

**Attachment: Victoria Regional Transit System
Spring 2023 Ridership Performance Report**

1.0 Introduction

This report compares the system-level ridership performance for the Victoria Regional Transit System comparing between 2019 and 2023. Further, this report provides more detailed ridership information at the route-type level for the spring 2023 service period, occurring between April 10 and July 2, 2023.

1.1 Data

Ridership information is collected through Automated Passenger Counter (APC) units, which are in place on over 60 per cent of the buses assigned to the Victoria Region's conventional fleet. This system counts the number of persons boarding and disembarking from a vehicle. If a person boards multiple buses in a single journey or on a specific day, this is reflected as multiple boardings. It also collects information on service reliability, comparing scheduled to actual departure times at timing points along the route.

1.2 External Factors

In addition to service changes, there are a number of external factors that may affect transit ridership. Some of these include fare increases, changing fuel prices, changing community economics, land use changes and major interruptions, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.0 Performance Trends

This report presents ridership performance information at the system and route level.

2.1 System Level Performance Trends

For the purposes of this report, overall system ridership has been presented weekly since the beginning of 2019. As of March 12, 2020, when non-essential travel was discouraged, the transit system experienced a significant decline in ridership of about 75 per cent. During that time, BC Transit moved to enact measures that would support safe and reliable travel options – from the introduction of vinyl barriers to the phasing of physical distancing standards. Through the implementation of these measures and the reopening of the economy via the Province's Safe Restart Plan, BC Transit has since realized a gradual and steady return of ridership, recovering to over 92 per cent in comparison to the same week in 2019 by the start of July, 2023 as seen in Figure 1.

