From: Joseph Frost
To: Transportation Commission
Subject: Metro Network Redesign
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Greetings,
A number of concerned peers (with disabilities) and neighbors have been expressing their worries about the bus route changes, per the proposed plan and how it will significantly restrict, if not eliminate, their access to the bus.

For many in my neighborhood (myself included), the commute will grow to nearly a mile. Folks have specifically noted worries, to me, about not being able to take routes on Acewood nor Merryturn, and areas currently covered by Routes 15, 32 and 33.

Fears of the dangers of traversing this distance in the winter, along with some not having the physical ability to make this commute, nor the financial flexibility to afford other options, make the proposal an extremely challenging prospect.

Furthermore, some are caught in a gap of not being eligible for Paratransit services (including my wife, who commutes via bus every day), nor having the ability to take alternate transportation (due to either not being able to drive, or due to not have adequate finances to afford cab rides every day). Additionally, with Union Cab being the only wheelchair accessible cab in Madison, and always being booked solid (I often have to book two weeks out with limited success), ad-hoc options.

Paratransit's requirement of booking the day prior, restricts the ability to go to any meetings, activities and events that are not precisely planned. On several occasions, I've had to drive my wheelchair to medical appointments, on even the ER a few times, owing to the limited transit options and the lack of leniency in Paratransit booking policy. At these times access to the bus helped to supplement the limited availability, and frequently served as a fallback. The loss of this access will leave myself and others in a precarious situation.

Furthermore, myself and many peers and friends, with disabilities, have had to find housing on or near the bus routes. Given that there are very few ADA compliant housing options in Madison, notably those with roll-in showers. When I moved to Madison, in 2008, there were only 12 such apartment units, with roll-in showers in the whole of Madison. In addition, upon chatting with landlords over the years, many are reluctant or unwilling to make alterations to their units to accommodate the accessibility needs. Removing bus access, for those who have had to carefully plan where we live, leaves myself and many others stranded.

As access to equitable bussing is vital to work, community, groceries and household staples, please join me in seeking equitable transit options.

Yours Truly,

Joe Frost
City of Madison Disability Rights Commissioner