



MEMO FROM COUNCIL OFFICE ON:

Ordinance 22-15 – To Amend Title 2 of the Bloomington Municipal Code Entitled “Administration and Personnel” - Re: Amending 2.76.040 Entitled “Boundaries” to Expand the Service Area of the Bloomington Public Transportation Corporation

Synopsis

This ordinance is sponsored by Councilmember Volan. It would authorize Bloomington Transit to expand services within the boundaries of Monroe County through appropriate interlocal agreement(s) that specify exact areas and funding mechanisms for those services.

Relevant Materials

- Ordinance 23-15
- Memo from Bloomington Transit Board of Directors to Common Council dated July 20, 2023
- Bloomington Transit Board of Directors Resolution 23-14
- Letter from Bloomington Transit Board of Directors to Mayor dated June 5, 2023
- Bloomington Transit Full System Map
- Selected pages from Transform BT – Strategic Plan for Bloomington Transit

Summary

Ordinance 23-15 would approve of Bloomington Transit expanding its services outside of the city limits to serve locations within Monroe County. Indiana Code [36-9-4-29.4](#) provides that a public transportation corporation may provide regularly scheduled passenger service or demand responsive service outside of the system’s operational boundaries if the following conditions are met:

- (1) The legislative body approves of any expansion of service outside the municipality's corporate boundaries.
- (2) The expanded service is reasonably required to do any of the following:
 - (A) Enhance employment opportunities in the new service area or the existing service area.
 - (B) Serve persons who are elderly, persons with a disability, or other persons who are in need of public transportation.
- (3) With certain exceptions, the expanded service does not extend beyond the boundary of the county in which the corporation is located.



On July 18, 2023, Bloomington Transit’s Board of Directors unanimously adopted a resolution (included in this packet) requesting that the Common Council consider extending the service area for Bloomington Transit throughout the county. The Board of Directors found that such an expansion of service would enhance education and employment opportunities and would also serve persons who are in need of public transportation, including the elderly and persons with a disability. The Board of Directors set forth additional reasons supporting a service area expansion in both a memo to the Council and a letter to Mayor Hamilton, both of which are included herein.

At its January 2023 meeting, Bloomington Transit’s Board of Directors approved of a strategic plan, ***Transform BT***, intended to guide decision-making of Bloomington Transit over the next 5-7 years. The full strategic plan is available at Bloomington Transit’s website: <https://bloomingtontransit.com/transformbt/>.

The strategic plan sets out various goals and related objectives that are relevant to this ordinance:

Goal 1: Serving customers

Objectives:

- Make service more dependable, convenient, and useful.
- Expand service area and work with partners to make our service more effective.

Goal 2: Innovation

Objective:

- Adopt innovative practices that make BPTC more efficient and effective.

Goal 5: Community and Equity

Objectives:

- Align service and fees with the needs of people who rely on transit.
- Support the region’s economic development.

The strategic plan also includes a number of initiatives, which are then supported by several strategies. Of note here is:

Initiative 1: Partnerships and Engagement

Strategy 1.1: Remove barriers to allow Bloomington Transit to provide service throughout Monroe County.

Bloomington Municipal Code [2.76.040](#) currently provides that the boundaries of the Bloomington Public Transportation Corporation shall be coterminous with the boundaries of the city of Bloomington. Existing Bloomington Transit routes are shown on the Full System Map, which is included in this packet. Ordinance 23-15 would add the following new sentence to this section of code:



City of Bloomington Indiana

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Pursuant to Indiana Code 36-9-4-29.4, the Bloomington Public Transportation Corporation is authorized to expand its services outside the city's corporate boundaries provided that the expanded services do not extend beyond the boundaries of the county of Monroe.

If a service area expansion is approved, Bloomington Transit's Board of Directors would still, under Indiana Code [36-9-4-35.1](#), determine all rates, routings, and hours and standards of service, subject to regulation by the state.

The ordinance recognizes and sets forth the expectation that an extension of services outside of city limits would need to be supported through funding sources other than city funds or tax revenues already generated from city residents. Funding arrangements would need to be determined through interlocal agreements between the relevant entities and Bloomington Transit's Board of Directors.

The ordinance sets forth an expectation that such agreements would address the specific areas of extended transit services and the funding mechanisms for those services, which should reflect the overall cost to city residents of funding the Bloomington Public Transportation Corporation. Because of this, there is no anticipated impact to city revenues, expenditures, or debt obligations directly tied to the passage of this ordinance.

Contact

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