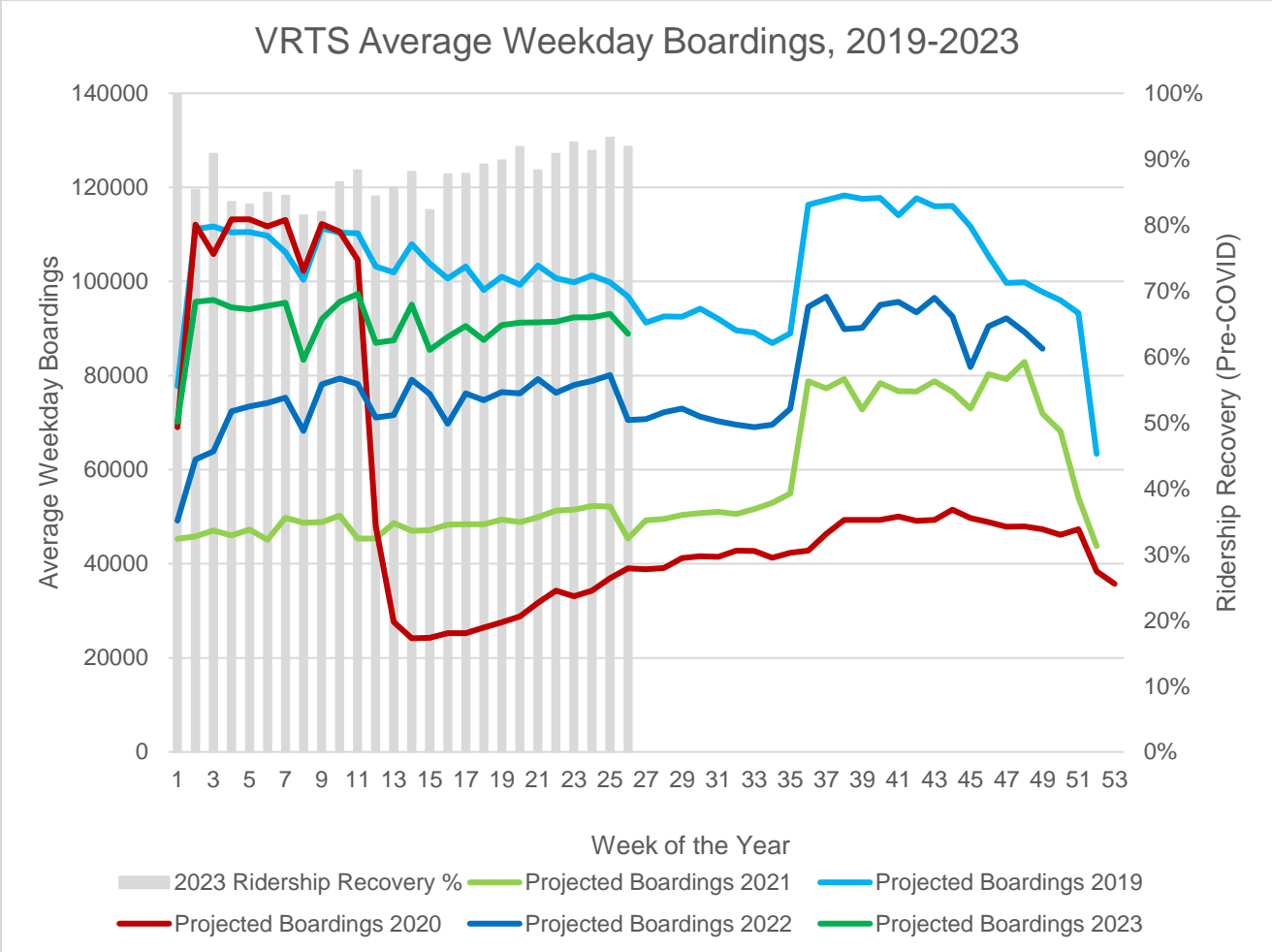


Figure 1: Victoria Average Weekday Boardings, 2019-2023.

2.2 Route Level Performance

For the purposes of this report, ridership has been aggregated and presented in five route-type categories for Spring 2023, including Rapid Transit, Frequent Transit, Local Transit (Ridership), Local Transit (Coverage) and Targeted Transit. These route-type categories were originally developed in the [2013/14 Service Review](#), and included associated performance targets.

The red line shown on the following graphs indicates the performance guideline for that route class. Routes exceeding or failing to meet the modified performance targets by +/-25% have been flagged for monitoring, and may be considered for future corrective action.

Based on recurring over-performance, Routes 12 and 35 have been upgraded to the Local Transit (Ridership) categorization and will be considered for future service improvements. Route 3 has been consistently under-performing, and will be reviewed in greater detail as part of the upcoming James Bay / Jubilee Local Area Transit Plan Update.

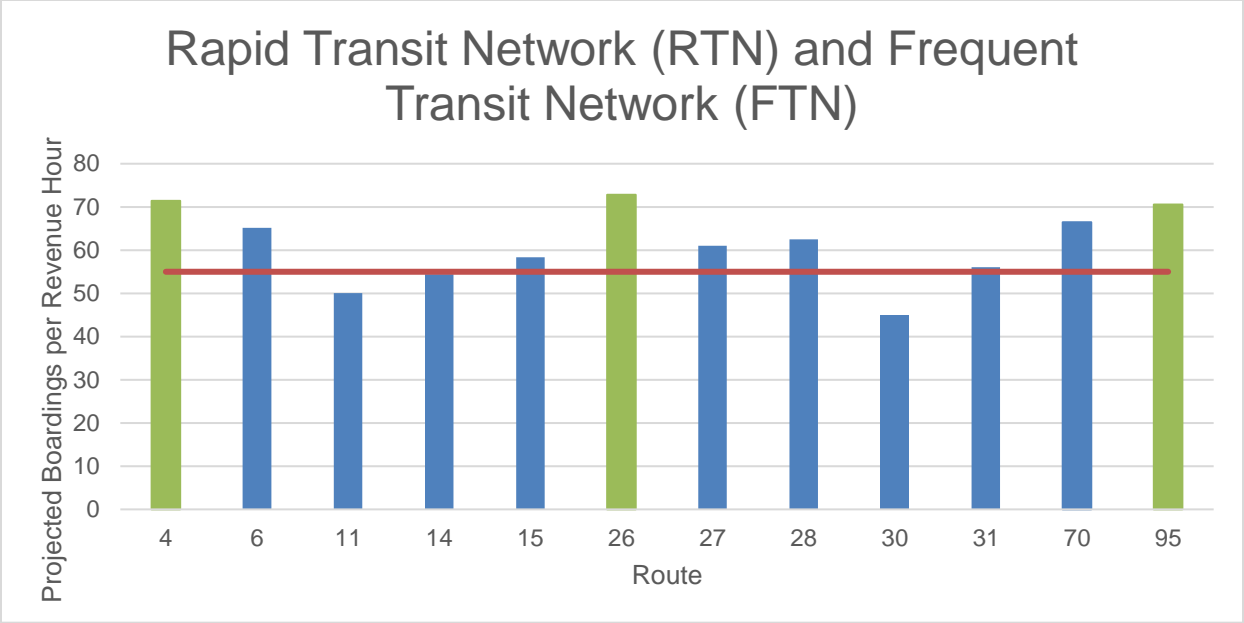


Figure 2: Projected Boardings per Revenue Hour for the Rapid Transit Network and Frequent Transit Network, Spring 2023 (Performance Guideline = 55)

