

A meeting of the Royal Oak Transit Task Force was held on Tuesday March 20, 2018, in the city hall, 211 Williams, Royal Oak. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Donigan at 6:03 p.m.

PRESENT

Chairperson Marie Donigan
Members Brian Cook
 Paul Curtis
 Rebecca Maas
 Ilene Orlanski
 David Woodward, Oakland County Commissioner (6:30 p.m.)

ABSENT

Sharlan Douglas, Mayor Pro Tem

INTRODUCTIONS

The members introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Orlanski
Seconded by Maas

Be it resolved, the agenda is hereby approved.

Adopted unanimously

REVIEW AND DISCUSS DRAFT OF LOCAL TRANSIT OPTIONS

Chairperson Donigan briefly went over the results from the survey that were discussed at the last meeting. She introduced Lucas Quickstad from SMART, and explained that from the results of that survey, he put together six transit concepts to be presented. Three of the concepts are fixed route buses, two concepts are flexible route buses, and one concept is on-demand.

Currently route 430 deploys 2 buses weekdays from 7am-10am and from 2pm-7pm, through Royal Oak via Main Street. This route does not offer afternoon, late evening or weekend service. Enhancing this route would add a third bus, adding additional hours to the service and would extend the route to the Detroit Zoo and to Downtown Birmingham at no additional cost. This service can be added to any of the following 6 concepts.

Concept 1: "RoGo Max" is the original service presented at an earlier meeting which consists of eight fixed routes with predetermined stops that cover the whole city. This concept provides the most service hours however, it requires the most vehicles. It is the least feasible and least efficient of the concepts, with so many routes it makes navigation difficult for users.

Concept 2: "RoGo Min" consists of three fixed routes which shifts the convergence point for all routes northward, away from the Royal Oak Transit Center. It has a high degree of coverage without the overlapping and complex route structure of Concept 1. There is a transfer location that allows users to transfer routes, which provide direct service to Beaumont Hospital and Downtown Royal Oak. During weekday morning and afternoon peak periods, buses run every 15 minutes. Two routes pass within a half mile from Royal Oak Middle School and one route within half mile of Royal Oak High School.

Concept 3: "Zig Zag" has just one fixed route line, which weaves back and forth across the city. While it provides nearly full coverage, the service is significantly less convenient than the first two concepts. The average distance to walk to a bus stop is a half mile. North-South travel would require a transfer to SMART service on Woodward or enhanced SMART service on Main Street. This concept is expensive to operate because of its 20-mile length.

Concept 4: "Flex Route 1" combines elements of a regular fixed-route bus service with an on-demand idea. Buses start at their scheduled stop and time on their fixed route, but as riders call for door pick up, the bus leaves the fixed route to pick riders up, then returns to its original route. This concept reduces walking time because you can request a pick up at your door, but it is hard to maintain frequency because of the pick-up service. The North bus stays in the North, and the South bus stays in the South, so you would have to transfer to get from the North to the South unless you take the 430 route.

Concept 5: "Flex Route 2" modifies Concept 4 however the southern route now has a direct link to the hospital. It's less expensive to operate this concept. In the morning, all vehicles travel towards Woodward at 15-minute intervals. In the evenings the buses take riders back to the city from Woodward in 15-minute intervals. During the non-peak hours, the bus arrives every 30 minutes.

Concept 6: "Zone Service" suggests 16 vehicles operating with no routes or schedules, all on demand curb to curb service. This lowers the cost, but limits capacity with the least emphasis on frequency and causing possible longer wait times. The City would be split into zones with vehicles assigned to each zone. Vehicles originating in one zone can drop off at destinations in other zones, but it must immediately return to their origin zone before picking up other passengers.

Mr. Quickstad presented a chart of all the concepts which compared the annual service hours, vehicle fleet required, annual operating costs, cost rank, convenience rank and legibility rank. All these concepts are interchangeable and can be re-routed as needed, so all items on this chart are estimates. Everything will be solidified once the task force members get a better understanding of where they want the routes to go, the frequency of the pick-ups and how many vehicles need to be added to the fleet.

The task force discussed and felt that Concept 1: "RoGo Max" and Concept 3: "Zig Zag" could be eliminated from future considerations. Concept 2: "RoGo Min" seems like a good starting point, with some modifications to help get users to the northern end and into the city. Ms. Donigan stated her original thought was to have transit to get people into Royal Oak for events and destinations. If modified this concept could do that while Concept 6: "Zone" could not. Combining a fixed route and an on-demand style route would work. Mr. Woodward was drawn to Concept 6: "Zone" as it showed strong support for enhancing Senior Services and aligns with the ride share program. Mr. Cook also uses Lyft and Uber and felt that more research needed to be done.

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FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE WORK SESSIONS

The next meeting will be scheduled on Wednesday, April 3, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Janice Wagman, 600 Wellesley, stated that she would like to see extended hours for senior services and would like a route to include the Salter Center. Many of the current users must have door to door pick-ups and no transfers between routes. She would love to see a pilot program before the residents are asked to pay for the whole project. She was also concerned how to have fixed routes with bike lanes and road diets in the streets of Royal Oak.

Ms. Victoria Schunk stated that the existing SMART service overlaps with most of the concepts presented. People are not familiar with the existing routes and with some education they would see that there is already a transit program in Royal Oak.

Mr. Clive Brown, 1010 Whitcomb, presented a sheet of questions to the task force members and voiced some of them. He wondered if the SMART bus drivers had the "E" endorsement and were authorized to drive students. Also, when the routes are increased the highway department will have to change ice/snow control. Would there be additional stop lights to help with traffic control? Also, would the city pick up the cost to build shelters at the bus stops?

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ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Melanie Halas, City Clerk

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