OFFICIAL COMPANY POLICY

ALEXANDRIA TRANSIT COMPANY (ATC)

Policy Name:	DASH Title VI Service Standards & Policies						
Section #:	**N/A**	**Section Title:**	**N/A**		**Former Reference ID:**	**N/A**	
Approval Authority:	ATC Board of Directors		**Adopted:**	**03/09/2022**	**Reviewed:**	2/9/2022	
Responsible Executive:	General Manager		**Revised:**	N/A			
Responsible Department:	Planning & Marketing		**Contact:**	Martin Barna			

1. **Policy Statement**

   The Alexandria Transit Company (ATC) prohibits any discrimination in the provision of its fixed-route bus services on the basis of race, color or national origin, as outlined by the Federal Transit Administration's Title VI Circular 4702.1B and Environmental Justice Circular 4703.1. Discrimination based on appearance or dress as it relates to racial identity or cultural practices is also prohibited.

2. **Reason for Policy**

   Title VI (codified at 42 U.S.C. S2000 et seq.) was enacted as part of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.

   As outlined in Title VI Circular 4702.1B and Environmental Justice Circular 4703.1, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires that all fixed route transit providers establish and monitor a set of service standards and policies that can be used to measure system performance and ensure that transit services are being provided in a fair and equitable manner. The purpose of this document is to establish the new Title VI standards and policies that will be used by the City of Alexandria, Alexandria Transit Company (ATC), and DASH, and submitted to the FTA as part of the triennial Title VI Program.

3. **Who Should Read this Policy**

   These standards and policies apply to all DASH bus service and passenger facilities. General oversight for the policies is performed by the City of Alexandria's Office of Human Rights. The ATC/DASH Department of Planning & Marketing, with support from the City of Alexandria's Department of Transportation & Environmental Services, is responsible for the ongoing implementation and execution of these policies. ATC and the City of Alexandria have drafted a separate Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that will outline city roles and responsibilities and will be subject to ATC Board review and approval.

4. **Resources**
   Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Title VI Circular (2012)

5. **Definitions**
   ATC: Alexandria Transit Company (DASH)

6. **Title VI Service Standards**

In accordance with FTA Title VI requirements, ATC/DASH shall regularly monitor the performance of its bus routes relative to system-wide service standards for the following indicators to ensure that minority and non-minority routes are being operated in a fair and equitable manner:

- Vehicle Load;
- Vehicle Headways;
- On-Time Performance; and
- Service Availability

Any significant service deficiencies identified through this process must be evaluated further to determine the extent to which minorities are affected. If the negative effect on minority persons is proportionally higher than the effect on non-minority persons, additional steps may be necessary to address or mitigate any impacts that might result from the discrepancy.

ATC/DASH shall also monitor its vehicle assignments and the distribution of passenger amenities based on the policies outlined in this document to prevent discriminatory practices in the quality of the buses that are being used on different routes or the provision of bus shelters, benches or real-time information displays. Since bus stops, shelters and benches are owned and maintained by the City of Alexandria, ATC/DASH staff will coordinate with City staff on evaluating the distribution of these assets and addressing or mitigating any adverse impacts on minority passengers.

Route Categories

In order to develop appropriate service standards for the different types of routes, each DASH bus line is classified as belonging to one of the four categories listed below. These classifications are used to identify service standards which are specific to and appropriate for each route category.

- **Frequent.** Frequent routes are defined as the routes that operate every 15 minutes or better, all-day, seven days per week. The 15-minute service standard on these routes is maintained from at least 6am to 7pm on weekdays and from 7am to 6pm on weekends. The routes will typically operate earlier in the morning and later in the evening, but with less frequent service.

- **Local.** All other routes that operate seven days per week but do not meet the “frequent” standard are classified as “local routes.

- **Commuter.** Any bus routes that are primarily intended for passengers who commute during the weekday peak hours are classified as “Commuter” routes. These routes typically do not operate on Saturdays or Sundays.

- **Trolley.** The King Street Trolley is classified with its own route category due to its distinct purpose and unique operating characteristics.

Tables 1 and 2 provide information on route categories for the DASH system and for each bus route.

Minority Routes

As part of the Title VI service monitoring evaluation procedure, each bus line is also designated as either a “minority route” or a “non-minority route”. The FTA definition of a “minority route” is “a route that has at least 1/3 of its revenue mileage in a Census Block or block group, or traffic analysis zone(s) with a percentage of minority population that exceeds the percentage of minority population in the transit service area.”

