

## Express Bus Service

Public comment centered on several key issues following the release of the Interim Report. One of these was the need for express bus service covering:

- Large employers or employment centers
- Park and ride lots
- The square
- University of Wisconsin
- Airport
- And, when returning to the garage.

The challenges to providing each type of service relate to schedule, equipment and funding. As such, they are mid and long-term objectives. However, at least one of the express bus concepts has been adopted and shows potential for application in other parts of METRO's service area. As discussed in the building public / private partnerships section of this report, the commuter service and financial model, which was successfully applied to The American Center (a large employer and employment center), has the potential to be used as a solution to meet other express bus service needs.

Rush hour, commuter service, for example, could be provided from park and ride lots to the square. If this service is combined with the recommendation elsewhere in this report to adopt a policy for locating new park and ride lots at transfer points rather than on the perimeter of the urban area, commuters could park their automobiles or transfer to local or express service to the square. Depending on density and time of day, this concept could also be applied to the University of Wisconsin as a destination.

Express service to and from the airport is more problematic as the volume of flights is not concentrated by time of day similar to starting and quitting times at employment centers. Airport express service, however, does have a good potential for financing if the scheduling issues can be worked out.

Deadheading empty busses back to the garage could provide express service options if origins and destinations of potential passengers can be identified and routes to the garage could be designed to meet passenger needs. This effort would also address a perception issue discussed elsewhere in this report that empty busses are wasteful, not environmentally sensitive and fiscally un-sound. Whether this is actually the case is not the issue. The issue is a marketing perception problem, which an express bus option has the potential to address.