

## Greater Portland Transit District (Metro)

### Contact Information

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### Service Summary

Service area:	Brunswick, Falmouth, Freeport, Gorham, Portland, South Portland, Westbrook and Yarmouth
Type of service:	Fixed route; paratransit provided by RTP

### Metro Bus Service

The Greater Portland Transit District (Metro) provides public fixed route LOCAL transit service on eight major routes within the Greater Portland urbanized area including Falmouth, Portland, South Portland and Westbrook. In addition, Metro operates two EXPRESS transit routes include the “Breez” which inter-connects the municipalities of Brunswick, Freeport, Portland and Yarmouth and the “Husky Line” which inter-connects the municipalities of Gorham, Portland and Westbrook.

Metro’s routes and services are summarized below.

- 1. Route 1 Congress Street.** This route begins at the Portland Transportation Center. Major stops on the outbound to Munjoy Hill portion of the route include the Portland Transportation Center (PTC), Monument Square and North Street on the Eastern Promenade. Major stops on the inbound to PTC portion of the route include North Street on the Eastern Promenade, Congress Street/North Street, the Library, Metro/St John Street, and PTC. Six days a week, service every half hour begins at 5:10 a.m. and ends at 11:10 p.m. On Sunday, hourly service begins at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 6:30 p.m.
- 2. Route 2 Riverton.** This route begins at Metro Pulse on Elm Street. Major stops on the outbound portion of the route include Metro Pulse, Woodford’s Corner, Morrill’s Corner, Forest/Riverside, and Prides Corner. Major stops on the inbound to Downtown Portland portion of the route include Pride’s Corner, Forest/Riverside, Morrill’s Corner, Woodford’s Corner, and Metro Pulse. Weekday service every 25 minutes begins at 5:55 a.m. and ends at 10:10 p.m. Saturday service every hour begins at 6:15 a.m. and ends at 10:10 p.m. Sunday service every hour begins at 8:15 a.m. and ends at 4:10 p.m.
- 3. Route 3 Westbrook Crosstown.** This route begins at the Hannaford shopping plaza at Forest and Riverside in northwest Portland. Major stops include the Westbrook Community Center (WCC), downtown Westbrook, Spring Street at County Rd. Target Shopping Plaza and the Maine Mall. Weekday service every half hour begins at 5:40 a.m. and ends at 10:26 p.m. Saturday service every

hour begins at 6:35 a.m. and ends at 10:10 p.m. Sunday service every 90 minutes begins at 9:15 a.m. and ends at 6:00 p.m.

- 4. Route 4 Westbrook.** This route begins at Metro Pulse on Elm Street. Major stops on the outbound to Westbrook portion of the route include Metro Pulse, Rosemont Corner, Brighton Riverside, Hannaford, Idexx, and Saco Quimby. Major stops on the inbound to Downtown Portland portion of the route include Idexx, Saco Quimby, Hannaford, Shaw's, Rosemont Corner and Metro pulse. Weekday service every half hour in most locations begins at 5:10 a.m. and ends at 11:45 p.m. Saturday service every half hour in most locations begins at 5:45 a.m. and ends at 11:45 p.m. Sunday service every 45 minutes in most locations begins at 8:15 a.m. and ends at 7:45 p.m.
- 5. Route 5 Maine Mall.** This route begins at Metro Pulse on Elm Street. Major stops on the outbound to Maine Mall portion of the route include Metro Pulse, Westgate, Jetport, Congress/Hutchins, and Maine Mall. Major stops on the inbound to Downtown Portland portion of the route include Maine Mall, Jetport, Congress/Hutchins, Westgate, and Metro Pulse. Weekday service generally every 35 minutes begins at 5:30 a.m. and ends at 10:45 p.m. Saturday service generally every half hour begins at 6:05 a.m. and ends at 10:45 p.m. Sunday service generally every 45 minutes begins at 7:55 a.m. and ends at 6:40 p.m.
- 6. Route 7 Falmouth.** This route begins at Metro Pulse on Elm Street. Major stops on the outbound to Falmouth portion of the route include Metro Pulse, Washington Veranda, Walmart, Town Market, and OceanView. Major stops on the inbound to Downtown Portland portion of the route include Town Market, OceanView, Shaw's, Walmart, Washington Veranda and Metro Pulse. Monday through Saturday service every hour in most locations begins at 6:30 a.m. and ends at 7:25 p.m. Sunday service every hour in most locations begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 4:25 p.m.
- 7. Route 8 Peninsula Loop.** This route begins at Casco Bay Lines. Major stops include Hannaford Plaza, Congress & Forest, Maine Medical Center, Monument Square, Casco Bay Lines, Franklin Towers, Whole Foods, and back to Hannaford Plaza. Weekday service every 30-35 minutes begins at 6:40 a.m. and ends at 6:15 p.m. Saturday service every hour begins at 7:50 a.m. and ends at 6:17 p.m. Sunday service every hour begins at 8:50 a.m. and ends at 4:17 p.m.
- 8. Route 9A North Deering via Stevens Avenue.** This route begins at City Hall. Major stops include City Hall, Westgate, Morrill's Corner, Washington Auburn, Summit Street/Allen Avenue, Allen's Corner, Washington Veranda, and back to City Hall. Weekday service every 30-60 minutes begins at 5:35 a.m. and ends at 10:25 p.m. Saturday service every hour begins at 7:30 a.m. and ends at 10:25 p.m. Sunday service every hour begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 4:25 p.m.
- 9. Route 9B North Deering via Washington Avenue.** This route begins at Monument Square. Major stops include Monument Square, Washington Veranda, Allen's Corner, Summit Street/Allen Avenue, W. Falmouth Hannaford, Morrill's Corner, Westgate, and back to Monument Square. Weekday service every 30-60 minutes begins at 5:40 a.m. and ends at 9:00 p.m. Saturday service every hour begins at 8:10 a.m. and ends at 9:00 p.m. Sunday service every hour begins at 9:10 a.m. and ends at 5:10 p.m.
- 10. Husky Line Portland-Westbrook-Gorham.** This is a limited stop rapid route that serves the communities of Gorham, Westbrook and Portland. Major stops in both directions include Metro

