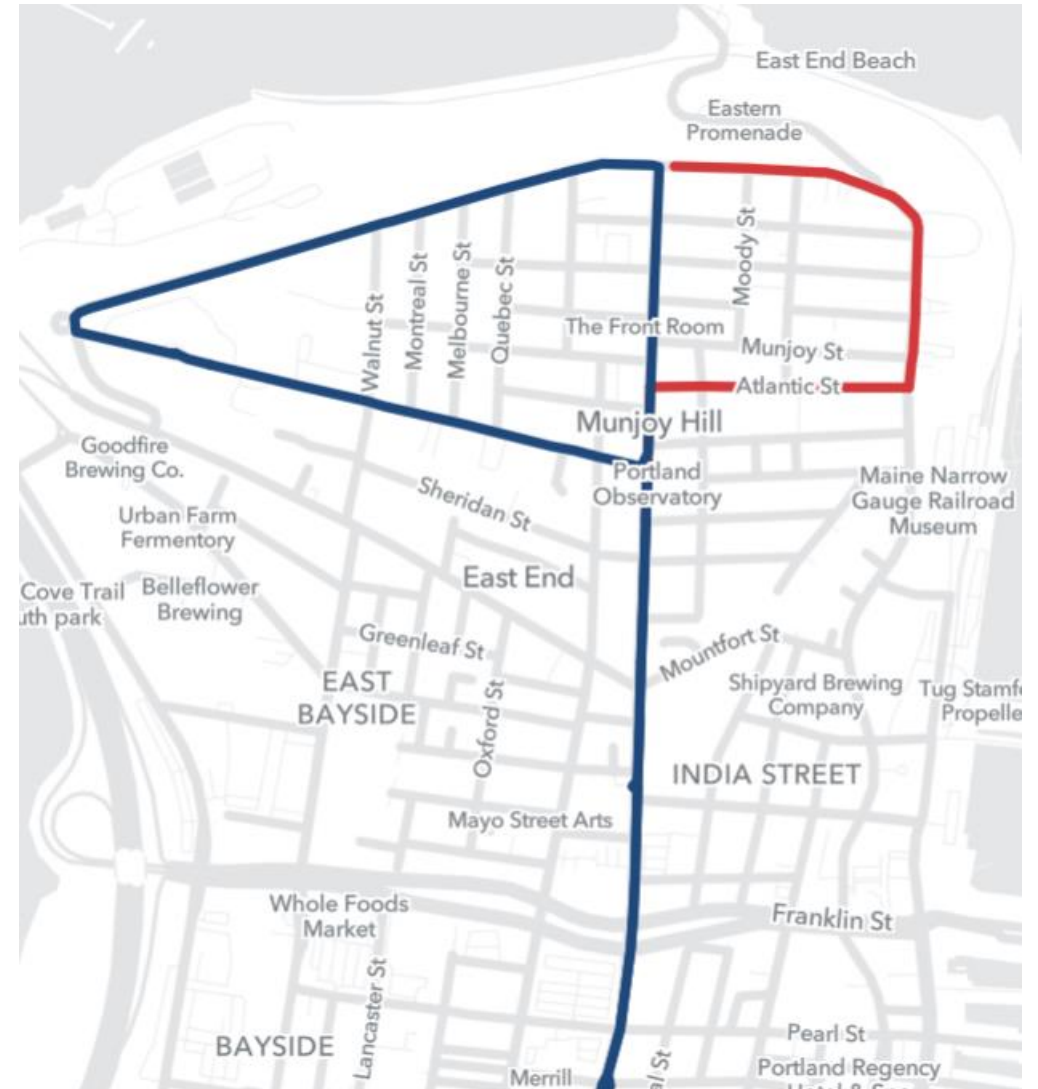
- Service removed due to low ridership, operational challenges due to width of Atlantic Street
- KPI review in September indicated that, since removal:
  - OTP for entire route is up; from ~86% on time to ~90% on time
  - Overall ridership on Route 1 has increased, but by less than systemwide average



