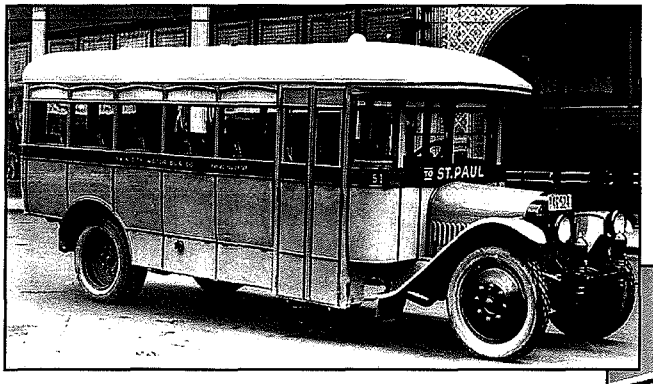
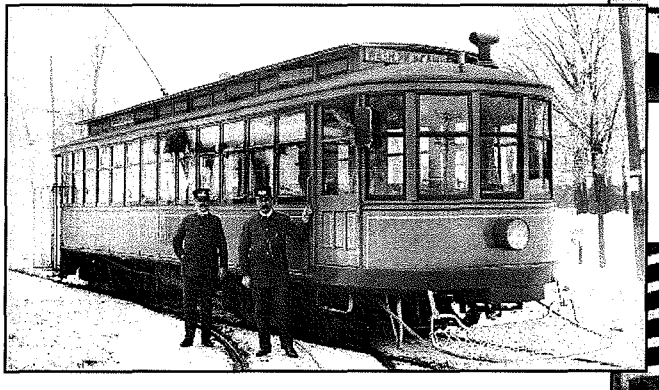
04 - 0390

2003 TWIN CITIES TRANSIT SYSTEM PERFORMANCE AUDIT





Metropolitan Council

ıly 2004

Metropolitan Council

2003 Twin Cities Transit System Performance Audit

Table of Contents

For further information, contact:
Carol Becker
Metropolitan Council
651-602-1756
Carol.Becker@metc.state.mn.us

Chapter 1. Purpose

Legislative Requirement

In 1996, the Minnesota State Legislature adopted statutes requiring the Metropolitan Council to perform an audit of the Twin Cities transportation system. The statute reads as follows:

> *473.1466 Performance audit; transit evaluation.*
>
> *(b) In 1999 and every four years thereafter, the council must evaluate the performance of the metropolitan transit system's operation in relationship to the regional transit performance standards developed by the council.*

The Metropolitan Council completed the first Transit System Audit in 1999, per the legislative direction. This report is an update to that first report.

In addition, the Council conducted a Transportation Systems Audit in 1997 and an update to the Transportation Systems Audit in 2001, both of which had chapters on transit. This report is also an update of information in these reports.

Purpose

The Twin Cities transit system is fairly complex, with 24 separate entities providing public transit service in the region. Service is provided in both urban and rural areas and includes both regular-route and dial-a-ride service. Routes include express, urban local, suburban local, flex routes, limited stop, and other types of routes. One of the primary focuses of this report is to aggregate information from individual jurisdictions to give a picture of overall transit trends in the region.

The Metropolitan Council is not only the largest transit service provider in the region; it is also the region's federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization. In this capacity, it is responsible for developing long-range and short-range plans for all transportation modes in the region, including transit. This report provides performance information and trend information for the Twin Cities transit system to provide context for these planning activities. It also provides feedback on goals set in transportation planning documents and a longitudinal perspective on transit issues.

Another purpose of this report is to provide a national context for the Twin Cities transit system. This report provides comparative information with other peer regions and for other peer transit systems to provide a national perspective on Twin Cities transit issues.

Chapter 2. Description of the Regional Transit System

Characteristics of the Transit System

There are currently two types of public transit service in the Twin Cities area.

- Regular-route service is repetitive service provided on a fixed schedule along specific routes, with vehicles stopping to pick up and deliver passengers to specific locations. Each fixed-route trip serves the same origins and destinations.
- Dial-a-ride service does not follow a fixed route. Passengers board and arrive at prearranged times at any location within the system's service area. Typically each trip is scheduled separately.

Currently all public transit service is provided by buses. Light-rail transit (LRT) is scheduled to begin operations in 2004, but LRT service is not within the audit period and thus is not covered in this report.

Twin Cities Transit Service Providers

The Twin Cities transit system is made up of the following types of transit service providers:

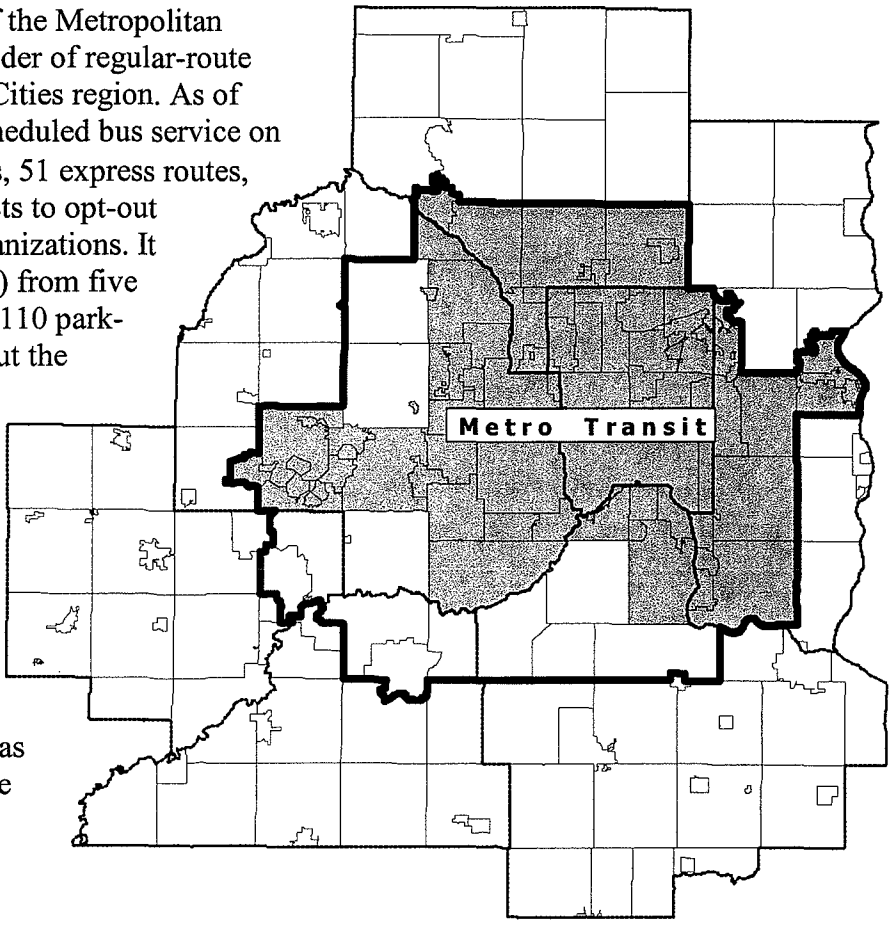
- Metro Transit (Metropolitan Council's directly provided transit service)
- Metropolitan Transportation Services (Metropolitan Council's contracted transit programs):
  - Metro Mobility
  - Contracted Regular Route
  - Community (Rural/Small Urban)
  - Public vanpools
- Opt-Out Communities
- Other contracted transit: Mn/DOT Northstar Commuter Coach (University of Minnesota service was absorbed into Metro Transit service in 2002)

The following pages describe each service and include a map of its service area.

Metro Transit

Metro Transit, a division of the Metropolitan Council, is the largest provider of regular-route transit service in the Twin Cities region. As of March 2003, it provides scheduled bus service on 138 routes – 71 local routes, 51 express routes, and 16 routes under contracts to opt-out communities and other organizations. It operates 766 buses (at peak) from five garages and approximately 110 park-and-ride facilities throughout the region.

Services consist of urban and suburban local, express, and cross-town routes operated on a fixed schedule. Metro Transit also carries the largest number of passengers of any part of the system, 69,589,375 in 2002. This was over 90% of the riders in the region.



Map Note: Regular-route bus service is provided within the heavy boundary depicted in the above map. Outside this district but within the seven-county region, only dial-a-ride service is provided. This boundary is the area that debt service is levied to provide local capital funds for transit.

Table 2-1. 2002

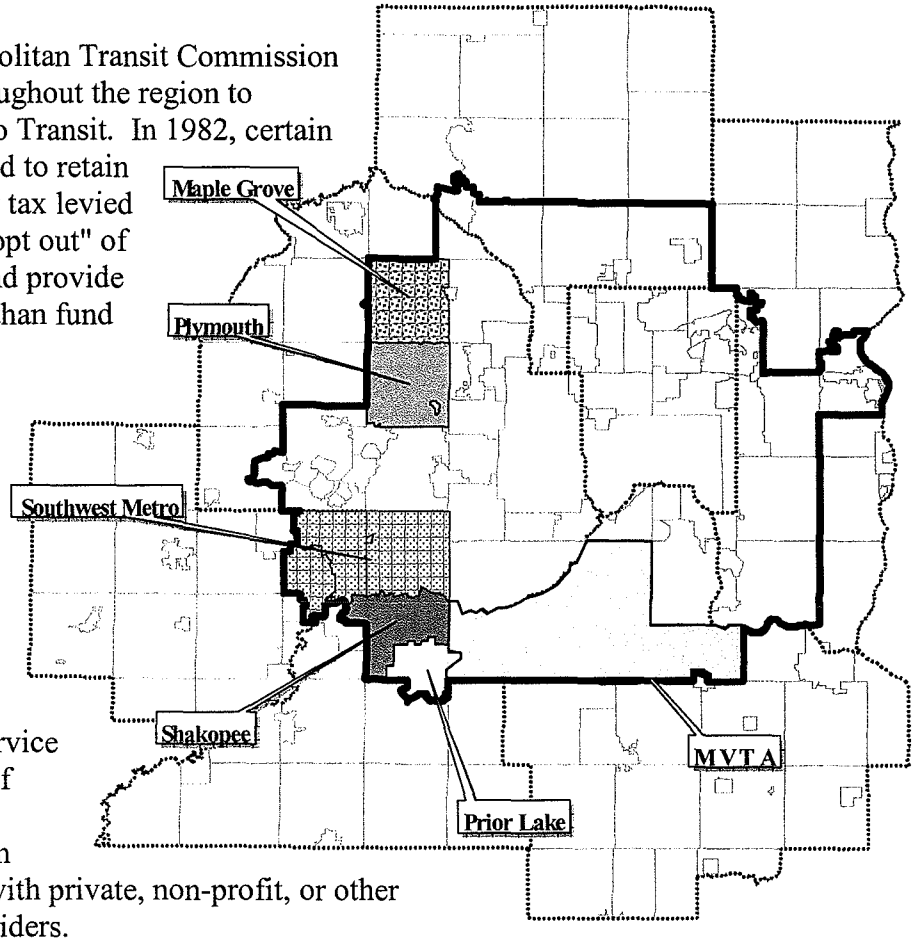
Operating Statistics: Metro Transit

System (2002 NTD statistics)	Operating Cost	Fare Revenue	Passengers	Revenue Hours	Subsidy Per Passenger	Cost Per Revenue Hour
Metro Transit	$191,673,162	$62,250,719	69,589,375	2,064,977	$1.86	$92.82
Included both in Metro Transit and Opt-Out	$6,691,103	$2,871,909	1,595,119	41,155		

Table Note: Ridership on service contracted by the Opt-Outs to Metro Transit is included both in the above figures for Metro Transit and in Opt-Out program figures. Ridership statistics for other service under contract to Metro Transit, such as MAC or U of M are reported solely in Metro Transit figures. NTD = National Transit Database, a required annual reporting program administered by the Federal Transit Administration

Opt-Out Communities

Prior to 1982, the Metropolitan Transit Commission levied a property tax throughout the region to provide funding for Metro Transit. In 1982, certain communities were allowed to retain up to 90% of the property tax levied in their communities to "opt out" of Metro Transit's service and provide transit themselves rather than fund the regional system.



Four communities chose to provide their own transit service while eight have formed two consortiums, Southwest Metro Transit and Minnesota Valley Transit. They now determine the location of routes, type of service, service provider, and frequency of routes. Some of these communities contract with Metro Transit and some with private, non-profit, or other governmental transit providers.

In 2001, the Legislature ended the use of the property tax to pay for transit operating expenses. Beginning in 2002, opt out providers receive a portion of the state Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (MVET) to fund transit.

Table 2-2. 2002 Operating Statistics: Opt-out Programs

System (2002 NTD statistics)	Operating Cost	Fare Revenue	Passengers	Revenue Hours	Subsidy Per Passenger	Cost Per Revenue Hr.
Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVTA)	$10,503,888	$3,166,062	1,886,266	79,952	$3.89	$131.38
Southwest Metro Transit Commission (SMTC)	$4,759,120	$1,064,430	$533,434	38,848	$6.93	$122.51
Plymouth MetroLink	$3,672,145	$440,779	401,707	52,082	$8.04	$70.51
Maple Grove Transit	$2,283,071	$797,870	467,438	19,928	$3.18	$114.57
Shakopee Area Transit	$328,809	$20,720	22,393	8,087	$13.76	$40.66
Prior Lake Laker Lines	$275,561	$35,601	17,987	1,214	$13.34	$226.99
Total Opt-Out	**$21,822,594**	**$5,525,462**	**3,329,225**	**200,111**	**$4.90**	**$109.05**
Included both in Metro Transit and Opt-Out	$6,691,103	$2,871,909	1,595,119	41,155		

Table Note: Ridership on service contracted by the Opt-Outs to Metro Transit is included both in the above figures for Opt-Out programs and for Metro Transit. NTD = National Transit Database, a required annual reporting program administered by the Federal Transit Administration

Metropolitan Council Privately Contracted Regular Routes

The Metropolitan Council provides about 5% of the regular-route service through 16 contracts with private and nonprofit transit providers. Fifteen of these contracts are through the Metropolitan Council. One route, the Northstar Commuter Coach is operated by the Northstar Corridor Development Authority under contract to Mn/DOT.

Contracted Regular Routes

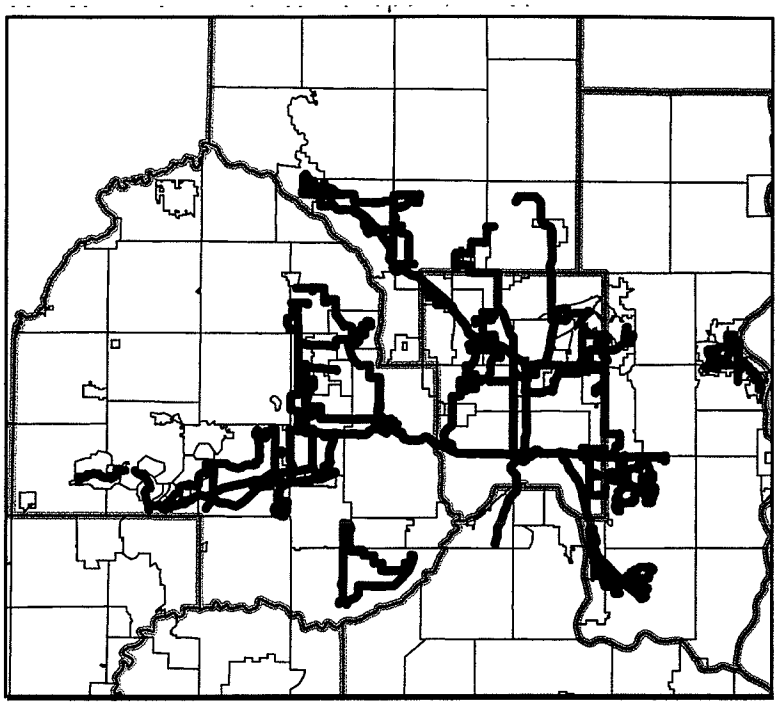


Table 2-3. 2002 Operating Statistics: Contracted Regular Routes

System (2002 statistics)	Operating Cost	Fare Revenue	Passengers	Revenue Hours	Subsidy Per Passenger	Cost Per Revenue Hr
Anoka Cty Traveler	$1,081,592	$47,616	144,902	17,878	$7.14	$60.50
BE-Line	$940,804	$120,555	287,167	18,863	$2.86	$49.88
East Metro Transit	$836,992	$23,324	172,058	10,373	$4.73	$80.69
Lake Area Bus MB	$84,928	$1,488	9,123	1,752	$9.15	$48.47
NEST MB	$315,446	$15,779	42,236	7,361	$7.10	$42.85
North Suburban Lines	$1,398,917	$75,935	316,861	12,892	$4.18	$108.51
Roseville Circulator	$987,675	$48,298	169,082	20,166	$5.56	$48.98
Route 417	$33,618	$187	4,848	765	$6.90	$43.95
Route 755	$923,548	$57,315	202,234	9,874	$4.28	$93.53
Route 66/614	$300,121	$12,874	38,894	6,543	$7.39	$45.87
Route 661	$47,650	$451	1,076	951	$43.87	$50.11
Routes 71 &78	$70,728	$4,207	6,920	1,798	$9.61	$39.34
South County	$631,734	$15,849	62,041	13,597	$9.93	$46.46
St. Croix Valley	$242,565	$4,244	9,917	4,204	$24.03	$57.70
West Metro Redesign	$1,465,412	$114,621	382,752	16,612	$3.53	$88.21
Total Metro Council	**$9,361,730**	**$542,743**	**1,850,111**	**143,629**	**$4.77**	**$65.18**
Northstar Coach	**$598,822**	**$300,449**	**121,209**	**3,700**	**$2.46**	**$161.84**

Table Note: Route 661 started service in 2002. St Croix Valley service terminated in 2002.

Community-Based Rural Programs

Eleven rural systems provide a base level of transit service in rural areas that are not served with regular-route service. They operate dial-a-ride limited scheduled service. These programs primarily serve the elderly and persons with disabilities but are open to the general public. Funding is provided from local sources, the Metropolitan Council and from fares.

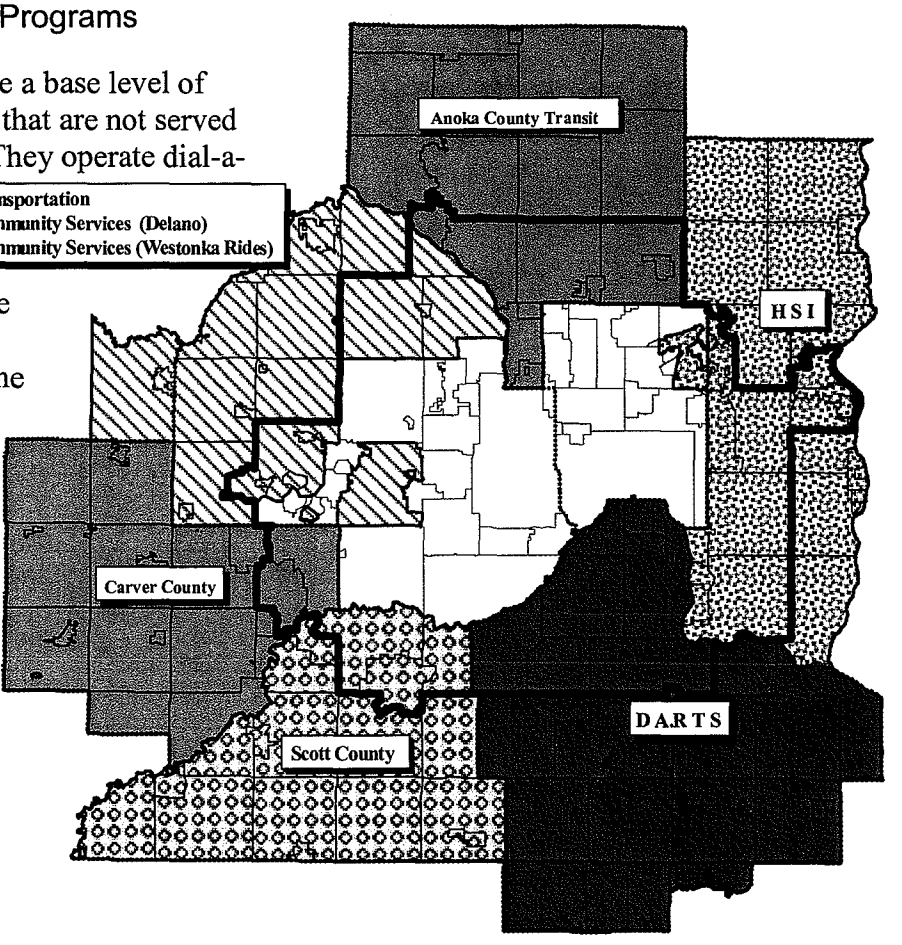


Table 2-4. 2002 Operating Statistics: Rural Programs

System (2002 Statistics)	Operating Cost	Fare Revenue	Passengers	Revenue Hours	Subsidy Per Passenger	Cost Per Revenue Hr
Anoka County	$957,215	$83,191	32,802	13,439	$26.65	$71.23
Anoka Volunteer	71,401	$19,264	4,287	6,444	$12.16	$11.08
Carver County	374,536	$30,921	33,212	9,481	$10.35	$39.50
DARTS	680,099	$162,723	40,604	13,857	$12.74	$49.08
Human Services Inc	505,025	$13,147	59,135	12,530	$8.32	$40.31
Linwood Volunteer	36,625	$1,875	1,436	515	$24.20	$71.12
Scott County	787,871	$32,984	76,809	30,933	$9.83	$25.47
SCS-Delano	117,583	$7,152	10,767	2,790	$10.26	$42.14
SCS-West Hennepin	36,500	$1,750	1,307	852	$26.59	$42.84
SCS-Westonka Rides	113,531	$5,023	12,662	2,277	$8.57	$49.86
Senior Transportation	132,536	$17,517	8,336	3,857	$13.80	$34.36
Total	**$3,812,922**	**$375,547**	**281,357**	**96,975**	**$12.22**	**$39.32**

Table Note: Anoka County costs reflect a blended rate which includes both small buses and larger buses used in other operations.

Community-Based Urban Programs

Ten Small Urban Systems operate local transit service in their communities. These systems generally cover specific cities only but providing linkages to the regional system. As with the rural systems, many of these services were formed to meet a specific mobility need (such as for elderly or disabled people), but are now open to the general public. Generally, funding comes from a mix of local, Metropolitan Council, and fare revenues.

