



WisDOT Transit Update

Ian Ritz
Transit Section Chief

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Overview

- Summary of transit in Wisconsin
- Wisconsin transit trends and challenges
- WisDOT Transit Activities
 - Funding opportunities
 - Transit Management System (TMS)
 - Economic Impact Study



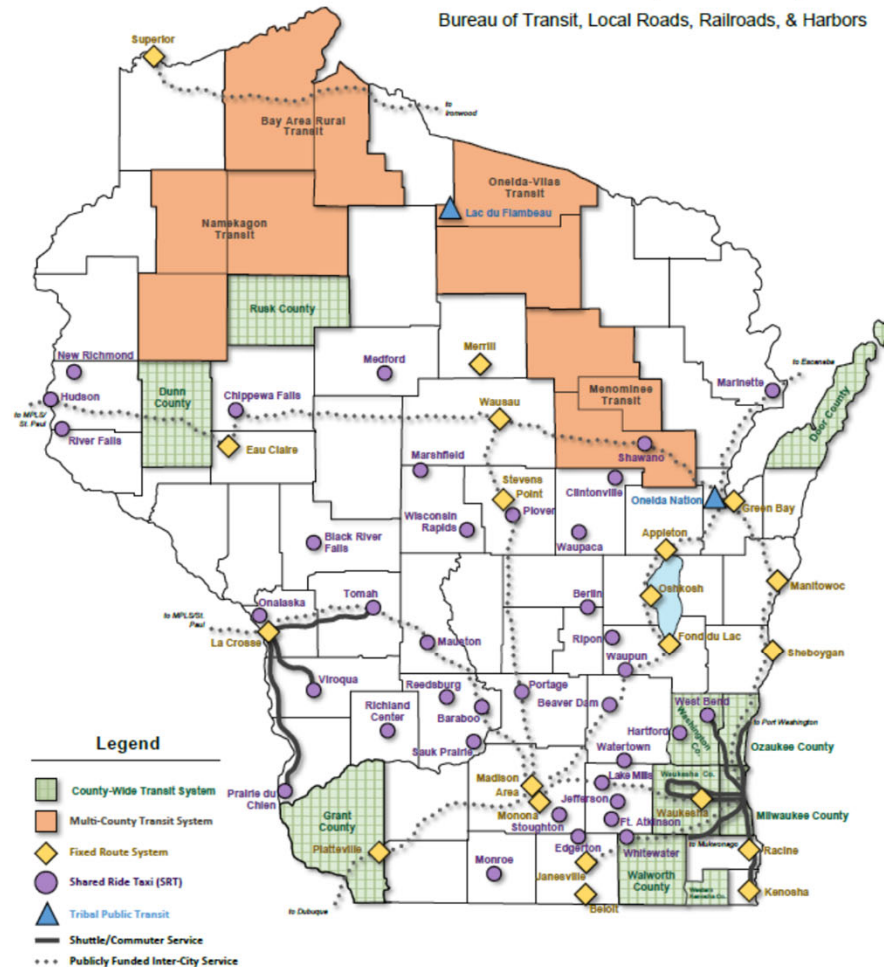
Transit in Wisconsin

- 79 urban and rural public transit systems
- Over 130 specialized transit systems for seniors and individuals with disabilities
 - Includes all 72 counties
- 11 tribal nations
- 12 employment transportation entities
- 8 Intercity bus routes
- Fixed route, paratransit, route deviation, shared-ride taxi & streetcar
- Greater than \$245 M annual investment of federal and state aid (public and specialized)



Wisconsin Public Transit Systems 2025

Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Bureau of Transit, Local Roads, Railroads, & Harbors



This map identifies the general coverage areas of public transit systems within Wisconsin. For specific route information, contact transit systems directly. For Intercity Bus Service, additional information is here -- <https://wisconsin.gov/Pages/travel/intercity-bus-service.aspx>

