

**COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE**  
Inter-Office Communication

Date: February 15, 2024

To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Donna Brown-Martin, Director, Department of Transportation

Subject: From the Director, Department of Transportation and the President and Managing Director, Milwaukee County Transit System requesting approval of the approach towards the Milwaukee County Transit System's bus replacement program.

File Type: Action Report

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**REQUEST**

The Director, Department of Transportation and President and Managing Director, Milwaukee County Transit System is requesting approval of the recommended approach towards the Milwaukee County Transit System's bus replacement program.

**POLICY**

N/A

**BACKGROUND**

**Consideration of the Proposed Vehicle**

The Milwaukee County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) and Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) propose pursuing the purchase of 40-foot, right-door loading, clean diesel buses in the near-term for any MCTS bus purchases, including the North-South Transit Enhancement Project. The use of alternative fuel vehicles (i.e., Battery Electric Buses) may be considered in the future provided that proper infrastructure and facility investment is made and if there is a healthy market to provide reliable vehicles.

The reasons for the continued acquisition of clean diesel buses at this time include:

- Clean diesel buses are more fiscally sustainable due to purchase costs.
- Challenges related to Battery Electric Bus (BEB) fleets (particularly with the CONNECT 1 experience over the past eight months).
- Volatility of the current BEB market due to supply chain issues, high demand, and limited U.S. manufacturers.
- Reliability of the current clean diesel fleet and expectations for the same reliability on future clean diesel buses.

MCTS conducted a thorough analysis of all vehicle options, including BEB, hybrid electric, and clean diesel buses. Exhibit 1 shows the proposed vehicle option analysis and rationale for pursuing clean diesel buses soon.

### **ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN**

- 2A: Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity
- 2C: Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions.
- 3A: Invest “upstream” to address root causes of health disparities.
- 3B: Enhance the County’s fiscal health and sustainability.
- 3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the department approach the Milwaukee County Transit System’s bus replacement program as defined in Exhibit 1.

### **FISCAL EFFECT**

N/A

### **VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES**

Donna Brown-Martin, Director, Department of Transportation,

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Denise Wandke, President and Managing Director, MCTS, [dwandke@mcts.org](mailto:dwandke@mcts.org)

Gordie Bennett, Sustainability Director, Milwaukee County Department of Administrative Services, [gordon.bennett@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:gordon.bennett@milwaukeecountywi.gov)

Dwyane Reese, Director of Maintenance, MCTS, [dreese@mcts.org](mailto:dreese@mcts.org)

David Locher, Manager of Enhanced Transit, MCTS [dlocher@mcts.org](mailto:dlocher@mcts.org)

### **PREPARED BY:**

David Locher, MCTS, Manager of Enhanced Transit

### **APPROVED BY:**



Donna Brown-Martin, Director, Department of Transportation

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Resolution

Fiscal Note

Vehicle Memorandum

PowerPoint

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board of Supervisors  
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk