



Years of MCTS
1975 - 2025



2025 Annual Report: Moving Forward Together



Moving Forward Together

Dear MCTS Community,

MCTS marked a significant milestone in 2025: 50 years since Milwaukee County, recognizing that affordable transportation options are crucial to the regional economy, acquired the state's largest public transit system. The County's investment has built a system that boosts economic development and tourism and gets people to work.

In fact, getting to work is the #1 reason why people ride the bus. Today, Southeast Wisconsin's workforce relies heavily on public transit. Lack of transportation is a major obstacle to employment in Wisconsin, especially in Milwaukee County where a significant percentage of the workforce does not drive or does not have access to a vehicle. In the Milwaukee metro area, 1 in 5 working age residents don't drive. Add to the need, 13% of households in the metro area don't have a vehicle.

Milwaukee County is the only major metro in the Midwest without a dedicated transit funding source. State funding is lower than in 2011 and no longer supports basic operational needs. MCTS is facing a structural gap of \$ 15.7 million in 2027. To help ensure long-term financial stability, MCTS will partner with the County to seek additional funding sources. In addition, we will spend the next year planning a system redesign, to align bus service with the resources we have.

This 50th annual report shows where we've been and where we're going, and one thing is constant: even as times have changed, our commitment to dependable, reliable, and safe service has not. No major city in America can exist without a strong transit network. Together, with your input, we will find ways within our means to move Milwaukee County forward over the next half century.

Steve Fuentes
MCTS President and CEO



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Honoring Our Past. Building Our Future.



Dear Milwaukee County,

Five decades ago, Milwaukee County made a commitment to ensure working families are connected, to help local businesses thrive, and to move our communities forward.

50 years later, MCTS has helped fulfill that promise by serving as a lifeline for residents across Milwaukee County's 19 municipalities. It's how people commute to work. It's how students get to school. It's how families reach medical care, grocery stores, recreational opportunities, and social connections. Simply put, public transit is essential to our way of life.

As we reflect on this 50th anniversary milestone, we must also recognize the broader role transit plays in Milwaukee County. The impact of transit extends far beyond the bus stop. Reliable public transportation attracts businesses, supports workers, and fuels economic development. MCTS connects workers to employers and customers to local businesses, strengthening our economy across the region.

After 50 years of service, one thing is clear: MCTS represents opportunity.

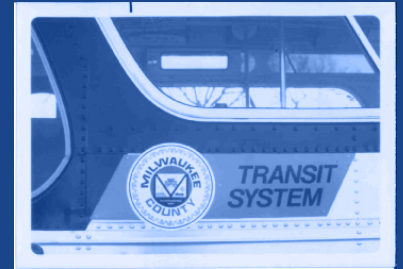
As we look ahead to the next half century, we must continue working together to ensure our transit system remains strong, reliable, and accessible to all. I remain committed to advocating for the investments and resources necessary to sustain and enhance MCTS for generations to come.

Congratulations on this incredible milestone and thank you for your dedication to moving Milwaukee County forward.

Sincerely,

David Crowley

Milwaukee County Executive



On July 1, 1975, Milwaukee County acquired ownership of the transit system in order to sustain it.



The county contracted Milwaukee Transport Services, Inc. (MTS) to operate the newly named Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS).

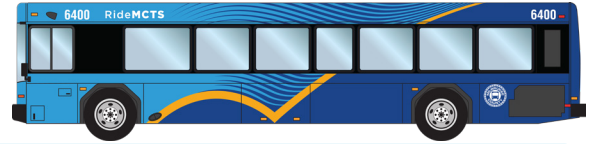


Milwaukee County invested in the transit system and grew ridership, earning several major awards recognizing the public transit agency.



Driving Economic Growth

The Need for Stable Transit Funding



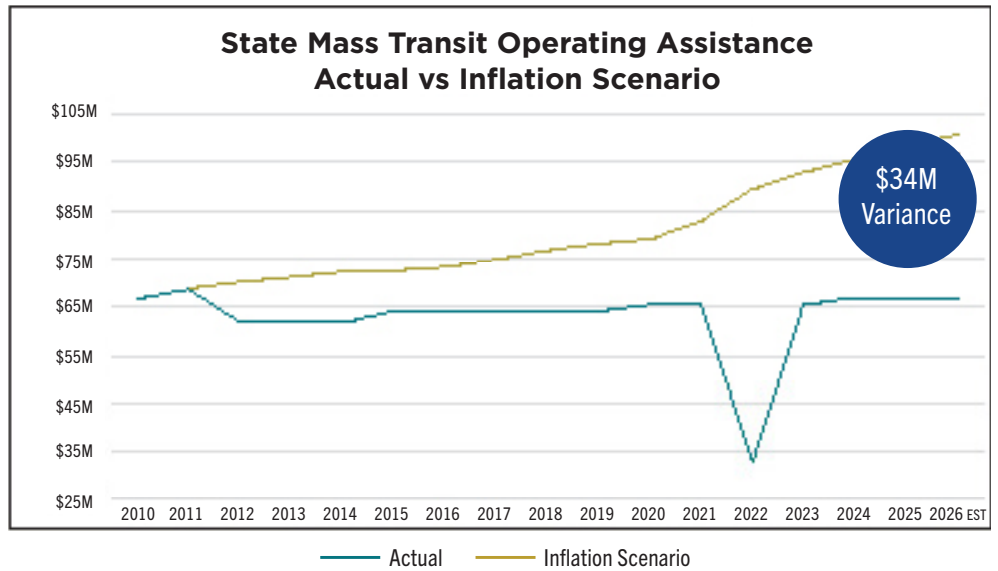
Milwaukee County is the only major metro in the Midwest without a dedicated transit funding source. MCTS is an important part of Southeast Wisconsin's transportation network - connecting workers to 386,000 jobs, supporting employers, powering major events, and reducing congestion across the region.

