



SMTD board to consider route changes today

By **JOHN REYNOLDS** (john.reynolds@sj-r.com)

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The Springfield Mass Transit District is poised to make some of the biggest changes to its bus routes since the district was formed more than four decades ago.

The proposals include eliminating some routes with low ridership and adding services in other areas. The district also is focusing on bus routes that will help people get to and from work.

Linda Tisdale, executive director of the SMTD, said a consulting firm, Perteet Inc. of Seattle, Wash., put the proposal together after meeting with people throughout the community.

“One thing the consultants found in the surveys they did was that people were interested in more work trips,” Tisdale said. “A lot of the recommendations they are proposing are beefing up the service to the southwest corridor, because that is where so many people work.”

One new route, for example, goes to the Walmart on South Sixth Street, which currently is not served by an SMTD route. The same route includes the University of Illinois Springfield and Lincoln Land Community College.

Tisdale said the district received numerous requests for the route from employees of the Walmart and students at the schools.

The changes are on the agenda for today’s meeting of the Springfield Mass Transit District board. If the board preliminarily adopts the changes, the next step will be a series of public hearings. If necessary, the board could make changes based on response at the hearings.

In addition to the southwest side changes, the consultants are proposing that the SMTD extend service to mobile home parks near Peoria Road and Dirksen Parkway. That also is the result of requests by people in the area.

Other proposed changes include eliminating the Historic Sites Route, adding a stop at Senior Services of Central Illinois, 701 W. Mason St., and creating paratransit service on Saturdays between downtown and the planned Southwind Park.

Consultants received several requests for a senior services’ stop, and the historic route has been drawing low numbers, Tisdale said.

“It’s one of the poorest performing routes, even in the summer,” Tisdale said.

Some of the recommendations could go into effect this summer.

“The consultant looked at our fleet, roster and budget,” Tisdale said. “They have designed service that fits within our current level of buses, drivers and budget. They did try to free up a few buses so we could address some future expansion.”

Frank Squires, chairman of the SMTD board, said the proposals are an attempt to meet the needs of as many people as possible.

“We are modifying the routes to reflect population changes and work zone changes,” Squires said.

While there are a lot of changes being proposed, Tisdale said the district is holding on to many of the old routes.

“They’re in there, it’s just that we’ve made adjustments,” Tisdale said. “We are covering the service areas with a different kind of route.”

SMTD meeting

Today’s meeting of the SMTD Board of Trustees is at 4:30 p.m. It will be held at the SMTD office, 928 S. Ninth.

Bus route proposals

Maps of some of the Springfield Mass Transit District’s proposed new routes can be viewed by going to the district’s Website, www.smtd.org. Click on the announcements, and scroll down. Some of the proposed routes have already been changed, and those changes may not be reflected on the maps.

Here is a summary of the proposed changes.

- **Route 1 South Fifth Street:** Discontinued; replaced by new Route 15 and 11.
- **Route 1 North Fifth Street:** Interline with (connected to) Route 8 Lowell Avenue.
- **Route 2 North Ninth Street:** Northgate service all inbound mornings and all outbound afternoons; Indian Hills deviation discontinued.
- **Route 3 Grandview and Route 3 Bergen Park:** Split into two routes; Grandview service connected to Route 4; Bergen Park service replaced by new Route 16; 30 minute peak, 60 minute off-peak.
- **Route 4 West Jefferson Street:** Shortened to turn around at Jefferson Street and Bruns Lane; connected to Route 3; new Saturday service.
- **Route 5 South 15th Street:** Discontinued; replaced by new Route 15 and Route 9.
- **Route 5 North Walnut Street:** Modified to serve the senior center on Walnut Street at Mason Street; connected to

Route 9 MLK.

