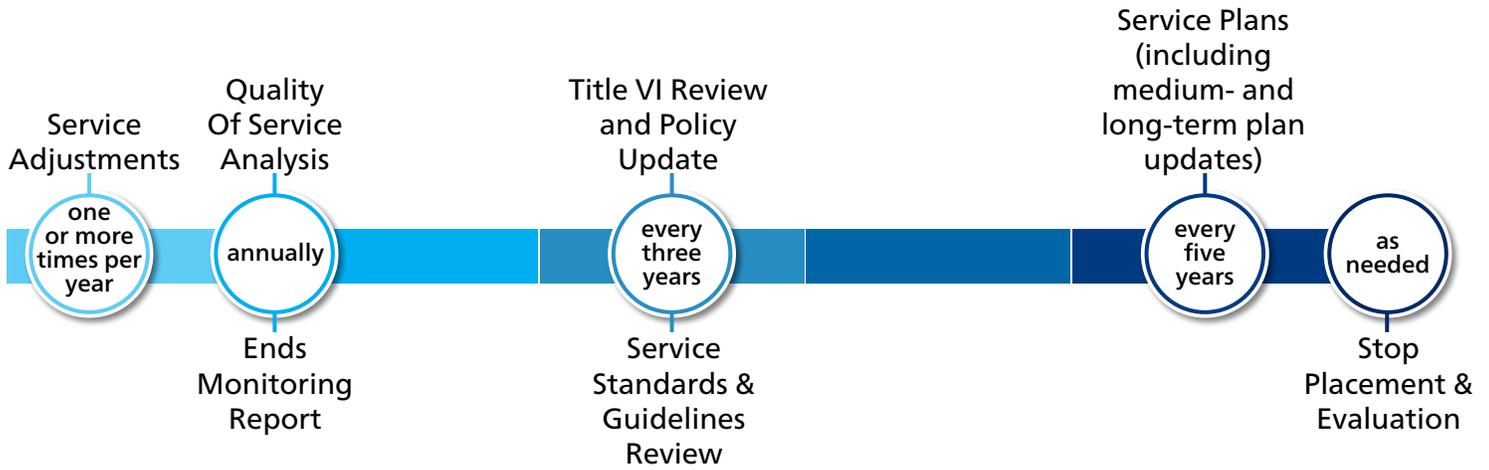




# Service Changes & Evaluation

# Schedules

TheRide is continuously assessing service performance and feedback to make improvements for customers and the community. There are several recurring planning efforts undertaken by staff and approved by the Board of Directors, each at different points in time and with varying levels of detail.



## Collection of Proposed Service Changes

Service changes provide an opportunity to modify TheRide service to better suit riders' needs. They can encompass changes to route alignments and schedules as well as physical amenities like bus stops and other facilities. Proposals for service changes are collected through the following means:

### Internal Requests

- Results from the evaluation of services based on data analysis that need improvements or corrective actions in order to meet the service standards and guidelines.
- Input from TheRide employees, particularly operators who are most familiar with route issues.
- Service Planning staff recommendations to explore better operating alternatives.

### External Requests

- Public/community engagement feedback.
- Customer service requests.
- Stakeholder engagement (local governments, businesses, community organizations, etc).

## Responding to Requests for Service Changes

TheRide frequently receives requests to create new services or bring back old services. Given the limited funding for putting transit service out on the street, it is very difficult for TheRide to act upon and implement every request. TheRide aims to provide a high quality, efficient and useful transit service, while balancing the needs of the residents in the service area and being good stewards of taxpayer dollars. These service standards & guidelines provide a basis from which to review service requests received and to evaluate what can be done given the amount of funding available.

## Categorization of Service Changes

Service changes shall be categorized so as to better understand which types of changes need to be evaluated internally. **A major service change is defined as the:**

A change affecting more than 25% of weekly revenue service hours or miles for any transit route or service at one time or cumulatively within a period of thirty-six months

