

# ROUTE 61

## 9<sup>th</sup>-Market to Manayunk

### KEY SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS, ISSUES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Route 61 connects northwest Philadelphia with Center City with connections to Wissahickon Transportation Center, the Broad Street Line, and the Market Frankford Line.
- Ridership on the route is strong, but the route suffers from substandard on-time performance and, in Center City, slow travel speeds.
- Opportunities to strengthen the route include simplifying the route and coordinating services in the Manayunk/Roxborough neighborhood.

### ROUTE OVERVIEW

Route 61 (9<sup>th</sup>-Market to Manayunk) operates between the Container Loop in Manayunk and Center City, primarily via Main Street in Manayunk and Ridge Avenue through North Philadelphia (Figure 1). The route runs northwest across the North Philadelphia grid, unlike other routes in the neighborhood that primarily run north-south or east-west. It provides connections to the Wissahickon Transportation Center, numerous bus routes in North Philadelphia and Center City, as well as the Broad Street and Market-Frankford Lines. In Manayunk, Route 61 operates on the same corridor as Route 35 and Route 62 via Main Street.

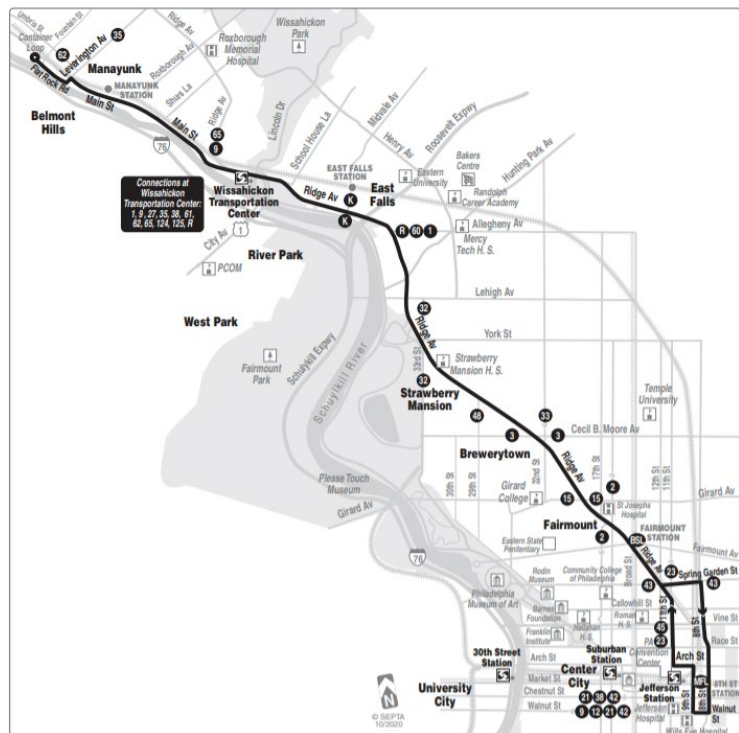


Figure 1 | Route Map

### SERVICE OVERVIEW

#### Schedule

Route 61 operates seven days per week for about 20.5 hours a day between 5:30 AM until 2:00 AM (see Table 1). Headways vary due to the use of multiple service patterns during the same periods. On weekdays:

- AM and PM Peak service is frequent on average, operating every 8 minutes.
- Average frequency during the midday is 12 minutes.
- In the evenings, average service frequencies remain high at 13 minutes during the evening period and every 19 minutes during the night.

On Saturdays, Route 61 operates on average every 14 minutes during the day and 19 minutes at night. On Sundays, it operates on average every 19 minutes during the day and 20 minutes at night. Actual frequencies vary during all time periods.

