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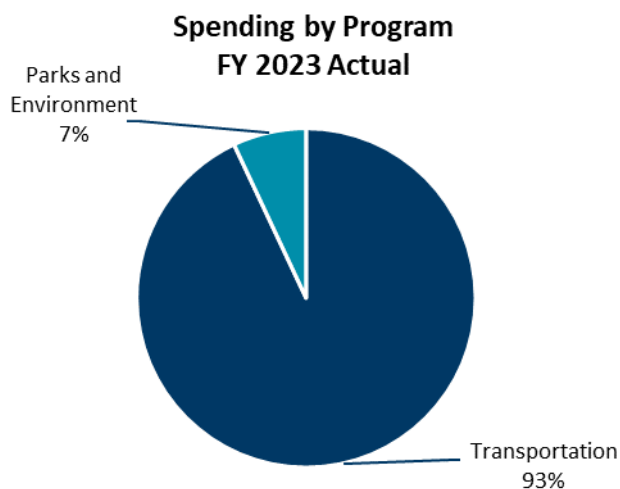
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**AT A GLANCE**

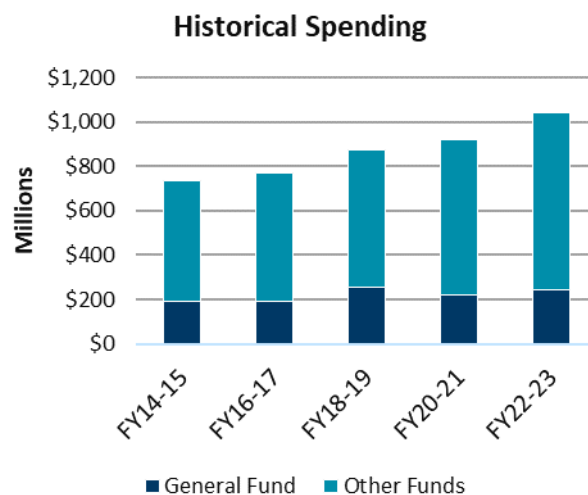
- 3,207,000 residents in the seven-county area in 2023 (Met Council March 2024 estimate based on 2020 Census)
- 48.7 million transit rides provided by the Council in 2023
- 2.1 million rides on Metro Mobility in 2023
- 290 million gallons of wastewater treated daily
- Over 100 communities provided with wastewater treatment service in 2023
- Nine treatment plants and 600 miles of regional sewers
- 69 million regional park visits in 2023
- 119 regional parks/trails, park reserves, and special recreation features; totaling 52,500 acres, plus 450 miles of interconnected trails
- 7,200 low-income households provided affordable housing by the Council's Metro Housing and Redevelopment Authority in 2023
- From 2020 to 2050 the Council forecasts the region will grow by:
  - 657,000 more people
  - 324,000 more households
  - 493,000 more jobs

**PURPOSE**

The Metropolitan Council is the regional policy-making body, planning agency, and provider of essential services for the Twin Cities metropolitan region. The Council's mission is to foster efficient and economic growth for a prosperous region in partnership with more than 180 communities and seven counties. We provide cost-effective transit and wastewater services, assist households with low and moderate incomes to find affordable housing, and support communities as they plan for anticipated growth.

**BUDGET**

**Source: Budget Planning & Analysis System (BPAS)**  
Reflects only funds flowing through the state accounting system



**Source: Consolidated Fund Statement**  
Reflects only funds flowing through the state accounting system

The charts on the previous page show appropriations to the Metropolitan Council recorded in the state's financial system, which represent a subset of the Council's total budget. The Council's Unified Operating Budget for 2024 is \$1.42 billion. State funding for transit and parks operations and water supply planning provided approximately 39% of agency funding in CY24. Most of our operating funding comes from charges for services (wastewater fees and passenger fares), federal funds, property taxes, and local funds.