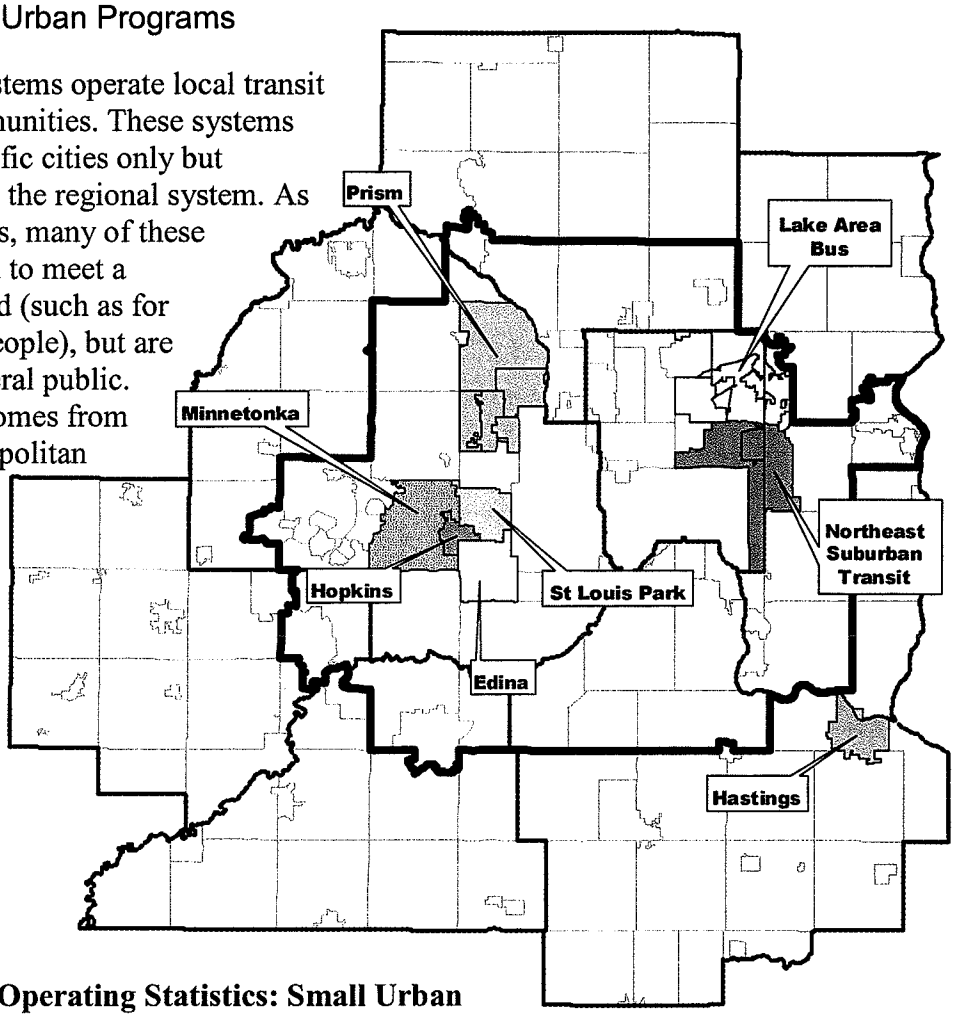


Table 2-5. 2002 Operating Statistics: Small Urban Programs

System (2002 statistics)	Operating Cost	Fare Revenue	Passengers	Revenue Hours	Subsidy/ Passenger	Cost/ Revenue Hr
Edina Dial-A-Ride	$56,389	$7,944	3,991	1,518	$12.14	$37.15
Hastings - TRAC	$229,497	$52,583	34,755	6,875	$5.09	$33.38
Hop-A-Ride	$118,912	$15,341	14,032	2,877	$7.38	$41.33
Lake Area Bus	$365,946	$47,624	29,713	9,363	$10.71	$39.08
Minnetonka DAR	$73,102	$3,067	2,700	1,872	$25.94	$39.05
NEST	$273,313	$34,234	20,316	5,835	$11.77	$46.84
Osseo Dial-A-Ride	$22,649	----	1,906	608	NA	$37.25
Park People Mover	$42,340	$3,228	3,434	1,736	$11.39	$24.39
PRISM	$137,216	$20,423	10,145	4,050	$11.51	$33.88
Route 246	$63,614	$2,910	2,465	1,782	$24.63	$35.70
Total	**$1,382,978**	**$187,354**	**123,457**	**36,516**	**$9.68**	**$37.87**

Table Note: Route 246 discontinued at the end of 2002. Minnetonka DAR in first year of operation

Metro Mobility/ADA Programs

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Metro Mobility and three county programs provide specialized, demand-response service for persons whose disabilities prevent them from using the regular-route system.

Individual call ahead of time and set up their trips. Rides are also provided through "agency" service, where a group of individuals are taken to a common location such as adult daycare programs, day training, or habitation centers.

This service is provided by two private contractors and contracts with three county providers. All are small bus dial-a-ride programs.

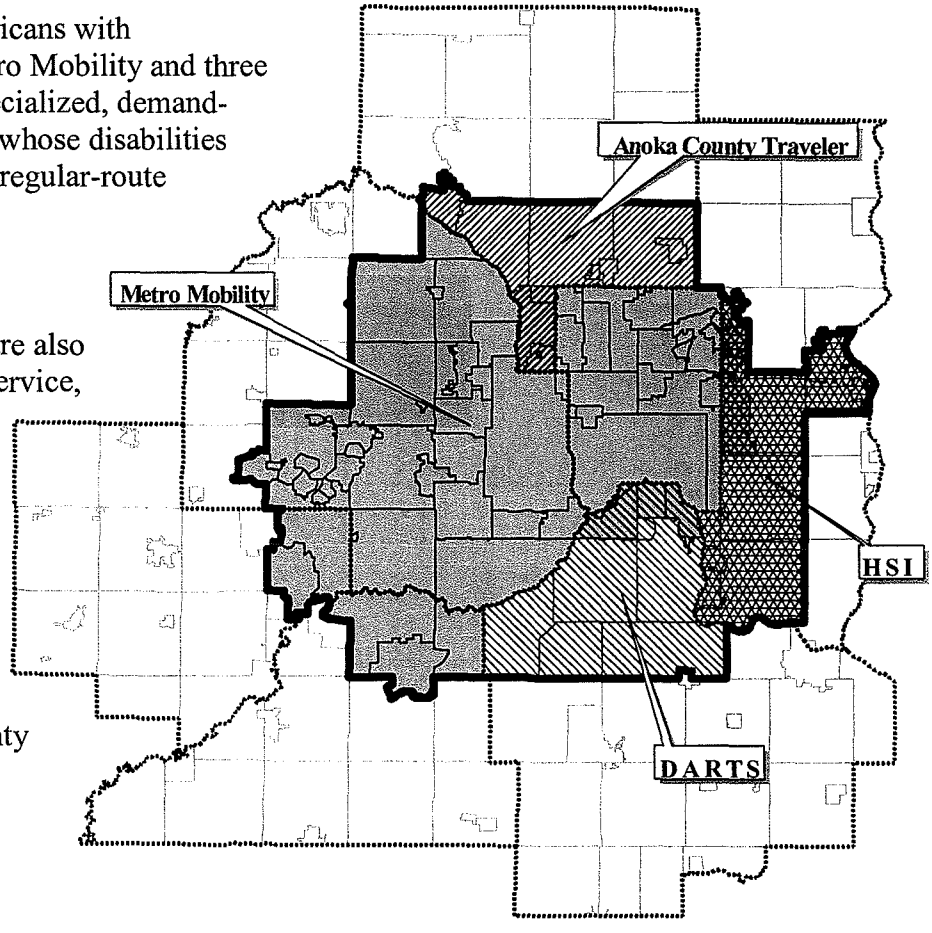


Table 2-6. 2002 Operating Statistics: Metro Mobility/County ADA

System (2002 statistics)	Operating Cost	Fare Revenue	Passengers	Revenue Hours	Subsidy Per Passenger	Cost Per Revenue Hour
Metro Mobility/ADA	26,523,420	2,564,991	1,309,397	720,476	$18.30	$36.81

Table Note: Metro Mobility statistics include all five Metro Mobility transit providers. County figures are not duplicated in the Community programs data.

VanGo! Vanpools

The Metropolitan Council operates a vanpool program called Van-*GO!* This program started in 2001 as a way of providing transit service for persons living or working in areas not served by regular route service. People driving long distances from low-density areas add a disproportionate amount of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and thus, removing them from the road adds a larger-than-typical benefit.

This program is operated by a private contractor who provides vans and administers the program. The Council and businesses provide a portion of the subsidy and the passengers pay the rest.

At the end of 2002, there were 28 vans in operation and 48 at the end of 2003. In 2002, the subsidy per person trip was $2.65.

Vanpool Origination Locations

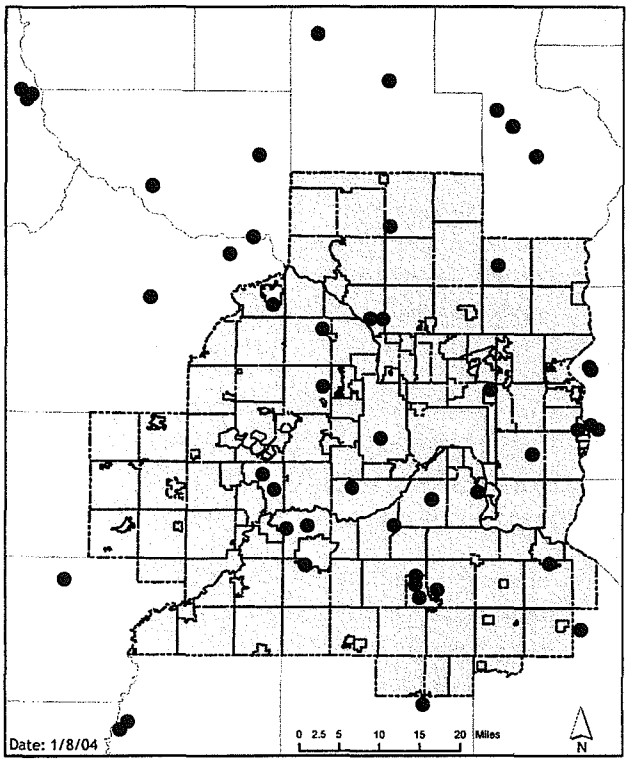


Table 2-7. 2002 Operating Statistics: VanGO!

System (2002 statistics)	Operating Cost	Fare Revenue	Passenger Trips	Revenue Hours	Subsidy per passenger
VanGo!	$421,039	$148,205	102,778	NA	$2.65

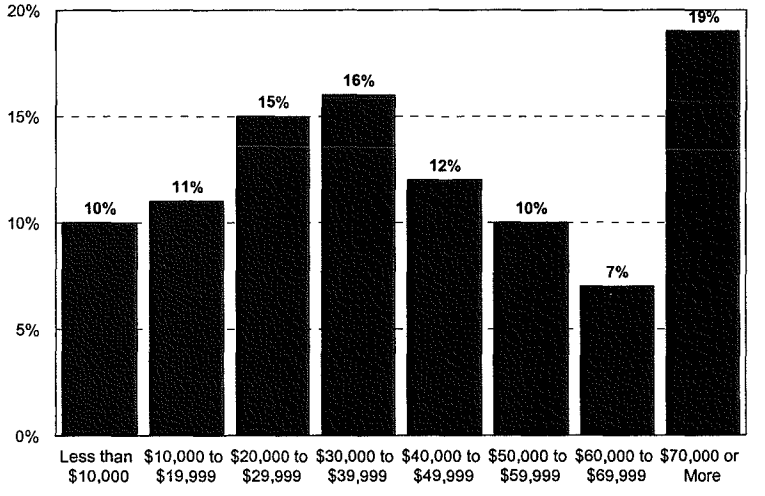
Metro Transit Rider Information

The Metropolitan Council surveys regular-route transit customers to gain an understanding of who transit users are and why they use transit. On January 22nd, 2003, a survey was distributed to a statistically significant sample of riders of regular route transit operated by Metro Transit. The data below does not include either opt out or contracted regular routes.

Among the findings:

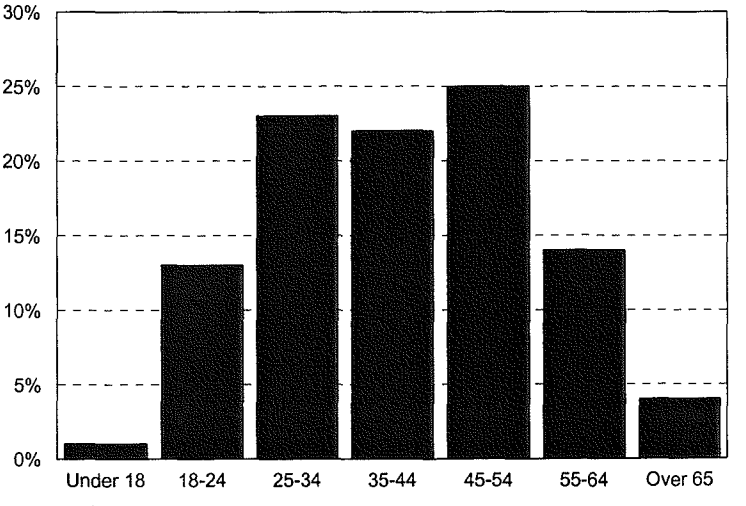
- Transit plays a major role in the economy by bringing people to and from work. The majority of Metro Transit riders (75%) are going to or from work. The next highest trip purpose (8%) is going to school.
- Most people using transit are frequent riders. 82% of Metro Transit riders identified using the bus five or more days a week.
- There is substantial turnover in the persons who choose to use transit, even though ridership levels remain fairly stable overall. 43% of Metro Transit riders have been riders for less than five years. 12% said they had been riders for less than one year.
- 69% reported they rode during rush hour.
- 60% of transit rides are female.
- 80% of riders identified themselves as Caucasian, similar to the 84.7% of Twin Cities residents that identified Caucasian as their race in the 2000 Census. 8% of riders identified themselves as of African descent, 4% of Asian descent, 2% Native American, and 2% as Hispanic, with 4% as two or more or other races.
- 97% identify English as their primary language
- If transit were not available, 28% of people would not have been able to make their trip. 62% of people would have used an automobile, with the balance using other modes.

Riders by Family Income



2003 Ridership Survey

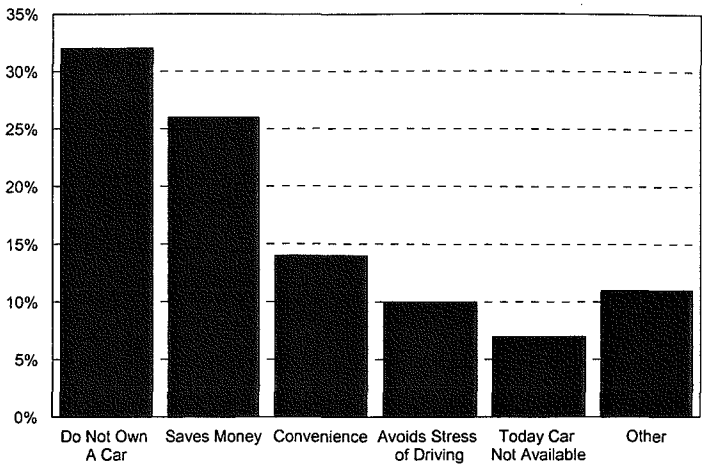
Riders by Age



2003 Ridership Survey

- Riders came from:
  - 46% Minneapolis
  - 29% Minneapolis suburbs
  - 17% St Paul
  - 8% St Paul Suburbs
- Riders were going to:
  - 67% Minneapolis
  - 14% Minneapolis suburbs
  - 17% St Paul
  - 3% St Paul Suburbs
- 86% of riders were riding on a weekday

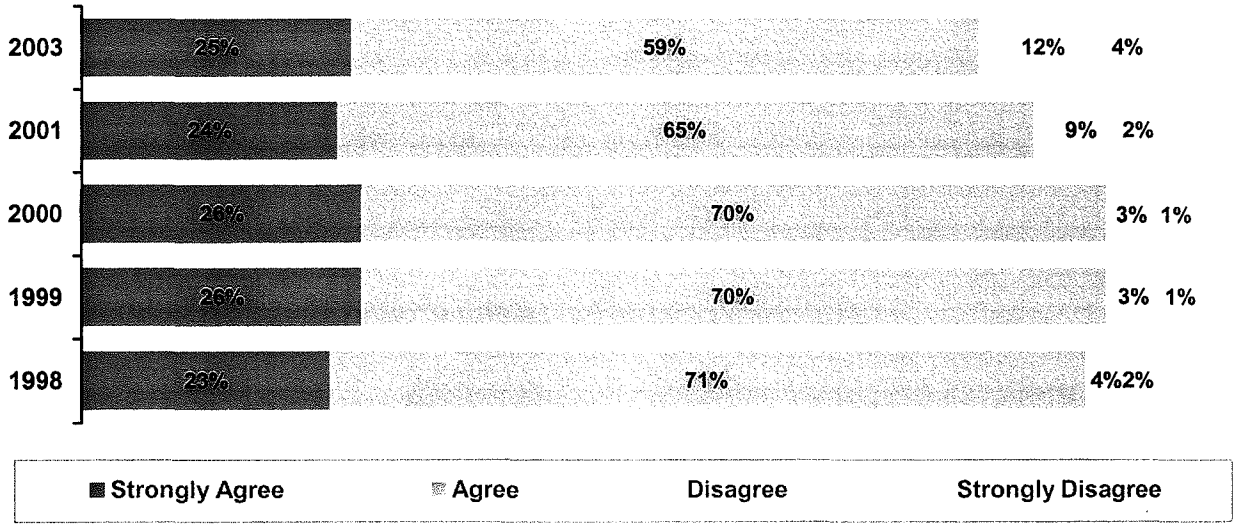
Reason for Using Transit



2003 Ridership Survey

- 17% of riders pay with cash. The balance of riders (83%) use stored value cards or passes.
- 43% of persons using stored value cards or passes bought them through their employer.
- Customer satisfaction is high. In 2003, 84% of persons said that they were satisfied overall with Metro Transit service. Overall customer satisfaction has declined slightly over the last three years, the same time frame as fare increases, service reductions, and budget cuts.

Customer Satisfaction



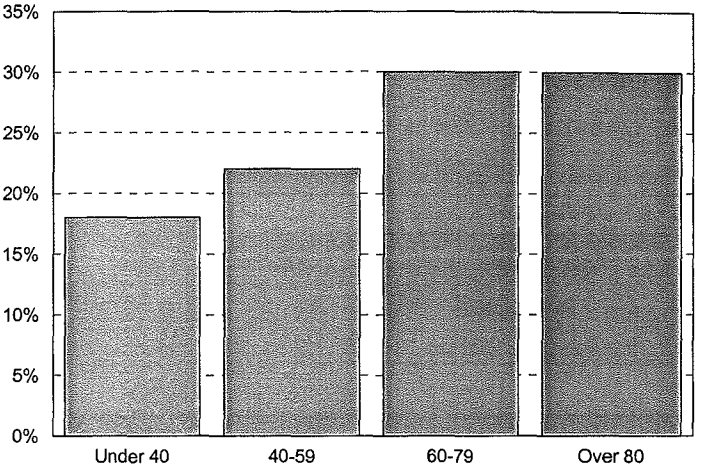
Response to the question "Overall You are Satisfied with Metro Transit Bus Service"
"Overall, You Are Satisfied with Metro Transit Bus Service"

Metro Mobility Rider Description

Metro Mobility also does an annual ridership survey.

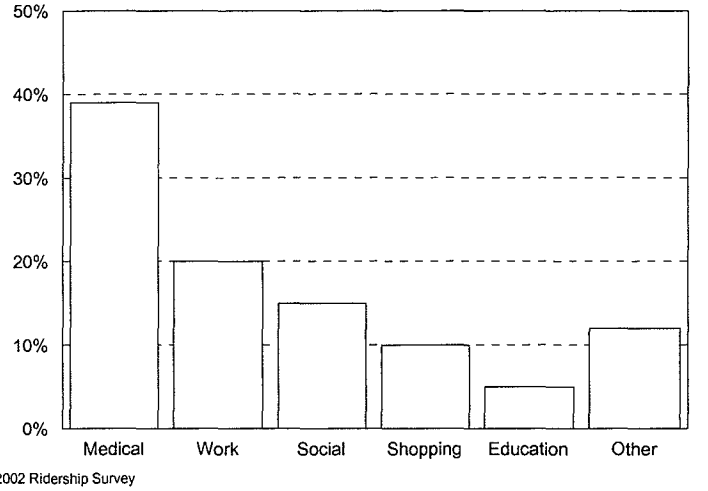
- Metro Mobility has 19,000 certified riders, with 13,000 being active riders.
- Metro Mobility had a 94.6% rider approval rating from its 2002 ridership survey.

Metro Mobility/ADA Riders by Age



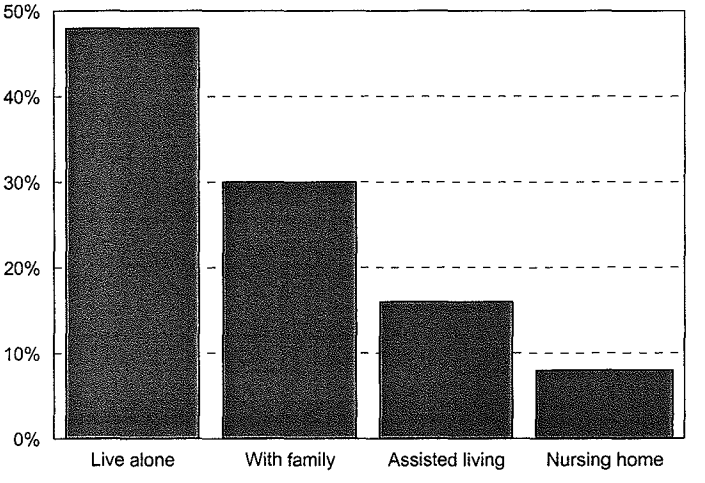
2002 Ridership Survey

Metro Mobility/ADA Trip Purpose



2002 Ridership Survey

Metro Mobility Rider Living Arrangement

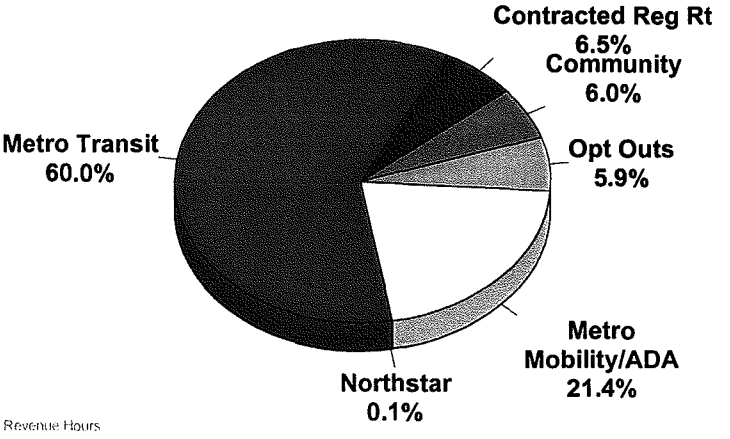


2002 Ridership Survey

Summary of Transit System Statistics

Metro Transit provides the largest number of transit service hours of any provider in the region.

