

2025 MCTS Fiscal Cliff Potential Service Reductions & #SAVETHEBUS Campaign

Transportation & Transit Committee
Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

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Tom Winter, Director of Service Development



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2025 Fiscal Cliff - Background



- Starting in 2025, the Comptroller's Office projected that DOT – Transit Division (MCTS) will have exhausted its federal stimulus (ARPA) funding that has allowed transit service levels to be maintained during the COVID19 pandemic (Five Year Financial Report 2024 – 2028)
- As such, MCTS is facing a fiscal cliff in 2025, driven largely by increasing costs, farebox revenue that remains below pre-pandemic levels, and tax levy funding that is less than half what it was pre-2017.
- The Comptroller's Office estimates MCTS will require an unprecedented \$31.4 million in tax levy to support current operations, an increase of \$22.7 million in tax levy.

2025 Fiscal Cliff - Background



- If such funding is not replaced, MCTS estimates 20% of bus service could be recommended for elimination by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors.
- A cut of this magnitude would mean eliminating nearly half of all routes along with large segments of other routes.
- These cuts would derail the progress MCTS has taken to make service more attractive and increase ridership / revenue:
 - CONNECT 1 Bus Rapid Transit line (start June 2023)
 - MCTS NEXT Network Redesign (completed 2021)
 - North – South 27th Street Transit Enhancement (in progress)

2025 Fiscal Cliff – Potential Route Eliminations



- **45% of entire routes** could be eliminated (16 of 36 routes):
 - Routes 11, 20, 22, 28, 31, 33, 34, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58, 68, 88, & 92
 - Segments of Route 19, 60, 76, and the PurpleLine
- These routes serve riders in neighborhoods across the County:
 - Brown Deer Road
 - Port Wash. Road
 - Hampton Avenue
 - Villard Avenue
 - Congress Street
 - Vliet Street
 - Highland Avenue
 - Greenfield Avenue
 - Lincoln Avenue
 - Hopkins Street
 - Layton Avenue
 - Clement / Penn. Avenue
 - 92nd Street
 - 108th Street
 - S. 20th Street

2025 Fiscal Cliff – Impacts on Economy / Residents

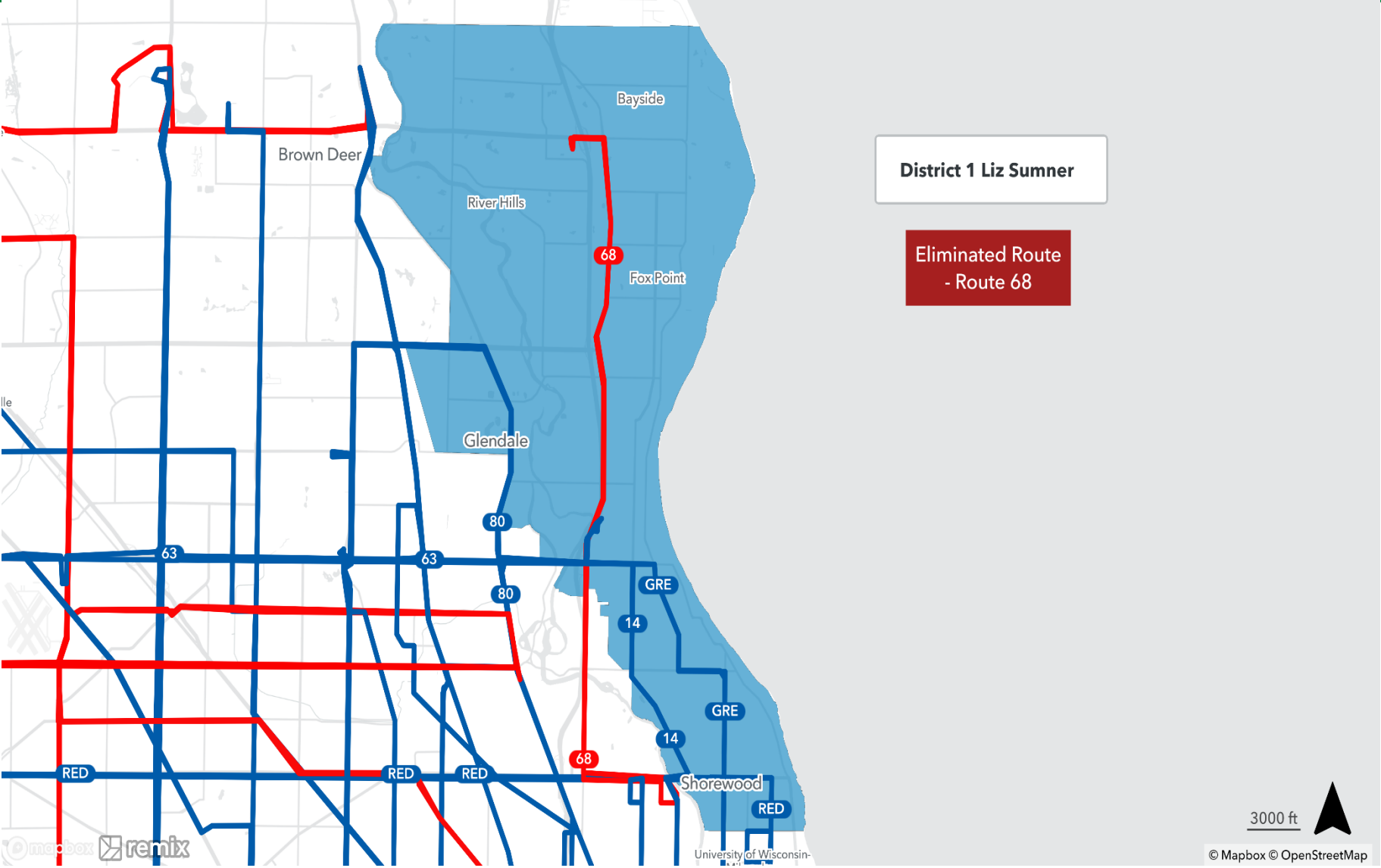


- Failing to invest in transit will have cascading ramifications for everyone and set back the local economy by exacerbating labor shortages and reducing educational and health outcomes in our community.
- **2,300 fewer businesses** would no longer be near a bus route
- **70,000 fewer jobs** would no longer be near a bus route
- **125,000 people** would no longer live near a bus route:
 - 60,000 persons of color
 - 30,000 people with disabilities
 - 15,000 senior citizens

