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RECORD OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

RACINE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT PLAN: 2013-2017
TRANSIT SERVICE IMPROVEMENT ALTERNATIVES

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM
FEBRUARY 7, 2013 THROUGH MARCH 15, 2013

Prepared by the
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
W239 N1812 Rockwood Drive
P.O. Box 1607
Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1607
www.sewrpc.org

March 2013
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INTRODUCTION

This report documents the comments received on a series of transit service improvement alternatives developed as part of the Racine County Public Transit Plan. Comments were received during a formal public comment period of February 7, 2013, through March 15, 2013, and during public meetings held on March 6, 2013, at the Corinne Reid-Owens Transit Center in Racine and on March 12, 2013, at the Veterans Terrace in Burlington.

The Racine County Public Transit Plan is a short-range, five-year plan for public transit in Racine County being prepared by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission at the request of the City and County of Racine. The plan will include recommendations for transit service and capital improvements for both the City and County transit systems over the period 2013 through 2017. The preparation of this transit plan is a joint effort by the staffs of Racine County, the City of Racine, and the Commission. The plan is being guided by an Advisory Workgroup that includes representatives from all units of government in Racine County and a wide variety of agencies and populations with an interest in transportation in the County. The Workgroup is responsible for proposing to the City of Racine, Racine County, and the Commission, after careful study and evaluation, a plan identifying the recommended transit system improvements over the next five years. The Workgroup approved the proposed transit service improvement alternatives, which were developed by the Commission staff working closely with City and County staff, for public comment.

The report presents in a series of appendices:

- Written and oral comments received from February 7, 2013, through March 15, 2013, including comments submitted at the public meetings held on March 6 and 12, 2013 (Appendix A).
- Attendance records of the public meetings held on March 6 and 12, 2013 (Appendix B).
- Materials announcing the two public meetings and summary materials distributed at those meetings (Appendix C).
- Newspaper articles and editorials concerning the Racine County Public Transit Plan (Appendix D).

The following section provides a summary of the comments received, and the Commission staff responses to those comments.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

During the period of February 7, 2013, through March 15, 2013, a total of 41 persons provided comments regarding the proposed transit service improvement alternatives developed as part of the Racine County Public Transit Plan. Oral comments were provided during public meetings held on March 6 and 12, 2013.
Written comments were provided on forms available at the public meetings or via letter, email, fax, or through the study website (www.sewrpc.org/racinetransitplan).

**General Comments Related to Public Transit in City of Racine, Racine County, or between Racine County and Surrounding Counties**

A total of four persons provided comments related to general transit service issues and did not identify specific transit service improvement alternatives.

- Two persons indicated a need to provide additional public transportation options for persons with disabilities.

- One person expressed opposition to any of the proposed alternatives that would have the potential to require the County to provide increased funding for public transit.

**Response:** The plan recognizes that limited funding is available to implement transit improvements. Commission staff analysis indicates that the County may be able to implement several of the proposed County alternatives within its current level of funding. For example, the County shuttle service, if operated as public transit as proposed under County Sub-alternative 1C, would be eligible for Federal and State rural transit operating assistance funds. Using these funds has the potential to reduce the County’s share of operating expenses for the shuttle service. There are, however, several alternatives that would likely require additional County funding during the five-year plan period or beyond, particularly those that would replace or expand eligibility for the existing eligibility-limited County demand-response service, such as the public shared-ride taxi program proposed under County Alternative 2.

- One person indicated that there was a need to provide public transit or specialized transportation to the Aging and Disabilities Resource Center (ADRC) in Ives Grove for individuals living within the City dial-a-ride (DART) paratransit service area.

**Response:** Currently, the City’s DART paratransit service provides specialized transportation to seniors and persons with disabilities for trips made entirely within 3/4 mile of City fixed-route, non-commuter service, while the County’s existing demand-response transportation service provides specialized transportation to seniors and persons with disabilities residing outside the City’s DART paratransit service area. The service area for the City’s DART paratransit service does not include the ADRC. In order for specialized transportation to be provided to seniors and persons with disabilities from within the City’s DART paratransit service area to the ADRC in Ives Grove—which is west of IH 94—the County and City would need to reach an agreement on which party would be responsible for serving those trips. In terms of public transit, the public shared-ride taxi program proposed under County Alternative 2 would provide a public transportation option for all individuals wanting to travel to the ADRC from anywhere in the County—including seniors and persons with disabilities residing within the City’s DART paratransit service area.

- One person expressed support for addressing the transportation needs of individuals without access to an automobile.
**Comments Related to Preliminary Recommended Alternative for City of Racine Belle Urban System**

A total of 12 persons provided comments specifically related to the preliminary recommended alternative for the City of Racine Belle Urban System (BUS).

- Three persons indicated that proposed changes to the alignments of specific BUS routes under the preliminary recommended alternative for the BUS would make it difficult or inconvenient for them to continue to use the BUS. Two of the commenters indicated that changing the BUS Route No. 86 loop to the proposed out-and-back Route No. 6 would make it more inconvenient to get to St. Mary’s Hospital from their residences near the intersection of Lathrop Avenue and Durand Avenue. One of the commenters also suggested that there is a need to provide a late night public transportation option for patients at St. Mary’s Hospital that need to return home. One of the commenters suggested that the proposed Route No. 25—a combination of existing Route Nos. 2 and 5—would make it inconvenient to get to work at Modine Manufacturing Company from his residence in the Lake Park area. He suggested that ridership on the existing Route No. 5 may be increased by operating the route through downtown, and that if Route Nos. 2 and 5 are to be combined, consideration be given to operating the proposed Route No. 25 over Memorial Drive rather than over Taylor Avenue between Durand Avenue and 12th Street.

Response: The proposed changes under the preliminary recommended alternative for the BUS are intended to improve the convenience and efficiency of the BUS, recognizing the limitations of existing and projected future funding levels. In doing so, there will be some individual riders that will be inconvenienced. City and BUS staff will need to consider these riders when determining whether to implement the proposed changes or make revisions to these changes. It should be noted that the changes to existing Route Nos. 5 and 86 are being proposed in an attempt to increase ridership on the routes, as both routes were identified among the weakest-performing routes in an evaluation of the transit system conducted as part of the plan.

- Two persons indicated that the BUS should continue to serve Lakeside Curative Services on Lincolnwood Court in the City of Racine.

- Two persons expressed support for establishing the proposed southwest transfer point in the Regency Mall area.

- One person expressed general opposition to the proposed changes to the BUS because they would have the potential to confuse existing users of the BUS.

Response: Under the preliminary recommended alternative for the BUS, many of the proposed changes would address concerns identified during a previous public outreach and involvement effort for the plan in 2009\(^1\). One such concern was that the current BUS midday schedule is confusing because between 9:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., the bus routes alternate between 30- and 60-minute service frequencies. The proposed changes would make the midday schedule more understandable, with consistent 60-minute service frequencies during the midday. It should be noted that whenever there are changes made to bus system routes or service levels, there is the potential to cause confusion for

\(^{1}\)Record of Public Comments, Racine County Public Transit Plan: 2012-2016, *June 2011.*
existing users. Should any of the proposed changes be implemented, City and BUS staff would provide sufficient notice to users of the exact changes for each BUS route that are being implemented so that users can make adjustments to their travel.

- One person suggested that the BUS replace some of its larger buses with small buses in order to reduce costs, indicating that many of the larger buses appear to operate with excess seating capacity.

Response: Commission staff analyses for other transit studies has determined that there may be no cost savings from replacing a fleet of large buses with small buses, and there may in fact be increases in costs. First, like street and highway vehicle traffic, passenger demand on bus systems is peaked, with significant travel occurring during the morning and afternoon rush hours. During these hours, a larger bus is required to carry all passengers. A system with a fleet of small buses would require two buses to carry the same number of passengers in those peak hours. As the bus driver represents the majority of the cost to operate a bus service, this would mean a significant increase in operating costs. And, in addition to higher operating costs, the capital cost of small buses would also be higher than large buses when considered over the lifetime of the bus. While the purchase price of a small bus may be one-half that of a large bus, its expected service life (about seven years) is typically about 60 percent of that of a large bus (about 12 years).

Using a mixed vehicle fleet—where large buses operate during peak times and small buses operate during off-peak times when the additional capacity of a large bus is not needed—also would increase costs. First, capital costs would be greater as both large and small buses would need to be purchased. Also, the two vehicle types would require different spare parts, so additional parts would need to be purchased. Operating costs would also increase as drivers and maintenance personnel would need to be skilled in operating and maintaining the two vehicle types, which would require additional training. The need for a driver to return to the garage to exchange a large bus for a small bus would increase costs as well.

It is also worth noting that large buses operating with excess capacity at certain times and on certain routes can be compared to streets and highways or airports, which are necessarily sized and constructed according to the peak traffic they may need to carry. Most of the time, these facilities have significant excess capacity, but can handle more traffic when demanded by high travel volumes during peak times. A public transit system is very similar in this regard.

- One person suggested that the BUS should provide service to the Amtrak Station in the Village of Sturtevant.

Response: BUS Route No. 27 currently provides all-day service to the Amtrak Station on weekdays. Route No. 27 operates into the City of Racine, connecting to Route No. 3 at J. I. Case High School and to Route Nos. 1, 4, 7, and 86 at Regency Mall. Under the preliminary recommended alternative for the BUS, connections between Route No. 27 and other BUS routes would be further improved by constructing the proposed southwest transfer point in the Regency Mall area.

- One person requested that the plan include specific recommendations for the locations of passenger shelters at stops along BUS routes.
Response: In 2011, the City of Racine obtained a grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5309 Bus and Bus Facilities Livability Initiative Program to purchase and construct new passenger shelters. The City has used that grant to replace two existing shelters and construct shelters at 27 new locations. Commission staff will work with City staff to prepare a priority listing of additional locations with high passenger boarding volumes that could be considered for future shelters. Implementation of future shelters would depend on the ability to obtain additional Federal capital assistance funding and to provide the required local matching funds.

- One person suggested that the BUS provide service to the Marcus Renaissance Cinema in the Village of Sturtevant on weekends.

Response: BUS Route No. 27, which serves the Marcus Renaissance Cinema, currently only operates on weekdays. Given that the route was recently changed in September 2012, the preliminary recommended alternative for the BUS does not propose any changes to the route at this time. However, BUS staff intends to monitor the performance of the recently-changed Route No. 27 to determine whether further changes are necessary and whether the route should be expanded to operate on Saturdays and/or Sundays.

- One person indicated that there is a need for the BUS to provide later evening service for individuals that attend support group meetings at the office of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Racine County, which is located on DeKoven Avenue in Racine.

Response: The existing BUS Route No. 2 currently provides direct service to the NAMI office. The route currently operates weekdays until about 6:30 p.m., but many of the support group meetings at the NAMI office are held in the evening, typically ending around 7:30 p.m. As such, those attendees are able to travel to an evening support group meeting on the BUS, but are not able to make the return trip home on the BUS. The NAMI office would continue to be directly served under the preliminary recommended alternative for the BUS by the proposed BUS Route No. 25, but the alternative does not propose extending the hours of Route No. 25 due to funding limitations. However, should additional funding become available, the City may want to consider providing later evening service on the proposed Route No. 25 to provide return trips for those attending NAMI support group meetings.

- One person suggested that the BUS continue to serve areas of concentrated employment in the City of Racine, such as Huck Industrial Park on the northern side of the City and Olsen Industrial Park on the southern side of the City.

Response: Under the preliminary recommended alternative, the proposed Route No. 25—a combination of existing Route Nos. 2 and 5—would continue to provide all-day service to Huck Industrial Park and Olsen Industrial Park.

- One person indicated that there was a general need to improve the BUS to attract new riders.

Response: The preliminary recommended alternative for the BUS was developed assuming the total transit operating budget would remain relatively flat over the five-year planning period and local funding also would need to remain at about the year 2012 funding level. Commission staff identified and evaluated several potential desirable service improvements, which could be considered beyond the proposed changes above should...
additional funding become available. The service improvement options include adding service on the proposed Route No. 6, providing service to the Village of Sturtevant, establishing express bus service between the Cities of Racine and Kenosha, and extending Saturday service hours to 9:40 p.m.

- One person expressed concern that the proposed changes to the BUS would require a fare increase.

Response: A fare increase is not proposed under the preliminary recommended alternative for the BUS. The alternative system would not require an increase in local operating assistance over the existing system, and in fact, is estimated to slightly reduce the amount of required local operating assistance. However, in case the City determines that it become necessary to reduce the local funding that it provides to the transit system at some point over the next five years, a fare increase of $0.25—from $2.00 to $2.25—was identified and evaluated for later in the plan period to help the transit system avoid making cuts to service.

Comments Related to Transit Service Alternatives for Racine County

A total of 28 persons provided comments specifically related to the proposed transit service improvement alternatives for Racine County.

- 25 persons expressed opposition to County Sub-alternative 1C, which would involve the County operating the existing Shuttling People Around Racine County (SPARC) shuttle service as a public transit service open to the general public. The commenters expressed support for the County continuing to operate the existing Burlington SPARC shuttle service, but expressed concern that the County would not be able to provide the same personalized service as the current Burlington SPARC service if the County were to operate the service as public transit. One of the commenters suggested that meeting the requirements associated with using Federal transit operating and capital assistance funds, as proposed under County Sub-alternative 1C, would require significant additional County funding and that the County should not implement any public transit services that would utilize Federal funding. One of the commenters suggested that the County consider operating the existing Burlington SPARC service on Saturdays, in addition to its current weekday service.

Response: County Sub-alternative 1C proposes that the County continue to fund and pursue refinements to the shuttle program, including the current Burlington SPARC service. This could include modifying routes, dropping routes, and trying new routes. It also suggests that the County accommodate trips made by the general public in addition to trips by seniors and persons with disabilities, while maintaining the same general service levels and fares as the existing Burlington service. Under Sub-alternative 1C, the County could continue to contract with a private operator to provide the same level of personalized service that is currently being provided.

Operating the shuttle service as public transit would make it eligible for rural transit operating assistance through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 non-urbanized area formula grant program and State Section 85.20 transit operating assistance program. The combination of Federal and State funds available through these programs may be expected to cover about 55 to 60 percent of annual operating expenses during the five-year plan period. The local share of the operating assistance for the shuttle could come from the combination of the State Section 85.21 specialized transportation assistance allocation to the County and the County’s required match for the Section 85.21
program funds. The combination of these funding sources would be expected to limit the County’s annual share of operating expenses to about $8,000 between 2013 and 2017—compared to County funding for the existing shuttle service of about $13,000 in 2011.

It should be noted that Federal ADA regulations require public transit operators to use vehicles that are accessible to persons with disabilities, including those using wheelchairs. If the County uses Federal transit assistance to fund the shuttle service proposed under Sub-alternative 1C, the operator of the shuttle service must use wheelchair-accessible vehicles. The County’s current contract with Kenson Enterprises, the private operator of the SPARC shuttle service, includes the costs for vehicles provided by Kenson, which are not wheelchair accessible. If the County purchases accessible vehicles with Federal capital assistance and provides those vehicles to the contract operator of the service for a nominal fee, it would meet the Federal ADA requirements. For the Burlington SPARC shuttle (and any other shuttle implemented in a non-urbanized area), the County could apply through the FTA Section 5311 non-urbanized area funding program. Federal capital assistance, if obtained, would cover 80 percent of the cost of vehicle purchases.

- Two persons commented that First Transit vehicles, which are used for the County demand-response transportation service, tend to drop riders off in the Burlington area and then wait idle for long periods of time.

- One person indicated that there is a need for additional transportation options for individuals and families that participate in programs offered by Love, Inc. in Burlington, including a need for transportation from the Burlington area to the Racine area, particularly for medical appointments.

Response: Many of the participants in programs offered by Love, Inc. are seniors or persons with disabilities and are eligible to use the County’s existing demand-response transportation service. Many of the other participants are BadgerCare recipients and are eligible for Medicaid non-emergency medical transportation currently coordinated by LogistiCare. One additional transportation option, operated by the County from June of 2012 through January of 2013, was a cross-county shuttle called the Racine County Link. The Link was open to the general public and served cross-county trips between the Burlington and Racine areas. However, the County eliminated the Link because it did not receive Federal Section 5317 New Freedom funding to continue operations in 2013. The Link was also experiencing low ridership. Two of the County alternatives that would increase the transportation options available for Love, Inc. participants would involve replacing and expanding the existing County demand-response transportation service—County Sub-alternative 1A (expanding eligibility of the County’s demand-response service to all clients of the County Human Services Department) and County Alternative 2 (replacing the existing County demand-response service with a shared-ride taxi program open to the general public). It should be noted that either alternative has the potential to require a significant increase in County funding by 2017 or beyond.

- One person expressed support for a combined City DART paratransit and County demand-response service east of IH 94 proposed under County Sub-alternative 1B.

- One person expressed support for the public shared-ride taxi program proposed under County Alternative 2.
• One person expressed support for a vanpool program proposed under County Alternative 3.

• One person suggested that the Racine County Link was unsuccessful because the route was too long and the service was not advertised well enough.

Comments Related to Transit Service Alternatives for Travel between Racine County and Surrounding Counties

A total of six persons provided comments specifically related to the proposed transit service improvement alternatives for travel between Racine County and surrounding counties.

• Three persons expressed support for providing public transportation between Burlington and Milwaukee, such as establishing the commuter bus route proposed under Inter-County Alternative 4.

• Two persons expressed support for establishing a commuter rail service to and from Racine.

Response: Several members of the plan’s Advisory Workgroup have expressed support for establishing a commuter rail service to and from Racine. One such service which was recently studied was a potential commuter rail line between Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee. Appendix C to the plan report discusses this commuter rail line and its current status. A regional transit authority was created in 2009 by the Wisconsin State Legislature and Governor, with the authority to construct and operate this proposed Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee (KRM) commuter rail line. However, in 2011 this authority was dissolved by the Wisconsin State Legislature and Governor, and Federal earmarks which had been obtained to provide the funds necessary to continue KRM commuter rail studies were withdrawn. Given that the Racine County Public Transit Plan is a short-range plan—identifying actions to be implemented within the next one to five years—it appears highly unlikely that a commuter rail service could be established during the five-year plan period.

• Two persons indicated that there was a general lack of public transportation options for travel between western Racine County and surrounding counties.

• One person suggested that the express bus service between Kenosha and Racine, proposed under Inter-County Alternative 3, should also include stops at Regency Mall and Carthage College.

Response: Express bus service is a limited-stop public transit service, with stops usually spaced about every 1/4 mile to one mile along an express bus route. The proposed route for the express bus service between Kenosha and Racine under Inter-County Alternative 3 would have an estimated one-way running time of about 60 minutes between the downtown transit centers in Kenosha and Racine. This running time is very desirable for scheduling purposes and makes it easy for potential riders to understand the schedule. Serving additional locations that would add distance to the route and make them less direct—such as Regency Mall or Carthage College—would likely increase the estimated one-way running time to more than 60 minutes. However, additional alternative route alignments—possibly including alignments to serve these locations—would necessarily be considered in more detail should the Cities of Kenosha and Racine determine to pursue implementation on an express bus service.
• One person requested more advertisement for the Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha commuter bus route operated by Wisconsin Coach Lines (WCL).

