

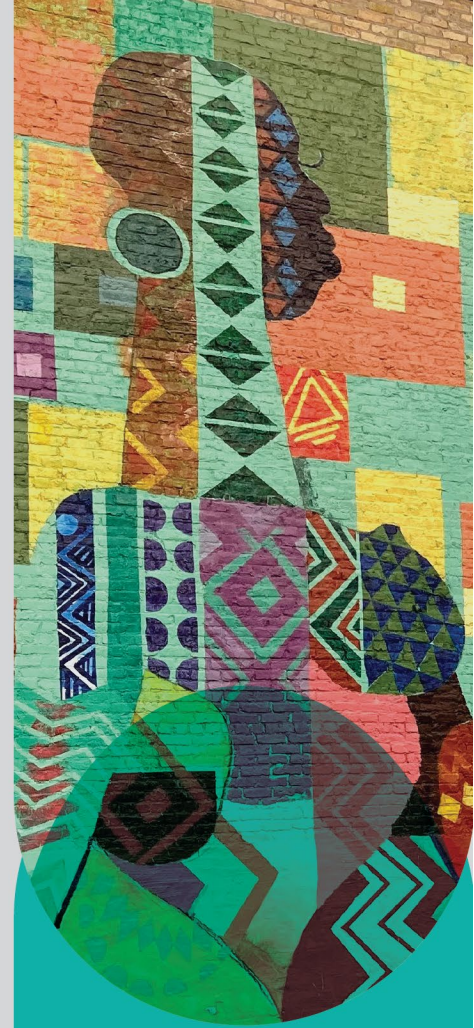


NORTH-SOUTH TRANSIT
ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE (LPA) REPORT

FEBRUARY 2024

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REVISION HISTORY

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ACRONYMS

ACRONYM	DESCRIPTION
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CAC	Community Advisory Committee
LPA	Locally Preferred Alternative
MCTS	Milwaukee County Transit Service
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
PIM	Public Involvement Meeting
SEWRPC	Southeast Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee

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1. INTRODUCTION

Milwaukee County and Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) are advancing the North-South Transit Enhancement Project (Project), a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service along 27th Street connecting the cities of Oak Creek, Franklin, Greenfield, Milwaukee and Glendale in Milwaukee County, Wisconsin.

A Feasibility Study was undertaken from 2020 to January 2023 to evaluate enhanced transit alternatives along and near the 27th Street corridor to reduce travel times, increase service frequencies and add amenities to better serve the high proportion of transit dependent populations in this area and attract new riders. The recommended alternative for the Feasibility Study included a recommended route, station locations and roadway configuration along the corridor. Feasibility Study Reports can be viewed at the following link: <https://www.mkenorthsouth.com/library>.

Since the completion of the Feasibility Study, MCTS has advanced the environmental review and design phase for the Project and has made refinements to the recommendations outlined in the Feasibility Study. The alternatives review completed as part of the Feasibility Study and the design refinements being completed in the current project phase form the basis of the Project's Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA).

1.1 Project Description

The Project proposes to improve the current PurpleLine bus route, one of MCTS's most used routes. The BRT service would operate on an 18-mile route traveling primarily along 27th Street, Teutonia Avenue, and Silver Spring Drive. The route would travel in a combination of dedicated bus lanes and mixed-traffic lanes and serve 32 destinations with 64 individual platforms. The BRT service would serve major employment, retail, cultural and community services destinations, including the 27th Street retail areas, Aurora St. Luke's Hospital, Historic Layton Boulevard, the 30th Street Industrial Route and the Bayshore Town Center. The BRT service would decrease passenger travel times, increase service frequency and add amenities to improve service to individuals, neighborhoods and businesses in the corridor, as well as transit users across the County.

1.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose of the MCTS North-South Transit Enhancement Project is to increase transit service effectiveness along the 27th Street corridor and throughout Milwaukee County by investing in improvements to existing transit infrastructure that will provide enhanced mobility to individuals and underserved residents and align with the County's mission to advance racial equity and social justice. The need of the Project is to improve transit service in the 27th Street corridor; enhance transit service to provide individuals, including traditionally underserved populations, with access to employment, services and amenities; and implement long-term MCTS Service Network Improvements along the 27th Street Corridor.

