

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: May 13, 2019

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of May 22, 2019

Subject:	Elimination of Route 614 Service
District(s), Member(s):	District 3, Christopher Ferguson
Policy/Legal Reference:	Public Accountability Policy 2-1, Public Hearings Procedure 2-1b Transportation Service Changes and Restructuring 1-3a Public Involvement in the Transportation Planning Process 1-3b
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Wes Kooistra, General Manager, 612-349-7510 Adam Harrington, Director Service Development 612-349-7797 Cyndi Harper, Manager Route Planning 612-349-7723 Steve Mahowald, Senior Planner 612-349-7775
Division/Department:	Metro Transit/Service Development

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the elimination of Route 614 service.

Background

Route 614 was implemented in August 2013 to test the feasibility of community fixed route service in a Transit Market Area III and IV environment such as Minnetonka.

Service operates between the Minnetonka Heights affordable housing complex and the Ridgedale shopping center area via Highway 101, Minnetonka Boulevard and Plymouth Boulevard. Weekday service is hourly between 5:15 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Initially, there was Saturday service as well, but it was eliminated in August 2015 due to low ridership.

Route 614 is operated by First Transit by contract to the Council. Minnetonka is an opt-out community with transit service provided by the Council under a Transit Cooperation Agreement. Service Development staff has been in communication with city staff regarding the route's performance, promotional efforts, and the proposed elimination of the route.

If Route 614 is eliminated, Transit Link service would be available to current riders as demand allows.

Rationale

Council's policy notes staff will regularly evaluate the performance of service and redirect transportation resources to meet the changing transit needs of the region. The regional's minimum performance standard for a suburban local route, such as Route 614, is 10 passengers per in-service hour. Since its implementation Route 614 has consistency averaged below 5 passengers per in-service hour, 32 rides per weekday and less than 2 rides per trip and with a subsidy of \$24 per passenger is the highest subsidy and lowest productivity route operated by Metro Transit/MTS.

Thrive Lens Analysis

Stewardship and responsibly managing the region's finite resources in a sustainable manner are the primary foci of the proposed elimination. The availability of Transit Link service in lieu of Route 614 supports equity by continuing to provide residents access to local destinations via transit.

Funding

With the elimination of service resources will be directed to other fixed route operating expenses.

Known Support / Opposition

The public was notified of the proposed elimination and invited to submit comments by attending a public meeting or via telephone, fax, e-mail and the Council website. A public hearing was held from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. on Monday, April 15 at Hennepin County's Ridgedale Library. Notice of the public hearing and proposed elimination of the route was distributed to riders on Route 614 as well as via electronic rider alerts and notices in local and regional newspapers.

The meeting was attended by two individuals, and an additional 18 people submitted comments expressing their concern with the proposed elimination:

- Seven customers stated that without the service they would not be able to get to work
- Two employers stated their valued employee needed it to get to work
- One individual stated her son needed it to get to school
- Eight customers noted they were regular users and the inconvenience of not having the service
- One individual recommended changing route to increase ridership