AGENDA
STRATEGIC PLANNING & OPERATIONAL COMMITTEE

September 27, 2017
11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Wellness Center
SunLine Transit Agency
Thousand Palms, CA

1. **Call to Order**

2. **Roll Call**

3. **Presentation**

4. **Public Comments**
   Anyone wishing to address the Strategic Planning & Operational Committee on items not on the Agenda should do so at this time. Each presentation is limited to three minutes.

5. **Committee Member Comments**

- ACTION -

6. **Service Standards Policy #B-190613 Amendment** **Action**
   (Emmanuel Martinez, Chair Strategic Planning & Operational Committee; Staff: Stephanie Buriel)
   Recommend that the Board of Directors approve the attached Amended Service Standards Policy #B-190613

7. **Adjourn**

SunLine Transit Agency

DATE:	**September 27, 2017**	**ACTION**
TO:	**Strategic Planning and Operations Committee**	
FROM:	**Deputy Chief Administration Officer**	
RE:	**Service Standards Policy #B-190613 Amendment Approval**	

Recommendation

Recommend that the Board of Directors approve the attached red-lined Service Standards Policy #B-190613.

Background

In 2016, the Board approved the Service Standards Policy to provide the Agency staff a clear direction in the planning, operation, and management of transit service in the Coachella Valley. The approved policy increased Passengers Per Revenue Hour for Urban Lines and Local Lines. The Policy also increased Passengers Per Trip for Commuter Link Service, and Cost Recovery. The service standards were changed based on the recommendation made by TMD, our planning consultant at the time. Since that time staff has reviewed the policy and made the determination to revert back to the previous measures prior to approval on July 27, 2016. Additional changes include naming of line service to reflect what was written in the SRTP.

The above standards are outlined in detail in the provided Service Standards Policy.

Financial Impact

None.

Stephanie Buriel

SERVICE STANDARDS POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Service Standards Policy is to provide a policy framework for guidance of staff in the design, operation, and management of SunLine Transit Agency's transit services.

II. POLICY

1. Scope

The provisions of this policy shall apply to all SunLine staff in the design, operation, and management of SunLine's transit services.

2. Objectives

SunLine's Service Standards Policy objectives shall be to:

a. Promote the continuous improvement of transit service throughout the Coachella Valley and the maximization of mobility benefits to the community.

b. Support the agency in meeting Federal Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) requirements in avoiding arbitrary discriminatory decisions regarding provision of transit service.

III. PROCEDURE

1. Background

SunLine is the sole provider of regular scheduled fixed route (SunBus) and complementary Americans with Disabilities Act of 1964 (ADA) Paratransit (SunDial) service for the Coachella Valley in Southern California.

SunLine Transit Agency is a Joint Powers Authority established in 1977 to provide public transit services to nine member cities and seven Riverside County unincorporated communities. It is governed by a Board of elected officials, one from each of the nine member cities, plus the county supervisor.

The stated vision, mission, and goals of the agency are as follows:

- Vision
    - SunLine Transit Agency is the regional transportation mode of choice.
- Mission:
    - To provide safe and environmentally conscious public transportation services and alternative fuel solutions to meet the mobility needs of the Coachella Valley.
- Goals:
    - To provide dynamic organizational leadership and change consistent with the growth of the transit agency.
    - To continue the advancement of innovative transportation and alternative fuel technologies.
    - To provide leadership for the region's mobility needs.
    - To provide high quality transportation services that are safe, efficient, and effective.

1. Service Area and Transit Network

SunLine operates a range of services:

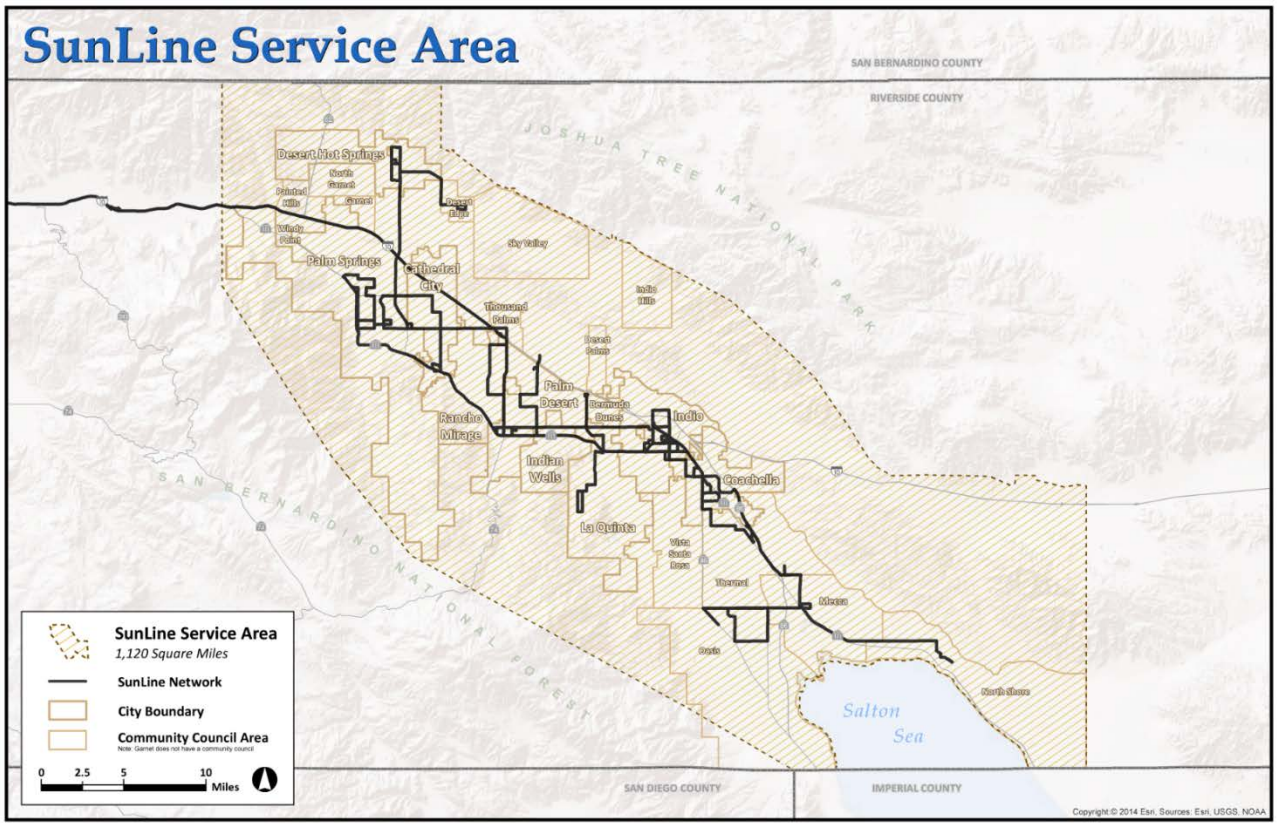
- SunBus provides 15 fixed route transit lines throughout the Coachella Valley.
- SunLine Market Based Service ~~Commuter Link~~ service provides local and regional passenger bus service between the Coachella Valley and Riverside.
- SunDial provides transportation service required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1964 (ADA) for individuals with disabilities who are unable to use the SunBus fixed route service; the system must be comparable to the fixed route system.
- Half Fare Taxi Voucher Program is a curb-to-curb, premium demand response service designed to transport residents of the Coachella Valley who are 60 years of age and older. It is provided through local taxi operators and is available 24 hours a day, year round. The continuation of this program is contingent upon grant funding.

SunLine has a 1,120 square mile service area from the Highway 111/Interstate-10 Junction in the northwest to the Imperial County border in the southeast, bounded by mountains to the north and south. The agency currently serves the nine member cities (from west to east)

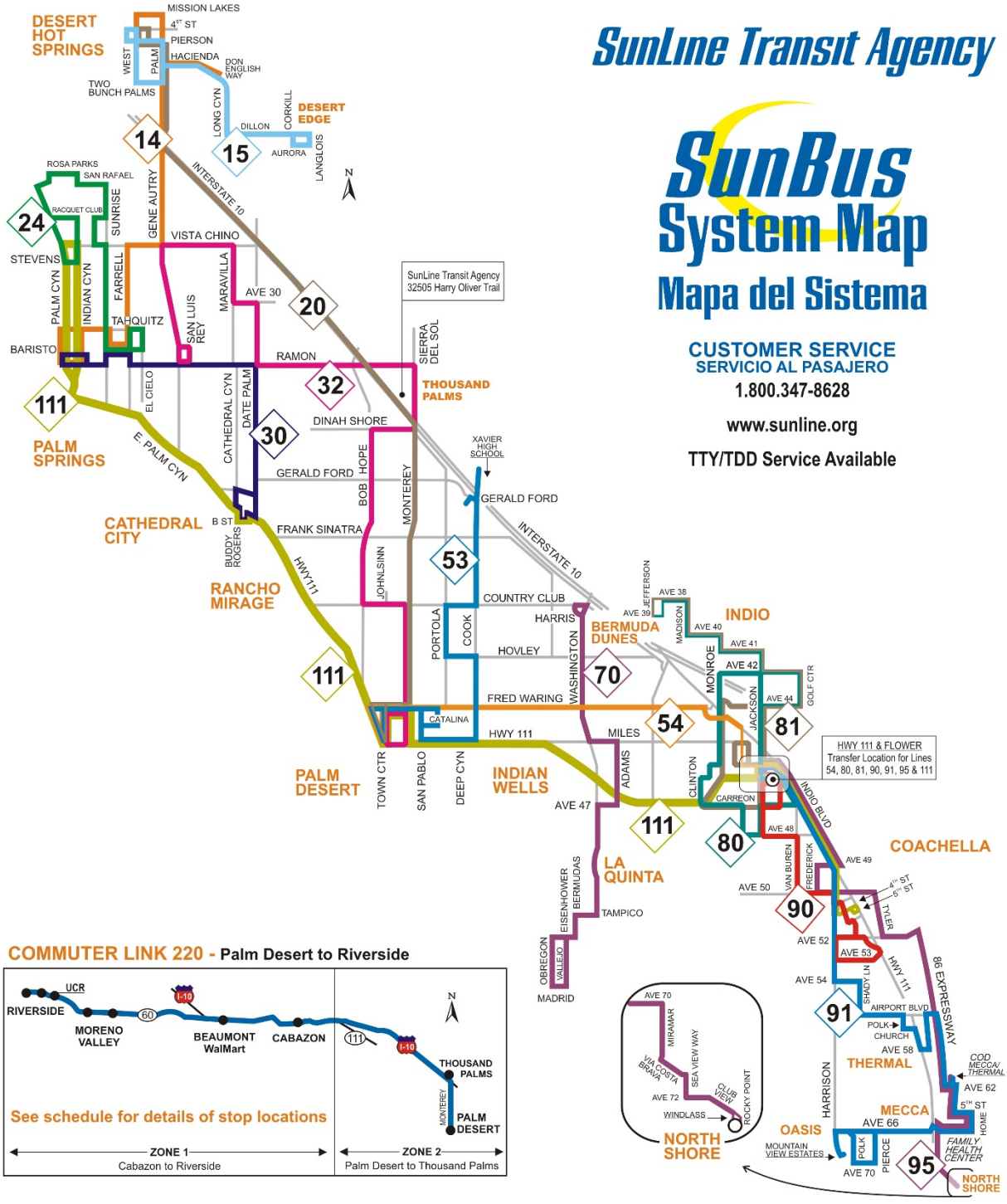
of Desert Hot Springs, Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage, Palm Desert, Indian Wells, La Quinta, Indio, and Coachella, plus the seven unincorporated communities of Thousand Palms, Bermuda Dunes, Desert Edge, Thermal, Mecca, Oasis, and North Shore.