**Table 1 | Schedule Statistics**

Service Day	Span Of Service	Frequency (Range)	Frequency (Average)
<b>Weekdays</b>	4:37 AM to 2:26 AM		
Owl	Midnight to 4:00 AM	1 - 30	19
Early AM	4:00 AM to 5:59 AM	1 - 28	15
AM Peak	6:00 AM to 8:59 AM	1 - 29	8
Midday	9:00 AM to 2:59 PM	1 - 21	12
PM Peak	3:00 PM to 5:59 PM	1 - 19	8
Evening	6:00 PM to 9:59 PM	1 - 30	13
Late Night	10:00 PM to 11:59 PM	1 - 30	19
<b>Saturdays</b>	24 hours		
Day	8:00 AM to 5:59 PM	1 - 31	14
Night	Before 8:00 AM & After 5:59 PM	1 - 35	19
<b>Sundays</b>	24 hours		
Day	8:00 AM to 5:59 PM	1 - 31	19
Night	Before 8:00 AM & After 5:59 PM	1 - 34	20

Note: Span of service reflects the time the first bus begins service until the time the last bus finishes service.

## Service Patterns

Route 61 operates with eight service patterns (see Table 2), with most trips running the same pattern on the full alignment. On weekdays, some trips short-turn at Wissahickon Transportation Center instead of beginning or ending at the Container Loop. There are also several other short-turn patterns with limited service.

**Table 2 | Service Patterns**

Pattern	Origin	Destination	Unique Feature	Unique Stops	Trips Per Day		
					Wkd	Sat	Sun
<b>Northbound</b>							
229758	9th St & Filbert St - FS	Flat Rock Rd & Container Loop	Primary Pattern	-	57	45	37
229757	9th St & Filbert St - FS	Wissahickon Transportation Center - onsite	Short-turn to Wissahickon	1	14	2	1
229756	9th St & Filbert St - FS	Ridge Av & Allegheny Av	Short-turn to Allegheny West	0	0	3	3
<b>Southbound</b>							
229755	Flat Rock Rd & Container Loop	9th St & Filbert St - FS	Primary Pattern	-	54	47	38
229753	Ridge Av & Wissahickon Transfer Center	9th St & Filbert St - FS	Short-turn from Wissahickon	0	12	2	1

229750	Ridge Av & Wissahickon Transfer Center	8th St & Market St	Short-turn from Wissahickon to Market St	0	3	0	0
229754	Flat Rock Rd & Container Loop	8th St & Market St	Short-turn to Market St	0	2	0	0
229752	Ridge Av & Dauphin St	9th St & Filbert St - FS	Short-turn from Strawberry Mansion	0	0	1	2

Note: Unique stops are those not served by the primary pattern

## RIDERSHIP

In Fall 2019, Route 61 carried 4,348 passengers on weekdays, 2,262 on Saturdays, and 1,653 on Sundays (see Table 3).

**Table 3 | Fall 2019 Ridership and Productivity**

	Weekdays	Saturdays	Sundays
<b>Daily Ridership</b>	<b>4,348</b>	<b>2,262</b>	<b>1,653</b>
Rank	52	45	45
<b>Passengers per Revenue Vehicle Hour</b>	<b>41.7</b>	<b>34.0</b>	<b>32.9</b>
Rank	59	52	58

## Transfer Patterns

The largest transfer volumes on Route 61 are to and from the following routes. Many bus-to-bus transfers occur at Wissahickon Transportation Center, where Route 61 passengers transfer to and from Route K, Route 33 and Route 65:

- The Broad Street Line (at Fairmount Station) (7.4% of all trips)
- The Market-Frankford Line (at 8<sup>th</sup> Street Station) (6.5%)
- Route K (Ridge-Midvale to Arrott Transportation Center at Wissahickon Transportation Center) (6%)
- Route 65 (Germantown-Cheltenham to 69th St Transportation Center at Wissahickon Transportation Center) (5%)
- Route 33 (Penn's Landing to 23rd-Venango at Wissahickon Transportation Center) (3.2%)

Weekend transfer patterns are similar but at a slightly lower rate.

