



REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

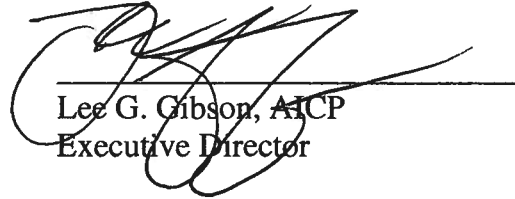
Public Transportation • Streets and Highways • Planning

February 17, 2012

AGENDA ITEM 6.1

TO: Regional Transportation Commission

FROM: Roger N. Hanson
Senior Transit Planner



Lee G. Gibson, AICP
Executive Director

SUBJECT: RTC RIDE Service Change Concepts

RECOMMENDATION

Acknowledge receipt of the RTC RIDE service change concepts; direct staff accordingly.

SUMMARY

With the Board's adoption of the FY 2012-2016 Short Range Transit Program (SRTP) in December, the next step is to move forward with elements of the document's Service Improvement Plan (SIP). While many of the concepts in the SIP will require additional field work and significant public outreach, some changes could be implemented this summer.

Perhaps the most significant change for consideration is improvements to the operating speed of the RTC RAPID. Implementing this change is dependent upon verifying improved running time resulting from the Transit Signal Priority (TSP) system and queue jump at Kietzke Lane. The systems have recently been installed but projected running time savings need to be verified. It is expected that a vehicle could be removed from service and still maintain existing frequency, thereby reducing operating costs and increasing productivity.

Other concepts being evaluated include combining Routes 13 (VA Hospital/Grove) and 19 (Wells/Airport), which would eliminate service on Wells Avenue; discontinuing Route 28 (Sparks Industrial), which connects Centennial Plaza with the Sparks industrial area around Glendale Avenue; providing two directional service on Route 21 (Sparks Marina) through the Legends development; and shifting some service hours from Route 14 (East Mill) to Route 18 (Glendale/Greg) to improve the performance of Route 14 while addressing increased demand on Route 18 due to the opening of Walmart on Glendale Avenue.

These concepts were presented to the public at an open house on January 27, 2012, at 4th Street Station. Over 450 people took the time to talk with staff and complete a survey on the proposed changes. Based upon public input and Board direction, these concepts will be refined and presented as recommendations at a public hearing scheduled for the March 16, 2012, RTC Board meeting. If approved at that time, implementation would occur in late June. If the Board desires staff to refine any proposed change, a new proposal can be brought back within the next month or two with a corresponding adjustment to the implementation schedule as well.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this agenda item.

PREVIOUS BOARD ACTIONS:

- Dec 2011: Adopted the FY 2012-2016 Short Range Transit Program containing strategies to improve transit service productivity.
- Sep 2011: Provided direction on the Service Improvement Plan task of the Transit System Analysis Update to combine the two concepts into the plan.
- Apr 2011: Acknowledged receipt of the Transit System Analysis Update.
- Feb 2011: Reviewed three service restructuring concepts for the SRTP at the Board Retreat.

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND

Following is a brief description of the service change concepts being evaluated. Maps illustrating the proposals are attached.

RTC RAPID

To make RTC RAPID a more convenient and reliable service when it began operating in October 2009, it was given 70 minutes of “cycle time” – the time needed to complete a round trip. This allowed for 50 minutes of running time and 10 minutes of recovery on each end to offset delays that occur while in service. To provide 10-minute frequency (e.g., a bus every 10 minutes), seven buses are needed in service. While 20 minutes of recovery time is more than needed, a 60 minute cycle time (six buses, 10-minute headways) would not have been sufficient for trips that encountered a greater number of red traffic signals, heavier passenger loads, and other factors that extend travel time.

Many of the capital improvements of the RTC RAPID project are designed to improve travel times. The stations are designed with raised platforms that allow for faster boarding and alightings. They will also have ticket vending machines that will allow pre-purchase of fares

thereby reducing delay at the farebox. Transit Signal Priority (TSP) was installed to further improve operating speeds. Results from the TSP system should be known by the end of the month. If running time improvements are as expected, the RAPID cycle time can be reduced, perhaps saving a bus, and resulting in lower operating costs and improved productivity.

Combine Routes 13 (VA Hospital/Grove) and 19 (Wells/Airport)

The SIP identified the area between Virginia and Kietzke as too small for the operation of parallel, north/south routes. Routes 13 and 19 currently operate hourly service within these boundaries. Route 19 was created in August 2006 to service Wells Avenue but ridership has never met expectations. In an effort to keep service on Wells, Route 19 was modified to serve the airport which was also facing loss of service. The schedule was then limited to weekday service. The new route has seen an improvement in productivity but ranks in the bottom third of all routes.

The SIP proposes eliminating Route 19 with Route 13 being modified to serve the airport. Most of Wells Avenue is considered to be within walking distance (1/4 mile) of other service. Attachment A shows these routes and how the service would operate if adopted.

During the SRTP public open houses held in October 2011, people were supportive of this concept, but some expressed a desire to increase the frequency on the Route 13 during peak hours. Some of the service hours saved from discontinuing Route 19 would be used to serve this request.

A further consideration is that the VA hospital is looking at possibly expanding to the west, closing Kirman Street. As part of the public outreach process, RTC staff will work closely with the hospital and City of Reno staff to mitigate the impact of this project on Route 13. It is possible the VA project could lead to a delay in implementing any change to both routes.

Discontinue Route 28 (Sparks Industrial) and improve Route 18 (Glendale/Greg)

Route 28 was designed to provide a more direct connection during peak hours for passengers traveling between the two areas of Sparks divided by I-80. Unfortunately, it has the lowest productivity in the RTC RIDE system. See Attachment B.

One of the Productivity Enhancement Concepts in the SIP was to provide better connected service from some of the larger residential areas to the "employment belt". The service design would provide a single-seat ride with no need to transfer, improving the attractiveness of transit as a travel option. One of the connections identified was between the McQueen area and the Sparks industrial area off Glendale Avenue. To provide new service between these two areas, Route 28 would be discontinued. Service from Route 3 would flow through to a new limited service operating with Route 18. This redesign would help address demand to the new Walmart on Glendale. Attachment C shows current routing for Routes 18 and 28 within Sparks.

Modify Route 21 (Sparks Marina)

With the opening of the Legends development, Route 21 serving east Sparks was redesigned to serve this new shopping hub. Unsure how the area was going to fully develop during the planning of the October 2008 service change, the route ends in a large loop using Marina Gateway, Prater Way, Lillard Drive, and Lincoln Way. This provides service in only one direction through Legends – the largest trip generator on the route.

The SIP proposes to reduce the size of the end loop by operating in both directions through Legends. Instead of turning onto Marina Gateway, the route would continue on Lincoln and use Sparks Blvd. to connect to Prater (see Attachment D). This concept was the most popular of all the possible route changes presented at the October 2011 open houses.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To provide our riders and the public an opportunity to review and comment on the possible changes, staff hosted a public open house at RTC 4TH STREET STATION on January 27th. Over 450 people attended providing feedback and suggestions to staff. Survey results are being tabulated and will be shared with the Board when complete.

The service change concepts in this item were taken to the advisory committees on February 1st to receive their comments and suggestions. Both committees were supportive of the possible changes.

