

Milwaukee County Transit System: Final phase of 'MCTS NEXT' system redesign takes effect August 29th, marking milestone achievement for transit in Milwaukee County

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MILWAUKEE (August 9, 2021) — The Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) is reminding passengers that the final phase of its MCTS NEXT system redesign takes effect **Sunday, August 29, 2021** with improvements and adjustments to **Routes 22, 28, 54, 55, 56, 60, 76, and BlueLine**. Additionally, there are three new routes - **Routes 18, 66, and 92** - that will begin operation. **Routes 64 and 67** will be retired.

Passengers are encouraged to visit RideMCTS.com/NEXT or call 414-344-6711 for specific information about what to expect on their route(s). For personalized trip planning assistance, our Customer Service team can be reached at 414-937-3218 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. There will also be extended Customer Service hours the first week of the implementation. (Sunday, August 29 from 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and Monday, August 30 through Friday, September 3 from 6:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.)

The completion of MCTS NEXT is a milestone achievement for transit in our community, adding faster service into new corridors, expanding access to unserved and underserved job areas, creating better connections to shopping destinations, and making routes easier to understand.

- **More high frequency service**

- Once Phase 3 begins, the MCTS system will feature 60% high frequency service (compared to 40% prior to the redesign). There will be 17% more trips across the board on weekdays, meaning buses are coming more often. When buses come more often, passengers enjoy an increase in reliability and can more easily transfer to other routes.
- In Phase 3, there will be 4 new high frequency routes: 18, 60, 76, and BlueLine.
- **Better connections to jobs and grocery stores**
 - In Phase 3, this includes routes 18, 22, 28, 54, 56, 92, and BlueLine.
 - For example:
 - The newly-modified BlueLine will be extended on the north end to reach businesses near N. 124th & Bradley like Woodman's, Aldi, and Sam's Club.
 - Route 22 will be modified and extended west to provide a new connection to Mayfair Mall and also businesses and residences located at N. 124th & North.
 - Route 54 will be modified on the east end to provide a new connection to an unserved job and shopping area near Holt Avenue & Chase Avenue.
 - Route 28 will be modified to expand access to multiple unserved and underserved job areas. On the north end, this includes the Mayfair Collection and other employment opportunities along N. 124th between Capitol Drive and Silver Spring Drive. On the south end, this includes businesses along S. 108th Street south of the Hales Corners Park-Ride lot.
 - Route 56 will be modified to expand access to the underserved job corridor along Miller Park Way-S. 43rd Street and also provide new service to Alverno College.
 - The new Route 92 will provide an additional way to travel to and from the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center (MRMC).
- **Simpler routing and route names that are easier to understand**
 - In Phase 3, this includes routes 60, 76, and 92.
 - For example:
 - The newly-modified Route 76 is named for the street that it primarily operates on (N. and S. 76th Street).
 - The new Route 60 is named for the street that it primarily operates on (N. and S. 60th Street).
 - The new Route 92 is named for the street that it primarily operates

on (N. and S. 92nd Street). It will establish one simpler route along this corridor (instead of three routes today).

- **Faster trips thanks to properly-balanced bus stops**

- [Bus stop balancing](#) means shortening many riders' travel times by removing some stops that are too close to each other, are not used often, or do not meet standards for being accessible to persons with disabilities.
- In Phase 3, this includes routes 18, 22, 28, 54, 55, 56, 60, and 76.

Milwaukee County has evolved over the years, especially when it comes to the locations of job centers, shopping destinations, schools, and residential areas.

“MCTS NEXT has been an exciting effort – years in the making – to update the route network, improve the rider experience, and meet Milwaukee County’s modern needs,” said Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley. “This important project expands access to parts of our community that have gone underserved, or unserved, for far too long. MCTS NEXT helps facilitate a more connected Milwaukee County and gives residents the opportunity to visit different communities, work opportunities, and shopping destinations with ease.”

MCTS spent more than three years conducting a comprehensive review of the entire transit system. Planners examined and evaluated every route and bus stop across the MCTS service area to identify opportunities for improvements, enhanced efficiency, and faster service.

A massive public outreach effort – including 13 open house events and more than 50 stakeholder meetings – resulted in hundreds of comments and thousands of interactions with passengers, bus drivers, businesses, community groups, and elected officials. Additionally, MCTS received input from the Milwaukee County Office on African American Affairs (OAAA). This valuable feedback helped shape plans that will improve the overall system and advance racial equity by increasing access for people of color to employment, education, healthcare, grocery stores, and other essential destinations.

As part of MCTS NEXT’s phased implementation in 2021, MCTS has conducted a comprehensive communications effort. In addition to making information available online and via phone 24 hours a day, MCTS launched an English and Spanish-language advertising campaign on buses, bus shelters, billboards, radio, TV, newspapers, news websites, and social media. There are also audio announcements playing on board buses, informative bus stop signage, special passenger



newsletters, virtual meetings, neighborhood outreach, and more.