



# Transit and Spokane Schools

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# Presentation Outline

- STA Overview
- Regulatory Context
- Existing Conditions
- Potential Opportunities

# STA Overview

- STA is the successor of earlier private transit companies and city-owned services
- Municipal corporation under state statute with powers to plan, construct, maintain and operate public transportation
  - Began operating transit in 1981 after 71% voter approval of local sales tax and inheriting assets from the City of Spokane
  - Municipal limits are known as the Spokane County Public Transportation Benefit Area and cover 248 square miles, including most urban areas of Spokane County
  - Federated board made up of nine voting members from member jurisdictions
    - Includes Airway Heights, Cheney, Liberty Lake, Medical Lake, Millwood, Spokane, Spokane County, Spokane Valley
- Carried more than 10-million passengers annually prior to COVID-19 Pandemic on three modes
  - 40+ Fixed Route (buses on regular schedules) and 150+ buses
  - Paratransit (ADA complementary service)
  - Vanpool

# Federal Context

- STA is the designated recipient for several federal transit grant programs and receives multiple federal capita grants and is this required to adhere to federal law and regulations
- 49 USC 5302 expressly excludes “school bus service” from the definition of public transportation
  - STA certifies each year “not to provide school bus transportation that exclusively transports students and school personnel in competition with a private school bus operator.” (See 49 USC 5323)
- Further regulatory guidance found in 49 CFR Part 605
- Allowance made for “school tripper service” with strict limitations

# Existing Conditions

- Every conventional high school is directly served by one or more STA bus route
- Running start students enrolled at EWU or the community colleges are able to ride the bus with their college ID
- Spokane Schools purchased over 22,000 bus passes in 2020, primarily 2-hour and monthly youth passes

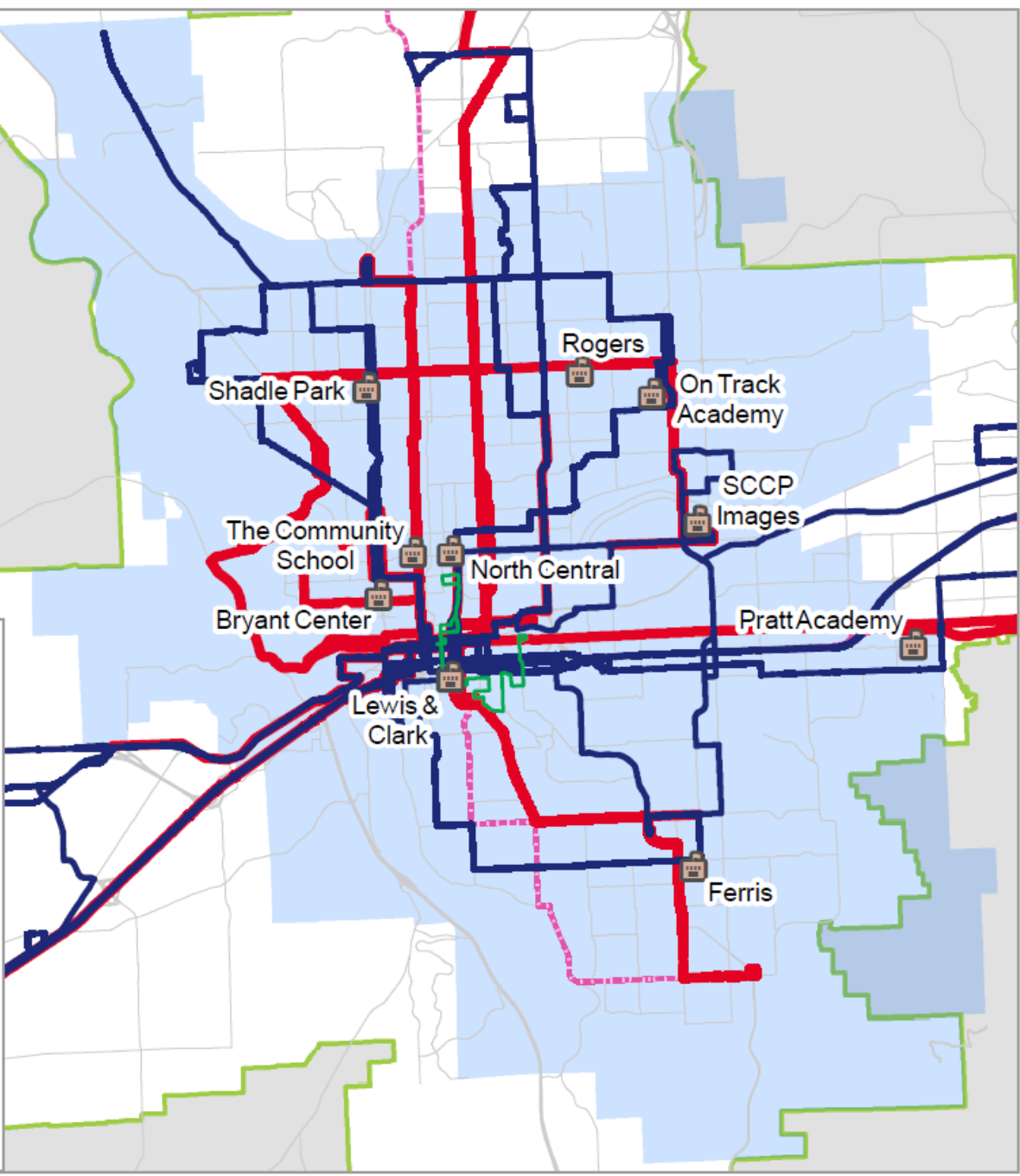
# STA Bus Service to Spokane Public High Schools