Funding reflected above is for both the "Metropolitan Council – Transportation" and "Metropolitan Council – Environment" state budgetary entities. Funding from the state general fund is provided for: Metro Mobility special transportation service (beginning in FY 2026, a forecasted amount), transit system operations (base funding of \$32.5 million/year which is used to fund a portion of light rail and commuter rail service), parks (base funding of \$2.5 million/year), and occasional varying amounts for specific transportation and park projects. Other funds flowing through the state's financial system to the Council that are a result of either ongoing statutory appropriations or occasional legislative appropriations include Transit Assistance Funds (derived from a portion of Motor Vehicle Sales Tax proceeds), parks and trails legacy funds, lottery in-lieu-of-sales tax funding for parks, clean water funds, environment funds, and certain onetime federal pandemic relief funds.

## STRATEGIES

Our governing body – the 17-member Metropolitan Council – plays a key convening role, bringing together communities to develop policies and a shared vision for the region. To achieve our mission, we carry out planning initiatives and provide essential services to the region, primarily through the Imagine 2050 process.

The Metropolitan Council is required by M.S. 473.145 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.145>) to prepare and adopt, after appropriate study and necessary policy hearings, a comprehensive development guide for the metropolitan area.

It consists of policy statements, goals, standards, programs, and maps prescribing guides for the orderly and economical development of the metropolitan area and future developments which will have an impact on the entire area. It includes but is not limited to such matters as land use, parks and open space land needs, the necessity for and location of airports, highways, transit facilities, public hospitals, libraries, schools, and other public buildings.

Building off Thrive MSP 2040 and feedback from residents, the Metropolitan Council is listening to people from across the metro region as we collectively envision the future we want. Imagine 2050, the next regional development guide, builds on the principle that together we can tackle challenges that individual communities may not be able to take on alone.

As the seven-county metro region's long-range plan, Imagine 2050 includes a vision and goals, and will set the policy foundation for land use, housing, transportation, water resources, and regional parks. It will also address critical issues that cross policy areas: climate, equity, natural systems, and public health, safety, and well-being. The guide will shape how this region grows in the next 30 years.

The Metropolitan Council endorsed the vision statement for Imagine 2050: "A prosperous, equitable, and resilient region with abundant opportunities for all to live, work, play, and thrive." The statement builds off the regional values and goals set by the Council to guide our policy work.

### Regional goals

The Metropolitan Council has endorsed these goals for our region to achieve through our policies, practices, programs, and partnerships.

*Our region is equitable and inclusive*

Racial inequities and injustices experienced by historically marginalized communities have been eliminated; and all people feel welcome, included, and empowered.

*Our communities are healthy and safe*

All our region's residents live healthy and rewarding lives with a sense of dignity and wellbeing.

*Our region is dynamic and resilient*

Our region meets the opportunities and challenges faced by our communities and economy including issues of choice, access, and affordability.

*We lead on addressing climate change*

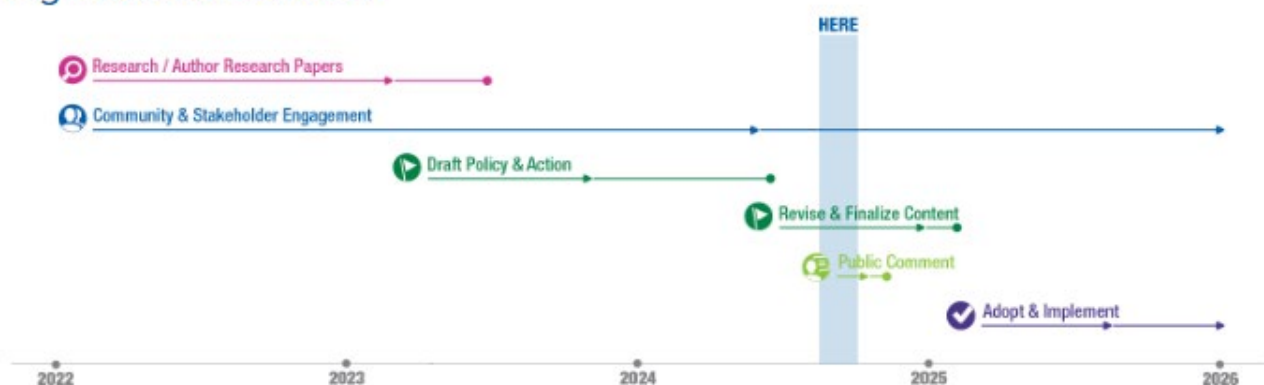
We have mitigated greenhouse gas emissions and have adapted to ensure our communities and systems are resilient to climate impacts.

