

1104 Jenifer Street  
Madison, WI 53703  
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April 4, 2005

Dear Members of the Transit and Parking Commission,

I'm writing to you today to kindly ask that Madison Metro stop the external route announcements at the corner of Jenifer and Ingersoll Streets for routes 3, 4, and 38. The announcements have already been implemented for route 3 and I understand that they will be implemented for all bus routes.

The city of Madison has established ordinances designed to protect the public from offenses against peace and quiet. The noise control regulation specifically states:

"Statement of Purpose. The City of Madison recognizes that excessive noise is a serious threat to the public health and welfare, public safety, quality of life and property values. Current science and technology permit abatement of noise sources which was not available in the past. Therefore, it is the policy of the City to prevent and abate excessive noise which may jeopardize the public health, safety or welfare or which would cause harm to property values or which would impair the quality of life within the city." (§24.08 Madison General Ordinances)

Specific paragraphs address such items as garbage pickup between the hours of 10:00 p.m and 6:00 a.m. and blowing train whistles at street crossings.

Mayor Cieslewicz was recently quoted in the Capital Times ("Mayor to Take Whistle Ban Case to Washington", 3/5/2005) regarding the train whistle ban. "We have an interest in balancing the need for public safety with the need for a livable downtown environment. There are a whole lot more people living downtown, so quality of life issues are more important than ever." Imagine my consternation and confusion at hearing Madison Metro buses shouting out stop announcements at my house around the same time the mayor was advocating in Washington for the train whistle ban. I hear these throughout my home, with the windows closed. It is hard for me to imagine ever being able to open them up again.

I have contacted Madison Metro and Catherine Debo suggested that I report the buses I feel are too loud. I have been doing that for the last week and no longer feel that is an option. This intersection is a "timed stop" so buses routinely stop whether or not there is a passenger getting on or off. There are 82 stops on the schedule for the front of my home during weekdays. While not all buses stop, easily over 50% of them do. The intersection is also a "shift transfer point" for Metro drivers. In both situations this has meant that as long as the bus is sitting there the announcement is repeated over and over. This seems to be the case whether the doors are open or shut. The announcement is serving no purpose other than to disturb my peace.

I understand what you are trying to do with the announcements and believe that the internal announcements serve a valuable function. I do not believe that anyone considered the impact of this "feature", mounting external speakers on buses, on the general public or specifically those of us who live along a bus route. I hope that in the future the Parking and Transit Commission notifies residents and property owners when considering changes that directly affect us. I never received a notice of a public hearing to get input on this implementation.

Again, I kindly ask that you eliminate the external announcements for routes 3, 4 and 38 at the intersection of Jenifer and Ingersoll Streets. These announcements are impairing my quality of life and are causing me much distress.

Sincerely,



Scott B. Thornton

Cc: Madison Transit and Parking Commission  
Mayor Dave Cieslewicz  
Jeanne Hoffman  
Aid. Judy Olson  
✓ Madison Common Council  
Marsha Rummel, Marquette Neighborhood Association