



Department Source: Public Works

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: August 7, 2017

Re: GO COMO Bus Service Evaluation Final Report

Executive Summary

Staff has prepared for Council consideration a report summarizing the attached July 24, 2017 "GO COMO Bus Service Evaluation-Final Report" prepared by Olsson Associates related to a comprehensive service and planning analysis of the current Transit system as directed by Council in 2015.

Discussion

In early 2015, Council directed staff to prepare a Scope of Services in order to develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a complete analysis of the current Transit system. The RFP was issued on June 17, 2015 and the project was awarded to Olsson Associates through a qualifications based process in late 2015. The agreement with Olsson Associates was executed on January 7, 2016 and formal work on the project began in February 2016. Several report deliverables were provided throughout the process and were made available to Council and the public. The attached final Olsson report compiles all previous technical memos into one comprehensive document which includes recommendations for route alternatives (see Chapter 11, page 212). These proposed alternatives were presented to Council at a work session held on March 20, 2017.

The preferred alternatives as outlined in the report are as follows:

- Replacing the current Black Route #1 with two north-south routes that both serve the University of Missouri campus and Wabash Station.
 - A new Route #2 that would serve the retail on Providence and Nifong, before connecting through campus to the Wabash Station. It would then continue to Business Loop 70 and then extend north along Garth Avenue to terminate at Blue Ridge Road.
 - The eastern portion of the existing Route #1 would be served by a new Route #1 that would connect Rock Quarry Road and Grindstone Parkway in the southeast of the city, to Wabash Station through the University of Missouri Campus, to Brown School Road via Rangeline Street.
- The current Gold Route #2 would be split into three separate routes. A new Route #3 would connect the Wabash Station to retail on Fairview using Ash Street, Garth Avenue, Business Loop 70, Wooley, and Bernadette. A new Route #4 would primarily serve Broadway between Wabash Station and Fairview. A revised Route #5 would extend service from St. Charles Road and Clark Lane to Wabash Station via Paris Road,



City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

while also serving the retail and medical services on Conley Road and Keene Street. Battle High School would continue to be served before and after the school day.

- A new Route #6 would link the retail and medical services on Conley Road and Keene Street to the Wabash Station via Broadway and the campus.
- The areas served by Dark Green Route #7, Light Green Route #8, Purple Route #9, and Pink Route #6 would turn into a flex zone allowing passengers to either circulate within the zone, or deliver to a point where they can access fixed route transportation.
- Flex would be introduced in areas served by the current Brown Route #3 and Orange Route #4.
- Modify the service span to start at 6:00 am, rather than 6:30 am, on weekdays. Evening service would end at 7:30 pm.

Subsequent to the March 2017 Council work session, staff has proposed to eliminate three underutilized routes: the Pink Route #6, the Dark Green Route #7 and the Light Green Route #8, at a savings of more than \$500,000, in order to discontinue Transit's fixed route use of cash reserves to cover expenses and services.

Moving forward to FY2019, staff supports the recommended alternatives and believes a transition from the current coverage system to one based around transit propensity and the highest number of potential riders is consistent with transit planning trends around the country. The preferred alternatives are more efficient and consistent, but would require modification to meet current budgetary constraints. Olsson Associates developed these proposed alternatives based on Transit's FY2016 budget; however, implementing these changes in 2018 would result in a budget increase of \$500,000/year. Therefore, in order to implement the majority of these changes as budget neutral, staff recommends modifying the proposed alternatives by removing flex zones, adjusting at least one route to decrease frequency and eliminate an additional bus in service.

Staff believes these alternatives are desirable by the majority of transit riding customers; therefore, based on the proposed route alternatives identified above, staff will schedule a public hearing in January of 2018 allowing for public input. Staff anticipates the changes could be implemented in August of 2018.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: If the proposed alternatives outlined in the Olsson report are implemented as is, staff estimates the cost would result in an additional \$500,000/per year. If these alternatives are modified to remove flex zones, adjust at least one route to decrease frequency and eliminate an additional bus in service, the result would be budget neutral.

Long-Term Impact: Unknown



Vision & Strategic Plan Impact

Vision Impacts:

Primary Impact: Transportation, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Operational Excellence, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Mobility, Connectivity, and Accessibility, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Legislative History

| Date | Action |
|------------|---|
| 03/16/2015 | R49-15 Authorizing the Purchasing Agent to request proposals for consulting services for a complete operations review and market analysis of the COMO Connect system. |
| 03/20/2017 | Council work session held to discuss Olsson & Associates comprehensive document and recommendations for route alternatives |

Suggested Council Action

For information only.