Pulse in downtown Portland, USM Portland, Brighton Avenue at Stevens Avenue, Westbrook Crossing (planned for activation in 2019), Westbrook Hub in downtown Westbrook, Gorham Village and USM Gorham. Weekday service generally every half hour begins at 6:20 a.m. and ends at 10:40 p.m. Saturday service every 45 minutes begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 11:15 p.m. Sunday service every 45 minutes begins at 8:05 a.m. and ends at 7:09 p.m.

- 11. BREEZ Express Service Connecting Portland, Yarmouth, Freeport and Brunswick.** This service begins at the Portland Transportation Center. Major stops on the northbound to Brunswick portion of the route include Portland Transportation Center, Monument Square, Yarmouth Town Hall, Downtown Freeport/L.L. Bean, and Brunswick Train Station. Major stops on the southbound to Portland portion of the route include Brunswick Train Station, Downtown Freeport/L.L. Bean, Yarmouth Town Hall, Monument Square, and Portland Transportation Center. Weekday service at variable times begins at 6:00 a.m. and ends at 9:57 p.m. Saturday service every 2-2/12 hours begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 9:57 p.m.

## Summary of Service Changes

There have been a number of major changes during the past five years:

- 1. Metro Breez.** The Metro Breez service has been expanded to Brunswick and now provides service from the Portland Transportation Center, through Yarmouth including the Exit 15 Park & Ride, through Freeport including L.L. Bean, and through Brunswick with stops at the train station and Bowdoin College.
- 2. Husky Line.** This route is considered to be Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Lite in that it includes lower level features of BRT such as limited stops and specialized branding. It was launched in August 2018, providing limited stop service (only seven stops) in the communities of Gorham, Westbrook and Portland including stops at the Gorham and Portland campuses of the University of Southern Maine.
- 3. New Route 9.** This route is a consolidation of old routes 3 and 9, and includes Route 9A (North Deering via Stevens Avenue) and 9B (North Deering via Washington Avenue).
- 4. New Route 3.** This route, which began in 2018, provides links between the Riverton area of Portland to downtown Westbrook and the Maine Mall area of South Portland.

## Major accomplishments

- 1. Marketing.** Metro's new marketing campaign includes new branding: a new logo, a new website with bus pass sign-up features and information on route changes, USB charging and Wi-Fi on all buses, and the replacement of hundreds of bus stop signs with the new logo (Metro took delivery of 1,000 new signs in 2018).
- 2. New bus stop shelters.** In 2018, Metro took delivery of 24 new bus shelters, 10 of which were installed during the summer of 2018. Metro's long-term goal is to install shelters at all major bus stops.

