

ROUTE 50

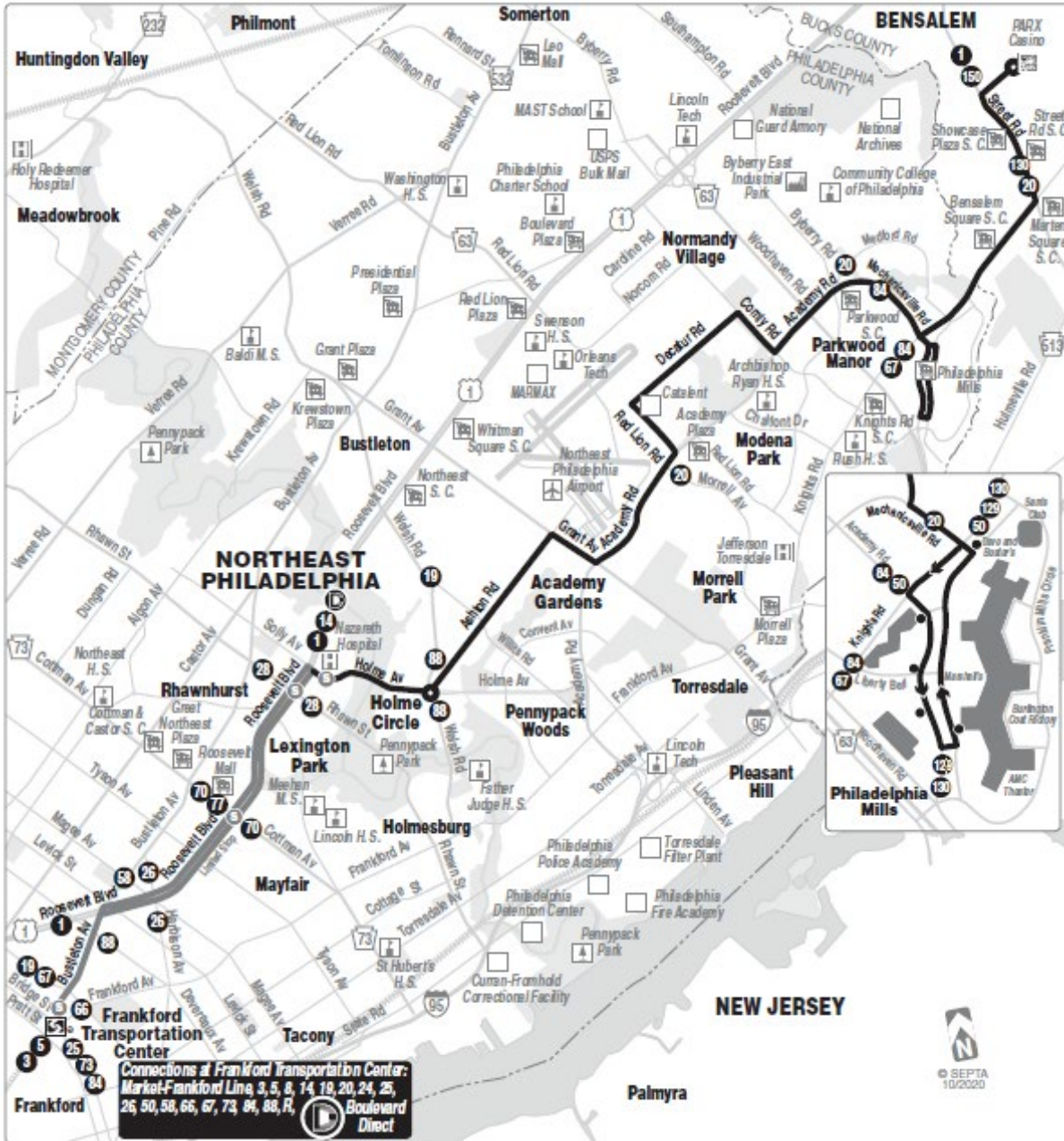
Parx Casino to Philadelphia Mills to Frankford Transportation Center