# Item 4 – Route 1 Service in Munjoy Hill

## Service Restoration Proposal

- Proposal for piloting restored service being prepared by staff
  - Likely spring/summer 2025
- Staff suggests discussing target KPI's for pilot at January 2025 Ridership Committee meeting

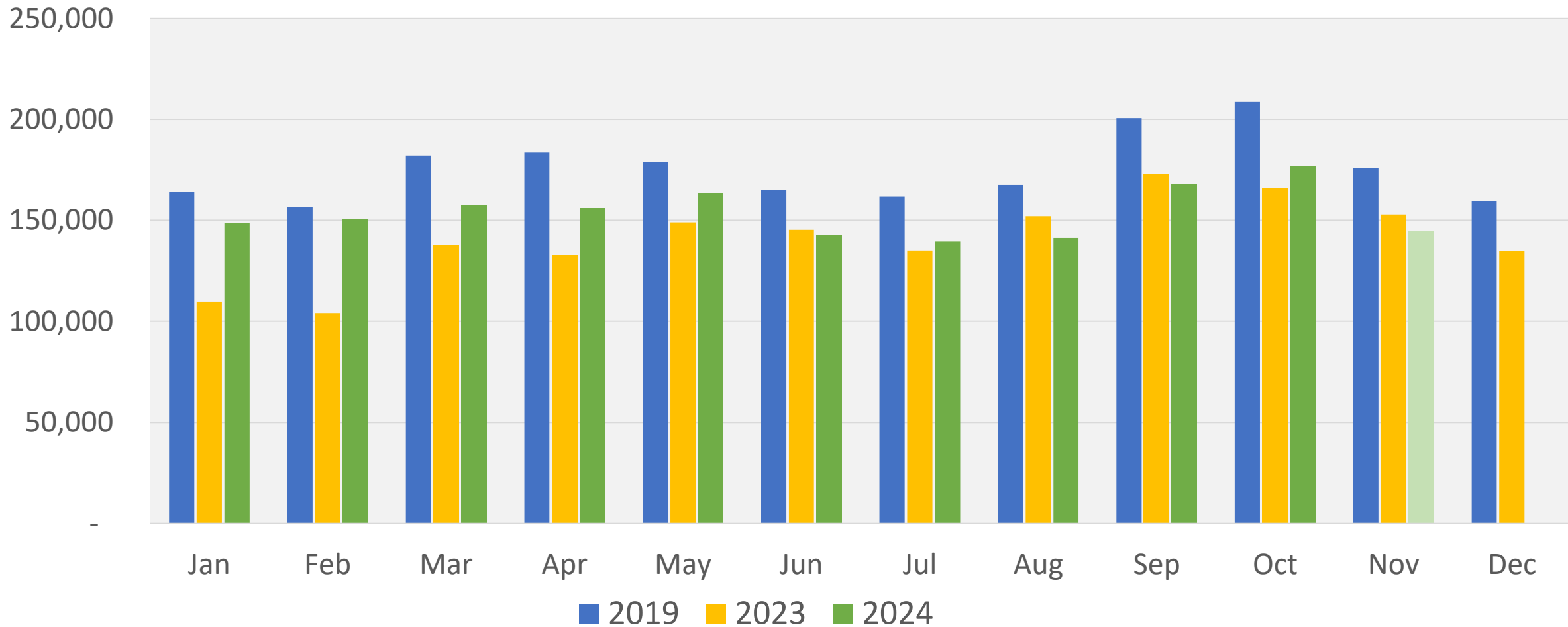




# Item 5 – Ridership and Project Update

## Ridership, 2019-2024

Metro Monthly Ridership: 2019, 2023, and 2024

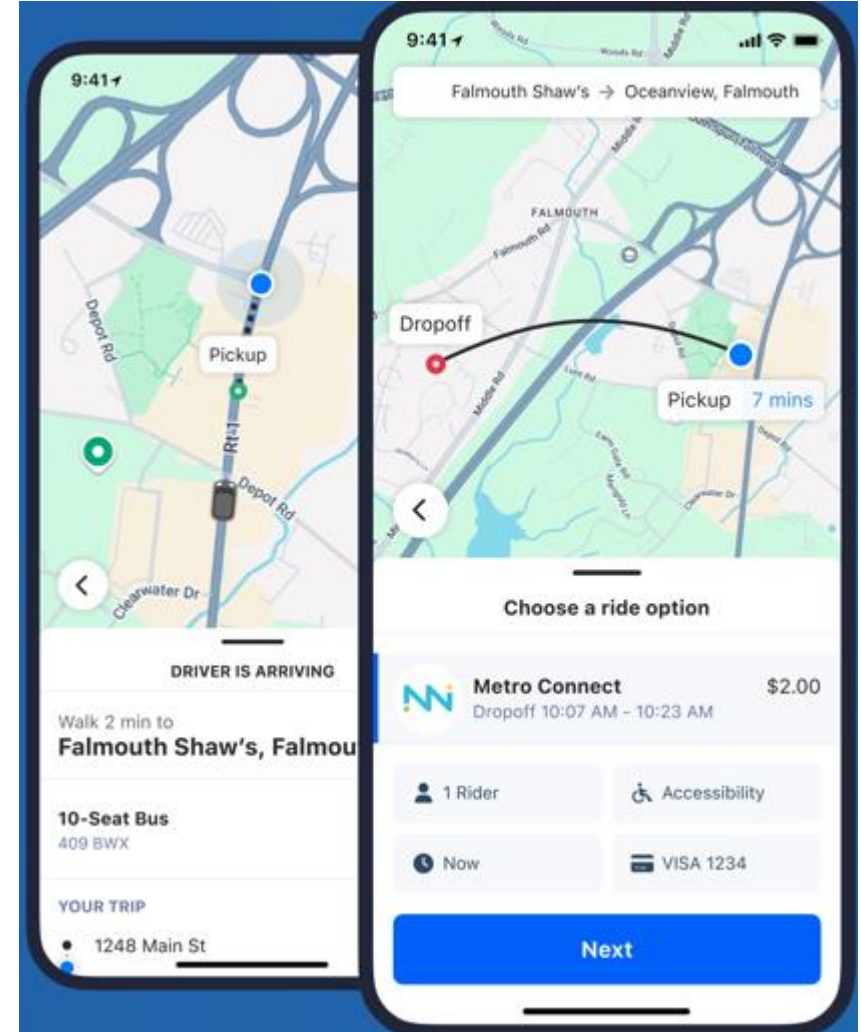


# Item 5 – Ridership and Project Update

## Metro Connect

### Microtransit Update

- Soft launch planned for December 9
- Vehicle delivered
- App is live – GP Metro Connect
- Free rides planned during soft launch
- Full launch and removal of Route 7 loops planned for December 29