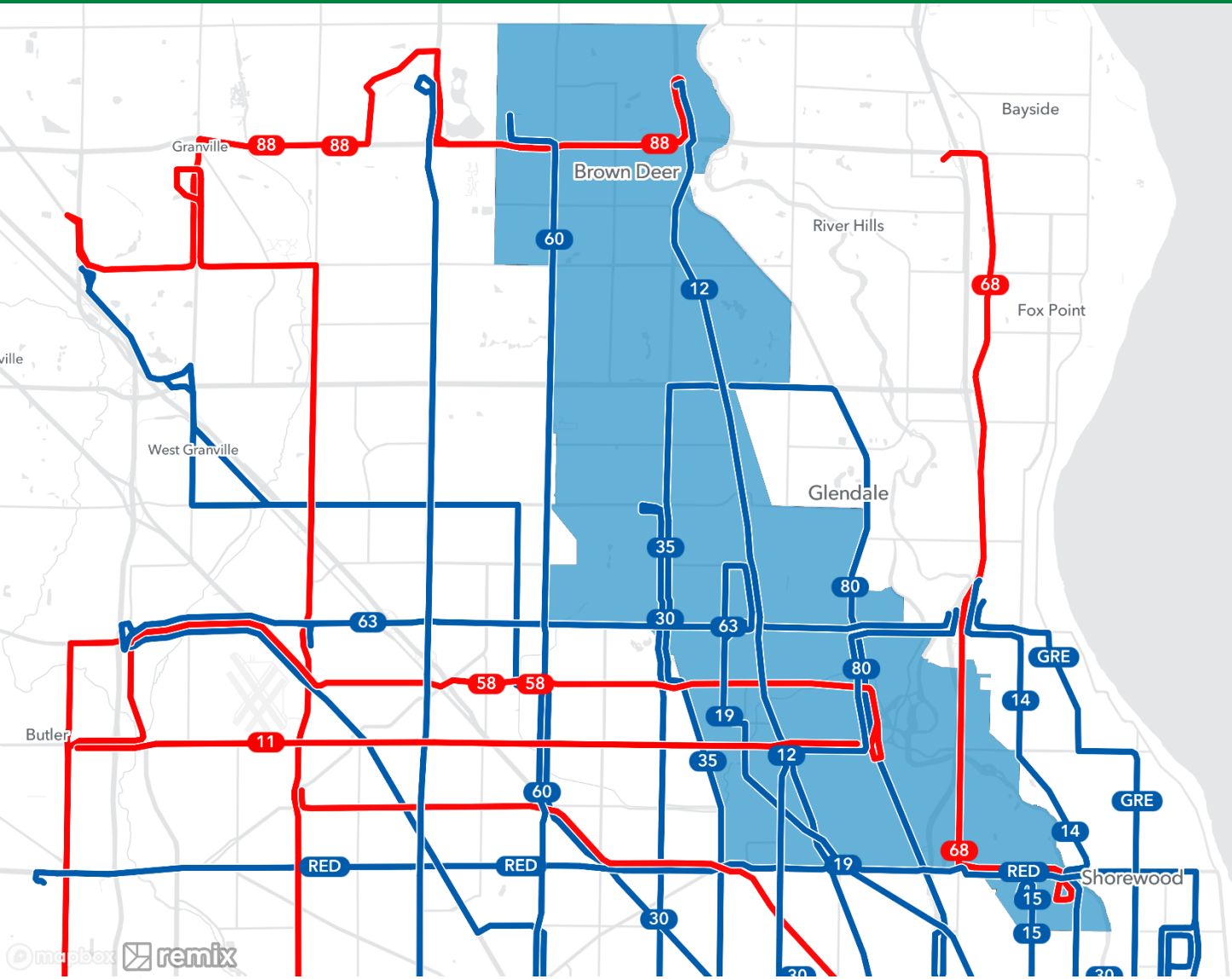
2025 Fiscal Cliff – 2020 versus 2025



#1 Supervisor Sumner - Potential Route Eliminations



#2 Supervisor Johnson, Jr. - Potential Route Eliminations



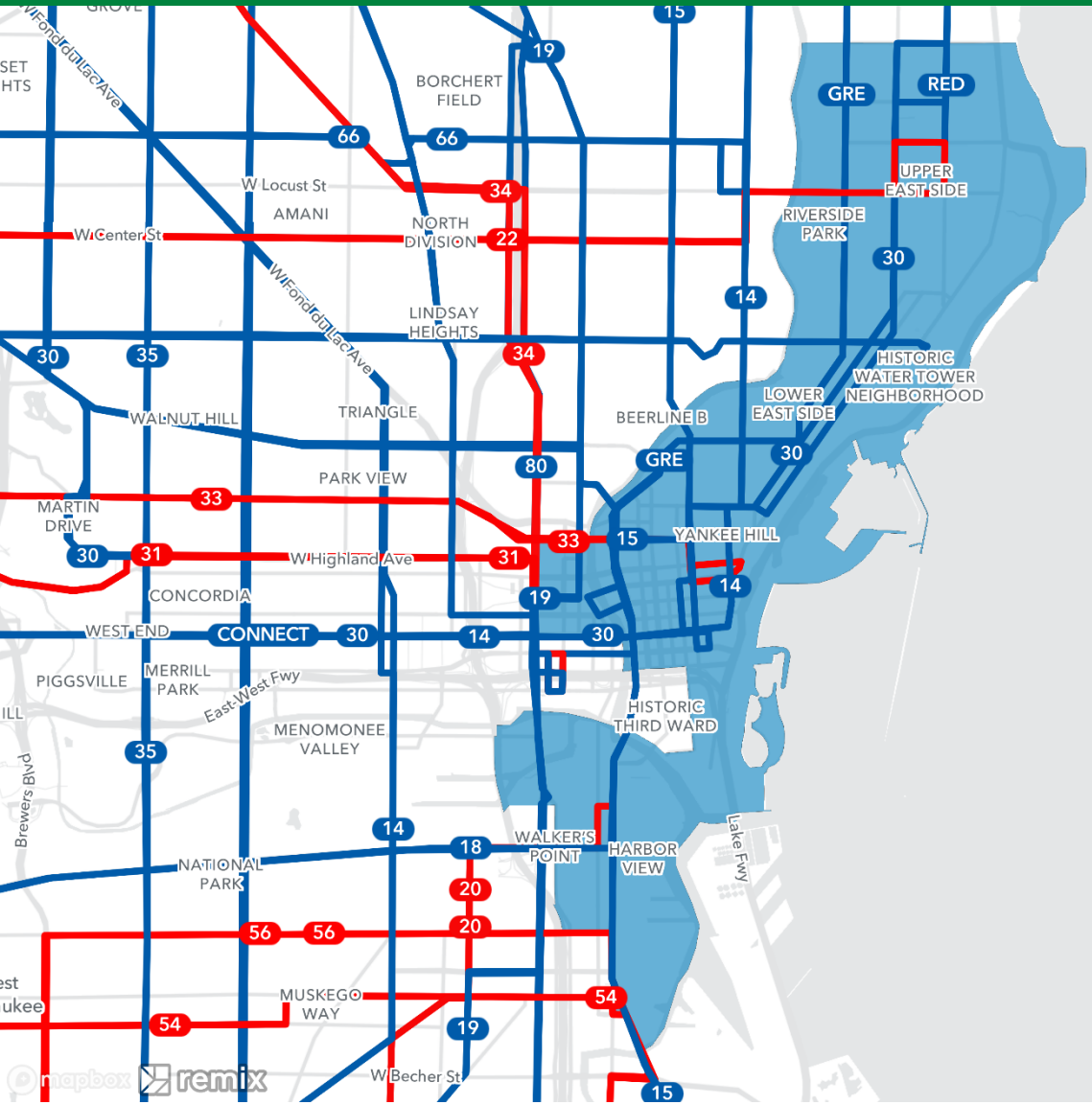
District 2 Willie Johnson Jr.

- Eliminated Routes**
- Route 11
 - Route 58
 - Route 68
 - Route 88

3000 ft



#3 Supervisor Wasserman - Potential Route Eliminations

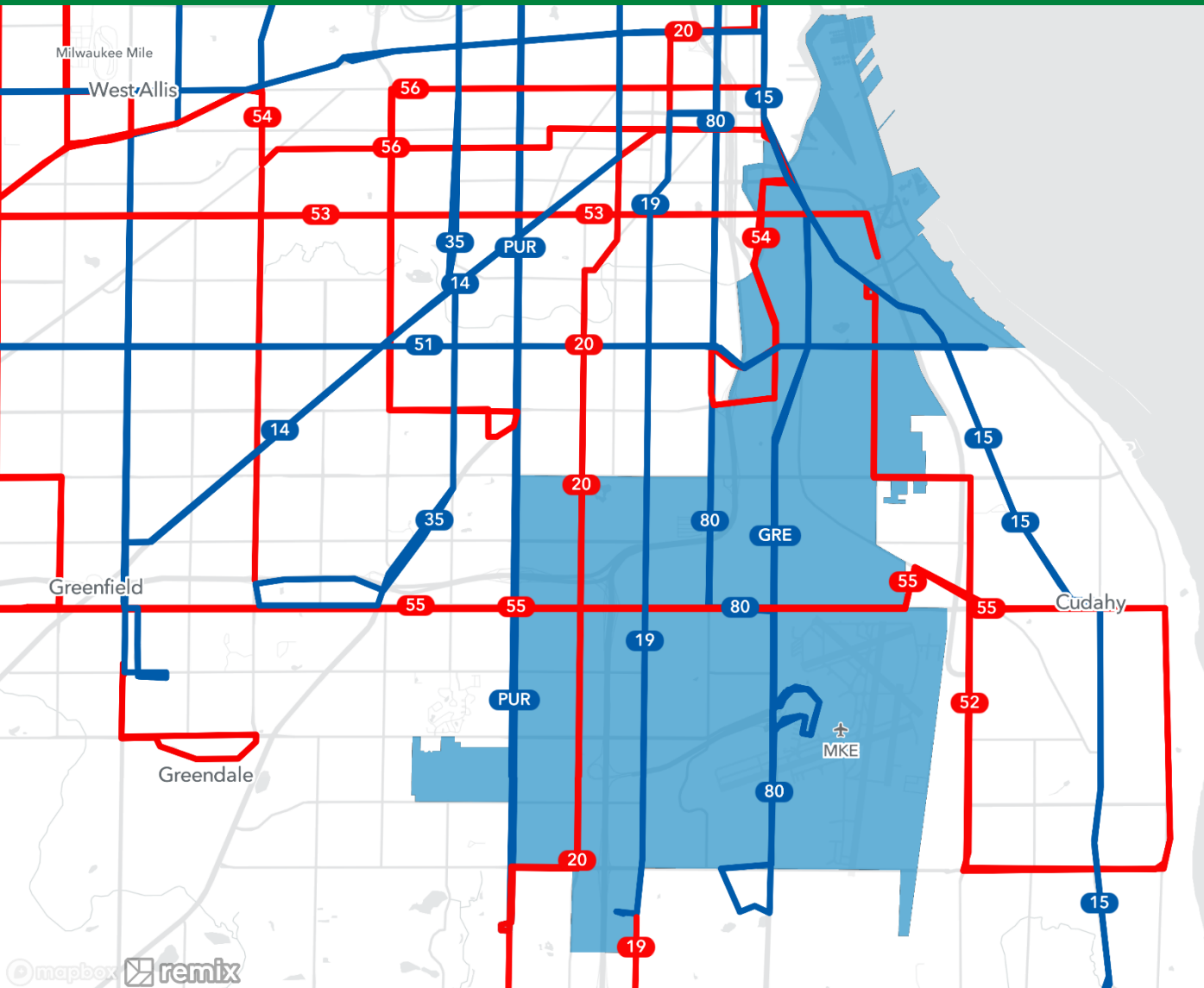


District 3 Sheldon Wasserman

- Eliminated Routes**
- Route 20
 - Route 22
 - Route 31
 - Route 33
 - Route 34
 - Route 54
 - Route 56