WisDOT Activities

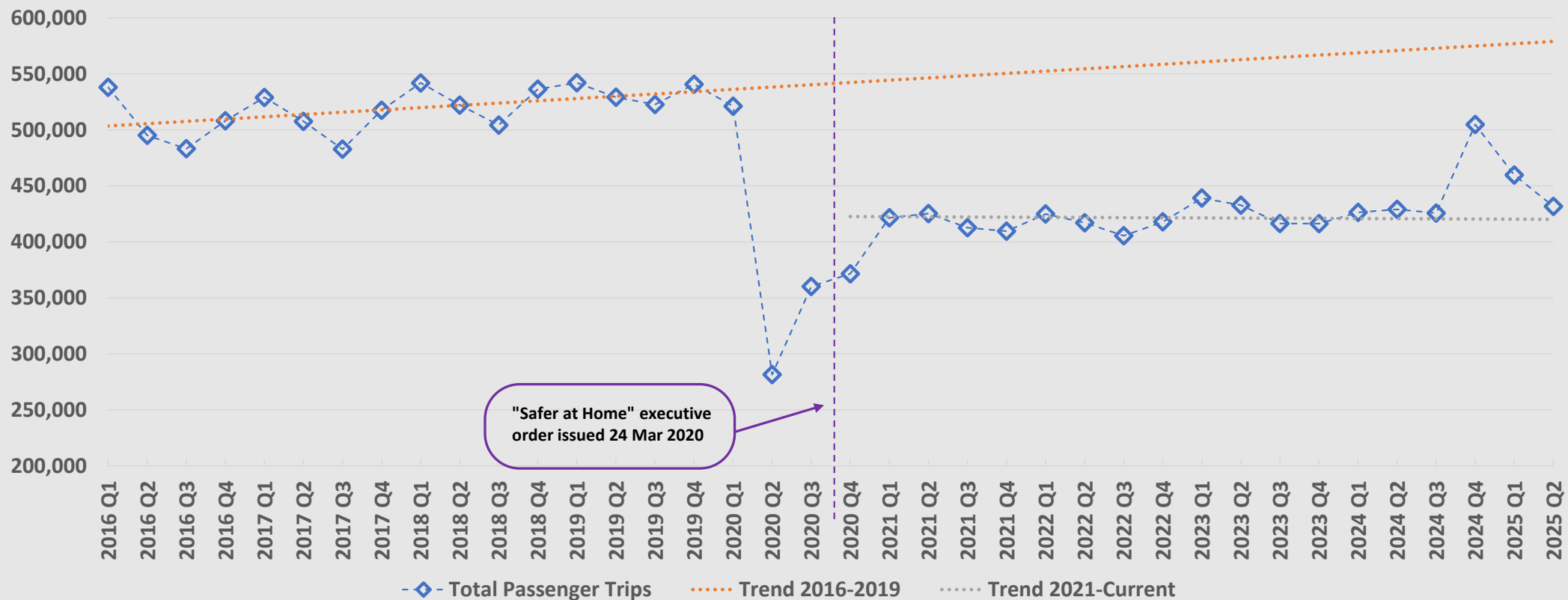
- Monitor transit service levels, support local project efforts and assist with other activities
- Collect, analyze and report data statewide
 - National Transit Database (NTD), Transit Asset Management (TAM) Group Plan, etc.
- Provide technical assistance to partner organizations
 - GTFS data feed from rural public transit bus systems for NTD reporting
- Engage with vendors, FTA, planning agencies, counterpart DOTs and other transit industry stakeholders to inform and advocate
 - Established a Heavy-Duty Bus statewide schedule
 - Includes diesel, hybrid and battery electric bus options
 - Human Service Vehicle statewide schedule



