

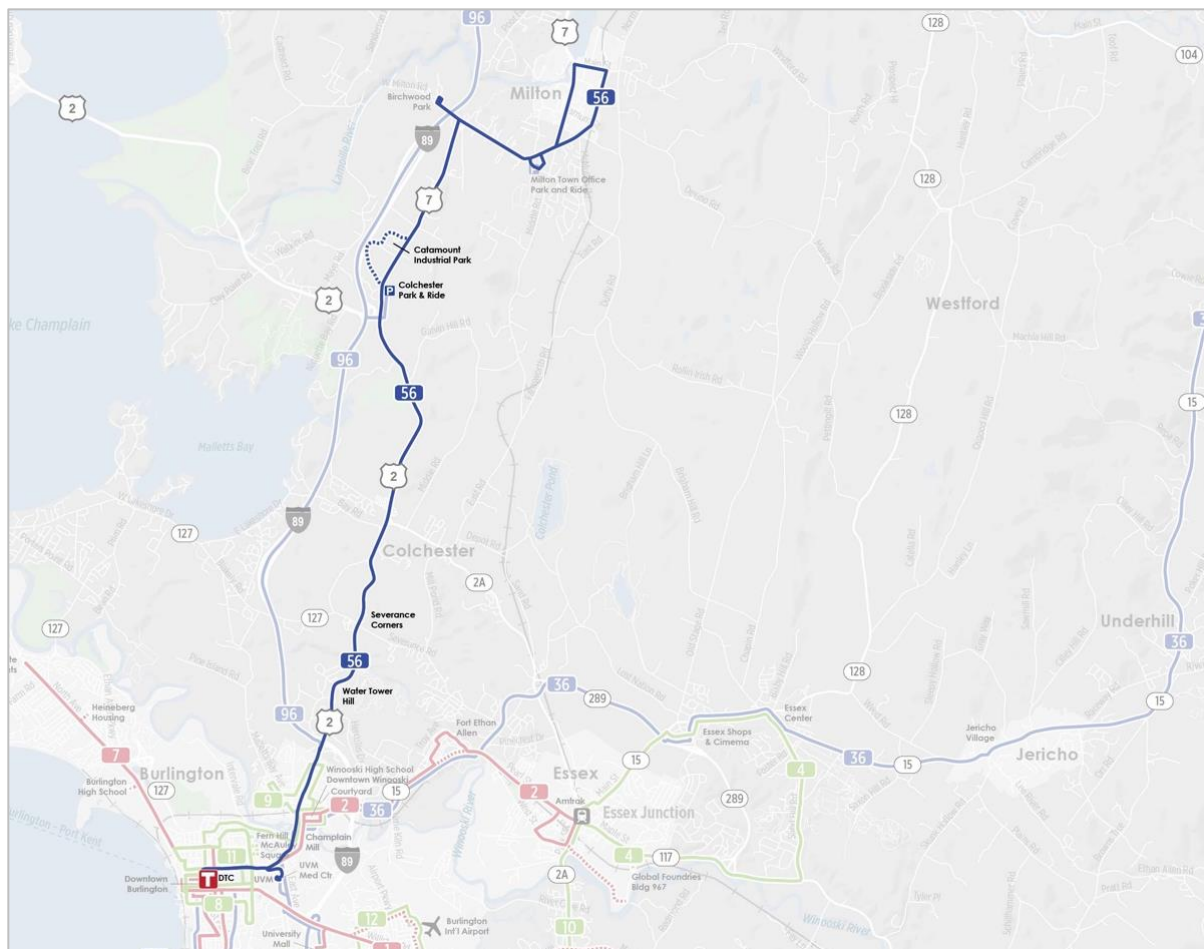
# ROUTE 56

## Milton Commuter

### ROUTE OVERVIEW

Route 56 is a Commuter route that provides weekday service between Milton and Pine Street in south of downtown Burlington via Colchester, Winooski and downtown Burlington. The route travels primarily along U.S. Route 7 and U.S. Route 2 (see Figure 1). Route 56 provides service to Milton Town Office Park & Ride, Catamount Industrial Park, Chimney Corners Park & Ride in Colchester, shopping and residential centers in Winooski and Colchester, Albany College of Pharmacy, Champlain Mill, UVM Medical Center, and downtown Burlington.