Response: Inter-County Alternative 1 proposes increasing the service frequency on the existing Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha commuter bus route. This alternative also recommends additional steps that the City of Racine should consider to integrate the route with existing BUS routes—regardless of whether or not service frequency is increased. These steps include adding the commuter route alignment to the BUS route map and requesting that the City of Kenosha also add the alignment to the Kenosha Area Transit (KAT) route map; establishing consistent charges for transfers between the commuter route and the local routes of the Racine and Kenosha transit systems; and providing information about the commuter route and its schedule at the Racine transit center and on the Kenosha and Racine transit system websites and anywhere else information about the two Cities’ transit systems is displayed. These steps would promote coordination between commuter and local transit services by making it easier and more attractive to use the two services.

• One person expressed support for the extended BUS Route No. 1 to the UW-Parkside campus proposed under Inter-County Sub-alternative 2B.

Other Comments and Suggestions

• One person suggested that a private taxi service is needed in the City of Racine and environs to serve evening trips and fulfill same day service requests. The commenter suggested that consideration be given to encouraging a private operator to provide taxi service, perhaps by providing partial public funding or a tax break to the operator.

Response: A taxi service in the City of Racine with reasonable response times was previously identified as an unmet need during an earlier stage of the development of the Racine County Public Transit Plan. Currently, there are no private taxi operators in the City of Racine area.

• One person suggested that the City should establish a bicycle sharing program as a way to improve access to the BUS and promote increased ridership on the BUS.

Response: A bicycle sharing program would be a potential way to increase access to the BUS by providing a transportation option for transit users to get to bus stops or to their final destinations, thus promoting increased ridership. This type of program can have other benefits as well, particularly for tourists and visitors to the City, but also for local residents. This comment will be provided to City staff for their consideration.

* * *

9
APPENDICES
Appendix A

Appendix A-1

WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED
BY MAIL, E-MAIL, FAX, OR ONLINE COMMENT FORM

Racine County Public Transit Plan 2013-2017

I am an 80 year old woman who lives at East Park Towers near Lake Michigan in Racine. I don't drive out of town anymore nor drive when it's dark. In winter it can get dark by 2 PM or 4 PM. This inability to drive in certain circumstances puts me in a dilemma when I can't get to see my doctor. For me it is essential to have:

1. transport to out-of-town medical facilities

2. A Racine cab service for same day or immediate transport needs. Other agencies like ITN cannot guarantee same day or night pick-up. Taxi service is essential - they can be at one's residence in half an hour and operate until midnight. No other entity can do that.

This in my story. One vital service Racine County has is First Transit which transports people to their doctors in Milwaukee and Kenosha. When my local doctor advised me to go to a specialist at Froedtert I was able to get First Transit to take me up for an appointment but when I planned to go up for another, the funding for the service had dried up and I couldn't get there. First Transit got more funding in 2013 so I have a return visit. A big relief.

I have a reflux problem and started having painful episodes just before the holidays. I had called my Dr's office, but he wasn't available, called again Dec. 24 and still no Dr. That evening in acute pain and the only MD's available on Christmas Eve were those at the Wheaton Hospital ER. I called a taxi at 10PM only to find it had gone out of business. So even though it's very difficult to drive at night, I got in my car and headed to the ER with a near mishap on the way. The ER patched me up and sent me home once more driving in the dark.

On Dec. 29 I was unusually dizzly so I called my doctor's office who told me to go to prompt care. At 1 PM a friend took me to prompt care but I was there for such a long time, it got dark and my 86 year old friend had to go home. Since there is no longer taxi service in Racine, I was stranded. My friend searched and finally found a kind soul to pick me up and take me home.

Taxi service in Racine comes and goes. Perhaps there could be some way to keep one operating permanently with help from the county - a tax-break maybe. Partially funding this service might be a cheaper way of providing transit for some seniors and others with disability problems since it would basically be a private business.

Yours truly,
Nancy Duerrsten
Racine, WI 53403

Ms. Enid Spaight

3-6-13

To County Transit Administrator

As a shuttle bus rider, it is very important that you will continue the service that you are doing. Let me know of any problems you may be facing. Thank you.

3-6-13

To County Transit Administrator

As a shuttle bus rider, it is very important that you will continue the service that you are doing. Let me know of any problems you may be facing. Thank you.
--- On Mon, 2/18/13, Lynde, Eric D. <elynde@sewrpc.org> wrote:
From: Lynde, Eric D. <elynde@sewrpc.org>
Subject: RE: Proposed Changes to Bus Route 5
To: "RacineTransitPlan" <RacineTransitPlan@SEWRPC.org>
Date: Monday, February 18, 2013, 9:22 PM

Mr. Giese,

Thank you for your comment. We very much appreciate you taking the time to review and provide comments on the preliminary recommended alternative for the Belle Urban System (BUS).

It should be noted that the combination of Route Nos. 2 and 5—referred to in your email below—is being proposed because they were identified as two of the weakest-performing routes of the system. Route No. 5 was shown to perform particularly poorly in several measures of service effectiveness and cost-effectiveness. You are correct that, as proposed, the combination of Route Nos. 2 and 5 would make it significantly more inconvenient for you—and others making similar trips—to commute to and from work using the BUS.

Your comments will be discussed with City and BUS staff and will be considered along with all other comments received during the public comment period. Specifically, the comments will be incorporated into the development of a final recommended plan for the Belle Urban System, which should include refinements to the preliminary recommended BUS alternative.

If you have any additional comments or questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Commission staff.

Sincerely,

Eric Lynde
Senior Transportation Planner/Engineer
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
P: (262) 547-6722 x281
ellynde@sewrpc.org

---

From: Mark M Giese
Sent: Tuesday, February 19, 2013 12:36 PM
To: Lynde, Eric D.
Cc: RacineTransitPlan
Subject: RE: Proposed Changes to Bus Route 5

Thank you for your reply.

Any idea when the Rt 2/5 changes might take place?

---

From: Mark M Giese
Sent: Friday, February 15, 2013 12:41:36 PM
To: RacineTransitPlan
Subject: Proposed Changes to Bus Route 5

Mark M Giese

Dear Planners:

I use the Route 5 bus every weekday to get from my home in Lake Park to work (Modine) on Dekoven and have done so for over 30 years.

As it is hardly a 10-minute ride (about 1.5 miles), with no transfers, it is really painless and convenient.

I don’t mind the 3-block walk from Racine St. to Modine.

But the proposed re-route, going up Taylor, would more than double that distance to about 8 blocks unless I am able to make a transfer.

Also, under the current route up Racine St, should I miss my bus home, I just walk home and at least I’ve already walked part of the way by simply going to the stop on Racine St. from Modine.

But the proposed route would have me go 8 blocks away from getting to my house to catch the bus and missing that bus would highly inconvenient.

I would prefer Route 5 remain unchanged for the above reasons – though I have always wanted it to run thru downtown ever since it was routed away from downtown.

The proposed changes may make me, regretfully, a former bus rider.

If there must be changes to Route 5, what about having it go up Memorial Drive?

I realize southbound on Memorial Drive is not very bus-stop friendly.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mark M Giese
A-3

From: Mary Beth Popchock
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2013 9:52:58 AM
To: RacineTransportPlan
Subject: Input Regarding Proposed Racine County Public Transit Plan

Good Morning,

Thank you for the opportunity for input. I am pleased to learn that the bus stop in front of Lakeside Curative Services is proposed/targeted to remain status quo; especially since over 12 people use the bus everyday to get to LCS plus up to 30 - 40 others, throughout the week, who come in for other types of services and/or appointments. When reviewing this plan, I ask that you please consider that many individuals with disabilities (across the city) are reliant upon public transportation for their rise to employment or other important appointments. As it stands now, an individual lives or works outside of defined city parameters public transit is not available for them. This can cause a huge problem. Additionally, individuals with disabilities and others who reside or are offered employment west of I94 and do not drive, have no public transit options and limited alternative transportation solutions.

I think that there are compelling ideas related to addressing some of these concerns outlined in the plan proposal. Ideas such as the shared taxi system, van pools, and are others are great examples of “thinking outside the box” and I applaud the committee for its willingness to be creative.

I ask that you please take these thoughts into consideration when adopting your final plan. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Mary Beth Popchock
Executive Director
Lakeside Curative Services
2503 Lincolnwood Ct.
Racine, WI 53403
262-598-0098 Ext. 104

The information contained in this message may be privileged, confidential, and protected from disclosure. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, or any employee or agent responsible for delivering this message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by replying to the message and deleting it from your computer. Thank you.

From: Ben Greenebaum
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 12:19:13 PM
To: RacineTransportPlan
Subject: Racine Transit Plan

Ladies and Gentlemen:

My prime concern with the plan as presented online and in the newspapers has to do with ensuring that service continues to be available for my two adult disabled sons and the not-insignificant number of similarly-situated people. They use the regular Racine City BUS system for transportation to and from work at Lakeside Curative, traveling on Route 2 from their apartment on North Main St. to the Lakeside Curative location on Lincolnwood in the south side Olsen Industrial Park. According to staff at Lakeside Curative, they are two of several participants who ride the BUS daily, in preference to the more-expensive special transportation option. In addition, I am informed that up to 200 people weekly come to the Lakeside Curative location for visits through DVR. In addition, until the recent elimination of Saturday service on Route 2, my sons used it Saturdays to travel around the city for recreation or to purchase something at a fast food restaurant, business that these establishments have now lost.

According to the plan and map published on the Internet for comment, Route 2 would no longer serve North Main St, requiring residents there who have no automobiles to walk what could be a considerable distance, depending on exactly where they live, to pick up Route 4. They could transfer at the Transit Center to Route 25—not a problem in itself for my sons as long as connections are halfway decent—but the earliest published plan’s map shows that this route does not enter Olsen Industrial Park, but would require a walk along S. Memorial Dr. (without sidewalks) of close to 1/2 mile in all weather. While the February 2013 map shows access to Lakeside Curative and staff there have told me that BUS planners do not intend to eliminate service to their door, it is not clear whether this access will only be for specific runs or all-day, accommodating the DVR appointments and people with nonstandard schedules.

The earlier published plan also showed that not only would Olsen Industrial Park and North Main St. lose service, but so would much of the industrial park on the north side along Mt. Pleasant Street, which includes the Racine Unified School District offices. This seems at variance with plans to encourage growth of employment in these industrial parks, including employment for people with disabilities and other people whose situations mean that they do not have a car that will benefit both the individuals and the companies which the parks are supposed to attract, not to mention reducing access to US0 headquarters for everyone without a car. While the Feb. 2013 map seems to have accommodated some of these areas, it still seems that comprehensive planning has not been as comprehensive as it might from the point of view of making the service fit the needs, rather than just the budget.

Sincerely yours,
Ben Greenebaum

--- On Thu, 3/7/13, Lynde, Eric D.  <Eylynde@sewrpc.org> wrote:

From: Lynde, Eric D.  <Eylynde@sewrpc.org>
Subject: RE: Racine Transit Plan
To:  RacineTransportPlan@SEWRPC.org
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2013, 4:12 PM

Mr. Greenebaum,

Thank you for your comments. We very much appreciate you taking the time to review and provide comments on the preliminary recommended alternative for the Belle Urban System (BUS).

The proposed alternative system recognizes that a significant number of people, like your two sons, ride the BUS to Lakeside Curative Services on Lincolnwood Court on a regular basis. As you mentioned in your email, Lakeside Curative and the Olsen Industrial Park are currently served by Route 2. Under the alternative system, Route Nos. 2 and 5 are being proposed to be combined (“Route 25”) because they were identified as two of the weakest-performing routes of the system. The proposed Route 25 would continue to provide all-day service to Lakeside Curative and the Olsen Industrial Park. In addition, Route 25 would continue to provide all-day service to Mt. Pleasant Street on the north side of the City, which is currently served by Route 2.

Your comments will be discussed with City and BUS staff and will be considered along with all other comments received during the public comment period. Specifically, the comments will be incorporated into the development of a final recommended plan for the Belle Urban System, which should include refinements to the preliminary recommended BUS alternative.

If you have any additional comments or questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Commissioner staff.

Sincerely,
Eric Lynde
Senior Transportation Planner/Engineer
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
P: (262) 547-6722 x281
eclynde@sewrpc.org

---

From: Fritz Obermberger
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 9:13:48 AM
To: RacineTransportPlan
Subject: Feedback for transportation

As a western Racine county resident, I am disgruntled over the proposed alternatives that have the potential to significantly increase the county’s public transit costs. We should be looking at alternatives that cut costs not increase them. Please remove any of the alternatives from the 5 year plan that have the potential to increase the tax funding liability of the residents.

It is frustrating to learn that our tax dollars were spent even looking into such frivolous proposals. Thank You In Advance,
Jonathan Munt

---

From: Fritz Obermberger
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 9:13:48 AM
To: RacineTransportPlan
Subject: Feedback for transportation

To whom it may concern,

I was not able to make the meeting on 3-6-2013, wanted to make suggestion. Racine needs a taxi service, that is all.
Sent from Yahoo! Mail on Android
From: Ben Greenbaum
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2013 11:29 AM
To: Lynde, Eric D.
Subject: RE: Racine Transit Plan

Dear Mr. Lynde,

Thank you for your prompt and full reply; I appreciate the consideration.

Please note that although my specific questions had to do with my sons' need for transit, I am also concerned on behalf of the community in general that the local transit plans offer as much opportunity for as large a part of the day and night as possible for people who do not have access to an auto, whether for because of disability, economics, age and infirmity, or anything else. The more people can use the bus to get to a job, go shopping, or exercise any other type of independence, the better for not only their quality of life, but also for the whole local economy and quality of life.

I wish you and your colleagues well in your efforts to ensure this, as well as in seeing how much you can squeeze out of our admittedly difficult (and probably short-sighted) budgetary situation.

Ben Greenbaum

From: website@sewpc.org
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2013 1:47:38 PM
To: RacineTransitPlan
Subject: Racine County Transit Development Plan Comment Form

FirstName1: Andreas
LastName1: Weiger
Email:
MailingAddress1:
City1: Burlington
State1: Wisconsin
Zipcode1: 53105
Phone:

I was disabled 4+ years ago due to a car crash. I now have to ask friends, neighbors and family to take me to appointments, medical treatments, and such innocuous things as going to the store or pharmacy. Recently there is a local transit option but that does not help me with things I need to do in Milwaukee. Instead I have to inconvenience those mentioned above - trying to fit it in with their jobs or their responsibilities. I'm 47 and I need to ask to go everywhere I can't reasonably walk to ONLY because there is not a mass transit option. My wife and I were looking to leave the area because I need to be able to travel on my own, at my own pace, and on MY schedule. I say WERE since, with the possibility of additional longer distance transit being available, I would be able to go places without any private transportation assistance. My situation may be unique but because of it and its transportation limitations I have lost touch with friends and not been able to enjoy the many things Milwaukee has been able to provide. My needs are only mine but a transit system that connects Milwaukee to the Burlington, Waterford, Union Grove area would also benefit students who commute daily to the city, wage earners that are limited to this area versus potential variety of opportunities in Milwaukee. If I was there in person to present this you would hear a impassioned plea for this transit plan to come to a reality. You have no idea - I am assuming here I know - what it means to be trapped where you live. I love the City of Burlington and what it has to offer but not being able to go any farther than my 2 feet can take me sometimes feels like an invisible prison. These varied solutions would free me from it. Thank you for your time.

From: website@sewpc.org
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 2:42:59 PM
To: RacineTransitPlan
Subject: Racine County Transit Development Plan Comment Form

FirstName1: Judy
LastName1: Charron
Email:
City1: Racine
State1: WI

I have noticed for years that most of our large buses are empty or very few riders (except for a school route). Could Racine sell some of our large buses to other cities? Could Racine then have buses that are small? I have seen small buses in other cities which made me wonder why our city doesn’t? Racine would save money on fuel, maintenance, etc. Thank You Judy Charron

From: website@sewpc.org
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 2:42:59 PM
To: RacineTransitPlan
Subject: Racine County Transit Development Plan Comment Form

FirstName1: glenn
LastName1: scheuerman
Email:
MailingAddress1:
City1: Racine
State1: WI
Zipcode1: 53403

Any system is better than the way the city bus transit system is being run now. a new company needs to run as well as a new supervisor. a complete overhaul is needed. if possible get rid of the teamsters union, with that, most drivers think they own the buses and that they can’t be touched!Please help us NOW!

2013-2017 Racine County Transit Plan Comment Sheet
Name: Jeff Jones
Address:
Racine WI
(city, state, zip)
Phone:
Email:
Comments: Not having route 76 running at latenight and during would make it very difficult to get to and from medical appointments. This is the only route in this area that serves access to St Mary's.
Fax Form

To: Racine Transit  
Fax: 262-547-1103

From: Racine Friendship Clubhouse  
Fax: 262.636.9084  
Phone: 262.636.9393

Date: 3-14-2013  
Number of Pages including cover sheet: 2

Subject:

Comments:

I don't feel that these changes that are being considered in regards of the city buses are not right. These changes are unfair to people who may or may not be able to pay two dollars and seventy-five cents. I also would like to point out that all these changes are not fair to the people who use the bus's every day. I also want to point out that these changes are unfair to the people. I wanna point that those who changes the bus's last year. I also think the changes are due to the new bus's buses very bad. We pay for them, we didn't ask for them.
Appendix A-2

TELEPHONE COMMENTS RECEIVED

TELEPHONE COMMENT
RACINE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT PLAN: 2013-2017

Name: Gerard Maerzke

Affiliation: 

Mailing Address: 

Telephone: 

I was at the meeting tonight and you said that buses should be working against each other. Well, when you have school buses they don't work against each other, they work for each other. When you have more, more, more, more, and if you have a SPARC, shuttle and it does its job and you have a bus for handicapped and other people, it will do its job. The more you put on the more money you are going to make, and in the county run you will benefit from that. That's why they have more than one school bus, because the first one can't pick up all the children. They need more. They pick more. So if you want to publicize your bus, you just publicize your bus and if you charge the same amount you charge our bus, it will be OK.

3-12-2013

TELEPHONE COMMENT
RACINE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT PLAN: 2013-2017

Name: Gerard Maerzke

Affiliation: 

Mailing Address: 

Telephone: 

Comments made during phone conversation:

- Burlington SPARC should be left alone. If the county wants to provide a public transit service that serves people with disabilities, such as the supervisor could take people where the Burlington school does not go — like Waterford, Union Grove, Lake Mills, and other communities in western Racine County.
- Racine County Link should have been better advertised, and the route should have operated over Hwy 11, not Hwy 20, between Burlington and Racine. It was difficult to ride because it was long.
- Need public transportation between Burlington and Milwaukee.
- Noticed that first transit vehicles drop people off in Burlington then wait for a long time until the person is ready to leave. This must cost first transit a lot of money.