#4 Supervisor Clancy - Potential Route Eliminations



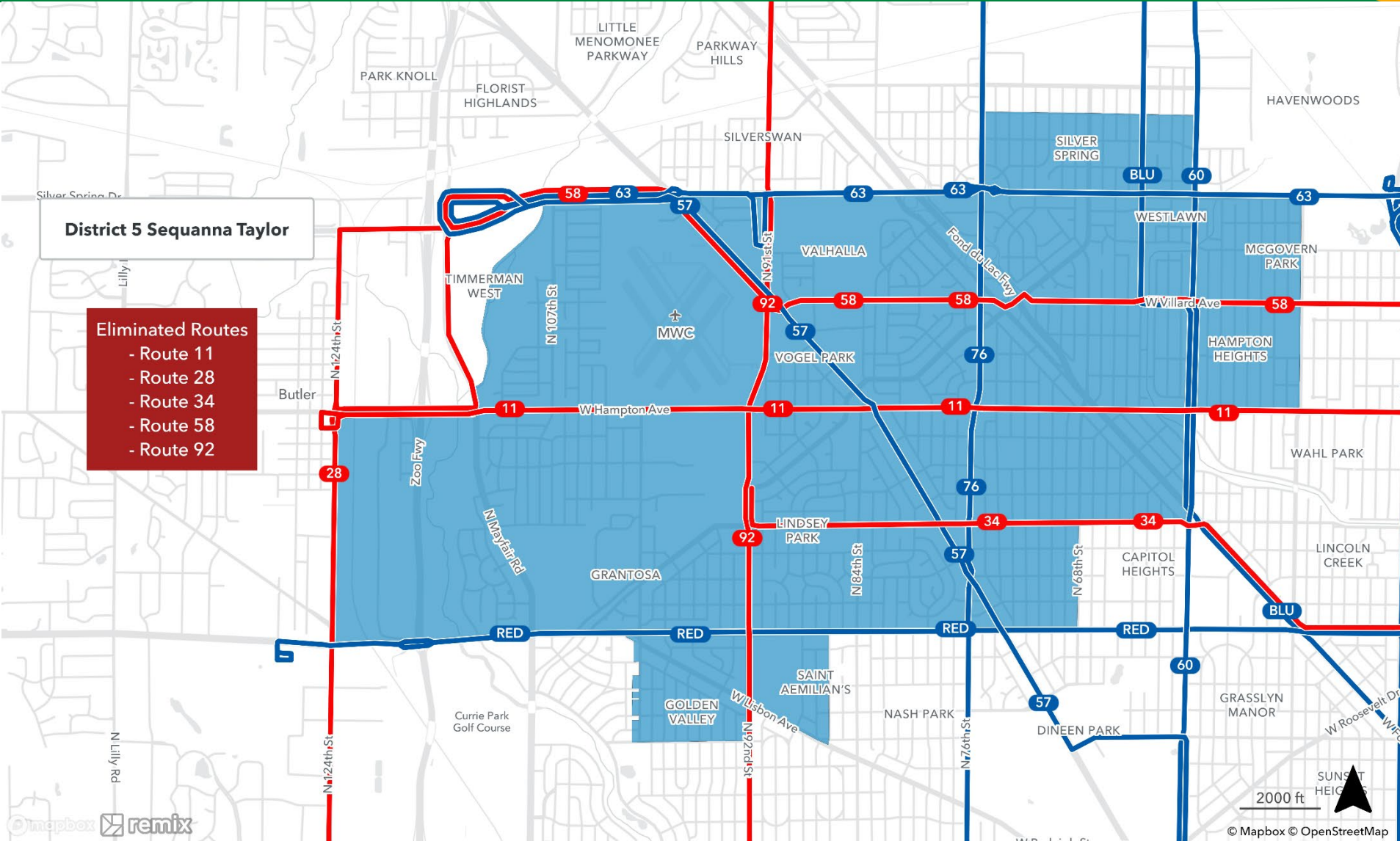
District 4 Ryan Clancy

- Eliminated Routes**
- Route 19
 - Route 20
 - Route 52
 - Route 53
 - Route 54
 - Route 55
 - Route 56

