

# GET TO KNOW MCTS



Updated April 2024



# MCTS moves Milwaukee County

The Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) innovates the way people across southeast Wisconsin get to work, school, medical appointments, entertainment and anywhere else they need to go. With a dedicated team of over 1,000 bus operators, mechanics and administrative staff, MCTS provides more than 17 million rides each year and generates a massive economic impact for the region.

MCTS's paratransit program, commonly known as Transit Plus, is administered by MCTS staff. We contract with Transdev to provide ADA accessible van service to eligible paratransit riders.

Covering 242 square miles across 19 municipalities, MCTS provides more than just transit infrastructure for Milwaukee County, it is critical to our regional economy.

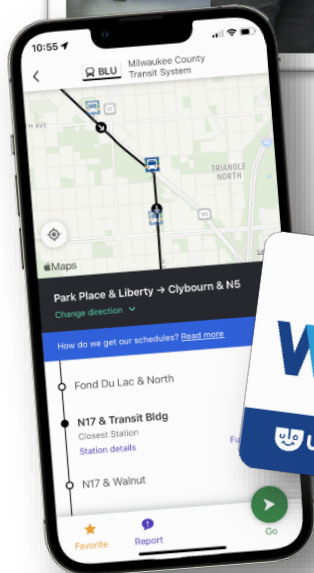


# Excellence is our middle name



Known around the world for the award-winning MCTS Excellence program, MCTS is proud to offer outstanding customer service and state-of-the-art features including:

- Battery electric buses
- Clean-diesel buses
- Real-Time bus tracking information
- Fare capping with WisGo - available in the Umo app and WisGo card



*Excellence*  
- ON BOARD -



We're continually working to improve rider experience, connectivity, efficiency and sustainability, and we have some exciting things on the horizon!



# A brief history of public transit

- **1860** Horse-drawn streetcars launched the transit system in Milwaukee
- **1890** Electric streetcars debut
- **1920** First gasoline bus is added
- **1936** Trackless trolleys introduced
- **1950** First diesel buses enter the fleet
- **1964** Freeway flyers added to service
- **1975** Milwaukee County acquired ownership of the transit system to sustain its existence. It contracted Milwaukee Transport Services, Inc. (MTS) to handle the newly named Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) bus operation. Milwaukee Transport Services, Inc. is a **quasi-governmental instrumentality** of Milwaukee County.
- **2010** Clean diesel buses added to fleet
- **2021** MCTS completely redesigns its bus system with MCTS NEXT
- **2022** MCTS debuts new Bus Rapid Transit brand and its first battery electric bus – MCTS CONNECT
- **2023** MCTS introduces new WisGo fare collection system with fare capping
- **2023** First Bus Rapid Transit line CONNECT 1 (CN1) starts revenue service
- **2025** 50th anniversary of MTS



# What drives us

## 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





# 2023 fixed route service stats

**44** routes

**17,281,735** total miles served

**1,309,026** Hours of service

**13** Passengers per hour

**65%** Ridership compared to pre-pandemic

**80%** On time performance

**344** Buses

**10** New Battery Electric Buses

**7.41** Average bus age in years

**3,984** Total bus stops / **664** bus stops have shelters



# 2023 paratransit service stats

**350,779** Paratransit van rides

**19,825** Paratransit taxi rides

**80,121** Transit Plus pass bus rides

**1,975** Paratransit assessments completed

**34,076** Boardings with mobility devices

**75** Paratransit outreach presentations

**98** Travel training sessions

**152** New bus operators trained



**TRANSIT**PLUS

MILWAUKEE COUNTY PARATRANSIT SERVICES



# Extending our reach – businesses and students



- **46** clients in the Commuter Value Pass program
- **1,400** employees participate



The University Pass (U-Pass) gets students not only to classes, but also to jobs, libraries, grocery shopping and anywhere else they needed using MCTS services.

