

MISMANAGEMENT: PUBLIC TRANSIT IN CRISIS

Walker has starved the transit system of adequate funding throughout his tenure, driving the system into financial crisis and requiring federal bail-out, just like the banks. He has eliminated routes, jacked fares to the highest in the nation and drove down ridership.

2003 transit fee hike made fares second highest in US

Transit officials say Milwaukee is the last major U.S. metropolitan area that relies on the property tax to fund public transit. Other transit systems use local sales, gas or vehicle taxes to supplement fares, and state and federal aid. As a result, Milwaukee County's bus system must compete against other county agencies for limited property tax dollars. And, like the parks system, it often loses out to programs mandated by state law, such as courts and social services, said Steve Mokrohisky, County Executive Scott Walker's deputy chief of staff


[Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 10/14/2003]

2008 hike made fees highest in nation

The basic bus fare would be the highest for any major U.S. public transit system, equaling the charge for bus and rail transit riders in Chicago, New York and Philadelphia. But Walker said preserving service is a higher priority than holding down prices.

[Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 9/18/2007]

Repeatedly increased transit fees, making them highest in country

- Increased fares by 50% since 2002.
 - Nearly doubled senior and disable rates since 2002 – 46.7% increase.
 - Eliminated a lower student rate, forcing them to pay the full fare, a 104.55% increase.
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	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	% Change
Adult Cash	\$2.25	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$1.75	\$1.75	\$1.75	\$1.75	\$1.50	50.00%
Adult Ticket (per 10)	\$17.50	\$16.50	\$10.00	\$16.00	\$14.00	\$14.00	\$14.00	\$12.00	45.83%
Premium Cash	\$3.25	\$3.00	\$2.75	\$2.25	\$2.25				
Premium Ticket (per 10)	\$23.50	\$22.50	\$22.00	\$21.00	\$19.00				
Half Fare Cash	\$1.10	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$0.85	\$0.85				
Half Fare Ticket (per 10)	\$11.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$8.50	\$8.50				
Weekly Pass	\$17.50	\$16.50	\$16.00	\$16.00	\$14.00	\$14.00	\$14.00	\$12.00	45.83%
Monthly Pass	\$64.00	\$60.00							
Child Fare Cash	\$1.10		\$1.00	\$0.85	\$0.85	\$0.85	\$0.85		
Child Fare Tickets (per 10)	\$11.00		\$10.00	\$8.50	\$8.50	\$8.50	\$8.50		
Senior Citizen, Medicare Card Holder and Disabled Person Fare Cash	\$1.10	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$0.85	\$0.85	\$0.85	\$0.85	\$0.75	46.67%
Senior Citizen, Medicare Card Holder and Disabled Person Fare Tickets (per 10)	\$11.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$8.50	\$8.50	\$8.50	\$8.50	\$7.50	46.67%
Freeway Flyers Cash	\$3.25	\$3.00	\$2.75	\$2.25	\$2.25	\$2.25	\$2.25	\$1.80	80.56%
Freeway Flyers (other)	\$1.00		\$0.75	\$0.50	\$0.50	\$0.30	\$0.30		
Freeway Flyers Tickets (per 10)	\$23.50	\$22.50	\$22.00	\$21.00	\$19.00	\$19.00	\$19.00	\$15.00	56.67%
Student Fare Cash				eliminated	\$1.30	\$1.30	\$1.30	\$1.10	104.55%
Student Fare Tickets (per 10)				eliminated	\$13.00	\$13.00	\$13.00		

Financial crisis; Federal & state governments bailed the county out with Recovery Act dollars

A \$25 million cash infusion from the federal stimulus package will delay - but not avert - a financial crisis at the Milwaukee County Transit System, county officials and outside experts agree. Wisconsin's biggest bus system is in line to receive nearly one-third of the \$81.6 million that the stimulus legislation will send to the state for transit. And County Executive Scott Walker, who has opposed other stimulus funding, says he will accept the bus money. The funding crisis stems largely from the way county officials used federal aid to avoid pumping more property tax dollars into the bus system. For years, Congress gave the county money to buy new buses, but the county legally spent the cash on major maintenance to keep old buses running longer. Those federal dollars are running out just as the transit system needs to start replacing about one-third of its aging fleet.

[Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 3/8/2009]

Walker's cuts to bus routes endangering economic development and pushing tens of thousands of jobs out of reach of residents who need them most

Bus route cuts are endangering the Milwaukee area's economic development and pushing tens of thousands of jobs out of the reach of the residents who need them most, according to a study being released Monday. An even larger service cut predicted for 2010 would leave most of the region's employers and more than 100,000 jobs inaccessible by public transit, with the result that "poverty and unemployment would likely increase, and employers would face an increasingly constricted labor market," says the report from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Center for Economic Development. Rast's report, "Out of Service: The Impact of Transit Cuts on Access to Jobs in Metropolitan Milwaukee," focuses on how commuters have been affected by seven years of bus route reductions.

[Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 10/18/2008]

Opposed creation of designated revenue stream, sales tax, to fund transit system

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker is opposing a County Board proposal to raise the sales tax by 0.5 percent to pay for the transit system. "He's not supportive of any additional or new tax increases," said Ed Eberle, Walker's deputy chief of staff. "He does not support them and will not as long as he's county executive." Instead of a tax increase, Eberle said Walker is favoring a proposal by state Rep. Jeff Stone, R-Greenfield, to dedicate a portion of the state automobile tax to a segregated transit system fund. Gov. Jim Doyle vetoed that plan when it was included in the last state biennial budget, and Eberle said he hasn't heard of plans to resurrect it.

[Daily Reporter, 6/10/2005]

