GORALEIGH 2026 R-LINE
TITLE VI SERVICE EQUITY ANALYSIS

TO BE PRESENTED TO THE RALEIGH TRANSIT AUTHORITY AUGUST 13, 2026

Introduction

GoRaleigh is an independent subsidiary of the City of Raleigh and is responsible for providing public transit services in Raleigh, North Carolina.

In accordance with Title VI requirements of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1B, and Executive Order 12898, transit providers are required to evaluate any proposed service changes to determine whether minority and low-income populations will be disproportionately burdened by the changes. This is referred to as a service equity analysis.

Methodology

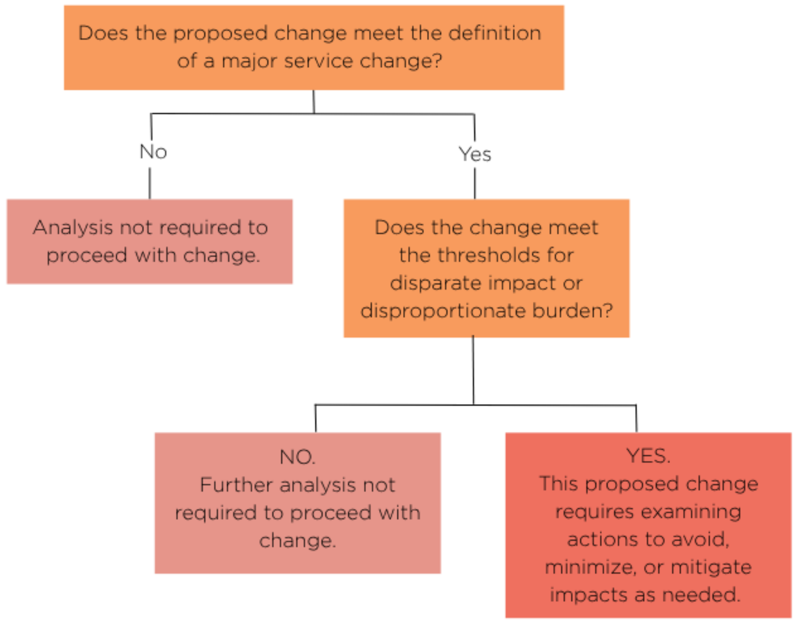
GoRaleigh's 2021 Title VI Plan defines a "major service change," which require a service equity analysis, as any of the following:

- The addition of a route
- The elimination of a route
- A 25 percent expansion or reduction in route-miles or revenue vehicle miles on any route
- A 25 percent expansion or reduction in the span of service or frequency of any route, as measured in revenue vehicle hours
- The expansion or reduction in regular days of service on any route
- A system-wide change concurrently affecting five percent or more of the total system revenue hours

Proposed changes determined to be major are then evaluated for disproportionate impacts to minority and low-income populations. Minority is both non-white and Hispanic or Latino origin (Census tabulation B03002 "Hispanic or Latino by Origin or Race"). Low income is defined as at or below 150% of the poverty threshold (Census tabulation C17002 "Ratio of Income to Poverty Level in the Past 12 Months"). This evaluation is done by comparing the demographics of the impacted bus route to the overall system demographics. GoRaleigh calculates impacts by creating a 1/3-mile buffer around impacted bus routes, using the 2024-2020 US Census American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates at the block group level, and calculating the average percentage of minority and low-income populations living within that buffered area.

In addition to defining major service changes, FTA requires that agencies establish thresholds for evaluating the impacts of proposed major service changes. A disparate impact policy will help determine if proposed service changes will disproportionately impact minority populations while a disproportionate burden policy will help determine if the adverse effects of service changes are borne disproportionately by low-income populations. For major service changes, a threshold of 5 percent is used by GoRaleigh to determine disparate impacts and a threshold of 2.5 percent for determining disproportionate impacts. Both thresholds are evaluated based on the population data from the US Census Bureau and apply to the difference in the minority or low-income population or ridership on the affected routes compared to the minority or low-income populations served by the system overall.

Figure 1: Title VI Evaluation Process



Summary of Proposed Changes

Table 1 shows the proposed service changes and whether they qualify as major changes based on GoRaleigh's definitions.

Table 1: Major Proposed Changes

Route	Description of Proposed Change	Major or Minor Change
R-Line	Elimination of a route.	✓ Major

A possible outcome of the pause in service to the R-Line downtown circulator and evaluation of its role in downtown Raleigh mobility is the elimination of the route.

Evaluation of Impacts

The GoRaleigh service area is defined as a 1/3-mile buffer around GoRaleigh's non-contract routes. The percent of the population that is a minority in the service area of the current system is 49.5%. Therefore, the allowable threshold for disparate impact is +/- 5%, or between 44.5% and 54.5%. The percent minority in the service area of the proposed system is also 49.5%.

The percent of people in the current service area with an income below 150% of the federal poverty definition is 22.4%. It is also 22.4% for the proposed system. The allowable threshold before disproportionate burden is +/- 2.5%, or from 19.9% to 24.9%.

Table 2: Impacts of Proposed Major Service Changes

Route Name	Existing minority %	Proposed minority %	Existing low income %	Proposed low income %
RLine	35.4		15.8	
GoRaleigh System	49.5	49.5	22.5	22.5

Green indicates over allowable threshold, yellow indicates below allowable threshold.

The service area for the R-Line has a smaller percentage of both minority and low-income populations than the GoRaleigh system service area does. The change does not change minority or low-income percentages in the service area of the system as a whole.

Figure 5: Minority Populations by Block Group with R-Line

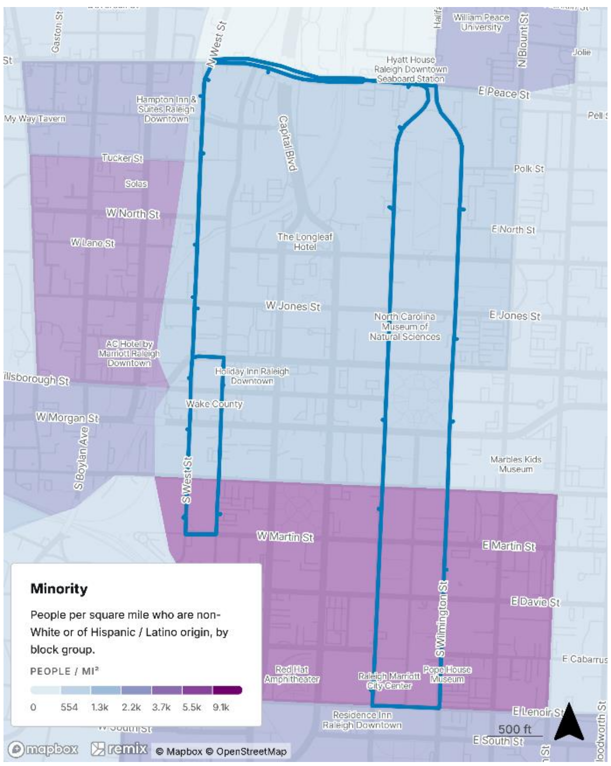
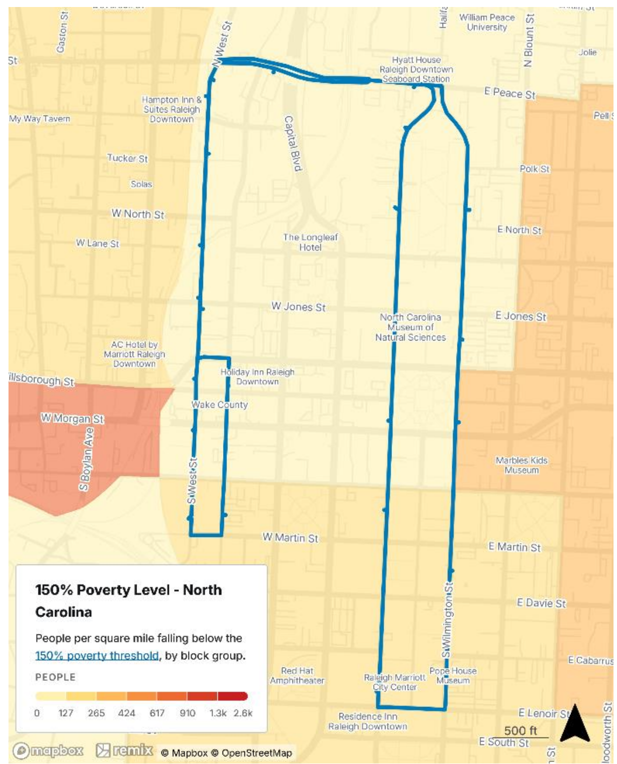


Figure 6: Low-Income Populations by Block Group with R-Line



Mitigation

The productivity of the R-Line has been in decline since 2013.

The route was suspended in February 2021 due to low ridership and a shortage of bus drivers for the GoRaleigh system. It returned to service in May 2024 and has performed with low ridership since, even as the GoRaleigh system has seen substantial growth in ridership.

From 2022 to 2026, GoRaleigh introduced 15-minute frequency on seven routes, bringing the total number of GoRaleigh routes running at least every 15 minutes to 11. All these routes serve downtown, overlapping much of the R-Line's alignment and walkshed, as well as providing additional downtown connections.

Micromobility, such as shared e-bikes and e-scooters, have been successful in Downtown Raleigh. In 2025, shared micromobility averaged about 1,000 trips daily in the R-Line service area.

Public Engagement

Discussion of the R-Line has taken place at several public Raleigh Transit Authority (RTA) meetings and committee meetings in the last year. On May 14, 2026, RTA voted to pause the route effective August 9, 2026 .

The pause in service for up to 18 months is intended to provide time for the RTA and other stakeholders to evaluate the role of the R-Line in Downtown Raleigh's transportation network, while allocating the resources of drivers and vehicles to more productive routes in the meantime. This report is part of that evaluation.

This analysis will be reported to RTA on August 13, 2026. In accordance with GoRaleigh's Title VI Plan, a public hearing has been scheduled for the same meeting.