**Figure 1: Route Map**



As with most Commuter routes, Route 56's schedule is oriented toward inbound trips to Burlington in the morning and outbound trips in the afternoon (see Table 1). The opposite direction trips are operated primarily to cycle buses for the peak direction trips. The AM inbound trips depart from Milton at 6:25 and 7:25 AM and arrive at the DTC in downtown Burlington at

7:35 and 8:35 AM. The PM outbound trips depart from the DTC at 4:20 and 5:20 PM.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the route also provides a midday round trip and a late evening round trip. The midday round trip departs from the DTC at 12:15 PM and from Milton at 1:57 PM. The evening round trip departs from the DTC at 9:40 PM and from Milton at 10:22 PM, with the inbound trip operated primarily to get the bus back to GMT's garage.

**Table 1: Schedule Statistics**

SERVICE DAY	SPAN OF SERVICE	FREQUENCY (MIN)	DAILY TRIPS (OUTBOUND/INBOUND)
<b>Monday-Friday</b>	5:50 AM – 8:35 AM	2 round trips	2/2
	12:15 PM – 2:00 PM	1 round trip	1/1
	4:05 PM – 6:50 PM	2 round trips	2/2
	9:40 PM – 10:27 PM	1 round trip	1/1
<b>Saturday</b>	—	—/—	—/—
<b>Sunday</b>	—	—/—	—/—

Route 56's 12 round one-way trips operate in eight different ways:

#### **Inbound**

##### AM Peak Inbound

- Both AM inbound trips operate in the same manner, serving all stops along the primarily alignment, plus in and out of Birchwood Park. Upon request, these trips will also deviate into the Catamount Industrial Park and Champlain Mills and serve stops along Pine Street.

##### Midday Inbound

- The midday inbound trip operates in the same manner as the AM peak inbound trips except that it does not provide request service along Pine Street.

##### PM Peak Inbound

- The two PM peak inbound trips operate counter-clockwise along the route's outer loop (all other service operates clockwise) and serve all stops plus and except the following: (1) the first trip does not serve the Catamount Industrial Park, and (2) both trips serve Champlain Mill and the UVM Medical Center only upon request. Also, these trips do not provide request service along Pine Street.

##### Evening Inbound

- The evening inbound trip operates in the same manner as the midday inbound trip.

#### **Outbound**

##### AM Peak Outbound

- Both AM outbound trips begin service at Pine Street at Locust Street and then operate to the DTC. Between there and Milton, they skip some stops served on other trips. These include UVM Medical Center and Severance Corners. The first trip does not serve Cave

<sup>1</sup> The trips also serve Pine Street south of downtown, with later AM arrival times at the outer end of the route, and with earlier PM outbound times.

Creek Plaza, but the second will serve it upon request. Both trips will serve the Colchester/Chimney Hill Park and Ride Lot, the Catamount Industrial Park, and Birchwood Park upon request.

#### Midday and Evening Outbound

- The midday outbound trips operates in a similar manner as the PM peak outbound trips, except that it does not serve Pine Street or the Catamount Industrial Park.

#### PM Peak Outbound

- PM peak service begins on Pine Street and operates to the DTC. Between there and Milton, these trips serve all stops directly along the primary alignment and deviates into Champlain Mills and the Catamount Industrial Park. Upon request, these trips will also deviate to Severance Corners, Creek Farm Plaza, and Birchwood Park.

#### Evening Outbound

- The evening outbound trip operate in the same manner as the midday outbound trip.

## **RIDERSHIP**

Route 56 carries 70 passengers per weekday, and an average of 5.6 passengers per trip.

### **Ridership by Stop**

#### **Weekdays**

Ridership data was collected by town and not at specific stops. For that reason, Figure 2 presents ridership for all stops in each town rather than stop-level ridership. Inbound to Burlington, available data indicates that 23 passengers board in Milton and 12 in Colchester, and that outbound, 32 riders board in Burlington and six board in Winooski. Although, as described above, the route's schedule is very complex due to different combinations of request-only and request only stops, not data is available to determine the extent to which those stops are used.

