



COALITION FOR ADVANCING TRANSIT

January 2009 Meeting

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AGENDA

- Introduction to C.A.T.
 - Vision & Purpose
 - Introduction of Members
 - Accomplishments to date
- Transit 101 – Why are we here?
- RTA Recommendations
- Q & A
- What Can We Do Together?
- Networking & Information

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Coalition for Advancing Transit

Mission & Purpose:

The coalition is an alliance of organizations, individuals and business leaders from throughout the region to foster cooperation by bringing elected officials together to improve and expand public transit by establishing a dedicated funding source for transit.

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Coalition for Advancing Transit

Mission & Purpose

Accomplishing this objective will:

- Enhance and promote economic development efforts in the region;
- Connect workers to jobs throughout Southeastern Wisconsin;
- Support a high quality of life for residents; and
- Encourage efficient land use.

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Coalition for Advancing Transit

Structure

- **Coalition meets twice a year**
- **Steering Committee meets quarterly**
- **Steering Committee currently consists of 10 volunteer members**
- **After 1st year, no more than 15 Steering Committee members will be recommended by Coalition**

The Urban Economic Development Association of WI (UEDA) provides administrative support to the Coalition and Steering Committee

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C.A.T. Steering Committee

- Chair: Tom Rave, The Gateway To Milwaukee
- Steve Glynn, Launch Milwaukee
- Chris Larson, Milwaukee County Board Supervisor
- Peter Madaus, Policy Studies, Inc.
- Eric Paulsen, Greater Milwaukee Committee
- Diane Robinson, Social Development Commission
- Bruce Speight, WISPIRG
- Kerry Thomas, Transit Now
- Barbara Wesener, South Suburban Chamber of Commerce
- Ken Yunker, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Could add 5 additional members

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C.A.T. Accomplishments

- Formed and held initial meeting in October 2008, to date CAT is comprised of over 68 members.
- Organized efforts in support of dedicated funding for transit and expected RTA recommendations – 6 out of 7 RTA members voted in support in November.
- Assisted with efforts to show support for Milwaukee County advisory referendum on the 1% sales tax, of which about half would be allocated to transit. The remainder would go towards Parks and EMS and remove all three items from the property tax.
- This referendum mirrors the recommendation made by the SE WI RTA for 0.5% sales tax dedicated to transit, and to remove it from the property tax.

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C.A.T. Accomplishments

- Announced the formation of C.A.T. at a press conference in early November
- Continued to submit editorials and other communications to elected officials and the media regarding the need for regional solutions for transit issues.
- Formulated an outreach strategy for 2009 to expand the membership of C.A.T. so that it will include more community-based organizations, businesses and individuals.

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Transit 101 and the RTA Recommendations

*Presented by
Kerry Thomas, Transit Now
and
Ken Yunker, Southeastern Wisconsin
Regional Planning Commission*

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Vital Role of Transit

Adds critical capacity to transportation system

- **Provides mobility for those without auto access:**
16% of households in Milwaukee
- **Reduces traffic congestion:** MCTS removes 150,000 daily auto trips from the roads and parking facilities.

Economy, community, and quality of life:

- **Connects employers and workers:** About 70,000 trips per day are for work purposes in Milwaukee alone.
- **Reduces cost of living, increases earning ability**
allowing increased savings and upward mobility.

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Vital Role of Transit

Economy, community, and quality of life:

- Gives people a reliable affordable alternative to driving in heavy traffic.
- Supports business districts:
MCTS delivers 10,000 shoppers daily.
- Makes higher education, health care, and arts and culture more accessible and affordable.

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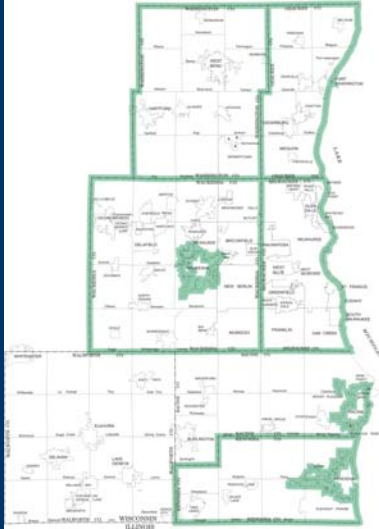
Vital Role of Transit

Economy, community, and quality of life:

- Reduces air pollution, global warming emissions, and dependence on oil.
- Builds global competitiveness, attracting businesses and transit-accessible jobs. Transit rich areas are a top priority for businesses and developers.
- Spurs efficient urban development and compact land use.