# Item 5 – Ridership and Project Update

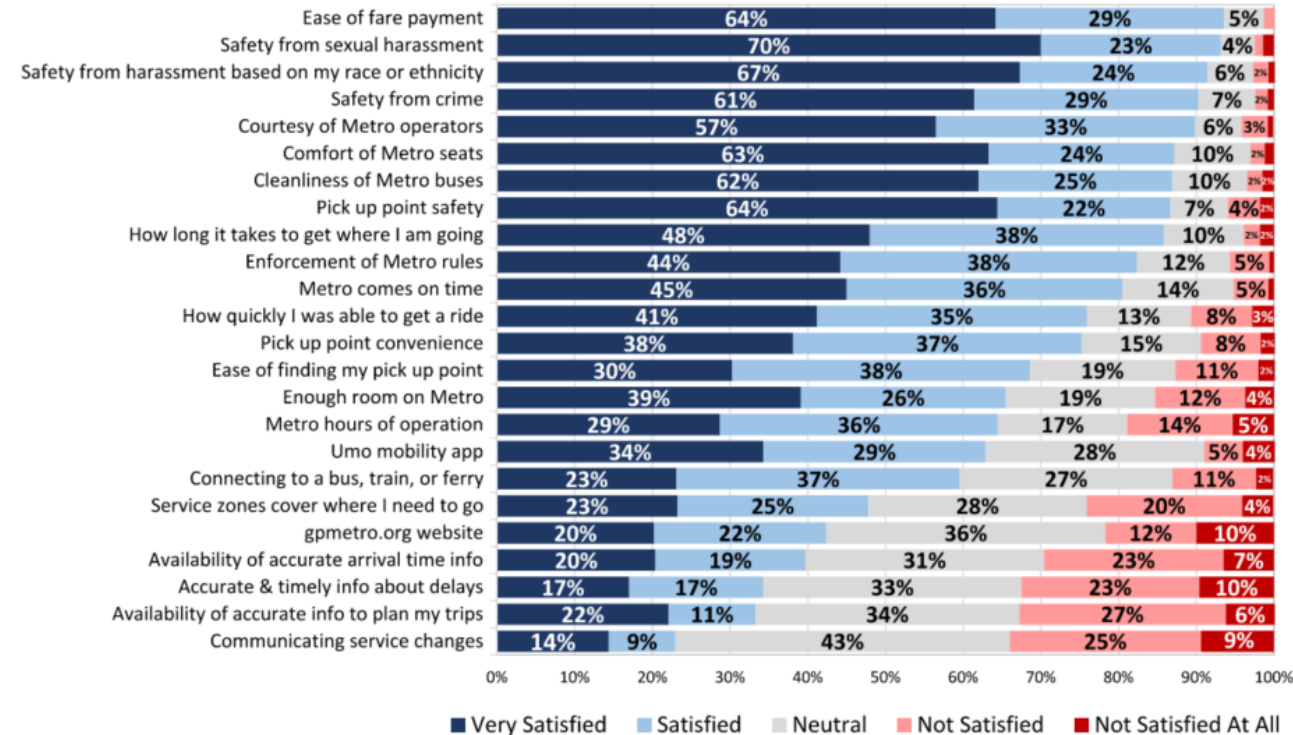
gpmetro.org

## Website Update

- Contract expiring with current vendor
- Planeteria selected as new vendor
- Complete redesign
- New features planned
  - Trip planner
  - Real-time maps
  - Dynamic passenger alerts
  - Optimized for mobile