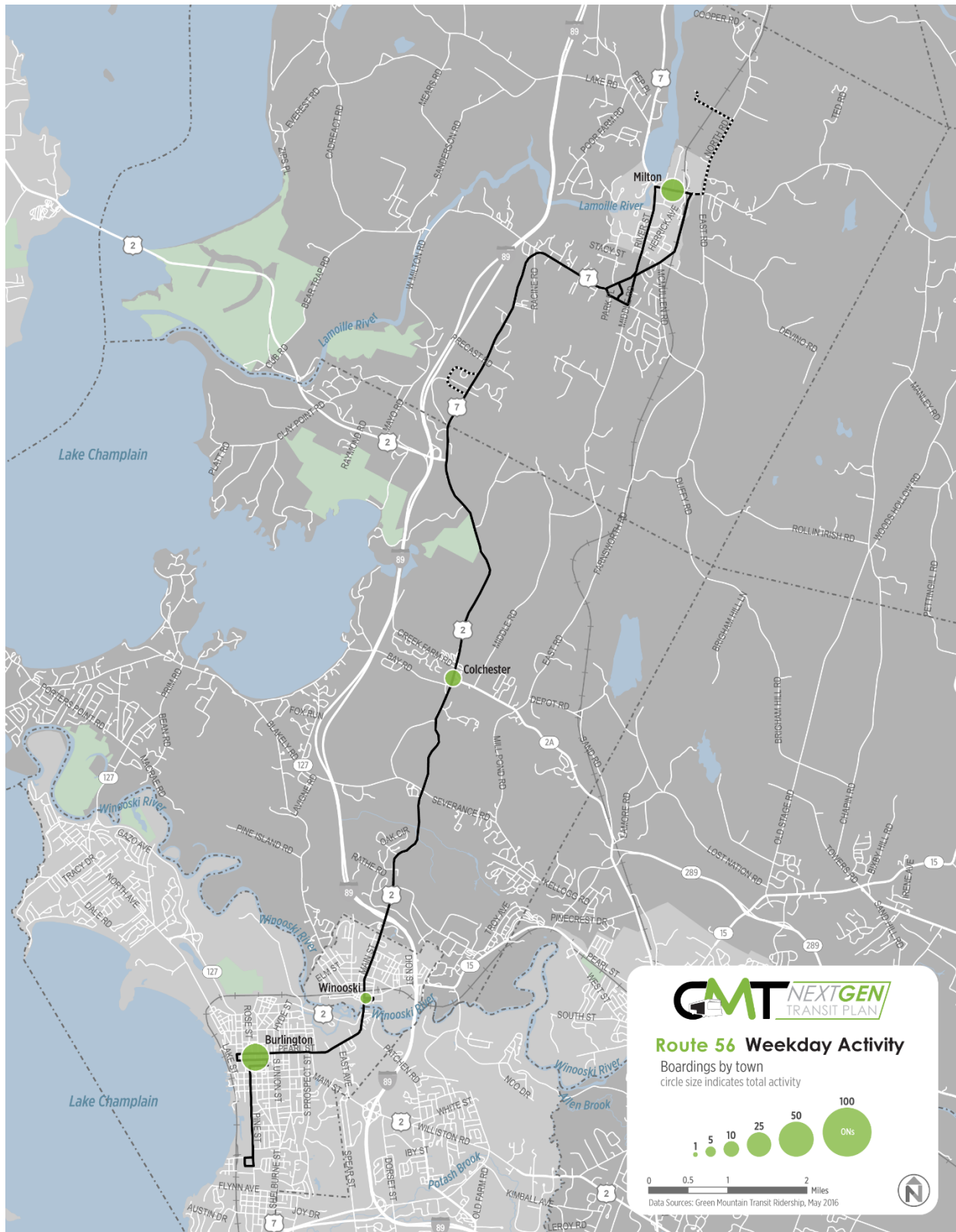
### **Ridership by Trip**

#### **Weekdays**

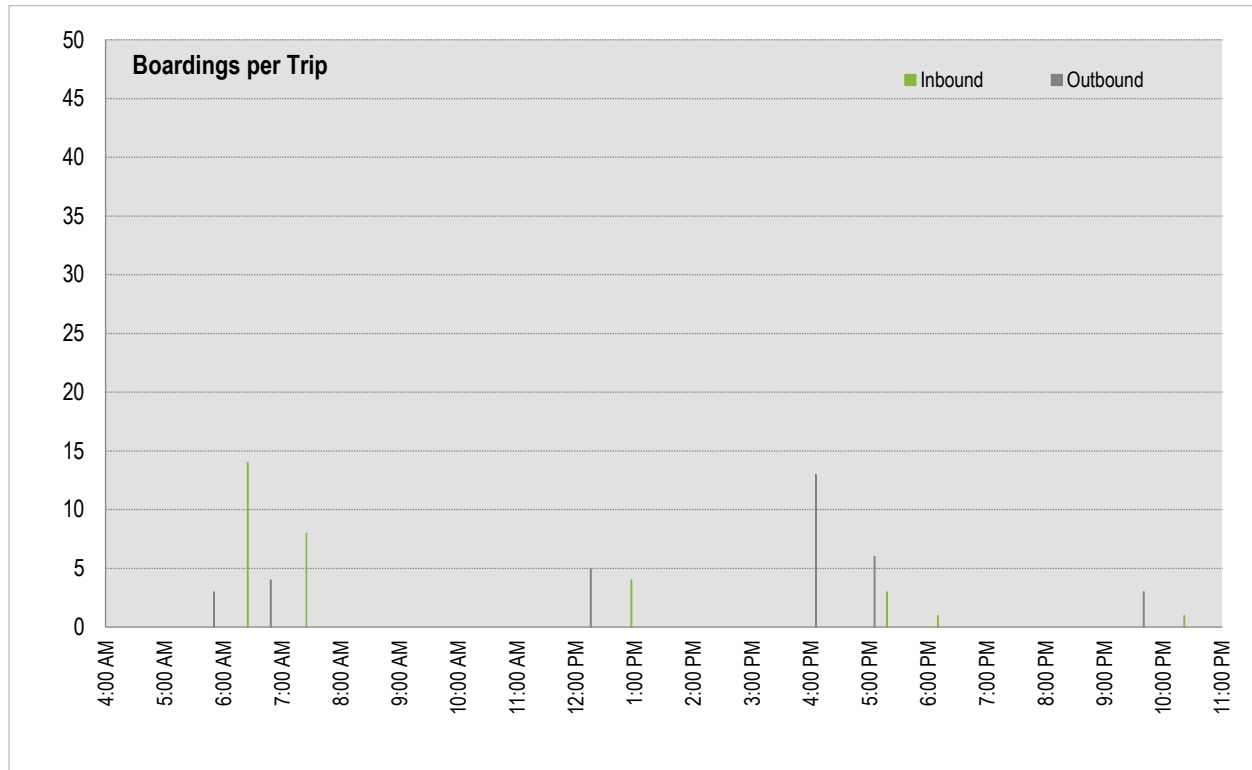
Ridership on Route 56 is heaviest inbound in the morning and outbound in the afternoon (see Figure 3). During the morning peak, the first inbound trip at 6:35 AM carries 14 passengers, and the second at 7:25 AM carries eight. During the PM peak, the first outbound trip at 4:05 PM carries 13 passengers, and the second at 5:05 PM carries six. Reverse direction trips, as would be expected, carry very few passengers.

The midday round trip carries only five passengers outbound and four passengers inbound. The evening outbound trip carries even fewer riders – only three.

**Figure 2: Weekday Inbound Ridership by Stop**



**Figure 3: Weekday Ridership by Trip**



## SERVICE PRODUCTIVITY

Route 56 carries 70 total passengers and 5.8 passengers per one-way trip at a cost of \$12.83 per passenger. The route does not meet VTrans' Acceptable threshold for passengers per one-way trip, but does meet the threshold for cost per passenger. This is because, compared to most other commuter routes, Route 56 is short.

**Table 2: Productivity Statistics**

	MONDAY-FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>Average Daily Ridership</b>	<b>70</b>	—	—
<b>Passengers/Revenue Service Hour</b>	<b>6.6</b>	—	—
<b>Passengers/One-Way Trip</b>	<b>5.8</b>	—	—
VTrans "Successful" Threshold	17.35	17.35	17.35
VTrans "Acceptable" Threshold	8.68	8.68	8.68
<b>Passengers/Revenue Mile</b>	<b>0.3</b>	—	—
<b>Cost/Passenger</b>	<b>\$12.83</b>	—	—
VTrans "Successful" Threshold	\$10.59	\$10.59	\$10.59
