

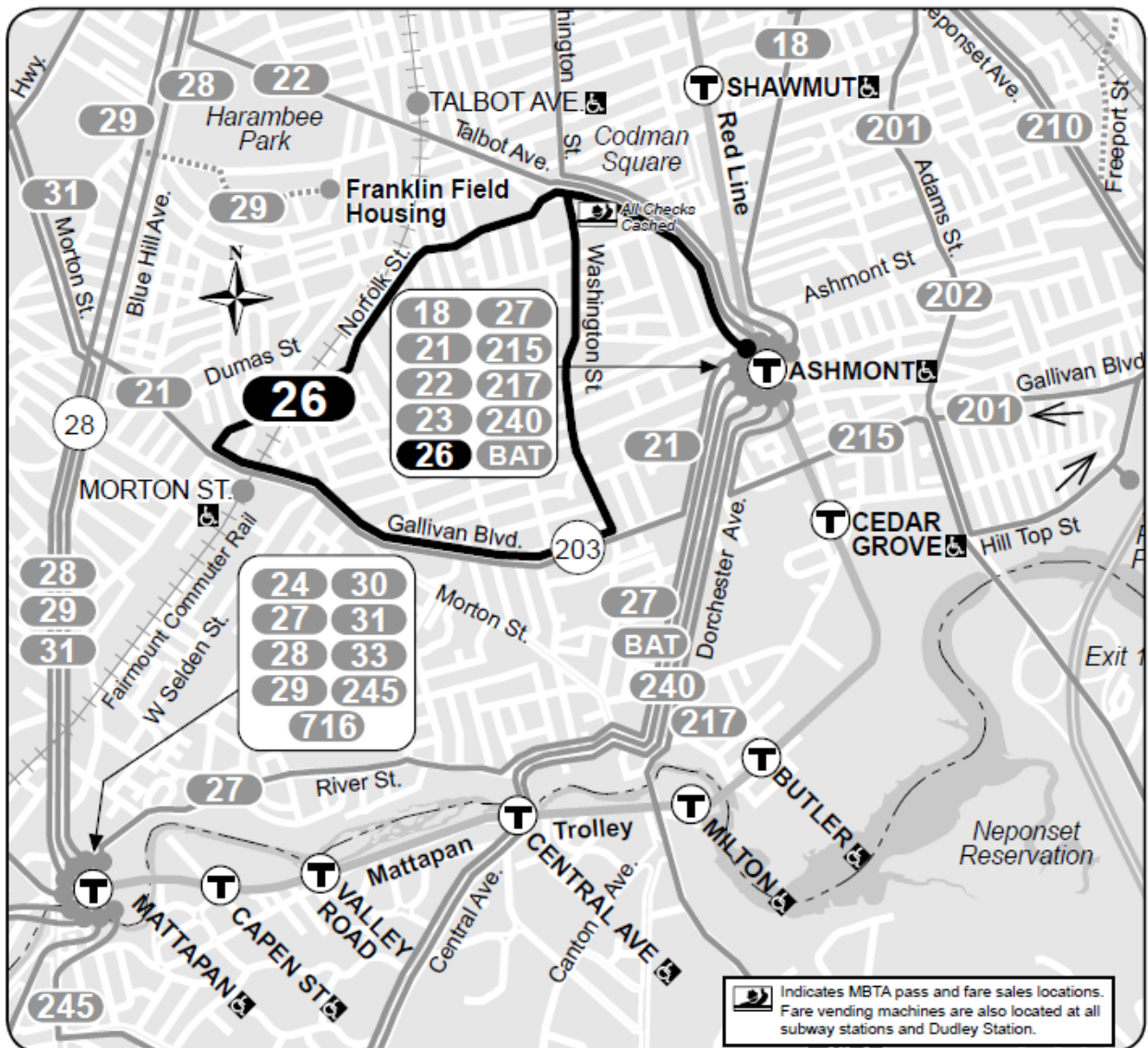
Route 26

Ashmont Station – Norfolk & Morton Belt Line

Route Overview

Route 26 Ashmont Station – Norfolk & Morton Belt Line is a Local route that operates via a short loop west and south of Ashmont Station via Norfolk Street, Morton Street, Gallivan Boulevard, and Washington Street. It operates to and from the loop via Talbot Avenue (see Figure 1).