Ridership Trends

Q2 2025 is at
81% of Q1 2020

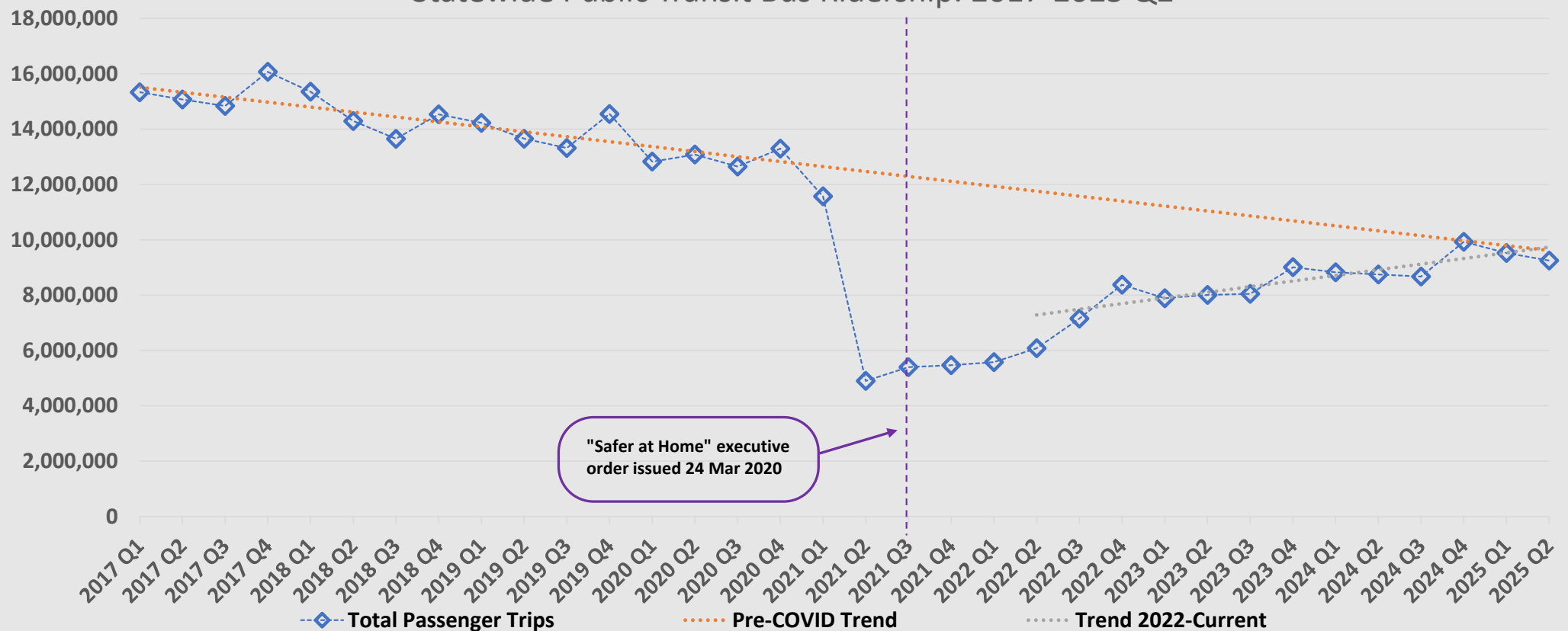
Statewide Public Transit SRT Ridership: 2016-2025 Q2



