



REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Metropolitan Planning • Public Transportation & Operations • Engineering & Construction

Metropolitan Planning Organization of Washoe County, Nevada

MEETING DATE: July 15, 2022

AGENDA ITEM 6.1

From: Mark Maloney, Director of Public Transportation & Operations

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Conduct a public hearing on potential service changes as recommended by the FY 2023-2027 Transit Optimization Plan Strategies (TOPS) document for RTC RIDE (Routes 2S, 3CC, 5, 9, 13, 15, and 19), FlexRIDE (service areas), ACCESS (changes to reservation hours) and other transportation programs (Washoe Senior Ride program and Uber Rides program); approve the recommended service changes.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

As part of the development of the FY 2023-2027 TOPS plan, the consultant team created a series of recommendations for RTC's transit services. Over the life span of this plan, recommended changes will be implemented dependent upon ridership, staffing levels and available financial resources. The first series of service changes are recommended for September 10, 2022, and include the following:

Route modifications:

Route 5

- Utilize the current Route 15 line-of-route from 4TH STREET STATION to the Clear Acre Lane / Sun Valley Boulevard and El Rancho Drive / Dandini Boulevard intersection.
- This change allows for a connection of Sun Valley residents to access the new Hug High School (Sun Valley is zoned for this high school) and access to the Northtowne Shopping Center (WinCo Foods).

Route 9

- Change the current line-of-route from:
 - Leave CENTENNIAL PLAZA to Victorian Avenue-Battle Born Way-Kietzke Lane-2nd Street-Kirman Avenue-Mill Street-Kietzke Lane-Peckham Avenue-Virginia Street-Kietzke Lane ending at Kietzke Lane's southernmost roundabout.
- Change line-of-route to:
 - Leave CENTENNIAL PLAZA to Victorian Avenue-Rock Boulevard-Glendale Avenue/2nd Street-Mill Street-Kietzke Lane-Meadowood Mall Way-Meadowood Mall Circle into RTC's Transfer Station at Meadowood Mall.
- These modifications allow for an improved connection with major activity centers and provides direct access to Walmart on 2nd Street by Sparks residents, and restores access to the Firecreek Walmart from the Meadowood Mall area. This change was based on continuing feedback from the public participation process.

Route 13

- Change the current line-of-route from 4th Street to Sutro, which turns into Kirman Avenue, to Lake Street to Mill Street to Kirman Avenue.
- Extend routing to serve the Social Security Administration Offices on Vassar St.

Route 15

- Utilize the current Route 5 line-of-route from 4TH STREET STATION to the Clear Acre Lane / Sun Valley Boulevard and El Rancho Drive / Dandini Boulevard intersection.
- This recommendation creates a shorter trip time between 4TH STREET STATION and Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC).

Routine Schedule Time Adjustments

As part of RTC's on-going effort to provide reliable and on-time service, staff monitors bus travel times and speeds, as well as other statistics. As traffic patterns, passenger habits, and street networks change, these changes have an effect on the reliability and on-time performance of each route. Therefore, each service change contains small adjustments to the schedule timetables to maintain their relevance to what the bus can actually perform, thereby improving reliability and on-time performance, as well as customer service. This service change will contain these small adjustments to a nominal number of routes.

Route Discontinuation:

- **Route 2S** (Route 2 remains unchanged),
- **Route 3CC** (Route 3CL remains unchanged), and
- **Route 19**

These routes have low ridership and have not been in-service for the last several months due to staffing levels. Furthermore, RTC staff has received a minimal number of complaints concerning these routes. Community feedback regarding these recommended changes received an average public approval rating of 57.2%, and an average disapproval rating of 18.3%.

FlexRIDE Adjustments

As part of RTC's on-going effort to improve service, staff continually monitors the FlexRIDE program, its service zones, and points-of-interest around each zone. The TOPS plan recommends adding specific new points-of-interest for the existing FlexRIDE zones such as Truckee Meadows Community College and additional locations in Spanish Springs. New zones will continue to be added as budget, staffing, and vehicles will allow.

Expanded Senior Services and ACCESS Reservation Hours Change

As contained in TOPS, staff recommends to expand and improve access to specialty transportation programs which includes enriching the Washoe Senior Rides and Uber Rides services subsidy. The plan also recommends standardizing the ACCESS reservation hours to a consistent 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM seven-days a week.

Staff recommends the above recommended changes be implemented for a September 10, 2022, service change.

Title VI Analysis

FTA Circular 4702.1B requires that recipients of federal transit funds prepare service equity analyses for proposed major service changes or any fare change. RTC policy identifies a major service change as:

- A reduction or increase of 10% or more of system-wide service hours
- The elimination or expansion of any existing service that affects:
 - 25% or more of the service hours of a route or
 - 25% or more of the route's ridership (defined as activity at impacted bus stops).

The analysis prepared under Title VI requirements is used to determine if a disparate impact exists with minority and disadvantaged populations. RTC's Title VI policy defines that a disparate impact exists if the impact of any major service change requires a minority population to bear adverse effects (20% more or less) than those adverse effects borne by the non-minority population. Should a proposed major service change result in disparate impact, RTC will consider modifying the proposed change to avoid, minimize or mitigate the disparate impact of the change. If RTC finds potential disparate impacts and then modifies the proposed changes in order to avoid, minimize or mitigate potential disparate impacts, RTC will reanalyze the proposed changes in order to determine whether the modification actually removed the potential disparate impacts of the changes.

RTC's policy thresholds for determining a disparate impact under Title VI requirements and a disproportionate burden under Environmental Justice guidance is 20%. For the proposed route changes as measured by the process guided by RTC's Title VI policy, the burden for minority populations is 19.4% and the burden for low-income populations is 13.7%. Based upon this analysis, no disparate impact or disproportionate burden exist.

FISCAL IMPACT

The proposed changes represent an approximate annual savings of 6,656 revenue hours. Changes to ACCESS, FlexRIDE, and other transportation programs will also have a small financial impact dependent upon the level of ridership.

PREVIOUS BOARD ACTIONS:

Apr 15, 2022	Received an update on Transit Optimization Plans Strategies (TOPS) service change recommendations for acknowledgement and direction regarding the recommendations.
Mar 18, 2022	Received an update on planned efforts to rebuild public transportation 2023-2027 Transit Optimization Plan Strategies (TOPS) study process based on input received at the Board's workshop in January 2022.
Dec 17, 2021	Received a report on the FY 2022-2026 Transit Optimization Plan Strategies (TOPS) for discussion and possible direction.

- May 21, 2021 Approved an agreement with Transportation Management & Design Inc., (TMD) for the Transit Optimization Plan Strategies (TOPS) study in an amount not-to-exceed \$239,430.
- Nov 20, 2020 Authorized a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the selection of Professional Services for the 2023-2027 Transit Optimization Plan Strategies (TOPS) study.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) REPORT

The proposed service change concepts discussed above were presented to the Citizens Multimodal Advisory Committee on July 6, 2022, and the Technical Advisory Committee on July 7, 2023.