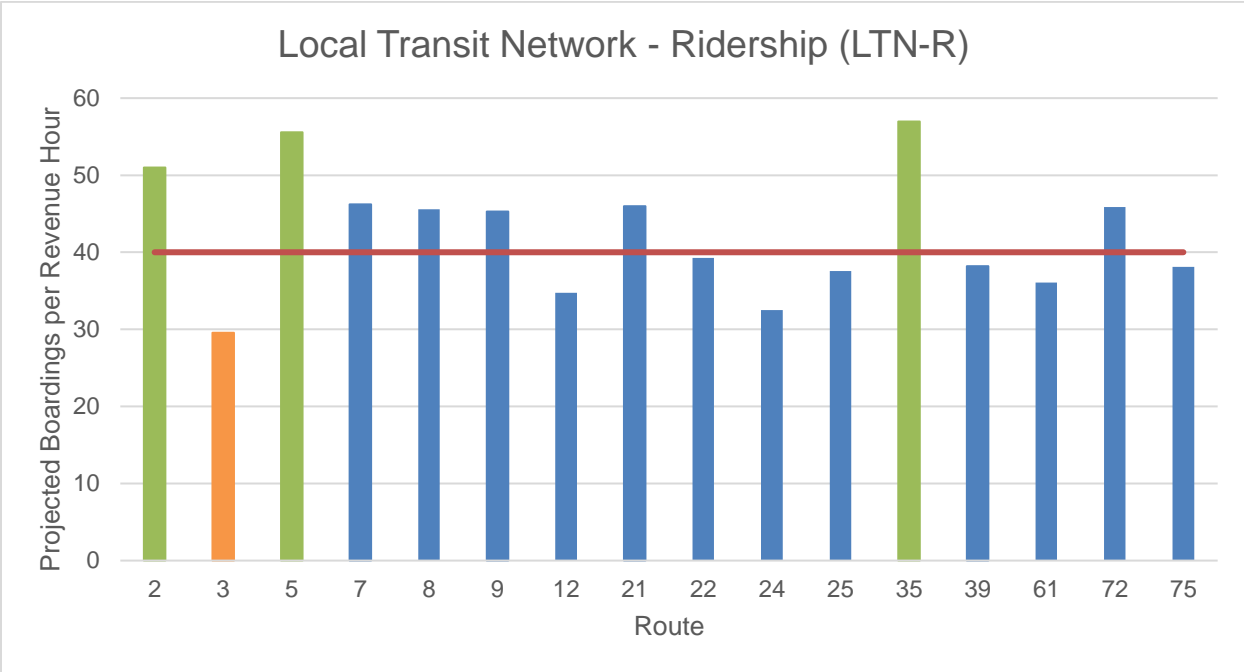


Figure 3: Projected Boardings per Revenue Hour for the Local Transit Network - Ridership, Spring 2023 (Performance Guideline = 40)

