



Milwaukee County Transit System

Information for Transportation, Public Works and Transit Committee

March 2018

Recall June 2017 TPW&T Committee Meeting

- File 17-435: From the Director, Department of Transportation, providing an informational report regarding Milwaukee County Transit System ridership by route type and time of day, and circumstances in which route modifications or eliminations could be considered.
- File 17-438: From the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors, a request for a written information report from the Executive Director, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, regarding the transit service reductions and fare increases of the State budget proposal to remove the Vehicle Registration Fee only in Milwaukee County.

MCTS Fixed Route Services



- Local fixed route bus services – 365 days/year
- Shuttles focused on business or industrial parks – 255 to 365 days/year
- School-day based services to MPS and suburban schools – 180 days/year
- University Bus (UBUS) services to UW-Milwaukee, MATC, etc. – 180 days/year
- Freeway Flyer services from park-ride lots into Downtown – 255 days/year
- Summer services to festivals, baseball games and State Fair – seasonally each year

Table 1: 85% of rides are taken on 28 MCTS Routes with greater than 29 PBH

Route	Service Type	Rides/Day	Bus Hours	PBH
RR2	School	166	2.1	77.8
30X	Local - Express	5,295	106.0	50.0
RedLine	Local - Express	5,419	118.5	45.7
PurpleLine	Local - Express	5,046	114.5	44.1
27	Local	4,758	113.8	41.8
RR1	School	203	4.9	41.7
BlueLine	Local - Express	6,396	154.5	41.4
30	Local	6,404	155.1	41.3
63	Local	2,825	70.4	40.2
62	Local	2,706	67.6	40.0
56	Local	2,762	69.5	39.8
22	Local	2,861	73.7	38.8
35	Local	3,797	100.4	37.8
85	School	79	2.2	35.4
60	Local	3,542	100.5	35.2
15	Local	5,461	158.0	34.6
12	Local	6,124	181.7	33.7
GoldLine	Local - Express	5,989	182.4	32.8
23	Local	5,314	163.5	32.5
51	Local	2,880	88.7	32.5
14	Local	5,142	159.2	32.3
21	Local	4,117	128.5	32.0
67	Local	4,019	129.3	31.1
54	Local	2,224	72.2	30.8
19	Local	6,426	208.7	30.8
87	School	34	1.1	30.4
GreenLine	Local - Express	6,267	206.2	30.4
80	Local	6,346	209.5	30.3

Table 2: 15% of rides are taken on 32 bus routes with 29 PBH or less

Route	Service Type	Rides/Day	Bus Hours	PBH
76	Local	4,914	166.4	29.5
53	Local	1,891	65.5	28.9
57	Local	1,965	71.2	27.6
RR3	School	63	2.6	23.9
89	School	62	2.6	23.8
55	Local	1,158	50.7	22.9
33	Local	850	38.9	21.9
64	Local	559	29.1	19.2
31	Local	1,307	78.3	16.7
40	Flyer	282	17.3	16.3
28	Local	839	51.8	16.2
43	Flyer	258	17.2	15.0
40U	School - UBUS	742	50.8	14.6
52	Local	470	32.9	14.3
48	Flyer	208	14.7	14.1
44	Flyer	192	13.8	13.9
143	Flyer - Contract	340	26.2	13.0
46	Flyer	187	14.8	12.6
49	Flyer	257	20.9	12.3
44U	School - UBUS	798	67.5	11.8
6	Shuttle	212	19.3	11.0
50	School	28	2.7	10.6
79	Flyer - Contract	117	11.4	10.3
61	Shuttle	713	70.8	10.1
49U	School - UBUS	211	21.1	10.0
17	Shuttle	107	11.3	9.5
88	School	19	2.7	7.1
223	Shuttle	98	13.9	7.0
219	Shuttle	31	4.7	6.6
276	Shuttle	110	16.9	6.5
42U	School - UBUS	126	27.6	4.6
137	Shuttle - HOC	20	4.4	4.5

File 17-435: MCTS Reported about when route modifications or eliminations could be considered