## Q8: Please rate your satisfaction with the following aspects of Metro.

by percentage of riders (excluding "N/A" responses)



# Item 5 – Ridership and Project Update

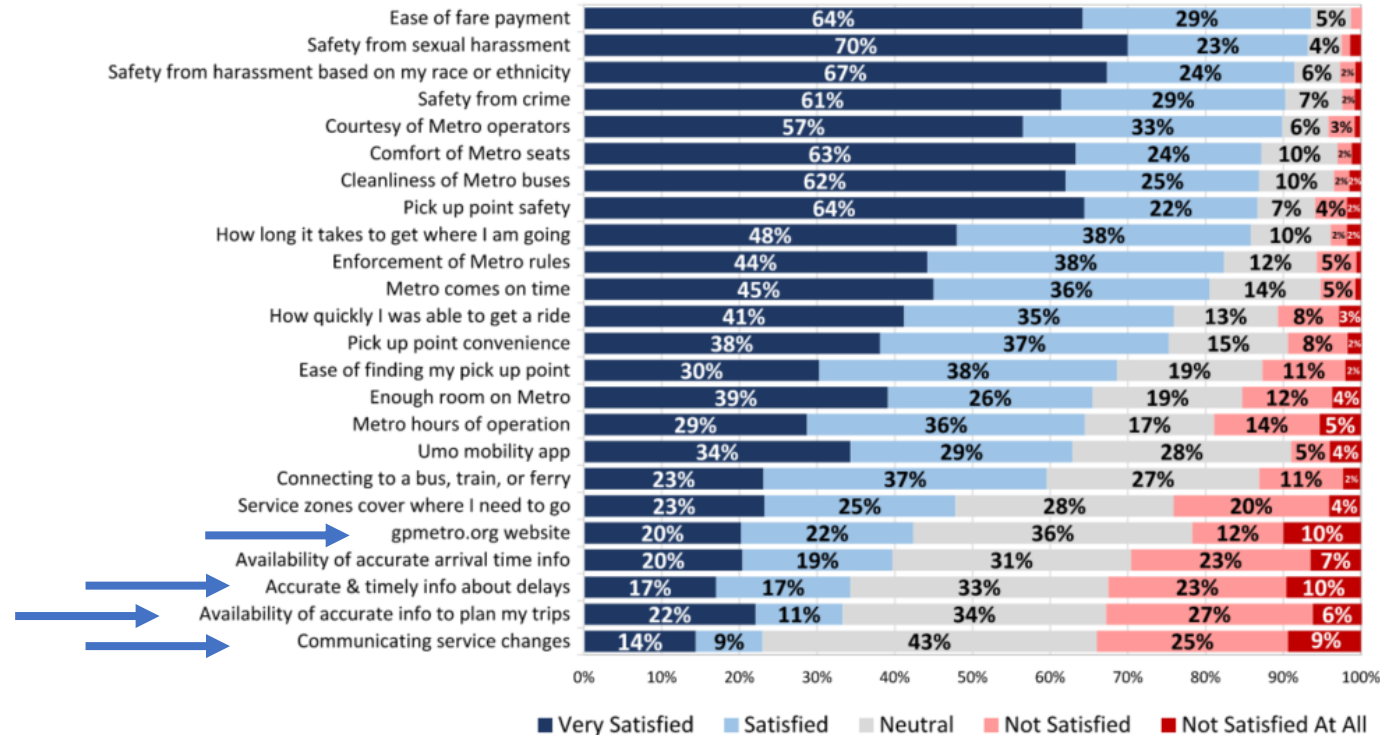
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# Item 5 – Ridership and Project Update