1.3 Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) Development

Selection of an LPA and adoption by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors demonstrates local support for the route alignment prior to the environmental documentation process. Once LPA approval is received from the Board of Supervisors, the LPA will be used for the environmental process which results in the completion of a Documented Categorical Exclusion (DCE) document. The LPA will require Milwaukee County approval and it is anticipated that it will be incorporated into the long-range regional plan. Local coordination on the LPA will continue throughout the Project.

This memorandum first summarizes the public and stakeholder outreach that informed the Feasibility Study's recommended alternative and continues to inform the LPA and decision-making in the environmental review and design phase. This memorandum then identifies the LPA; discusses the LPA's development process, including recent refinements; and outlines next steps.

2. PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

Public and stakeholder outreach was essential in the development of the Feasibility Study's recommended alternative, greatly informed the LPA decision-making process and continues to inform the design process. MCTS has held over 130 public and stakeholder meetings since the beginning of the Feasibility Study and will continue to maintain a robust and inclusive engagement process. This section first summarizes the outreach strategies utilized and then provides specifics on the outreach that occurred during the Feasibility Study and is continuing during the environmental review and design process.

2.1 Overall Outreach Strategies

The following outreach strategies were deployed throughout the Feasibility Study and continue to be utilized during the project development.

- **Community and Technical Advisory Committees:** The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) provide input to MCTS. They review documents and materials and provide input throughout the different phases.
- **Community Partners:** These stakeholder groups include community- and neighborhood-based organizations who have a longstanding presence in underserved neighborhoods in the corridor. During the Feasibility Study, the community partners were paid to assist in providing outreach along and near 27th Street. The design phase is continuing the Community Partner program and is in the process of implementing outreach activities with partners to facilitate input from affected communities included in the decision-making process.
- **Stakeholder Outreach:** Individual and group meetings were and continue to be held with key stakeholders, such as local and county officials, neighborhood and business organizations and others along the corridor to gain insight on specific topics.
- **Project Website:** The Project website (mkenorthsouth.com) has been maintained since the inception of the Study and continues to be updated. The website is used as an information hub and is utilized heavily during each round of public involvement to share information and obtain feedback.

- **Public Involvement Meetings and Comment Periods:** These meetings provide opportunities for the public and stakeholders to review progress and provide input to inform the subsequent phases.
- **Social Media and Newsletters:** Information is shared through MCTS social media accounts, press releases, newsletters, and email blasts.

2.2 Feasibility Study Outreach

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) met three times each during the study to review study progress and provide feedback and guidance. The meetings were conducted prior to Public Involvement Meetings (PIMs) and at critical decision points to allow members to provide input on information before it was presented to the public, help guide public involvement activities and provide expertise.

In May 2021, the Community Partner Program was initiated with community- and neighborhood-based organizations who have a longstanding presence in underserved neighborhoods in the corridor. The community partners conducted approximately 760 hours of outreach by developing materials and disseminating study information handouts via neighborhood mail drops and at local festivals, farmer's markets and other community events. The community partners also assisted in conducting surveys along and near 27th Street, including a PurpleLine bus stop survey, and attended the study's seven public meetings to answer resident questions.

The survey of existing PurpleLine riders at bus stops in June and July 2021 was a significant work effort for the study, which was conducted largely by Community Partners. Approximately 1,500 printed English and Spanish surveys were distributed, and 490 surveys were submitted. An online version of the survey was also available and could be accessed on mobile phones with a QR code.

The study team held over 90 meetings with individual stakeholders and stakeholder groups. Stakeholders included local and county elected officials, neighborhood and community associations, business-improvement districts, and transportation-focused organizations and groups.

