



City of Eau Claire, WI Eau Claire Transit

Transit Development Plan

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SRF
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PLANNERS
DESIGNERS

in partnership with Bourne Transit Consulting, LLC

Eau Claire Transit Development Plan

Final Report

City of Eau Claire, Wisconsin



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Introduction

The City of Eau Claire is conducting a Transit Development Plan. The purpose of this plan is to determine how well current transit services are meeting local needs and to identify opportunities to improve the transit system. The project includes three main tasks. These are:

1. Inventory Existing Conditions and Review Performance of Current Transit Services
2. Evaluate Service Options and Improvements
3. Develop Recommendations

This report summarizes key information from the Eau Claire area as well as documents the performance of the existing transit system. The report is divided into the following topic areas, including:

- System Overview
- Peer System Analysis
- Stakeholder Input
- Transit System Observations
- Recommendations
- Partnership Strategies
- Implementation Plan

Glossary of Terms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act: Passed by the Congress in 1990, this act mandates equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in the areas of employment, transportation, communications and public accommodations. Under this Act, most transportation providers are obliged to purchase lift-equipped vehicles for their fixed-route services and must assure system-wide accessibility of their demand-responsive services to persons with disabilities. Public transit providers also must supplement their fixed-route services with paratransit services for those persons unable to use fixed-route service because of their disability.
Cost Effectiveness	Cost effectiveness is the cost per passenger trip. More precisely, it is the amount of money a transit agency spends to provide its service (either as a system or a particular mode of travel, such as bus or rail) divided by the total number of passenger trips. This only takes into account what it costs to provide the service, and does not deduct fare revenues from the cost of providing the service.
Equalized Percent Share	The equalized distribution of funding that comes from WisDOT and the Federal Transit Administration for small urban bus systems. In addition to revenue, and local share, this comprises Eau Claire Transit's operating funding.
Frequency	The number of transit units (vehicles or trains) on a given route or line, moving in the same direction, that pass a given point within a specified interval of time, also known as headway.
Level of Service (LOS)	A series of measures graded from A-F that assess a transit system's performance based on national standards.
Market Penetration	How well a transit system serves a population. Passenger trips per capita.
Passenger Revenue Effectiveness or Operating Ratio	The ratio of fare revenue to direct operating expenses.
Peer Communities	Cities with transit systems that are similar to Eau Claire's
Revenue Hours	Transit service excluding deadheading (the time a vehicle is not producing passenger revenue) or layovers or any service scheduled for passenger trips
Route Productivity	A general statement about how well a transit route performs in terms of efficiency and ridership.
Service Coverage	A measure of how well a transit system serves a geographic area.
Service Effectiveness	The consumption of transit service relative to the amount service available (passenger trips per revenue hour)
Service Efficiency	The amount of transit service provided relative to the

	amount of funding supporting the service.
Span	The number of hours during the day between the start and end of service on a transit route
Stakeholder	A person with interest or concern in something. In this case, the future development of Eau Claire Transit.
Vehicle Miles Traveled	Estimate of vehicular travel in a given geographic area over a specific period of time.

System Overview

History

Transit service in Eau Claire was started in December 1879 when the Eau Claire Street Railway Company began horse car service pulled by mules and horses. Eau Claire was the fourth city in the United States to initiate electric streetcar service, beginning on November 6, 1889. In 1898, the Eau Claire Light and Power Company, owned by A. E. Appleyard, purchased the existing street car system and extended service to Chippewa Falls as the Chippewa Valley Electric Railway Company.

There were three subsequent owners who also provided street car and utility service.

- 1905 – Eau Claire Railway Light and Power Company
- 1914 – Wisconsin-Minnesota Light and Power Company (American Public Utilities Company)
- 1923 – Northern States Power Company (Standard Gas and Electric Company)

The Motor Bus Company of Chippewa Falls began operation to compete with the interurban service in 1920. Approximately 713,000 passengers used the electric interurban and streetcar service that year. Fare and service competition between the two carriers continued until August 7, 1926 when the interurban service was abandoned. In 1931, buses began replacing streetcars and electric streetcar service in Eau Claire ended in April 1932.

In 1932, the fleet was converted to Mack Truck buses, and in 1939, the Fey family (owners of Student Transit) purchased the Eau Claire Transportation Company. They also operated public transit systems in Winona, Minnesota and La Crosse, Wisconsin.

By the 1960s, it had become increasingly difficult for private businesses to operate transit systems without financial losses, so the federal government began offering grants through the Urban Mass Transportation Act. Eventually, the Eau Claire Transportation Company would receive state aid as well.

In 1971, the Fey family was forced to approach the City Councils of Eau Claire and Altoona to ask for subsidies to continue providing public transit services. Despite these subsidies, the Eau Claire Transportation Company continued to operate with deficits, so in 1972, they asked the City of Eau Claire to consider assuming operations.

In 1973, the Eau Claire Transit Commission was formed to assist the City Council in determining the future of public transit. In 1974, a referendum was held in Eau Claire to ask the citizens if the City should issue bonds for the purpose of acquiring the local bus system. The referendum passed with a 74 percent “YES” vote.

On January 2, 1975, the City of Eau Claire officially assumed management of Eau Claire Transit. The City purchased the transit-related facilities at the Fey family’s headquarters and

continued to operate services from that location until 1988, when the City built the Central Maintenance Facility, located at 910 Forest Street.

Ridership on Eau Claire Transit peaked in the late 1970s, due in part to the energy crisis. Eau Claire Transit provided over a million rides annually until 1983. Then, ridership started a long decline into the mid-1990s, until only 400,000 rides a year were the norm. By 1995, the future of transit was once again in jeopardy.

The City held a series of public hearings and hired outside consultants to conduct a lengthy study in 1994. Hearings continued through 1996. Finally, the City Council decided that rather than reduce or eliminate bus service, they would greatly expand bus service and freeze bus fares. The City also entered into a contractual agreement with the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire (UWEC) to provide dedicated fixed-route service to their students and faculty. As a result, unprecedented increases in ridership have been experienced since 1997 on Eau Claire Transit buses.

Existing Transit Service

Eau Claire Transit provides fixed-route transit service throughout the City of Eau Claire and areas of the City of Altoona. Eau Claire Transit operates 15 fixed bus routes with service from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays. No Sunday service is operated. During the school year, supplemental tripper (express) service is provided for neighborhood access to area schools. These routes are open to the public and charge regular fares. Express Route 12 was added in September 2013 as a supplement to existing service and a connection to Dunn County Transit, as well as Greyhound Lines and Jefferson Lines intercity bus services.

Eau Claire Transit's fixed routes operate on a radial loop route structure centered on downtown Eau Claire. Fixed route services operate on 20-, 30-, or 60-minute headways.

The current Eau Claire Transit fixed route services include:

- Route 1 – Margaret & Mall
- Route 2 – M. Washington
- Route 3 – North High
- Route 4 – Locust Lane
- Route 3/4 – North High & Locust
- Route 5 – Rudolph Road
- Route 6 – Putnam Heights & Mall
- Route 7 – West Clairemont
- Route 8 – Folsom & Vine
- Route 9 – University
- Route 12 – Delong
- Route 15 – West MacArthur
- Route 17 – Altoona
- Route 18 – Memorial High
- Route 20 – Westridge Center
- Route 21 – Shopko
- Express Routes 2, 10, 11, and 12

Figure 1 displays a current system map of Eau Claire Transit bus routes and the downtown Transfer Center, as well as points of interest throughout the community, including schools, community centers, major employers, and retail centers. The UWEC and Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) campuses are also highlighted in Figure 1, as these institutions play an important role in the community and generate approximately 33 percent of Eau Claire Transit’s ridership.

The basic adult fare for is \$1.50; cash fares, tokens, day passes, monthly bus passes, and student pass rates for Eau Claire Transit fixed route service are displayed in Table 1.

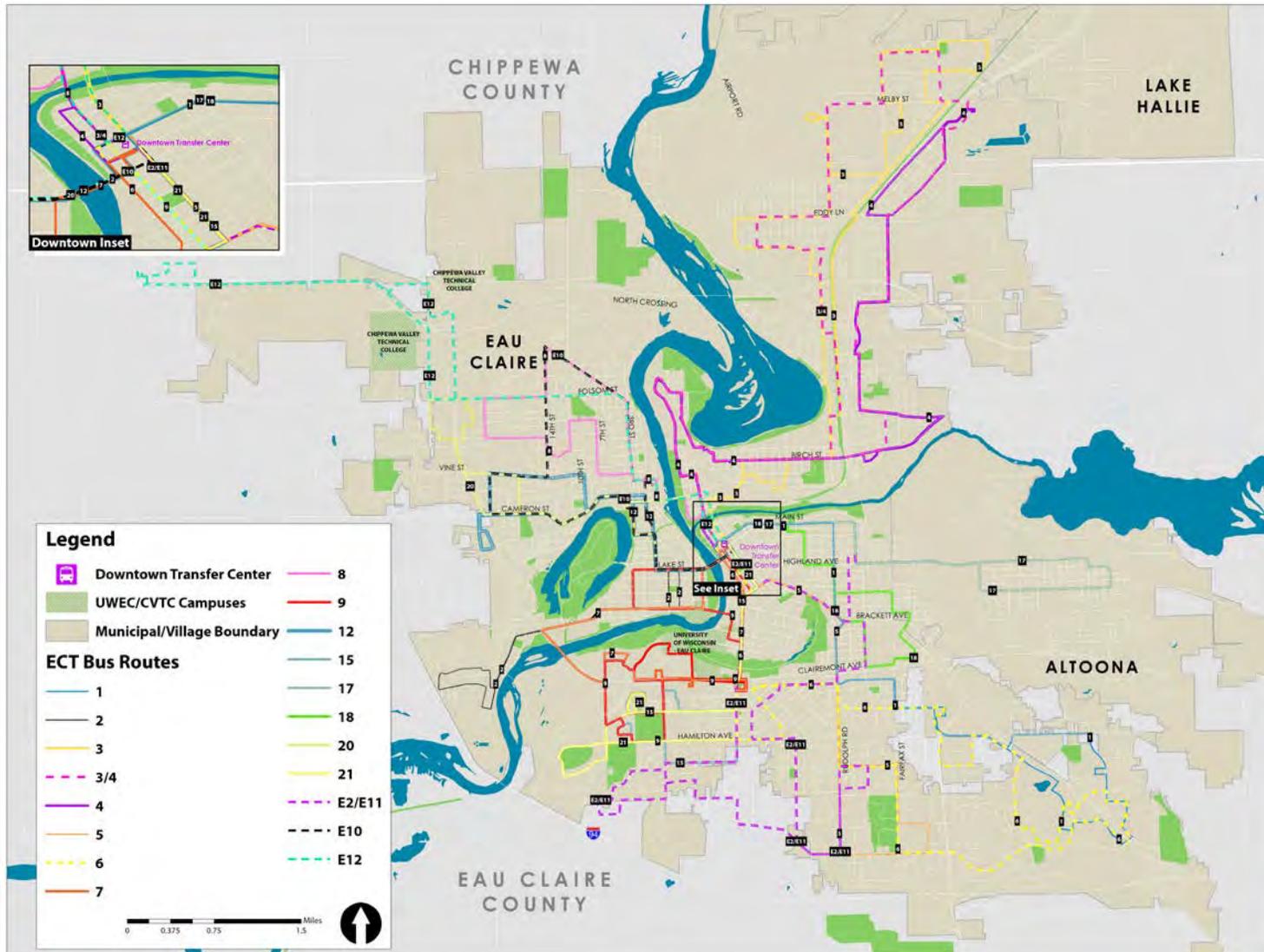
Table 1. Fixed Route Fare Structure

Fare Category	Cash	Token	Monthly Bus Pass	Student Pass
Children (Under 5)	Free (with paying adult)	--	--	--
Adult	\$1.50	8/\$10	\$45	--
Seniors (65 years and older), Disabled, and Medicare cardholders	\$0.75	15/\$10	\$23	--
Student (K-12)	--	--	--	\$3 (daily) \$45 (semester) \$30 (summer)
Transfer	Free	--	--	--
Chippewa Valley Technical College Student	--	--	--	\$62.50 (semester) \$45 (summer)
Children (Under 5)	--	--	--	Free with Current ID (U-Pass)

Source: Eau Claire Transit

In addition to fixed-route service, Eau Claire Transit provides complementary Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service through a contract with Abby Vans, a private contractor based in Neillsville, Wisconsin with offices in the Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls region. Service is provided for certified users with disabilities through an accessible door-to-door, ADA-compliant paratransit van service. The fare for paratransit service is \$3.00 each way, which is double the adult fixed route fare. There are eligibility restrictions and certification is required. As is required by ADA, the paratransit service operates during fixed route service hours. Furthermore, Eau Claire County also contracts with Eau Claire Transit for human services transportation throughout the county.

Figure 1. Eau Claire Transit System



Sources: City of Eau Claire, Eau Claire Transit

Fleet

The Eau Claire Transit fixed route fleet consists of 22 heavy-duty Gillig and New Flyer buses. The average age of the fleet is 7.7 years. All vehicles in the fixed route fleet are low-floored, ADA-accessible, and equipped with a fold-out ramp. All buses are also equipped with racks to accommodate up to two bicycles and free Wi-Fi service, as of September 2013. The most recent addition to the fleet are the three 2013 New Flyers, which are hybrid electric vehicles. Table 2 includes a breakdown of the fleet information by year.

Table 2. Fixed Route Fleet

Vehicle Numbers	Quantity	Year	Make/Model	Average Capacity	Average Condition	Average Mileage	Age
511-515	5	2001	Gillig low floor	26	Fair to Adequate	489,514	12
504-509, 516-518	9	2002	Gillig low floor	36	Adequate	290,322	11
503, 521-524	5	2011	Gillig low floor	33	Good	97,287	2
525-527	3	2013	New Flyer low floor	30	Excellent	26,544	0
TOTAL	22	-	-	32 (average)	Adequate to Good	255,751 (average)	7.7 (average)

Source: Eau Claire Transit

Facilities

Fixed route vehicle maintenance, vehicle storage, operations, and administrative activities occur at the city's Public Works Central Maintenance Facility at 910 Forest Street, approximately one mile north of the downtown transit center.

The downtown Transit Center is located at Farwell and Main Streets in downtown Eau Claire. Intercity bus service operated by Jefferson Lines also connects to Eau Claire Transit at this facility. Passenger amenities include enclosed and heated shelter space, benches, litter receptacles, a token vending machine, and lighting. System maps and schedules are posted in a protected case.

Eau Claire Transit Funding

Eau Claire Transit is supported by various funding sources, including assistance programs from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the State of Wisconsin, local support from the City of Eau Claire, and user subsidies from transit passengers. Each funding source is defined and summarized in this section along with the eligibility and management requirements for each.

Public Transit Operating Aids

In Wisconsin, bus systems in communities with populations that are greater than 50,000 but with operating budgets less than that of Madison and Milwaukee fall under the funding category of Tier B. The State of Wisconsin sets an equalized percent share of state and federal funds that consists of Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) 85.20 urban mass transit operating assistance and the Governor's Apportionment of FTA Section 5307 funding. Annually the goal is to cover 60 percent of operating expenses, but the State has fallen short of this goal in recent years and typically funds closer to 55 percent of operating expenses. This program can be distributed to local governments, and all projects must benefit residents in small urban areas. WisDOT has oversight authority on the 85.20 program, and manages the application process and distribution of these funds through statute and administrative rules Trans 4 and Trans 6. Each year local governments that operate public transit can apply for funding under this program. 85.20 funds supplement the non-federal share of operating expenses.

Bus and Bus Facilities Program

This program is the primary program for federal transit capital assistance available to Eau Claire Transit. The Bus and Bus Facilities Program is a federally-funded capital grant program contained within the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) authorization bill that provides capital funding to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities.

WisDOT will award grants to urban systems in both 2013 and 2014 via a competitive process based on evaluation criteria such as consistency with local transit priorities, age and deferred maintenance of vehicles or facilities, and demonstrated commitment of local share. Eligible applicants include public agencies to private nonprofit organizations engaged in public transportation, including those providing services open to a segment of the general public, as defined by age, disability, or low income.

Funding is distributed to transit agencies based on competitive criteria including project readiness, need, and consistency with Wisconsin's transit administrative rules. In order to be considered ready, applicants must have sufficient local match to fund a complete project (partial awards are not made) and the technical capacity to carry out a federally funded rolling stock procurement. Projects are evaluated based on need by reviewing the age and useful life of the asset that slated for replacement. Older vehicles will be prioritized for funding. Program funds are then awarded by priorities indicated in Wisconsin Administrative Rules. Replacement vehicles are the top priority, followed by obsolete facilities, and then expansion vehicles and equipment. In the most recent grant cycle, Eau Claire Transit received \$435,000, which covered 80 percent of a hybrid bus purchase.

It is notable that this presents a significant decrease in funding. The statewide allocation for the Bus and Bus Facilities Program in Wisconsin was about \$1.3 million in 2013. In previous years the State of Wisconsin received Section 5309 discretionary funding at levels that were typically greater than double that on an annual basis.

Specialized Transportation Assistance for Counties

The 85.21 program is a grant that is made to each county in the State of Wisconsin to support the mobility needs of the elderly and disabled. Generally, each county is allocated a share of the annual state 85.21 appropriation proportionate to its share of the total statewide population of elderly persons and persons with disabilities. However, these amounts are adjusted to ensure that each county receives not less than 0.5 percent of the total annual program appropriation. Each county must provide a 20 percent match of these funds. Up to \$80,000 of 85.21 funding can be held in a trust for future purposes such as capital purchases or future projects. Typical uses of 85.21 funding include providing transportation to medical activities, nutritional activities, and work-related activities. 85.21 funded projects can serve the general public on a space available basis. The funding can also be used to leverage FTA funds as non-federal share. In Eau Claire County this funding is passed through to Eau Claire Transit to support paratransit and rural transit for older adults and individuals with disabilities. Eau Claire Transit contracts with Abby Vans to provide this service.

Other Human Service Transportation Programs

There are several human service programs for which Eau Claire Transit can bill care providers on an agency fare basis. These services are typically operated on a contractual basis via the purchase of fare media for the Eau Claire Transit fixed route, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit service, or service on behalf of Eau Claire and Chippewa Counties.

Title XIX Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Program

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) is a passenger transportation benefit of the Medicaid program. States are required in their Title XIX State plans to ensure necessary transportation of Medicaid beneficiaries to and from health care providers. Expenditures for transportation may be claimed as administrative costs of the State plan. The State may elect to include transportation as medical assistance under its State Medicaid plan, but use a direct vendor payment system consistent with applicable regulations. There are various ways in which a State can construct the network by which these rides are provided to the users. Statewide, regional, or local provider networks are typical. In Wisconsin, a statewide brokerage is in place to manage a network of local providers. This is managed by MTM, Incorporated and NEMT providers are comprised of both public and private agencies.

Publicly Funded Long-term Care Programs

FamilyCare – ContinuUs

In Eau Claire County, ContinuUs offers two publicly funded long-term care options under FamilyCare. Participants work with an inter-disciplinary team consisting of a Registered Nurse and a Social Service Coordinator. Transportation benefits are one component of this program. Eligibility is determined through the Aging & Disability Resource Center.

I.R.I.S.

IRIS stands for Include, Respect, I Self Direct. IRIS is a publicly funded, long-term care program in which the participant chooses to self-direct their care plan and services. A participant will work with an independent consultant in determining monthly budget for purchasing services. Transit benefits are included as a purchased service.

The breakdown of funding for Eau Claire Transit's operation is shown in Figure 2 below.

Local Funding Sources

In addition to the aforementioned funding sources, the City of Eau Claire has several funding partners at the local level that contribute to the operations of Eau Claire Transit.

City of Eau Claire

In calendar year 2013 the City of Eau Claire committed approximately \$1,125,100 toward the operations of Eau Claire Transit. This is from a dedicated transit account that is supported by property tax levy. Eau Claire Transit operates within the City of Eau Claire's public works department. In 2013 this amount represented approximately 20 percent of Eau Claire Transit's operating expenses. The City of Eau Claire is the largest local contributor to the transit system.

Eau Claire County

As mentioned earlier, Eau Claire County contributes Chapter 85.21 funding to the coordinated transit system operated by Eau Claire Transit and Abby Vans. In 2013 this amounted to approximately \$288,000 that supported transportation services to the elderly and disabled in rural Eau Claire County, and specialized transit services in the City of Eau Claire. Given that older adults and individuals with disabilities are also public transit users, this funding is used to leverage public transit aids as well. This consists of about 5 percent of Eau Claire Transit's annual operating expenses.

City of Altoona

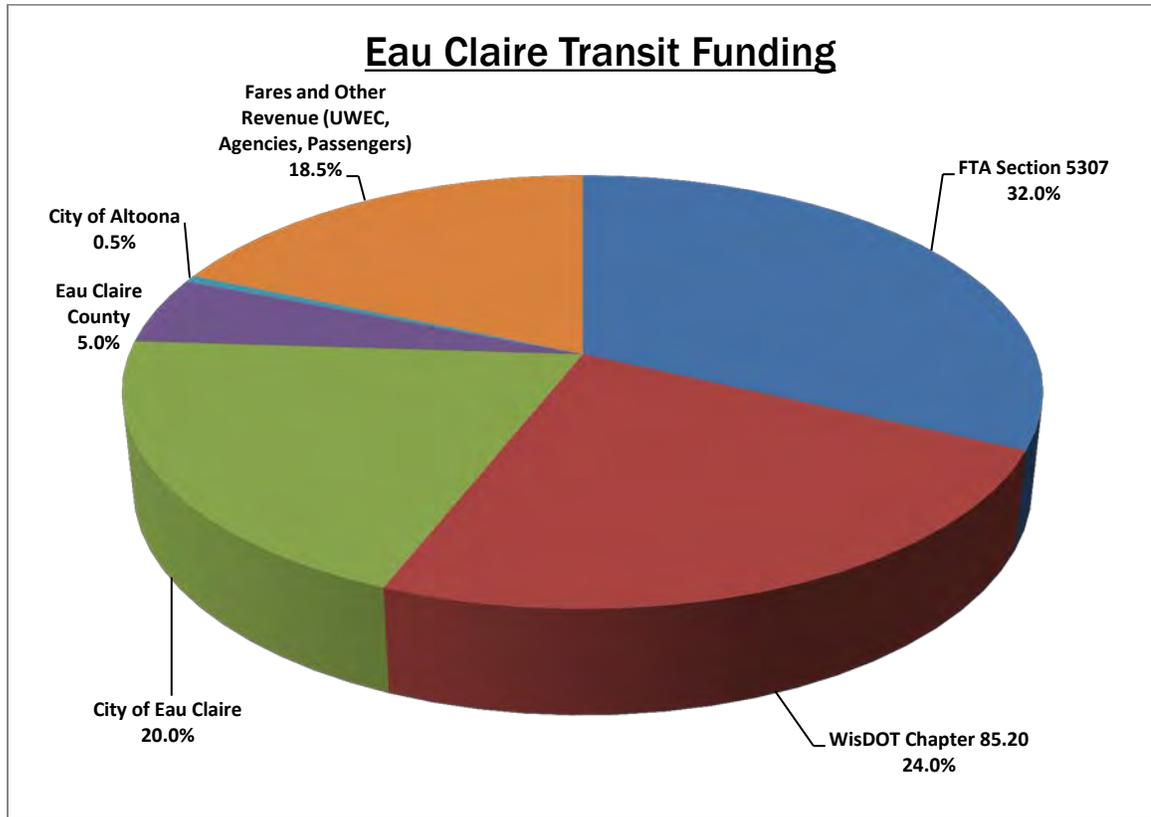
In 2013 the City of Altoona contributed approximately \$48,000 toward Eau Claire Transit's operations. This represents about 0.5 percent of Eau Claire Transit's overall operating expenses, but it covers the local share of operating expenses for public transit and ADA complementary paratransit service in Altoona.

University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire

UWEC currently pays a flat rate of approximately \$260,100 to Eau Claire Transit each year. In return all UWEC students ride Eau Claire Transit free of charge with a student identification card. This consists of approximately 4.6 percent of Eau Claire Transit's operating expenses. The relationship between Eau Claire Transit and UWEC is one of mutual benefit given the significance of students, faculty, and staff in the makeup of transit ridership in Eau Claire. Route 9, which primarily serves the UWEC campus, has the highest

ridership of any route in the transit system. Students annually account for about a third of overall Eau Claire Transit ridership. In 2013, university students rode Eau Claire Transit about 345,000 times out over 1 million passenger trips per year provided by the system.

Figure 2. Eau Claire Transit Funding Distribution



Service Performance Analysis

The primary source for reviewing transit service performance data is the National Transit Database. The National Transit Database is a nationwide transit reporting system that provides yearly information on selected characteristics of all transit operations in the United States. Performance data for Eau Claire Transit over the last five years (2008-2012) is listed in Table 3.

Table 3. Eau Claire Transit Performance Trends

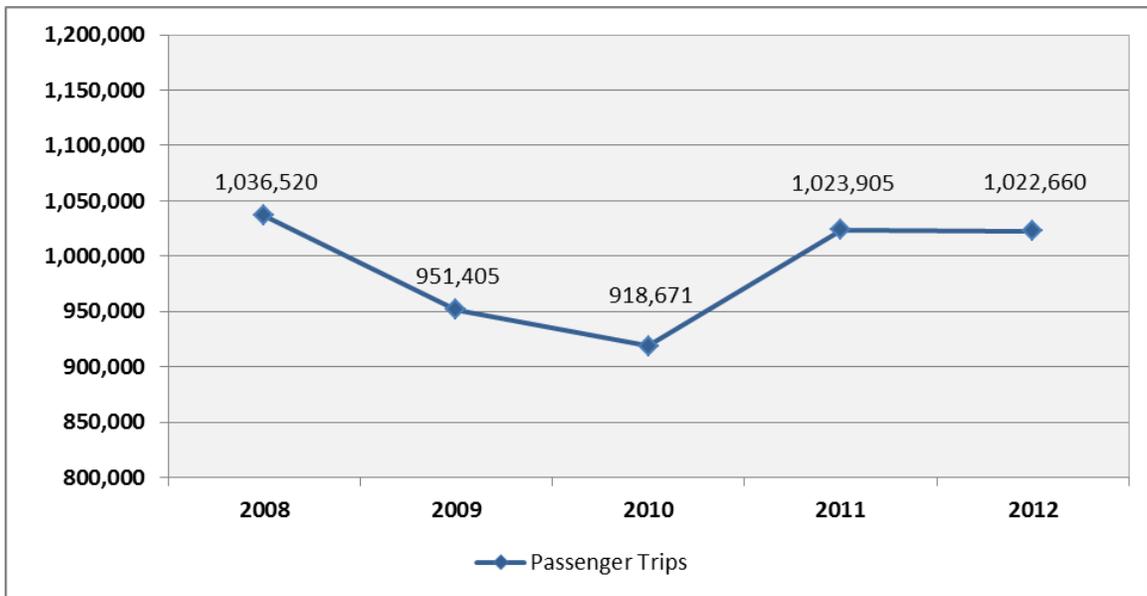
Performance Measure	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Passenger Trips	1,036,520	951,405	918,671	1,023,905	1,022,660
Revenue Hours	45,491	49,405	46,033	46,228	46,372
Revenue Miles	678,151	681,865	680,967	663,039	666,408
Passenger Trips Per Revenue Hour	22.8	19.3	20.0	22.1	22.1

Performance Measure	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Operating Expense	\$3,468,569	\$3,273,179	\$3,475,620	\$3,549,822	\$3,696,999
Passenger Revenue	\$835,067	\$905,893	\$958,727	\$948,618	\$917,619
Operating Cost per Passenger	\$3.35	\$3.44	\$3.78	\$3.47	\$3.62
Operating Expense per Revenue Hour	\$76.25	\$66.25	\$75.50	\$79.79	\$79.72

Source: 2008-2012 National Transit Database

Note: Passenger revenue includes agency fares.

Figure 3. Annual Passenger Trips (2008-2012)



Source: 2008-2012 National Transit Database

Figure 4. Monthly Ridership, Eau Claire Transit Routes (excl. Route 9 and Express Routes)

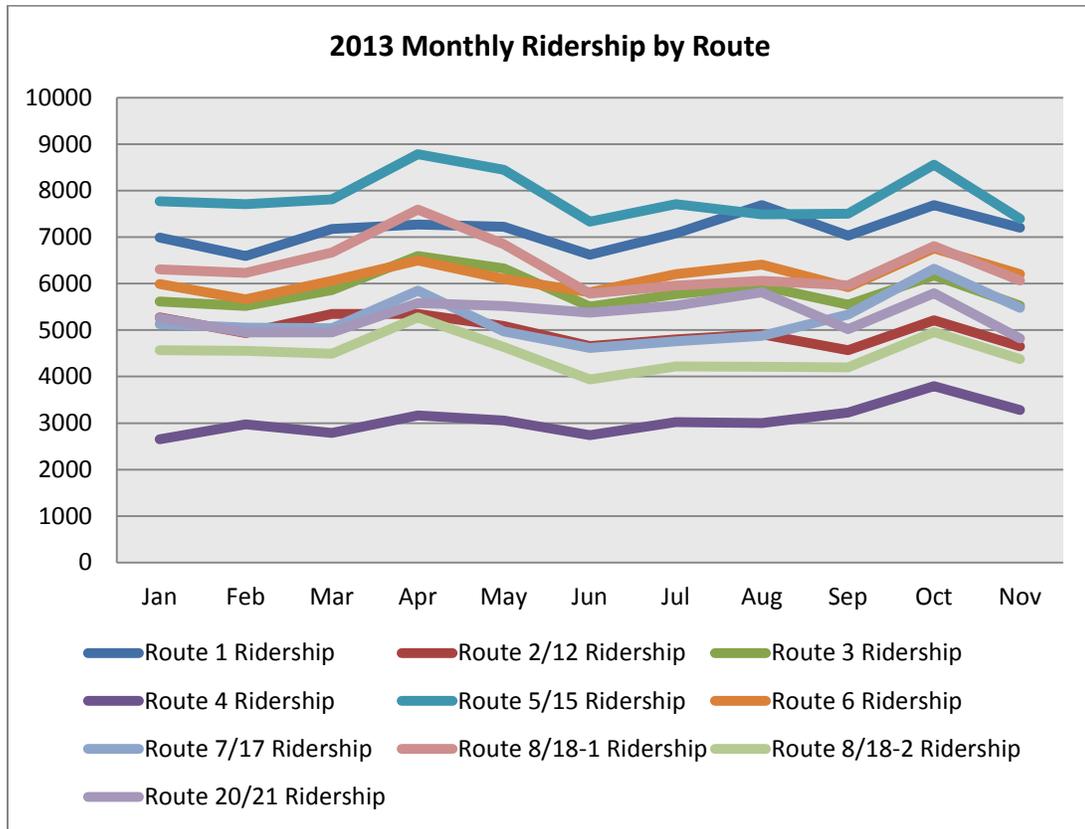
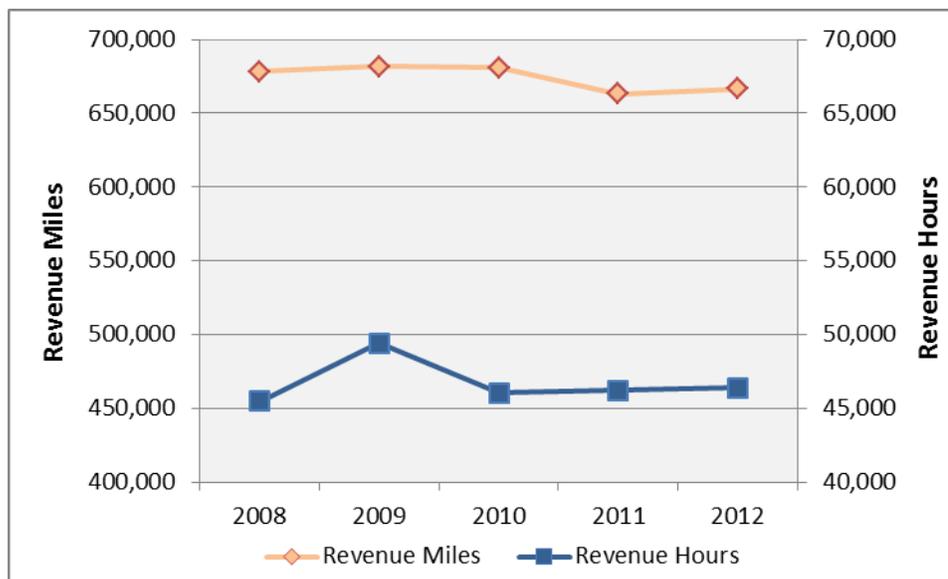


Figure 5. Revenue Service (2008-2012)



Source: 2008-2012 National Transit Database

In Figure 4 ridership by month through November for 2013 on all of Eau Claire Transit’s regular routes is shown. This includes all route pairs, excluding the Route 9 (UW Eau Claire service), and the express routes. Route 5/15 and Route 1 have been the routes with the greatest number of riders and Route 4 has the fewest of the regular routes. A detailed

overview of monthly ridership by route is presented in Appendix C; this includes the Route 9 pairs which have the highest ridership with the university in session.

The Eau Claire Transit system is a very stable and consistent operation. Review of this performance data shows relatively little variation over the five year period between 2008 and 2012. Passenger trips, revenue hours, and miles are stable with small variations as shown in Figure 3 and 5. Passenger revenues have increased and then fallen slightly in the last year, while operating expenses are increasing at a rate of approximately four percent per year since 2008.

Level of Service Assessment

A level of service (LOS) assessment was completed to gauge the system's performance relative to a set of national benchmarks. Transit systems typically use the LOS assessment to guide planning for future improvements. Each quality-of-service factor measured in this analysis is important to Eau Claire Transit's operations, as each directly influences how passengers perceive the quality of a transit trip. Levels of service are graded on an A-F scale according to a traveler's point of view, with "A" representing an optimum condition and "F" representing an undesirable condition. Generally, a goal of improving the LOS one grade for the weakest areas produces the greatest result for future investment.

The levels of service and methodologies employed in this analysis are derived from the *Transit Capacity and Quality of Service Manual (TCQSM)*, [TCRP Report 100](#). It is important to note that the LOS assessment is not a definitive rating of the system's performance and local decision makers should employ their own locally developed standards to rate service. LOS assessments are often used to measure year-to-year improvements in the service provided. For this assessment, service coverage, frequency, and span were analyzed. Other LOS measures were not analyzed due to limited data availability.

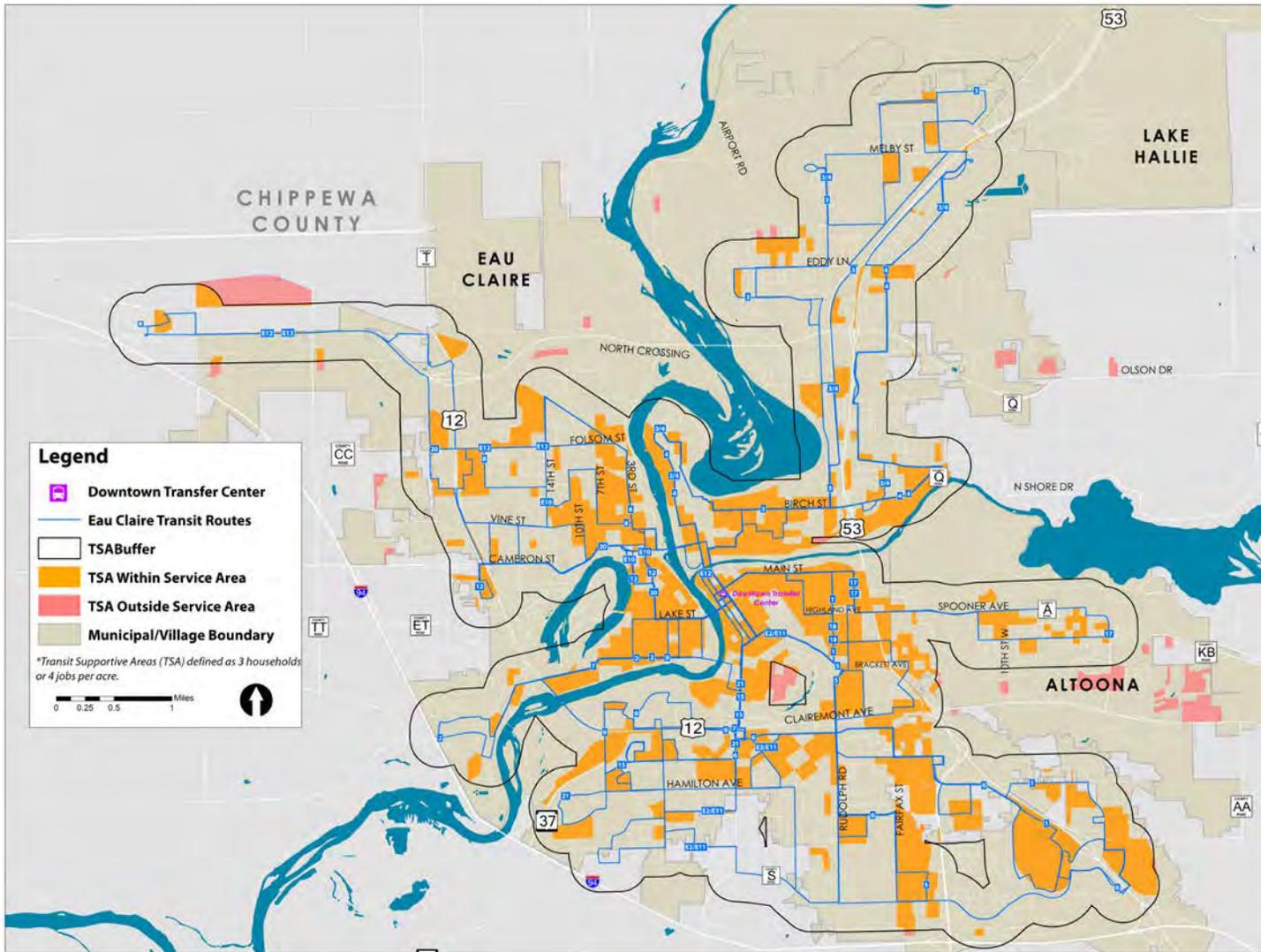
Service Coverage

Service coverage measures the area within walking distance of transit stops. The more area covered by transit, the greater the geographic availability of transit. Industry standard minimum densities are used in this analysis.

A residential density of three housing units per gross acre is considered the minimum density capable of supporting a basic level of transit service (at 60-minute headways). An employment density of four or more jobs per acre is also considered capable of supporting the basic level of service. Places that meet this threshold are referred to as transit-supportive areas (TSAs) in this analysis. Areas within ¼ mile of bus routes are considered covered by transit service.

As displayed in Figure 6, there are large segments of Routes 3 and 4 that do not serve transit supportive areas. Areas in southern Eau Claire on Routes 5 and 6 also have limited transit potential. Outside of the existing service network, the industrial area in northwest Eau Claire, areas of Altoona, and areas of Chippewa Falls also have some transit potential.

Figure 6. Transit-Supportive Areas and Fixed Route Coverage



Sources: City of Eau Claire, 2011 Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Program, 2010 Census

A total of 3,620 acres of transit-supportive areas are located within ¼ mile of an Eau Claire Transit route, or 96 percent of the total transit-supportive areas within the Eau Claire city limits. The remaining four percent of transit-supportive areas are outside the ¼-mile service area. Eau Claire Transit performs at LOS A for system coverage of transit-supportive areas within the city limits. As noted in Table 4, this level of service means generally that almost all major origins and destinations are served.

Table 4. Summary of Transit-Supportive Area Analysis

Definition of Area	Area (acres)	Percent of Total
Eau Claire urbanized area (city limits)	21,837	--
Transit-supportive area (outside city limits)	2,205	-
Transit-supportive area (city limits)	3,752	--
Within ¼ mile of transit route	3,620	96%
Not within ¼ mile of transit route	132	4%

Sources: City of Eau Claire, Eau Claire Transit, 2011 Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Program, 2010 Census

Table 5. Fixed-Route Service Coverage LOS Assessment

LOS	% TSA Covered	Comments
A	90.0–100.0%	Virtually all major origins & destinations served
B	80.0–89.9%	Most major origins & destinations served
C	70.0–79.9%	About ¾ of higher-density areas served
D	60.0–69.9%	About two-thirds of higher-density areas served
E	50.0–59.9%	At least ½ of the higher-density areas served
F	<50.0%	Less than ½ of higher-density areas served

Source: Transit Cooperative Research Program – Transit Capacity and Quality of Service Manual (Report 100)

Transit Oriented Development

The redevelopment of the downtown area in Eau Claire is one example of land use that supports a system of multi-modal travel options. Most routes are concentrated in the downtown area. Combined with a strong downtown pedestrian network and a good bicycle network, transit provides the third mode choice that will be used by young adults and others who are willing to change travel behaviors. As downtown redevelops and becomes a stronger commercial hub, combined with a strong residential component, Eau Claire Transit has the opportunity to capture a significant share of the local travel market with a focused investment in additional bus service.

Service Frequency

Service frequency is a measure of how many times an hour a user has access to bus service, given reasonable service coverage and hours of service that make a transit trip possible.

Table 6 lists the frequencies of each weekday route (excluding express routes and school trippers), which can be categorized as an LOS D-E, as listed in Table 7.

Table 6. Service Frequency by Route

Scheduled Headway (Minutes)	Vehicles/Hour	Routes
20	3	9-Stein,9-Water ¹
30	2	8, 18
60	1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 15, 17, 20, 21

Source: Eau Claire Transit

Table 7. Frequency LOS Assessment

LOS	Average Headway (min)	Vehicles/Hour	Comments
A	<10	>6	Passengers do not need schedules
B	10-14	5-6	Frequent service, passengers consult schedules
C	15-20	3-4	Maximum desirable time to wait if bus/train missed
D	21-30	2	Service unattractive to choice riders
E	31-60	1	Service available during the hour
F	>60	<1	Service unattractive to all riders

Source: Transit Cooperative Research Program – Transit Capacity and Quality of Service Manual (Report 100)

Improving service to 30 minute intervals will improve the level of service, make the system more understandable to prospective passengers, and provide an increase in ridership. In Eau Claire, improving the frequency LOS would produce the best return on investment.