3000 ft



#5 Supervisor Taylor - Potential Route Eliminations

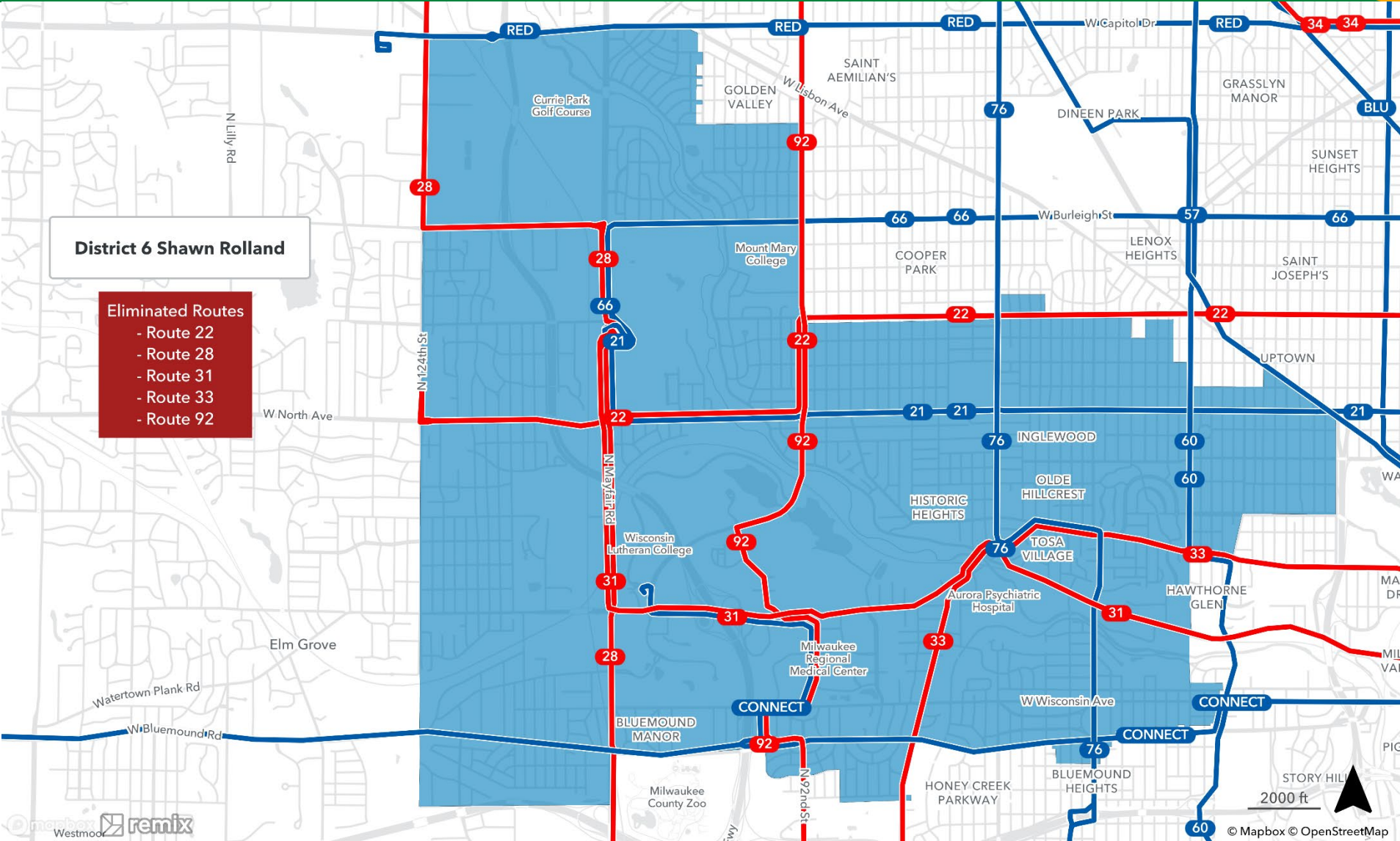


#6 Supervisor Rolland - Potential Route Eliminations



District 6 Shawn Rolland

- Eliminated Routes**
- Route 22
 - Route 28
 - Route 31
 - Route 33
 - Route 92

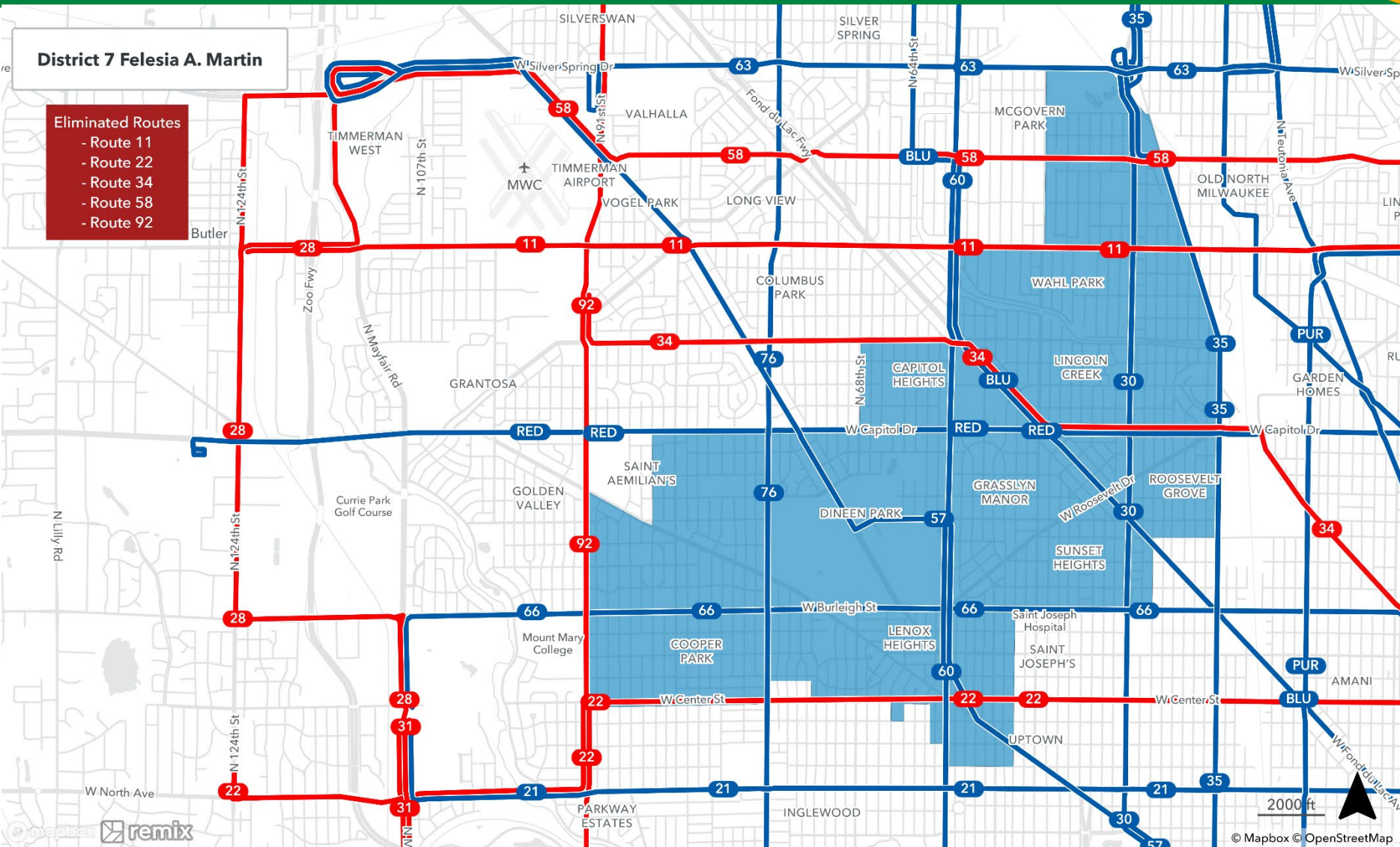


#7 Supervisor Martin - Potential Route Eliminations

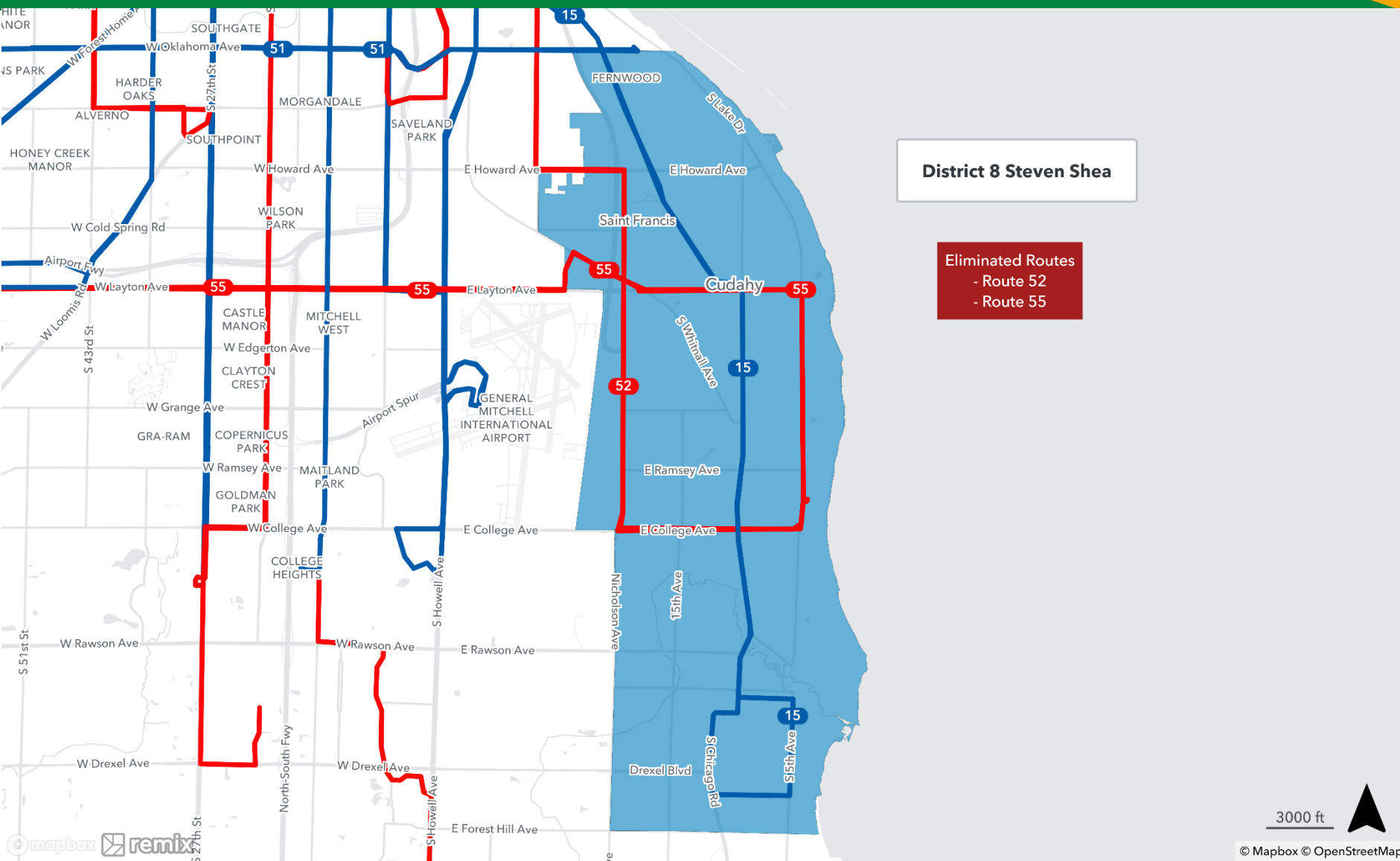


District 7 Felesia A. Martin

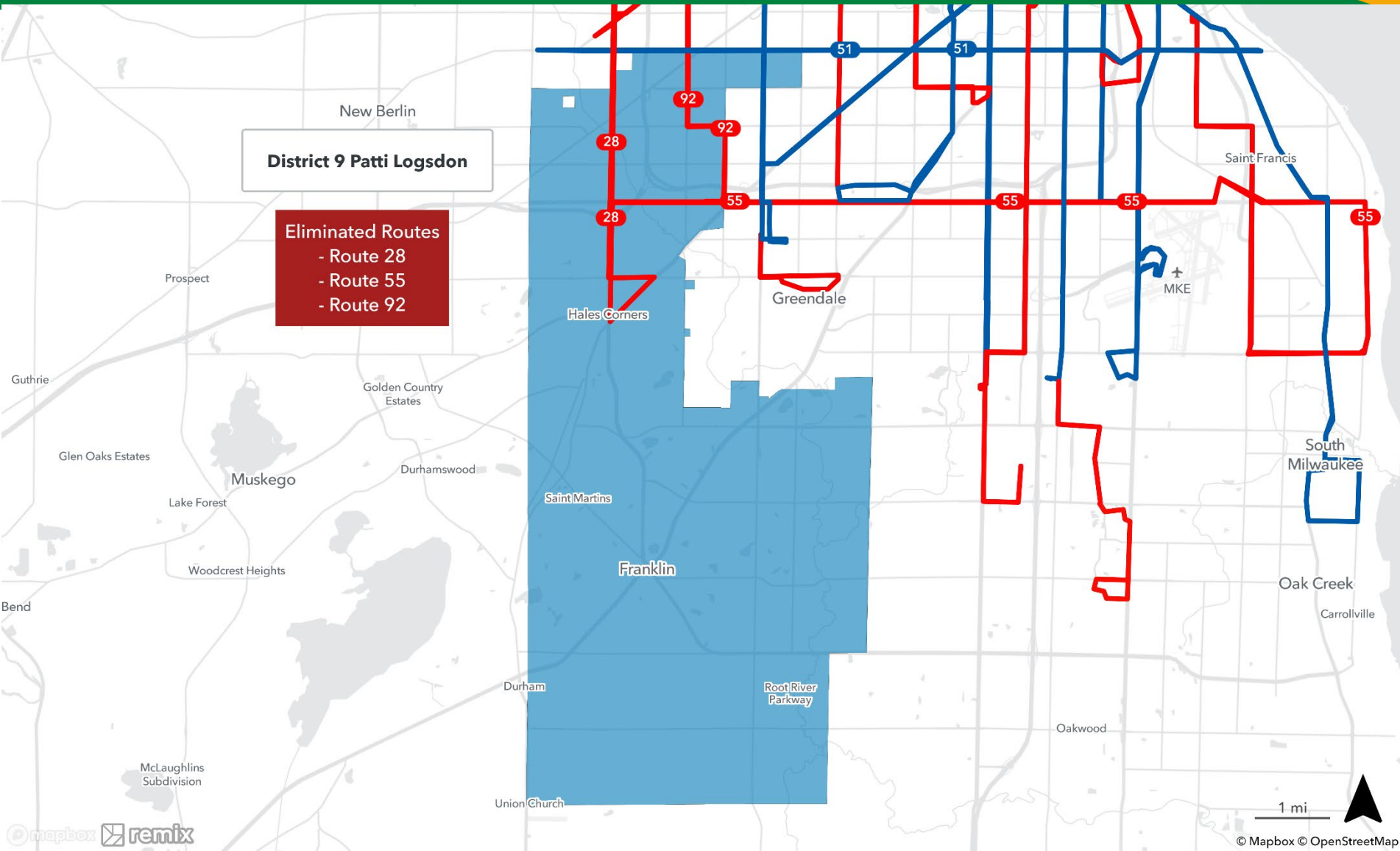
- Eliminated Routes
- Route 11
 - Route 22
 - Route 34
 - Route 58
 - Route 92