## Ridership by Stop

Route 61's major function is to transport people between northwest Philadelphia and Center City, with connections to Regional Rail and rapid transit. There is also a moderate amount of intermediate ridership along the southern half of the route. High ridership stops on northbound trips include (see Figure 2):

- 313 board at 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Filbert Street. This is the closest bus stop to the intercity bus terminal and New Jersey Transit service. (7.8% of all passengers)
- 198 riders board and 12 alight at Arch Street and 11<sup>th</sup> Street (5.2%)

- 201 board and 22 alight at Ridge Avenue and 15<sup>th</sup> Street, where transfer is available to the Broad Street Line (5.6%)
- 79 Board and 89 alight at Ridge Avenue and Cecil B. Moore Avenue, which is adjacent to a retail district and where transfer is available to Route 3 (4.2%)
- 53 board and 92 alight at Ridge Avenue and 27<sup>th</sup> Street (3.6%)
- 58 board and 174 alight at Ridge Avenue and Midvale Avenue (5.8%)
- 66 board and 253 alight at the Wissahickon Transportation Center (8.0%)

**Figure 2 | Weekday Southbound Ridership by Stop**

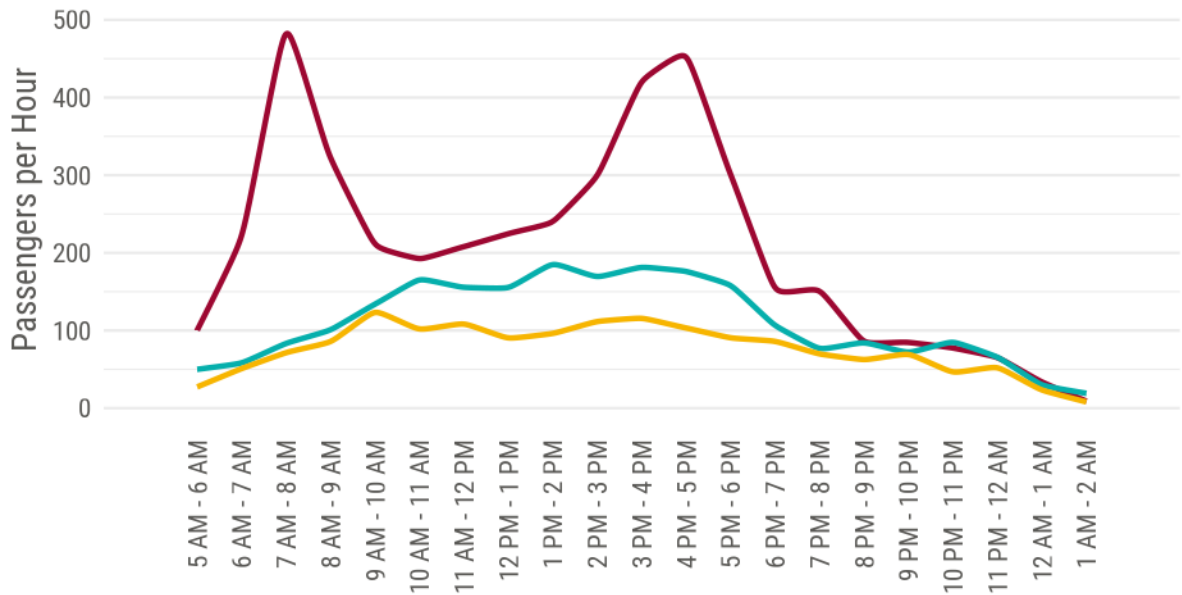

## Ridership by Time of Day

### Ridership by Hour

In Fall 2019, weekdays ridership had steep peaks, with the greatest number of passengers per hour carried in the AM peak and between 7:00 AM and 8:00 AM (see Figure 3). Midday ridership, on a per hour basis, was slightly less than half as high as peak period ridership. Evening ridership was much lower than midday ridership, followed by a sharp decline and sustained low ridership at night.

Saturday and Sunday ridership did not exhibit peaks and gradually increased through mid-afternoon, decreasing in the evening, and remaining low late night.