## Website -- Lextran Example

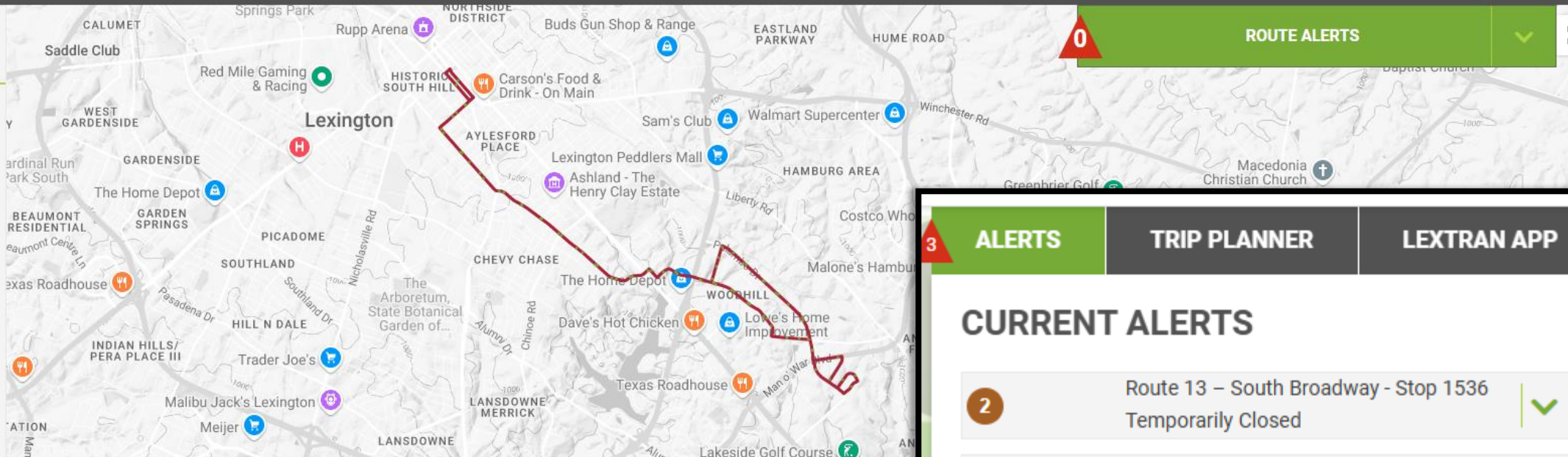
HOME > BUS ROUTE > ROUTE 1 – WOODHILL DRIVE

