

operations include providing rapid bus services throughout portions of its network. Rapid services are high-frequency, limited-stop routes that are intended to provide faster transportation by providing less frequent stops than traditional local bus services. Rapid 227 is a new rapid route that launched on October 15, 2023 and connects the communities of Otay Mesa, Nestor, and Imperial Beach with the Iris Avenue Transit Center. The Rapid 227 provides 60-foot electric articulated buses and currently operates within the City of Imperial Beach along Imperial Beach Boulevard, 3rd Street, Palm Avenue, and Seacoast Drive. According to the MTS website, the new limited-stop bus service brings passengers from the border to the Trolley in 15 minutes and runs every 7.5 to 15 minutes throughout peak travel times, seven days a week.

Community concerns were expressed upon notification of the route before launch. It was soon discovered that residents along the impacted route segments did not receive notification of the route, particularly along 3rd Street where no bus route segment previously existed.

On November 8, 2023, City and MTS representatives held a neighborhood meeting at the intersection of 3rd Street and Imperial Beach Boulevard to discuss the issues occurring related to the new rapid route. Concerns related to inadequate outreach, noise, lighting, safety, infrastructure impacts, high frequency of buses, limited ridership, obstruction of businesses in Pier Plaza, coastal views, and driveways (see Attachment 1). Ultimately residents requested that the route be eliminated or moved away from the 3rd Street segment.

Following the neighborhood meeting, the City's MTS Board representative expressed community concerns at the November 9 MTS Board meeting. City and MTS representatives met on December 19, 2023 to discuss community impacts and it was recognized by all parties that the rapid route should be moved away from 3rd Street. In addition, queuing at Pier Plaza will be eliminated to minimize impacts to businesses.

MTS is considering rerouting the rapid route from 3rd Street to 9th Street. 9th Street is a collector roadway with an existing bus route (Route 901). The rapid route would only operate northbound on 9th Street from Imperial Beach Boulevard to Palm Avenue and no new bus stops are proposed and parking is not anticipated to be impacted. MTS will be sending notices along 9th Street informing residents of the proposed rerouting and inviting comment. The City Council, acting as Planning Commission, may be requested to review the route and any modifications.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

Not a project as defined by CEQA.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This update has no fiscal impact.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 - MTS Rapid Route 227 Neighborhood Meeting Summary