KEY SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS, ISSUES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

- *Route 50's provides fast and limited-stop service between Frankford Transportation Center and Parx Casino via Philadelphia Mills Mall. Route 50 provides similar service to Route 20.*
- *Route 50 operates on average every 30 minutes during its service span, and its service is simple and easy to understand. It has high weekend ridership compared to weekday ridership. Its alignment is somewhat circuitous (as shown in Figure 1).*
- *The major opportunity to improve Route 50 is to simplify it. This opportunity involves consolidating Route 20 and 50. This would make service in this portion of Northeast Philadelphia much more direct and easier to understand. Route 50 riders would also benefit from service beginning earlier in the day.*

ROUTE OVERVIEW

Route 50 travels from Frankford Transportation Center to Parx Casino in Bensalem through the Lexington Park, Holme Circle, Academy Gardens, and Parkwood Manor neighborhoods in Northeast Philadelphia. Route 50's alignment is somewhat indirect (as shown in Figure 1) and it operates using Boulevard Direct stops on Roosevelt Boulevard.

Figure 1 | Route Map


SERVICE OVERVIEW

Schedule

Route 50 operates 18 hours a day on weekdays (from 6:37 AM to 12:41 AM), and about 16 hours a day on Saturdays and Sundays (see Table 1).

- Route 50 provides AM peak service every 20-35 minutes between the hours of 6:00 AM to 9:00 AM. Midday service is similar.

- PM peak service between the hours of 3:00 PM and 6:00 PM has the largest range in frequency between 10- and 30-minute headways.
- On Saturdays, service frequencies average 31 minutes during the day and 35 minutes at night. On Sundays, frequencies average 34 minutes during the day and 35 minutes at night.

Table 1 | Schedule Statistics

Service Day	Span Of Service	Frequency (Range)	Frequency (Average)
Weekdays	6:370 AM - 12:41 AM		
AM Peak	6:00 AM - 8:59 AM	20 - 35	27
Midday	9:00 AM - 2:59 PM	20 - 31	29
PM Peak	3:00 PM - 5:59 PM	10 - 30	25
Evening	6:00 PM - 9:59 PM	27 - 44	32
Late Night	10:00 PM - 11:59 PM	33 - 41	37
Owl	12:00 AM - 3:59 AM	94 - 94	94
Saturdays	6:28 AM – 10:45 PM		
Day	8:00 AM - 5:59 PM	28 - 42	31
Night	6:00 PM - 7:59 AM	29 - 46	35
Sundays	6:24 AM – 10:34 PM		
Day	8:00 AM - 5:59 PM	29 - 55	34
Night	6:00 PM - 7:59 AM	30 - 62	35

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

Service Patterns

Route 50 operates with three service patterns which makes service simple (see Table 2). All northbound trips operate the same pattern between Frankford Transportation Center and Parx Casino. All but two southbound trips operate the same primary pattern.

Table 2 | Service Patterns

Pattern	Origin	Destination	Unique Feature	Unique Stops	Trips Per Day		
					Wkd	Sat	Sun
Northbound							
229607	Frankford Transportation Center	Parx Casino	Primary Pattern	0	32	30	28
Southbound							
229611	Parx Casino	Frankford Transportation Center	Primary Pattern	0	21	18	18
229610	Parx Casino	Frankford Transportation Center -	Serve's Main Dropoff at FTC instead of Rt 20 & 50 stop	0	11	11	10

229608	Red Lion Rd & Decatur Rd	Frankford Transportation Center	Originates from Red Lion Rd & Decatur Rd and serves the Rt 20 & 50 Bus Stop at FTC	7	1	0	0
229609	Red Lion Rd & Decatur Rd	Frankford Transportation Center	Originates from Red Lion Rd & Decatur Rd, and serves the Main Dropoff at FTC	7	1	0	0

Note: Unique stops are those not served by the primary pattern

RIDERSHIP

In Fall 2019, Route 50 carried 2,010 passengers on weekdays, 1,640 on Saturdays, and 1,490 on Sundays (see Table 3).