After a drastic cut in state transit funding in 2011, annual allocations have never recovered. At the same time, costs like fuel, bus maintenance and wages have risen substantially. In 2026, MCTS is effectively underfunded by \$34 million in state support, without tools to raise additional revenue. Since August 2025, MCTS has already implemented 170,000 hours - or 15% - service cuts. Without new revenue, the system faces an additional 25% in cuts in 2027.

State Funding is Lower Than in 2011 and No Longer Supports Basic Operational Needs

If transit service remains underfunded, the impacts will be felt regionally beginning in 2027. **Without changes in funding, service cuts will continue and reach 36% in total between 2025 and 2027.** To protect the regional transit network, we need a stable, dedicated funding model that:

- 1 Keeps pace with inflation
- 2 Protects riders and commuters from budget swings
- 3 Reflects MCTS's true regional impact
- 4 Supports reliable service for workers and employers



SE Wisconsin's Workforce Relies Heavily on Transit

13%

of households in the metro area don't have a vehicle

In Milwaukee County

1 in 5

working age residents don't drive

47%

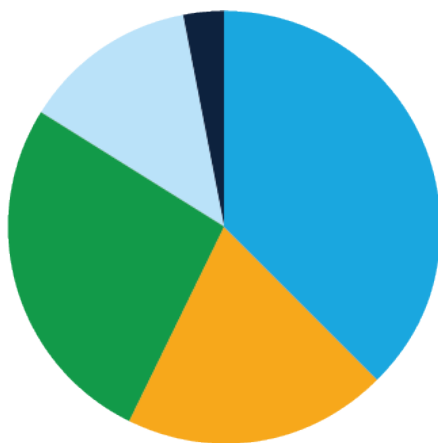
of riders use MCTS to get to work

2025 Revenue and Costs

In mid-2025, MCTS announced a projected budget deficit of \$10.9 million. Through cost savings efforts and federal funds from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, the projected budget shortfall was offset, eliminating the anticipated year-end deficit.

Looking ahead, MCTS forecasts a structural budget gap of approximately \$15.7 million in 2027. To address this challenge and ensure long-term financial sustainability, MCTS has initiated a comprehensive system service redesign focused on aligning resources within available funding. In addition, MCTS and Milwaukee County Department of Transportation are partnering with the Office of Government Affairs to seek additional state and federal funding opportunities.

2025 Revenue by Source \$186,265,233



- 38% State \$69,967,400
- 20% Federal \$36,443,000
- 27% Local \$50,717,623
- 13% Passenger Revenue \$24,219,939
- 3% Other \$4,917,272

**Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding*

2025 Costs \$186,265,233



- 53% Bus Operations \$98,494,146
- 12% Paratransit \$22,245,441
- 16% Maintenance of Vehicles & Facilities \$30,293,373
- 6% Capital Charges* \$11,464,640
- 13% Administration \$23,767,623

**Capital Charges are estimated and will be finalized after July 2026*

Major Grants and Partnerships to Upgrade Service

The U.S. Department of Transportation Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Program

MCTS is more proactively and aggressively pursuing grant funding sources. MCTS is also coordinating with the Federal Transit Administration to unlock \$21 million in enhancements along the 18-mile PurpleLine corridor as announced in the 2025 BUILD grant awards. The project will enhance accessibility and reliability by delivering ADA boarding upgrades at more than 50 bus stops, installing new shelters at more than 65 stops, constructing raised platforms at three priority intersections, and optimizing traffic signals at more than 60 intersections. The PurpleLine is one of MCTS's most heavily utilized routes, serving more than 1.2 million riders annually across Oak Creek, Franklin, Greenfield, Milwaukee, and Glendale. Project implementation is targeted for 2028.

I-94 East/West Construction Project Partnership with WisDOT (2025 – 2033)

Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is beginning I-94 East/West Project lane and overpass closures, with broad impacts to the area expected over the next eight years. WisDOT has identified spending \$25 million to \$30 million on transit over the course of the project to mitigate the impacts of road and bridge closures and traffic congestion. MCTS is partnering with WisDOT to minimize service impacts to riders throughout the duration of this long-term construction effort. MCTS will add service to routes to maintain reliability when there's increased traffic. The end result: a safer, more modern roadway.

State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Fast Forward Grant

In 2025, after four years of planning and collaboration, MCTS reached a major workforce milestone with the official registration of Wisconsin's first Coach/Bus Operator and Mechanic apprenticeship programs. The effort began with close coordination among MCTS Human Resources, Transportation, and Maintenance leadership, training representatives from the American Transit Union (ATU), and the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD). Designed to address ongoing workforce shortages in public transit, the apprenticeships create a pathway for recruiting, training, and retaining skilled employees. DWD awarded MCTS a \$387,000 Fast Forward Grant and hopes other public transit agencies across Wisconsin will replicate the apprenticeship program to address the statewide shortage of public transit workers.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Grant (2025)

Milwaukee County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) announced nearly \$8 million in grant funding awarded by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to help enhance transit services in Milwaukee County. The funding, awarded through the 2025-28 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Supplemental Cycle, will support these three projects:

- MCTS replacement buses
- Traffic signal optimization
- MCTS public outreach campaign to increase ridership

