

Testimony for Network Redesign Public Hearing on 5-31-2022
Transportation Planning and Policy Board
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Hello. My name is Susan De Vos. I am a senior disabled resident of Madison and a mainline bus rider who used to have to ride paratransit. I served for years on the now-defunct ADA Transit Subcommittee of the Transit and Parking Commission.

To summarize my 4 points:

1. hold off on any decision until there is a more coherent plan;
2. Be honest about what the plan delivers; everyone is aware the current system needs improvement;
3. re-instate having a senior or disabled voting member on all transportation oversight bodies;
4. give people a choice as to how to spend their transportation money.

My main recommendation is that **the current pseudo-plan be put on hold and revisited when more coherent**. That coherence would include an equity analysis and a simple overlay of maps of existing and planned service. Why the rush? We are now being asked to comment on a piecemeal, uncoordinated plan. That is not a reasonable use of the public's time or attention.

Second, I recommend the **redesign plan be honest** – honest about social equity, funding, accessibility, and sustainability. For instance, how honest is it to claim that adding a frequent BRT route from east to west at the expense of existing routes on the north and south improves social equity, when the highest concentrations of non-student low income and transit-dependent populations live on the north and south sides? How honest is it to dangle frequency as an option, when frequency ends up being defined as every 30 minutes, similar to the current supposedly infrequent service *now* of every 30 minutes? How honest is it to claim that the network redesign and BRT projects are separate when the two projects are really inseparable, one depending on the existence and nature of the other?

Third, I recommend **reinstating the requirement that a senior or disabled person be a voting member of any transportation oversight committee, especially the one tasked with approving or rejecting this network redesign**. That used to be the case. I emphasize that the ADA of 1990 is a Civil Rights law. Does Madison really want to feign ignorance of this fact?

Fourth, **I recommend that people be given a choice of how to spend their transportation money**. Are they really okay with funding the new system at the pre-2019 Wheels Tax level after approving the added fee under the misguided belief that they would be, quoting from the 2019 Metro Forward flyer: *investing in fast, reliable and accessible transportation?* After all, to quote again: *For every \$1 invested in public transit, approximately \$4 is generated in economic returns.*