

**County of Milwaukee**  
**Interoffice Communication**

**DATE:** 8/7/2018  
**TO:** John Weishan, Jr., Chairperson, Transportation, Public Works and Transit Committee  
**FROM:** Donna Brown-Martin, Director, Department of Transportation  
**SUBJECT:** Transit System Route Redesign Update: MCTS NEXT

BACKGROUND

In June 2017, Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) provided an informational report on transit ridership to the Committee on Transportation, Public Works and Transit. A section of that report also identified the fact that MCTS was currently operating a 40/60 service model meaning that 40% of fixed route services were defined as frequent service (e.g. buses arrive at least every 15 minutes, if not more often) while 60% were coverage services with longer wait times of up to one hour. The report mentioned that transit systems nationally were redesigning their route structure to increase the proportion of frequent service as a means of increasing ridership, revenue, and customer satisfaction.

A resolution adopted by the County Board of Supervisors (File No. 17-435) authorizes MCTS to study a 60/40 service delivery option and present findings in a written report to the County Board for review and approval. Although the study is not completed, this report serves as an update on progress made by MCTS.

Evaluating the entire transit system and considering changes that can provide faster service with more connections and increased accessibility for riders is not a simple task. It requires public participation, good communication, route-by-route analyses, and creation of a plan that is consistent with the MCTS Mission of providing reliable, convenient, and safe transit services that meet the travel needs of our community.

**Update**

One of the first actions taken in preparation of the study was to develop a brand-name for the system redesign process: MCTS NEXT (see <https://www.ridemcts.com/programs/mcts-next> for up-to-date information about the planning and public participation process being used, as well as a collection of public information materials).

The Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors, and City of Milwaukee Common Council were provided with a link to MCTS NEXT and invited to participate in the first round of public participation meetings, which were held in June and July 2018 at five (5) local public libraries in Milwaukee (Mitchell Street, Washington Park and Bay View), Brown Deer and Wauwatosa. Each meeting featured a presentation by MCTS planners along with informational boards to facilitate one-on-one, and group discussions between the public and MCTS staff.

Media coverage was very good with two television stations, WISN-12 and WDJT-58 both sending news teams to a meeting. In addition, a radio station, WUWM 88.9, and the Milwaukee Post also provided coverage of a meeting and promoted upcoming meeting dates/times on their websites. In total, more than seventy (70) stakeholders, including groups that represent the interests of minority and low-income populations, as well as persons with disabilities, neighborhood and business districts, and transit supporters were invited to participate in the meetings.

### Next Steps

- During Summer 2018, MCTS will continue to schedule direct meetings with targeted stakeholders and organizations with an interest in transit and the MCTS NEXT project.
- In Fall 2018, MCTS will begin to draft system redesign alternatives based on the public transit service objectives and standards published in Table 32, page 102 of the Milwaukee County Transit System Development Plan, prepared by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in October 2010. <http://www.sewrpc.org/SEWRPCFiles/Publications/CAPR/capr-279-milwaukee-county-transit-system-development-plan.pdf>
- In Winter 2018, MCTS will present draft system redesign alternatives that include maps and information boards to the public in similar venues as the first round of meetings. At each meeting, MCTS will collect and tabulate public comments.
- In Spring 2019, MCTS will prepare a recommended system redesign plan based on comments from the public and present the plan to the Committee on Transportation, Public Works and Transit for consideration.

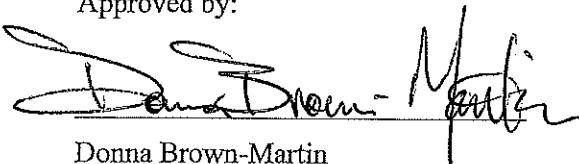
### RECOMMENDATION

This report is for informational purposes unless otherwise directed.

Prepared by:

Dan Boehm, President & Managing Director, MCTS

Approved by:



Donna Brown-Martin  
Director, Department of Transportation

cc: Chris Abele, County Executive  
Raisa Koltun, Chief of Staff, County Executive  
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board of Supervisors  
Joe Lamers, Budget Director, DAS - PSB  
Steve Cady, Research Director, Office of the Comptroller  
Jonathan Schatz, Sr. Budget & Management Analyst, DAS-PSB