

Service standards and guidelines serve as useful policy tools that reflect the mission and goals of the transit organization. These define attributes of service design and delivery, as well as, create an objective set of criteria under which existing services, proposed alterations to services and prospective new services are evaluated. Service standards also provide a basis for the open and equitable allocation of budget-limited service resources in accordance with the Title VI and Environmental Justice requirements.

Vehicle Load

- Vehicle Load Factor (passengers on board/bus seating capacity) shall not exceed 1.3 (i.e., 30% standing) on any trip for more than 10 minutes.
- Routes with Vehicle Loads exceeding 1.3 will be considered first for headway improvement.

Vehicle Headway/Frequency of Service

- Regular Fixed Route Vehicle Headway on any route shall not exceed 60 minutes (or one vehicle per hour frequency) between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.
- Regular Fixed Route Vehicle Headway may exceed 60 minutes before 6:00 a.m. and after 7:00 p.m. (weekdays and Saturday) or at any time on Sunday.

This headway standard shall not apply to express bus or suburban bus services.

On-Time Performance

- On-time is defined as the trips completed between one (1) minute early and five (5) minutes late as compared to schedule. Arriving at a trip's destination point early will not be counted as an early for calculations purposes.
- System-wide on-time performance shall be a minimum of 95% of schedule at route origins and destinations (i.e., terminal points).
- Individual route on-time performance shall be a minimum of 90% of schedule at route origins and destinations.
- System-wide on-time performance shall be a minimum of 70% of schedule at published time points.

Service Availability

Access to Service

- Sixty percent (60%) of service area residents shall have access to bus service. Access to bus service is defined as less than ½ mile walk from residence to bus stop from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekdays

Bus Stop Spacing

- Stops shall be no closer than 800 feet, unless land use and passenger demand indicate a need for closer stops.
- Minimum five (5) stops per mile in core
- Minimum two (2) stops per mile in outlying areas (depending on density and land use)
- Bus stop spacing standards shall not apply to express or limited stop bus service

Route Design

- Routes shall operate on major thoroughfares or arterial streets to the maximum extent possible. Exceptions will be allowed for turnaround loops or major destinations located on non-arterial streets. Services should be designed to operate in two directions on the same street whenever possible in order to reduce confusion to passengers and maximize service effectiveness. However, due to street configurations, some loop routes may be necessary.

Route Deviation

- Fixed routes may deviate off their primary alignment for a variety of reasons – to serve a major destination, to avoid a bottleneck and to provide coverage. Deviations off the basic alignment of a fixed route should be minimized whenever possible. Any deviations considered as a part of a route change should meet the following criteria:
 1. The additional time necessary for the deviation should not exceed five minutes, or 10% of the one-way travel time of the existing route without deviation.
 2. Deviations should result in an increase in overall route productivity.

Distribution of Transit Amenities

Bus Shelters

- At stops with 20 or more boardings per day or locations where 3 or more routes converge

Bus Benches

- At stops with 10 or more boardings per day

Bus Stop Signs

- At all stops bus stop signs should display FAST name, information contact number and route/schedule

Sponsorships

- Shelters or benches may be placed at stops that have less boardings than noted above when a non-City entity agrees to provide funding to sponsor such stop.

Vehicle Assignment

Vehicle Equipment

- Revenue vehicles shall be clean, in good condition, with working ramp or lift and working air conditioning or heat (depending on season)

Route Assignment

- Higher capacity buses shall be used on routes with the highest ridership and load factors
- Vehicle Age/Mileage Vehicles shall be distributed equally throughout the route system. Vehicle assignments shall be evaluated every six (6) months to ensure equitable aging (accumulated miles) and distribution to all routes.

Evaluating and Altering Services

FAST strives to allocate service resources equitably and efficiently. Circumstances may change requiring that routes be evaluated and adjusted to ensure effectiveness and proper allocation of resources. Routes will be evaluated at least annually. Although several factors are considered, the primary route productivity measure FAST will use is Total Passengers per Revenue Service Hour.

Routes to Review

- Less than 80% of system average Passengers per Hour

Routes to Modify

- Less than 60% of system average Passengers per Hour

Maturing Service

- New routes do not generally generate stable ridership levels immediately. A two-year period permits adequate time to build a transit market. Routes that have operated less than two years will be considered maturing. Maturing routes will be monitored but may be exempted from corrective actions to provide opportunity to meet ridership expectations. FAST anticipates making fine-tuning adjustments to maturing routes over its first two years.

Lifeline Routes

- Factors such as percentage of population below federal poverty guidelines, elderly population, and zero-vehicle households will be examined when considering route modifications.

Corrective Actions

Targeted Marketing

- Low ridership may result from a lack of awareness of routes and services available. A targeted marketing campaign before a service reduction may be considered.

Route Realignment

- A route may miss several key locations which can be accessed with short route deviations or extensions. A route may also have unproductive segments. Careful evaluation of boardings by stop can result in route revisions that can help to build ridership and improve service productivity.

Service Reduction

- A route may have more frequent service than warranted by load factors or ridership. Headway adjustments, reductions in hours of operation, and/or elimination of service on weekends may improve route productivity with limited negative impacts.

Service Elimination

- If ridership is consistently poor with little hope for future growth, a route may be eliminated. Service elimination is a last resort and generally follows prior actions to improve productivity. Elimination of service does not preclude restoration of service at a later time, but new factors supporting ridership demand must exist before such a step is considered.