



Public Transit: A Need for Action



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#139209



Southeastern Wisconsin Needs a Good Public Transit System

- **To meet the travel needs—work, education, healthcare, shopping—of the significant portion of the population (11% of households) without an automobile.**
- **To provide a necessary and desirable alternative in heavily traveled corridors and areas.**
- **To support higher density and infill development and redevelopment, which results in efficiencies for public infrastructure and services, including transportation.**



Southeastern Wisconsin Needs a Good Public Transit System (continued)

- **To contribute to efficiency in the transportation system, including reduced highway traffic and congestion, air pollution and energy consumption.**
- **To enhance economic development/quality of life**
 - **To provide job and labor force accessibility**
 - **To access opportunities for higher education**
 - **To provide choice**
 - **To reduce household expenditures on transportation, permitting greater savings, other expenditures, and higher standard of living**

3



Improvements Needed in Southeastern Wisconsin Public Transit

- **New routes and route extensions**
- **Longer service hours**
- **Both direction service**
- **Convenient service frequency**
- **Faster service—express service**
- **Major improvements and initiatives**

4



Public Transit Funding Crisis

- **Last 7 years**

	<u>Service Reductions</u>	<u>Fare Increases</u>
Milwaukee County	16%	30%
Waukesha County	40%	10-75%
Waukesha City	17%	75%
Racine City	25%	50%
Kenosha City	10%	- -

- **Projections for next five years**

- **35% reduction – Milwaukee County**
- **20-25% reductions for other systems**

5



Public Transit Funding Crisis – Why?

- **Federal and State funding provide 70 to 80% of transit annual operating funding**
 - **Has not increased with inflation**
 - **May not be expected to increase with inflation**
- **No potential to replace Federal and State funds with property taxes**

6



Public Transit Funding Crisis – Why? (continued)

- **Nearly 100% of Federal funds intended for capital projects are being spent on operating funding**
 - Milwaukee County has spent down a \$40 million bank of Federal capital funds
- **Milwaukee County needs to replace 30% of its bus fleet around 2010—\$60 million capital cost**

7



Nearly Every Other Metro Area Has Dedicated Local Transit Funding

Name	2000 Population (in millions)	Source of Local Dedicated Funding
St. Louis, MO	2.08	0.25% Sales tax
Denver, CO	1.98	0.6% Sales tax
Cleveland, OH	1.79	1.0% Sales tax
Pittsburgh, PA	1.75	Sales tax
Portland, OR	1.58	0.6218% payroll tax
Cincinnati, OH	1.50	0.3% payroll tax
Norfolk, VA	1.39	--
Sacramento, CA	1.39	0.5% Sales tax
Kansas City, MO	1.36	0.375% Sales tax
San Antonio, TX	1.33	0.5% Sales tax
Las Vegas, NV	1.31	0.25% Sales tax
Milwaukee, WI	1.31	--
Indianapolis, IN	1.22	--
Providence, RI	1.18	6.25 cents per gallon gas tax
Columbus, OH	1.13	0.25% Sales tax
New Orleans, LA	1.01	1.0% Sales tax
Buffalo, NY	0.98	0.125% Sales tax
Memphis, TN	0.97	--
Austin, TX	0.90	1.0% Sales tax
Salt Lake City, UT	0.89	Sales tax
Jacksonville, FL	0.88	1.0% Sales tax
Louisville, KY	0.86	0.2% payroll tax
Charlotte, NC	0.76	0.5% Sales tax

8



Need for Dedicated Transit Funding

- **Without dedicated transit funding**
 - Transit service will not be maintained or expanded
 - Major transit initiatives will not be possible
- **Addressing this issue will require**
 - Acknowledging the funding crisis
 - Achieving the necessary State legislation
 - State Budget
 - 2009 – 2011 State Budget

9



Actions Underway to Achieve Dedicated Transit Funding

- **Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Transit Authority (RTA)**
 - Report to Governor and State Legislature—
November 15, 2008
 - Need for public transit dedicated funding
 - Need for a permanent RTA
- **Wisconsin State Legislature Legislative Council Special Committee on Regional Transportation Authority**
 - Draft Legislation for consideration and action in
January 2009
- **Milwaukee County advisory referendum on a 1 percent sales tax for public transit, parks, and emergency medical services**

10



Summary

- **Compelling reasons for a good transit system**
- **The existing system needs improvement and expansion**
- **Have a serious funding crisis which may only be expected to get worse**
- **Our Metro Area peers are ahead of us with local dedicated transit funding (sales tax) and regional transit governance (RTA's)**

11



Summary (continued)

- **Without dedicated transit funding**
 - **Transit service will not be maintained or expanded as needed**
 - **Major transit initiatives will not be possible**
- **Addressing this issue will require**
 - **Acknowledging the funding crisis**
 - **Achieving the necessary State legislation**
 - **Dedicated funding**
 - **2009-2011 State Budget**

12