

# McHenry County Transit Plan Update

P R E F E R R E D   C O N C E P T   JANUARY 2019

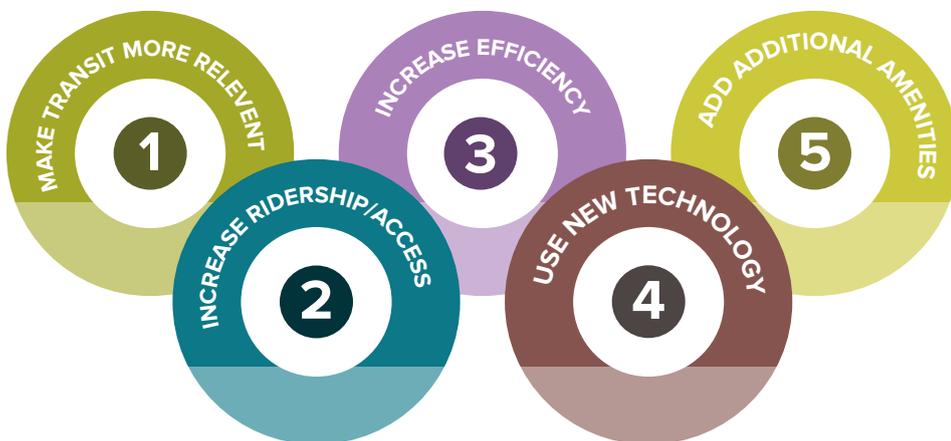
The McHenry County Division of Transportation completed the McHenry County 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan in March of 2013. The 2040 Plan was designed for the residents of McHenry County by preparing for future needs, identifying problems, generating and evaluating alternatives, and developing solutions so residents may travel around and through the County with ease.

A component of the 2040 plan focused on transit recommendations. Some of these recommendations have been implemented, while others remain on the shelf.

So, why was a Transit Plan Update conducted? A Transit Plan Update was initiated in January 2018 to verify whether transit service recommendations in the 2040 plan still meet current conditions, and to recommend new transit services and technologies.

## PREFERRED CONCEPT & GOALS

The Preferred Concept will be completed in three phases. This will give guidance on incremental improvements rather than making those decisions in a reactive way with no guiding principles to support them. The five goals of the Preferred Concept are shown below.



## ABOUT THE PROCESS

Before determining a Preferred Concept, three reports were drafted and ultimately led to the development of recommended improvements to public transit in the County.

- **Existing and Future Conditions Report** – provided current and projected demographic, employment, and transit information
- **Public Engagement Report** – determined mobility issues and identified desired travel patterns in the County by gathering public input through the project website, community events, focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and surveys
- **Concept Discussion Report** – provided distinct concepts that were designed, vetted and presented to focus groups, the County's Public Transportation Advisory Committee (PTAC) and the County Board's Transportation Committee to ultimately identify one Preferred Concept

## CURRENT CONDITIONS

*There are currently three transit modes operating in McHenry County.*



### DEMAND RESPONSE

The MCRide dial-a-ride program provides general public service throughout many areas of the County.

There are other areas that have demand response service that is available to seniors and individuals with disabilities.



