

**Massachusetts Bay  
Transportation Authority**

# Forging Ahead: Bus and The RIDE

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November 9, 2020

# Overview of Service Changes

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- The MBTA is providing more service than its revenues can support and its ridership justifies so today staff will propose adjusting service levels to a new, temporary “Base Service” that will gradually be implemented in CY 2021. This Base Service realigns service to match current ridership patterns while also preserving and protecting service for those who depend most critically on the MBTA for frequent and reliable service by reducing primarily non-essential services.
- The vast majority of MBTA service will continue and the service changes are not permanent. The MBTA will periodically realign service to match current and future ridership patterns, when durable revenue is available for pay for such service.
- No increases in fares are being proposed.
- The proposed service adjustments are not final and an extensive public engagement process begins today. On Tuesday the MBTA will hold the first of 11 virtual public meetings, which will continue through December 3, to accept public feedback on the proposed service changes. Online feedback is also being accepted, allowing riders to comment on proposed changes to the services that they use.
- The FMCB is scheduled to vote on the changes on December 7, so that planning can begin for gradually making the changes in 2021.
- While some service changes on Commuter Rail and Ferry could take place as early as January, the changes to Rapid Transit would be made in the spring and to Bus in the summer. This will allow the MBTA to adjust the proposed basic service if warranted by changes in ridership and if additional, durable revenue becomes available.



# Most Service Is Preserved

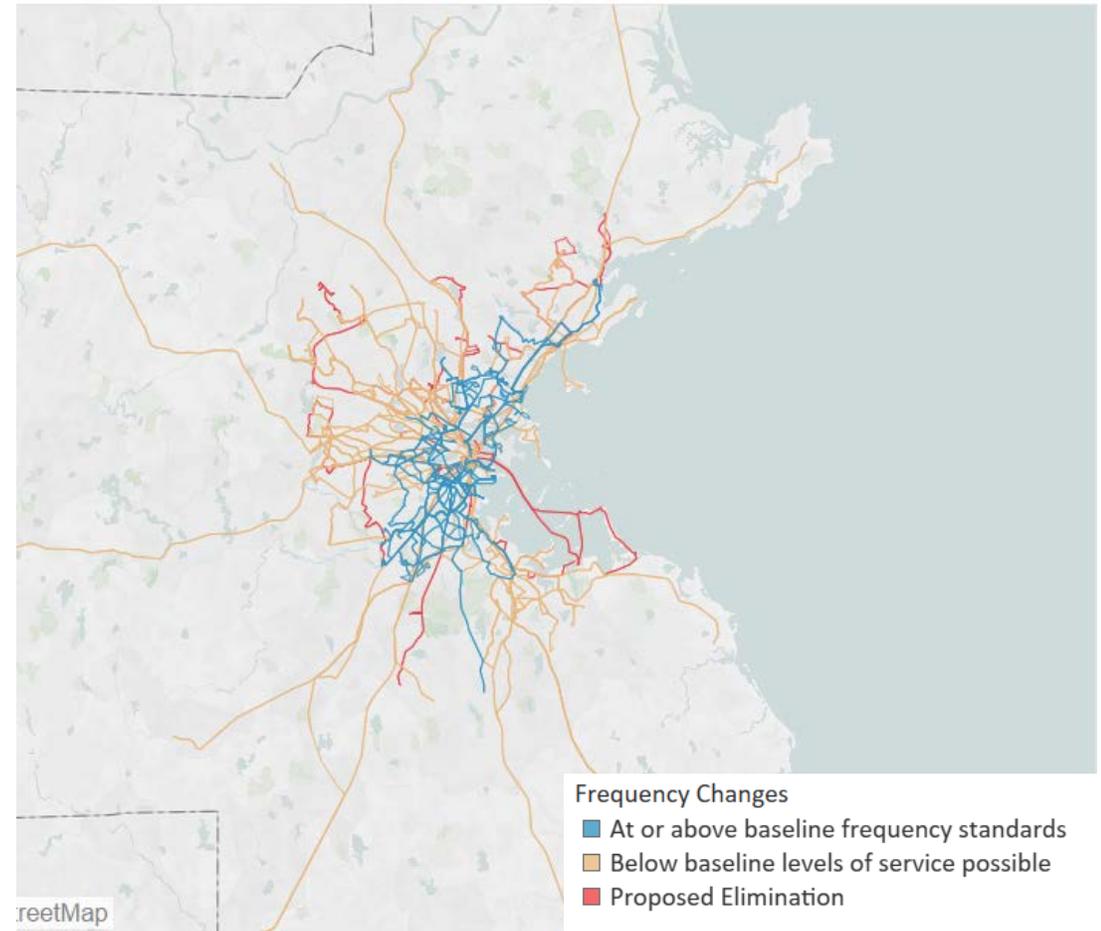
## Current Weekday trips (Sept. 2020):

