



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

A year of **bold** changes
and improvements



2024 Highlight Launching Bus Rapid Transit

Metro Transit introduced several new initiatives designed to help the City of Madison prepare for an anticipated influx of thousands of new jobs and residents by 2050. 2024 marked a pivotal year for Metro Transit, highlighted by the launch of Bus Rapid Transit, the introduction of an all-electric fleet, major fare system upgrades, and an increase in ridership.

Metro introduced Rapid Route A on September 22, 2024, its first bus rapid transit (BRT) line. Spanning 15 miles from east to west, this new route serves Madison's busiest travel corridor, including the downtown area and the university campus.

What is Bus Rapid Transit?

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a high-frequency, faster, and more dependable bus service that uses larger vehicles to carry more passengers. Key features of BRT include all-day frequent service, direct routes with limited stops, and infrastructure designed to speed up travel—such as dedicated bus lanes, priority traffic signals at intersections, off-board fare payment at stations, and spacious buses for higher capacity.

Why do we need BRT?

By 2050, Madison expects to add 85,000 new jobs, welcome 100,000 new residents, and see nearly 800,000 additional daily trips for work, school, and recreation. Integrating Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) into the Metro Transit system eases overcrowding on buses, enhances travel times across the city, and streamlines the overall system—making public transit more convenient and efficient as demand continues to grow.

Electric Articulated Buses

As part of the launch, Metro expanded its fleet with 62 new 60-foot articulated buses, designed to transport more passengers while reducing Metro's overall carbon footprint.

Updated Bus Systems

Metro also introduced new technology across its entire fleet, replacing and consolidating outdated systems. This upgrade enhances bus tracking, provides improved online customer information, and delivers significant improvements for paratransit riders.



2024 Highlight

Bus Rapid Transit Launch: 09.22.24

Metro Transit's East-West bus rapid transit line officially went into service on September 22. The launch of bus rapid transit is a culmination of Mayor Rhodes-Conway's MetroForward initiative kicked off in 2019 to address the transportation needs of our growing city.

Metro's new BRT system is possible thanks to a new state-of-the-art maintenance facility, new charging technology, and a new fleet of high-performance all-electric buses funded by the Biden-Harris Infrastructure Law.

In addition, on September 24, Metro Transit held an official ribbon cutting ceremony to commemorate Madison's first BRT line. Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway was joined by local, state, and federal leaders at a celebration ceremony located near the new Eau Claire BRT Station.



East/West BRT Project Overview

Bus Rapid Transit

- 15 miles, 31 stations
- Serving 98,300 people, 117,700 jobs
- 5 to 15 minute headways in various portions of the corridor
- 60% dedicated lanes
- Mix of left and right side stations
- 100% electric buses
- Overall cost of \$194 million, 75% federally funded
- Opened September 2024

Station Design

- Full-featured stations with:
 - Level boarding
 - Full shelter
 - Real-time signs & audible announcements
 - Fare kiosk
- Custom design through community engaged competition
- Context sensitive in areas of historic concern (smaller shelter)
- Designed with maintenance in mind; snow melt and maintenance vehicle parking pad
- Majority of stations are center running:
 - Fastest running speeds
 - Single platform to save cost
 - Reduces conflict with deliveries, parked cars and bikes
 - Reduced construction conflicts with adjacent homes and businesses

Charging

- 6 - 450 kW pantograph chargers
- 13 - 150 kW depot charger cabinets
- 39 - depot charging dispensers



BRT Features

Electric Buses

All-electric articulated buses operate on Rapid Route A, as well as Routes B and F. These vehicles are quieter, more environmentally friendly, and offer greater passenger capacity.

New Fare System & Station Ticket Machines

Passengers can now board all buses more quickly with Metro's new tap Fast Fare system. Ticket vending machines are also available at BRT stations so riders using cash can purchase fares before getting on the bus.

Bus-Only Traffic Lanes

Buses make their way more efficiently through traffic with bus-only travel lanes and traffic signal priority.

New Bus Tracking Technology

Metro's technology partner, Clever Devices, equipped all buses with advanced systems to help riders plan their trips and track their buses with real-time information. In addition, CleverCAD enables dispatchers to communicate directly with vehicles and manage routes more effectively. It delivers greater efficiency to transit operations by providing agency staff with a real-time picture of the location and status of every in-service vehicle and the ability to quickly react to service disruptions.

