

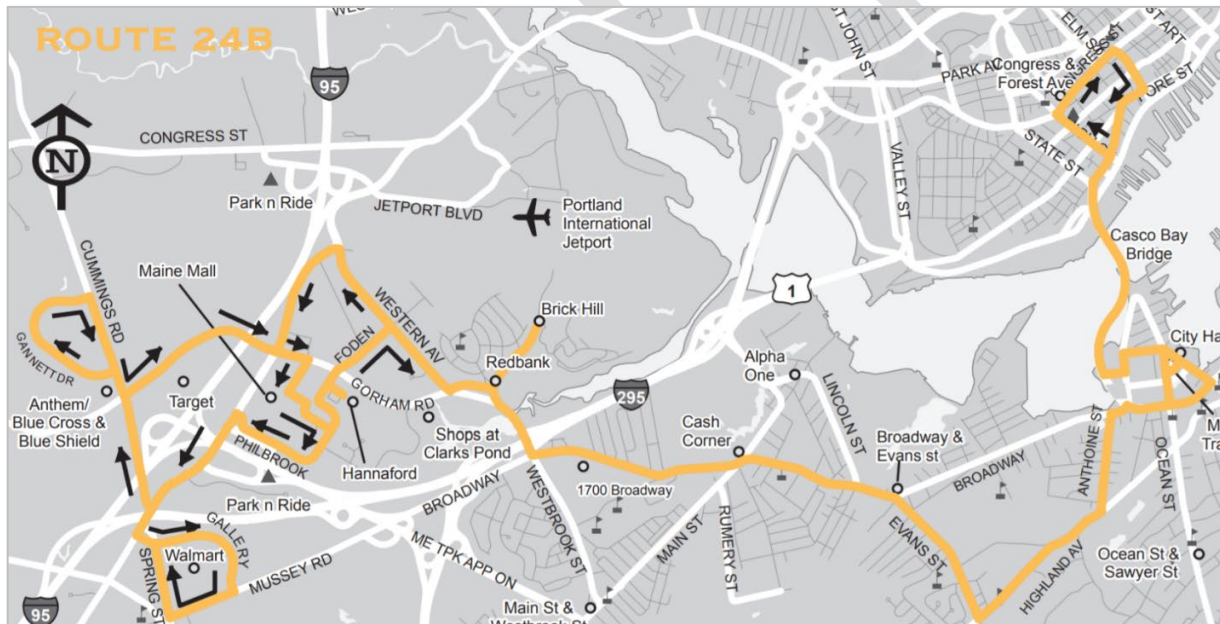
SOUTH PORTLAND BUS SERVICE

24B MAINE MALL

Route Overview

SPBS Route 24B is one of two east-west coverage routes that connect the Maine Mall area and several South Portland neighborhoods with downtown Portland. The route serves South Portland's Knightville, Pleasantdale, Stanwood Park, Cash Corner, Meadowbrook, Redbank, and Mall/Airport neighborhoods. Key destinations on the route include Hannaford, Shaw's, South Portland High School, Redbank Village, South Portland Comprehensive Treatment Center, the Maine Mall, and Walmart.

Route Map



The companion route that provides east-west service is Route 24A Maine Mall. The difference between the two is that Route 24B serves Stanwood Park and South Portland High School and Route 24A serves the Ligonias and Thornton Heights neighborhoods.

Alignment

Along most of its lengths, Route 24B operates bi-directionally on Anthoine Street, Highland Avenue, Evans Street, and Broadway. The route deviates from the most direct east-west corridor of Broadway to provide coverage along Anthoine Street, Highland Avenue, and Evans Street. At its eastern end in downtown Portland, it operates a terminal loop to serve the PULSE. At its western end, it operates very circuitously along a generally clockwise loop-within-loop alignment that serves the Maine Mall, other retail destinations, and the Gannett Drive business

park. The alignment in this area is confusing, indirect, and causes many riders to travel out of direction for considerable amounts of time.

Connections

Transfers to other routes can be made three locations:

- Along Congress Street/the PULSE in downtown Portland, where connections can be made with METRO routes, RTP’s Lakes Region Explorer, and BSOOB Transit’s Route 60 and 70.
- At SPBS’ Mill Creek Transit Hub, where connections can be made with other SPBS routes.
- At the Maine Mall, where connections can be made with METRO’s Route 3 Portland–Westbrook–South Portland and Route 5 Maine Mall, as well as SPBS 24B and BSOOB Transit Route 60.

Schedule

Route 24B only operates on weekdays and service frequencies are very low, with most trips operating two hours apart from 6:20 AM to 9:50 PM. Route 24B trips alternate with Route 24A trips. This means that common locations along the two routes receive service approximately every 60 minutes, while unique locations receive service approximately every 120 minutes.