MCTS reported that if service modifications or eliminations are needed, the following questions could be asked:

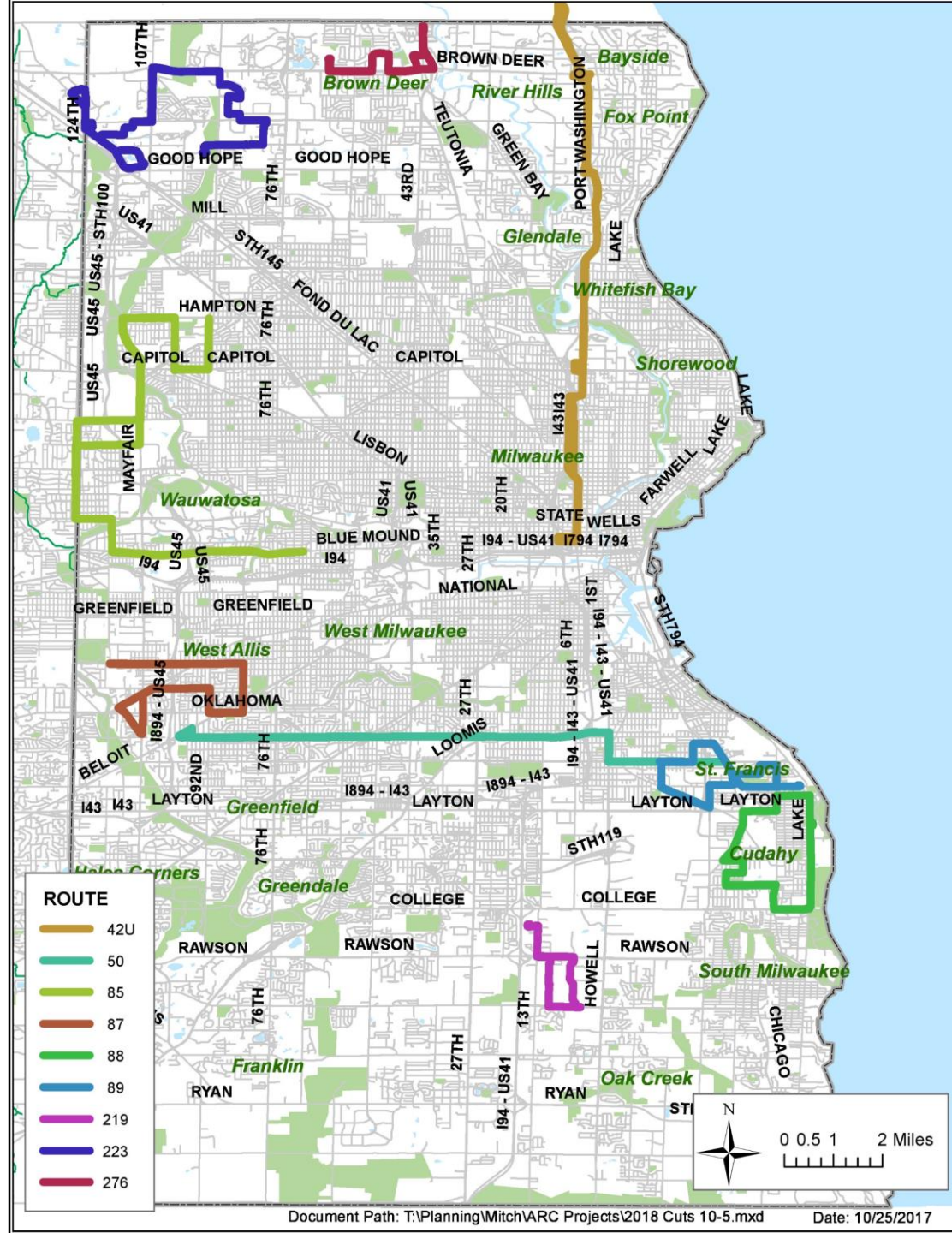
- A. What is the productivity of each route, measured in passengers per bus hour?
- B. Is the route used by persons with transportation alternatives available to them?
- C. Is the route part of the MCTS core mission, or can another entity (e.g. school district, employer, etc.) assume responsibility for the route?
- D. Are the vehicles used for the service used year round?

