

Proposal For East Busway Service

When the first EBA route started in February 1983, the route went through downtown via Grant, Fifth and Liberty. Six months later the loop was shortened to Liberty Smithfield, Oliver and back out Grant. In 1991 the 68X route was created for morning only service that went on the longer loop through town and the EBX provided both morning and afternoon rush hour service. The shorter EBA loop to Oliver continued until 1999 when construction forced numerous Smithfield buses to shorten their downtown loop to Smithfield, 7th and out on Grant.

In 2003 before the East Busway extension opened, there were three routes: EBX, 68X (morning only long loop) and EBA. With the extension to Swissvale, Port Authority created a “new” route, the EBS, which served the Hay Street loop, all of the stops from Wilkinsburg into downtown and an extended loop into town via Grant, Fifth and out on Liberty, supplementing service during rush hours. The EBS was a replacement and enlargement of the 68X, which was discontinued.

After observing rider usage and using the system, there are several key points to consider in any continuing service adjustments.

- The stop at Herron is little used and is hardly a factor in calculating run times or usage.
- The three designations with the three varieties of stops create rider confusion and rider overcrowding.
- The East Liberty Station, Negley Station and especially the Wilkinsburg Park N Ride Station are high volume stops.
- Stations on the extension have an undue burden in reaching the extended parts of downtown.
- Having one common loop downtown would prevent uneven loading of the buses since the loop would be served more frequently and takes the guesswork out of choosing which loop to wait for the bus.

ACTC’s East Liberty garage proposes that the East Busway service be all stops, by all buses, eliminating the Hay Street Loop and extending all service through the Downtown via the Grant/Fifth/Liberty loop.

Eliminating the various EBA, EBX and EBS designations simplifies the system and the necessity of figuring out which stops are served by which buses. We have seen riders board an EBX only to discover it does not stop at Negley, forcing them to ride out to Wilkinsburg and board an inbound EBA/EBS.

In addition, riders will elect not to board the EBA or EBX in order to board the EBS so they can reach their destinations further in town, which causes overloading on the EBS and uneven load distribution on the EBX. Similarly, riders are confused by the EBS designation and the “short loop” it makes to the Hay Street loop.

In addition, East Busway users are the only busway riders who are forced to transfer or walk 15 minutes to reach destinations further in the downtown, such as Gateway Center or PPG. All other busway routes (West and South) have routes that extend through the downtown, giving riders an option of discharging closer to areas throughout downtown. While the theory is that riders can transfer from an EBA or EBX to a route serving other parts of downtown, this is extremely impractical at any time after 7:45 a.m. or 5:45 p.m. because service by buses proceeding further into town is extremely limited. Also, only the very transit savvy are familiar enough with various routes to know which buses will take them into the downtown area.

For those riders who board the EBS at the Hay Street loop, the 63A/B and 68D/G alternative service to downtown via the East Busway and the 71C/D provide service between Wilkinsburg Station and the Hay Street loop.

By running every four to five minutes during rush hour, with all runs following the same route, there would be less bunching of buses with inconsistent service, thus allowing passengers to take any bus, rather than being forced to take a specific bus based on its stop pattern.

By having a single route that serves all stops on the busway and loops through downtown via Fifth Avenue, service could run weekdays every four to five minutes between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., and every 10-12 minutes during midday non-peak hours and 20 minutes after 7 p.m. This would result in a savings of about 6 vehicle hours for each weekday (30 hours during the week) that could be used to create additional runs on Saturdays and Sundays providing 15 minute and 20 minute headways respectively.