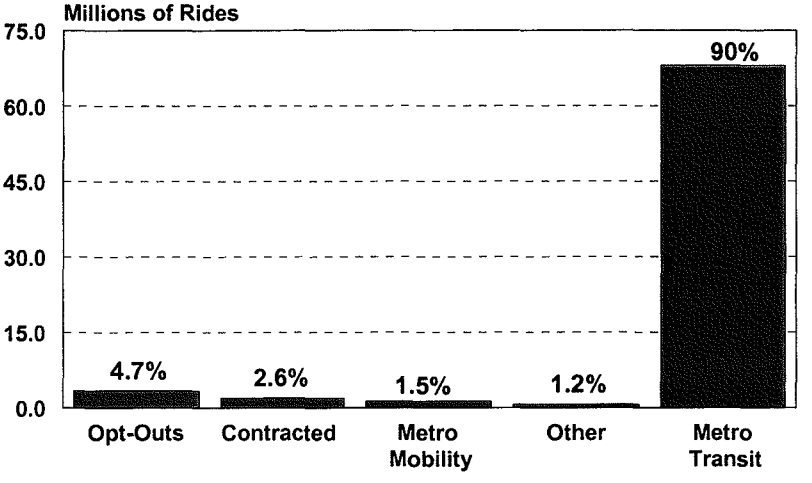
Hours of Bus Service: 2002



Revenue Hours

Metro Transit carries 90% of the riders in the region.

Ridership by Program



2002 - Other includes Community Programs, Vanpool, Northstar
U of M program discontinued in 2003, LRT begins in 2004

The transit system of the seven-county metropolitan area consists of various types of transit services. Table 2.8 summarizes the 2002 ridership, service levels (revenue hours), operating costs and fare revenues for the general service types in the regional system.

Table 2-8. 2002 Regional Transit Operating Statistics Summary

System (2002 statistics)	Operating Cost	Fare Revenue	Passengers	Revenue Hours	Subsidy/ Passenger	Cost/ Revenue Hr
Metropolitan Council – Directly Operated						
Metro Transit	$191,673,162	$62,250,719	69,589,375	2,064,977	$1.86	$92.82
Metropolitan Council – Contracted						
Metro Mobility /ADA	$26,523,420	$2,564,991	1,309,397	720,476	$18.30	$36.81
Contracted Reg. Route	$9,361,730	$542,743	1,850,111	143,629	$4.77	$65.18
Rural Providers	$38,976,536	$480,426	489,144	167,220	$6.94	$23.18
Small Urban	$1,382,978	$187,354	123,457	36,516	$9.68	$37.87
Vanpools	$421,039	$148,205	102,778	NA	$2.65	NA
Non-Metro Council Providers						
Opt-Out Providers	$21,822,595	$5,525,429	3,329,225	200,066	$4.90	$109.05
Northstar Coach	$598,822	$300,449	121,209	3,700	$2.46	$161.84
Included in Metro Transit & Opt-Out	($6,691,103)	($2,871,909)	-1,595,119	-41,155		
Twin Cites Total	$284,069,179	$69,128,407	75,319,577	3,336,584	$2.85	$85.14

Table Note: Metro Transit provides service under contract to Opt-Out communities. These statistics are reported both under Metro Transit and under Opt-Out statistics. Also Metro Transit sells fare media for Contracted Regular Routes, which do not record this revenue, overstating Metro Transit's fare revenue, and understating Contracted Regular Route's by approximately $1 M. Metro Transit also carries certain regional costs such as the cost of selling fare media, distribution of schedules, and other region-wide costs.

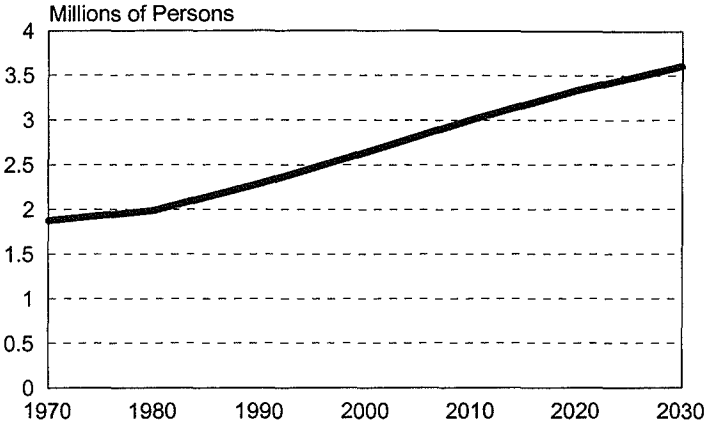
Chapter 3. Demographic Trends

Population

The Twin Cities region is growing and is projected to continue to grow. Between 1990 and 2000, the region added 353,000 people to bring the population to 2,642,000. The Council projects that by 2030 there will be 3,608,000 people living in the region, or an additional 37%

This population growth will increase the potential market for transit. It will also put a substantial strain on the existing highway system and increase traffic congestion.

Twin Cities Area Population, 1970-2030



Twin Cities Metropolitan Area
Census/Metropolitan Council Forecasts Jan 2004

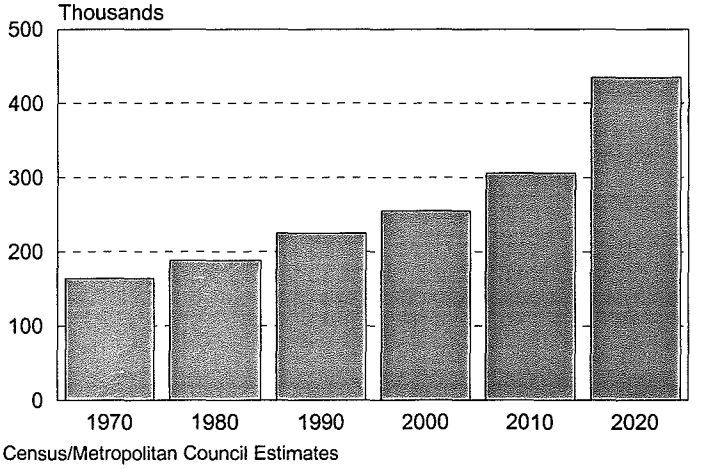
Changes in Elderly Population

Traditionally the elderly have used transit at higher percentages than other age groups.

As the baby-boom generation grows older, the number of elderly persons will increase substantially. In 1970, 164,000 people in the Twin Cities were over age 65. The Council projects that by 2020, 440,000 people will be over age 65.

The elderly will also be a higher percentage of the population. In 2000, 9.7% was over age 65 but it is projected that by 2020, 13.2% of the population will be over 65.

Area Population above Age 65, 1970-2030

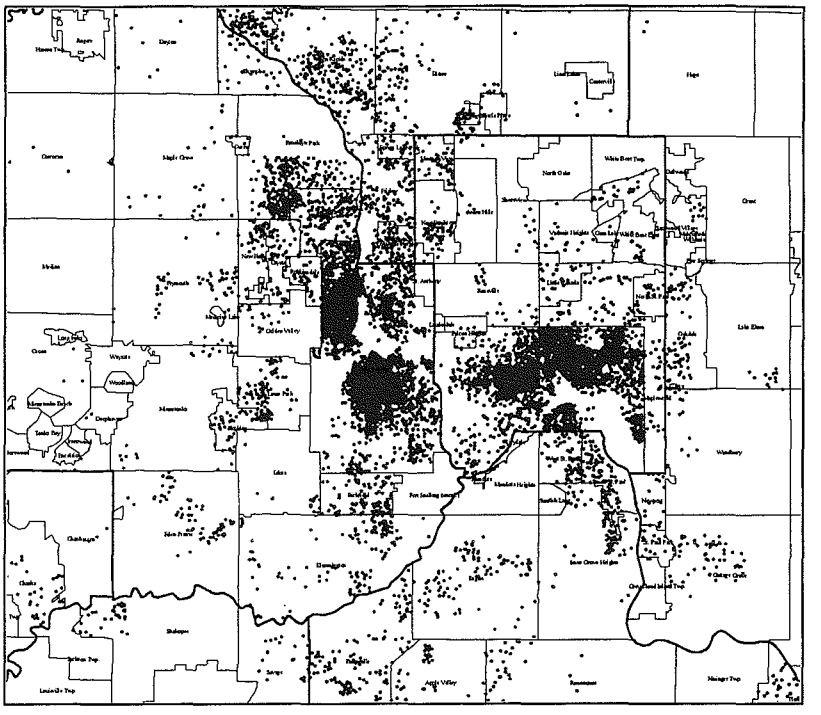


Census/Metropolitan Council Estimates

Income and Transit Dependency

Low income people have traditionally been a strong market for transit. The Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) is one of the core welfare programs in the state of Minnesota. The location of participants is a good indicator of where low-income individuals are concentrated. As shown by the map, people with lower incomes are concentrated in the two central cities. (1999, Department of Economic Security).

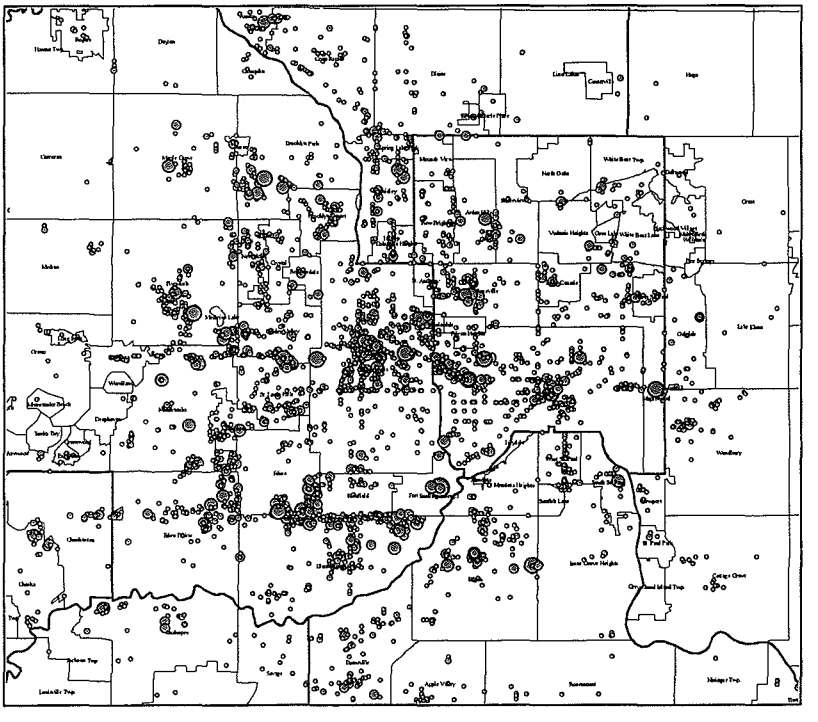
Location of MFIP Recipients



Entry Level Jobs

The majority of transit riders are going to or from work. As shown by the map, entry-level jobs are scattered throughout the region. (1999, Department of Economic Security).

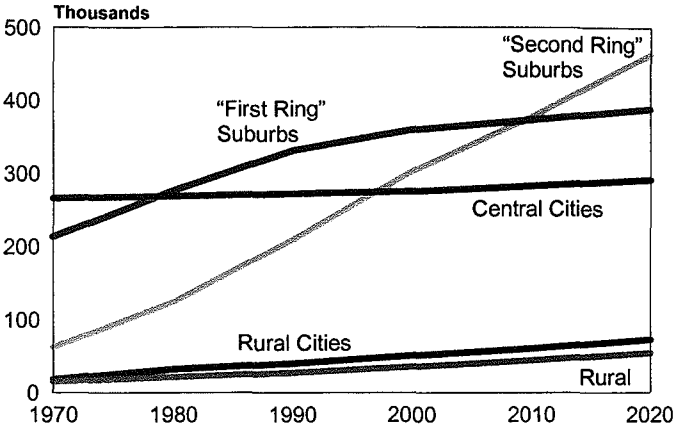
Location of Entry-Level Jobs



Housing Location

Prior to 1945, most of the region's growth occurred in the two central cities of Minneapolis and St Paul. From 1950 into the 1980s, most of the region's growth occurred in the suburbs immediately surrounding the center cities. By 2000, their growth slowed and development shifted to the second ring.

Number of Area Households, by Location



Census/Metropolitan Council Projections

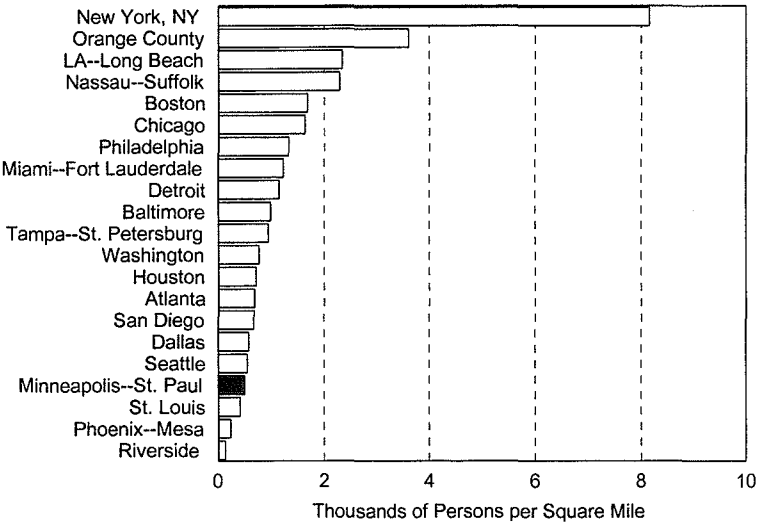
Population Density

The Twin Cities metro area is less dense compared to other metropolitan areas. In 1990, it was 21st of the 25 largest primary metropolitan statistical areas (PMSAs).

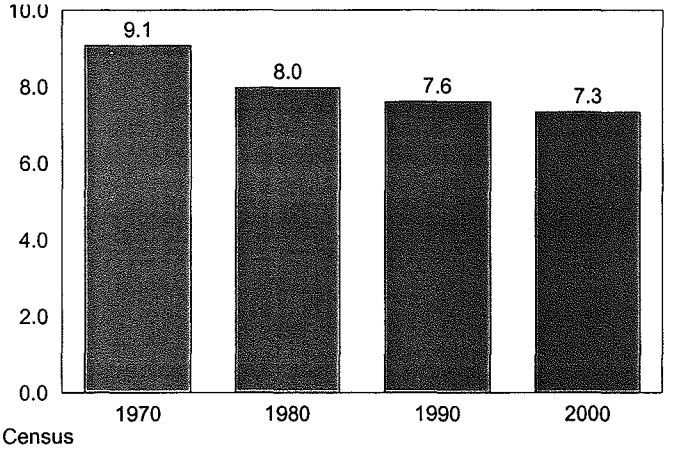
There are several reasons:

- Growth is unimpeded by bodies of water or mountains
- Low density central cities
- There is a strong preference for home ownership of mostly single-family housing.
- A higher proportion of housing was built after World War II.
- The Twin Cities area has a higher-than-average number of wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, gravel pits and other non-buildable land than other areas.

Population Density in 25 Largest Metro Areas, 2000



Persons per Acre, Twin Cities Area, 1970-2000



Census

The number of persons per acre in the urbanized core of the region has been declining. Since 1970, the number of people per acre has gone from 9.1 to 7.3.

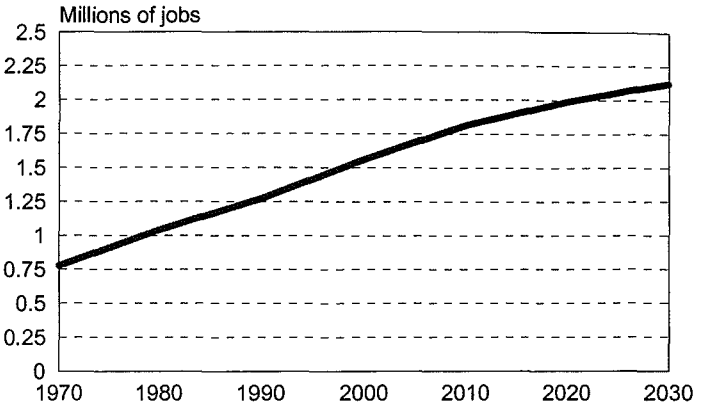
This lower density also makes it more difficult to provide transit service efficiently. Transit functions better in higher-density areas, making provision of transit more difficult in the Twin Cites than in other regions.

Employment

In 1990, there were 1,273,000 people employed in the seven-county area. In 2000, this increased to 1,565,000, a growth of 23%. By 2020 employment is expected to increase by 24% to 1.9 million.

	Employment	Percent Change Over Previous Decade
1970	779,000	–
1980	1,040,000	33%
1990	1,273,000	22%
2000	1,556,000	23%
2010	1,709,000	12%
2020	1,928,000	14%

Twin Cities Area Employment, 1970-2020



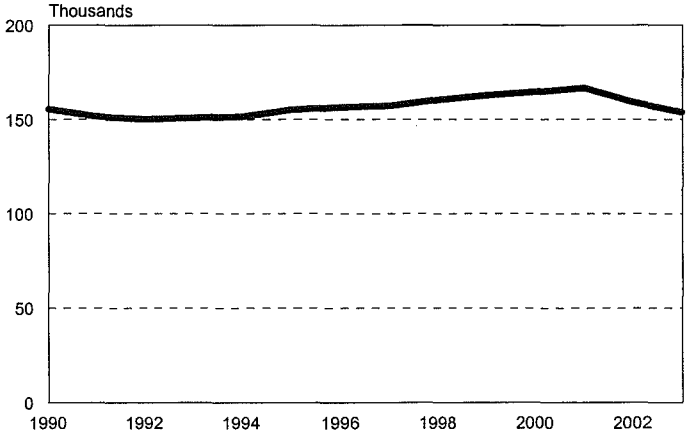
Twin Cities Metropolitan Area
Census/Metropolitan Council Estimates

The largest transit market in the Twin Cities is downtown Minneapolis. Transit takes about 40% of the people employed in downtown Minneapolis to work during peak hours. Employment increased in this market through the 1990s but has declined since 2001 because of the economic downturn. The result is that employment in 2003 is lower than employment was in 1990. Recent declines in transit ridership are linked to this downturn in employment.

Downtown Minneapolis Employment	
1990	155,422
1991	151,540
1992	150,112
1993	150,894
1994	151,504
1995	155,196
1996	156,450
1997	157,132
1998	160,325
1999	162,859
2000	164,571
2001	166,712
2002	159,287
2003	153,762

Table Note: First quarter data for 1990-99 is from original report of DEED to Metro Council. First quarter data for 2000-2003 is from online data tool, NAICS-based, collected 2/24/04.

Downtown Minneapolis Employment, 1990-2002



Total employment, Mpls CBD: first quarter on SIC basis - From DEED

Chapter 4. Ridership

Ridership increased 20% between 1996 and 2001 due to increased funding, service redesign, customer service education, and a strong economy. But ridership has declined 5% from 2001 to 2003 due to budget cuts, service reductions, fares increases, and a downturn in the economy resulting in lower employment.

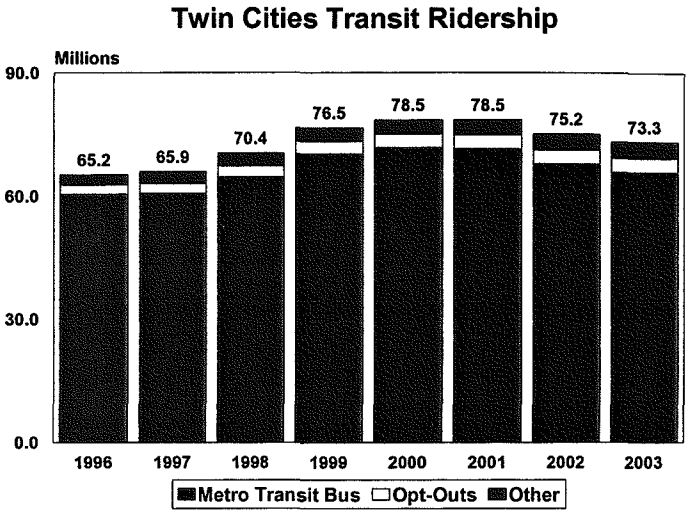


Table 4-1. Twin Cities Ridership 1996 - 2002

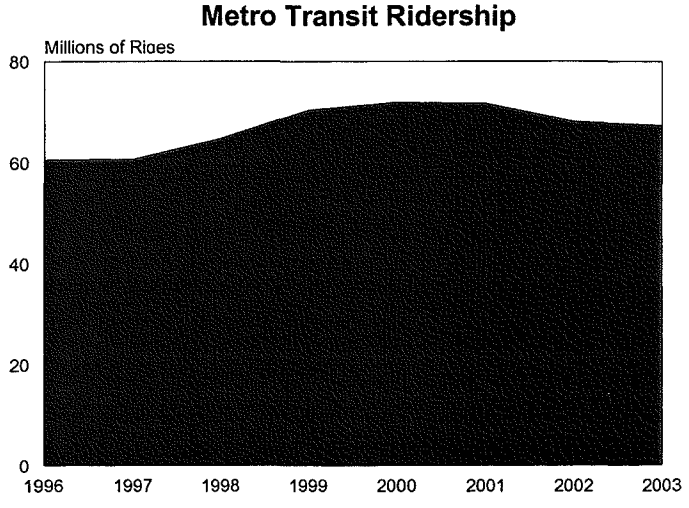
Twin Cities Ridership	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Opt-Outs	2,319,129	2,446,142	2,687,314	3,020,546	3,245,370	3,377,941	3,368,586	3,417,589
Contracted	857,069	1,240,096	1,528,923	1,723,089	1,829,415	1,880,902	1,891,517	1,927,324
Community	366,463	388,161	367,123	361,245	380,978	369,365	388,631	458,777
VanGo	-	-	-	-	-	83,660	102,882	100,300
Metro Mobility/ADA	1,174,493	1,197,052	1,183,579	1,164,861	1,204,805	1,223,298	1,313,953	1,289,906
MTS Subtotal	4,717,154	5,271,451	5,766,939	6,269,741	6,660,568	6,935,166	7,065,569	7,193,896
Metro Transit Bus	60,448,421	60,623,266	64,643,921	70,276,774	71,840,231	71,570,739	67,995,312	65,956,387
Metro Transit	60,448,421	60,623,266	64,643,921	70,276,774	71,840,231	71,570,739	67,995,312	65,956,387
Northstar (MnDOT)	-	-	-	-	-	-	121,109	144,277
Total	65,165,575	65,894,717	70,410,860	76,546,515	78,500,799	78,505,905	75,181,990	73,294,560
Annual Change		1.1%	6.9%	8.7%	2.6%	0.0%	-4.2%	-2.5%
Cumulative Change	0.0%	1.1%	8.0%	17.5%	20.5%	20.5%	15.4%	12.5%

Ridership, by program

Metro Transit

Since 1996, Metro Transit has seen an 11.2% increase in ridership. This was due to a combination of factors: increased funding, transit service redesign, a strong economy, investments in technology and management initiatives.