File 17-438: SEWRPC Reported- ways to address a revenue shortfall in 2017

SEWRPC Reported:

- The County could decide that a blend of cutting service and increasing fares makes the most sense.
- The County has focused on eliminating the lowest performing bus routes (e.g. lowest passengers per revenue vehicle hour of service) in the past.
- The County has previously discussed eliminating premium services that can be seen as less essential as it is likely that individuals who use these services have access to an automobile (e.g. Summerfest, State Fair and other festivals as well as Freeway Flyers).
- It may make sense to eliminate school services as these could be reasonably replaced by the appropriate school district through yellow school bus service.

Review of MCTS Routes Previously Chosen for Potential Elimination (2018 Budget)



Actions previously deemed necessary to address the budget gap:

- a) Abandon the strategy to add bus hours of service to Route 17 as described on page 7 of 8 of the recommended DOT – Transit (5600) Budget saves \$185,000
- a) Eliminate low performing UBUS Route 42U (MATC North and Downtown) at the end of the Spring Semester saves \$136,000
- a) Eliminate low performing every-day bus service on Route 276 (Brown Deer Business Park) in March 2018 saves \$221,500
- a) Eliminate low performing weekday only bus service to business and industrial parks on Routes 219 (Oak Creek Industrial Park Shuttle) and 223 (Park Place – Bradley Woods Shuttle) in March 2018 saves \$267,500
- a) Eliminate school day only services after the end of the 2017-2018 School Year on Routes 50 (Morgan Ave - Milwaukee & St. Francis), 85 (Wauwatosa Whitman – West), 87 (West Allis Nathan Hale), 88 (Cudahy), and 89 (St. Francis.) saves \$72,800

Total gap is closed: \$882,800

Key Reasons for Route Cuts: Shuttle Routes to Industrial Parks and Business Parks

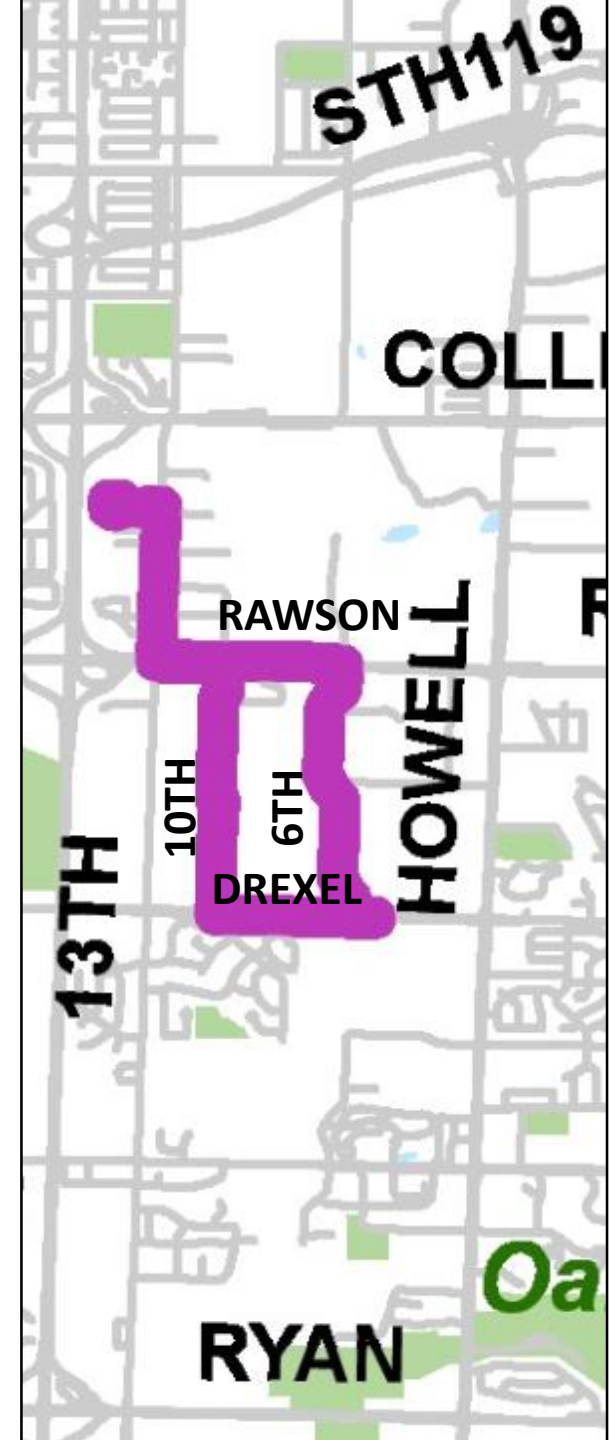
- Routes 219, 223, 276
 - Routes carry relatively few riders since they are only used for 1 type of travel for part of the day, i.e., going to / from work
 - Fixed routes serve **all** types of travel in **both directions** at **all times of the day**
 - Industrial parks and business parks are typically located on the fringes of Milwaukee County requiring long rides with transfers
 - Mismatch between business shift times - which can change often - and bus schedules which change seasonally can occur as businesses experience shifts in their work schedule to support changes in consumer product/service demand