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
W259 N182 Rockwood Drive
P.O. Box 1607
Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1607
Phone: 262-547-6721 Fax: 262-547-1103
E-mail: racine-transitplan@sewrcp.org
Website: www.sewrcp.org/racine-transitplan
Appendix A-3

WRITTEN COMMENTS SUBMITTED AT PUBLIC MEETINGS

PUBLIC FORUM
March 6, 2013

REMARKS CONCERNING
SEWRPC RACINE COUNTY TRANSIT PLAN 2013-2017
TRANSIT SERVICE IMPROVEMENT ALTERNATIVES

by

Steven K. Rogstad

My remarks today are intended to be in response to the SEWRPC’s Racine County Public Transit Plan 2013-2017. As the SEWRPC’s Committee on Task Force Committee, I have been tasked with the objective of creating a comprehensive plan to improve transit service in Racine County. I will provide my comments on the proposed alternatives, focusing on the following key points:

1. The draft transit plan provides a framework for improving transit service in the county. However, I believe that the proposed alternatives do not fully address the needs of our community.

2. The plan includes options for new transit routes and service improvements, but I believe that there are opportunities to expand the existing service to better meet the needs of our residents.

3. The plan also includes proposals for improving accessibility for individuals with disabilities. I applaud the efforts to improve accessibility, but I believe that more could be done to ensure that these improvements are fully integrated into the transit system.

4. Finally, I would like to urge the SEWRPC to consider the impact of their proposals on the environment. I believe that alternative transportation options should be explored to reduce our reliance on single-vehicle use.

In conclusion, while the draft transit plan represents a significant step forward, I believe that there are opportunities to improve the proposals. I encourage the SEWRPC to continue working with stakeholders to ensure that the final plan meets the needs of our community.

Should Racine County seriously consider the SEWRPC’s proposals to establish a countywide public transit system to meet the needs of seniors in the city and suburbs, and also other areas in western Racine County, then my opinion is that the County should simply take the status quo and expand it into a countywide public transit system. It makes no sense to have two separate public transit systems operating within the same county. Given the fiscal constraints, challenges and realities of operating the existing county-wide public transit system, the SEWRPC proposal is therefore not viable.

I am liquids my remarks today solely to the SPARC shuttle program, and will let those persons associated with the City’s main transit system, the Beloit Urban System (including its DART paratransit program, address those programs). I am the operator for the current SEWRPC-Burlington shuttle program.

SPARC-Burlington

SPARC-Burlington was established in 2009 to specifically service a targeted population of vulnerable populations. The program was created to provide affordable and efficient transportation services to a population of seniors, who are (1) disabled, (2) low-income, and (3) do not have the use of a vehicle or public transit service. Other aspects of this transportation service included (1) door-to-door service, (2) driver training/testing, (3) route planning, and (4) cost. The service has been well-received by this community of active and abandoned seniors, which does not compete with non-emergency medical transportation services, such as the Racine County’s paratransit and demand response programs. The program has grown from 8 daily trips to nearly 700 trips per month. SPARC-Burlington is a “cut-and-run, one size fits all, universal transit operation for anyone who chooses to ride. It is unique. It is customized. It is for a targeted population. It is segregated from other transit programs. And it WORKS!

Federal and State Funding

SEWRPC proposes abandoning the current structure of the County’s successful SPARC shuttle program, and replace it with a standard national public transportation structure and model that would eliminate the personalized service for vulnerable seniors. That program was established to serve the former 21-year Operations Manager and General Manager for the City’s Beloit Urban System, and I am very familiar with the Federal and State transit operating funds as well. SEWRPC suggests the County accept its new transit system. I am very familiar with the hidden costs and constraints which this type of transit structure would impose upon Racine County. It is important to note that these costs would be the responsibility of the County, not any provider. Whether the County would hire County employees to operate its transit program, or whether it sub-contracted those employees (as in the case of the City of Racine’s Beloit Urban System and Milwaukee County Transit) the costs will be completely paid for by the Racine County. A sub-contractor is simply a partnership organization for funding, but does not pay for any of the operating or capital expenses. If the County were to accept federal transit operating funds to operate its SPARC shuttle program, then it will be completely paid for by the County. A sub-contractor is simply a partnership organization for funding, but does not pay for any of the operating or capital expenses. If the County were to accept federal transit operating funds to operate its SPARC shuttle program, then it will be completely paid for by the County. A sub-contractor is simply a partnership organization for funding, but does not pay for any of the operating or capital expenses.

Federal Regulations and Milestones

There are numerous regulations that also accompany the acceptance of federal funding. The cost of these regulations will also be paid for by the County. Here are a few examples from simply an operational perspective:

- Substance Abuse program for drivers, dispatchers, and any persons who maintain or direct the movement of vehicles. This will involve written contracts for physicians, 72 hour tests, medical staff, and testing facilities. It will require personnel to be hired and ensure that the County is complying with these rules.
- Federal financial management program for county-owned vehicles. This program is also attached to the Federal financial management program for county-owned vehicles. These vehicles are subject to periodic inspections and maintenance.
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In conclusion, I urge the SEWRPC to reconsider the proposed changes to the SPARC shuttle program. The current structure is effective and meets the needs of our community. I believe that the proposed changes are unnecessary and will result in increased costs and decreased service for our residents.
A-8

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC MEETING
RACINE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT PLAN ALTERNATIVES

Wednesday, March 6, 2013
Corvus Reid-Owen Transit Center
Racine

Name: Charles Stahl
Affiliation (if any):
Mailing Address:

Comment:
Increasing ridership on current routes is crucial before system can expand. To increase this, I believe, by promoting a bicycle program such as what is being done in Madison. Bicycling is much more practical than one might imagine, and can significantly expand service areas.

Planning transfer centers near ride's destinations is an excellent idea. I greatly support a transfer center around the nearby shopping area.

Add sheets as needed and leave at the registration table or give to a SWRPC staff member or send following the meeting to the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission by March 15, 2013.

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
W259 N3132 Rockwood Drive
P.O. Box 1687
Wardown, Wisconsin 53185-1687
Phone: 262-547-6723 Fax: 262-547-1105
E-mail: racine@swrpc.org
Website: www.swrpc.org/racinetransitplan

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC MEETING
RACINE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT PLAN ALTERNATIVES

Wednesday, March 6, 2013
Corvus Reid-Owen Transit Center
Racine

Name: Mark M. Giese
Affiliation (if any): SELF
Mailing Address:

Comment:

Add sheets as needed and leave at the registration table or give to a SWRPC staff member or send following the meeting to the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission by March 15, 2013.

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
W259 N3132 Rockwood Drive
P.O. Box 1687
Wardown, Wisconsin 53185-1687
Phone: 262-547-6723 Fax: 262-547-1105
E-mail: racine@swrpc.org
Website: www.swrpc.org/racinetransitplan

From: Mark M (Giese)
Sent: Friday, February 15, 2013 12:41:36 PM
To: RacineTransitPlan
Subject: Proposed Changes to Bus Route 5

Mark M Giese

Dear Planners:

I use the Route 5 bus every weekday to get from my home in Lake Park to work (Modine) on Delavan and have done so for over 20 years.

As it is hardly a 10-minute ride (about 1.5 miles), with no transfers, it is pretty painless and convenient. I don't mind the 3-block walk from Racine St. to Modine.

But the proposed re-route, going up Taylor, would more than double that distance to about 8 blocks unless I am able to make a transfer.

Also, under the current route up Racine St., should I miss my bus home, I just walk home and at least I've already walked part of the way by simply going to the stop on Racine St. from Modine.

But the proposed route would have me go 8 blocks away from getting to my house to catch the bus and missing that bus would highly inconvenient.

I would prefer Route 5 remain unchanged for the above reasons - though I have always wanted it to run thru downtown ever since it was routed away from downtown RUNNING IT THRU DOWNTOWN MIGHT INCREASE ITS RIDERSHIP.

The proposed changes may make me, regretfully, a former bus rider.

If there must be changes to Route 5, what about having it up Memorial Drive?

I realize southbound on Memorial Drive is not very bus-stop friendly.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mark M Giese

A-8
I use the bus to take me to Foot Day, Anderson Chiropractic, and to 5 Grocery—Gooseberries, Walmart, Aldi, Sentry. Pick up save bus also took me to get my pills at Walgreens. I don't drive because of my disability and the bus gives me independence. So I'm not always calling on family member. The bus is also affordable.

The Maerzke Family

3/12/13

Our thanks to the wonderful service, transportation provided by the shuttle provided for the Spring Brook Village.

Sincerely,

JW. Coltwell

Spring Brook Village

I love the bus.

At help people with no car out.

Nancy Tellermann
I moved from Waukesha City to Waukesha City to Racine and got.
I still drive but when I can't or all need this bus service, as a lot of people have no other means  of getting anywhere. Our people (when the time and have) jobs live in their own can't be there to get us around.

The service is not reliable in Burlington. I don't know what this 12a means because I'm there is never anyone on them.

3/11/13

To whom it concerns,

Please keep our shuttle bus! I like others hear at senior housing rely on it for appointments & clinic, shopping and not social service.

My only social outing is to Shores senior lunch on Wednesdays & sometimes ride 5 days a week.

Thank you,

Chelle Rare

3-12-13

To Whom It May Concern,

Why don't you leave the spare bus alone. We would like to keep it the way it is.

It is a godscent to us older seniors.

Sincerely,

Heraldine Seitz
530 Madison St. Apt 231
Burlington, WI 53105
I just moved back

to Burlington after being
gone for 8 years and
was thrilled to see we
had a bus. I am on a
smaller budget and can’t
afford a car to take me
to doctor appointments
and shopping. Without
a bus I would be stuck
and unable to go when
I need to. Please
continue the way it is
now so people can live
income can still get
around and be a little
independent

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Ms. End Spaight

Hi I am a regular user of Burlington’s service. I
hope the new bus service in Burlington will remain
as good as it is at present. The few with the larger
driver’s and who try to really help try to do their jobs. I
think the bus is a necessity. I have not had an issue
with the service. I would hate to see it change from
what it is at present. Sincerely,

[Signature]

End Spaight

The SPARC Shuttle Bus is a

good thing to have in Burlington for people

who don’t drive or who want to be

independent, or to have a way to get
to their appointment or to the grocery

store. I think they need to keep the

Senior bus for the seniors

thank you

PATRICIA D EVANS

A-11
Hello, March 4, 2013

I am one of many adults with a disability that can not drive myself to:
my Doctor appointments to go Shopping
to go to the Store for my pets needs
to go to the library
to go to Love Inc. For the Food Pantry

The bus to me means getting out - it is my connection to the outside world!!
But, "the bus" also has someone who is the heart & soul of it.... Karen Goodwin.
Karen is the reason so many of us love to ride the bus,
she is always friendly and helpful,
she'll help us get our packages, bags, good carts, and walk us off the bus
and in many cases, cases, help us with them to our doors.

What I want to say is....

Karen is a wonderful person,
her compassion for people is rare.

For me, "the SPARC bus is Karen..."

It means, laughing, smiling,
meeting people and getting out
because of Karen.

Until you can no longer drive,
for whatever reason, you start to feel depressed and cut-off from life.

So, because of Karen and the little "SPARC" bus...

I, and many others have a life again.... Sincerely...

Please... don't stop "our bus," Lynne Shuster
Add sheets as needed and leave at the registration table or give to a SWRPC staff member or send following the meeting to the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission by March 15, 2013.

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
W239 N8182 Rockwood Drive
P.O. Box 1687
Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1687
Phone: 262-947-6723 Fax: 262-947-1103
E-mail: racinecomments@swrpc.org
Website: www.swrpc.org/racinecommentsplan
A written comment from CLARK HUNTOON:

Affiliation (if any): NAMI- RACO & LOVE, INC.

Comment:

At NAMI, the Racine City Bus is needed (3500 passenger) for support groups when people needs to be there for groups scheduled.

With love, we need transportation to love, Inc. is needed for meals, meetings, etc. gathering individuals from Burlington. Needs also to get from Burlington into Racine for doctor apps, medication, psychiatrists, therapists, etc.


A written comment from MAURO HOPPE:

Comment:

Leave our Burlington as it is, our business facts are not started.

Add sheets as needed and leave at the registration table or give to a SEWRPC staff member or send following the meeting to the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission by March 15, 2013.
Appendix A-4

ORAL COMMENTS PRESENTED TO COURT REPORTERS AT PUBLIC MEETINGS

BROWN & JONES REPORTING, INC.

PUBLIC COMMENTS IN RE:
SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
RACINE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT PLAN ALTERNATIVES
MARCH 8, 2013

PUBLIC COMMENTS, taken before JENNIFER L.
SCHMALING, a Registered Merit Reporter, Certified
Realtime Reporter, Certified Broadcast Captioner and
Notary Public in and for the State of Wisconsin, at the
Corinne Reid-Dowens Transit Center, 1421 State Street,
Racine, Wisconsin, on March 8, 2013, commencing at
4:30 p.m. and concluding at 6:30 p.m.

MR. GIESE: My current route is Route 5,
and the proposal makes it not go up Racine Street,
and that messes me up. I guess I would have to get
a transfer on Taylor over to where I want to go
which is Modine. I take the bus every day to work,
and so I understand my route is underperforming or
whatever. But if it were up to me, and it's not, I
would still have it go up Racine Street.

I think ridership could be increased if
it could run through downtown. It doesn't
currently run through downtown, and going up Racine
Street, getting off at Racine Street, going to
Modine, is about two-and-half blocks, but going up
Taylor, getting off at Taylor and DeKoven, would be
about eight blocks. And the way it is currently, I
don't have to worry about a transfer. Actually, I
don't have much experience in transferring. I
don't know how good connections are, but I've never
had to make one for my commute, so that's about
all.

MS. TERRY: Okay. The ADRC, right now
there's no transportation at all, whether
specialized or public transit. And since they
serve people with disabilities, I think it's
important that they extend transportation to the
ADRC in Ives Grove.

MR. WARNER: This is in the -- This is in
the nature of wishful thinking, but it is also
relied -- deals with issues that are very current
to the bus question. These plans that are up here
are discussing multiple options with $100,000 here
and $100,000 there. Sometimes we get up to
$600,000. Perhaps they'll actually be viable.

At the same time, if we had a I-94
commuter train running from Kenosha to Milwaukee,
it would cost about one-eighth of the cost of
rebuilding I-94 over the same distance, and it
would increase the demand on the buses and
eliminate concerns for intercity transportation.

It would provide that.
The highways that are being built now, including the cost of I-94, are reaching the point that we can no longer afford them. The current --

The about-to-be-displayed budget will increase --

will use general revenue funds to help cover
desired highways. In other words, the gasoline tax
no longer covers the cost of highways in Wisconsin.

So my questions focused on the bus systems alone
are will this bus system reduce automobile traffic, especially on the most expensive intercity,
interstate and great highways? If we could reduce
that traffic, we wouldn't need the highways, and we
could save some money.

Will this proposed bus system, whichever
alternative we have, address the desires of
potential users? That is, how will the changes
attract noncaptive riders? There's a great deal of
concern for handicapped and other captive riders,
people who don't have cars or for various reasons
are not available to use cars. That's a small
percent of the total population. We need a big
system that addresses the needs of all -- of most
of the potential riders, the noncaptive. And I am
asking seriously, do any of these alternatives
address the needs of noncaptive riders? And

as a subnote, my regards to Ken Younker.

ML CALDER: I want to go -- I'll say
that there are times that people come to the
hospital in an ambulance like at 10:00 at night,
and they don't get out until about 2 or 3 in the
morning, and there is no transportation. They are
stuck at the hospital, and they need transportation
home. And the buses stop at about 10, 11:00
hour, and there needs to be either a shuttle that
is coming from the hospital to drop people off at
their homes or have the city buses extend their
hours of all the city buses, extend the hours so
that -- so that people can get home.

(Proceedings concluded 6:30 p.m.)
RACINE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT PLAN, 03/12/2013

1. called the BASS, Burlington Area Senior Shuttle, which is three years. And there have been changes and improvements for the better as we've grown. And more people are riding this.

2. I have knowledge of several seniors who are giving up their cars, or have given up their cars, because we have a shuttle. In an area that I live, which is in Riverview Apartments, we actually have people who have moved to this area from other counties because we have the shuttle here.

3. And it has been a phenomenal thing for me because my other mode of transportation is a three-wheel bicycle. I don't have a car anymore.

4. It is wonderful not to have to depend upon family to take you for groceries and medical appointments.

5. The shopping part of it that so many of the people that get on the bus for is not fun shopping. It's not just looking-around shopping. It's necessity shopping. And I think that this bus has become a necessity here in town.

6. The only thing I think would make it any better, if need be, and it isn't required right now, is to add a Saturday or another bus if they decided that they needed more as the ridership grows. It's my understanding that we've grown to 700 riders a month from -- I don't remember how many it was when we started. But we're all enjoying it and find it a necessity, as well as being very enjoyable. Thank you.

7. Ms. Lazor: All I want to do is comment that the shuttle, the SPARC, our shuttle, she takes cars of us real good. She tells us what time she's going to pick us up. Sometimes she's a little early. Sometimes she's a little late. But she calls us, if we have cell phones, and tells us she's going to be late, that she's busy. But otherwise than that, the shuttle is perfect. I'm happy with it.

8. In the summertime, I'll use my scooter, but I use the shuttle all winter. And I even got a truck. And that's all I want to say.

9. Ms. Gamez: I feel that we need to leave things the way they are. Simply because it's used for me. There's times I can't drive. And the driver herself helps us to the door with groceries, anything we need. That's about it.

10. Mr. Gamez: I would just like to know if they will leave the way things are in Burlington area. That's it.

RACINE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT PLAN, 03/12/2013

1. MS. DATZER-FELL: First of all, I would like to have the County reconsider the Wisconsin Coach Line running from Burlington to Milwaukee. Even though it had been tried in years past, I believe that we are a bigger community, more people commuting into the city. So I'd like them to reconsider the Wisconsin Coach Line for that service.

2. Also, the shuttle bus has provided excellent service for the elderly in this community. And I'd hate to see it go away. My suggestion is that they provide two of the smaller buses. They've tried a bigger bus in some of the areas where they pick up the seniors, and it's hard to maneuver. So I think the success of the smaller bus has shown proof that they need to have a second bus also. About the same size. And that's it.

3. Thank you.

4. MS. BERMUDEZ: I like the bus because I don't drive. And I have to go walk three times a week at the Wellness Center, and that's the only way I have of getting there and getting back. And to go shopping with the bus. I'm very, very well satisfied. I like it just the way it is. And we have a marvelous bus driver that helps us, so I don't want them to change it. I guess that's it.