Schedule Summary (Current)

	Span of Service	Headways (mins.)	On-Way Trips
Weekdays	6:20 AM to 9:50 PM	87-120	16
Saturday	No service		
Sunday	No service		

Note: Span and frequency from January 2022 schedules. Trip counts from spring 2017 data.

Ridership and Productivity

Ridership and Productivity by Day

In Spring 2017, Route 24B carried 245 passengers per weekday. This made it SPBS’ lowest ridership route, but not much lower than Route 24A, which served 304 passengers over a longer span. The route carried 16 passengers per revenue hour, which was also the lowest of SPBS’ three routes, but also not significantly lower than Route 24A’s 17 passengers per hour.

Weekday Ridership by Stop

In Spring 2017, Route 24B’s highest average weekday ridership stops were:

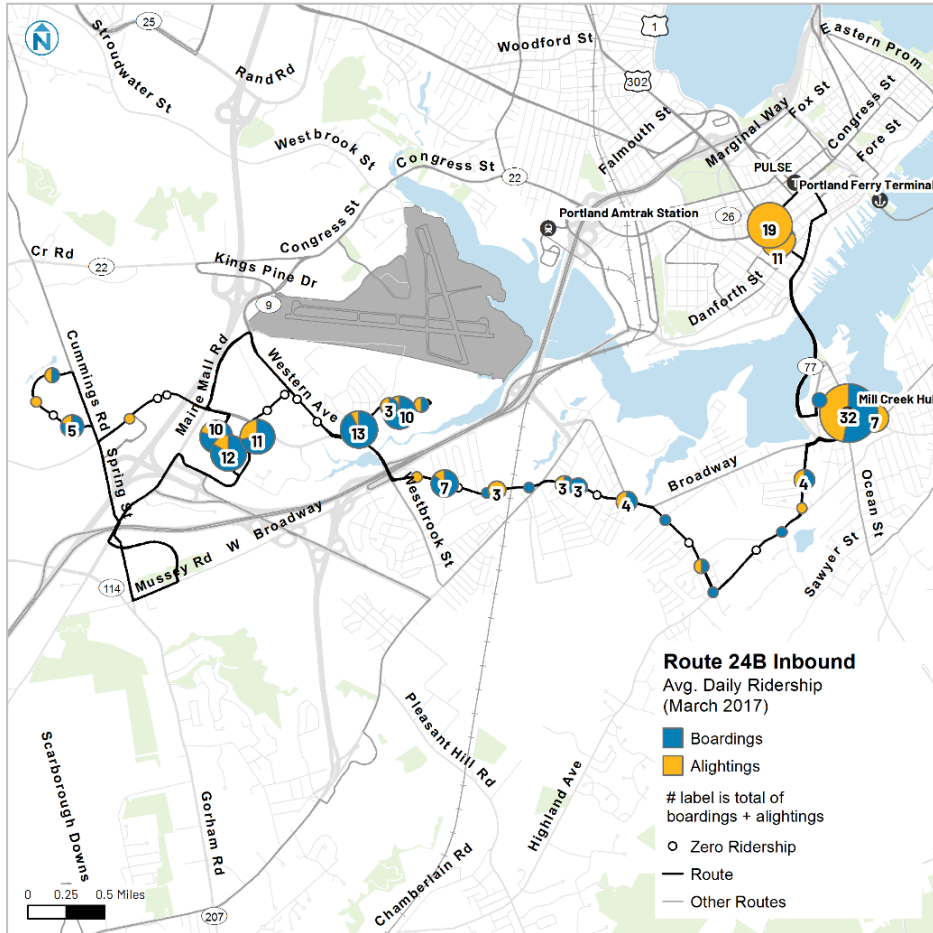
- Downtown Portland, with almost 150 boardings and alightings
- The Maine Mall area, with about 70 boardings and alightings

- The Mill Creek Transit Hub, with 70 boardings and alightings
- Walmart, with 43 boardings and alightings
- Redbank Village apartments, with 25 boardings and alightings

