



SouthWest Transit Update

Commuter Services

May 20, 2021

SouthWest Transit (SWT) Overview

- ▶ Public transit provider for Eden Prairie, Chaska, Chanhassen, as well as Carver and Victoria (contracts).
- ▶ Governed by a commission consisting of six individuals appointed by the member cities and one rider representative.
- ▶ Suburban provider established by State Legislative action in 1983 due to the fact that the existing structure was not responsive or meeting the needs of the growing suburbs.
- ▶ SWT was formed in 1986.
- ▶ Pre-COVID: Operated over approximately 160 trips per day with 75 buses.
- ▶ Major routes bring commuters to Downtown Minneapolis and the University of Minnesota.
- ▶ National leader in innovation, technology, and transit-oriented development.
- ▶ Introduced one of the nation's first microtransit operations - SW Prime
- ▶ Provider of choice to many special events.
- ▶ Has over \$60 million in assets.
- ▶ Pre-COVID: Annually provided over 1.2 million rides.

COVID-19 Impacts

- ▶ Transit as an industry hit hard by the impact of COVID-19.
 - ▶ SWT hit harder than most do the makeup of our customer base - “Choice Riders.”
- ▶ Impacts/Actions
 - ▶ Initially lost over 90% of our riders and a similar percentage of farebox revenue.
 - ▶ Furloughed or eliminated over 50% of our workforce.
 - ▶ Reduced service by over 60%.
 - ▶ Received two rounds of Federal Stimulus Funding.
 - ▶ Took numerous safety measures to increase customer and employee confidence (mask mandate, passenger/driver separators, air purification systems, etc.).



Continuing Plan to Address COVID-19

- ▶ Continue reduced service with the plan to add back trips to meet any increased demand as we come out of the pandemic.
 - ▶ Targeting Labor Day for substantial service increases.
- ▶ Continue high level cleaning/disinfecting vehicles and facilities.
- ▶ Swapping out vehicles multiple times per day.
- ▶ Maintain daily employee health screening.
- ▶ Continue to make the wearing of masks mandatory in our facilities and on our vehicles.
 - ▶ This is a Federal mandate in effect until mid-September.
- ▶ Self-perform versus contract (keep as many employed as possible).

Goal : To give the agency the opportunity to meet all challenges and be financially solvent once we are able to put the coronavirus behind us.





What's Next After COVID?

- ▶ Build back express operations as Downtown/U of M reopens
 - ▶ U of M back on campus in the Fall
 - ▶ Downtown employers starting to return in Summer/Fall
- ▶ Explore new markets.
 - ▶ Suburb-to-Suburb Services - Shakopee expansion completed
 - ▶ 494/MOA/Airport - Service started April 2021
- ▶ Opportunity to build back services smarter
 - ▶ Create more efficient and attractive service schedules
 - ▶ Better leverage microtransit capabilities - First Mile/Last Mile



What's Next After COVID Cont.?

- ▶ Resume Special Event services
 - ▶ Trips will require reservations to start
 - ▶ State Fair - Planning for full service
 - ▶ Sporting Events
 - ▶ Twins Express resuming June 8th
 - ▶ Concerts
- ▶ Pilot evolving technologies
 - ▶ Mobility as a Service (MaaS)
 - ▶ Electric Vehicles
 - ▶ Autonomous Vehicles

What's Next? - SW Prime/Prime MD Expansion

- ▶ Expanded SW Prime and SW Prime MD services.
 - ▶ Expanded SW Prime hours of service
 - ▶ June 7th - Service to start earlier (5:30am)
 - ▶ Service into evening hours being planned
 - ▶ Expansion into Shakopee (up and running)
 - ▶ Canterbury Park, Valleyfair, Mystic Lake
 - ▶ MVTA service connections
 - ▶ Expansion of SW Prime MD Locations Serviced
 - ▶ Methodist Hospital
 - ▶ Park Nicollet Clinics in St. Louis Park
 - ▶ 494 Corridor Expansion
 - ▶ MSP Airport
 - ▶ Mall of America
 - ▶ Entire corridor between Eden Prairie and MOA





What's Next? - 494 Service

- ▶ Regional Solicitation grant awarded in 2016 for 3-year demonstration service.
- ▶ Provides for service between SouthWest Station and Mall of America.
 - ▶ Award amended in 2020 to include service to MSP Airport.
- ▶ Service scheduled to start in 2022.
 - ▶ Limited on-demand service already in operation.
- ▶ Primary Service Locations: SouthWest Station, Mall of America, MSP Airport, Normandale Community College, Orange Line BRT, France Ave, Lyndale Ave, and others.
- ▶ Weekdays and Saturdays.

SWLRT & SouthWest Transit

- ▶ 3.5-year negotiation process.
- ▶ Final agreement adopted in December of 2017.
- ▶ Results of the agreement met the needs of both SWT and the Met Council.
- ▶ SouthWest Station site is being redesigned to support existing SWT bus operations and LRT.
- ▶ Ultimately, the LRT operations will open up new service opportunities for SWT.
 - ▶ Improve service efficiencies for mid-day, evening, weekend, and special event services.
 - ▶ Improved first mile/last mile connections via SW Prime.