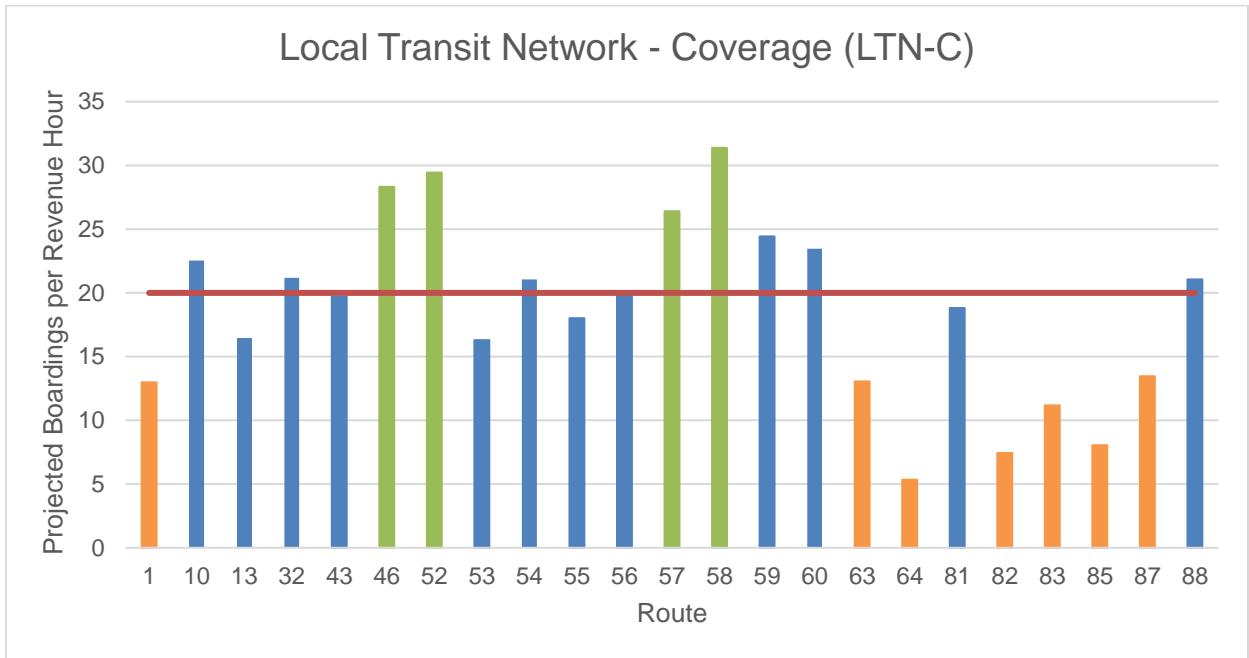


Figure 4: Projected Boardings per Revenue Hour for the Local Transit Network - Coverage, Spring 2023 (Performance Guideline = 20)

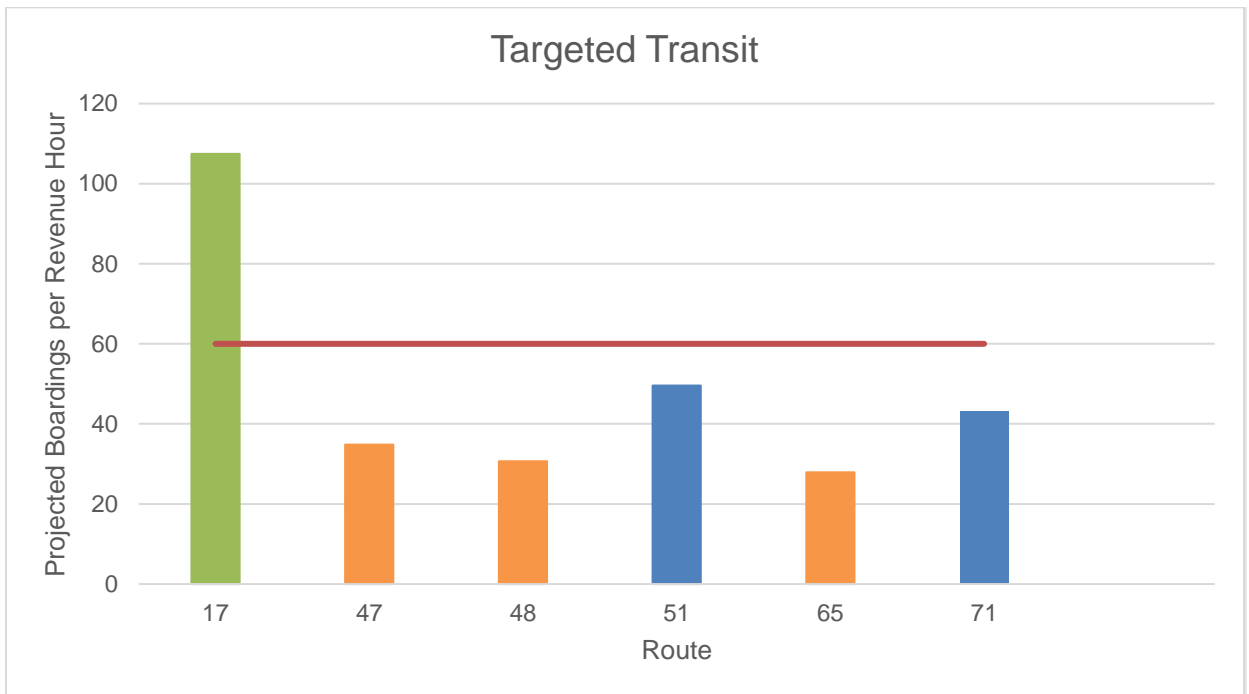


Figure 5: Projected Boardings per Revenue Hour for Targeted Transit, Spring 2023 (Performance Guideline = 60)

2.2 Service Reliability

Service reliability is crucial for transit service as it ensures that vehicles and routes run on schedule, leading to increased customer satisfaction and ridership. A trip is considered on-time if it departs from a timing point between 1 minute early and 3 minutes late of the scheduled departure time.