Between November 2020 and October 2022, the study team provided four rounds of public involvement that included public meetings, surveys, strategic sharing of information and comment opportunities. The first round occurred from February to April 2021. It included two study overview public meetings conducted virtually about the existing conditions, an interactive remix map, a virtual whiteboard, and a general follow-up survey. The second round occurred from June to July 2021. It included the bus stop survey and three public meetings (one was Spanish-only). The public meetings shared information on the purpose and need, route options and preliminary station locations. Three short topic-based surveys were also released regarding preliminary transit type, route and station location alternatives. The feedback received helped to narrow alternatives. The third outreach round occurred from October to December 2021. It consisted of two public meetings that provided a synopsis of the Tier 1 Evaluation and its results. Four short topic-based surveys were provided following the public meetings about route options, station locations and dedicated bus lanes. The fourth and final outreach round occurred from September to October 2022. This round included robust outreach by sharing and collecting information and comments on the project website and through press releases, social media and the public comment form. Feedback from the final round of public involvement served as input to the Tier 2 and Tier 3 Evaluation reports.¹ The

¹ SEWRPC, Milwaukee North-South Transit Enhancement, Volume 7: Public Involvement Summary, January 2023, [d4ed33_b1ec70c2795a4928979506dd5546d6a5.pdf \(mkenorthsouth.com\)](https://www.mkenorthsouth.com/d4ed33_b1ec70c2795a4928979506dd5546d6a5.pdf), accessed February 1, 2024.

Milwaukee County Transit and Transportation Committee was briefed throughout the Feasibility Study including a final briefing on the Tier 3 Evaluation Report.

2.3 Environmental Review and Design Phase Outreach

Outreach for the environmental review and design phase began in 2023. The Project team continued the outreach started during the Feasibility Study by reengaging with stakeholders. In 2023, MCTS held 35 stakeholder meetings with the FTA, elected officials, municipalities, WisDOT and community, neighborhood and business organizations to better understand stakeholder concerns and share about the design and environmental review process. The team also continues to keep the public informed through the project website and project update emails.

The Project team participated in 14 community events throughout the summer to share information about the Project and encourage people to sign up for project updates. The events were a mix of local events near the corridor, such as Vibes on Villard and the Silver City International Festival, and events with a regional draw, such as the Juneteenth Festival and Mexican Fiesta. At several of the events, the team provided Spanish-speaking translators and project materials translated into Spanish, which enabled more conversations about the Project. At an event hosted by the Hmong American Friendship Center, the Project team had a Hmong-speaking translator available who enabled additional conversations. Throughout these events, 250 people participated in an interactive activity about what features of BRT are most important to them. An additional 50 people participated in a similar online poll shared in a project update email and on MCTS's social media channels.

The Project team also reconvened the TAC and CAC advisory committees. Notably, the CAC membership was expanded to include additional organizations to help reach more neighbors and businesses along the corridor. A CAC meeting was held in July 2023 to better understand how to engage with the diverse community along the project corridor. Then TAC and CAC meetings were held in January 2024 to share project progress so far.

Public meetings will be held February 27, 28, and 29, 2024. This includes two in-person options with Spanish-speaking translators and one virtual option. The Project team is working with CAC members to identify neighborhood meetings to bring public meeting materials to throughout February and March. Meeting materials will also be published on the project website.

During this phase, the Milwaukee County Transit and Transportation Committee (T&T Committee) has been briefed twice and will continue to be briefed throughout the duration of the Project.

3. NORTH-SOUTH TRANSIT ENHANCEMENT PROJECT LPA

The LPA is about 18 miles long with termini on IKEA Way in Oak Creek and on Port Washington Road in Glendale adjacent to Bayshore Town Center. Runningway operations would include a combination of dedicated bus lanes and bus running in mixed traffic. The stations would generally be spaced a half mile apart. The frequency of service (headways) would be 10 minutes during peak hours and 15-30 minutes during off-peak hours and on weekends. **Table 1** summarizes LPA characteristics and **Sections 3.1-3.7** provide additional information.

