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October 26, 2011

To: The Racine Transit & Parking Commission

From: The Transit and Parking Systems Manager

Subject: Response to Public Comments on Proposed 2012 BUS Service Cuts

The bulk of public responses to the proposed 2012 BUS service cuts concerned the impact that cuts would have on people having access to employment. The proposed cuts are primarily the result of a decrease of state aid to public transportation mandated in the most recent state budget combined with the upward spiraling costs of fringe benefits and inflationary pressures.

The following are potential action items to address these concerns:

1. Work with other Wisconsin communities also affected by the state cuts at getting “surplus” State Transportation Funds allocated to reduce the impact of the state cuts.
2. Evaluate service delivery options that could soften the impact of the proposed cuts and/or recommend fare structure changes that will help mitigate the impact of proposed cuts.
3. Work with the City Council at examining any options for additional city funding within the financial constraints and spending limits required by state mandates.

There is a statewide effort, lead by the City of Racine, regarding action item #1, and action item #3 will play out as City of Racine budget deliberations take place.

The following information is provided regarding action item #3 and is a very crude estimate of costs:

- The current service delivery model for third shift jobs (primarily in the Waxdale and Grandview Industrial Park areas) could possibly be revised to use two buses as opposed to the full complement of buses currently deployed. It is estimated that this would require adding back in an estimated 1700 service hours or roughly \$85,000.
- A reduced Sunday Service schedule of hourly service on five routes with first and last departures from the Reid-Owens Transit Center at 10:10am and 5:10pm would require adding back in an estimated 3,500 service hours or roughly \$175,000.
- A fare increase would not be recommended at this time due to the negative impact it would have on currently increasing ridership. The system has experienced fare increases and service cuts every year since 2003 and the response from our largely “captive ridership” has been less frequent ridership and altered transportation plans. Total ridership remains essentially constant from a smaller population base.

A comprehensive fare structure restructuring is being developed along with a revised comprehensive route revision for mid-year 2012. The goal is to deliver essential service more efficiently and at a fare that maximizes both revenue and ridership.