¹ Route 9 provides a higher level of service than the remainder of the routes; however, it does not operate at high levels of service all year which makes it difficult for potential customers to rely on it for commuting throughout the entire year.

Service Span

Hours of service, or service span, is a measure of the number of hours during the day when a customer could potentially make a trip using the bus. As shown in Table 8, Eau Claire Transit performs between LOS C-D.

Table 8. Hours of Service LOS Assessment

LOS	Hours of Service	Comments
A	19–24	Night or “owl” service provided
B	17–18	Late evening service provided
C	14–16	Early evening service provided
D	12–13	Daytime service provided
E	4–11	Peak hour service only or limited midday service
F	0–3	Very limited or no service

Source: Transit Cooperative Research Program – Transit Capacity and Quality of Service Manual (Report 100)

Service Area Overview

This section examines several demographic factors that contribute to the demand for transit service in the Eau Claire area, including population characteristics, major employer locations, and colleges and universities.

Service Area Population

An overview of the Eau Claire area’s population characteristics is useful in reviewing the current route structure to identify if there are any gaps in service for specific populations. The demographic overview in this section examines patterns in:

- Population density
- Vehicle availability
- Age (Senior populations)
- Low-income population
- Disabled population

Peer communities have an average service area population density of approximately 2,582 persons per square mile, or 3.8 persons per acre. The population density of the Eau Claire Transit service area is 2,607 persons per square mile, or 4.1 persons (1.4 households) per acre.

Using the most recent 5-year estimates from the American Community Survey (2007-2011), Table 9 includes characteristics of Eau Claire related to transit propensity. Although Eau Claire Transit primarily operates within the City of Eau Claire, key transit propensity measures for the City of Altoona are also included to better understand the area-wide need for transit, and to mirror the previously addressed service area population density definition.

Table 9. Summary of Transit Propensity Measures in Eau Claire and Altoona

Transit Propensity Measure	City of Eau Claire	City of Altoona
Zero-Vehicle Households	2.7%	0%
Individuals Below Poverty Status	11,466 (18.8%)	461 (7.0%)
Senior Population (65+)	6,906 (12%)	965 (15.5%)
Individuals with a Disability	8,798 (15.3%)	958 (15.4%)

Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey

Note: Data is not provided beyond the percentage summary for zero-vehicle households.

Whether a household has a vehicle for use is a major factor in determining transit need. Individuals below poverty, senior citizens, and individuals with a disability also all play an important role in determining a community's transit need, as each population may be unable to afford or operate an automobile, and is a significant share of the population in both Eau Claire and Altoona.

National Trends Affecting Transit

When evaluating future transit development in Eau Claire, it is important to note some current trends in travel behavior at the national level in addition to local market conditions that will affect recommendations. Eau Claire has a core ridership of young adults, which is a population segment where many of these trends are prevalent. In the last decade, there has been a steady decline in vehicle miles traveled, a decrease in young licensed drivers, and a shift in preference from the automobile to other modes of transportation. Additionally, mobile technology, which is easily accessible while traveling on transit, has impacted the way people communicate and do work. Those same tools can be used to obtain transit schedule and route information making the mode more accessible to new users. These trends, which are expected to continue and intensify in the future, will be part of the demand for additional transit service in the Eau Claire area.

It is also noted that these trends typically occur in university communities with strong transit systems. Eau Claire Transit is inconsistent in the LOS that is provided. While area coverage is at an "A" level, frequency and span of service are much lower. Improvements to the route frequency in these areas will have the greatest return on investment and provide better service to the people most likely to use transit service in Eau Claire.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

VMT is the total number of miles that vehicles are driven. It is a key measurement of roadway use. Traditionally, economic recessions have a negative effect on VMT, and then it increases after the recession ends. While there was significant growth in the number of miles traveled on the highway system in the early 1990s and 2000s, this growth had leveled off in 2004 and declined slightly over the last seven to eight years. Total VMT is expected to increase along with population growth, but per capita VMT is projected to remain relatively

flat over the next 20 years due to demographic, technological, and behavioral changes. These factors include:

- Increase in environmental awareness
- Online retailing and home delivery of goods and services
- Increase in telecommuting, internet replacing face-to-face communication/meetings
- Live/work locations that minimize travel

As a result, revenues that support infrastructure investment (including fuel tax revenues that support state and federal transportation funds) will not increase at a rate that would meet all needs. Transit operations decisions made now are important, as they will have a long-term effect on their ability to meet changing demand for transit service in the next decade.

Licensed Drivers

Declines in VMT are most pronounced among young adults. This corresponds to a trend in fewer licensed drivers. A delay in driver licensure will affect transit propensity in many communities. A study from the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute² concluded that teenagers were no longer acquiring drivers' licenses in the same proportion as in the past. The original purpose of the study was to study trends among older drivers, and the teenage driver results were an unexpected finding. A subsequent study was conducted in 15 developed countries, and this trend was also occurring in Sweden, Norway, Great Britain, Canada, Japan, South Korea, and Germany. A comparison of licensed driver rates between 1983 and 2008 is shown in Table 16:

Table 10. U.S. Licensed Drivers by Age Group

Age	1983	2008
16	46.2%	31.1%
17	68.9%	50.0%
18	80.4%	65.4%
19	87.3%	72.5%
20-24	91.8%	82.0%

Increased costs of insurance, driver training, and vehicle maintenance/repair, as well as other competing expenses, have allowed teenagers to reduce the importance of driving in their lives. As they move into collegiate settings, there is often no need for auto ownership or a driver's license if the transit system at their college or university meets most of their travel needs. Further conclusions include that the evolution of licensing trends by age will have major implications for future transportation. Specifically, licensing trends will likely affect the

² 2011, Schoettle, Brandon and Sivak, Michael, *Recent Changes in the Age Composition of Drivers in 15 Countries*, The University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute, Ann Arbor, MI.

transportation mode selection, vehicle purchases, the safety of travel, and the environmental consequences of travel. The table below (Table 11) shows that young people make fewer daily trips than middle-age people³.

³ National Household Transportation Survey, 2011

Table 11. Number of Daily Trips by Age Group

Age	Daily Trips	Age	Daily Trips
16-20	3.5	46-50	4.3
21-25	3.6	51-55	4.1
26-30	3.9	56-60	4.0
31-35	4.2	61-65	3.9
36-40	4.4	66-70	3.8
41-45	4.5	71+	3.1

Mode Choice

National trends also show that young people are more likely to use transportation modes other than an automobile for their trips to and from work. Reliance on the automobile tends to increase with age and is relatively constant from ages 36 to 65. Transit, bicycling, and walking are primarily used by young people under the age of 30 where these modes are viable, safe options. This includes students as well as the general public who are not students. Other modes of transportation such as taxi service, car-sharing, and car services are growing in popularity among all demographics with the deployment of new technologies for reserving rides and making payments.

Some transit systems have experienced significant increases in ridership in the last five years without adding significant new routes or making service changes. For example, Madison, Wisconsin is a region that has experienced significant year-to-year increases in fixed-route ridership without making major changes to the overall system.

Peer System Analysis

Part 2 of this report presents a peer group analysis which compares Eau Claire Transit to transit systems in comparable communities. The purpose of a peer group analysis is to gain general insights into the efficiency and effectiveness of a transit system, and to guide further assessment of system performance. For this analysis, the peer group was selected based on “likeness factors,” as defined by the Florida Transit Information System (FTIS), a tool that uses the National Transit Database (NTD) information. Seven performance measures using the most recent year for which performance data is available (2011) were used. The FTIS peer systems were refined based on Eau Claire Transit’s operating measures, community characteristics, and areas that experience cold-weather to include the following transit agencies:

- Billings Metropolitan Transit----- Billings, MT
- City of Fargo Metropolitan Area Transit----- Fargo, ND
- LaCrosse Municipal Transit Utility----- LaCrosse, WI
- Macatawa Area Express Transportation Authority----- Holland, MI
- Oshkosh Transit System----- Oshkosh, WI
- Wausau Area Transit System----- Wausau, WI
- Pueblo Transit System----- Pueblo, CO
- Metropolitan Transit Authority of Black Hawk County----- Waterloo, IA
- St. Cloud Metropolitan Transit Commission----- St. Cloud, MN

Table 12. Peer Group Characteristics

Agency	Service Area Population	Service Area Population Density (per square mile)	Number of Fixed Route Vehicles	Annual Fixed Route Ridership
Billings Metropolitan Transit	114,773	3,376	28	612,959
City of Fargo, Metropolitan Area Transit	134,149	2,981	28	1,772,443
Eau Claire Transit	73,000	2,607	22	1,023,925
La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility	78,000	2,167	21	1,247,698
Macatawa Area Express Transportation Authority	91921	2,189	11	313,565
Metropolitan Transit Authority of Black Hawk County	107,666	1,210	18	456,938
Oshkosh Transit System	66,083	2,643	17	890,720
Pueblo Transit System	105,000	2,692	18	1,046,455
St. Cloud Metropolitan Transit Commission	101,206	3,490	39	2,261,957
Wausau Area Transit System	40,000	2,105	31	788,748
AVERAGE	90,905	2,546	25	1,536,004

Source: 2011 National Transit Database

Performance Measures

In this exercise, the following measures were studied to gain an understanding of how well Eau Claire Transit performs in comparison to peer systems:

Figure 7. Performance Objectives and Performance Measures

Cost effectiveness	•Transit use in relation to the level of resources expended
Service efficiency	•The amount of service provided in relation to the amount of resources expended
Service effectiveness	•The consumption of transit service in relation to the supply of transit service available.
Market penetration	•How well a system is serving the transit market.
Passenger revenue effectiveness	•The performance and effectiveness of revenue collection.

Peer Analysis Summary

Table 13. Summary of Peer Analysis Performance Measures

Category	Performance Measure	Peer Average	Eau Claire Transit	Performance
Cost Effectiveness	Operating Expense per Passenger	\$4.01	\$3.47	
Service Efficiency	Operating Expense per Revenue Hour	\$74.72	\$76.79	
Service Effectiveness	Passenger Trips per Revenue Hour	20.38	22.15	
Market Penetration	Passengers per Capita	12.17	14.03	
	Revenue Hours per Capita	0.60	0.63	
Passenger Revenue Effectiveness	Passenger Revenue per Operating Expense (Operating Ratio)	14.8%	19.9%	
	Passenger Revenue per Passenger	\$0.57	\$0.69	

 = Better than peer average

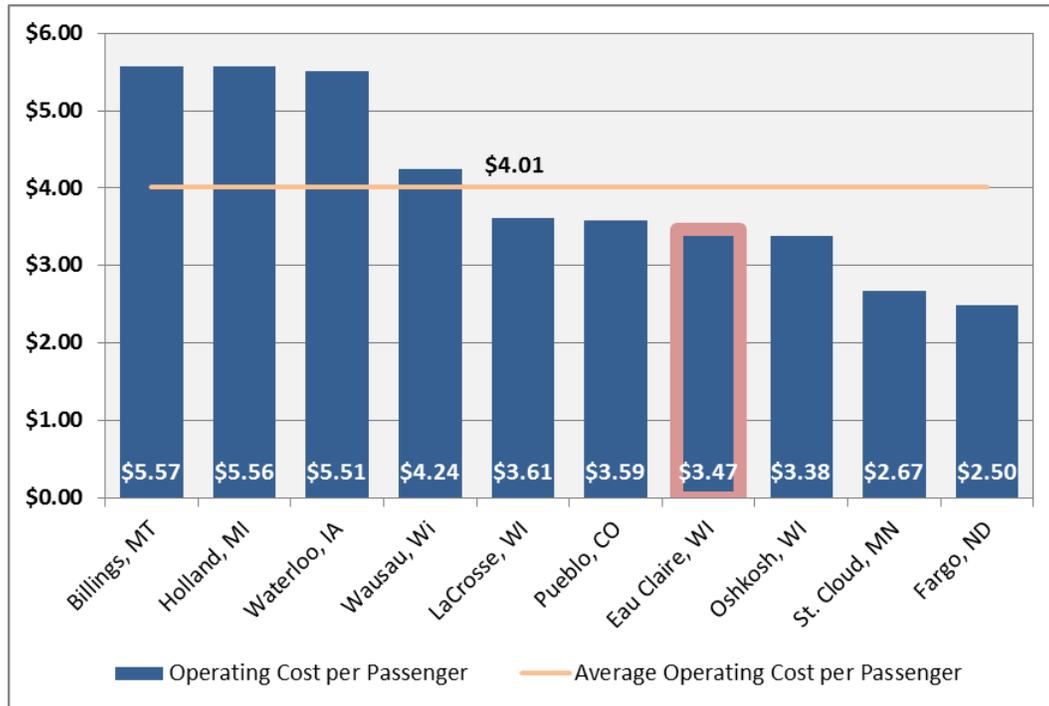
 = Worse than peer average, but within acceptable range

 = Worse than peer average and outside of acceptable range

Cost Effectiveness

Cost effectiveness addresses transit use in relation to the level of resources expended. The primary measure for comparison under this area is operating expense per passenger. In 2011, the average operating expense of providing a single passenger trip on Eau Claire Transit fixed route service was \$3.47. This is lower than the peer average of \$4.01 per trip. As such, the cost effectiveness of Eau Claire Transit operations is *better than the peer average*.

Figure 8. Cost Effectiveness

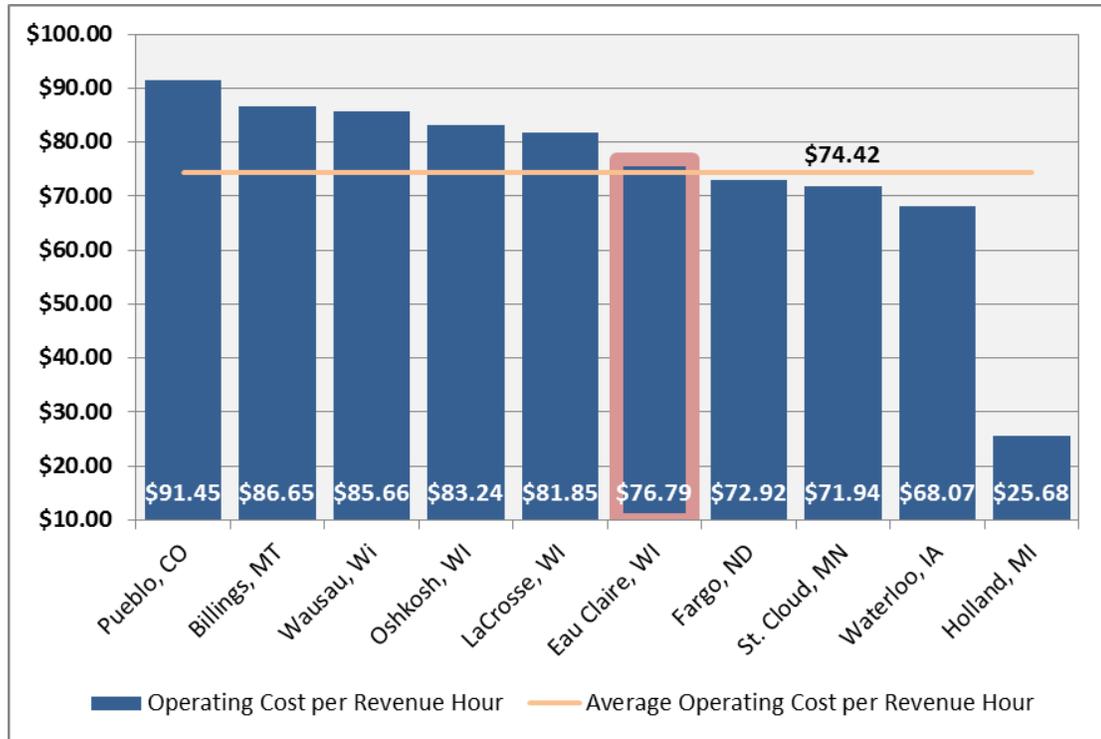


Source: 2011 National Transit Database

Service Efficiency

Service efficiency examines the amount of transit service produced relative to the resources expended. Operating expense per revenue hour is the measure used to assess how efficiently a system delivers service. In 2011, the cost of providing one hour of revenue service at Eau Claire Transit was \$76.79, while the peer average is slightly more efficient at \$74.72. Thus, **the service efficiency of Eau Claire Transit operations is *less efficient than the peer average, but within an acceptable range.***

Figure 9. Service Efficiency

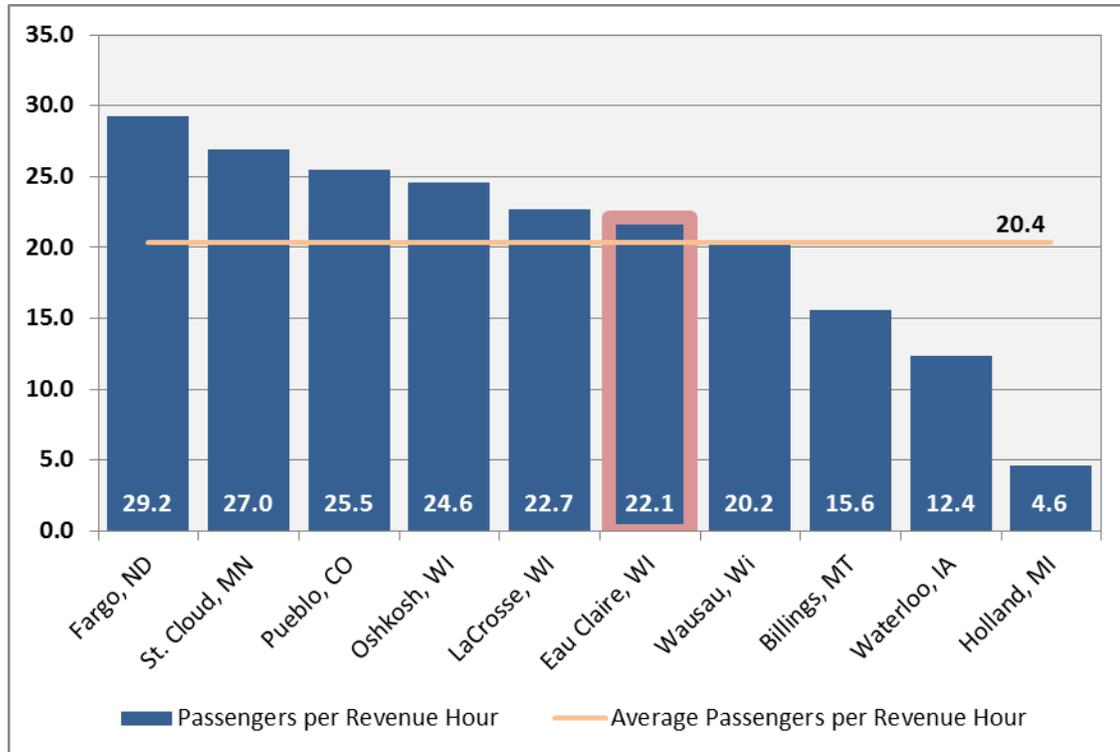


Source: 2011 National Transit Database

Service Effectiveness

Service effectiveness is a measure of the consumption of transit service in relation to the amount of service available. **Passenger trips per revenue hour** is the measure used to assess service effectiveness. Eau Claire Transit serves 22.2 passenger trips per revenue hour, which is above the national peer average of 20.38 passengers per hour. As such, **the service effectiveness of Eau Claire Transit operations is higher than the national peer average.**

Figure 10. Service Effectiveness

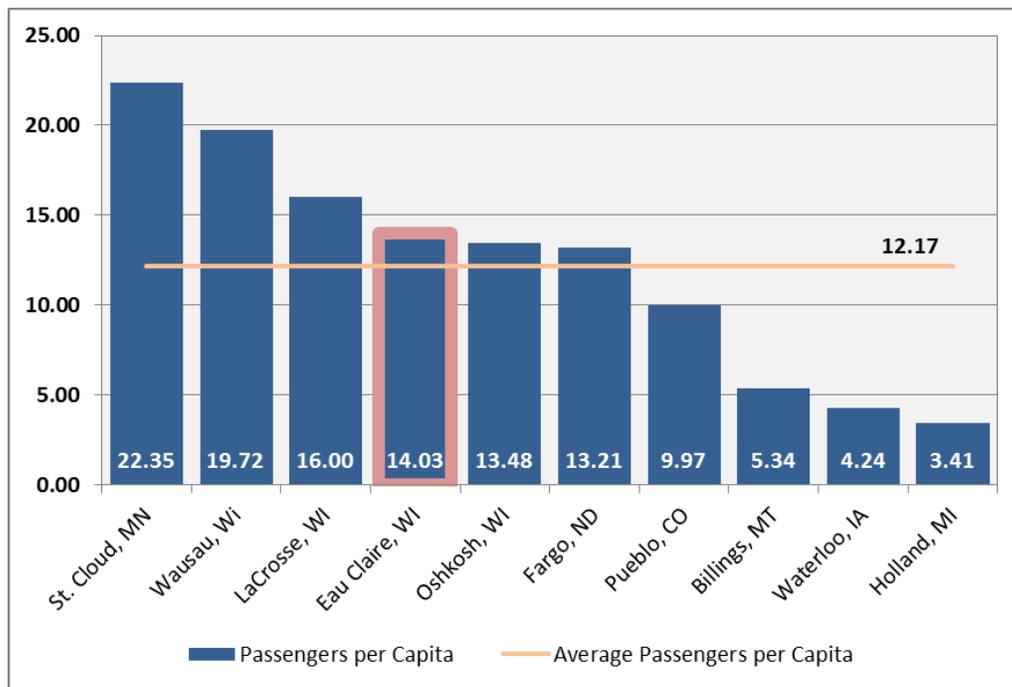


Source: 2011 National Transit Database

Market Penetration

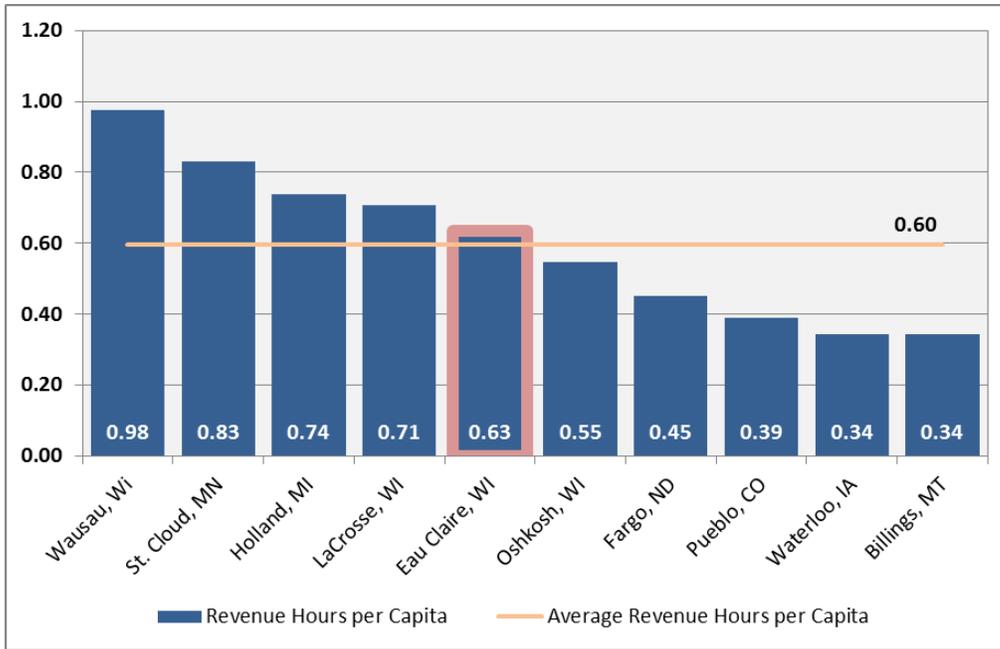
Market penetration measures how well the current transit operations serve the transit consumers in the Eau Claire area. Passengers per capita and revenue hours per capita are measures of market penetration. In 2011, Eau Claire Transit carried 14.03 passengers per capita. In other words, the average citizen of Eau Claire boarded Eau Claire Transit 14.03 times. Similar to the service effectiveness measure, this is above the peer average of 12.17. Relative to the national peers, the **market penetration in Eau Claire is higher than the peer average**. Another measure of market penetration is revenue hours per capita. Eau Claire Transit provides 0.63 hours of service per person. This is above the national average of 0.60 hours of service per person. In this measure, relative to the peers **market penetration is above average**. Although this is the case, a point of review in the fixed route study will be whether the span of transit service is appropriate, and whether or not it could be refined to improve performance.

Figure 11. Market Penetration and Passengers per Capita



Source: 2011 National Transit Database

Figure 12. Market Penetration and Revenue Hours per Capita

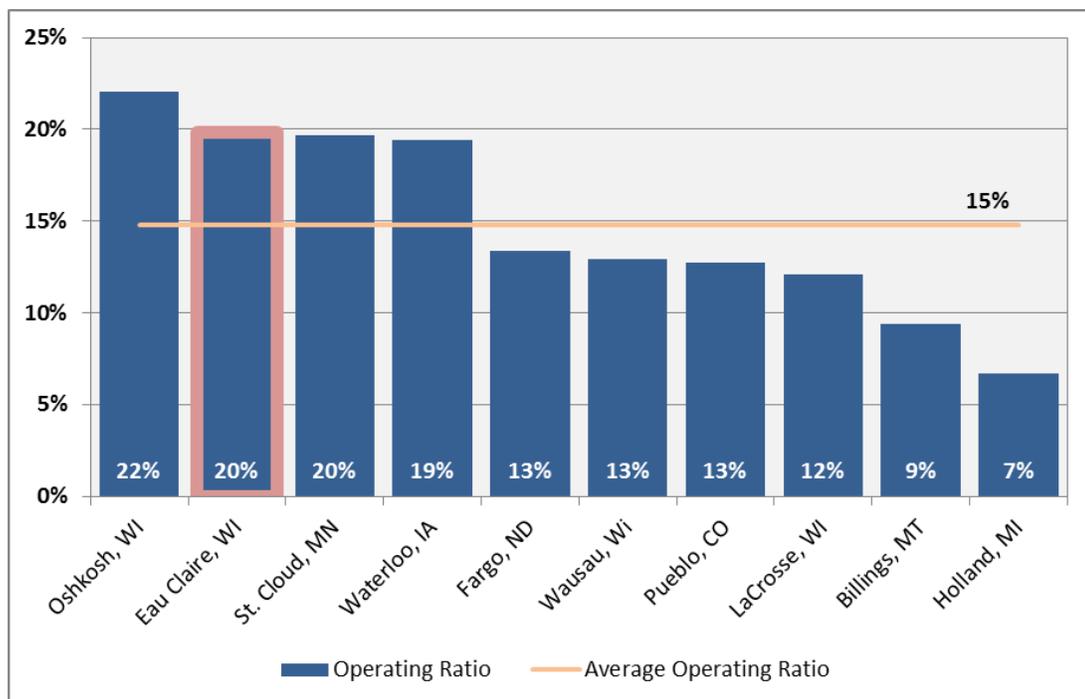


Source: 2011 National Transit Database

Passenger Revenue Effectiveness

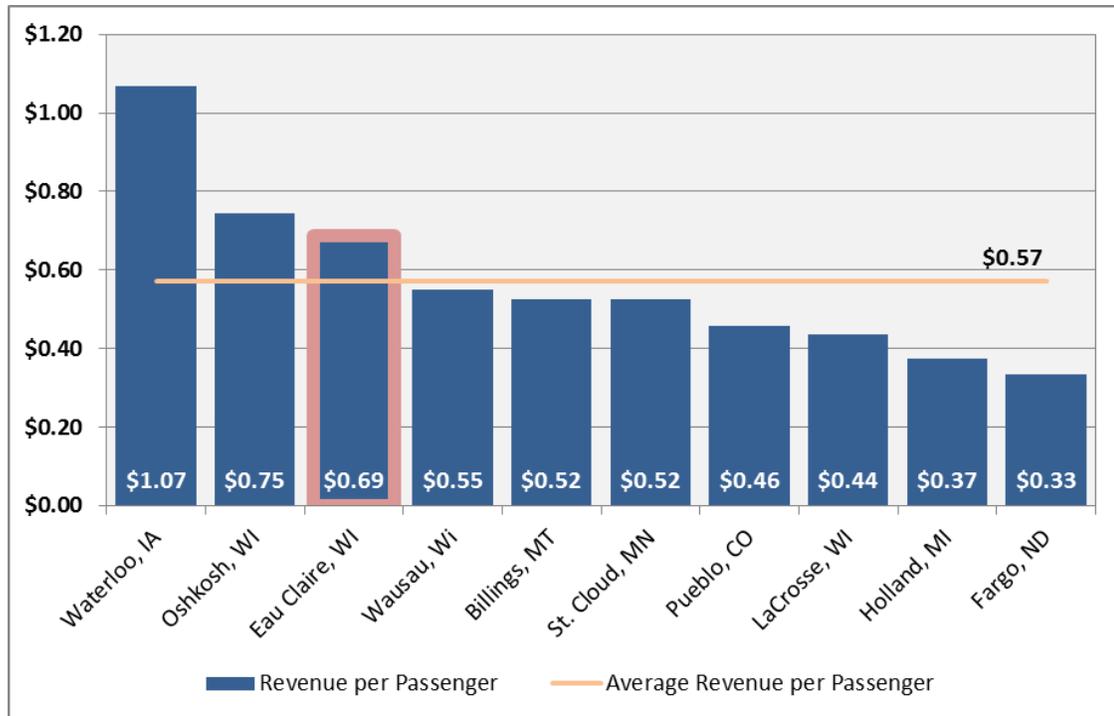
Passenger revenue to operating expense measures the level of operating expenses that are recovered through passenger fare payment. This measure is also referred to as the **operating ratio**. Among the set of national peers, Eau Claire Transit has the second highest operating ratio of approximately 19.9 percent, which is well above the peer average of 14.8 percent. The most similar system in this performance measure is the St. Cloud Metropolitan Transit Commission in St. Cloud, MN with a 19.7 percent operating ratio. Another measure of revenue effectiveness is passenger revenue per passenger, also known as the average fare. In 2011, the average fare paid by an Eau Claire Transit passenger was \$0.69, above the national peer average of \$0.57. In both measures, **the passenger revenue effectiveness of Eau Claire Transit is better than the national peer average.**

Figure 13. Eau Claire Transit Passenger Revenue Effectiveness: Operating Ratio



Source: 2011 National Transit Database

Figure 14. Passenger Revenue Effectiveness, Revenue per Passenger



Source: 2011 National Transit Database

In conclusion, Eau Claire Transit’s performance is quite good, relative to its national peers. In Table 14, an inventory of the performance measures is taken, and summary comparisons are made. In the areas of cost effectiveness, service efficiency, market penetration (passengers per capita), and passenger revenue effectiveness, Eau Claire Transit performs above the peer average, and is within acceptable range of the peer average on the other performance measures.

Often there is discussion at the local level of raising fares as a source of revenue. While fares should keep up with changes in cost-of-living and peer systems, raising fares can also have a negative effect on ridership and produce little gain in revenue because of the loss in passengers.

Table 14. Peer Analysis Summary

Category	Performance Measure	Performance Status
Cost Effectiveness	Operating Expense per Passenger	Above Peer Average
Service Efficiency	Operating Expense per Revenue Hour	Poorer than Peer Average
Service Effectiveness	Passenger Trips per Revenue Hour	Above Peer Average
Market Penetration	Passengers per Capita	Above Peer Average
	Revenue Hours per Capita	Poorer than Peer Average
Passenger Revenue Effectiveness	Passenger Revenue per Operating Expense (Operating Ratio)	Top Ranked Among Peers
	Passenger Revenue per Passenger	Above Peer Average

Stakeholder Input

Discussing Eau Claire Transit services with a variety of people in the Eau Claire area was a key step in understanding the system's strengths and weaknesses and defining potential directions for change. Stakeholder input during the needs assessment phase was conducted through several different avenues to gather feedback on current services from a wide range of users, non-users, and others with insight into the transit system.

The following outreach techniques were employed:

- Public meeting
- Stakeholder meetings
- Surveys:
 - On-board customer
 - Community
 - University
- Passenger vignettes

Public Meeting

A public meeting was held on October 28, 2013 at Eau Claire City Hall. Eau Claire Transit staff gave an introduction to the Transit Development Plan process. They then provided an opportunity for the meeting attendees to discuss transit improvements and concerns. The attendees also had an opportunity to provide input on Eau Claire Transit service quality through three interactive exercises (for a more detailed look at the interactive exercises please see Appendix A).

The initial exercise asked attendees to assess the ability of current transit service to meet travel needs for various populations within the community. The responses to the exercise are summarized in displayed in Table 15. A large percentage (64 percent) of the attendees stated that current transit service serves students in Eau Claire very well. An even larger percentage of attendees (85 percent) stated that current transit service only meets the basic needs of people who rely on transit. Finally, 60 percent of attendees stated that current service does not serve commuters very well.

The second interactive exercise, summarized in Table 16, addressed service changes and passenger views regarding the importance of various modifications to Eau Claire Transit service. Attendees were asked to identify the type of service change that was most important to them. Increasing the frequency of service received the highest proportion of responses (30 percent). Improving facilities and vehicles and expanding weekend service were both a close second for the most important service changes (23 percent each). Open discussion around these modifications included extended emphasis on adding Sunday service, improving the location of the transfer center, enhancing the safety and amenities within facilities, and service improvements to nighttime routes.

Table 15. How well do Current Transit Services Meet Travel Needs in the Community?

	Not very well	Meets only basic needs	Very well
For people who rely on transit?	15%	85%	0%
For commuters?	60%	20%	20%
For students?	9%	27%	64%
For visitors?	90%	10%	0%

Table 16. Potential Service Changes

What modifications to Eau Claire Transit service are most important?	Percentage of responses
Increase frequency of buses	30%
Improve facilities and vehicles	23%
Expand weekend service	23%
Serve a new destination*	16%
Provide service later at night	8%
Provide better customer information (maps, signage, technology)	0%

* Suggested destinations included Fall Creek, Augusta, Chippewa Falls and 'all of Eau Claire County.'

The final interactive exercise, displayed in Table 17, asked attendees to indicate two service improvements which would help a non-user of Eau Claire Transit to reconsider using the service. Similar to the second exercise, increasing the frequency of Eau Claire Transit service received a notable response (54 percent), followed by increasing the speed of service to important destinations throughout Eau Claire and improving the ease of understanding and using the Eau Claire Transit system. Similar to the second exercise, this exercise was supplemented with a strong emphasis on adding Sunday service, extending service to locations such as Chippewa Falls and Lake Hallie, and improving the communication of transit service and route information to users and non-users.

Table 17. Strategies to Grow Ridership

What would make non-users of Eau Claire Transit consider riding the bus?	Percentage of Responses
More frequent service	54%
Faster trip to key destinations	38%
Make riding the bus easier to understand	23%
Increased gas prices	8%

Stakeholder Meetings

In addition to the general public meeting, two stakeholder meetings were held to get additional input on the transit system. The following sections summarize the highlights from these meetings. Summary notes from each of the stakeholder meetings can be found in Appendix A.

University of Wisconsin Eau Claire Meeting

A meeting was held on October 29, 2013 at UWEC to discuss the Transit Development Plan goals and study process and to identify needs and opportunities for service improvements and changes on and around the UWEC campus. Meeting attendees included UWEC faculty and staff, UWEC student senate members, Eau Claire Transit staff, and representatives from the Chippewa Valley Transit Alliance.

Discussion themes included:

- The need for Eau Claire Transit to support the **growing needs of UWEC**, as the student population accounts for approximately 33 percent of system ridership and both organizations see their relationship with each other as critical. Improvements are needed in **service hours, frequency, stop locations, reliability, and technology** to make the system more appealing and understandable to users.
- The Eau Claire Transit system is currently challenged because it is unable to effectively reach out to and **communicate with the student population**. Increased involvement in freshman orientation, as many students do not have experience with transit when they start school, as well as increasing the usability of the Eau Claire Transit website, adding a mobile application, and focusing on continual communication efforts, may help with this issue.

Stakeholder Meetings

Meeting #1

A stakeholder meeting was held on October 29, 2013 at Eau Claire City Hall. Attendees included Eau Claire Transit staff, City of Eau Claire staff, and representatives from the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC), the Chippewa Valley Transit Alliance, the West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition, and the Third Ward Neighborhood Association.

Discussion themes included:

- Increasing the **availability of information** to students and the general public through map, bus stop, and general marketing improvements.
- Expanding the **service coverage area** to reach destinations in Chippewa Falls and Lake Hallie, such as Walmart and retirement communities, as well as Ward 3 in Eau Claire.
- Expanding **route and stop frequency** to better serve evening and weekend populations, including the evening expansion of service in Altoona (Route 17) and Route 6. The **addition of Sunday service** was also an emphasis of this conversation.

Meeting #2

An additional stakeholder meeting was held on December 5, 2013. Attendees included Eau Claire Transit, City of Altoona, and City of Chippewa Falls staff, as well as representatives from Chippewa Valley Technical College and the Chippewa Valley Transit Alliance.

Discussion themes included:

- Increasing the **service coverage and frequency in Altoona** to serve newly developed areas and to improve the convenience of transit and coverage of transit service. Additional questions about the cost of expanded transit service for the City of Altoona were also voiced.
- Expanding the **extent of service** to better serve needs during the evening (Route 9), and on Sundays.
- Improving the **location and public amenities available at a future transfer station**, including public bathrooms.

Surveys

Three surveys were conducted during the initial stakeholder input phase to gather opinion on current conditions and solicit ideas for service improvement. The survey efforts included an on-board customer survey, a community-wide survey, and a survey targeted at the UWEC and CVTC communities.

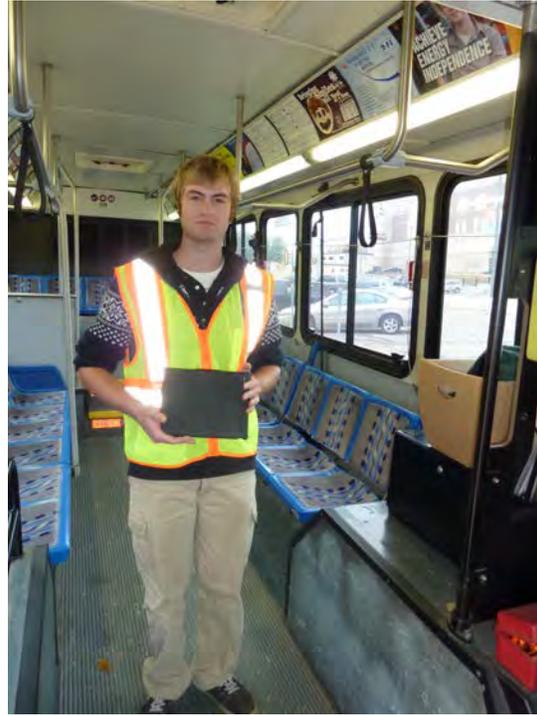
On-Board Survey

Surveys of transit customers are useful in informing a transit system's planning and operations functions, as well as governmental boards, commissions, and councils. An on-board rider survey was developed to gather input on current conditions and to solicit ideas for service improvement within the Eau Claire Transit network.

The survey was distributed to Eau Claire Transit passengers on board transit vehicles on Monday, October 28 and Tuesday, October 29, 2013. Temporary survey collectors were hired and trained by the consultant team to administer the survey on tablet computers. Nighttime riders were provided with a hard copy of the survey for completion. A total of 539 responses were collected during the two day period in which the survey was administered. Some respondents opted out of certain questions on the survey, and the responses account for this in the percentages by omitting the "opt-outs."



Passengers board Route 17 to Altoona at the downtown transfer station.



A member of the survey team waits on board an Eau Claire Transit bus with his tablet before surveying passengers.

Survey respondents were asked a series of basic demographic questions. Of all the participants, 61 percent identified as women and 29 percent as men.⁴ Participants were also asked whether they had any mobility issues, their age, race/ethnicity, household size, and vehicle availability. Results of these demographic questions are displayed in Figure 15 - Figure 19. The majority of respondents do not have mobility limitations (87 percent). Over 40 percent of the respondents were between the ages of 19 and 34, and the rest of the respondents were relatively evenly distributed throughout the other age groups, with the exception of the 65+ age group (seven percent). This is remarkable in that it shows relatively low transit usage by the Eau Claire's senior population, suggesting that there is growth potential in this market. Given that the most common age group on Eau Claire Transit is age 19-34, it supports that students traveling to and from UWEC or CVTC are a dominant in the transit system's core ridership. Furthermore, 87 percent of participants identified as "White, Non-Hispanic." Household size and vehicle availability were also addressed in the survey. Respondent household sizes were nearly equally distributed between one, two, and three or more persons per household, but more than half of participants (51 percent) stated that they do not have a vehicle available for use within their household.

⁴ Ten percent of respondents did not answer this question

Figure 15. Do you have any mobility limitations?

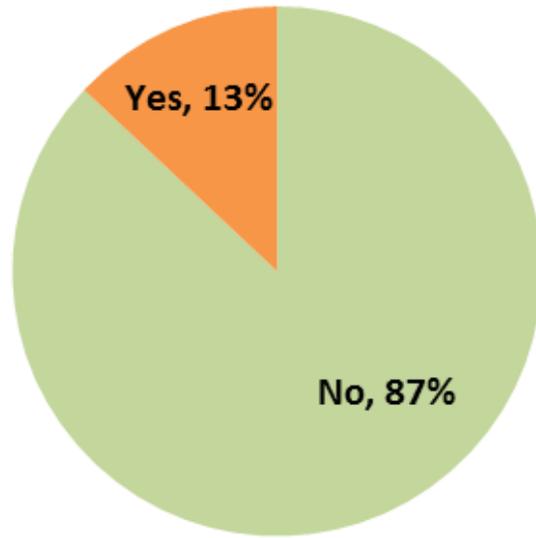


Figure 16. What is your age?