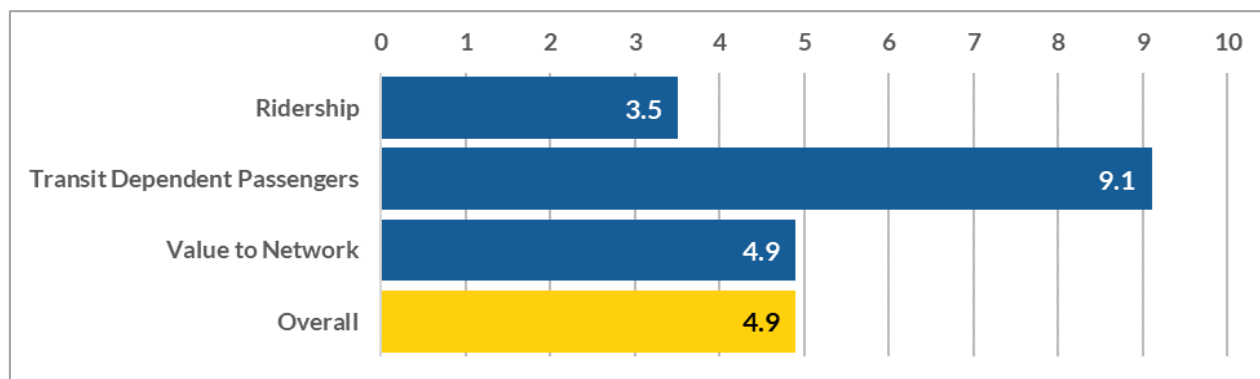
Figure 1 | Service Map



Network Importance

Route 26 is moderately important within the MBTA bus network (see Figure 2). On a relative scale of 0 to 10, the route rates 3.5 in terms of ridership, 9.1 in terms of transit dependent ridership, and 4.9 in terms of its value to the network (which reflects the number of people who are uniquely served, the number of jobs and other important destinations, and the number of transferring passengers). Its overall score, which gives a 70% weight to overall ridership and a 15% weight to both other measures, is 4.9.

Figure 2 | Relative Importance within MBTA Bus Network (on a scale of 0 to 10)



Service Overview

Schedule

Route 26 operates seven days a week and provides infrequent service at all times (see Table 1). On weekdays, service operates from 4:55 AM to 1:22 AM:

- Every 21 to 27 minutes before 6:00 AM. This is the most frequent service that is provided. However, service only operates clockwise around the loop.
- Every 30 minutes from 6:00 AM through 6:30 PM. However, between 9:30 AM and 2:00 PM and from 6:00 PM on, service only operates counter-clockwise, while during other periods it operates in both directions.
- Predominantly every 30 minutes from 6:30 PM to 9:30 PM, but only counter-clockwise.
- Every 70 minutes after 9:30 PM and with all service operating counter-clockwise.

On Saturdays, service operates from 5:05 AM to 1:22 AM. Most service operates every 30 minutes until 9:05 PM, and then every 70 minutes. Service operates counter-clockwise only until 6:05 PM, and then clockwise only.

On Sundays, service operates from 9:20 AM to 9:38 PM, every 60 minutes throughout the day. All service operates counter-clockwise.

All service meets the MBTA’s span of service standards on all days. However, weekday and Saturday evening service that operates every 70 minutes does not meet the minimum service frequency standard of 60 minutes for off-peak service.

Table 1 | Schedule Statistics

SERVICE DAY	SPAN OF SERVICE	FREQUENCY (RANGE)	FREQUENCY (AVERAGE)	DAILY TRIPS (INBOUND/OUTBOUND)
Monday-Friday	4:55 AM to 1:22 AM			54/54
Sunrise	4:55 AM to 5:59 AM	21 - 22	22	3/3
Early AM	6:00 AM to 6:59 AM	30	15	4/4
AM Peak	7:00 AM to 8:59 AM	30	15	8/8
Midday Base	9:00 AM to 1:29 PM	30	27	10/10
Midday School	1:30 PM to 3:59 PM	30	17	9/9
PM Peak	4:00 PM to 6:29 PM	30	15	10/10
Evening	6:30 PM to 9:59 PM	20 - 70	36	7/7
Late Evening	10:00 PM to 11:59 PM	70	70	2/1
Night	12:00 AM to 1:22 AM	70	70	1/2
Saturday	5:05 AM to 1:22 AM	20 - 70	32	37/37
Sunday	9:20 AM to 9:38 PM	60	60	13/13

Note: Span of service reflects the time the first bus begins service until the time the last bus finishes service.

Service Patterns

All service operates as a loop to and from Ashmont Station, with a mix of clockwise and counter-clockwise service (see Table 2):

Weekdays

- All service before 6:15 AM operates counter-clockwise via Norfolk Street (Pattern 26.1).
- Service between 6:15 AM and 9:15 AM alternates between clockwise and counter-clockwise trips (Pattern 26.2).
- Service between 9:30 and 2:00 PM operates counter-clockwise.
- Service between 2:15 PM and 6:15 PM alternates between clockwise and counter-clockwise trips.
- From 6:15 PM on, all service operates clockwise.

Saturdays

- All service before 6:35 PM operates counter-clockwise
- All service from 6:35 PM on operates clockwise.

Sundays

- All service operates counter-clockwise.

Table 2 | Service Patterns

PATTERN	ORIGIN	DESTINATION	UNIQUE FEATURE	TRIPS PER WKD	TRIPS PER SAT	TRIPS PER SUN
CLOCKWISE				26	10	-
26.2	Ashmont Station	Ashmont Station	Serves loop clockwise	26	10	-
COUNTER-CLOCKWISE				28	27	13
26.1	Ashmont Station	Ashmont Station	Serves loop counterclockwise	28	27	13

Ridership

Route 26 carries 1,590 passengers on weekdays, 770 on Saturdays, and 280 on Sundays.