**Figure 3 | Ridership by Hour**



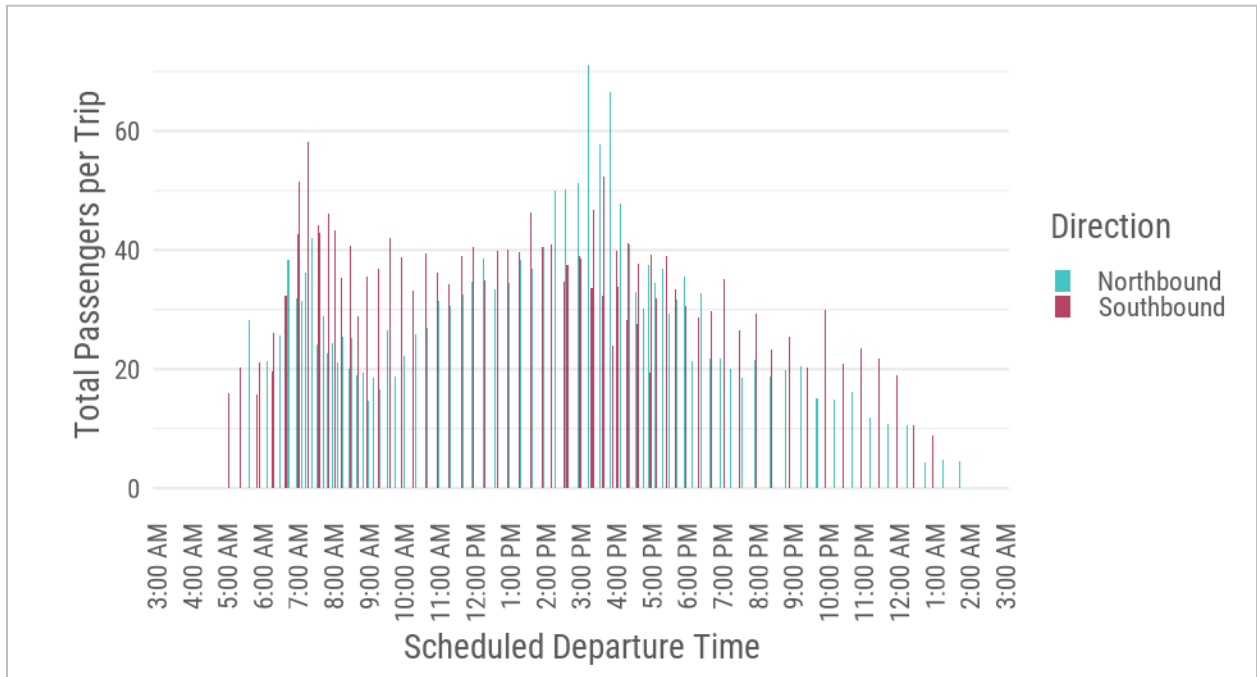
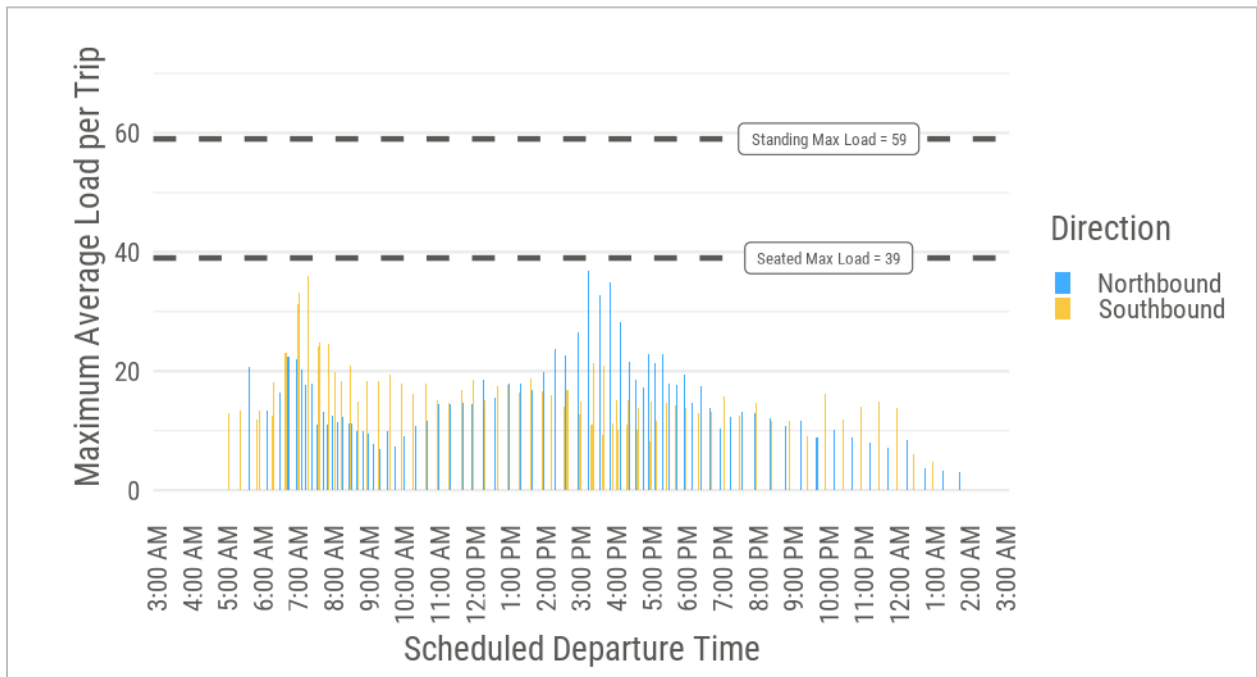
### Ridership and Maximum Loads by Trip