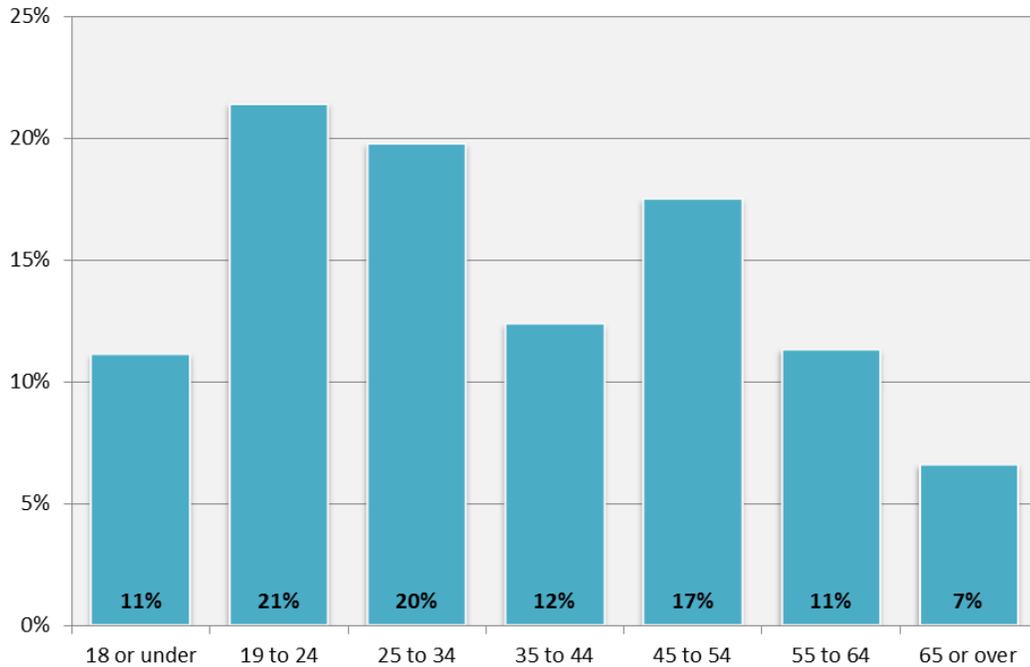


Figure 17. What is your race/ethnicity?

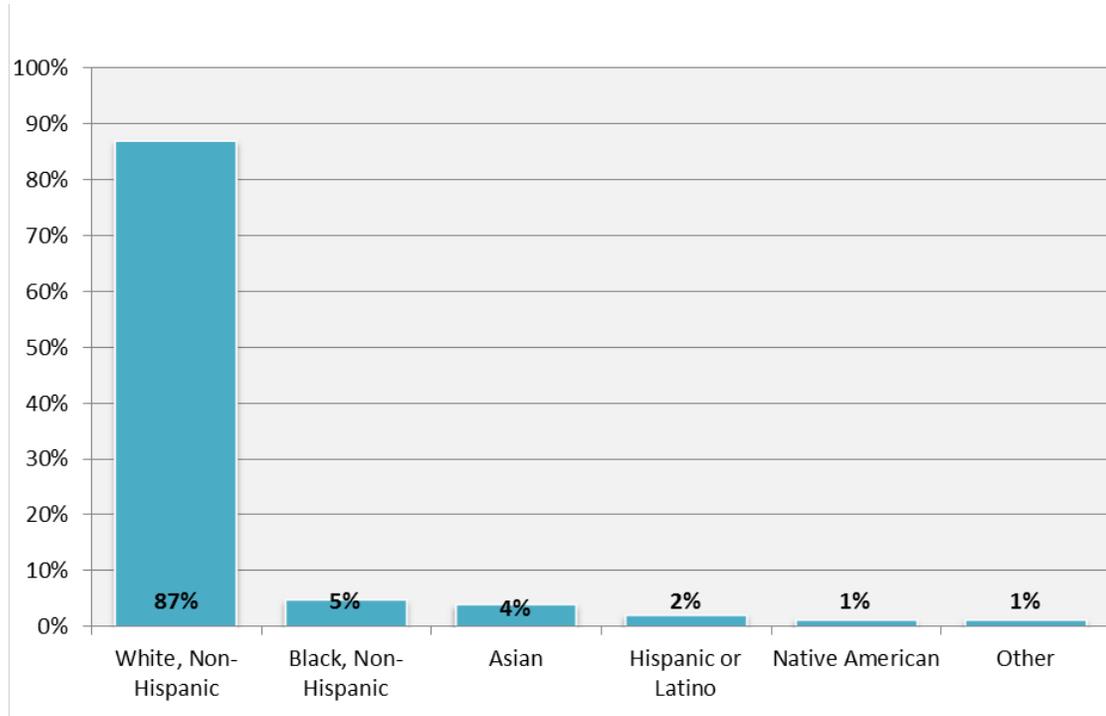


Figure 18. How many people are in your household?

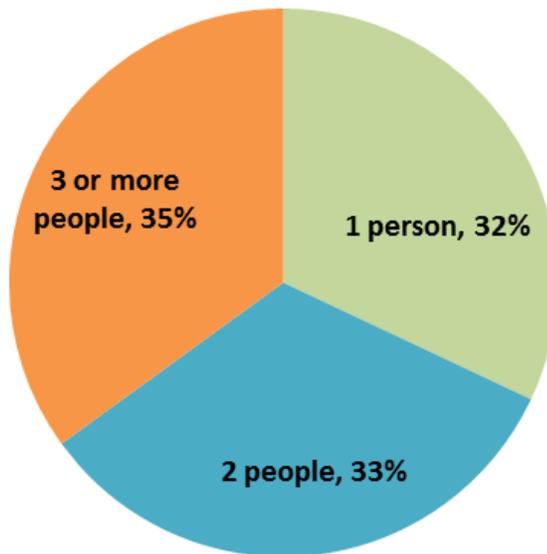
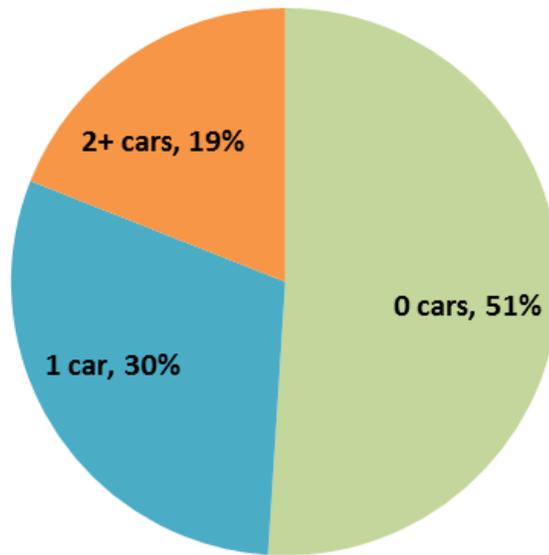


Figure 19. How many cars are available in your household?



As shown in Figure 19, a significant number of Eau Claire transit users (51 percent) do not own a car. In contrast, only 13 percent of the community respondents stated they did not own a car, and according to 2011 American Community Survey data, approximately seven percent of Eau Claire households do not own a car. This suggests that the transit reliant individuals that are without a car are well served by the system, and that there is growth potential in other markets.

In addition to the demographic questions, the survey also asked a series of questions more directly related to use and payment for Eau Claire Transit, travel behavior, and perceptions.

Figure 20. How often do you use Eau Claire Transit?

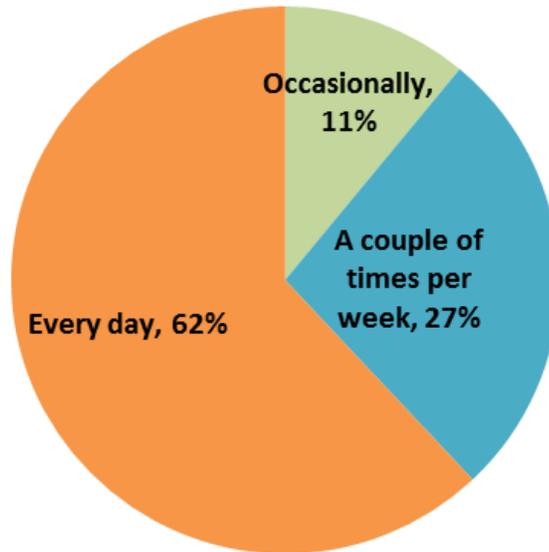
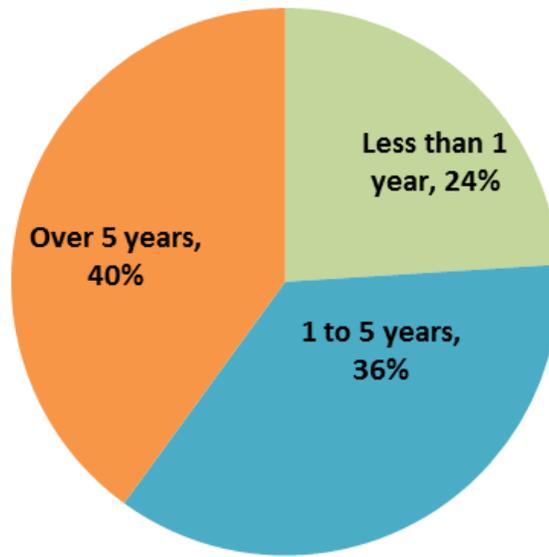


Figure 20 shows a majority of survey respondents rely on the service every day, and that there is a stable core group of transit users. Eau Claire Transit presents a clear utility to these passengers. Two-thirds of the riders are daily users, speaking to the reliability and overall positive perception of the system.

Figure 21. How long have you been a transit user?



The percentage breakdown shown in Figure 21 is typical of trends in other mid-size communities where one in four riders is new to the system. This is also affected by a community with a large student population where there is a regular influx of new people who rely on transit with incoming university classes. Figures 22 and 23 show which routes people were riding on the days the survey was deployed. Figure 23 shows transfer patterns. Approximately 48 percent of survey respondents made transfers on their trips.

Figure 22. Which route are you currently on?

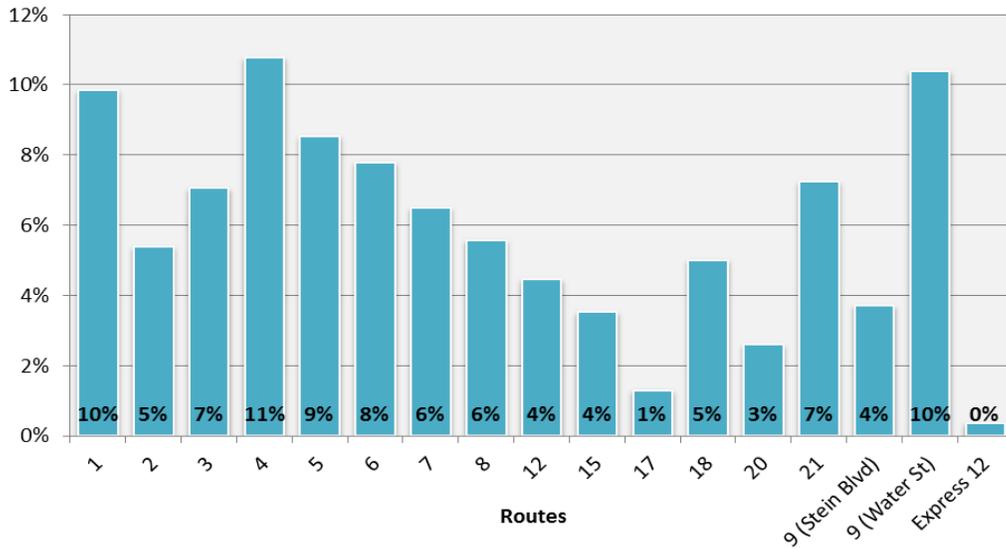


Figure 23. If you transferred to this route or plan to transfer, which route will you be using?

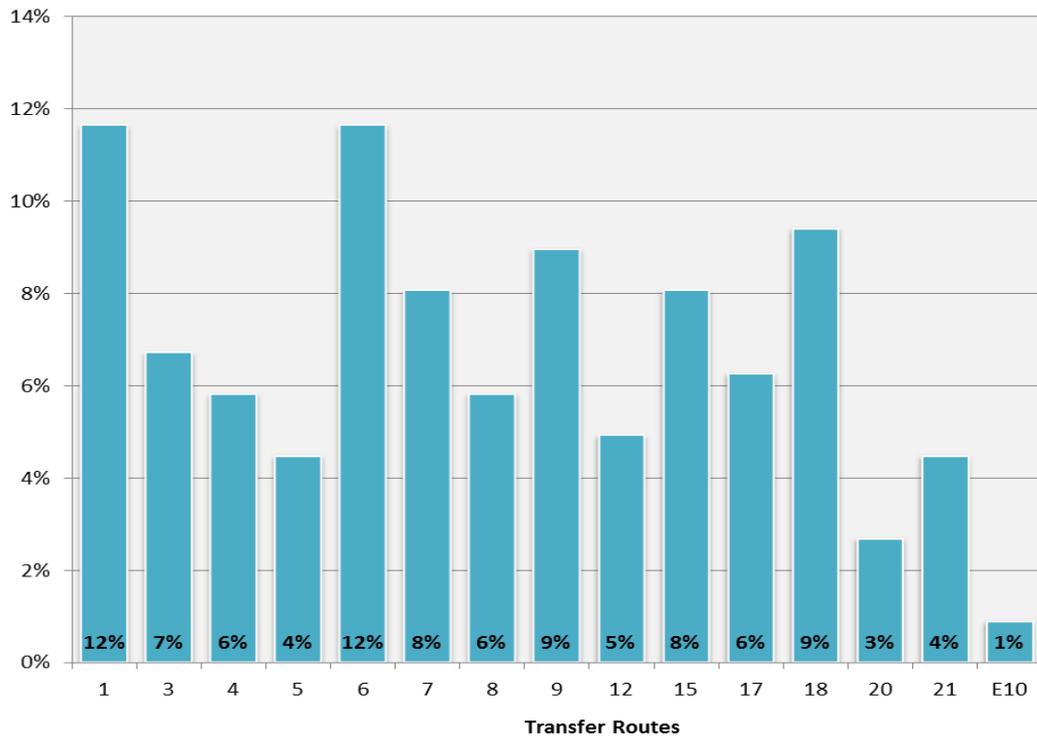
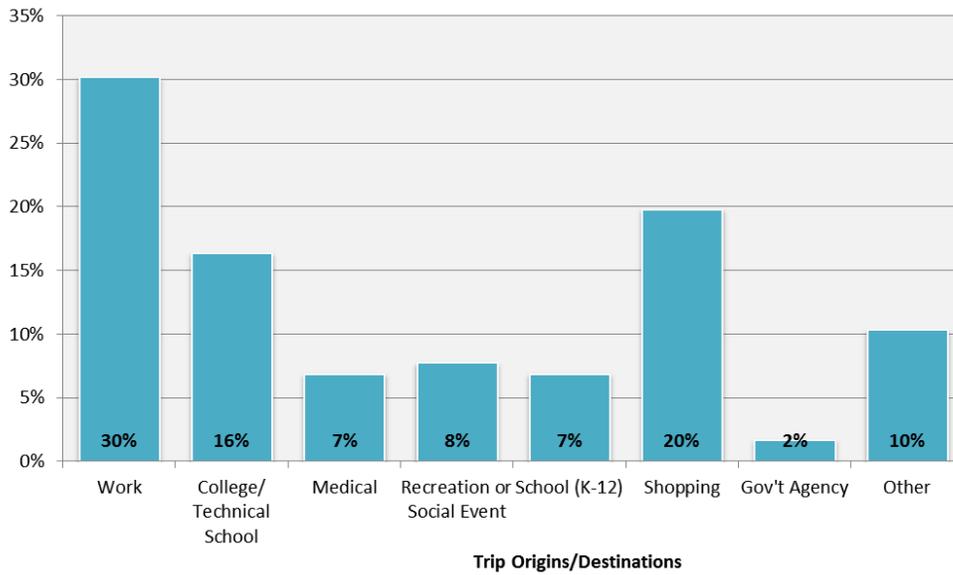


Figure 24. Where are you traveling to/from today?



Most trips originate or terminate at a transit user’s residence, and serving residential areas is a key part of a transit agency’s mission. Most of the transit supportive residential areas in Eau Claire are well covered by existing service. When home based trips are excluded (i.e. trips starting or ending at a rider’s home), most riders were traveling to or from work, a shopping destination, or to college/technical school, as shown in Figure 24.

Figure 25. How did you pay for your current trip?

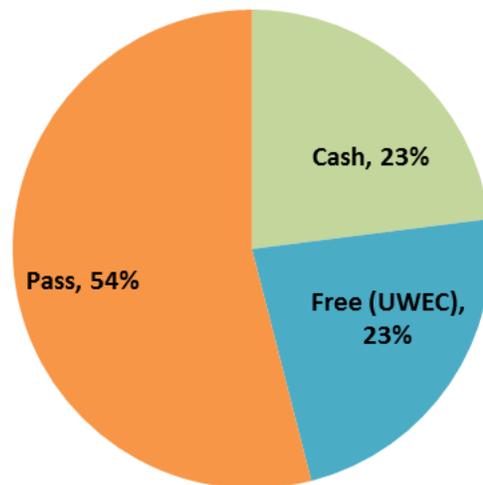
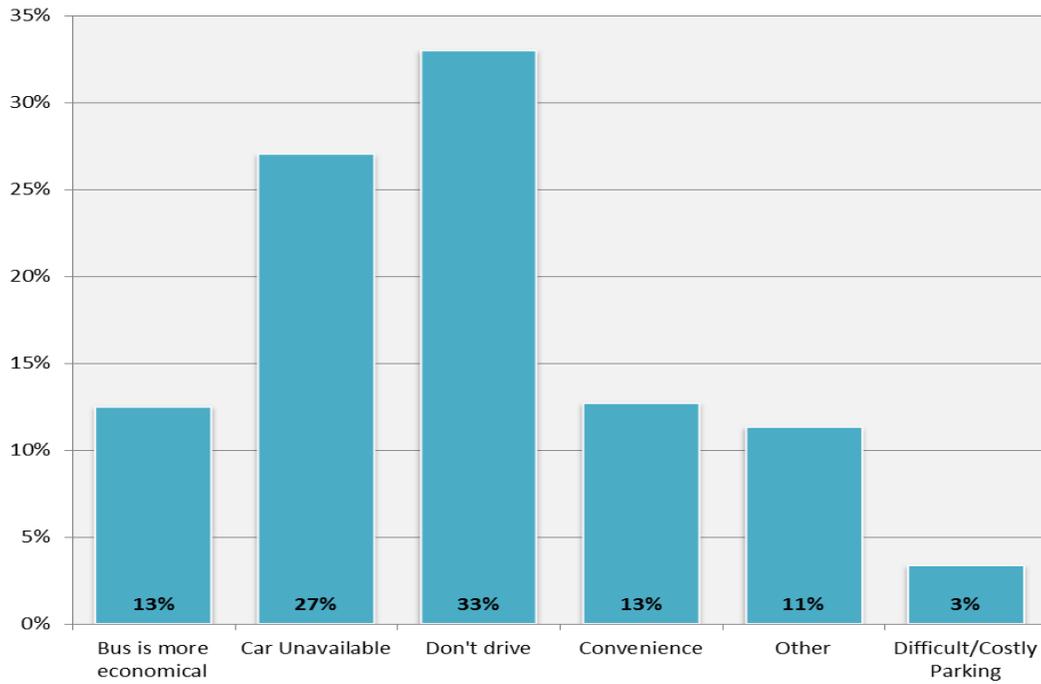


Figure 26. What is the main reason you use Eau Claire Transit?



As shown in Figure 26, a significant number of respondents (60 percent) either do not have access to a car or do not drive.

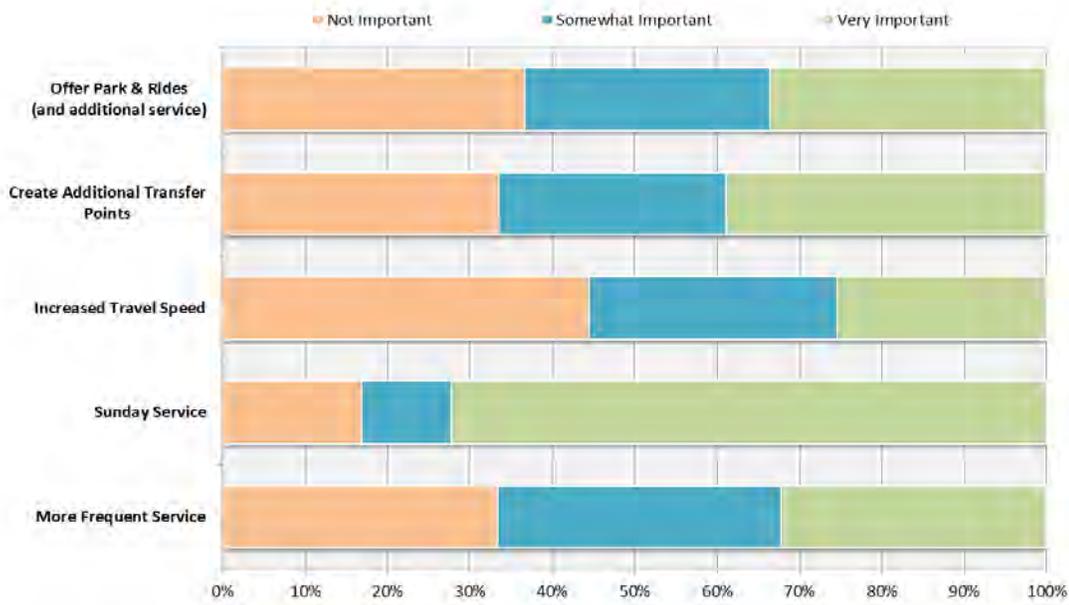
Figure 27. At what point would you begin riding transit less if fares increased?



A fairly significant percentage of survey respondents (54 percent) stated they would ride transit less if fares increased by any amount. This is significant, because trends show it is more typical to see a 25 to 30 percent drop in ridership for every 1 percent increase in transit fares; meaning the stated preference of respondents is 14 to 26 percent higher than typical. However, it should be noted that when prices are actually changed stated preferences can differ significantly from actual behavior.

Survey participants were also asked to state how important various service improvements are to them. Of the five service improvement questions addressed, as displayed in Figure 28, responses to four of the questions were approximately equally distributed between “not important,” “somewhat important,” and “very important,” with the exception of the survey question regarding the expansion of service to Sundays. More than 70 percent of survey participants responded that this issue was very important.

Figure 28. How important are the following improvements to you?



Finally, all survey participants were allowed to respond in an open-ended format with general comments about Eau Claire Transit. Types of comments received are summarized in Table 18. Many riders requested service improvements, including extending existing service to late nights and Sundays, as well as expanding service to new areas, such as Altoona and Chippewa Falls. A full record of comments is included in Appendix C.

Table 18. Open-Ended Comment Summary (On-Board Survey)

Comment Type	Count
Expand Service	32
Extend Service (PM, Saturday PM, Sunday)	29
Bus Stop/Transfer Center Improvements	17
Bus Driver Courtesy	15
Bus Condition	6
Ease of Information/Understanding	2

Community Survey

A web-based survey was developed to gather input from community members after the public planning or stakeholder meetings held in October. The survey's link was posted on the Eau Claire Transit website and was open to both riders and the non-riding public. A total of 301 responses were collected during the month in which the survey was open. Results of the survey are discussed as shares of responses, as not all respondents answered all of the survey questions.

Similar to the on-board survey, respondents were asked a series of basic demographic questions. Of the survey respondents, 59 percent identified as women and 41 percent as men. Respondents were also asked whether they had any mobility issues, their age, race/ethnicity, household size, household income, and vehicle availability. Results of these demographic questions are displayed in Figure 29 - Figure 35.

The majority of community survey participants do not have mobility limitations (94 percent). Nearly 40 percent of the respondents were between the ages of 19 and 34, and the rest of the respondents were relatively evenly distributed throughout the other age groups, with the exception of the 65+ age group (seven percent) and the 18 or under age group (four percent). Furthermore, 95 percent of respondents identified as "White, Non-Hispanic."

Household size, income, vehicle availability, and survey resident locations were also addressed in the community survey. Respondent household sizes were nearly equally distributed between two and three or more persons per household (38 percent and 39 percent, respectively). Unlike the on-board survey, only 13 percent of respondents do not have a vehicle available for their use. Household income was not addressed in the on-board survey, but is likely related to this difference in vehicle ownership, as nearly 40 percent of respondents have an annual household income greater than \$50,000. An equal share of respondents live in the north and west areas of Eau Claire (18 percent), while slightly more respondents currently live in the east (21 percent) and south areas (25 percent), respectively.

Figure 29. Do you have any mobility limitations? (Community Survey)

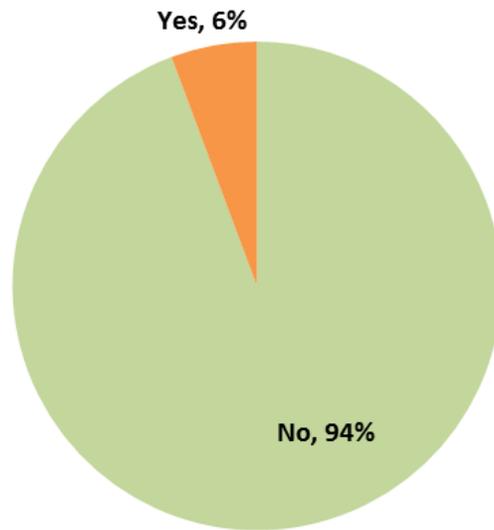


Figure 30. What is your age? (Community Survey)

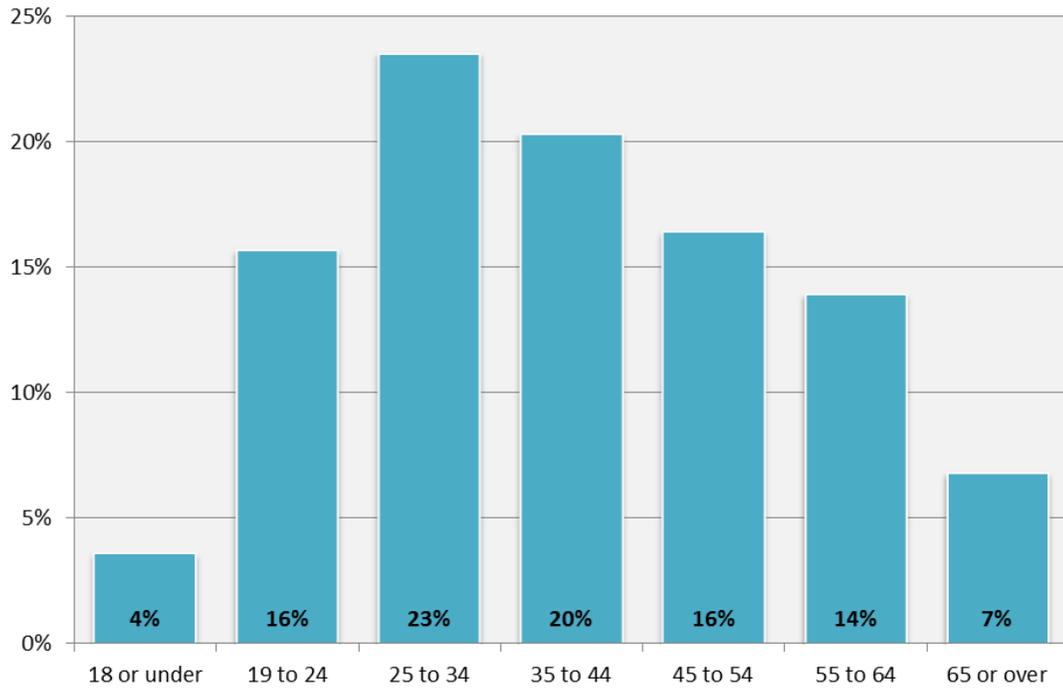


Figure 31. What is your race/ethnicity? (Community Survey)

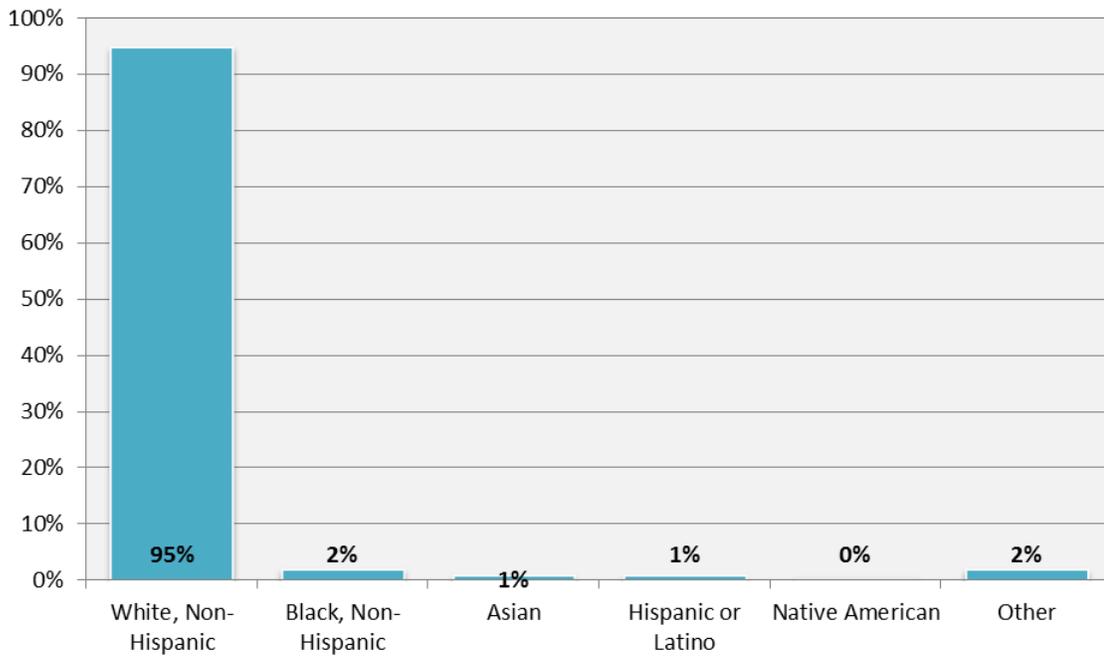


Figure 32. How many people are in your household? (Community Survey)

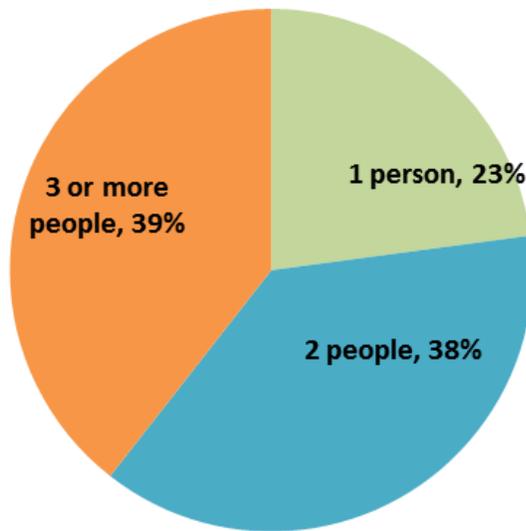
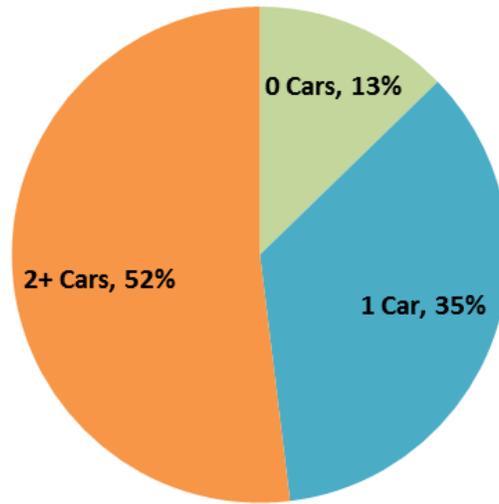


Figure 33. How many cars are available in your household? (Community Survey)



As noted previously, the percentage of respondents that stated they had zero cars available in their household is much lower in the community survey (13 percent) than on-board survey (

Figure 34. What is your annual household income? (Community Survey)

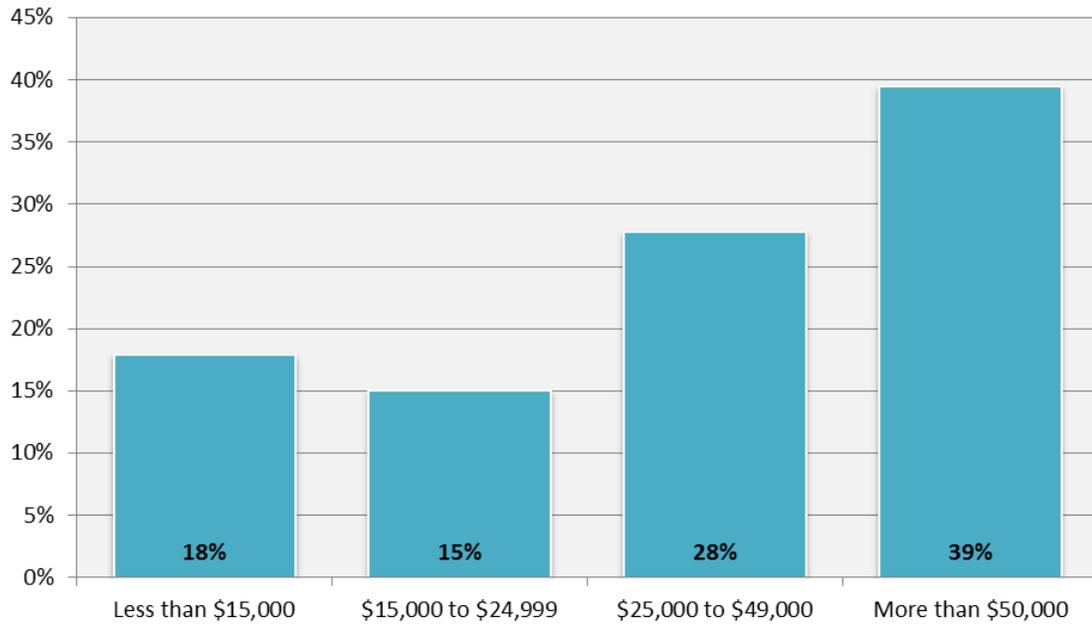
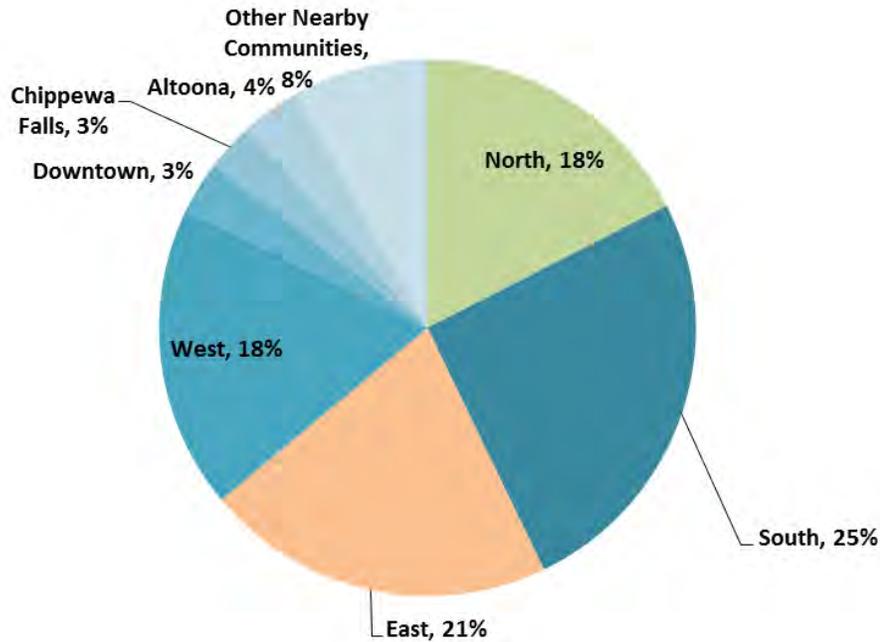


Figure 35. Where do you live in the Eau Claire area? (Community Survey)



Additional survey questions identified the respondents who are regular users of the system. Forty percent responded that they or someone else in their household are regular users of the Eau Claire Transit system, while 60 percent of households were not regular users (Figure 36). Of these regular users, 45 percent use Eau Claire Transit daily, and another 34 percent use the system on a weekly basis (Figure 37). As displayed in Figure 38, the majority of these regular riders use the system to travel to work (44 percent) or college/technical school (18 percent).

Figure 36. Do you or any members of your household use Eau Claire Transit on a regular basis? (Community Survey)

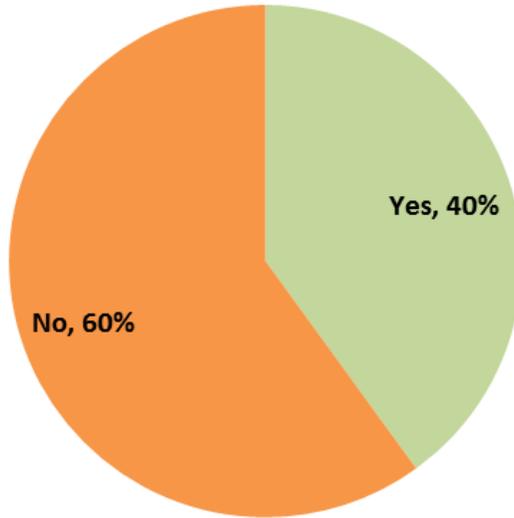


Figure 37. How often do you or a member of your household use Eau Claire Transit? (Community Survey)

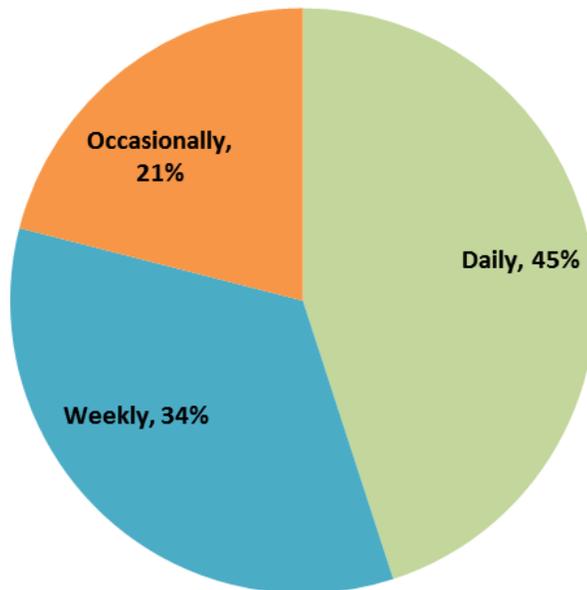
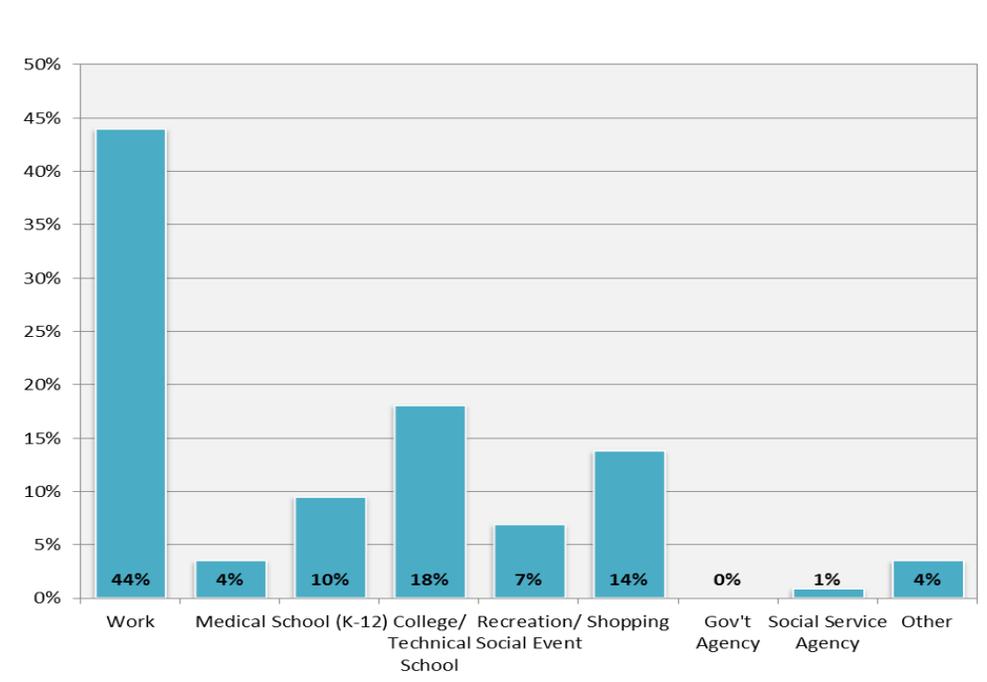
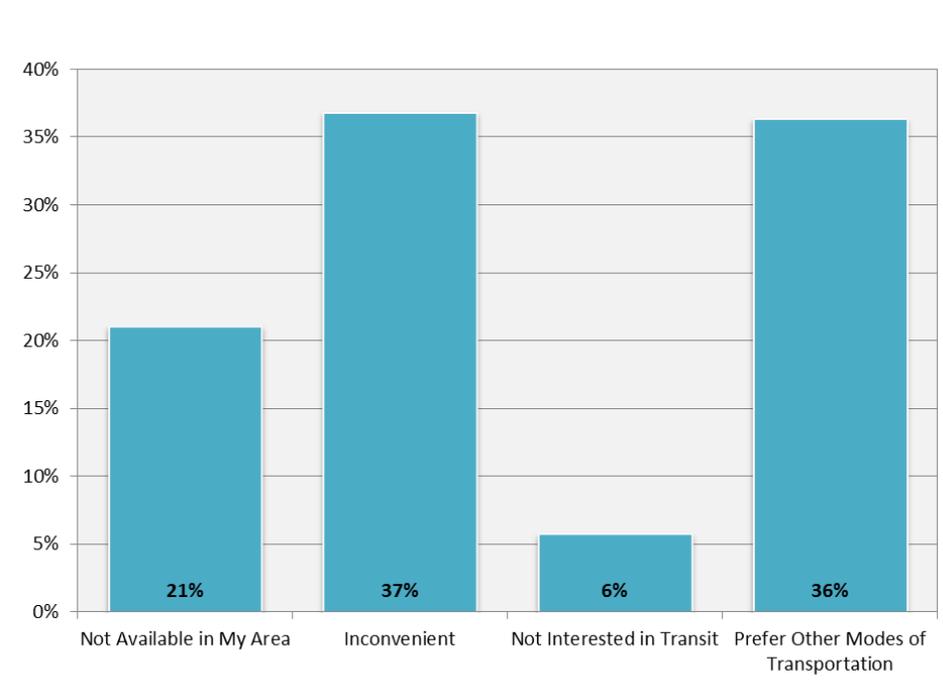


Figure 38. What is your usual trip purpose? (Community Survey)



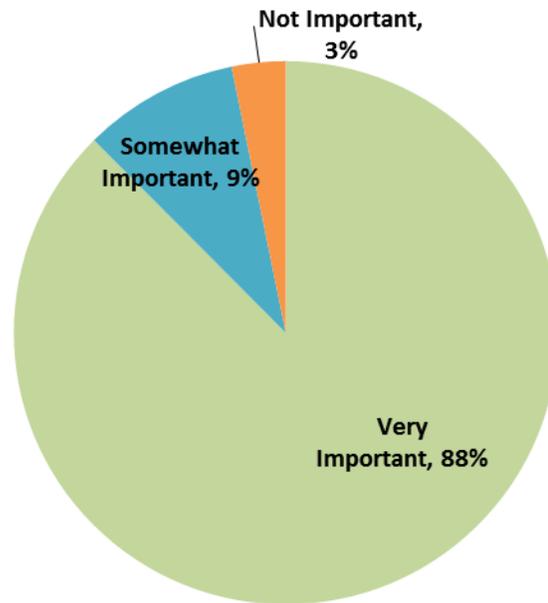
Participants who do not use Eau Claire transit were asked why this is the case. Nearly 60 percent responded that the service is unavailable in their area or inconvenient; 36 percent responded that they prefer another mode of transportation (Figure 39).