Ridership by Stop

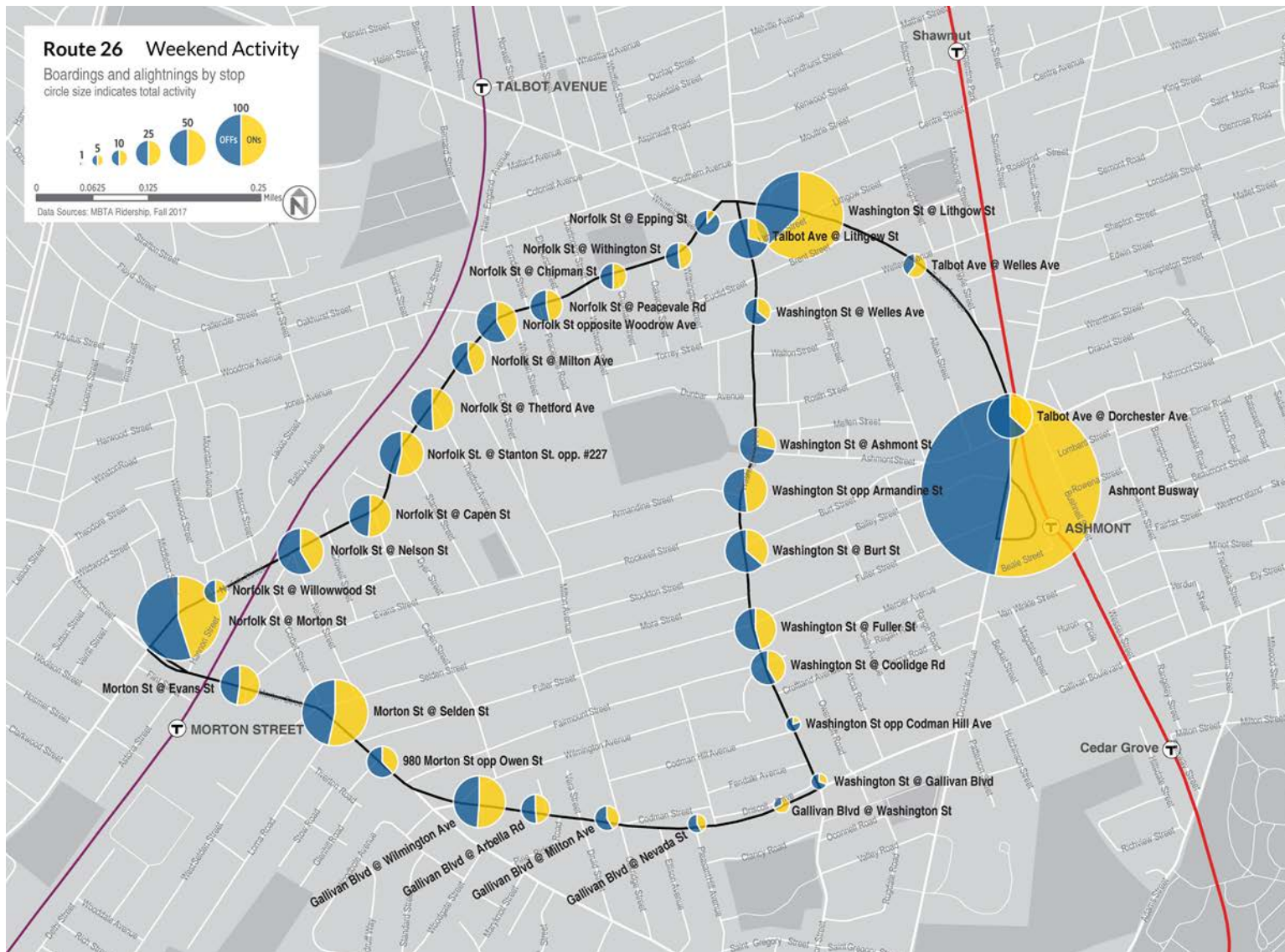
The majority of passengers ride to and from Ashmont Station. On weekday counter-clockwise trips (which provide 28 of 54 weekday trips and carry 750 passengers) (Figure 3):

- 350 passengers board at Ashmont Station.
- 60 passengers board and 20 alight at the three stops on Talbot Avenue after buses leave Ashmont Station.
- 50 passengers board and 140 alight at the eight stops on Washington Street.
- 70 passengers board and 130 alight at the nine stops on Gallivan Boulevard and Morton Street.
- 180 board and 220 alight at the 11 stops on Norfolk Street.
- 30 passengers board and 40 alight on Talbot Street returning to Ashmont Station.
- 210 passengers alight at Ashmont Station.

On weekday clockwise trips (which provide 26 of 54 weekday trips and carry 840 passengers):

- 280 passengers board at Ashmont Station.
- 80 passengers board and 20 alight at the three stops on Talbot Avenue after buses leave Ashmont Station.
- 170 passengers board and 210 alight at the 10 stops on Norfolk Street.
- 150 passengers board and 90 alight at the eight stops on Morton Street and Gallivan Boulevard.
- 100 passengers board and 120 alight at the nine stops on Washington Street.
- 50 passengers board and 80 alight on Talbot Avenue returning to Ashmont Station.

Figure 3 | Weekday Inbound Ridership by Stop Map



- 350 passengers alight at Ashmont Station.

For both directions combined:

- 830 passengers board at Ashmont Station.
- 220 passengers board and 160 alight on Talbot Avenue.
- 150 passengers board and 260 alight on Washington Street.
- 220 passengers board and 220 alight on Gallivan Boulevard and Morton Street.
- 350 passengers board and 420 alight along Washington Street.
- 560 passengers alight at Ashmont Station.

On weekends, ridership patterns are similar but with lower passenger volumes.