Weekday ridership per trip is high on most trips, due to a combination of high utilization and the long length of the route (see Figure 4):

- During the AM and PM peak, most trips carry between 40 and 60 total passengers.
- Consistent with large numbers of workers commuting to Center City, the highest maximum loads occur on AM peak southbound trips and on PM peak northbound trips.
- Midday trips generally carry between 30 and 40 passengers with maximum loads of 18 or less.
- In the evening, ridership ramps down from nearly 40 passengers per trip at 6:00 PM to around 20 by midnight, and then to around 5 passengers on the last trips.
- Turnover on the route means average load per trip stays below the seated capacity (see Figure 5).

On Saturdays, ridership ramps up quickly, climbing to around 30 passengers per trip until about 5:00 PM. In the evening, Route 61 carried about 20 passengers per trip until 9:00 PM. Ridership increased slightly between 9:00 PM and midnight before decreasing after midnight. All trips operate well below seated capacity. Sunday ridership by trip patterns is like that on Saturday but with lower passengers per trip overall.



**Figure 4 | Weekday Ridership by Trip**

**Figure 5 | Weekday Maximum Loads by Trip**


# ON-TIME PERFORMANCE AND RUNNING TIMES

## On-Time Performance

In Fall 2019, Route 61’s on-time performance was 71% on weekdays, 67% on Saturdays, and 80% on Sundays (see Table 4), with off-schedule performance occurring more often as late trips.