*We protect and restore natural systems*

We protect, integrate, and restore natural systems to protect habitat and ensure a high quality of life for the people of our region.

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## Imagine 2050 Timeline



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Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 473 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=473>) provides the legal authority for the Metropolitan Council.

# Metropolitan Council - Transportation

# Agency Expenditure Overview

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY22	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimate FY25	Forecast Base FY26 FY27		Governor's Recommendation FY26 FY27	
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## Expenditures by Fund

1000 - General	147,070	90,630	101,430	128,430	147,581	152,644	115,127	120,190
1050 - Transit Assistance	355,077	381,900	387,189	393,811	418,186	432,214	418,186	432,214
<b>Total</b>	<b>502,147</b>	<b>472,530</b>	<b>488,620</b>	<b>522,241</b>	<b>565,767</b>	<b>584,858</b>	<b>533,313</b>	<b>552,404</b>
Biennial Change				36,183		139,764		74,856
Biennial % Change				4		14		7
Governor's Change from Base								(64,908)
Governor's % Change from Base								(6)

## Expenditures by Program

Transit System Operations	445,731	416,554	432,644	466,265	450,640	464,668	418,186	432,214
Special Transportation Services (Metro Mobility)	56,416	55,976	55,976	55,976	115,127	120,190	115,127	120,190
<b>Total</b>	<b>502,147</b>	<b>472,530</b>	<b>488,620</b>	<b>522,241</b>	<b>565,767</b>	<b>584,858</b>	<b>533,313</b>	<b>552,404</b>

## Expenditures by Category

Grants, Aids and Subsidies	502,147	472,530	488,620	522,241	565,767	584,858	533,313	552,404
<b>Total</b>	<b>502,147</b>	<b>472,530</b>	<b>488,620</b>	<b>522,241</b>	<b>565,767</b>	<b>584,858</b>	<b>533,313</b>	<b>552,404</b>

# Metropolitan Council - Transportation

# Agency Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual	Actual	Actual	Estimate	Forecast Base		Governor's Recommendation	
	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY26	FY27
1000 - General								
Balance Forward In				30,000				
Direct Appropriation	147,070	90,630	131,430	98,430	32,454	32,454	0	0
Open Appropriation					115,127	120,190	115,127	120,190
Balance Forward Out			30,000					
Expenditures	147,070	90,630	101,430	128,430	147,581	152,644	115,127	120,190
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(7,840)		70,365		5,457
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				(3)		31		2
Governor's Change from Base								(64,908)
Governor's % Change from Base								(22)

## 1050 - Transit Assistance

Balance Forward In	101	104	68	2				
Receipts	354,976	381,796	387,124	393,809	418,186	432,214	418,186	432,214
Balance Forward Out		0	2					
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>355,077</b>	<b>381,900</b>	<b>387,189</b>	<b>393,811</b>	<b>418,186</b>	<b>432,214</b>	<b>418,186</b>	<b>432,214</b>
Biennial Change in Expenditures				44,023		69,400		69,400
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				6		9		9
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

(Dollars in Thousands)

	FY25	FY26	FY27	Biennium 2026-27
<b>Direct</b>				
<b>Fund: 1000 - General</b>				
<b>FY2025 Appropriations</b>	<b>98,630</b>	<b>98,630</b>	<b>98,630</b>	<b>197,260</b>
<b>Base Adjustments</b>				
All Other One-Time Appropriations		(10,000)	(10,000)	(20,000)
Current Law Base Change		(55,976)	(55,976)	(111,952)
Allocated Reduction	(200)	(200)	(200)	(400)
<b>Forecast Base</b>	<b>98,430</b>	<b>32,454</b>	<b>32,454</b>	<b>64,908</b>
<b>Change Items</b>				
Reduce Transit System Operations Appropriation		(32,454)	(32,454)	(64,908)
<b>Total Governor's Recommendations</b>	<b>98,430</b>			
<b>Open</b>				
<b>Fund: 1000 - General</b>				
<b>Base Adjustments</b>				
Forecast Open Appropriation Adjustment		95,000	115,000	210,000
November Forecast Adjustment		20,127	5,190	25,317
<b>Forecast Base</b>		<b>115,127</b>	<b>120,190</b>	<b>235,317</b>
<b>Total Governor's Recommendations</b>		<b>115,127</b>	<b>120,190</b>	<b>235,317</b>
<b>Dedicated</b>				
<b>Fund: 1050 - Transit Assistance</b>				
<b>Planned Spending</b>	<b>393,811</b>	<b>418,186</b>	<b>432,214</b>	<b>850,400</b>
<b>Forecast Base</b>	<b>393,811</b>	<b>418,186</b>	<b>432,214</b>	<b>850,400</b>
<b>Total Governor's Recommendations</b>	<b>393,811</b>	<b>418,186</b>	<b>432,214</b>	<b>850,400</b>
<b>Revenue Change Summary</b>				
<b>Dedicated</b>				
<b>Fund: 1050 - Transit Assistance</b>				
<b>Forecast Revenues</b>	<b>393,809</b>	<b>418,186</b>	<b>432,214</b>	<b>850,400</b>
<b>Total Governor's Recommendations</b>	<b>393,809</b>	<b>418,186</b>	<b>432,214</b>	<b>850,400</b>

# Metropolitan Council

## FY 2026-27 Biennial Budget Change Item

### Change Item Title: Metropolitan Council Sales Tax Loan to MnDOT

Fiscal Impact (\$000s)	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
General Fund				
Expenditures	0	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Other Funds				
Expenditures	0	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Net Fiscal Impact = (Expenditures – Revenues)	0	0	0	0
<b>FTEs</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### Recommendation:

The Governor recommends legislation to permit MnDOT to receive funds from Metropolitan Council's regional transportation sales and use tax, authorized under Minnesota Statute 297A.9915, to advance the F Line arterial BRT project. No new funding is requested. This is advanced as a budget proposal because it would have budget effects for both the Council and MnDOT by moving expenditures and cash flows between budget biennia; however, the specific effects are indeterminable at this time.

### Rationale/Background:

The Metropolitan Council is advancing the F Line arterial BRT project on Highway 65 in Minneapolis and Columbia Heights and Highway 47 in Fridley, Spring Lake Park, and Blaine. Metro Transit has a full funding plan for the F Line to start construction in 2028. MnDOT has identified this corridor as an area in urgent need of significant safety improvements due to the volume of vehicular and pedestrian crashes. As the road authority for the Highway 65 portion of the project, MnDOT has determined that the road needs to be reconstructed but does not have sufficient funding to begin construction in 2028 concurrently with F Line construction. MnDOT and the Metropolitan Council wish to construct both projects at the same time to minimize overall disruption and redundant construction. This proposal addresses a problem in funding availability within MnDOT to align construction projects.

The regional transportation sales and use tax that was enacted in October of 2023 has provided the financial resources to stabilize the operations of the Council's transportation programs. As the system continues to grow, those resources will be utilized to pay for the growing bus and rail systems and new lines as they become operational. The Council anticipates having sufficient revenues to provide a loan to DOT in the next four to six years, but will be counting on the repaid funds to pay for the growing transit system in the early 2030s and the ongoing capital maintenance needs of the transit system in the late 2030s.

This proposal will allow for concurrent highway and transitway construction, minimizing disruption, preventing rework, and reducing overall project costs. The benefits for safety, state of good repair, and multi-modal accessibility will begin earlier by coordinating projects. The project design, communication, and construction will be significantly more efficient than building two separate projects. This is a common approach when MnDOT and local road authorities coordinate project delivery, and the proposal would expand this best practice to also include Met Council / Metro Transit. This proposal would allow the Metropolitan Council to fund the capital costs up front for MnDOT to start highway projects concurrently with transitway construction and allow MnDOT to repay costs to the Council over time based on mutually determined repayment terms.