- 82% of weekday trips on essential services
- 18% of weekday trips on non-essential services
- 3% of current weekday trips will lack access or have to divert due to proposed changes (span, eliminations, station closures, short-turns)

## Base service represents (weekly service hours vs. pre-COVID):

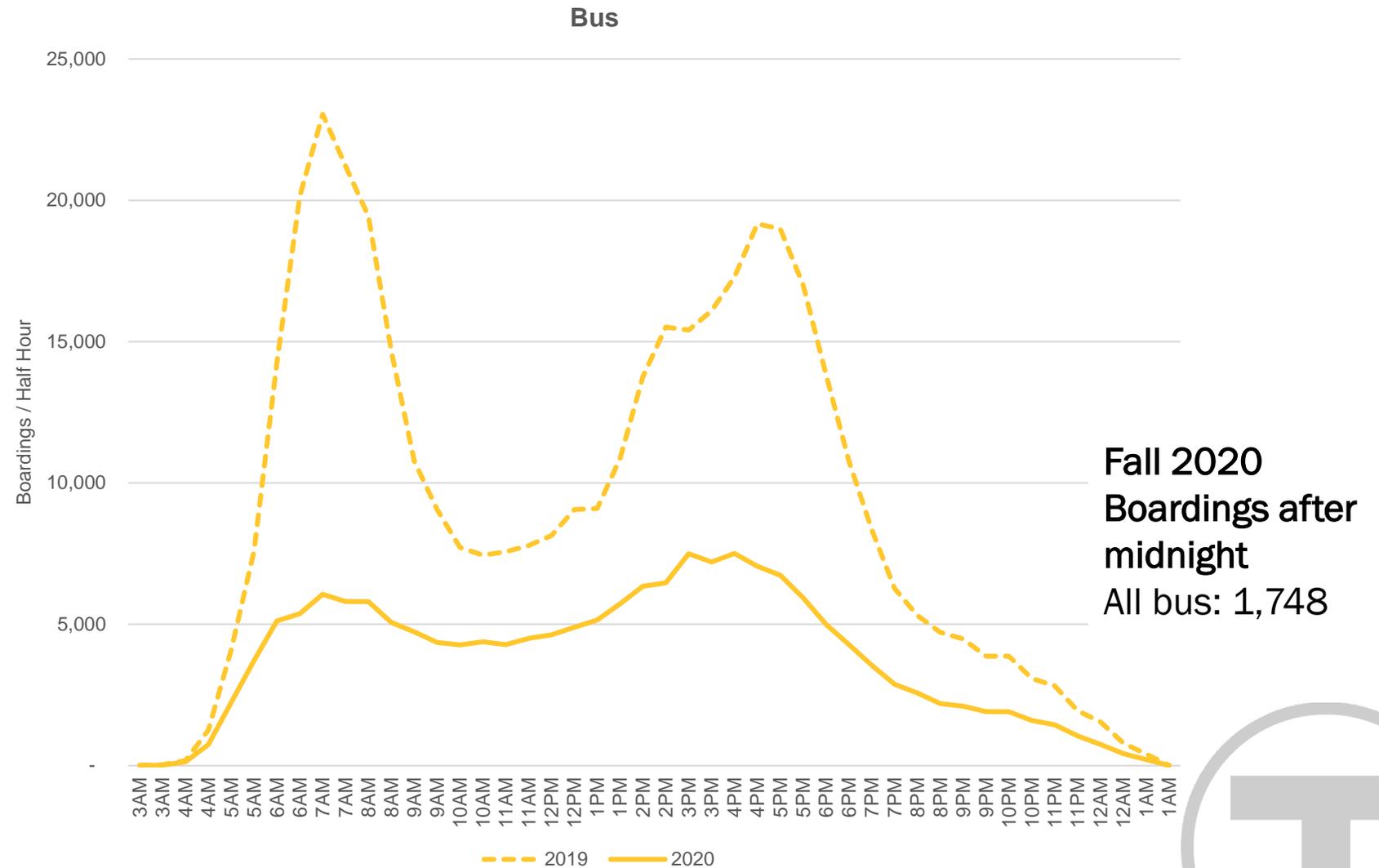
- 85% of Bus
- 70% of Rapid Transit
- 65% of Commuter Rail
- 0% of Ferry