Route 219 – Oak Creek Shuttle

Rides per Day (Fall 2016)	In-Service Hours per Day	Passengers per Bus Hour	Total Annual Cost	Estimated Lost Revenue	Annualized Net Savings
31	4.7	6.6	\$85,374	\$0	\$85,374

Analysis

- Buses on this route run well-below capacity (95% empty)
- Duplicates other service provided by MCTS:
 - Route 80 provides regular all day service on 6th Street
- Riders make multiple transfers to get to/from industrial park



Route 223 – Park Place - Bradley Woods Shuttle

Rides per Day (Fall 2016)	In-Service Hours per Day	Passengers per Bus Hour	Total Annual Cost	Estimated Lost Revenue	Annualized Net Savings
98	13.9	7.0	\$248,319	\$12,620	\$235,699

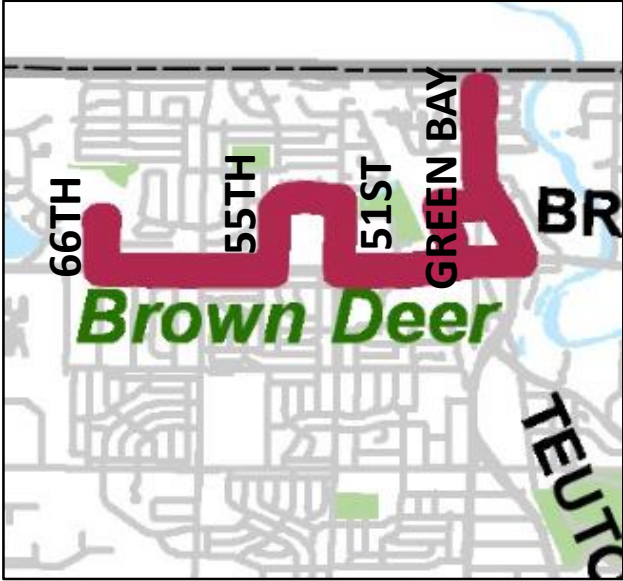


Analysis

- Buses on this route run well-below capacity (86% empty)
- Ridership continues to decline - 58 rides in Fall 2017
- There is alternative all-day service within ¼ to ½ mile on the BlueLine, Routes 23, 67, and 76
- Riders make multiple transfers to get to/from business park

Route 276 – Brown Deer Shuttle

Rides per Day (Fall 2016)	In-Service Hours per Day	Passengers per Bus Hour	Total Annual Cost	Estimated Lost Revenue	Annualized Net Savings
110	16.9	6.5	\$279,990	\$14,165	\$265,825