3. **Snow bus.** During the winter of 2017-2018, Metro implemented a program to shovel out, sand and salt bus stops, using a “snow bus” and three laborers. A bus, rather than a service vehicle is used for the safety of the workers. A bus provides curbside access to the bus stop (no need to exit the vehicle from the driver’s side), and the traveling public is used to seeing a bus parked at a bus stop. Three laborers can clear up to 90 bus stops during an 8-hour day.
4. **New buses.** In 2018, Metro received and put into service 11 New Flyer buses. Eight of these buses supported the expansion of service on Route 3 and Husky Line. The remaining three replaced older, 40-foot buses. Thirteen additional replacements are planned in 2019 and 2020.
5. **Electric Bus Grant.** In partnership with Shuttlebus-Zoom and the Maine Department of Transportation, Metro secured \$2.3 million from FTA Low-No Emissions Grant Program to purchase 4 electric buses (2 for Metro; 2 for Shuttlebus) and supporting infrastructure.
6. **New Unlimited Access Transit Pass Program.** Through an Unlimited Access Transit Pass Program, students, faculty and staff can ride all Metro routes using their USM ID.
7. **New service bay doors.** Metro replaced 24 of its service bay doors with insulated doors and new motors.

## Future Priorities

1. **Regional bus stop access program.** This is aimed at providing better ADA access at roughly 200 bus stops throughout the region. Metro has funds in its capital improvement budget for the program.
2. **Electronic fare collection.** This would involve replacing the old fare boxes with electronic fare payment technology that can accept payment by smart card and smart phone. Bus passes could then operate like gift cards, with varying amounts of money on them, and be available in numerous locations.
3. **Portland Peninsula Transit Service Restructuring.** Metro is commencing a planning and public process to restructure how transit service operates on the Portland peninsula. The primary focus will be on converting the existing Route 8 into a more effective and broadly used urban circulator.
4. **Zero emission fleet.** Metro’s Board of Directors passed a resolution committing to be zero-emission by 2040.
5. **New facility.** Metro is gradually outgrowing the current facility and has begun consideration of a replacement facility, either on the same property or at a new location. Metro is currently leasing part of the office and garage space to RTP for a period of three years, and could use the leased space if RTP relocates to another site after the lease expires. To continue using the current site, a new, more compact office would allow more of the property to be devoted to bus storage and maintenance. Metro has not yet set aside any funds for the necessary studies or the facility itself.

- 6. Bus replacement schedule.** Metro has adopted a plan to replace buses on-time (or no later than 14 years for a 12-year bus) and is also working to smooth out the replacement cycle to optimize average vehicle age and by extension, operating and capital cost expenditures.

## Plans and Studies

- 1. PACTS/GPCOG.** Metro works with PACTS and GPCOG and other transit providers on short and long-range transit plans for the region.
- 2. Annual customer survey.** Metro conducts an annual customer survey to measure customer satisfaction with its service. Metro advertises the availability of the survey on the bus, on line, in the newspaper, at the office and at the Transportation Center.
- 3. Forest Avenue Study.** This is a long-range plan aimed at reducing traffic along the Forest Avenue corridor.
- 4. Hub Link study.** This is an on-going study to provide better connections between the Jetport, Transportation Center and Casco Bay Ferry.

## Ridership

Ridership on Metro has been increasing on an annual basis as shown in the table below. From September through May, a large number of high school students ride the bus. During the summer months, there are fewer students, although there is a summer pass program for high school students and a summer youth pass program. More tourists ride the bus during the summer months.

<b>GPTD/Metro Fixed Route Trips</b>					
	<b>FY2013</b>	<b>FY2014</b>	<b>FY2015</b>	<b>FY2016</b>	<b>FY2017</b>
General Public	1,452,363	1,489,116	1,568,136	1,810,825	1,850,686
ADA Trips	8,258	4,873	4,029	11,732	18,281
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,460,621</b>	<b>1,493,989</b>	<b>1,572,165</b>	<b>1,822,557</b>	<b>1,868,967</b>

## Fares

<b>Fare</b>	Local service: \$1.50 Local one-way Breez: \$3.00 one-way
<b>Exact Fare Required?</b>	Yes
<b>Electronic Fare?</b>	No
<b>Senior/disabled Half fare available?</b>	Yes Local Service \$0.75 one-way Breez: \$1.50 one-way
<b>Senior/disabled half fare pass required?</b>	Pass or proper ID
<b>Other discounts?</b>	Local Service: \$1.00 youth fare (ages 6-18); free ages 5 and under; two free child fares when combined with full or reduced adult fare; transfers free; \$5.00 day pass; monthly pass \$45; 10-ride ticket

	\$13.50 (\$6.75 for senior, disabled discount); summer youth pass \$20 Breez: \$2.00 youth fare (ages 6-18); free ages 5 and under; \$10 day pass; \$90 monthly pass; 10-ride ticket \$27 (\$13.50 for senior, disabled discount)
<b>Multi-ride prepayment?</b>	Yes
<b>Monthly pass prepayment?</b>	Yes
<b>Passes available from:</b>	Tickets and passes available at Metro Pulse, Westbrook City Hall, Yarmouth and Freeport Town Halls, participating Shaw's and Hannaford stores, Casco Bay Ferry Terminal, Bowdoin College, Brunswick Visitor Center Transit Station