Below, Map 1 illustrates the SunLine service area; Map 2 shows the January 2016 fixed route transit network.

Map 1 – SunLine Service Area



Map 2 – SunLine Transit Service Network



2. Service Standards Overview

This document sets service standards for service design, service performance, service quality and service warrants.

- **2.1 Design Standards:** Design Standards refer to the design of transit services in regards to service tiers, frequency, service span, stop and route spacing, route alignment, connectivity, and stop amenities.
- **2.2 Performance Standards:** Performance Standards are used to evaluate the performance of existing transit services to continuously improve productivity and sustainability.
- **2.3 Quality Standards:** Quality Standards are used to maintain and improve the consistency and reliability of service delivery as well as the passenger experience.
- **2.4 Warrants Standards:** Warrants Standards provide a way to determine which areas within the large service area will have both the passenger demand and performance potential to produce cost effective fixed route transit service.

2.1 Service Design Standards

Service Tiers the SunLine transit network is classified into three tiers that define the service level and performance expectations for each service:

- **Trunk ~~Urban~~ Lines** – Lines 14, 30, and 111
- **Local Lines** – Lines 15, 20, 24, 32, 53, 54, 70, 80, 81, 90, 91, and 95
- **Market-Based ~~Commuter Link~~ Service** – Link 220

Minimum service level specifications or warrants are responsive to the service tiers, network connectivity, and ridership/demand requirements. Minimums may be exceeded where supported by demand and prioritized for funding of such higher service levels.

Trunk ~~Urban~~ Lines are designed to deliver service in highly populated areas with high ridership and productivity anticipated, also known as ridership per revenue hour. Generally, to meet the demand, higher frequencies are required to accommodate the demand for service. Additionally, the service links travel between multiple communities often serving the Coachella Valley's busiest corridors.

Local Lines are designed to pick up and deliver passengers to a~~n~~ Trunk~~Urban~~ Line and therefore necessitate lower levels of service due to the provision of localized transportation. Generally, these lines typically have lower overall ridership and productivity.

Market-Based ~~Commuter Link S~~Service is designed to provide express service to regional destinations, improving access to jobs and job services across the county and beyond (via connection to the regional rail network and/or Trunk~~Urban~~ Lines).

Key attributes in relation to these services include:

- Stop frequencies and span
- Stop spacing
- Route spacing
- Route alignment
- Connectivity
- Stop amenities

Service Frequency and Service Span Standards

Service frequency is a leading factor that attracts new riders to a transit system. Frequency defines how long customers wait for bus service in relation to the time in which they arrive at the stop. Industry experience shows more customers spontaneously show up to stops instead of planning their trips, and higher levels of frequencies decrease the average wait time for random arrivals. While high frequency service is desirable, different mobility and service types warrant different levels of transit service.

Similar to service frequency, service span affects the variety of travel options passengers can choose to take. Routes with similar network roles should have similar spans in order to facilitate travel throughout the SunLine network. For both frequency and span, it is important to balance convenience for passengers with funding and resource constraints.

Below are the minimum service frequencies and spans considered sustainable with funding level increases expected for SunLine in the next two to five years. Services in each service type can operate more frequently or longer hours but should not operate less frequently or fewer hours than the minimum standard.