5. MR. MAERZEN: I'd just like to say I like the bus the way it is. To me, if you start making it bigger, and handicapped accessible, it's going to change our little route that we got. To me, I don't understand. Like he says, the County would be working against itself if it added another bus. To me, it wouldn't. Because with more, you have more. With less, you have less. Two buses, you'd have more people. One, you have less people. See?

6. That's it.

7. (Proceedings concluded at 6:30 p.m.)

A-18
Appendix B

ATTENDANCE RECORDS OF PUBLIC MEETINGS
HELD MARCH 6 AND 12, 2013
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name (Please Print)</th>
<th>Agency/Organization Represented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diane Roach</td>
<td>MCDFC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark A. Geese</td>
<td>Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reactor to</td>
<td>Racine City Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Backow</td>
<td>WBBM Radio News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raymond J. DeHull</td>
<td>City of Racine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norman Schoenwa</td>
<td>Racine Raiders Football Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al Staker</td>
<td>City of Racine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimberly Fennhoff</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Lee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa Wannen</td>
<td>SEGG Sera Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice Bierwagen</td>
<td>Bus Rider.</td>
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<tr>
<td>T. Kehn</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>James L. Stotes</td>
<td>Cadillac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Street</td>
<td>Racine County HSD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alan Banks</td>
<td>Journal Times</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelly Forleyway</td>
<td>Forney Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Glider</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura Terry</td>
<td>Society's Assets</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Giuffre</td>
<td>Kenyon Enterprises, LLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Stahl</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John K. Magee</td>
<td>TRANSIT NOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Warner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## PUBLIC MEETING FOR RACINE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT PLAN ALTERNATIVES

### Sign-In Sheet

**DATE:** March 12, 2013  
**TIME:** 4:30 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Veterans Terrace – Patriot Room  
567 Milwaukee Avenue  
Burlington, WI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name (Please Print)</th>
<th>Agency/Organization Represented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. CLARK HUNTHOLZ</td>
<td>WAMI - RAC, + LOUV, INC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sarah Swift</td>
<td>Racine County HSD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Richard Gantech</td>
<td>Racine Literacy/Teen Services/Hope’s House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. L. Jopp</td>
<td>Racine County HSD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Susan Jopp</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. MaryAnn Winkfield</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. J.C. Cantrell</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Holly Sticklus</td>
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<td>9. Ed Sticklus</td>
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<td>10. Tony Ingram</td>
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<td>11. Elisa Massey</td>
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<td>12. Shirley Zielke-Fell</td>
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<td>13. Darrell Bell</td>
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<td>14. Karen Briones</td>
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<td>15. Monica Hoffa</td>
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<td>16. Marilyn Johnson</td>
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<td>17. Andrew Alman</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. James Ludwig</td>
<td>County Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Jami Hunning</td>
<td>River View Manor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Dan Hedges</td>
<td>Saukville Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Helene Irland</td>
<td>River View Manor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Mary Smith</td>
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<tr>
<td>23. Steve Srank</td>
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<td>27.}(\text{NAME})</td>
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<td>28.}(\text{NAME})</td>
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Appendix C

COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS OF PUBLIC MEETINGS
HELD MARCH 6 AND 12, 2013, AND SUMMARY MATERIALS
DISTRIBUTED AT THOSE MEETINGS
You are invited to attend public meetings on the Racine County Public Transit Plan. The plan is being prepared by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), at the request of the City and County of Racine. The plan will recommend transit service improvements for the City and County to consider over the five-year period from 2013 to 2017.

The meetings will be held in “open house” format, allowing you to attend at any time during the two-hour timeframe for each meeting. Information will be provided on alternatives for improving transit service in the City and County, including a short presentation made at 5:30 p.m. at each meeting. Your feedback on the alternatives is very valuable to the preparation of the plan. More information about this advisory plan is available on the study website at [www.sewrpc.org/racinetransitplan](http://www.sewrpc.org/racinetransitplan).

A court reporter will be available to record oral comments on the alternatives. Written comments will be accepted through March 8, 2013, and may be submitted at the meeting or by U.S. mail, email, or fax (see below). Comments may also be submitted using the study website.

Meeting locations are wheelchair-accessible. Persons needing disability-related accommodations are asked to contact the SEWRPC office at (262) 547-6721 a minimum of three business days before the meetings so that appropriate arrangements can be made regarding access or mobility, review or interpretation of materials, active participation, or submission of comments.

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, PO Box 1607, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1607
Telephone: (262) 547-6721 Fax: (262) 547-1103 Email: racinetransitplan@sewrpc.org

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuesday, March 5, 2013</th>
<th>You are invited to attend public meetings on the Racine County Public Transit Plan. The plan is being prepared by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), at the request of the City and County of Racine. The plan will recommend transit service improvements for the City and County to consider over the five-year period from 2013 to 2017.</th>
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<tr>
<td>4:30-6:30 p.m.*</td>
<td>You are invited to attend public meetings on the Racine County Public Transit Plan. The plan is being prepared by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), at the request of the City and County of Racine. The plan will recommend transit service improvements for the City and County to consider over the five-year period from 2013 to 2017.</td>
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<td>Veterans Terrace - Patriot Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>589 Milwaukee Avenue, Burlington</td>
<td>You are invited to attend public meetings on the Racine County Public Transit Plan. The plan is being prepared by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), at the request of the City and County of Racine. The plan will recommend transit service improvements for the City and County to consider over the five-year period from 2013 to 2017.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, March 6, 2013</td>
<td>You are invited to attend public meetings on the Racine County Public Transit Plan. The plan is being prepared by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), at the request of the City and County of Racine. The plan will recommend transit service improvements for the City and County to consider over the five-year period from 2013 to 2017.</td>
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<td>Corinne Reid-Owens Transit Center</td>
<td>You are invited to attend public meetings on the Racine County Public Transit Plan. The plan is being prepared by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), at the request of the City and County of Racine. The plan will recommend transit service improvements for the City and County to consider over the five-year period from 2013 to 2017.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1421 State Street, Racine</td>
<td>You are invited to attend public meetings on the Racine County Public Transit Plan. The plan is being prepared by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), at the request of the City and County of Racine. The plan will recommend transit service improvements for the City and County to consider over the five-year period from 2013 to 2017.</td>
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</table>

*Presentation at each: 5:30 p.m.*
RESCHEDULED: BURLINGTON PUBLIC MEETING FOR RACINE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEW MEETING DATE:</th>
<th><em><strong>Due to inclement weather on Tuesday, March 5, the public meeting to be held in Burlington on the Racine County Public Transit Plan was cancelled and has been rescheduled for Tuesday, March 12.</strong></em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, March 12, 2013</td>
<td>You are invited to attend this public meeting on the Racine County Public Transit Plan. The plan is being prepared by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), at the request of the City and County of Racine. The plan will recommend transit service improvements for the City and County to consider over the five-year period from 2013 to 2017.</td>
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<td>4:30-6:30 p.m.</td>
<td>The meeting will be held in “open house” format, allowing you to attend at any time during the two-hour timeframe for the meeting. Information will be provided on alternatives for improving transit service in the City and County, including a short presentation made at 5:30 p.m. Your feedback on the alternatives is very valuable to the preparation of the plan. More information about this advisory plan is available on the study website at <a href="http://www.sewrpc.org/racinetransitplan">www.sewrpc.org/racinetransitplan</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veterans Terrace - Patriot Room</td>
<td>A court reporter will be available to record oral comments on the alternatives. Written comments will be accepted through March 15, 2013 (note: this deadline was extended due to the rescheduled meeting), and may be submitted at the meeting or by U.S. mail, email, or fax (see below). Comments may also be submitted using the study website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>589 Milwaukee Avenue, Burlington</td>
<td>The meeting location is wheelchair-accessible. Persons needing disability-related accommodations are asked to contact the SEWRPC office at (262) 547-6721 a minimum of three business days before the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made regarding access or mobility, review or interpretation of materials, active participation, or submission of comments.</td>
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Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, PO Box 1607, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1607
Telephone: (262) 547-6721 Fax: (262) 547-1103 Email: racinetransitplan@sewrpc.org

Racine Journal Times
March 7, 2013
Appendix C-2
PRESS RELEASE AND LIST OF MEDIA OUTLETS

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
2393 N. 122nd Road
Hartland, WI 53029

News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 7, 2013
Release No. 13-01

For more information:
Ken Koch, Executive Director
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
262-547-6731
skoch@sewrc.org

RACINE COUNTY RESIDENTS ASKED TO PROVIDE INPUT ON ALTERNATIVES FOR IMPROVING PUBLIC TRANSIT IN THE COUNTY

Two public meetings have been scheduled to gather input from Racine County residents on possible ways to improve public transit service in the County over the next five years. At the public meetings, attendees will be able to review, ask questions, and provide comments on a series of alternatives developed for improving City, County, and inter-county public transit services. The meetings will be held:

Tuesday, March 5, 2013, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Vernon Towne – Patrick Room
509 Millisan Avenue
Burlington, WI 53105

Wednesday, March 6, 2013, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Cortina Rd/Owns Transit Center
1423 State Street
Racine, WI 53404

The public meetings will be in an “open house” format, allowing residents to attend at any time during the two-hour timeframe for each meeting. A short presentation will be given at 5:30 p.m. at the time of each meeting attendees can leave written comments or speak to a court reporter or staff member to provide oral comments. Written comments may also be submitted through March 18, 2013. All comments will be considered when developing a Federal recommendee Regional Public Transit Plan. Comments can be submitted in any of the following ways:

- Plan Website: www.sewrc.org/publicinput
- Email: publicinput@sewrc.org
- Fax: (262) 547-1103
- Mail: Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
2393 N. 122nd Road
Hartland, WI 53029

News Release No. 13-01
February 7, 2013
Page 2 of 2

The transit service improvement alternatives have been developed as part of a short-range, five-year plan for public transit in Racine County. The plan is being prepared by the Regional Planning Commission, working in cooperation with staff from the City of Racine and Racine County. Guidance for the plan is being provided by an Advisory Workgroup made up of representatives from all levels of government in the County and a wide variety of agencies with an interest in transportation in the County. The Advisory Workgroup has approved the initial service improvement alternatives for public comment.

In preparation for the public meetings, the Commission has prepared a newsletter summarizing the alternatives. The newsletter is included in this newsletter packet.

A Preliminary Recommended Alternative for the City of Racine/Township System
An alternative system for the Racine/Bellevue Township System (BUS) has been developed. The changes proposed under the alternative would make the BUS more efficient by combining and reallocating non-performing routes. For example, Route Nos. 2 and 5—two of the poorest performing routes—would be combined into one route, renamed Route No. 23. Route No. 36 would also be combined from a one-way loop, which makes travel inconvenient for farmers, into a two-way route, renamed Route No. 6.

Overall, the proposed changes would result in a more understandable weekday schedule and significantly reduced layover times during evening and weekend hours. Service frequency would be increased so that regular routes will take 30 minutes to travel from the Transit Center to any origin, 60 minutes to travel 1.5 miles, and 90 minutes to travel 3.3 miles in the Transit Center. Nearly all regular routes will run every 30 minutes during peak periods and every 60 minutes during off-peak periods or on weekends. Route service frequencies would allow the routes to "circle" at the Transit Center on each trip so passengers would be able to transfer between routes without waiting for long periods of time. Total travel time for the system would also be improved by automating a proposed switch transfert point at Regency Mall.

The total operating costs, total public operating funding, and local share of public funding for the proposed service improvement are about the same as the existing system. Additional funding is needed to improve existing routes and to add new routes. The reader is encouraged to attend the public meeting to review the services and to provide comments on the regional planning commission’s initial service improvement alternatives for the City of Racine.

A Preliminary Recommended Alternative for the County System
Three alternative service improvement alternatives were developed for Racine County:

- Alternative 1 proposes three routes to improve existing County transit services. One option is to expand eligibility of the existing County demand-response transportation service which operates west of 95th Street to seniors and persons with disabilities to anyone who qualifies for Social Security Disability Insurance. Another is to continue the existing City of Racine and Racine County para-transit services east of 95th Street. A third is to continue service to land and rail with the County’s SPA service (Starring Purple Aces) and the Racine County’s County’s SPA service. The service will be eligible to receive Federal and State public transit operating assistance.

- Alternative 2 would replace the current, eligibility-limited County demand-response transportation service west of 95th Street with a public demand-response transit service open to the general public. The program would be similar to those currently operated in Oak Park and Washington Counties.

- Alternative 3 would involve undertaking a pilot demand program for low-income commuters. The program would be open to commuters of the County or by a county resident.

** * **

Analysts of these alternatives indicated that the County, in addition to continuing its existing eligibility-limited demand-response service west of 95th Street until the first implement a combined City/County para-transit services east of 95th Street. It would be eligible for Federal and State operating assistance, and implement a combined para-transit program, all within the existing budget. It would be assumed that extending the City and County para-transit services east of 95th Street could be a very complex task. As such, the first step may be to establish an integrated public transit system, providing a single point of contact for information on both the City and County services.

Replacing the existing City demand-response service west of 95th Street with a service open to anyone who receives assistance from County agencies or a shared-ride taxi program open to the general public would be required to make a significant increase in County funding within or beyond the next five years.

The County Service Alternatives (for Travel between counties and Surrounding Counties)
Four alternatives were developed for better connecting Racine County residents and activity centers to adjacent counties:

- Alternative 1 would increase the service frequency on the existing Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha commuter train o the Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha commuter train is operated by Wisconsin County Line, runs from almost weekly to 10 weekday round-trips. A daily service alignment change would also be made to directly serve the Gateway Technical College campus in Racine.

- Alternative 2 proposes three ways to improve transportation connections between UNS routes and the UW-Pulaski campus. One option is for the City of Racine to operate a shuttle service between campus and the proposed southwest transit point in Regency Mall. Another is for the City to extend U.S. Route 14 to campus. A third is for the City to work with U.S. Department of Transportation to expand the University’s existing shuttle service, including an extension of the service to the proposed southwest transit point.

- Alternative 3 proposes an express bus service between the Cities of Racine and Kenosha. The service would operate on weekdays, with stops limited to about every 14 to 16 miles. Buses would run 30 minutes during peak periods and 60 minutes during off-peak periods.

Alternative 4 proposes a commuter bus service between the City of Burlington and downtown Milwaukee. The route would serve several commuter lots, with two-way weekend service eastbound on service from Burlington to Milwaukee in the morning and the reverse direction in the afternoon.

Each of the inter-county alternatives would require an increase in the costs for providing public transit services between Racine County and surrounding counties. Depending on the alternative, necessary increases in local funding would need to come from the City of Racine, County of Racine, Wisconsin County Lines, or UW-Pulaski.

[Note: Attached to this press release is a copy of newsletter 2, which lists the dates and locations of the associated public meetings and summarizes the proposed transit service improvement alternatives developed for the Racine County public transit program.]

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LIST OF MEDIA OUTLETS

NEWSPAPERS
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
The Journal Times
Burlington Standard Press
CNI Newspapers
Waterford Post
The Insider News
The Spanish Journal

RADIO
WBSD FM
WRJN AM

OTHER
Wheeler Reports Inc.
RACINE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT PLAN: 2013-2017

Transit Service Improvement Alternatives

Racine County, the City of Racine, and the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) are jointly preparing a short-range, five-year plan for public transit in Racine County. Alternatives for improving transit service in the City and County have been developed and are summarized in this newsletter. Public comments on these alternatives submitted by Friday, March 8, 2013, will be considered when developing a final recommended Racine County public transit plan.

See the last page of this newsletter for more information about the plan, upcoming public meetings, and how to comment on the alternatives.

STEPS COMPLETED TO DATE

☑ Evaluate the performance of the City of Racine Belle Urban System (BUS);

☑ Evaluate other public and human services transportation provided in Racine County;

☑ Identify the unmet transit travel needs for trips within Racine County and to/from other counties;

☑ Develop and evaluate transit service improvement alternatives for the BUS that address the performance evaluation, including unmet transit service needs; and

☑ Develop and evaluate transit service improvement alternatives for the remainder of the County outside the BUS service area, to address unmet transit needs.

NEXT STEPS

☐ Obtain public input on the transit service improvement alternatives; and

☐ Prepare a final recommended transit service improvement plan for Racine County over the next five years.

WHAT'S INSIDE

This newsletter presents a summary of alternatives for improving public transit service in the City of Racine and Racine County.

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EXISTING TRANSIT SERVICES

City of Racine Belle Urban System
Map 1 shows the current Belle Urban System (BUS) routes. The BUS operates eight regular bus routes, several peak-hour routes, and paratransit service for disabled persons unable to use the regular routes. Almost all regular routes meet at the Corinne Reid-Owens Transit Center on a “pulse” schedule to allow transfers between routes. The regular routes operate between 5:10 a.m. and 10:10 p.m. on weekdays, between 5:40 a.m. and 6:40 p.m. on Saturdays, and between 9:40 a.m. and 6:40 p.m. on Sundays. Most buses arrive every 30 minutes during peak periods, and between 30 and 60 minutes during off-peak periods, evenings, and weekends.

The City's Dial-A-Ride Transport (DART) provides Federally-mandated demand-response transportation services within 3/4 mile of a fixed BUS route to people who cannot use the City's fixed-route service due to a physical or mental impairment. DART paratransit is funded through operating revenues, local funds, and Federal and State urban transit operating assistance funds. The service is available during the same hours as the regular BUS routes.

County Transportation Services
The Racine County Human Services Department provides demand-response transportation to seniors and disabled persons outside the DART service area, and to seniors within the DART service area. The service operates on weekdays between 5:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. The County also runs a Burlington area shuttle service through the Shutting People Around Racine County (SPARC) program. The Burlington SPARC route operates on weekdays between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. The County contracts with First Transit to operate the demand-response service and with Kenson Enterprises to operate the SPARC program. The services are funded through operating revenues, County funds, Federal Section 5317 “New Freedom” funds, and the County’s allocation of State Section 85.21 specialized transportation assistance funds.

Inter-County Transportation Services
Wisconsin Coach Lines (WCL) currently operates a commuter bus route between the Cities of Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee. The route includes seven round-trips on weekdays between 5:15 a.m. and 10:30 p.m., focused on the morning and afternoon peak periods, and six round-trips between 8:15 a.m. and 10:37 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. The WCL route is funded through operating revenues and the State urban mass transit operating assistance program. WCL recently made three service changes to the route:

- Reduced weekday round-trips from eight to seven,
- Eliminated service to UW-Milwaukee, and
- Began serving UW-Parkside on two weekday round-trips.

UW-Parkside, located in Kenosha County, currently operates a campus shuttle for its students and staff, which includes two round-trips between the campus and the McDonald’s at Taylor Ave. and Meachem Rd. in the City of Racine. This service is offered on weekdays when class is in session.
Map 2 below shows the proposed BUS routes under the Workgroup’s preliminary recommended alternative for the City of Racine. The alternative system is “financially-constrained”, keeping the local share of the needed annual operating assistance between about $1.52 and $1.65 million over the five-year planning period.