**5** universities

**40,402** students





# A new way to pay

**WisGo partnerships were created to make regional transit seamless (Waukesha started in 2023, and Beloit and Racine will start in 2024) - goal is to expand across Wisconsin**

## **2023 stats:**

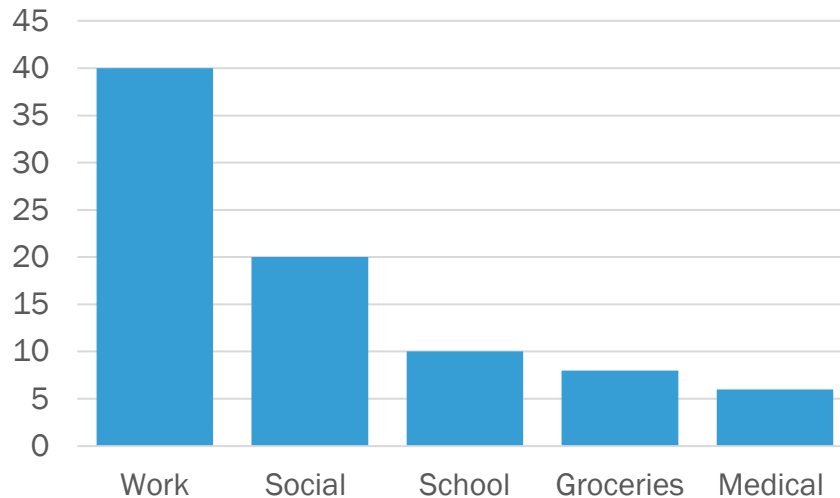
- 169,710 Umo Mobile App Downloads
- 98,594 WisGo cards distributed
- 79,394 Full fare cards
- 19,200 Reduced fare cards
- 10% Cash usage has reached a historical low due to the convenience of online payment forms
- 168 WisGo retail outlets, which is 43% more than the previous fare collection system



# Ridership snapshot

- 35% are long-time MCTS riders – 15 years or more
- 9% have a disability
- 71% have a driver's license
- 46% have full-time work, 17% work part time, 17% are retired, and 15% are students
- 50% have college or tech school degrees, or have some college experience
- 14% have post graduate degrees

## BUS USE



# Reaching riders every day



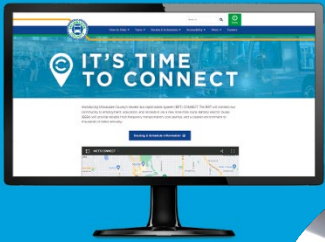
**2.6 million** sessions on RideMCTS.com