Table 1: LPA Characteristics

CHARACTERISTIC	DETAILS
Route length	▪ 18 miles
Number of stations	▪ Serve 32 destinations with 64 individual platforms
Station spacing	▪ Stations generally spaced a quarter- to a half-mile apart
Station facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Raised platform with ADA-accessible ramps ▪ Off-board fare collection ▪ Sheltered seating and weather protection ▪ Trash receptacles ▪ Real-time arrival variable message boards ▪ Security cameras ▪ Station identification signage ▪ Platform snow melt
Runningway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dedicated outside-running lane for a majority of the corridor ▪ Mixed traffic operations where dedicated lanes are not physically or operationally recommended ▪ Travel or parking lanes could be converted to dedicated lanes ▪ Details to be defined during NEPA and engineering
Vehicle Type	▪ New, 40-foot, clean diesel buses with right-door loading
Branding	▪ BRT stations and buses would utilize the MCTS CONNECT branding
Frequency of service	▪ 10 minutes (peak); 15-30 minutes (off-peak and weekends)
Span of service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 7 days a week ▪ Weekdays: 3:30 a.m. – 2:00 a.m. ▪ Saturday: 4:30 a.m. – 1:30 a.m. ▪ Sunday: 4:30 a.m. – 1:00 a.m.
Capital cost (\$2026)	▪ \$148 Million per Feasibility Study (will be updated)
Annual O&M cost	▪ O&M costs are anticipated to be cost-neutral to the MCTS system
Maintenance Facility	▪ Utilize existing MCTS maintenance facility

3.1 Routing

As shown in **Figure 1**, the 18-mile route would begin in the city of Oak Creek at IKEA, would run south on IKEA Way, would turn west onto Drexel Avenue, and then would head north onto 27th Street. The route would continue north on 27th Street through the cities of Franklin, Greenfield and Milwaukee, become Layton Boulevard between Lincoln Avenue and Canal Street in Milwaukee, and then would resume as 27th Street until Cornell Street where the route would jog northeast and then northwest onto Teutonia Avenue in Milwaukee. The route would then turn east onto Silver Spring Drive, traverse through Glendale and Milwaukee and continue to Port Washington Road where it would turn north, ending adjacent to Bayshore Town Center. Going south, the route would go back the way that it came. The routing is generally the same as what was recommended in the Feasibility Study except that the south-end routing to the IKEA terminus and the north-end Bayshore terminus were slightly revised (see **Section 4.1** for additional information).

3.2 Station Locations

The LPA will serve 32 destinations with 64 individual platforms, one for each direction (see **Table 2** and **Figure 1**). The station locations were updated based on refinements to the Feasibility Study recommendation (see **Section 4.2**).

Table 2: LPA Station Locations

IKEA Way (one platform at IKEA)	Layton & Evergreen (at the Domes)
27th & Northwestern Mutual Way	27th & Wisconsin
27th & Sycamore (at Walmart)	27th & Highland
27th & College	27th & Vliet
27th & Ramsey	27th & Lisbon
27th & Grange	27th & North
27th & Edgerton	27th & Center/Fond du Lac
27th & Layton	27th & Burleigh
27th & Coldspring/Bolivar	27th & Hopkins
27th & North of Howard	27th & Capitol
27th & Ohio (at Walmart)	27th & Atkinson
27th & Oklahoma	Teutonia & Hampton
27th & Lincoln	Teutonia & Villard
27th & Burnham	Teutonia & Silver Spring
Layton & Greenfield	Silver Spring & Pick 'n Save
Layton & National	Bayshore (three platforms on Port Washington Road)

Figure 1: Route and Station Locations



3.3 Station Features

Station features would include many of the same features that are on the CONNECT 1 platforms. The intent is to provide platforms and amenities that are ADA-accessible, safe and protected, and provide easy access to the BRT vehicles and connecting MCTS routes.

Amenities would include shelters with side enclosures, seating, garbage containers and platform snowmelt system to provide a convenient environment to wait for a bus. ADA-compliant features, such as passenger transition zones, ramps, treads for stairs, handrails, and Braille signage, would be provided.