Analysis

- Buses on this route run well-below capacity (90% empty)
- Partially duplicated service:
 - Routes 12, 49 and 76 provide alternatives to customers
- Very low ridership to the Brown Deer Industrial Park - 13 rides
- Riders make multiple transfers to get to/from business park

Key Reasons for Route Cuts: Schools

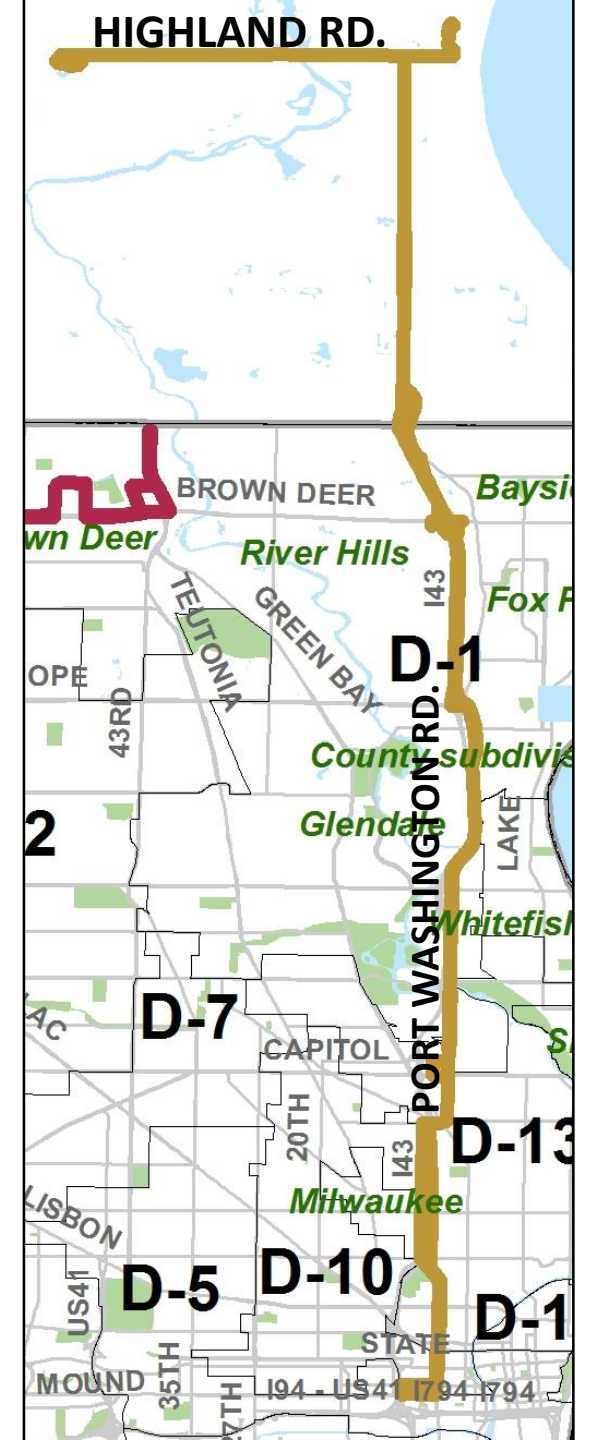
- Routes 42U, 50, 85, 87, 88, and 89:
 - Routes carry relatively few riders given they are only used for 1 type of travel, i.e., going to / from school
 - Fixed routes serve **all** types of travel in **both directions** at **all times of the day**
 - Services can duplicate other service provided by nearby fixed routes
 - Many High Schools provide yellow bus service to students

Route 42U – 6TH St. - Port Washington UBUS

Rides per Day (Fall 2016)	In-Service Hours per Day	Passengers per Bus Hour	Total Annual Cost	Estimated Lost Revenue	Annualized Net Savings
126	27.6	4.6	\$304,425	\$20,998	\$283,427

