

County of Milwaukee
Interoffice Communication

DATE: 8/7/2018
TO: Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chairman, County Board of Supervisors
FROM: Donna Brown-Martin, Director, Department of Transportation
SUBJECT: MCTS Service Coverage for Route 61 Passengers

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

Recall that in May 2018, the Committee asked the Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) to provide an update on funding for Routes 6 (New Berlin Industrial Park) and 61 (Appleton – Keefe). It was reported:

- The adopted 2018 Transit budget included references to discontinuation of Routes 6 and 61 in December 2018 when Zoo Interchange litigation settlement funds were projected to be exhausted.
- MCTS contacted transit administrators in Waukesha County to inquire about whether there was interest in operating portions of Routes 6 or 61 within Waukesha County.
- MCTS was evaluating means of providing service to portions of Route 61 that generate the largest numbers of passenger rides, all of which are located within Milwaukee County.

After MCTS planners considered various alternatives, it was recommended that areas of Route 61 be covered by the extension of a nearby bus route, Route 57, as described below:

- Extending Route 57 (Walnut – Lisbon) to cover portions of Route 61 that operate on Appleton Avenue north to N. Silver Spring Drive would provide a connection for passengers to job opportunities in Downtown Milwaukee. (see Map 1).
- In turn, extending Route 22 (Center Street) to cover portions of Route 57 along W. Center Street (west of N. 60th Street) and along north 92nd Street between Center Street and Appleton Avenue will ensure that all bus stops along Routes 57 and 22 will continue to have transit services.

These changes will also more fully integrate Routes 57 and 22 into the larger transit system network and provide riders with shorter travel times and better access to major job centers. For example, Route 57 riders on Appleton Avenue will have a new direct route to downtown destinations. Meanwhile, Route 22 riders on Center Street will have one less transfer to connect to Mayfair/Mayfair Collection. These changes are estimated to result in an increase of 100 rides/day between the two routes.

Another benefit of the proposed plan, is that MCTS is in a good position to partner with our neighbor to the west, should Waukesha County decide at a later date to fund transit service farther west and northwest in the future.

The tradeoff necessary for accommodating 800 passenger rides in Milwaukee County that currently use Route 61 is that up to 10 passengers who board buses on Keefe Avenue would have to walk to bus stops on Sherman Boulevard, Fond du Lac Avenue, N. Capitol Drive, or N. 60th Street to reach a nearby bus stop.

The service span and the frequency of service of reconfigured Routes 57 and 22 would be comparable to current levels. It should also be noted these changes are consistent with core priorities of:

- Sustainability - The operating cost of these route changes are within the budget for transit.
- Equity - A majority of Route 61 riders will continue to have transit service.
- Excellence – the recommended changes enable MCTS to operate the services in a manner that is reliable, convenient, and safe for passengers.

Should this resolution be adopted, MCTS will contact county supervisors whose districts encompass route changes: Supervisor Sheldon Wasserman (#3), Supervisor Willie Johnson (#13), Supervisor Supreme Moore Omokunde (#10), Supervisor Marcelia Nicholson (#5), Supervisor Eddie Cullen (#15), Supervisor James Schmitt (#6), Supervisor Felesia Martin, (#7), and Supervisor Deanna Alexander (#18).

In addition, MCTS will communicate with passengers by:

- Updating our online information at www.ridemcts.com and printing new bus schedules
- Displaying signs at affected bus stops directing passengers to alternatives
- Updating all electronic schedule information, and real-time information systems
- Reporting on the change in Rider Insider Newsletter and issuing a press release

If approved, changes to Routes 57 and 22 will be implemented in December 2018. If the changes are not adopted, it is expected that Routes 6 and 61 will be discontinued near year's end as identified in the adopted 2018 Transit Budget.

FISCAL EFFECT

There is no fiscal impact of the service modifications. Costs will not increase as a result of this change. Although the change will benefit passengers, the increase in passenger revenues is nominal.

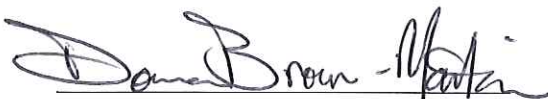
RECOMMENDATION

MCTS recommends approval of the resolution authorizing MCTS service coverage for Route 61 passengers in Milwaukee County through the modification of Route 57 and Route 22.

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