

MCTS BUS SERVICE IS AT RISK OF FACING MAJOR CUTS



To Everyone Living and Working in Milwaukee County:

Great cities rely on great public transit. If you live or work in one of the 19 municipalities that make up Milwaukee County, I hope you'll help us save transit.

The Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) is facing a crisis whose ripple effects would touch the entire community. MCTS is confronting a projected \$26.5 million budget shortfall in 2025 after relief funds provided during the COVID-19 pandemic run out. Despite our ongoing efforts to control costs (which have us ranked second among our peer systems in cost-per-vehicle and third in cost-per-passenger) we are hurtling toward a fiscal cliff.

Without a sustainable funding solution, MCTS bus service will shrink by more than 20 percent which represents nearly one half of all routes in the system.

Failing to invest in transit will have cascading, cross-sectoral ramifications for all of us—setting back the regional economy, exacerbating labor shortages, and impacting education and health outcomes. And the harm done by such drastic reductions would fall on those least able to absorb additional burdens.

Most large cities invest in their transit systems with sustainable funding, like a local sales tax, that is indexed to grow year over year. MCTS receives local funding through a combination of property taxes and a vehicle registration fee—both of which don't match the scale of the gap we face. Without a reliable source of local funding, the proposed transit funding cuts would cripple Milwaukee County. We need allies like you to help position MCTS for growth.

Here's how you can help:

- Let the state legislature know that you support Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley and the Move Forward MKE coalition to create sustainable local funding for local priorities through at least a 1 percent local sales tax. (Sample e-mails and a directory of legislators can be found at ridemcts.com/savethebus)
- Put an MCTS "#SaveTheBus" logo on your website and social media pages. (Download at ridemcts.com/savethebus)
- Register your company for the MCTS Commuter Value Pass (CVP) program. Enrolling your employees not only provides a business tax deduction, it also frees up parking spaces, supports sustainability and equity goals, and more. Get the details at cypass@mcts.org.

The bottom line: MCTS helps support and grow our economy by getting employees to their jobs and customers to local businesses. Every strong community in the U.S. has and needs a strong transit system.

We hope you'll join MCTS, support our great city and county, and help #SaveTheBus!

Denise Wandke
President and Interim Managing Director
Milwaukee County Transit System

Donna Brown-Martin
Director of Transportation
Milwaukee County