### ROUTE INFORMATION

## 1 ROUTE 1 – WOODHILL DRIVE

#### Serving

- Woodland Park
- Kroger Euclid
- Chevy Chase
- Henry Clay High School
- Southland Christian Richmond Rd.
- Lexington Senior Center
- Woodhill Plaza
- Palumbo Drive



0 ROUTE ALERTS

3 ALERTS    TRIP PLANNER    LEXTRAN APP

#### CURRENT ALERTS

- 2 Route 13 – South Broadway - Stop 1536 Temporarily Closed
- Transit Center 11:30 pm Departure from High Street due to Construction
- 4 Some Stops on Route 4 Closed Due to Construction after 6:00pm

#### SCHEDULES

Effective: May 29, 2022

DOWNLOAD

# Item 5 – Ridership and Project Update

## Holiday Service

Metro currently does not operate on the following holidays:

- New Years Day
- Easter
- Memorial Day
- July 4
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day



**No Metro  
Bus Service**  
Easter Sunday  
**March 31, 2024**

# Item 5 – Ridership and Project Update

## Holiday Service

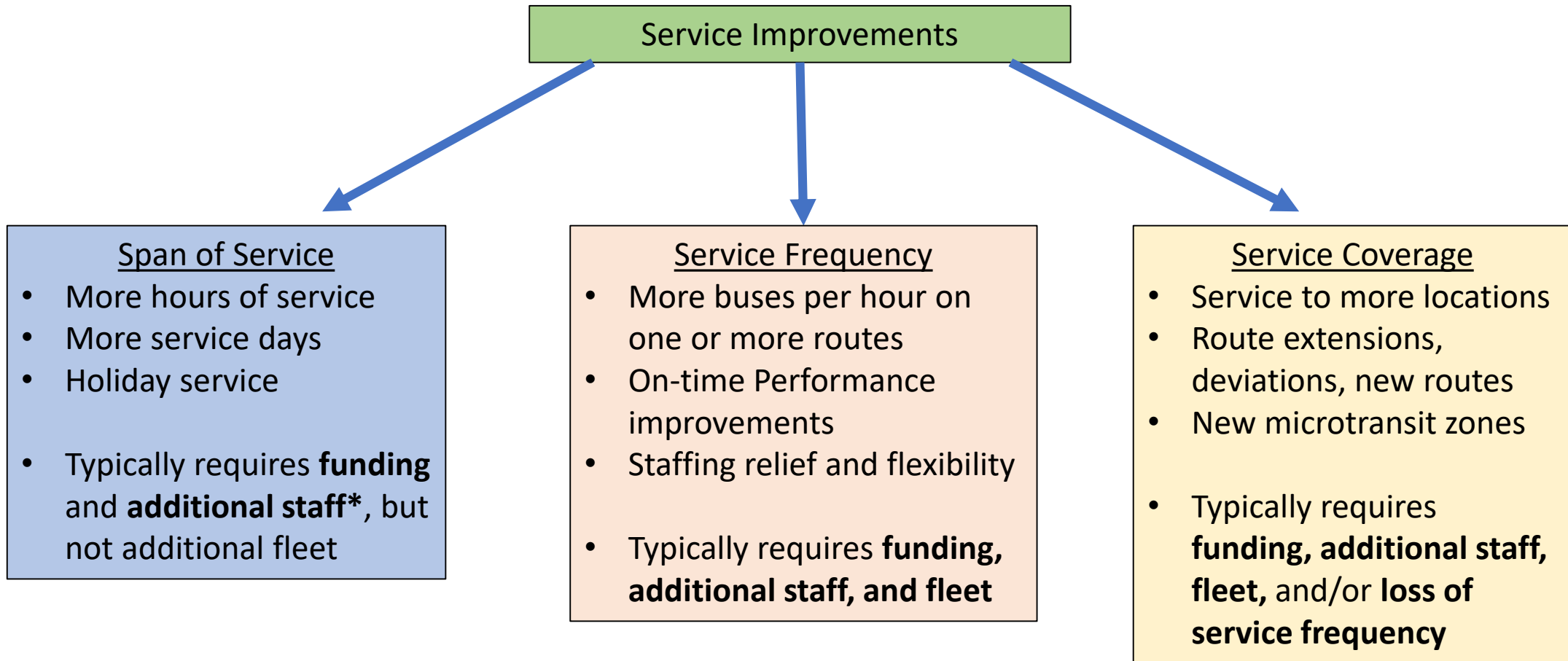
### Case Studies

(Metro operates ~102k revenue hours)

