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Subject: Bus network redesign and lack of service to Route 19 riders
Date: Tuesday, December 21, 2021 8:12:18 PM

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Dear Metro Transit officials, City of Madison Transportation Commission, and City of Madison Transportation Policy and Planning Board,

I am writing to express my personal concern that the bus riders and neighborhoods previously served by Route 19 are being ignored or dismissed in the planning and redesign of the Transit Network. I am referring to the Crawford-Marlborough-Nakoma Neighborhood, as well as Dunn's Marsh and Allied Drive. Route 19 service took riders from Dunn's Marsh, Allied Dr and areas near the Beltline/Seminole Hwy and the south end of Midvale Blvd directly down Nakoma Rd, close to West High School and over to the west end of U. W. Madison Campus and then downtown. When I rode this from Doncaster Drive to my job at Henry Mall on campus it was a quick 20 to 25 minute trip.

Presently the only service to these areas is Route 18, suggested by Metro Transit as an alternative. It is NOT good service. For very many residents in the greater Nakoma area, it is well over 1/4 mile to any of the Route 18 stops, and is a longer trip requiring transfers. For some, walking to a Route 18 stop would be a half mile or more. This might not seem too unreasonable, except for two factors. First, the bus service is meant to be, and should be, inclusive, accessible to those who are older, and to anyone with mild mobility issues. Second, in winter weather and with snowy or icy sidewalks and streets, even a moderate walk takes longer and can be hazardous. And more so in winter's darkness.

If you live close to the Beltline frontage road near Seminole Highway, a trip to Union South on campus using the "Plan Your Route" tool could require catching the #18 for a round-about trip to the West Transfer point, and taking the #6 to campus, taking 45 minutes. That includes 4-6 minute walk at either end. Or, you could take the #18 to the South Transfer point, transfer to a #4 to Mills St

at W. Johnson and walk, for a 40 minute trip. Either way, that's about twice as long as the Route 19 used to take.

As another example of a trip using the "Plan Your Route" tool, someone living near the Nakoma Rd/Yuma/Seminole intersection is given a 0.7 mile walk down Nakoma Rd and over to Odana Rd to catch a #7 bus to get to Union South on Campus. Total trip time is 24 minutes. But that's a 0.7 mile walk and assumes a fairly brisk walking pace to make a close connection. Another alternative for that same trip involved a total walk of 1.2 mile. This service is simply not inclusive or accessible for many.

Looking ahead, I have studied the redesign maps, ridership and coverage models, and the analysis of impacts. I participated in one of the Transit Focus Groups and saw the presentations. Neither model includes any route going down Nakoma Rd. What is even more disturbing is that the starting point for "existing service", the baseline from which impacts are measured, is the network and service as it exists in 2021, after cutting out Route 19, and fifteen (15) other routes. I counted these route cuts based on comparison of 2021 service to the published System Map and Ride Guide of August 2019. In other words, there is no measurement, at least none that the public has seen, of the impact of the Covid-related cuts. There is no analysis of the redesign impact that includes the pre-Covid service. These riders and neighborhoods apparently aren't counted, don't count, aren't being considered. That is a myopic, short-sighted approach. I think it underestimates the impacts of both of the redesign alternatives, but especially the impact of the ridership model.

I am disappointed that the next redesign phase will strongly favor the ridership model, with only modest "tweaks". A high priority has been put on frequent service to fewer geographic areas, at the expense of access to service. I really think this is a flawed approach. I'm afraid we will end up with multiple routes serving the same few corridors with frequent service, while other areas are left with little or no service. It seems to me that an important goal of a public transit system should be service that is inclusive to as many neighborhoods as possible. I fear the redesign will fail that goal miserably.

I appreciate all of you taking the time to read this. I realize that with the

Holidays coming soon, I may not get a fast response to my concerns. But I would hope to hear back in the not-too-distant future.

Sincerely,

Carol Buelow

██████████ Doncaster Dr

Madison