Table 3 | Fall 2019 Ridership and Productivity

	Weekdays	Saturdays	Sundays
Daily Ridership	2,004	1,602	1,519
Rank	76	56	48
Passengers per Revenue Vehicle Hour	37.7	34.6	36.2
Rank	71	50	42

Transfer Patterns

Approximately a third of Route 50 trips involve a transfer to or from the Market Frankford Line. The largest transfer volumes are to and from:

- The Market-Frankford Line (35 of all trips)
- Route 70 (5.6 percent)
- Route R (4.6 percent)
- Route 14 (1.9 percent)
- Route 66 (1.8 percent)

Weekend transfer volumes are similar.

Ridership by Stop

Route 50’s primary function is to provide express service between the Frankford Transportation Center and riders in Northeast Philadelphia. Major ridership patterns on southbound trips are as shown in Figure 2. Northbound patterns mirror southbound patterns. In more detail, on southbound trips:

- Parx Casino, the northern terminal, has a daily average of 139 boardings.
- Approximately 50 boardings occur at Street Road and Tillman Drive, which is adjacent to Parx Casino and close to a Gwynedd Mercy University campus.
- Over 30 boardings occur at Knights Road and Virginia Avenue. This stop provides access to various grocery, retail, and dining options.

- Ashton Road and Woodbridge Road also has a high number of alightings due to its proximity to the Social Security Administration Building.
- Philadelphia Mills Mall has average daily boardings of over 125 passengers.
- Stops along Roosevelt Boulevard experience between 20 to 30 boardings as trips approach the Frankford Transportation Center.
- Most passengers riding southbound are alighting at Philadelphia Mills, Roosevelt Boulevard, and Frankford Transportation Center.

Weekend ridership patterns mirror weekday patterns though with more activity at Parx Casino, but lower ridership for most other stops.

Figure 2 | Weekday Southbound Ridership by Stop



Ridership by Time of Day

Ridership by Hour

In Fall 2019, weekday ridership was somewhat peaked at 7:00 AM and again between 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM (see Figure 6). Evening ridership was much lower than midday ridership and fell quickly after 5:00 PM. Saturday and Sunday ridership did not exhibit the same peaks and gradually increased through mid-afternoon and then gradually decreased. Notably, weekend midday ridership was equal to or slightly greater than weekday midday ridership.

Ridership and Maximum Loads by Trip

In Fall 2019, weekday ridership was moderate on most trips (see Figure 3):

- AM peak trips carried 20 to 50 passengers. The first few trips in both directions had very high ridership, indicating there may exist unmet demand to begin service earlier in the day.
- Midday trips carried 20 to 30 passengers
- PM peak trips carried 70 to nearly 120 passengers
- After 6:00 PM, ridership gradually declined to about 20 passengers per trip after midnight, but with some northbound trips carrying over 60 passengers.

On Saturdays, ridership stays between approximately 20 to 40 riders per trip all day. The highest trip loads are seen in the midday between 11:00 AM and 5:00 PM. In general, northbound trips carry more riders than southbound trips. Sunday ridership by trip is like Saturdays.