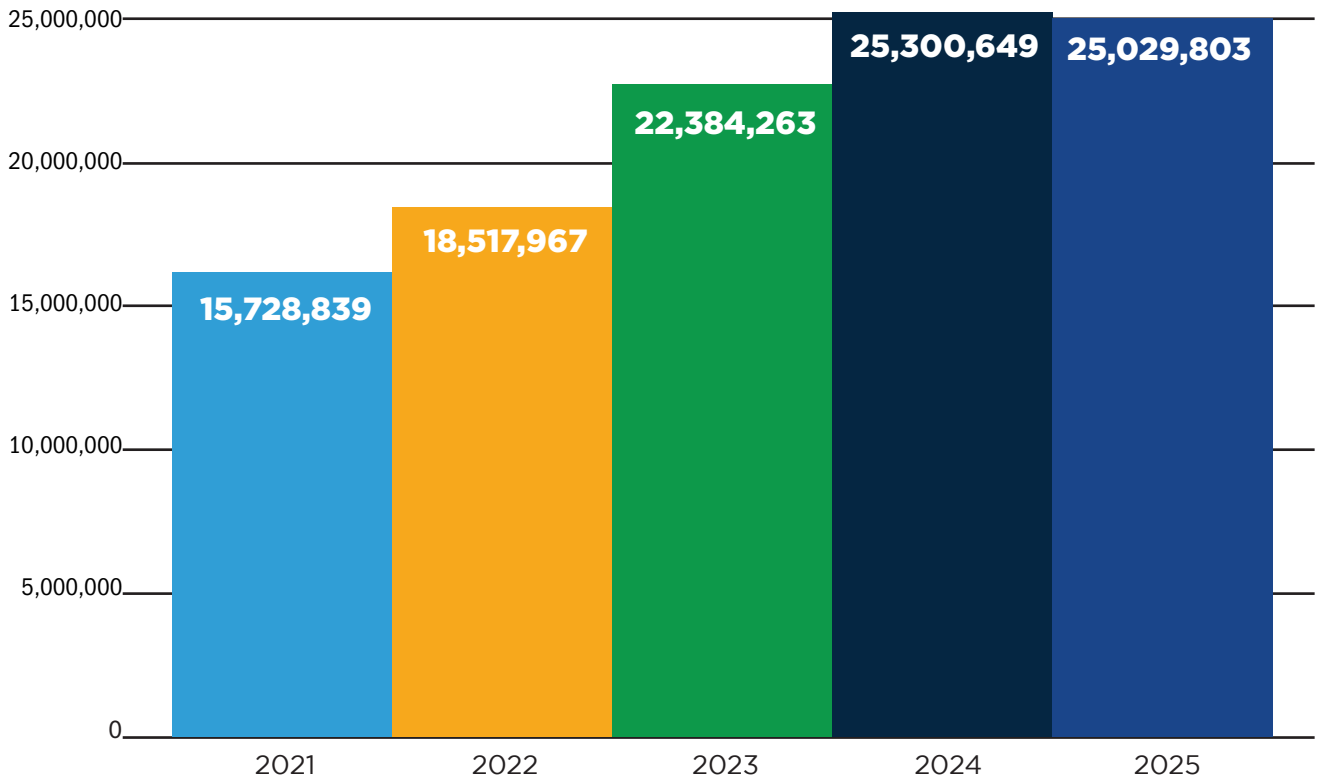


Investing in Service Grows Ridership

When Milwaukee County sees investment in public transit, the region sees ridership increase. This is seen in the change between 2024 and 2025 ridership levels. MCTS ridership remained stable, providing 25 million rides in 2025, compared to 25.3 million rides in 2024. While this is a slight drop from the previous year, MCTS implemented service changes at the end of 2025 to maintain financial sustainability, which impacted end-of-year growth.

Even with stable ridership, MCTS has outperformed expectations in recovering ridership following the COVID-19 pandemic. By the end of 2024, MCTS had regained 87.2% of its pre-pandemic ridership. National Transit Database reporting indicates that this recovery exceeds Madison's (71.7%), Columbus' (63.5%), Indianapolis' (74.9%), and Minneapolis–St. Paul's (61.7%).

2025 Ridership



Source: National Transit Database (NTD)



A Stronger, Safer System

Investing in a Safer Environment

The safety of riders and operators is MCTS's number one priority. MCTS continues to build upon ongoing safety investments through staffing, technology and infrastructure.

From 2024 to 2025, the expanded MCTS's internal public safety team, known as Public Safety Officers, contributed to a 50% reduction in operator assaults. The in-house safety department has grown to 21 officers and staff and has expanded coverage to all three shifts. MCTS developed an in-house Field Training Officer program for Public Safety officers to ensure a high quality and consistent training program for all Public Safety hires. MCTS continues to grow its Public Safety program, creating an in-house Public Safety Dispatch office and expanding coverage to cover overnight and on weekends.



Increasing Fare Compliance

MCTS is taking fare evasion seriously and has implemented a layered strategy to increase fare compliance. We are optimistic about the progress we will see over the next year due to these efforts.

A public awareness campaign launched at the end of 2025, which includes the addition of on-bus audio announcements at every stop, along with a destination sign on the front of the bus, social media, website, news media and other communication channels that highlight the importance of paying your fare for the sustainability of the system. MCTS expects to see fare evasion trend downward with this approach and with the additional funding for more Public Safety Officers (PSO).

The 2026 Bus Fare Compliance Program is expanding MCTS's existing in-house PSO Program to provide a visible presence to deter fare evasion while enhancing safety.

Safe + Sound Week

MCTS participated in its inaugural Safe + Sound Week in August 2025. Lead by OSHA and the National Safety Council, it recognizes the steps businesses have taken to improve workplace safety and health, implementing safety and health programs. CPR and certified first aid training for registrants was available during this event and operators who achieved incredible milestones were honored including 30+ years with no preventable accidents on the road.



Building Skills for De-escalation and Crisis Prevention



Employee professional development boosts morale and increases retention. In 2025, MCTS continued investing in its people through a three-day De-escalation & Crisis Prevention Workshop open to employees across the organization. Led by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), the interactive training equips staff with practical tools for de-escalation, self-care, and connecting individuals with community support.

Operators and staff consistently describe the workshop as highly relevant to their daily work. “This training was helpful for real-life situations—great knowledge to know,” one participant shared. 108 employees attended in 2025, with participants saying the experience is both impactful and empowering—helping MCTS staff feel better prepared to respond with empathy, confidence, and care.

Fatigue Management

In 2025, MCTS strengthened its fatigue management program for bus operators through a collaborative effort involving Transportation, Operations and local ATU 998 leadership teams. The result was an enhanced Fatigue Management Policy designed to help ensure that only employees who are fit and ready for work operate MCTS vehicles.