Table 1- Frequency and Span by Service Type	Frequency of Service		Span of Service	
	Weekday	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend
~~Urban~~ Trunk Lines	20 minutes	30 minutes	5:00 AM – 11:00 PM	5:00 AM – 11:00 PM
Local Lines	30/60 minutes	60 minutes	5:00 AM – 7:00 PM	9:00 AM – 6:00 PM
~~Commuter Link~~Market-Based Service	Based on demand	Based on demand	Based on demand	Based on demand

These are minimum standards established by SunLine and can be revised where sustainable (i.e., where demand warrants, performance measures can still be met, and

increased funding can maintain operation). Desired performance goals are outlined in Section 4.

Stop Spacing Standard
The Stop Spacing Standard involves the distance between bus stops and where stops should be located. This involves balancing access to service while minimizing delay. Industry wisdom argues too many stops results in fewer riders because faster service operations is more important than minimizing walking distances. Adding stops slows down a route, making it less attractive to passengers. In some cases, a stop may need to be skipped (e.g. empty land with no development) or added (e.g. special customer access need or key destination).

As part of the Comprehensive Operational Analysis Study of 2005-2006, SunLine established a 0.5-mile target average stop spacing for all routes, with changes made over the last nine years having largely implemented this policy. Individual stops spacing can be varied based on local conditions with the average spacing target in mind.

Route Spacing Standard
Route spacing of at least one mile between parallel routes is considered essential for more sustainable service. Every effort is also made to avoid unproductive duplication of routes, as well as to avoid unproductive areas such as vacant land, gated resorts, and residential communities.

Route Alignment Standard
SunLine fixed route lines should be designed to provide service using direct pathways to varying origins and destinations; out-of-direction movements should be minimized. Direct service is more efficient; therefore, increases in fare revenue can be anticipated while operating costs are minimized.

Deviations resulting in indirect alignments which serve high volumes of passengers may occasionally be warranted. The impact to riders on the bus should be no more than five minutes per boarding gained on the deviation. The formula for calculating this impact is below:

$$\frac{(Passenger\ Load) * (Time\ of\ Deviation)}{Boardings\ Gained\ Along\ Deviation} \leq 5$$

For example, if a proposed deviation to a housing development would add 6 minutes in running time to a route, generate 40 new passenger boardings, and force 30 current riders to ride through the deviation, the time impact to current riders per boarding gained would be 4.5 minutes. Since this is less than 5 minutes, this deviation would be justified.

$$\frac{30\ current\ riders * 6\ minutes}{40\ new\ riders} = 4.5 > 5$$

There may be times where line deviations are warranted due to construction, special events, and/or inclement weather. These deviations are not subject to the same five-minute rule because they are temporary and often unavoidable.

Connectivity Standard
Existing service frequencies are reflective of service demand, but also are based on operating realities such as how long it consistently takes for a bus to make a round trip on a route. This mixture of service frequencies defines the experience when customers must connect between two routes.

SunLine will prioritize matching frequencies based on clock-face frequencies of 15, 30, and 60 minutes to facilitate connections between services. Having consistent intervals between trips on all services allows SunLine to schedule reliable transfers and makes the schedules easier to remember.

Stop Amenities Standard
SunLine provides amenities (a bench and waste container) at all stops where a sidewalk exists (and sufficient space is available).

All stops with at least 10 average daily passenger boardings should have a shelter installed, unless prevented by local conditions (such as available space or design issues, as determined in consultation with each city or the county).

New bus stops will be installed as mandated by ADA guidelines. As funding permits, the agency will upgrade existing stops to meet the standards set forth by ADA.

2.2 Service Performance Standards

Key Performance Indicators (KPI) are used across the industry to measure, evaluate, and compare transit service performance. The following KPI~~s~~ is ~~are~~ recommended for measuring the performance of SunLine's service:

- Passengers per Revenue Hour
- ~~Subsidy per Passenger Boarding~~
- ~~Cost Recovery~~

SunLine should regularly review service performance against service KPIs to better match service demand and supply within the financial and operational capacities of the agency. The KPIs are discussed in more detail below.

Passengers per Revenue Hour: This KPI measures service effectiveness or productivity based on ridership (passenger boardings) generated for each revenue hour of service operated (PPRH).

$$\frac{Passenger\ Boardings}{Revenue\ Hours}$$

The minimum performance expectations for each service tier is shown in Table 4 below. These KPIs are based on past performance and minimum standards set by peer agencies. SunLine's service area reflects both urban and rural characteristics. Rural population density is associated with lower ridership. Customer surveys reveal that 83% of SunLine's riders are transit dependent. Accordingly, some transit lines experience low performance, but are continued to support mobility in the Coachella Valley.

Lines performing at or above 125% of their service classification target will be candidates for increased investment while lines performing at or below 75% will be subject to corrective action. These options will be discussed in more detail later in this document.