Under this proposal 78.5% of households in the MBTA service area have MBTA service within ½ mile compared to 82% previously



# Bus Ridership

- 171,000 boardings on weekdays, which is 41% pre-COVID
- Significant variation on route by route basis, e.g. Route 111 at >60% and SL2 at 20%
- Close to pre-COVID service levels system-wide, but distributed differently to account for different ridership patterns and support social distancing
- 21 Routes have more significantly more service than pre-COVID to help prevent crowding (e.g. Routes 22, 23, 66, 111, 116/117, 109)



# Changes at a glance – Bus

- Stop all service after midnight, but no changes to start of service or days of operation
- Reduce frequency on essential and non-essential routes:
  - **Reduce frequency on essential routes by 5% on average system-wide.** Reduction will vary route by route and by time of day (in some cases likely no change vs. pre-COVID service levels for routes like 111, 116/117, 109, etc.; for others potentially 20-30%), **all based on ridership**
  - **Reduce frequency on non-essential routes by 20% on average system-wide.** Reduction will also vary route by route and by time of day
- Out of 169 MBTA routes, consolidate 14 routes, shorten 5 routes, and eliminate 25 routes. Of those eliminated:
  - 7 routes within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of alternative bus or rapid transit, so no riders are stranded
  - 12 routes serve non-transit critical, low ridership trips (“bottom right box”)
  - 6 routes serve high transit critical riders, but have very low ridership and have significant, but not fully alternative options
- Eliminate suburban subsidy program which partially funds 5 additional services (Bedford, Beverly, Burlington, Lexington, and Mission Hill), but fewer than 200 avg. weekday riders
- About 1.1% of pre-COVID RIDE trips would be shifted from ADA to Premium; no changes to overall geographic coverage area, though hours of operation may change based on changes to other modes. Lengthen scheduling window from 30 to 40 minutes.
- **All operating routes will continue to be reviewed for crowding and adjusted as part of quarterly Service Planning process, including social distancing guidelines**

**Base service at a glance:**

Sept. 2020 ridership: 41% of pre-COVID rider.  
 85% of pre-COVID service hours  
 \$38M annual savings vs. FY21 budget

