

County of Milwaukee Interoffice Communication

DATE: 4/10/2018
TO: Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chairman, County Board of Supervisors
Chairperson, Transportation, Public Works & Transit Committee
FROM: Julie Esch, Interim Director, Department of Transportation
SUBJECT: Integrating MCTS Bus Routes with the Milwaukee Streetcar

BACKGROUND

For several years, Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) staff have been meeting with City of Milwaukee engineers and their consultants to discuss how MCTS bus routes can be integrated with the streetcar project in Downtown Milwaukee. By working together, we have created a long-term plan to avoid delays for MCTS services and the streetcar while creating good opportunities for passengers to move freely between the two transportation modes.

In March 2018, the first Milwaukee Streetcar was delivered to the City. Later this year, the Milwaukee Streetcar will start service between the Intermodal Station and the lower east side of Milwaukee. During the construction and build-out of the streetcar system, numerous detours have been necessary since there are several streets on the streetcar route that have historically been used by MCTS buses.

Once operational, the streetcar will stop at station platforms that extend out from the curb to meet the vehicle causing moments, especially on single-lane streets, when vehicles following streetcars may also have to stop while passengers board and alight the streetcar. To avoid delays for MCTS Routes 15 and 30/30X the buses will be detoured in advance of testing of the vehicles and equipment on the streetcar route as follows:

- Route 15 as historically operated and as detoured is shown on Map 1. The detour avoids conflicts with the streetcar on Milwaukee Street. This major north-south route provides 4,200 passenger rides each weekday between Glendale's Bayshore Town Center and Cudahy. Because of the detour some Route 15 passengers will walk an additional two to three blocks to reach a destination; however, these riders will also have access to the streetcar as an alternative. An on-bus survey revealed that most passengers were either in favor of or indifferent to this change.
- Route 30/30X passengers will only have to walk one additional block from Jackson Street where the streetcar will operate to Van Buren Street as shown on Map 2. Route 30/30X is the heaviest used bus route in the system with 9,600 passenger rides each weekday. Route 30/30x buses will continue to operate on Ogden Avenue despite the potential for streetcar related delays because continuing to use Ogden Avenue maximizes accessibility to destinations of current passengers.

MCTS will inform riders about these permanent detours by changing the website (www.ridemcts.com), updating electronic schedule information, and real-time information data, as well as printing new bus schedules. In addition, signs will be posted at affected bus stops directing passengers to alternative bus stops. MCTS will also contact the Milwaukee School of Engineering to obtain their assistance in communicating these changes to their students and employees.

RECOMMENDATION

This report is for informational purposes unless otherwise directed.

Prepared by:

Dan Boehm, President & Managing Director, MCTS

Approved by:



Julie Esch

Interim Director, Department of Transportation

cc: Chris Abele, County Executive
Raisa Koltun, Chief of Staff, County Executive
John Rodgers, Interim Deputy Director, Department of Transportation
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