~~Table 2 – Service Performance Expectations by Service Type~~	PPRH Standard
Trunk~~Urban~~ Lines – Lines 14, 30, and 111	2~~0~~5 passengers per hour
Local Lines – 15, 20, 24, 53, 54, 70, 80, 81, 90, 91 and 95	1~~0~~5 passengers per hour
Market~~Commuter Link~~-Based Service – 220	1~~0~~5 passengers per trip

~~**Cost Recovery and Subsidy per Passenger Boarding:** These KPIs measure the service cost effectiveness as defined by the proportion of cost covered by fares from passengers (cost recovery) and the net additional operating cost per passenger beyond the average passenger fare (subsidy per passenger boarding).~~

~~Targets for all SunLine services are 20 percent farebox recovery and a maximum ($5.00) subsidy per passenger boarding. Rather than setting different standards by type of service, a system-wide standard is established based on a reasonable cost of providing service. Lines that do not meet these minimum standards are not cost effective for SunLine to operate. Prior to eliminating service, SunLine attempts to identify partners to provide funding subsidies to maintain low-performing services. The formulas for calculating farebox recovery and subsidy per passenger are below:~~

$$\frac{Passenger\ fare\ revenue}{Operating\ cost} = Farebox\ recovery$$

$$\left(\frac{Passenger\ fare\ revenue - operating\ cost}{Passenger\ boardings}\right) = Subsidy\ per\ passenger\ boarding$$

~~Table 3 below sets out targets for cost recovery and subsidy per ride at the overall transit line level. These measures should be reviewed quarterly.~~

~~Table 3 – Cost Recovery and Subsidy per Passenger Boarding Service Type~~	~~Minimum Cost Recovery/ Maximum Subsidy per Boarding~~
~~Urban Trunk Lines 14, 30, and 111~~	~~≥156%~~ ~~≤$5.00~~
~~Local Lines 15, 20, 24, 32, 53, 54, 70, 80, 81, 90, 91, and 95~~	~~≥12%~~ ~~≤$5.00~~
~~Market-Based Commuter Link Service – 220~~	~~≥20%~~ ~~≤$5.00~~

2.3 Service Quality Standards

Service quality standards contribute to the reliability and consistency of the delivery of transit service. While riders are attracted to transit service based on frequency and span, they continue to use services because they can reliably get to their destinations on-time. Unreliable service often results in decreased ridership. Service quality standards are proposed to be measured using the following operational and passenger experience metrics:

- Service Scheduled Speed
- On-Time Performance (service reliability)
- Percent Service Delivered (service reliability)
- Miles between Service Interruption (service reliability)
- Load Standards (service comfort)
- Average fleet age (service comfort)
- Bus deployment policy

Each suggested metric is discussed in more detail below.

Service Scheduled Speed: Measures a routes scheduled service speed. The measure is calculated by dividing scheduled revenue hours by revenue miles for each route. This KPI monitors services needed to maintain reasonable speed to retain and grow ridership.

Table 3~~4~~ below shows target performance for SunLine's transit system. SunLine's schedule average service speed standard is 12.5 miles per hour (MPH). It operates in a relatively uncongested environment, and this speed is expected to be maintained.

Through significant efforts to optimize existing operations with better service frequencies and removing causes of delay, bus service scheduled speeds may increase. This measure will require ongoing improvement over time to maintain and improve performance.

Table 34 – Service Scheduled Speed Service Mode	Service Speed - Weekdays	Service Speed - Weekends
Fixed-Route Bus	12.5 MPH	12.5 MPH

On-Time Performance: This KPI measures service reliability as defined by adherence to the published service schedule. "On-time" is when a trip departs a time-point within a range of zero minutes early to five minutes late. In order to achieve targeted on-time performance, service running times need to be calibrated regularly based on existing conditions. SunLine has a relatively uncongested operating environment, which helps support a high KPI for on-time performance. The on-time performance target is 85% for all services.

The biggest impact for on-time performance is route detours. The target of 85% is consistent with those adopted by peer systems with automated measuring tools (automatic vehicle location (AVL) equipment).

Table 45 – On-Time Performance Service Mode	On-Time Performance Standard
Fixed Route Bus	85% (excepting major detours)

Percent Service Completed: This KPI measures service reliability as defined by percentage of trips completed daily. There are three components necessary in order to measure completed trips:

- 100 percent daily availability of both operators and fleet to meet service demands
- Miles between service interruptions
- Timely response to service interruptions (less than half an hour)

The target is consistent with that adopted by peer systems.

Table 56 – Percentage of Service Completed Service Mode	Service Completed Minimum Standard
Fixed Route Bus	99%

Miles Between Service Interruptions: This KPI measures service reliability as defined by revenue miles between service interruptions, regardless of cause. SunLine's standard is

5~~10~~,000 miles. This measurement also includes bus exchanges where buses are swapped out in service though service is often not interrupted. To meet this standard, both avoidance of service interruptions through early identification (e.g., planning for detours, proper fleet maintenance, etc.) and timely as well as proactive response to service interruptions.

Table 6~~7~~ – Miles Between Service Interruptions Service Mode	Target Minimum Miles Between Service Interruptions (Road Calls)
Fixed Route Bus	5,000~~10,000~~

Load Standards: This service quality KPI establishes load standards for various vehicle types and is measured for each trip operated. While it may be acceptable for some riders to stand for short distances or time periods (e.g. under 2 miles and/or 10 minutes) during peak periods, it is generally accepted that seating should be available for all riders during normal off-peak conditions.