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Local Transit: Efficient



- **8 existing public transit systems**
- **Milwaukee County Transit**
 - **Total operating cost per rider**
 - **31% below peers**
 - **5th lowest**
 - **Net operating cost per rider**
 - **32% below average**
 - **4th lowest**
- **150,000 daily trips**
- **42 million trips per year**
- **Nearly half for work purposes**
- **\$1 investment returns \$4.72 in benefits to community** ¹³

Local Transit Improvements Needed

- **Communities and SEWRPC have identified improvements to meet needs**



- **New routes and route extensions**
- **Longer service hours**
- **Both direction service**
- **Convenient service frequency**
- **Faster service—express and rapid service**
- **Service improvements—signal priority and reserved lanes**

Major Initiatives



- Milwaukee City – County Bus Rapid Transit Proposal



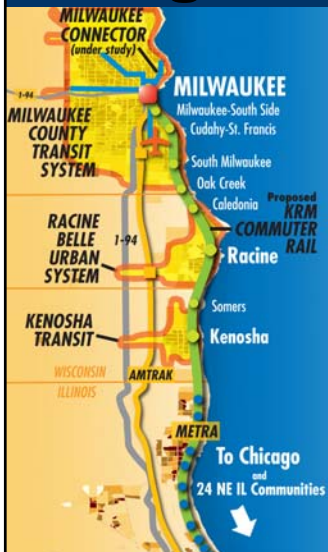
- City of Milwaukee Streetcar Circulator Proposal



- Kenosha – Racine – Milwaukee Commuter Rail

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Major Initiatives: Regional Transit Network



Would provide:

- Critical local & regional job linkages
- Link and enhance 3 urban transit systems in SE WI
- Create and support 10's of thousands of transit-accessible jobs
- Spur millions of dollars of private investment in urban revitalization
- Gain over \$210 million in federal \$

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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**
- **Lack of local funding source is major reason why transit improvements have not been implemented**

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Transit Funding Crisis

Impact of transit service cuts: Deepening divide between workers and jobs

UWM Study:

- **In the past 7 years 40,000 jobs became inaccessible by transit in Milwaukee and Waukesha.**
- **If the funding trend continues, that number will grow to 101,000 by 2010.**
- **“poverty and unemployment would likely increase, and employers would face an increasingly constricted labor market,”**

Source: University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Center for Economic Development study: Out of Service: The Impact of Transit Cuts on Access to Jobs in Metropolitan Milwaukee, by Joel Rast

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Funding Crisis: Why?

Increasing costs & decreasing revenues

- Increasing costs: fuel, human resource costs, etc.
- Revenue from state and federal have not kept pace with inflation
- Not able to replace funding gap with current funding source, the local property tax



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Funding Crisis: Why?

To fill the funding gap:

- Capital funds have been used for operating to avoid further service cuts.
 - Milwaukee County has spent down nearly all of its \$40 million bank of Federal capital funds for bus purchases
- Milwaukee County needs to replace 30% of its bus fleet around 2010—\$60 million capital cost



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Dedicated Local Funding in Most Metro Areas

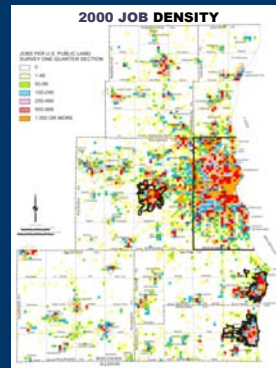
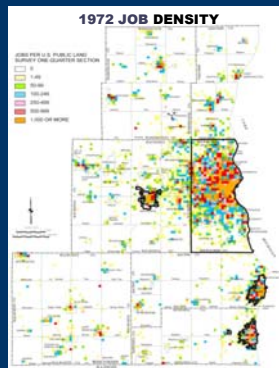
Name	2000 Population (in millions)	Source of Local Dedicated Funding
St. Louis, MO	2.08	0.25% Sales tax
Denver, CO	1.98	0.6% Sales tax
Cleveland, OH	1.79	1.0% Sales tax
Pittsburgh, PA	1.75	Sales tax
Portland, OR	1.58	0.6218% payroll tax
Cincinnati, OH	1.50	0.3% payroll tax
Norfolk, VA	1.39	--
Sacramento, 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