The proposed changes would make the BUS more efficient by combining and realigning poor-performing routes. The proposed changes would also result in a more understandable midday schedule and significantly reduced layover times during evenings and weekends.

Proposed Changes to BUS Routes

The alternative system would keep the same reduced service hours that were established in January 2012. On weeknights, the last trips would leave the Transit Center at 9:10 p.m. On Saturdays and Sundays, the last trips would leave the Transit Center at 6:10 p.m.

To easily identify where routes are proposed to change under the alternative system, the existing legs of Routes 1 through 5—which generally run north to south through the Transit Center—were labeled based on whether they run north (Routes 1N through 5N) or south (Routes 1S through 5S) of the Transit Center. The primary changes to route alignments include:

- Remove Route 1N loop on South St., Charles St., and Carlton Dr., and modify the route to serve Horlick High School and Rapids Plaza.
- Modify Route 3N to serve St. Mary’s hospital.
- Modify Route 4N to serve downtown.
- Convert Route 86 from a one-way loop to a two-way out-and-back route (“Route 6”).
- Establish a southwest transfer point at Regency Mall for transfers between Routes 4S, 6, 7, and 27.

These changes, along with other minor route changes, equalize route lengths so each regular route will take 30 minutes to get from the Transit Center to its endpoint, then 30 minutes back to the Transit Center. Nearly all regular routes would run every 30 minutes during peak periods and every 60 minutes during off-peak periods and on weekends (except Route 6, which would operate every 60 minutes all day). These service frequencies would allow the routes to “pulse” at the Transit Center on each trip. Transfers between routes would also be improved by constructing the proposed southwest transfer point.

Although the alternative system does not include changes to Route 27 (which was changed in fall 2012), BUS staff intends to monitor the route’s performance and decide whether to change or expand the route.
WHAT WILL THE ALTERNATIVE SYSTEM COST TO OPERATE?

The alternative system would save about $340,000 in total operating costs in its first full year. Compared to continuing with existing service levels, the alternative system would save about $340,000 in total operating costs and $150,000 in required local operating assistance in its first full year.

Performance Measures and Costs
Overall, the transit system's annual revenue hours would be slightly reduced—from 81,200 revenue hours in the system's 2012 budget to 77,000 under the alternative system. Ridership is assumed to modestly increase by 1 percent per year—from about 1.06 million revenue passengers in 2012 to about 1.11 million in 2017. Compared to continuing with existing service levels, the alternative system would save about $340,000 in total operating costs and $150,000 in required local operating assistance in its first full year.

Options if Operating Funding Levels Change
While the alternative system assumes essentially flat operating funding levels, it recognizes that future funding levels may change. Map 3 shows several possible service improvements that the City could consider if more funding becomes available. These improvements combined would cost about $1.2 million more to operate annually, requiring $1.0 million more in net operating assistance.

Capital Needs
The alternative system does not require any additional capital investment over the existing system. Over the five-year planning period, the following significant capital investments are planned:

- Maintain its existing fleet of 35 heavy-duty buses by replacing a total of 20 buses.
- Replace seven existing paratransit buses (in service since 2009) with new paratransit buses.
- Lease/purchase land at Regency Mall for a small transfer facility.
- Make various repairs, renovations, and upgrades to BUS facilities.

Over five years, 80 percent of these capital costs could be funded by a total of about $8.8 million in Federal funds, with the City of Racine providing a local share of $2.2 million.

If local funding levels need to be reduced, the City could consider these service reductions or fare increase:

- Eliminate Route 25N/25S on Saturdays.
- Eliminate Route 1S after 6:30 p.m. on weeknights.
- Eliminate Route 1S on Saturdays and/or Sundays.
- Increase cash fares by $0.25 (about 12 percent).

These options combined would reduce the alternative system's needed net operating assistance by about $400,000. If even more severe funding cuts are faced, another option would be to cut back routes that run every 30 minutes during peak periods to run every 60 minutes all day. If done on all routes, total operating assistance would be reduced by about $720,000 in the first year, with local assistance reduced by about $240,000. As a less drastic option, the City could also select individual routes to cut back to 60 minutes all day, based on performance.
RACINE COUNTY TRANSIT ALTERNATIVES

Three alternatives for transit service were developed for Racine County to address an identified need for affordable transportation services with fewer eligibility restrictions. The County could choose to implement any or all of these alternatives, or to maintain existing services.

**RACINE COUNTY TRANSIT ALTERNATIVES**

1. **Expand/Coordinate Existing Services**
2. **Public Shared-Ride Taxi**
3. **Vanpools**

**Alternative 1: Expand/Coordinate Existing Services**

Three ways to better coordinate and expand access to existing transportation services were developed:

- **Sub-alternative 1A**: West of IH 94, expand eligibility for the County's demand-response service—currently limited to seniors and disabled persons—to anyone who receives assistance from County agencies (except Medicaid-funded non-emergency transportation).

- **Sub-alternative 1B**: East of IH 94, combine the City DART paratransit and County demand-response services into a single service for seniors and disabled persons. The service hours would mirror the BUS service hours. Fares would be $3.00 each way for most trips.

- **Sub-alternative 1C**: Continue to operate the existing County shuttle service (Burlington SPARC), refine as needed, and operate the service as public transit.

**Analysis and Conclusions for Alternative 1**

Under Sub-alternative 1A, expanding eligibility for the County's demand-response service would more than double ridership, which would require significantly more vehicle hours of service and cause annual operating expenses to increase by about 2.5 times by 2017. The service would not be eligible for Federal and State transit operating funds, so higher levels of State Section 85.21 and County funding would be needed.

Under Sub-alternative 1B, combining the City DART paratransit and County demand-response transportation service east of IH 94 would benefit seniors and disabled persons by providing a convenient, one-stop transportation service. Total ridership would be expected to slightly increase and utilizing only one operator would improve efficiency. However, combining **City and County paratransit services east of IH 94 would be a complex task. A potential first step would be an integrated call center.**

Under Sub-alternative 1C, operating the shuttle service to serve trips made by the general public—in addition to trips made by seniors and disabled persons—would make the service eligible for Federal and State rural transit operating funds. This eligibility would require the operator to purchase and use vehicles that are accessible to disabled persons. Overall, this Federal and State funding would limit the amount of County funding needed, while still allowing the County to improve the shuttle service. It would also allow the County to set aside some State Section 85.21 funding to purchase vehicles for the County's various transportation services.

**Operating the County shuttle service as public transit would make the service eligible for Federal and State rural transit operating assistance funds.**
Alternative 2: Public Shared-Ride Taxi West of IH 94
This option would replace the County's eligibility-limited (seniors and disabled persons only) demand-response transportation service with a shared-ride taxi program that anyone could use. The shared-ride taxi service would have the same service area as the existing eligibility-limited service (any trips with one trip end west of IH 94, including out-of-county medical trips) and would operate weekdays from 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Adult one-way fares would range from $4.00 to $7.75, with discounts for students, seniors, and disabled persons.

Analysis and Conclusions for Alternative 2
Replacing the current, eligibility-limited demand-response transportation service with a public shared-ride taxi program would likely more than triple ridership, which would require significantly more vehicle hours of service and cause annual operating expenses to nearly quadruple by 2017. Since shared-ride taxi would be a public transit service, it would be eligible for Federal and State rural transit operating funds, reducing the initial amount of State Section 85.21 and County funding needed. However, as ridership, service levels, and the associated operating costs increase, the needed State Section 85.21 and County funding would return to about existing levels by 2017. Based on the experiences of Ozaukee and Washington Counties, which currently operate rural shared-ride taxi services, a shared-ride taxi program would eventually require a much higher County contribution than the existing service.

Alternative 3: Vanpools for Commuter Trips
Two ways to form a vanpool program were evaluated in which volunteer drivers would provide group transportation for long work-trip commutes (over 15 miles each way) starting or ending in the County:
- Sub-alternative 3A: County-run vanpool program.
- Sub-alternative 3B: Privately-run vanpool program.

WHAT IS A VANPOOL?
Vanpools are for workers with long commutes who cannot use public transportation or find it inconvenient to do so. They consist of groups of five to 15 people commuting together to and from work. Each member contributes to the cost of operating the van. One member volunteers to drive, usually in exchange for reduced monthly fees. Typically, the vans are owned by a third party, such as a government agency, an employer, or a private vanpool operator.

Vanpools are most useful to a narrowly-defined market:
- Workers whose commutes are longer than 15 miles;
- Workers who share a single employer or who work in an area with a concentrated group of employers with similar shift start- and end-times;
- Workers who live near each other or who can travel to a common departure point (such as a park-ride lot).

Analysis and Conclusions for Alternative 3
Under Sub-alternative 3A, a County-funded vanpool program would be administered by County staff, with the County purchasing vans using Federal transit capital assistance funds which cover 80 percent of the vehicle costs. Fees charged to the vanpool users would cover the operating costs and the County’s share of the cost to purchase additional or replacement vans.

Under Sub-alternative 3B, a private vanpool operator would provide vans and administer the vanpool program, using fees charged to the vanpool users to cover their own costs. Monthly user fees would be significantly higher under a private vanpool provider, because it would not receive Federal assistance for purchasing vehicles. To reduce these user fees, the County could contribute funding, or partner with employers willing to contribute funding, to cover part of the cost of the service.
RACINE COUNTY TRANSIT ALTERNATIVES

Discussion of Transit Service
Alternatives for Racine County
The following should be considered with respect to the transit service alternatives proposed for Racine County:

1. Purchasing Vehicles for County Transit Services:
Racine County could consider purchasing the vehicles used for providing all County-funded transit services. The vehicle purchases would be eligible for Federal capital assistance that could cover 80 percent of the cost. Three advantages of Racine County purchasing vehicles needed for County-funded transit services are:

- The County could negotiate lower rates with the services' contract operators.
- There is a potential to increase competition for service contracts, which could decrease the costs for the service contract.
- Federal capital assistance could cover 80 percent of vehicle purchase costs, while Federal and State operating assistance covers only about 50-60 percent of operating expenses.

2. Long Term Costs of Shared-Ride Taxi:
Sub-alternative 1A and Alternative 2 provide two options for demand-response public transit service in western Racine County. The shared-ride taxi program under Alternative 2 would provide a service open to everyone west of IH 94 and may have lower costs to the County in the short term. However, operating costs would likely grow for several years beyond the five-year planning period, because service levels would need to increase to accommodate increased ridership. This trend was seen by public shared-ride taxi services operated by Ozaukee and Washington Counties.

3. Advantages/Drawbacks of Combined City/County Paratransit:
Combining City and County demand-response paratransit service east of IH 94 (Sub-alternative 1B) could be done similar to Kenosha County. Short-term local and County funding would not be expected to increase, although there is potential for funding to increase if demand increases significantly. A combined service has the following advantages:

- Should benefit seniors and persons with disabilities who need transportation in eastern Racine County by providing a convenient, one-stop transportation service—one telephone number and one provider.
- More efficient since many of the County’s demand-response passenger trips start or end within the BUS service area.

However, there are also drawbacks:

- If operated by drivers for the BUS, cost savings from a more efficient one-stop service would be cancelled out due to higher unit operating costs for the City DART paratransit service than for the current County service.
- Reaching agreement between the City and County on how to combine funding for the joint paratransit service could be a very complex task.

Which Transit Services can Racine County Afford?
The estimated costs of the alternatives presented in this section of the newsletter indicate that there may be enough funding from the existing County levy, the County's State Section 85.21 allocation, and Federal transit funding sources to adequately fund a number of the Racine County alternatives. For example, the County could implement the following three initiatives (while maintaining its existing eligibility-limited demand-response transportation service west of IH 94):

- Sub-alternative 1B: Combine City/County paratransit east of IH 94;
- Sub-alternative 1C: Continue/refine shuttle service and operate service as public transit; and
- Alternative 3: Vanpools.

By 2017, all four services would require an estimated $332,000 in State Section 85.21 funds, which is well below the $436,000 in State Section 85.21 funds expected to be available to the County in 2017. The total estimated County share of funds would be about $64,000 by 2017—about the same as the existing $62,000 in 2011.

Again assuming implementation of the three initiatives above, the County could also replace its existing eligibility-limited demand-response transportation service west of IH 94 with either Sub-alternative 1A or Alternative 2. However, implementing Sub-alternative 1A (expand eligibility to clients of County Human Services) or Alternative 2 (shared-ride taxi open to anyone) would be expected to require a significant increase in County funding. Sub-alternative 1A would require annual County funding to increase from $62,000 to $103,000 by 2017. Alternative 2, due to the availability of Federal and State funding, would not increase County funding by 2017, but would be expected to significantly increase County funding beyond 2017 as ridership grows.
INTER-COUNTY TRANSIT ALTERNATIVES

Four alternatives were developed for better connecting Racine County residents and activity centers to adjacent counties. The City and County could choose to implement any combination of these alternatives, or to maintain existing services.

**INTER-COUNTY TRANSIT ALTERNATIVES**
1 – Increased Commuter Bus Frequency
2 – Public Transit to UW-Parkside
3 – Kenosha-Racine Express Bus
4 – Burlington-Milwaukee Commuter Bus

Alternative 1: Increase Service Frequency on the Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha Commuter Bus Route

This option would include the following changes to the existing WCL commuter bus route:

- Increased weekday service frequency from seven to 10 round-trips:
  - Northbound one-way trips: one more in the morning and two more in the afternoon, and
  - Southbound one-way trips: one more in the midday and two more in the evening.
- A slight route alignment change to directly serve Gateway Technical College in Racine (shown on Map 4).

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*Local funding from WCL or Cities of Kenosha and Racine.

Alternative 1 would provide additional service to Milwaukee and Kenosha and increase travel options for City of Racine and Racine County residents at times when there is an apparent need for more frequent service. However, given current financial constraints, the increased local funding required to increase the service frequency may not be available. Regardless of whether or not the service frequency is increased, the City of Racine should consider taking steps to integrate the route with existing BUS routes in order to promote coordination between commuter and local transit services and make each easier and more attractive to use.
Alternative 2: Provide Local Public Transit Service to UW-Parkside

Two ways to provide local public transit service to the UW-Parkside campus and one way to enhance the existing University shuttle service were developed:

- Sub-alternative 2A: Operate a shuttle between Regency Mall and UW-Parkside using a BUS paratransit vehicle.
- Sub-alternative 2B: Extend the proposed BUS Route 1 to serve UW-Parkside.
- Sub-alternative 2C: Extend and increase the existing UW-Parkside shuttle service.

Map 5 below shows the proposed alignments for each of the sub-alternatives.

Map 5 PROVIDE LOCAL PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE TO UW-PARKSIDE (ALTERNATIVE 2)

Under Sub-alternative 2A, the City would operate shuttle service between Tallent Hall and the proposed southwest transfer point at Regency Mall. The shuttle would replace the existing campus shuttle's two round-trips per weekday with six round-trips, and would be operated using a BUS paratransit vehicle and driver. The shuttle trips would run every two hours on weekdays when classes are in session and would meet BUS routes at transit "pulse" transfer times.

Under Sub-alternative 2B, the proposed extension of BUS Route 1 would provide frequent local bus service to UW-Parkside's Tallent Hall, permitting transfers between the proposed BUS Route 1 and Kenosha Area Transit (KAT) Route 1, which already serves UW-Parkside. Service to UW-Parkside would be operated between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on weekdays when classes are in session (15.5 weekday round-trips).

Under Sub-alternative 2C, the City would work with UW-Parkside to enhance the existing campus shuttle service, with the University implementing a 1.2-mile extension north to the southwest transfer point and one additional round-trip during the midday period, for a total of three weekday round-trips.

All three sub-alternatives would improve connections to BUS routes by providing service to the proposed southwest transfer point. A higher frequency service, like that under the extended BUS Route 1, would better serve both students needing transportation between the City and UW-Parkside and individuals who need to continue on to the KAT system. A lower frequency, like that of either a City or increased University shuttle service, would limit the ability to provide convenient transfers to KAT routes.

However, extending BUS Route 1 would require additional funding. It may also cause operational difficulties because the route would be longer (90 minutes round-trip from the Transit Center to UW-Parkside and back to the Transit Center) than other BUS routes (60 minutes round-trip from the Transit Center to each route's endpoint and back to the Transit Center). It should be noted that any improved service to UW-Parkside would require collaboration between the City and University in terms of how the service is operated and funded.

### Year 2017 Estimates

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*Local funding from UW-Parkside or local/County government.
Alternative 3: Establish Express Bus Service between the Cities of Racine and Kenosha

Under Inter-County Alternative 3, the Cities of Racine and Kenosha would jointly establish and contract for an express bus service between the two Cities (see Map 6). The route would serve major public higher education institutions, including the Gateway Technical College campuses in Racine and Kenosha and the UW-Parkside campus in Kenosha County. On the proposed service, 16 round-trips would be operated between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekdays, with peak service frequencies of 30 minutes and off-peak service frequencies of 60 minutes. Fares would be $2.25 each way.

WHAT IS EXPRESS BUS?

Express bus is a limited-stop public transit service provided with large, urban buses. Stops are usually spaced about every 1/4 mile to one mile along an express bus route. Express bus typically provides service in major travel corridors to connect major activity centers and medium- and high-density residential areas. An express route connecting downtown Racine and downtown Kenosha is recommended in the currently adopted year 2035 regional transportation system plan for Southeastern Wisconsin.

The year 2017 estimates (above right) reflect the Racine-Kenosha express bus service after four years of operation. The service would be funded through operating revenues, local funds from the Cities of Racine and Kenosha, and Federal and State urban transit operating assistance funds. Four buses would need to be purchased at a total cost of about $1.7 million. Of that cost, 80 percent could be funded using Federal transportation grants, with the Cities of Racine and Kenosha responsible for providing the remaining 20 percent. The Cities of Racine and Kenosha would need to reach agreement on how to provide the needed local operating and capital funding.

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*Local funding from Cities of Kenosha and Racine.
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Map 6

Establish Express Bus Service between Racine and Kenosha (Alternative 3)

Source: SEWRPC.
Alternative 4: Establish Commuter Bus Service between the Cities of Burlington and Milwaukee
Under Inter-County Alternative 4, Racine County would establish and contract for a commuter bus service between the City of Burlington and the Milwaukee central business district. Map 7 shows the proposed route alignment over STH 36 and IH 43, as well as three proposed park-ride lots that would be served by the route (an additional park-ride lot could be considered in the Wind Lake area). The service would provide two round-trips on weekdays, focused on service from Burlington to Milwaukee in the morning and the reverse direction in the afternoon. Racine County could contract for operation of the route from a private transit operator, much like Waukesha County contracts for commuter bus service. Fares would be $3.25 each way.

WHAT IS COMMUTER BUS?
Commuter bus is a limited-stop public transit service focused on providing work commute trips (often referred to as “freeway flyer” service). Commuter bus connects urban centers through buses operating over freeways or major highways, with stops spaced every three to five miles. Many commuter bus routes already exist in southeastern Wisconsin, with most focused on serving work commute trips to downtown Milwaukee.