To enhance safety, platforms would include lighting, video cameras and illuminated pylon signs. Real-time signage with an ADA-accessible audio push button would be provided to keep riders informed of when the next bus will arrive. Also, ticket vending machines and validators would be provided on the platforms to help buses avoid delays associated with on-board fare collection. A pylon would be located adjacent to each shelter with the CONNECT branding and the station name. Braille signs would be located on the pylon with a button to push to hear the real-time sign information in an audio message.

3.4 Runningway

The runningway proposed for the LPA would utilize outside-running dedicated bus lanes, except for in segments where the roadway configuration or traffic conditions will not allow it. The runningway would begin in mixed traffic from IKEA Way, west on Drexel Avenue to 27th Street. A northbound dedicated bus lane would begin on 27th Street at Drexel Avenue and would continue north until Lincoln Avenue. Mixed traffic would run from Lincoln Avenue to Evergreen Lane. A dedicated lane would then run on 27th Street from Evergreen Lane to Wisconsin Avenue and mixed traffic would run from Wisconsin Avenue to State Street. A dedicated lane would resume on 27th Street from State Street to Cornell Street where the route would jog northeast to connect to Teutonia Avenue. Mixed traffic would run on Cornell Street. A dedicated lane would start again at the northwest turn onto Teutonia Avenue and would continue until the route turns east on Silver Spring Drive. The route would run east in mixed traffic for a short distance on Silver Spring Drive from Teutonia Avenue to just before the railroad corridor where a dedicated lane would run to the Milwaukee River Parkway. The remainder of the route would run in mixed traffic to a station on Port Washington Road adjacent to Bayshore Town Center in Glendale.

Mixed traffic would continue when the route turns south on Port Washington Road until the westbound outside-running dedicated lane would begin on Silver Spring Drive at Milwaukee River Parkway to just after the railroad corridor. The route would run in mixed traffic for a short distance until it turns southeast on Teutonia Avenue when a dedicated lane would resume until Cornell Street, which would have mixed traffic. A southbound dedicated lane would begin again on 27th Street until State Street. The route would run in mixed traffic from State Street to Wisconsin Avenue and a dedicated lane would run from Wisconsin Avenue to Evergreen Lane. The route would then run in mixed traffic from Evergreen Lane to Lincoln Avenue when a dedicated lane would resume south of Lincoln Avenue to just south of Northwestern Mutual Way. The remainder of the route would run in mixed traffic to IKEA in Oak Creek.

MCTS is continuing to coordinate with WisDOT and local governments along the corridor to determine the runningway. MCTS will develop intergovernmental agreements as needed for the final runningway configuration.

3.5 Vehicle Types

New buses would be purchased for the Project. MCTS would pursue 40-foot, right-door loading, clean diesel buses for this project, in alignment with near-term MCTS fleet management plans. They would be specialized vehicles, branded under the CONNECT BRT system.

3.6 Branding

The stations and buses would utilize the MCTS CONNECT branding. The consistent branding for the CONNECT service creates an identifiable, marketable and common theme that extends across the CONNECT system, as well as throughout the MCTS system. Branding is a foundational element of modern BRT systems and provides a clearly differentiated transit service, enhances outreach efforts and increases customer loyalty, and has the potential for attracting riders to the system.

3.7 Operations and Maintenance Plan

Headways, or frequency of service, is anticipated to be every 10 minutes during peak hours and 15-30 minutes during off-peak hours and on the weekends. The service would run seven days a week. On weekdays it would run from 3:30 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. On Saturday it would run from 4:30 a.m. to 1:30 a.m. and on Sunday from 4:30 a.m. until 1:00 a.m.

MCTS plans to run a limited underlying local service along a portion of the route. This service would utilize existing bus stops and would operate at lower frequencies than the current PurpleLine service. The Project would utilize the existing MCTS Milwaukee-based bus maintenance facility.

The operations and maintenance plan and costs will be updated during the design process to reflect updated design characteristics and project features and will include an operations and maintenance cost estimate. Operations and maintenance costs are anticipated to be cost-neutral to the MCTS system.