**Legend**

- Spokane Public Schools District Boundary
- STA Public Transportation Benefit Area
- High Schools
- Bus Routes
  - Shuttles
  - Express Routes
  - Every 30 min weekdays
  - Every 15 min weekdays
  - routes combine for 15 min weekday service

N

0 1 2 4 Miles



# Planned Improvements (2022)

- Route 36 North Central
  - Route will extend east-west, connecting SFCC, West Central, Hillyard and Logan neighborhoods to North Central High School
- Route 27 Hillyard realignment will improve accessibility to North Central and Rogers high schools
  - Travel further north on Washington to Buckeye improves access within the North Central neighborhood
  - Will travel to Crestline and Wellesley, within a 5-minute walk from Rogers (today it is about a 15-minute walk from Rogers)
  - More frequent service supports those making connections from other routes
- Route 38 Upriver/Argonne
  - Extend service east from Minnehaha neighborhood to Millwood

# Transit Availability – Existing/Planned Network

## Middle schools, high schools and other secondary schools/sites

### Schools with direct bus service

Lewis & Clark High School

Ferris High School

Rogers High School

North Central High School

Shadle Park High School

On Track Academy

The Community School

SCCP Images (@Spokane CC)

*Yasuhara Middle School*

Shaw Middle School

Chief Garry Middle School

Salk Middle School

### Schools with nearby bus service (within 10-minute walk)

Glover Middle School

Sacajawea Middle School

*Flett Middle School*

Pratt Academy

Bryant Center

### Schools no/limited bus service (>10-minute walk)

Chase Middle School

*Peperzak Middle School*



# Notable geographies within District 81 with limited/no STA bus service (existing/planned)

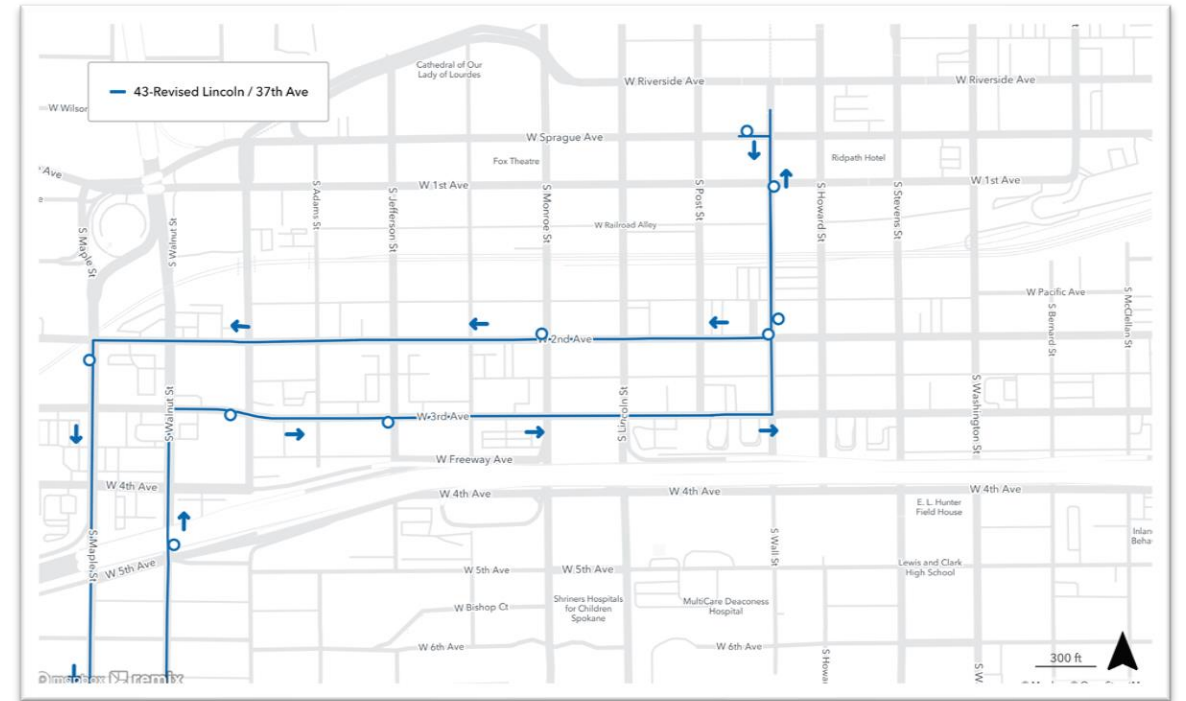
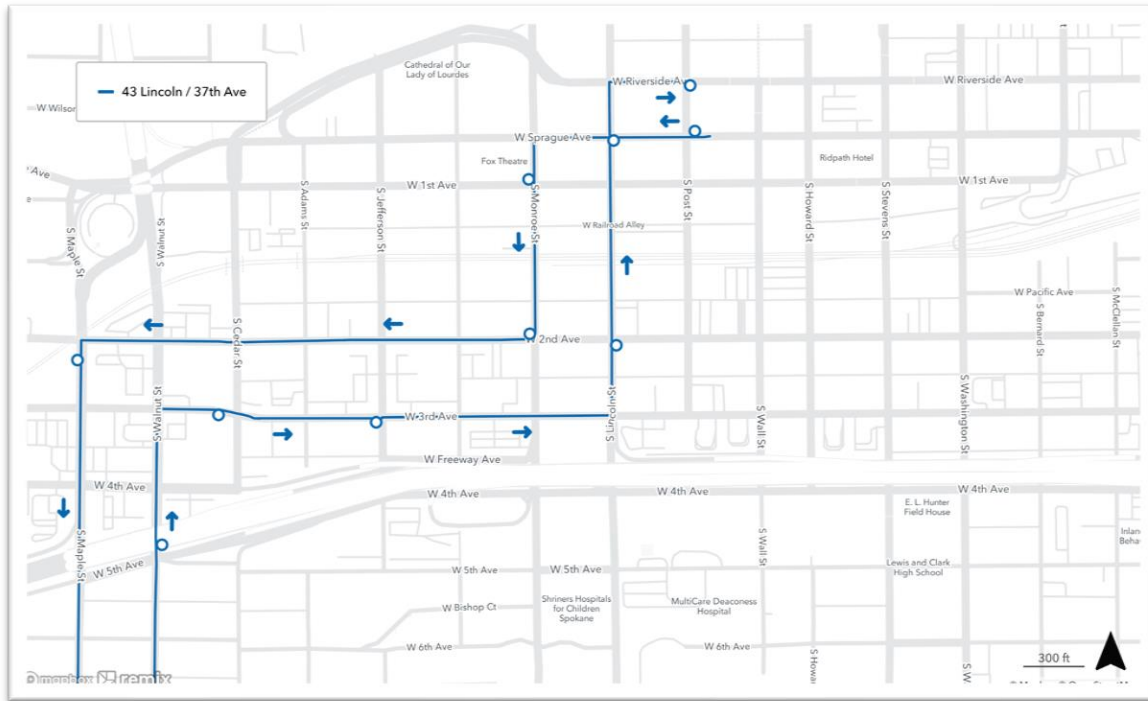
- Latah Valley/Eagle Ridge
- Nine Mile Road
- Glenrose / Carnahan Hill
- West Hills

# Potential Opportunities

- Identify specific opportunities to improve access with the existing bus network
  - Improvements to bus stop accessibility
  - Schedule adjustments to improve connections
  - Service area gaps would need to be addressed in a way compliant with federal law
- Identify specific opportunities for “school tripper service” to meet gaps while strictly adhering to federal restrictions
- Explore a transit pass program with Spokane Schools

