

To: CapMetro Board of Directors
From: Sharmila Mukherjee, EVP, Chief Strategic Planning and Development Officer
Date: March 14, 2024
Re: Proposed August 2024 Service Changes

Service changes provide CapMetro an opportunity to adjust its services to meet the needs of customers and efficiently use our resources. Service changes occur up to three times a year typically in January, June, and August to coincide with local school and university calendars.

The service change process is guided by the revised Board-approved [Service Standards and Guidelines](#). Additional information about how service changes are developed, evaluated, approved and ultimately implemented is available on our website at capmetro.org/service_change.

Summary of Proposed Changes & Process

The following is a high-level summary of the proposed service changes for August 2024.

- **UT Shuttle Route Adjustments** – To increase accessibility, connectivity, and better fit the needs of the community, combine Route 640 Forty Acres and Route 641 East Campus into one expanded campus circulator.
- **UT Shuttle Service Adjustments** – Typical transition to normal service levels will occur on UT Shuttle routes.
- **Pickup** – Four Pickup zones will have minor boundary changes to close “donut holes” or improve operational efficiency without impacting resources. CapMetro staff continues to coordinate with the City of Leander to respond to requests for Pickup enhancements.
- **School Trip Adjustments** – Select trips on bus routes will return to normal service levels.
- **Minor Bus Schedule Adjustments** – To improve on-time performance, select routes may receive minor adjustments to their schedules. This does not impact routes or stop locations.
- **Minor Rail Schedule Adjustments** – Rail on weekdays and/or Saturdays may receive minor schedule adjustments to ensure more efficient and reliable service.

The proposed changes are in accordance with CapMetro’s proposed FY 2025 budget. If approved, the changes would be implemented on Sunday, August 18, 2024.

The proposed August 2024 service change process includes a public involvement plan to notify key stakeholders and communities and solicit input from potentially impacted riders from March 15 – April 10, 2024. Input will also be solicited from advisory committees, the University of Texas students, staff and faculty, and operators, among others. As part of our commitment to public involvement, the community will have an additional opportunity to participate by providing a formal comment opportunity on the proposed service change during a scheduled public hearing on April 10, 2024. Engagement efforts will be summarized, and community feedback will be reviewed prior to bringing the proposed service change to the board for approval on April 22, 2024.

The UT Shuttle route adjustments are subject to review and approval by the UT Shuttle Bus Committee, as per the Interlocal Agreement between CapMetro and the University of Texas.¹ On February 14, 2024, CapMetro presented the recommended adjustments to the committee. The committee recommended that CapMetro proceed with public engagement on this matter. Once the feedback from the public has been reviewed, the committee will conduct a formal vote before considering this proposed service change item in April.

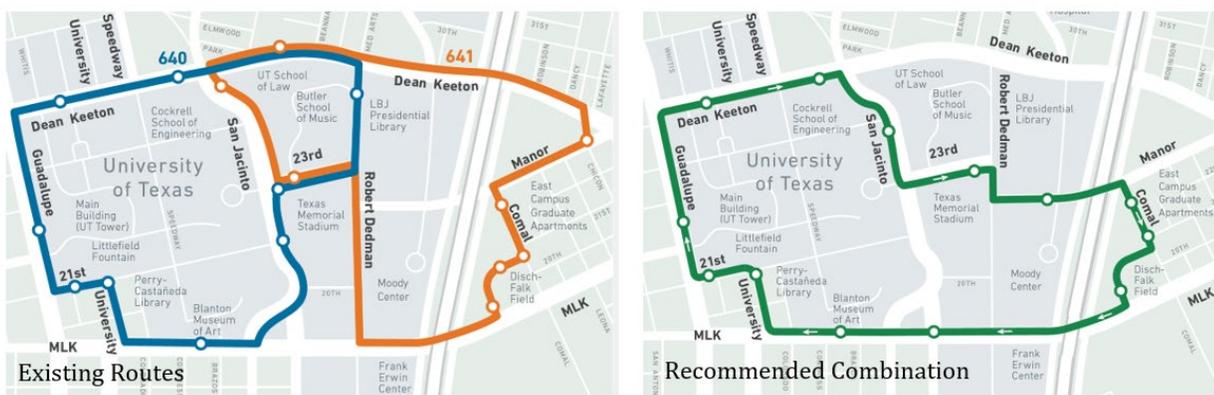
Once the proposed changes are finalized after board review, we will promote final decisions on service through communications and marketing materials.

These recommendations are classified as a major service change as two operating routes will be combined into one operating route, resulting in the elimination of one route. A service equity analysis for the combination showed no disparate impact or disproportionate burden. The analysis and finding are included in Appendix A.