To further support employee well-being and reduce fatigue-related risks, MCTS partnered with several expert resources, including the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Haleo, FitPro and NAMI. In addition, MCTS worked with its insurance partners, Risk Management and Marketing and Communications teams to produce a training video focused on recognizing and mitigating fatigue. The video serves as a valuable resource for new hires and employees seeking to refresh their knowledge and skills.



Investments in Transit Infrastructure

Research shows that investments in public transit infrastructure help create safer communities. Transit-oriented communities tend to have lower accident rates. MCTS is completing improvements at 65 bus stops, including 25 modern bus shelters, 30 ADA-compliant concrete boarding pads, and the beautification of ten shelters. Increasing visibility through better signage, shelters, and accessibility helps move more single occupancy vehicle drivers off the street and onto the bus.

Helping Employees Get to Work

Commuter Value Pass

Helping people get to work has always been central to MCTS’s mission over the past 50 years. Through the Commuter Value Pass (CVP) program, employers can offer bus access as a convenient, affordable benefit for their staff—helping employees avoid parking, traffic, and construction during their commute.

In 2025, CVP participation grew by 6%, reflecting strong interest from employers seeking reliable transportation options that support their workforce. Nearly 50 employers participate in MCTS Commuter Value Pass programs, providing low-cost commute options to 1,500 workers.

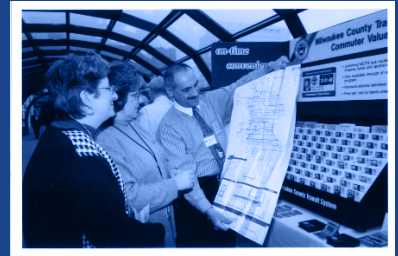
SE Wisconsin's Workforce Relies Heavily on Transit

Milwaukee County is home to over 20,000 employers, spanning industries from healthcare and manufacturing to finance and education. MCTS connects the workforce to such large employers as:

- Advocate Aurora Health
- Amazon
- Baird
- City of Milwaukee
- GE Healthcare
- Harley Davidson
- Milwaukee Regional Medical Center
- Northwestern Mutual
- Potawatomi
- The Marcus Corporation
- Molson Coors
- Rockwell Automation

Source: U.S. Census

Lack of transportation is a major obstacle to employment in Wisconsin, especially in Milwaukee County where a significant percentage of the workforce does not drive or does not have access to a vehicle.



The Commuter Value Pass was introduced in 1997 to help employers offer a transit benefit to employees and the program is still running strong today.



13%

of city of Milwaukee households are without a vehicle - higher than the national average of 8.5%

#1

reason riders use MCTS is to get to work

386K

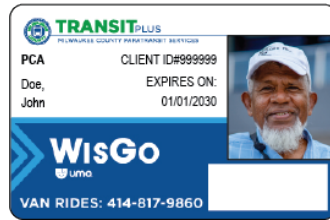
jobs accessible by MCTS bus service

WisGo Modernizes Transit Across Wisconsin

Beloit Transit and Valley Transit in Appleton Are the Latest to Join the Growing List of WisGo Agencies

When MCTS sought to update its fare collection system, it sought to modernize not only MCTS, but to bring along other public transit agencies across the state. MCTS initiated a buying agreement through the creation of WisGo. This alliance operates like a regional authority, allowing public transit agencies to leverage their buying power and decision-making, and gain operational savings. In 2025, Appleton and Beloit joined Milwaukee, Oshkosh, Racine, and Waukesha participate in the agreement.

In addition, in 2025, MCTS laid the groundwork for Transit Plus riders to use WisGo on the paratransit van service. Paratransit van passengers will benefit from the same modern, convenient, fare payment system as bus riders, making it easier for everyone to access services they rely on every day.



Coming in 2026, WisGo Open Payments will enable riders to pay via credit and debit cards, Google Pay and Apple Pay on all WisGo partner agency buses.

WisGo makes it possible for all participating agency riders to achieve fare capping and makes it easier for people to travel throughout the state. This transition represents a major leap forward for Wisconsin. Together, these agencies, some of which moved from paper tickets to an app for the very first time, have powered more than 14 million Umo-enabled fare transactions statewide in 2025.



Creating a Data-Driven Culture

Public transit has evolved dramatically over the past 50 years and so has the technology that supports it. In 2025, MCTS took a major step forward by replacing multiple financial databases with a single Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. Built on Microsoft Dynamics 365, the cloud-based platform provides one source of truth and gives departments real-time access to financial data.

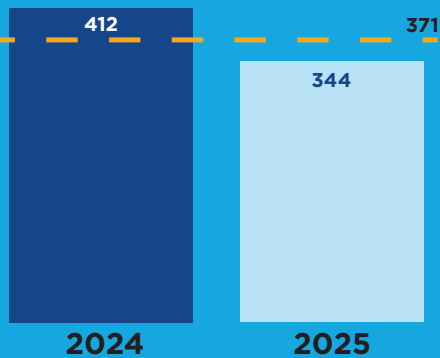
The new system replaces manual reporting with automated, data-rich insights, increasing financial productivity by 20% while reducing manual tasks and the potential for human error. Staff can now generate faster reports and conduct deeper analysis across the organization.

At the same time, MCTS introduced Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to track progress on priorities such as disruption management, on-time performance, and safety. Departments across the agency use these metrics to stay aligned and collaborate more effectively. Leadership reviews progress on KPIs each month, reinforcing accountability and shared goals. Together, these changes are helping MCTS build a stronger culture of data-driven decision-making that will support better service and smarter investments in the years ahead.