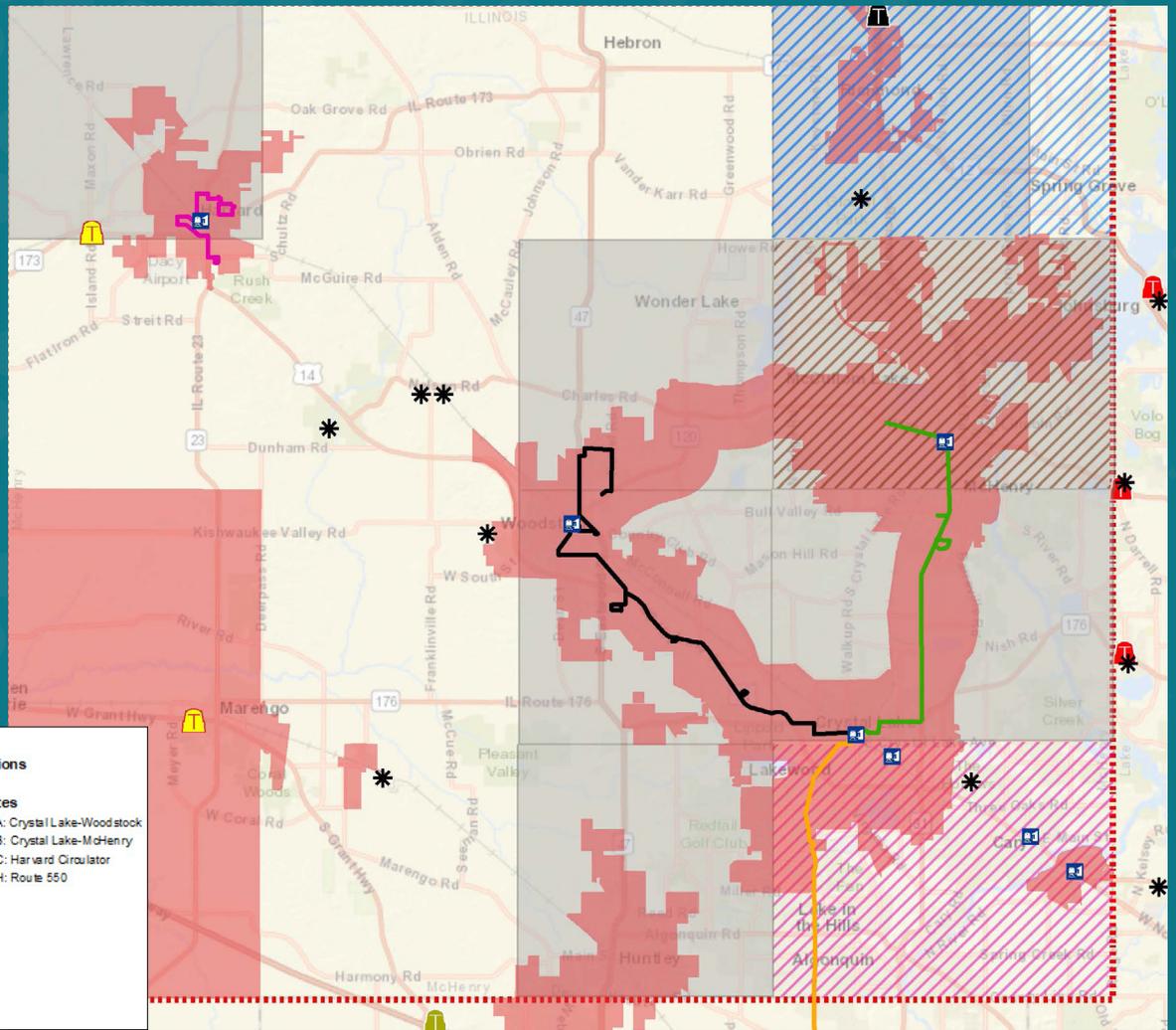
### FIXED ROUTE BUS SERVICE

Four bus routes are operated by Pace Suburban Bus. Additionally, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), ADA paratransit service is provided within three-quarters of a mile of fixed route bus service in the County.



### COMMUTER RAIL

Metra operates one train line in the County, with two branches. There are seven Metra stops throughout McHenry County.



## PHASE I (2019 TO 2020)

Phase I recommendations are proposed to be implemented over the next two years.

### GENERAL:

- Clearly differentiate between fixed route and MCRide buses
- Install bike racks on fixed route buses
- Increase outreach to the Spanish-speaking community
- Create and distribute MCRide instructional materials
- Implement new technology that will allow riders to schedule their rides online
- Improve coordination between MCRide and demand response services in adjacent counties to ensure transfers can be made between services
- Route 550** would be rerouted
- Route B** would run between Northwestern Medicine McHenry Hospital and the Crystal Lake Metra station
- Route C** (a circulator) would be created in Harvard

### DEMAND RESPONSE:

- Offer rural riders the option of traveling on a less expensive, demand response "route". These will be designed to improve efficiency in less dense portions of the service area.
- Consolidate the Southeast and Mid-Day Intercommunity dial-a-rides into MCRide to reduce the overlapping of demand response services in the southeast part of the County