65% of Pre-COVID service hours

# Bus overview

|  | FY21 Budgeted service   | FY22 Base Service  | 2017 Service Delivery Policy*<br>(only applicable for essential service)   |
|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Services</b>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>169 routes</li> </ul>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>~140 routes</li> </ul>  |  |
| <b>Hours of operations</b><br>(varies by line) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Varies significantly by route</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All bus service stops at midnight, but early bird service will continue on essential routes</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Weekdays &amp; Saturdays:</b> 6:00 AM to midnight for Key Bus Routes (KBR); 7/8:00 to 6:30/7:00 PM for Local Routes</li> <li><b>Sundays:</b> 7:00 AM to midnight for KBR; 10:00 AM to 6:30 PM for Local</li> </ul>       |
| <b>Frequency</b>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Varies significantly by route</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>~80 essential routes operate within existing Service Delivery Policy, including crowding standards</li> <li>~60 non-essential routes that come 20-30% less frequently than pre-COVID</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Peak:</b> Every 10 min. for KBR, every 30 min. for Local</li> <li><b>Off-Peak weekday:</b> Every 15-20 for KBR, every 60 min for Local</li> <li><b>Weekends:</b> Every 20 min for KBR, every 60 min for Local</li> </ul> |
| <b>Additional customer impacts</b>             |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19 routes consolidated or restructured</li> <li>25 routes eliminated, but only &lt;1,700 pre-COVID riders stranded (&lt;0.5% of Pre-COVID ridership)</li> </ul>                                 |  |

\*Commuter or Community Route Standard not shown; Minimum span only standard for high-density areas. There is no span standard for low-density areas on weekend

# Bus details

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## Ridership impacts (based Sept. 2020 ridership):

- Lack of Access:
  - 1,697 riders (Sept. 2019 ridership), less than 0.5% of all bus ridership, due to greater than ½ mile from alternatives, **likely closer to fewer than 700 riders (conservatively)**
  - 1,748 riders due to service stopping at midnight
- Divert: <6,000 riders
- Frequency:
  - ~31K riders, likely not within SDP (non-essential routes)
  - ~130K riders, service still within SDP (essential routes)

## Consequences/impacts from reducing service to base service level:

- Loss of skilled labor
- Will take more than a year to re-hire and re-train labor when returning service levels

## Total gross savings:

- No savings in FY21
- \$38M in FY22



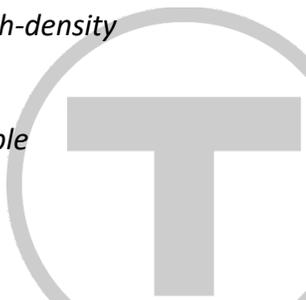
# Appendix: List of all essential bus routes

| High Transit Priority & High Ridership Potential<br>(Key Bus Routes and Silver Line Routes in gray) |    |    |    |     |     |     |     |
|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1   | 21 | 32 | 42 | 69  | 105 | 120 | 504 |
| 8   | 22 | 33 | 44 | 83  | 106 | 121 | CT2 |
| 9   | 23 | 34 | 45 | 85  | 108 | 202 | CT3 |
| 10  | 24 | 35 | 47 | 86  | 109 | 210 | SLW |
| 11  | 26 | 36 | 50 | 89  | 110 | 215 | SL1 |
| 14  | 27 | 37 | 51 | 91  | 111 | 240 | SL2 |
| 15  | 28 | 38 | 57 | 93  | 114 | 411 | SL3 |
| 16  | 29 | 39 | 64 | 97  | 116 | 424 | SL4 |
| 17  | 30 | 40 | 65 | 99  | 117 | 429 | SL5 |
| 19  | 31 | 41 | 66 | 104 | 119 | 455 |     |

|                     | 2017 Service Delivery Policy*<br>(only applicable for essential service)   |
|---------------------|--|
| Hours of operations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Weekdays &amp; Saturdays:</b> 6:00 AM to midnight for Key Bus Routes (KBR); 7/8:00 to 6:30/7:00 PM for Local Routes</li> <li><b>Sundays:</b> 7:00 AM to midnight for KBR; 10:00 AM to 6:30 PM for Local</li> </ul>       |
| Frequency           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Peak:</b> Every 10 min. for KBR, every 30 min. for Local</li> <li><b>Off-Peak weekday:</b> Every 15-20 for KBR, every 60 min for Local</li> <li><b>Weekends:</b> Every 20 min for KBR, every 60 min for Local</li> </ul> |

