



2022 - 2023

MILWAUKEE COUNTY TRANSIT SYSTEM STRATEGIC PLAN



MCTS OVERVIEW

The Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) is an organization that is driven to improve its service to our community. Efforts large and small help us to strive towards making Milwaukee the healthiest County in the State through achieving racial equity. To that end, the work that we do at MCTS aligns closely with the initiatives expressed within the Milwaukee County Strategic Plan. But there is also a need for a transportation-oriented mission, vision, values and strategic plan that can guide us in the business of transit, the business of moving people around our community to important destinations.

The business side of MCTS consists of operations departments (transportation, maintenance, schedule & planning, project management, and safety – security – training & risk), and administrative departments (human resources, information technology, paratransit, and marketing – advertising – customer service) as well as business functions within finance and procurement departments. MCTS Department heads responsible for each of these areas worked to create strategies and initiatives that improve their departments and our organization in its efforts to better serve riders, employees, and other stakeholders.



The 2022 - 2023 MCTS Strategic Plan is rooted in the MCTS Mission, Vision and Values (MVV), as described below.



MISSION:

MCTS connects our community to jobs, education and life with essential transit services.



VISION:

To be the preferred transportation choice through service excellence and innovation.



VALUES:

Respect, Integrity, Excellence, Equity, Collaboration, Innovation

MCTS MISSION CRITICAL DIRECTIVES

Department heads were asked to establish departmental goals for 2022 that are consistent with the MCTS MVV and align with the following mission critical directives (MCDs):

Be Reliable: Consistently good in quality or performance; able to be trusted

Be Safe: Protected from or not exposed to danger or risk

Be Helpful: Giving or ready to give help; customer focused, friendly, accommodating, cooperative, etc.

Be Responsible: Accountable for important duties, independent decision making

Be Inclusive: Allowing and accommodating people who have historically been excluded to participate and contribute

MCTS GOALS OVERVIEW

Also, Department heads were asked to focus their departmental goals on organizational priorities expressed in the 2022 Budget:

- Negotiate successful multi-year collective bargaining agreements with Amalgamated Transit Union Local No. 998 and Office Professional Employees International Union Local No. 9.
- Prepare facilities, staff and fare collection system for Battery Electric Buses and the East-West Bus Rapid Transit route.
- Begin project development for North-South Transit Enhancement.
- Monitor and evaluate the first full year of MCTS Next.
- Complete implementation of CAD/AVL project and support ongoing infrastructure on buses.

As an additional guide to Department heads, it was required that departmental goals and strategies lean into MCTS organizational goals that focus on four key areas of our business: rider experience, employee experience, community engagement and fiscal sustainability. The MCTS goals are described in more detail below.

MCTS Goal 1

Enlist all MCTS departments to improve the rider experience. Focus on safety, reliability and customer satisfaction.

MCTS Goal 2

Create an inclusive atmosphere to foster a unified, engaged workforce. Focus on employee experience, safety, job satisfaction, equity and inclusiveness, professional development opportunities, improving accountability, employee relations and labor relations.

MCTS Goal 3

Increase ridership by meeting needs of the community. Focus on community outreach and external stakeholder engagement to better understand how well we serve our passengers.

MCTS Goal 4

Develop sustainable funding and enhance fiscal stability. Focus on streamlining processes, making data driven decisions, educating legislators, mitigating software risks, controlling capital and operating costs, and stabilizing assets.



While Department heads work on strategies within their individual departments to advance goals of the organization, there are several projects that require involvement from more than one area of MCTS. These projects and attendant goals are pursued by teams of individuals from several different areas. Together, departmental goals and team goals are oriented around the four organizational goals described on the previous page, and goals of any type are all consistent with MCTS's mission, vision, values, and mission critical directives. In turn, the County strategic plan also aligns to MCTS Goals as described on the next pages.



MCTS is aligned with Milwaukee County.

Milwaukee County has established three strategic focus areas with nine objectives to guide its work moving forward.

1. Create Intentional Inclusion

1A: Reflect the full diversity of the County at every level of County government

1B: Create and nurture an inclusive culture across the County

1C: Increase the number of County contracts awarded to minority and women-owned businesses

2. Bridge the Gap

2A: Determine what, where and how we deliver services based on the resolution of health disparities

2B: Break down silos across County government to maximize access to and quality of services offered

2C: Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions

3. Invest in Equity

3A: Invest “upstream” to address root causes of health disparities

3B: Enhance the County's fiscal health and sustainability

3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities

MCTS GOAL 1

ENLIST ALL MCTS DEPARTMENTS TO IMPROVE THE RIDER EXPERIENCE



Test WiFi on Buses

Our Information Technology Department will run a pilot test to provide a "proof of concept" for rider Internet access. Various combinations of options will be tested to achieve best results in terms of access, cyber-security and cost effectiveness.