Based on this "minority route" definition, 5 of the 11 current DASH routes are classified as minority routes. This information is summarized in Table 1 and listed by route in Table 2.

Table 1 – DASH Route Classifications

Route Category	Minority	Non-Minority	Total	*Percent*
Frequent	2	1	3	*27%*
Local	2	2	4	*36%*
Commuter	1	2	3	*27%*
Trolley	0	1	1	*9%*
Total	**5**	**6**	**11**	***100%***
Percent	*45%*	*55%*	*100%*	

Table 2 – DASH Route Classifications by Route

Route	Name	Route Category	Minority Route?
30	Van Dorn Metro - Braddock Road Metro via Duke Street	Local	Minority
31	NVCC-Braddock Road Metro via King Street	Frequent	Non-Minority
32	Landmark Mall - King Street Metro via Eisenhower Avenue	Local	Minority
33	Potomac Yard - King Street Metro via Del Ray	Local	Non-Minority
34	Braddock Road Metro - Lee Center via City Hall	Local	Non-Minority
35	Van Dorn Metro - Pentagon via West End	Frequent	Minority
36A/B	Mark Center - Potomac Yard via Shirlington	Frequent	Minority
102	Mark Center - King Street Metro via Seminary Road	Commuter	Minority
103	Braddock Road Metro - Pentagon via Parkfairfax	Commuter	Non-Minority
104	Braddock Road Metro - Pentagon via Parkfairfax	Commuter	Non-Minority
KST	King Street Trolley	Trolley	Non-Minority

Systemwide Service Standards

The following sections outline the four primary service indicators that will be used to monitor ATC/DASH bus lines. Each standard is set based on the route categories listed above and monitoring will compare the performance of minority routes against those of non-minority routes to ensure that DASH service is being operated in an equitable manner.

The data samples used to compare route performance to these standards should be collected over a representative time period to ensure that they provide an accurate snapshot of each route. To ensure consistency, ATC/DASH typically uses data from March, April, September or October, which represent the busiest months of the year in terms of ridership. These months also serve as good comparison points because schools are in session and few major holidays are observed. Data collection time periods may also fluctuate based on data availability. Weekday peak periods are generally defined as 6:00 – 9:00 AM and 3:00 – 6:00 PM.

Vehicle Loads

The FTA Title VI Circular describes vehicle loads as follows:

> *Vehicle load can be expressed as the ratio of passengers to the total number of seats on a vehicle. For example, on a 40-seat bus, a vehicle load of 1. 3 means all seats are filled and there are approximately 12 standees. A vehicle load standard is generally expressed in terms of peak and off-peak times. Transit providers that operate multiple modes of transit must describe the specific vehicle load standards for peak and off-peak times for each mode of fixed route transit service (i.e., bus, express bus, bus rapid transit, light rail, heavy rail, commuter rail, passenger ferry, etc., as applicable), as the standard may differ by mode.*

ATC/DASH service planners monitor load factor data on all routes to prevent overcrowding and determine when additional capacity is needed. The load factor for each route is calculated based on the average maximum load of each trip on a route during the peak, off-peak, and weekend periods.

The following table outlines the vehicle load factor standards, which are based upon historical data, industry practices, and staff analyses. If a route exceeds its respective peak load factor standard, ATC/DASH staff will review the service to determine if additional capacity should be provided. Commuter routes are subject to a reduced load factor standard to ensure passenger safety on routes that operate on highways. The King Street Trolley includes a higher load factor standard due to the lower number of seats on Trolley vehicles, and the shorter average trip lengths.

Table 3 – DASH Peak Load Factor Standards

Route Category	Average Peak Load Factor		
	Weekday (Peak)	Weekday (Off-Peak)	Weekend
Frequent	1.2	1.0	1.0
Local	1.2	1.0	1.0
Commuter	1.0	1.0	-
Trolley*	1.5	1.5	1.5

*Trolley does not typically operate during AM peak periods or on weekends before 11:00 AM.