4. LPA DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

A Feasibility Study for the project was undertaken from 2020 to January 2023 to evaluate enhanced transit alternatives along and near the 27th Street corridor. The study conducted a thorough analysis of six alternatives.² The recommended alternative was defined in the Tier 2 Evaluation (December 2022) and was confirmed in the Tier 3 Evaluation (January 2023).

Since the Feasibility Study, MCTS has advanced the environmental review and design phase and has made Project refinements leading to a proposed LPA described in **Section 3**. This section summarizes the key characteristics of the Feasibility Study recommendation and discusses the processes used to refine the recommendations for the LPA in terms of routing, station locations, the runningway, and the operations and maintenance plan.

4.1 Routing

The Feasibility Study's recommended route is generally the same as the LPA, except slight modifications on the south and north ends of the route. To the south, the Feasibility Study recommended the bus head east on a proposed extension of Northwestern Mutual Way from 27th Street, south on IKEA Way, west on Drexel Avenue, and through the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company campus before returning to 27th Street via Northwestern Mutual Way. Since the City of Oak Creek does not have a timeline for the proposed extension of Northwestern Mutual Way, slight modifications were made to the route to keep the BRT operations on existing public streets (27th Street, Drexel Avenue and IKEA Way) and to avoid private driveways and roadways (see **Section 3.1**). In addition, the route on the north end was rerouted to stay within the public right-of-way along Port Washington Road, rather than utilizing the privately-owned Bayshore roadway network.

4.2 Station Locations

The Feasibility Study identified general station locations at intersections that represent areas where station pairs would be located. The evaluation included station area population and employment totals; PurpleLine ridership, population and employment density scores; equitable access to the transit investment; development potential and other factors.³

Following the Feasibility Study, MCTS conducted an in-depth analysis of the existing 147 bus stops along the current PurpleLine and those recommended in the Feasibility Study. The analysis included the development of criteria to determine which locations were best suited to serve as stations for the proposed BRT service. This analysis supplemented the Feasibility Study recommendation based on updated ridership, demographic and other data.

The following criteria were developed for the analysis:

- **Ridership** – Average weekday PurpleLine boardings and alightings in the period between June 2023 through August 2023

² SEWRPC, Milwaukee North-South Transit Enhancement: Volume 5: Tier 2 Evaluation, December 2022, https://6cdbcb69-f96b-423f-8697-eaff52178165.filesusr.com/ugd/d4ed33_e1909a2fa80846f2afbe70937a6c1b78.pdf, accessed January 31, 2024.

³ SEWRPC, Milwaukee North-South Transit Enhancement: Volume 5: Tier 2 Evaluation, December 2022, https://6cdbcb69-f96b-423f-8697-eaff52178165.filesusr.com/ugd/d4ed33_e1909a2fa80846f2afbe70937a6c1b78.pdf, accessed January 31, 2024.

- **Connections** – Presence of transfer locations to and from other routes
- **Destinations and Land Use** – Proximity to points of interest including:
 - ➔ Senior residences and senior centers
 - ➔ Human services providers
 - ➔ Civic buildings
 - ➔ Schools and universities
 - ➔ Hospitals/medical facilities
 - ➔ Major employers
 - ➔ Major commercial/retail
- **Area Income** – Correspondence to a low-income census tract
- **Minority Population** – Correspondence to a predominantly minority census tract
- **Feasibility** – Ability to construct BRT station within a reasonable distance of the existing bus stop
- **Efficiency** – Ability to construct BRT station on the far side of a signalized intersection

As a result of the analysis, MCTS made these modifications to the station locations for the LPA:

- The Layton & Evergreen station location was added at the Mitchell Park Domes.
- The 27th & St. Paul station was eliminated.
- The Silver Spring & Crestwood station was eliminated.
- A third station platform was added on Port Washington Road near Bayshore Town Center due to high ridership.

See **Table 2** for a full list of LPA station locations.