**Table 4 | On-Time Performance**

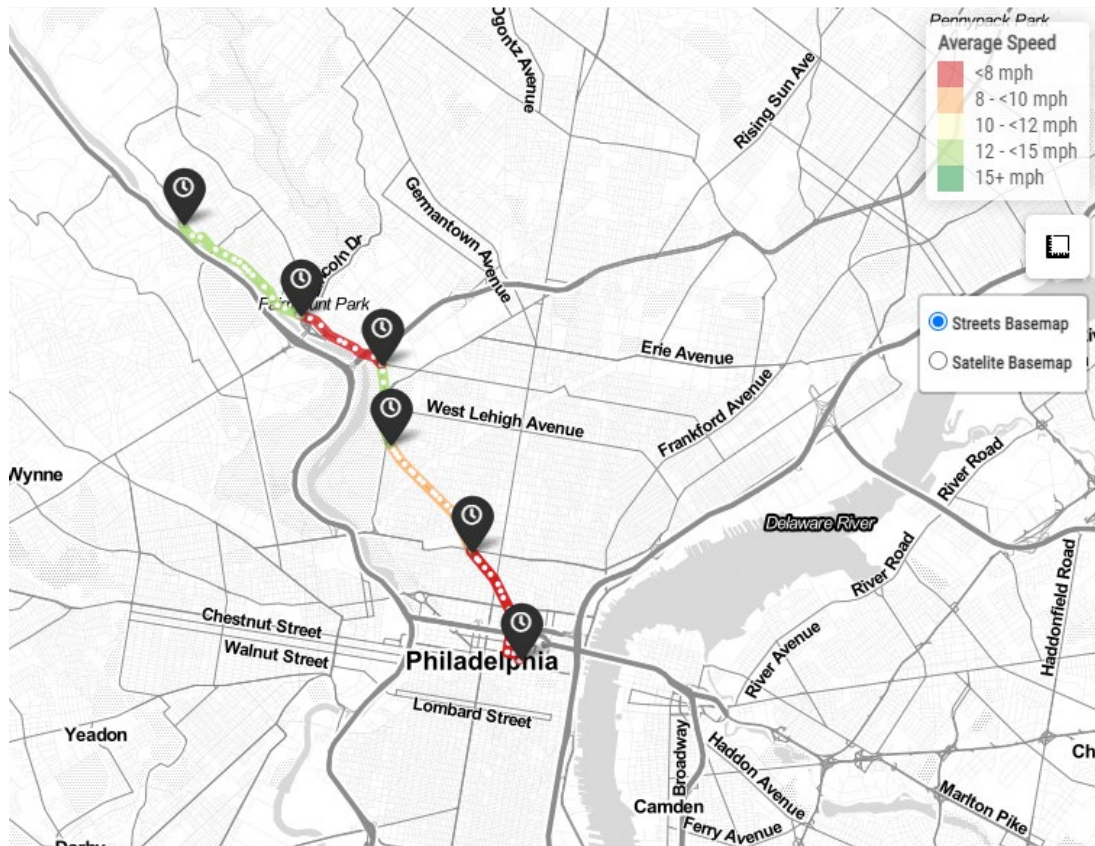
	Early (>2 Mins Early)	On Time (<2 Mins Early to 6 Mins Late)	Late (>6 Mins Late )	Missed Trips
<b>Goal</b>		<b>80%</b>		
<b>Fall 2019 Actual</b>				
Weekday	10.2%	71.0%	18.8%	0.0%
Saturday	8.6%	67.2%	24.3%	0.0%
Sunday	8.5%	80.3%	11.1%	0.0%

Note: On-time percentages are for trips that are run (do not include dropped trips)

