

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: February 25, 2013

For the Council Meeting of March 6, 2013

ADVISORY INFORMATION

Date: February 20, 2013

Subject: Accept West Suburban Service Changes Concept Plan for Public Review

District(s), Member(s): District 3-Jennifer Munt, District 6-James Brimeyer

Policy/Legal Reference: Public Accountability Policy 2-1, Public Hearings Procedure 2-1b; Transportation Service Changes and Restructuring 1-3a; 1-3b Public Involvement in the Transportation Planning Process

Staff Prepared/Presented: Brian Lamb, General Manager, 612-349-7510
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Division/Department: Metro Transit

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council accept the West Suburban Service Changes Concept Plan for public review.

Background

The West Suburban Service Changes Concept Plan carries forward the recommendations contained in the 2012 Minnetonka Transit Study to improve local circulation and access for transit-reliant communities. Additionally, it proposes a consolidation of express services, eliminating segments of route duplication and addressing issues of low productivity.

The plan's study area includes the communities of Minnetonka, Hopkins, St. Louis Park, Deephaven, Greenwood, Excelsior, Shorewood and Tonka Bay.

Local service improvements include: added weekday evening trips on Route 9N serving the Greenbrier residential complex on Cedar Lake Road west of Highway 169; extended weekday service hours on the Route 615 crosstown service operating between Excelsior & Grand in St. Louis Park and Ridgedale in Minnetonka; a new local weekday and Saturday crosstown route operating between Ridgedale and Minnetonka Heights in Minnetonka.

Express routes 664, 665, 667E, 670 and 671 are proposed to be consolidated into four express routes to improve productivity and eliminate areas of service overlap. Segments of low ridership will be eliminated, area of service duplication will be reduced and fringe trips with low ridership will be eliminated.

A Title VI service equity analysis was done to review the impacts of the proposed changes on minority and low-income populations. The Concept Plan will result in an overall increase in the transit service across the study area. The Title VI review showed no equity concerns for minority populations, but there is potential of disparate impacts for low-income populations. The number of total transit trips increases by 12 percent for low-income populations compared to 17 percent for non-low-income populations. This exceeds the Council's threshold for potential disparate impact. To address this, staff will review the specific impacts of the

Concept Plan on low-income populations and identify any changes needed to address those impacts.

Rationale

These route changes impact greater than 25 percent of a route or group of routes which is defined by Metropolitan Council policy as a “major service change” and requires a public hearing.

The following activities ensure compliance with Council policies.

West Suburban Service Change Concept Plan Public Outreach and Approval Schedule

March 13	Metropolitan Council accepts West Suburban Concept Plan for public review & input)
April 01	Public Hearing, 6:30 PM at Hopkins Library – 22 11 th Avenue North, Hopkins
April 03	Public Hearing, 7:00 PM at Ridgedale Library – 12601 Ridgedale Drive, Minnetonka
April 14	5:00 pm Public comment period closes (10 days after hearings end – state requirement)
April 22	Transportation Committee adopts final plan
May 08	Metropolitan Council adopts final plan
August 24	Service Implementation

Funding

The outreach and public meetings will be funded through existing operating budgets. The service changes resulting from the Concept Plan will be operated within existing Metro Transit and Metropolitan Council transit service resources.

Known Support / Opposition

None know at this time, but public input on the plan is anticipated through April 2013.