4.3 Runningway

The Feasibility Study recommended a combination of center-running and outside-running dedicated bus lanes. Runningway alternatives were studied during each of the three Feasibility Study tiers. The Tier 2 Evaluation recommended including center-running BRT on portions of the corridor. The Feasibility Study's Tier 3 Evaluation confirmed the Tier 2 Evaluation recommendations.

Since the Feasibility Study, and as design has progressed, refinements to the runningway configuration have been made. The LPA runningway has outside-running dedicated BRT lanes with some areas of mixed traffic (see **Section 3.4**). Given MCTS' preference to maintain a fleet of right-sided-only boarding buses, this runningway refinement was made because constructing center-running dedicated bus lanes would add significant capital cost to the project due to intersection and roadway reconstruction that would be required to accommodate the center running operations and would require costly signal enhancements for buses to safely cross through intersections.

4.4 Operations and Maintenance

The BRT service would be consistent with CONNECT 1 service and would run service for 22.5 hours on weekdays and maintain the 21 and 20.5 hours on Saturday and Sunday, respectively. Headways would be 10-minute headways during peak hours on weekdays, 15- and 30-minute headways during nonpeak hours on weekdays and 15- to 30-minute headways on weekends (see **Section 3.7**).

The Feasibility Study's estimated annual operating and maintenance costs are currently being reviewed by MCTS and will be refined as project elements are further determined (see **Section 3.7**).

5. NEXT STEPS

Milwaukee County and MCTS are in the process of implementing BRT service along the 27th Street corridor in Milwaukee County as part of MCTS' CONNECT BRT system. The implementation of the project is part of a federal funding process through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and requires a specific process to secure federal funds. Also, Project implementation will require approval by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors for local match funds.

5.1 Approval and Adoption of the LPA

Approval and adoption of the LPA by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors is needed to demonstrate local support for the route and general project features prior to the submittal of the environmental document to FTA. Following approval of the LPA, a request to incorporate the Project into the region's long-range plan will be made.

5.2 FTA Capital Investment Grant Program – Small Starts

FTA accepted MCTS into Project Development through the Small Starts Capital Investment Grant Program in February 2023. During Small Starts Project Development, MCTS will complete the environmental review, conduct engineering and procure vehicles. Final plans, specifications and a bid package for project construction will also be developed during this phase.

MCTS is planning to request a Project rating from FTA in summer/fall 2024 for inclusion in the federal fiscal year 2025 budget. Congress is expected to determine if the Project will be included in the budget in winter 2025. Pending approval of federal funds, MCTS would negotiate the Small Starts Grant Agreement with FTA as early as late 2025. This grant provides the FTA Small Starts funds for the capital costs of the Project.

5.3 National Environmental Policy Act

MCTS initiated the environmental review for the Project in early 2023. In March 2023, FTA determined a Documented Categorical Exclusion (DCE) is the appropriate Class of Action for the Project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The DCE will include the Project's purpose and need statement and will conduct environmental studies to identify potential impacts and benefits of the Project along with mitigation and commitments, if applicable. The DCE will include evaluations of historic

resources, noise and vibration, hazardous materials, social and community resources, environmental justice, visual quality and other environmental factors.

5.4 Project Funding and Local Approvals

Project funding is anticipated to include a combination of sources with federal sources comprising approximately 80 percent of the Project costs and local sources making up about 20 percent. Anticipated federal sources include FTA Project Development funds and FTA Small Starts funds, as well as other potential federal sources, to be determined. The Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors will be asked to approve the local matching funds as part of the annual capital budget process. MCTS will continue to explore additional funding sources throughout the Project.

5.5 Intergovernmental Agreements and Memorandums of Understanding

MCTS is coordinating with WisDOT and the various local governments along the route that have jurisdiction of the right of way to confirm the Project's runningway, station platform placement and other roadway modifications, as well as operational considerations for the BRT during construction and when it is operational. MCTS expects to begin developing intergovernmental agreements or memorandums of understanding with these entities during project development.