- South Portland (16.5k rev hours)
  - Operates on Easter, closed other Metro holidays
- Brockton Area Transit Authority (163k rev hours)
  - Operates on Easter, closed other Metro holidays. Some minor holidays operate on Saturday or Sunday schedule.
- MeVa (193k rev hours)
  - No service on all Metro holidays, Saturday schedule on minor Monday holidays
- Green Mountain Transit (204k rev hours)
  - Operates on Easter, closed other Metro holidays
- Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (700k rev hours)
  - Operates 365 days. Sunday service on all holidays

# Item 6 – Requests for Service

## Service Improvement Tradeoff

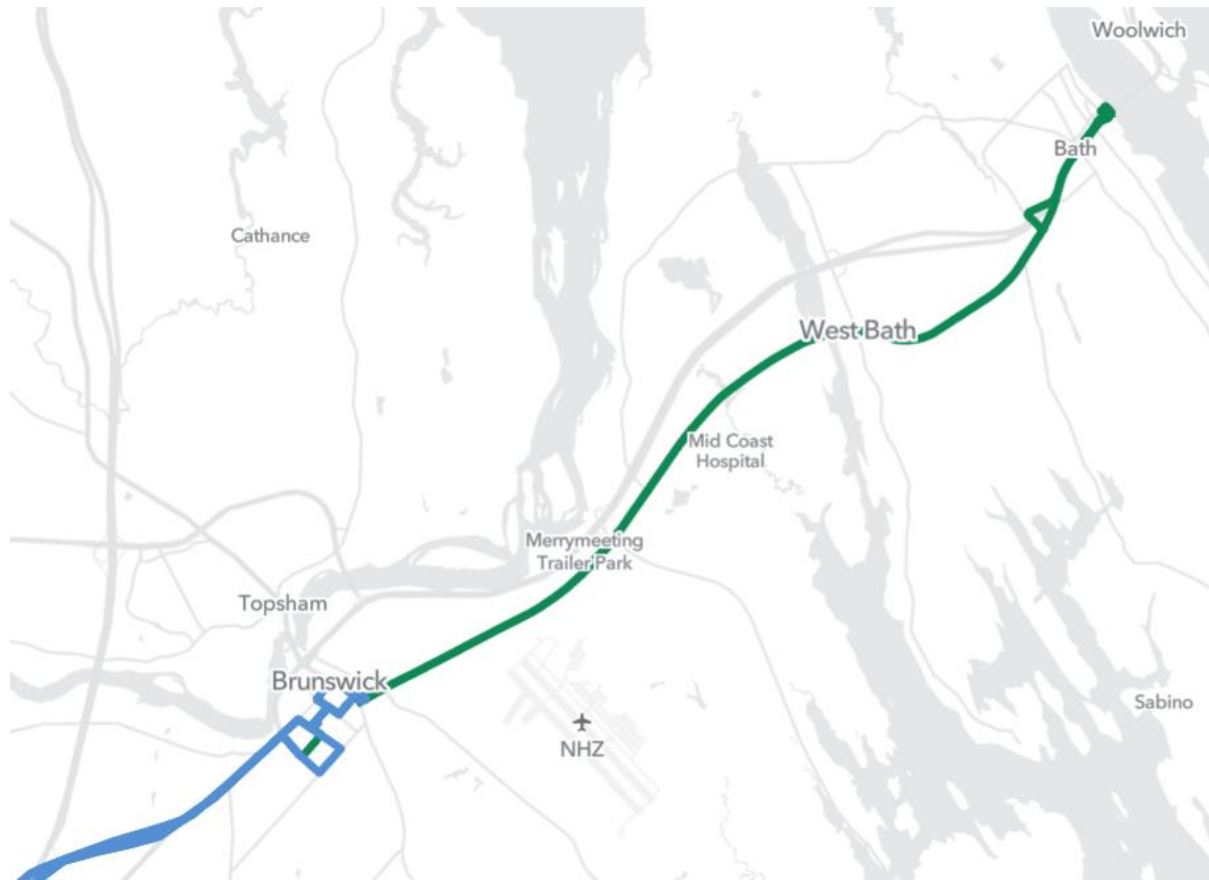