**80,000+** riders signed up for monthly Rider Insider e-newsletter

Bus Lines quarterly on buses

**65** community meetings in 2023 (in person and virtual)

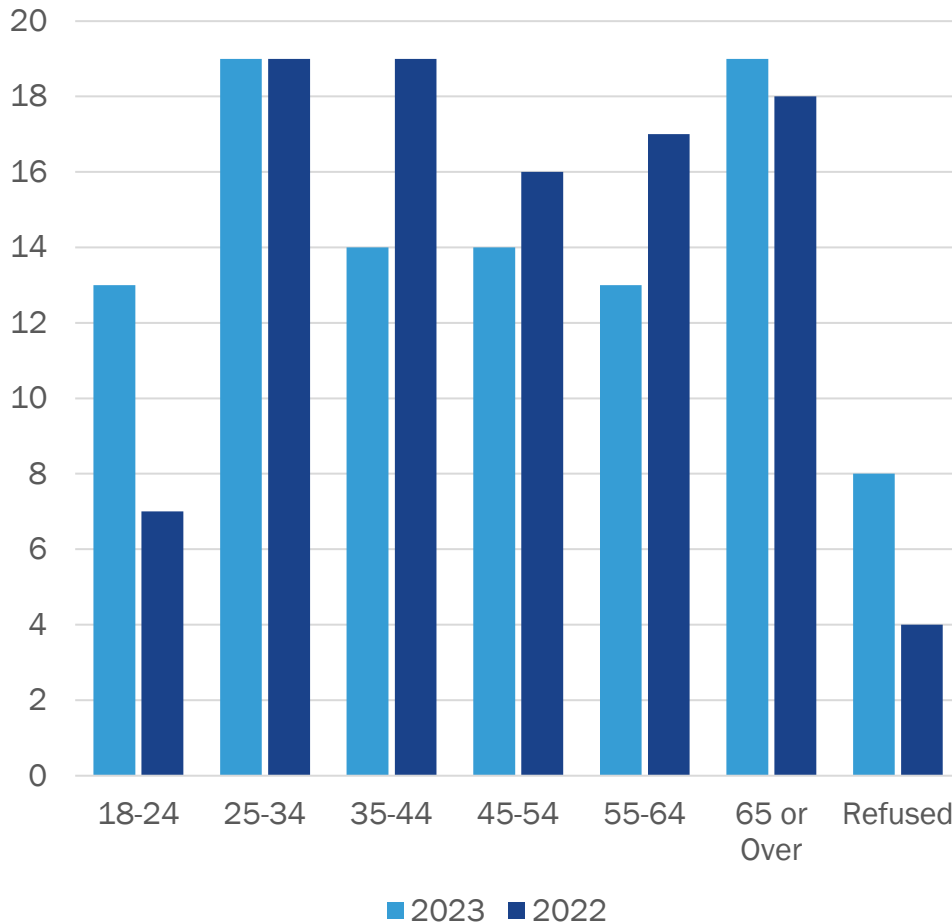
Mobile Meet Up program for elected officials to meet riders