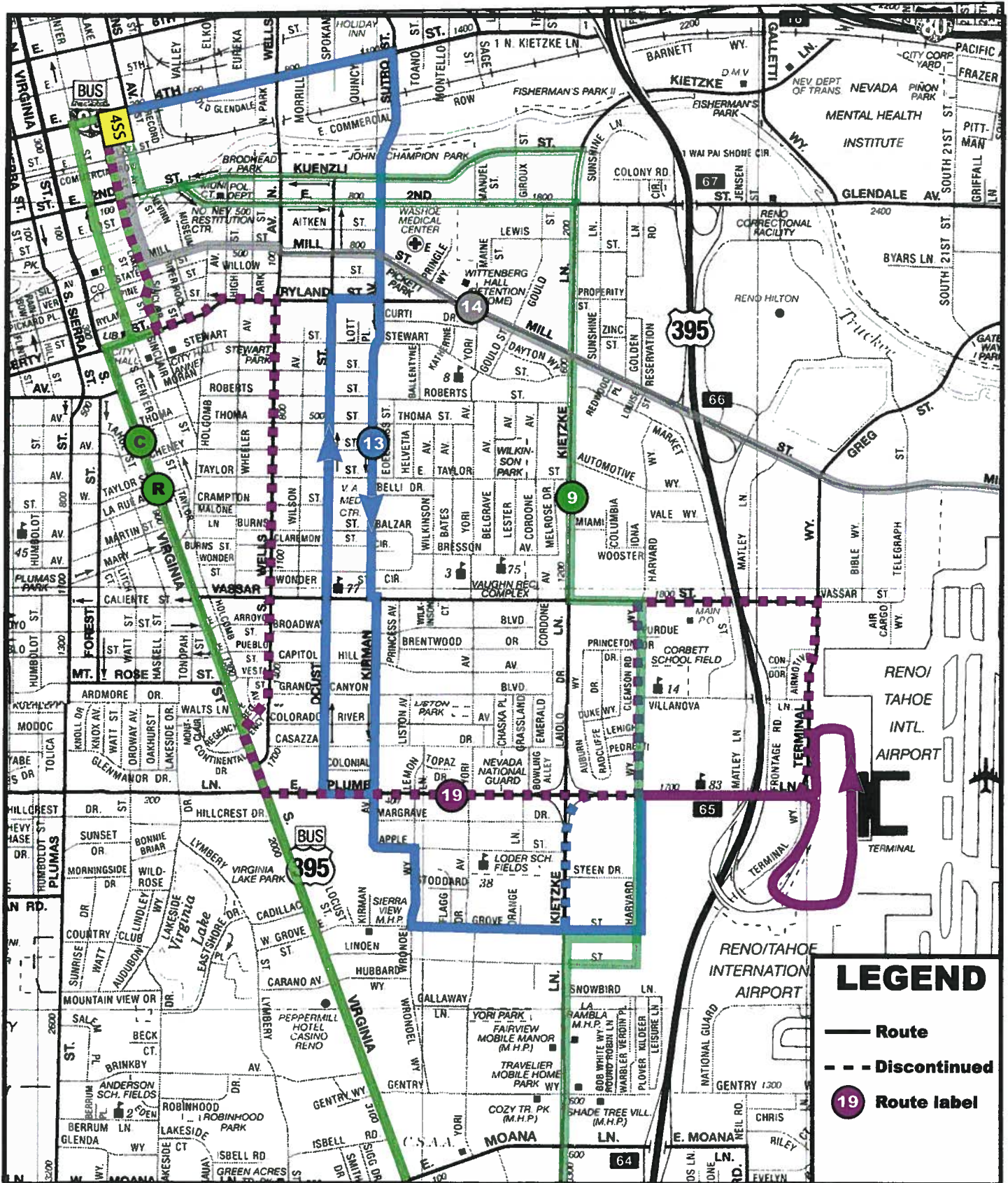
At the Technical Advisory Committee meeting, it was noted that Route 21 uses Nichols and could be impacted by improvements being made as part of a road rehabilitation project. Investigating this issue, RTC staff and MV staff had already worked with the project manager to accommodate transit service.

During the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting, the only issue of concern was combining Routes 13 and 19. With the understanding that the VA hospital would have more frequent service, the CAC members were supportive of the concept.

