

# Community weighs in on possible transit changes

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The Beloit Transit Department is looking at possibly offering a bus option to the South Beloit Road Ranger along Route 75.

The Van Galder option would start at the transfer center on Shirland Avenue and head north on the west side of the city before crossing the Rock River, and heading southeast on Cranston. From there the bus would turn left onto Gateway Boulevard, crossing over into Illinois and heading west on Route 75 (Gardner Street) passing the Road Ranger in South Beloit.

Michelle Gavin, transit director for the City of Beloit, said the plans are preliminary, and the city would need to work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation on any legalities to offer the service.

The option is part of an ongoing study the transit department is working on with Seattle-based Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates.

The department held two open houses on Wednesday to allow bus riders and other stakeholders a chance to look at two different options.

One option has less geographical coverage, but lowers the route times to 30 minutes compared to the current 40 minute routes. It also eliminates bus access at Krueger-Haskell Golf Course and the pool.

The second option keeps the 40 minute time intervals, and uses one route on the west side of the city instead of two.

Both options would allow residents on the west side direct access to Wal-Mart and back. Currently, most riders must transfer to a different bus in order to get to the Wal-Mart on the east side.

Rider Ed Brockman said he takes the bus to work every day and would like to see an option to get to the Road Ranger in South Beloit.

“I know they’ve done it before when the Holiday Inn was still open (in South Beloit)” he said. “The service in general is really good. The drivers are all really friendly. I haven’t had any issues.”

Gerald Mansfield said he would prefer to leave the bus routes as they are right now, adding he uses the



## Possible route changes

Beloit resident Ed Brockman (left) talks with Victor Stover, transit planner for Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates, at the Beloit Transit Transfer Center on Wednesday during an open house to discuss possible changes to the bus routes. Brockman said he uses the bus every day to get to work, and would like to see a route that would take riders to the Road Ranger in South Beloit.

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“After work, I go pick up my kids and take them home,” he said. “Where they stop now and pick you up it’s only a couple of blocks away from where my kids live.”

The department did an internal study of its routes back in 2011, but hasn’t done a comprehensive study since 2004, Gavin said. After the School District of Beloit expanded its bus service for students last fall, Gavin said she believed it was time to look over the city’s route plans.

Under the new plans, the department would still have 17 bus drivers and the same number of buses in operation.

Gavin said the goal is to bring the preferred route changes to the city council in late April or early May, and implement the changes by mid-August at the latest.