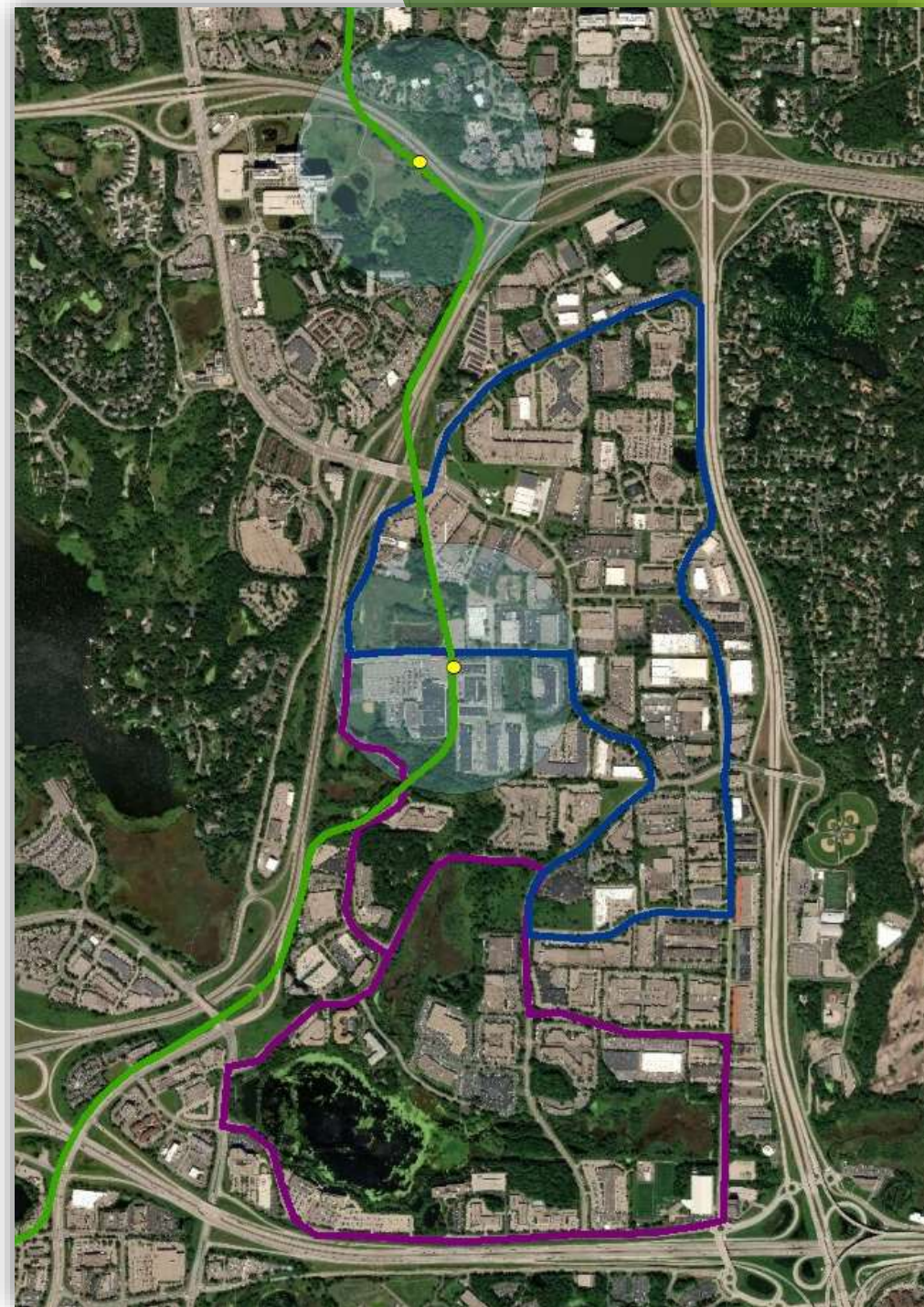
What's Next? - SouthWest Station Mobility Hub

- ▶ Regional Solicitation Grant awarded in 2018 for 3-year demonstration service.
- ▶ Planned Implementation: 2024 to coincide with SWLRT start of operations.
- ▶ Focuses on providing a high level of first mile/last mile multi-modal connectivity centered around the SouthWest Station SWLRT station.
- ▶ Consists of:
 - ▶ Additional SW Prime microtransit service.
 - ▶ Providing eBike and/or eScooter sharing.
 - ▶ 5 Carsharing vehicles.
 - ▶ Other mobility solutions as they evolve.



What's Next? - Golden Triangle Autonomous Demonstration

- ▶ Eden Prairie's Golden Triangle Area (GTA)
 - ▶ Largest Suburban Business Park in the Twin Cities Metro Area
 - ▶ 20,000+ Jobs
 - ▶ 9.8 million sqft. of office, commercial, and industrial property.
 - ▶ Accounts for 9% of all office/industrial space in the Twin Cities
 - ▶ Increased employment density anticipated with SWLRT
 - ▶ Large Employers: Optum, 3M, Starkey Labs, iMedia, Cigna, Lifetouch Studios
 - ▶ Majority of jobs outside of ¼-mile buffer of planned SWLRT stations
- ▶ Currently in discussions with multiple AV vendors/MnDOT/FTA about possible pilots.





What's Next? - Electric Vehicles & Autonomous SW Prime

Contact Us

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Employer Resources

- Receive email updates about Southwest LRT from Commuter Services
- Return to Work guidance
- Bus pass programs – Metropass
- Telework resources and training
- Preferential carpool / vanpool parking management
- Free outdoor bike rack
- New hire packets, e-blasts, newsletter articles



Commuter Resources

- Customized transit itinerary + free ride passes
- Transit Assistance Program (TAP)
- Carpool, vanpool matching and tips
- Bike-to-work materials and trail construction updates
- Try It Campaigns
- Sign up for monthly commuter newsletter
- Guaranteed Ride Home





NEW Twin Cities Telework website!

www.tctelework.com

Free resources for employers and teleworkers



Contact Us

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QUESTIONS

