

Transit and Parking Commission  
Wednesday, April 10, 2013

## Proposed Metro Service Changes—Testimony of Laurie Wermter

*Hello*, I'm Laurie Wermter and I live and work on the Madison Isthmus. I live eight blocks east of the Capitol Square and I work eight blocks west of the Capitol Square.

I'd like to use my time to endorse the proposed improvements to Routes 9 & 10—I used the word 'improvement,' rather than just 'service changes,' because I see the changes proposed for these two routes to be a definite improvement to the provision of the 'downtown circulator' bus service Madison needs. If we expect people living and working on Madison's congested Isthmus to significantly lessen their car use, we need to provide a workable downtown circulator bus service for the benefit of the environment and for others without other transit options.

I have studied the changes proposed by Metro for Routes 9 & 10 and I think that, as described in the handout distributed by Metro Transit, the new Routes 9 & 10 make a lot of sense and will actually *improve* the utility of that pair in meeting the need for an effective downtown circulator for the Isthmus area.

By operating between North Street in the east and Sheboygan Street in the west, the 9/10 pair will easily move people in the most housing-dense areas of the city down to, and along the entire length of the heaviest clusters of employment and business centers in the city.

Businesses throughout the area will see the benefits of these proposed changes, both for their customers and for their employees. The 9/10 pair is unique in serving *both* the Jenifer Street corridor *and* the Johnson Street corridor of the Isthmus, thereby allowing people on one side of the Isthmus to easily get over to the *other* side of the Isthmus and back again, to get to and from their jobs and school, to shop and to run errands at downtown and neighborhood businesses.

The changes proposed to the 9/10 pair build on the fact that the Isthmus is populated by people who are trying to either reduce their car usage, or even get by *completely* without a car, for the sake of economy or the environment or both. This downtown circulator service will be good enough to get residents to significantly reduce their car use, with consequent beneficial reductions in carbon emissions per person and per trip. I have suggested before and do so again here that Metro Transit try to quantify how much their service is contributing to the reduction in Vehicle Miles Travelled! How about putting a form in Metro's website for people to pledge to use the 9/10 pair, rather than their household's second car and estimate how many Vehicle Miles Travelled they will save?

I also want to add that it is important to continue the current level of service on the Isthmus by the 'mainline' bus routes through the Jenifer Street corridor on Routes 3 & 4 and through the Johnson Street corridor on Routes 2 & 6. No trip times were distributed in the handout, so, I want to mention that the 9/10 pair needs to have their trips planned so as to *not* be running in tandem with those 'mainline' bus routes. Also, just as the current 9 & 10 bus routes operate year-round, so the newly-proposed 9/10 pair also needs to operate all year—environmentally, this is vital so that people will be able to rely on the service and permanently reduce their car usage.

Finally, I'd like to make just one additional point—there used to be an effective westside circulator route as well. It was known as Route 8 and it linked residents of the westside with the campus/downtown area and enabled bus riders of the campus/downtown area to make easy use of

**westside businesses, such as the Dean West Clinic. With the service changes made by Metro in August 2006, however, the original Route 8 was gutted and lost all utility as a westside circulator route. Restoration of the westside circulator is desperately needed and will bring the same beneficial effects as the downtown circulator has, both for individuals and for businesses.**