Vehicle Headways

The FTA Circular describes headways as follows:

> *Vehicle headway is the amount of time between two vehicles traveling in the same direction on a given line or combination of lines. A shorter headway corresponds to more frequent service. Vehicle headways are measured in minutes (e.g., every 15 minutes); service frequency is measured in vehicles per hour (e.g., 4 buses per hour). Headways and frequency of service are general indications of the level of service provided along a route. Vehicle headway is one component of the amount of travel time expended by a passenger to reach his/her destination.*

As outlined in the 2022/2030 Alexandria Transit Vision Plan, ATC/DASH emphasizes frequent service with short headways of 15 minutes or less as the most important determinant of how useful a bus service will be for the average customer.

Based on changes in ridership levels, headways may be proposed for adjustment during the annual ATC/DASH Transit Development Process (TDP) process, or if needed during regular service changes throughout the year.

ATC/DASH calculates headways as the average length of time between the scheduled arrival times of subsequent vehicles on a specific route. Table 4 outlines the vehicle headway standards by route category and time of day. These standards represent typical headways for each route category.

Table 4 – Vehicle Headway Standards

Route Category	Minimum Headway Standard (minutes)		
	Weekday (Peak)	Weekday (Off-Peak)	Weekend
Frequent	15	15	15
Local	30	60	60
Commuter	30	60	-
Trolley*	15	15	15

*Trolley does not typically operate during AM peak periods or on weekends before 11:00 AM.

On-Time Performance

The FTA Title VI Circular describes on-time performance as follows:

> *On-time performance is a measure of runs completed as scheduled. This criterion first must define what is considered to be "on time. " For example, a transit provider may consider it acceptable if a vehicle completes a scheduled run between zero and five minutes late in comparison to the established schedule. On-time performance can be measured against route origins and destinations only, or against origins and destinations as well as specified time points along the route. Some transit providers set an on-time performance standard that prohibits vehicles from running early (i.e., ahead of schedule) while others allow vehicles to run early within a specified window of time (e.g., up to five minutes ahead of schedule). An acceptable level of performance must be defined (expressed as a percentage).*

ATC/DASH regularly monitors on-time performance to increase service reliability and determine if running time changes are needed. Running times on each route are reviewed on a monthly basis and adjusted as warranted by changing traffic conditions or other operating factors.

ATC/DASH has previously established an on-time performance goal of 85 percent for all routes based on industry-wide standards. A trip is considered to be "on time" when the bus arrives to timepoint no more than one minutes before or five minutes after the scheduled arrival time.

Table 5 – On-Time Performance Standards

Route Category	On-Time Performance (OTP)		
	Weekday (Peak)	Weekday (Off-Peak)	Weekend
Frequent	85%	85%	85%
Local	85%	85%	85%
Commuter	85%	85%	-
Trolley*	85%	85%	85%

*Trolley does not typically operate during AM peak periods or on weekends before 11:00 AM.

Service Availability

The FTA Title VI Circular describes service availability as follows:

Service availability is a general measure of the distribution of routes within a transit provider's service area. For example, a transit provider might set a service standard to distribute routes such that a specified percentage of all residents in the service area are within a one-quarter mile walk of bus service or a one-half mile walk of rail service.

The ATC/DASH approach to service availability is shaped largely by the Alexandria Transit Vision Plan (https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/Alexandria%20Transit%20Vision%20Final%20Report%20_2020-02-24.pdf). One of the key statistics that was used during the development of the Alexandria Transit Vision Plan was the percentages of city residents who live within ¼ mile of a bus stop with "frequent" bus service, and the percentage within ¼ mile of a bus stop with any bus service. This metric was also calculated for percentages of minority residents, low-income residents, senior residents and jobs. These percentages help to measure the availability of bus service to residents, and the availability of useful, frequent, all-day service. These metrics will be calculated for each of these population groups as part of the regular service monitoring process.

The Alexandria Transit Vision Plan, which was adopted by the ATC Board of Directors in 2019, called for a bus network that increases total ridership by providing more useful, frequent bus service in high-ridership transit areas as opposed to providing more infrequent service across a wider geographic area. This approach guided the development of the 2022/2030 Alexandria Transit Vision Plan and the resulting New DASH Network, which provides frequent, all-day bus service in key corridors across the City of Alexandria. This focus on increasing the amount of useful, frequent service in areas where lots of people can use it has proven to be particularly effective at increasing ridership as well as fulfilling the transit needs of the City of Alexandria's minority and low-income populations.