Source: Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

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Need for Regional Transit

- Connect people to the growing jobs and opportunities that lie outside the transit system service areas
- Deliver workers and customers to urban areas
- Business attraction and job growth rely on a good regional transit network



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Action Needed: Dedicated Funding Source

Adequate, stable, dedicated local funding source is needed NOW to:

- **Avoid major transit service cuts that would impact families, employers and economy**
- **Implement planned local transit improvements**
- **Implement major systems improvements**

Pivotal Decisions in 2009

Gaining dedicated funding source requires

- **State legislation: 2009-11 State Budget**
- **Timeline: January–July 2009**

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Milestones in Gaining Transit Funding

Advisory referendum in Milwaukee Co.

- **Removal of parks, transit, and EMS from the property tax and institute a 1% sales tax to fund the costs**

Regional Transit Authority recommendation

- **Acknowledged the critical importance of local & regional transit**
- **Transit be removed from property tax and institute up to a 0.5% sales tax to fund local share of transit**

Business & community leaders prioritize:

- **Healthy transit systems and transit improvements**
- **Dedicated funding, and up to a 0.5% sales tax tied to property tax relief**

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Transit Summary

- **Good transit plays a vital role in our economy and quality of life**
- **Transit systems are efficiently operated**
- **We are facing a critical funding crisis**
 - **If current trends continue service cuts of 35% are projected**
 - **Transit improvements cannot move forward without a dedicated local funding source.**

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Action Needed in 2009

- **Dedicated funding source is urgently needed**
- **Regional coordination and collaboration are essential**
- **Legislative action is required
Jan. - July 2009**
- **Historic decisions will be made in 2009.
The Public (you!) must be engaged.**

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Southeastern Wisconsin
Regional Transit Authority

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY (RTA)

Overview of recommendations to the Governor and Legislature

January 13, 2009



141753

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Southeastern Wisconsin
Regional Transit Authority

- **“Temporary”, “Limited Purpose”, Three County Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Created in 2005-2007 State Budget**



- 7 Members
- Action requires “Super-Majority” 6-to-1 vote

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- **Southeastern Wisconsin RTA**
 - 25 Meetings
 - Research
 - Need for Public Transit
 - Public Transit Trends and Plans
 - Public Transit Funding
 - Public Transit Efficiency
 - Peer Metro Areas and RTA' s
 - Alternative Local Funding Sources
 - Responsibilities and Governance
 - Recommendations
 - www.sewisrta.org



*Recommendations set forth on
November 15, 2008*

- **The RTA recommends that it continue as the permanent RTA for the 3 counties.**
 - Initial Region
 - Kenosha County
 - Milwaukee County
 - “Urbanized portion” of Racine County, currently defined as the part of the County east of I-94
 - Potential Future Expansion to other Southeastern Wisconsin Counties/Urbanized Areas



*Recommendations set forth on
November 15, 2008*

- **The RTA recommends that it be enabled to levy up to 0.5 percent sales tax for transit**
 - All revenue generated from a sales tax would stay within each county and be used to pay for transit service within each county.
 - Current funding for county/municipal transit from the property tax would be removed from property tax levies, providing property tax relief.

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*Recommendations set forth on
November 15, 2008*

- **The RTA recommends that it be empowered to subcontract with the current operators for local bus transit service, or assume operations as appropriate, and upon agreement with the existing transit operators**
 - Responsibilities would include public transit, paratransit, shuttle, vanpooling, and ridesharing.
 - Establish a local transit planning group in each County consisting of members appointed by local elected officials to develop a 5 year transit service plan and budget for their County that will guide the transit service to be provided within their County and between their County and other Counties.³²



Southeastern Wisconsin
Regional Transit Authority

*Recommendations set forth on
November 15, 2008*

- **The RTA recommends that the present board structure be retained**
 - Appointed board (by elected officials)
 - 7 members with super-majority 6-to-1 vote required

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Q & A



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What Can We Do Together?

OVERALL GOAL:

A permanent regional transit authority with a dedicated funding source will improve and enhance our current transit systems and create a dynamic, multimodal network in southeast Wisconsin.

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What Can We Do Together?