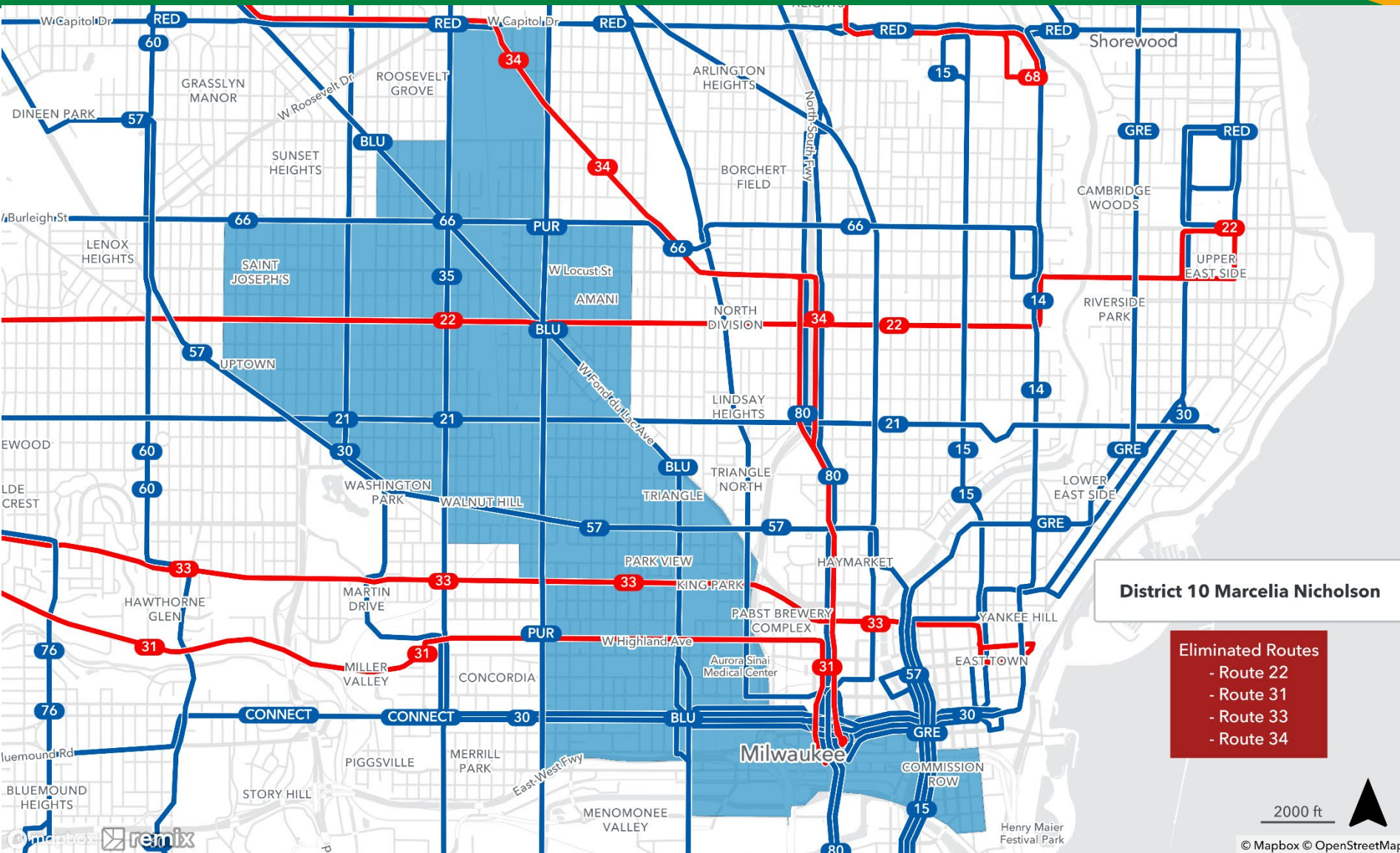
#8 Supervisor Shea - Potential Route Eliminations