Ridership Trends

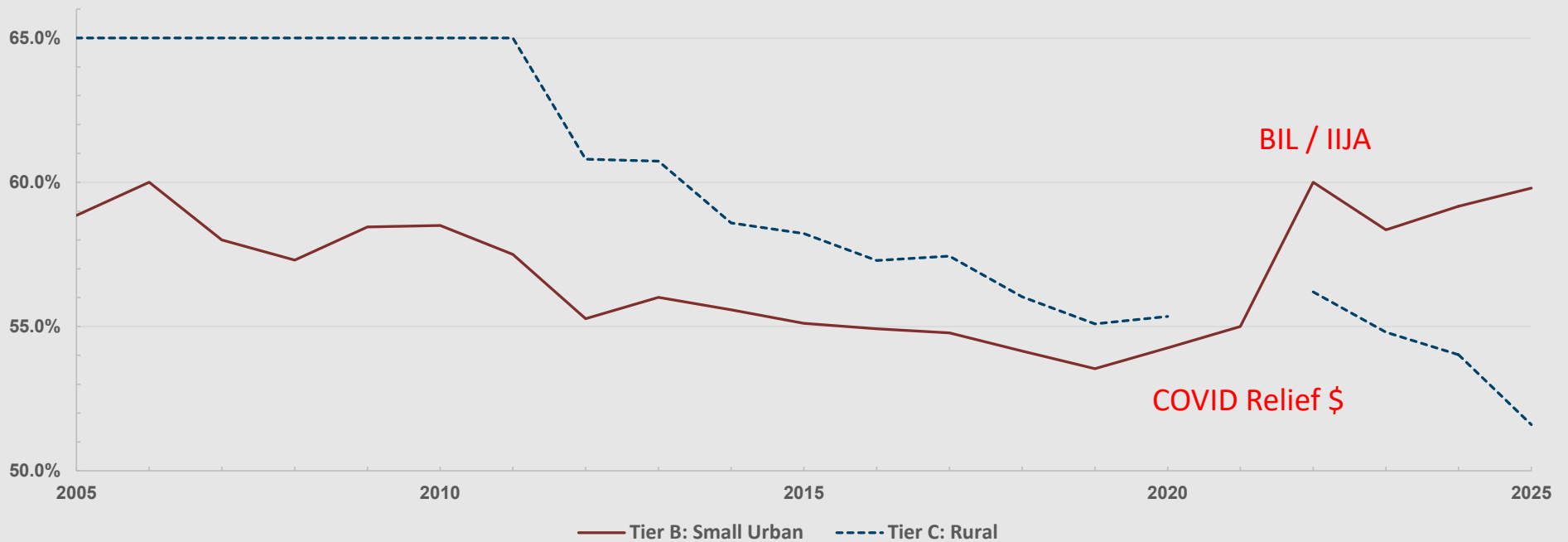
Q2 2025 is at
83% of Q1 2020

Statewide Public Transit Bus Ridership: 2017-2025 Q2



Funding Level Trends

State and Federal Transit Funding for Tiers B and C (% of budgeted expenses)