Key Performance Indicators

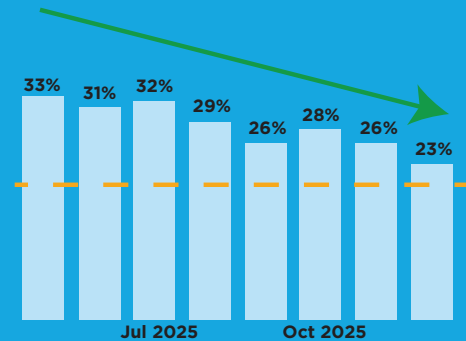
Preventable Vehicle Collisions

MCTS outperformed goal, with a 17% reduction in avoidable accidents.



Reducing Fare Evasion

The ERP delivers real-time feedback on fare compliance by comparing farebox, Umo app, and passenger count data to reduce fare evasion.



2025 Community Highlights

50th Bus-iversary Celebration

MCTS celebrated its 50th Anniversary with Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley and members of the Milwaukee County Department of Transportation during the unveiling of a new addition to its bus fleet. Thirty new Clean Diesel buses debuted a refreshed look that reflects iconic Milwaukee County landmarks such as the Museum of Art, Lake Michigan, and sports arenas, and Cream City colors. Employees took a drive down memory lane with a 1975 vintage bus look-alike.

As part of the yearlong celebration, MCTS launched its first merchandise store, brought to life by bus operators, mechanics, dispatchers, and transit planners who modeled the new MCTS collection in a fashion show on 4/14 Milwaukee Day.



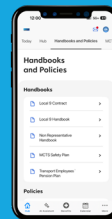
Bus rodeos were a cherished MCTS tradition, bringing together bus operators and mechanics in friendly competition to showcase their skills, precision, and pride in delivering safe, reliable service.



Launching the Hub

In 2025, MCTS introduced the Hub, a new digital home for employee news, updates, and resources. Replacing the former Employee Portal, the Hub brings essential tools together in one convenient place online. The Hub costs less than the previous tool and requires no separate login.

MCTS's 1,080 employees can access daily bulletins and operator paddles, view benefits and policies, and explore wellness resources. A new "Ask AI" feature also helps staff quickly find documents and answers. Designed for both desktop and mobile use, the Hub makes it easier for employees to stay informed and connected wherever they are. Best of all, staff can log in using their existing employee credentials—no new account required.



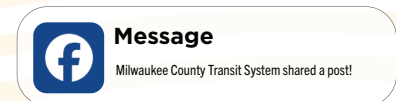
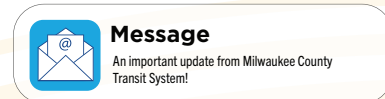
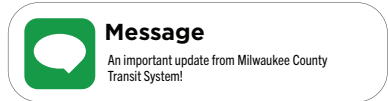
National Transit Employee Appreciation Day

MCTS extended the March 18 National Transit Employee Appreciation Day into a week-long celebration in honor of its 50th anniversary. Employees joined in festivities and received special bus-iversary transit lapel pins and themed t-shirts.



More Timely Communication for Riders

In 2025, MCTS strengthened its communications for detours and service delays. By devoting staff to populate communication streams, including RideMCTS.com, the Umo App, Facebook, Instagram, X, E-Notify text and email alerts, and others, MCTS saw a 190% increase in detour notifications from 2024. Riders are noticing an increase in E-Notify subscriptions: texts up 21% and emails up 550%. Ongoing updates continue to boost rider confidence in trip planning and real-time information.



MCTS Excellence

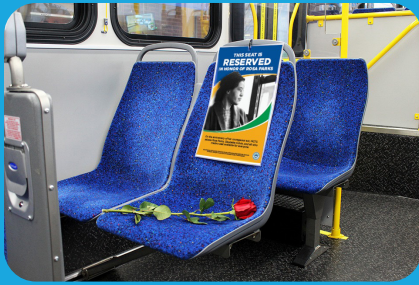
Major news sources have recognized MCTS bus operators for their big and small acts of kindness. In 2025, the story of a bus operator rushing to the aid of a car crash got 2.3 million views online. When an MCTS bus rider rode the Route 76 to take his daughter to her school one morning, he saw a car on 76th Street near Milwaukee Avenue in Wauwatosa cross into oncoming traffic. Within seconds, the car hopped the curb and started moving slowly toward a nearby elementary school.

Without hesitation, the driver of that bus, Latanya S., stopped and ran to the car to help. Meanwhile, the rider called 911. He told the bus driver that she may well have saved someone's life that day. Latanya said, "Anyone would have done the same."

It turned out that the woman inside the car was a pregnant mom experiencing a health issue. She didn't know a bus operator was the first to respond, until she saw the video on the news and contacted MCTS to thank the bus operator. Today, mom and baby are fine and thank the bus operator for her example of MCTS Excellence.



10th Anniversary of the Rosa Parks Annual Tribute



In honor of Rosa Parks and her legacy of courage, for the tenth year in a row, MCTS once again reserved a seat on every bus in its fleet. Each reserved seat featured a red rose and a commemorative placard with Parks' photo, paying tribute to her pivotal role in the civil rights movement. The sign reads, "On the anniversary of her courageous act, MCTS salutes Rosa Parks, Claudette Colvin, and all who made a seat available for everyone."

Hispanic Heritage Bus

MCTS rolled out the first-ever Hispanic Heritage Bus along with a kickoff celebration to Hispanic Heritage Month. The art was designed by Latino Arts, nonprofit cultural association. The first Hispanic President and CEO of MCTS, Steve Fuentes, joined Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley, Latino Arts, County Board Supervisors and City of Milwaukee officials to unveil the vibrant, culturally-inspired bus design celebrating the contributions, resilience, and culture of Milwaukee's Hispanic and Latino communities.



Transit Plus Accomplishments

In 2025, MCTS worked to sustain the Transit Plus program. MCTS's paratransit program, known as Transit Plus, provides van transportation for people with disabilities whose disability prevents them from using the fixed route bus system. Transit Plus continued to enhance the paratransit rider experience, strengthen service reliability, and improve accessibility. In 2025, Transit Plus successfully passed the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) triennial review with zero findings, demonstrating full compliance with federal requirements and reinforcing the team's strong foundation.

