

## METRO

# ROUTE 8 PENINSULA LOOP

## Route Overview

Route 8 is a circulator route on the Portland Peninsula. The route serves Portland’s West End, downtown, Old Port, Bayside, and Oakdale neighborhoods, and key destinations at the Portland Ferry Terminal, Franklin Towers, Whole Foods, Trader Joe’s, Hannaford, Maine Medical Center, 100 State Street, and Preble Street Day Shelter.

## Route Map



## Alignment

Route 8 is a counterclockwise loop with a complex alignment that involves over 30 turning movements. The alignment is difficult to understand, and its circuitousness means short trips often take a long time.

## Connections

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

made at the PULSE. Transfers can also be made at other locations as radial routes enter and exit downtown Portland and intersect with Route 8.

## Schedule

Route 8 operates every 30 minutes on weekdays and every 60 minutes on weekends. The span of service is approximately 11.5 hours on weekdays, 10.5 hours on Saturdays, and 8.5 hours on Sundays.

### Schedule Summary

	Span of Service	Headways (mins.)	On-Time Performance
Weekdays	6:40 AM to 6:15 PM	30	62%
Saturday	7:50 AM to 6:17 PM	60	
Sunday	8:50 AM to 4:17 PM	60	

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

### On-Time Performance

Route 8 on-time performance is 62%, which is below the METRO system’s route average of 76% and does not meet the agency’s standard of 90%. The route operates in a turn-intensive congested urban environment and on relatively constrained roadways, which impacts on-time performance.

## Ridership and Productivity

### Ridership and Productivity by Day

In October 2019, Route 8 averaged 455 boardings on weekdays, 335 on Saturdays, and 225 on Sundays. These figures made it METRO’s fourth-lowest ridership route on weekdays, sixth-highest on Saturdays, and fourth-highest on Sundays. Productivity, in terms of boardings per revenue hour, was 20 on weekdays, 32 on Saturdays, and 30 on Sundays. Overall low ridership is typical for loop routes and on downtown circulators.

### Weekday Ridership by Stop

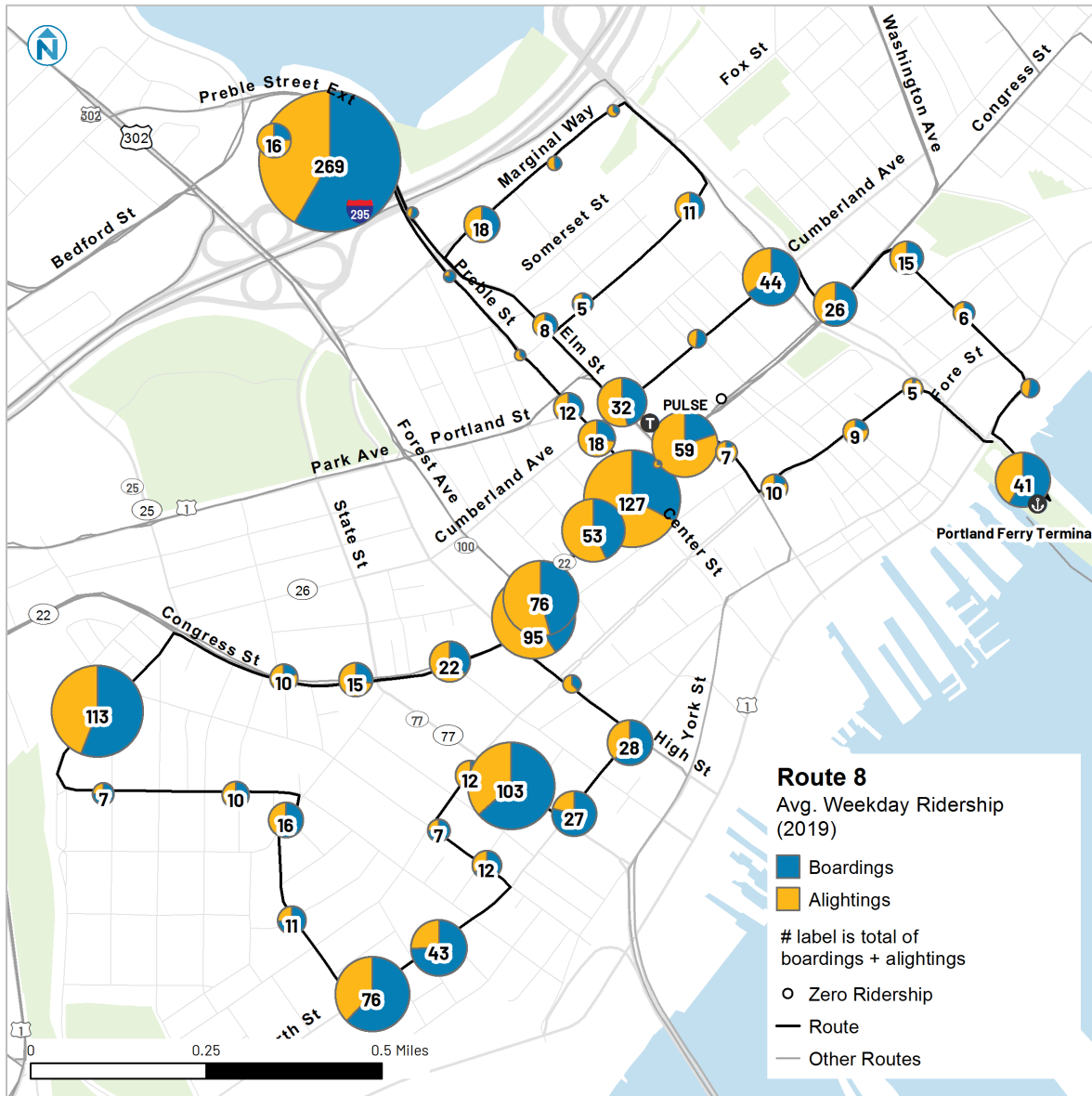
In October 2019, Route 8 only served significant volumes of passengers in a few locations:

- Stops along Congress Street between Monument Square and High Street, with 351 boardings and alightings
- Hannaford, with 267 boardings and alightings
- Maine Medical Center, with 112 boardings and alightings

- 100 State Street, which is an affordable housing apartment building, with 102 boardings and alightings

Most segments of the route have very few boardings or alightings, including the segments serving Whole Foods Market and the ferry terminal.

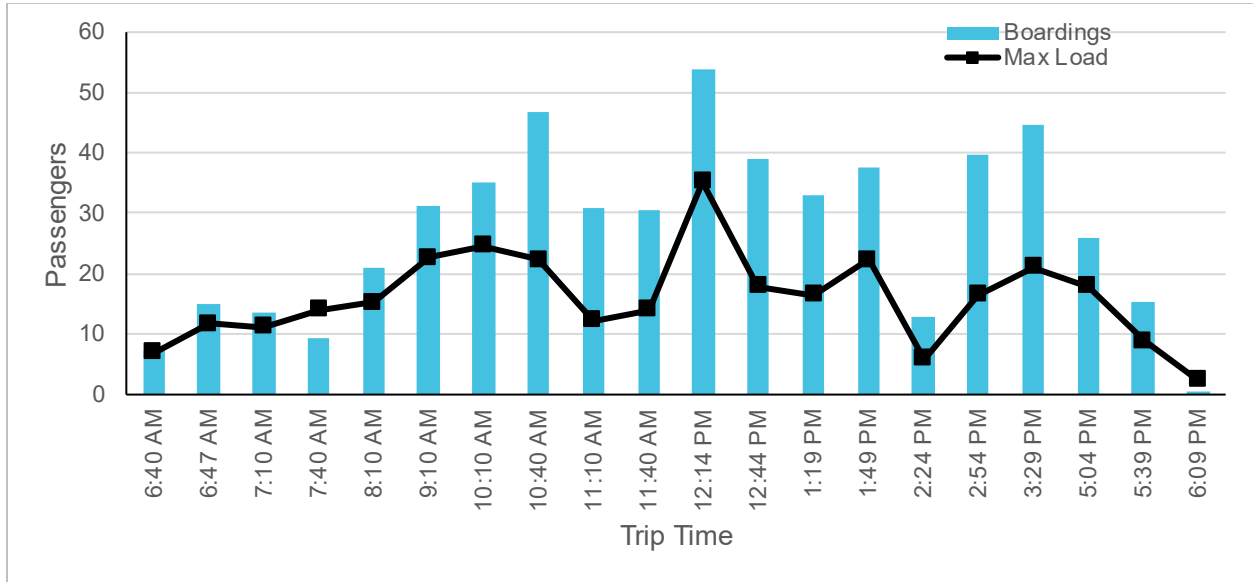
### Weekday Ridership by Stop Map



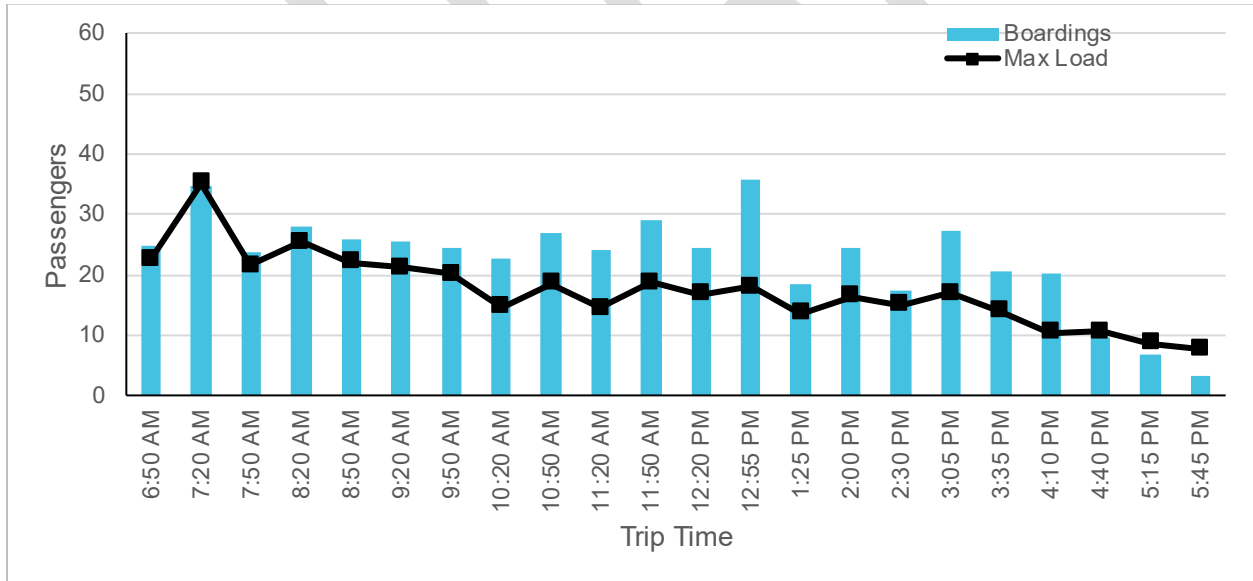
### Weekday Ridership by Trip

In October 2019, Route 8 ridership peaked in the midday and declined on later-evening trips.

#### Weekday Boardings by Trip: Inbound (October 2019)



#### Weekday Boardings by Trip: Outbound (October 2019)



# Overall Service Assessment

## Strengths

- Route 8 serves a number of locations on the Portland Peninsula that are not served by other routes.

## Weaknesses

- The loop nature of the route is inconvenient for most riders as it takes a long time to travel short distances, at least in one direction.
- The route's alignment, besides being very circuitous, is confusing.
- Overall ridership is low, and ridership on some segments is extremely low.
- On-time performance is very poor, in part due to excessive turning movements.

## Opportunities

Opportunities to strengthen Route 8 are listed below. Some suggestions may be contradictory, as there is usually more than one approach to improving a route.

- Loop routes and downtown circulators typically discourage more riders than they attract because travel times are long relative to the distances traveled. Most or all areas served by Route 8 could likely be better served by changes to the radial routes that operate in and out of Portland. For example:
  - Hannaford is the highest-ridership stop on Route 8 and could be served instead by operating Route 2 Forest Avenue in and out of downtown Portland via Preble Street.
  - The ferry terminal could be served by a new Jetport–Portland Transportation Center–PULSE–ferry terminal route or a new Portland Transportation Center–PULSE–Ferry terminal route.
  - Maine Medical Center could be served by a reconfigured Route 1 Congress Street.
- If Route 8 is maintained as a loop, it could be shortened and made more direct by discontinuing service along very low-ridership segments such as the service to Whole Foods.