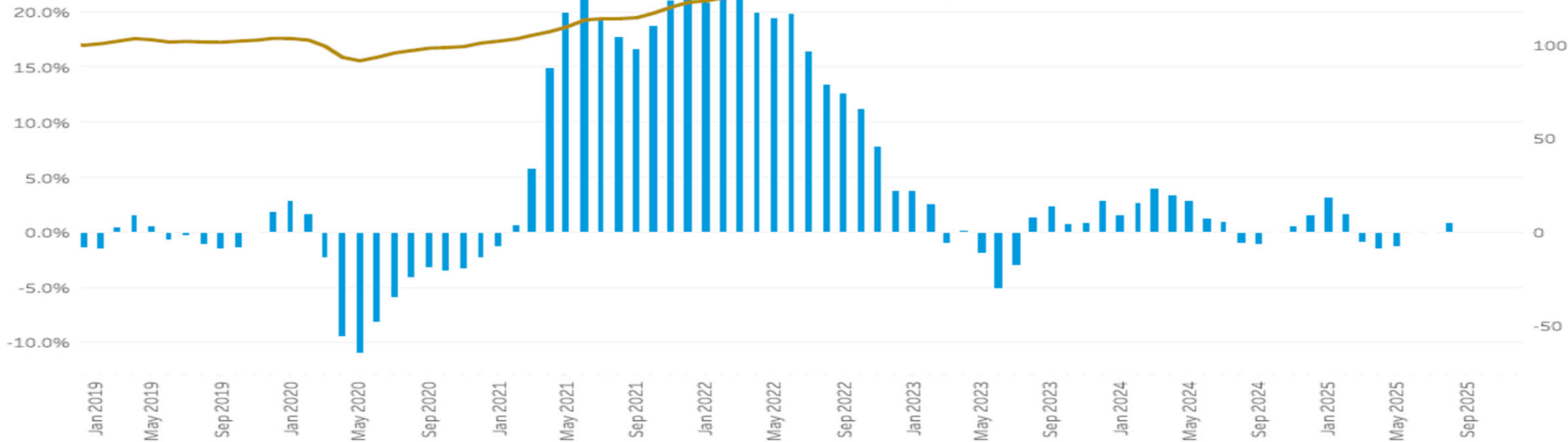


Transit Challenges

- Cost of transportation goods and services has increased

Consumer Price Index for Overall Transportation

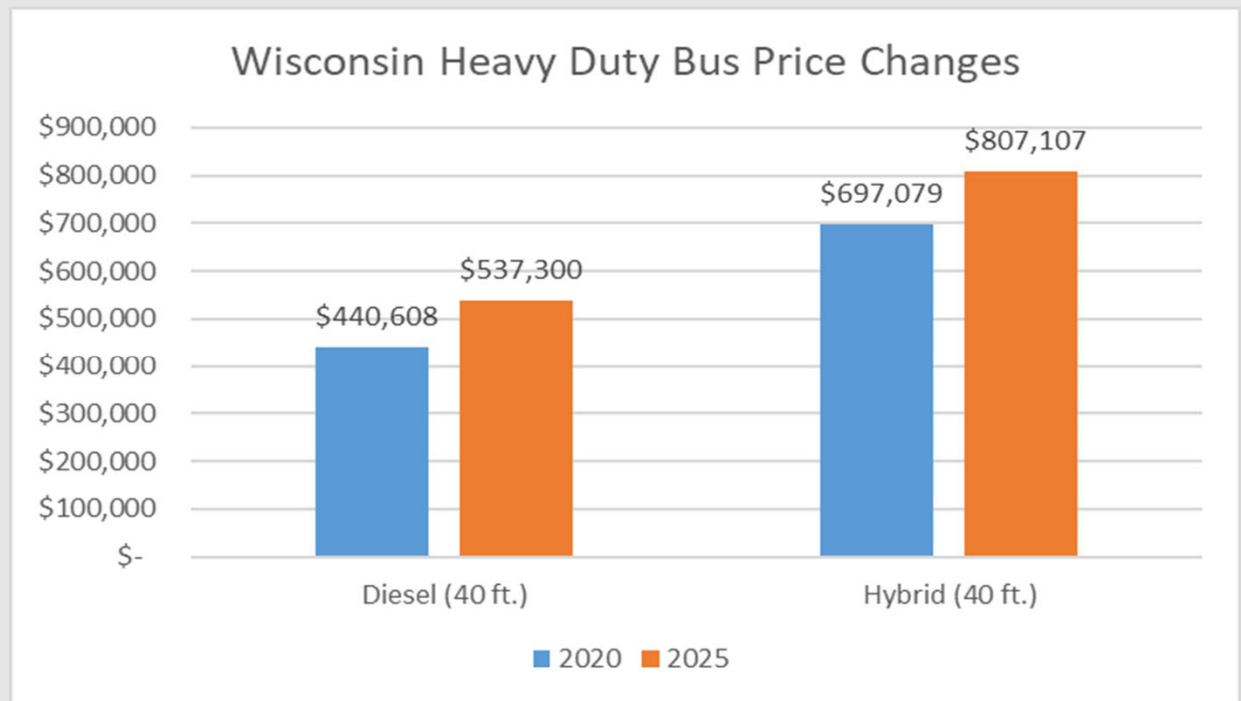
■ Transportation CPI (seasonally adjusted)
■ Transportation CPI Year-over-Year Change



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, All Urban Consumers (Current Series), Seasonally Adjusted, US City Average, CUSR0000SAT, and Unadjusted, US City Average, CUUR0000SAT available at <https://www.bls.gov/cpi/data.htm>

Transit Challenges

- Delays in transit vehicle delivery, cost increases and uncertainty in vehicle production
- Vehicle manufactures have been impacted by inflation, supply chain issues and federal policy changes
 - Since 2020, costs have increased by 16-22% on HDB