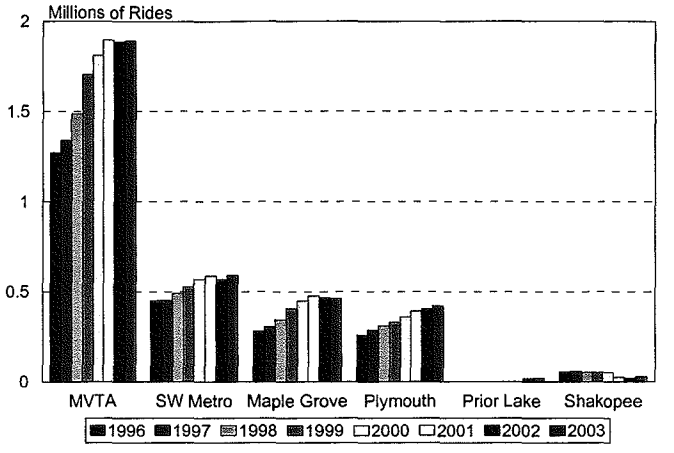
However, from 2000 to 2001, ridership was flat, as a fare increase was enacted July 1, 2001. From 2001 to 2003, effects of the fare increase, reductions in funding, and the economic downturn resulted in a ridership loss of 6.1%.



Opt Outs

Opt-Outs have been serving the fast-growing suburban commuter markets in areas becoming increasingly congested. In addition, significant investments have been made in transit amenities such as park-and-rides, bus-only shoulders, and ramp-meter bypasses. This has resulted in a ridership increase of 47.7% between 1996 and 2003.

Opt-Out Ridership

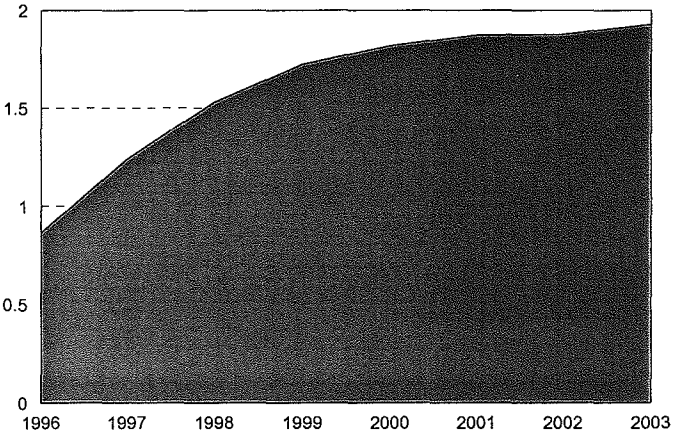


In percentages, Maple Grove has had the largest increase in ridership over this time period, 64.3%. During the same period, Shakopee, which provides no regular route service, had a reduction in ridership of 50%. In terms of gross increase in riders, MVTA has had the largest increase in ridership, with 620,631 more riders in 2003 than in 1996.

Contracted Regular Route

Substantial restructuring has occurred through the addition of large bus service and fine-tuning of smaller bus routes. This has resulted in a 123% increase in ridership since 1996.

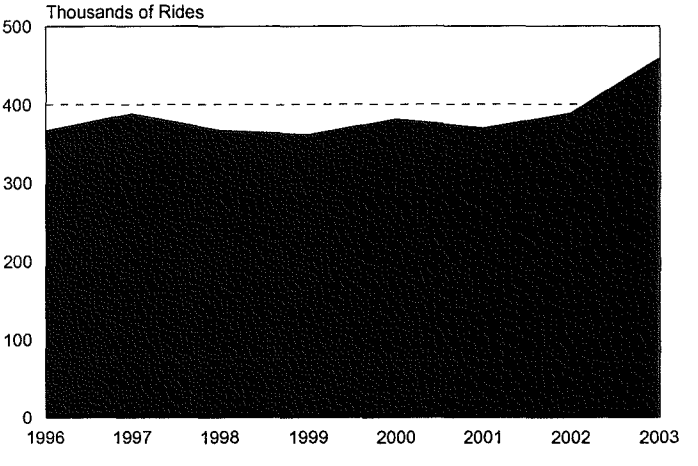
Contracted Regular-Route Ridership



Community Programs

For community programs, mostly dial-a-ride services, output is controlled in large part by the number of service hours. From 1996 to 2002, the number of service hours, and thus ridership, remained fairly fixed. In 2003, there was a change in how passengers were counted for ADA purposes. The result was that the three county programs that provide both ADA and community trips counted more riders as community program riders and fewer as ADA programs.

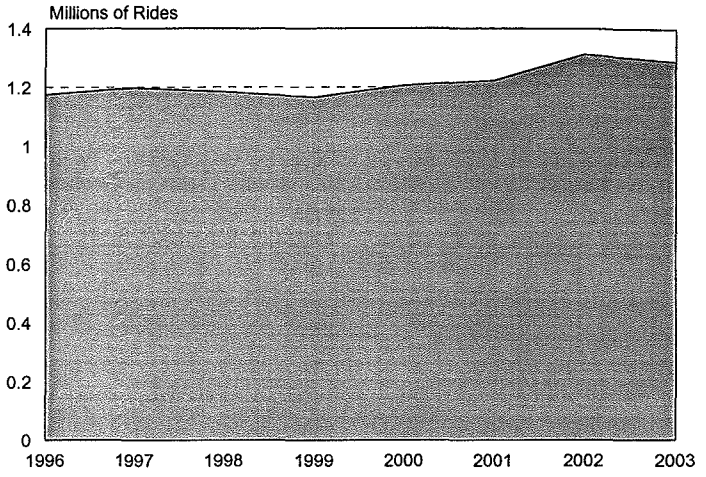
Community Programs Ridership



Metro Mobility/ADA

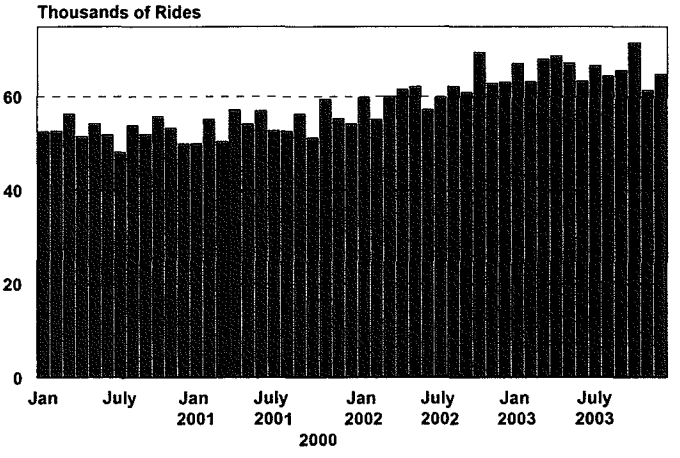
Metro Mobility/ADA ridership, the region's mandated ADA program, has increased 9.8% since 1996, mostly between 2000 and 2002. The increase was due to additional funding, management initiatives to improve efficiency, and increased demand for service. Also, federal law sets a goal of zero trip denials for demand ADA transit service, mandating additional service. In 2003, there was a change in how passengers were counted for ADA purposes. The result was that the three county programs that provide both ADA and community trips counted more riders as community program riders and fewer as ADA programs.

Metro Mobility Ridership



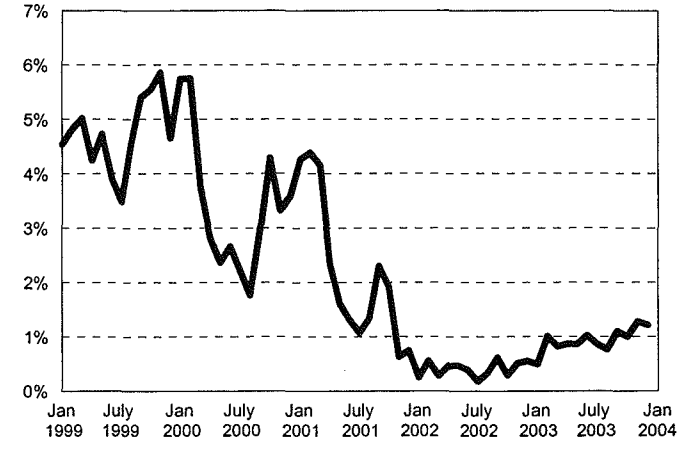
Much of the Metro Mobility increases in ridership have occurred in the portion of the program that provides rides on an individual basis, known as demand service. Demand service has been trending upward at a rate of about 7% a year since 2001.

Metro Mobility Demand Ridership



Trip denial rates have declined substantially over the last five years.

Metro Mobility Trip Denials



For Demand Serivce

Table 3-3. 1996-2003 Ridership, by Program

Twin Cities Ridership	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Opt-Outs	2,319,129	2,446,142	2,687,314	3,020,546	3,245,370	3,377,941	3,368,586	3,417,589
Contracted	857,069	1,240,096	1,528,923	1,723,089	1,829,415	1,880,902	1,891,517	1,927,324
Community	366,463	388,161	367,123	361,245	380,978	369,365	388,631	458,777
VanGo	-	-	-	-	-	83,660	102,882	100,300
Metro Mobility	1,174,493	1,197,052	1,183,579	1,164,861	1,204,805	1,223,298	1,313,953	1,289,906
MTS Subtotal	4,717,154	5,271,451	5,766,939	6,269,741	6,660,568	6,935,166	7,065,569	7,193,896
Metro Transit Bus	60,448,421	60,623,266	64,643,921	70,276,774	71,840,231	71,570,739	67,995,312	65,956,387
Metro Transit	60,448,421	60,623,266	64,643,921	70,276,774	71,840,231	71,570,739	67,995,312	65,956,387
Northstar (MnDOT)	-	-	-	-	-	-	121,109	144,277
Total	65,165,575	65,894,717	70,410,860	76,546,515	78,500,799	78,505,905	75,181,990	73,294,560

Metro Transit	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Total Metro Transit	61,887,808	62,044,513	66,027,398	71,874,146	73,477,709	73,347,859	69,589,375	67,235,776
Minus MVTA	892,502	866,854	907,968	1,040,405	1,069,436	1,171,554	984,898	680,692
Minus Plymouth	143,965	159,979	169,829	193,129	221,921	233,971	224,445	232,120
Minus Maple Grove	214,971	210,878	222,742	304,305	346,121	371,595	384,720	366,577
Minus SMTC	187,949	183,536	82,938	59,533	-	-		
Total Adjusted MT	60,448,421	60,623,266	64,643,921	70,276,774	71,840,231	71,570,739	67,995,312	65,956,387
MT includes airport #	1,480,493	1,179,032	1,369,186	1,436,872	1,481,548	1,374,905	1,386,576	1,183,868

Opt out	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
MVTA	1,271,357	1,339,931	1,488,124	1,704,792	1,811,096	1,896,001	1,886,266	1,891,988
SW Metro	452,287	453,590	491,304	527,604	571,000	588,040	569,554	592,719
Maple Grove	281,889	305,133	345,266	406,085	450,372	476,500	467,441	463,138
Plymouth	256,837	288,301	310,163	330,065	360,902	392,400	405,020	421,051
Prior Lake	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	19,362	20,095
Shakopee	56,759	59,187	52,457	52,000	52,000	25,000	20,943	28,598
	2,319,129	2,446,142	2,687,314	3,020,546	3,245,370	3,377,941	3,368,586	3,417,589

Small Urban	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Edina						2,935	3,991	4255
Osseo					518	1,594	1,906	2,218
STEP		1,743	2,369	2,031	3,018	2,874	3,434	2,865
Hopkins	15,134	12,784	10,759	11,041	15,202	14,102	14,032	16,046
Columbia Heights								
Route 246 St Croix							2,435	5,253
NEST	29,971	30,840	27,585	26,414	26,489	23,093	20,316	21,464
Lake Area Bus	20,033	20,100	22,820	28,439	31,504	30,844	29,884	28,772
Hastings	26,404	26,637	28,747	30,294	32,278	30,815	34,755	33993
	93,996	92,104	92,280	98,219	109,009	106,257	110,753	114,866

Rural	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
West Hennepin	NA	NA	NA	1,684	1,882	1,730	1,432	1,449
Linwood	2,907	2,900	1,907	1,992	2,182	1,308	1,373	1,632
Anoka Volunteer	5,442	4,319	4,115	4,597	4,728	3,742	4,287	4,057
Delano	7,924	8,046	9,756	10,119	10,628	10,761	10,767	10,899
Senior Trans	6,526	5,533	7,926	10,003	11,775	8,714	8,332	8,470
PRISM	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	10,145	20,007
Westonka	11,210	10,748	13,339	14,064	13,762	11,566	12,662	12,908
HSI*	25,046	32,569	26,161	29,458	31,055	39,543	43,230	80,573
Carver	32,527	33,619	34,715	31,197	34,693	31,025	33,656	41,131
DARTS General Pub	36,326	38,868	43,722	35,822	42,828	39,433	40,514	45,534
Scott	50,606	53,805	59,633	58,662	57,528	66,397	77,293	86,805
Anoka Senior Progra	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
DARTS Lakeville	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Dakota Volunteer	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Anoka Traveler Gen	93,953	105,650	73,569	65,428	60,908	48,889	34,187	30,446
	272,467	296,057	274,843	263,026	271,969	263,108	277,878	343,911

*1997 & earlier are estimated based on trends - data was not collected to differentiate ADA from PBF

County ADA	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Anoka ADA*	46,276	52,037	36,453	32,573	28,749	24,357	33,338	36,827
DARTS ADA*	84,761	90,692	96,161	97,350	92,906	108,011	115,400	115,053
HSI ADA*	37,570	48,853	39,065	42,813	42,531	63,937	59,049	20,067
Agency Total	168,607	191,582	171,679	172,736	164,186	196,305	207,787	171,947

*1997 & 1996 are estimated based on trends - data was not collected to differentiate ADA from PBF

Total Community	535,070	579,743	538,802	533,981	545,164	565,670	596,418	630,724

Paratransit	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Metro Mobility	1,005,886	1,005,470	1,011,900	992,125	1,040,619	1,026,993	1,106,166	1,117,959
ADA Total	1,174,493	1,197,052	1,183,579	1,164,861	1,204,805	1,223,298	1,313,953	1,289,906

*1997 & 1996 are estimated based on trends - data was not collected to differentiate ADA from PBF

Regular Route	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
DARTS 417			1,795	4,534	5,584	4,821	4,827	5,141
NEST 219						24,468	41,876	54,894
Route 661							1,076	5,425
St Croix Valley	NA	NA	NA	19,242	22,193	19,753	12,306	4,640
LAB	5,163	20,953	22,198	22,354	34,885	15,149	9,123	5,678
Route 66/614	NA	NA	NA	25,111	23,176	27,967	38,894	52,055
Westonka	NA	14,595	30,957	30,126	30,080	27,092	29,386	27,603
South County	NA	16,352	67,861	65,627	68,434	67,394	63,572	58,778
Roseville Circulator	81,138	87,763	91,714	107,567	108,539	149,792	169,171	187,942
Anoka	NA	17,909	80,399	101,357	125,085	142,109	144,912	151,691
East Metro Redesig	39,652	155,092	169,916	197,066	221,723	218,335	187,094	158,418
ABC Weekender								
Airport Express								
Route 55	233,710	223,816	225,536	231,922	221,945	220,132	202,234	206,237
North Suburban	196,704	183,468	188,051	212,296	248,316	283,529	316,861	330,120
Medicine Lake Line								
BE-Line	240,865	232,923	247,770	287,896	295,580	292,133	287,433	314,373
West Metro Redesig	32,184	261,430	378,425	412,880	423,875	388,228	382,752	364,329
Valley Transit	27,653	25,795	24,301	5,111				
	857,069	1,240,096	1,528,923	1,723,089	1,829,415	1,880,902	1,891,517	1,927,324

MnDOT Service	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Northstar Commuter	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	121,109	144,277

Van Service	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
VanGo!	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	83,660	102,882	100,300

Chapter 5. Peer Region Comparisons

The Twin Cities transit system performance is assessed, in part, using data from the federal National Transit Database (NTD). The area's performance is compared to the performance of a peer group of 11 urban areas transit systems.

Table 6-1. Peer Urban Areas Used in Transit Audit

Baltimore	Cleveland	Dallas	Milwaukee	Portland	Seattle
Cincinnati	Denver	Houston	Pittsburgh	St. Louis	

Changes to Peer Group

In 1996 a twelve region peer group was selected with similar population and transit system characteristics. But between the 1990 and 2000 census, the population of the Twin Cities grew by 17% while Buffalo had population losses of 2%. This difference is now great enough to warrant the removal of Buffalo from the peer group.

Peer Regions vs. Peer Transit Systems

Prior to 1999, parts of the Twin Cities regional transit system did not report statistics into the National Transit Database, meaning that data was not available for the whole region. Because of this, this is the first transit audit that overall Twin Cities statistics are available. Statistics for other regions are also aggregated to include all providers in a region. Exceptions were made in three areas—Baltimore, Dallas and Seattle—where the urban area includes major cities that are separated by 30 to 40 miles. In these cases, only the transit systems serving or related to the major city were included. Also, the ferry services in Seattle were not included.

The following transit service providers were included for each region for this report:

- Baltimore
  - Maryland Transit Authority (MTA)
  - Harford County Transportation
- Cincinnati
  - Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA/Metro)
  - Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK)
- Cleveland
  - Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA)
  - Brunswick Transit Alternative
- Dallas
  - Dallas Area Rapid Transit Authority(DART)
  - Fort Worth Transportation Authority
  - Handitran Special Transit Division
  - First Transit, Inc.
  - City of Grand Prairie
  - City of Mesquite

- Denver
  - Regional Transportation District (RTD)
- Houston
  - Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO)
  - First Transit
  - VPSI
- Milwaukee
  - Milwaukee County
  - Waukesha County
  - Waukesha Transit
- Pittsburgh
  - Port Authority of Allegheny County (PAT)
  - Beaver County Transit Authority
  - Westmoreland County Transit
  - GG & C Bus Company, Inc.
  - ACCESS Transportation Systems, Inc.
  - University of Pittsburgh
- Portland
  - Tri-County Metropolitan Transit District of Oregon (Tri-Met)
  - Clark County Public Transportation
- St. Louis
  - Bi-State Development Agency (BSDA)
  - Madison County
- Seattle
  - King County Department of Transportation (KC Metro)
  - City of Seattle - Monorail Transit
  - Everett Transit
  - Snohomish County Transportation Benefit Area Corporation (Community Transit)
  - Senior Services of Snohomish County
  - Central Puget Sound Regional

Peer Modes

When this peer group was established in 1996, regions were selected that were similar both in size and in composition of transit service. Over the intervening eight years, most transit systems have added modes of service.

This data is as of 2002. As of 2002, all of the peers except Houston, Milwaukee, and Cincinnati had at least one mode in operation besides bus service. Since 2002, Houston has opened a light rail line and planning for additional modes is occurring in Milwaukee and Cincinnati.

The Twin Cities area's first light-rail line will be operational in 2004. Statistics about the Twin Cities light-rail line will be included in future reports.

The modes operated as of the date of these statistics, the end of 2002:

Baltimore: Heavy rail, commuter rail, light rail, bus

Cincinnati: Bus

Cleveland: Heavy rail, light rail, bus

Dallas: Light rail, commuter rail, bus

Denver: Light rail, bus

Houston: Bus

Milwaukee: Bus

Pittsburgh: Light rail, inclined plane, bus

Portland: Light rail, bus

St. Louis: Light rail, bus

Seattle: Trolley bus, monorail, light rail, bus

In addition, demand-response service to meet the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act is operated in all areas. In the Twin Cities, this service is provided primarily by Metro Mobility.

Twin Cities ridership regionally is down slightly, similar to peer regions.

Annual transit ridership in the seven-county Twin Cities area decreased almost 1.6 million trips or 1.8% from 1999 to 2002. This 1.8% decrease was similar to, but smaller than, the average decrease of 3.2% that occurred in 11 comparable regions.

Table 6-2. Twin Cities Region
Annual Transit Ridership, 1999-2002

Twin Cites Region Ridership	
1999	76,546,515
2000	78,500,799
2001	78,505,905
2002	75,181,990

Ridership Change 99 - 02 *(Actual)*	(1,644,558)
Ridership Change 99 - 02 *(Percent)*	-1.8%
Ridership Change Peer Group 99-02 *(Percent)*	-3.2%

Transit spending for both the Twin Cities and peer regions increased at a similar rate when adjusted for inflation.

Spending for operating transit in the Twin Cities increased 18.4% between 1999 and 2002 as compared to 16% for peer regions. When adjusted for inflation, the real rate of increase was about 7.7%, almost exactly the same rate as peer regions of 7.6%.

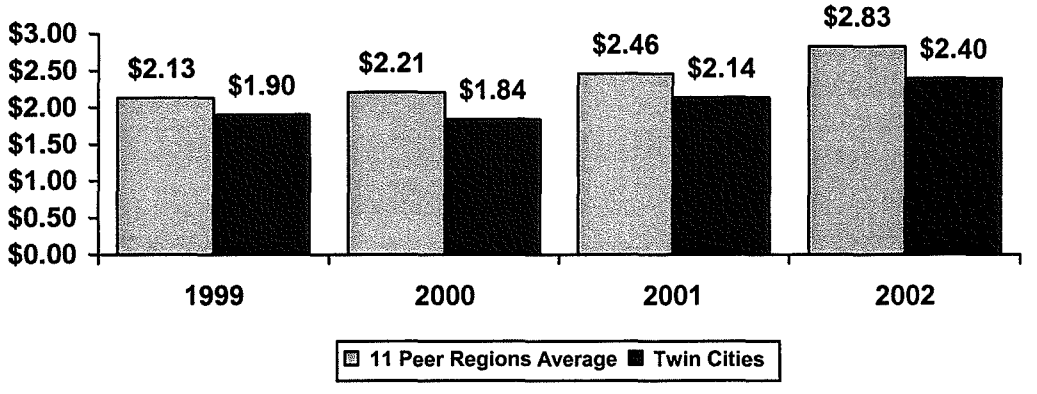
Table 6-3. Twin Cities Region
Annual Transit Operating Costs, 1999-2002

	Actual	Inflation Adjusted
1999	$212,337,361	$212,337,361
2000	$216,822,961	$208,083,456
2001	$243,624,074	$225,369,171
2002	$251,484,639	$228,622,399
Percent Change 1999-2002		
Twin Cities	18.4%	7.7%
Average 11 Peer Regions	16.0%	7.6%
Average Annual Percent Change 1999-2002		
Twin Cities	5.8%	2.5%
Average 11 Peer Regions	4.8%	2.2%
Inflation Adjustnments Made to 1999 Dollars using CPI-U		

The region's subsidy per passenger increased over the last four years but remains significantly lower than comparable systems.

