

Public Transit Programs (Wis. Stats. § 85.20, 85.205)

Program Overview:

- Public transit service is defined as being available to the general public – “open door service”
 - Service includes fixed route (with ADA paratransit), route deviation and demand response
- Local public bodies such as cities, villages, counties, transit commissions and tribes are eligible
 - Supports operating costs such as labor, fuel, maintenance, insurance, marketing, etc.
- According to a 2015 statewide passenger survey, public transit trip purposes are broken out into the following categories: 55% for employment, 14% for education, 20% for shopping or recreation and 11% for healthcare

Program Funding:

- State funds are combined with federal grants and administered on a calendar year basis.
- Applications for public transit funding are published on-line in the autumn
- Urban Mass Transit Operating Assistance Program [Wis. Stats. § 85.20] 2017-19 Biennium - \$110,737,500 SEG annually
 - By statute, funding is allocated at an equalized percentage of budgeted expenses according to tiered structure
 - Tiers are based on community population and mirror federal structure: Tier A-I (Milwaukee), Tier A-II (Madison), Tier B-Small Urban (50,000 < 200,000 pop.) and Tier C – Rural (< 50,000 pop.)
- Paratransit Aids Program [Wis. Stats. § 85.205] 2017-19 Biennium - \$2,750,000 SEG annually
 - Implemented in 2012 to partially offset a reduction in the 85.20 program
 - Allocated to fixed route bus systems via formula based on budget and service
- Transit service delivery is a local decision. WisDOT administers federal and state transit funding programs, provides oversight for regulatory compliance, develops policies and provides technical assistance. WisDOT does not determine the amount or type transit service that exists in a community.

Challenges:

- Demand for service and operating expenses have increased but funding levels have fluctuated.
- Current programs do not meet the capital needs of public transit systems. Wisconsin relies on federal grants for this purpose and a gap exists between available funding and the ability to maintain capital items (i.e. vehicles, facilities and equipment) in a state of good repair.
- Full federal funding availability is inconsistent, resulting in delayed operating and capital aid.

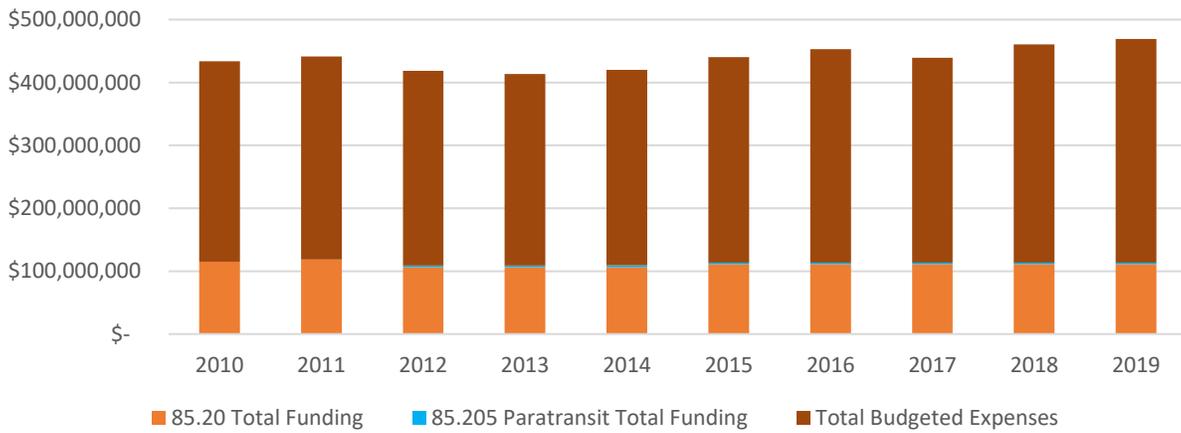
Policy and budget opportunities:

- Increase the funding available for public transit operations across tiers and modify the appropriation structure from annual to continuing
- Create a state funded public transit capital program
- Maintain transit funding in the Transportation Fund
- Locally dedicated revenue source

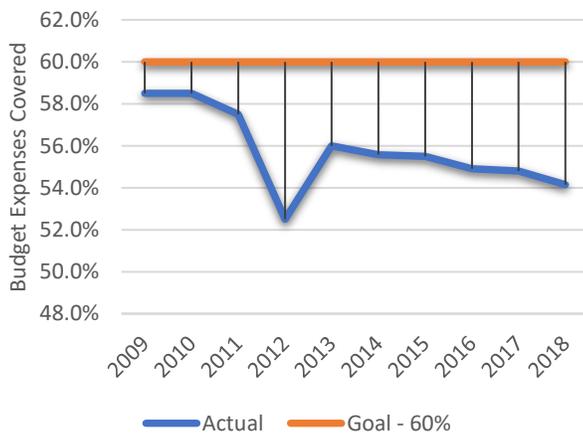
Transportation Stakeholder Task Force



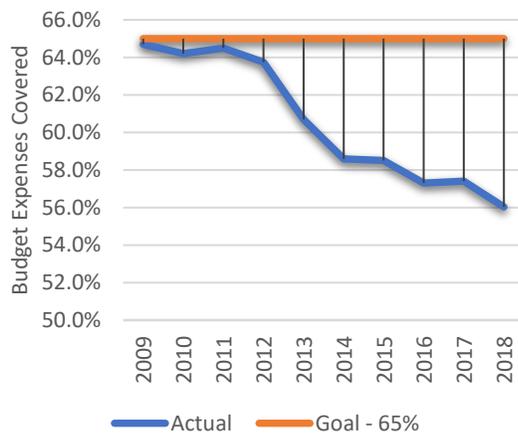
Public Transit Operating Funding Levels 2010 - 2019



Tier B Funding Gap



Tier C Funding Gap



Wisconsin Transit Ridership, 2010-2017