*\*Commuter or Community Route Standard not shown; Minimum span only standard for high-density areas. There is no span standard for low-density areas on weekend*

*Note: Route 68 initially included in essential services (as serves essential trips), but as multiple alternatives exist with ¼ mile, proposed eliminating route*



# Appendix: List of all non-essential bus routes (without major structural changes)

| Non-essential bus routes w/o major structural changes (Key Bus Routes in gray) |           |     |     |     |     |
|--|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 4  | 74        | 101 | 195 | 238 | 450 |
| 7  | 75        | 112 | 201 | 245 | 712 |
| 34E  | <b>77</b> | 132 | 211 | 350 | 713 |
| 59   | 87        | 134 | 216 | 426 |     |
| 60   | 90        | 137 | 217 | 430 |     |
| 61   | 92        | 171 | 220 | 435 |     |
| 67   | 94        | 191 | 222 | 436 |     |
| 70   | 95        | 192 | 225 | 439 |     |
| <b>71</b>  | 96        | 193 | 226 | 441 |     |
| <b>73</b>  | 100       | 194 | 236 | 442 |     |

- All routes listed here will continue to operate
- All routes will stop service at midnight
- Frequency may be significantly reduced throughout the day



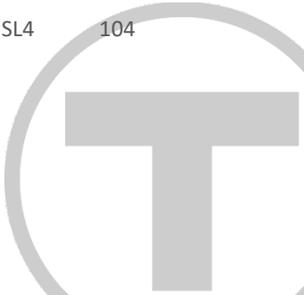
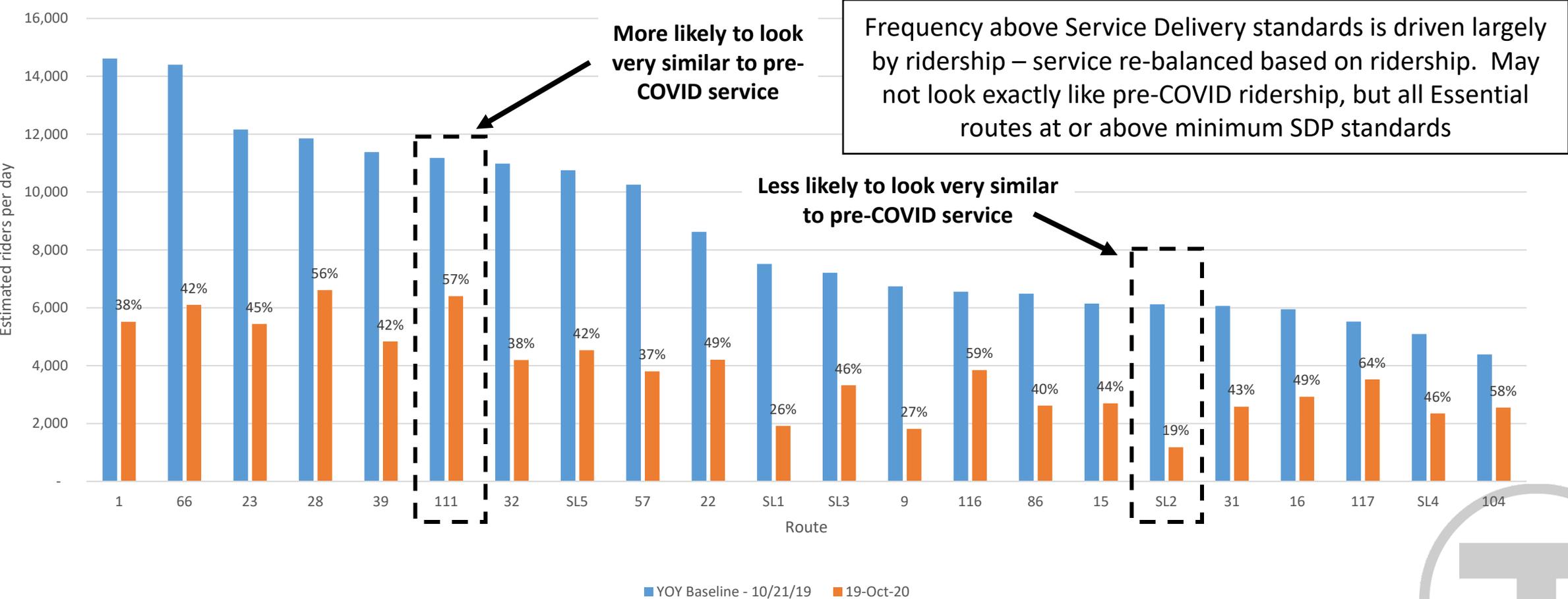
# Appendix: All bus routes with major structural changes or eliminations