#9 Supervisor Logsdon - Potential Route Eliminations



#10 Supervisor Nicholson - Potential Route Eliminations

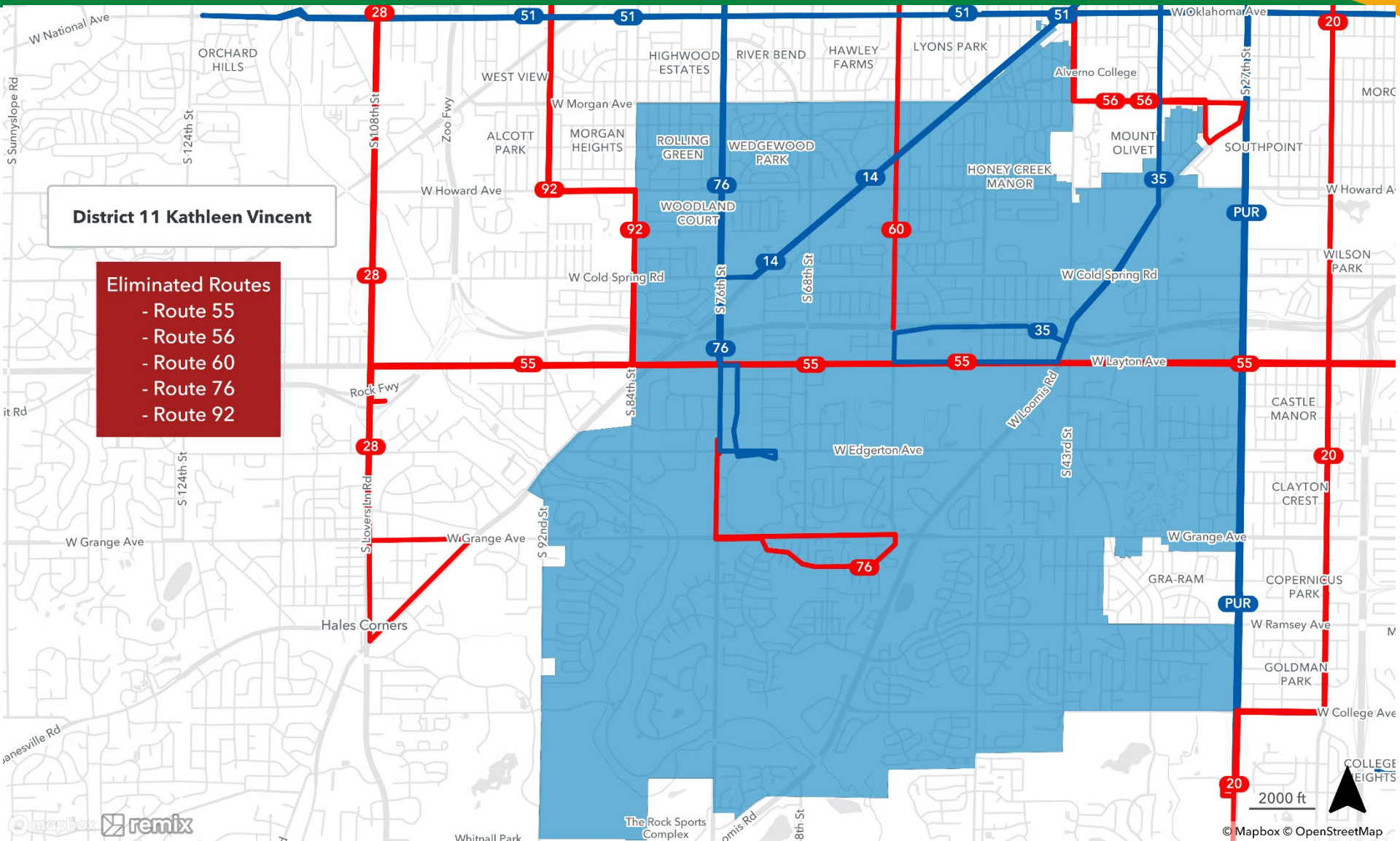


#11 Supervisor Vincent - Potential Route Eliminations

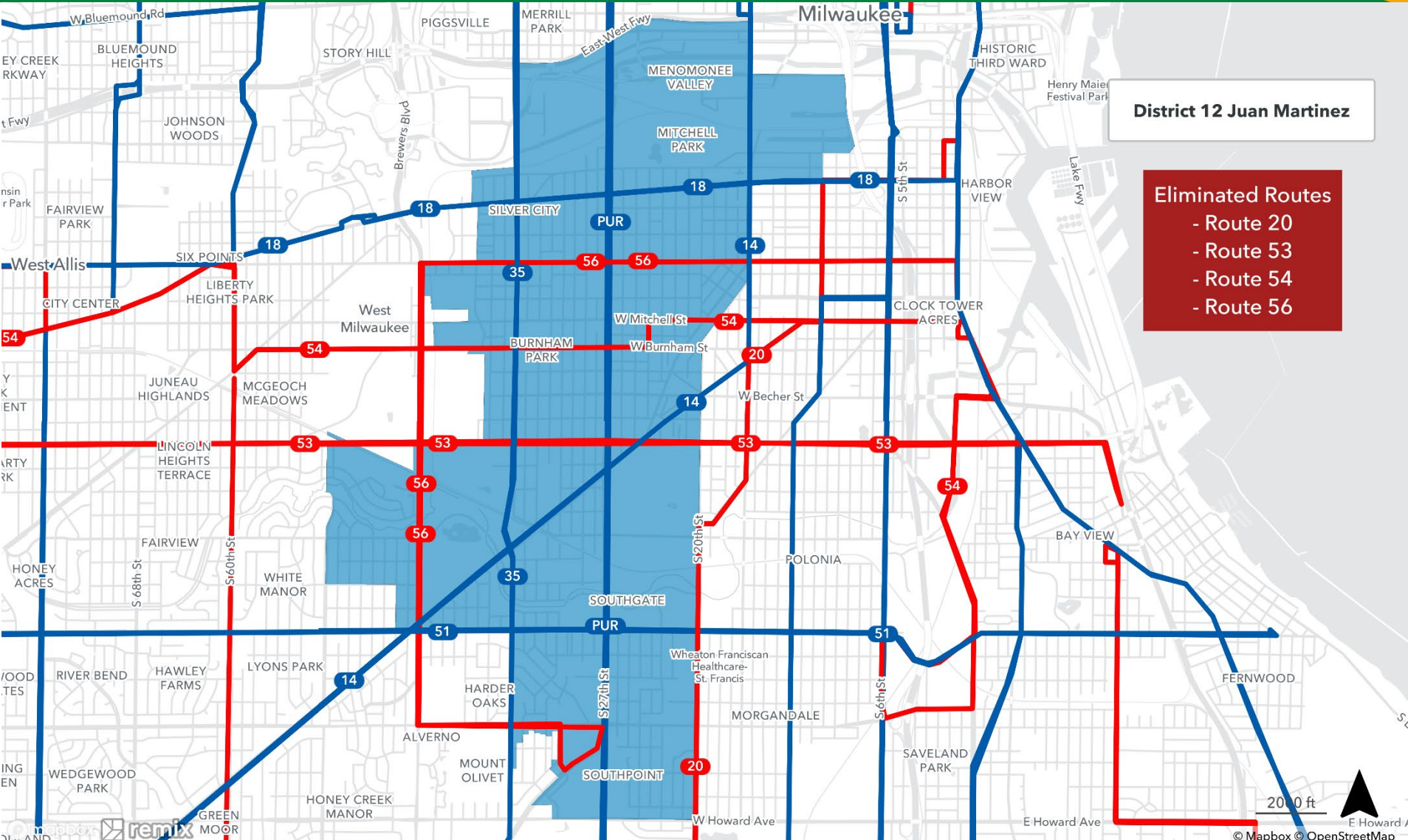


District 11 Kathleen Vincent

- Eliminated Routes**
- Route 55
 - Route 56
 - Route 60
 - Route 76
 - Route 92



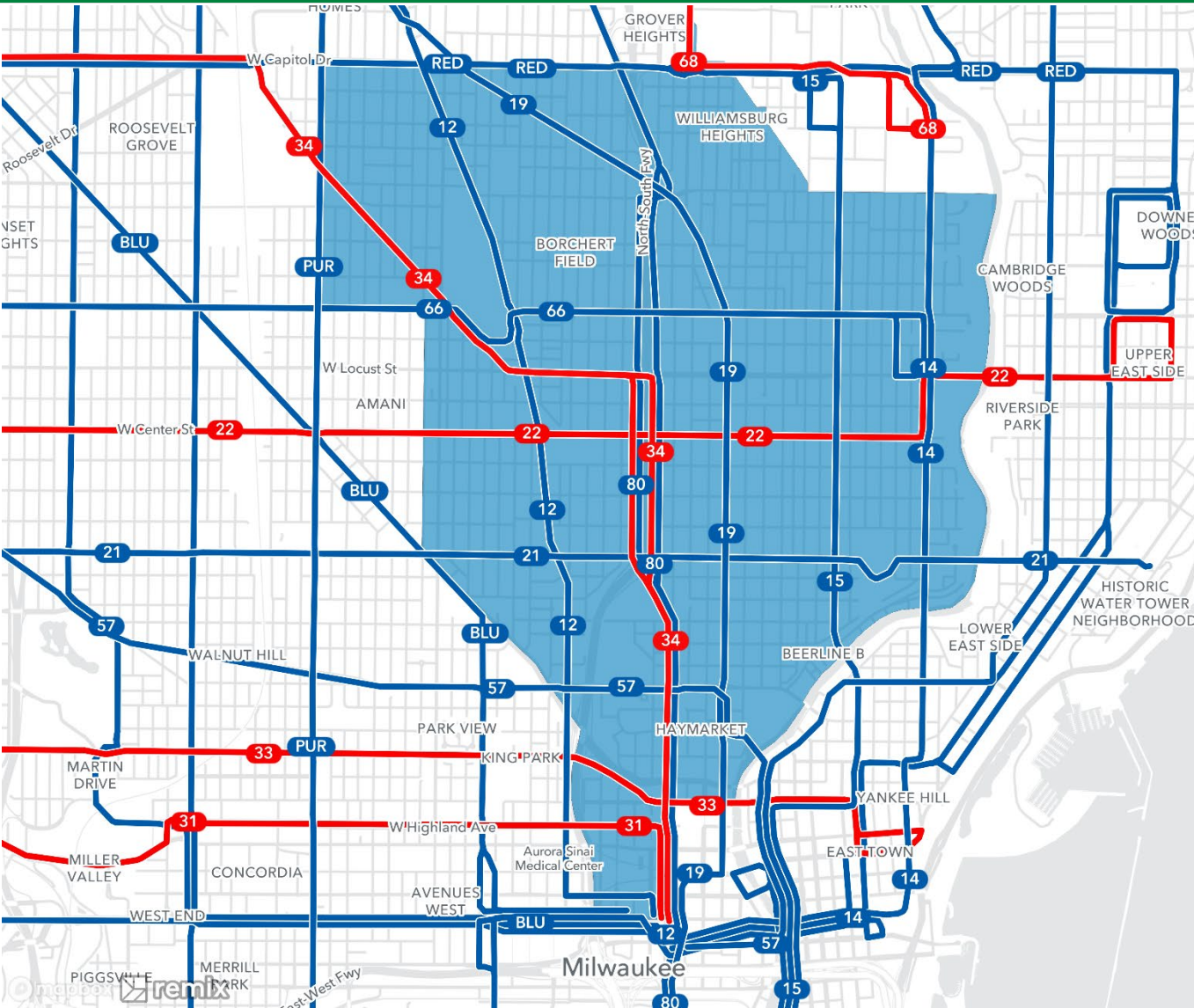
#12 Supervisor Martinez - Potential Route Eliminations