Figure 39. If you do not use Eau Claire Transit, what discourages you from doing so? (Community Survey)



Finally, all respondents were asked to rate the importance of transit service. Nearly all respondents (88 percent) answered that it is very important for the community to continue to provide this service (Figure 40).

Figure 40. How important is it for the community to continue providing transit service? (Community Survey)



University Survey

Students, staff, and faculty at UWEC were invited to participate in an online survey about the Eau Claire Transit system through emails distributed by each campus' administration. Similar to the on-board and community surveys, respondents were asked a series of basic demographic questions; due to the low response rate, results of this survey should be interpreted with caution. Of the 123 UWEC survey respondents, 37 percent self-identified as women and 63 percent as men. Participants were also asked whether they had any mobility issues, as well as their age, race/ethnicity, household size, and vehicle availability. Results of these demographic questions are displayed in Figure 41 - Figure 45.

The majority of survey participants from the university community do not have mobility limitations (96 percent). The age distribution of survey participants is also similar to the participants of the other surveys; participants were close to equally distributed between the ages of 19 and 64. Furthermore, 91 percent of participants identified as "White, Non-Hispanic." Respondent household sizes were nearly equally distributed between two and three or more persons per household (37 percent and 39 percent, respectively). Similar to the community survey, only a small share of participants (nine percent) do not have a vehicle available for their use.

Figure 41. Do you have any mobility limitations? (University Survey)

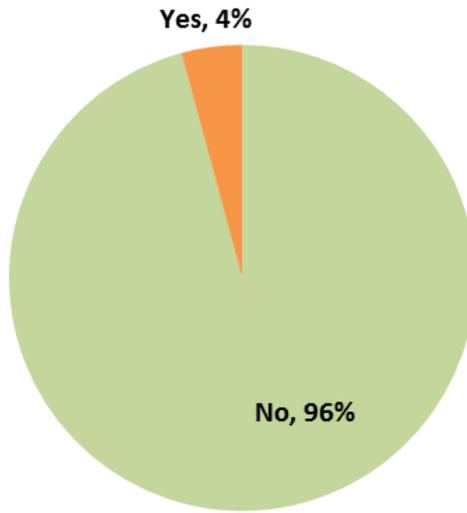


Figure 42. What is your age? (University Survey)

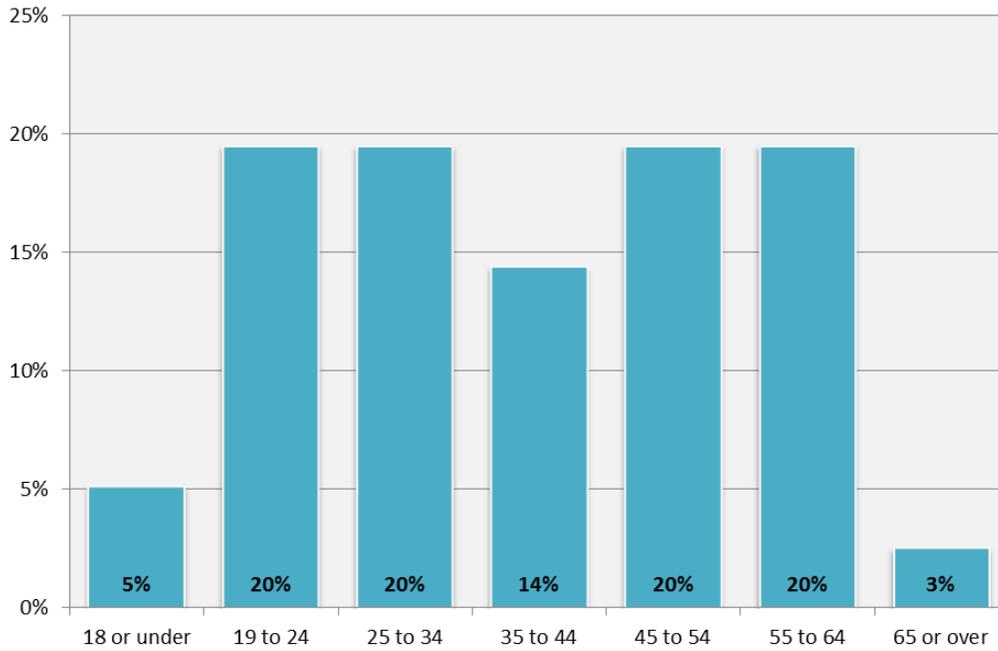


Figure 43. What is your race/ethnicity? (University Survey)

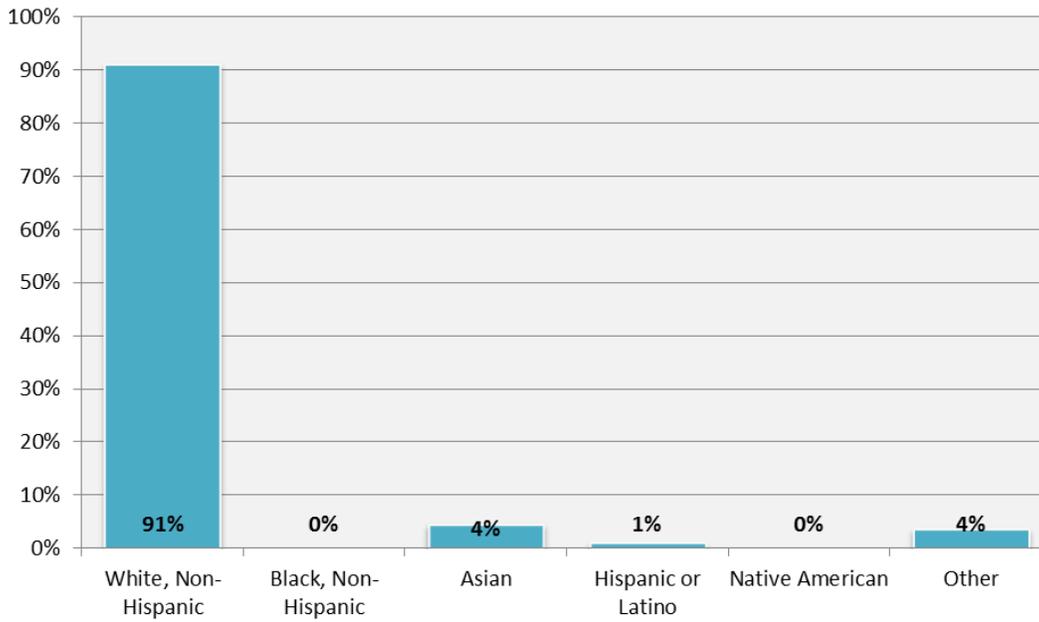


Figure 44. How many people are in your household? (University Survey)

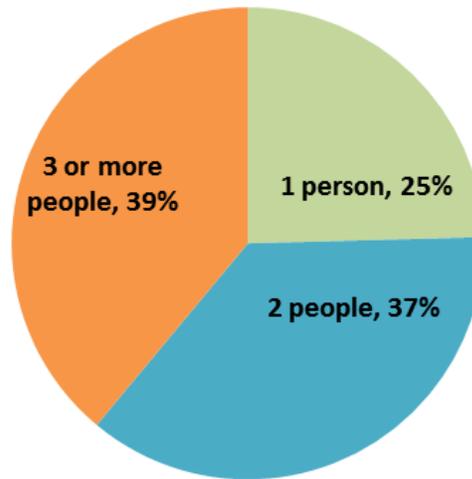
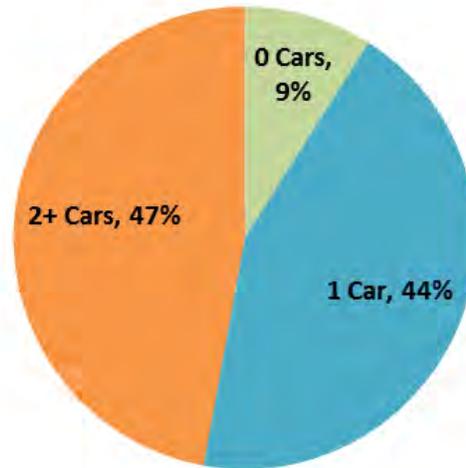


Figure 45. How many vehicles are available for your use at your household? (University Survey)



In order to better understand the needs of the university community, the participant’s relationship to the community (i.e., student, staff, and faculty) and residential locations were also addressed in this survey.

Of the respondents, 70 percent were UWEC faculty or staff, while 24 percent identified as UWEC undergraduate students (Figure 46). Of the participants in the University Survey that indicated they did not own a car, all but one was an undergraduate student at UWEC. The other respondent was an employee of UWEC.

An approximately equal share of participants live in the north, east, and west areas of Eau Claire, for a total of 30 percent of the responses. An additional 29 percent of respondents live in the southern area of Eau Claire, 17 percent reported an on-campus (UWEC) residence, and six percent reported a downtown residence. Participants from nearby communities such as Chippewa Falls, Altoona, Elk Mound, New Auburn, and others make up the final 18 percent of responses. All respondents that noted mobility issues or that they did not have access to a working vehicle live within the City of Eau Claire.

Figure 46. Are you a student, staff, or faculty member? (University Survey)

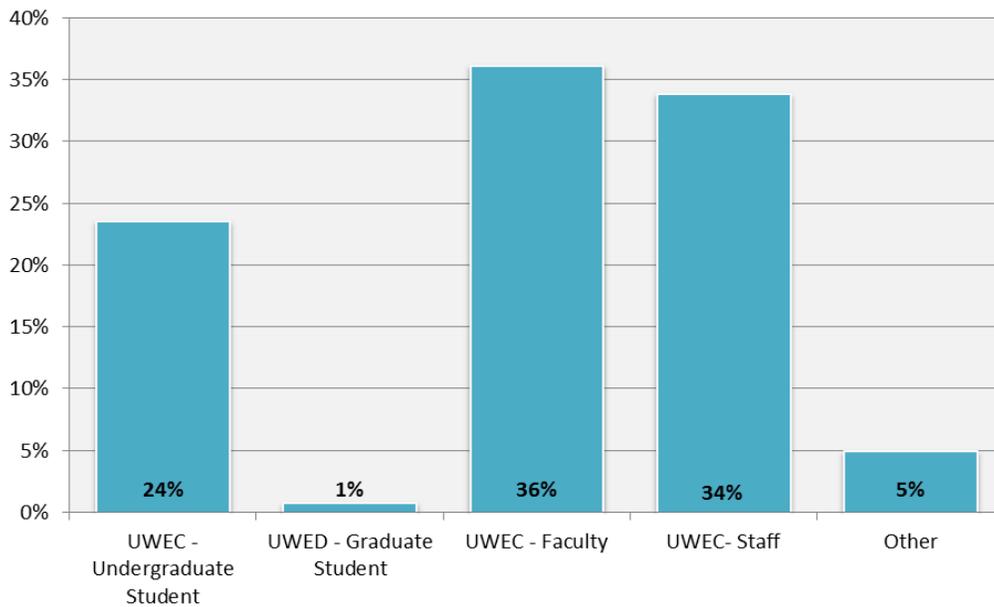
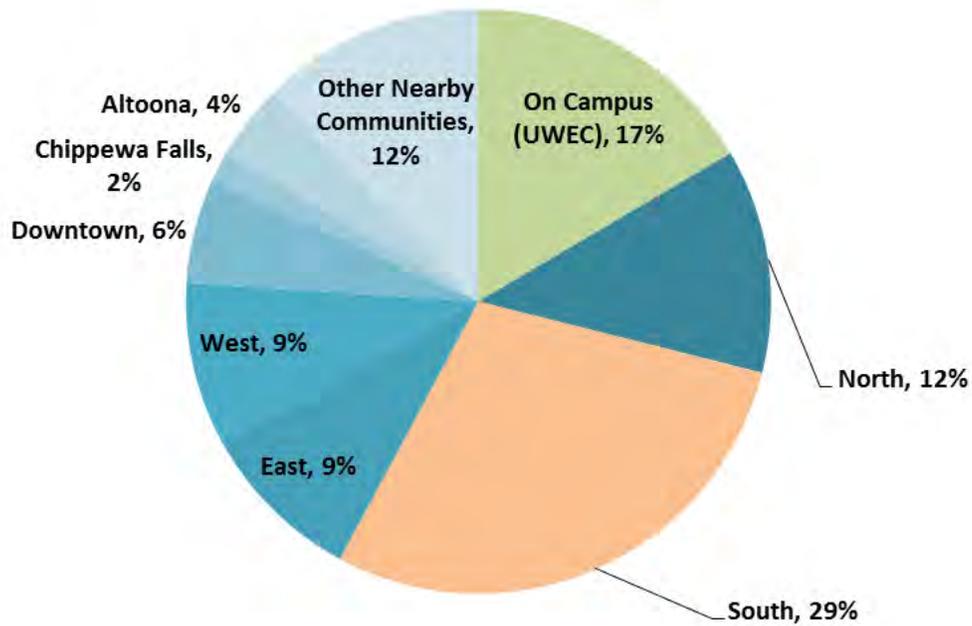


Figure 47. Where do you live in the Eau Claire area? (University Survey)



In addition to the demographic questions, survey participants were asked if they use Eau Claire transit on a somewhat frequent basis (greater than once per month). The participants that indicated that they use Eau Claire transit frequently (34 percent) were asked a series of additional questions about how long they have been a transit user, specific frequency of use, commonly used routes, trip purposes, and perceptions of service, as displayed in Figure 48 - Figure 52.

Over 75 percent of frequent riders state that they have been a transit user for greater than three years, and 23 percent of frequent riders have used transit for two or fewer years. Sixty-two percent of users reported using Eau Claire transit on a daily basis, and an additional 27 percent use the system multiple times per week.

Nearly half of frequent riders use the system to travel to UWEC classes, and 35 percent use the system to travel to work at UWEC. When asked what routes are most commonly used, Route 9 (Water and Stein) ranked the highest, followed Route 1 and Route 6. No frequent users reported regular use of Route 3/ 4, Route 4, or any of the express services. Service perception questions about bus driver courtesy, safety, and on-time performance returned largely positive results, as 80 to 90 percent of respondents indicated positive experiences.

Figure 48. How long have you been a transit user? (University Survey)

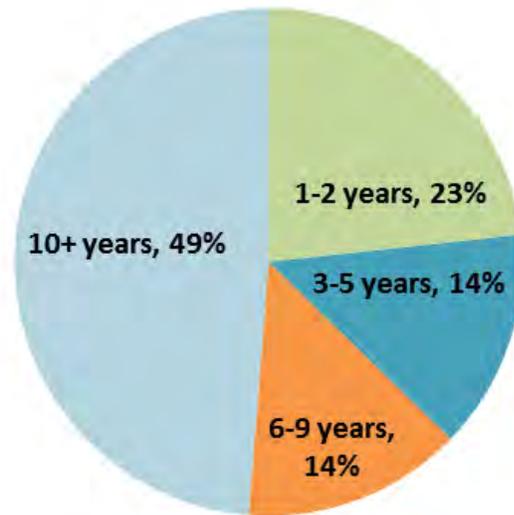


Figure 49. How frequently do you use Eau Claire Transit? (University Survey)

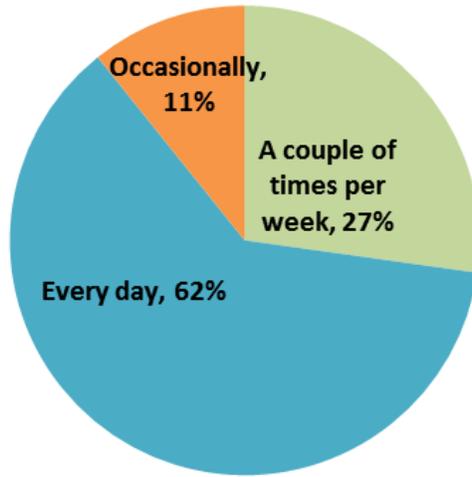


Figure 50. What is your usual trip purpose? (University Survey)

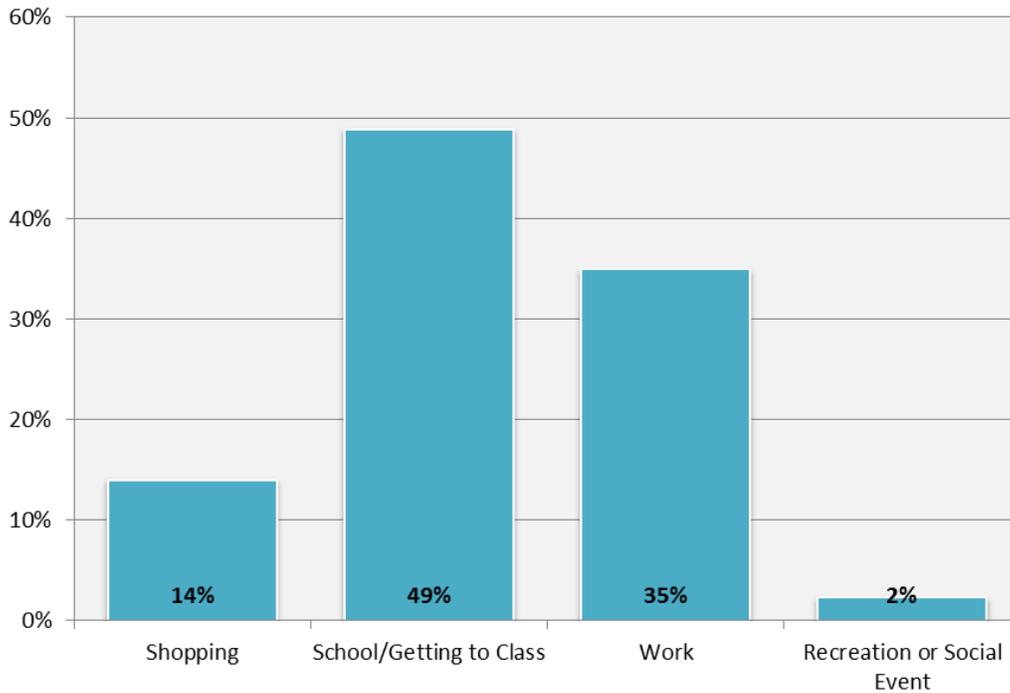


Figure 51. Which routes do you use most often? (University Survey)

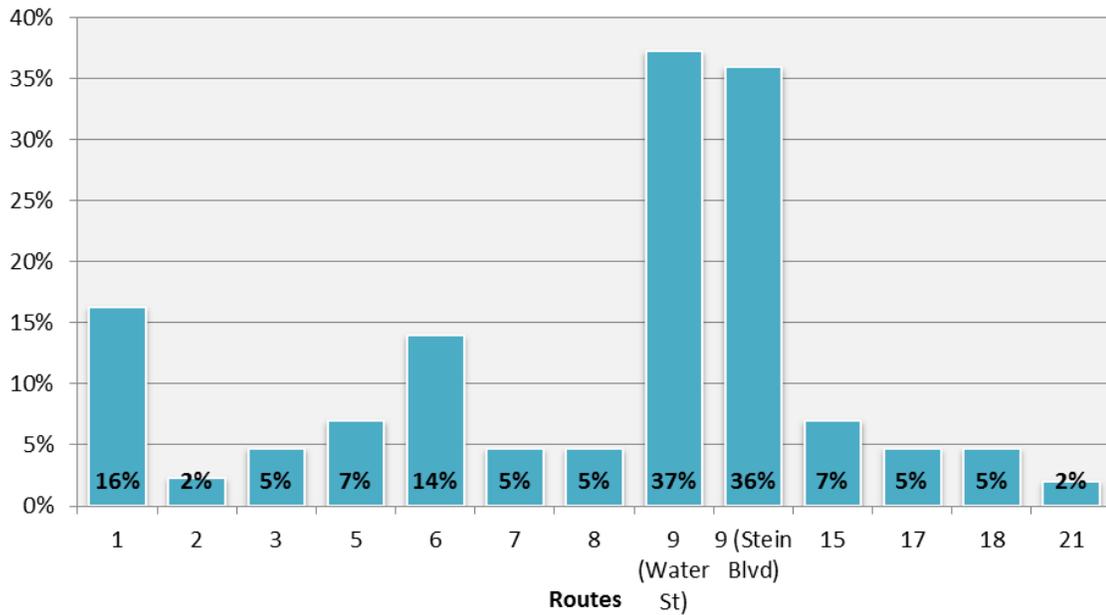
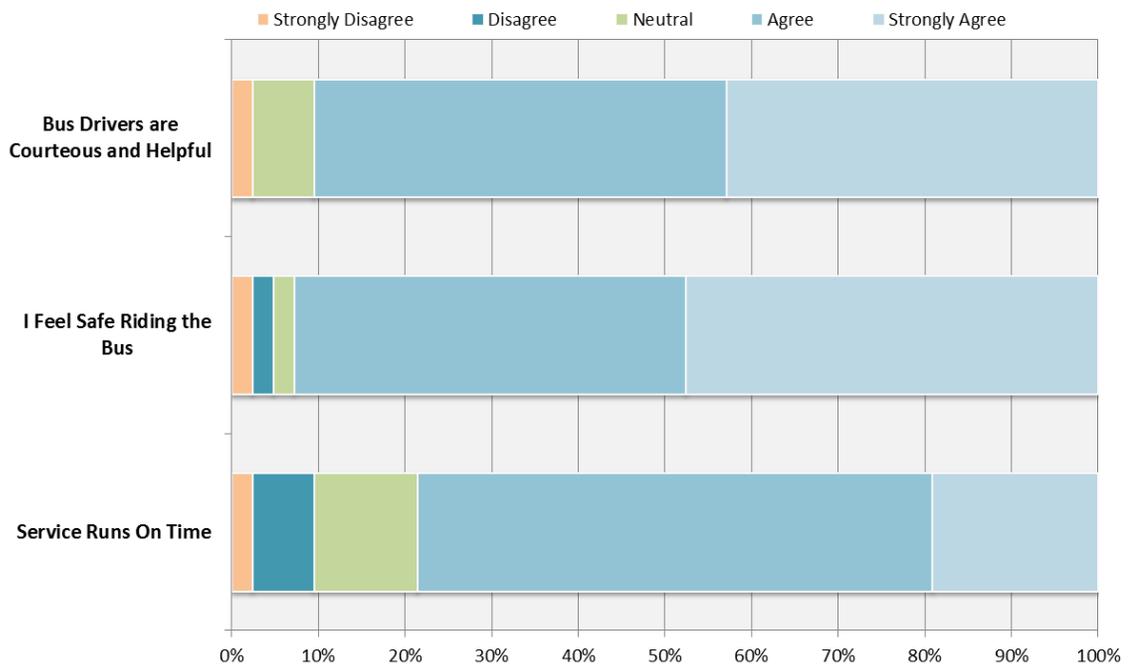
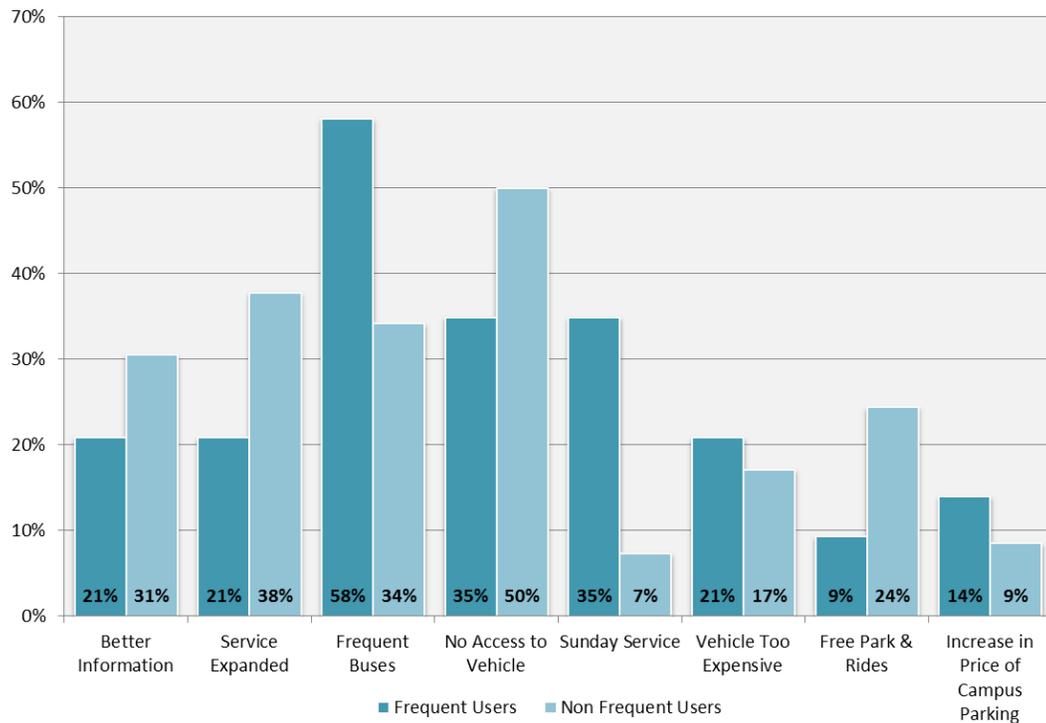


Figure 52. Service Perceptions (University Survey)



All survey participants were asked what changes (one or more) would need to occur to increase their use of Eau Claire Transit. Results of this question, which are divided into responses from frequent and infrequent/non-users are displayed in Figure 53. Frequent users responded that increasing the frequency of buses would positively influence their use of the system, followed by a change in vehicle access and the addition of Sunday service. Infrequent and non-users reported a change in vehicle access as their greatest motivator to increase their use of the Eau Claire Transit system, followed by expansion of service to new areas/nearby communities, and increased frequency of service.

Figure 53. What changes would cause you to use Eau Claire Transit more frequently? (University Survey)



Finally, all survey participants were allowed to respond in an open-ended format with general comments about Eau Claire Transit. Of the 41 comments received, participants indicated an interest in a wide variety of issues, include service expansion to nearby communities such as Chippewa Falls and Lake Hallie, the addition of Sunday Service, improvements to the transfer center, and improvements to the routes and schedules. A full record of comments is included in Appendix C.

Passenger Vignettes

Passenger vignettes provide a sample of the trip purposes of typical Eau Claire Transit customers. These vignettes paint a picture of the type of passengers and the kinds of trips that might be affected by service changes. Passengers often suggest minor improvements that they would like to see to make their transit system better. The following are individual and route-based passenger vignettes gathered during interviews conducted in October 2013.

- **Katie** has been riding Eau Claire Transit for six years. She started riding while in high school and continued while attending UWEC. She is graduating this year with a degree in Psychology and plans on getting a Master's degree at the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse. She rides Route 17 from home and transfers to Route 9. She would like more frequent service on Route 17 and Sunday service.



Katie waits for her morning bus to UWEC.

- **Route Express 12** is Eau Claire Transit's newest route and it provides service to the western portion of the city. This route serves the Menards Headquarters and Distribution Center, makes connections with Dunn County Transit at a transfer point located at the McDonald's on Highway 12/312, makes connections with intercity bus carriers Greyhound and Jefferson Lines, and offers transfers to other Eau Claire Transit Routes at the downtown transfer center. **Two individuals that are regular riders of the route** offered to discuss their experiences with the new service. The key destinations on either end of the route were the Menards distribution center, at which both were

employed, and the downtown transfer point where one person would walk to and from home and the other would connect to other Eau Claire Transit routes. Neither passenger had access to a personal vehicle, and without this bus connection, they expressed that it was unlikely that they would be able to keep their jobs due to the distance from the central city and the lack of affordable housing within walking distance of their workplaces. In this case, the Express 12 provided a lifeline connection to a major regional employer.

- **On Route 17**, a group of about **ten individuals with cognitive and developmental disabilities rides the bus regularly** to and from their work-sites at retail stores. Eau Claire Transit offers mobility to this group, and serves places like the State Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Reach, Inc., The Arc of Eau Claire, Goodwill Industries, and their homes in the City of Eau Claire. All used the bus nearly every day, and enjoyed riding with their driver Steve, who they thought did an excellent job helping them get where they needed to go safely.

Summary of Transit System Observations

Parts 1-3 of this transit development plan present the existing conditions of Eau Claire Transit, including performance data, stakeholder input, and notes from field observations of the system. The consultant team and Eau Claire Transit staff used this information to identify areas of need that will serve as the basis for development of recommendations for improvements.

Eau Claire Transit operates an efficient transit system in Eau Claire that meets a variety of social and transportation needs. There are a wide variety of passenger types and trip purposes. Eau Claire Transit is slightly above average in several performance measures in comparison to other similar sized systems in Wisconsin, and performs well when compared to national peers. There is significant potential for moderate cost improvements and strategic transit development opportunities. Observations and analysis of current conditions are contained in this section.

Route Network

The primary focus of the transit development plan is improvement of the fixed route service network; it does not address paratransit service. The current system consists of 15 primary weekday routes and three limited service routes. Table 19 shows the headways by route.

Table 19. Service Headway (Frequency)

Route	Headway (Minutes)	Route	Headway (Minutes)
1	60	9 Saturday	60
2	60	12	60
3	60	15	60
4	60	17	60
5	60	18	30
6	60	20	60
7	60	21	60
8	30	E2/E11	2 trips (AM & PM)
9 University/Water	20	E10	1 trip (AM)
9 University/Stein	25	E12	3 trips (AM, midday, PM)

Source: Eau Claire Transit

The current route network focuses on downtown with all routes terminating at the downtown Transfer Center, except for one route variation (Route 9). One route focuses on

UWEC with other routes serving the periphery of campus. The intensive commercial area in the Hastings Way corridor is served by five routes (Routes 1, 6, 9 (Saturday), 17, and 18).

Evening service is provided by ten routes operating until final runs at 10:15 p.m. on weekdays. Saturday service is provided during daytime hours from 8:15 a.m. to 6:45 p.m. on 13 primary routes and two limited service routes.

Most Eau Claire Transit routes operate at 60 minute frequencies; this is not attractive to potential passengers. There are several segments of the community; however, that are served by paired routes which provide 30 minute intervals over shared portions of the routes. Unfortunately, this higher level of service is not clearly depicted on route maps.

Figure 55 shows areas of the community with 30 minute segments, as well as the Route 9 alignments, which operate on 20-25 minute headways during the school year. These areas served by the 30 minute segments are not contiguous and are only effective when the origin and destination of the passenger are both on segments of routes with 30 minute service.

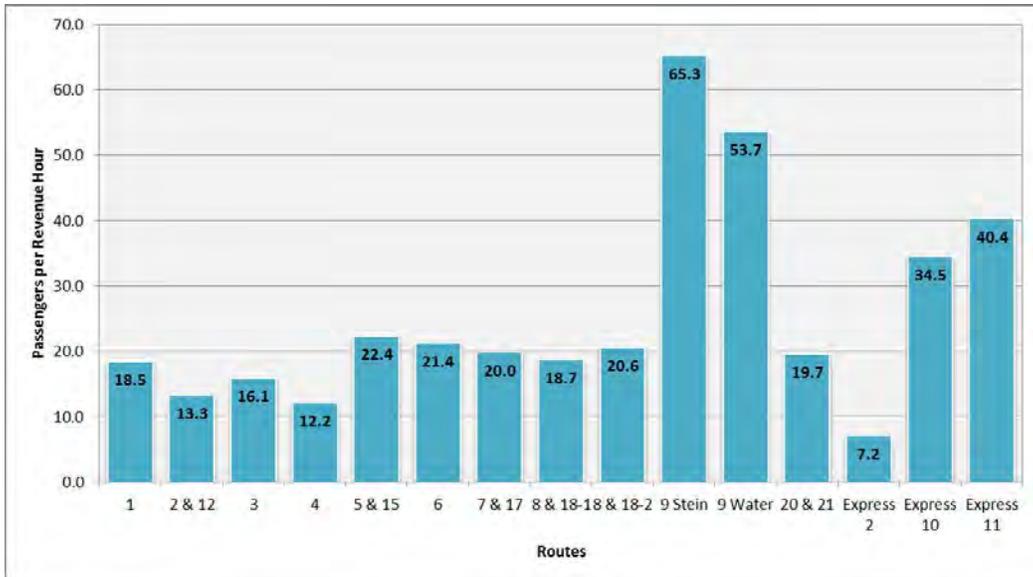
In terms of the route patterns, the radial shape of the route network with a central hub works reasonably well for a city with the geographic characteristics of Eau Claire. This basic structure does not need to be changed, and it provides a good foundation for future expansion. Referring to Figure 6, the map of transit supportive areas, the existing route network covers virtually all of the areas in the City of Eau Claire that densities of employment and housing that can support fixed route transit service. Therefore there are no significant gaps in coverage, and route expansion is not of the highest priority.

The alternative strategy is to build up transit service in the core of the Eau Claire region. In fact, in the City of Eau Claire approximately 69 percent of the areas with a transit supportive density are located within two miles of the downtown transit center. This includes the central parts of the City of Eau Claire, several retail destinations, and the UWEC and CVTC campuses. These represent the greatest opportunity for growing ridership in the near term.

Route Productivity

Some routes have high productivity while others are less productive. All routes are serving a segment of the general population that has specific transit needs and may not have other choices to complete their travel needs. Care must be taken in examining route productivity as the impartial numbers do not reflect the variety of travel needs of the customers. While earlier sections of the document have depicted performance from a systemwide perspective, the following section assesses samples of ridership on a route level basis. Figure 54 displays passenger trips per revenue hour by route for the month of April 2013. Express Route 12 is excluded from the reported data because it did not begin operation until September 2013.

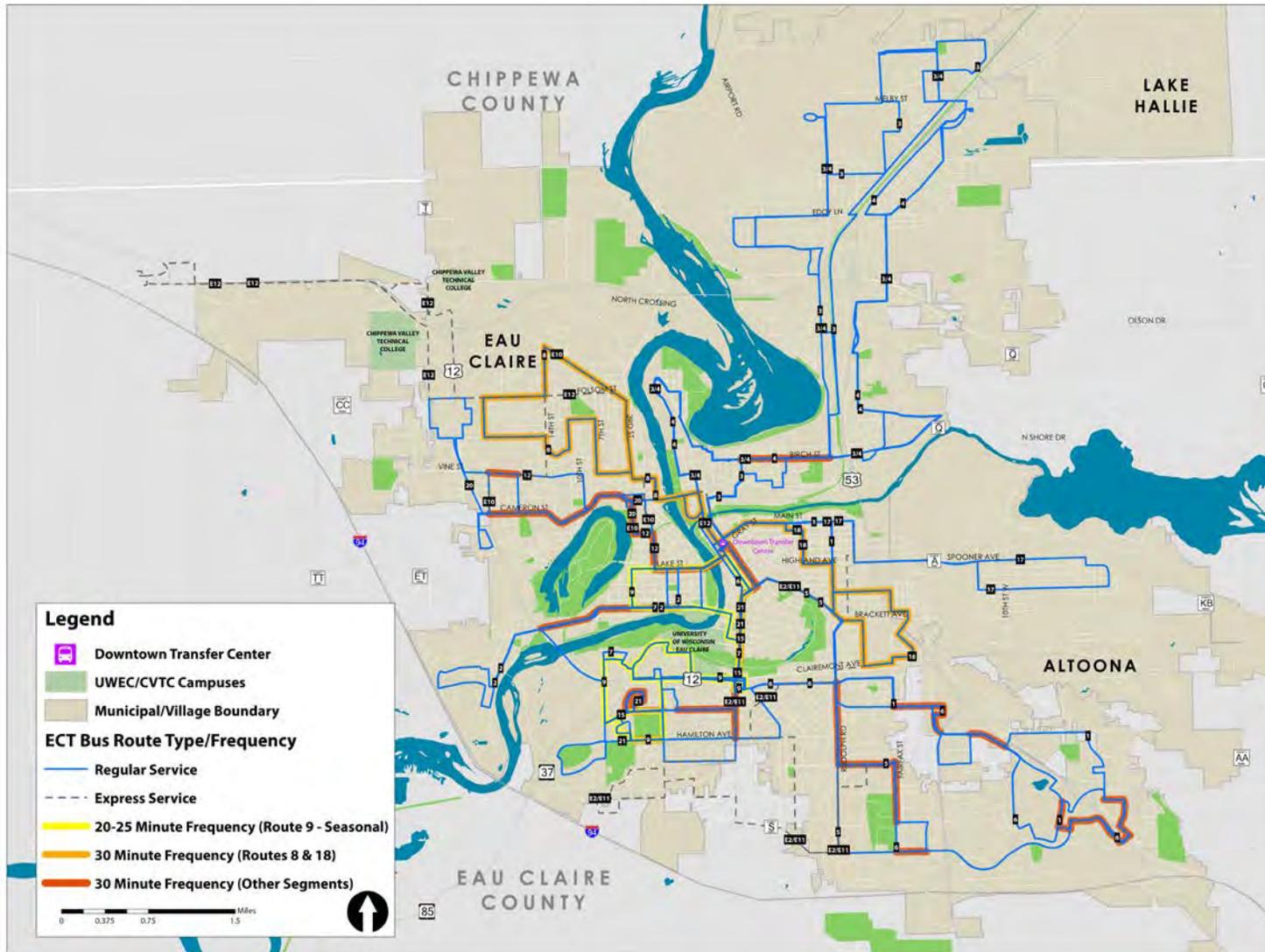
Figure 54. Passenger Trips per Revenue Hour by Route (April 2013)



Sources: Eau Claire Transit

The routes with the greatest passenger trips per hour are the UWEC routes (Route 9) and the two express routes. The Route 4 and the E2 have comparatively low productivity. Subsequent sections of this report have recommendations to improve Route 4, and because the E2 represents such a small portion of the overall ridership no changes are recommended at this time. Regular performance monitoring of passengers per hour should be evaluated regularly on all routes.

Figure 55. Frequent Transit Service (Routes and Segments)



Sources: City of Eau Claire, WI, Eau Claire Transit

In university communities, the routes that connect student intensive housing areas to central campus have the highest productivity and often have a disproportionate effect on the system average. In Eau Claire, Route 9 (Stein Boulevard) has an average productivity of 65.3 passenger trips per revenue hour, while Route 4 is the weakest full service route in the system, carrying 12.2 passenger trips per revenue hour.

UWEC students compose 33 percent of Eau Claire total ridership. The various versions of Route 9, which is a student focused route, comprises 37 percent of total ridership. Figure 56 shows the distribution of student residences in the community. While there is the expected concentration near campus, it is somewhat unusual to have a wide, fairly uniform distribution through the entire community.

Students living away from Route 9 would use the route nearest their residence and then transfer to Route 9 to complete their trip to campus. Route 9 operates via 7th Avenue (7th Street on transit map) which takes 11 minutes. The return trip is six minutes via a direct route on State Street and Barstow Street to the downtown Transfer Center. There is no direct route to the primary campus stop (Kjer Theatre, now Hibbard Hall) from the downtown Transfer Center.

E12 Express Connect Service

As previously noted, the E12 Express Connect Service began operations in September 2013. Given the timing of the Transit Development Plan, very little data was available to the consultant team and therefore assessments of this service relied on field observations and stakeholder input. Ridership trends and performance should be monitored to effectively manage productivity on this route if a stable market is to be developed. The route currently serves a regional employment center at the Menard's distribution center and corporate headquarters, but shift times and the origins and destinations of Menard's employees make it difficult to provide efficient or effective service to that market under current conditions. Another market that the E12 serves is the connection made to Dunn County Transit and Intercity Bus service at the Greyhound depot on Highway 312. The E12 also has long route mileage and run times which require significant resources from the transit agency. In subsequent sections of this report the consultant team will offer funding strategies and service plans that will serve as alternatives to the existing E12 if the market does not grow in the near term under the existing conditions.