The year 2017 estimates (above right) reflect the Burlington-Milwaukee commuter bus service after four years of operation. The service would be funded through operating revenues, County funds, and Federal and State rural transit operating assistance funds. The County may also be able to obtain Federal Highway Administration Congestion Management and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) grant funding to cover about 80 percent of the total cost to operate the service during its first three years. During those three years, passenger revenues may be expected to provide the 20 percent local matching funds.

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*Local funding from Racine County.
TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

We want to hear your opinion of the alternatives for improving public transit in Racine County. There will be two public meetings that you are invited and encouraged to attend. The public meetings will be in an “open house” format, allowing you to attend at any time during the two-hour timeframe for each meeting. A short presentation will be made at 5:30 p.m. at each meeting. To provide comments, please attend one of the public meetings, where you will have the opportunity to leave written comments or speak to a court reporter or staff member to provide oral comments. If you are unable to attend one of the meetings, you can send written comments in any of the following ways by March 8, 2013:

- Plan Website:  www.sewrpc.org/racinetransitplan
- E-mail: racinetransitplan@sewrpc.org
- U.S. Mail: P.O. Box 1607, Waukesha, WI 53187-1607
- Fax: (262) 547-1103

All comments will be considered when developing a final recommended Racine County public transit plan.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

In addition to the information presented in this newsletter, the plan website contains detailed information about the alternatives as well as other work completed to date for the plan. You can also submit comments or request a briefing by staff.

Kenneth R. Yunker, Executive Director
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
(262) 547-6721

Eric Lynde, Senior Transportation Planner/Engineer
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
(262) 547-6721

SCHEDULE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

Tuesday, March 5, 2013, 4:30-6:30 pm
Veterans Terrace - Patriot Room
589 Milwaukee Avenue, Burlington

Wednesday, March 6, 2013, 4:30-6:30 pm
Corinne Reid-Owens Transit Center
1421 State Street, Racine

The meeting locations are wheelchair-accessible. Persons needing disability-related accommodations are asked to contact the SEWRPC office at (262) 547-6721 a minimum of three business days before the meetings so that appropriate arrangements can be made regarding access or mobility, review or interpretation of materials, active participation, or submission of comments.
ALTERNATIVES FOR IMPROVING TRANSIT IN RACINE COUNTY

You are invited…
To provide comments and feedback on proposed alternatives for improving transit service in the City of Racine and Racine County over the next five years.

You will have the opportunity to…
- Hear about the effort to prepare a short-range, five-year plan for public transit in Racine County.
- Learn about proposed transit service improvement alternatives, including alternatives for the City of Racine, Racine County, and between Racine County and surrounding counties.
- Talk about the proposed alternatives with staff from the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, City of Racine, and Racine County.
- Comment on the proposed alternatives and provide suggestions that will be considered as the final recommended plan is developed.

The Racine County Public Transit Plan is being prepared by the Regional Planning Commission, at the request of the City and County of Racine. Guidance for the plan is being provided by an Advisory Workgroup, which has approved the proposed alternatives for public comment. The plan will recommend transit service improvements for the City and County to consider over the five-year period from 2013 to 2017.

The proposed transit service improvement alternatives include:
- A preliminary recommended, and other, alternatives for the City of Racine Belle Urban System,
- Alternatives for transit service within Racine County, and
- Alternatives for better connecting Racine County to adjacent counties.

Information about the plan, including a newsletter describing the proposed alternatives, is available on the plan website at www.sewrpc.org/racinetransitplan, or by contacting us at (262) 547-6721 or racinetransitplan@sewrpc.org.

Two public meetings to get YOUR INPUT on the proposed alternatives will be held as shown below, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. (presentation at 5:30). The meetings will be held in “open house” format, allowing you to attend at any time during the two-hour timeframe for each meeting.

**Tuesday, March 5, 2013**
Veterans Terrace – Patriot Room
589 Milwaukee Avenue
Burlington, WI 53105

**Wednesday, March 6, 2013**
Corinne Reid-Owens Transit Center
1421 State Street
Racine, WI 53404

Persons needing disability-related accommodations are asked to contact the Commission offices at (262) 547-6721 a minimum of three business days before the meetings so that appropriate arrangements can be made regarding access or mobility, review or interpretation of materials, active participation, or submission of comments.
Background

- Short-range, five-year plan for public transit in Racine County
  - Will include advisory recommendations for transit service for both the City and County through 2017
- Prepared by SEWRPC
  - Joint effort with City and County
- Guided by an Advisory Workgroup
Outline of Presentation

- Review of existing transit services
- Transit service improvement alternatives
  - City of Racine Alternative
  - Racine County Alternatives
  - Inter-County Alternatives
- Next Steps

Existing Transit Services

City of Racine Belle Urban System

- Eight regular bus routes and several peak-hour routes
- Dial-A-Ride Transport (DART)
  - Federally-mandated
  - For individuals with disabilities who cannot use the fixed-route service
### Existing Transit Services (continued)

#### Racine County Transportation Services

- Racine County Human Services Department provides two transportation services:
  - Demand-response transportation to seniors and disabled persons outside the DART service area, and to seniors within the DART service area.
  - Burlington area shuttle service through the Shuttling People Around Racine County (SPARC) program.

- Primary funding sources:
  - County funds
  - State Section 85.21 specialized transportation assistance funds

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#### Inter-County Transportation Services

- Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha commuter bus route
  - Operated by Wisconsin Coach Lines (WCL).

- UW-Parkside campus shuttle
  - Two round-trips between campus and the City of Racine.
Preliminary Recommended Alternative for the Belle Urban System (BUS)

- Alternative system is “financially constrained”
  - Limits local contributions to $1.52 to $1.65 million per year during five-year period
- Would address several operational issues
  - Confusing midday schedule
  - Long layover times on evenings and weekends
  - Inconvenient travel on Route 86 one-way loop
  - Route updates needed to more efficiently serve development

City of Racine Alternative (continued)

- Route changes
  - Poor-performing routes would be combined and realigned.
- Equal route lengths
  - 30 minutes from the Transit Center to the route endpoint, then 30 minutes back to the Transit Center.
City of Racine Alternative (continued)

- Alternative system would save about $340,000 in total operating costs in its first full year.
- Modest ridership increases are assumed (1% per year).
- No additional capital investment required over existing system.

City of Racine Alternative (continued)

- Funding levels could change during the next five years.
- Options are presented in case additional funding becomes available or funding levels decrease.
- City has more flexibility under alternative system to change routes based on performance.
Three alternatives for transit service in Racine County were developed:

1. Expand/Coordinate Existing Services
2. Public Shared-Ride Taxi
3. Vanpools

Racine County Alternative 1

Alternative 1:
Expand/Coordinate Existing Services

- Sub-alternative 1A: West of IH 94, expand eligibility for County demand-response service
- Sub-alternative 1B: East of IH 94, combine the City DART paratransit and County demand response services
- Sub-alternative 1C: Continue/refine shuttle service and operate service as public transit
Racine County Alternative 1 (continued)

Summary of Conclusions

- **Sub-alt. 1A (Expand eligibility to all clients of County Human Services):**
  - More service needed, resulting in increased costs
  - Not eligible for Federal/State transit operating assistance
- **Sub-alt. 1B (Combined City/County paratransit east of IH 94):**
  - May not save money
  - Complex undertaking
- **Sub-alt. 1C (Shuttles operated as transit open to general public):**
  - Need to use vehicles accessible to persons with disabilities, which may increase operator's unit costs
  - Eligible for Federal/State transit operating assistance, which would limit needed levels of County and 85.21 funding

Racine County Alternative 2

**Alternative 2:**

**Public Shared-Ride Taxi West of IH 94**

- Would replace eligibility-limited County demand-response service with shared-ride taxi program open to general public
- Would be provided using small vehicles
- Would be similar to programs in Ozaukee and Washington Counties
Racine County Alternative 2 (continued)

Summary of Conclusions

- A shared-ride taxi program would significantly increase operating costs
- Eligible for Federal and State rural transit operating funds
  - Reduces initial amount of State Section 85.21 and County funding needed
- Demand likely to increase beyond 2017
  - May eventually need much higher County funding

Racine County Alternative 3

Alternative 3: Vanpools for Commuter Trips

- Sub-alternative 3A: County-run vanpool program
  - Administered by County staff, with County purchasing vans
- Sub-alternative 3B: Privately-run vanpool program
  - Administered by private operator, which would provide vans
Summary of Conclusions

- Privately-run vanpool would not require investment from the County
- However, user fees would be significantly higher for a privately-run vanpool
  - To reduce user fees, the County could contribute funding, or partner with employers willing to contribute funding, to the privately-run program

County may be able to adequately fund a number of alternatives

- For example, three initiatives could be implemented (while maintaining the existing eligibility-limited demand response service west of IH 94):
  - Sub-alt. 1B: Combine City/County paratransit east of IH 94
  - Sub-alt. 1C: Operate shuttle service as public transit
  - Alt. 3: Vanpools
- All three together would not likely require an increase in local and County funding
  - Potential to increase if demand increases significantly
Summary of Conclusions (continued)

Alternatives that would replace and expand the existing eligibility-limited demand-response service west of IH 94 would likely require an increase in funding:

- Sub-alternative 1A (expand eligibility to all clients of County Human Services) would require a significant increase in County funding by 2017
- Alternative 2 (shared-ride taxi program open to the general public) would not likely increase County funding by 2017, but could significantly increase County funding beyond 2017

Park-Ride Lot Needs

- Existing Ives Grove park-ride lot (Hwy 20 and IH 94) experiencing capacity problems
  - Lot reportedly exceeding capacity at times
  - BUS Route 20 has difficulty maneuvering in lot due to illegally parked cars when lot is over-capacity
  - City and County currently working with WisDOT to address capacity issues (possible expansion on adjacent County-owned land)
Four alternatives for transit service between Racine County and surrounding counties were developed:

1. Increased Commuter Bus Frequency
2. Local Public Transit to UW-Parkside
3. Kenosha-Racine Express Bus
4. Burlington-Milwaukee Commuter Bus

Inter-County Alternative 1

Alternative 1:
Increase Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha Commuter Bus Service Frequency

- Increase weekday round-trips from 7 to 10
- Route change to directly serve Gateway Technical College in Racine
Summary of Conclusions

- Would need to significantly increase funding
- Whether or not service is increased, BUS and WCL should consider steps to integrate two services
  - Would promote coordination between commuter and local transit services, making them easier to use and more attractive

Inter-County Alternative 2

Alternative 2:
Provide Improved Transit Service to UW-Parkside

- Sub-alternative 2A: BUS shuttle route
- Sub-alternative 2B: Extend proposed BUS Route 1
- Sub-alternative 2C: Extend and increase existing campus shuttle
Inter-County Alternative 2 (continued)

Summary of Conclusions

- Connecting to southwest transfer point—under all three sub-alternatives—would provide access to more BUS routes.
- Higher frequency service would provide better service to UW-Parkside and allow convenient transfers to Kenosha Area Transit routes:
  - Extended BUS Route 1: 15.5 weekday round-trips
  - City shuttle: 6 weekday round-trips
  - University shuttle: 3 weekday round-trips
- Extended BUS Route 1 would require additional funding and may cause operational issues:
  - Route would be longer than all other BUS routes
- Improving service to UW-Parkside would require City and University to collaborate on operations and funding.

Inter-County Alternative 3

Alternative 3:
Establish Express Bus Service Between Racine and Kenosha

- Would be jointly established by Cities of Racine and Kenosha
- Would serve colleges and universities
- 16 weekday round-trips
Inter-County Alternative 3 (continued)

Summary of Conclusions

- Would be eligible for Federal and State urban transit operating funds
  - Cities would provide local matching funds
- Annual operating expenses in 2017 would be about $800,000
  - Local funds of about $260,000 (assuming City of Racine provides half, this represents an increase in City funding of over 10 percent)
- Four buses would need to be purchased
  - Federal capital grants could fund 80 percent

Inter-County Alternative 4

Alternative 4:
Establish Commuter Bus Service Between Burlington and Milwaukee

- Would be established by Racine County
- Two weekday round-trips
- Would serve three park-ride lots
Inter-County Alternative 4 (continued)

Summary of Conclusions

- Would be eligible for Federal and State rural transit operating funds
  - County would provide local matching funds
- Annual operating expenses in 2017 would be about $230,000
  - Local funds of about $39,000
- Could also obtain FHWA CMAQ funding
  - Could fund 80 percent of operating expenses for first three years

Next Steps

- Obtain public input on alternatives
  - Comments accepted through March 15, 2013
- Prepare final recommended plan
  - Recommended transit service improvements for Racine County over next five years
- Present final plan to City and County for their consideration
Introduction to the Racine County Public Transit Plan

The purpose of this effort is to prepare a short-range, 5-year plan for public transit in Racine County. The plan will include advisory recommendations for transit service for both the City of Racine and Racine County through 2017. The following display boards present three sets of transit service improvement alternatives:

- A preliminary recommended alternative for the City’s Belle Urban System (BUS).
- Three transit service alternatives that could be considered by Racine County.
- Four alternatives for improving transit service between Racine County and surrounding counties.

Comments and questions regarding these alternatives are highly encouraged. Following consideration and incorporation of comments, a final short-range plan will be prepared with recommendations for transit service improvements.

Who is preparing the plan?
The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) is developing the plan in a joint effort with Racine County and the City of Racine. SEWRPC staff works with staff from the BUS, the Racine County Department of Human Services, and the Racine County Department of Planning and Development.

Racine County Transit Plan Workgroup

The Racine County Public Transit Plan is being developed under the guidance of a Workgroup formed specifically for this study.

- Representatives invited to participate in the Workgroup from all units of government in Racine County and a wide variety of agencies and populations with an interest in transportation in the County.
- The Workgroup has approved the transit service improvement alternatives being presented for public comment at this meeting.
- The Workgroup will propose to Racine County and the City of Racine a recommended public transit plan for the next five years for their consideration.

Agencies and Organizations Invited to Participate in Workgroup

City of Racine

The City of Racine is preparing the plan under the guidance of the Workgroup. The City of Racine is responsible for the final approval of the plan.

Racine County

Racine County is a partner in the development of the plan. The County is responsible for the final approval of the plan.

Racine County Public Transit Plan Workgroup

The Workgroup is a joint effort with Racine County and the City of Racine. SEWRPC staff works with staff from the BUS, the Racine County Department of Human Services, and the Racine County Department of Planning and Development.

Map 1

Existing Belle Urban System Routes

The BUS operates 8 regular bus routes (shown on Map 1), several peak-hour routes, and paratransit service for persons with disabilities that are unable to use the regular BUS routes.

- Service hours for regular routes
  - Weekdays: 5:10 a.m. to 10:10 p.m.
  - Saturdays: 5:40 a.m. to 6:40 p.m.
  - Sundays: 9:40 a.m. to 6:40 p.m.
- Service frequency
  - Every 30 min. during weekday peak periods.
  - Every 30 to 60 min. during weekday off-peak periods/weekends.
- Fares
  - Adult cash fare (ages 18-64): $2.00
  - Youth fare (ages 6-17): $1.50
  - Seniors and disabled persons: $1.00
- Dial-A-Ride Transport (DART)
  - Operated by the BUS, DART provides door-to-door service to persons with disabilities who are prevented from using fixed route bus service.
  - Fulfills Federal mandate for providing paratransit service within 3/4 mile of fixed-route service.
  - Available during same hours as fixed-route service.
  - Fare: $3.00
Belle Urban System Challenges and Issues

The City’s geography poses a significant challenge to designing the BUS.

- **Uneven development pattern**: Downtown Racine is located north and east of the City’s geographic center. Over the years, new development has spread south and west, influenced by the Root River.
- **Difficult to design bus routes with near-equal lengths between the downtown transit center (TC) and the routes’ outlying endpoints.**
- **Current “pulse” schedule system implemented in 2002** was designed so most routes run on 90-min. round-trip schedules: 15 min. from the TC to the northern endpoint and 15 min. back to the TC; then 30 min. from the TC to the southern endpoint and 30 min. back to the TC. This results in several issues:
  - **Confusing midday schedule**: Between 9:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., the bus routes alternate between 30- and 60-min. service frequencies.
  - **Long layover times on evenings/weekends**: During evenings/weekends, the routes’ 90-min. round-trip schedules are stretched to 120 min., with buses waiting over 20 min. at route endpoints on many routes.
- Other issues were identified in an evaluation of the system and through public comments, including:
  - Circular design of Route 86 makes travel to some destinations on that route very inconvenient.
  - Some routes need to be updated to more efficiently serve existing residential and commercial development.

Belle Urban System Preliminary Recommended Alternative

Map 2 shows the proposed BUS routes under the Workgroup’s preliminary recommended alternative for the City of Racine.

- **Alternative system** is “financially-constrained”, keeping the local share of annual operating assistance at about $1.52 to $1.65 million.
- **Proposed changes** would make the BUS more efficient by combining and realigning poor-performing routes.
  - **Longer layover times during evenings and weekends**: resulting in a more understandable midday schedule and significantly reduced layover times during evenings and weekends.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO BUS ROUTES

- **Primary changes to route alignments** include (note: legs of Route Nos. 1 through 5 are labeled based on whether they are north or south of the TC):
  - Remove Route 1N loop on South St., Charles St., and Carlton Dr., and modify the route to serve Horlick High School and Rapids Plaza.
  - Combine Routes 2N and 5N and Routes 2S and 5S (new route legs labeled 2SN and 2SS).
  - Modify Route 3N to serve St. Mary’s hospital.
  - Modify Route 4N to serve downtown.
  - Convert Route 86 from one-way loop to two-way out-and-back route (Route 6).
  - Establish a southwest transfer point at Regency Mall for transfers between Routes 45, 6, 7, and 27.
- **Route lengths would be equalized**, so each regular route takes 30 min. to get from the TC to its endpoint, then 30 min. back to the TC.
  - This allows more uniform service frequencies: every 30 min. during peak periods and every 60 min. during off-peak periods/weekends (note: Route 6 would be an exception, running every 60 min. all day).
  - Buses on all routes would meet at the TC so passengers would not need to wait to transfer to another route.
- **Alternative system does not include changes to Route 27 because it was recently changed (fall 2012)**. BUS staff intends to monitor route’s performance and decide whether to change or expand the route (for example, by adding Saturday service).

Map 2

Belle Urban System Routes Under the Preliminary Recommended Alternative

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND COSTS

Overall, the transit system’s annual revenue hours would be slightly reduced:

- **Existing system**: 81,200 annual revenue hours (2012 budget)
- **Alternative system**: 77,000 annual revenue hours (2013 through 2017)

Ridership is assumed to modestly increase by 1% per year:

- **Existing system**: 1.06 million revenue passengers (2012 budget)
- **Alternative system**: 1.11 million revenue passengers (by 2017)

Compared to continuing with existing service levels, the **alternative system would save about $340,000 in total operating costs** and $150,000 in required local operating assistance in its first full year.