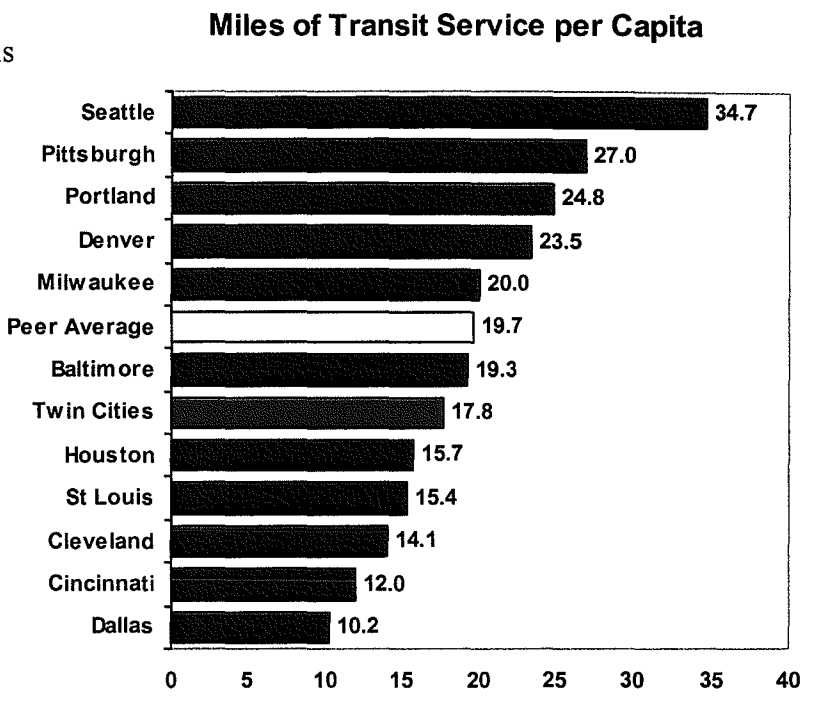
The measure *net government cost per passenger*, or subsidy, is the cost made up by government subsidies after user revenues and other transit-generated revenues (e.g., advertising) are deducted. The source of this funding is a combination of federal, state, and local tax revenues. The Twin Cities net subsidy per passenger increased at a lower rate than the average peer region between 1999 and 2002—26.3% versus 32.9%. In 2002, the Twin Cities subsidy was 15.2% below that of peer regions.

Twin Cities Region
Net Government Cost (Subsidy) per Passenger



The Twin Cities area has less transit service than other peer regions.

The number of miles of transit service provided in the Twin Cities is lower than in other regions. This is consistent with the level of funding provided for transit in the Twin Cities area.

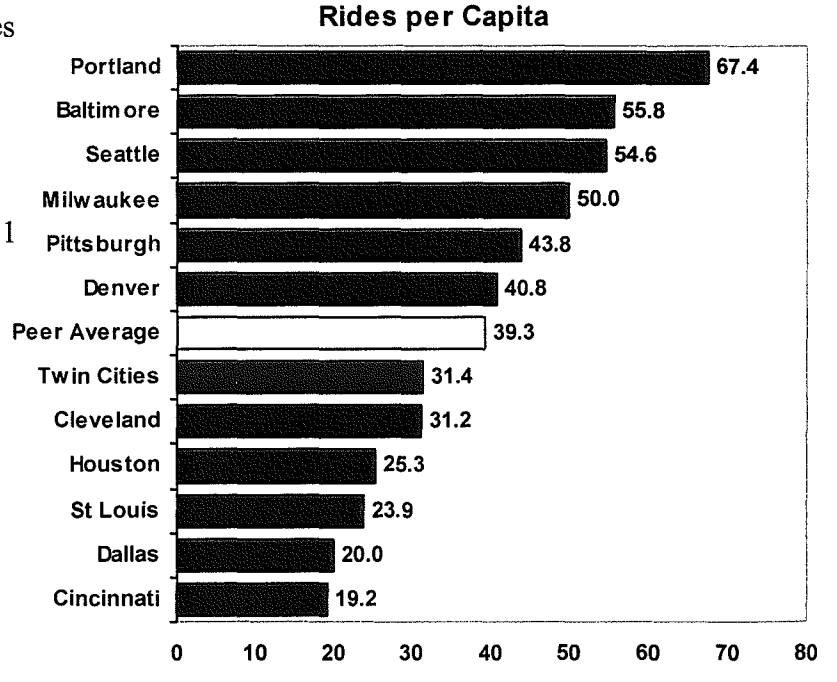


2002 NTD Regional Figures – Population is 2000 urbanized population

The Twin Cities area has fewer rides per capita than other regions, consistent with the low amount of government spending and high fare levels.

In 2002, the Twin Cities provided 31 transit rides for every person in the region. This was 20% less than the peer average and 53% less than Portland, which has the highest ridership of any region.

This is due to a number of factors. Government spending on transit in this region is low in terms of spending per capita. In addition, a larger-than-typical portion of the budget is recovered through fares, giving an economic disincentive to riders.

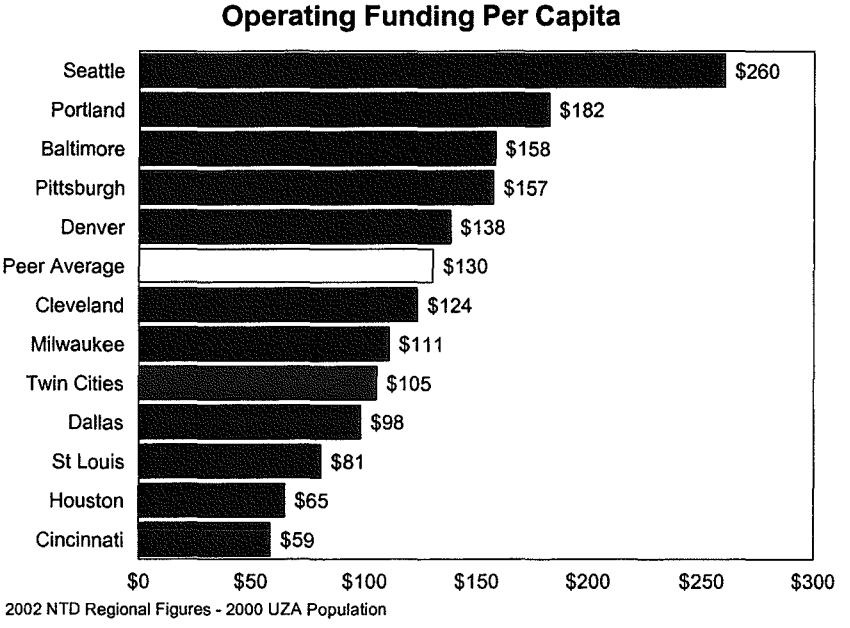


The Twin Cities area also has a lower population density than most other regions, making transit inherently less efficient. Similarly, the Twin Cities has two downtowns to serve and, therefore, jobs are split between two locations rather than focused on one traditional downtown.

2002 NTD Regional Figures – Population is 2000 urbanized population

Overall, transit funding is significantly lower in the Twin Cites area than in other areas.

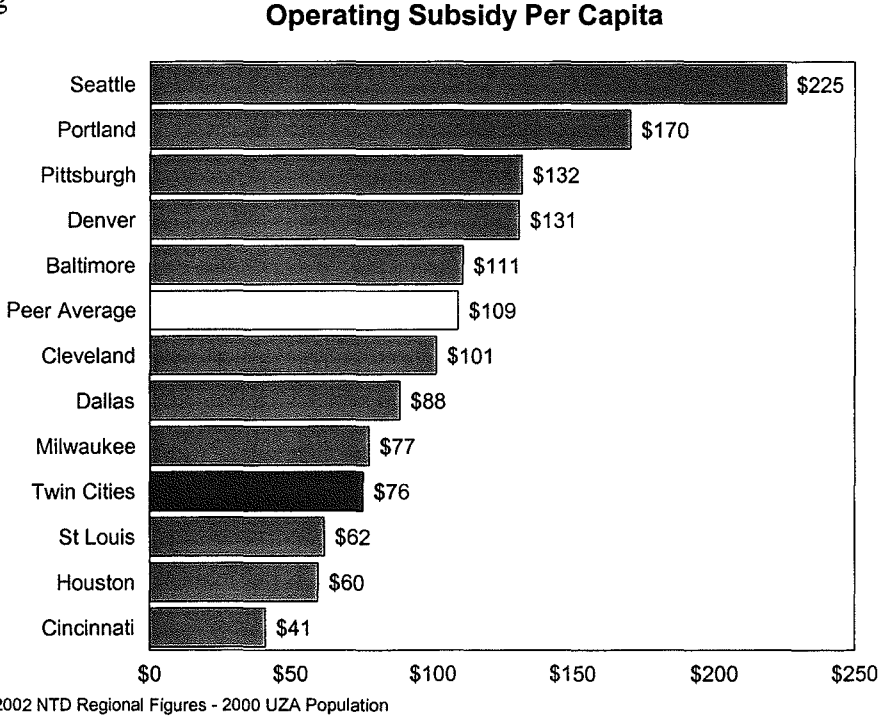
The overall level of transit funding determines how much transit service can be provided. The Twin Cities area provided $105 per capita for transit service in 2002. This is compared to a peer average of $130, or 24% more transit funding. Seattle spends $260, about two and a half times more funding for transit than the Twin Cites area.



Low subsidy levels are one component of low transit funding.

Subsidy is calculated by taking the total cost of service and subtracting fares. Subsidy can include state and local subsidies, federal grants, interest earnings, lease earnings, and other self-generated funds

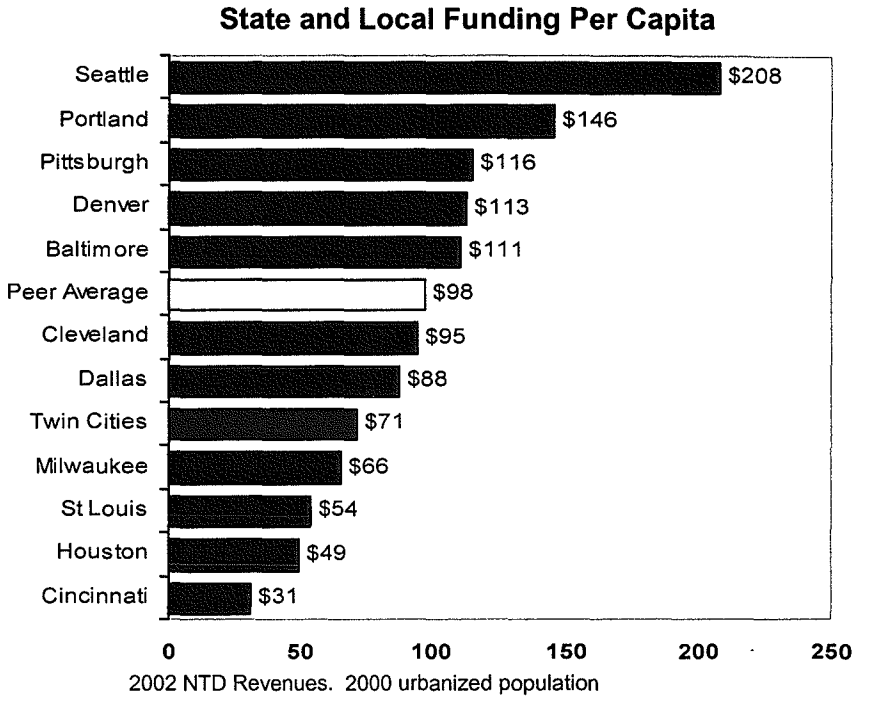
The amount of subsidy provided for transit is low in the Twin Cities area when compared to the peer regions. The Twin Cities provides a subsidy of $76 per capita for transit. The peer average is $109, about 44% more than the amount provided in the Twin Cities. At a subsidy of $225 per capita, Seattle provides three times as much.



The level of state and local funding support for Twin Cities transit is lower than in other regions.

The level of transit funding support from local and state governments is a critical factor in the performance of public transportation. The measure *local and state assistance per capita* is a common indicator of public commitment to adequate transit service.

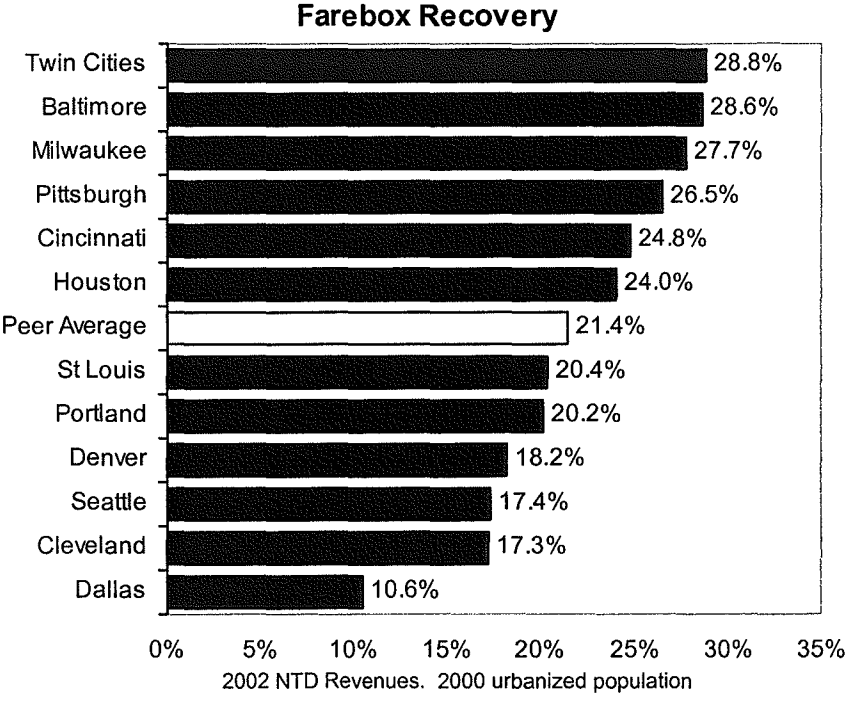
In 2002, the Twin Cities area received $71 per capita in local and state operating assistance. This total would need to increase by 37% to equal the peer group average of $98 per capita and almost double to reach Seattle's $208 per capita.



Transit riders pay a larger percentage of operating costs than users in other areas.

The region ranks first in the peer group in terms of farebox recovery—the percentage of operating costs covered by passenger fares. Fares paid by the region's transit riders cover 28.8% of transit operating costs compared to only 21.4% at the average region in the peer group.

Farebox recovery rates for the Twin Cities have historically remained fairly stable at about 31%. The farebox recovery rate declined in 2002 primarily because of the loss of passengers due to the economic downturn in the region.



Funding transit from state motor vehicle excise taxes is not a typical transit funding mechanism.

The Twin Cities area's major sources of funding for transit operating subsidies are the motor vehicle sales tax (MVST) and from the state general fund. This is a fairly unusual funding source for transit; only one other of the peer regions uses MVST as a transit funding source. Five of the 11 regions have a local sales tax as the primary source of transit funding, the most predominate method of funding transit.

Table 8-1. Major Sources of Funding for 11 Peer Transit Systems

Local Sales Tax	6 of 11 systems
Property Tax	2 of 11 systems
Petroleum Tax:	2 of 11 systems
Payroll Tax	2 of 11 systems
General Funds	3 of 11 systems
MVST	2 of 11 systems
Other Funds	3 of 11 systems

Table 8-2. Funding Source for Each of 11 Peer Transit Systems

Region	Largest Source of Funding	Second Largest Source
Baltimore	State Multimodal Fund (Gas Tax/MVST/Corporate Income)	
Cincinnati	Local Payroll Tax	State General
Cleveland	Local Sales Tax	
Dallas	Local Sales Tax	
Denver	Local Sales Tax	
Houston	Local Sales Tax	
Milwaukee	State General Fund	Property Tax
Pittsburgh	State/ Local General Funds	State Lottery/ Hotel/Other
Portland	Local Payroll Tax	Local Property Tax
Seattle	Local Sales Tax	Local Property Tax
St Louis	Local Sales Tax	
Twin Cities	State Motor Vehicle Sales Tax (MVST)	State General

Most peer transit systems have local control of their major funding sources.

Of the 11 peer regions, 8 have their major revenue source—and thus funding levels—under local rather than state control.

Table 8-3. Funding Control for Each of 11 Peer Transit Systems

Region	Funding Control
Baltimore	State
Buffalo	State
Cincinnati	Local
Cleveland	Local
Dallas	Local
Denver	Local
Houston	Local
Milwaukee	State
Pittsburgh	State & Local
Portland	Local
Seattle	Local
St. Louis	Local
Twin Cities Area	State

Chapter 6. Peer Agency Analysis

There are two services that can be directly compared to services in other regions. Metro Transit, being the largest transit provider in the region, can be compared to other large regional transit providers. Metro Mobility, the region's ADA service, can be compared to ADA programs. This chapter compares these two programs to similar programs in other regions.

Use of Peer Group Comparisons

The use of peer group comparisons for identifying differences among transit systems is a valuable tool for broad policy assessments. However, some caution should be taken. While the NTD data is reported using the same rules, differences exist among the systems that are not easily discerned from the data. Among these are:

- The institutional arrangements for delivering transits services differ among the regions served by the peer systems. Therefore, the proportion of the total regional transit services provided by the reporting system may vary. The relationships between agencies in the region can also affect reporting statistics. For example, in the Twin Cities area, other agencies provide smaller bus transit service, leaving Metro Transit providing service only with 40-foot and larger buses. Other agencies may provide a different mix of services.
- The extent of the service area compared to the urbanized area differs. While some transit services operate beyond the boundaries of their census-defined urbanized area, others service only a portion.
- The varying use of private contractors to provide transit service. This can affect the mix of relatively low-cost local and high-cost express service operated by the transit systems.

Metro Transit Peer Agency Comparisons

As the largest single transit provider in the Twin Cities region, Metro Transit has counterparts in other parts of the country that are comparable in the types of services provided and agency size. This allows for certain agency to agency comparisons. Whereas Chapter 6 aggregated all of the transit systems in a region to give a region-to-region comparison, this chapter compares Metro Transit to comparable transit providers elsewhere in the nation.

In previous audits, a six-peer transit system group was identified to benchmark Metro Transit operations; this group is a subset of the 11 peer regions. This audit continues this data series. The six peer transit systems are:

- Cleveland: Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA)
- Denver: Regional Transportation District (RTD)
- Houston: Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (Metro)
- Pittsburgh: Port Authority of Allegheny County (PAT)
- Portland: Tri-County Metropolitan Transit Authority (Tri-Met)
- Seattle: King County Department of Transportation (Metro)

All peer transit systems provide bus transit service. However, all other systems also operate other modes of transit such as light rail or inclined plane. Since Metro Transit operates only bus service, its performance is compared only to the bus service operated by peer agencies.

Metro Transit Peer Group Characteristics

Population and population density are important considerations in the development of peer groups. The service area is based on where transit services are operated. For bus services, the service area is defined as the area within ¾ mile of either side of a bus route.

Table 7-1. Demographic Characteristics of Metro Transit Peer Group

			Metro Transit Comparison	
Measure	Metro Transit	Six-Peer Group Avg.	Percent of Peer Avg.	Rank Among 7 (1 = Highest)
Service Area (2002 NTD)				
Population	1,877,916	1,898,345		3
Area (Sq. Miles)	894	1,272	54%*	5
Population Density	2,750	1,492*	184%*	2

Table Note: The peer group shows a wide variation in service area population and service area. Cleveland has the smallest service area at 458 square miles while Denver has a service area four times larger at 2,406 square miles. This wide range affects the area and population averages for the service area. Even so, Metro Transit statistics fall within the norms of the peer group.

Table 7-2. 2002 Operating Characteristics of Metro Transit Peer Group

Per 2002 NTD Measure	Metro Transit	Six-Peer Group Avg.	Peer Minimum	Peer Maximum
Passengers	69,589,375	69,362,321	45,157,626	94,777,606
Operating Expense	$191,673,162	$210,454,294	$157,203,255	$279,791,558
Peak Vehicles	841	873	544	1,227
Revenue Hours	2,064,977	2,344,443	1,575,860	3,137,905
Revenue Miles	25,735,999	31,759,095	19,724,412	44,782,410
Peak-to-Base Ratio	2.56	1.93	1.58	2.56

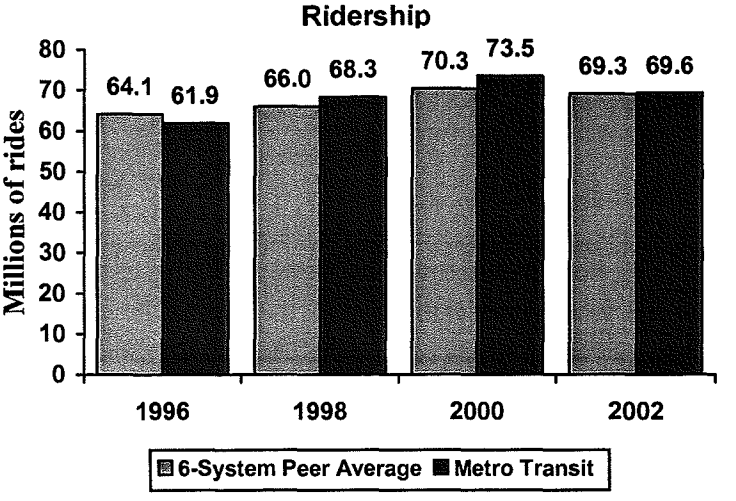
Table Note: This analysis includes all directly operated bus service provided by Metro Transit as reported in the NTD. Operating cost data may differ very slightly from the totals reported elsewhere in this audit, which excluded the service provided under contract by Metro Transit to opt-out providers. Also figures in other parts of this report may be reported under a different basis than those required by the federal government under the NTD.

One characteristic substantially different is that Metro Transit puts more service out during the peak travel times than other agencies, otherwise known as peak-to-base ratio. This is, in part, attributable to a higher-than-typical percentage of peak express service. Peak service is more costly than midday (all-day) service due to more costly labor guarantees, higher percentage of non-revenue travel time to and from garages, and lower vehicle utilization. Because of this, a high peak to base ratio can result in higher overall costs.

Metro Transit Peer Analysis

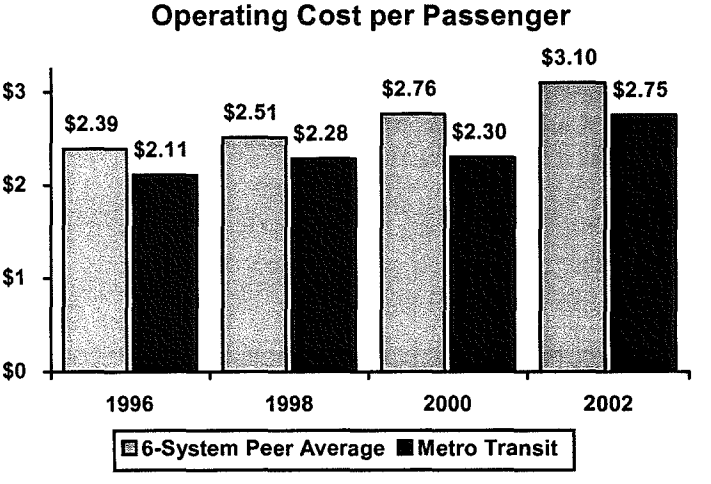
Metro Transit ridership grew faster than peer ridership despite recent declines.

Between 1996 and 2002, Metro Transit ridership increased 12.4%. This 12.4% increase was significantly larger than the average increase of 8.1% that occurred in the six Metro Transit peer transit systems. This increase is despite reductions from 2001 to 2002 due to the economic downturn, budget cuts, fare increases, and the impact of 9/11.



The cost per passenger for Metro Transit increased from 1996 but remained significantly below peer systems.