- **Route 6 East Cook Street:** Extended to White Oaks Mall via Ash Street; serves Montvale and Sherwood neighborhoods.
- **Route 6 Colony West:** Discontinued; Montvale/Nottingham replaced by Route 6 East Cook Street.
- **Route 7 West Washington:** Ends at Parkway Pointe; future planned extension west on Wabash Avenue to Wells Fargo, AT&T and new Walmart; hourly service off-peak.
- **Route 7 South State Street:** Discontinued, replaced by new Route 13.
- **Route 8 Lowell Avenue:** Moved to First Street between Ash and Laurel streets; to be connected to Route 1 North Fifth Street when Legacy Pointe opens, route extended from First Street via Highland and MacArthur avenues and moved to Fourth/Fifth street corridor.
- **Route 8 Governor Street:** Discontinued, replaced by new Route 18.
- **Route 9 Martin Luther King Blvd.:** Moved to South Fifteenth Street between Cornell Avenue and Laurel Street replacing part of Route 5 South 15th Street; moved to Capitol Avenue in and out of downtown, connected to Route 5 North Walnut Street.
- **Route 9 Noble Avenue:** Discontinued.
- **Route 10 Southern View/Laketown:** Moved to Sixth Street north of Laurel Street to replace Route 1 South Fifth Street; modified to Stanford Avenue between Stanton Street and Dirksen Parkway, discontinuing Radcliff Road service.
- **Route 11 UIS/LLCC:** Extended to JC Penney and new county health offices; shortened to end at UIS; replaced by new Route 15 south of UIS; reduced to hourly off-peak; to move to Seventh/Ninth streets when Route 8 extended to Legacy Pointe.
- **Route 12 Knox Knolls-Country Club:** Discontinued; Knox Knolls replaced by new Route 18.
- **Route 13 MacArthur Boulevard:** New route replacing most of Route 7 South State Street; hourly off-peak.
- **Route 14 Wabash Avenue:** New trunk route serving Second Street, Grand Avenue; MacArthur Boulevard; Wabash Avenue; White Oaks Mall; Parkway Pointe and Prairie Crossing every 30 minutes.
- **Route 15 South 11th Street/UIS:** New route replacing Route 5 South 15th and portions of Route 11 every 30 minutes via 11th Street corridor, Walmart, UIS, LLCC, Noll Medical
- **Route 16 Sandhill:** New Route replacing Route 3 Bergen Park; extends to Dirksen Walmart and Sandhill mobile home park; 30 minute peak, 60 minute off-peak.
- **Route 18 Lawrence Avenue:** New route replacing Route 8 Governor and Route 12 Knox Knolls via Lawrence Avenue, Cranmer Drive and Dickinson; peak periods every 30 minutes.
- **Routes 901 and 902:** Night Service (north and south): No changes.
- **Routes 903 and 904 Night Service (westside):** Modified to serve the south side bus stop at White Oaks Mall.
- **Harrison Park:** Discontinued
- **Southwind Park:** New service route Saturdays only, using paratransit vehicle connecting downtown and Southwind Park

John Reynolds can be reached at 788-1524.

Comments (9)

Vet

21 hours ago

Report Abuse

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Report Abuse

If they started to run a Park & Ride service to Chatham, Sherman, Rochester, you would see less cars having to come into town during the morning commute, plus would benefit those from out of the area that may not have reliable transportation to & from Springfield. SMTD needs to become a county wide service, not just a city narrowed service.

optim

20 hours ago

Report Abuse

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Report Abuse

No service in the area between MacArthur to Veterans and Washington to Wabash. Seems kind of ridiculous to leave out such a large part of the City. There should at least be some routes that cover this area in the morning and the afternoon to allow riders to use it to get to and from work.

HavePulse
20 hours ago
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Woo-hoo! I'd love it if they moved the bus route off my street!!! I've never seen anyone waiting for the bus in my area - and when the bus drives by, there's usually only about 1 person on it.

Jagergeist
18 hours ago
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I've often wondered what the bus service was like in town and what the routes were like. I've lived here for 11 years and wanted to try a bus ride but the downtown hub looked far too confusing (and a bit dangerous in spring and fall with the high school kids wandering around). Glad to see SMTD making changes based on rider feedback.

vivien leigh
16 hours ago
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Vet-Spot on the Park-n-Ride!!! I second that proposal. We did this during a recent trip to Portland, which has one of the best public transportation systems in the country, and it was awesome!!

scooter38
13 hours ago
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Glad to see the Historic Site Route go. That has been nothing but a big waste of money. Nobody ever rides it. All the sites are within walking distance of each other.

Nimzoman
12 hours ago
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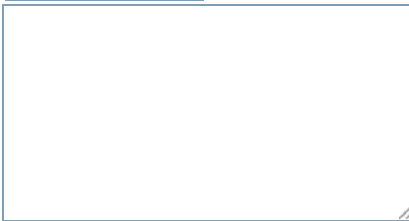
Oak Ridge & Lincoln home are 'walking distan

Mark Observed

6 hours ago

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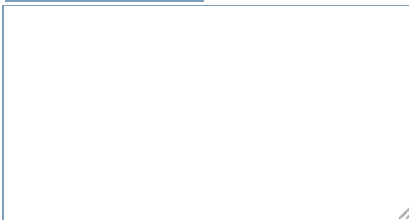
When are they going to convert to a grid system instead of having one large (and as one previous poster stated somewhat dangerous) transfer point downtown. Downtown has long since NOT been the center of commerce in this town.

Inigo Montoya

2 hours ago

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Report Abuse

Going off posts here... The grid system seems the way to go. If you look at the city map, the area is basically a grid. This way might mean more transfers for people, but I'm willing to bet most riders would be okay with that if it means a better overall service. Also like the park and ride idea. Not sure SMTD serving county wide is feasible, but I'm willing to bet if something like that were a private business, someone could make some money. As far as the historic route... if it were a grid system, it wouldn't be a problem... but I think most families who travel to Springfield for the tourism stuff drive. You don't see many dad, mom, and 3 kids getting on a bus to go see the Lincoln sites.

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2/22/2010

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