Accessibility Features at BRT Stations

Level Boarding: Raised station platforms are level with the floor of the articulated buses, allowing smooth, ramp-free boarding for wheelchair users, strollers, and people with mobility devices.

Tactile Warning Strips: Yellow truncated domes (bumpy surface) are installed at the platform edge to assist riders with visual impairments in identifying platform boundaries.

Real-Time Information Displays: Digital signs at each station show real-time bus arrival.

Audio Announcements: Stations are equipped with automated voice announcements to inform riders of arriving buses, stops, and other essential information.

ADA-Compliant Design: All stations meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

Bike Racks

Bike racks are located inside the rear door of each BRT bus.



New Fare Payment System

To expedite boarding on both its bus rapid transit and local routes, Metro introduced new fare technology in 2024. The new fare system focuses on fare capping, enabling passengers to access Metro's multiple-ride discounts as they travel, instead of paying for costly passes in advance. It also features online accounts, ticket vending machines at BRT stations, and the ability to board the bus using a smartphone.

Metro's fare system hasn't seen a major update in over 20 years. These improvements aim to simplify the bus-riding experience and increase accessibility for low-income riders through a fare capping system.

What is Metro's Fast Fare?

Metro's fare system is an easy way to get Metro's discount pricing on the go without buying fare items in advance.

Features include:

- Online accounts with reloadable smartcards
- Pay as you go fare cap pricing
- Ticket vending machines at most BRT stations

How Do Fast Fares Work?

- Customers may pick up a Fast Fare smartcard at Metro, through the mail by emailing mymetrobus@cityofmadison.com, or at Madison library locations.
- Money can be loaded on Fast Fare Cards at Metro, a sales outlet or by creating an online account.
- Passengers then tap their card on the new fare readers located at the doors of all Metro buses.

Riders can easily reload cards online, at kiosks, or via mobile apps.

Smartcards generate detailed data on passenger travel patterns, helping agencies make data-driven decisions on route planning and scheduling.

Enables real-time monitoring of fare system performance and system usage.



Metro's Fare Technology Partner: Masabi

Facility Improvements

East Washington Facility

Metro also continued enhancing its main maintenance and bus storage facility on Ingersoll and E. Washington Ave. In 2023, two phases of the project were completed, including the addition of a new service lane, maintenance bays and lifts, a driver breakroom, and training space. New restrooms, boilers and water heaters were also installed.

The final phase of this project starting in 2025 will include the replacement of thirteen maintenance bays, reconstruction of the operations administration space, creation of new driver and maintenance staff locker rooms, as well as a new dispatch area and additional restrooms.

Hanson Road Facility

To accommodate service expansion and the implementation of BRT, Metro acquired a satellite maintenance and bus storage facility on the city's far-east side.

The new site includes a spacious bus storage facility, a fully equipped bus wash and maintenance area, utilities to support electric vehicles, and lifts for servicing the 60-foot BRT buses. This location also features additional training and conference room space and a second dispatch and administration area. The satellite facility opened alongside the launch of BRT in September.

Driver Training for BRT

Each transit operator received approximately 10-12 hours of comprehensive Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system training. This robust training program covered over 280 active operators and continues to support operators returning to work or transitioning to new route assignments.

The training process included classroom instruction focused on BRT system operations and safety protocols, mock platform training along with hands-on corridor training to ensure on-the-ground readiness.



Project Costs

Three Separate Projects:

\$194 million BRT
(46 buses + charging),
75% federal

\$38 million LoNO grant
(16 buses + charging),
80% federal

\$36 million facility,
67% federal

Total Charging System: \$10 million

Total Bus Cost: \$95 million

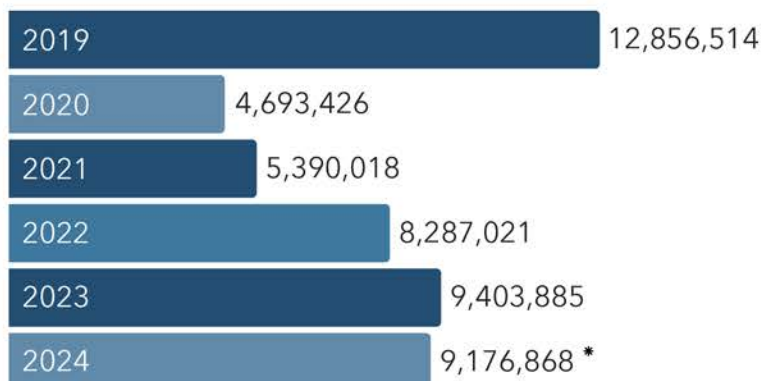
Ridership



Metro Transit closed out the year with an impressive 9,581,366 passenger rides. The launch of Metro's first-ever Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route in Fall 2024 contributed to an increase in ridership.

In November and December, Metro's Rapid Route A showed an increase of nearly 20 percent compared to Route A numbers from 2023.

Overall, ridership is also up systemwide by 10 percent in that same timeframe. For the year, Metro's passenger rides are the highest they've been since 2019 as we continue to make our way back to pre-pandemic levels.



* 2024 APC totals came in at 9,581,366 passenger rides, but this number hasn't been certified as of yet.

Community Outreach

To support the launch of BRT, Metro Transit launched a comprehensive community outreach campaign aimed at helping residents understand the benefits of BRT and how to navigate the improved bus system. Outreach teams hosted informational workshops at libraries, community centers, and local events, offering information on BRT, along with one-on-one trip planning assistance.



Outreach Events

Metro Transit staff participated in more than 185 community events throughout 2024.

- Parks Alive
- Boys & Girls Club
- Senior Centers
- Eastside Community Center
- Madison & Surrounding Libraries
- Bike Week Commute Station
- Family Fun Day at Henry Vilas Zoo
- Paratransit Info Sessions
- Monona Center
- Olbrich After Hours
- UW Campus
- Lussier Community Center
- Goodman Community Center
- Earth Day Sustainability Fair
- Rotary Club
- Catholic Multicultural Center
- Westside Community Connections
- Sun Prairie Sunshine Place
- Meadowood Resource Fair
- Just Dane Community Night
- Allied Drive Food Pantry
- Fitchburg Community Night Out
- BRT Info Sessions
- Community Partner Meetings
- Neighborhood Resource Teams
- BRT Open House

In addition to outreach, Metro's Customer Service Representatives answered 154,230 calls in 2024!

Service Snapshot

Fixed-Route Partners

City of Madison
City of Middleton
City of Fitchburg
City of Verona
City of Sun Prairie
Epic
Madison College
Madison Metropolitan School District
University of Wisconsin
Village of Shorewood Hills

Service Area

130 square miles
Population: 363,017
Source: NTD database

Annual Operating Budget

\$72,118,811
Source: City of Madison 2024 Adopted Budget

Budgeted Number of Employees:

Administration: 54
Operations: 346
Maintenance: 110
Total FTE's: 505

Transit Service

31,154 passenger trips on average weekday*
126 fixed route local buses (40ft)
62 bus rapid transit buses (60ft)
1 transfer point
284 shelters (includes BRT Stations)
1,346 bus stops
469,067 annual fixed route revenue hours*
6,002,888 annual fixed route revenue miles*
*includes BRT

Ridership

Fixed Route
9,176,868 (*APC Total: 9,581,366) *Yet to be certified

Paratransit:
108,710

Performance Measures

Measures	Paratransit Service	Fixed Route Service
Operating Expenses per Vehicle Revenue Mile	\$11.85	\$13.30
Operating Expenses per Vehicle Revenue Hour	\$141.28	\$162.68
Operating Expenses per Passenger Mile	\$9.16	\$2.08
Operating Expenses per Passenger Trip	\$50.69	\$7.70
Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile	0.23	1.73
Trips per Vehicle Revenue Hour	2.79	21.12

NOTE: The performance measures for 2024 are still undergoing official verification



Revenue

Local Share	\$10,768,392
State Funds	\$18,374,570
Fare Revenue	\$9,668,541
Federal Assistance	\$10,640,604
Other Funds	\$8,231,256



Expenses

Salaries, Wages & Benefits	\$53,605,058
Materials & Supplies	\$5,984,947
Purchased Transportation	\$5,226,540
Other Operating Expenses	\$7,379,833
Total Expenses	\$72,196,378