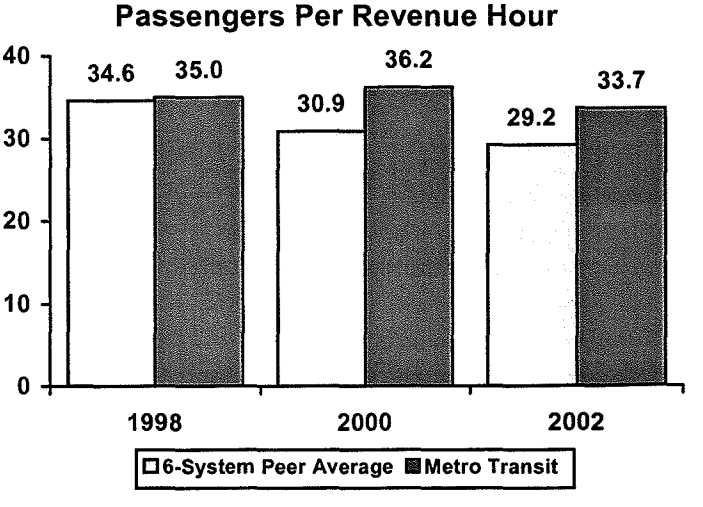
Between 1996 and 2002, the operating cost per passenger for Metro Transit's service increased 30.6%, almost exactly the same rate as the peers at 29.8%. In 2002, Metro Transit's operating cost per passenger was approximately 11% below other regions.



Metro Transit provides more rides per hour of service than its peers do.

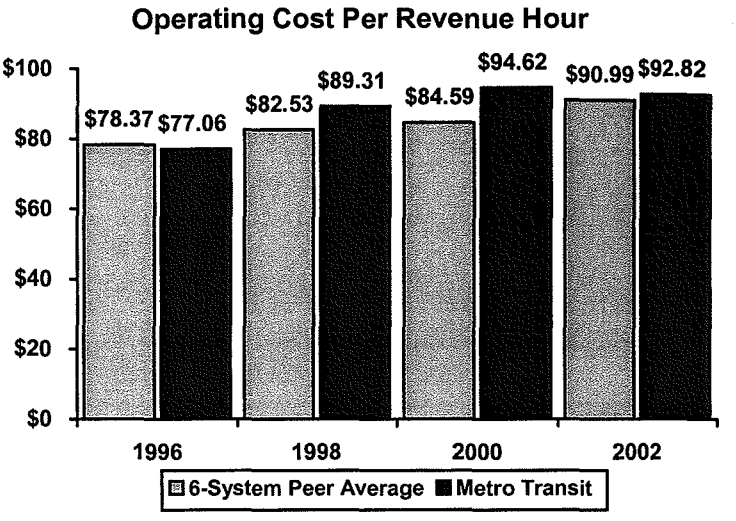
The number of passengers carried per revenue hour of service increased for Metro Transit from 1996 to 2000 but declined for peers during the same period. The Metro Transit trend reversed itself in 2002, where both Metro Transit and peer statistics declined.

For the total period, Metro Transit passengers per revenue hour declined by 7.7% and declined for peer systems 14.6%.



Metro Transit operating costs remain lower than its peers.

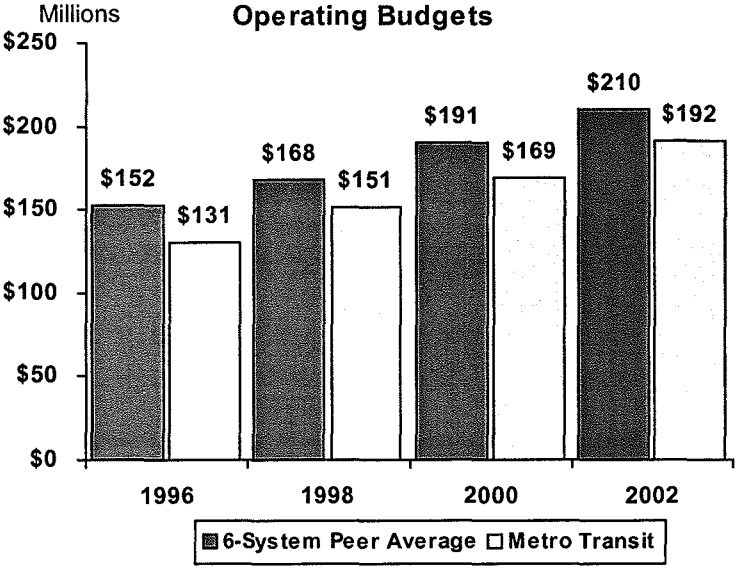
Metro Transit's operating cost per revenue hour increased 20.5% from 1996 to 2002. This was faster than the peer region average of 16.1% and slightly ahead of the 15% growth in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Even so, Metro Transit's operating cost per revenue hour remains within 2% of the peer average.



Metro Transit's operating budget has grown slightly faster than peer budgets but so has Metro Transit's revenue hours.

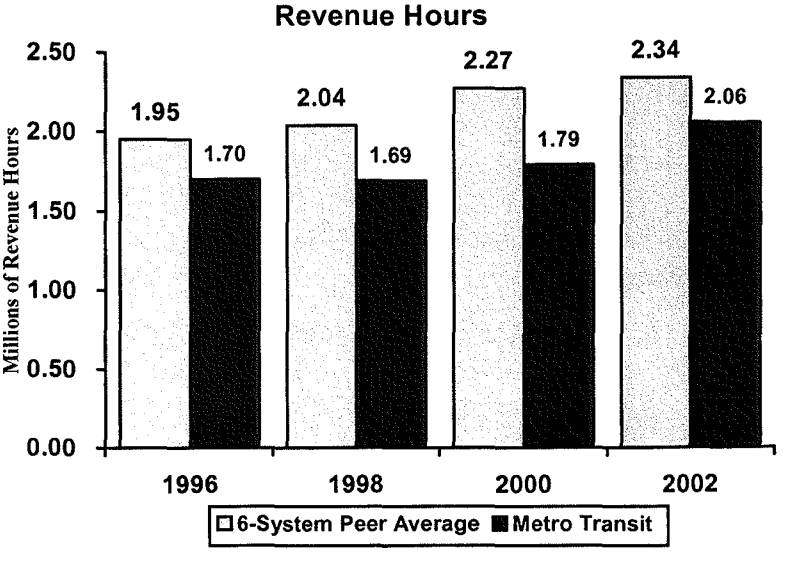
The budgets for both Metro Transit and for its peers increased between 1996 and 2002. Metro Transit's grew faster during this period, 47%, as opposed to the budgets of its peers, which grew 38%.

Inflation as measured by the CPI during this time increased 15% and service levels as measured by the number of revenue hours also increased 14.7%.



Despite increasing its revenue hours, the overall number of revenue hours provided by Metro Transit still lags behind peers.

The number of hours of transit service provided by Metro Transit grew 14.7% from 1996 to 2002 while it peers averaged 13.6%. Even with this growth, Metro Transit provided about 12% fewer revenue hours than its peers in 2002, despite providing almost the same total number of rides.



METRO MOBILITY PEER AGENCY COMPARISONS

USE OF PEER GROUP COMPARISONS

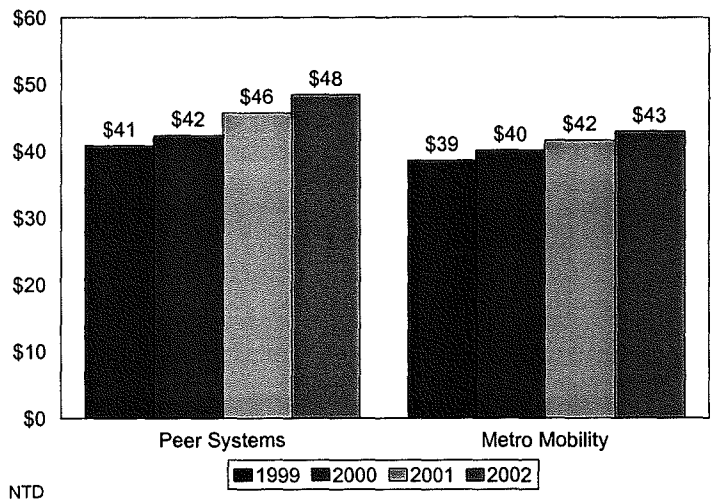
The Americans with Disabilities Act requires all major metropolitan areas with regular route transit service provide dial-a-ride service for persons with disabilities that restrict them from using the regular route transit system. Metro Mobility is the program in the Twin Cities that fulfills this requirement.

Other regions also have similar transit programs for persons with disabilities. A peer group was developed from the eleven peer region group used in other chapters. These regions include Baltimore, Cincinnati, Houston, Pittsburgh, Portland, Seattle, St. Louis, Dallas, and Denver. Two regions were removed from the peer group because of NTD data reporting irregularities - Milwaukee and Cleveland.

Metro Mobility operating cost per hour of service are lower than peer systems.

Metro Mobility costs per hour of service are substantially lower than that of its peers. This can be attributable to several factors. Metro Mobility contracts for its service and recently received favorable bids. Also the Twin Cities generally has lower transit labor costs when compared to other regions. Metro Mobility management has also taken steps to improve service efficiency.

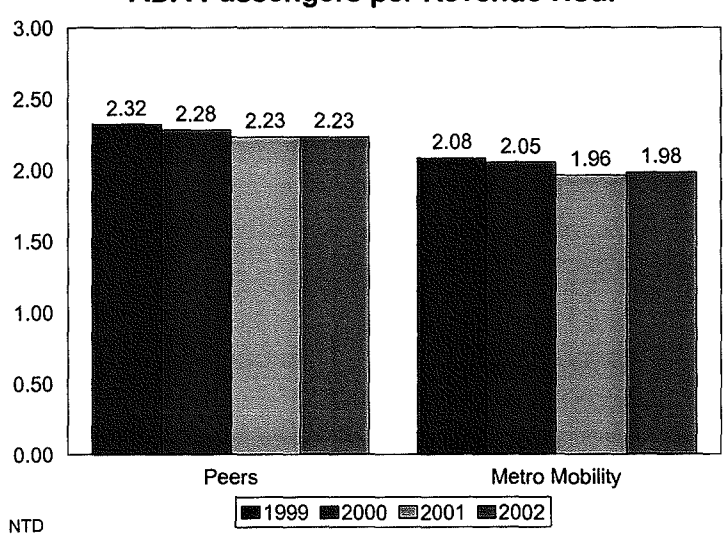
ADA Service Cost per Revenue Hour



Nationally ADA productivity has been declining due to requirements for a goal of zero trip denials.

Metro Mobility serves fewer passengers per hour of service. One factor in this is that the Twin Cities is a very low density region compared to other regions. This is due to a number of factors - lack of major barriers like oceans or mountains, strong preference for single family homes, a higher percentage of wetlands, floodplains, lakes, and rivers and other unbuildable land and a higher proportion of housing built after World War II. This lower than average passengers per hour also mirrors Metro Transit's experience.

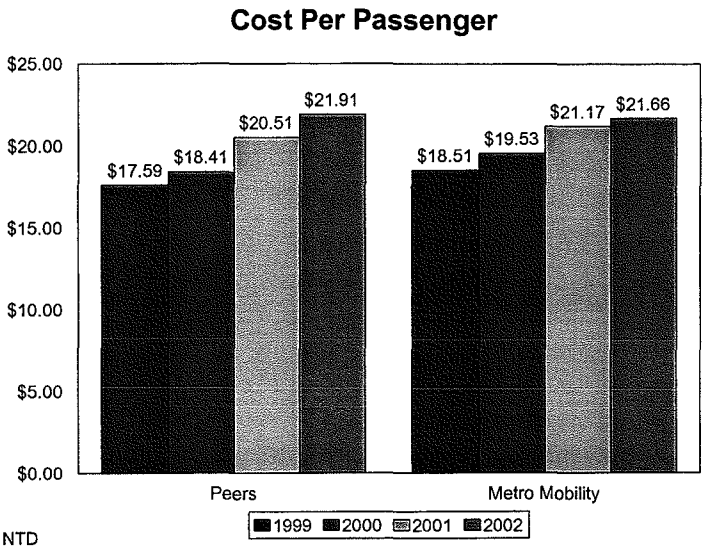
ADA Passengers per Revenue Hour



The numbers of passengers per hour of service has been declining both nationally and locally. This has been in response to a national effort to reduce trip denial rates. Recent court cases have set a goal of zero trip denial rates due to a lack of availability of service and this has meant providers have had to add additional service to meet this demand. The result has been a decrease in productivity.

Metro Mobility's cost per passenger mirror national peers.

Because Metro Mobility operating costs per hour are lower but also are the number of passengers that it carries per hour, Metro Mobility costs per passenger are very close to its peers. Also Metro Mobility's costs per passenger increased 17% over the last four years, compared to 24.6% for its peers.



Chapter 7. Funding

Significant changes have occurred in the funding of Twin Cities transit services over the last 10 years.

Funding sources have increased in absolute terms about 25% between 1994 and 2003. But there have been major variations in individual funding sources over this time.

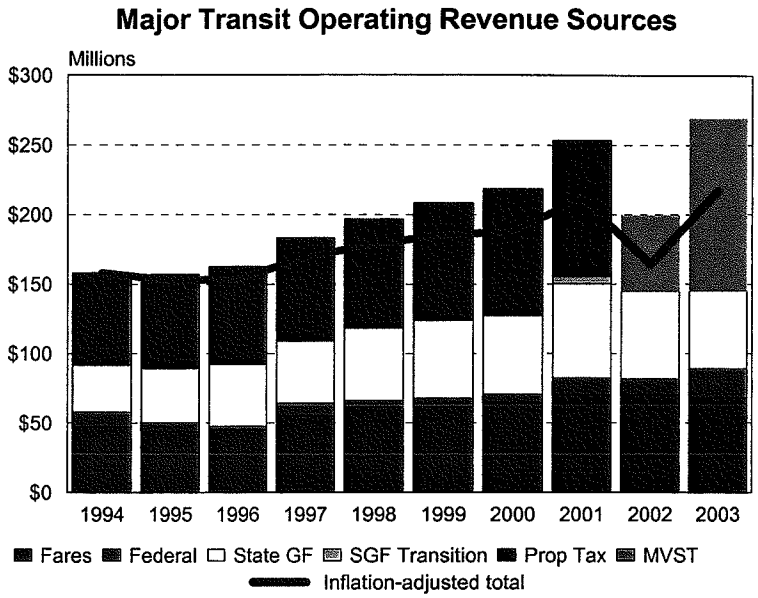


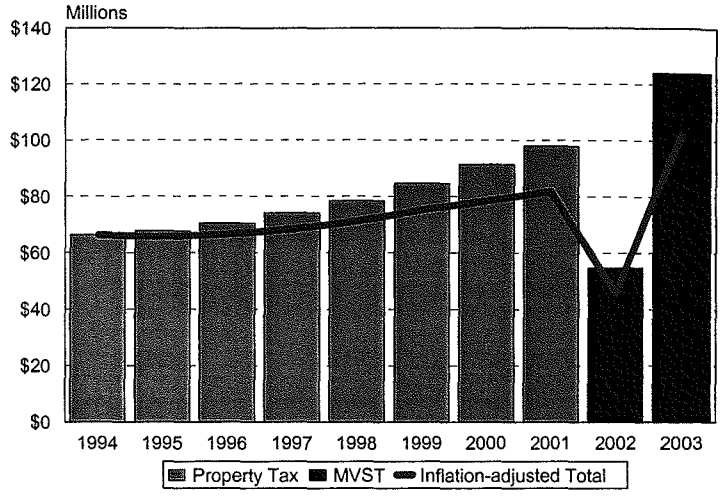
Table 8-1. Major Funding Sources for Transit

Year	Fares	Federal Grants	State General Fund	State General Fund Transition	Property Tax	MVET
1994	47,010,060	10,828,130	33,810,190		66,315,560	
1995	43,701,820	6,429,139	39,166,180		67,661,280	
1996	45,223,000	2,502,950	44,628,520		70,415,610	
1997	55,035,050	9,215,990	44,794,530		74,114,840	
1998	61,382,670	4,727,802	52,110,000		78,396,540	
1999	61,488,440	6,250,224	55,993,700		84,547,390	
2000	64,430,460	6,159,123	56,592,500		91,270,010	
2001	70,073,880	12,261,180	68,101,000	5,000,000	97,911,490	
2002	70,246,230	11,578,340	62,771,000			54,968,270
2003	68,043,630	21,039,960	55,893,000			124,178,900

Table Note: Fare revenues and federal grants include only funds earned or passed through the Metropolitan Council and exclude funds directly earned by Opt-Out services or Community-based programs. Table does not show all funding sources, only major funding sources.

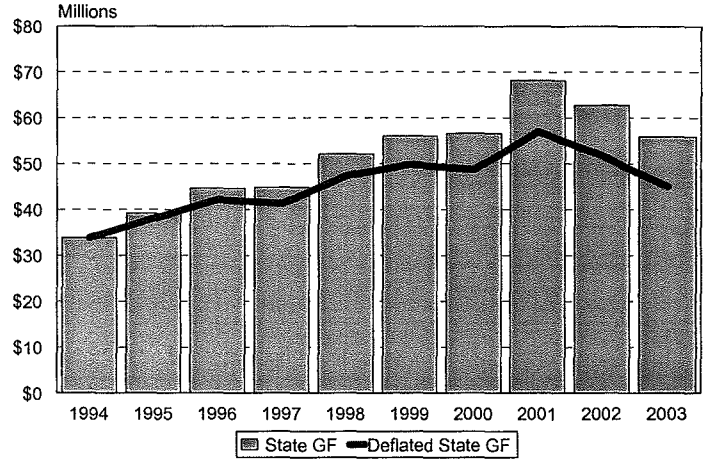
One major change in funding occurred in 2001, when the Legislature ended the use of property taxes for transit service and replaced it with the Motor Vehicle Sales Tax (MVST). Also, because the property tax was levied on a calendar-year basis and the MVST is allocated on the state July-to-June fiscal calendar year, there were six months in 2002 when funds from neither source were received. On an inflation-adjusted basis the property tax/MVST has been increasing over time in real dollars.

Transit Operating Revenues: Property Tax/MVST



As the property tax/MVST has been increasing, the second largest funding source, state General Fund appropriations, increased since 1993 both in absolute dollars and in inflation-adjusted dollars despite significant declines in the past two years.

Transit Operating Revenues: State General Fund



Excludes $5 M of transition funds in 2001

Fare revenues have remained relatively at the same levels since 1997 in terms of real dollars. This was achieved through periodic fare increases to keep up with inflation and to offset lost fare revenues that occurred when ridership declined due to the downturn in the economy and the effects of 9/11. Since 1994 there were fare adjustments in 1995, 1996, 2001, and 2003.

Transit Operating Revenues: Fares

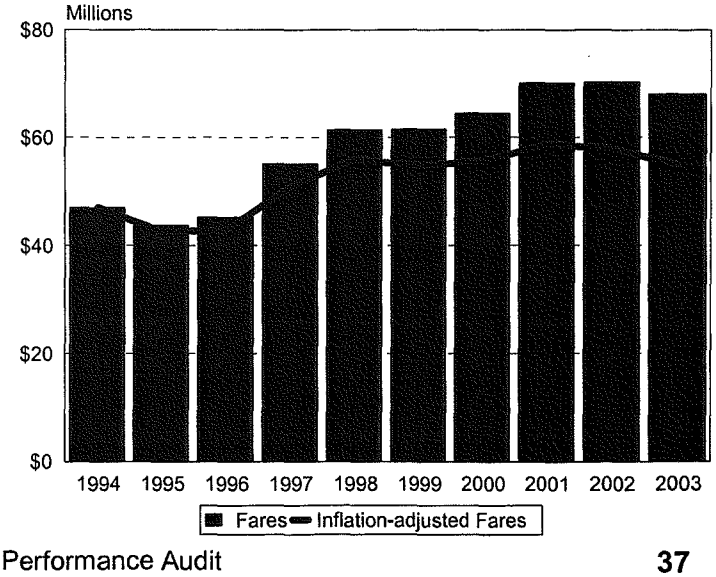
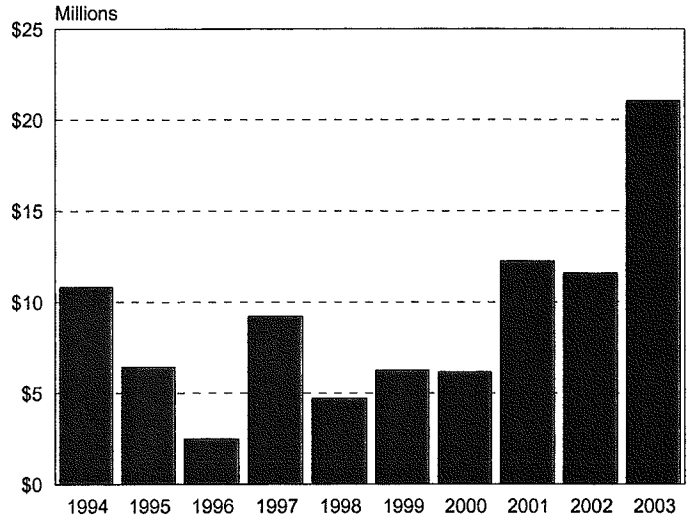


Table 8-2. History of Fares, 1970 - 2003

	Regular Fares						Social Fares		
	Base	Express	Peak	Peak/ Express	Max Zone	Discount	Youth	Seniors	Limited Mob
1970	$0.30	$0.05	N/A	N/A	$0.50	$0.00	Free	Free	N/A
1975	$0.30	$0.05	N/A	N/A	$0.25	$0.00	$0.10	Free	$0.15
1976	$0.30	$0.10	N/A	N/A	$0.20	$0.00	$0.10	Free	$0.15
1977	$0.30	$0.10	N/A	N/A	$0.25	$0.00	$0.10	Free	$0.15
1979 (July)	$0.40	$0.10	N/A	N/A	$0.25	$0.00	$0.10	Free/$.10	$0.15
1980 (April)	$0.50	$0.10	N/A	N/A	$0.25	$0.00	$0.20	Free/$.10	$0.20
1981 (July)	$0.60	$0.10	N/A	N/A	$0.40	$0.00	$0.20	$0.10	$0.20
1982	$0.60	$0.10	$0.15	N/A	$0.40	$0.00	$0.25	$0.10	$0.25
1989	$0.50	$0.25	$0.25	N/A	$0.25	$0.00	$0.25	$0.10	$0.25
1991	$0.85	$0.25	$0.25	N/A	$0.25	$0.30	$0.25	$0.25	$0.25
1993	$0.85	$0.25	$0.25	N/A	$0.25	$0.25	$0.25	$0.25	$0.25
1993	$1.00	$0.50	$0.25	N/A	N/A	$0.20	$0.25	$0.25	$0.25
1995	$1.00	$0.50	$0.25	N/A	N/A	$0.15	$0.50	$0.50	$0.50
1996	$1.00	$0.50	$0.50	N/A	N/A	10%	$0.50	$0.50	$0.50
2001 (July)	$1.25	$0.50	$0.50	N/A	N/A	10%	$0.50	$0.50	$0.50
2003 (August)	$1.25	$0.50	$0.50	$0.25	N/A	10%	$0.50	$0.50	$0.50

Transit operating costs are not directly eligible for federal funding. There are two ways that federal money can be used for transit operating costs. The first involves using federal formula funds for eligible preventative maintenance costs. The second involves the use of federal money for start-up costs of new services. The amounts used for these purposes have varied over this time period depending on individual projects and the use of capital funds to offset shortfalls in subsidy funding

Transit Operating Revenues: Federal Funds



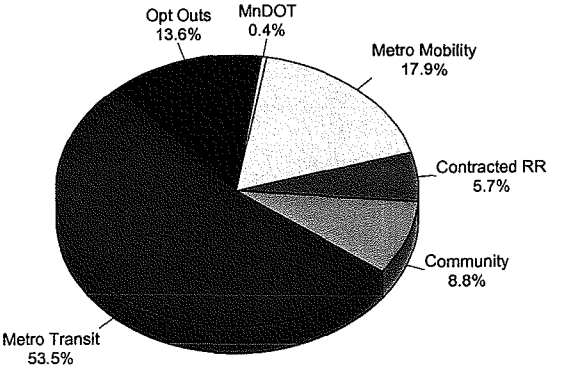
Chapter 8. Capital Investments

This chapter looks at three transit capital investment categories: (1) vehicle fleet, (2) park-and-rides, and (3) transit corridors, which include bus-only shoulders on freeways, arterial corridors and dedicated transitways.