This is advanced as a budget proposal because it would have budget effects for both the Council and MnDOT by moving expenditures and cash flows between budget biennia. Funds advanced by the Council would be repaid by MnDOT's Metro District over time through a reduction in its Capital Highway Investment Plan (CHIP) commitments until payment is completed. No new funding is requested.

**Proposal:**

Permit MnDOT to receive funds from the Met Council's regional transportation sales and use tax under Minnesota Statute 297A.9915 to be repaid over time based on mutually determined agreement terms. This proposal would enact a change to uses of the existing Metro Area Sales Tax from the 2023 legislative session, by adding additional language enabling further use of these funds to advance fund MnDOT trunk highway construction when doing so would have a significant benefit to transit. Details of the loan agreement are not yet determined, but the authorization would be up to \$250 million and would be limited to one project. It is anticipated that MnDOT would repay the funds over ten years at an annual interest rate that is aligned with the Council's general cost of capital.

**Impact on Children and Families:**

This change item does not directly impact the administration's priorities for children and families. However, it does contribute to a comprehensive transportation system that serves Minnesotans now and into the future.

The TH65 reconstruction project will create safer walking and biking conditions along the corridor. This will promote healthier lifestyles through active transportation while reducing the environmental and financial burdens of car dependency.

**Equity and Inclusion:**

The F Line corridor is in an area with a high percentage of people of color, households living below the poverty line, and households without access to personal vehicles. Integrating a new transitway connected to downtown Minneapolis with safer walkability and bikeways enhances equity and provides greater opportunity by connecting disadvantaged communities with greater and more affordable access to education, jobs, and essential services around the Twin Cities.

Ensuring MnDOT construction in coordination with the METRO F Line will avoid more significant disruption for people who ride the bus. Compared to the population of the Twin Cities metropolitan region, transit riders have lower household incomes, less access to vehicles, and are more likely to be Black, Indigenous, or people of color.

- 48 percent of bus riders in the F Line corridor have annual household incomes under \$25,000, compared to 8 percent region wide.
- 60 percent of bus riders in the F Line corridor do not have access to a vehicle, compared to just 7 percent of the region overall.
- Bus riders in this corridor are 58 percent BIPOC, significantly higher than the 30 percent of the region's residents who identify as BIPOC.
- Bus riders are also more likely than the regional population to have a disability; 12 percent of bus riders report having a disability, compared to 10 percent of the region.

The proposal's corridor-wide ADA improvements will ensure that the entire community, not just the area around the station, is connected in an ADA-compliant way. This approach enhances mobility throughout the city, creating accessible routes for all residents by addressing sidewalks, crosswalks, and ramps far beyond the station area.

Implementing the METRO F Line and the Highway 65 project as a unified effort would allow for safer streets, better multimodal access, pedestrian safety, and faster and reliable transit service sooner, rather than deferring these needed benefits to burdened communities. All construction projects have impacts on local communities, but this proposal crucially allows two major projects to advance as a single disruption. The unified effort enabled

by this proposal would condense the duration of construction impacts, streamline design efforts, and lead to clearer communication of construction plans, timelines, and impacts.

MnDOT uses an equity lens framework to evaluate policies, designs, programs, and practices to create the most equitable outcomes possible. MnDOT understands that decisions made by the agency affect people differently and develops measures that advance equity in transportation. Considerations like multimodal access and impact, community and built environment factors, user experience and local context, zero emission vehicle access and use, and workforce inclusion and representation affirm MnDOT's mission and values.

**Tribal Consultation:**

Does this proposal have a substantial direct effect on one or more of the Minnesota Tribal governments?

☐ Yes  
☒ No

**Results:**

This proposal will allow the Council's transit sales tax to be used to advance funds to MnDOT to construct the much-needed roadway and streetside improvements to TH 65 concurrent with Metro Transit's F Line. A successful project should reduce the number of injuries and fatalities on TH 65 and increase the intensity of bicycle and pedestrian travel along a safer TH 65.