For the spring 2023 service period, system-level on-time performance fell slightly below the target of 70%, coming in at 66%. At the route level, Routes 5, 25, 27, 46 and 70 had the worst service reliability, and are targeted for the following service reliability improvements (Figure 6):

- Route 5 will be rescheduled for Spring 2024, as the issues appear to be seasonal according to increased spring/summer tourism demand
- Route 25 received a full reschedule for the summer 2023 service change
- Route 27/28 changes were deferred due to long-term construction on Shelbourne, but are being planned for the January 2024 service change
- Route 46 received a full reschedule for the fall 2023 service change
- Route 54 had some minor service reliability adjustments for summer 2023, but will be fully reconfigured in January 2024 to align with the West Shore network restructure
- Route 70 received runtime increases in spring 2023, but growing passenger loads and requirements to hold buses at the Swartz Bay Ferry terminal to align with delayed ferries have had ongoing impacts.

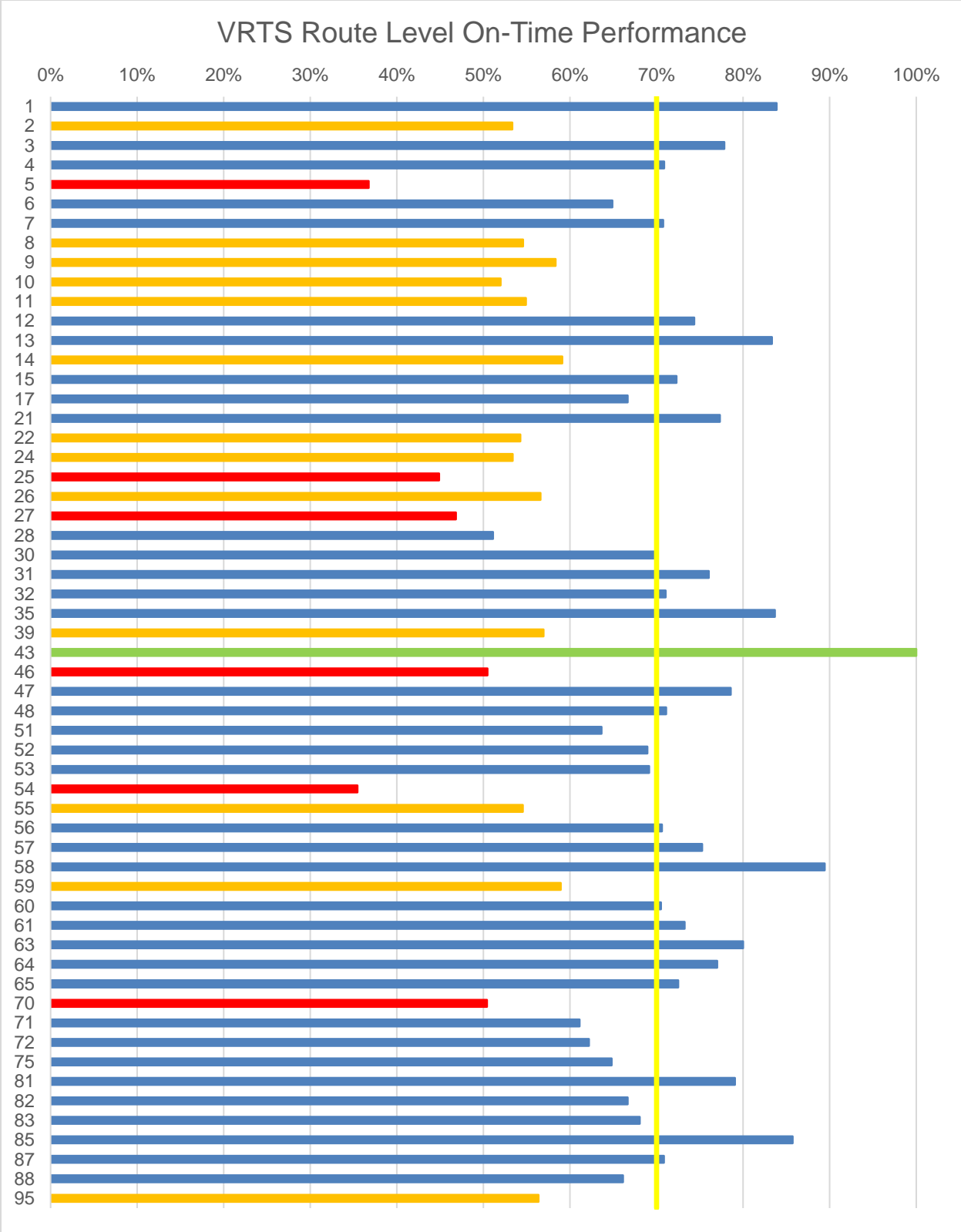


Figure 6: Per Cent On-Time Departures at Timing Points, Monday-Thursday Spring 2023 (-1, +3 minutes)