Table 6 – Service Availability Standards

Service Availability	City Residents
Within 1/4 Mile of a Frequent Route	50%
Within 1/4 Mile of Any Route	90%

7. Systemwide Service Policies

These policies are intended to provide guidance and instruction to ensure that vehicle assignment and passenger amenity distribution practices do not result in discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin.

Vehicle Assignment

The FTA Title VI Circular describes vehicle assignment as follows:

> *Vehicle assignment refers to the process by which transit vehicles are placed into service in depots and on routes throughout the transit provider's system. Policies for vehicle assignment may be based on the age of the vehicle, where age would be a proxy for condition. For example, a transit provider could set a policy to assign vehicles to depots so that the age of the vehicles at each depot does not exceed the system-wide average. The policy could also be based on the type of vehicle. For example, a transit provider may set a policy to assign vehicles with more capacity to routes with higher ridership and/or during peak periods. The policy could also be based on the type of service offered. For example, a transit provider may set a policy to assign specific types of*

vehicles to express or commuter service. Transit providers deploying vehicles equipped with technology designed to reduce emissions could choose to set a policy for how these vehicles will be deployed throughout the service area.

The ATC/DASH bus fleet is comprised of roughly 100 buses in active revenue service. The DASH fleet operates out of the DASH William B. Hurd Maintenance & Operations Administration Facility, which is located at 3000 Business Center Drive in Alexandria, Virginia. The current fleet includes a mix of buses of varying lengths and propulsion types, which are shown in Table 7, below:

Table 7 – Active DASH Bus Fleet (2022)

Vehicle ID's	Year	Make	Type	Length	# of Vehicles
200-206	2011	Gillig	Hybrid	35’	7
300-302	2011	Gillig	Hybrid	40’	3
400-404	2011	Gillig (Trolley)	Hybrid	29’	5
207-211	2012	Gillig	Hybrid	35’	5
303-307	2012	Gillig	Hybrid	40’	5
212-216	2014	Gillig	Hybrid	35’	5
308-309	2014	Gillig	Hybrid	40’	2
217-229	2015	Gillig	Hybrid	35’	13
405	2015	Gillig (Trolley)	Hybrid	35'	1
230-233	2017	Gillig	Hybrid	35’	4
310-311	2017	Gillig	Hybrid	40’	2
501-514	2018	Gillig	Clean Diesel	35’	14
515-527	2019	New Flyer	Clean Diesel	35'	13
528-530	2020	New Flyer	Clean Diesel	35'	3
701-705	2020	New Flyer	Clean Diesel	40'	5
801-803	2020	New Flyer	Electric	40'	3
804-806	2021	Proterra	Electric	40'	3
807-810	2021	Proterra	Electric	40'	4
901-904	2021	New Flyer	Electric	60'	4
TOTAL ACTIVE FLEET					**101**

The majority of the DASH fleet is comprised of 35- and 40-foot low-floor transit buses, however, DASH also has several 60-foot articulated buses. DASH also operates the King Street Trolley on behalf of the City of Alexandria and has several 30- and 35-foot buses that have been equipped with specialized Trolley replica features for this purpose. All DASH buses are handicap-accessible and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

In terms of vehicle propulsion, most of the DASH fleet consists of either hybrid diesel-electric or clean diesel buses, however, DASH has acquired over a dozen 100% electric buses over the last two years and will continue to transition its fleet to 100% electric over the next decade.

Vehicle Assignment refers to the process by which transit vehicles are assigned to routes for revenue service. A summary of the ATC/DASH Vehicle Assignment Process is included below:

- DASH Operations staff typically assign buses at random, based on fleet availability at the time when a bus is scheduled to pull out. In most instances, whichever bus is most accessible or near the front of the garage is used for pullout.

- DASH employs a significant amount of “interlining”, which is a vehicle blocking strategy whereby a single bus and operator will rotate through multiple routes during the course of the day to maximize operating cost efficiency. In addition to lowering operating costs, this approach also results in buses being rotated through the system in a more fair and equitable manner.

- Exceptions to the vehicle assignment policy described above are employed for several routes with increased ridership or specific operating or branding constraints. Examples include:

    - Dispatchers typically avoid assigning the larger, 40- and 60-foot buses to routes that operate on narrow streets or tight turns, including those on Lines 36A/B, 103 and 104;

    - Dispatchers try to assign these larger buses to routes with higher ridership that may be more susceptible to overcrowding. These high-ridership routes include Lines 30 and 35 in West Alexandria, which has a higher percentage of low income and minority residents than the rest of the service area.