# Example Route Adjustment

## Route 43 – Move to Wall Street

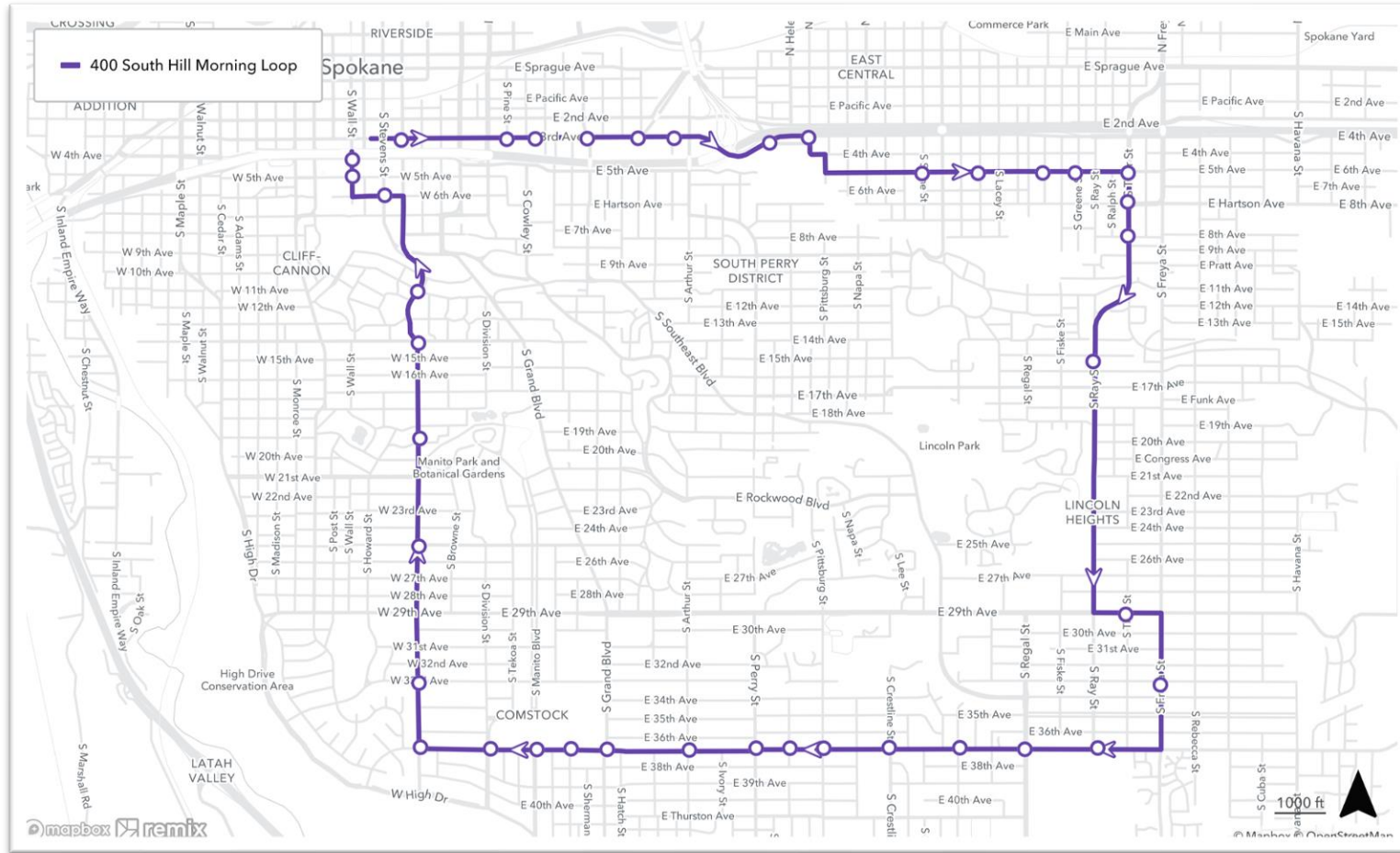


# School Tripper Service Opportunity

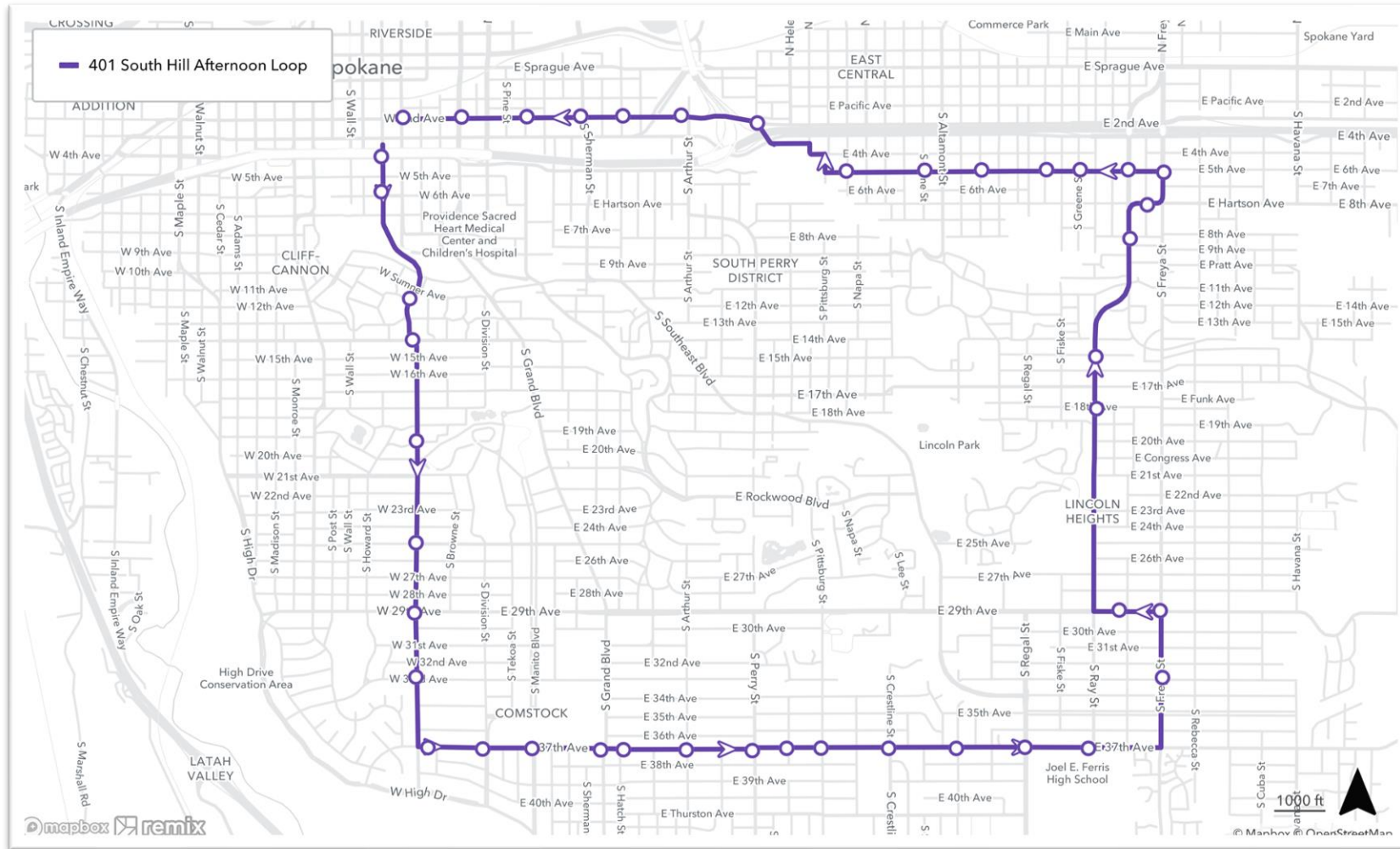
## Federal Restrictions and Requirements

- Recipients are permitted to provide school tripper service to accommodate the needs of school students and personnel. The school bus regulation defines school tripper service as regularly scheduled mass transportation service that is open to the public and is designed or modified to accommodate the needs of school students and personnel.
- Tripper service allows a recipient to:
  - Utilize various fare collections or subsidy systems
  - Modify the frequency of service
  - Make de minimis route alterations from route paths in the immediate vicinity of schools to stops located at or in close proximity to the schools
- Buses used in tripper service must:
  - Be open and promoted to the public
  - Not carry designations such as “school bus” or “school special”
  - Stop at regular bus stops
- School tripper service should operate and look like all other regular service. All routes traveled by tripper buses must be within the regular route service as indicated in the published route schedules. Schedules listing tripper routes should be on the recipient’s regular published schedules or on separately published schedules that are available to the public with all other schedules, including on the website. Demand response service does not qualify for the tripper service exception.

# Concept Example School Tripper Routes 440/441



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**Thank you!**