## AVERAGE SPEEDS AND STOP SPACING

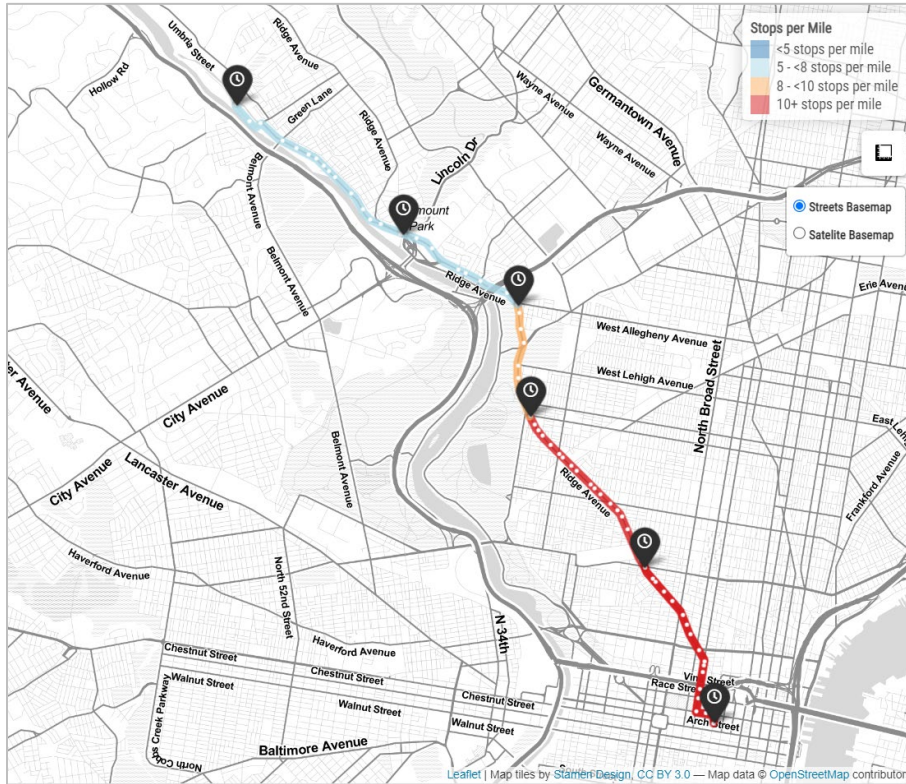
Route 61 operates at low speeds throughout most of its alignment, especially from Center City to Girard Avenue and along Ridge Avenue south of the Wissahickon Transportation Center (see Figure 6). Speeds are typically faster north of Wissahickon Transportation Center.

**Figure 6 | Average Speeds: PM Peak Northbound**



Route 61 has an average of nine stops per mile, or about 600 feet or a two-minute walk apart (see Figure 7). Stop spacing is much closer along Ridge Avenue between Susquehanna Avenue and Center City, with an average approaching 12 stops per mile.

**Figure 7 | Stop Spacing by Route Segment**



## RIDER CHARACTERISTICS

Black passengers, those without a vehicle, and those in poverty compose a higher proportion of Route 61 riders than on SEPTA's network overall (see Table 5).

**Table 5 | Rider Characteristics**

	Route 61 Riders	Systemwide Average
Median Household Income	\$32,324	\$32,713
Share in Poverty	46%	30%
Ethnicity		
White	33%	38%
Black	55%	46%
Hispanic	8%	10%
Other	4%	7%
Without a Vehicle	45%	37%
Seniors	16%	15%
With a Disability	3%	2%



## SERVICE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities to strengthen Route 61 are listed below. Some suggestions may be contradictory, as there is usually more than one approach to improving a route.

- **Alternate Service between Wissahickon or Manayunk:** Another potential service improvement would be to alternate service to Wissahickon Transportation Center (short turns) and Manayunk (full length). The alternating patterns would help manage balance service levels with demand and simplifying the service overall.
- **Shift Northern Terminal to Ivy Ridge Regional Rail Station:** An alternative to operating service to Ridge Avenue and Lyceum Avenue would be to end Route 61 at Ivy Ridge Regional Rail Station. The station would need to be evaluated to ensure it is a suitable location from an operational perspective, the location creates a stronger terminal location. It would also pick up portions of Route 35's alignment (see above).
- **Consolidate Stops Along Ridge Avenue:** Route 61 along Ridge Avenue between Susquehanna Avenue and Center City has some of the closest stop spacing in the SEPTA network. Consolidating stops on this segment would likely improve the speed and reliability of Route 61, without significantly increasing access times for most riders.
- **Combine with Fairmount Neighborhood Route:** Route 61 provides unique diagonal service across North Philadelphia, however most passengers in this neighborhood travel north-south or east-west to connect to the Broad Street Line. To better serve existing travel patterns, Route 61 could be consolidated with a north-south route currently serving Fairmount, such as Route 7, Route 32, Route 48, or Route 49.