A new public comment form submission has been received. Below are the details.

Name: Shannon Villa

Representing: Self and the general public and transit users

Topic: Unacceptable 70 Grand Service, Detours During Special Events That Defeat Purpose of Transit

Comments: I have 2 areas of concern regarding Metrobus operations:

1. 70 Grand Poor Operations After 6pm All Days Leading to Upwards of 2 hours gap in service and buses up to 1 hour or more behind schedule

2. Detours during times of heavy traffic- Affected Route 90 Hampton in Forest Park and 34 Earth City around the Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre

1. 70 Grand poor operations after 6pm every day is of primary concern. As you are well aware, the 70 Grand has historically been Metro’s heaviest ridership and most productive bus line as a total route, per hour of service, and per mile of service. The route seems to have ample running time to allow for nearly 100% on-time performance. However, and especially after the reduction of the route to 30 minute frequencies after about 6pm daily, this route has suffered tremendously amounting to as much as 2 hours of time between buses. BOC attempts to try to make buses get back on schedule with very little success and the times they do make a bus run “Special” or “Drop-off only” there is not always a bus following within 5 to even 10 minutes, doing many times requires a very long wait for riders bypassed due to a bus going “Special” or “Drop-off only.” Last night on Thursday 6/2 I have a specific example when this should not have been done, leading to a 1 hour and 47 minute gap at Loughborough Commons northbound. The operator made to “Special” to Broadway-Taylor TC was actually rightfully hesitant to Special himself knowing there would be passengers missed.

I believe there needs to be a dedicated mobile TSM for the 70 Grand and since I know TSMs don’t have laptops they should use <https://www.transsee.ca/routelist?a=stlouis> from a mobile device to see where buses are at, schedule adherence, and service gaps. The TSM would then be able to adjust service as needed as well as notify riders at key stops of service delays or cuts in service.

An alternative would be to divide 70 Grand into 2 segments with a 70N and 70S, as you would guess 1 route would run from Grand Station north to Broadway-Taylor TC and 1 route would run from Grand Station south to Loughborough Commons. 1 bus would be needed for each. There would also be a 70 that would run the entire route end to end. 70N and 70 buses can be run with 60 foot buses while the 70S would have to be a 40 foot bus due to being unable to recharge at Broadway-Taylor TC. Resource requirements would remain at 3 buses after 6pm although a 4th bus can be added for improved frequency or as a strategic bus to fill in service gaps as needed.

2. Detours during times of heavy traffic- Affected Routes 90 Hampton and 34 Earth City

These routes are routinely detoured without notice to passengers with no alert on the Metro website or Transit app, and no notice at affected stops.

As you know, with a workforce shortage, the Forest Park Trolley has ceased operations ever since 2020. The route was created to allow for reliable 90 Hampton service to bypass Forest Park on weekends during the day until about 7pm. With the discontinued route, 90 Hampton buses are being routinely detoured away from Forest Park. Exact detours are not always followed with most operators using Forest Park Parkway versus the prescribed use of Lindell to Skinker and vice-versa for northbound trips. However, with this change passengers have no reliable service in Forest Park particularly during high demand days like last weekend with the African Arts Festival at the World’s Fair Pavilion. I attended this and had to wait for 90 Hampton buses outside the park.

34 Earth City also is frequently detoured due to traffic in the area of the Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre. Detouring around high traffic areas while keeping a bus on-time causes riders to be stranded or have to walk to another stop which in many cases is over 30 min away.

My suggestion is to not detour buses around heavy traffic as it skips stops most key for riders both for dependent riders and riders Metro wants to attract.

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