Transit Plus administers two services:

- Federally required Americans with Disability Act (ADA) paratransit services provided under contract with First Group, a wholly owned subsidiary of Transdev

Transit Plus continues to partner with Transdev to provide safe and efficient service to paratransit eligible riders in Milwaukee County.

- Same Day Pilot program provided under contract with Via

The Same Day Pilot offers on-demand service for trips that could not be booked the day before, such as a doctor's visit, a change in work schedule, or the need to pick up a sick child from school. Funding was originally going to end in 2025. However, the County Board of Supervisors approved additional funding for the pilot service through 2026.

Transit Plus By the Numbers



- **385,602** total rides on paratransit vans
- **2,445** Transit Plus applications processed
- **2,480** Transit Plus ticket orders processed
- **3,329** trips provided on the Same Day Pilot Program

Transit Plus also works to secure grant funding to support Mobility Management activities that promote use of the transit system by older adults and people with disabilities. These funds are used for individual and group travel training; community outreach and education; mobility device training; bus operator ADA sensitivity and passenger assistance training.

Paratransit service has evolved from expanding ADA-accessible service to introducing apps and modern payment methods, enhancing mobility and independence for all.



Transit Plus Accomplishments Cont.

ADA Mobility Management By the Numbers

- 7 ADA Sensitivity Training Sessions, 108 new bus operators trained
- 4 ADA Refresher Trainings, 232 veteran operators trained
- 99 one-on-one travel training sessions
- 9 resource fairs
- 73 Freedom on Wheels group bus training sessions



In September 2025, MCTS implemented a new customer feedback database, significantly improving the agency’s ability to track, manage, and investigate customer concerns. Riders can now submit feedback via phone, online, as well as request follow-up responses via email.

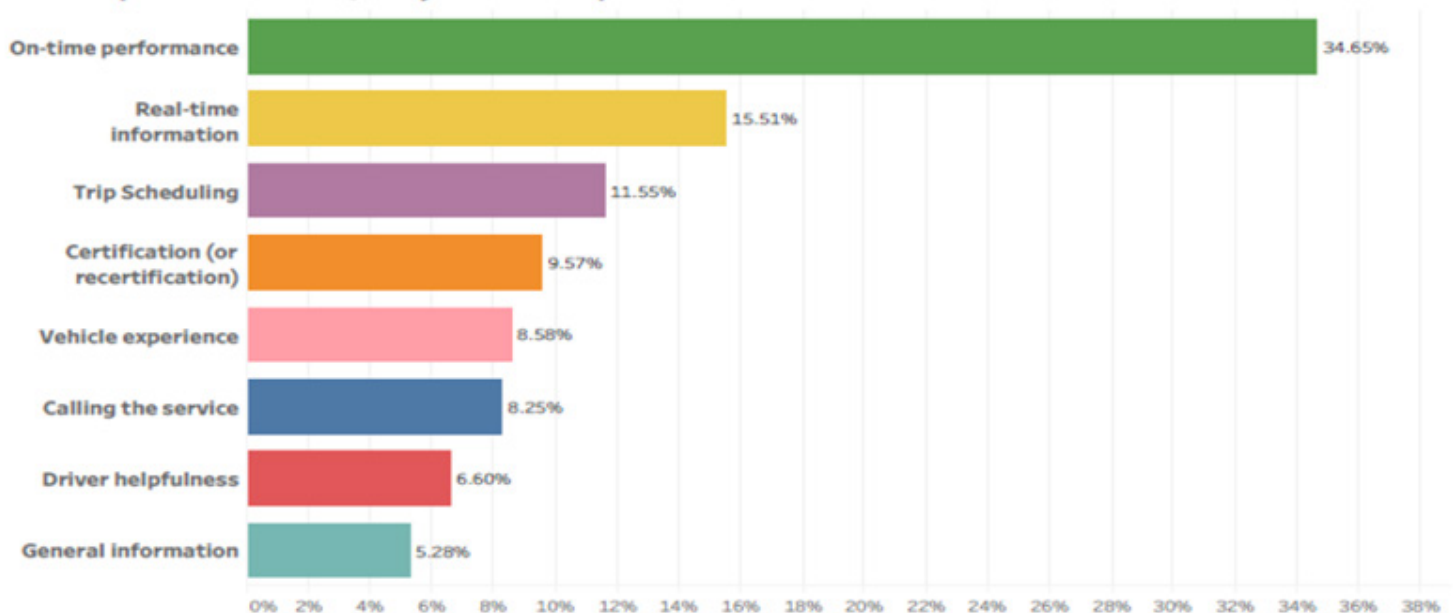
Transit Plus improved efficiencies across several internal processes and vendor contracts, and improved compliance monitoring of vendors. The program now makes it easier for riders to apply online, reducing the need for paper forms. They have boosted communications with riders, growing their email distribution list and sharing more updates. Apps such as My Agency Portal and My Transit Manager give riders and caregivers improved ability to monitor the location of their paratransit ride.

Customer Experience Insights

Transit Plus conducted the biennial paratransit Customer Satisfaction Survey to better understand rider experiences and identify areas for improvement.

This chart shows the proportion of respondents that identified each service quality area as the most important to improve. The areas are ranked on the most commonly selected at the top and least selected at the bottom.

Most Important Service Quality Areas to Improve



Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey

Overall Satisfaction

Significantly higher percentages of respondents say MCTS exceeds their needs, compared to previous years. Conversely, a significantly lower percentage of respondents say MCTS nearly meets their needs, contributing to the positive shift in satisfaction.

- For frequent riders, results are similar to all riders
- Respondents who are lower income, lower education, and who are Black/ African American are significantly more likely to say MCTS meets or exceeds needs.



Customer feedback has long been a cornerstone of continuous improvement at MCTS.



