

BEFORE THE  
WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D. C.

ORDER NO. 582

IN THE MATTER OF:

Served March 25, 1966

Application of D. C. Transit System, Inc., for Authority to Change and Extend Its Route U-8. )  
)  
)  
)

Application No. 358

Docket No. 109

APPEARANCES:

MANUEL J. DAVIS and SAMUEL LANGERMAN, Attorneys for D. C. Transit System, Inc., applicant.

STANLEY H. KAMEROW, Attorney for WMA Transit Company, protestant.

D. C. Transit System, Inc., ("Transit") filed an application to change and extend its Route U-8. The application and Order No. 552, issued December 23, 1965, contain a detailed description of the proposed service. Generally, the proposed service would modify and extend Transit's existing service in the Benning Heights area of the District of Columbia. The re-routing would enlarge the Benning Heights area now served by Transit. This area is generally a collection and distribution terminus on the east end of a route arcing north and west into the mid-town area of the District of Columbia.

Notice of the application and hearing ordered thereon was given in compliance with Commission requirements. A protest to the application was filed by WMA Transit Company ("WMA"). The transcript of the record consists of one hundred forty-eight pages and thirteen exhibits. Twenty-two witnesses testified, including one applicant employee, one protestant employee, and twenty public witnesses.

William E. Bell testified for Transit in support of the application. He stated that the eastern portion of Route U-8 presently operates over Benning Road to 46th Street, thence over 46th Street to G Street, thence over Alabama Avenue to a loop, turn-around area, and returns. The proposal contemplates abandonment of service over 46th and G Streets; the

operation to be continued outbound over Benning Road to Hanna Place, thence over Hanna Place to H Street, thence over H Street to Alabama Avenue, thence to resume its present routing. Inbound, the service would continue over Alabama Avenue past G Street to Hillside Road, thence over Hillside Road to Benning Road, and thence continue to a mid-town terminal. It was the witnesses' opinion that, although the service would operate over four streets presently served by WMA, the service offered by Transit will be in "divergent directions" from that of WMA and therefore not in direct competition. The basis for this opinion is that the U-8 does not operate over any streets which duplicate the WMA service, other than the turn-around loop; that Transit's route operates to the north and west, while WMA's route operates to the south and west; that the operations are too far apart to be parallel, duplicative, or competitive; and they do not terminate in the same area. Mr. Bell also testified that the extension would provide service from an area which does not now have adequate service to the area north of East Capitol Street. To utilize existing service, people residing or working in the area to be served must now walk three to eight blocks. The witness minimized the adverse effect upon people now utilizing the service over the streets to be discontinued, stating that the maximum distance they would have to walk would be two blocks. Mr. Bell further stated that no additional equipment or operators would be required to render the proposed service.

Mr. Albert Long appeared on behalf of the Benning Ridge Civic Association. He stated that a majority of the members of the Association support the requested extension.

Nineteen other residents of the area testified, Sixteen of these stated that they supported the application without reservation, even though some would be personally inconvenienced. The remaining three witnesses supported the extension if it would be used only as a supplement to the existing service.

Mr. Samuel Sardinia testified for WMA in opposition to the application. It was his opinion that the extended service would adversely affect WMA, by attracting passengers presently riding WMA service who are destined to the downtown area. Also, passengers now using WMA service to transfer points with Transit would switch to Transit for their entire trip. He also stated that the operation of additional buses on Hillside Road would increase traffic congestion to the point that WMA service would be delayed, thereby causing schedule adjustments to counteract the slow-down of its operations.

Mr. Sardinia proposed that if additional service is needed, WMA is willing and able to extend its service to meet the additional requirements of the public.

The Commission is of the opinion and finds that the application should be granted in part. The Commission finds that it is in the public interest that Transit extend its service to H Street between Alabama Avenue and Benning Road. The extension of the route will open a new corridor of travel to the residents of Benning Heights located to the south of the existing service. Many of them walk a considerable distance to board Transit's service in order to travel to the various points served by the U-8 Route. From the testimony of the public witnesses it is apparent that service to these points is needed. Many of those testifying in support of the application live in close proximity to the WMA service but have no need to travel to the areas served by the WMA route. It is obvious that a large number of people in the area need and use WMA service, but it is also obvious that many people need and will use Transit's service for travel along the U-8 Route.

The Commission is of the further opinion that the proposed service will have little adverse economic effect on WMA. Only those persons having the extreme end of each route as their destination will have their choice of carriers, although it is recognized that the terminal area of WMA does not serve the same downtown employee population as is served by the Transit terminal.

The Commission further finds that the route protection offered by the Compact in Section 4(g) is not applicable in situations of this kind where converging routes must meet. A duplication of routes over a several block area caused by turn-around conditions cannot be viewed negatively when the public interest is involved.

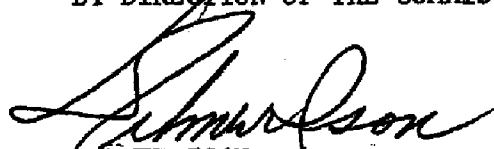
For these reasons, Transit should be permitted to extend its service. However, the Commission does not believe that the facts support the granting of the application as sought. The facts in this proceeding indicate that there is no need to overlap WMA's entire turn-around loop. It is sufficient that the routes meet, and this is accomplished. Lastly, our action reduces the competitive aspect to a very minimum.

**THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED:**

1. That the application of D. C. Transit System, Inc., to change and extend its Benning Line, Route U-8, be, and it is hereby, granted in part, authorizing extension of service to H Street between Alabama Avenue and Benning Road.

2. That appropriate Route Authorization be issued.

BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMISSION:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Delmer Ison".

DELMER ISON  
Executive Director