

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Recommended Modifications to Wheels School Routes in Dublin, Fall 2026

FROM: Michael Tobin, Director of Operations
Cyrus Sheik, Senior Transit Planner

DATE: April 27, 2026

Action Requested

Staff requests that the Projects and Services Committee review and provide feedback on the proposed changes to LAVTA’s Dublin School Tripper service for the 2026/27 academic year.

Background

When Emerald High School (EHS) opened for students in 2023, with on-campus instruction beginning the following year for freshman and sophomore students, it started a transition of high school students living in East Dublin away from Dublin High School (DHS) to the new EHS.

As part of accommodating this transition, overflow bus capacity on the three supplemental routes that serve students traveling between East Dublin and DHS (routes 501, 502, and 504) have been gradually drawn down, while a new route (201) was started to serve students at EHS.

As of the upcoming 2026/27 school year, the DHS-to-EHS transition will have been completed, and all high school students living east of Hacienda Drive will reside within the boundary of EHS, while those living west of Hacienda Drive will continue to be assigned to DHS.

Dublin High School Service

With students in East Dublin no longer assigned to DHS, Wheels Routes **501** (Silvera Ranch / Positano Hill) and **504** (Dublin Ranch) will no longer be needed and can be discontinued.

Route **502**, which currently serves areas as far east as Cottonwood Creek, can be truncated near Dublin Boulevard & Hacienda Drive. At the same time, this presents an opportunity to serve the new “Boulevard” residential development. It is therefore recommended that the 502 be routed to serve Sterling Street, Horizon Parkway, and Scarlett Drive. The modified route would serve existing physical bus stop locations that were approved and have been installed as part of the Boulevard development.

Route **503** (Shannon Park, Schaefer Ranch), which serves both DHS and Wells Middle School (WMS), is not affected by the EHS transition.

Based on a suggestion by Committee member Josey, Staff explored the possibility of splitting Route 503 into two routes in order to provide more direct and faster service from west and central Dublin to DHS. Staff looked at expanding 503 service off the main collector streets on which this route currently operates; specifically, to Creekside Drive / Rolling Hills Drive and Inspiration Circle.

A ridership estimate based on enrollment numbers received from the school district as well as the current modal split at DHS indicated that 5 or so students would be likely to use or benefit from the expansion (based on the Wheels typical carrying share of students). This – together with the fact that no parent requests have been received for service to those areas – prompted Staff to not recommend any changes to the 503 at this time. If the demand picture changes in the future, however, this can be revisited. It should also be noted that splitting Route 503 into two routes would require an additional peak bus.

Lastly for DHS, it should be noted that it is also served by Wheels **Route 4**, a local line serving various areas of Central Dublin.

Emerald High School Service

Due to its relatively central placement within the general East Dublin area, EHS does not generate the same level of demand relative to the student population that, for example, the East Dublin-to-DHS corridor did.

As indicated earlier, Wheels currently operates a single supplemental route (201) to/from EHS. This route is a loop, serving neighborhoods to the northwest and northeast of the school, including Dublin Ranch, Silvera Ranch, and Positano Hill.

With the EHS student population increasing with the final phase of the transition from DHS, the threshold to create a second route is being reached. As such, it is proposed that the 201 be split / expanded into two routes as follows:

Route **201** would be modified to provide expanded service to the Tassajara Hills subdivision, operating there primarily on Palisades Drive with one new bus stop. It would continue to serve the Tassajara Road corridor – including Dublin Ranch – on its way to/from the school. It would no longer serve Fallon Road or Positano Hill.

Route **202** (new) would take over coverage along Fallon Road and at Positano Hill. In addition, this new route would provide expanded service to Francis Ranch (Croak Road extension) and Cottonwood Creek (Central Parkway east). The latter expansion would be subject to the date of a Croak Road dedication to the city and subsequent public access.

In addition to the proposed expansion outlined above, Staff looked into the possibility of direct service to the Wallis Ranch subdivision, off Tassajara Road. However, the subdivision itself is a gated community, and when road-testing the one street that loops outside of it (Rutherford Drive) in a bus together with Operations staff, it was determined that routing there would present too many hazards for safe city bus operation and as such would not be feasible.