Ridership by Trip

As described above, weekday service is provided multiple patterns that provide service in either one direction around the loop or both. On weekdays (see Figure 4 and Figure 5):

- Before 6:15 AM, all service operates counter-clockwise (initially via Norfolk Street). Trips during this time carry 22 to 33 passengers.
- From 6:15 AM to 9:15 AM, service alternates between clockwise and counter-clockwise trips. Clockwise trips carry 24 to 52 passengers, with the highest ridership on the 6:45 AM and 7:15 AM trips. Counter-clockwise trips carry 21 to 42 passengers, with the highest ridership on the 7:00 AM, 7:30 AM, and 8:00 AM trips.
- Between 9:30 AM and 2:00 PM, all service operates counter-clockwise. Trips during this time carry 21 to 37 passengers. However, the only trip with more than 30 passengers is the 2:00 PM trip.
- Service between 2:15 PM and 6:15 PM alternates between clockwise and counter-clockwise. Clockwise trips carry 22 to 40 passengers, with the highest ridership on the 3:45 PM and 5:15 PM trips. Counter-clockwise trips carry 24 to 40 passengers, with most trips carrying over 30 passengers.
- From 6:15 PM on, all service operates clockwise, and ridership per trip is around 20 riders except for the last trip at 1:00 AM which carries fewer than 10 riders.

On Saturdays (see Figure 6 and Figure 7):

- All service before 6:35 PM operates counter-clockwise. Ridership on these trips builds from fewer than 10 riders on the first trip at 5:05 AM to 23 at 8:35 AM, then increases slowly to around 30 passengers per trip through 6:35 PM.
- All service after 6:35 PM operates clockwise. Ridership per trip ranges from 17 to 28 passengers through 9:05 PM, then declines to fewer than 10 riders on the last trip at 1:05 AM