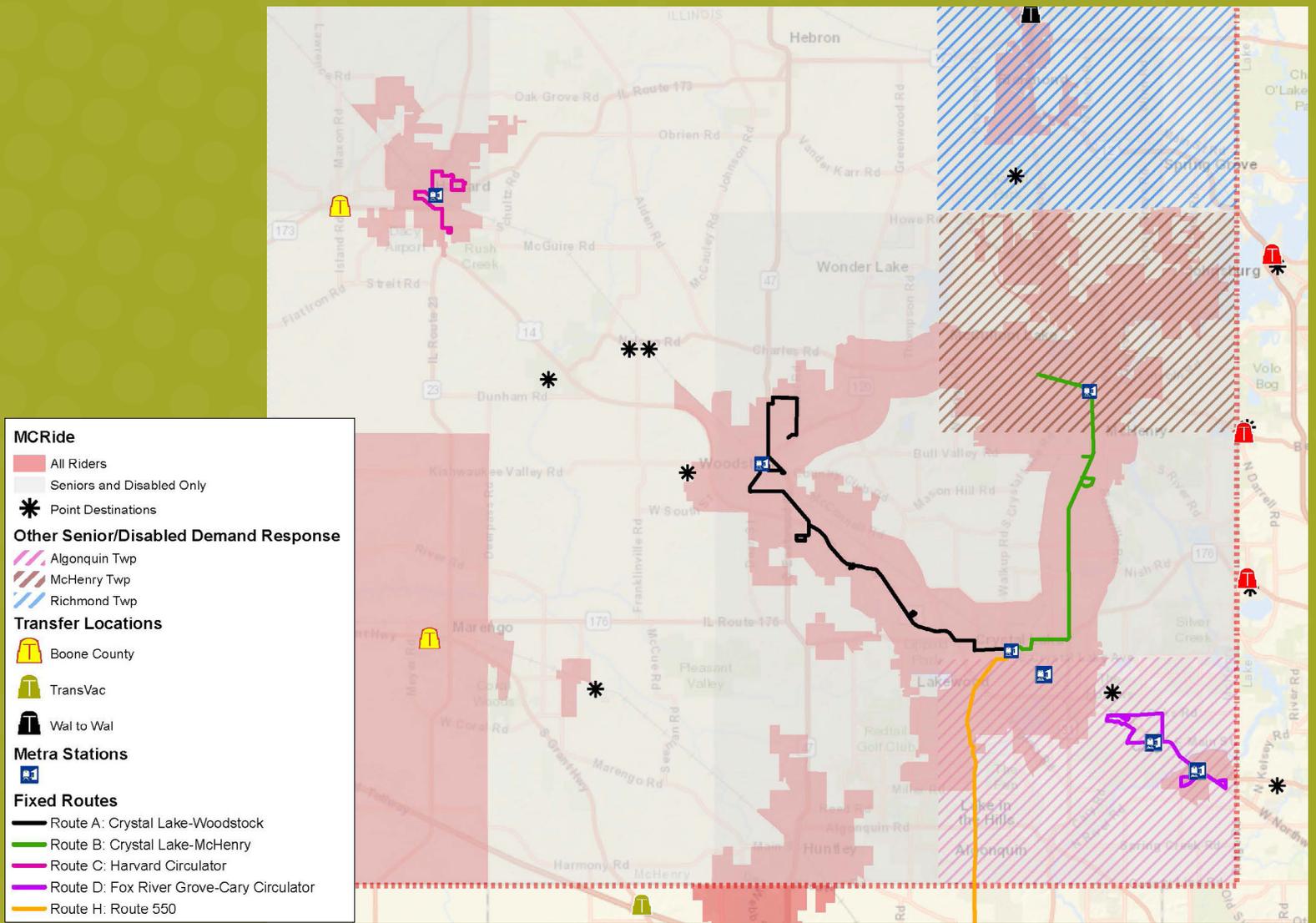
- No change in MCRide operating service days or hours at this stage

### FIXED ROUTE:

- All of **Route 809**, and parts of Routes **806**, **807**, and **808** would be eliminated
- Route A** would run between Crystal Lake and the McHenry County Government complex via the Woodstock Metra station

### METRA:

- Metra should make its pilot program consolidating fare zones J, K, L, and M permanent in order to decrease the cost of rides within the County and encourage shorter trips



## PHASE II (2021 TO 2024)

Phase II recommendations are proposed to be implemented over five years beginning in 2021.

### DEMAND RESPONSE:

- Riders will have the option of paying fares electronically by credit card or Ventra card
- Riders will have the ability to schedule via mobile app and track arrival in real-time
- MCRide offered to entire County for seniors and people with disabilities who show an RTA reduced fare or ride free card
- Extend MCRide service hours to 10:00 PM

### FIXED ROUTE:

- Add a new **Route D**, a circulator that would serve Cary and Fox River Grove
- Shift MCRide riders onto fixed routes where possible; the County should consider subsidizing free or severely reduced fares for any fixed route that operates entirely within the County

### METRA:

- A new coach yard should be built north of the Woodstock station to allow more trains to originate and terminate there