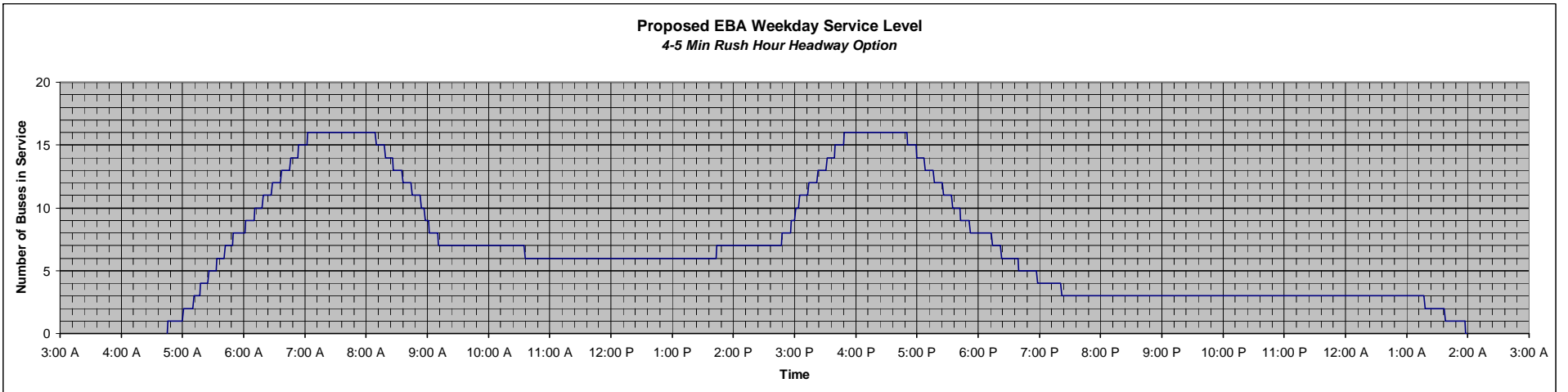
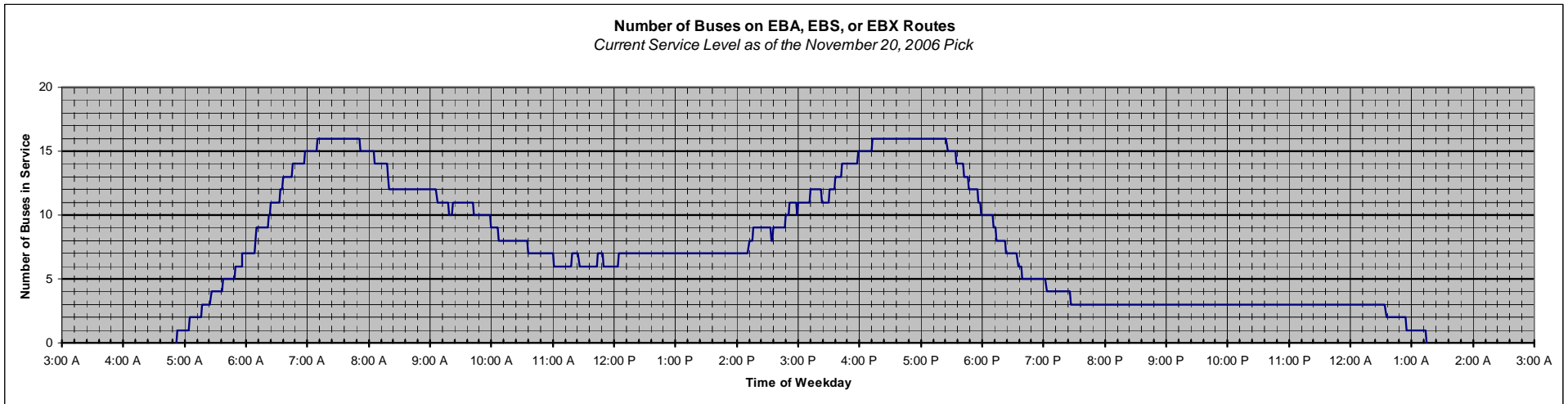
Appendix A plots the current service and proposed service levels. Appendix B shows the proposed schedule for the single route. Appendix C calculates the number of vehicle hours on the proposed single route and Appendix D summarizes the current vehicle hours for the three separate routes.

ACTC East Liberty garage welcomes any questions or comments regarding this proposal.

