



METRO

ROUTE 5 MAINE MALL

Route Overview

Route 5 operates between the Maine Mall and downtown Portland via the Stroudwater, Libbytown, Valley Street, and Parkside neighborhoods. Major destinations along the route include the Maine Mall, Hannaford, the Westgate Shopping Center (where there is a Shaw’s), South Portland Comprehensive Treatment Center, and Maine Medical Center. Some trips also serve the Portland International Jetport and Nichols, and inbound trips serve Union Station Plaza, where there is a Sav-a-Lot supermarket and a Dollar Tree.

Route Map



Alignment

Route 5 mostly operates bi-directionally on Foden Road, Western Avenue, Congress Street, and Park Avenue. Quasi alternating deviations, as shown in the map above, serve Portland International Jetport and the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, and Unum offices, Health Care Resource Centers Portland, and Nichols Portland. Just south of I-295, inbound operates via Congress Street to Saint John’s Street to Park Avenue via Union Station Plaza. However, outbound service skips these locations and stays on Park Avenue.

Connections

Transfers with all other METRO routes (except Route 3 Westbrook Crosstown), all SPBS routes, RTP’s Lake Region Explorer, and BSOOB Transit’s routes 60 Green and 70 Purple/ZOOM can be

made at the PULSE. Transfers can be made with BSOOB Transit Route 60 Green and SPBS' Routes 24A Maine Mall and 24B Maine Mall at the Maine Mall and transfers can be made with METRO's Route 9A/9B North Deering at Stevens Avenue. Finally, Route 3 interlines with Route 5 at the Maine Mall, providing a one-seat ride.

Schedule

Route 5 trunk service operates every 30 minutes for most of the day on weekdays and Saturdays and every 45 minutes on Sundays. Most trips alternate between the two mid-route deviations (to the airport and Nichols). There are many exceptions to the alternating patterns but service along the deviations generally operates every 60 to 90 minutes.

Schedule Summary

	Span of Service	Headways (mins.)	On-Time Performance
Weekdays	5:20 AM to 10:40 PM	30-60	79%
Saturday	6:05 AM to 10:40 PM	30-60	
Sunday	7:55 AM to 6:40 PM	45	

Note: Span and frequency are from February 2022 data, while revenue hours, ridership, and OTP are from October 2019 data.

Service operates with a long span of service on weekdays and only slightly shorter hours on Saturdays, and for fewer hours on Sundays.

On-Time Performance

Route 5 on-time performance is above the METRO system's route average of 76% but does not meet the agency's standard of 90%. Traffic congestion impacts on-time performance on Congress Street west of I-295 and at the St. John Street at Congress Street intersection.

Ridership and Productivity

Ridership and Productivity by Day

In October 2019, Route 5 averaged 1,043 weekday boardings, 873 Saturday boardings, and 381 Sunday boardings. It is METRO's third-highest ridership weekday route and highest-ridership weekend route.

Productivity, in terms of boardings per revenue hour, was similar across the week, with 31 on weekdays, 25 on Saturdays, and 28 on Sundays. Using this measure, it is METRO's second-most productive route on weekdays and Sundays, and third-most productive on Saturdays.