Figure 4 | Weekday Ridership by Trip: Clockwise

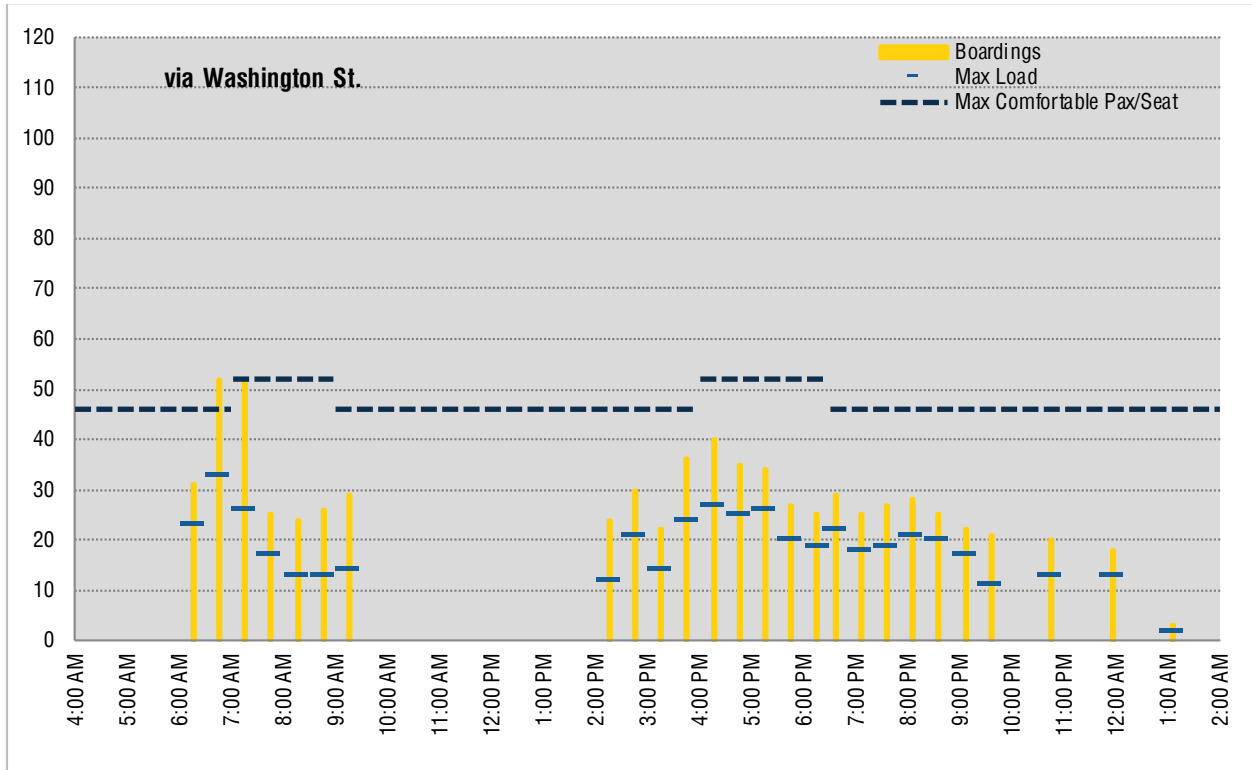


Figure 5 | Weekday Ridership by Trip: Counter-Clockwise

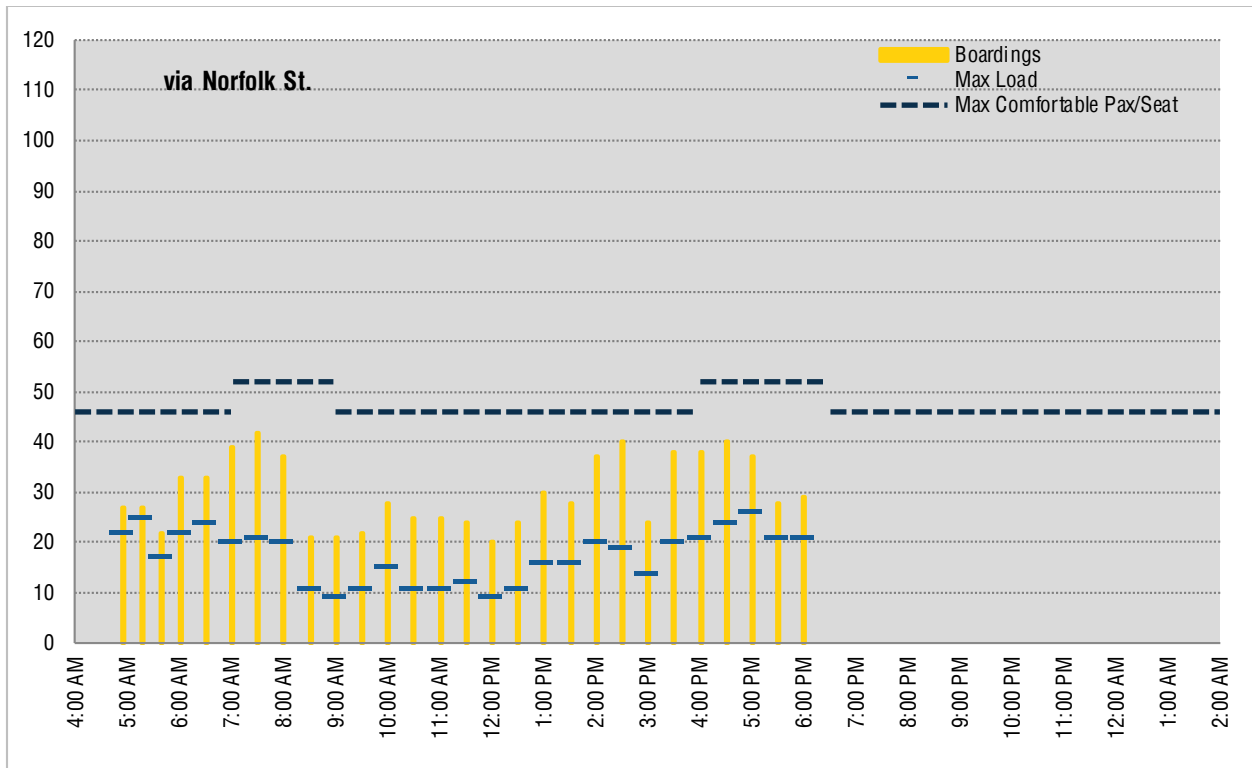