OVERALL GOAL:

- **Transit cuts are harming accessibility to jobs.** Between 2001 and 2007 in Milwaukee and Waukesha counties, 40,500 jobs became inaccessible by transit due to service cuts.
- Without a stable dedicated funding source, **existing transit systems will face severe service reductions in 2010** and important transportation system improvements will not happen.
- **Transit is a top attractor for the talent that businesses require to be successful.** We need to ensure a talented workforce and reverse our brain drain by investing in transit to build a globally competitive regional economy.
- **If no legislative action is taken**, the SE Wisconsin RTA will dissolve in 2009 and with it the best opportunity to gain dedicated transit funding and regional coordination.

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What Can We Do Together?

TIMELINE & PROCESS:

- **Governor's Budget**
 - Announced by end of January
 - Provision for dedicated funding and RTA?
- **State Legislation**
 - Required to create regional authority and allow for dedicated funding.
- **Support of local electeds needed** (County Boards, Common Councils, Mayors, Executives) to ensure action by Governor and State legislators in THIS biennial budget.

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What Can We Do Together?

STRATEGY

1. **Educate the public and transit users to be advocates** for an integrated mass transit system that serves residents, employers, businesses and visitors throughout SE WI.
2. **Build consensus among local business and community leaders** for dedicated funding and a permanent regional authority for transit in SE Wisconsin.
3. **Identify and cultivate legislative champions** for transit in SE Wisconsin.

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ACTION 1: Join the Coalition

- Become a member of the Coalition for Advancing Transit (CAT)!
 - Over 68 members have joined to date.
 - Ask your agency or business to become a member as an organization.
 - Ask colleagues, friends and neighbors to get involved and join C.A.T.
 - Join the C.A.T. listserv at Google Groups – post comments and discuss transit issues with other members.

GOAL: Over 100 members by 1/31/09

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ACTION 2: Endorse

4 Principles

- A vibrant, modern transit system is a fundamental part of a successful and sustainable economy in the region.
- A permanent regional transit authority in Southeast Wisconsin in 2009 is critical to providing regional coordination, creating a united voice to access local funding and federal investments, and advancing efficient regional linkages for jobs and economic growth.
- A dedicated funding source for transit is vital in 2009 to provide adequate, stable funding for transit and prevent significant cuts in service.
- A dedicated 0.5% sales tax for transit will provide property tax relief by removing local transit costs from the property tax.

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ACTION 2: Endorse

- **Sign the C.A.T. Endorsement form**

- Show unified support around regional transit solutions for SE Wisconsin. Ask your agency/organization to endorse the four principles on transit
- Share this form with colleagues, friends and neighbors.

Goal: At least 50 Endorsers by 1/31/09

We will continue to collect Endorsers from SE Wisconsin and will share this list elected officials to show how many support real transit solutions in this region!

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ACTION 3: Contact Elected Officials

- Contacting elected officials has an impact!
- Call, write or email
- Where to start?
 1. **The Governor's Office** – ask them to include language in the budget for a permanent RTA and 0.5% sales tax for transit
 2. **Local elected officials** – tell your state legislators and county representatives that you support regional transit solutions for SE WI.

At the back, pick up your Action Flyer for talking points and contact information.

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RECAP: What Can We Do Together?

1. **Join CAT!** Ask your agency/business, colleagues, friends and neighbors to join.
 - **GOAL: 100 members by 1/31/09**
2. **Endorse!** Ask your agency/business, colleagues, friends and neighbors to endorse.
 - **GOAL: At least 50 Endorsers by 1/31/09**
3. **Contact elected officials.**
 - **GOAL: At least 100 contacts to the Governor's office by THIS Friday (1/16/09)**
 - *Let us know what you hear!*

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HOW CAN WE HELP?

- Visit the tables in the back for information and to take your **ACTION FLYER** home.
- Join CAT and you will receive regular action bulletins via email.
 - We will provide you with concise transit sound bites and contact information for elected officials.
- Access to professionals **who can provide education/information** to you and your organization in a variety of ways.
- Network with other individuals and professionals interested in transit issues.

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Networking & Information

- Sign up to become a member of C.A.T.
- Sign onto the Endorser form.
- Pick up Action Flyer to contact elected officials.
- Ask questions and interact with C.A.T. members.
- Pick up information on C.A.T., transit fact sheets and presentation materials.

THANK YOU!



Your support and involvement is so important to our success in 2009.