The TH 65 corridor is in need of safety improvements. Approximately 37 percent of crashes resulted in injuries or fatalities on TH 65, compared to 26 percent of crashes resulting in injuries and fatalities in the Metro and Statewide. Nine intersections along TH 65 have crash rates that exceed the critical rate, with five others approaching the critical rate.

This proposal would allow MnDOT TH 65 construction would begin in 2028 rather than in 2030 or later, as currently planned based on available resources. MnDOT anticipates costs increasing by \$10M if delayed until 2030 due to the rising prices of labor, materials, and other construction-related expenses. A 2030 start means an additional two years of construction interruptions in the corridor (for a total of 5 years) which would impact commute times, access to local business and disrupt existing routes. F line would undoubtedly open revenue service in a detour for at least three years which would reduce reliability and increase travel times, a recipe for reduced ridership. Additionally, F Line would open with temporary stations at an additional cost for Metro Transit.

**Statutory Change(s):**

M.S. 473.4465

# Metropolitan Council

## FY 2026-27 Biennial Budget Change Item

### Change Item Title: Metro Mobility Certified Customer Free Rides on Buses and Trains

Fiscal Impact (\$000s)	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
General Fund				
Expenditures	0	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Met Council Transit Funds*				
Expenditures	0	0	0	0
Revenues (transit fares)	(75)	(100)	(100)	(100)
Net Fiscal Impact = (Expenditures – Revenues)	(75)	(100)	(100)	(100)
<b>FTEs</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

\*These funds are not reflected in the state's accounting system, nor the fiscal pages of this budget book, but are listed here for informational purposes.

### Recommendation:

The Governor recommends that the Metropolitan Council continue to implement a portion of a pilot program enacted by the Legislature in 2023. In addition to evaluating free fares for all customers on two routes (not part of this proposal), the pilot program required the Council to offer Special Transportation Service (Metro Mobility) certified customers free fares on regular route buses and trains. This aspect of the pilot program has performed well, and the Metropolitan Council seeks authorization to make the change permanent.

The Council implemented the program on July 1, 2023. The Council has tracked fare-free ADA rider usage of fixed route service since October 2023, which has totaled over 54,000 rides, now averaging over 6,000 rides per month. The proposed legislation would make this aspect of the pilot program permanent, so certified disabled customers could use regular route buses and trains free of charge. These customers would join service-connected disabled veterans as the only customers authorized for free fares on regular route transit. The public purpose of adding Metro Mobility riders to the statutory free fare population is to help mitigate growth in the program; by taking buses and trains instead of Metro Mobility, the state may save significant funds.

### Rationale/Background:

The proposal seeks to continue one element of the 2023 transportation bill's pilot program that has proven successful. The Council requires legislative authority to continue the program, which officially ended on December 31, 2024. The program provides an incentive for Special Transportation Service (Metro Mobility) certified customers to use regular route transit (buses and trains) for some trips instead of Metro Mobility.

The pilot program has not resulted in increased operating costs on regular route service, only limited fare revenue reduction. While there is not robust data providing a direct estimate of trips not taken on Metro Mobility as a result of the program, the Council anticipates at least equivalent savings to the state. More importantly, individual users have greater freedom to travel and meet needs, especially spontaneous travel needs, than afforded by pre-scheduled Metro Mobility trips.

Equity and Inclusion: Riders with disabilities have increased access to affordable transportation, enabling a greater degree of community inclusion and access to essential and non-essential services.

Greenhouse gas emissions: Use of regular route buses and trains provides fewer emissions per passenger mile because trips are shared with more riders, vehicle miles are reduced, and rides may shift to zero emission vehicles.

Housing stability: Greater affordability of transportation helps riders meet housing needs with limited resources.

The proposal continues a pilot initiative required by the 2023 legislature, on a permanent basis.

