

County of Milwaukee
Interoffice Communication

DATE: 4/16/2021
TO: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
FROM: Donna Brown-Martin, Director, Department of Transportation
SUBJECT: MCTS NEXT System Redesign – Implementation Report - Phase 2

BACKGROUND

A resolution approving of the implementation of the MCTS NEXT System Redesign Project and the 2020 System Map (File No. 20-476) was adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in September 2020. MCTS informed the County Board in December 2020 (File No. 20-881) of its intention to implement the MCTS NEXT system redesign in three phases beginning in March 2021 and continuing in June and September 2021. This report provides an update on actions in Phase 2 which is scheduled to start June 6th, 2021.

As a reminder, the specific goal of MCTS NEXT is to update the service model, in a cost neutral manner, from 40% high frequency vs. 60% low frequency to a new mix of 60% high frequency and 40% low frequency (high frequency being defined as buses running every 15 minutes or more often). The following actions are being taken to create the new system:

- Expand high frequency service in several new corridors
- Expand service to unserved or under-served job centers
- Provide faster service by removing lightly used bus stops that are close together
- Reduce or remove service in some areas where the demand for transit is low or very low
- Simplify the network to make it easier for riders to understand

Ultimately, these actions are intended to advance racial equity by increasing access for people of color to employment, education, healthcare, grocery stores, and other essential destinations.

MCTS NEXT: Phase 2 Service Change Details

Phase 2 will continue the expansion of high frequency service begun in Phase 1, expand rider's access to important job centers, and provide more frequent service on weekends in several corridors. These changes will include two sets of routes:

- Routes 12 & New Routes 11 and 88, and
- PurpleLine and Route 80 and New Routes 34 and 58

Routes 12 & New Routes 11 and 88

- Route 12 (Teutonia Avenue) will be modified to provide more high frequency service to residents and job centers as well as an easier to understand routing (**See Map 1 attached**).

- Existing high frequency service on Teutonia Avenue will be extended beyond Hampton Avenue to Brown Deer Road. Residents north of Hampton Avenue will notice buses arrive approximately twice as often as they do today.
- Route 12 branch service on Hampton Avenue will be replaced with new Route 11 (described below). Finally, Route 12 service on Brown Deer Road will be replaced with new Route 88 (described below).
- New Route 11 (Hampton Avenue) will provide more frequent service on weekends than Route 12 as well as an easier to understand routing.
 - Buses will travel on Hampton Avenue from Green Bay Avenue to 124th. The frequency of weekday service will be similar to today (20 to 25 minutes). Weekend service will be every 20 to 30 minutes versus 40 to 50 minutes today. Service will run from 5 am to 12:30 am and is similar to existing service.
- New Route 88 (Brown Deer Road) will provide new crosstown service on Brown Deer Road and new access to unserved job centers.
 - Buses will travel on Brown Deer Road between Green Bay Avenue to 107th and then travel via 107th and Bradley Road to 124th to serve Woodmans, Sams Club, and Aldi. The frequency of service will be approximately every 20 minutes. Service will run from 5 am to 12:30 am and is similar to existing service.

PurpleLine and Route 80 and New Routes 34 and 58

- PurpleLine (27th Street) high frequency service will be extended and provide new connections to an important job center (**See Map 2 attached**).
 - Existing high frequency service will be extended to Bayshore Town Center via Silver Spring Drive and Port Washington Road.
 - Service to Green Bay & Florist will be replaced with a modification to Route 80 (described below).
- Route 80 (6th – Green Bay) will be modified to provide more high frequency service to residents and job centers as well as an easier to understand routing (**See Map 2 attached**).
 - Existing high frequency service will be extended north of Locust Street on 6th Street and Green Bay Avenue to Florist Avenue. Residents north of Locust Street will notice buses arrive approximately twice as often as they do today.
 - Route 80 branch service on Hopkins Street will be replaced with new Route 34 (described below). Route 80 branch service on Villard Avenue will be replaced with new Route 58 (described below).
- New Route 34 (Hopkins – Congress) will provide more frequent service as well as new connections to several other routes in the system.
 - Buses will travel from 5th & Clybourn (near the Intermodal Station) to 92nd & Congress in the following manner:
 - Via Route 80 on 6th, Locust, and Hopkins to Capitol Drive,
 - Via the RedLine on Capitol Drive to Fond du Lac Avenue,
 - Via the BlueLine on Fond du Lac and Congress Street to 92nd Street.
 - The frequency of weekday service will be similar to today (20 to 25 minutes). Weekend service will be every 30 to 35 minutes versus 45 to 50 minutes today. Service will run from 5 am to 12:30 am and is similar to existing service.

- New Route 58 (Villard) will provide more frequent service than Route 80 and provide new connections to important job centers.
 - Buses will travel from Green Bay Avenue & Hampton Avenue to Lovers Lane & Silver Spring Drive in the following manner:
 - Via Route 80 on Green Bay Avenue and Villard Avenue to Appleton Avenue
 - Via Route 57 on Appleton Avenue and Silver Spring Drive to Lovers Lane.
 - The frequency of weekday service will be similar to today (20 to 30 minutes). Weekend service will be every 30 minutes versus 60 minutes today. Service will run from 5 am to 12:30 am and is similar to existing service.

MCTS will shorten travel times in Phase 2 (as was done in Phase 1) by reducing the number of bus stops on these routes. Bus stops would remain at key destinations and transfer corners as well as at major employers, schools, and multi-unit residences for elderly persons and persons with disabilities. These changes make it possible to add time into the layover and give operators more time to walk to nearby restrooms. It will also help operators get back on schedule if they happen to fall behind due to high ridership or heavy traffic conditions.

Outreach and Engagement Efforts

MCTS will prepare an extensive communications plan to inform and engage riders and stakeholders on service and bus stop changes. Under this plan MCTS will:

- Host virtual community meetings to provide route / schedule information to neighborhood and business groups and to underrepresented populations.
- Update our website with revised route maps/schedules. Videos will be prepared to describe key information on the new routings.
- Publish special issues of MCTS Bus Lines and Rider Insider.
- Develop and install bus stop signage to promote awareness of route/bus stop changes weeks in advance of implementation. Buses will also make audio/visual announcements of changes.
- Prepare press release for local media.
- Provide key materials in Spanish and use a Spanish language interpreter to answer questions.
- Provide new route/schedule information to County Board Supervisors and answer any questions.

MCTS will continue to meet with ATU 998 leadership to inform them and listen to their suggestions regarding the implementation plan. Wall sized maps of the new route network will be displayed for operators at both Fond du Lac and Kinnickinnic Stations to keep them abreast of changes in the current and future phases. In addition, a website is being updated that provides drivers with a map of every route, a video of the routing, the timepoints on the route, and a list of restrooms along the route.

Summary

Consistent with the adopted MCTS NEXT System Redesign Project, MCTS has begun to incrementally implement the new route network. Phase 2 will be implemented in June and Phase 3 in September 2021. MCTS will create a well-rounded public outreach campaign to notify riders

and stakeholders, including the County Board before changes take effect. MCTS will also regularly meet with ATU 998 leadership and bus operators to inform and seek their input.

RECOMMENDATION

This report is for informational purposes unless otherwise directed.

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