Table 7~~8~~ – Load Standards Service Period	Maximum Consistent Load Factor
Peak	Average over 133% of seated load = 50 passengers
Off Peak	Average 100% of seated load = 38 passengers

Any vehicle operating at high speeds on highways (e.g., Routes 20, 91, 95, and 220) requires all passengers to be seated, reducing the maximum load on these services to 100 percent of seated capacity.

Average Fleet Age: The age of the vehicle fleet affects performance and reliability of transit services as well as system attractiveness to customers. SunLine's standard for average fleet age is no greater than 10 years. Adhering to the average fleet age standard will help ensure a reliable and comfortable passenger experience.

Table 8~~9~~ - Vehicle Average Age	Average Fleet Age
Standard Transit Bus	No greater than 10 years

Bus Deployment Policy

Bus deployment specifies the type of vehicle that should be used to operate individual routes. The type of vehicle deployed on a route depends primarily on ridership demand and trip loads. Using incorrectly sized vehicles on routes can unnecessarily add operating cost to a route or result in overcrowding issues.

Trunk ~~Urban~~ Lines 14, 30, and 111 should utilize 40-foot buses due to high passenger volumes/turnover, frequent stops, and route gradients in order to maintain reliable and on-time service.

Local Lines should use either 40-foot or 32-foot buses based on ridership demand. Routes with lower demand should use 32-foot buses to meet the demands of lower ridership and having fewer seats will not result in load or overcrowding issues.

Table ~~9~~10 – Bus Deployment	Vehicle Type
~~Urban~~ Trunk Lines	40’ buses
Local Lines	32’ or 40’ buses depending on ridership demand
Market-Based Service ~~Commuter Link~~	40’ buses

SunLine will review the Bus Deployment Policy every two years beginning in 201~~8~~6, and make necessary adjustments as the fleet is updated and to ensure compliance with Title VI requirements.

SunLine Transit Agency is in full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that protects people from discrimination based upon race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. SunLine insures equitable distribution of its assets in delivery of transit services to the people of Coachella Valley.

Buses are assigned according to successful completion maintenance functions without regard to route assignment, or vehicle age, except in size considerations as outlined above. Additionally, fuel cell buses are assigned to routes with shorter distances and / or durations that are within acceptable range capacity of those vehicles.

Adequate number of buses are assigned to routes with high demand to avoid instances of overcrowding or passenger standees. All SunLine buses are fully air conditioned, and are 100% accessible to persons with disabilities.

2.~~4~~5. Warrants Standards

Warrants Standards provide a way to determine which areas within the large service area will have both the passenger demand and performance potential to produce cost-effective fixed-route transit service. In order to ensure the financial sustainability of the agency, SunLine should only introduce new services that perform at or above the current system average. Planning new services around these guidelines will help ensure successful performance of new routes. Providing a set of guidelines for which areas warrant all-day fixed-route service will help SunLine respond to future community requests for new service.

Network Role

New services should be evaluated for their place in the overall transit network. Each new route in the network will have a unique role, whether it is facilitating transfers with existing services, introducing service coverage to a recent development, or providing connections between current routes and major destinations. While successful new routes connect with existing services, they should not duplicate existing service or compete for passengers.

Market Opportunities

There is a strong correlation between service performance, surrounding population and employment densities; the more people with access to a route, the higher the route's ridership. Population-dense areas tend to coincide with mixed-use neighborhoods, walkable environments and higher populations of transit-friendly constituencies such as students, seniors, zero-vehicle households, and low-income populations.