Analysis

- 42U is the least productive route in the system
- Buses on this route run well-below capacity (90% empty)
- Ridership continues to decline - 77 rides in Fall 2017
- MCTS provides extensive service to MATC campuses in Milwaukee County – Central, South, and West
- North campus is NOT in Milwaukee County – by providing this service, Milwaukee County is subsidizing MATC and to some extent Ozaukee County

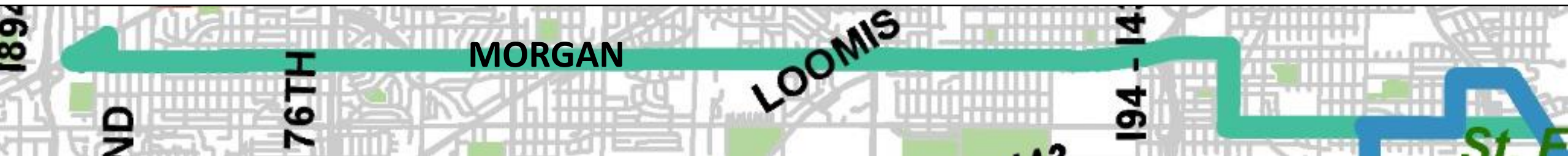


Route 50 – Morgan Avenue

Rides per Day (Fall 2016)	In-Service Hours per Day	Passengers per Bus Hour	Total Annual Cost	Estimated Lost Revenue	Annualized Net Savings
28	2.7	10.4	\$45,066	\$2,870	\$42,196

Analysis

- Buses on this route run well-below capacity (86% empty)
- MPS schools along this route provide yellow bus service
- This Route serves Thomas More High School, which is also accessible via Route 15

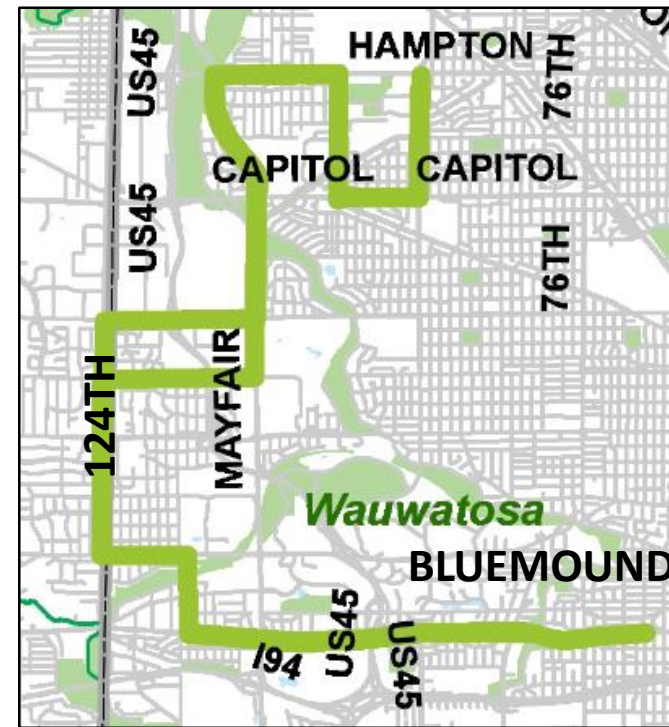


Route 85 – Whitman - West

Rides per Day (Fall 2016)	In-Service Hours per Day	Passengers per Bus Hour	Total Annual Cost	Estimated Lost Revenue	Annualized Net Savings
79	2.2	35.9	\$51,393	\$11,071	\$40,322

Analysis

- Buses on this route run well-below capacity (47% empty)
- Whitman Middle School students and Wauwatosa West High School students are less than ¼ mile away from all-day service on Routes 21, 28, 31 and 60 at Mayfair Mall
- Schools can provide yellow bus service as an alternative



Route 87 – Nathan Hale

Rides per Day (Fall 2016)	In-Service Hours per Day	Passengers per Bus Hour	Total Annual Cost	Estimated Lost Revenue	Annualized Net Savings
34	1.1	30.9	\$30,652	\$3,056	\$27,595