Detailed Overview of Proposed Changes

UT Shuttle Route Adjustments

CapMetro received a request from the UT Shuttle Bus Committee to improve access to the Main Campus from East Campus. Following an analysis of potential solutions, CapMetro recommends combining UT Shuttle Routes 640 Forty Acres and 641 East Campus into one expanded campus circulator. This adjustment also matches service with evolving housing trends, as West Campus and East Campus continue to rapidly grow. Key destinations through campus would be connected in a single ride, which would reduce potential transfers and improve the customer experience. The combined route would not only enhance campus connectivity, but also provide a more frequent and reliable level of service.



Although access would be maintained for most of the stops currently served by Route 640 and Route 641, a few stops would no longer be served by the combined route. These stops currently have low

¹ The UT Shuttle Bus Committee solicits input from students, staff and faculty, and recommends plans for improvement of the safety, scheduling, routing and overall performance of the UT Shuttle services. It also serves as a formal channel of communication and an outlet for action on transportation issues and recommendations. Per the Interlocal Agreement between CapMetro and the University of Texas, major changes for the UT Shuttle Services must be presented to the University of Texas at least one month in advance of any public presentation on the change proposal. In addition, advance written approval of the University is required for major service changes.

usage, alternative routes, and/or nearby stops. Further, no additional resources are required for this recommendation.

Pickup

Over the last several years, CapMetro staff have monitored Pickup performance for each zone and provided regular reports to the Board. CapMetro now operates eleven Pickup zones and frequently receives requests for either new zones or expanded operations within existing zones. Due to resource limitations (available funding, vehicles and operators), we are not able to meet all demands and reviewing the performance of existing zones helps determine opportunities for improvement and balance requests for changes. CapMetro staff is proposing minor boundary changes to four zones, including East Austin, Dessau, Walnut Creek and North Oak Hill. These boundary changes will have minimal impact on resources and staffing, while closing “donut holes” and optimizing zone performance. CapMetro staff wants to see sustained success in terms of performance and will continue to review performance every six months to allow for action to occur if performance declines or improves.

In addition to making these minor changes to Pickup, CapMetro staff is closely coordinating with the City of Leander to evaluate enhancing the City’s Pickup zone. CapMetro staff continues to work with the Leander community to ensure a balanced approach to Pickup service enhancements while engaging with customers to get feedback on any potential proposed changes to service.

Should Board Members have any questions regarding the proposed changes, they should contact Ed.Easton@capmetro.org.

Appendix A: Title VI Analysis

The analysis was conducted in accordance with Title VI policies adopted by the board on June 28, 2021. The Major Service Change policy requires Capital Metro to conduct a service equity analysis whenever there is a “major service change” as defined in the policy. “Major service change” is defined to include “the establishment of a new fixed-route bus route, elimination of any fixed-route bus or rail route in its entirety, a geographic change on a given transit route of 25% or more of its annual revenue miles or hours.” Since single operating routes will be combined into one operating route, one route is eliminated and a service equity analysis is required to evaluate the impacts of the service changes on Title VI-protected populations and low-income populations.

The service equity analysis was conducted using the Title VI component of Remix Transit, an online transit planning software. Remix allows agencies to automatically generate a Title VI report by comparing existing service to a set of proposed changes using demographic data from the US Census Bureau (2018-2022 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates). Using this data, Remix estimates the population near a route, including its low-income and minority percentage, for both existing and proposed service. The output of the Remix Transit VI analysis is then summarized to compare the people trips for minority/low-income to non-minority/non-low-income for the existing service to the proposed service. CapMetro policy states that minority or low-income populations are being disproportionately impacted by a service change when they receive either more than 2% of their share of the adverse effects of a service change or less than 2% of the benefits of a service change. In accordance with CapMetro’s Title VI policies, a disparate impact to minority riders or a disproportionate burden to low-income riders would require CapMetro to take steps to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts when practicable (see following tables).

Disparate Impact (Minority)

Minority populations experienced a 7% increase in people trips and non-minority populations experienced a 3% increase. Since minority populations experience a larger increase than non-minority populations, there is no disparate impact.

	Non-Minority People Trips	Minority People trips
After	190,996,877	260,384,983
Before	184,740,541	242,529,319
Percent Change	3%	7%
Percentage Point Difference	-4%	

Disproportionate Burden (Low-Income)

Low-income populations experience a 5% increase and non-low income populations experience a 5% increase. Since low-income populations experience the same increase as non-low income populations, there is no disproportionate burden.

	Non-Low-Income People Trips	Low-Income People trips
After	185,225,162	266,156,698
Before	175,592,177	251,677,683
Percent Change	5%	5%
Percentage Point Difference	0%	