Vehicle Fleet

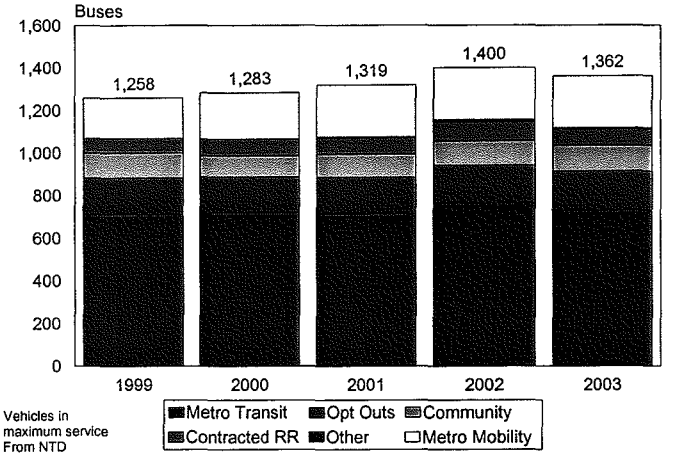
The core of any transit system is its vehicle fleet. In 2003, the maximum number of buses used on any given day in the Twin Cites was 1,362. Over half of these vehicles were used by Metro Transit, with the remaining vehicles used by the other programs in the region. These vehicles are overwhelmingly buses, although there are a small number of vans also used.

Vehicles in Maximum Service: 1,362 by Service Classification



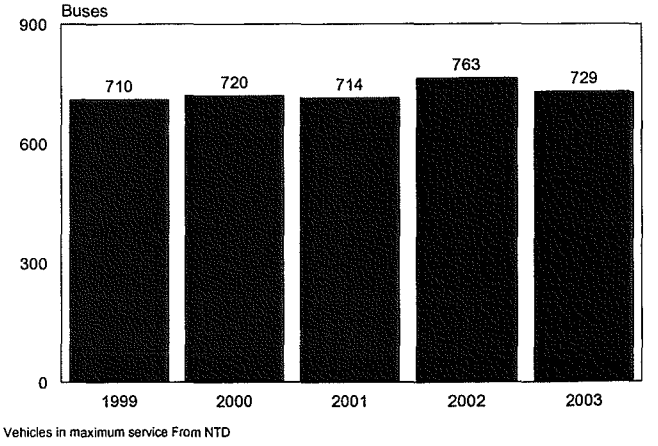
The number of vehicles in maximum service overall had been increasing since 1999 but declined in 2003 due to funding reductions. Changes in fleet size have not been uniform across all programs.

Vehicles in Maximum Service, by Year



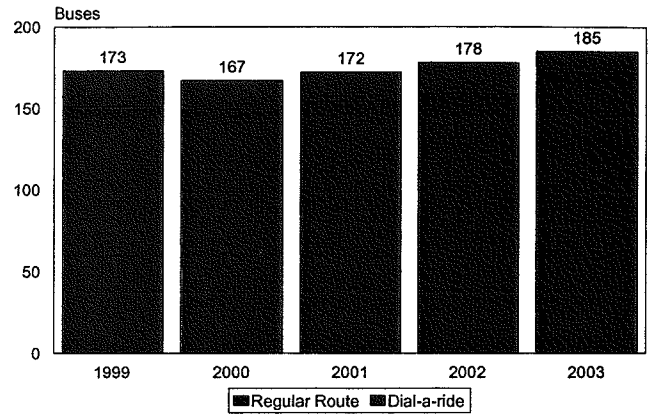
Metro Transit had the largest reduction in fleet between 2002 and 2003.

Metro Transit Fleet



The Opt-Out program fleet, in contrast, has increased from 1999 to 2003. This is in part due to increases in operating budgets and also due to greater reliance on regular-route buses. In 1999, there were 151 regular-route buses and 22 dial-a-ride buses but in 2003, there were 172 regular-route buses and only 13 dial-a-ride buses.

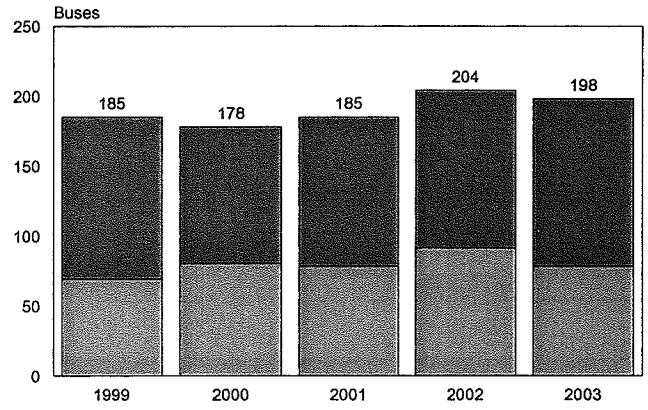
Opt-Out Fleet



Vehicles in maximum service From NTD

The Contracted Regular Route and Community programs share some buses and, therefore are shown together. Annual variation is related to changes in levels of service and shifts between using smaller or larger buses on particular routes.

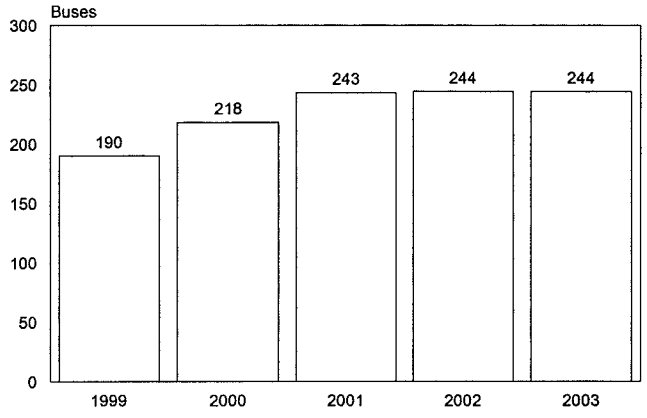
Community/Contracted Vehicles



Vehicles in maximum service From NTD

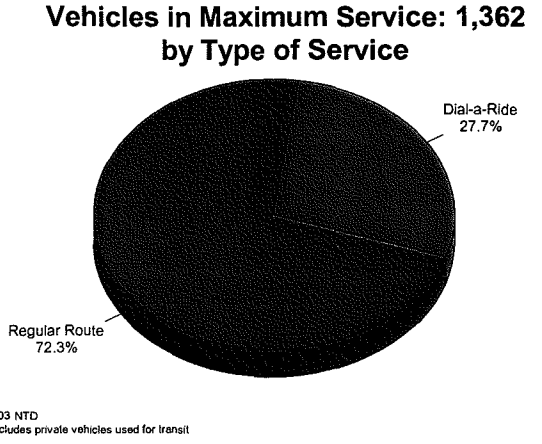
The Metro Mobility fleet expanded in 2000/2001 and then has remained stable.

Metro Mobility Fleet



Vehicles in maximum service. From NTD

About three-quarters of the total transit fleet is used for regular-route service. The balance is used for dial-a-ride service.



Over the last five years, the dial-a-ride fleet at maximum service increased 15%. The vehicle requirements for regular-route service increased 10% from 1999 to 2002 but declined from 2002 to 2003 by 4% due to service reductions.

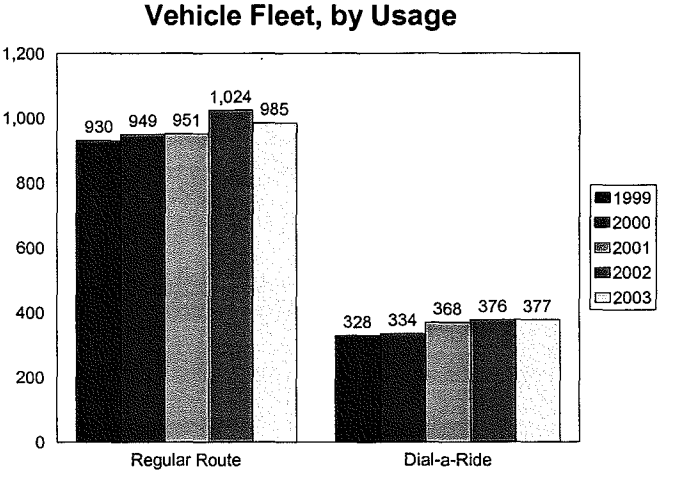


Table 9-1. Fleet Size, by Year and Provider

PEAK BUSES	1999 Reg Rt	1999 DAR	1999 Total	2000 Reg Rt	2000 DAR	2000 Total	2001 Reg Rt	2001 DAR	2001 Total	2002 Reg Rt	2002 DAR	2002 Total	2003 Reg Rt	2003 DAR	2003 Total
Metro Transit	710	0	710	720	0	720	714	0	714	763	0	763	729	0	729
Opt Outs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MVTA - Private	38	1	39	38	0	38	39	0	39	37	0	37	71	0	71
MVTA - MT	49	0	49	49	0	49	48	0	48	44	0	44	13	0	13
SMTC - Private	21	10	31	23	6	29	23	6	29	23	6	29	31	0	31
SMTC - MT	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MG - Private	4	2	6	4	3	7	5	3	8	4	3	7	4	3	7
MG - MT	16	0	16	16	0	16	16	0	16	20	0	20	19	0	19
Plymouth - Private	9	6	15	9	6	15	9	6	15	15	7	22	16	7	23
Plymouth - MT	10	0	10	10	0	10	14	0	14	14	0	14	13	0	13
Shakopee	0	3	3	0	3	3	0	3	3	0	3	3	3	3	6
Prior Lake	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	0	2
Subtotal Opt Outs	151	22	173	149	18	167	154	18	172	159	19	178	172	13	185
Community	0	116	116	0	98	98	0	107	107	0	113	113	0	120	120
Contracted RR	69	0	69	80	0	80	78	0	78	91	0	91	78	0	78
U of M	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	5	5	0	5	0	0	0
MnDOT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	6	6	0	6
Metro Mo - Private	0	57	57	0	85	85	0	88	88	0	90	90	0	95	95
Metro Mo - Council	0	133	133	0	133	133	0	155	155	0	154	154	0	149	149
Total	930	328	1258	949	334	1283	951	368	1319	1024	376	1400	985	377	1362

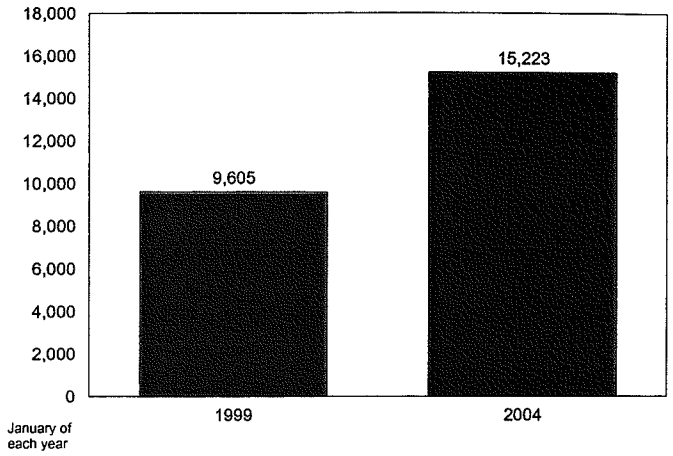
Note: Metro Transit Buses reported in service for Opt Outs are reflected as part of the opt out fleet
Note: Excludes private automobiles used for volunteer service

Park-and-Ride Facilities

The Twin Cities area had 124 active park-and-ride lots as of January, 2004. There were 15,233 spaces available for transit riders. In January 1999, there were 9,605 spaces, a growth of 59% in four years.

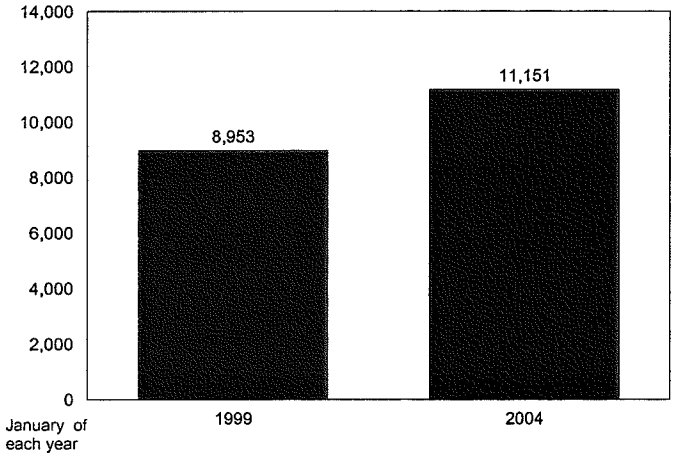
Even though there are 124 lots, 62% of spaces are concentrated in the 15 largest lots. The two largest, the Burnsville Transit Station and Foley Park and Ride, have over 16% of the region's total park-and-ride capacity.

Park-and-Ride Spaces, 1999 & 2004



In January 2004, 11,151 park-and-ride spaces were in use on an average day, compared to 8,953 in January 1999, an increase of 87%. 73% of available spaces were in use in January 2004, versus 62% in 1999.

Park-and-Ride Spaces Used, 1999 & 2004



Spaces are provided through three types of arrangements. Some park-and-rides are owned by transit agencies like Metro Transit or Opt-Out organizations. Others are owned by Mn/DOT, typically on excess highway right-of-way and used under agreement between Mn/DOT and the transit agency. Third, some are joint use with private entities like theaters, shopping centers, or churches. Table 9-2 shows active park-and-rides as of January 2004.

Park-and-Ride Spaces, by Owner, 1999 & 2004

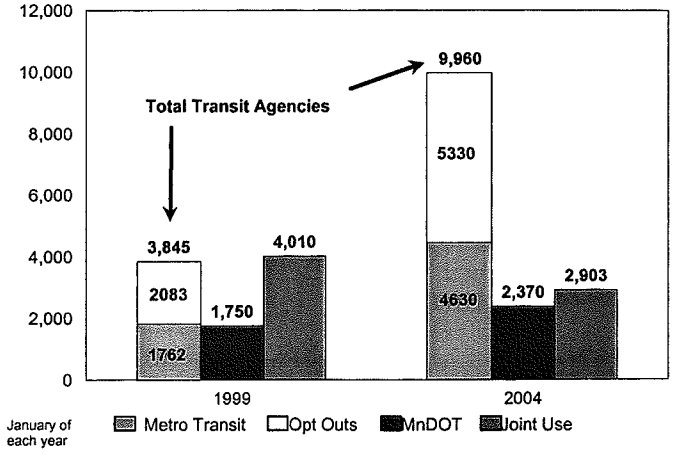


Table 9-2. Metro Area Active Park-and-Ride Facilities

Park-and-Ride Facility	Type	Spaces
Foley Blvd. (between Coon Rapids Blvd. and East River Rd)	Metro Transit	1,243
95th Ave. NE. & I-35W	Metro Transit	800
Woodbury Theater Park and Ride - 1400 block of Queens Dr.	Metro Transit	550
Cottage Grove Park & Ride	Metro Transit	494
95th & Noble	Metro Transit	410
Northtown Shopping Center Transit Hub - 85th & Jefferson	Metro Transit	340
Brooklyn Center - 65th Ave. N. & Brooklyn Blvd.	Metro Transit	242
Champlin City Lot - 117th Ave. N. & West River Rd.	Metro Transit	147
Metro Transit - Hwy. 252 & 73rd Ave.	Metro Transit	116
Wayzata Blvd. & Barry Ave.	Metro Transit	91
Champlin Lot - Dayton Road & Colburn Ave.	Metro Transit	68
Hopkins Transit Center - Co. Rd. 3 & 8th Ave. So.	Metro Transit	65
Metro Transit - Como & Eustis	Metro Transit	45
Nicollet & 62nd	Metro Transit	19
	Metro Transit Subtotal	**4,630**
Mn/DOT - Co. Rd. 73 & I-394	Mn/DOT	463
Riverdale - Northdale Blvd. & 123rd Ave. NW	Mn/DOT	400
171st Ave. NW. & Tyler St. NW	Mn/DOT	315
Mn/DOT - Hwy. 61 & Co. Rd. C	Mn/DOT	207
Co. Rd. H & I-35W	Mn/DOT	206
Louisiana Ave. Transit Center - I-394 & Louisiana Ave.	Mn/DOT	172
85th Ave./Hwy. 169/Co. Rd. 81	Mn/DOT	131
Plymouth Road Transit Center - I-394 & Plymouth Rd.	Mn/DOT	111
I-394 & General Mills Blvd.	Mn/DOT	110
Garfield & 7th Ave.	Mn/DOT	80
I-394 and Xenia Ave.	Mn/DOT	59
Hwy. 61 & Lower Afton Rd.	Mn/DOT	41
Rice & I-694	Mn/DOT	40
Hwy. 7 & Vinehill Rd.	Mn/DOT	25
Hwy. 7 & Texas Ave.	Mn/DOT	10
	Mn/DOT Subtotal	**2,370**
Burnsville Transit Station - Hwy. 13 & Nicollet	Opt-Out	1,260
Maple Grove Transit Station - Elm Creek Blvd. and Main St	Opt-Out	940
Southwest Metro Transit Station - Technology Dr. & Prairie Center Dr.	Opt-Out	650
Eagan Transit Station - Pilot Knob & Yankee Doodle	Opt-Out	610
Apple Valley Transit Station & Carmike Cinema & Watson	Opt-Out	568
Blackhawk - Cliff Road & I-35E	Opt-Out	361
Palomino Hills Park & Ride - Christus Victor Lutheran Church	Opt-Out	312
Market Blvd. - Pauley Rd. & Market	Opt-Out	120
Shady Oak Rd. & Hwy. 212	Opt-Out	70
Savage Park & Ride - Co. Rd. 42 & Huntington	Opt-Out	182

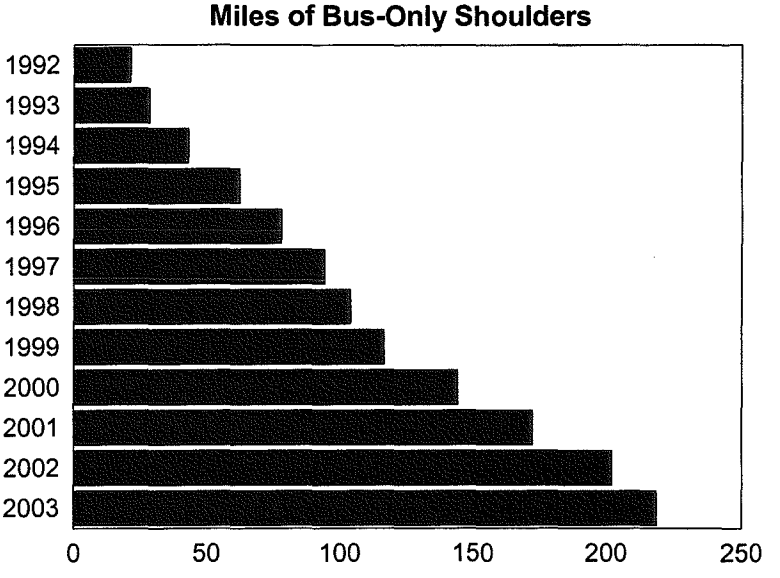
Park-and-Ride Facility	Type	Spaces
Hwy. 55 & Co. Rd. 73	Opt-Out	65
Walnut & Hwy. 212	Opt-Out	62
Municipal Lot - west of Main St. between Eagle Creek	Opt-Out	65
Chanhassen Lot - Hwy 169 & TH101/TH 212	Opt-Out	30
City Hall - Belle Plaine	Opt-Out	20
Lions Park - Triangle Lane & Creek Lane	Opt-Out	15
	Opt-Out Subtotal	**5,330**
Rosedale Shopping Center - Co. Rd. B2 & Snelling	Joint Use	175
Southdale Shopping Center - 69th & York Ave.	Joint Use	100
Faith United Methodist Church - 1530 Oakdale Ave.	Joint Use	100
West St. Paul Sports Complex - Oakdale and Wentworth	Joint Use	100
St. Croix Valley Recreation Center	Joint Use	100
Target - Chaska	Joint Use	100
Woodbury Lutheran Church - Afton and Queens Rd.	Joint Use	90
Maplewood Mall - UA Theatre	Joint Use	85
Seagate Technology - 1280 Disc Drive	Joint Use	85
Four Seasons Mall - Pilgrim & Lancaster	Joint Use	83
Shepherd of the Grove Church - Hemlock & West Eagle Lake	Joint Use	75
Crosswinds Church - Ranchview & West Fish Lake Rd.	Joint Use	75
Messiah United Methodist Church	Joint Use	75
Roseville City Hall - Co. Rd. C & Civic Center Dr.	Joint Use	60
Mermaid Supper Club - Hwy. 10 & Co. Rd. H	Joint Use	60
Salem Covenant Church - Silver Lake Rd. & 5th St. NW	Joint Use	50
Christ Episcopal Church - Afton Rd. & Queen Rd.	Joint Use	50
Preserve Village Mall - Hwy. 169 & Anderson Lakes Pkwy.	Joint Use	50
Plymouth Covenant Church - Old Rockford Rd. & Vicksburg Lane	Joint Use	50
Brooklyn Evangelical Lutheran - Zane Ave. & 69th Ave.	Joint Use	45
Westwood Lutheran Church - Cedar Lake Rd. & Flag Ave.	Joint Use	40
Community Center - 167th block of Valley View Rd.	Joint Use	40
Mall of America - 24th Ave. & Killebrew Drive	Joint Use	36
Transfiguration Lutheran Church - 110th St. & Goodrich	Joint Use	35
Church of the Nazarene - Hwy. 252 & 73rd Ave. N.	Joint Use	32
Atonement Lutheran Church - Portland & 98th St.	Joint Use	30
Woodlake Lutheran Church - 76th & Oliver Ave. S.	Joint Use	30
Community of the Cross Lutheran	Joint Use	30
St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran - 84th & France	Joint Use	30
Signal Hills Shopping Center - Robert St. & Orme St.	Joint Use	30
Blainebrook Bowl - Paul Parkway & Hwy. 65	Joint Use	30
Maple Valley Shopping Center - Revere Lane & 97th Ave.	Joint Use	30
Wells Fargo Plaza - 7900 Xerxes Ave. S.	Joint Use	25
Normandale Village	Joint Use	25
St. Edward's Catholic Church - Nesbitt Rd. & 94th St.	Joint Use	25
Steele St. & Minnetonka Blvd. (north side of Minnetonka)	Joint Use	25
Spring Gate Shopping Center: Duluth St. & W. Service Rd. of Hwy. 100	Joint Use	25