Implementation of a new route

Elimination of a route

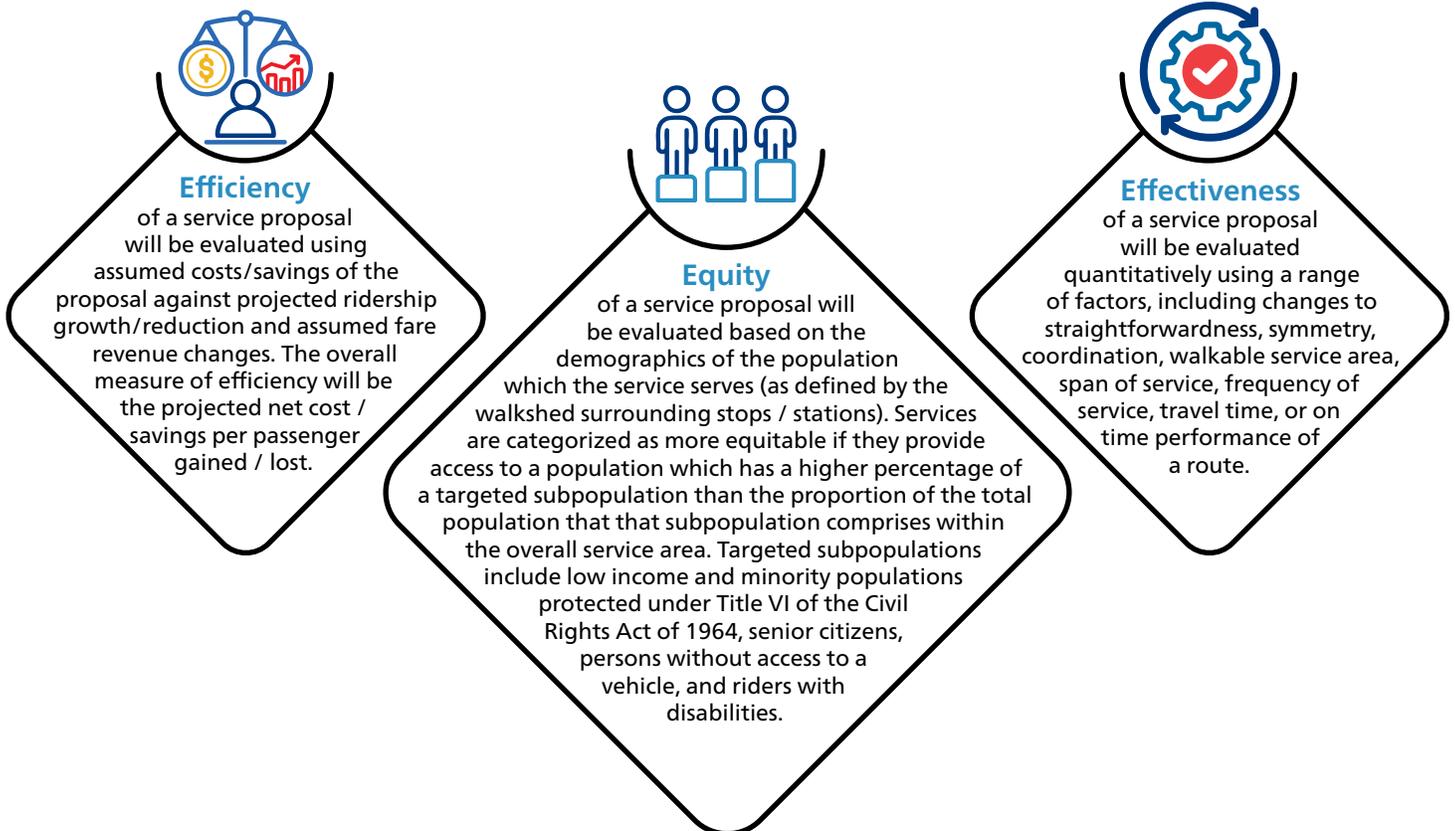
## Evaluation of Proposals for Major Service Changes in Quality of Service Assessments or Service/Network Studies and Plan Updates

Proposals will be evaluated annually in the three main categories which TheRide uses as its goals for service:

- **The efficiency** of a proposal based on resources needed to carry it out.
- **Its effectiveness** at increasing access to transit or transit use within the service area.
- Whether it changes the **equity** with which services are provided to those who have higher need.

Proposals which do not meet service standards do not need to be evaluated and should be noted as such by staff.

Once proposals have been aggregated and determined to meet basic service standards as set forth in this document, they will be evaluated and ranked based on the following criteria:



# Underperforming Service – When to Take Action

There are multiple actions that can be taken when a service is not meeting a standard. These actions fall under the following types of changes:

## Reallocate:

Add or reduce service to respond to overcrowding or reliability issues, such as increasing vehicles on a route or building transit priority infrastructure.

## Optimize:

A change to the frequency, span, or route alignment of service to better match demand.

## Expand:

Adding a new route.

## Reduce:

Removing a route.

## Adjust:

Bus stop placement, configuration, or amenity change resulting from one of the changes above.

The following are examples of how TheRide might respond to the issue of an underperforming route:

- Targeted marketing;
- Adjusting frequency or service span;
- Rerouting;
- Rescheduling;
- Eliminating or rerouting unproductive route segments;
- Consolidation of routes or portions of routes;
- Replacement with FlexRide (microtransit) service; and
- Elimination of the route when none of the above actions are viable or prove successful.

## Evaluating New Services or Major Changes

Within the first year of introduction or implementation of a major change, services may be adjusted to help them run more efficiently but should not be modified in significant ways. Riders often take some time to adjust to the new and changed services and it takes time for that market to develop. Typically, TheRide will allow for some form of a “ramping up” period to allow for routes to be given time to ‘mature’ before their performance is evaluated against the same standards as mature routes. During this period, performance of new or changed service will be observed but not altered, because no service will be viewed by the public as dependable if it is too frequently changed.

After the first year of a service being introduced or since the last major change, TheRide expects that a service will meet 60% of the minimum thresholds described in each of the Service Standards. After 24 months, a route should have a mature market and be expected to meet the standards. After the introductory period of 24 months, routes should be evaluated annually. A route that is underperforming the standards in the annual evaluation will be studied for changes. If appropriate, a response from the lists outlined in the previous section will be implemented within the next eligible service planning cycle. Exceptions can be made for a route that falls within 15% of the standards and has shown growth over the previous year. These services can be given additional months to meet targets before a potential service change is studied in the next annual evaluation.

## Changing Service to/from Fixed Route to FlexRide (microtransit)

When evaluating route performance in a certain area, one option is to consider converting a fixed-route to, or from, a FlexRide (microtransit) zone. There are costs associated with creating a new FlexRide zone or expanding an existing one. However, where a route(s) fails to meet performance standards, converting it to a FlexRide zone could be a feasible solution.

Should conversion result in overall cost savings to TheRide, savings may be re-invested in fixed-route service improvements, such as frequency or span increases, in other parts of the network.