VTrans "Acceptable" Threshold	\$21.18	\$21.18	\$21.18

Source: Green Mountain Transit, May 2016; VTrans Performance Reviews (2016)

## SERVICE IMPROVEMENT OPTIONS

The ridership data that is available for Route 56 is too limited to comprehensively understand the strengths and weakness of the route. Thus a first step in determining potential improvements will be to collect stop-by-stop and trip-by-trip ridership data. That said, potential changes that warrant further examination include:

- **Simplify Service:** As described above, Route 56's 12 trips operate in eight different ways, with a number of stops being served as regular stops or by request only. The different combinations that are used are overly complex and the number of different combinations should be minimized.
- **Minimize Variant Services:** Work to date has shown that on GMT routes where more detailed data is available, ridership to locations served by route deviations is very low. The collection of more detailed data will likely indicate that the same is the case with Route 56, which could provide the basis for further simplifying service.
- **Discontinue Midday Round Trip:** Ridership is very low on the route's midday trip. Resources from this trip could be reinvested to provide additional peak-period trips on Route 56, or to improve service in other parts of the system where there is demand.
- **Discontinue Late Evening Round Trip:** Ridership on this standalone late-night trip is extremely low, carrying only four passengers in either direction. Resources from this trip could be reinvested to improve service in other parts of the system where there is demand.