Park-and-Ride Facility	Type	Spaces
Village Square Shopping Center	Joint Use	25
Beth El Synagogue - 26th St. & Toledo Ave.	Joint Use	25
Municipal Lot - 3rd St. & Broadway	Joint Use	25
Redemption Lutheran Church - 10th Ave S & Old Shakopee Rd	Joint Use	25
Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran - Larpenteur & Arcade/Hwy. 61	Joint Use	25
Atonement Lutheran - Silver Lake Rd. & Rice Creek Rd.	Joint Use	25
Golden Valley Lutheran Church	Joint Use	25
Faith-Lilac Way Lutheran Church - 42nd Ave. & Welcome	Joint Use	25
Navarre Center Parking Lot - Co. Rd. 15 & Co. Rd. 19	Joint Use	25
Richfield Municipal Pool - 66th Street & Park Ave.	Joint Use	25
St. Luke's Lutheran Church - 1701 W. Old Shakopee Rd.	Joint Use	25
North of City Hall - 17th & Hadley	Joint Use	25
Hwy 13 & Eagle Creek Ave.	Joint Use	25
Cub Foods - Centerville Rd. & Meadowlands Dr.	Joint Use	25
Wayzata Junior High - Wayzata Blvd. & Barry Ave.	Joint Use	20
Municipal Parking Lot - 3rd St. & Water St.	Joint Use	20
Municipal Lot - Little Canada Rd. & McMenemy St.	Joint Use	20
St. Phillip's Lutheran Church - Hwy. 65 & W. Moore Lake Dr.	Joint Use	20
Servant of Christ Lutheran Church - Hayden Lake Rd.	Joint Use	20
Public Works - Main St. & Co. Rd. 14	Joint Use	20
Guilliam Ball Park - 12100 block of Minnetonka Blvd	Joint Use	20
Creekside Community Center - 98th St. & Penn	Joint Use	20
Minnetonka Blvd., west of Cottagewood Rd.	Joint Use	20
City Hall - Minnetonka Blvd. & Northhome	Joint Use	20
City Hall - Country Club Rd. & Co. Rd. 19	Joint Use	20
Lino Park - Lake Dr. & Lois Lane	Joint Use	20
Mound Post Office - Co. Rd. 15 & Auditors Rd.	Joint Use	15
Aldrich Arena - White Bear Ave. & Ripley	Joint Use	15
St. Mary's Catholic Church - 5th St. & Pine	Joint Use	15
Praise Christian Center - Colorado & 41st Ave. No.	Joint Use	15
Old Public Works Facility - Centerville Rd. & Heritage	Joint Use	13
White Bear Shopping Center - South Lake Ave. & Whitaker	Joint Use	12
Marina Center - Co. Rd. 15 & Island Dr.	Joint Use	12
St. Joseph's Church - Elm Street & Rice Lake Drive	Joint Use	12
Fairview Ave. & Excelsior Blvd.	Joint Use	10
Co. Rd. 60 & Minnetonka Blvd. (SW. corner of intersection)	Joint Use	10
Oak Park Plaza Shopping Center - 109th Ave. & University	Joint Use	10
Birchwood City Hall - Birchwood Ave. & Birch Street	Joint Use	10
Colonial Church - Colonial Way & Olinger Blvd.	Joint Use	10
Community Center - Hwy. 96 & Victoria	Joint Use	10
Tonka Bay City Hall - 4901 Manitou Rd. (Co. Rd. 19)	Joint Use	18
	Joint Use Subtotal	**2,903**
	Grand Total	**15,233**

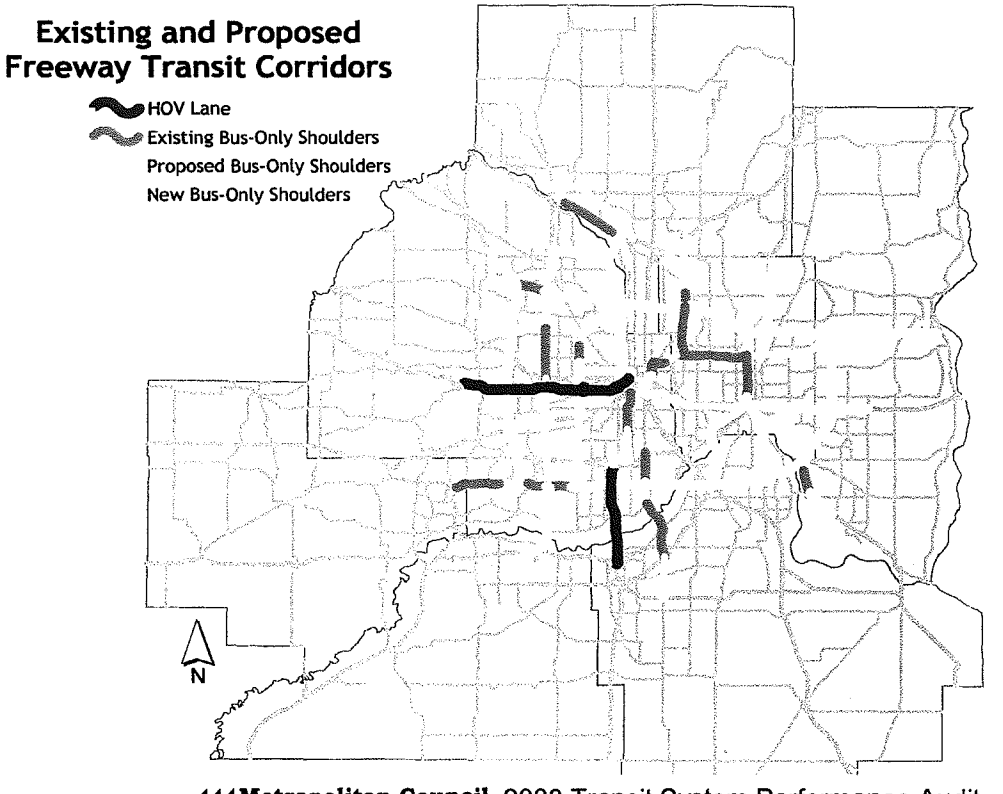
Freeway Transit Corridors: Shoulder Bus Lanes

State law allows shoulder lanes on highways to be used by buses to bypass congestion and to improve travel times over automobiles. Most of these bus shoulders are 14 feet wide, wider than the typical shoulder which was constructed solely for automobile breakdowns and emergency vehicles. These lanes are also signed as being for bus use only. In 1992, the Twin Cities first bus-only shoulder lane was constructed. Since that time, there has been a dramatic growth in the number of bus-only shoulder lanes in the Twin Cities.

Year	Total Miles	Miles Added
	21.29	21.2
1993	28.52	7.23
1994	43.09	14.57
1995	62.56	19.47
1996	78.18	15.62
1997	94.36	16.18
1998	104.0	9.64
1999	116.54	12.54
2000	144.18	27.64
2001	172.53	28.35
2002	202.03	29.5
2003	218.73	16.7

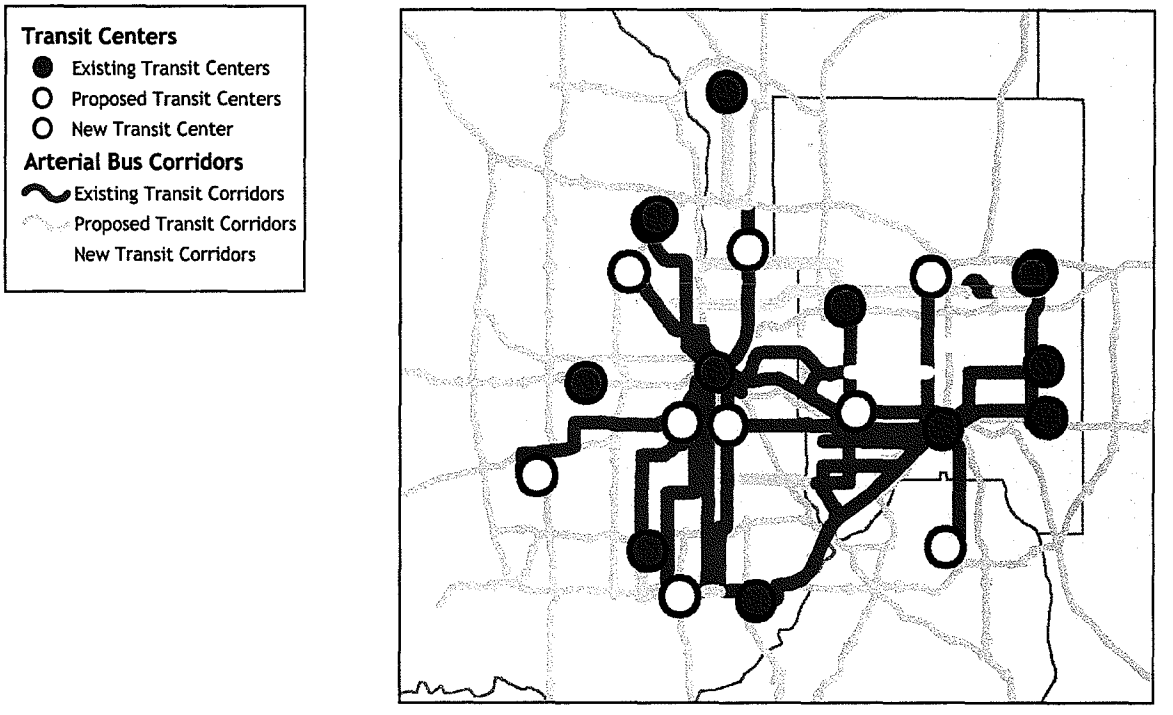


Even with the growth of bus-only shoulder lanes, much of the system does not yet have these lanes. Additional construction, however, is planned for the future. The rate of addition of new lanes will be determined by available funding.



Arterial Transit Corridors

Arterial corridors are major local streets where high frequency bus transit operates. These corridors act as collectors for other routes and are on major local thoroughfares like University Avenue, Lake Street, Central Avenue, Snelling Avenue, and West 7th Street. Much of the system ridership is concentrated on these routes. These routes are being developed for amenities like limited stop routes, signal prioritization, and real-time information systems. Metro Transit is developing a plan for adding to the routes that have these types of amenities.



Dedicated Transit Corridors

In the 2025 Transportation Policy Plan, the Metropolitan Council adopted a plan to develop a network of transitways throughout the Twin Cities. This plan identified 11 corridors for further study. As of June 2004, the status of the following corridors is:

Hiawatha: The first leg of the light-rail line (downtown Minneapolis to Fort Snelling) opened June 2004. The entire line (to the Mall of America) will open late 2004.

Minneapolis Northwest: Preliminary design is under way for bus rapid transit. Station and park-and-ride design contracts have been awarded. Application has been made to the state for funding.

Northstar: Preliminary engineering is completed for a commuter rail line operating on the Burlington Northern railroad line running from downtown Minneapolis to Big Lake. An Environmental Impact Statement Record of Decision was received from the FTA and it stated that the project meets FTA cost-effectiveness criteria. State funding is being sought for the required local match for federal funds.

Central Corridor: The Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is finalized. Selection of the locally preferred alternative is anticipated in the summer of 2004.

Southwest: The Hennepin County Board is currently reviewing a feasibility study of light-rail transit in this corridor.

Rush: The Rush Line Corridor Transit Study report was completed in 2001. Bus improvements and park/ride lots are being constructed in the corridor to provide short-term transit improvements.

Red Rock: A commuter rail feasibility study was completed in 2001. An Alternatives Analysis/Draft EIS study is planned to begin in 2004.

Northeast Diagonal: This corridor underwent preliminary study. No further work is planned because substantial feasibility issues were found.

Riverview: Riverview was changed from a dedicated transitway to an arterial busway. Currently shelter improvements appropriate for an arterial bus route are being implemented.

Cedar: A Phase Two study is currently under way for bus rapid transit. The Governor has recommended $10 million for preliminary engineering, work on a DEIS, and short term transit improvements.

I-494 South: Initial research was done on the feasibility of bus rapid transit in the south I-494 area but further work is awaiting a plan for reconstruction of the roadway.

Chapter 9. Progress toward Doubling Ridership

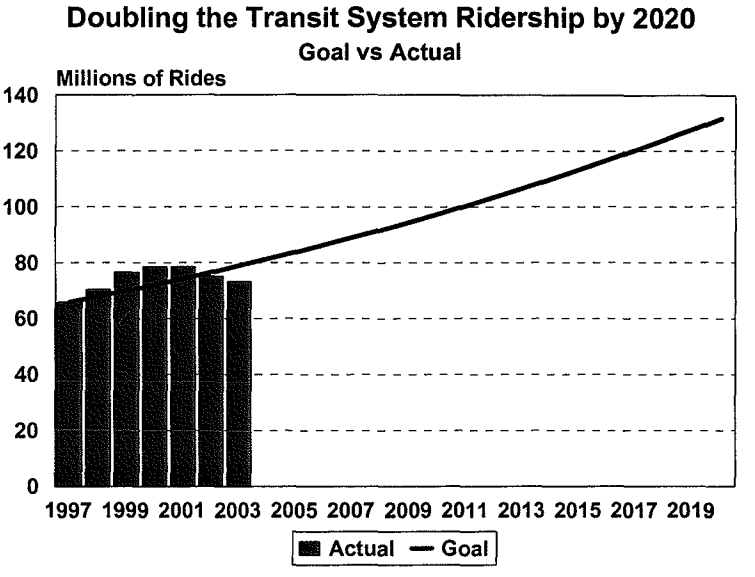
In 1998, the Metropolitan Council in its *Transit 2020 Master Plan* set a goal of doubling the transit system by 2020. This chapter looks at the progress towards meeting this goal.

Ridership grew from 1997 to 2001, putting the Twin Cities area ahead of this goal. But recent ridership declines have put the Twin Cities area behind.

Ridership increased 16.1% from 1997 to 2001 because of increases in service hours, improvements in transit service, and growth in employment in the Twin Cities.

By 2001, this put ridership about 6.4 million rides ahead of the goal established in 1998.

Since 2001, however, ridership has decreased to the point where it is now 5.7 million rides behind the goal.



This change occurred due to several factors:

- The reduction in travel immediately after September 11, 2001 and then the following short-term economic downturn.
- The recession from 2001 - 2003 which reduced employment and thus travel to and from work. This is especially critical as approximately 80% of transit riders are going to or from work. The number of people employed in the Twin Cities declined each year from 2001 to 2003, for a total decline over the three years of 2.6%. The decline in employment hit the Twin Cities' largest transit market, downtown Minneapolis, especially hard. Downtown Minneapolis experienced an 8.4% job decline between 2001 and 2003. During the same time period, transit ridership declined 6.6% region-wide[1].
- State budget cuts triggered fare increases, which are an economic disincentive to ridership.

Future ridership growth will depend on funding levels, the economy, employment levels, development patterns, service improvements, and highway congestion levels.

[1] Minnesota Workforce Center

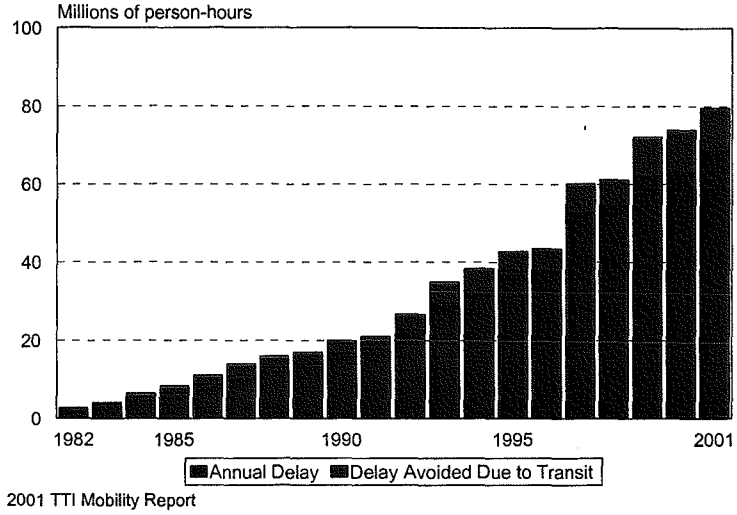
Chapter 10. Transit's Impact on Highways

The Texas Transportation Institute's 2003 Mobility Report estimated that 62% of the region's freeways and major roads experienced congestion during peak travel times in 2001. This translated to 68.5 million person-hours spent in congestion in the region. They also estimated that this cost the region $1.365 billion dollars in fuel and lost time.

Transit has the ability to increase the number of persons that can travel on a congested roadway by putting people in higher occupancy vehicles. The Texas Transportation Institute estimated that an additional delay of approximately 11.1 million person-hours was saved due to the positive impacts of transit on the region's highway system in 2001.

Also, as congestion is increasing over time, the positive benefits of transit on travel time are also increasing.

Total Hours Persons in Congestion



2001 TTI Mobility Report

Transit can be a strategy for increasing highway capacity. There are sections of highway that have been at their limits for several decades and currently the only way to increase the number of persons traveling through them is with transit. In fact, if service and transit ridership is high enough, transit can provide as much capacity as a lane or more of traffic.

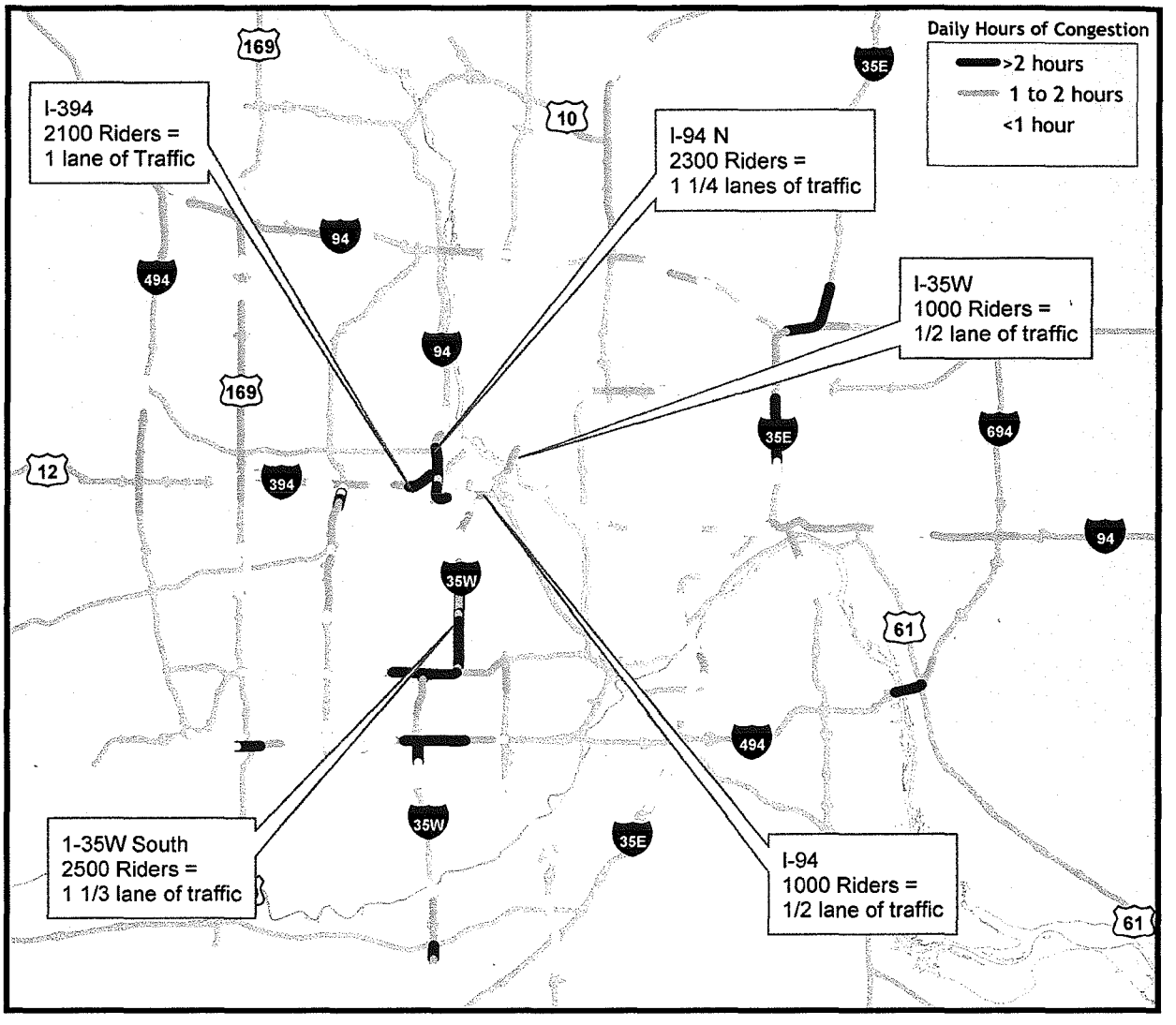
The typical highway lane can carry about 1,800 free-flowing vehicles per hour. So if transit carries about 1,800 persons in an hour, it is carrying about the equivalent of one lane of free-flowing traffic. An analysis was done looking at transit usage at key highway locations experiencing the highest levels of congestion in the region.

Table 10-1. 2003 AM Peak-Hour Transit Data by Corridor

Corridor	Express Riders	Impact Equivalent to
I-35W South Northbound @ Lake	2,500	1 1/3 Lane
I-94 North Southbound @ Washington	2,300	1 1/3 Lane
I-394 Eastbound @ Penn	2,100	1 1/5 Lane
I-94 Central Westbound @ 280	1,100	3/5 Lane
I-35W North Eastbound @ 4th	975	1/2 Lane

Table Notes: Peak Hour 7:30 to 8:30 a.m.
Metro Transit data is October 2003. Opt-Out data provided by MTS is 2001 and/or 2002.

2002 MnDOT Highway Observed Congestion - AM Peak
And Additional Highway Capacity Due to Transit



This analysis underestimates the impact of transit on the highway system as it only looks at transit riders whose buses actually travel on highways. There are transit trips taken on local streets and arterials that could have been taken by auto on highways. These trips also contribute to reducing congestion. For example, persons traveling on University Avenue by bus are not traveling on I-94 by car or persons who are traveling on Nicollet Avenue by bus are not traveling on I-35W by car. At this point, there are no estimates of what percentage these trips are of the total transit trips but it is expected that these impacts are substantial in improving highway throughput.