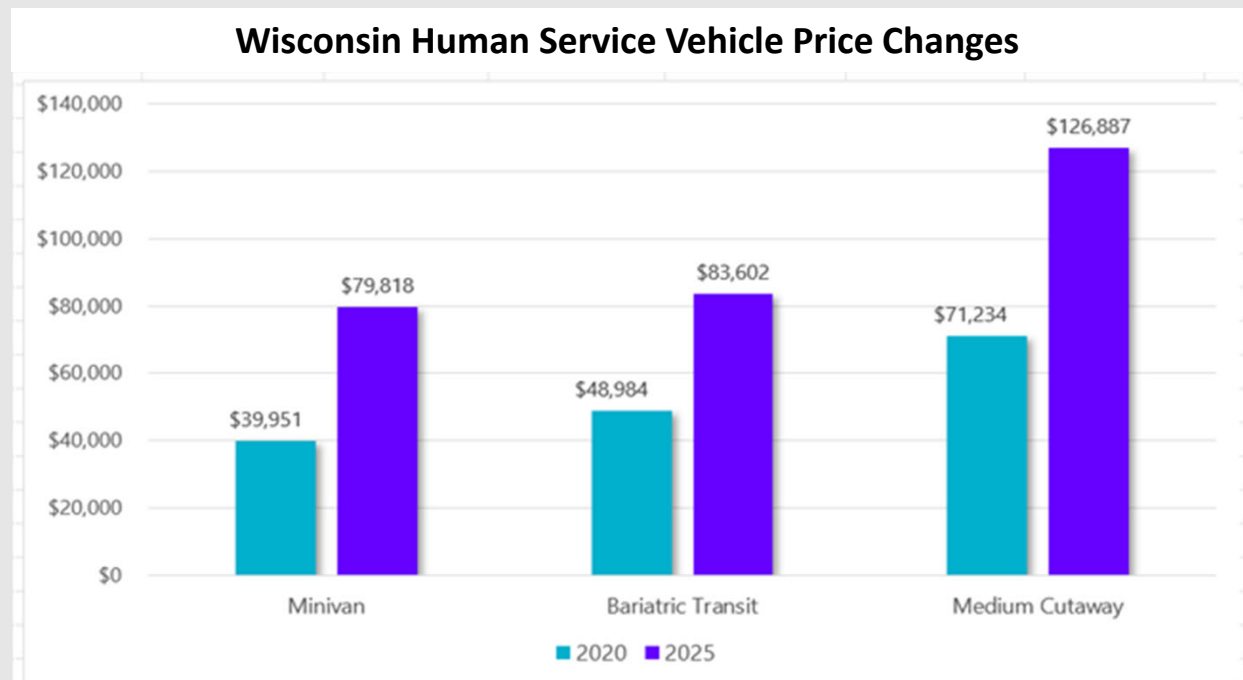


Source: WisDOT vehicle contracts amounts



Transit Challenges

- Delays in transit vehicle delivery, cost increases and uncertainty in vehicle production
 - Since 2020, cost increases as high as 75-100% for certain human services vehicle types



Source: WisDOT vehicle contracts amounts



Act 15: 2025-2027 Biennium Budget

- Signed by Governor Evers on July 3, 2025
- Included funding increases to two transit programs
 - Urban Mass Transit Operating Assistance (§ 85.20) increased by \$1.5 million - \$5,398,600 in CY2025 to \$6,898,600 in CY26 and beyond - for Tier C (rural communities with population less than 50,000)
 - Paratransit aids (§ 85.205) increased by 10% (\$343,800) in FY26 and FY27



Grants Management System

- WisDOT contracted with a vendor called SmartSimple to provide an online informational and financial management system.
- WisDOT implemented the new software called the Transit Management System (TMS) in the fall of 2024
- It has many similar features such as organizational profiles, application submittal and evaluation processes, asset management, invoicing and reporting.
- In addition, TMS has enhanced features related to e-signatures, subrecipient oversight and greater flexibility in data querying and processing among other things.



smartsimple

Grants Management System



Login

✉ Email

🔑 Password

Log In

[Forgot Password?](#)

New to the System?