Assess MCTS NEXT

The Schedule and Planning Department will evaluate route changes made as a part of the MCTS NEXT implementation to determine what improvements merit additional consideration. This review will assess changes that can improve customer service and increase ridership.

FAST.
FORWARD.



Implement BRT

A multi-department team will work together to prepare MCTS facilities, staff, passengers and stakeholders for new systems, such as fare collection and new Battery Electric Buses that will accompany the introduction of Bus Rapid Transit in the East-West corridor.

Goal 1 Equity notes: The rider is at the center of our focus on operations. Transit is an up-stream investment in the rider that opens doors to opportunities that may not otherwise be obtainable without an affordable and reliable transportation alternative. As such, the existence of transit in our community dismantles and overcomes barriers that could otherwise limit opportunity for our passengers.

The following Milwaukee County strategic plan items are aligned with this MCTS goal:

- #3A, invest "upstream" to address root causes of health disparities
- #3C, dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities.

MCTS GOAL 2

CREATE AN INCLUSIVE ATMOSPHERE TO FOSTER A UNIFIED, ENGAGED WORKFORCE

Supervisory Training

The Human Resources Department will improve relationships between management and employees, and between management and unions. Supervisors will be coached to take proactive steps with employees before behavior results in a need for discipline.

Training programs

The Maintenance Department will develop an internal training program that prepares Maintenance Department employees for career advancement. The skills and desire to advance will be assessed to identify internal candidates for mentoring. A curriculum that is customizable to employee needs will be designed, and candidates seeking advancement into positions that require a skills or knowledge test will be prepared for these opportunities by Department trainers.

DEI Training

The Executive Office will coordinate with Human Resources to provide Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training and resources to staff. MCTS policies and procedures will encourage and support DEI initiatives and training /mentoring, and will be initiated in Transportation and Maintenance Departments as a pathway to expansion organization wide. An annual employee survey will continue to be used to assess engagement and advancement towards equity.

Good Faith Bargaining

A multi-departmental team lead by the MCTS Deputy Director will negotiate a multi-year collective bargaining agreement (CBA) with ATU and with Local 9.

Goal 2 Equity notes: Having a unified and engaged workforce is critical to job satisfaction, idea generation, and success for individual employees and the organization. MCTS seeks to create a culture free of bias, with a workforce representing the full diversity of the County.



The following Milwaukee County strategic plan items are aligned with this MCTS goal:

- #1A, reflect the full diversity of the county at every level of County government
- #1B, create and nurture an inclusive culture across County government
- #2C, apply a racial equity lens to all decisions.

MCTS GOAL 3

INCREASE RIDERSHIP BY MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY



N-S Transit Project Development

The Schedule and Planning Department will provide support for the North-South Transit Enhancement Study as it moves to Project Development, including attending public meetings to garner feedback about the North-South BRT project and other ways in which MCTS can meet the transportation needs of our community.



Umo Fare Collection Information

The Marketing Department will communicate with and educate the public about the new Umo Fare Collection System. Informative messaging will be used to minimize consumer confusion/complaints and contribute to a successful rollout of a new fare tariff. Marketing Department staff will schedule outreach activities with Community and neighborhood organizations to engage with the public and stakeholders about the fare collection system and transit. An internal and external marketing and communications campaign will aid in change management and help riders to switch to the new fare system.