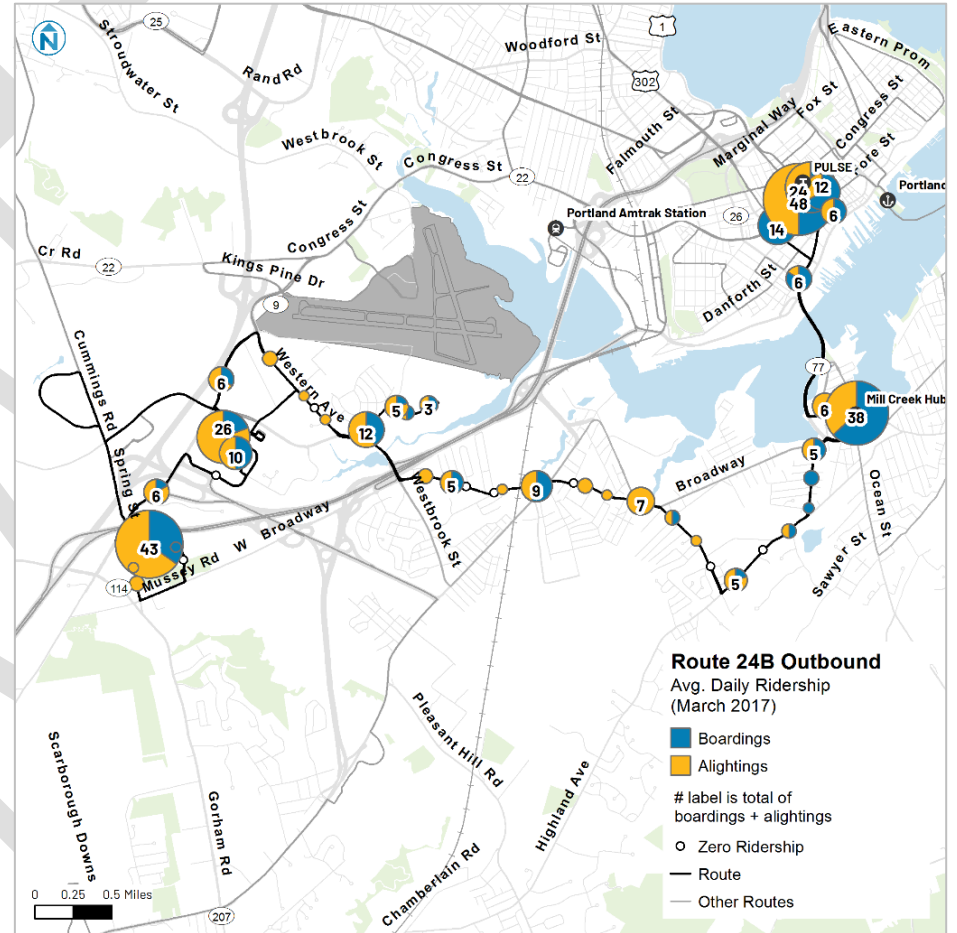
The Gannett Drive business park loop served very few riders.



Weekday Ridership by Stop: Inbound (Spring 2017)



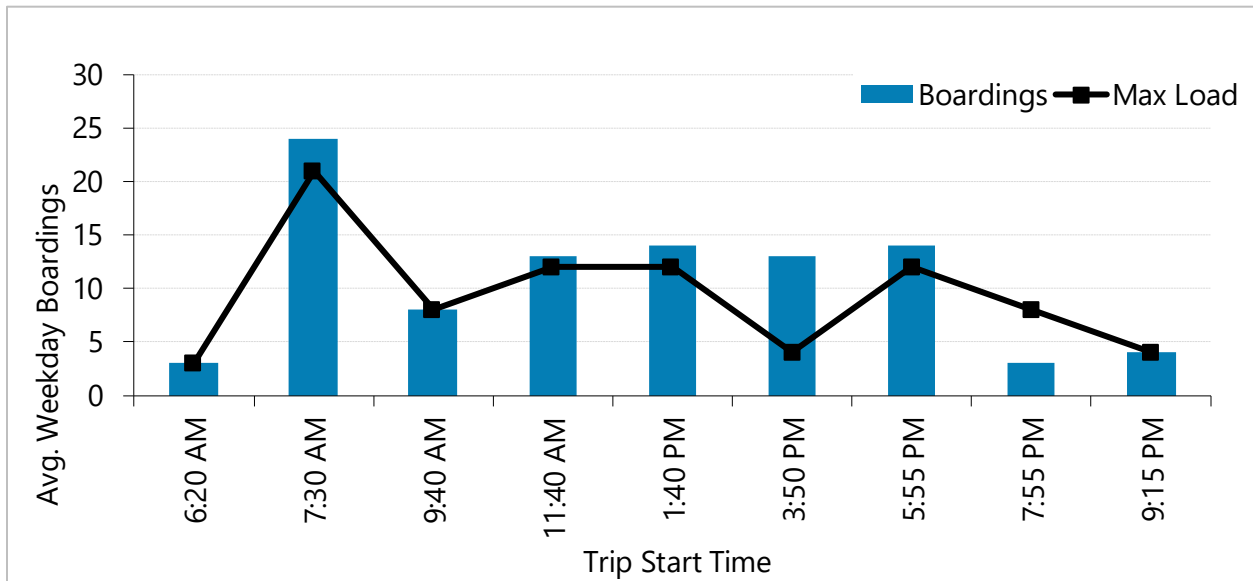
Ridership by Stop: Outbound (Spring 2017)