Register

Welcome to WisDOT TMS

The Transit Management System (TMS) is the Department's new online portal for submitting applications for funding, executing grant agreements, reporting financial and operational data, invoicing, tracking assets and more.

All CY2025 reporting by Wisconsin public and specialized transit agencies will be submitted through this portal, however required CY2024 reporting must still be submitted through the [BlackCat](#) grant management system (for agencies previously reporting via BlackCat). WisDOT's license for BlackCat expires at the end of February, 2025, so **please ensure all CY2024 required reporting is submitted promptly** to ensure sufficient time for WisDOT review and payment processing (where applicable).

Refer to WisDOT's website for more information about [transit assistance](#)

Funding Opportunities

- Public Transit Assistance Program (PTAP)
 - Includes 85.20 state aid and 5307 / 5311 federal aid
- Specialized transportation assistance program for counties (Ch. 85.21)
- Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP)
- Statewide transit planning (Section 5304)
- WisDOT will host webinars to train individuals to access and utilize the Transit Management System (TMS)



Transit Impacts Study

- The object of the effort is to find the social and economic benefits of public transit to the main sectors in Wisconsin:
 - Healthcare
 - Work
 - Education
 - Retail, Recreation and Tourism
- Report Update:
 - Updated benefit and cost estimates
 - Quantifies the relationship between funding and transit service in Wisconsin
 - Provides an assessment of benefits and costs of transit over a 20-year period
- Estimated to be completed by summer of 2026



Proposed Research, Survey and Report

- Research:
 - Updated Literature Review
 - Model Information
 - Estimate economic value of public transportation trips for each sector
- The project includes a survey public transit services for trip purpose
 - Collaborated with public transit agencies
 - Paper copies and online through a weblink and QR code
 - Available in English, Spanish and Hmong languages
 - April 28 – June 27, 2025
 - Over 900 responses statewide



Impact Model and Cost Benefit Analysis

- Use survey results to find cost savings and cross sector savings
 - Alternative modes without transit
- Additional Calculations:
 - Qualitative Measure of Access
 - Congestion Benefits
- Use IMPLAN to calculate impact from savings
 - Employment, output, tax revenue
- Risk Analysis on results
- Calculation of Cost-Benefit Metrics
- Previous study engaged with industry experts to give feedback to the data and models
 - Suggested community-based weighting of the results



Purpose, Outcomes and Comparing to Past Reports

- Purpose:
 - Findings could support budget requests, policy initiatives and marketing efforts
 - Transit Section needs to update a Trip Purpose Survey, which could be combined with and used for this study effort
- Outcomes:
 - Information for Transit Agencies
 - Information for WisDOT
 - Information for the general public (Quality of Life Impacts)
- Ability to compare is dependent on information found during the project:
 - Compare inputs to models
 - Communities surveyed
 - Expert panel feedback
- All changes between reports will be described in this newest edition
 - Changes found will appropriately used to determine whether findings between past reports can be directly compared



WisDOT Transit Contacts

<https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/transit/contacts.aspx>

Brian Kierzek – lead worker

- Program delivery

Kevin Lange

- Public transit (85.20, 5311/5307, RTAP)

Ariana Dieter

- Public transit (85.20, 5311/5307, ICB)

Lori Jacobson

- Specialized transit (85.21, 85.22, 5310)

Eric Anderson

- Specialized transit (85.21, 85.22, 5310)

Valentina Ritz

- Financial management

Katie Patterson – lead worker

- Compliance and oversight (TAM)

Becky Soderholm

- Compliance (ADA, Title VI, D&A testing)

Eric Stoegbauer

- Safety oversight (SSO, PTASP)

Joe Turchi

- Procurement and contract administration

Diane Paoni

- Compliance site reviews, WETAP

Ian Gale

- Transit policy analyst LTE



Thank you!

Questions?

Contact Info

Ian Ritz

Chief, Transit Section

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

4822 Madison Yards Way, 6th Floor South

Madison, WI 53705

608-266-0189 (office) / 608-347-0889 (cell)

ian.ritz@dot.wi.gov

