

**COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION**

DATE: February 21, 2012

TO: Supervisor Michael Mayo, Sr.,
Chairperson, Transportation, Public Works & Transit Committee

FROM: Frank Busalacchi, Director, Milwaukee County Department of Transportation
Lloyd Grant, Jr., Managing Director, MCTS

SUBJECT: GreenLine MetroEXpress Service North of the Milwaukee River

POLICY

2012 budget amendment 1A073 directs MTS/MCTS to report on how it intends to address transit needs specific to the elderly and persons with disabilities in the densely populated area served by former Route 15 along Oakland Avenue from Whitefish Bay down to and including Brady Street, and to include specific steps which MCTS has taken to consider the accessibility of bus stops and paths of travel in the areas where underlying bus service has been eliminated.

BACKGROUND

On January 29, 2012, MCTS began service on three new express bus routes including the MetroEXpress GreenLine (Bayshore–Airport) which links the Bayshore Town Center, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Downtown Milwaukee and Mitchell International Airport. The GreenLine replaces former Route 15 bus service from Downtown to Bayshore along Water Street, Brady Street, Oakland Avenue, Marlborough Avenue and Silver Spring Drive.

In general, stop spacing for local bus stops on arterial streets in urban areas is approximately every 700 feet, or between seven to eight stops per mile. Most U.S. transit systems use a standard of six to eight bus stops per mile (every 660 to 880 feet) outside of the central business district. The established MCTS service standard for local bus stops is no less than 600 feet (1/8 mile) or more 1,250 feet (1/4 mile). Local service provides more convenient walk distances by its more frequent stops.

In contrast, express bus service on arterial streets attempts to offer a faster ride for trips by its less frequent stops. Access is not characteristic of freeway flyer service because passenger accessibility along the route is greater, but with a limited number of stops. For these reasons, stops are generally made at transfer corners to facilitate transfer connections with local routes and major traffic generators such as a shopping mall or university. Bus stops are typically spaced about every six (6) blocks or one-half (1/2) mile when operating express bus service. Bus stops for local bus service are typically spaced about every two (2) blocks.

As part of the pre-service change and post-service change process, MCTS considered the ease to which service is accessible by seniors and disabled persons. Since the nature of the GreenLine MetroEXpress route is intended to operate faster than regular bus service, removal of some local stops is an essential component. Careful consideration was given as to which local stops to remove. For the most part, stop spacing on the MetroEXpress GreenLine is about every two to three blocks. Specific steps that MCTS took into consideration of the location and accessibility of bus stops include:

Pre-Service Change:

- Considered the degree to which local stops could be continued without compromising the speediness of express bus service. Stops are not limited to transfer corners and major traffic generators.
- Evaluated stop spacing to avoid situations that would require passengers to walk more than one additional block to get to/from a bus stop.
- Identified bus stops with highest ridership levels in an effort to minimize negative impact of stop removal.
- Considered paths of travel by retaining bus stops where bus shelters, crosswalks and controlled intersections exist in an effort to maximize safety and convenience.
- Considered proximity of bus stops to major destinations.
- Attended community meetings to share route planning progress and listened to resident concerns. Incorporated resident concerns prior to finalizing the list of bus stops to be removed.

Post-Service Change:

- Visiting senior living facilities along the route and meeting directly with residents who are affected by the route and/or bus stop change.
- Offering one-on-one travel training for individuals who are concerned with how the changes affect their commute to/from the bus stop. This includes on-site travel and educational training at various locations in the community for seniors and persons with disabilities.
- Collecting and evaluating ridership data to determine route effectiveness including the factor of no underlying local service.

- Collecting and evaluating customer feedback via telephone, email, website and community outreach.
- Developing web-based and on-street surveys to help assess the impact and effectiveness of the service changes.


MCTS is actively engaged in continuous review and evaluation of the recent service changes. Customer feedback on the GreenLine has been very positive which we believe reflects the strategic approach taken by MCTS to minimize passenger walk distances while maintaining limited stop express service.

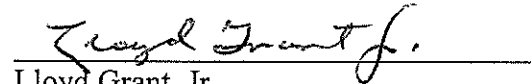
RECOMMENDATION

This report is for informational purposes unless otherwise directed.

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and Lloyd Grant, Jr., Managing Director, MCTS

Approved by:


Frank Busalacchi, Director
Department of Transportation


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