Lastly for EHS, it should be noted that it is also served by Wheels **Route 30R**, a trunk line that operates to the east and west of the school, along Dublin Boulevard.

The following table summarizes the recommended service adjustments for the supplemental service in Dublin.

FALL 2026 RECOMMENDED SUPPLEMENTAL SERVICE CHANGES DUBLIN		
Route	School	Change
201	EHS	Modify alignment to focus on Tassajara Road; expand to Tassajara Hills
202	EHS	Create new route serving Fallon Road and Positano Hill; expand to Francis Ranch and Cottonwood Creek
501	DHS	Discontinue route; no longer needed following the boundary transition
502	DHS	Remove East Dublin portion, and add new service to "Boulevard" development
503	DHS+WMS	Retain current route as-is
504	DHS	Discontinue route; no longer needed following the boundary transition

Fiscal Impact

The resource impact from the supplemental school routes is more associated with peak vehicle and manpower requirements than with service (revenue) hours; the net effect on the latter is relatively small as a result of the recommended changes. Two routes are removed, and one route is added, resulting in an estimated net reduction of 1.8 daily revenue hours.

Due to interlining (where a bus/driver is utilized to operate more than one route during a run), the exact effect on peak-pull from a set of changes like this will depend on final scheduling. However, from a resource-attributable perspective, the recommended changes would result in a net reduction of 0.5 buses in the a.m. and p.m., respectively.

Next Steps

The route changes and expansions will be implemented in conjunction with school-starts in August 2026 on a pilot basis. Staff will return with a recommendation for Board approval within six months.

Recommendation

Staff recommend that the Projects and Services Committee review and provide feedback on the proposed changes to LAVTA’s Dublin School Tripper service for the 2026/27 academic year.

Strategic Plan Goal

Service Development: Assess LAVTA’s service area network, monitor ridership trends, evaluate routes, and make recommendations for meeting current demand and community priorities

Attachments:

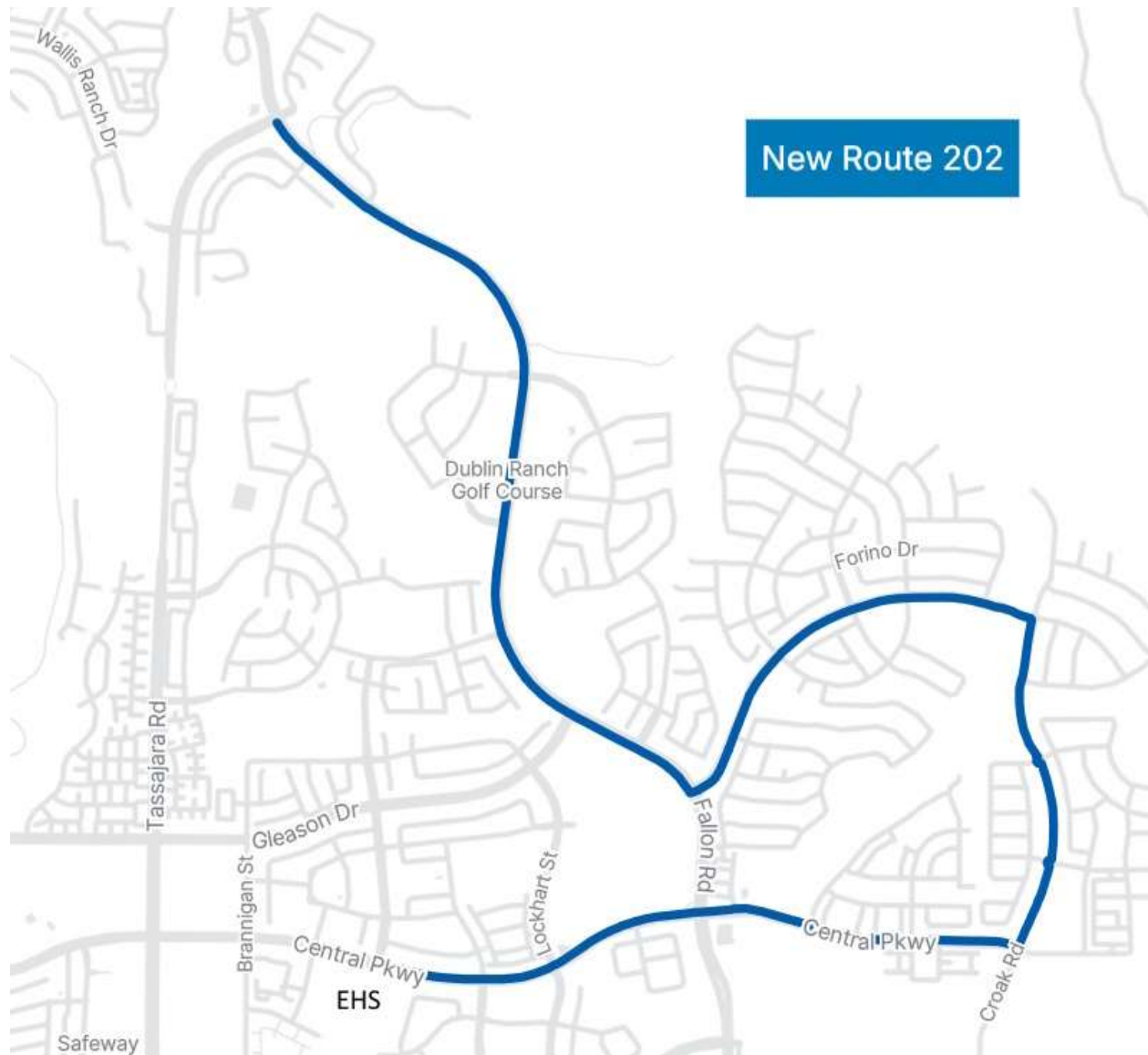
1. Maps (3) of the recommended new alignments of routes 201, 202, and 502.

NEW OR MODIFIED ROUTES

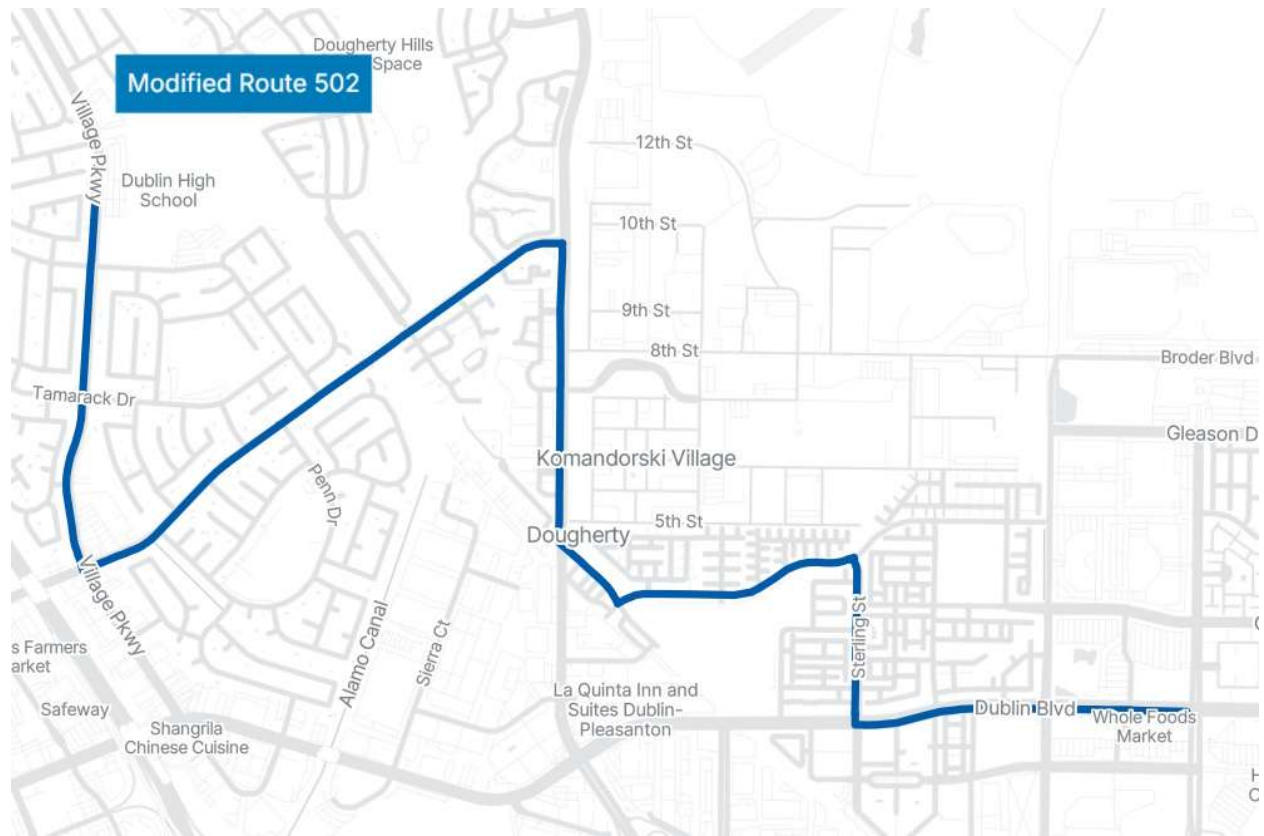
MODIFIED ROUTE 201:



NEW ROUTE 202



MODIFIED ROUTE 502



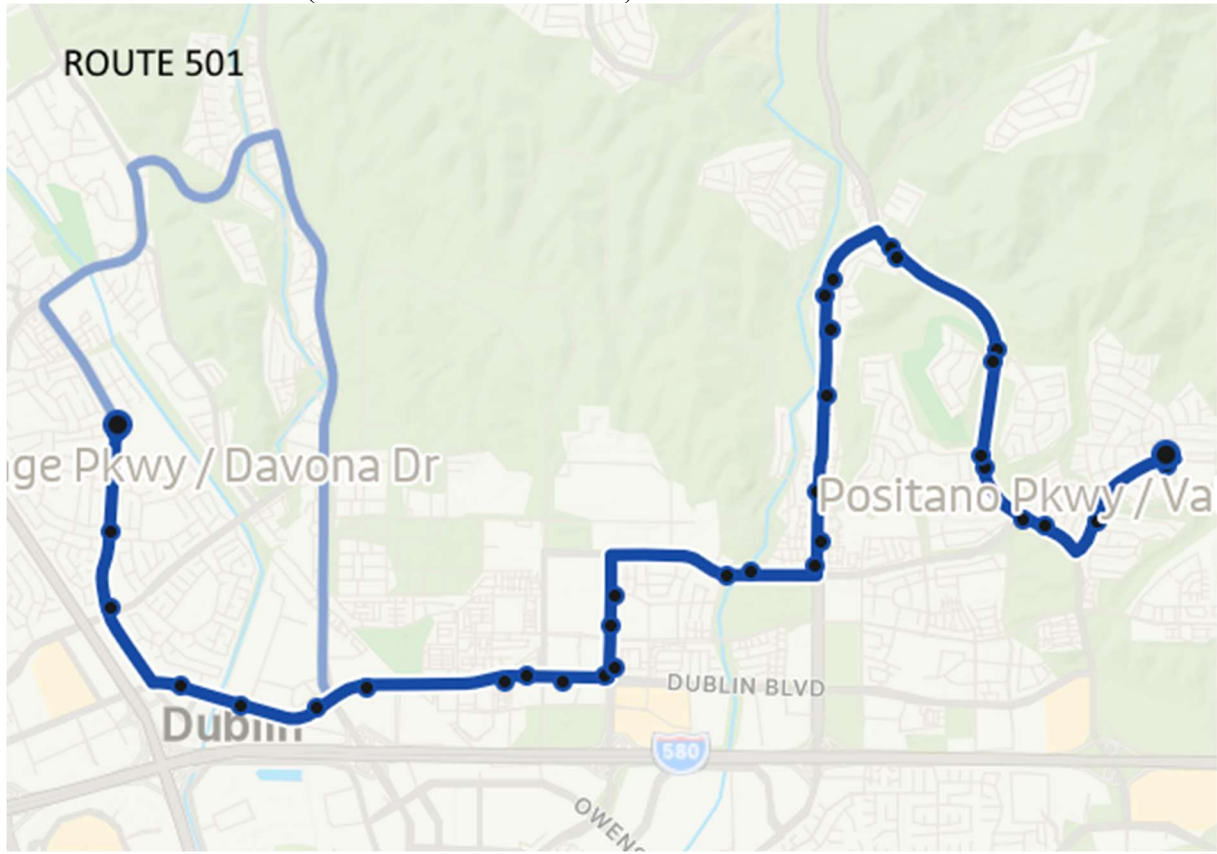
CURRENT ROUTES

EXISTING ROUTE 201 (TO BE MODIFIED AS PER PRIOR MAP)

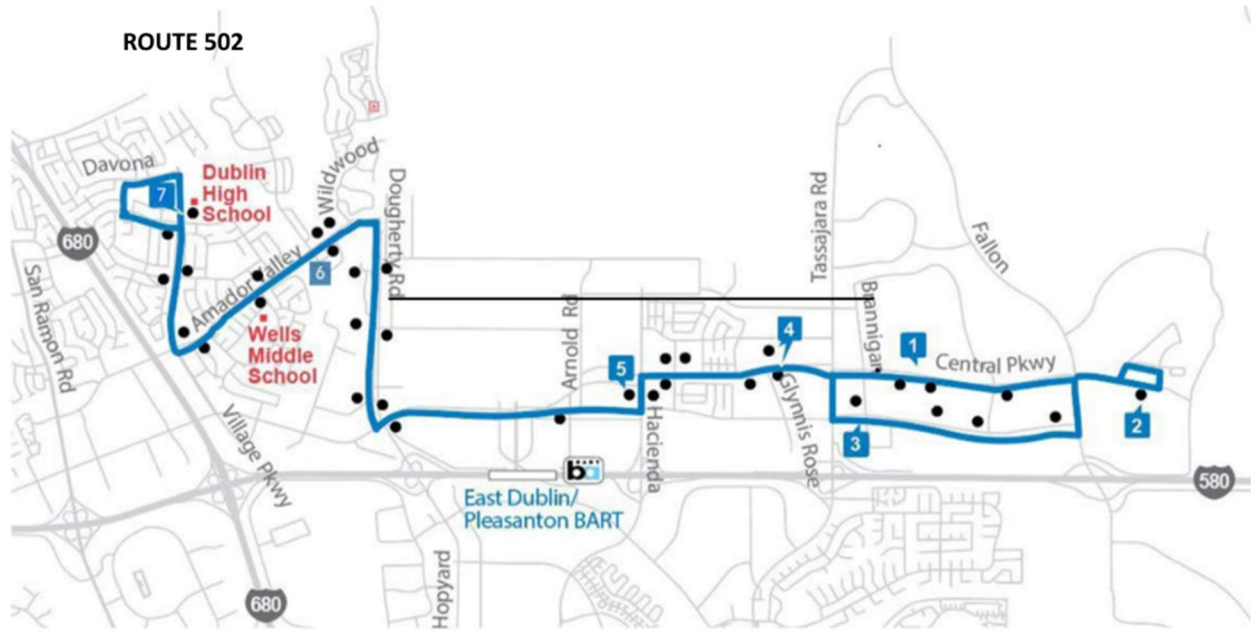
ROUTE 201



EXISTING ROUTE 501 (TO BE DISCONTINUED)



EXISTING ROUTE 502 (TO BE MODIFIED AS PER PRIOR MAP)



EXISTING ROUTE 504 (TO BE DISCONTINUED)