CAPITAL NEEDS

The alternative system does not require any additional capital investment over the existing system. Over the 5-year planning period, the following significant capital investments are planned:

- **Maintain its existing fleet of 35 heavy-duty buses by replacing 14 buses in 2013, three buses in 2016, and three buses in 2017.**
- **Replace seven existing paratransit buses** (in service since 2009) with new paratransit buses.
- **Lease/purchase land at Regency Mall for a small transfer facility.**
- **Make various repairs, renovations, and upgrades to BUS facilities.**

Over the 5 years, 80% of these capital costs could be funded by a total of about $8.8 million in Federal funds, with the City of Racine providing a local share of $2.2 million.
Belle Urban System
Preliminary Recommended Alternative

OPTIONS IF OPERATING FUNDING LEVELS CHANGE

The preliminary recommended alternative was developed assuming a relatively flat total operating budget for the system, keeping local funding at about the year 2012 funding level. However, funding levels could change during the next five years.

Should additional funding become available, the map to the right shows some improvements the City could consider beyond the proposed changes in the alternative system.

>> An increase of about $1.0 million in net operating assistance would be needed to implement all options.

Should the City need to decrease local funding for the system, here are some service reductions (and a fare increase) that the City could consider:

- Eliminate Route 25N/25S on Saturdays
- Eliminate Route 1S after 6:30 p.m. on weeknights
- Eliminate Route 1S on Saturdays and/or Sundays
- Increase cash fares by $0.25 (12.5%)

>> Savings of about $400,000 in net operating assistance for all options.

In the case of a severe funding shortfall, all or selected regular routes that would run every 30 min. during peak periods could be cut back to run every 60 min. all day.

- If all routes are cut back to 60 min. service frequencies all day, total operating assistance would be reduced by about $720,000 in the first year, with local assistance reduced by about $240,000.

Racine County
Transportation Services

The Racine County Human Services Department currently provides the following transportation services:

- Demand-response transportation
  - Door-to-door, advance reservation
  - Eligibility: seniors and persons with disabilities outside the City’s DART paratransit service area, and seniors within the DART service area.
  - Service hours: weekdays from 5:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
  - Fare: $2.50 per one-way trip

- Shuttling People Around Racine County (SPARC) program
  - Flexible route (can deviate a short distance off the route) in the Burlington area.
  - Eligibility: designed for seniors, but no formal eligibility restrictions.
  - Service hours: weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
  - Fare: $2 per one-way trip ($3 round-trip; $5 for a day pass)

The County contracts with First Transit to operate the demand-response service and with Kenson Enterprises to operate the SPARC program.

Racine County Transit Alternatives - Alternative 1 (Expand/Coordinate)

Three potential ways to better coordinate and expand access to existing transportation services were developed under Alternative 1 (County could choose to implement any or all):

- **Sub-alternative 1A: Expand eligibility of County demand-response service**
  - West of IH 94, eligibility for the County’s demand-response service—currently limited to seniors and disabled persons—would be expanded to anyone who receives assistance from County agencies (except Medicaid non-emergency transportation).
  - Ridership would more than double, requiring significantly more service hours and resulting in total annual operating expenses increasing by 3.5 times by 2017.

- **Sub-alternative 1B: Combined City/COUNTY paratransit service**
  - East of IH 94, the City DART paratransit and County demand-response services would be combined into a single service for seniors and disabled persons, with service hours removing those of the BUS fixed-route service.
  - If City DART paratransit operates service (may also be possible for County to operate), DART’s higher unit operating costs would likely negate any ridership increases and efficiencies gained by having only one operator. There is also a potential for local and County funding to increase if demand increases significantly.

- **Sub-alternative 1C: County shuttle service operated as public transit**
  - Existing County SPARC shuttle service would be continued, refined as needed (by modifying or dropping routes, or trying new routes), and operated as public transit.
  - If operated as public transit, the shuttle service would qualify for Federal and State transit operating funds, limiting the County’s share of total operating expenses and allowing the County to set aside some State Section 85.21 funding to purchase vehicles. This eligibility would require the purchase and use of vehicles that are accessible to disabled persons.

**Racine County Transit Alternatives - Alternative 2 (Public Shared-Ride Taxi)**

This option would replace the County’s demand-response service—currently limited to seniors and disabled persons—with a shared-ride taxi program that anyone could use.

**WHAT IS SHARED-RIDE TAXI?**

Shared-ride taxi is a curb-to-curb or door-to-door transit service open to the general public. Shared-ride taxi is usually provided using small vehicles, such as automobiles, vans, or small buses. As the term indicates, passengers share a vehicle for at least part of their trip. Dispatch handles service requests like a conventional taxicab service. Good examples of county-run shared-ride taxi services in southeastern Wisconsin are the services operated by Ozaukee and Washington Counties.

Ridership would more than triple, requiring significantly more service hours and resulting in total annual operating expenses nearly quadrupling by 2017.

Shared-ride taxi would be a public transit service, so it would be eligible for Federal and State rural transit operating funds, reducing the initial amount of State Section 85.21 and County funding needed.

However, as ridership, service levels, and the associated operating costs increase, the needed State Section 85.21 and County funding would return to about existing levels by 2017.

A shared-ride taxi program may eventually require a much higher County contribution than the existing service as demand increases beyond 2017.

Based on the experiences of the public shared-ride taxi systems in Ozaukee and Washington Counties, which began in 1998.

Ten taxicab vehicles would need to be purchased by either the private operator or the County.

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Racine County Transit Alternatives - Alternative 3 (Vanpools)

Two ways to form a vanpool program were evaluated in which volunteer drivers would provide group transportation for long work-trip commutes (over 15 miles each way) starting or ending in the County.

- **Sub-alternative 3A: County-run vanpool program**
  - Administered by County staff.
  - County would purchase five mini-vans over four years using Federal transit capital assistance funds which could cover 80% of the vehicle costs.
  - Fees would be designed to cover both operating costs and the County’s share of the costs to purchase or replace vans.
  - Fees (per vanpool):
    - Monthly fee: $150
    - Mileage fee: about $0.55 per mile

- **Sub-alternative 3B: Privately-run vanpool program**
  - Administered by a private vanpool operator, which would provide vans, using fees charged to the vanpool users to cover their own costs.
  - Monthly user fees would be significantly higher than a County-run program because Federal assistance would not be used to purchase vehicles.
  - To reduce user fees, the County could contribute funding or partner with employers willing to contribute funding to cover part of the cost of the service.

**WHAT IS A VANPOOL?**

Vanpools are for workers with long commutes who cannot use public transportation or find it inconvenient to do so. They consist of groups of 5 to 15 people commuting together to and from work. Each member contributes to the cost of operating the van. One member would volunteer to drive, usually in exchange for reduced monthly fees. Typically, the vans are owned by a third party, such as a government agency, an employer, or a private vanpool operator.

Vanpools are most useful to a narrowly-defined market:
- Workers whose commutes are longer than 15 miles;
- Workers who share a single employer or who work in an area with a concentrated group of employers with similar shift start- and end-times;
- Workers who live near each other or who can travel to a common departure point (such as a park-and-ride lot).

Racine County Transit Alternatives - Which Services Can the County Afford?

Based on cost estimates for the County alternatives, there may be enough funding from the existing County levy ($62,000 in 2011), the County’s State Section 85.21 allocation (projected $436,000 in 2017), and Federal transit funding sources to adequately fund a number of the alternatives which were identified.

- **For example, the County could implement the following three initiatives (while maintaining its existing eligibility-limited demand-response transportation service west of IH 94):**
  - **Sub-alternative 1B: Combine City/County paratransit east of IH 94**
  - **Sub-alternative 1C: Continue/refine shuttle service and operate as public transit**
  - **Alternative 3: Vanpools**

However, some of the alternatives would require an increase in funding, specifically alternatives which would replace and expand the existing eligibility-limited demand-response service west of IH 94:

- **Sub-alternative 1A: Expand eligibility of demand-response transportation service west of IH 94 to all clients of County Human Services**
  - Would require significant increase in County funding by 2017 because Sub-alternative 1A would not be eligible for Federal and State transit operating funds.

- **Alternative 2: Shared-ride taxi program (expand eligibility to general public) west of IH 94**
  - Would not likely increase County funding by 2017, because Alternative 2 would be eligible for Federal and State transit operating funds, but could significantly increase County funding beyond 2017 as demand increases.

Racine County Transit Alternatives - Additional Considerations

PURCHASING VEHICLES FOR COUNTY TRANSIT SERVICES

- Racine County could consider purchasing the vehicles used for providing all County-funded transit services to take advantage of Federal capital assistance, which could cover 80 percent of the cost.

- Three primary advantages:
  - Could negotiate lower rates with the services’ contract operators.
  - Potential to increase competition for service contracts, which could decrease the costs for service contracts.
  - Federal capital assistance could cover 80 percent of vehicle purchase costs, while Federal and State operating assistance covers only about 50-60 percent of operating expenses.

  - Federal Section 5310 funding for vehicles to provide demand-response services for seniors and disabled persons, such as those under Sub-alternatives 1A and 1B.
  - Federal Section 5311 funding for vehicles to provide transit services open to the general public, such as those under Sub-alternative 1C, Alternative 2, and Sub-alternative 3A.

Existing Transportation Services between Racine County and Surrounding Counties

Wisconsin Coach Lines (WCL) currently operates a commuter bus route between the Cities of Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee.

- WCL commuter bus service characteristics
  - Seven round-trips on weekdays between 5:15 a.m. and 10:30 p.m. (focused on the morning and afternoon peak periods)
  - Six round-trips on Saturdays and Sundays between 8:15 a.m. and 10:37 p.m.
  - Adult cash fare (distance-based): $2.00 - 4.25
  - Began serving UW-Parkside on two weekday round-trips in September 2012.

UW-Parkside, located in Kenosha County, currently operates a campus shuttle for its students and staff.

- Includes two round-trips between the campus and the McDonald’s at Taylor Ave. and Meachem Rd. in the City of Racine (the endpoint of BUS Route 1).
- Service is offered on weekdays between 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. (only when class is in session).
- Fares: free for UW-Parkside students and employees

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Inter-County Transit Alternative 1 - Increase Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha Service

- Proposed changes:
  - Increased weekday service frequency from 7 to 10 round-trips.
  - Northbound one-way trips:
    1 more morning, 2 more afternoon
  - Southbound one-way trips:
    1 more midday, 2 more evening
  - Slight route alignment change to directly serve Gateway Technical College campus in Racine.
  - Integration of route with existing BUS routes.
  - Add route to BUS and KAT route maps.
  - Establish consistent charges for transfers between route and BUS and KAT systems.
  - Provide information on route anywhere information about BUS and KAT systems is displayed.

- Proposed increase in service frequency may not be feasible at this time given need for increased local funding.

- Should still consider integration of route with BUS and KAT systems to promote coordination between commuter and local transit services.

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Inter-County Transit Alternative 2 - Improved Transit Service to UW-Parkside

This alternative proposes three ways to improve transportation connections between BUS routes and the UW-Parkside campus in Kenosha County:

- Sub-alternative 2A: City-operated shuttle between Regency Mall and UW-Parkside
  - BUS paratransit vehicle would be used to operate between Talifer Hall and proposed southwest transfer point at Regency Mall.
  - Six round-trips between 7:30 a.m. and 9:10 p.m. on weekdays when classes are in session (every two hours), meeting BUS routes at transit “pulse” transfer times.

- Sub-alternative 2B: Extend BUS Route 1 to serve UW-Parkside
  - City would extend BUS Route 1 by 3.5 miles (one-way) to provide frequent local bus service to UW-Parkside’s Talifer Hall.
  - 15 round-trips between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on weekdays when classes are in session (every 30 min. during peak, and every 60 min. during off-peak).

- Sub-alternative 2C: Extend and increase existing UW-Parkside shuttle service
  - University would enhance existing campus shuttle, extending shuttle by 1.2 miles (one-way) and adding one midday round-trip.
  - Connecting to southwest transfer point under all three would provide access to more BUS routes.
  - Higher frequency would provide better service to UW-Parkside and allow convenient transfers to Kenosha Area Transit routes.
  - Extended BUS Route 1 may cause operational issues as it would be longer than other routes.
  - University collaboration on operations/funding.

---

Inter-County Transit Alternative 3 - Racine-Kenosha Express Bus

Under this alternative, the Cities of Racine and Kenosha would jointly establish and contract for an express bus service between the two Cities. The service would address an identified unmet need for frequent and convenient transit service connecting the Cities of Racine and Kenosha.

- Express bus service characteristics:
  - Limited-stop public transit service provided with large, urban buses. Stops spaced about every 1/4 mile to 1 mile along route.
  - Would serve major public higher education institutions, including UW-Parkside and Gateway Technical College campuses in Racine and Kenosha.
  - 16 round-trips between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekdays (every 30 min. in peak, and every 60 min. in off-peak).
  - Travel time (entire route): 60 min. each way.
  - Adult cash fare: $2.25 each way.
  - Saturdays could be considered if weekday service experiences high ridership.

- Funding sources:
  - Operating revenues.
  - Federal and State rural transit operating assistance funds.
  - Local matching funds from Cities of Racine and Kenosha.

- Capital needs:
  - Four buses would need to be purchased at a total cost of about $1.7 million.
  - Federal transportation grants could fund 80 percent, with Cities of Racine and Kenosha needing to provide remaining 20 percent.

- Cities of Racine and Kenosha would need to reach agreement on how to provide needed local operating and capital funding.

- Agreement would also need to address bus maintenance.

---

Inter-County Transit Alternative 4 - Burlington-Milwaukee Commuter Bus

Under this alternative, Racine County would establish and contract for a commuter bus service between the City of Burlington and the Milwaukee central business district. The service would address an identified unmet need for transportation between western Racine County and Milwaukee.

- Commuter bus service characteristics:
  - Limited-stop public transit service focused on providing work commute trips. Stops spaced about every 3 to 5 miles along route.
  - Waterford lot would need to be constructed.
  - Two round-trips on weekdays (inbound from Burlington to Milwaukee in morning and outbound in reverse direction in afternoon).
  - Travel time (entire route): 75 min. each way.
  - Adult cash fare: $3.25 each way.

- Funding sources:
  - Operating revenues.
  - Federal and State rural transit operating assistance funds.
  - Local matching funds from Racine County.

- Possible “demonstration” funding:
  - County may also be able to obtain Federal Highway Administration Congestion Management and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) grant funding to fund about 80 percent of total cost to operate service for its first three years.
  - Passenger revenues may be enough to provide needed 20 percent local matching funds during those first three years.

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Inter-County Transit Alternative 2 - Improved Transit Service to UW-Parkside

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Inter-County Transit Alternative 3 - Racine-Kenosha Express Bus

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Inter-County Transit Alternative 4 - Burlington-Milwaukee Commuter Bus

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Appendix D

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES AND EDITORIALS CONCERNING
THE RACINE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT PLAN: 2013-2017
Transit changes proposed

Group seeks public input on five-year plan to improve access, save money

ALISON BAUTER
alison.bauter@journaltimes.com

RACINE COUNTY — A state commission is seeking the public’s opinion on proposed changes to Racine city and county transportation systems, saving about $350,000 annually in city transit alone.

At the request of city and county officials, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission is working with local transit authorities to vet and implement the proposed changes over the next five years, holding two open houses for public input next month.

It’s been several years since the area’s transportation systems have been examined, but that’s a rough period when it comes to transportation funding, according to Ken Yunke, the planning commission’s executive director.

“This has been a period of about 10 years when federal and state funding has undergone cuts or lack of increase and... as a result, fares have increased, services have been reduced or constrained,” Yunke said.

In his commission’s Racine County report, Yunke said, “Everything is with an eye on what funding is available, so we’ve tried to look at what, perhaps, could be done within the funding available” while improving efficiency and accessibility in public transit.

‘Alternative system’

The planning commission has developed an “alternative system” for the City of Racine’s current Belle Urban System, combining some bus routes, realigning others and standardizing all routes’ transit time.

More on CHANGES, Page 5A

CHANGES

From Page 1A

According to Yunke, changing routes to equal lengths “should permit greater ease of transferring. No one will have to wait during the midday for 30 minutes or so to transfer” because buses will reach the transit center at roughly the same time.

The commission’s report also suggests constructing a southwest transfer point at Regency Mall.

There are other options for improvement on the table, including extending routes and creating an express bus between Kenosha and Racine, but those depend on available funding, according to the commission’s report.

Likewise, if transportation funds — a combination of local, state and federal dollars — decrease, then additional service reductions are possible, including cutting routes on certain days and increasing the cash fare by 25 cents.

The alternative system is expected to cost about $6.91 million per year to start, about $340,000 less than the current $7.25 million annual cost. Of the proposed price, local taxpayer funding would cover $1.52 million, while state and federal dollars would continue funding the majority, about $3.8 million.

Options for Racine County and beyond

The commission’s report suggested three alternatives for county transit: expanding and coordinating existing systems, creating a public shared-ride taxi or implementing “vanpools,” which allow groups of 5 to 15 people to commute together.

The report also offered four possibilities to increase transit between different counties, including: increasing the frequency of existing commuter bus routes, creating a local public route from Racine to the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, in Somers, establishing an express bus route between Racine and Kenosha, and establishing a commuter bus system between Burlington and Milwaukee.

Almost all of those proposed alternatives rely on majority federal and state funding, rather than local dollars.

More on the commission’s proposals is available online at www.sewrpc.org/racinetransitplan, where the public can offer comments. Those interested can also comment by emailing racinetran sitplan@sewrpc.org, faxing (262) 547-1103 or attending either of the commission’s two public meetings.

If You Go

WHAT: Public forums on transit alternatives
WHEN: 4:30-6:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 5
WHERE: Veterans Terrace — Patriot Room, 589 Milwaukee Ave., Burlington

WHEN: 4:30-6:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 6
WHERE: Corinne Reid-Owens Transportation Center, 1421 State St., Racine

Meetings are in open house format with a short presentation at 5:30 p.m.
After less than a year, only countywide public shuttle shelved

RACINE COUNTY — After less than a year in service, the county discontinued its only cross-county public transit service earlier this month, citing lack of ridership and funding.

When the Racine County Link shuttle service started in June, County Executive Jim Ladwig said that the route, funded predominately through federal and state transportation grants, was operating on a trial basis.

If demand and funding were available, the shuttle would continue running, Ladwig said at the time.

More on PUBLIC SHUTTLE, Page 5A

PUBLIC SHUTTLE

From Page 1A

Less than one year later, neither the funding nor the ridership is there, the county executive said; state funding is gone, and, “ultimately, ridership was extremely poor.”

“The county is willing to try different things, but we also have to recognize when something isn’t working,” Ladwig said Tuesday.

The route, which connected riders east of Interstate 94 to the Burlington and Waterford area, ended Feb. 1, taking with it the only public transportation option that covered the county end-to-end.