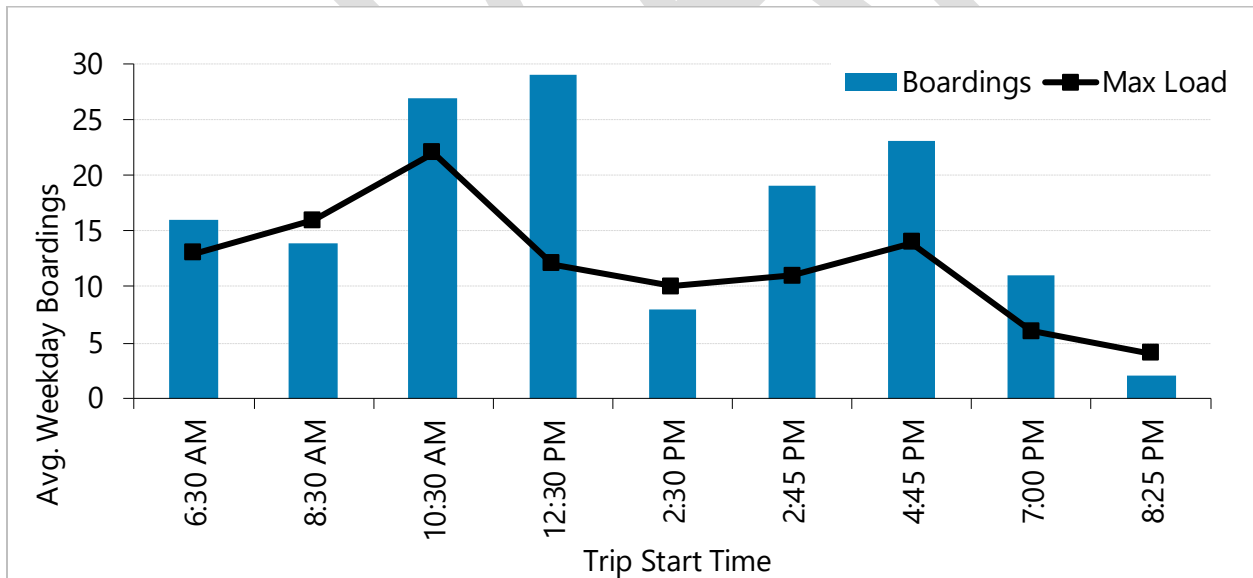
Weekday Ridership by Trip

Spring 2017 ridership on Route 24B was relatively consistent throughout weekdays, with an inbound peak on the 7:30 AM trip and outbound peaks in the mid-day and late afternoon. The last trips of the night had relatively low ridership.

Weekday Boardings by Trip: Inbound (Spring 2017)



Weekday Boarding by Trip: Inbound (Spring 2017)



Assessments and Opportunities

Strengths

- There are several strong ridership generators on the route, including shopping near the Mill Creek Transit Hub, downtown Portland, Redbank Village, Walmart, and the Maine Mall.
- The route has a long segment of easily understandable bi-directional service, much of which is on the most direct east-west corridor for the service, Broadway.

Weaknesses

- Route 24B has very long headways. Because services that operate less frequently than every 60 minutes are very inconvenient, most potential riders will only use them as a last resort.
- The route's western end is extremely circuitous, causing riders to spend extra time on the bus and travel out-of-direction.
- The route has a long deviation to serve Brick Hill.
- The route deviates to serve near-zero ridership Gannett Drive.
- The route is infrequent, even when combined with the Route 24A.
- The route duplicates the connection between the Maine Mall and downtown Portland with the SPBS Route 24A and METRO Route 5.

Opportunities

Opportunities to strengthen Route 24B are listed below. Some suggestions may be contradictory, as there is usually more than one approach to improving a route.

- Provide more frequent service, with buses arriving at least every 60 minutes.
- Reduce duplication with Route 24A, potentially by operating Route 24A much more directly (largely along Broadway) and providing coverage service with Route 24B.
- Consolidate routes 24A and 24B into a single route that provides more direct service to higher-ridership stops, Serve low-ridership locations with microtransit.
- Simplify the western end loops to make service easier to understand and reduce out-of-direction travel. There are several ways this could be done, some of which may require additional resources.
- Discontinue Gannett Drive loop service, where ridership is very low.
- Shift Route 24B's schedule slightly earlier to better serve South Portland High School's 8:10 AM start time.