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Committee: Transit Commission	Date: 3/21/2024
Common Council Item Number: ID#24-9336	Date: 4/4/2024
Submitted By: Alex Damien, Director of Public Works	City Administrator Approval: Anthony Brown, City Administrator AB
Finance Department Review: Joseph Ciurro, Finance Director	City Attorney's Office Review: Brian Running, City Attorney
Subject: Review and Act on Proposed Service Changes Effective June 17, 2024 and Supporting Resolution	

Details:

This item is to review and act on the proposed service changes effective June 17, 2024 that are designed to increase the efficiency of the service. The item includes a supporting resolution for minor changes to the route descriptions for Routes 4, 5 and 7.

Proposed School Service Changes for 2024-25 School Year

The proposed revisions below are related to changes in school service that would take effect in September for the 2024-2025 school year:

1. Eliminate dedicated after school trip on Route 4 serving Les Paul Middle School

This trip has averaged less than 2 passengers per school day this year and has had similar ridership in the past few school years. Over 70% of this school trip service area is within the Horning Middle School assigned school area and those areas are the farthest away from Les Paul Middle School. Only three bus stops on this school trip are within the Les Paul assigned area and all are within 0.75 miles of the school. Given these factors, it is unlikely for a larger number of students from Les Paul to use the service. It should be noted that this trip was eliminated in 2008 and was brought back for the 2014-2015 school year. The first few years of the return of the service, ridership was higher but that was when the entire route was within the then Central (now Les Paul) assigned area. A much greater area of the current Les Paul assigned area is served by Route 5 which students can board on Wisconsin Ave. just one block north of Les Paul Middle School. This change would eliminate the bus stop on Grand Ave just south of Carrol St.

2. Shorten the routing on the Route 7 Butler-North School trip

The proposed change would be to operate the Route 7 School Trip as currently operated from Butler Middle School to Crestwood Lane and Madison St and then operate on Madison St. to North St. and North St. to the Transit Center. Very little ridership has been recorded this school year on the Route 7 School trip north and west of Madison St. at Crestwood Dr, which is consistent with the past few school years. The portions of Route 8 and on Cambridge Ave. east of Grandview Blvd. that were added this year have also had very low

ridership. The Route 7 trip does not need to serve Waukesha North High as the regularly scheduled Route 8 bus is by North High just 3 minutes after the Route 7 school route. This proposed routing change would eliminate bus stops on Madison St. at Madison Ct., Madison St. at N. Comanche Ln, N. Comanche Ln at Brendan Way, Burton Dr at Blair Ct and Burton Dr at N. University Dr. Most of these stops have yet to record a ride this school year.

By making both the proposed school service changes to Route 7 and Route 4, Metro can reduce the total afternoon peak service buses by one and eliminate a two hour school day shift. The plan would then be to operate the Route 7 Butler Trip to the Transit Center and then immediately have that bus go to West High to operate the Route 5 afterschool trip for West High school. These changes will be effective for the 2024-25 school year in September.

3. Eliminate the morning Route 5 trip to West High School and Route 6 6:30 am Trip

The ridership this school year for the morning Route 5 West High trip has averaged under two rides per day total with only one passenger going to West High and the other typically going to the Shoppes at Fox River. Ridership to West High in the morning has been low the past few years but the big change for this school year is the West High morning trip was no longer incorporated into the regular bus route due to changes to the service from the System Re-design implemented last June. It now requires a dedicated bus serving West High. The Route 6 6:30 am trip tied to the Route 5 West High trip would also be eliminated as that has averaged only 1 passenger/day. This Route 6 trip operates every weekday regardless of whether the Route 5 school trip operates. This would eliminate two-hour shift that operates every weekday. This change would be effective June 17, 2024 after the current school year. It should also be noted that all other morning special school trips on Waukesha Metro have been eliminated years ago due to very low ridership. Staff has found that parents tend to drop students off in the morning prior to work and then the students will find a different way home like riding Metro home in the afternoon.

Staff is recommending making these proposed school service changes now so that Metro can inform students of the changes prior to the end of this year school and also have materials ready ahead of the 2024-25 school year for families planning next school year's transportation over the Summer. These changes were identified last year as potential changes for the 2023-24 school year but staff wanted to take more time to collect data to verify prior to proposing the changes.

Minor Route 5 Routing Change

It is proposed to operate the regular routing on Route 5 west on Sunset Dr. to the east drive of the Shoppes at Fox River by CVS vs. have it continue further west entering the Shoppes from the main entrance. This is being proposed as it would be much safer for Route 5 to operate the proposed way within the Shoppes of Fox River property. It also would be more convenient for passengers going to CVS as it is also proposed to move the bus stop on Sunset at the main entrance of the Shoppes east one block on Sunset by CVS.

Minor Saturday Night Reductions- Route 2/3, 5, 15

It is proposed to eliminate the last Saturday night trips on Route 2/3 at 7:50 pm, Route 5 at 7:50 pm and on Route 15 at 6:50 pm. Since June 4, 2023, when the system re-design was implemented, all three of these trips have averaged under 1 passenger/trip. These reductions would eliminate 2.17 hours of service on Saturdays.

Bus Stop Eliminations

It is proposed to eliminate the following bus stops not related to the service changes as ridership at these stops are either low and/or there is another stop in proximity:

Greenway Terrace @ Butler (east side of street)
Butler @ Greenway Terrace (north side of street)
Butler @ Wolf (south side of street)
Tenny @ Sunset (southeast corner by Meijer)
Progress @ Prairie (south side of street)
Main St @ The Strand (north side of street)
Main St @ Oakland (south side of street)

Options & Alternatives:

One alternative is to not approve any of the proposed changes but would leave very low ridership, high cost service still operating. The proposed changes to the Route 4 and 7 school service would need to be approved or opposed together to optimize afternoon school service but is independent of the other proposed changes. It would, however, be most efficient and cost savings to approve all of the changes at once.

Financial Remarks:

The proposed changes would reduce driver pay hours by around 1,000 hours and reduce cost by over \$50,000 annually and eliminate the future investment in one bus which now costs over \$600,000.

Executive Recommendation:

Recommend approval.