



metro transit

1245 E. Washington Ave.
Suite 201
Madison, WI 53703

Wed. April 15, 2020

RE: Review and Approval of Metro Transit's Proposed Service Changes

On Wednesday, March 11, 2020, Metro Transit and the City of Madison Transportation Commission held a public hearing at 6 p.m. to discuss potential service updates proposed to go into effect in August 2020.

On March 18, 2020 and March 24, 2020, Metro Transit took significant actions to address the safety of its employees and passengers during the COVID-19 crisis. The actions included:

- Reducing capacity on buses to 15 people including the driver,
- Restricting passenger boarding and exiting to the rear door,
- Suspending the collection of fares, and
- Reducing service to Saturday schedules plus select commuter routes.

The impacts the COVID-19 crisis on Metro Transit are significant. Ridership is down more than 90% when compared to a same period of 2019. During late March and early April, Metro Transit has experienced ridership of 2,000 to 8,000 passengers a day. In addition, \$1.1 Million per month of passenger fares are not being collected. We do not know when our community will be able to lift the safer at home order and the need for social distancing, but we expect that Metro will be dealing with financial and ridership impacts of COVID-19 for the remainder of this year and into 2021.

Over the next several months, we will remain vigilant regarding the safety of drivers and passengers. In addition, Metro Transit will be:

- Quantifying the financial impacts to Metro Transit of the COVID-19 crisis,
- Researching and accessing relief under the CARES Act,
- Working on operational recovery plans including plans for orderly return to greater service, and
- Developing strategies to encourage the return of ridership.



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The approval and implementation of the service changes proposed on March 11, 2020 will not only be confusing to our passengers, but will use human resources that are needed for agencies recover planning and implantation.

Metro Transit staff has altered its recommendation regarding proposed service changes.

Metro Transit staff recommend approval of changes to Route 29 and UW Campus Routes 80, 81, 82, 84 due to the following:

- The University of Wisconsin, which contracts this service from Metro, has asked that this service change proposal continue to move forward for August.
- Since Metro Transit no longer has access to the parking lot in the Northside Town Center, staff continue to propose shifting service from high-traffic, limited stop service on Packers Ave., to more residential Sherman.

Metro Transit staff are recommending that the Transportation Commission's suspended review and approval of all other service updates presented at the public hearing until such time as Metro Transit's returns to more normal service.

Best Regards,

Natalie Erdman
Interim Transit General Manager