Addendum to Report (May 2014):

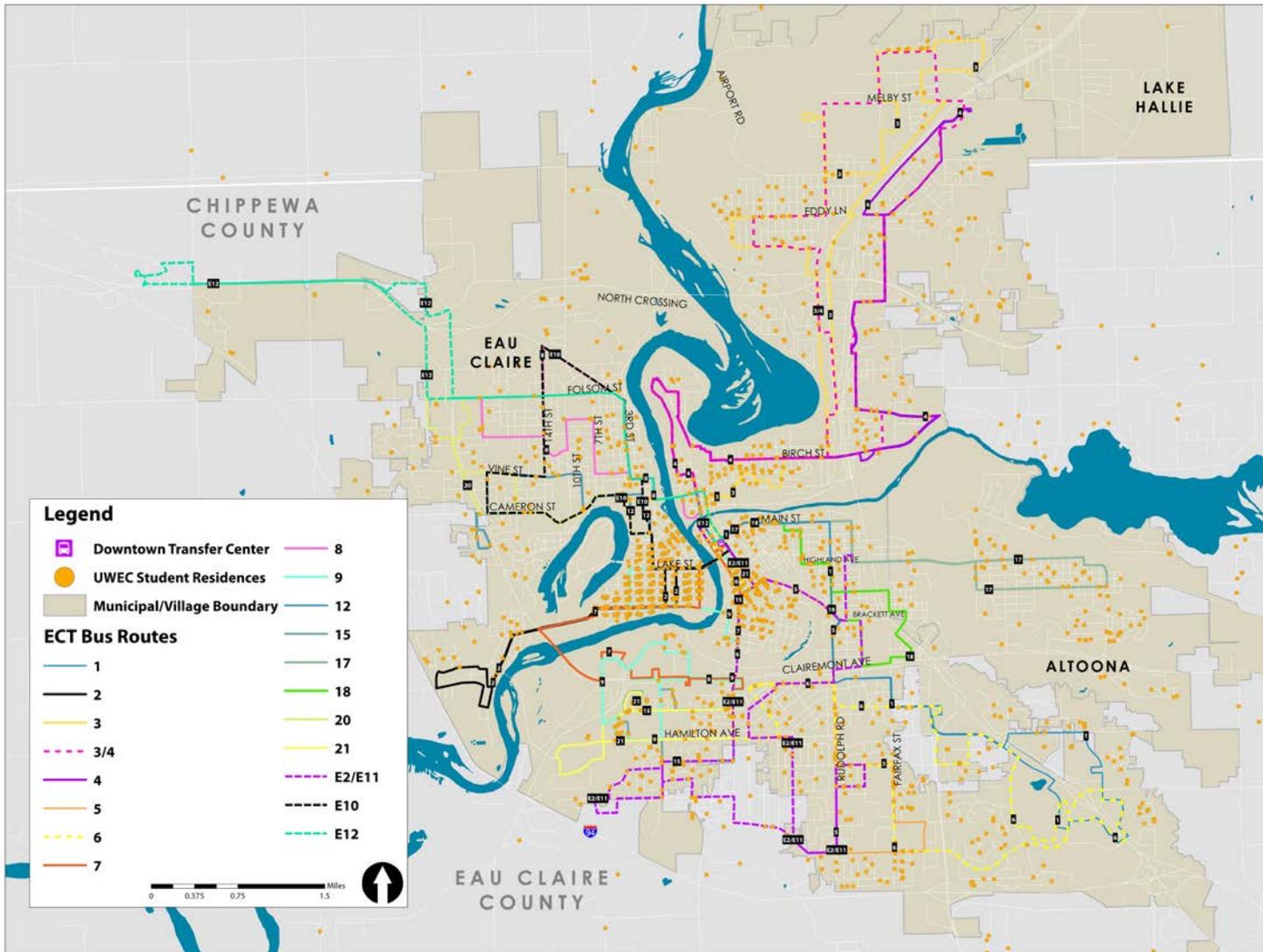
Effective May 2014, Route E12 will be discontinued. Dunn County Transit will continue to serve this market by running its trips to the Downtown Transit Center in Eau Claire with some intermediary stops. Transit agency staff and management can evaluate future service along this corridor as markets develop.

Route Speeds

Average route speed is examined to determine routes that may be tightly scheduled. Route speeds in areas with few stops and high speed arterials have higher average speeds than routes operating in residential areas. Route speeds may also show the need to adjust schedules by adding vehicles or changing routes to reduce route length, or improve routing to make them more direct with fewer turns which affect average speed.

In general, an average route speed above 15 mph in an urban environment similar to Eau Claire would indicate schedule adherence problems. Routes 3, 4, and 17 have several high speed segments of significant length that allow a higher average speed. Other routes have high average speeds and this indicates that there is no available time for route extensions or route deviations. Route 20 is one route with high average speed that is a long route and has occasional reliability problems. Seasonal route problems are not factored into average speeds, which are listed by route in Table 20.

Figure 56. University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire Student Residence Locations



Sources: City of Eau Claire, Eau Claire Transit, University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire Registrar

Table 20. Route Mileage and Average Speed

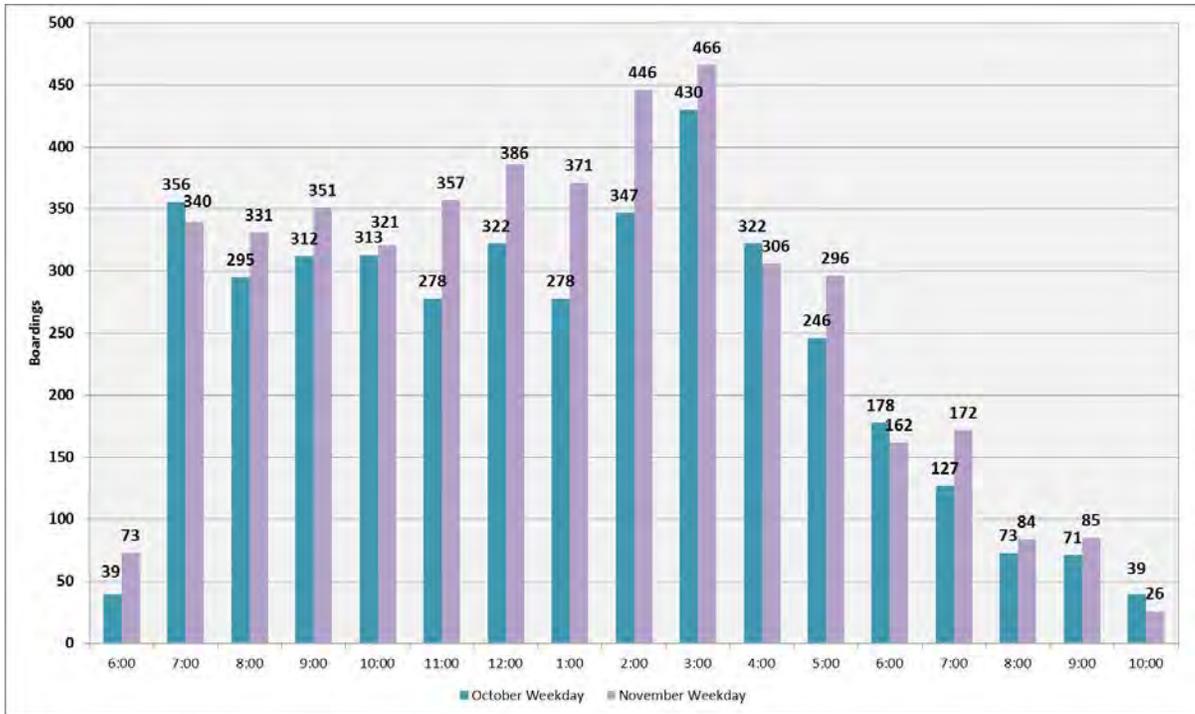
Route	Route Length (miles)	Average Travel Speed (MPH)
1 - Margaret & Mall	12.9	12.9
2 - Mount Washington	7.4	14.7
3 - North High	16.8	16.8
3/4 - North High	18.3	18.3
4 - Locust Lane	18.2	18.2
5 - Rudolph Road	8.3	16.6
6 - Putnam Heights & Mall	15.5	15.5
7 - West Clairemont	6.6	13.1
8 - Folsom & Vine	7.5	15.1
9 - University/Water	3.6	10.7
9 - University /Stein	6.3	15.2
9 - University/Stein (Evenings)	5.5	10.9
12 - DeLong	7.6	15.1
15 - West MacArthur	7.0	14.0
17 - Altoona	8.2	16.4
18 - Memorial	5.8	11.6
20 - West Ridge Center	8.3	16.6
21 - Shopko Plaza	7.6	15.2
Express 2/11	14.3	17.1
Express 10	8.1	16.2
Express 12	14.8	19.7

Source: Eau Claire Transit

Ridership Peak Periods

Figure 57 shows boardings by time of day for a typical day in October and November. Based on this data, there is no strong traditional peak period of travel. Boardings at noon and 1:00 p.m. are roughly equivalent to the traditional morning and higher than afternoon peak travel times. The peaks at 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. reflect travel by K-12 students and UWEC students.

Figure 57. Typical Weekday Boardings by Hour (October & November 2013)



Source: Eau Claire Transit

Operational Topics

Parking Lots

There are several locations in the Eau Claire Transit network where buses operate through parking lots. Operating buses through automobile parking lots to serve the front doors of various commercial businesses increases the risk of collision with vehicles or pedestrians. Removing routes from parking lots does not affect the average speeds because the total cycle time and mileage remain the same. However, changing the route in a parking lot does remove some of the slow speed segments from a route, allowing more time for loading passengers with mobility difficulties. It also improves route reliability, which is not measured in Eau Claire.

On-Time Performance

Eau Claire Transit buses observed in the field generally operate close to schedule with occasional afternoon and seasonal delays. Cycle times are generally adequate. Departures from the Transfer Center left on time with some routes occasionally departing two to three minutes later than the scheduled time.

Transit Marketing

Eau Claire Transit has a modest marketing program that does not incorporate broad market research. This is typical of city-owned transit systems which are primarily focused on meeting existing needs and do not look to capture the latent demand that might result from high or quality transit service.

Market demand can be evaluated and appropriate services developed to meet that demand. There are several TCRP publications that are a valuable resource for market research. This TDP is one step in the process, but a transit system looking aggressively to new markets would be continuously analyzing available data; interacting with system users and non-users, and developing strong relationships with advocates for transit service and other modes. The current staffing levels at Eau Claire Transit are successfully focused on delivery of existing service. A stronger marketing/research program cannot be implemented with existing resource levels.

Recommendations

Eau Claire Transit has the opportunity to make strategic investments in its current bus system. Future investments should focus on meeting the travel needs of the demographic groups most likely to use transit. With these investments, the system will be much stronger, with an increased ridership base and more effective service delivery throughout the community.

The current bus system connects low- and moderate-income people with full- and part-time jobs, provides access for students to UWEC and Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC), and service to middle school and high school students. The system also connects residents with vital medical, shopping, and social service facilities. Future growth of the system will continue to serve these markets, but a more focused service strategy is needed in order to foster sustainable growth.

Currently the Eau Claire Transit system is focused on geographic coverage of the City of Eau Claire. In the transit context, “coverage” refers to how transit service is distributed geographically in a service area. The opposite of coverage is “directness”. At the extreme, a transit system with complete coverage would have transit service on nearly every street, whereas a transit system that was very direct would only travel on major corridors having very few deviations or stops. A small urban community like Eau Claire requires an approach that balances the trade-offs between coverage and directness. Full coverage would result in very inefficient service with long travel times, whereas extremely direct service would offer very little access to public transit. The current transit system enables good access to public transit; however it can be improved to offer more productive service that also enhances the user experience. The recommendations in this report provide strategies that will work to maintain this high level of transit access in Eau Claire, while reinvesting in markets that have growth potential. The primary target markets with the greatest immediate growth potential are UWEC and CVTC students and post-college young adults.

In addition to the college market, connecting people with work opportunities will create consistent ridership beyond just the school year serving customers who are making 10 to 12 work trips per week. Improving service for the target markets will have a residual benefit for other current customers that Eau Claire Transit currently serves.

Recommendations for Eau Claire Transit are presented to strengthen the current route network and provide targeted service increases where there will be the greatest return on investment.

These changes include:

- Neutral Cost Strategies
- Improved frequency on existing routes
- Improved Saturday service

- New routes
- New Sunday service

Neutral Cost Strategies

The first set of recommendations includes changes to the transit system that can be made using existing resources. There are several no-cost changes that will improve the overall bus system. No additional peak vehicles, capital costs, or increased operating costs are needed for these changes. These include:

- Combine Routes 3 and 4 into one route
- Combine Routes 15 and 21 into one route with minor re-route to UWEC
- Combine Routes 18 and 1 into one route to provide 30-minute service between downtown and the southeast commercial area
- Reconfigure Route 9 service
- Modify Route 6 to serve Target
- Modify Routes 8 and 20 in downtown to avoid congestion near the riverfront

Adjustment of Route 3 and Route 4

Routes 3 and 4 provide service to the northern area of Eau Claire. Each route operates at 60-minute intervals with a 60-minute cycle time. Route 3 generally serves the area west of Business Hwy 53, and Route 4 generally serves the area to the east. During the day, they are operated as a departure pair from the Transfer Center. On their shared segment – part of Birch Street -- 30-minute interval service is provided. Most of the mileage is operated as 60-minute service. In the evening, the routes are combined into one route that operates as a large loop with the northbound segment west of Hwy 53 and the southbound segment east of Hwy 53.

Routes 3 and 4 are long routes with relatively low performance, compared to the rest of the Eau Claire Transit system. Route 4 has the lowest productivity of the two.

Service will be improved if the current evening routing concept of one combined route is implemented during the daytime schedule. This combined route would operate at 30-minute intervals on the current Route 3 and Route 4 routing from downtown to Birch Street/Starr Avenue, where there is the greatest residential density, combined with a reasonable pedestrian network providing good access to the nearest bus stop. North of Birch Street, existing ridership is concentrated in a few locations. To better support existing ridership, Routes 3 and 4 would be combined on the northern portion of the routes and operate in a bi-directional manner, with Route 3 traveling clockwise and Route 4 traveling counterclockwise. The evening route should also be modified north of Birch Street to this new proposed daytime routing. South of Birch Street, route productivity levels are similar to other routes and should retain their current route patterns. Yearly vehicle mileage will

increase approximately 1,300 miles, however low ridership segments of the routes will be eliminated and travel times will be improved. A map of the proposed consolidation of Route 3 and 4 is shown in Figure 58.

Under the consolidated route plan, buses would depart from the Transfer Center every 30 minutes. For passengers on the overlapping southern portion of the route, there would continue to be 30-minute intervals in both directions. On the north end of the route along Runway Avenue and Sundet Road, buses would also be close to a 30-minute interval, although on opposite sides of the roadway. Along the other portions of the route, there would be two buses per hour instead of the current one bus per hour, although the arrival times would not be evenly spaced.

Table 18 shows the stops that are eliminated under this consolidated route plan, as well as the closest stop on the new route, and the walking distance between those stops. The table also includes the average number of passengers per day and the maximum number of passengers in one day. The number of passengers affected is based on a one week survey conducted in January 2014.

There were no passengers at the airport for the five days of the survey. This stop can be served on demand if there are passengers traveling to or from the airport. New stops are proposed at Redwood Drive/Western Avenue and Marquette Street/Mercury Avenue to minimize walking distance from closed bus stops. With the high volume of peak traffic near North High, a thorough safety study is needed to determine the safest location for these bus stops. The City Traffic Engineer and school district will be required to determine safe locations for bus stops and pedestrian movements.

The advantage of this route consolidation is a simplified route structure with two buses per hour along the new unified route for no additional cost. This is a major improvement in service with reduced travel time for some passengers, which will make the service more attractive to potential passengers. As a result of this change, travel times for customers living near the northern portions of Route 3 would be greatly reduced. With this proposed change in route and schedule, travel time on Route 3 can be cut by up to 30 minutes per day for some passengers. Current Route 4 passengers will have the same level of bi-directional travel times, thus, there will be no significant travel time savings. However, bi-directional service to North High may also attract additional student ridership.

The disadvantage of the simplified route is that some passengers may have a longer walking distance to the nearest bus stop. Depending on public reaction, the combined route can be slightly modified to resolve some of these concerns.

Figure 58. Proposed Changes to Route 3 and Route 4

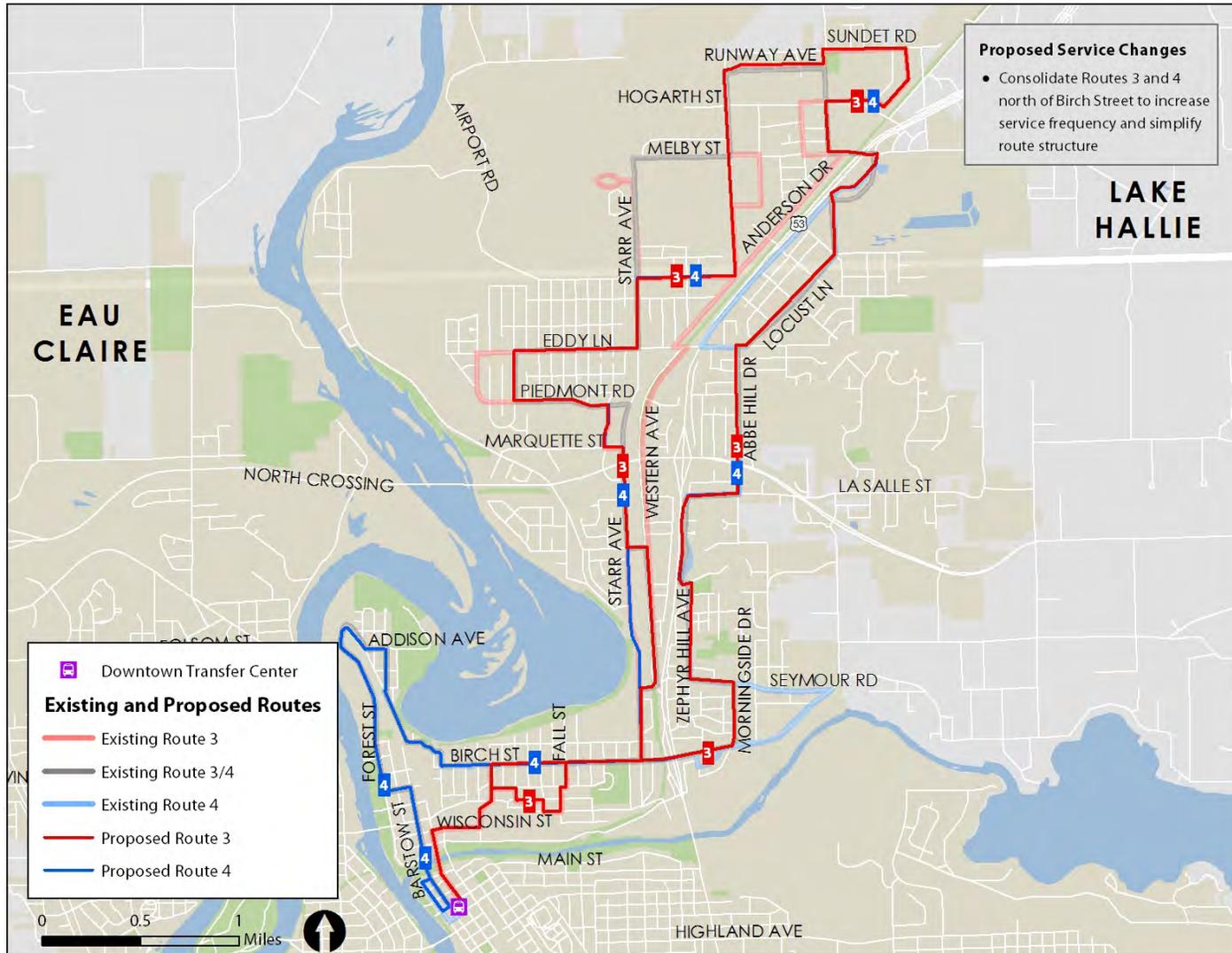


Table 21. Route 3 and 4 Consolidation/Bus Stop Impacts

	Stop Eliminated	Nearest Stop	Distance (Miles)	Daily Avg. Passengers	Max Daily Passengers	Sidewalk Network
Route 3: North High	Western/Harrison	NEW: Western/Redwood	0.14	2.6	4	Yes
	Western/Marquette	NEW: Marquette/Mercury	0.19	0.8	2	Yes
	Western/Waller	NEW: Marquette/Mercury	0.44	3.6	10	Yes
	Western/Eddy	Starr/Eddy	0.36	2.2	6	Yes
	Anderson/Eddy	Starr/Eddy	0.30	4.6	7	Yes
	Anderson/Edgewood	Anderson/White	0.20	0.4	2	Yes
	Milton/Eddy	Eddy/Wellington E	0.18	3.2	5	Yes
	Piedmont/Wellington W	Piedmont/Wellington E	0.12	-	-	Yes
	Airport	On demand	-	0	0	No
	McIntyre/Melby	Melby/White	0.14	2.4	5	Yes
	Lark/Louis	Hogarth/Robin	0.20	0	0	No
	Lark/Melby	Lark/Robin	0.12	1.4	2	Yes
	Anderson/Lark	Anderson/Melby	0.21	0	0	Yes
	Anderson/Delbert	Anderson/White	0.29	0.2	1	Yes
Route 4: Locust Lane	Seymour/McKinley	Seymour/Morningside	0.45	4.4	7	Yes
	Seymour/Andover	Seymour/Morningside	0.24	1.4	6	Yes
	Seymour/Brookline	Seymour/Morningside	0.18	0	0	Yes
	Eddy/Northland	Abbe Hill/Eddy	0.14	1.8	3	Yes
	Hastings/Pinehurst	Locust/Pinehurst	0.22	0.6	2	Yes
	Hastings/Delbert	Locust/Delbert	0.22	0.4	1	Yes

Consolidation of Route 15 and Route 21

The southwest area of Eau Claire, which is currently served by Route 15 and Route 21, as well as Route 9, has the greatest potential for a high return on transit investment. There is a strong concentration of UWEC students in the area. Entry level, affordable housing that is attractive to young adults who are most likely to use bus service also exists in the area.

The existing Route 15 and Route 21 act as a route pair and operate with staggered departure times from the Transfer Center. Routes 15 and 21 also operate as a 30-minute pair on the shared segments of the routes. They serve the Eldorado-Imperial student-intensive housing

area, but do not make a convenient stop near central campus. When Route 9 is not operating during summer and semester breaks, some students use Routes 15 and 21 and exit along State Street to walk to campus.

Proposed changes include combining Route 15 and Route 21 into one route and routing this combined service to directly serve the UWEC campus and the student-intensive area along Eldorado and Imperial. Improved proximity to UWEC will increase student ridership during the school year, and combining the routes will help to provide consistent 30-minute service on all route segments in this area. Furthermore, rerouting these routes to serve Centennial Hall will provide students with more travel options and allow the re-routing of Route 9 to be more effective on campus and student residence halls north of Clairemont Avenue. The mileage on Route 15 will decrease from 7.0 miles to 6.7 and Route 21 mileage will decrease from 7.6 miles to 6.5 miles. There will be a year savings of approximately 4,400 miles. Figure 65 shows the proposed revised route.

Table 19 shows the stops that are eliminated under the recommended routing, the closest stop on the new route, and the walking distance between those stops. The table also includes the average number of passengers and the maximum number of passengers in one day, based on a one week survey conducted in January 2014. One stop modification includes moving the existing stop at Shopko (Subway) stop to the corner of Ruth Street/Richard Drive. This adjusted stop location will result in travel time and mileage savings without significant inconvenience to passengers, and will also provide protection from winter winds from the north and northwest. Furthermore, a change from the existing stop West Macarthur Avenue/Augusta Street to a new stop at Richard Drive/Stein Boulevard will have minimal inconvenience to current passengers and may be closer to many residences than the current stop.

To maintain service to the industrial park that is now served by the Route 21, it is recommended to tailor those frequencies to specific shift times or operate the service on an on-call basis. This does not add significant run-time to the consolidated 15/21 route and will continue to serve a relatively low ridership segment of an otherwise productive route. This demand response service area is marked by a dashed line on Figure 59.

Frequencies on the Thomas Drive/Kenney Avenue route variation, which provides service to Mayo Clinic, will also improve by operating Route 15 and Route 21 as one combined route. This facility will have 30-minute service instead of the current 60-minute interval.

Planned new construction at Eldorado Boulevard/West MacArthur Avenue will increase demand for transit service in the Route 15/21 service area. This area could support a 15- or 20-minute peak service in the near future. One additional vehicle should be programmed to this route in the second or third year of the Transit Improvement Program (TIP) after the changes are implemented and ridership has increased.

Figure 59. Consolidated Route 15 and Route 21



Table 22. Route 15/Route 21 Bus Stop Impacts

	Stop Eliminated	Nearest Stop	Distance (Miles)	Daily Avg. Pass.	Max Daily Pass.	Side-walk Network
Route 15: West Macarthur	Macarthur/Augusta	NEW: Stein/Richard	0.14	-	-	Yes
	Shopko/Subway	Richard/Ruth	0.08	-	-	Yes
	Frontage/Red Lobster	Richard/Ruth	0.19	1.2	2	Parking Lot
	Westover/Stein	Hamilton/Stein	0.20	3.0	5	Yes
	Westover/Ellis	Hamilton/Stein	0.46	1.0	2	Yes
	Westover/State	Hamilton/State	0.20	0.0	0	Yes
Route 4: Locust Lane	Macarthur/Augusta	NEW: Stein/Richard	0.14	-	-	Yes
	Shopko/Subway	Richard/Ruth	0.08	-	-	Yes
	Frontage/Red Lobster	Richard/Ruth	0.19	1.2	2	Parking Lot
	Craig/Fahrman Center	Imperial/Eldorado	0.26	8.5	16	Yes
	Craig/International	Hamilton/ Eldorado	0.33	0.2	21	Yes
	International/Continental	Hamilton/ Eldorado	0.51	0.3	12	Yes
	International/Sky Park	Hamilton/ Eldorado	0.70	4.8	9	Yes
	Hamilton/Xcel Energy	Hamilton/ Eldorado	0.62	3.8	6	Yes
Hamilton/Hidden	Hamilton/ Eldorado	0.35	0.0	0	Yes	

Route 1 and Route 18

Route 1 and Route 18 travel southeast from the Transfer Center downtown. Route 1 serves the commercial centers near the Oakwood Mall and along the Highway 53 corridor. Route 18 has broader coverage of dense commercial and residential areas southeast of downtown, but does not travel south of Clairemont Avenue. A key issue with these routes is that in their journey from downtown, they overlap with several routes but do not provide complementary service on all segments. This means that buses from the same routes operate on the same streets at the same time.

For example, Route 1 overlaps several other routes:

- Route 17 from downtown to Margaret Street and Main Street (schedule duplication)
- Route 18 from downtown to Main Street and Chauncey Street (schedule duplication)
- Route 18 from Margaret Street and Highland Avenue to Margaret Street and Brackett Avenue (schedule duplication)
- Route 5 from Margaret Street and Brackett Avenue to Rudolph Road and Lexington Boulevard (schedule duplication)
- Route 6 from Skeels Avenue and Fairfax Street to Oakwood Mall Drive and Oakwood Hills Parkway, except Festival northbound (schedule coordination)
- Route 6 from Oakwood Mall to Walmart (schedule coordination)

There is a high density of bus routes in downtown Eau Claire, with all routes converging at the Transfer Center. By combining the south end of Route 1 (south of Clairemont Avenue) with Route 18, there will be direct service to the Oakwood Mall at 30-minute intervals on the new Route 1/18. The number of buses entering the Transfer Center will be reduced by one, but service will be improved by eliminating one transfer for some passengers.

This combination route will provide 30-minute interval service to the high job density sections on the current Route 1 from downtown and eliminate the confusion of using Route 1 or 6 depending on the time of travel. There will be no significant access challenge to bus service by existing customers.

There is a strong pedestrian network in the older parts of Eau Claire served by Route 1 which will allow passengers to easily and safely walk to Route 18. The segments of Route 1 that will be unduplicated are on Margaret Street between Highland Avenue and Main Street. There is one marked stop at Margaret Street and Altoona Avenue that will be eliminated. Passengers will be required to walk approximately 0.15 miles to the nearest stop.

Route 18 will be modified to move from the K-Mart parking lot and Esmond Avenue. It will remain on Kirk Street, after crossing Hastings Way, and then turn south on Fairfax to Lexington where it will continue along the current Route 1. Passengers can board buses at Kirk Street and Esmond Road or on Fairfax and the K-Mart driveway by Memorial High School.

This combined route will have potential, when combined with Route 8 (currently operated as a pair with the Route 18), to support 15- or 20-minute service as ridership develops. One additional bus will be needed for 20-minute service on the combined route in a future year and should be programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program, as well as future grant requests. A map showing the combined routes is portrayed in Figure 60.

Figure 60. Consolidated Route 1 and Route 18



Route 9 Improvements

UWEC is the major travel generator for transit service in Eau Claire. Service to campus is primarily served by four variations of Route 9. The Route 9/Stein variation connects central campus with the residence halls and off-campus student residences south of Clairemont and west of Stein. Another version of the service, Route 9/Water, connects central campus with the concentration of student residences north of Water St. A third variation is the Route 9/Evening service, which is a combination of the two daytime routes with a slightly different campus routing. The fourth variation, Route 9/Saturday, operates between residence halls and commercial areas on the east side of Eau Claire on Saturday afternoons. The primary, central campus stop is at Centennial Hall, with the exception of the evening routing.

It is recommended that Route 9 operate as a bi-directional route north of campus and continue to operate as a loop route south of campus. This will provide faster travel times in the afternoon for students returning from campus to their residences north of Water St. The current routing requires a trip to the Transfer Center before returning to the residential area between Lake Ave and Water Street. A bi-directional route will reduce travel time by 10 minutes in the afternoon for most students.

If the recommendations for Routes 15 and 21 are implemented, then the primary purpose of Route 9 can be altered to connect the residence halls on upper campus with central campus, and to connect the student residences north of Water Street with central campus in a bi-directional manner instead of its current loop route.

Some of the passengers who now transfer to Route 9 from other routes at the Transfer Center would use Routes 15/21 if they are re-routed to Centennial Hall. This will provide some additional capacity on the Water variation of Route 9. Students living east of State who use Route 9 in the afternoon will be able to use Routes 15 and 21, which will be rerouted to Centennial Hall. The adjustments to Route 9 are portrayed in Figure 61.

The route would operate with two buses at 20-minute intervals during the day when UWEC class is in session. The round-trip route is approximately 9.5 miles, which should allow for a cycle time of 40 minutes. Field testing is needed on class days to test the 40 minute cycle.

The evening route would be identical to the daytime route to minimize route location confusion. The extra stop on campus would be eliminated. There is adequate time in the evening schedule to operate the route at 40-minute intervals. While this will not make convenient connections with other routes, it will serve a large market of students traveling to and from evening activities with eight trips in six hours, instead of the current six trips in six hours. The primary purpose of the evening service on this route will be to serve passengers traveling to and from campus. Other routes will provide connections at the Transfer Center with other routes.

On weekends, Route 9 would operate on its current route and would be identified as Route 9W or 91 to differentiate from the weekday route. Its primary function would be to connect the residence halls with the commercial area along Hastings and also to provide service to the Water Street area. Currently, having four different bus routes named the Route 9 is

potentially confusing for new riders. It also makes routes unclear on published materials. Modifying the nomenclature of these routes should be carried out with the next revision of signage and route maps.

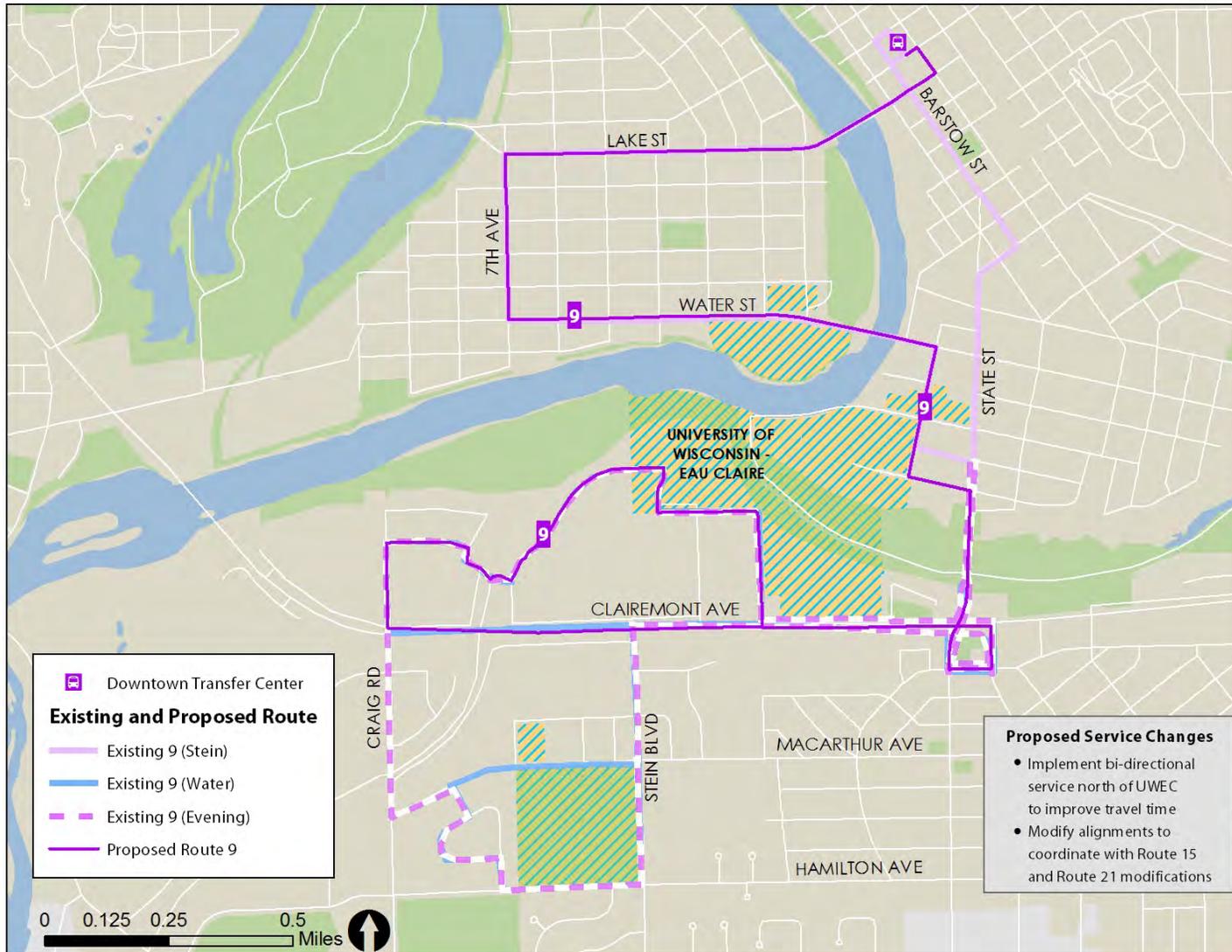
Route 6 Improvements

Route 6 can be slightly modified to serve Super Target. If the Route 1/18 combination occurs, ridership may decline on Route 6. The small route extension will increase the access to Target on the portions of the route that are bi-directional.

Route 8 and Route 20 Improvements

Routes 8 and 20 currently operate on Barstow in downtown. When events occur along the riverfront, buses are frequently late. Field observations show that there are inconsistent boardings and alightings on Barstow. Moving the routes to Farwell will provide a consistent, reliable service. There is a strong pedestrian sidewalk network in the area that will allow passengers to walk two short blocks to the new route.

Figure 61. Modified Route 9 Service



Parking Lot Service Changes

A set of low-cost recommendations concerns moving buses from parking lots of large commercial buildings to other locations, which will allow for safe pedestrian movement. These include:

- Walmart - Route 1 and 6
- Gordy's on Birch - Route 3
- Target - Route 1
- ShopKo - Route 15 and 21
- Mega West - Route 20
- K Mart - Route 18

There will be no significant vehicle operating cost change for each of these improvements, but there may be a capital cost to create a safe pedestrian path. A shelter at the bus stop will create a safe waiting location for passengers. There will be some minor maintenance costs, and Eau Claire Transit is encouraged to work with the building owners to create a private sector solution to minimize public cost of maintenance

Wal-Mart – Route 1 and 6

There are several concerns with the current operation to the front door of Walmart. The turn into the parking lot is difficult, requiring drivers to make a right turn and then an immediate left turn. The route operates through parking lanes, which creates potential auto/bus conflicts when cars back out of parking spaces. The maneuver to square the bus with the curb at the bus shelter is also challenging.

Stopping at the main door also presents conflicts between buses, pedestrians, and automobiles. When a bus is stopped for pedestrians crossing the roadway, cars may attempt to pass the bus and there is limited visibility for the auto driver due to the size of the bus.

There are two options to provide safer service while remaining convenient for the passengers. One is to stop in the parking lot near the Pharmacy entrance in the western portion of the parking lot. The distance from the Pharmacy door to the new bus stop would be approximately 170 feet. This would be safer, but still require the bus to enter the parking lot.

Another choice is to place the bus stop on Gateway Drive and not enter the parking lot. The stop would be approximately 520 feet from the Pharmacy entrance and would require the construction of an accessible path from the edge of the parking lot to the bus stop. A shelter should also be constructed at this location.

Target – Route 1

The Target bus stop is an adequate distance from the traveled portion of the parking lot central roadway, which provides a wider view for bus drivers, auto drivers, and pedestrians

than at Walmart. However, the bus movement through the parking lot is difficult, with the bus traveling in parking lanes after leaving the bus stop. Auto/bus conflicts exist when cars back out of parking spaces.

It is recommended to have the bus leave the bus stop and exit via the rear loading dock area, to minimize potential auto/bus/pedestrian conflicts in the parking areas. There may be some occasional delay caused by truck movements in the loading area.

Mega West – Route 20

The routing through Mega West presents an operational challenge. A similarly challenging environment can be found at the Route 20 stop at The Hope Gospel Bargain Center. Moving the stop north approximately 150 feet will allow the bus to travel on a wider roadway and out of the parking rows. This will minimize the potential auto/bus/pedestrian conflicts in the parking area and provide some protection from weather while passengers wait for the bus.

Another option is for the route to remain in the western portion of the parking lot and not pull up to the front door of Mega or the businesses to the north. A shelter will be needed at the new bus stop. Passengers would be required to walk approximately 320 feet to the bus stop from the front door of Mega. If this stop is established, a second stop near Planet Fitness and Burger King should also be considered.

ShopKo – Route 15/21

The current routing through the ShopKo Plaza parking lot presents operational and safety challenges. The bus turning maneuver in front of Gordy's Market is a problem due to sight distances. The bus makes a right turn and must stop for pedestrian movement in a very short distance. The front door is approximately 50 feet from the corner of the building, with limited space between the front door and the vehicle movements. The bus maneuvers through the parking lot to exit from Subway to the frontage road and auto backing maneuvers are a source of potential auto/bus conflicts.

A better alternative is to operate the buses on the south side of the shopping complex via Richard and Ruth. Stops could be established at the east entry road near ShopKo and at the shopping walkway entrance near the corner of Richard and Ruth. This would provide building protection from winter weather. The change in walking distances for customers of ShopKo to the new bus stop on Richard is approximately 260 feet.

Elimination of the current bus stop on Hendrickson Drive would be necessary and Eau Claire Transit should follow its normal procedures for eliminating a bus stop.

Gordy's on Birch – Route 5

Route 5 operates through the Gordy's on Birch parking lot with the same inherent potential problems as with the other parking lots. At this location, it is recommended that the bus remain on Birch, and adequate pedestrian protection should be established to cross Birch. The eastbound stop is easy to locate in a safe location. The westbound stop should be

reviewed by the City Traffic Engineer to determine if pedestrian warning signs and/or lights are needed. The stop can be located near the corner of Mt. Nemo/ Birch in a safe location. The added walking distance for the eastbound stop is approximately 225 feet and 270 feet for the eastbound stop.

K-Mart – Route 18

Route 18 operates through the K-Mart parking lot. If Routes 1 and 18 are combined, access to K-Mart would be at a bus stop on Fairfax at the K-Mart driveway. Passengers would be required to walk approximately 370 feet to the bus stop. Adequate pedestrian protection should be provided, as determined by the City Traffic Engineer, for pedestrians crossing Fairfax at this location.

Transit Service Expansion

Frequency Investments on City of Eau Claire Routes

The current bus system does not have a traditional morning and afternoon ridership peak time. In larger urban areas and communities with high levels of concentrated downtown employment transit ridership peaks during standard AM and PM rush hours. Transit systems in these communities deploy many extra buses during these peak periods, and have fewer buses out in service during the midday and evening service times. In Eau Claire, ridership is consistent throughout the day and there isn't a difference between "peak" and "off-peak" service. This is an indicator that there are many students who attend classes for part of the typical weekday, as well as workers who are working part-time jobs with start and end times outside of the traditional AM/PM peak roadway travel times. Increasing the frequency to 30 minutes all day on some routes will generate a significant increase in ridership and improve mobility for people traveling to and from work, and others in the core transit market in Eau Claire.

The following recommendations are based on the routes with the highest potential for increased ridership. The routes are prioritized by those pairs that will generate the highest ridership and are not the current traditional route pairs. One bus is needed for each route pair. Exact pairing of routes may vary after field testing to determine the best combination that will minimize delays due to late buses. These pairings include 30-minute all-day service from 7:15am to 5:15pm on:

- Routes 7/5
- Routes 2/12
- Route 17/20

Routes 2, 5, 7, and 12 will see a noticeable increase in student ridership to UWEC and CVTC with 30-minute intervals due to the distribution of UWEC students living in Eau Claire along these routes. Students will be able to easily commute to class, return to their residence, and have easy access to part-time jobs. Routes 17 and 20 also serve the student

market, but have a greater potential for access to work trips by non-students. Student-focused trips usually generate a substantial ridership return within one year, while work trip changes often take two to three years to see significant growth.

Since many passengers use Route 6 paired with Route 1, performance on Route 6 should be monitored over time to determine if route adjustments need to be made. The consolidated Route 1/18 may be a more convenient option for passengers.

UWEC Service – Route 9

Route 9 improvements include operating the Water Street segment of the new route at 10-minute intervals for entire fall and spring semesters. An additional tripper bus may be needed in the winter at certain times of the day. 10-minute service to Upper Campus should also be considered, and it will also require an additional vehicle. This is essentially the same level of service that is provided now, but the 10-minute service will operate on all school days instead of only during the winter. Service continues at 10-minute intervals until approximately 5:30PM, when the schedule would transition to the evening schedule. This is slightly longer than the current 10-minute schedule that ends at 4:48PM.

If ridership continues to develop on the north end of the route, a tripper bus can be added at the busy times (usually the primary trip before class times in the morning) and after classes end in the afternoon. Trippers usually operate two or three minutes before or after the scheduled bus. An additional scheduled tripper bus may be needed from downtown to Centennial Hall to resolve overloading conditions. In the morning, the tripper bus would operate from the Transit Center (Lake/1st Ave.) to Centennial, and then back to its starting point. After 12:30PM it would operate from Centennial to Transit Center via the reverse direction of Route 9.

Added trips should be scheduled to avoid vehicle congestion with Route 15/21 at Centennial Hall. Transfers between the routes are possible, but unlikely as Route 9 is primarily a circulator route and there is no need to have Routes 9 and 15/21 meet as a timed transfer at Centennial Hall.