Figure 6 | Saturday Ridership by Trip: Clockwise

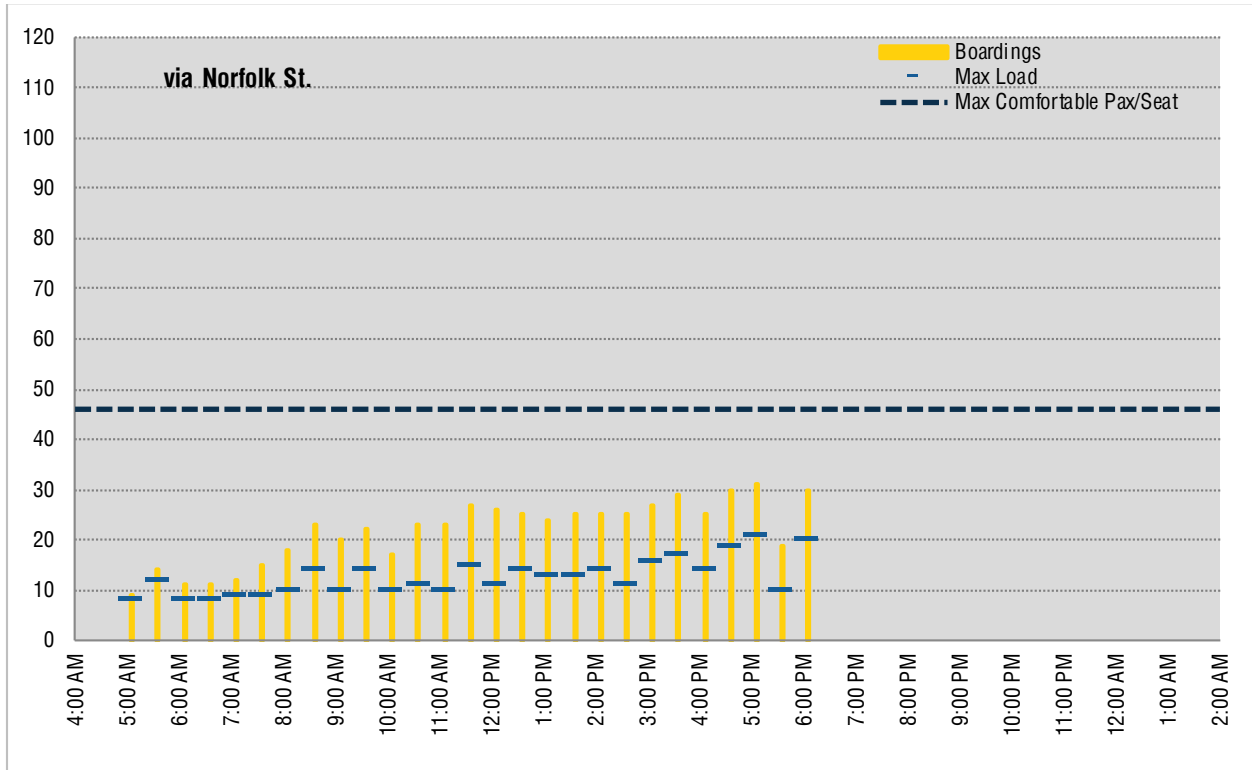
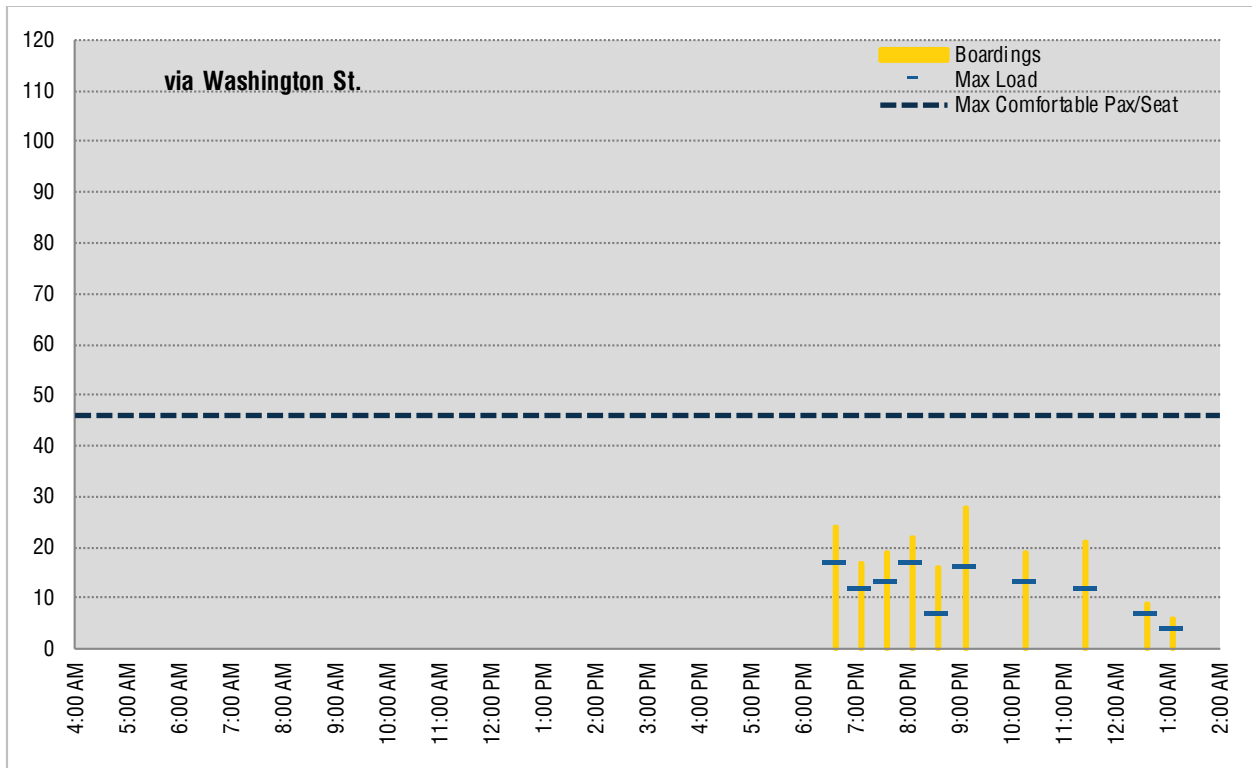
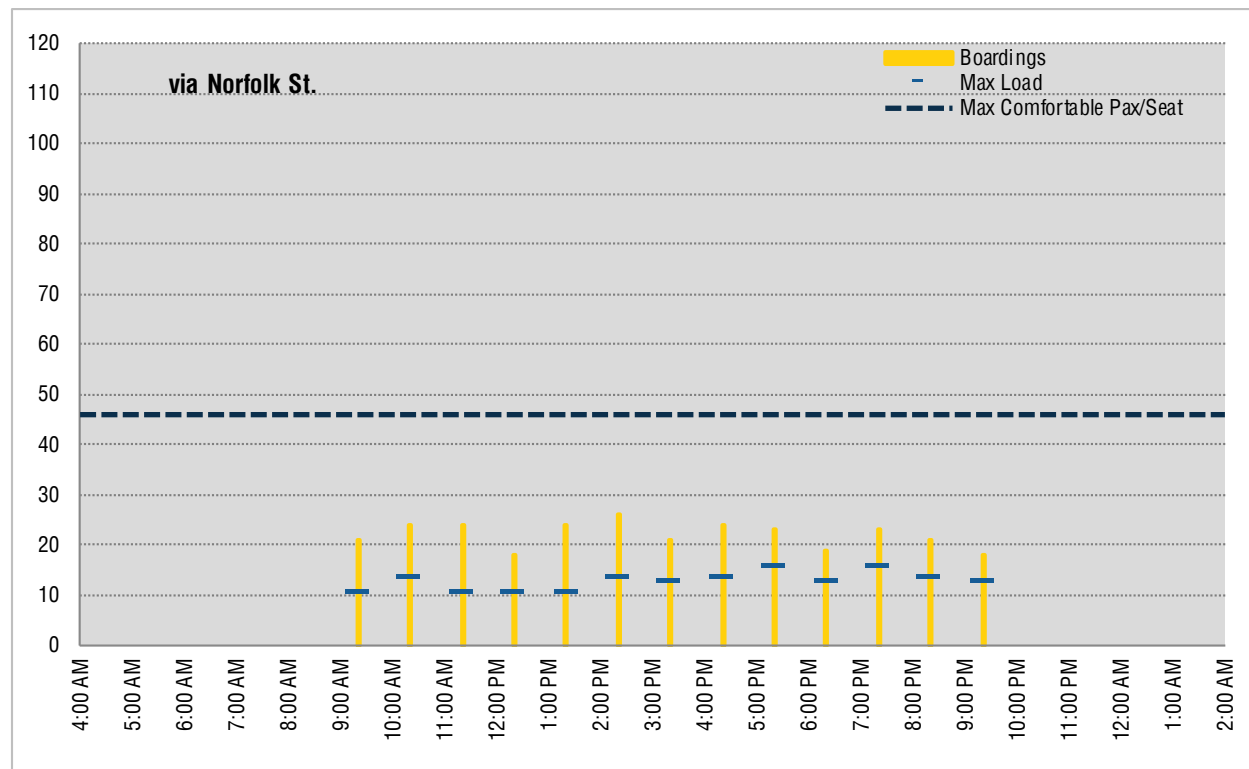