| Consolidated Routes   | Restructured routes (shortened) |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 62 & 76   | 553                             |
| 84 & 78   | 554                             |
| 88 & 90 (w/ GLX)  | 556                             |
| 214 & 216   | 558                             |
| 352 & 354   | 230                             |
| 501 & 503   |                                 |
| 502 & 504   |                                 |
| <b>Restructured &amp; consolidated routes will continue to operate, but stop at midnight and with lower frequency</b> |                                 |

| Eliminated routes                     |  |                                      |                    |
|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Within ¼ mile of bus or rapid transit | High transit critical, very low ridership, redundant options available on portion of most routes | Low transit critical, low ridership) |                    |
| 43                                    | 18   | 52                                   | 505                |
| 55                                    | 170  | 72                                   | 710                |
| 68                                    | 221  | 79                                   | 714                |
| 80 (w/ GLX)                           | 428  | 131                                  | Suburban subsidies |
| 325                                   | 434  | 136                                  |                    |
| 326                                   | 716  | 212                                  |                    |
| 456                                   |  | 351                                  |                    |
|                                       |  | 451                                  |                    |
|                                       |  | 465                                  |                    |

# Appendix: What 5% frequency reduction looks like on Essential Services

Daily Bus Ridership YOY, 10/21/19 vs. 10/19/20, Example Essential Routes by Ridership



Nearly 99% of pre-COVID trips are unaffected

# Appendix: The RIDE



| Lever   | Pre-COVID trips impacted                                       |   | Gross Savings (\$M) FY22 | Risks / Consequences   |
|---|--|---|--------------------------|--|
|   | Annual   | Avg. daily  |                          |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase scheduling window from 30 to 40 minutes</li> </ul>                                    | All riders   |   | \$0.4 - \$1.2            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some trips may be booked 40 minutes from request time instead of current 30 minutes</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changes to ADA/Premium service area based on fixed route eliminations/restructuring</li> </ul> | ~18,000 impacted (assume of that, ~4,000 trips no longer made) | ~50 trips impacted (assume of that, ~11 trips no longer made) | \$0.3 - \$0.5            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Of 1.5M pre-COVID weekday trips, approx. 18,000 would shift from ADA to premium service</li> <li>Of these, it's estimated customers would avoid taking 4,000 trips due to the higher premium fare, leaving 14,000 trips shifted to premium service</li> <li><b>Dependent on final package of service changes for fixed route</b></li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changes to ADA/Premium service to fully adhere fixed route times of service</li> </ul>         | Under review   |   |                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start/stop of RIDE service adjusted to fully match times of service of other MBTA modes (e.g. Bus/Rapid transit stopping at midnight, Commuter Rail at 9 PM)</li> </ul>   |

RIDE fares per trip:

- Premium - \$5.60
- ADA - \$3.35