One additional bus could provide 10-minute service to the south end of the route from Centennial Hall to Upper Campus if students indicate a demand for service or if ridership increases and the 20-minute interval is inadequate to accommodate demand.

Weekend Route 9 buses would operate at hourly intervals from 8:00AM to 8:00PM, with half-hour intervals from approximately noon to 5:00PM. Summer and semester break service would be provided with one bus from approximately 7:30AM to 5:00PM on weekdays when no classes are scheduled. Ridership patterns should be carefully analyzed after one year of operation to determine if additional changes are warranted in this new service.

The frequency recommendations require three additional buses for the city-oriented routes and two for Route 9. Used buses in good condition cost approximately \$50,000 to \$70,000 each from bus dealers. Lower cost vehicles may be available from other Wisconsin transit systems. The Eau Claire Transit maintenance facility does not have indoor storage available for additional vehicles, and it will be necessary to provide secure storage at another location

for the daily operation of these additional vehicles. The cost of additional storage is not included in the marginal cost model. If the City has storage at another location, cost will be low. If Eau Claire Transit is required to lease space, cost will be higher.

Operating Cost Methodology

To estimate operating costs of for transit service expansion in Eau Claire the following elements were considered. First, the existing hourly rate for Eau Claire Transit’s fixed route operations is used as the basic element of cost. In this case, the cost of one revenue hour for transit service in Eau Claire is approximately \$77.00. Run and cycle times for routes were based on data from existing service and field observations. The State and federal share of operating assistance is assumed to be 56 percent of operating costs, and farebox revenue is estimated to be approximately 15 percent. Both of these percentages are similar to existing conditions. All cost estimates are in 2013 dollars. If these investments in frequency and new routes are undertaken in future years, the figures presented in this report should be adjusted for inflation.

Table 23. Frequency Investments

Service Expansion	Revenue Hours per Day	Days per Year	Cost per Revenue Hour	Cost per Year	State/Fed Share	Local Share	Farebox	Operating Deficit (Local Gov. Share)
Route 7/5 Frequency	10	255	\$77.00	\$196,350	\$109,956	\$86,394	\$29,453	\$56,942
Route 2/12 Frequency	10	255	\$77.00	\$196,350	\$109,956	\$86,394	\$29,453	\$56,942
Route 17/20 Frequency	10	255	\$77.00	\$196,350	\$109,956	\$86,394	\$29,453	\$56,942
Route 9: 10 min frequency on school days	10	84	\$77.00	\$64,680	\$36,221	\$28,459	\$9,702	\$18,757
Route 9: Summer/Break Service	9.5	99	\$77.00	\$72,419	\$40,554	\$31,864	\$10,863	\$21,001
Route 9: 10 min frequency to Upper Campus	10	156	\$77.00	\$120,120	\$67,267	\$52,853	\$18,018	\$34,835
Totals				\$846,269	\$473,910	\$372,358	\$126,940	\$245,418

The frequency investments recommended will greatly enhance overall mobility in Eau Claire and provide a much stronger weekday network connecting people with jobs and educational opportunities.

Saturday Service

The 60-minute interval on Saturdays is not convenient for most passengers and results in very long travel times to accomplish necessary tasks. Common trips made in mid-sized communities on Saturdays are work trips and shopping trips. Shopping trips consist of both travel time and time in a store. Often, the time in a store, such as a grocery trip, is much less than one hour. With the limitation of allowing only a few bags of groceries on the buses, people are able to complete their shopping in 20 to 30 minutes, but then have to wait 30 to 40 minutes for the next bus. Having long waits that add hours to travel time on weekends makes transit an uncompetitive mode compared to personal vehicles, or in some cases walking. Improving frequency to 30 minutes in the early afternoon minimizes cost while providing improved mobility on Saturday afternoons.

A core network with a higher level of service on selected routes should be established to provide key access to jobs and shopping opportunities. This core network will provide higher frequencies and be more attractive to riders who use multiple modes as well as those passengers who use public transit as their primary mode of travel. The core network can be gradually expanded as ridership increases. Improved service on the core routes may generate higher ridership on the other routes. Additional hours of service and improved frequency can be added in subsequent years.

The core network for expanded Saturday service is initially defined as:

- Route 1/18 (combined route as recommended in previous section)
- Route 2
- Route 8
- Route 9 Weekend

The span of service for the core network should be lengthened to start at 7:45AM and end at 8:15PM on Saturdays on the core network. One hour earlier service and two hour later service should commence on the core network. 30-minute intervals will be provided during peak travel times from approximately 11:45AM to 4:45PM. The remainder of the Saturday network and schedule will have the same span and frequency as currently exists. If ridership increases on the other routes due to the higher intensity service on the core network, then additional frequency can be added on those routes. If the first and last trips on each non-core route experience a ridership increase, an additional earlier or later trip should be added.

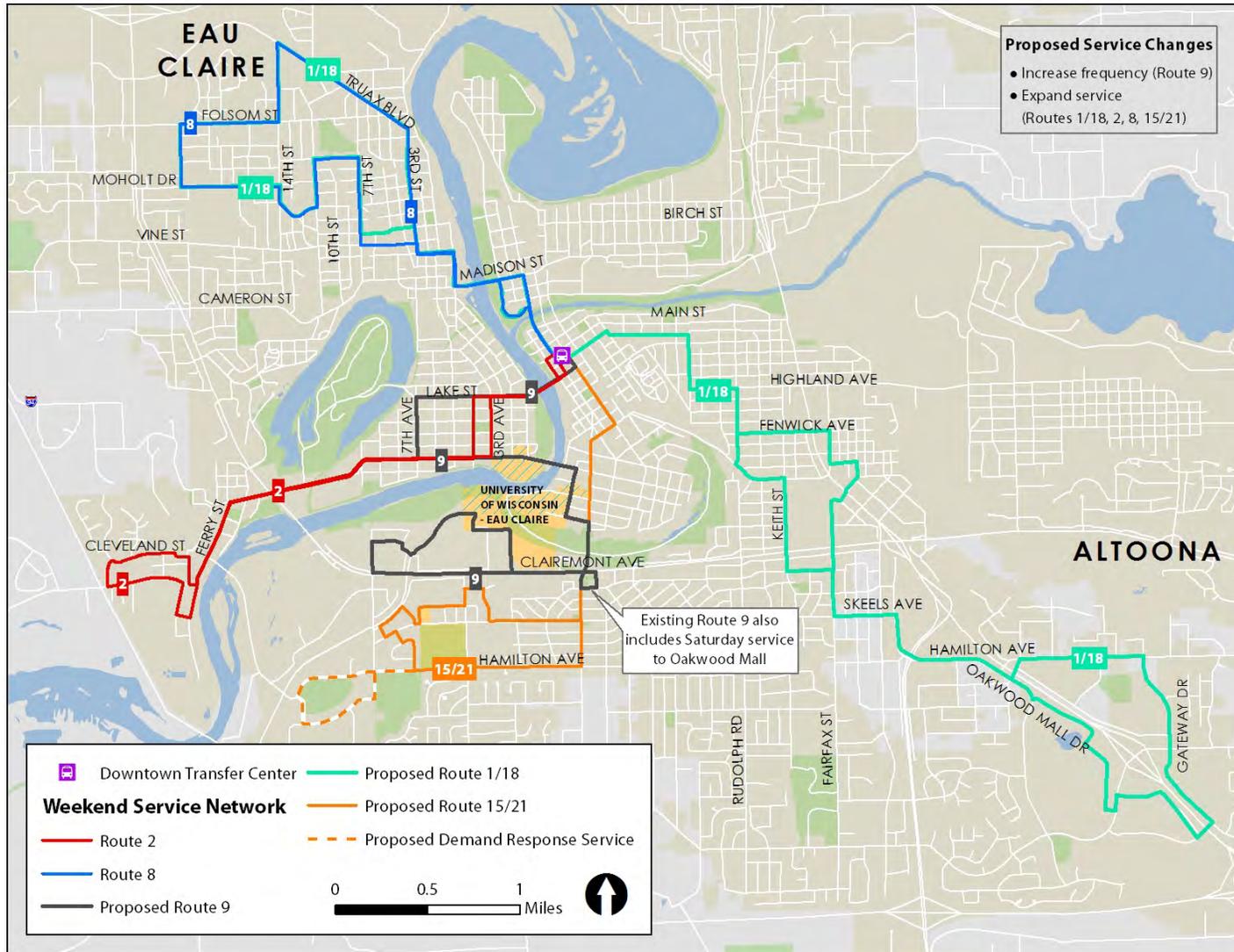
Table 24. Saturday Service Investment

Service Expansion	Revenue Hours per Day	Days per Year	Cost per Revenue Hour	Cost per Year	State/Fed Share	Local Share	Farebox	Operating Deficit (Local Gov. Share)
Saturday AM Expansion	4	52	\$77.00	\$16,016	\$8,969	\$7,047	\$2,402	\$4,645
Saturday PM Expansion	8	52	\$77.00	\$32,032	\$17,938	\$14,094	\$4,805	\$9,289
30 Min PM Frequency	20	52	\$77.00	\$80,080	\$44,845	\$35,235	\$12,012	\$23,223
Route 9	17	32	\$77.00	\$41,888	\$23,457	\$18,431	\$6,283	\$12,147
Saturday Dispatcher	15	52	\$77.00	\$60,060	\$33,634	\$26,426	\$9,009	\$17,417
Totals				\$230,076	\$128,843	\$101,233	\$34,511	\$66,722

This plan will provide additional service where it is most likely to be used. The result will be enhanced utility for people who rely on transit traveling to and from work and retail centers. Improved frequency will attract more students and people who use multiple modes for travel because the service will be a convenient transportation option. Work start and end times will be better served by the earlier/later span of service and the improved frequency.

A map showing the weekend route network is shown in Figure 62.

Figure 62. Weekend Service Network



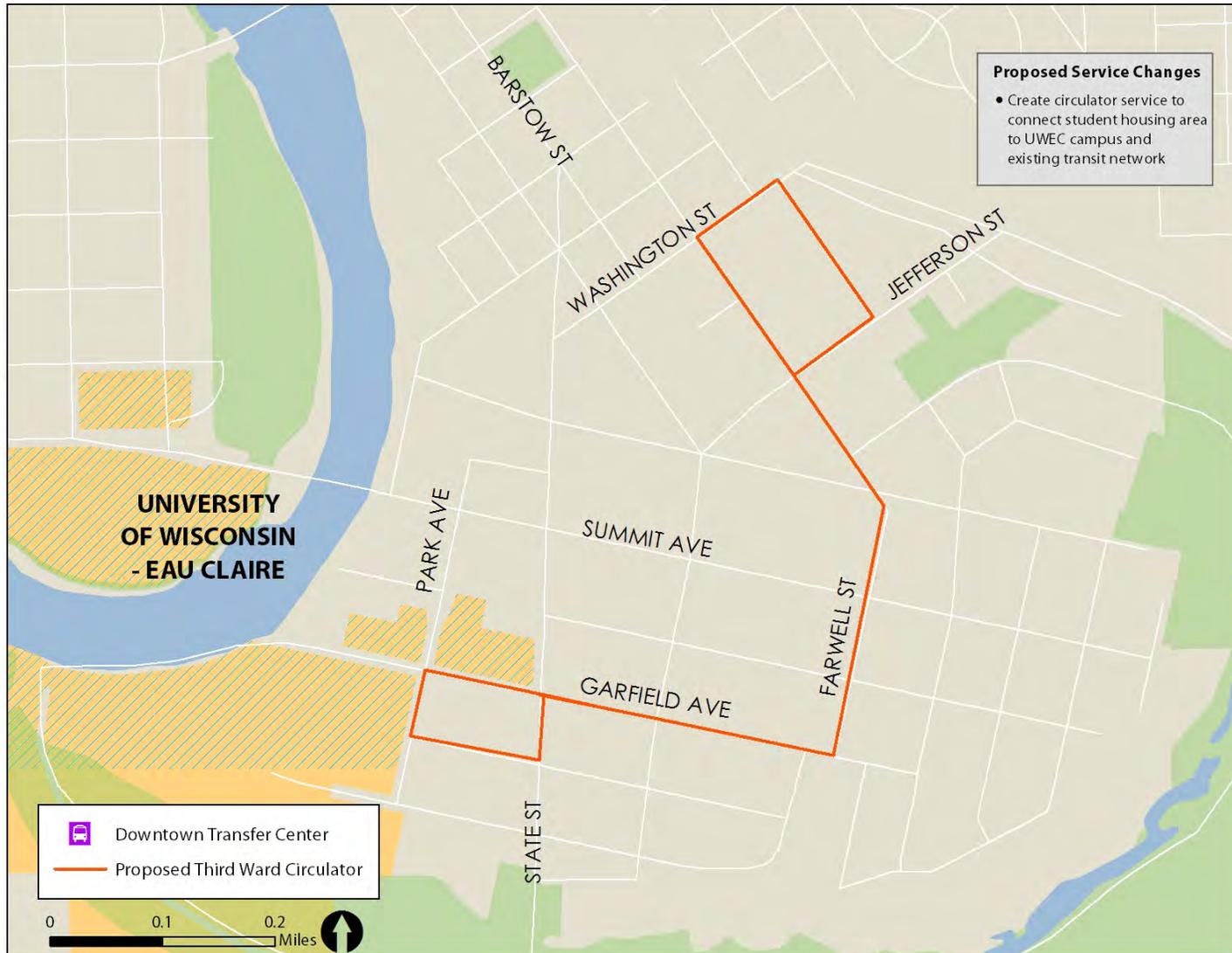
New Routes

Farwell/Third Ward Circulator

The student-intensive housing area east of campus is not served well by the current route network. The map of transit supportive areas (Figure 6) shows this area is not served by the current network, but has a relatively high potential for bus ridership. In many university communities, students living more than a half-mile from campus will often use their automobile to drive a short distance and park near campus instead of walking or bicycling. These trips contribute to neighborhood congestion and parking inefficiency. A good bus service will eliminate these inefficient motorized trips.

The Farwell/Third Ward Circulator route will connect these areas of high population density with downtown Eau Claire, where further connections can be made to the rest of the Eau Claire Transit network, and to UWEC. This route is approximately 2.5 miles per trip, and can operate at 15-minute intervals. Field testing is needed during busy class times to determine optimum scheduling to meet class times and avoid congestion at near the UWEC campus. Round-trip travel times should also be field tested. A map of the proposed circulator route is shown in Figure 63.

Figure 63. Third Ward Circulator



Dunn County Service

Regional bus service connecting Eau Claire with nearby communities can bolster the economy of the region, establish positive relationships among local governments, and provide improved mobility for many residents of the region. The Menomonie-Eau Claire service currently provided by Dunn County Transit connects Menomonie with Eau Claire and provides an important link between UW-Stout and UWEC. It can also provide employment opportunities for residents of both communities. However, the current schedule of three trips per day is minimal and is not coordinated with class schedules. It is also not a convenient option for commuters. A minimum of six trips per day is needed to make the schedule viable for long-term success.

A coordinated schedule with service provided by both systems will greatly improve the service. A common brand name, fare structure, route, and route identification will allow passengers to access the service seamlessly, without noticing any difference in which bus system is providing each trip. Long-distance transit service beyond municipal boundaries has a strong chance of success with proper design. Peer examples of this type of service can be found throughout the State of Wisconsin. In the Fox Cities, Valley Transit partners with GO Transit in Oshkosh to provide a regional route connecting Neenah and Oshkosh. This route is operated by a private contractor on an hourly basis, and offers connections to the GO Transit and Valley Transit Route networks. Also, Beloit Transit System and Janesville Transit System both operate the Beloit-Janesville Express (BJE) route in Rock County. The BJE operates along the Highway 51 corridor, connecting the cities of Beloit and Janesville which are about 13 miles apart. The service is jointly operated by the two transit systems which share the operation of the system.

The route as proposed in Menomonie needs several stops, including stops close to central campus at UW-Stout, the residence hall areas, and the high-density residential areas near downtown. It also needs one or two Park and Ride locations for people who have a car that is not capable of the daily round trip of up to 60 miles per day.

In Eau Claire, defined stops are needed at the Greyhound Station (McDonalds), Transfer Center, and UWEC. Time sensitivity of passengers is important in regional routes of this nature. A stop at the Transfer Center allows access to other Eau Claire Transit buses, and a stop at UWEC eliminates the transfer penalty time for trips to campus. Additional stops at Towers Hall and Oak Ridge Hall can be added to serve the UWEC residence halls and CVTC.

A park-and-ride location can also be added that requires minimal time for passenger boarding and exiting. One potential location is the commercial area in northwest Eau Claire near Folsom and Clairemont. Connections with Route 20 and Route 8 can be made in this area. The primary schedule consideration is class times at both campuses, and there may not be a perfect timed connection with Route 20. Westbound buses would serve this stop after making the downtown and UWEC stops in the morning. Eastbound buses would serve this stop before continuing downtown in the afternoon. This will minimize travel time for people who park and ride. A map of stops for this regional service is presented in Figure 64.

Future growth of the service should be a shared venture. If Eau Claire Transit adds three trips on weekdays now, each system could add one additional round trip per year as the service grows. A farebox revenue sharing arrangement can be negotiated or each system can retain cash fares collected on the buses. A multi-ride ticket or monthly/semester pass can also have a revenue sharing arrangement. Since this route also travels near the Menard's headquarters and distribution center, opportunities for private sector partnership should also be explored.

Altoona

Altoona is currently served by Route 17, which operates at 60-minute intervals. There is planned expansion of commercial areas in the northwestern part of the community. This section presents three proposals for additional service in Altoona. The most conservative option is to add service to Route 17; a second option is a new route through the developing commercial development; a third option is a more direct connection with the Oakdale Mall commercial area along Hastings.

The first option is to add 30-minute intervals to existing Route 17 from approximately 7:30AM to 5:30PM. This option would provide more convenient access for UWEC students living in Altoona as well as Altoona residents working in Eau Claire. The current cost share arrangement between Altoona and Eau Claire would provide the basis for providing the local share to match the 57.5 percent state and federal share of the cost of service.

The second option is to create a new route serving Galloway (Tire Plant) in Eau Claire and proposed new commercial activity. It would terminate at Hillcrest Estates manufactured housing community. One bus would operate at 60-minute intervals; two for 30-minute intervals.

The exact routing through Hillcrest Estates would depend on discussion with the owners of the facility. Roadway strengths, pedestrian safety, and safe vehicle routing would be part of the discussion. This route would serve the primary area in Altoona with strong transit propensity.

A third option is to connect Hillcrest Estates mobile home park with the retail and high-job density area along South Hastings in Eau Claire. This service would connect retail shopping and low and moderate income jobs in Eau Claire with residential areas in Altoona. The initial service could be at 30- or 60-minute intervals with evening service as an option in a future year if the initial service is successful. A map showing all potential Altoona routes is shown in Figure 65.

Figure 64. Menomonie – Eau Claire Bus Stops

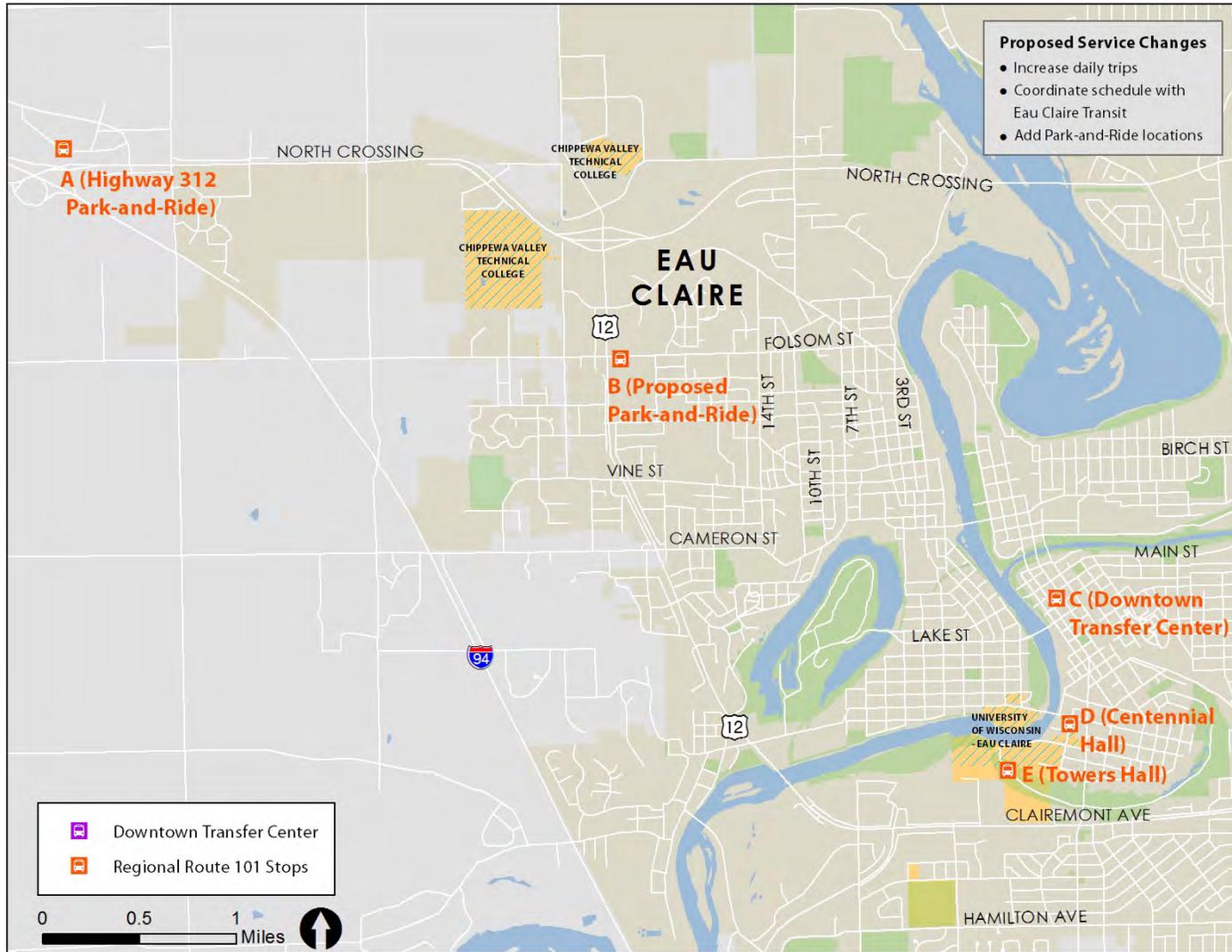
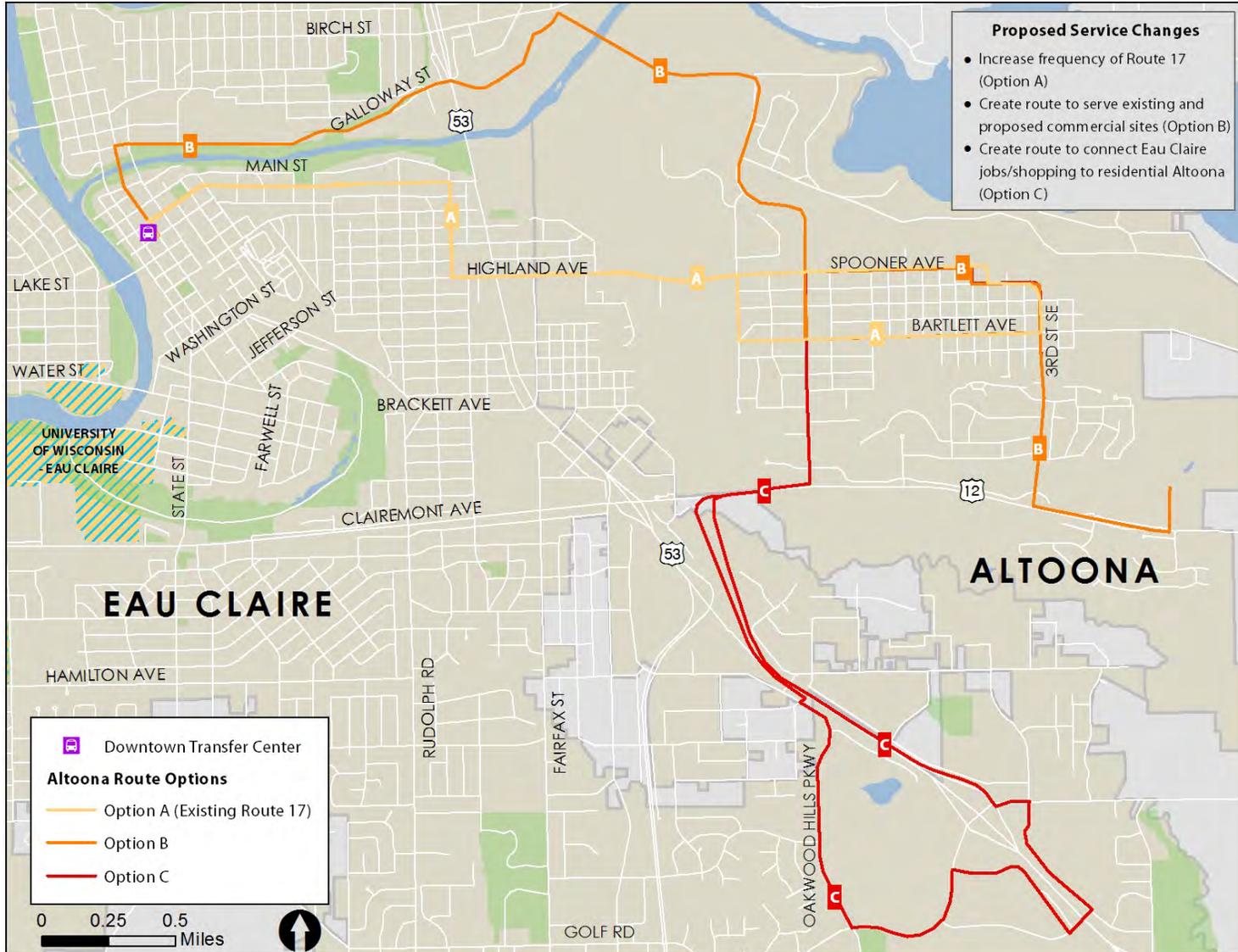


Figure 65. Altoona Service Alternatives



Carson Park

Summer shuttles can operate to Carson Park with the buses that are normally assigned to Route 9 during the school year. To comply with FTA regulations, the service should be deployed on a regular basis, consistent with Eau Claire Transit public transit service, and not focused on a special event. Service to Carson Park can operate for a specific number of hours each day, and supplemental service can be added for special events. It could be weekend only or weekday plus some weekend service and can be focused on specific times of the day when there is significant traffic to the facility.

Additional discussion with the City Parks Department is needed to determine when transit service would be most effective. For this study, it is assumed there will be eleven hours of daily service and three revenue hours of supplemental service for 10 large events.

The route would operate between Carson Park and downtown Eau Claire via Lake Street.

Chippewa Falls – Lake Hallie

Many stakeholders have provided comments through surveys and during meetings regarding service to Chippewa Falls and Lake Hallie. The transit propensity map shows potential for fixed-route transit service within Chippewa Falls. In Lake Hallie, the only potential for transit service is at the Walmart. Spaces in between the communities show little support for fixed-route bus service, and a limited stop service would be recommended if public transit is to be implemented connecting the cities. The distance from downtown Chippewa Falls to the Transfer Center is approximately 12.5 miles. Round-trip cycle time can be designed for a 90-minute cycle, which will allow for some circulation in Chippewa Falls and also adequate time to serve Walmart. Field testing is needed to determine the exact route in Chippewa Falls and a safe path at Walmart. A scheduled speed of 22 to 25 mph is possible on this route due to the high road speeds on Hwy 53. Scheduled speed will depend on the number of stops in Eau Claire and the extent of circulation in Chippewa Falls.

Lake Hallie does not have strong transit propensity other than the Walmart area. However, if requests for service develop, the route can use the frontage roads along Hwy 53 to provide service to businesses that need workers who live in Chippewa Falls or Eau Claire. Limited residential service can be provided, but extensive circulation in Lake Hallie will reduce the average speed of the route and lengthen overall travel times.

One bus would provide 90-minute headway, two buses 45-minute headway, and three buses would provide 30-minute headway. A cost share arrangement for the local share would be required among Lake Hallie, Chippewa Falls, and Eau Claire to match the State and federal transit aid (currently providing 57.5 percent of operating expenses).

Table 25. New Routes

Service Expansion	Revenue Hours per Day	Days per Year	Cost per Revenue Hour	Cost per Year	State/Fed Share	Local Share	Farebox	Operating Deficit (Local Gov. Share)
Third Ward Circulator	11	156	\$77.00	\$132,132	\$73,994	\$58,139	\$19,820	\$38,318
Menomonie - 3 Trips	6	255	\$77.00	\$117,810	\$65,974	\$51,836	\$17,672	\$34,165
Menomonie - 1 Trip	2	255	\$77.00	\$39,270	\$21,991	\$17,279	\$5,891	\$11,388
Chippewa Falls - Lake Hallie: 90 min Frequency	12	255	\$77.00	\$235,620	\$131,947	\$103,673	\$35,343	\$68,330
Chippewa Falls - Lake Hallie 45 min Peak	18	255	\$77.00	\$353,430	\$197,921	\$155,509	\$53,015	\$102,495
Chippewa Falls - Lake Hallie: 30 min Peak	24	255	\$77.00	\$471,240	\$263,894	\$207,346	\$70,686	\$136,660
Chippewa Falls - Lake Hallie: Evening	4.5	255	\$77.00	\$88,357	\$49,480	\$38,877	\$13,254	\$25,624
Chippewa Falls - Lake Hallie Saturday	12	52	\$77.00	\$48,048	\$26,907	\$21,141	\$7,207	\$13,9334
Altoona Expansion	11	255	\$77.00	\$215,985	\$120,952	\$95,033	\$32,398	\$62,636
Carson Park Daytime Shuttles	11	60	\$77.00	\$50,820	\$28,460	\$22,361	\$7,623	\$14,738
Carson Park PM Shuttles	3	10	\$77.00	\$2,310	\$1,294	\$1,012	\$347	\$670
Totals				\$1,349,502	\$755,721	\$593,781	\$202,425	\$391,356

Sunday Network

Clear Vision Eau Claire is a planning process led by the Eau Claire Community Foundation. It is based explicitly on a participatory model of meaningful citizen involvement that began in 2007, and has been established as a county-wide effort. Sunday service has been presented as a top priority in the Clear Vision Eau Claire Transportation Plan and in the community surveys conducted during the TDP process. Comprehensive bus systems usually provide a partial route network focused on where primary Sunday travel occurs. In most communities, there are heavy traffic volumes in commercial areas of the community.

The transit model for Sunday service that is most popular is to provide service where there will be an economic return to the transit system and to the community as a whole. Most transit systems do not run their full route network on Sunday. The core network defined in the Saturday improvements that connects many of the residential areas with the commercial activity along Hastings Way will provide a starter Sunday service. As ridership develops, additional routes can be added.

The initial network is identical to the Saturday high-frequency network:

- Route 8
- Route 18/1 (combined route as recommended)
- Route 2
- Route 9 Weekend

Service should initially operate from approximately 10:30AM to 7:30PM to serve work trips to part-time jobs in the commercial area. It will also serve shopping trips to several grocery stores and other commercial stores that are open on Sundays.

Service would operate at 60-minute intervals, with a 30-minute peak from approximately 12:45pm to 4:45pm. Six vehicles would be needed at the peak time. A dispatcher should be on duty at all times that buses are operating, and this position has a slightly different cost structure as shown in the cost table.

Table 26. Sunday Service Investments

Service Expansion	Revenue Hours per Day	Days per Year	Cost per Revenue Hour	Cost per Year	State/Fed Share	Local Share	Farebox	Operating Deficit (Local Gov. Share)
60 Min - Route 1, 2, 8, 18	18	52	\$77	\$72,072	\$40,360	\$31,712	\$10,811	\$20,901
30 Min - Route 1, 2, 8, 18	8	52	\$77	\$32,032	\$17,938	\$14,094	\$4,805	\$9,289
Route 9	13	52	\$77	\$52,052	\$29,149	\$22,903	\$7,808	\$15,095
Sunday Dispatcher	11	52	\$77	\$44,044	\$24,665	\$19,379	\$6,607	\$12,773
Totals				\$200,200	\$112,112	\$88,088	\$30,030	\$58,058

Transit Expansion: Summary

The table below shows the capital cost of the recommended improvements that have been presented. Eight to ten buses would be needed, depending on the service levels that are chosen. Currently, the only source to stable transit capital assistance for the City of Eau Claire is the FTA Bus and Bus Facilities program, which does not keep pace with replacement or expansion needs of the transit system. The grant program is highly competitive and in the most recent grant cycle Eau Claire Transit only received enough funding for a single replacement vehicle. Future capital investments will be more locally driven. The Menomonie route can use a tripper bus in between scheduled tripper runs if the schedule is coordinated with Dunn County trips and no additional vehicle will be needed for this service.

Capital costs for additional buses include:

- One bus for Route 7/5 frequency
- One bus for Routes 2/12 frequency
- One bus for Route 17/20 frequency
- Two buses for Route 9
- One bus for new route Farwell/Third Ward
- One bus for new route to Altoona
- One to three buses for Chippewa Falls/Lake Hallie

No additional buses are required for the Saturday and Sunday improvements and they can be easily implemented by August, 2014 if funding is available. The transit vehicle costs for service expansion are presented below in Table 23. Costs are presented in 2014 dollars, and are based on recent contract prices obtained by Eau Claire Transit.

Table 27. Vehicle Cost Table

Service Change	Number of Vehicles	Diesel Unit Cost	Hybrid Unit Cost	Price Range
Adding frequency to Route 7 and Route 5	1	\$335,000	\$545,000	\$335,000 - \$545,000
Adding frequency to Route 2 and Route 12	1	\$335,000	\$545,000	\$335,000 - \$545,000
Adding frequency to Route 17 and Route 20	1	\$335,000	\$545,000	\$335,000 - \$545,000
Route 9 Changes	2	\$335,000	\$545,000	\$670,000 - \$1,090,000
Adding Third Ward Circulator	1	\$335,000	\$545,000	\$335,000 - \$545,000
New Altoona Service	1	\$335,000	\$545,000	\$335,000 - \$545,000
Regional Service to Chippewa Falls	1-3	\$335,000	\$545,000	\$335,000 - \$1,635,000
TOTALS	8 - 10			\$2.6 - 5.5 million

Ridership Impacts

Improvements in transit service in both span and frequency will positively affect ridership. The reduced travel times and increased utility that result from the neutral cost improvements will prompt existing riders to use the transit system more often, and attract some new riders to the system. However, the most significant gains in ridership will come from the investments bus frequency. In the report *Transit Price Elasticities and Cross-Elasticities* by the Victoria Transport Policy Institute⁵, the effects of various service changes (fares, frequency, mode, etc.) on ridership are detailed.

⁵ Litman, Todd. 2014. *Transit Price Elasticities and Cross-Elasticities*. Victoria Transport Policy Institute.

<http://www.vtppi.org/tranelas.pdf>

Depending on the setting, a 1% increase in deployed transit service yields a 0.6%-1.0% increase in ridership. A reasonable estimate for transit service in the City of Eau Claire would be a 0.75% increase in ridership for every 1% of additional service that is deployed.

Capital Investment Needs

Additional capital investments are needed to preserve the current infrastructure and route structure and to prepare for future investments in service. Major capital improvements include construction of a Transfer Center, routine bus replacement and bus expansion plans, future garage needs, and shelter/bus stop improvements.

Bus Replacement

Eau Claire Transit has a reasonable capital program and has been replacing overage buses in a manner consistent with Wisconsin standards. The current bus fleet is similar in age and condition to other systems in Wisconsin. However, there are buses that have cracked frames that are no longer serviceable. Other buses are near the end of their useful life and are scheduled for replacement.

If bus replacement funding is not secured, there may be a need to purchase used buses. Similarly, expansion vehicles are difficult to fund and it may be necessary to purchase used buses for fleet expansion. Buses can be acquired from other Wisconsin systems for a very low cost, or used bus dealers with better quality buses have buses that are usually priced between \$50,000 and \$70,000 each. Purchasing used buses is not an ideal situation, as federal funding is difficult to secure for these projects, and maintenance and vehicle inefficiency makes them more costly. Replacement buses with equipment are priced between \$300,000 and \$550,000.

Transfer Center

The downtown transfer center was a temporary facility when it was constructed in 1985. It is inadequate in meeting existing passenger volumes and future growth opportunities. It does not comply with current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations and some boarding locations are not accessible for people in wheelchairs. While the physical facility is well past its useful life, and will soon be further beyond capacity if any investments in expanded service are made, it is operationally well suited to its location. The geography of Eau Claire is such that it is conducive to a radial route design, meaning that routes begin and terminate at a central point where the bulk of transfers are made. Eau Claire Transit operates on a “pulse” system at the central transfer point. This is effective and it would not be advisable to move the transfer point outside of a central location. As downtown Eau Claire continues to develop and grow in density, the utility of a downtown transit center will also grow. It is recommended that Eau Claire Transit’s central transfer point remain in downtown Eau Claire. Operationally, a location that is as close as possible to the existing facility would be the most efficient, and the easiest to implement without having to make major changes to transit operations that would affect the operating cost. There is good

roadway access, and the current location is walking distance from several key downtown destinations.

An engineering study is programmed in the current TIP to determine the best location and an estimated cost of the Transfer Center's replacement. Other transit systems in Wisconsin (Beloit Transit System, Maritime Metro Transit (Manitowoc, WI)) have recently constructed bus transfer facilities and the construction costs were about \$1.2 million, though those transit systems are only about one-fifth of the size of Eau Claire Transit, and the cost of developing a new transit center for Eau Claire would be much greater than that. However, these smaller transit systems constructed these facilities using FTA grants, and can be referred to technically as having successfully met requirements associated with environmental approval and project delivery. Belle Urban System in Racine, WI constructed a new transfer center in 2004 at a cost of \$4.4 million. The City of La Crosse, Wisconsin recently completed the construction of a mixed-use transit center called Grand River Station. This was a \$33 million facility that includes a public transit and intercity bus terminal with staffed waiting area, as well as retail, commercial, and residential space. Approximately \$9.1 million in FTA Section 5309 discretionary funding was put forth toward the transit portion of the facility as a joint development project. Other funding sources associated with affordable housing, from state, local, and federal sources, as well as those from a private developer, made up the remaining investments.

Further analysis needs to be undertaken to estimate the exact cost of redeveloping the Eau Claire Transit transfer center. Replacement alternatives can range from a facility that serves the existing purpose as a pure transit facility, to one that is part of a larger mixed-use development and the costs will vary based on project scope and items like technology and land acquisition.

Maintenance Facility

Eau Claire Transit's garage and maintenance facility is a shared facility with Eau Claire Public Works. The garage and maintenance facility, constructed in 1988, is adequate for the existing service and fleet. Any service expansions will require additional secure storage of vehicles. The current maintenance area can support a modest increase in fleet size, but not a large (25 to 30 percent) increase in peak vehicles and mileage. Facility security should also be reviewed if there is additional growth in the system.

The most efficient capital investment would be to construct a new transit facility capable of storing up to 40 vehicles and providing at least three maintenance bays. Additional adjacent land should be reserved for future growth over the next 30 years. An ideal size for the initial construction would be four to six acres with an additional adjacent three acres for future growth.

The City would be required to reimburse the FTA for the remaining useful life. The original construction cost was. If the facility had a 40-year design life, it has approximately 30 percent of the life left. The payment to FTA would be 30 percent of the 80 percent federal share. Discussion with FTA will determine the exact amount. The space currently occupied by Transit could then be used for other city maintenance activities.

If the City donates land for the new facility, 100 percent of the appraised value of the land can be used to offset the payment to FTA for the remaining federal share. Depending on location of the new facility and the value of land in that area, the reimbursement could be substantially reduced.

Shelters and Bus Stops

The system currently has 15 shelters and 265 marked bus stops. Bus stop spacing is wider than in common practice. A shelter and stop program will enhance ease of customer access in areas of Eau Claire where there is an adequate sidewalk network. It is a local decision on bus stop spacing and shelter acquisition. It is important that stops and shelters are adequately maintained after installation. This includes snow removal and periodic cleaning. Often a local homeowner or business can be compensated to perform some of the maintenance duties. Adequate funding for shelter and stop maintenance must be included in the operating budget each year. In Eau Claire, there is a mix of far side, mid-block, and near-side stops. Bus stops should be located in areas with safe pedestrian access and sidewalks. Marked bus stops are gradually being installed in Eau Claire. TCRP Report 19 guidelines state that stop spacing should be approximately:

- 600 feet in Central Business Districts
- 750 feet in urban areas
- 1,000 feet in suburban areas

Environmental Investment

Bus systems with strong ridership patterns are environmentally and energy efficient for the community. Transit facilities should also be environmentally progressive, to be complementary to the bus system's commitment to reduce energy consumption and Green House Gases.

There are limited environmental enhancements available to the physical facilities at Eau Claire Transit. Modern solar installations have high environmental benefits, even in northern climates. The presence of large trees around the maintenance facility is desirable for a variety of reasons, but would reduce the solar benefit on the existing facility. A geothermal installation could be beneficial, but additional engineering analysis is necessary to determine ground conditions and potential benefit. A new transfer center could incorporate solar design depending on the location and adjacent structures which could block available sunlight. The recent investment in hybrid buses also has environmental benefits that can be quantified.

Technology

Eau Claire Transit has made recent investments to add technology on buses. This technology includes wireless internet connections (Wi-Fi), global positioning system (GPS), and cameras. Additional investments should be made to install automatic passenger counters and to better incorporate GPS data to track schedule adherence and reliability.

Partnership Strategies

Regional Funding

Regional Transit Authorities

In the existing conditions section of this report, the various funding sources that support Eau Claire Transit are outlined. The shares of operating assistance are generally made up of user subsidies, state funding, federal funding, and local funding. The local share of Eau Claire Transit is primarily sourced by property tax levy, from the communities of Eau Claire and Altoona, and there is no dedicated local funding source for transit in the Chippewa Valley. Moreover, the share of federal and state aid has not kept pace with unmet needs in vehicles, facilities, and operations. One approach to addressing this unmet need would be to establish a Regional Transit Authority (RTA). An RTA addresses two issues: governance and funding.