**MCRide**

- Point Destinations
- All Riders

**Transfer Locations**

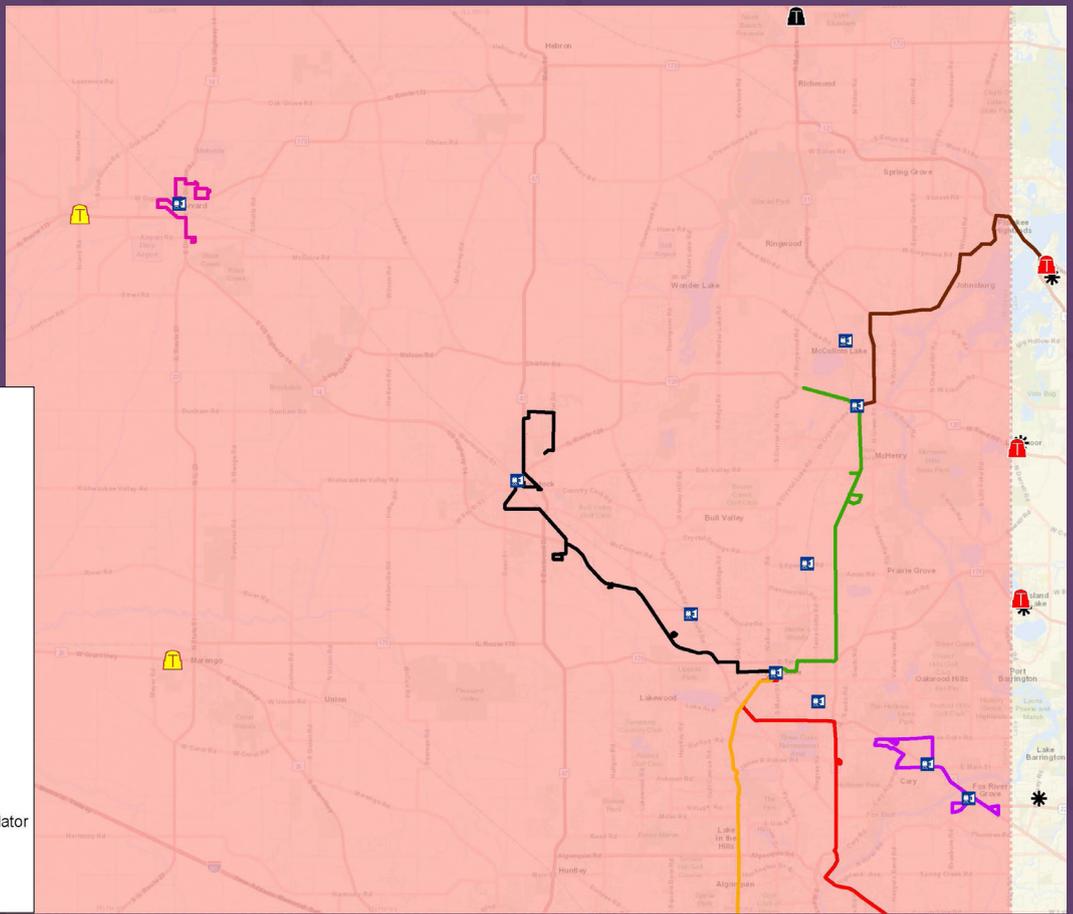
- Boone County
- TransVac
- Wal to Wal
- Lake County

**Metra Stations**

- Metra Station

**Fixed Routes**

- Route A: Crystal Lake-Woodstock
- Route B: Crystal Lake-McHenry
- Route C: Harvard Circulator
- Route D: Fox River Grove-Cary Circulator
- Route E: Crystal Lake-Barrington Rd
- Route F: CLC-McHenry
- Route H: Route 550



## PHASE III (2025 TO 2030)

Phase III recommendations are designed to be unbound by funding constraints and meant to be a goal for the transit system in the County.

### DEMAND RESPONSE:

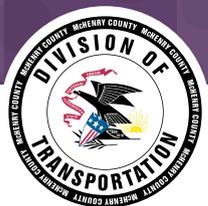
- Implement a Transportation Network Company (TNC) or Microtransit program to help provide or supplement MCRide services
- Open demand response service to all riders throughout the County

### FIXED ROUTE:

- Extend the service span of all **Routes A, B, C and D** until 7:00 PM, and add service on Saturday to these routes (in addition to **Route H**) as well.
- Add a new **Route E**. This route would serve the Northwest Highway retail corridor in Crystal Lake, the Lake in the Hills park-and-ride, and central Algonquin and then terminate at the Barrington Road inline bus station on I-90. This route would be a semi-express route.
- Extend five **Route 570** trips per day (**Route F**) to the McHenry Metra Station. The rest of the trips would begin and end at the Fox Lake Town Center as they do now.

### METRA:

- For the McHenry branch, extend the line to Johnsburg and build a new station and coach yard there
- Two new stations should be added between existing stations: at Prairie Grove on the McHenry branch and east of Woodstock on the Harvard Branch
- The existing signal system should be upgraded, and additional crossovers should be built to increase the operating capacity and reliability on the UP-NW line



Click [MCHENRYCOUNTYDOT.ORG](https://www.mchenrycountydor.org) and click transportation plans and programs to see the full plan.