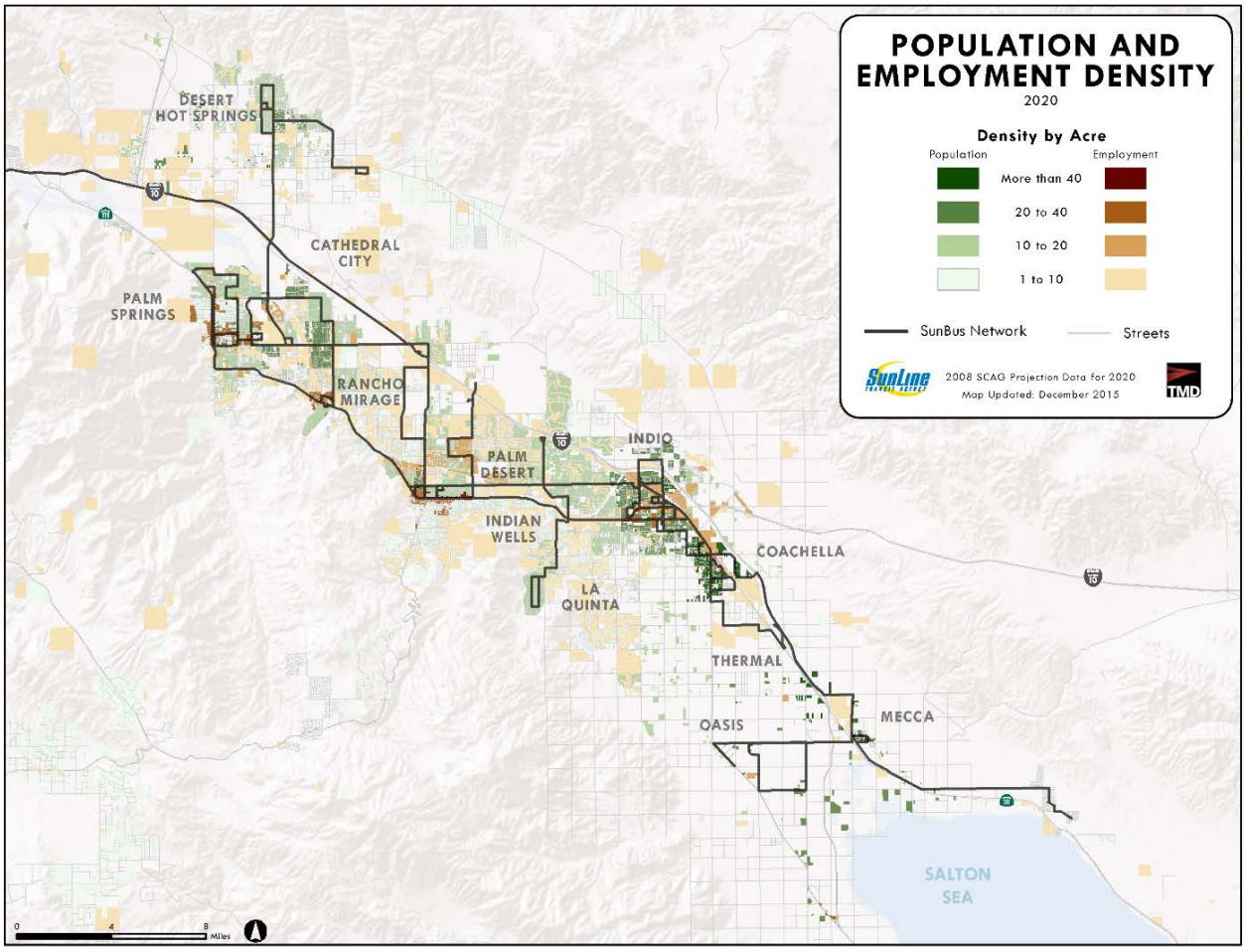
The minimum population and employment density for the introduction of new all-day fixed route transit service is an average of 10 people/jobs per acre within a half mile of the proposed route.

$$\frac{Sum\ of\ population\ and\ jobs\ within \frac{1}{2} mile\ of\ route}{Sum\ of\ population\ and\ employment\ acres\ within \frac{1}{2} mile\ of\ route} >= 10$$

At densities over this minimum threshold, transit has the opportunity to play a meaningful role in public mobility. Areas with densities below this minimum threshold are not considered supportive of fixed route service and should not be subjected to further analysis. Areas in this category that have unmet needs may be served by alternative options to fixed route service.

Unmet Mobility Needs

SunLine should strongly consider the mobility needs of transit dependent populations when evaluating where to operate service. In assessing the area's demand for transit service, it is important to examine the presence of these demographic groups and identify any present unmet needs.



Key Destinations

Key destinations likely to generate higher demand for transit service include major area school, colleges, universities, hospitals, retail/commercial/entertainment centers with more than 10 people/jobs per acre, and open residential communities (not gated) to those with relatively lower income and vehicle ownership levels.

Evaluating New Services

New services should be implemented on weekdays only and operate between 6:00 AM and 7:00 PM. Once a new line has been implemented, it should be closely monitored to determine whether it is reaching its desired performance standards. The line should first be evaluated after six months to determine whether it meets more than two-thirds (2/3) of its performance standards. New services not meeting the minimum standards at the end of an 18-24-month trial period are subject to corrective action or discontinuation.

In some cases, trial periods for new services may vary based on the requirements of grant funding. For example, if a grant provided three years of funding for a route that did not meet standards, this route would still be operated for the full three-year period.

3. Major Service Change

According to the provisions of the Title VI, (FTA C4702.1B), no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

To comply with FTA C 4702.1B, SunLine has implemented the following policy regarding the Title VI Analysis of proposed impacted routes and/or schedule changes prior to the implementation of any significant service changes or fare increases.

A mandated service change occurs no more than three times a year, unless necessitated by service adjustments and/or other operational requirements. A major service change is defined by SunLine as any permanent service change (6 months or longer duration) of 25% or more in revenue hours and/or revenue miles, span of service, or alignment miles for a given route or the network overall for any day type (weekday, Saturday, Sunday, and Holiday). Such changes require a public hearing and SunLine Board approval before implementation.

Under Title VI requirements, SunLine also identifies a Disparate Impact Policy and Disproportionate Burden Policy to ensure low-income and minority populations are not adversely affected by service changes.