Governance

Mobility issues are regional in nature, and this is especially true in the Chippewa Valley. Significant travel patterns exist between communities in Eau Claire, Chippewa, and Dunn Counties and there are regional destinations in each locale. These include employers, medical facilities, shopping centers, and institutions of higher education. While travel patterns and services are regionalizing, transit funding is wholly reliant on funding sources that are linked to municipal boundaries. An RTA removes the redundant layers of governance to a regional agency. Representation on the authority is a regional decision, but it would likely include elected representatives or appointees from communities in the transit service area.

Funding

RTA's would also have the ability to levy a sales tax to support transit operating and capital expenses, and reduce reliance on state and federal funding sources, and increasingly scarce property tax funds. There are numerous ways in which sales tax revenues could be directed. Some regions have set asides for capital funding and operations, whereas others make distinctions between the two. Also, public transit may not be the only investment for these revenues. RTA tax levy can fund other mobility projects as well, including local roads, bicycle and pedestrian investments, and travel demand management strategies.

Dedicated Regional Capital Funding – CTIB

In the Minneapolis – St. Paul region there is another regional funding mechanism complementing an RTA (in this case a transit taxing district). The Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) is a dedicated funding source at the county level that supports capital investments in public transit, in this case corridor level development. Since April 2008, five counties – Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington – have used a quarter-cent sales tax and \$20 a motor vehicle sales tax, permitted by the Minnesota

Legislature, to invest in and advance transit projects by awarding annual capital and operating grants. The Board works in collaboration with the Metropolitan Council and Carver and Scott counties. The Counties Transit Improvement Board is a joint powers board. Each county has two members and one alternate. The Metropolitan Council has one member and one alternate. The Executive Committee consists of the Board officers and one county commissioner from each county who are not officers.

Rochester, Minnesota – Destination Medical Center

Where CTIB provides an example of dedicated regional funding for transit in a large urban area, an example of dedicated funding on a somewhat smaller scale is present in Rochester, Minnesota. As part of the Destination Medical Center (DMC) effort in Rochester, the city is able to direct approximately \$128m in local funds for infrastructure investments (including roadway improvements and transit). This funding is used to match transit aids from Olmsted County and the State of Minnesota. The City of Rochester is authorized to take all of the following actions to raise these funds:

- Extend its current 0.5 percent sales tax
- Impose an additional 0.25 percent sales tax
- Increase its lodging tax
- Impose a food and beverage tax
- Impose an admissions and entertainment tax
- Exercise expanded tax abatement authority
- Exercise expanded TIF authority

Olmsted County is also authorized to adopt a 0.25 percent sales tax or a wheelage tax of up to \$10 per registered vehicle. While Eau Claire does not have a destination with a global draw such as the Mayo Clinic, the funding methods in Rochester present a wide variety of local tax revenues that can be used to support transit operations and facilities.

Private Partnership

Innovation Express – Janesville, WI

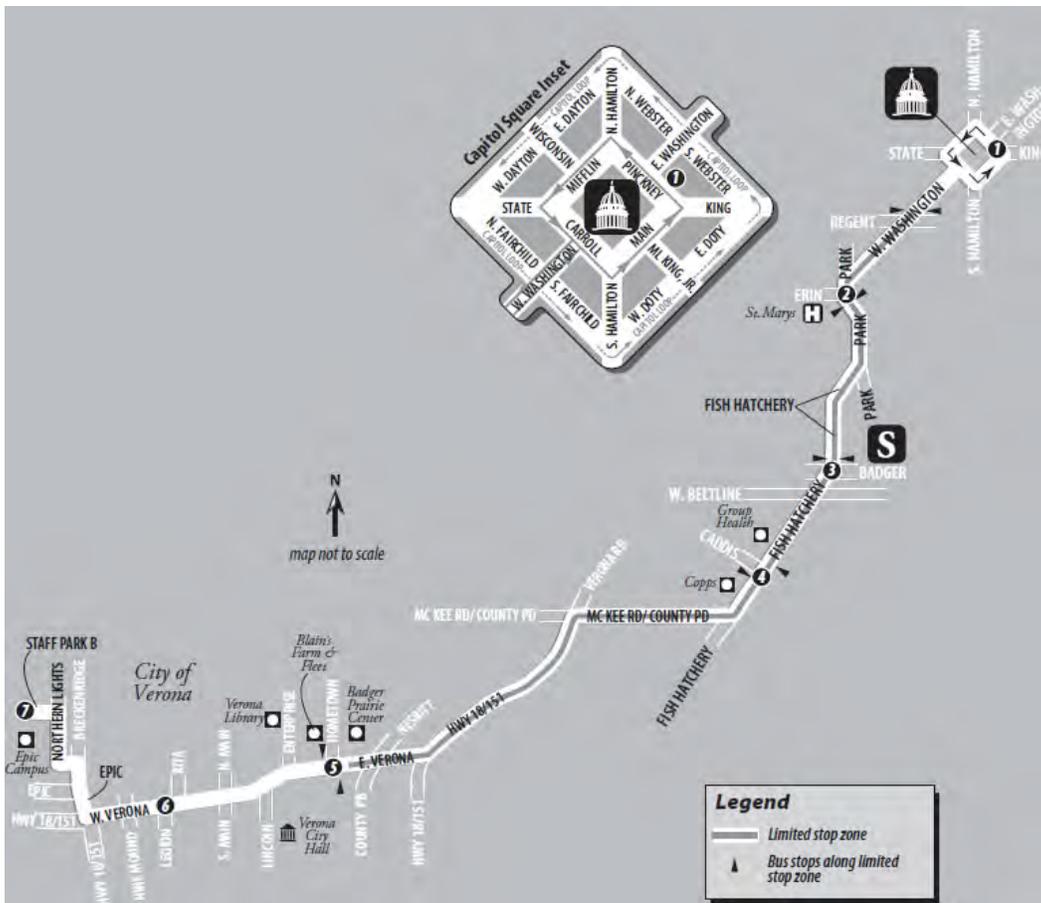
Janesville Transit System (JTS) in Janesville, WI operates a commuter bus service that connects the City of Janesville with employment and educational destinations in Milton and Whitewater, WI. The Innovation Express commuter route was initially supported by a Supplemental Transportation Rural Assistance Program grant from WisDOT and FTA. Currently, the service project is funded by the blend of urban mass transit operating aids distributed by WisDOT each year (WisDOT 85.20 and FTA Section 5307). The local share contribution is made by the Cities of Janesville and Whitewater, and there is also a contribution that is made by Generac Power Systems, Inc. (Generac), which employs several workers in Whitewater.

The Innovation Express provides three round trips each weekday, as well as one round trip on Sunday evenings. All of the trips are designed to meet Generac's work schedules, along with other employers at the University Technology Park in Whitewater. The City of Janesville has experienced declines in employment in recent years, and challenges exist in connecting the workforce with jobs that exist outside of the region. In addition to the University of Wisconsin –Whitewater, and employers in the University Technology Park to workers in Rock County, the Innovation Express connects outlying communities to Janesville, and to Blackhawk Technical College's campus in Milton. It is also a popular mode of travel for students living along the corridor. The Innovation Express serves as an example of the public sector offering start-up funds, and Generac stepping in to offer an employee benefit that also covers the funding gap and seed money to start the new service and build a new rural transit market.

Epic Systems – Madison, WI

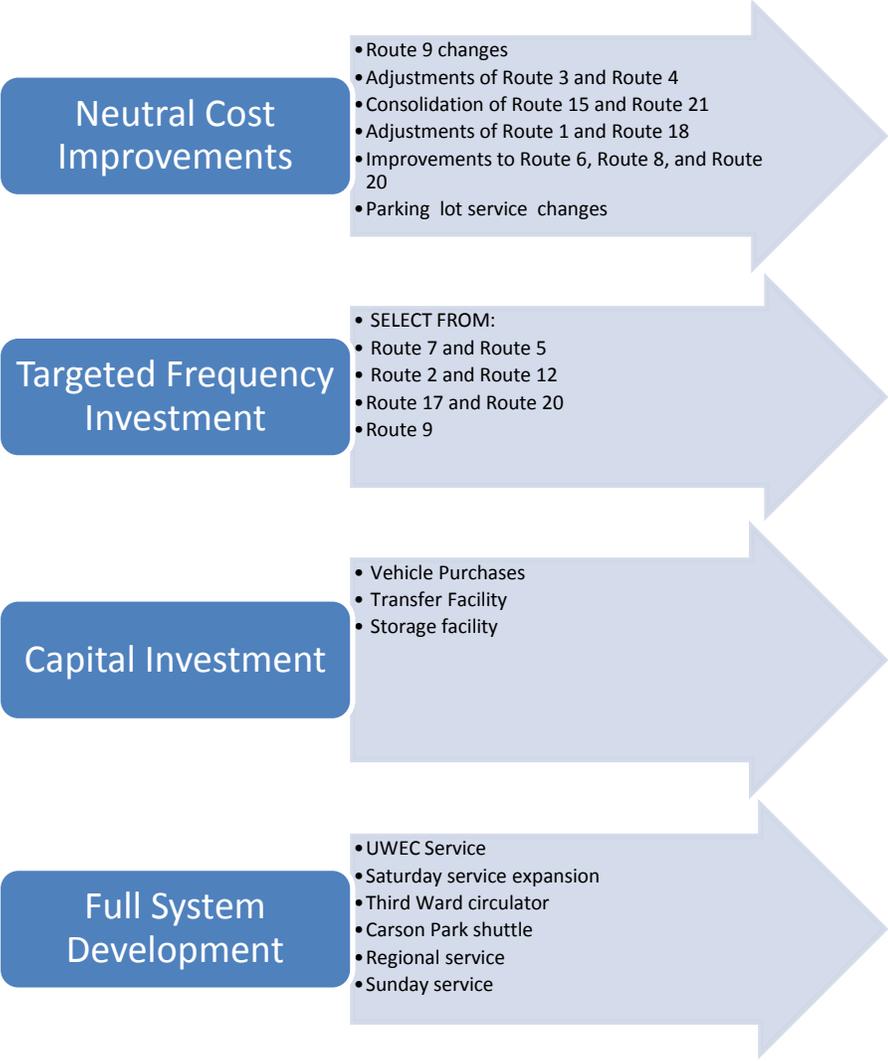
Madison Metro Transit partners with Epic Systems in Verona, WI to operate the Route 75 reverse commute service to the Epic Campus which houses over 6,000 of its employees. Madison Metro Transit provides six public transit round trips per day from downtown Madison to Epic, and the local share of the service is funded by contributions from the City of Verona and Epic Systems. The City of Verona also supports Route 55 which connects the Epic Campus to Madison Metro Transit's West Transfer Point. This model could be used to support reverse commute service in Eau Claire that would connect the central city with Menard's or other large employment centers that exist outside of the Eau Claire Transit route network.

Figure 66. Madison Metro Route 75



Conclusion and Implementation Plan

This report outlines several strategies for future development of the Eau Claire Transit System. This section outlines how each one should be prioritized for implementation over the next five years. In Figure XX the transit system changes are listed in order of priority.



First Priority: Neutral Cost Improvements

Because they can be accomplished using existing resources, the neutral cost improvements are the top priority for projects that can be implemented in the five-year time frame. There are numerous options for route adjustments and consolidation of routes to offer higher frequency service, and improve efficiency at negligible cost to the City of Eau Claire. There is quite a bit of flexibility as to how Eau Claire Transit can go about implementing these improvements. The changes to Route 6, Route 8, and Route 20 present the least impact to current users, as would the changes to parking lot deviations. The best course of action

would be to conduct further public outreach on each option and let that guide the re-routing decisions.

Second Priority: Targeted Frequency Investments

After the neutral-cost strategies have been implemented, Eau Claire Transit can address system growth by adding frequency to selected routes. The routes with the highest potential for growth are the Route 7 and Route 5, Route 2 and Route 12, and the Route 17 and Route 20. Also, the UWEC routes (Route 9's) have a high potential for growth. Routes that serve the core of the city and areas near the UWEC campus should be prioritized during this phase of transit development. The shortcoming with implementing these strategies is that they will require the acquisition of additional buses, so not all could be implemented at once. Even if sufficient capital funding for vehicle replacement became available, the transfer facility and bus storage facility does not have capacity for additional vehicles. The route selected for frequency investment should be based on additional stakeholder input, operational feasibility (transfer center capacity during peak times), and the availability of funding to support expanded service.

Third Priority: Capital Investment

Very little transit service expansion can occur without first investing in the capital assets of the transit system. New service will require additions to the fleet, so vehicle replacement is the highest priority. Additional service will require more space at the transfer facility and more space to store vehicles. A replacement downtown transit center is in the early planning phases, and should be constructed to accommodate future growth of the system. Also, sheltered cold storage of vehicles needs to be provided, either by expanding the garage facility or by constructing an auxiliary bus barn.

Fourth Priority: Full System Development

After the above needs are met, the long term development of the Eau Claire Transit system should be to better serve existing markets and serve new markets by strategically deploying new service as resources become available. The following services should be deployed in the following order of priority:

4. Expanded UWEC Service
5. Saturday service expansion
6. Third Ward Circulator
7. Carson Park Shuttle
8. Regional service (Altoona, Dunn County, Chippewa Falls/Lake Hallie)
9. Sunday service

Appendix A: Public Meeting Notes and Materials

Meeting Comments:

Stakeholder Meeting 10/28/2013
North Conference Room @ City Hall

- We are currently in the process of a transit development plan (TDP) with SRF (An independent consulting firm).
 - Three steps
 - Information Gathering (step we are currently in)
 - On Board Surveys, Who is riding? What can be improved on? What do we need to do to get more customers? etc.
 - Comparison
 - Compare City of Eau Claire's results to other municipalities of comparable size
 - Recommendations
 - SRF will come back with suggestions
 - Reasons for using SRF: They are able to view and access plans from other municipalities of similar size, so they are able to compare how ECT runs compared with similar areas. The data used will not be solely from Eau Claire.
- One note on the survey was that it did not allow for specific suggestions and opinions, all questions were closed ended, they were curious as to how someone who does not ride the bus get a say in what could be improved.
 - This survey is mostly demographic information to try to determine who our customers currently are, and what ECT needs to do in order to recruit new customers
- Are we getting bathrooms at the transfer center? Are we getting a new transfer center? (Mentioned multiple times)
- Jim Dunning states: He has information and data available for use. He feels we should be looking at Eau Claire County as a whole rather than just City of Eau Claire.
- New transfer center should (if we are able to build it) be near a rail station
- We should bring back a Regional Transit Authority
- Greyhound- should we try to get them to stop at our transfer center? Response: "Greyhound is a difficult animal to work with" We just implemented the express route to Dunn County, this goes by the Greyhound station.
- Ongoing Issue: There is no Sunday service. This is a very specific and wide concern. Was repeated multiple times at this meeting.

- We should get a new transfer center that makes it easier for Greyhound and Airport shuttles to work with and get to.
- Connection with Chippewa Falls and Hallie is very limited.
- Transit is in demand
- Many feel it is critical to get a new transfer center.
- Public awareness of the transit department is not an easy task but is extremely important
- Is downtown a logical spot for new transfer center? Have had plans in past for smaller centers
- Just Local Foods Rep- North and South Barstow redevelopment combined with parking ramp may be a decent spot for new transfer center.
- Multi-County system CAN run without RTA, it is a matter of getting everyone to agree.
 - Railstudy: EC/Minneapolis is 3rd best route
- DECI confluence center/project is something of concern, as it may create a need for more routes/people in downtown.
- Not enough students are aware of transit center/transit system.
- Transit department should be helping students learn to use our system
- Connectivity of campus and confluence project should be in plan
- Easier to get around in NYC than rural EC County- 3 routes to rural areas, suggesting that we don't focus just one business but also recreational activities.
- Development is getting more spread out so it is more difficult to get service city wide
 - The further out we go, the higher the cost
- Should have hypothetical possibilities in plans, many different possibilities and opportunities may arise; we should be ready for all situations to the best of our ability.
- Sunday Service should be number 1 priority
- Mark states: Chippewa Valley Transit comprehensive integration need to reach out to CF, Menomonie, Regional- All parties need to be involved, we need to get a plan to build the system in segments
- Sprawl pattern development negatively effects transit- Maybe we need to have commission members actively object sprawl pattern because people can't access the routes to get where they need to go. Projects should not be approved without knowing if transportation is guaranteed.

- Transit did have an input on the last plan, although we are 1 voice and it is difficult to get public awareness up. We have no decision making power on development plans- only opinions.
- We need to see if we are using our resources to the best of our ability. If we are able to get more resources, what would we do? How can we get more resources? Transit development plan is giving us the opportunity to give us the “Pie in the sky” plan, and then we will base our realistic plan off of that.
- Committee was formed previously to have transit commission review development plans, was dropped on the formal level, but we need to get info before plans go to council
- Night time routes need to be improved- better communication and longer hours
- Mall routes- doesn't get there early enough and ends too early- there is no Sunday route (big complaint)
- Timing and Frequency of routes is very inconvenient. Lack of attention to detail- only 30 and 60 minutes, when all routes should run at 20 minutes.
- Day Pass- slows the buss down, bus drivers should not handle passes, they should be dealt with at the transfer center so riders don't feel like a burden.
- Capital plan & Operational plan
 - EC is very far behind the curve in technology
- Transfer center is a big concern- PUBLIC BATHROOMS
- Growth plan in 5% increments
 - 1 new bus adds 5%
 - 1 bus to Chippewa Falls is 5%
 - Etc.
- Some stops are in complete dark at night- this needs to be addressed
 - Pass holders with reflective lights
 - Reflectors on signs

NOTES FROM UW STAKEHOLDER MEETING

- Interested in knowing what we are looking at in near future with new apartments, confluence project- US is expanding- how will transit change to meet expanding needs?
- Mike states UW is 33% of ridership- wants to make sure we are meeting their needs and supporting UW growth; also sees transit becoming more technologically advanced
- We lack:
 - Communication with students
 - Involvement in freshmen orientation (making students more aware of transit system)
 - Campus activities for off campus
- Relationship with University is critical
 - Cities care about cost, universities concerned about appearance and students are concerned about services provided.
- Very little change from the last plan
 - Make changes in routes as space/density changes
- UW is most dense, but downtown is more focused- has the majority of routes
- What do we need for lead time to work with new construction and planning routes?
- Funding will have to shift more towards local funding going forward.
- Will have a student member on transit commission- 1 year term
- More meetings between transit and UW
- 7th and Water Street is one of the more populated bus stops- increase frequency there?
- Include special events/special bus runs during contract negotiations to provide public transit from campus to other events
 - Must be open to all public!
- More student specific services/routes
- Get more reliable and timely GPS on buses, need to get student input. Many students don't have experience with public transit prior to school.
- Enhance our website
- First couple weeks of school- enhance routes to grab more students
- We should have someone showing students how to use the transit system
- Mobile app?

STAKEHOLDER MEETING- CITY HALL 10/29/2013

- Chippewa Falls and Eau Claire should meet up, can't get to Walmart in Hallie, retirement home in Hallie, etc.
- State St- better evening service (once an hour isn't enough) We should also market this route more
- Less stops in 3rd ward residential- we should increase the stops
- People shouldn't have to walk more than 1/4 - 1/2 mile to get to bus stop.
- Bus Shelters should be at all stops- are in 3 year budget
- Not enough information available to students and general public
 - Maps
 - Presentation
 - Info right at bus stops
- Unfortunate stigma of riding the bus- we should look into that
- We will look more into general planning for 5 years
 - Bike
 - Walk
 - Bus
 - Car
- We should double the frequency of all routes. SRF will look at each route specifically
- 15 minutes at transfer center
- How is Dunn County Express going? We should increase frequency on that route
 - John Menard has been very supportive
- Marketing has been disappointing
- Bus fares- look at revenue as a performance level
- Work with Altoona, make Altoona route go into the evening
- Different types of passes- 3 hour/6 hour/ 8 hour passes
- Travel planning/trainers should be mentioned
- East side evening routes are cut down- only staggered one way
- Sunday Service
- No stops on busy roads

Public Meeting Exercises:

Existing Conditions

● Not very well
 ● Meets only basic needs
 ● Very Well

How well do current transit services meet travel needs in the community?



EAU CLAIRE TRANSIT

Service Changes

● Place red stickers on the service changes that are most important.

What modifications to Eau Claire Transit service are most important?

Increase frequency of buses:



Improve the facilities and vehicles:



Extend the span of service:

- Later at night



- Expanded weekend service



Provide better customer information (maps, signage, technology):

Serve a new destination (write in:)

● All of Eau Claire County and Chippewa Falls

● Fall Creek/Augusta

Other (write in):



EAU CLAIRE TRANSIT

Growing Ridership

Place red stickers on the service changes that are most important.

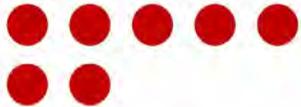
What would make non-users of Eau Claire Transit consider riding the bus?

Faster trip to key destinations:



Increased gas prices:

More frequent service:



Other (write in):

Make riding the bus easier to understand:



EAU CLAIRE TRANSIT

**Appendix B:
Open-Ended Responses to
On-Board and UWEC Surveys**

On-Board Survey General Comments

- 2 buses in Altoona and 1 later times
- A 4 hour transfer service
- A 9 pm bus sat and sun bus electric outlet
- A food snack vending would be awesome
- A rest room in the transfer station
- Add bathroom to transfer center
- All positive
- Altoona bus should run later because of their job
They said they would like a bus going to Chippewa Falls.
Would like to see another route out to the Mall,
it takes to long to get there they have seen people fall asleep.
- At night bussing needs to be the same
- Bad legs and joints
- Bath rooms and food dining area
- Bathrooms bus passes weekly or-every two weeks can't always come up with 45.00 all at once
- Bathrooms snack machines
better accommodations for drivers including a break room very happy with transit
- Been good experience
- Better notification on canceled routes & heated stations
- Bus from cvtc should run later
- Bus route to chip
- Bus service to Chippewa would be nice. Would like seating and wind block coverage
- Bus to Chippewa
- Buses are clean and on time
- Buses could connect with each other outside transfer station
- Buses need to stay on time schedule
- Buses to run on Sunday and longer time on Altoona bus
- Buss that goes up and down Claremont
- Chippewa/Menomonie
- Convenient and affordable
- Depend on bike n bus, put departure n arrival times at each stop n at tc
- Didn't finish survey
- Dint have enough time to complete survey
- Do a good job
- Doing a good job
- Doing a good job
- Drivers are nice. Need new.buses.
- Drivers are very friendly and helpful
- Drivers should be nicer and sex offenders should not be allowed on when children allowed on.
- E12 service needs bus stop signs at Menard distribution center
- Earlier times and more rural stops
- Everything is great for transportation
- Extended hours
- Extremely nice bus drivers
- Get more busses.
- Go to Chippewa
- Good driver they are very helpful
- Good drivers
- Hard to find website. The bus system needs to be more user friendly.

- Has a hard time connecting buses
- Have an Altoona later evening route such as 8:00-9
- Have bus routes on Sunday and holidays
- Have the bus go to Hallie
- Having wifi is great
- Hopes you follow thru
- I like it
- I work on Sundays and have to take a cab to work which costs me 15 dollars.
The bus is a lot cheaper. Plus my husband and I could go somewhere on Sunday.
Bathrooms would be great at the transfer station
- I would also like seating at every bus stop
- If he is late for the bus he has to wait another hour for another bus
- If the bus ran on Sunday people who don't have a car could go to the laundry mat.
January day for people to get out of the house
- It's good
- Jeff is a very good bus driver and cares about the people
- Keep doing a good job
- Later service after 6pm
- Later service for Altoona
- Like now don't change
- Likes it its fun
- Likes the bus decor
- Likes the new buses
- Likes the newer buses
- Likes the system very much
- Live bus tracking
- Longer busing out to cvtc
- Longer hours needed
- Longer routes on Saturday and open on Sunday
- Loves eau Claire bus system
- Major stops with schedules and shelters, good drivers,
- Majority of bus drivers don't know the city well and can't give directions outside of their route
Larger smoking area at transfer point to improve visibility
- Make buses easier to find at the transfer point by numbering them in order
- Mike is doing a bang up job.
- More Altoona routes
- More bus stations at stops
- More buses frequently would be nice
- More buses more times at the university
- More busses to Chippewa
- More express services
- More female drivers
- More rural routes and shelters
- More shelters and benches in waiting areas
- Music in bathrooms
- Need more seating at bus stops. Would like a route going to Chippewa Falls
- Needs a new one with restrooms
- New buses are good! Steve is a great driver
- Nice drivers, good service, good system.
- No name calling or bullying which there isn't like the bus drivers
- Obnoxious riders irritate him. Would like more crowd control.
- Operation on Sunday would be great

- People are very nice
- Pick up every 30 mins at east ridge and a route from Putnam to target
- Pretty good transit system
- Push for Sundays & seat belts for little people
- Put a bathroom in the transfer station. A bigger transfer station, and warmer one.
- Ran later during the week
- River prairie stop or by new medical centers also provide all new buses they are very nice !
- Routes to Seymour
- Routes run later- rte21
- Routes to Chippewa, longer routes on Saturday
- Run more frequently and on weekends
- Run to 12 pm
- Sat later
- Saturday nights have a nine o'clock bus and be open sundays
- Bus drivers are very nice people
- Seating at the pick up spots and wind break booths.
More storage on the us to put backpacks or luggage.
Places to put stroller and walkers.
- Service later and Gordys on birch st
- Shelters at major stops
- Should be able to use the transfer ticket anywhere without having to go downtown.
Good comment, "the drivers are great and helpful"
- Should have signs posted better...and having security while on duty, rest rooms for passengers.
- Some drivers will pick people up away from bus signs and others say you have to be by the bus sign
- Stein blvd bus
- Stop at 5th and union 1/2 a block
- Stopping at more corners for convenience
- Stops are jerky
- Sunday bus very important and later sat evenings also having a route for river prairie
- Sunday service
- Sunday service
- The only bus service around that is friendly and says thank you, and willing to help a person on the bus if needed
- The person she was teaching has mobility issues
- Tint windows more from the sun light
- Very convenient
- Very happy with drivers and bus system
- West ridge bus stop at burger king
- What's 3:15 bus back
- Wi fi is a plus buses are nice clean ad quiet
- Wi fi is awesome
- Working pretty good
- Would like route to Chippewa falls
- Would like to see bus service to Lake Hallie. Walmart, Farm and Fleet
- Would like to see the north bus do the route backwards
- Would like to use a scooter but some buses are not accessible

University Survey Comments

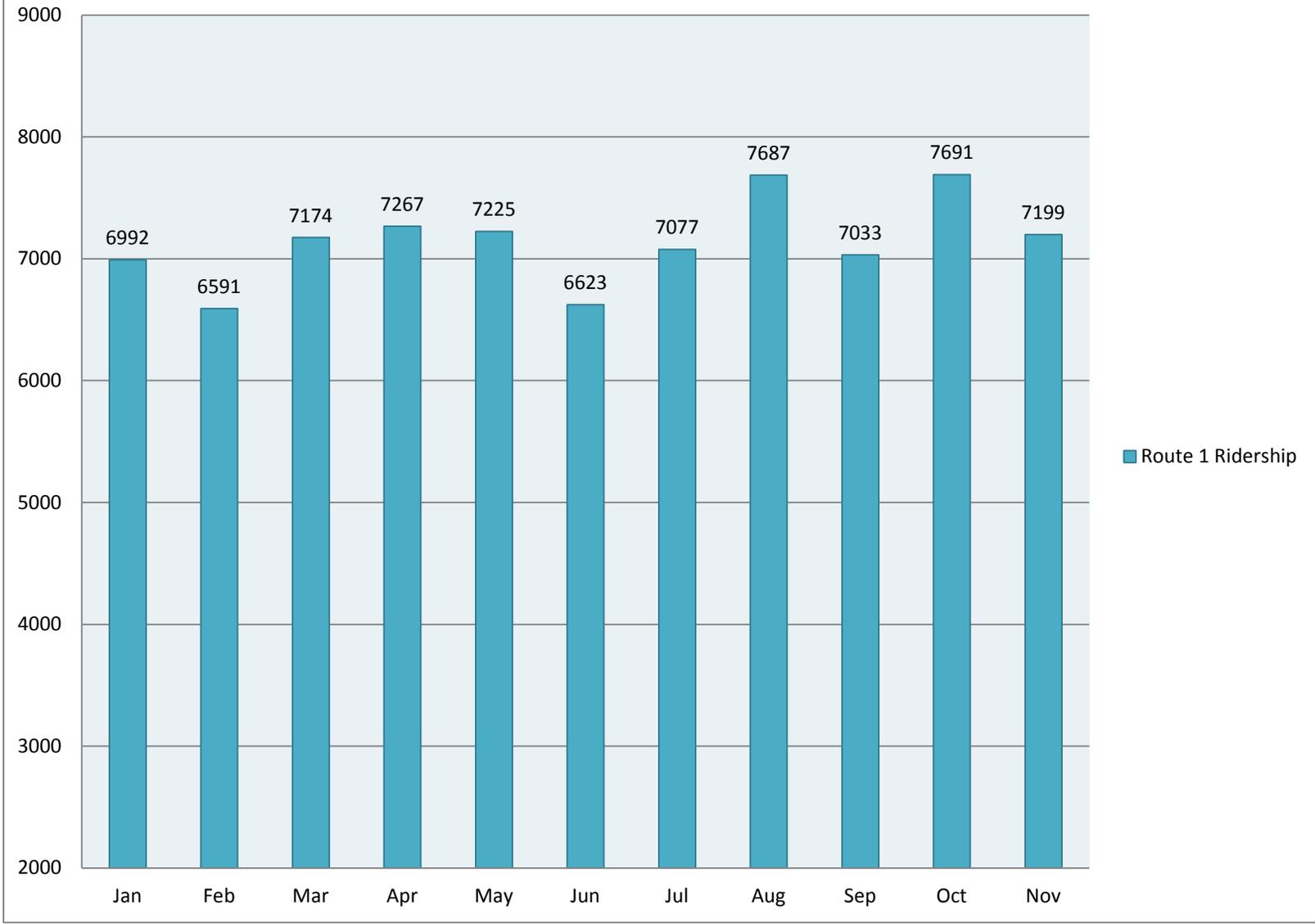
- A bigger, better transit station downtown would make me want to ride the bus more often to places other than just to/from campus
- A main problem is that it takes so long to get anywhere. To ride from my home near North High, through the transfer point, to UWEC takes a total of 40 minutes, door-to-door. Taking my car requires 12 minutes. While I do support public transportation, this extra 1 hour (round trip) per day is too large of a "time tax" for me to do it frequently.
- Bus routes and schedules seem so mysterious. Is there a phone app that if I entered where I was and where I wanted to go would tell me which bus(es) to take and their schedule? That would take some of the hesitation out of it for me.
- Easy to navigate. I like the google route maker on your website.
- Experiencing the difference between my neighborhood's bus service (1 bus per hour) and the campus bus service (3-6 buses per hour) is an eye-opener. Were my neighborhood served as frequently as is the case for the university I would always take the bus for local, in-town transportation.
- Good idea to transport bikes! Why are new buses so ugly??
- I am very thankful for it and we have raised our kids to take -- they take/took the city bus to school every day. Important life skill.
- I didn't have to use the transfer station. I can walk to work in the amount of time it takes me to get to campus when using the bus system. If all routes went by the university it'd make more sense for me.
- I enjoy riding the bus when I do
- I feel your route information is difficult to figure out and also feel that you should expand to the growing far south side of the community.
- I have a hard time understanding the bus schedule. If specific times could be given so I don't have to compute it (which I suck at), I would actually more than likely use the bus more.
- I have a special needs child that uses the bus for work every day. It is a real godsend!
- I live fairly close to campus (by the hospital on 5th Ave), but it seems like to get to campus itself, I would have to transfer buses, which is why I never took the bus.
- I LOVE the new Transit Ap. I think a promo for UWEC students and community about that Ap would be very helpful and take a lot of the anxiety out of riding the bus.
- I only ride when my car is at the mechanic. Have been pleased with the service and reliability though. Love the wifi.
- I recently used the transit service within the past week after avoiding it for 5 years. It was a smooth and easy ride, and I will probably use it more. My only complaints are the condition of the station, as well as the smell on the bus. I understand certain users may be less fortunate where hygiene isn't their first concern, but this aspect was rather nauseating.
- I rode the bus as a UW-Eau Claire student all the time and it was a positive experience.
- I think it is great that Eau Claire has transit service.
- I think it's a great idea - and very beneficial for those of us who live near campus to reduce the number of cars by offering this transit - My neighborhood is still very parked up both during and after school hours but I am sure it would be much worse without the buses -
- I work in Haas Fine Arts Center; I think it would be helpful to have some info over there about bus schedules and stops. Many of the folks who work on that side of campus never go to the other side (where I believe bus info is).
- I would consider doing a park and ride / bus transit down to campus
- I would love it if the bus went right to Biolife! It would be very nice and get more people to donate.
- If it was more frequent so it wouldn't take me an hour to commute vs. a 15-minute car ride, I would take the bus.
- I'm glad that we have "free" access to it! Helps out a lot!
- It would be great to have service from the Third Ward to Memorial High School since there is not school bus service.
- It would be nice to have an easier way to get from UW-Eau Claire upper campus to other areas (especially the mall) on days that aren't Saturday. Currently we have to take 3 different buses and it takes like an hour and a half. We also don't have a direct route to the transfer

station.

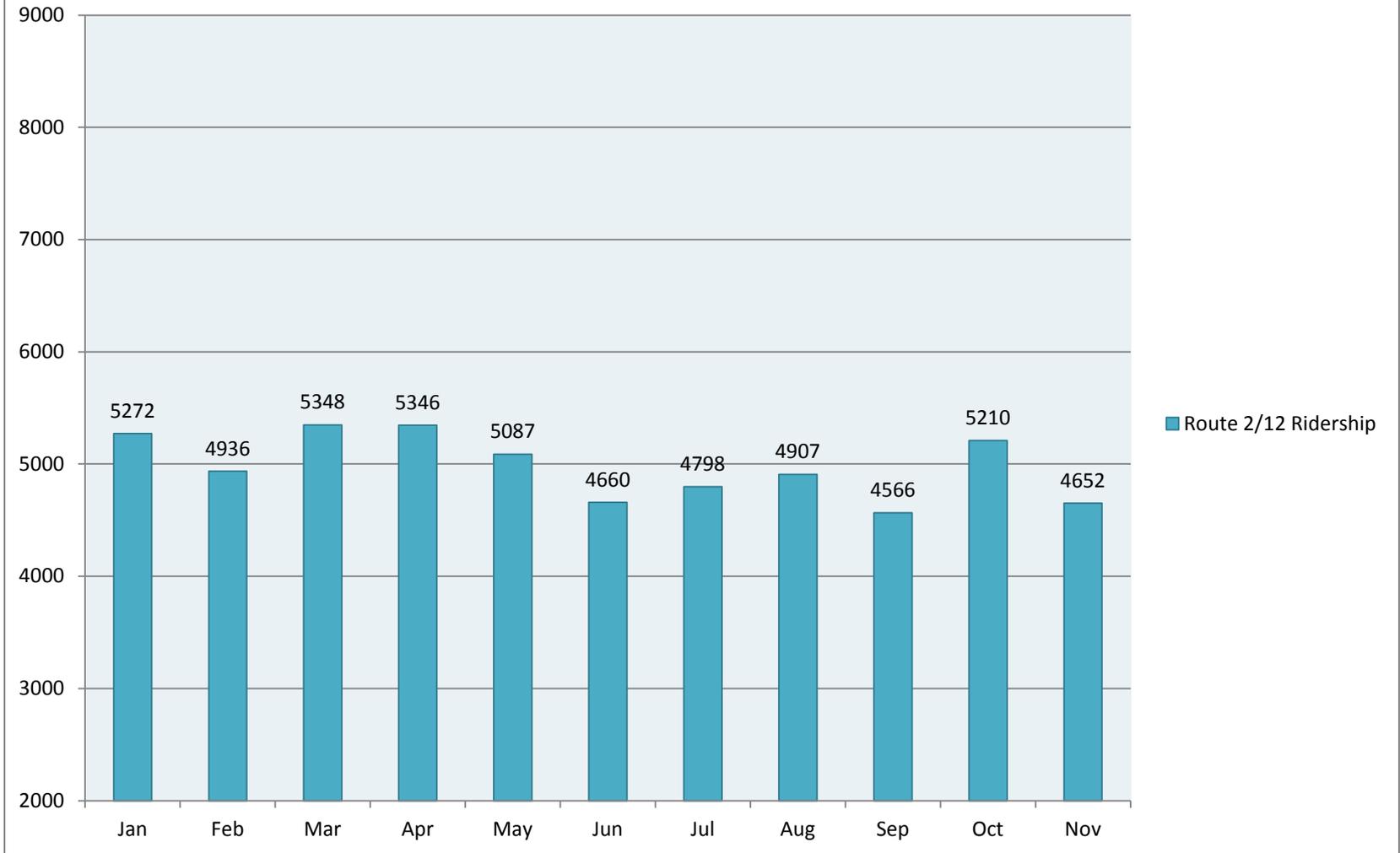
- Its a great service--I wish it were closer to where I live
- keep it going
- make schedules line up with class times in morning, afternoon, and night and then advertise to let people know schedules
- More bus connections to upper campus to shopping areas.
- More frequent service and Sunday service should be a top priority, and going later into the night. The bus transfer center should connect to more intercity bus routes like Chippewa Falls and Greyhound.
- Park and Ride would be a wonderful service to add to transit in Eau Claire. It would also be nice if there were easier to understand bus schedules.
- Perhaps a change/addition to the 17 Altoona route to include service further south to Claremont. I walk a half a mile to the nearest bus stop from Devney Dr to Bartlett and 3rd
- Please go back to the routes and frequency of the buses like in the 1960's. A person could go anywhere in Eau Claire within 30 minutes for the most part, 60 minutes with one transfer. Now it would take me three hours and I'd still be late because of the lack of routes.
- PLEASE have simple directions on 'how to use' & schedules in Spanish! There are many Spanish speakers who need but are intimidated about using the bus. Please make it more welcoming for them. Thank you.
- Provide a monthly or semester pass for faculty who can use the service
- Public transit is an essential service. I'm looking forward to see what's in store for the transfer center.
- Sometimes difficult along State Street to know if the bus is going to stop or not when you are standing on the corner where the sign is.
- Students will only use the bus system if you prevent them from parking in the third ward - which I would LOVE!!!!
- The bus schedules are impossible to figure out, and the Transit office is never open for calls/information.
- There are over 100 houses in my subdivision in Eau Claire and, unfortunately, a bus does not come close.