Figure 3 | Ridership by Hour: Fall 2019

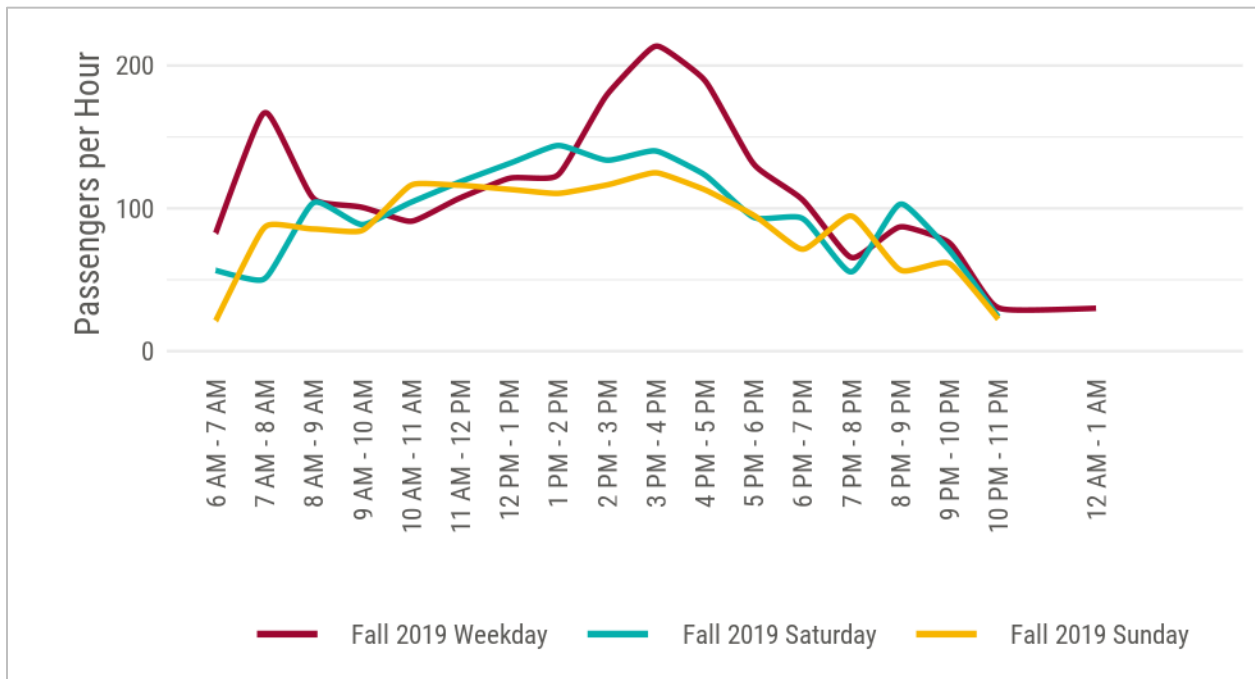
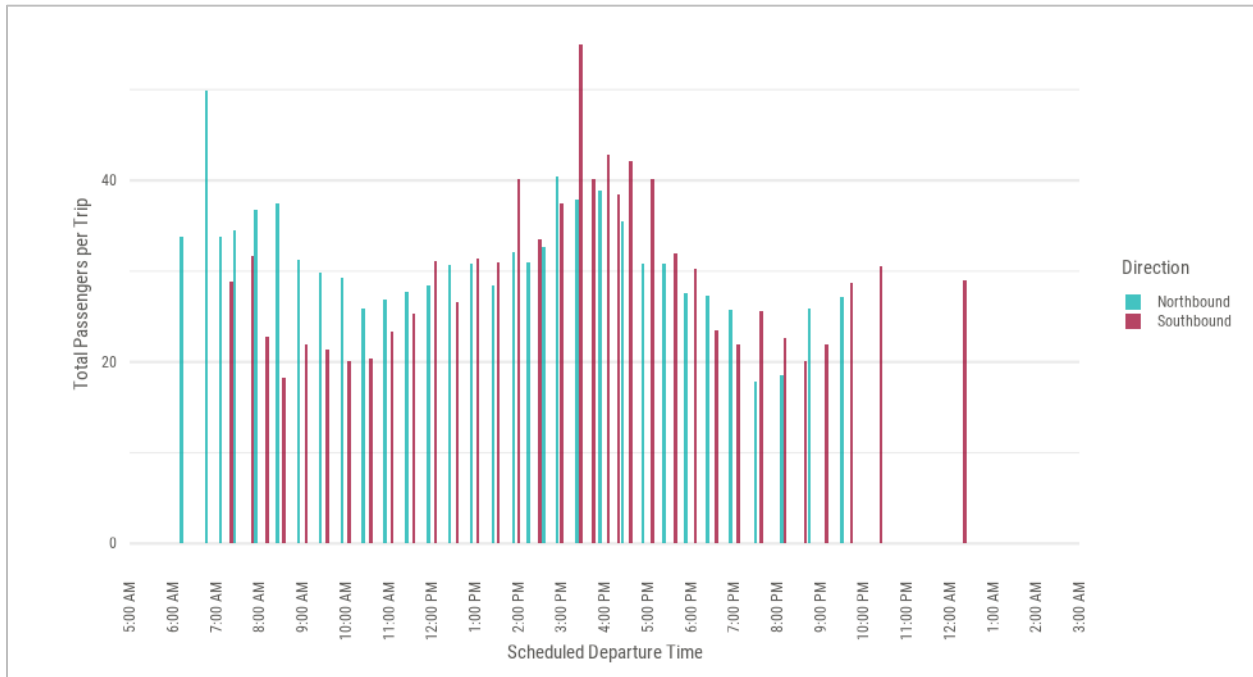


