

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: Improve Service on 27th Street by Reallocating Route 27 Buses to the PurpleLine

POLICY

Proposed additions, deletions, and modifications to transit routes and services are subject to approval by the County Executive and County Board of Supervisors.

BACKGROUND

The PurpleLine bus route was initiated on 27th Street in 2015 with Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Funds. About 7,200 passengers ride Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) buses in the 27th Street transit corridor each weekday. The PurpleLine was created from MCTS Route 27 by removing lesser used bus stops thereby providing for faster travel times between Rawson Avenue and Florist Avenue, a 16-mile distance. MCTS continued to operate Route 27 to provide service at local bus stops.

The spacing between bus stops on the PurpleLine is larger than on Route 27, as shown on the attached map, which contributes to faster travel times for passengers. As the PurpleLine has increased in popularity, there is less reason to continue Route 27. By reallocating Route 27 buses to the PurpleLine to create a higher frequency of PurpleLine service, MCTS can generate benefits for riders in this transit corridor:

- Passengers don't have to carry schedules for more than one route and those individuals using the website or App (Ride MCTS) can more clearly see when the next bus is arriving.
- Passengers don't have to try to figure out if they should continue to wait at an independent Route 27 bus stop or walk a little farther to a combined PurpleLine/Route 27 bus stop.
- Travel times and the frequency between buses will be uniform.

MCTS can meet over 95% of passenger demand by changing some of the Route 27 bus stops to PurpleLine bus stops, leaving less than 5% of passengers with a short walk of one to three blocks for access to more frequent service to more destinations with faster travel times. This is a tradeoff that most passengers welcome. This same type of route simplification strategy was successfully implemented last year in the Capitol Drive transit corridor when Route 62 was combined with the RedLine to increase the frequency of service on the RedLine. Overall passenger satisfaction increased after that change. MCTS is expecting similar results with this proposed change in the 27th Street transit corridor.

Once approved, outreach activities will commence with stakeholders in the corridor, such as Layton Boulevard West Neighbors, and Near West Side Partners, as well as major employers like St. Luke's Hospital, and Northwestern Mutual. MCTS planners will also reach out to County Supervisors in Districts #1, #4, #5, #7, #9, #10, #11, #12, #13, and #14 to describe this service change one-on-one, as necessary.

MCTS will also communicate information about this change directly with passengers through the following:

- Making changes to route information at www.ridemcts.com, and updating electronic schedule information and real-time information system data, as well as printing new bus schedules
- Displaying signs at affected bus stops directing passengers to alternatives
- Reporting on the change in the MCTS Rider Insider Newsletter

If the recommendation is approved, buses from Route 27 will be reallocated to the PurpleLine beginning in Fall 2018.

FISCAL EFFECT

There is no fiscal impact of reallocating Route 27 buses to the PurpleLine. Costs will not increase as a result of this change. Although the change will benefit passengers, the anticipated increase in passenger revenue is nominal.

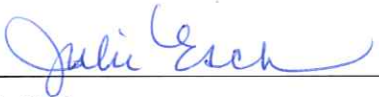
RECOMMENDATION

MCTS recommends approval of the resolution authorizing the reallocation of Route 27 buses to the PurpleLine.

Prepared by:

Dan Boehm, President & Managing Director, MCTS

Approved by:



Julie Esch

Interim Director, Department of Transportation

cc: Chris Abele, County Executive
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