- Disparate Impact Policy: A disparate impact occurs when the impact of proposed service or fare changes to minority populations is 20% greater than the impact to non-minority populations.
- Disproportionate Burden Policy: A disproportionate burden occurs when the impact of proposed service or fare changes to low-income populations is 20% greater than the impact to non-low-income populations.

4. Reporting and Management

To monitor KPIs adequately, data will be reviewed monthly or quarterly, as most appropriate. The Board of Directors will receive an annual performance report in December.

All services will be monitored for adherence to the productivity, farebox recovery, subsidy per passenger and are divided into three tiers based on performance:

- High-performing service: performs at or above 125% of the tier productivity standard
- Average-performing service: performs between 76%-124% of the tier productivity standard

- Low-performing service: performs at or below 75% of the tier productivity standard

High-Performing Service - Green (125% or higher of tier standard)
Lines with high performance suggest the need for greater investment, as high performance may signal the presence of significant latent demand. This category of services constitutes the top-performing tier of the entire SunLine system. It is very important to maintain a high-quality level of service as well as to continue further investment. Creating standards for high-performing service prioritizes investment in the core system. Upgrading high-performing lines directs investment where it will be most effective.

The primary form of investment is in service frequency. Increasing frequency will prevent overcrowding on popular routes and make the service more attractive to a wider pool of potential customers. It will make the service more convenient for both current and future riders. Another investment is providing enhanced high-quality features along the route. Bus bulbs, bus-only lanes, and transit signal priority are all methods for decreasing delay and travel time along a route and improving the customer experience. Upgrading amenities at bus stops also makes services more attractive to riders and enhances the branding of SunLine services. All of these investments make buses more competitive with automobile travel.

Average-Performing Services- Yellow (76%-124% of tier standard)
Services in this category are adequately fulfilling their roles in the transit network, and no corrective action is required. These routes will be monitored on an ongoing basis to determine how their performance changes over time. While Green tier services should be prioritized for service investment, the same investment strategies can be applied to the Yellow tier services to improve system performance.

Low-Performing Services - Red (75% or below of tier standard)
Low-performing services indicate ridership demand is not high enough to justify the amount of resources being invested. Since SunLine works within the constraints of limited resources, it is important the use of each route is being maximized. Corrective Action Plans for low-performing services are designed to help improve performance to justify the level of resource investment. For productivity, lines will be considered to be “low-performing” if it does not reach 75% of the performance target for its tier. For the farebox and subsidy standards, the line must exceed the minimum threshold.

Corrective Action Plan
The *Corrective Action Plan* will examine the routing, schedule, route segments, and span of service in order to diagnose weaknesses in the route’s current operations. Using the information gathered, SunLine will develop a *Corrective Action Plan* for improving performance which will be implemented in the next feasible service change given the limitations in place regarding public process, public hearing (if required), and annual service change calendar. Areas of consideration follow:

- Segment-Level Analysis: A segment-level analysis may highlight a specific portion of the line that limits overall performance, causing it to perform below the standard for its tier. If a low-performing segment is identified, it can be modified in an attempt to raise the productivity of the route as a whole.
- Operational Analysis: Realigning service to cover only critical segments or eliminating unnecessary delay (e.g. deviations) are ways to reduce travel time and save resources, thereby raising performance levels while retaining ridership.
- Change in Service Levels: Adjusting the service levels of a low-performing route (e.g. by any combination of frequency, span, or day of week changes) may help tailor the transit product to its market, and subsequently increase productivity.
- Cost-Sharing: Exploring cost-sharing or public-private partnerships can reduce the amount of subsidy required to operate low-performing services. This is applicable for services that do not meet minimum performance standards yet serve a need identified by businesses, schools, attractions, or other organizations that may be willing to assist with funding operations in order to continue service.
- Targeted Marketing: Marketing tactics can help raise the public awareness of a service in need of improvement. Poor ridership may be a result of a lack of public knowledge of a route and investing in marketing can help reverse this trend. This is especially the case for targeted market groups like employment centers, shopping districts, schools, hospital, agencies, and other major destinations.
- Rider Outreach: Onboard surveys and rider interviews are methods for gaining valuable information on how a route can be improved. These methods can reveal information about popular destinations that a route may bypass or other aspects of a service that may be holding back ridership growth.

Consequences/Outcomes

Once a *Corrective Action Plan* is implemented the route must exceed “low-performing” in two of the three performance metrics for at least one quarter within the first three successive quarters or face further action which may include line elimination. If a route meets the expectations, the process of the *Corrective Action Plan* will be deemed concluded. Subsequent low performance will be reviewed as a new event.

In the event the corrective actions are unsuccessful in raising at least two of the metrics (productivity, farebox recovery, or subsidy per passenger) to above “low-performing” after six consecutive quarters, discontinuation may be necessary to ensure effective use of agency resources.

Sunline Transit Agency reserves the right to periodically review and revise the Service Standards Policy. Comments and suggestions are welcome by contacting SunLine Customer Service on 1-800-347-8628, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., weekdays, or via email at www.sunline.org/customer.

Approved:

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Lauren Skiver
CEO/ General Manager