### Proposal:

The proposal would make one aspect of the 2023 transportation bill's (Laws 2023, Ch. 68) transit fare elimination pilot program permanent, for certified disabled customers. While the Council does not have data from the program to directly forecast a change in Metro Mobility rides, it is confident the program results in net savings to the state, particularly as Special Transportation Service (Metro Mobility) becomes a forecast program in FY26.

- Tracked pilot trips (year 1): 54,487 (Oct 2023 through Sept 2024), ranging from 2,048 to 6,843/month
- Estimated trips: 6,250 rides/month in FY26; 8,300 rides/month (100,000 rides/year) at maturity
- Lost farebox revenue (buses and trains) per ride: \$1 Per year: \$100,000
- Increased bus/rail operating costs: \$0 (no increased service/overhead directly attributed to pilot program)
- Average subsidy per Metro Mobility ride, 2023: \$45.93 (unaudited estimate)
- Avoided Metro Mobility rides needed to "break even" to date:  $(54,487 / \$45.93) = 1,186$  rides (2% of actual rides taken). At maturity, this equates to roughly 2,200 rides that would need to be diverted to the regular route system to produce net state savings.

If 2 percent (1 in 50) of observed bus and train rides during the pilot program were taken *instead of* a Metro Mobility service trip, the difference in cost presents a net savings to the state. While the Council does not have sufficient data to project a reduction to the Metro Mobility budget from this change, we are confident the proposal helps mitigate growth in the region's paratransit program and offers additional flexibility for users to meet their travel needs, without increasing transit operating costs.

### Dollars in Thousands

Net Impact by Fund	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27	FY 25-27	FY 28	FY 29	FY 28-29
General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lost fare revenue- Metro Transit	0	(75)	(100)	(175)	(100)	(100)	(200)
Increased operating costs- bus and rail	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reduced operating costs- Metro Mobility	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total All Funds</b>	0	(75)	(100)	(175)	(100)	(100)	(200)

### Impact on Children and Families:

No specific linkages to these aspects. The program's added flexibility for certified disabled riders may aid their fulfillment of duties in work and personal lives to children and families.

### Equity and Inclusion:

- Making the pilot program permanent will directly benefit people with disabilities. People certified as disabled under FTA criteria (aka Metro Mobility eligible) will benefit by having free use of regular route buses and trains.
- Free use of buses and trains by certified disabled rides will provide greater travel choices and flexibility than relying on Metro Mobility (pre-scheduled only) services.

- Metro Mobility riders have participated in the pilot program since July 1 and have expressed appreciation for the added flexibility and benefit.

**Tribal Consultation:**

Does this proposal have a substantial direct effect on one or more of the Minnesota Tribal governments?

☐ Yes

☒ No

**Results:**

The Council will report on the pilot program by February 2025 as required by law (Laws 2023, Chapter 68). The project has been active on a pilot basis since July 1, 2023. The Council is tracking use of free rides on buses and trains by certified disabled customers.

**Statutory Change(s):**

M.S. 473.408

## Metropolitan Council

### FY 2026-27 Biennial Budget Change Item

#### Change Item Title: Reduce Transit System Operations Appropriation

Fiscal Impact (\$000s)	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
General Fund				
Expenditures	(32,454)	(32,454)	(32,454)	(32,454)
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Other Funds				
Expenditures	0	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Net Fiscal Impact = (Expenditures – Revenues)	(32,454)	(32,454)	(32,454)	(32,454)
FTEs	0	0	0	0

#### Recommendation:

The Governor recommends a reduction in the general fund appropriation for rail operations at the Metropolitan Council of \$64.908 million in FY 2026-27 and \$64.908 million in FY 2028-29. Reduction items at the Metropolitan Council are intended to align with strategic decisions to minimize impacts on people served.

This is a 100% reduction in the appropriation to the Metropolitan Council for rail operations. The Council will instead rely on use of reserves and other revenue sources for light rail and commuter rail, such as the regional transportation sales tax enacted during the 2023 legislative session.