**Appendix C:
Monthly Ridership by Route (Jan.- Nov., 2013)**

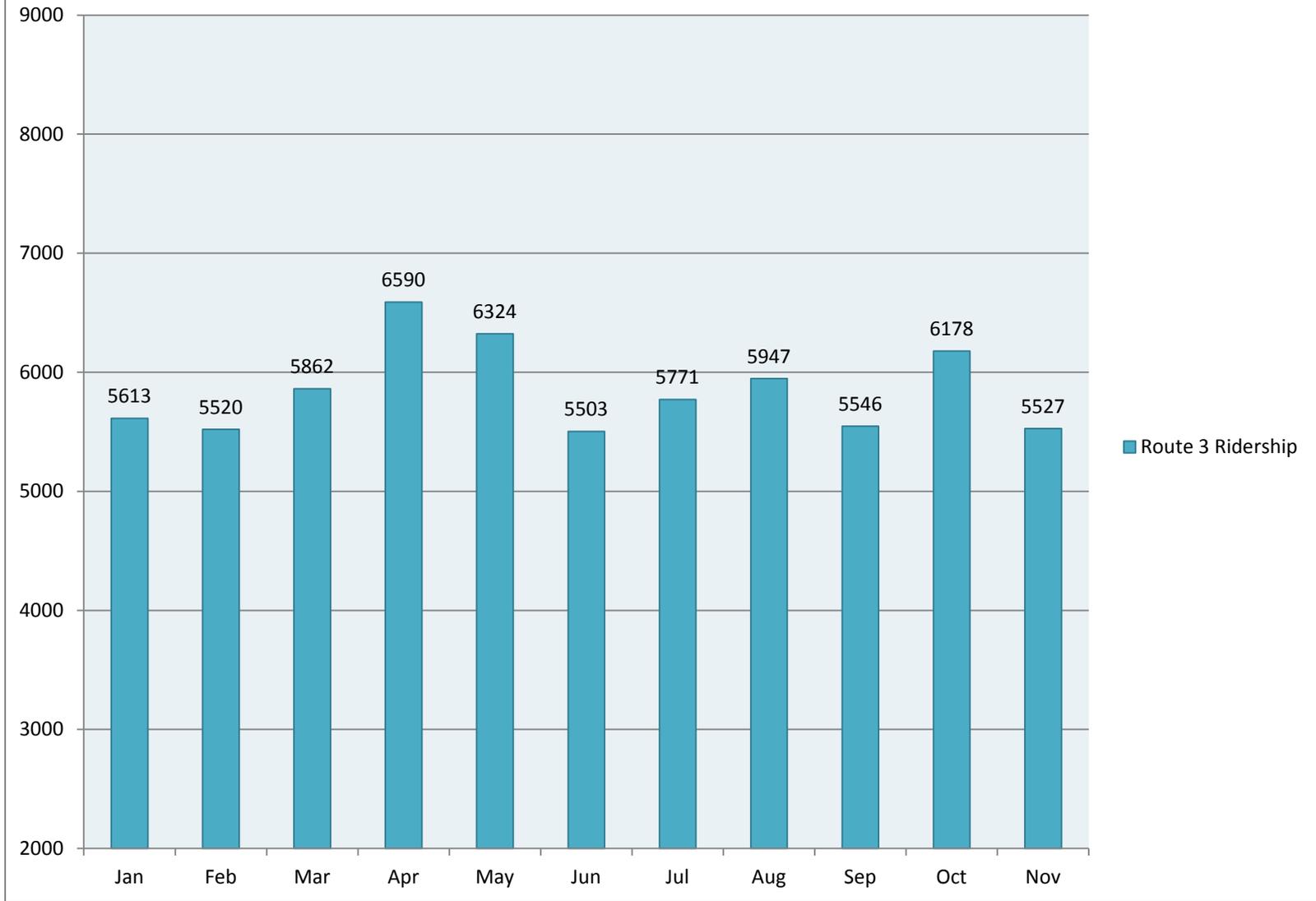
2013 Monthly Ridership: Route 1



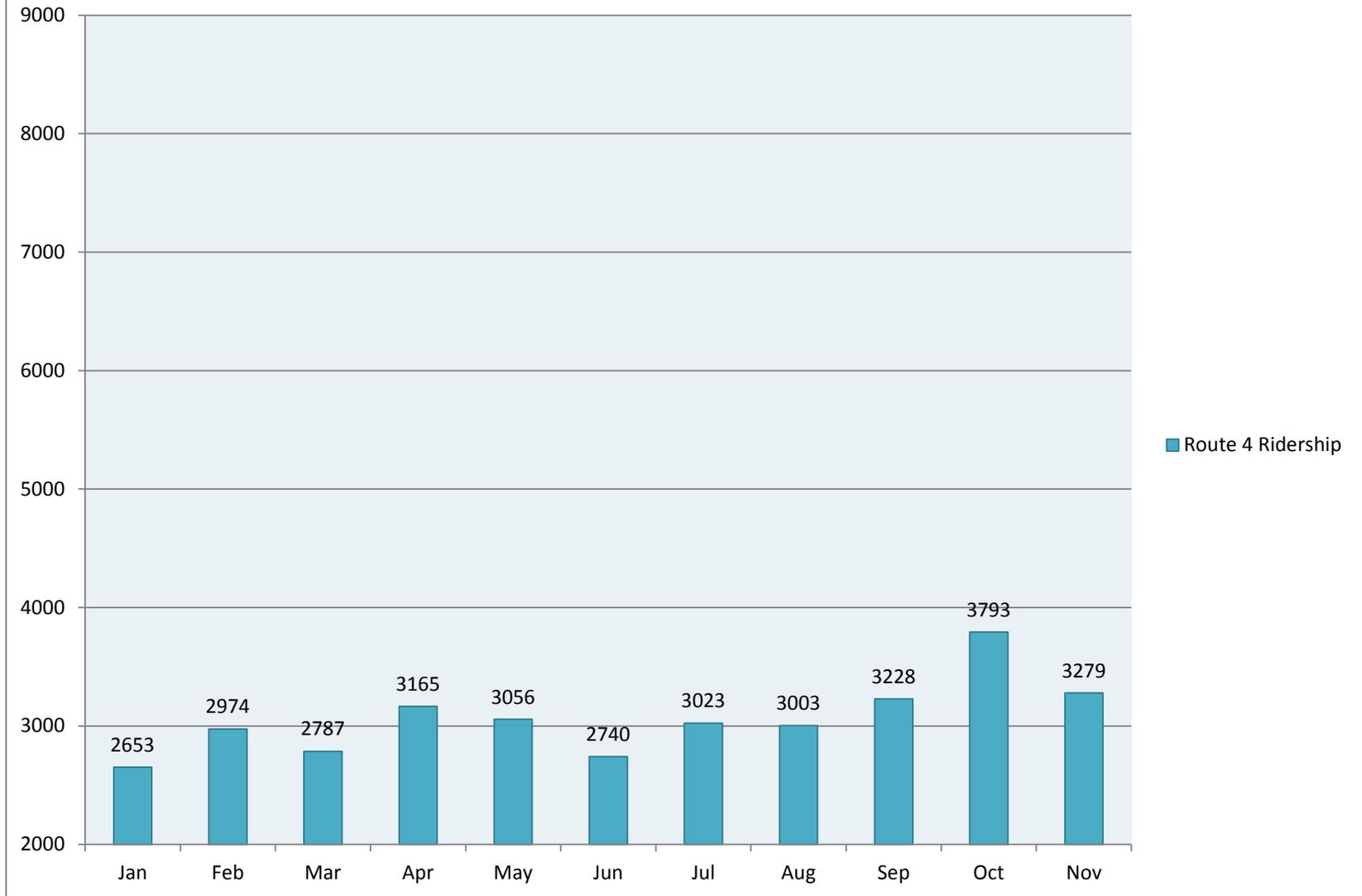
2013 Monthly Ridership: Route 2/12



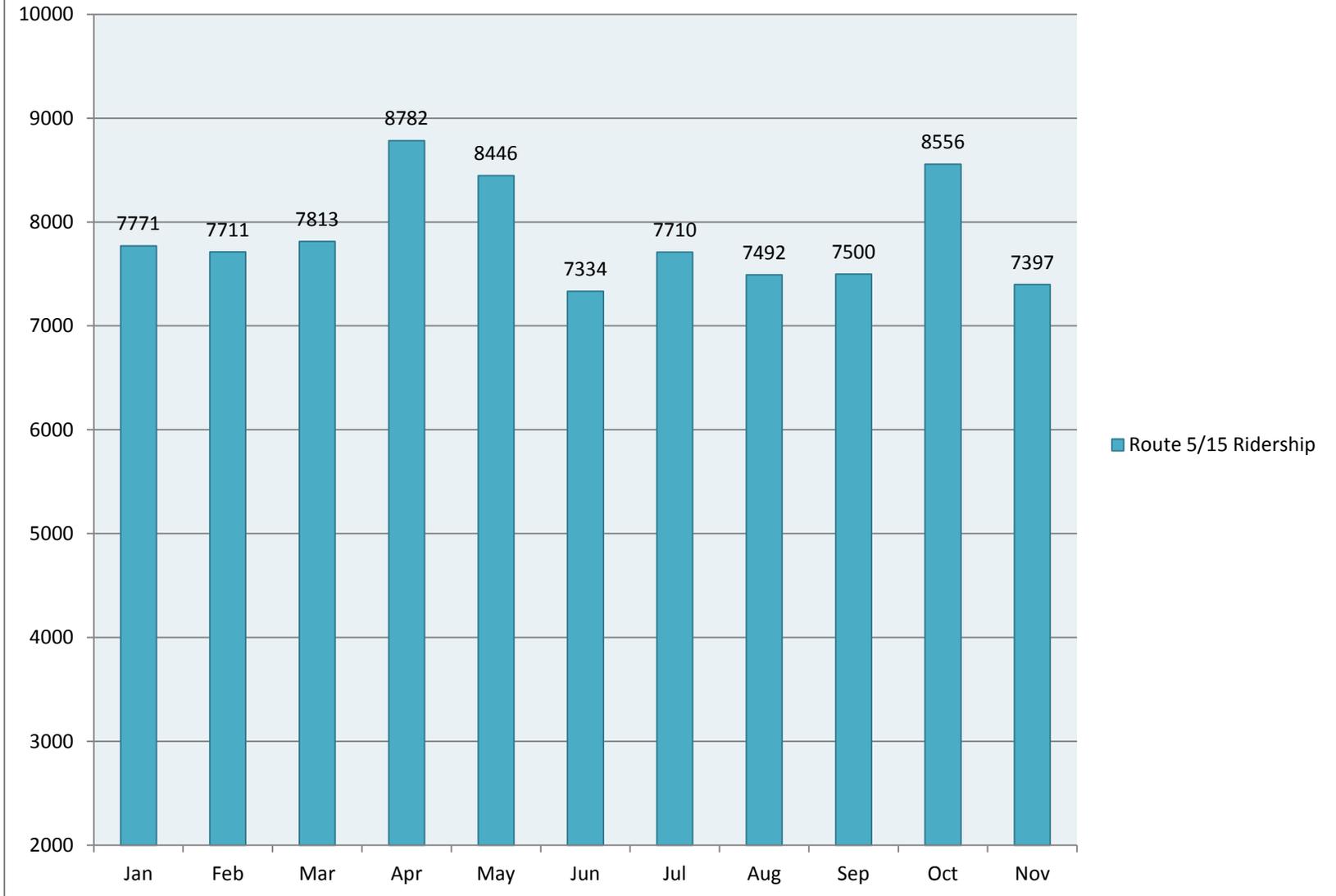
2013 Monthly Ridership: Route 3



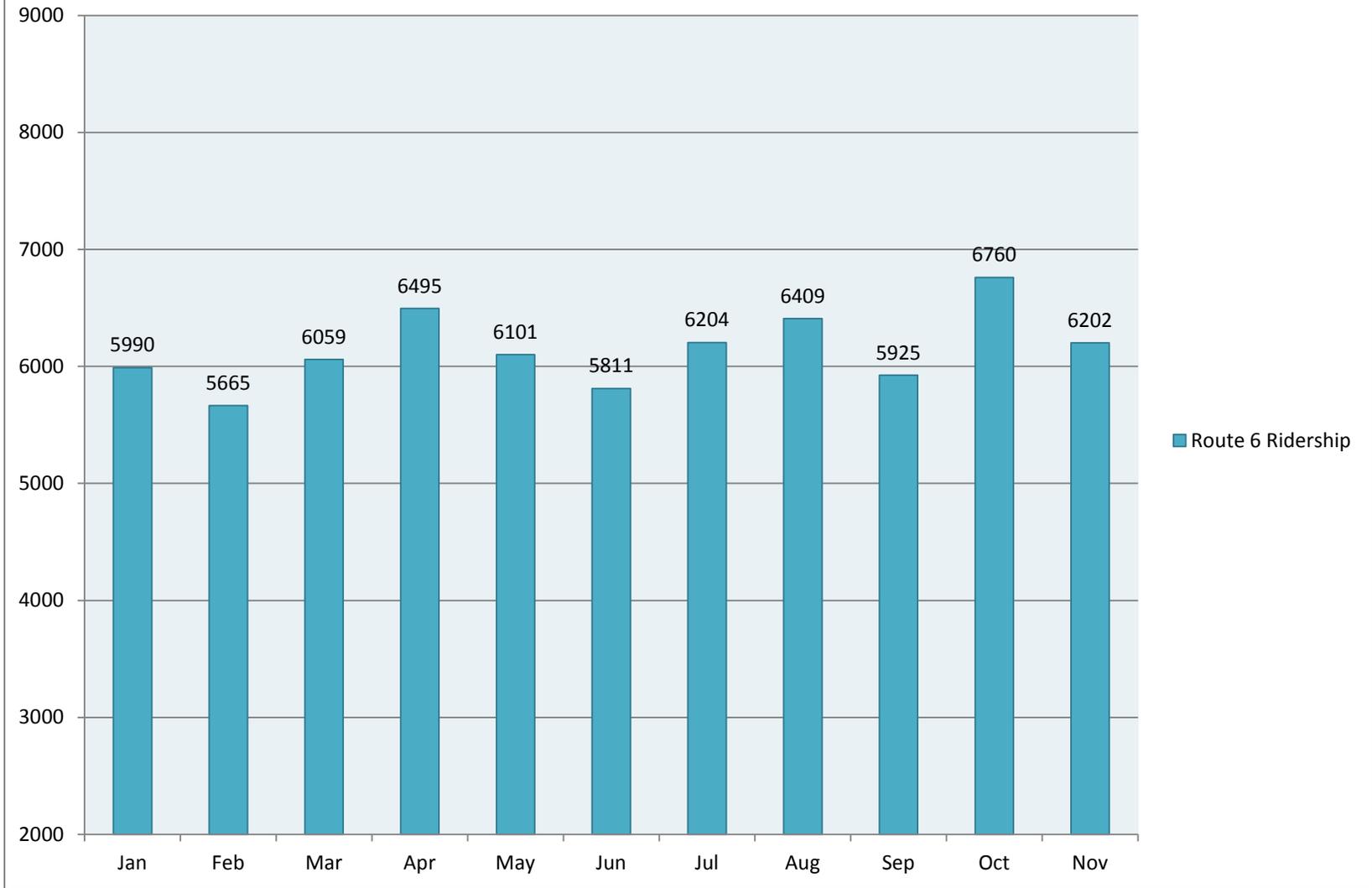
2013 Monthly Ridership: Route 4



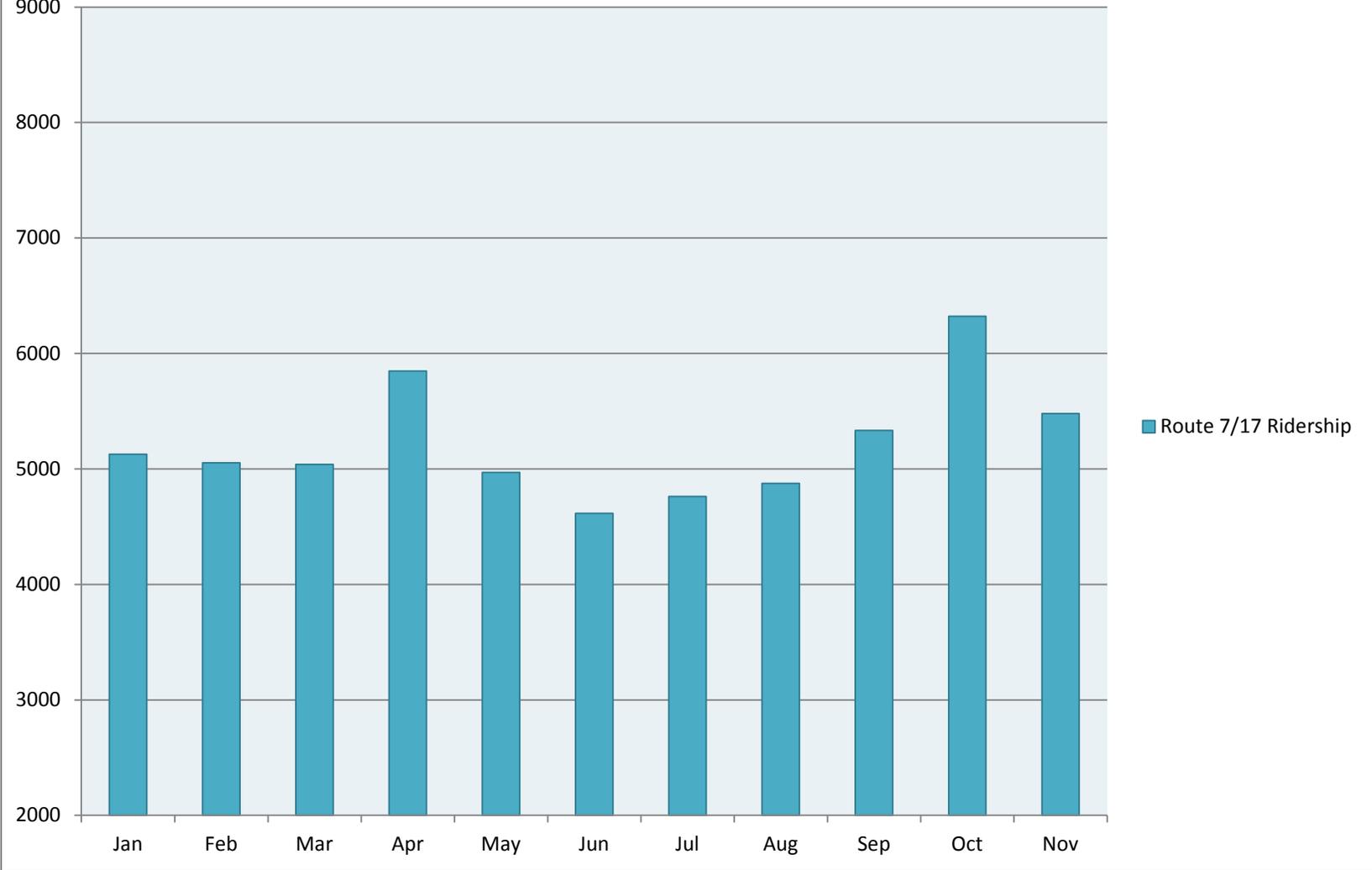
2013 Monthly Ridership: Route 5/15



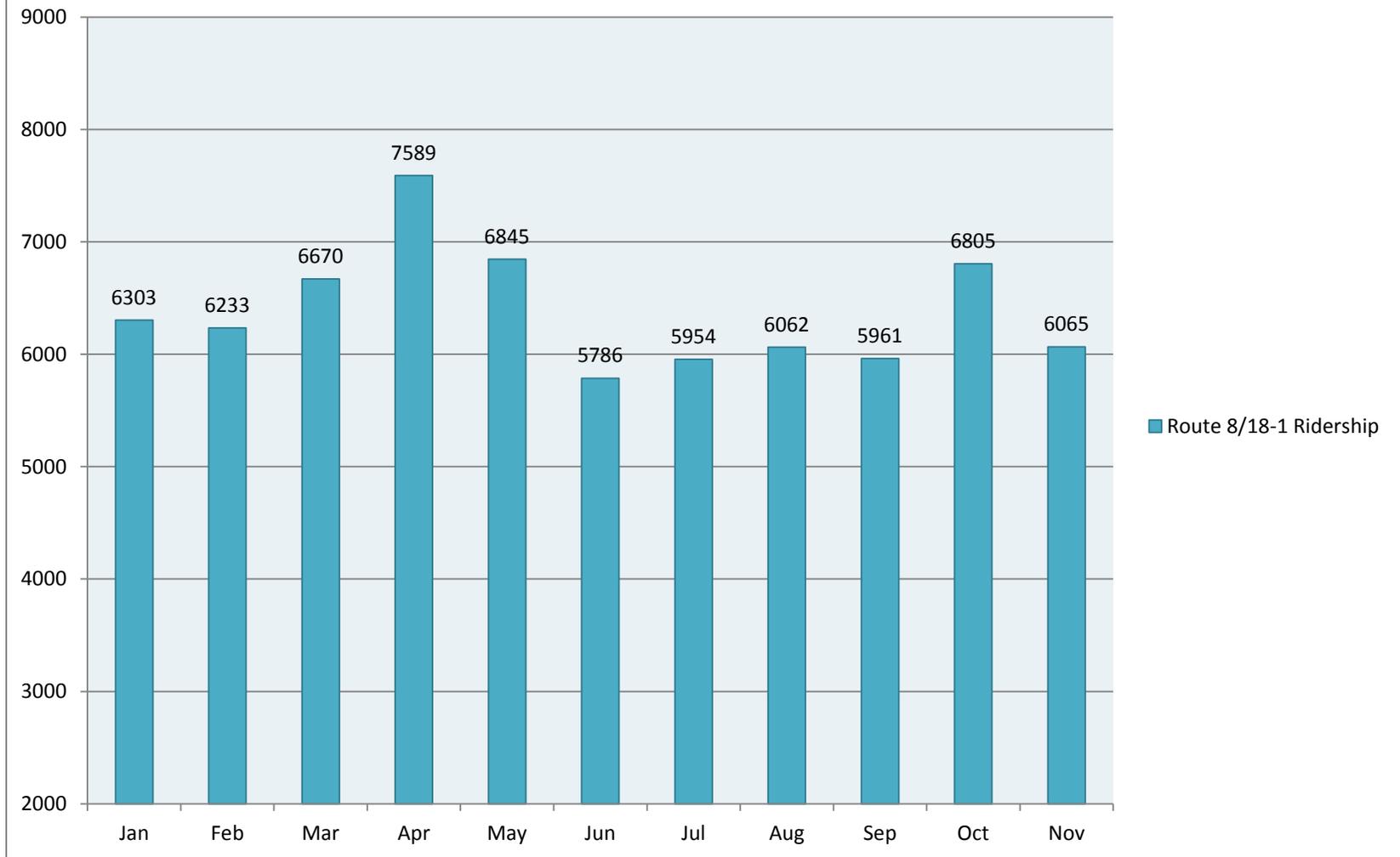
2013 Monthly Ridership: Route 6



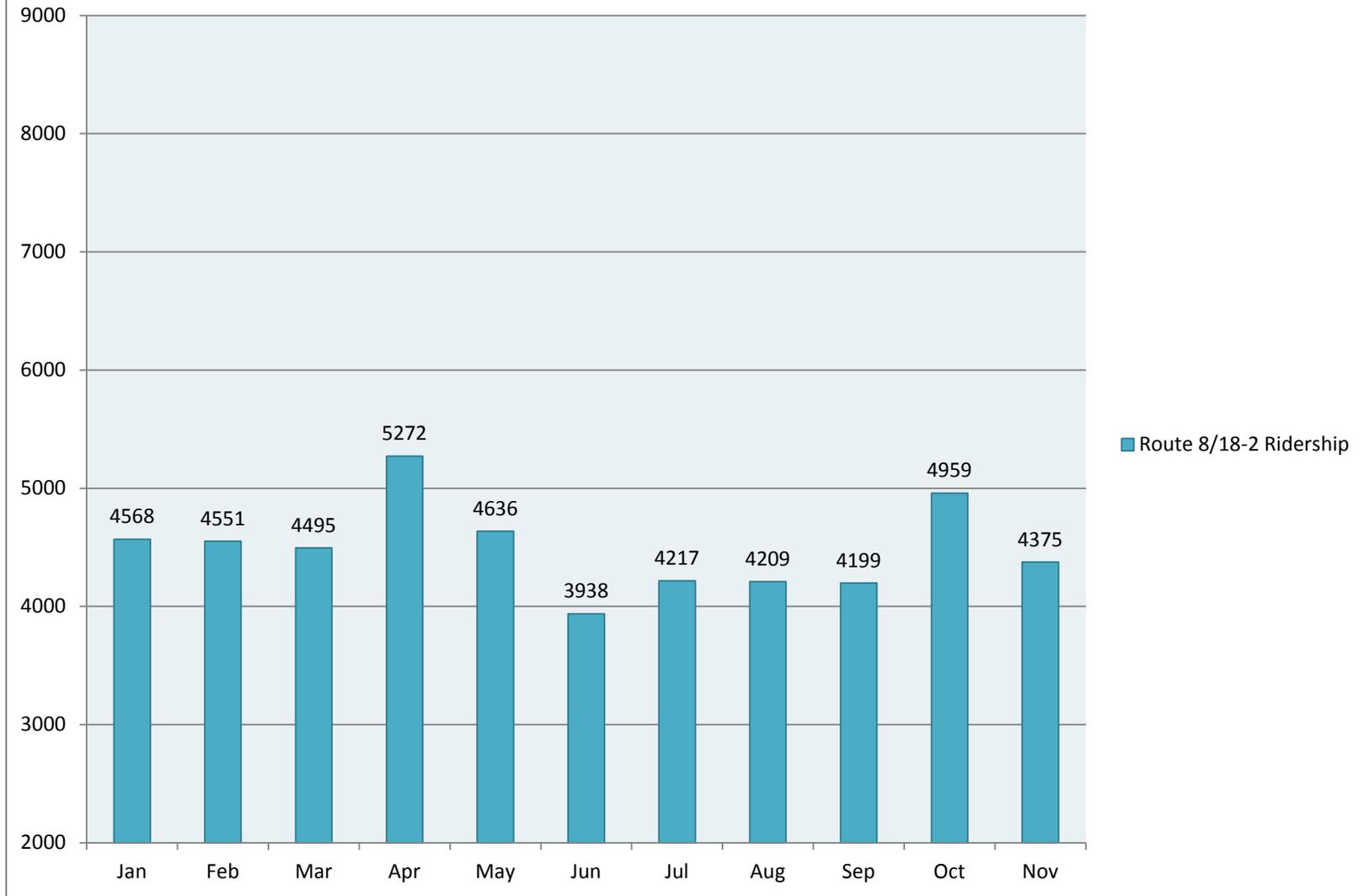
2013 Monthly Ridership: Route 7/17



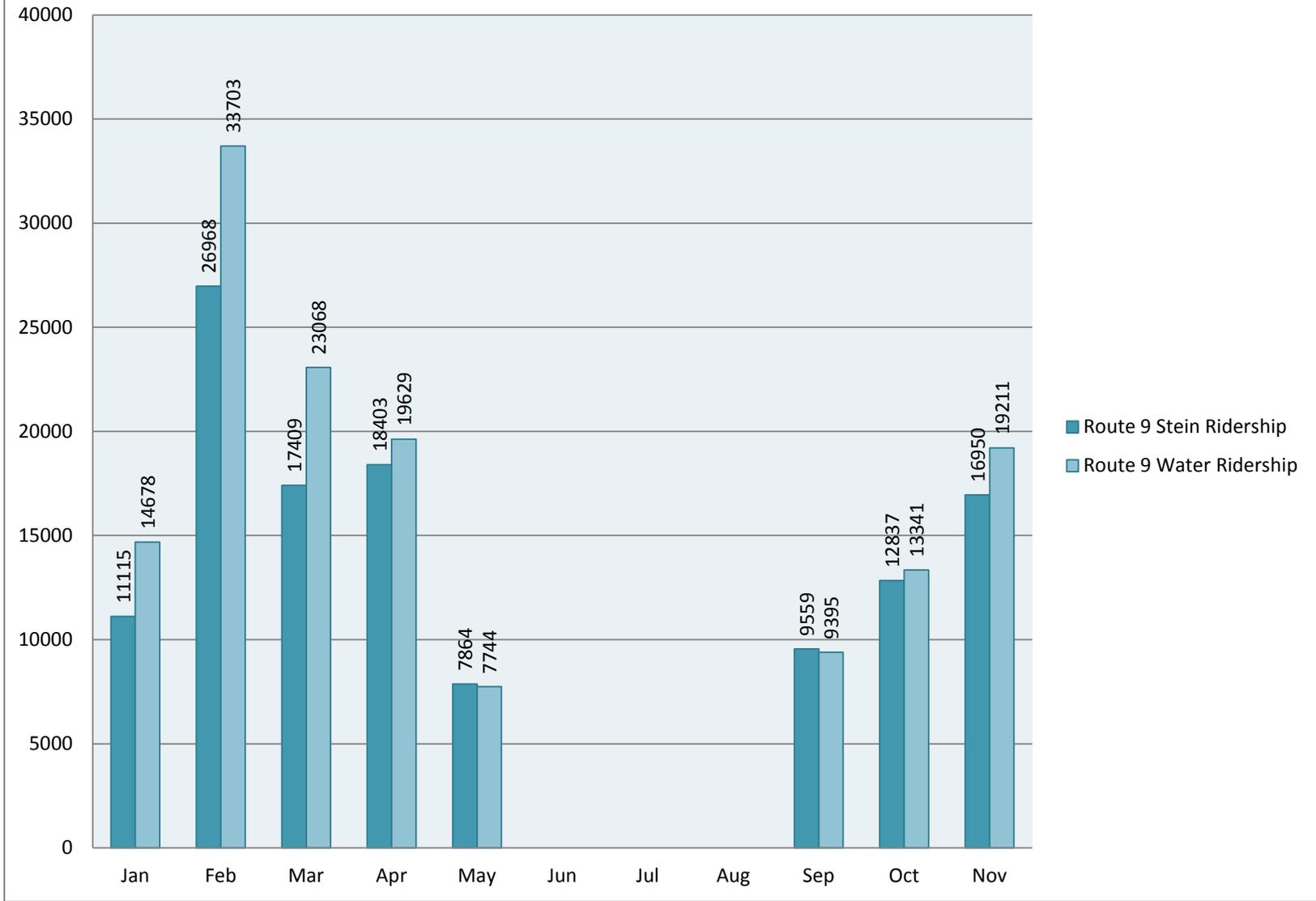
2013 Monthly Ridership: Route 8/18-1



2013 Monthly Ridership: Route 8/18-2



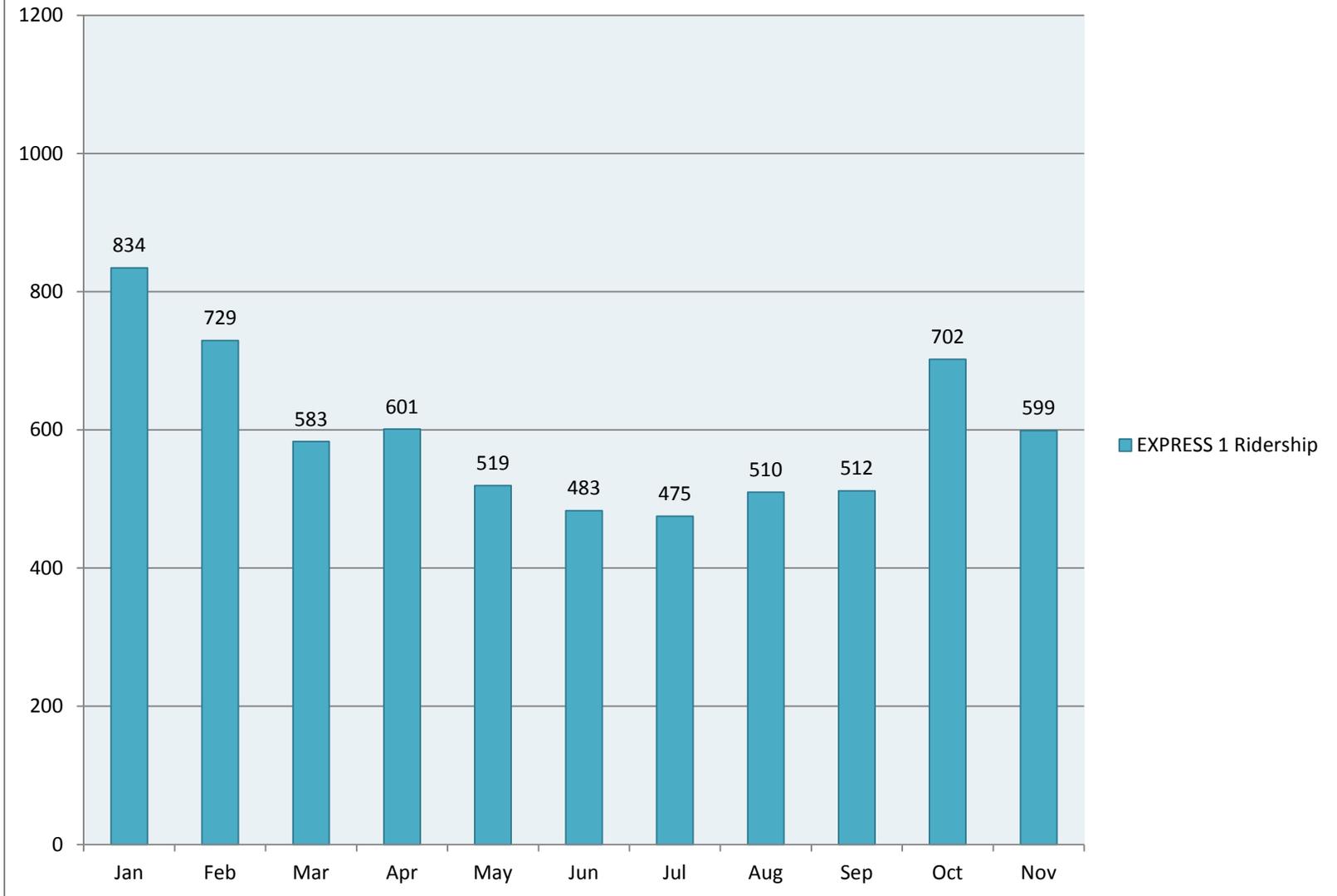
2013 Monthly Ridership: Route 9



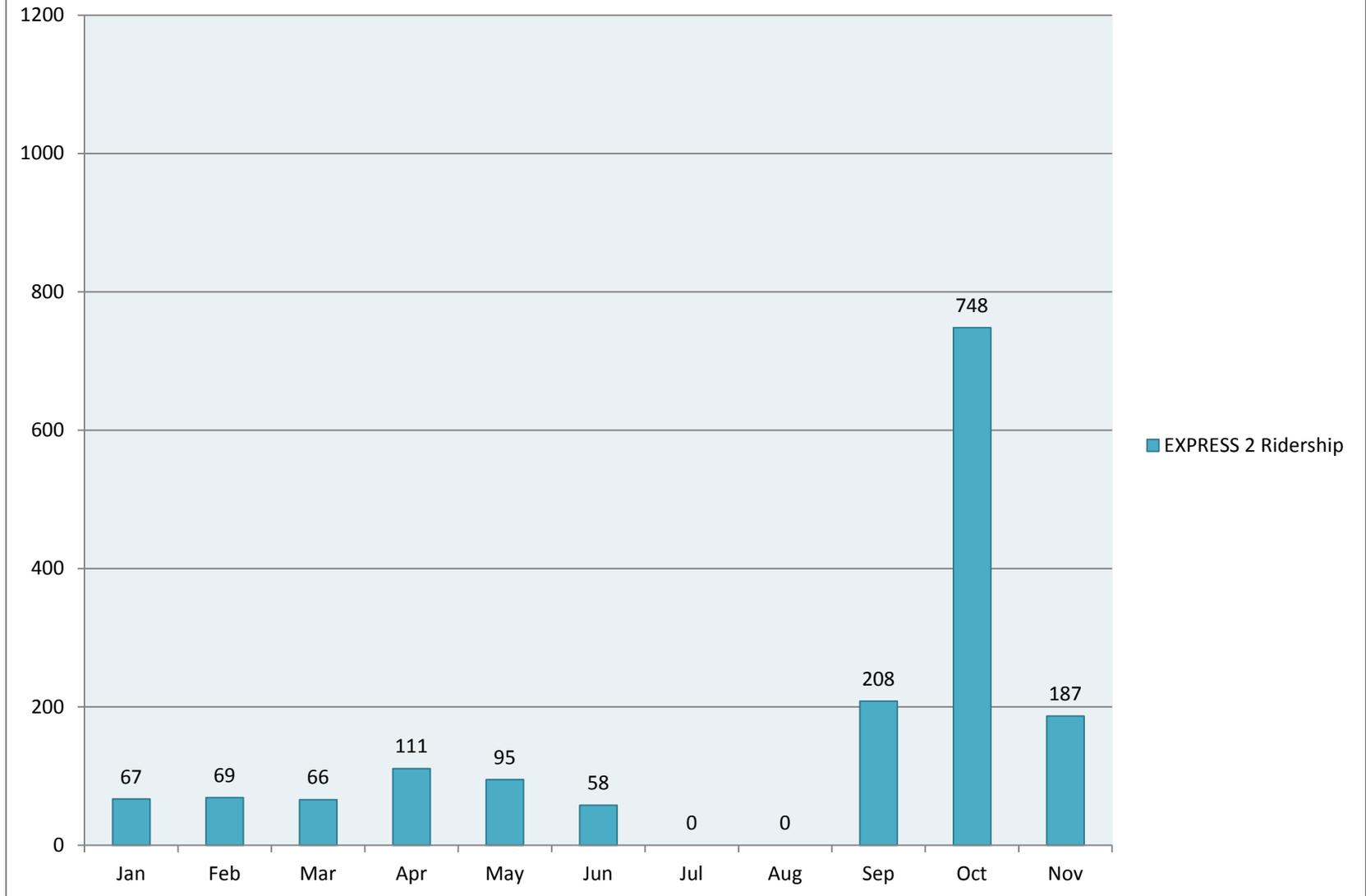
2013 Monthly Ridership: Route 20/21



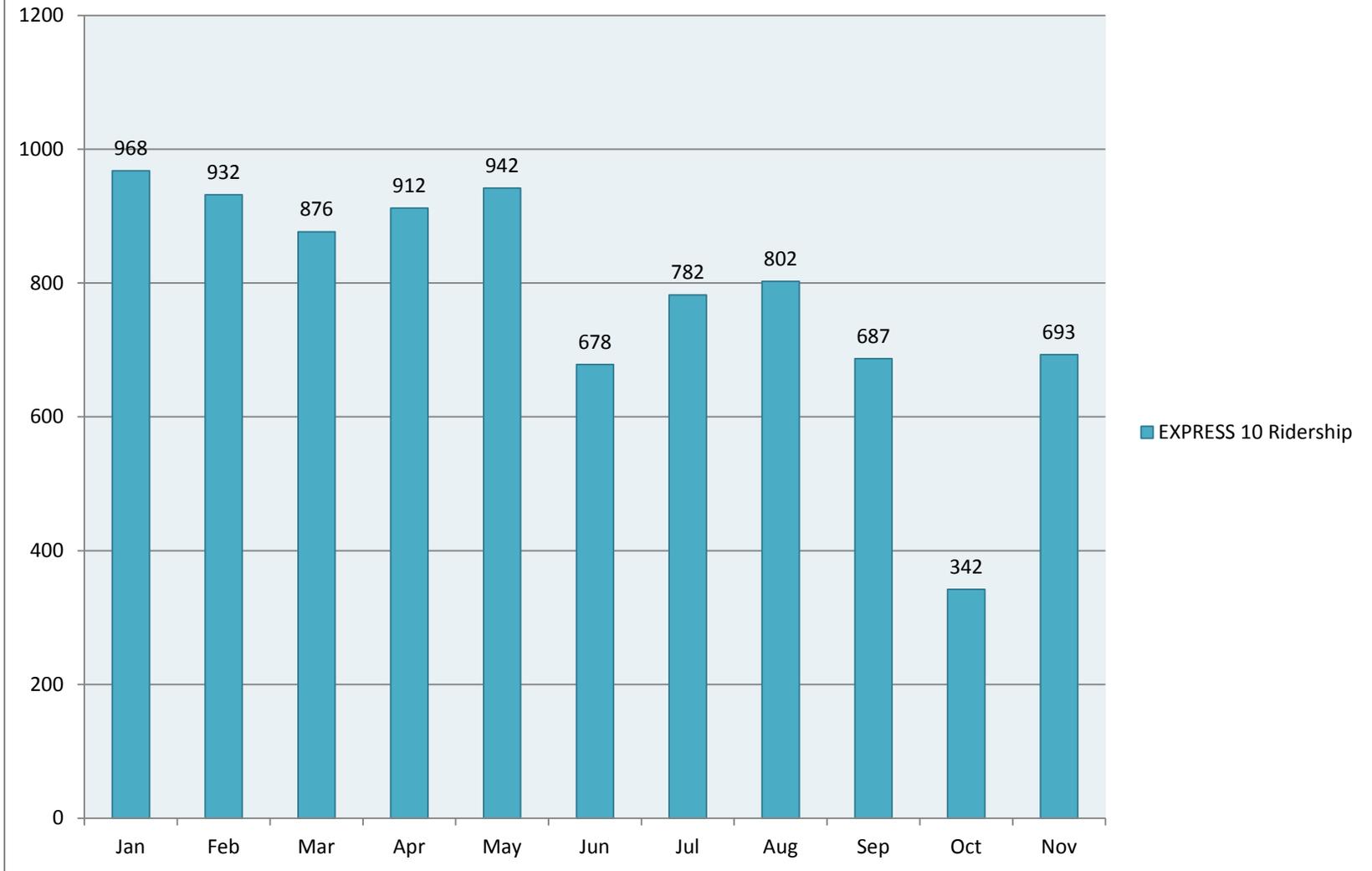
2013 Montly Ridership: Express 1



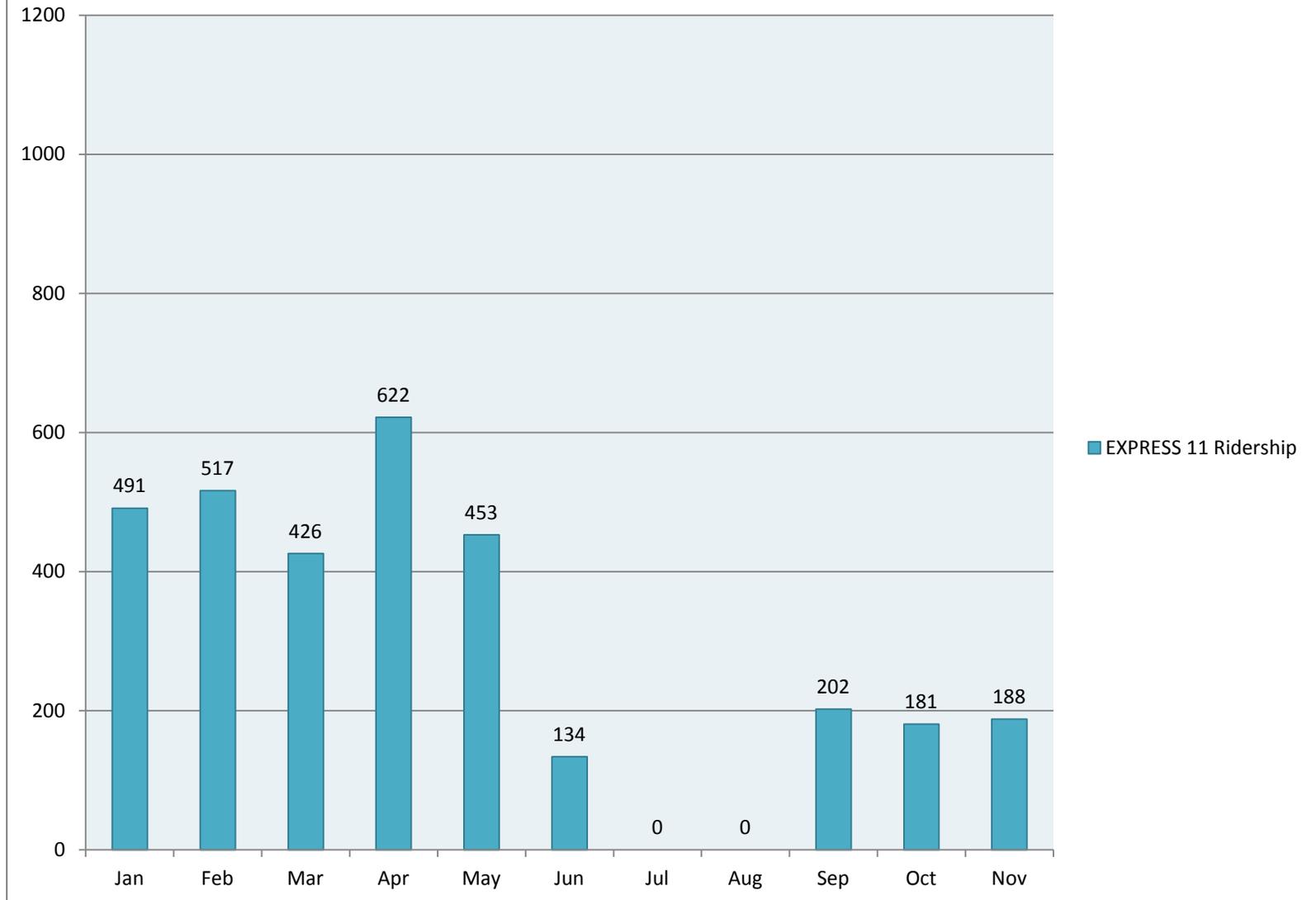
2013 Monthly Ridership: Express 2



2013 Monthly Ridership: Express 10



2013 Monthly Ridership: Express 11



2013 Monthly Ridership by Route