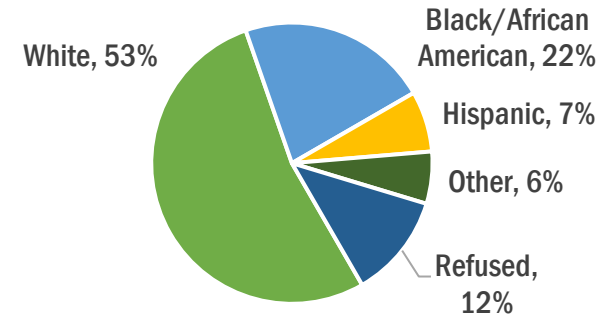


# Ridership demographics

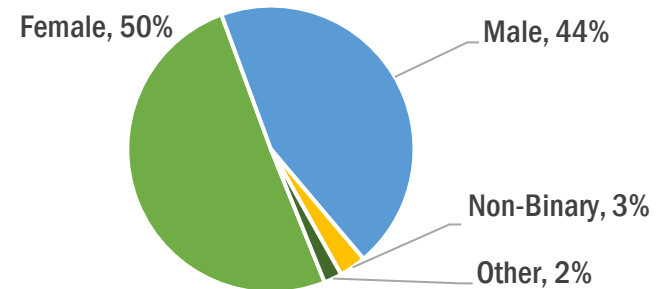
## AGE



## ETHNICITY- Current Wave



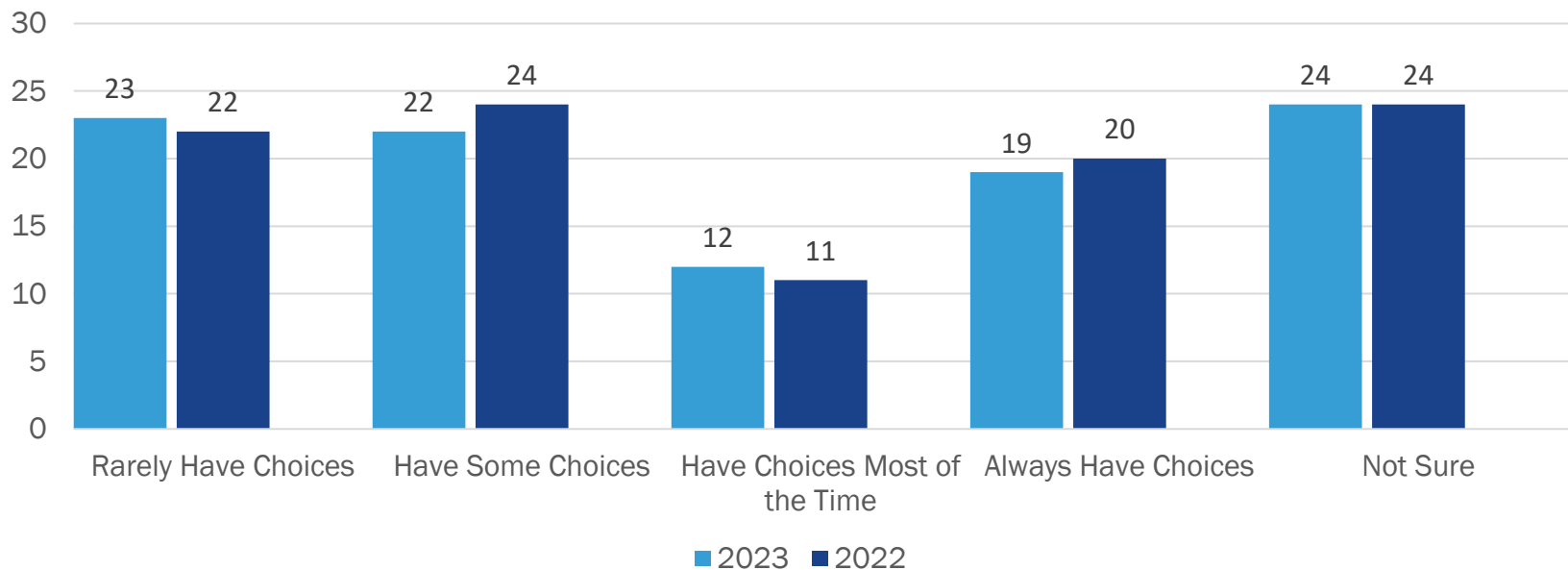
## GENDER- Current Wave



# What riders tell us

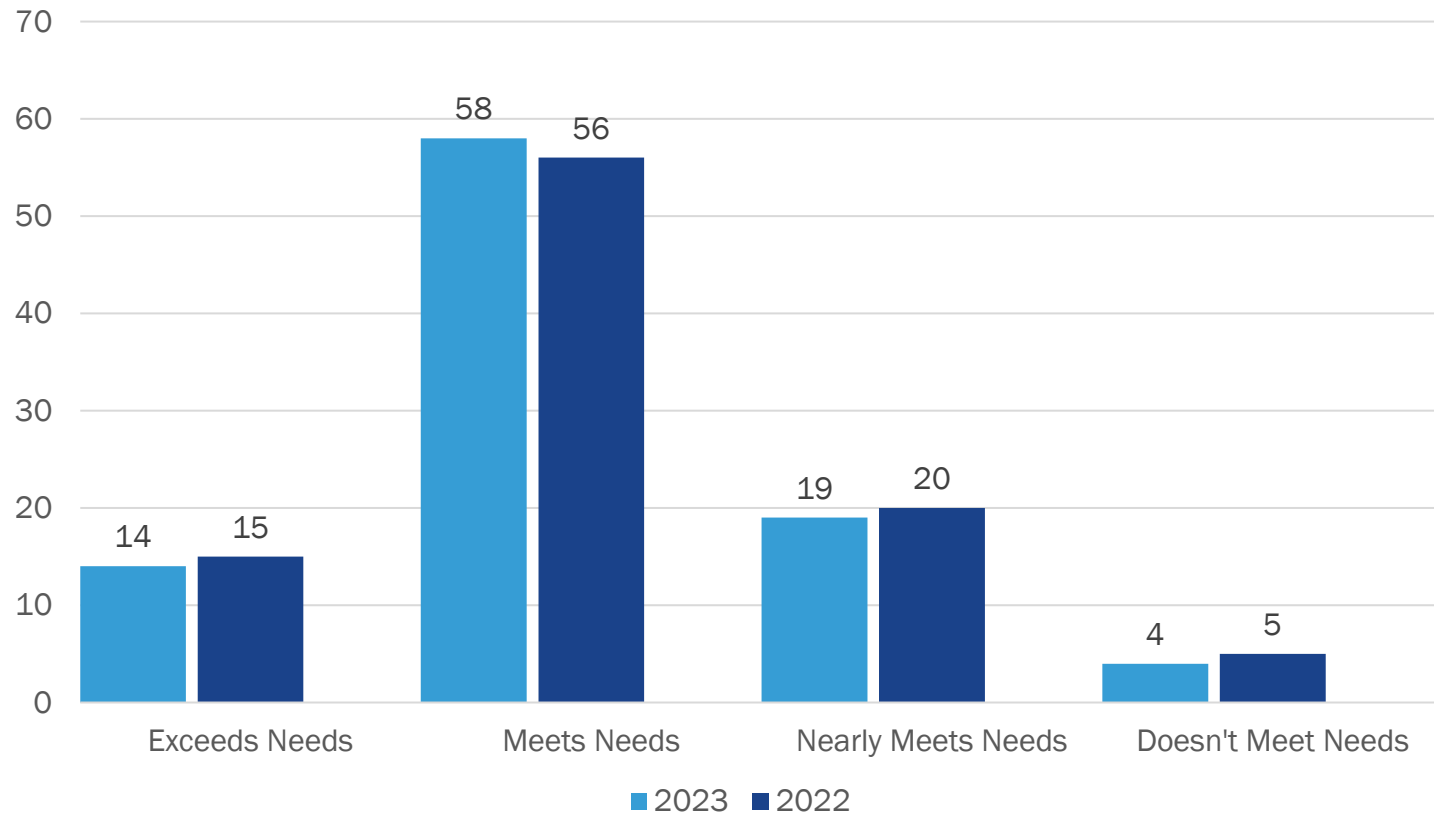
The 2023 survey shows that 23% of riders rarely have an alternative to using public transit. This represents a slight increase from the 22% reported in the 2022 survey. On average 19% of riders always have an alternative to riding the bus, and 22% report they sometimes have alternatives, but choose to use MCTS.

## Alternative to Riding the Bus



# What riders tell us

In terms of passenger satisfaction, 46% of respondents said they are “very likely” to recommend riding the bus, which is up 3% YOY.





# How can the County Board of Supervisors help MCTS?

Create a robust budget that increases annually to:

- Provide the 20% local match required for Federal projects.
- Support micro transit and other last-mile solutions
- Fund new on-demand paratransit service
- Expand future BRT service areas



# Immediate Needs

The current level of deferred maintenance for transit facilities according to the Milwaukee County VFA is \$36.9 million – when figuring soft costs like design, project management, etc., that cost rises to \$55.5 million

To keep the aging bus fleet up to date before buses reach end of life (500k miles or 12 years in service) over the next five years will require an investment of over \$110 million

- Need **30 new buses** every year for the next 5 years
- Need to **modernize** bus shelters, garage facilities
- Find solutions for lack of **sustainable funding**
- Pave the way for **dedicated funding**



# 5-year financial outlook for 2025-2029

“Prior forecasts predicted that by 2025 the Transit Division would require an additional \$25.1 million in tax levy to support operations. This “fiscal cliff” was largely mitigated by an unprecedented tax levy increase of \$17.8 million in 2024 but will still require an additional \$17.5 million in property tax levy support by 2029.

Based on most recent projections, the Department of Transportation – Transit Division will extend its remaining allocation of federal stimulus funding through 2026 and increase its share of federal Section 5307 used in the operating budget to absorb cost increases over the next two years.

***By 2027, the estimated gap between operating expenditures and revenues hits \$12.6 million, growing to \$17.5 million by 2029, and will likely fall to the property tax unless new or increased revenue sources are secured.”***

Milwaukee County Comptroller's report





# Keep up to date on our initiatives

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**Thank you!**