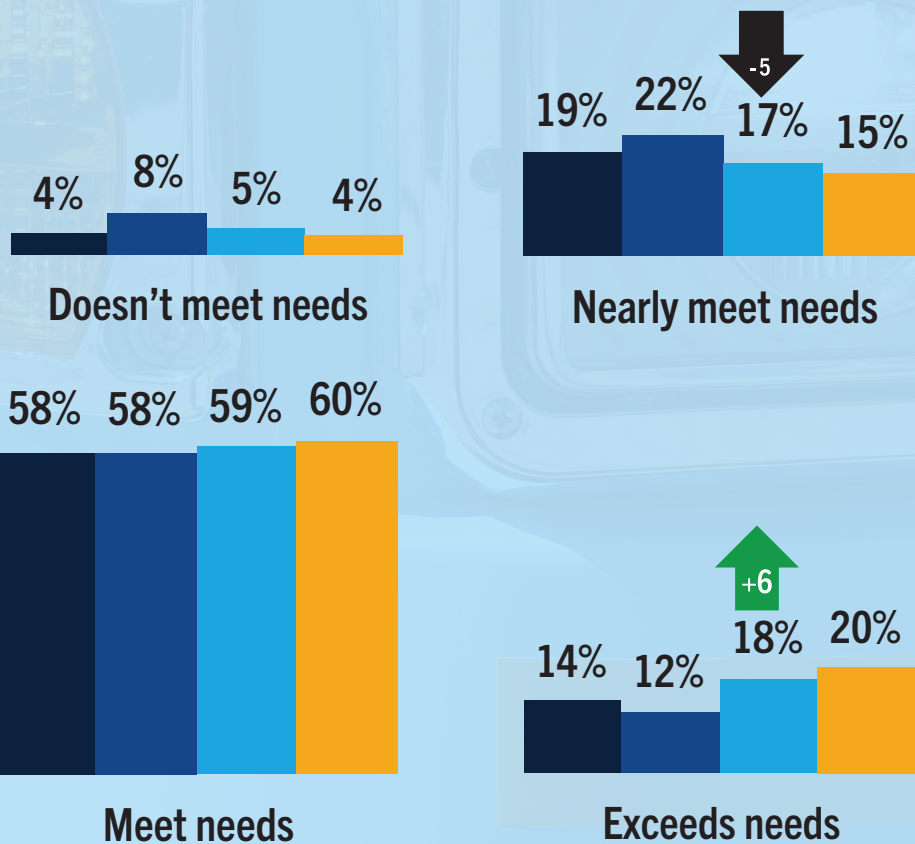
Guided by rider feedback, MCTS continually evolves to meet the changing needs of the community—from introducing articulated buses and accommodating bicycles on board to implementing modern Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service.



Overall, would you say that Milwaukee County Transit System...

2023 All Riders (n= 1,332)
2024 All Riders (n= 1,166)

2025 All Riders (n= 1,763)
2025 Frequent Riders (n= 1,389)



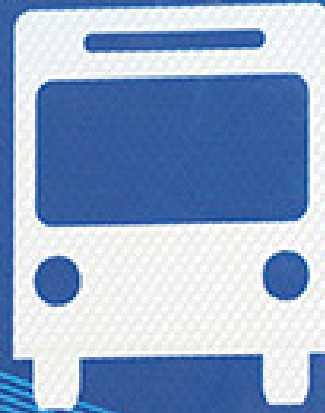
2024 and 2025 data reflect direct comparisons across all riders.

The 2025 Frequent Riders group includes respondents who used MCTS within the past 30 days.

n= number of respondents

2025 By the Numbers

**20
25**



- **378** total buses
 - 364** clean diesel buses
 - 14** battery electric buses
- **49** routes
- **25,029,803** ridership
- **16,895,831** total vehicle miles
- **1,306,406** hours of service
- **19.81** passengers per hour
- **6.88** average bus age in years
- **80%** on-time performance
- **3,742** bus stops
- **625** bus stops with shelters
- **1,486** Commuter Value Pass riders
- **84,017** U-Pass riders



414-344-6711
RideMCTS.com
Text MCTS 9735 to 41411



APTA National Transit Facts

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) is the professional association in North America that represents all modes of public transportation, including bus, paratransit, light rail, commuter rail, subways, waterborne services, and intercity and high-speed passenger rail. Every two years, APTA produces a report on the economic impact of public transit.

“Every dollar invested in public transportation returns five dollars in long-term economic value.”

Job Creation

450K+
People



work for public transportation agencies

41K Jobs

created and supported per \$1 billion investment in job creation

5-to-1
ECONOMIC RETURN

produced by long-term investment in public transit

\$251 Million

IN TAX REVENUE

supported per \$1 billion investment in job creation

(According to APTA's "Economic Impact of Public Transportation Investment: 2020 Update")

Growing the Economy

87%



of trips on transit directly benefit the local economy

50%
of trips are to and from work



37% of trips are to shopping and recreational spending (less priority than trips to work)

Current Ridership



41.3 BILLION

Total Passenger Miles Traveled



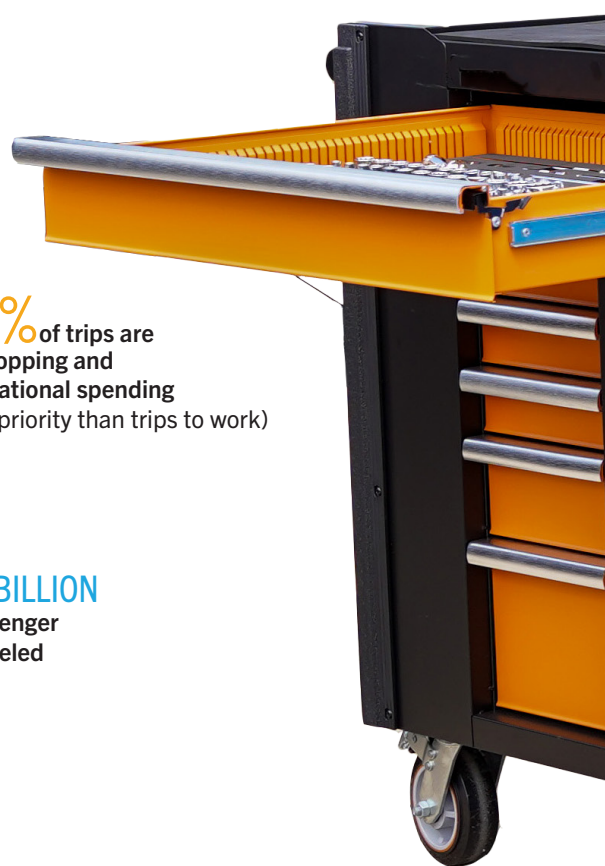
8.07 BILLION

Trips in 2024

Presented by the American Public Transportation Association, the America's Best System Award is one of the highest honors in the transit industry. It highlights systems that set the national standard for reliability, efficiency, and rider experience.



