

# Route 211 - Fairhaven: Service Change Proposal

July 2023

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## I. Description

Route 211 is a local, primarily east-west running route that connects Downtown New Bedford to Fairhaven. Route 211 provides service to Southcoast Health, Market Basket, Fairhaven Commons (e.g., Walmart, Stop & Shop), and Fairhaven High School. On weekdays, this route operates every 30 minutes from 6:35 AM to 9:05 PM. On Saturdays, this route operates every 30 minutes from 7:55 AM to 5:25 PM.

The route alignment between the New Bedford Terminal and the Fairhaven Wal-Mart is bi-directional, is easily understood, and serves major destinations that generate substantial demand. Both Market Basket and Fairhaven Wal-Mart are among the busiest stops in the SRTA fixed route system. The alignment after the Fairhaven Wal-Mart is confusing and unidirectional which makes it challenging for customers to understand when and where the bus will travel.

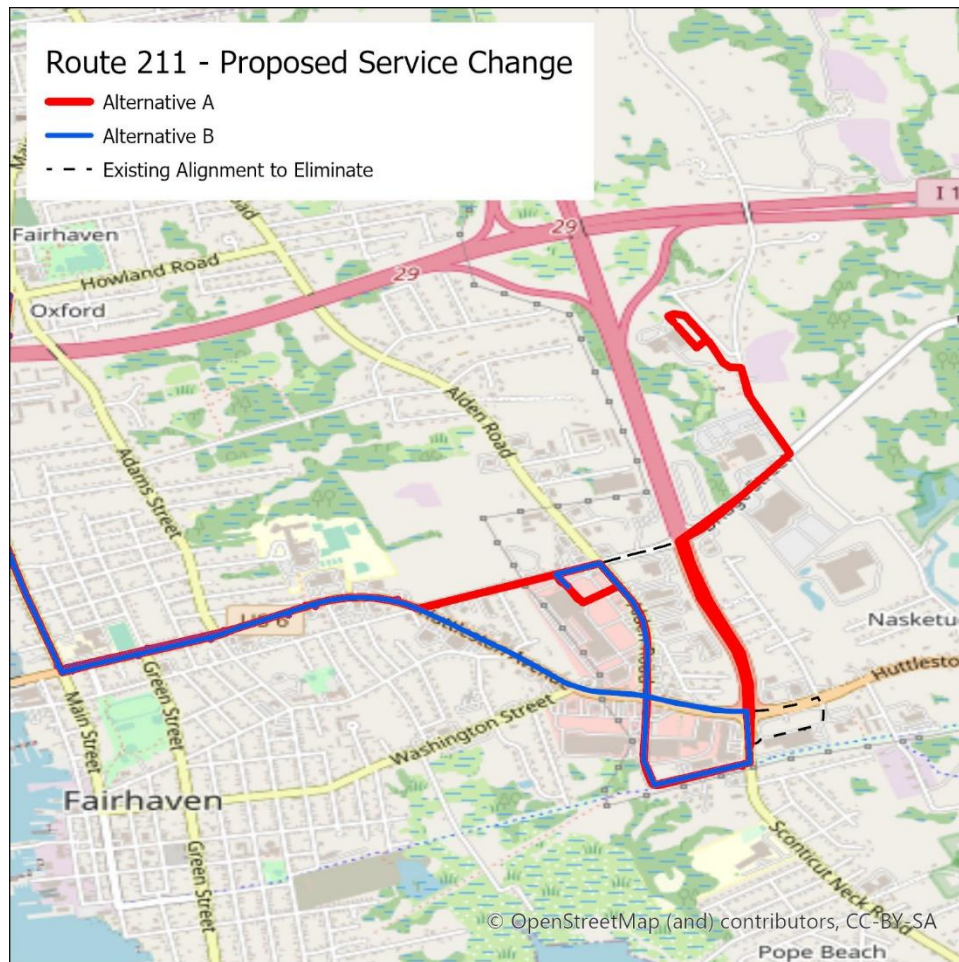
## II. Proposed Changes

### A. Alternative A

Alternative A follows the current outbound pattern to the Fairhaven Wal-Mart. The route turns into Wal-Mart, serves the front of the store and exits the plaza onto Alden Rd, turns south and continues east on David Drown Blvd., north on Sconticut Neck Rd and continues on Route 240 to Bridge St, turns east on Bridge St, north on Mill Rd and ends at the South Coast Health building on Mill Rd. The inbound pattern reverses the outbound pattern, however it continues on Alden Rd to Bridge St and turns into Wal-Mart from Bridge St to serve the front of the store, exits onto Alden Rd, turns west on Bridge and continues Huttleston Ave where it joins the current inbound pattern.

### B. Alternative B

Alternative B follows the current outbound pattern to Bridge St in Fairhaven at which point it continues east on Huttleston Ave to Alden Rd, turns south on Alden Rd, turns east on David Drown Blvd, turns north on Sconticut Neck Rd, turns west on Huttleston Ave, turns north on Alden Rd, turns east on Bridge St, and turns south into Wal-Mart. The inbound pattern exists Wal-Mart on Alden Rd and reverses the outbound pattern. Alternative B eliminates service on Bridge St and Mill Rd and does not serve the South Coast Health or Titleist.



### III. Title VI Equity Analysis

A Title VI Equity Analysis is required by the SRTA Title VI Program whenever a service change will result in a change of more than 25% of the revenue mileage for the route. Both alternatives exceed the 25% threshold and warrant an equity analysis. The parameters for a Title VI equity analysis is described in Chapter 8 to the 2022 SRTA Title VI Program and evaluates two factors: the effects of the change on racial minority groups and the effects of the change on low-income populations. In both measures, the effects are measured against the current conditions by establishing a baseline for racial minorities and low-income populations. If the affected population is more than 60% of the total, the change is determined to have an adverse impact.