## Buses/Facilities

During FY 2018, Metro acquired 11 New Flyer buses; 8 of which were expansion and 3 were replacements for the 1996 buses. Five of the new 40-foot buses are CNG buses; the rest are diesels. Metro plans to acquire another six buses to replace 2005 buses. In 2020, another seven buses will replace the remainder of the 2005 buses. Metro worked with MaineDOT and BSOOB in 2018 to successfully leverage VW Settlement funds with the FTA Low-No Grant Program to begin the transition to electric buses. The number of buses and charging stations will be confirmed in 2019. More funds are needed. To date, the New Flyer buses have been well received by the public.

Metro is installing Wi-Fi on all its buses. In FY 2018, Metro took delivery of 24 new bus shelters, 10 of which were installed during the summer of 2018. Metro's long-term goal is to install shelters at all major bus stops. Other work included the replacement of bus stop signs with reflective signs that carry the new logo, and replacement of 24 service bay doors with insulated doors.

## Coordination/Outreach/Partnerships/Unmet Needs

Metro has a customer service person who helps customers and potential riders on a daily basis. Metro works with nonprofits including several Catholic charities, New Mainers Resource Center, seniors' groups, shelters, and the Portland Disability Advisory Committee to teach people how to use the bus and to provide information about service changes. A lot of the outreach occurs during the spring. Outreach also occurs through the website and printed marketing materials, some of which are also available in other languages.

Metro connects with other transit services (e.g. South Portland Bus Service, Lakes Region Bus Service, ShuttleBus) and supports the bus pass system that allows passengers to transfer from one bus system to another at no additional charge. Additional connections are also made to other modes of transportation (e.g. Portland Jetport, Casco Bay Ferry Service, Amtrak). Metro also works with PACTS and its members, including other transportation providers in the region, on long-range transportation plans for the region including initiatives to better serve the traveling public.

## Innovations/Creative Approaches

Innovations and creative approaches, as previously discussed, include:

1. **The snow bus**, used for clearing bus stops of snow and ice;
2. **USB charging and Wifi** on all Metro's buses;
3. **The Metro Breez**, which provides regional bus service to communities from Portland to Brunswick;
4. **The Husky Line**, which provides light rapid transit with limited stops between Portland, Westbrook and Gorham and connects the USM campuses in Portland and Gorham;
5. **Unlimited Access Transit Pass Programs**, USM students, faculty and staff can ride all Metro routes using their university ID.
6. **The regional bus pass system** that allows passengers to transfer from one system to another at no extra charge.

## Major Challenges

1. **Drivers and mechanics.** Finding, training and retaining drivers and mechanics is a constant challenge, in part because of the high cost of housing in Portland. Planned expansion of services will require an additional 11 drivers. Another problem affecting driver retention is Metro's service day which extends from 5:00 a.m. until midnight and requires that drivers work split shifts.
2. **Funding.** Funding is a constant challenge.
3. **Paratransit service.** Client dumping by the broker is a budget challenge, as is the fact that RTP often closes during snowstorms when Metro continues to operate.
4. **Facility constraints.** Metro is quickly outgrowing the current facility and is commencing work on a suitable replacement.
5. **Fragmented transit network.** With four bus providers operating in the region each with different brands, service standards, communications and policies, the current system is confusing, hard to use and represents a major barrier to attracting new riders.

## Public Participation Summary

1. Metro attended and participated in the Region 6 Transit Workshop on October 27, 2016, at the City of Portland Library.
2. Title VI Program Update – February and March 2016.
3. Metro Overview and Budget Report to Westbrook City Council – April 2016.

4. Annual (“Listening Tour”) Public Meetings in Falmouth, Freeport, Portland, Westbrook and Yarmouth – May 2016.
5. Three presentations to Gorham Town Council on Transit West Improvements – July and October 2016.
6. Progress Report Presented to Portland Public Schools on Portland High School Student Pass Program – September 2016.
7. Presentation to Westbrook City Council on Transit West Improvements – October 2016.
8. Presentation to Brunswick Town Council on joining Metro Breez project – December 2016.
9. Routine meetings with Portland Disability Advisory Committee.
10. Routine meetings with Portland’s Bike-Pedestrian Ad Hoc Committee.
11. Routine meetings and presentations to Catholic Charities and other groups requesting travel training.
12. Presentation to Portland Trails 15x15 Annual Meeting.
13. Regular meetings of the Metro Breez Task Force which comprises municipal staff, elected officials and citizens.
14. Regular meetings of the Advisory Task Force for the Portland High School Student Pass Program which comprises Metro staff, PPS staff, students and parents.