RNH/
Attachments

ATTACHMENT A

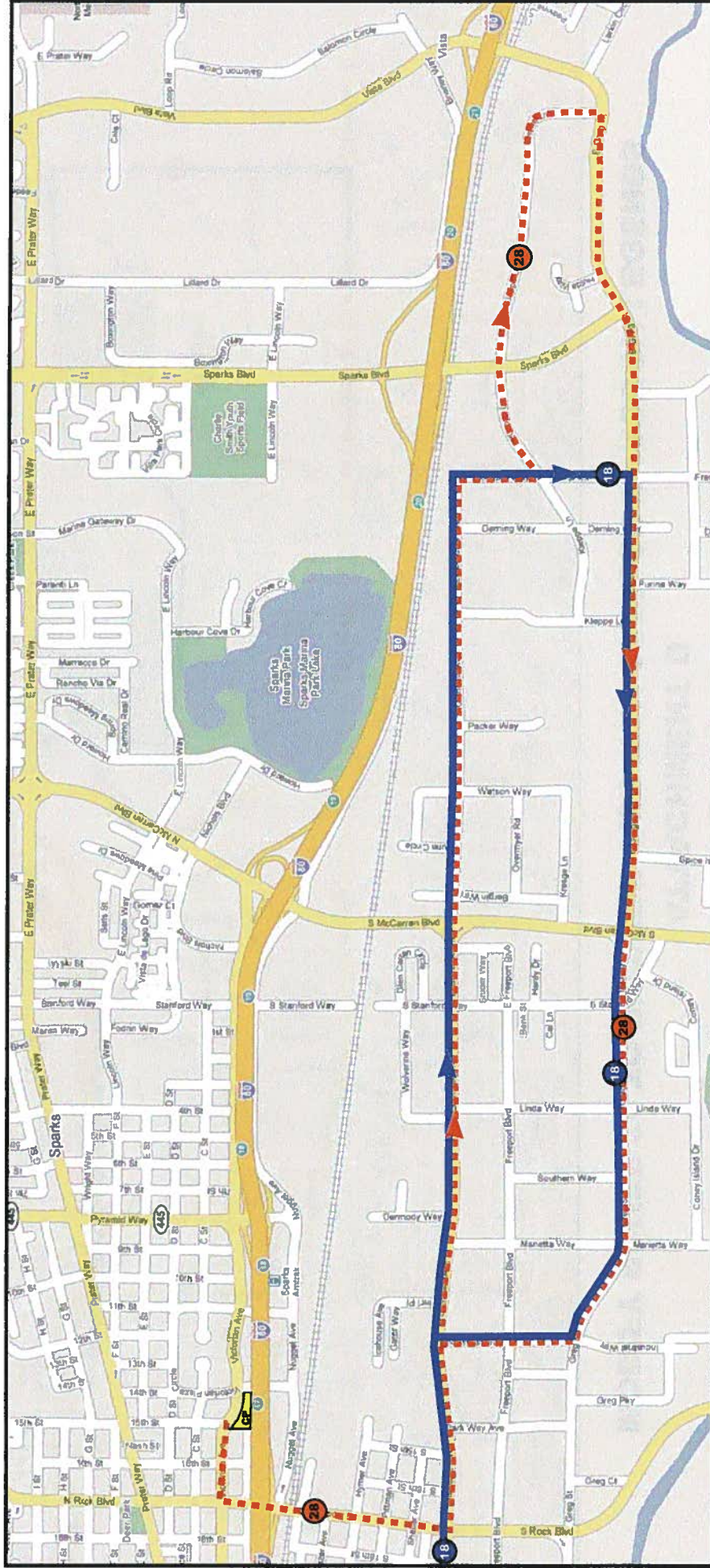
COMBINING ROUTES 13 AND 19



Attachment B
RTC RIDE Route Productivity
(November 2011)

Route	Ridership	Service Hours	(Boardings per Service Hour)	% of System Hours	Cumulative Percent from bottom
5	38,517	863.6	44.6	4.2%	100.0%
15	33,260	772.0	43.1	3.7%	95.8%
11	56,700	1,407.5	40.3	6.8%	92.1%
3	22,588	613.5	36.8	3.0%	85.3%
4	17,575	506.7	34.7	2.5%	82.3%
RAPID	87,814	2,565.8	34.2	12.4%	79.9%
2	57,661	1,700.4	33.9	8.2%	67.4%
18	19,237	581.3	33.1	2.8%	59.2%
CONNECT	53,098	1,644.5	32.3	8.0%	56.4%
16	10,197	327.8	31.1	1.6%	48.5%
SYSTEM	640,411	20,670.5	31.0		
14	29,860	986.4	30.3	4.8%	46.9%
RTC SS	21,671	720.0	30.1	3.5%	42.1%
9	46,416	1,616.6	28.7	7.8%	38.6%
7	41,825	1,465.8	28.5	7.1%	30.8%
13	14,197	508.0	27.9	2.5%	23.7%
25	5,240	195.7	26.8	0.9%	21.2%
6	22,015	879.8	25.0	4.3%	20.3%
54	9,703	402.3	24.1	1.9%	16.0%
19	6,002	248.9	24.1	1.2%	14.1%
57	5,462	235.8	23.2	1.1%	12.9%
21	11,933	573.1	20.8	2.8%	11.7%
26	6,335	370.2	17.1	1.8%	9.0%
56	8,040	470.5	17.1	2.3%	7.2%
17	10,941	657.4	16.6	3.2%	4.9%
RTC IC	3,480	272.7	12.8	1.3%	1.7%
28	644	84.3	7.6	0.4%	0.4%