A Brief History of the East Busway

- **February 6, 1983:** EBA route was created
 - First Trip at 5:39 AM & Last Trip at 12:00 Midnight
 - 6 minute rush hour headway
 - 10 minute mid-day and early evening headway
 - 15 minute headway after 10:00 PM
 - Loop went from Penn Station to Grant, to Fifth, to Market, to Liberty, to Penn Station. (Similar to current EBS routing)
 - Ran 120 weekday and 45 Saturday round trips
- **April 23, 1983:**
 - Sunday Service was introduced
 - Ran from 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM
 - 20 minute headway all day
 - EBO was introduced with 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM timeframe and 20 minute headway
- **November 13, 1983:**
 - Bus loop changed due to complaints of delays
 - Loop followed Penn station, to Liberty, to Smithfield, to Oliver, to Grant, to Penn Station
- **January 1987:**
 - EBA rush hour headway was 2-3 minutes
 - 11,600 Weekday riders
- **November 1989:**
 - Fare Collection at stations (similar to light rail procedure) given a 60 day trial
 - Nothing was heard on when and why this was discontinued
- **1990's:**
 - Many discussions on Busway extension and where it should end.
 - Some even mentioned eventual extension to Monroeville, Trafford, or McKeesport
 - Rush hour service on the EBA was 3-4 minutes
- **1991:**
 - EBX & 68X were created
 - EBX had same loop as EBA
 - 68X followed Grant then Fifth inbound only (No outbound service)
- **September 1999:**
 - Gimbels construction caused temporary elimination of the stop at Smithfield & Sixth
 - EBA, EBX, 63's, 68D, 68G, and the Friendship 77's followed current EBA Loop
 - This was understood as a detour routing.
- **November 2000:**
 - The 63's, city bound 68's and the Friendship 77's resumed their regular loops
 - EBA & EBX was to keep short loop "until further notice"
 - Loop still remains today!
- **September 2002:**
 - Rush hour headway was 5 minutes on EBA
 - Midday headway was 12 minutes
 - 68X still a morning only service
- **December 2002:**
 - Wilkinsburg Park-n-Ride Opened
 - No change in schedule of the routes
 - 3 Harmar and 3 West Mifflin Artics were borrowed by East Liberty
 - Artics were supplied to the EBX and 68X regularly for the first time
- **June 13, 2003:**
 - East Busway Extension opens.
 - EBS is formed by eliminating 68X
 - EBA, EBS, and EBX each had 12 min headways at rush hour
 - EBS loop ran and still runs the current loop of Grant, Fifth, and Liberty
 - After a few picks, midday EBS service was introduced

Appendix A – Service Level Profiles



The existing level of service requires 16 peak buses that would most likely be articulated buses. Although East Liberty now has 25 fully functional articulated buses newly delivered from Neoplan, the proposed level of service also would require 16 peak buses to allow for the remaining articulated buses to be used on other high volume routes such as the 71D-Hamilton or the 63B-Rankin Express.

Proposed EBA Schedule suggested by ACTC's East Liberty Division. Four-to-Five Minute Rush Hour Headway Option. Table with columns for Block Route, East Liberty Garage, and Revenue Vehicle Hours for Weekday Service. Rows list various bus routes (444, 445, 446, etc.) and their schedules.

Proposed EBA Schedule suggested by ACTC's East Liberty Division. Table with columns for Block Route, East Liberty Garage, and Revenue Vehicle Hours for Saturday Service and Sunday/Holiday Service. Rows list various bus routes (271, 272, 273, etc.) and their schedules.

Weekday Run Totals table showing Start, End, and Revenue Vehicle Hours for various routes.

76.15% Weekday Percentage Revenue Vehicle Hours

116.03 Weekday Revenue Vehicle Hours

152.38 Weekday total Vehicle Hours

78.85% Saturday Percentage Revenue Vehicle Hours

56.80 Saturday Revenue Vehicle Hours

72.03 Saturday total Vehicle Hours

74.69% Sunday/Holiday Percentage Revenue Vehicle Hours

45.00 Sunday/Holiday Revenue Vehicle Hours

60.25 Sunday/Holiday total Vehicle Hours

Saturday Run Totals

271 20:18

272 20:18

273 20:18

EBA - 278 11:08

72.03

Sunday Run Totals

172 20:05

173 20:05

EBA - 181 20:05

60.25