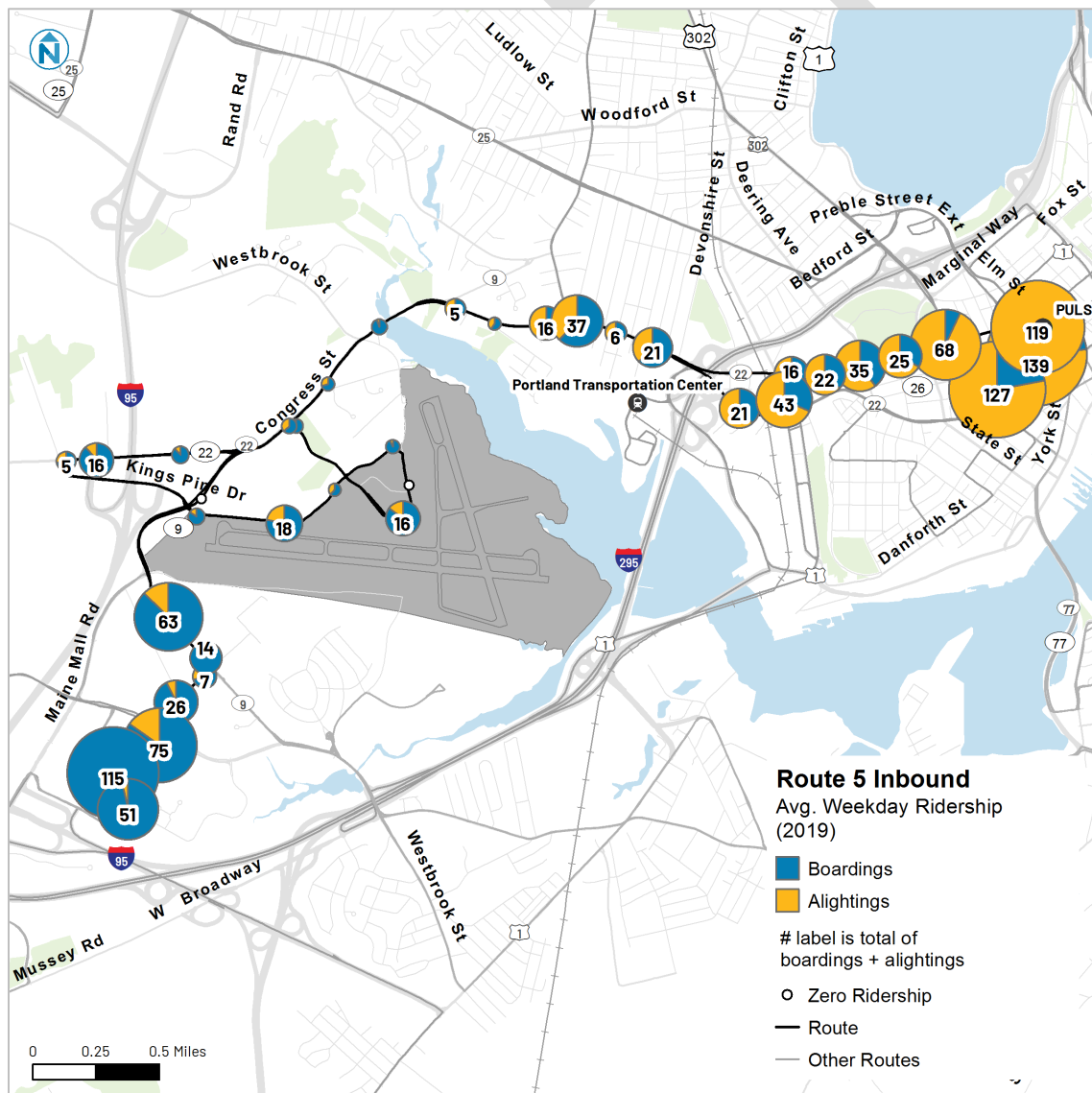
Weekday Ridership by Stop

In October 2019, Route 5's weekday ridership was highest on the Portland Peninsula and in the Maine Mall area. Ridership between I-295 and the intersection of Western Avenue and Maine Mall Road was relatively low. The highest-ridership stops and stop groupings were:

- Downtown Portland stops, which served about 655 boardings and alightings
- The South Portland Comprehensive Treatment Center on Western Avenue, with 124 boardings and alightings
- The Maine Mall, with 280 boardings and alightings

Ridership on the Portland Jetport and Nichols deviations was low.

