

2013-15 WI Biennial Budget: *Budget Hearing April 4*

Impacts to Transit and the Economy in SE Wisconsin

Provided by Regional Transit Initiative

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An efficient transportation system is vital to the economy of SE Wisconsin, the State's economic engine. Good public transit is needed to get and keep people educated and working, and businesses growing jobs. Transit is an important factor in building global economic competitiveness and attracting and retaining businesses and the talent that they seek.

New dynamics have exacerbated a dangerous historic trend of increasing barriers to employment and workforce development, as a large and growing number of employers are located outside of the shrinking transit service areas, and regional connectivity remains limited.

Transit has been reduced more than 20% over the past decade in the region. (SEWRPC). A 10% cut in state transit funding in the 2011-13 state budget added to the situation, resulting in less mobility and increased fares in communities region-wide.

Milwaukee County maintained service levels in 2012 and 2013 by creatively using one-time federal CMAQ funding to help mitigate the cut in State funding. **The one-time federal funding will expire in 2014 leaving an \$8 million gap in the MCTS annual operating budget.**

In addition, state adjustments for inflation have not been realized, reducing buying power by \$1.5 million per year for Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) alone.

The 2013-15 proposed state budget for transportation is \$6.4 Billion (transit aids uses \$106.4 million.) It calls for continuing the harmful 10% cuts in state funding, does not address inflation, and undermines transit by moving transit out of the segregated Transportation Fund. It would then compete with every non-transportation program.

Without a change in the proposed Biennial Budget, communities across the region will continue to lose essential mobility.

There are key opportunities for to provide input into the budget and help protect transit, and our positive economic future.

- **State Budget Public Hearing: April 4, 10:00 – 6:00. Greendale High School**, 6801 Southway, Greendale (suburban Milwaukee). Tips: Arrive prior to 9:30 AM to register, bring 16 copies of your comments for the committee.
- **Comments can also be submitted to Joint Finance Committee members and your legislators.** Contact information at www.legis.wisconsin.gov.

These priorities are crucial to preserving transit services:

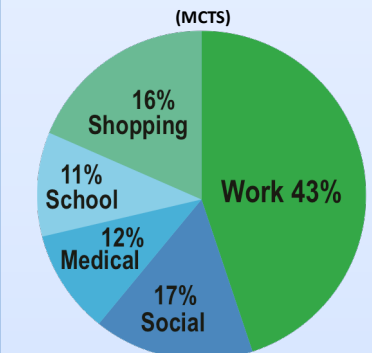
1. **Restore state transit operating aids that were cut in the 2011-13 biennial budget.** This is a surplus budget with the ability to make transit more whole.
2. **Maintain transit funding from the segregated Transportation Fund**, to provide crucial funding stability. Transit is as integral a part of the transportation system as roads and requires the same stable dedicated funding from the segregated funding source.

The amount to restore cuts to state transit funding is just one half of one percent of the \$6.4 Billion Transportation Fund. Transit does so much for such a small investment!

Transit: Vital to a Vibrant Economy

Over 145,000 rides are provided every weekday in SE Wisconsin.

How is transit used?



Education & Training

Over 53,000 students per semester in the Milwaukee area have access to the U-Pass program, helping to provide the skilled workforce and improved incomes needed to strengthen our economy.

Jobs that became inaccessible by transit due to service cuts from 2001-2008:

40,500 (UWM Center for Economic Development)

Households without access to an auto:

12% region-wide, 16% in Milwaukee County, and up to 70% in some neighborhoods in the region.

Average annual cost to own and operate an auto:

\$9,000 (AAA)

Tourism and recreation

MCTS carries over 400,000 people annually to Summerfest and other recreational events, supporting jobs, economic development, and tax base; and easing congestion.