

**MUSKEGON AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM
PROPOSAL FOR ROUTE SERVICE REDUCTIONS
TO BE EFFECTIVE APRIL 1, 2019**

The Muskegon Area Transit System is proposing the elimination of two routes from service, effective April 1, 2019. Below is a summary of the changes proposed, followed by additional information regarding this proposal. A 15-day public comment period will be held regarding this proposal from February 1, 2019, to February 15, 2019. During this period, interested persons may submit written comments (please include name and contact information) to publiccomment@matsbus.com or to:

Muskegon Area Transit System
Attn: Transit Systems Manager
2624 Sixth Street
Muskegon Heights, MI 49444

A public hearing will be held to gain input on these proposals at the offices of the Muskegon Area Transit System, located at the Louis A. McMurray Conference and Transportation Center, 2624 Sixth Street, Muskegon Heights, MI 49444, on Tuesday, February 19, 2019, at 3:30 pm.

The proposed changes will:

- 1) Remove Route 20 – Apple 1 from service, Effective April 1, 2019.**
- 2) Remove Route 45 – Peck Sanford from service, Effective April 1, 2019.**

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Background

- A. The Muskegon Area Transit System (MATS) operates fixed route and demand-response public transit service throughout Muskegon County. These services are funded primarily by federal and state grants, local community contributions, and fares paid by passengers of the system.

- B. The cost of providing public transportation services continues to increase. Through the economic downturn earlier this decade, MATS expanded services to provide additional mobility options to the community. Now, with the improving economic conditions of the past few years, system ridership is returning to pre-recession levels and the fare revenues that MATS relies on to support the system are not keeping pace with the local match need and expenditure levels. MATS is operating with a significant budget deficit that must be addressed.

- C. MATS will be undertaking a comprehensive system study in 2019 to assist in identifying long-term changes to the system. In the meantime, while this effort is undertaken, MATS is proposing to take action to reduce operating expenses through the elimination of two bus routes as identified in this proposal.

Proposed Actions

1) Remove Route 20 – Apple 1 from Service, Effective April 1, 2019.

MATS has operated Route 20 – Apple 1 for many years. This route provides a clockwise loop from downtown Muskegon to the area east of US-31, serving the Apple Avenue corridor outbound and Evanston Ave./Catherine Ave. corridors inbound. Service departs the Herman Ivory Terminal at :20 minutes after each hour and is operated from 6:35am to 5:54pm Monday through Friday. Notable destinations served by the route include the Hall of Justice, Hartford Terrace, Healthwest, Great Lakes Fresh Market, Cherry Health, MAISD transitional classroom, Career Tech Center, MCC, Baker College, Quail Meadows, Arbor Crossings, CVS, Pine Grove Manor, Parkwoods Apartments, and the Secretary of State.

Nearly all of the major intersections or destinations on Route 20 - Apple 1 are also serviced by Route 25 – Apple 2, which operates along the same corridors in a counter-clockwise direction. Most users of Route 20 – Apple 1 will have access to continued public transportation service via the Route 25 – Apple 2 route, albeit with a different bus stop location, schedule and trip plan. Users of the MAISD transitional classroom facility and Career Tech Center will be required to walk a short distance to the nearest alternate bus stop, returning their access to what was available prior to May 2017.

Elimination of this route is estimated to save MATS \$40,000 in the remainder of FY2019 and a greater amount in FY2020 and beyond.

2) Remove Route 45 – Peck Sanford from Service, Effective April 1, 2019.

MATS has operated two buses on the Peck/Sanford corridor for many years. Route 45 – Peck Sanford represents one of the two buses operating identical routing on the Peck Street and Sanford Street corridors. The Route 45 – Peck Sanford departs the Herman Ivory Terminal at :50 minutes after each hour and is operated from 6:50am to 6:01pm Monday through Friday. This route provides a north/south link between downtown Muskegon and downtown Muskegon Heights, with service to the Jackson Hill and South Heights areas. Notable destinations served by the route include Hackley Library, Catholic Charities, Jefferson Towers, Muskegon High School, Muskegon Heights High School, Mercy Hospital Hackley Campus, Women’s Rescue Mission, Healthwest’s Club Interactions, Bayview Towers, the Hall of Justice, and Healthwest. All of these locations are also serviced by Route 40 – Peck Sanford, 30 minutes offset in scheduled departure times. Users of Route 45 – Peck Sanford will have continued access to public transportation service via the Route 40 – Peck Sanford, albeit with a different schedule and trip plan. Users needing to travel this corridor after 5:10pm when Route 40 ends will need to find alternate routing via Route 15 – Sixth or other options to reach their destination.

Elimination of this route is estimated to save MATS \$40,000 in the remainder of FY2019 and a greater amount in FY2020 and beyond.