Milwaukee County Transit System has been fortunate enough to earn this distinction twice in its 50-year history (1987 & 1999).



2025 Leadership

Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

District 1

Supervisor Anne O'Connor

District 2

Supervisor Willie Johnson, Jr.

District 3

Supervisor Sheldon A. Wasserman

District 4

Supervisor Jack Eckblad

District 5

Supervisor Sequanna Taylor

District 6

Supervisor Shawn Rolland

District 7

Supervisor Felesia A. Martin

District 8

Supervisor Steven Shea

District 9

Supervisor Patti Logsdon

District 10

Chairwoman Marcelia Nicholson-Bovell

District 11

Supervisor Kathleen Vincent

District 12

Supervisor Juan Miguel Martinez

District 13

Supervisor Priscilla Coggs-Jones

District 14

Supervisor Caroline Gómez-Tom

District 15

Supervisor Sky Z. Capriolo

District 16

Supervisor Justin Bielinski

District 17

Supervisor Steve F. Taylor

District 18

Supervisor Deanna Alexander

Milwaukee County Executive

David Crowley

Milwaukee Transport Services Board

Milwaukee County Department of Transportation Director

Joe Lamers

Milwaukee County Department of Transportation Deputy Director

John Rodgers

Milwaukee County Senior Financial Manager

Michael Bickerstaff

Milwaukee County Supervisor
Steven Shea (District 8)

Milwaukee County Transit System President and CEO

Steve Fuentes

MCTS Leadership

President and Chief Executive Officer
Steve Fuentes

Vice President/Deputy CEO
Ruben Salas

Chief Operating Officer
Kevin Pumphrey

Chief Administrative Officer
Sandra Kellner

Chief Financial Officer
Alexander Corona

Chief Human Resources Officer
Benjamin Stark

Chief Information Officer/Chief Information Security Officer
William Bethia



Meet four former Managing Directors who helped lead the way in years past, pictured here alongside current President and CEO Steve Fuentes. From left to right: Anita Gulotta-Connelly, Thomas Kujawa, Steve Fuentes, Mike Giugno, and Mike Vebber.

50th Anniversary Timeline



1977

MCTS begins offering Miller Free Rides, a long-standing partnership with the brewery for New Year's Eve service.



1979

MCTS holds its first Bus Rodeo with top honors going to Dick Henning, a bus operator with 17-years' experience.



1984

MCTS rolls out the Shoreliner, a special weekend route making key stops along the lakefront.



1987

MCTS receives APTA's America's Best System Award, recognizing it as the best transit system in the country.

1975

Milwaukee County acquires the transit system, renaming it Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) and contracts Milwaukee Transit Services, Inc. (MTS) to operate it.



1978

Wheelchair equipped lift buses are introduced on 11 routes making MCTS the third system nationally to adopt this.



1982

MCTS launches a TTY system, to accommodate hearing-impaired callers.



1986

MCTS replaces 80-year-old fareboxes with modern versions that feature a sensor and audio.



1991

MCTS introduces television technology, a small black and white security camera connected to a VCR.

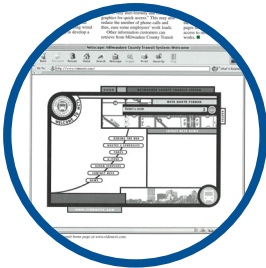


Timeline Cont.



1994

U-Pass provides unlimited rides to participating university students as part of their tuition.



2000

MCTS joins the World Wide Web by launching a website: RideMCTS.com.



2003

MCTS serves Harley Davidson's 100th Anniversary Celebration, providing nearly 34,000 rides.



2009

Bike racks are installed on the 342 of the 479-bus fleet expanding the reach of the system with bicyclists able to more easily connect with bus rides.

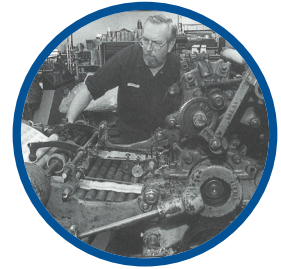
1999

MCTS earns APTA's honor as the Best Transit System in the nation for a second time.



2002

MCTS retires two 100-year-old presses which are among few remaining in operation.



2004

WisDOT begins Marquette Interchange reconstruction requiring years of detoured bus service.



Timeline Cont.



2015

Milwaukee Transport Services reorganizes its corporate structure to begin operating as a quasi-governmental entity and instrumentality of Milwaukee County.



2020

During the COVID-19 pandemic, transit remains an essential service. MCTS puts safety first by requiring masks, enhancing bus cleaning, and adding onboard hand sanitizer stations.



2024

MCTS establishes an in-house Public Safety Department, hiring new Public Safety Officers.

2010

MCTS continues services during one of the most severe flash flooding events in history.



2019

MCTS earns APTA's Innovation Award for the "MCTS Excellence" commitment to customer experience.



2023

CONNECT 1 Bus Rapid Transit System, the first of its kind in Wisconsin, launches with 15 battery electric buses.



2025

MCTS marks its 50th Bus-iversary with celebrations, new bus designs, new bus stop signs, and new shelters.



