



## Stand Up for Equitable Bus Service in the Madison Metro Redesign

### The Issue

*"The Metro Transit Network Redesign will design a route system that will better meet the needs of Madison area residents and businesses by increasing access and frequency, decreasing travel times, and improving the quality of transit riders' experience" [Madison Metro Website].*

In response to feedback from City residents and bus users, Madison Metro has chosen a plan that favors frequency of buses over coverage of bus routes. This means that buses will pass by more often on major routes, but that some neighborhoods will lose their bus coverage. For example, in South Madison routes 4 and 13 will be eliminated under the originally proposed draft plan. These routes currently offer service to several low-income neighborhoods, senior apartments, and key social services and community centers on the South Side, including the Catholic Multicultural Center.

[Transit Network Redesign Webpage](#)

[Current Madison Metro Map](#)

[Proposed Draft Plan of New Routes](#)

### CMC Concerns

*"I am upset they are taking away route 13; what are people in these neighborhoods going to do?"*

*"I am concerned because lots of people can't walk that far to some of the new stops."*

*"As a senior, my number one concern is: 'How far do I have to walk to the bus?' My number two concern is: 'How long do I have to wait for the bus?'"*

Many of our guests at the CMC depend on the bus, not because it is more convenient for them, but because it is the only option they have. Of those who use the bus, many of our guests are concerned about how the new draft plan will affect them and their fellow bus users, as highlighted in the quotes above. Certain groups will be impacted the hardest, including seniors, people who have physical disabilities, and individuals who are of low-income. People who rely on bus service for meeting their daily living needs will experience the absence of bus coverage throughout South Madison as a life-changing burden. Under the currently proposed plan, our neighbors in Bram's Addition and Bay Creek will lose bus service one or two blocks away from their doorstep and instead will need to walk to Park Street to catch the bus. For our immediate neighbors, this walk requires going uphill several blocks and then walking an extra block to get around the Beld St buildings and to the stop on Park Street, because there is no direct foot route to Park St from Beld St. Another example of the hardships this plan would cause is that the northern part of Fish Hatchery would lose all-day service, cutting off Dane County's largest food pantry, St. Vincent de Paul, from reliable bus service.

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Madison could have a first-rate transit system with a system that provides both frequent service and nearby neighborhood bus stops. Madison Metro Redesign staff have told us that the primary barrier to having both frequent service and neighborhood coverage is funding. We believe the current draft plan is the skeleton of an amazing transit design that could be fleshed out to provide better coverage to the aforementioned vulnerable groups and neighborhoods, provided sufficient funding is obtained. Instead of settling for a plan that improves some service to a few privileged areas while leaving large geographic areas behind, what if we advocated right now for a transit system that provided access, equity, and frequency?

## Recommended Actions

*Want to get more involved in advocating for an adequate and equitable transportation system? You can sign up to receive updates and future action steps from a neighborhood advocacy group, South Madison Unite, by contacting [southmadison.unite@gmail.com](mailto:southmadison.unite@gmail.com).*

**Action 1** – Contact Madison Metro to let them know your concerns about the current draft plan. Be as specific as possible; is there a route being eliminated in your neighborhood that would have negative impacts on the people who live there? Is there a space on the redesign draft plan map that you see lacks coverage? Let Madison Metro redesign staff know so they can draft amendments to improve the plan. Additionally, take the network redesign survey and help spread the word so that other bus users know to do the same.

Contact Madison Metro and Take the Survey [here](#)

**Action 2** – Tell our City Council that we want to see increased funding for the Madison Metro System. Metro redesign staff are proposing amendments to fill in some holes in coverage in the draft plan, but each amendment requires additional funding to become a reality. If funding a strong public transit system becomes a priority for our City, this redesign will not become a matter of picking winners and losers in who has access to quality transportation. For equity, environmental sustainability, and the good of all Madison residents, let the City know we want to see sufficient funds provided to this project at this pivotal moment in our transportation future.

## [Find and Contact Your Alder](#)

See the following page for suggested language you can use when writing your Alder.

Thank you for your consideration in standing up for the people CMC serves by advocating for a strong, accessible public transportation system.

Suggested language:

Dear Alder [Alder Last Name]:

Thank you for all the work the City and its consultants have put into the Madison Metro redesign. I appreciate efforts to improve public transportation and bring more frequent bus services to residents. However, I am concerned that the draft plan will leave many bus users behind.

The proposed plan leaves large swaths of the City unserved by Madison Metro. We cannot sacrifice accessibility to the bus system for frequency. People need and want buses that are both frequent and nearby. The draft plan would cut service in neighborhoods such as *[insert which neighborhoods you are concerned about]*. Removal of neighborhood stops will force people to walk farther to get to and from bus stops, disproportionately impacting the elderly, people with special needs, and low-income people who depend on the bus as their sole option for transportation.

I would like to see the City make funding transportation a priority. With more funding, *[where would you like to see service restored to on the draft plan? What other concerns to you have about the Metro redesign and public transportation in Madison?]*

The redesign consultants state that service can be frequent or dense (nearby), but not both. But why does it have to be this way? I strongly urge you and your colleagues to direct more funding to this project so that we can have a strong public transportation that serves everyone, but especially those who most need access to bus service. Please do not miss out on the opportunity to offer Madison an improved bus system accessible to all who need it because our City falls short on providing sufficient funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

*[Your name and contact information]*