    - DASH has a series of buses that have been specifically wrapped and branded for Line 35 service in West Alexandria. These buses include a mix of 35- and 40-foot vehicles and are used almost exclusively on Line 35.

    - The King Street Trolley service is also operated with a dedicated sub-fleet of six buses that have been equipped with a custom livery package that emulates historic trolley design features. These trolley buses are used exclusively on the King Street Trolley.

ATC/DASH maintains extremely high safety standards and closely monitors the age and condition of its vehicles to determine when repairs are needed and when the buses are due for replacement. Buses are typically replaced at the end of their useful 12-year lifespan in accordance with the ATC/DASH Fleet Replacement Plan. DASH has a comprehensive Preventive Maintenance (PM) program which outlines regular maintenance procedures that are performed on all buses to ensure a high level of vehicle reliability. The oldest vehicles in the active DASH revenue fleet date were manufactured in 2011, while the average age of the fleet is 5.7 years old.

Transit Amenities

The FTA Title VI Circular describes transit amenities as follows:

> *Transit amenities refer to items of comfort, convenience, and safety that are available to the general riding public. Fixed route transit providers must set a policy to ensure equitable distribution of transit amenities across the system. Transit providers may have different policies for the different modes of service that they provide. Policies in this area address how these amenities are distributed within a transit system, and the manner of their distribution determines whether transit users have equal access to these amenities. This ... is not intended to impact funding decisions for transit amenities. Rather, this ... applies after a transit provider has decided to fund an amenity.*

The City of Alexandria provides a wide array of transit amenities such as bus shelters, benches, trash cans, lighting, and real-time bus arrival displays. These amenities are distributed throughout the service area based on ridership data, income/ethnicity/disability status demographics, staff analysis, funding opportunities, development conditions and customer requests. General policies for the distribution of bus shelters, benches, trash cans, lighting fixtures and posted schedule information are outlined below. ATC/DASH and City staff monitor the locations of all transit amenities to ensure that they are equitably distributed to minority and low-income areas.

Bus Shelters

Bus shelters are provided at roughly 60 stops throughout the City of Alexandria. The installation of bus shelters is generally based upon ridership data and staff input, but many shelters have been installed as part of developer agreements on construction projects. Generally, bus shelters are prioritized for bus stops with at least 50 average boardings per weekday.

Benches

Benches are provided at approximately 180 stops throughout the City of Alexandria. The installation of benches is based upon ridership, customer requests and staff input. Stops located near medical and senior facilities are also furnished with benches as much as possible. Generally, bus shelters are prioritized for bus stops with at least 20 average boardings per weekday, however, stops located near significant populations of seniors, the disabled, students, or other special uses (e.g., hospitals, medical offices, tourist attractions) may receive special consideration.

Trash Cans

Trash cans are installed at roughly 150 stops in the City of Alexandria. Trash cans are typically installed at stops where there is a demonstrated issue with littering, but ridership data, customer requests, maintenance trends and staff input are also considered. Trash cans are regularly maintained by the City of Alexandria's Department of Transportation & Environmental Services (T&ES).

Lighting

As part of its focus on passenger safety, the City of Alexandria installs lighting at many of its bus stop locations, including those with bus shelters. The distribution of lighting fixtures is primarily based upon ridership, customer requests, safety considerations, and staff recommendations.

Real-Time Information Displays

ATC/DASH have installed real-time information displays at more than 60 stops across the City of Alexandria. These displays provide customers with information on when the next buses will arrive based on real-time bus locations. Most of the displays are solar-powered tablets mounted on bus stop poles, but several larger TV screens or real-time kiosks have been installed at major transit hubs or transfer locations across the City. Installation decisions on real-time information displays is generally based upon ridership, transfer activity, grant opportunities, developer considerations, operating factors, sunlight exposure, and staff input.

In addition to these real-time information displays, DASH also makes real-time bus arrival information available via the DASH Tracker website, third-party real-time apps, SMS text message, and an interactive voice response (IVR) on the DASH Customer Service telephone hotline. A static display featuring QR Codes with links to the "Schedules" page on the DASH website is also provided at several dozen bus stop locations.