

Tuesday, March 31 SMART will cut service as COVID-19 impacts ridership

- Effective Tuesday, March 31, 2020 additional service reductions will begin
- SMART ridership has dropped 80% over the past several weeks
- Service Reductions include:
 - Frequency is hourly at a minimum for all routes
 - Woodward, Gratiot, and Michigan, FAST and local routes will alternate every 30 minutes.
 - Commuter and Park & Ride Routes will operate only one trip into downtown in the morning and only one trip out of downtown in the afternoon
 - SMART Shuttles and Dial A Ride service will not operate
 - Hours of operation will be consistent with the length of weekday service hours
- Updates on SMART service can be found at www.smartbus.org.

Updated March 30, 2020, Detroit, Mich. – As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, SMART is committed to providing service for those who have no other alternative transportation to make essential trips to work, grocery stores and for necessary, schedule appointments such as dialysis treatments. SMART is identified as ‘critical infrastructure’ and its employees deemed essential workers in the Governor’s Executive Order 2020-21 to Stay Home, Stay Safe.

SMART is implementing further service reductions starting Tuesday, March 31, 2020 as a way to better match service on the road with the reduced demand. As ridership is significantly lower at 80% less than a typical weekday, SMART will reduce service an additional 40%. Since SMART implemented the initial 30% reduction last week, ridership has leveled off and remains steady.

“To ensure SMART can maintain its commitment to provide essential trips during the COVID-19 pandemic, we are adjusting service due to a substantially lower demand and a desire to control and limit deployment of our drivers,” said Robert Cramer, Deputy General Manager of SMART, “While transit workers aren’t always acknowledged for the frontline roles in public emergencies, this crisis is demonstrating how important our service is for the public health and well-being in the region. Our drivers and supporting staff have been commendable throughout this on-going crisis.”

Service Change Overview

- Busy corridors like Woodward, Gratiot, and Michigan which includes, FAST and local routes, will run staggered every hour; meaning FAST and local routes will alternate every 30 minutes.
- Weekday routes will operate hourly (time between buses) service with similar hours of operation as regular weekday service.
- Commuter and Park & Ride routes will run one trip into downtown in the morning and one trip out of downtown in the afternoon. Ridership on these routes has dramatically fallen on these routes, averaging a 95% decline from typical weekday ridership.
- Elimination of SMART same day services, including Groesbeck Shuttle, Somerset and Oakland Mall Shuttles as well as the Farmington/Farmington Hills Dial A Ride. Anyone needing ride in these areas should call SMART Connector to reserve a trip at 866-962-5515 and press #1.

Furthermore, to protect against overcrowding and promote social distancing for riders

(maintaining a minimum of 6 feet between passengers whenever possible), SMART will place additional buses along the busiest corridors, at the ready, to join buses in service that are at or reaching a crowded passenger level.

SMART Customer Service will extend its hours to assist riders with the service reductions. To talk with a SMART representative, riders can call 866-962-5515 on Monday, March 30 and Tuesday, March 31 from **6 a.m. until 10 p.m.** All SMART updates can be found online at www.smartbus.org.

SMART continues with the following initiatives until further notice: free fare, rear-door boarding, and yellow chain separating drivers from passengers, mid-route cleaning and regular electrostatic spraying of all buses.

Serving residents since 1967, SMART is southeast Michigan's only regional public transportation provider, offering convenient, reliable and safe transportation for Macomb, Oakland and Wayne Counties. SMART's Fixed Route and small bus services connect people to employment and educational institutions, medical appointments and shopping centers. For routes and fare information, visit smartbus.org.

###