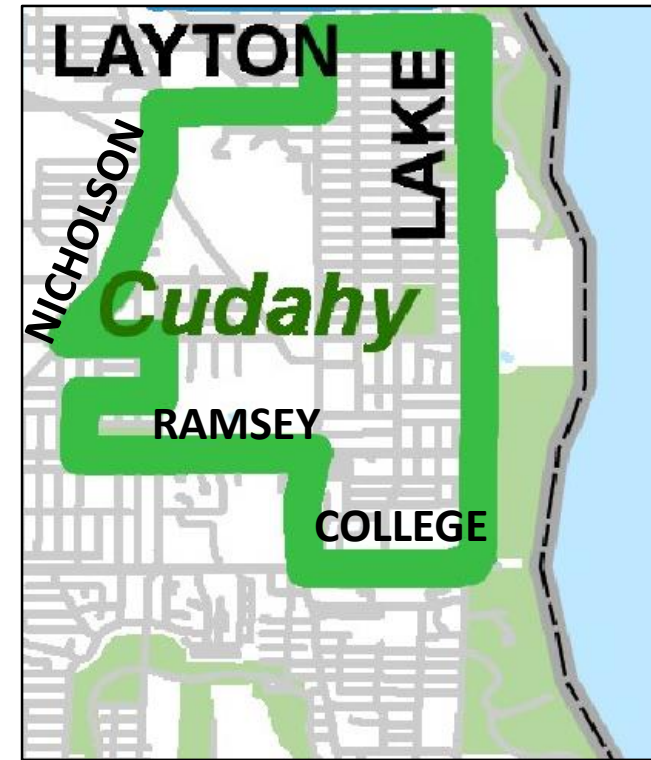


Analysis

- Buses on this route run well-below capacity (57% empty)
- Students at West Allis Central High School and Nathan Hale High School have access to all-day service on Routes 28, 51, 53 and 67
 - Route 53 provides direct service to Central and Nathan Hale
- Schools can provide yellow bus service as an alternative

Route 88 – Cudahy

Rides per Day (Fall 2016)	In-Service Hours per Day	Passengers per Bus Hour	Total Annual Cost	Estimated Lost Revenue	Annualized Net Savings
19	2.7	7.0	\$42,957	\$1,775	\$41,182



Analysis

- Buses on this route run well-below capacity (92% empty)
- Students at Cudahy High School have access to all-day service on Route 55 which provides front-door service to the school
- Route 15 and 52 provide service within ½-mile of other schools along the route
- Schools can provide yellow bus service as an alternative

Route 89 – St. Francis



Rides per Day (Fall 2016)	In-Service Hours per Day	Passengers per Bus Hour	Total Annual Cost	Estimated Lost Revenue	Annualized Net Savings
62	2.6	23.8	\$39,395	\$8,735	\$30,659

Analysis

- Buses on this route run well-below capacity (89% empty)
- Students at St. Francis High School have access to all-day service on Route 15 within $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile
- Schools can provide yellow bus service as an alternative

Key Reasons for Route Cuts: Fleet Size

- While service to Industrial Parks / Schools operates on a limited basis, MCTS still needs to have buses available to provide the service
- This requires MCTS to purchase and maintain extra buses beyond what would otherwise be needed during peak travel times
- Excess capital costs can direct limited local resources away from providing service to riders
- A bus costs approximately \$500,000

2016 Transit System Management Performance Review

Prepared for Wisconsin Department of Transportation by SRF Consulting Group. Final Report December 2017

- MCTS is an efficient transit system with dedicated employees that is hampered by inadequate capital and operations funding.
- The greatest area of concern is planning for the future which does not provide programming for capital improvements and does not address some solvable operating issues.
- MCTS management was aware of virtually all of the issues discussed, particularly related to capital and facilities planning. The issue is related to the lack of state, local, and federal resources available for major facility rehabilitations and state of good repair for bus systems, rather than any deficiency within the agency.



MILWAUKEE COUNTY TRANSIT SYSTEM

2016 TRANSIT SYSTEM MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Prepared for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Final Report | 2017