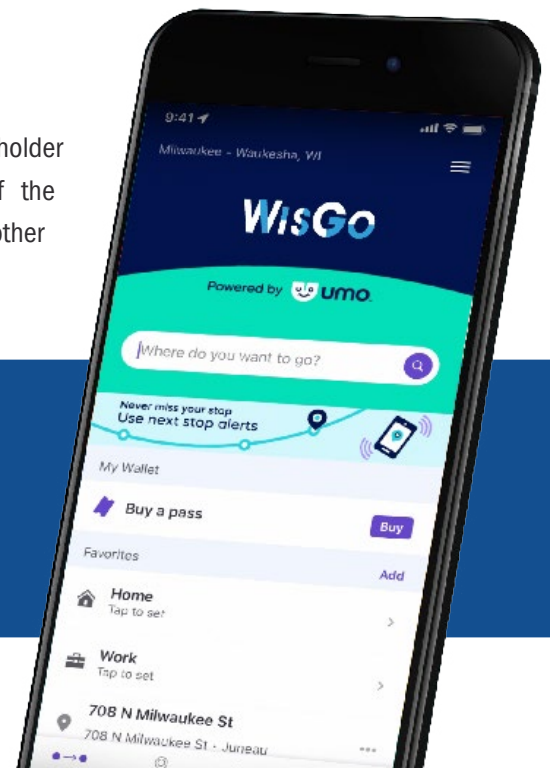
Umo Fare Collection Setup

A multi-departmental team lead by the Chief Financial Officer will complete Phase 1 of Cubic/Umo setup on buses by December 1, 2022, including related community engagement efforts around tariff changes. The project will be managed to its timeline, including all configurations and agreements.

Goal 3 Equity notes: Community and stakeholder engagement are critical to understanding the needs of the community that can be met with transit, enhanced transit or other improvements.

The following Milwaukee County strategic plan item is aligned with this MCTS goal:

#2A, determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity.



MCTS GOAL 4

DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE FUNDING AND ENHANCE FISCAL STABILITY

Research Software

The Finance Department will assess and recommend a new accounting software system for inclusion in the 2023 operating budget. Paper systems used in Cashiers will be converted to electronic records.

Improve Purchasing

The Purchasing Department will expand usage of Bonfire software and address areas for process improvement within purchasing.

Achieve Hiring Goals

Human Resources will ensure adequate staffing is in place to meet goals, including the hiring of bus operators (150) and mechanics. Human Resources will also explore ways to streamline hiring.

Increase Use of Dashboards

The Project Management Department will utilize new data sources from the fare collection system and new CAD/AVL dispatch software to improve dashboards and enable more data-informed decision making. The Department will also communicate and collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to assess data needs and overall vision for data usage. Through this understanding, and an active role in projects, the Department will be able to enable more seamless integration into existing MCTS systems.

Improve Claim Management

The Safety, Security, Training and Risk Department will focus on process improvements in claim and workers compensation management. A baseline of response time/rates will be established and targets for timely administrative practices determined, thereby improving response times for entering claim data and processing mail. The Department will also increase awareness of risks and promote risk mitigation by collaborating with insurance brokers to educate internal stakeholders.

CAD/AVL System Training

The Transportation Department will enable dispatchers to meet the challenge of operating the new CAD/AVL system by updating policies and procedures accordingly and communicating changes to all Dispatchers. Training will be key to successfully implementing the new CAD/AVL system.

Contract Monitoring

The Paratransit Department will establish and document five new processes for monitoring contract compliance and measure Safety Management System metrics, as well as implement a new process to audit excessive ride duration. Paratransit will also collaborate with the project management department to create a paratransit dashboard to display performance indicators.

Goal 4 Equity notes: Fiscal sustainability can be enhanced through more reliable and consistent revenue streams or through improved business practices that create cost effective outcomes. Several departmental goals focus on improving business practices, policies or decision making through better data.

The following Milwaukee County strategic plan item is aligned with this MCTS goal:

#3B, Enhance the County's fiscal health and sustainability.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The Strategic Plan is a solid representation of goals at MCTS and can be considered a component of a continuous improvement cycle within our organization. MCTS department heads and staff will continue to assess how we perform relative to improving the rider experience, elevating the employee experience, receiving community feedback about unmet needs and areas of improvement, as well as how we can strive for improved business practices and financial sustainability. The continuous assessment -- or gap review -- will allow us to respond to new opportunities, threats and conditions in a way that enables a re-prioritization of resources to focus on those 'gaps' most in need of addressing. Simply said, there is flexibility within the framework of the strategic plan, and importantly, the budget process itself will have a significant impact on the plan as we assign resources necessary to achieving desired outcomes for transit passengers, MCTS employees and

the community. In the future, annual initiatives around goal setting at MCTS will be used to refine subsequent strategies so that short-term strategic plans become normal and customary at MCTS.

The 2022 - 2023 MCTS Strategic Plan is a starting point for strategies and initiatives that will improve transit for our community. There are 13 departmental goals, and three project team goals distributed within four MCTS organizational goal areas that also speak to achievement of five organizational priorities as expressed within the 2022 transit budget.

Implementing these strategies beginning in 2022 and carrying them forward to 2023 will guide MCTS for the next two years in addressing improvements for riders, employees, and community stakeholders while building fiscal resiliency and stability.