Figure 7 | Saturday Ridership by Trip: Counter-Clockwise



On Sundays, all service operates counter-clockwise. Ridership is generally 20 to 25 passengers per trip throughout the day (see Figure 8).

Figure 8 | Sunday Ridership by Trip: Counter-Clockwise



Passenger Comfort

The MBTA desires that passengers travel in relatively comfortable conditions. At the same time, the MBTA's definition of comfort reflects the very high volume environment in which the MBTA operates, and that some passengers may have to stand for a portion of their trip. More specifically, at least 92% of passengers' travel times should be in comfortable conditions, and ideally, at least 96% of travel times should be in comfortable conditions. Comfortable conditions are considered to be 140% or less of seated capacity during high volume periods and 125% or less during other periods.

On Route 26, 99.7% of passenger minutes are in comfortable conditions, which is above the target of 96% (see Table 3).

Table 3 | Passenger Time Spent Traveling in Comfortable Conditions

	WEEKDAYS	SATURDAYS	SUNDAYS
Minimum Standard	92%	92%	92%
Target	96%	96%	96%
Actual	99.7%	100%	100%

Reliability and Speed

Reliability

Route 26’s overall reliability is 62% on weekdays, 64% on Saturdays, and 77% on Sundays (see Table 4). The weekday and Saturday reliability levels are below the MBTA’s minimum standard of 70%, while the Sunday level is above the MBTA’s target of 75%. As described in the next section, one cause of poor on-time performance is that actual running times are longer than scheduled times.

Table 4 | Reliability

SERVICE DAY	ORIGIN/MID-ROUTE ON-TIME PERFORMANCE	DESTINATION ON-TIME PERFORMANCE	OVERALL RELIABILITY	DROPPED TRIPS
Monday-Friday	60%	68%	62%	0.3%
Saturday	60%	75%	64%	-
Sunday	74%	85%	77%	-

Running Times

Actual running times are generally longer than scheduled, especially during the PM peak and evening. Inbound trips¹ via Washington Street operate close to schedule until around 3:00 PM, but then run up to five minutes longer (see Figure 9). Inbound trips via Norfolk Street run slightly late for most of the day, with longer delays in the PM peak (see Figure 10).

Stop Spacing

Route 26 has an average of 9.6 stops per mile, which is well above the MBTA’s guideline of four to seven stops per mile for urban areas. Stops are especially closely spaced along Norfolk Street north of Capen Street, where there are nine stops within three-fifths of a mile. Stop consolidation would speed service and improve reliability.

¹ Inbound service on clockwise trips is defined at the portion of the loop between the intersection of Gallivan Boulevard at Morton Street and Ashmont Station and on counter-clockwise trips as the portion of the loop between Gallivan Boulevard at Washington Street and Ashmont Station.

Figure 9 | Scheduled & Median Travel Time by Trip: Route 26 Inbound (via Washington Street)