Ladwig said that a new cross-county option may come forward, based on the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission’s recent report.
A glimpse into future of public transport

Residents have a chance to review, comment on county transit options

By Ed Nadolski
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Western Racine County residents are invited to offer their opinions on future public transportation options, including a local shared-ride taxi service and a Burlington-to-Milwaukee commuter bus.

Those are just two among a variety of options included in a five-year plan for improving public transportation that is being developed by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in conjunction with Racine County and the City of Racine.

Local residents will have a chance to learn more about the plan and offer their opinions during a meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 5, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at Veterans Terrace, 589 Milwaukee Ave., Burlington.

The meeting will be in an open house format, allowing residents to attend at any time during the two-hour timeframe. A short presentation will be given at 5:30 p.m. At any time during each meeting, attendees can leave written comments or speak to a court reporter or staff member to provide oral comments.

A second meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 6, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at Corinne Reid-Owens Transit Center, 1421 State St., Racine.

To prepare for the meetings, SEWRPC has produced a newsletter outlining the various alternatives for public transportation in the near future. The newsletter can be found online at www.myracinecounty.com.

All input received at the meetings will be considered as final recommendations are developed.

What's in the plan?

While at least a third of the plan focuses on route and schedule improvements for the City of Racine's Belle Urban System of buses, it also provides alternatives for the west side of the county — namely the Burlington, Waterford and Union Grove areas.

The county plan provides three alternatives that range from expansion of the current SPARC (Shuttling People Around Racine County) service for seniors and disabled people to a shared-ride taxi service that is available to everyone. Planners contend the latter will likely triple ridership in Western Racine County, but will also require a steep increase in funding during the first five years of the program.

So what is a shared-ride taxi program? According to SEWRPC, it is a door-to-door transit service open to the general public. The taxi is usually provided using small vehicles, such as automobiles, vans or small buses. Passengers may share a vehicle for at least part of their trip. A dispatch center handles service requests like a conventional taxicab service.

Ozaukee and Washington counties have operated successful shared-ride services for years.

Here's a closer look at the three alternatives offered by SEWRPC in the county plan:

- Alternative 1 proposes three ways to modestly improve or expand transit services.

One option is to expand eligibility of the existing county demand-response transportation service that operates west of I-94 — currently limited to seniors and persons with disabilities — to anyone who receives assistance from county agencies.

Another is to combine the existing City of Racine and Racine County paratransit services east of I-94.

A third is to continue to fund and refine the county SPARC service and make modest changes so the service is eligible to receive federal and state public transit funding assistance.

- Alternative 2 would replace the current, eligibility-limited county transportation service west of I-94 with a public shared-ride taxi program. The shared-ride taxi program would provide on-call curb-to-curb transit service open to the general public.

The shared-ride taxi service would have the same service area as the existing eligibility-limited service and would operate weekdays from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturdays from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Adult one-way fares would range from $4 to $7.75, with discounts for students, seniors and disabled people.

- Alternative 3 would involve establishing a vanpool program for long work commute trips. The vanpool program could either be operated by the county or by a private operator.

If you go...

WHAT: Public input session on options in the five-year public transportation plan for Racine County.

WHEN: Tuesday, March 5, from 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Where: Veterans Terrace, 589 Milwaukee Ave., Burlington.

LAWDOWN: Local residents will have a chance to comment on options developed for local public transportation, including alternatives such as a shared-ride taxi service open to everyone and a Burlington-to-Milwaukee commuter bus route.

CAN'T ATTEND? Written comments will be accepted until March 8 and may be submitted by email at racinetransitplan@sewrpc.org, fax at (262) 547-1103 and U.S. mail at Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, W239 N1812 Rockwood Dr., P.O. Box 1607, Waukesha, WI 53187-1607.

MORE INFO: See the plan website at www.sewrpc.org/racinetransitplan.
A Burlington-to-Milwaukee commuter bus route is among the proposals included in a five-year plan for Racine County public transit.

Vanpools are for workers with longer commutes who cannot use public transportation or find it inconvenient to do so. They consist of groups of five to 15 people commuting to and from work. Each member contributes to the cost of operating the van. One member volunteers to drive, usually in exchange for reduced monthly fees. Typically, the vans are owned by a third party, such as a government agency, an employer, or a private vanpool operator.

SEWRPC officials contend there are several combinations of these alternatives that can be accomplished without significantly increasing the amount the county currently pays for transportation services.

However, at least two of those options—expanding transit services to all people who receive county services, and the shared-ride taxi program—have the potential to significantly increase the county’s public transit costs.

“Replacing the existing County demand-response service west of Interstate Highway 94 with a service open to anyone who receives assistance from county agencies or with a shared-ride taxi program open to the general public would be expected to require a significant increase in County funding within or beyond the next five years,” SEWRPC officials wrote in a summary of the alternatives.

Commuter bus eyed

In addition to transportation within the county, the plan examines alternatives for inter-county transport.

Among the four alternatives developed for better connecting Racine County residents and activity centers to adjacent counties, one focuses on the west side of the county.

That alternative proposes a commuter bus service between the City of Burlington and downtown Milwaukee. The route would serve several park-ride lots (Burlington, Waterford and Franklin lots are currently proposed), with two weekday round-trips focused on service from Burlington to Milwaukee in the morning and the reverse direction in the afternoon.

The other alternatives presented focus on east-end services. Those include:

- Increasing the service frequency on the existing Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha commuter bus route, operated by Wisconsin Coach Lines;
- Proposing three ways to improve transportation connections between Belle Urban System routes in the City of Racine and the University of Wisconsin-Parkside campus; and
- Providing express bus service between the cities of Racine and Kenosha. The service would operate on weekdays, with stops limited to about every quarter mile to one mile.

Each of the inter-county alternatives would require an increase in the costs for providing public transit services between Racine County and surrounding counties.
Modine product will help city buses conserve fuel

RACINE — Finding ways to improve the fuel consumption of local bus fleets is a goal in cities across America. But in Racine the effort has a unique local bent.

This week, the first of 14 new buses arrived at the Racine Belle Urban Systems garage in Racine.

The buses were made in California, but they are equipped with a unique “E-fan” cooling system designed and built by Racine-based Modine Manufacturing.

The E-fans, which use an electrically powered system to cool the engine and transmission as opposed to a hydraulic system, are expected to significantly increase fuel economy.

On Thursday, engineers who helped to design the E-fan talked to bus mechanics about what the system can do and how it improves not only fuel efficiency and safety, but lowers greenhouse emissions and reduces maintenance costs.

“It is the latest technology in cooling systems. It is variable speed fans and it maintains optimum temperatures,” explained Gregg Olson, Modine’s engineering director for power train cooling. “It takes minimum energy to maintain the optimum temperatures. One’s cooling air. One’s cooling water in the engine and the other one is cooling oil. Previously there was a very large hydraulic fan — one fan for everything. So that took a lot more power away from the engine.”

Not having to deal with the maintenance problems caused by large hydraulic fans is a big plus for Dan McCabe, Belle Urban System’s lead mechanic.

“I have a bus that’s down on the hydraulic pump because of the overuse,” McCabe said.

McCabe added that having Modine “right in the backyard” is also a plus, as they will be available to help mechanics with any issues or questions.

Racine’s new buses are expected to use at least 5 percent to 8 percent less fuel than the 1997 buses that they are replacing, according to a Belle Urban System press release. The majority of Racine’s current fleet of buses have more than 700,000 miles on their odometers and have been in daily service for nearly 16 years, the release states.

The Belle Urban system has a fleet of 35 vehicles and provides nearly 1.5 million rides each year in Racine, Mount Pleasant, Caledonia and Sturtevant as well as service to the Grandview Industrial Park just west of I-94 in Yorkville. Operations are funded by a combination of passenger fares, state and federal funding and financial support from the five local units of government.

BY THE NUMBERS

Fuel Economy - old buses versus new buses

6 miles/gallon: 2013 buses

4.7 miles/gallon: 1997 buses

Source: Belle Urban System
New Racine buses tap Modine Manufacturing technology

Jeff Engel
Reporter- The Business Journal

Racine’s new public bus fleet will come equipped with a Modine Manufacturing Co. component expected to greatly increase fuel efficiency, the city said this week.

The Racine Belle Urban System is replacing city buses that have in many cases been operating since 1997 and have become expensive to maintain. The 14 replacements are being manufactured by California-based Gillig Corp. and will be equipped with a Modine “E-fan” cooling system that has reportedly improved fuel economy in some transit operations by as much as 15 percent.

Modine also says the cooling system increases safety and decreases greenhouse gas emissions, bus weight and maintenance costs. The technology performs engine and transmission cooling through an electrically powered system instead of the traditional hydraulic system.

Modine (NYSE: MOD) is a Racine-based manufacturer of radiators and other thermal management products.

The new buses emit 4 percent of the nitrogen oxide emissions of the old buses and 10 percent of the particulate matter. The Racine area and all of southeastern Wisconsin are under Environmental Protection Agency emissions guidelines because of poor air quality.

Racine’s bus system provides nearly 1.5 million rides each year in Racine, Mount Pleasant, Caledonia, Sturtevant and to the Grandview Industrial Park in the town of Yorkville.

Jeff Engel is The Business Journal’s reporter covering the manufacturing industry and technology.
Racine County residents asked to provide input on alternatives for improving public transit

Two public meetings have been scheduled to gather input from Racine County residents on possible ways to improve public transit service in the County over the next five years. At the public meetings, attendees will be able to review, ask questions, and provide comments on a series of alternatives developed for improving City, County, and inter-county public transit services. The meetings will be held:

Tuesday, March 5, 2013, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Veterans Terrace - Patriot Room
589 Milwaukee Ave.
Burlington, WI

Wednesday, March 6, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Corinne Reid-Owens Transit Center
1421 State Street
Racine, WI

The public meetings will be in an "open house" format, allowing residents to attend at any time during the two-hour timeframe for each meeting. A short presentation will be given at 5:30 p.m. At any time during each meeting, attendees can leave written comments or speak to a court reporter or staff member to provide oral comments. Written comments may also be submitted through March 8, 2013. All comments will be considered when developing a final recommended Racine County public transit plan. Comments can be submitted in any of the following ways:

www.nwrpc.org/racinetranplan
E-mail: racinetranplan@nwrpc.org
Fax: (262) 547-1103
Mail: Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
W239 N1812 Rockwood Drive
P.O. Box 1607
Waukesha, WI 53187
The transit service improvement alternatives have been developed as a short-range, five-year plan for public transit in the County. The plan is being prepared by the Regional Planning Commission, in cooperation with staff from the City of Racine and Racine County. Guidance for the plan is being provided by an Advisory Group made up of representatives from all units of government in the County and a wide variety of agencies with an interest in transportation in the County. The Advisory Workgroup has approved the transit service improvement alternatives for public comment.

In preparation for the public meetings, the Commission has published a newsletter summarizing the alternatives. The alternatives are:

A Preliminary Recommended Alternative for the City of Racine
Belle Urban System
An alternative system for the City of Racine Belle Urban System (BUS) has been developed. The changes proposed under the alternative would make the BUS more efficient by combining and realigning poor performing routes. For example, Route Nos. 2 and 5-two of the poorest performing routes-would be combined into one route, re-named Route No. 25.

The total operating costs, total public operating funding, and local share of public funding for the proposed alternative system is about the same as that of the existing system. Should more funding become available in the next few years, several possible additional service improvements and expansions are identified, and should less funding be available, a number of possible service reductions are also identified.

Transit Service Alternatives for Racine County Three Alternatives for transit service were developed for Racine County: Alternative 1 proposes three ways to modestly improve and expand County transit services. One option is to expand eligibility of the existing County demand-response service west of IH 94, currently limited to seniors and persons with disabilities-to anyone who receives assistance from County agencies. Another is to combine the existing City of Racine and Racine County paratransit services east of IH 94.

Alternative 2 would reduce the current, eligibility-limited County demand-response service west of IH 94 with a service open to anyone who receives assistance from County agencies or with a shared-ride taxi program open to the general public would provide curb-to-curb or door-to-door transit service open to the general public.

Alternative 3 involves establishing a vanpool program for long work commute trips. The vanpool program could either be operated by the County or by a private operator.

Analyses of these alternatives indicate that the County-in addition to continuing its existing, eligibility-limited demand-response service west of IH 94-could likely implement a combined City/County paratransit service east of IH 94, continue to operate and modify its existing SPARC shuttle service so that it would be eligible for Federal and State operating assistance, and implement a vanpool program, all within its existing budget.

Reuniones publicas para el Plan de Transporte Publico del Condado de Racine

Las reuniones se celebraran en formato de "encuentro abiertos", lo que permiten que usted vaya en cualquier momento durante el plazo de dos horas para cada reunion. Se proporcionara informacion sobre las alternativas para mejorar el servicio de transporte en la Ciudad y el Condado, incluyendo una breve presentacion hecha a las 5:30 pm en cada reunion. Sus comentarios sobre las alternativas son muy valiosos para la preparacion del plan. Mas informacion acerca de este asunto se encuentra disponible en el sitio web del estudio en www.swrpc.org/racinetranplan

Un reporuento de la corte estara disponible para grabar comentarios verbales sobre las alternativas. Los comentarios escritos seran aceptados hasta el 9 de marzo de 2013, y podran ser presentados en la reunion o por correo de los EE.UU., como electronico o fax (ver mas abajo). Los comentarios tambien podran ser presentados utilizando el sitio web del estudio.

Los lugares de reunion son accesibles en silla de ruedas. Se pide a las personas que necesitan adaptaciones relacionadas con su discapacidad se pongan en contacto con la oficina (262) 547-4721, o por menos tres dias habiles antes de las reuniones para que los arreglos apropiados se pueden hacer sobre el acceso o movilidad, revision o interpretacion de los materiales, la participacion activa a la presentacion de observaciones.

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, PO Box 1607, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1607
Teléfono: (262) 547-4721
Fax: (262) 547-1103
Email: racinetranplan@swrpc.org
Transit plan meeting is Tuesday

Local residents will have a chance to learn more about a five-year public transit plan and offer their opinions during a meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 5, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at Veterans Terrace, 589 Milwaukee Ave., Burlington.

The meeting, hosted by Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, will be in an open house format, allowing residents to attend at any time during the two-hour timeframe. A short presentation will be given at 5:30 p.m. At any time during each meeting, attendees can leave written comments or speak to a court reporter or staff member to provide oral comments.

A second meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 6, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at Corinne Reid-Owens Transit Center, 1421 State Street, Racine.

Among the proposal in the plan are a shared-ride taxi service open to everyone and a commuter bus line that would run from Burlington to Milwaukee.

To prepare for the meetings, SEWRPC has produced a newsletter outlining the various alternatives for public transportation in the near future. The newsletter can be found online at www.myracinecounty.com.

All input received at the meetings will be considered as final recommendations are developed, according to SEWRPC.
Meeting on transit plan postponed

Posted by Ed Nadowski in Burlington on March 4, 2013 3:17 pm / no comments

A meeting seeking public comments on proposals for improving public transportation in Racine County has been rescheduled for Tuesday, March 12.

The meeting was originally planned for March 5 in Burlington, but has been postponed due to a forecast of heavy snow for the area that day, according to officials with the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, who developed the plan in conjunction with county and local officials.

Like the original, the rescheduled meeting will be held at Veterans Terrace, 589 Milwaukee Ave., Burlington, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. County residents will be able to review the proposals and are encouraged to comment.

The meeting will be in an open house format, allowing residents to attend at any time during the two-hour timeframe. A short presentation will be given at 5:30 p.m.

Attendees can leave written comments or speak to a court reporter or staff member to provide oral comments. The deadline for written comments has been extended through March 15.

A story on the proposed plan can be found by clicking here.

For additional information, visit www.swrpe.org/racinetransitplan.
Residents weigh in on public transportation at forum
Transit's future a question

PRESENTING THE SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS AT A PUBLIC FORUM WEDNESDAY, SEWRPC'S ERIC LYNDE OFFERED MULTIPLE SCENARIOS BECAUSE, HE SAID, "THERE'S A LOT OF FLUX, IN TERMS OF FUNDING" OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

Several dozen residents filtered through the Corinne Reid-Owens Transportation Center on Wednesday, taking in posters and packets on the proposed alternatives. Those interested in commenting wrote out their thoughts and dropped them in a marked box. Others listened to a half-hour's worth of information presented by commission project leader Lynde.

That public input will get weighed and added to the commission's proposal before it goes to Racine County and the City of Racine later this spring, Lynde said.

Funding in flux

Moving forward, federal funding is especially uncertain, Lynde noted. State funding is flat, at least in Gov. Scott Walker's biennial budget, which also proposes transferring mass transit funding from the protected transportation fund to the general fund, putting it in the same pot as school aids, Medicaid and other publicly funded services.

According to the governor's budget, the move is designed "to further strengthen the relationship between user fee revenues and investments in transportation infrastructure."

But it has some, like City Administrator Tom Friedel, worrying about the long-term funding forecast for mass transit in Wisconsin.

According to Friedel, it makes sense for public transportation like buses and shuttles to receive funding from a dedicated source like state transit aids, rather than compete with other public projects in the general fund.

The Wisconsin League of Municipalities, which lobbies the state Legislature on behalf of Racine and other cities, agrees.

"As long as the dollars are there, it doesn't matter," noted League Executive Director Dan Thompson. "But reading between the lines, this looks like it could well, over a period of years, it could signal reduced support for transit from the Wisconsin Legislature."
The governor's budget has yet to be finalized, and the state Legislature could still make significant adjustments. In the interim, Thompson said the League will most likely lobby to keep mass transit dollars out of the general fund.

Timelines

In the short term, the city is well-positioned to realign existing bus routes and even save money by running more efficiently under the commission's proposed model, according to City Transit Manager Al Stanek.

It's a project that's been under way for the past two years and represents the first major route adjustment in about two decades, Stanek said. It will likely go into effect later this summer, pending City Council approval.

At the county level, however, County Executive Jim Ladwig said there is no dedicated timeline, in part because while the city is revising exiting routes, the county would be creating new public transit options under the commission's proposals.

And with federal funding fluctuating and state contributions currently supposed to stay flat, Ladwig said that he's not looking at investing increased local tax dollars unless citizens or businesses demonstrate a real need.

"Is it something we're actively pursuing at this point? No," said Ladwig. "But if we can identify the need, and if ridership is going to be there, we will."

Currently, Health and Human Services Department Director Jonathan Delagrave said the county is eyeing the commission's proposed shared-ride tax and shuttle programs, and considering the funding viability of a commuter route that would connect Milwaukee with Racine and Kenosha County.

Whether it's federal or local tax dollars, Ladwig said, the county will likely spend judiciously on transportation, saying "We still have an obligation to use peoples' tax dollars appropriately."

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

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Comments will be received and considered through March 15.

See the proposed transit alternatives online at www.sewrpc.org/racinetranstplan