#### A. Alternative A

The proposed service change for Alternative A increases weekday revenue miles from 320.6 to 343.2, a 7% increase; Saturday revenue miles increase from 250.9 to 268.6, a 7% increase. The proposed service change does not meet the threshold of a Major Service Change and does not require a Title VI Equity Analysis.

#### B. Alternative B

The proposed service change for Alternative B decreases weekday revenue miles from 320.6 to 297.9, a 7% decrease; Saturday revenue miles decrease from 250.9 to 233.1, a 7% decrease.

The proposed service change does not meet the threshold of a Major Service Change and does not require a Title VI Equity Analysis.

## IV. Discussion

Route 211 is a very popular route that serves high demand destinations. The current alignment works well up to Wal-Mart, but becomes confusing, lengthy, and under-utilized after Wal-Mart. The route end essentially has two tails: the first to South Coast Health; the second to Stop & Shop. The two-tail alignment creates an sub-optimal condition for passengers wanting to go to Wal-Mart whereby they have the option to alight at the entrance on Bridge St and navigate a busy parking lot without sidewalks or pathways to the storefront, or they can remain on-board and exit at the front of the store after the route serves South Coast Health. This alignment puts customers in a position to decide between their time or their safety. Additionally, because Wal-Mart is only served on the outbound pattern, customers boarding at Wal-Mart are not granted a transfer to the inbound route and must pay an additional fare when the route begins the inbound pattern at Stop & Shop.

South Coast Health generates a fair number of trips per day. In FY23 there were 1,209 boardings and 1,372 alightings; approximately 5.3 boardings per day with a 34% stop use frequency. The tail extends the length of the trip and with increasing traffic on the route and on the roads the route travels, the route is struggling with on-time performance and a cycle time (combined time for outbound and inbound pattern) that extends beyond sixty-minutes and making route scheduling a challenge.

The changes proposed offer two alternatives to improve the alignment and make it more understandable to the customers and bring the cycle time down to less than sixty-minutes to improve operating efficiency of the New Bedford fixed route system.

## V. Public Input

## VI. Recommendation