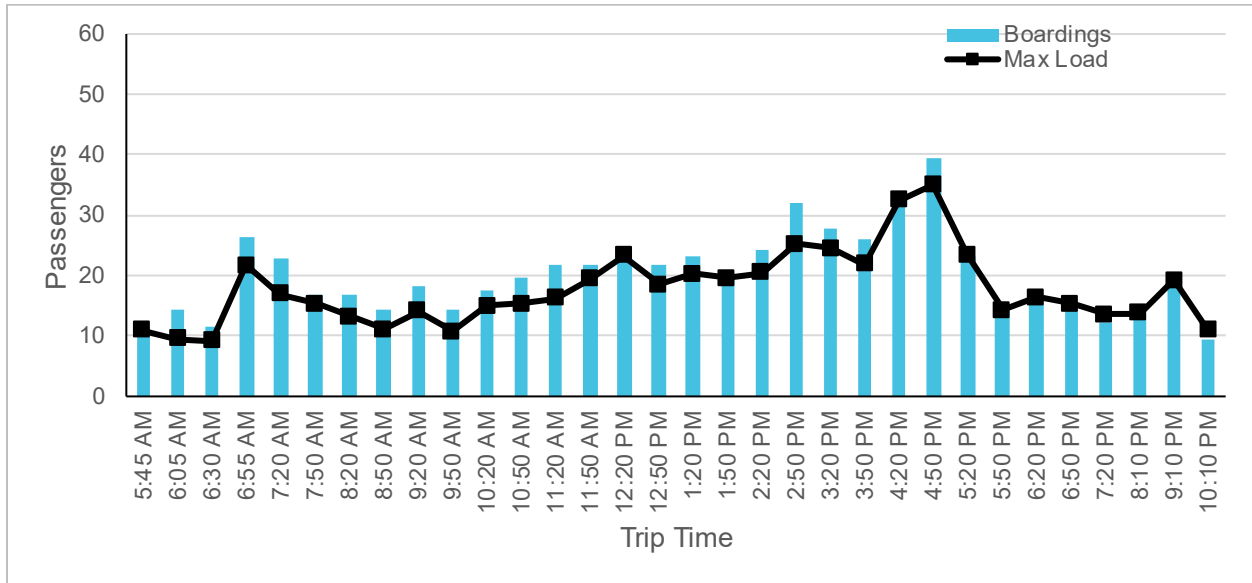
Weekday Ridership by Stop Map



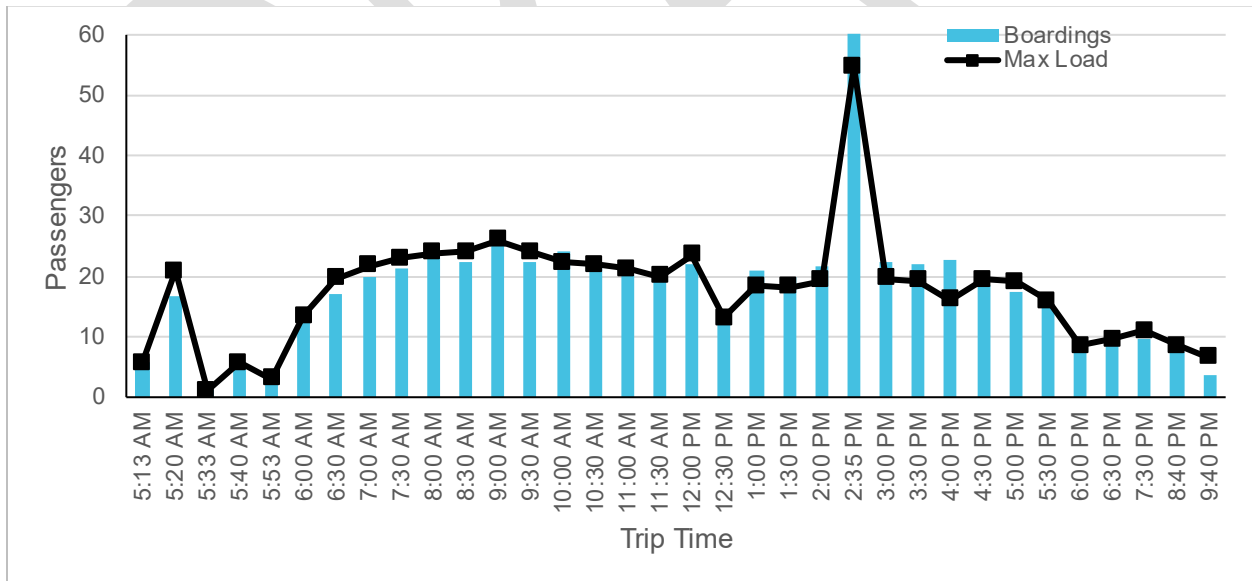
Weekday Ridership by Trip

In October 2019, Route 5 ridership was relatively consistent throughout the day, with a peak in the late afternoon, including high ridership on the 2:35 PM outbound trip, which were likely high-school departures.

Weekday Boardings by Trip: Inbound (October 2019)



Weekday Boardings by Trip: Outbound (October 2019)



Overall Service Assessment

Strengths

- Overall ridership is strong, and productivity is high.
- Weekday and Saturday spans of service are very good.
- With the significant exception of the two mid-route deviations, the route is direct.
- Route 5 connects the high-demand areas of downtown Portland and the Maine Mall.
- Route 5 provides important social services connections, including the South Portland Comprehensive Treatment Center.

Weaknesses

- The Jetport and Nichols deviations serve few riders and take through-riders significantly out of their way.
- Union Station Plaza is only served on inbound trips.
- Route 5 does not serve popular destinations such as Target or the Scarborough Walmart.

Opportunities

Opportunities to strengthen Route 5 are listed below. Some suggestions may be contradictory, as there is usually more than one approach to improving a route.

- Discontinue service on the Jetport and Nichols deviations due to low ridership and impacts on through-riders.
- Alternatively, if the two deviations are maintained, consistently alternate trips between the two.
- Extend service to the South Portland Target and/or Scarborough Walmart.
- Improve Westbrook–Maine Mall area–South Portland service as part of a more extensive restructuring of METRO/SPBS South Portland/Portland service.
- Work with the City of Portland to see if the one-way segment of Congress Street between I-295 and St. John Street can be altered, as Route 5 currently only serves Union station Plaza in one direction.
- In the future, extending Route 5 to Scarborough Downs may be warranted and possible.