Figure 4 | Fall 2019 Weekday Ridership by Trip



ON-TIME PERFORMANCE AND RUNNING TIMES

In Fall 2019, Route 50’s on-time performance was 76 percent on weekdays, 77 percent on Saturdays, and 74 percent on Sundays (see Table 4). This indicates moderate levels of running time variability along the route. On weekdays, nearly nine percent of trips were early, and 15 percent were late.

Table 4 | Fall 2019 On-Time Performance

	Early (>2 Mins Early)	On Time (<2 Mins Early to 6 Mins Late)	Late (>6 Mins Late)	Missed Trips
Goal		80%		
Fall 2019 Actual				
Weekday	8.9%	76.3%	14.8%	0.0%
Saturday	10.7%	76.9%	12.5%	0.0%
Sunday	8.6%	74.4%	17.0%	0.0%

Note: On-time percentages are for trips that are run (do not include dropped trips)

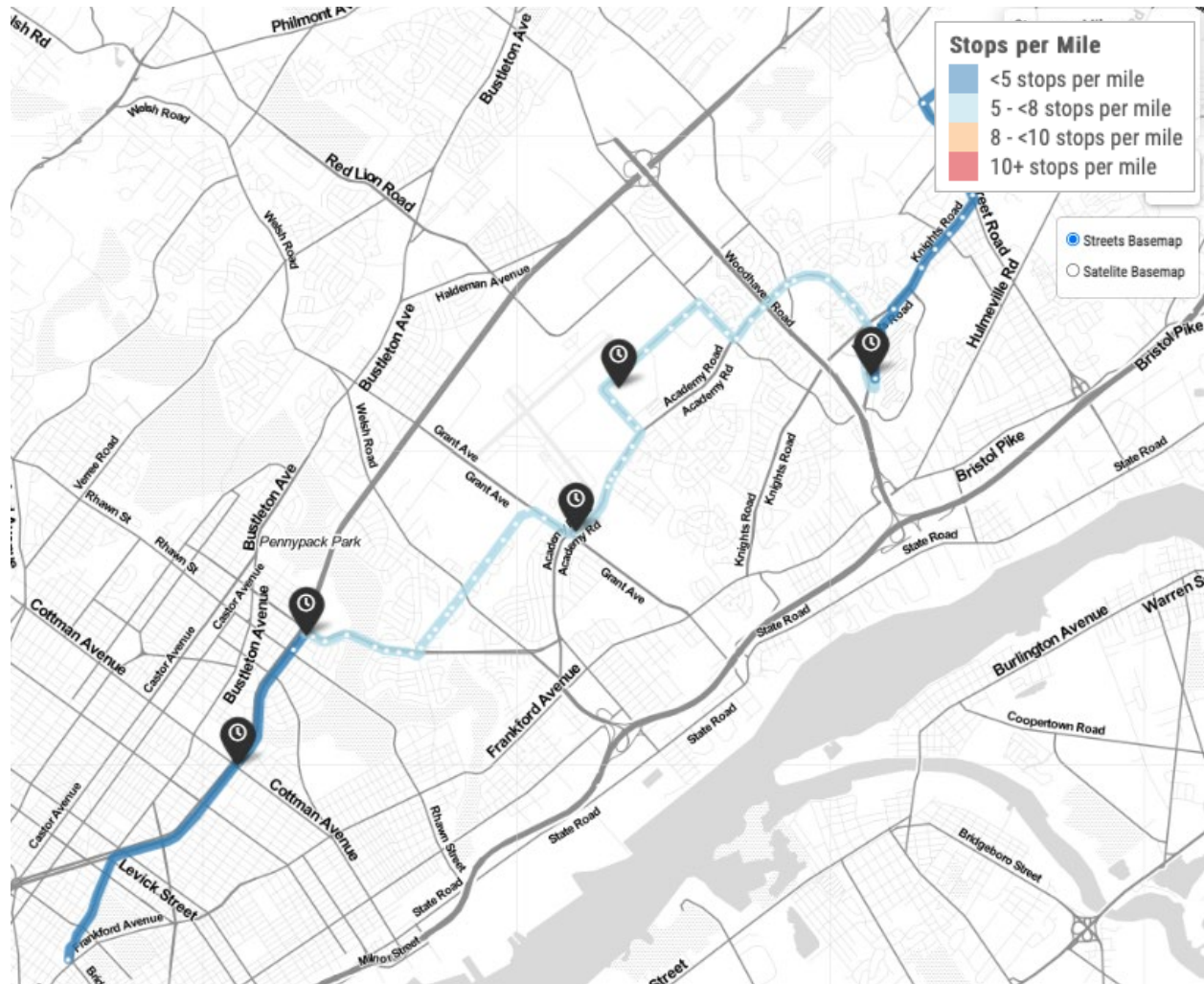
AVERAGE SPEEDS AND STOP SPACING

Route 50’s average speed is 18.8 miles per hour, which is very fast. Average speeds do not drop below 12 mph during any day of the week on any segment, northbound or southbound (see Figure 5).

Route 50 has an average of 4.5 stops per mile with some route segments showing closer stop spacing of eight stops per mile (see Figure 6). Route 50 operates with very limited stops and utilizes two stops shared with the Boulevard Direct when traveling on Roosevelt Boulevard to Holme Avenue.

Figure 5 | Fall 2019 PM Peak Northbound Average Speeds



Figure 6 | Stop Spacing by Route Segment


RIDER CHARACTERISTICS

In most Route 50's service area is typical of SEPTA's service area, with Route 50 seeing a slightly higher percentage of White and Hispanic riders. Additionally, there are fewer households without a vehicle than systemwide (see Table 5).

Table 5 | Rider Characteristics

	Route G Riders	Systemwide Average
Median Household Income	\$30,890	\$32,713
Share in Poverty	28%	30%
Ethnicity		
White	43%	38%
Black	35%	46%
Hispanic	14%	10%
Other	8%	7%
Without a Vehicle	29%	37%

Seniors	15%	15%
With a Disability	2%	2%

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities to strengthen Route 50 are listed below. Some suggestions may be contradictory, as there is usually more than one approach to improving a route:

- Consolidate Routes 20 and 50:** Route 20 and Route 50 operate similar service, and the two routes may be taking away riders from each other. Instead of operating both routes, Route 20 and Route 50 could be consolidated into one route using the primary pattern of Route 20. This consolidation could be implemented along with improved headways on Route 20 to better match ridership demand.
- Begin Service Earlier in the Day:** Route 50’s first few eastbound trips have very high ridership, indicating that there exists unmet demand for Early AM service. Route 50 could begin operating at 4:00 AM or 5:00 AM instead of its present weekday start time.