# Item 6 – Requests for Service

## Conceptual Route Extensions

### BREEZ Extension to Bath Iron Works



### Route 7 Extension to Yarmouth via Cumberland



# Item 6 – Requests for Service

## Other Service Improvement

### Public Requests for Service

- VA Clinic – West Commercial Street
- Stroudwater – Westbrook Street
- Clarks Pond Road
- Ray Street
  - Currently only served by school trippers
- Route 100 in Falmouth
- Sunday BREEZ service
- Direct service between PTC and Jetport

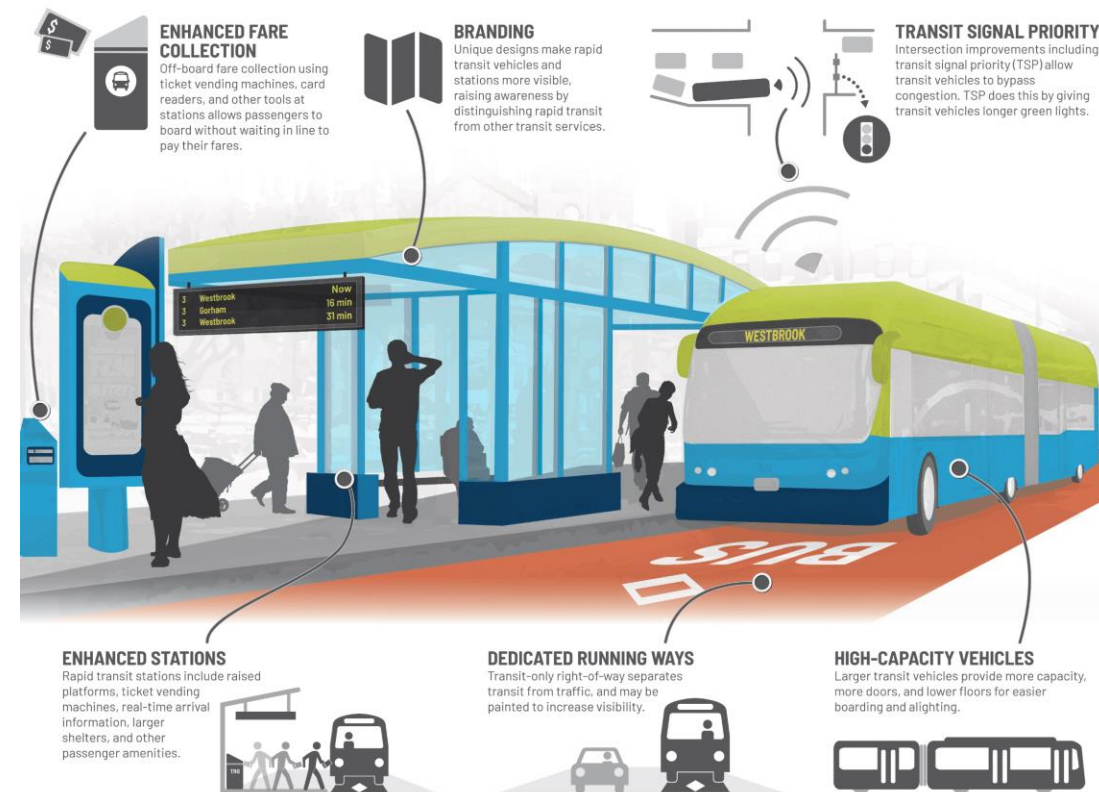


# Item 6 – Requests for Service

## Internal Service Improvement Priorities

### Internal Plans for Service Improvements

- South Portland service improvements
- Frequency Improvements
  - Route 2
  - Weekend service on several routes
- Maine Mall improvements
- Rapid Transit
- Microtransit expansion



# Item 6 – Requests for Service

## Prioritization Considerations