District 12 Juan Martinez

- Eliminated Routes**
- Route 20
 - Route 53
 - Route 54
 - Route 56

#13 Supervisor Coggs-Jones - Potential Route Eliminations

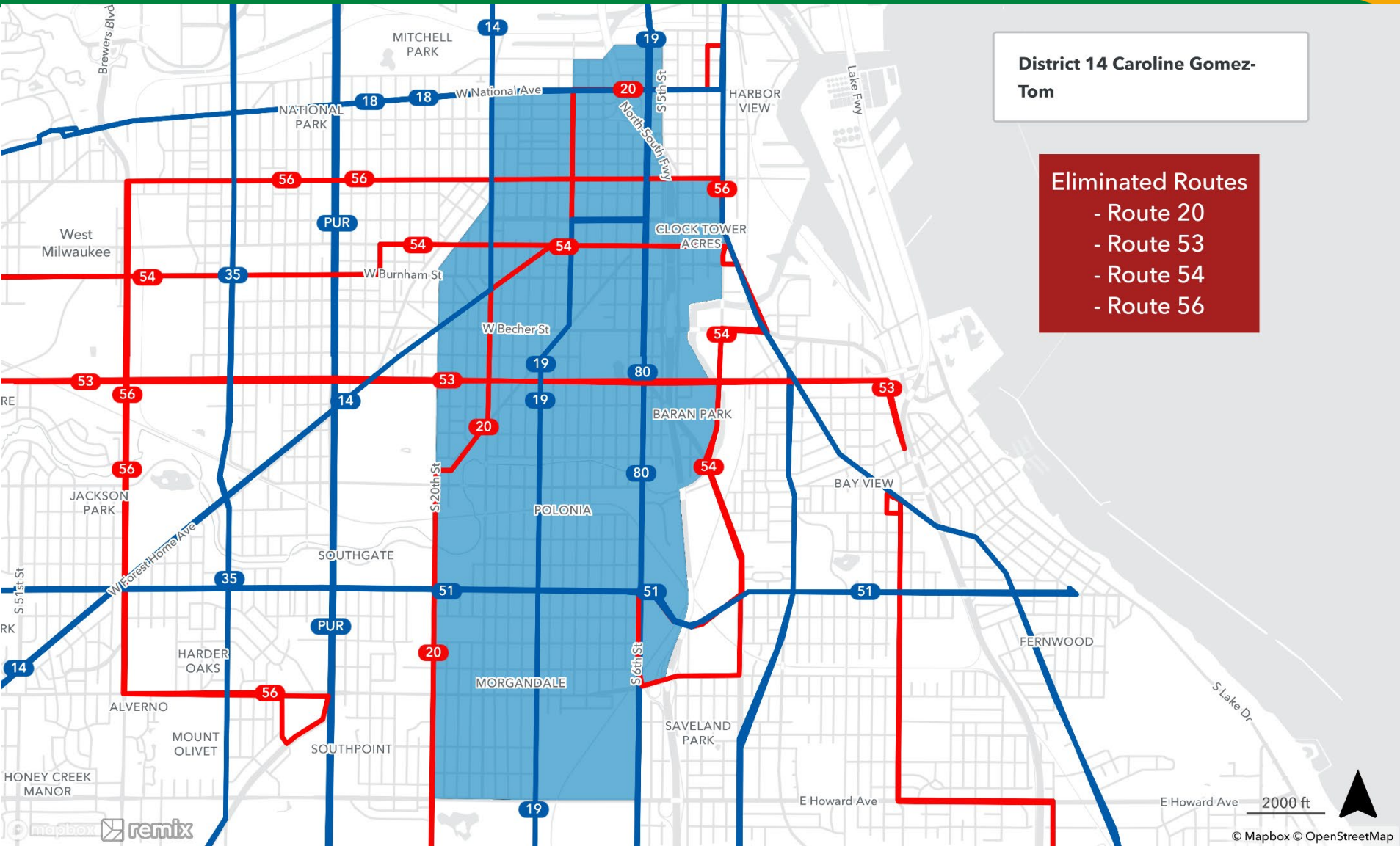


District 13 Priscilla E. Coggs-Jones

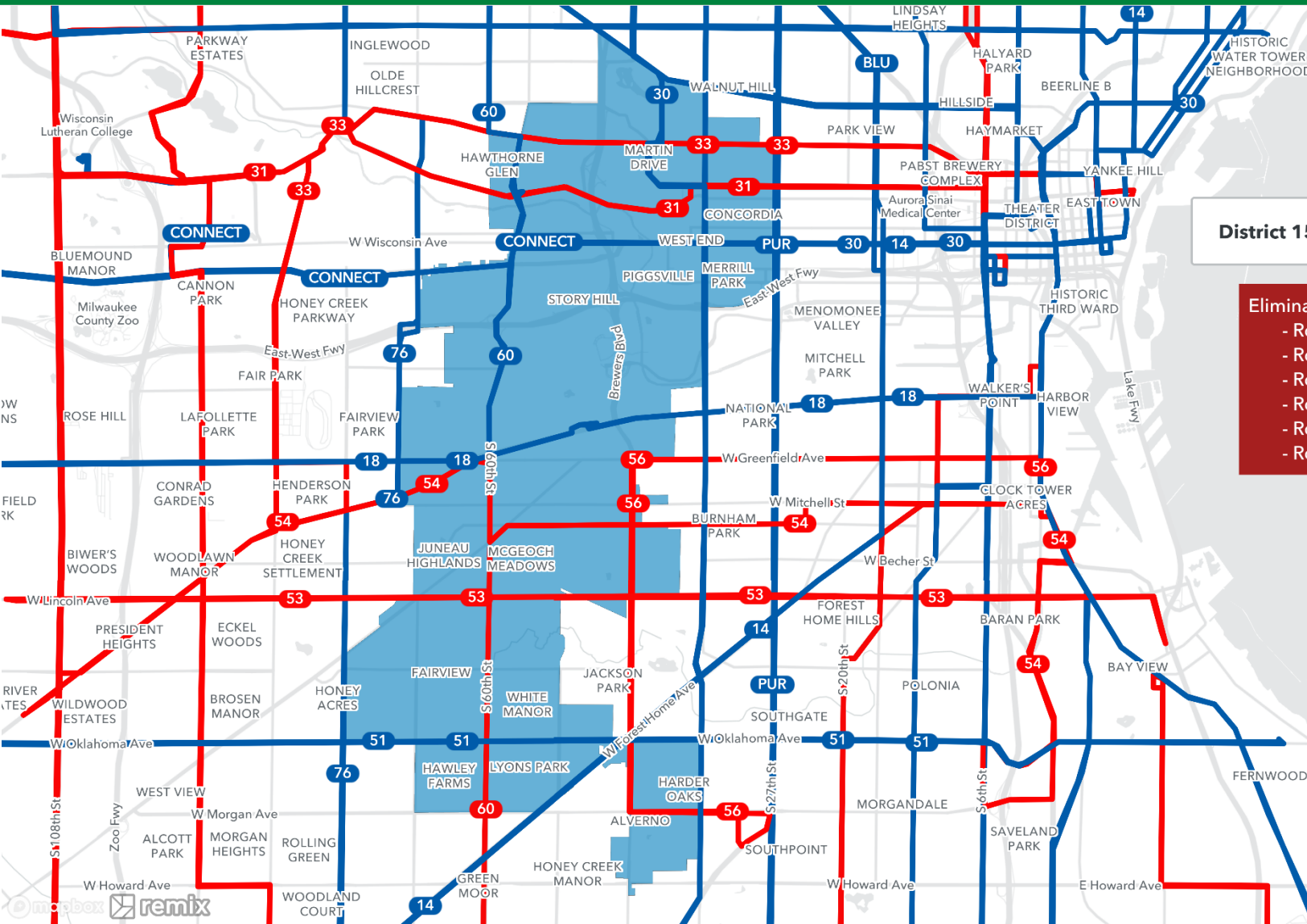
- Eliminated Routes**
- Route 22
 - Route 31
 - Route 33
 - Route 34
 - Route 68



#14 Supervisor Gomez-Tom - Potential Route Eliminations



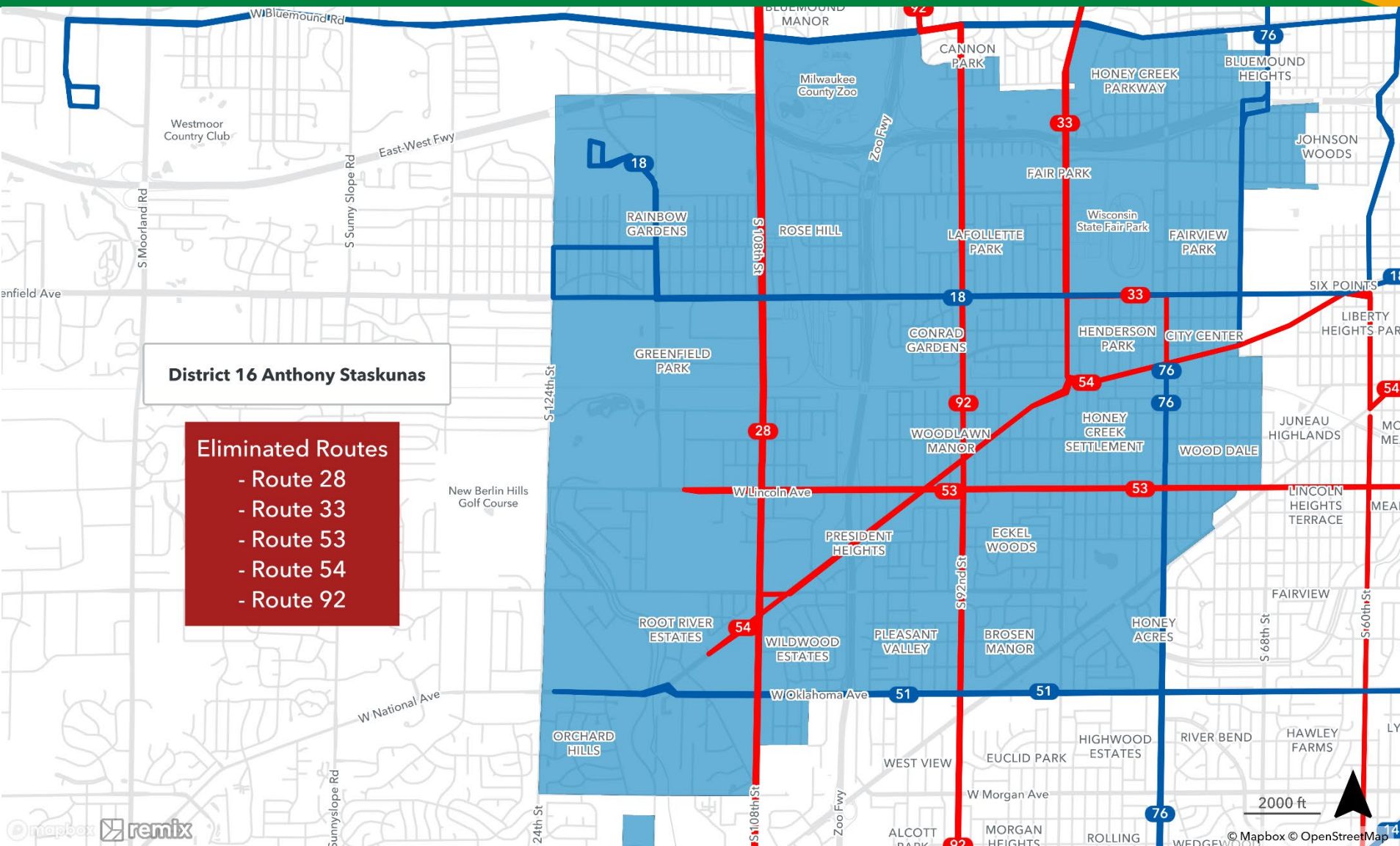
#15 Supervisor Burgelis - Potential Route Eliminations



District 15 Peter Burgelis

- Eliminated Routes
- Route 31
 - Route 33
 - Route 53
 - Route 54
 - Route 56
 - Route 60