ATTACHMENT C: DISCONTINUE ROUTE 28, IMPROVE ROUTE 18

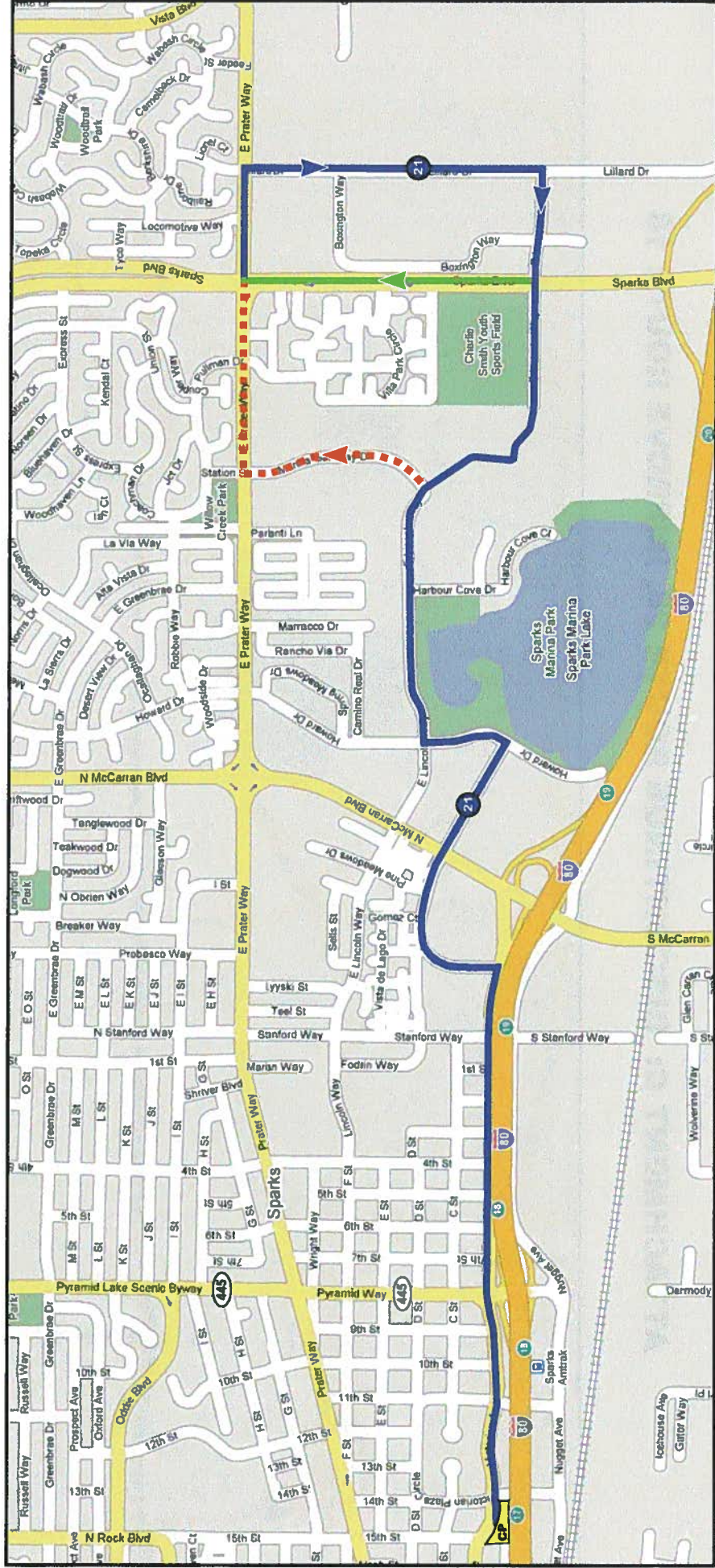


Route 28 - Discontinue

Route 18 - add service

ATTACHMENT D

MODIFY ROUTE 21 TO PROVIDE TWO-WAY SERVICE THROUGH LEGENDS



- Unchanged
- Discontinue
- Route 18 - add service