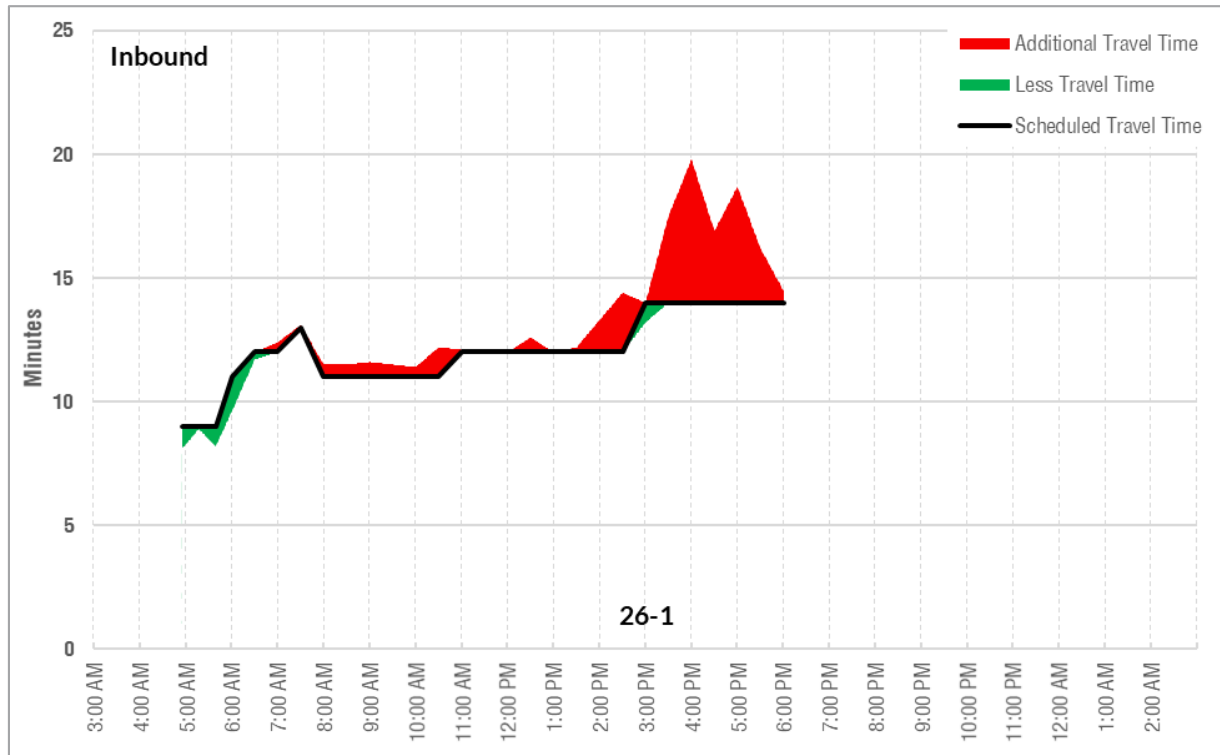
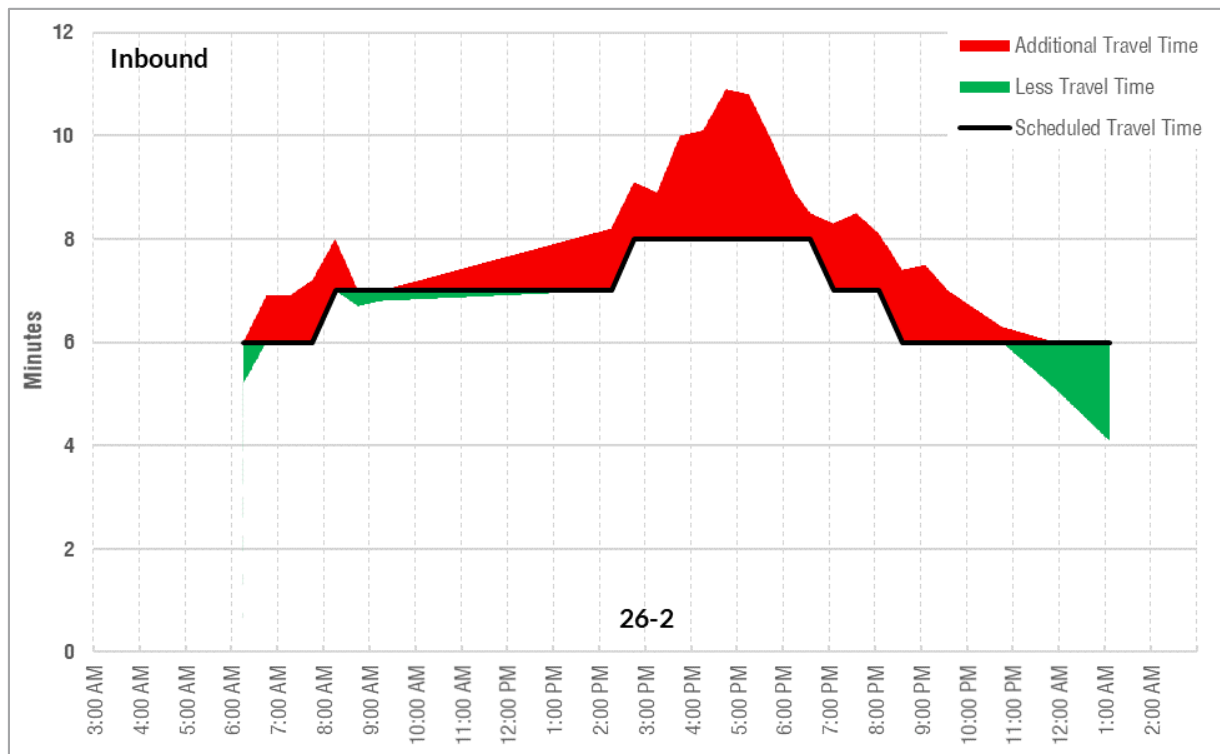


Figure 10 | Scheduled & Median Travel Time by Trip: Route 26 Inbound (via Norfolk Street)



Summary

Route 26 serves a small area with high transit demand that is located between corridors served by other routes, and ridership is relatively good. However, there are a number of issues with the route's services:

- The loop patterns are inconsistent and confusing, with service that sometimes operates in both directions and at other times only clockwise or counter-clockwise without a clear reason for the direction of operation.
- The bi-directional service that is provided during peak periods reduces effective service frequency for all passengers, while only decreasing travel times for some passengers.
- On-time performance is poor, largely due to schedules that do not reflect actual running times.
- Weekday evening and Saturday service after approximately 9:00 PM operates every 70 minutes, which is less frequent than the MBTA's standard of at least every 60 minutes.
- Stops are spaced extremely closely together, which makes service slower than it should be and degrades on-time performance.