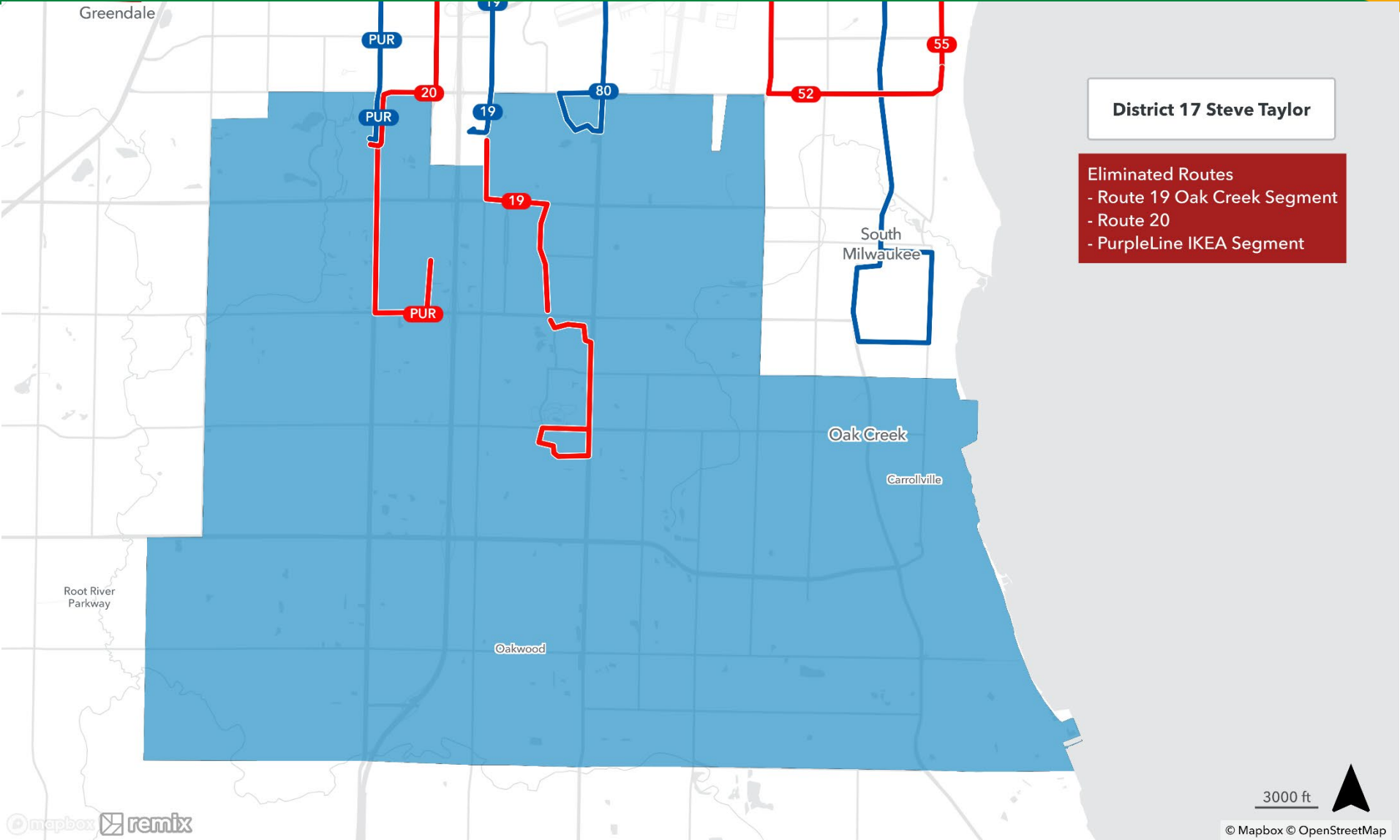
#16 Supervisor Staskunas - Potential Route Eliminations



District 16 Anthony Staskunas

- Eliminated Routes**
- Route 28
 - Route 33
 - Route 53
 - Route 54
 - Route 92

#17 Supervisor Taylor - Potential Route Eliminations

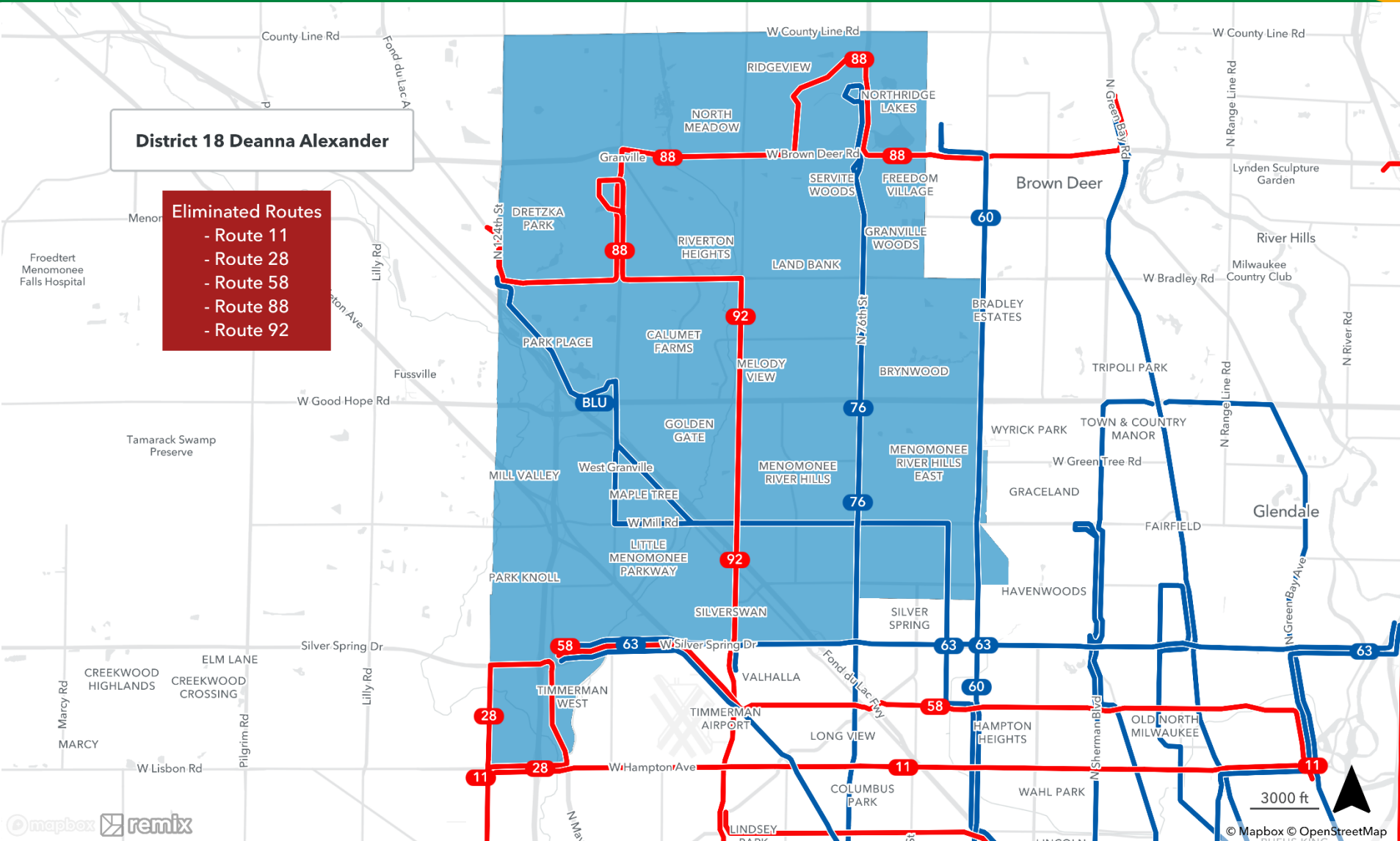


#18 Supervisor Alexander - Potential Route Eliminations



District 18 Deanna Alexander

- Eliminated Routes**
- Route 11
 - Route 28
 - Route 58
 - Route 88
 - Route 92



#SAVE THE BUS Campaign



- MCTS developed the #SAVETHEBUS campaign with the following goals:
 - Inform citizens / stakeholders of the fiscal cliff and potential major route eliminations
 - Ask citizens / stakeholders to contact state legislators and ask them to allow Milwaukee County to create a sustainable funding source for transit.



- Unlike nearly every other major city in the U.S., MCTS is not supported by a dedicated source of funding such as a sales tax.
- Most of the funding to MCTS is provided by the State of Wisconsin. Local funding is provided by Milwaukee County through a levy on property taxes and the vehicle registration fee.

#SAVE THE BUS Campaign



- You can help us #SaveTheBus! Here are 3 things you can do TODAY!
- <https://www.ridemcts.com/savethebus>

1. Download the #SaveTheBus badge and share it on your social channels to start spreading the word.



2. Fill out the "Take Action" form at Move Forward MKE to advocate for sustainable funding for MCTS and Milwaukee County

- https://www.moveforwardmke.com/take_action

3. Sign up to receive updates and find out more ways to help #SaveTheBus

#SAVE THE BUS Campaign



- MCTS staff have met / engaged with stakeholders / key influencers to gain support for sustainable funding:
 - Legislators in the State Capitol
 - Local Municipalities, e.g., Village of Shorewood
 - Business Leaders, e.g., Summerfest, Amazon
 - Transit Advocates:
 - Wisconsin Public Transit Association (WIPTA)
 - Wisconsin Transit Riders Alliance
 - MCTS Teen Advisory Committee



#SAVE THE BUS Campaign



- #SAVETHEBUS has also included an advertising campaign directed at business leaders and transit advocates. It has received extensive media coverage:
- Journal Sentinel - “MCTS is headed toward a fiscal cliff. Here are solutions and other takeaways from a new report.”
- Milwaukee Community Journal – “Public Transportation, Utilities, and Waterways Review Board to discuss MCTS funding, Electric Vehicles Initiative”
- Milwaukee Business Journal - "Prospect of Milwaukee County bus service cuts fuels argument for local sales tax vote"
- Fox 6 TV - Milwaukee - "Milwaukee County Transit System faces 'fiscal cliff,' less than 2 years"
- TMJ4-TV Milwaukee - "MCTS facing a significant financial situation in millions."

Questions / Comments?

[“ridemcts.com/SaveTheBus”](https://ridemcts.com/SaveTheBus)



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