#### Rationale/Background:

The Metropolitan Council is responsible for the state's largest public transit system, which provided nearly 49 million rides on bus and rail in the region in 2023. Metro Transit, which operates Bus, METRO Light Rail, and Northstar Commuter Rail, provides the bulk of those regional rides. Metro Transit has been at the forefront of improvements in our regional transit system, creating communities that are more equitable, economically competitive and sustainable. The American Public Transportation Association named Metro Transit the 2016 System of the Year, recognizing the service for its safety, vehicle and facilities maintenance and operations, and record pre-pandemic ridership.

The METRO Blue Line opened for service in 2004 and is budgeted to operate service every 10 minutes during rush hours and midday, every 15 minutes in the early morning and evening hours, and less frequent service overnight. There are park-and-ride facilities at the Fort Snelling and 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue stations, and there is connecting bus service available at most other stations. In 2023, the METRO Blue Line provided over 6.5 million rides. The METRO Blue Line also provides special event service.

The METRO Green Line, completed in June 2014, is 11 miles long and connects downtown Saint Paul and downtown Minneapolis via University Avenue and the University of Minnesota. The corridor also travels through the State Capitol complex and the Midway area. The line has 18 stations and shares five stations with the METRO Blue Line in downtown Minneapolis. The Line makes three stops in downtown St. Paul, connects directly to the U.S. Bank Stadium Station and Target Field, and connects to the Northstar Commuter Rail line at Target Field. The METRO Green Line is budgeted to operate service every 10 minutes during rush hours and midday, every 15 minutes in the early morning and evening hours, and less frequent service overnight. In 2023, the METRO Green Line provided over 8.2 million rides.

The Northstar Commuter Rail line, completed in 2009, travels 40 miles from Big Lake in Sherburne County to downtown Minneapolis, where it connects with the METRO Blue Line and the METRO Green Line at the Target Field Station. The project included an extension of the METRO Blue Line from the Warehouse District Station to Target Field Station, where it connects with the Northstar. The Northstar line in 2025 is budgeted to provide 8 weekday trips plus special event service as compared to pre-pandemic service levels of 12 weekday trips plus weekend and special event service. The line serves six suburban park-and-ride stations on its way to downtown Minneapolis at Big Lake, Elk River, Ramsey, Anoka, Coon Rapids, and Fridley. In 2023 the Northstar Commuter Rail provided over 97,000 rides.

**Proposal:**

This proposal would eliminate the state general fund appropriation for transit system operations. The Council's rail programs will continue to operate at the same service levels using reserves and other existing revenues, including fares, local revenue, and regional transportation sales and use tax funds.

**Results:**

The proposed reduction will not result in a change of service level or number of riders served.

**Statutory Change(s):**

None.

**Program: Transit System Operations**

**Activity: Bus Operations**

<https://metrocouncil.org/Transportation/Services/Metro-Transit.aspx>

### AT A GLANCE

- In calendar year 2023
  - 53.3 million total regional transit rides
  - 48.7 million total Council transit rides
  - 31.5 million total Council bus operations transit rides

### PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

Transportation is the engine of our regional – and state – prosperity. A reliable, affordable, and efficient transportation system promotes a competitive economy, safety and security, a healthy environment, and a livable region.

As our region continues to grow and adds more vehicles to our transportation system, transit is an ever-more critical component to our transportation system. Transit provides a sustainable, efficient, and effective option to address increasing roadway congestion and improve air quality. It is one of the most important assets to businesses looking to attract and retain employees. Our transportation planners continually look for new and innovative ways to provide more efficient service that meets customer needs and to leverage the opportunities of emerging technologies to enhance the customer experience and improve service performance.

Transit functions are funded by Motor Vehicle Sales Tax (MVST) revenues, state appropriations, Metro Area Transportation Sales and Use Tax, passenger fares, local (county) sales taxes, federal revenue, federal relief funds, advertising revenues, and other local sources.

A ¼ cent metro-area sales and use tax for transportation took effect on October 1, 2023. The tax creates a predictable and sustainable revenue source for transit operations, maintenance, and security. The transportation sales and use tax funds will be used to support bus and rail operations, transit safety, capital maintenance projects, and technology improvements for the transportation programs, and will be disbursed to other regional transit providers to maintain, expand, and improve their systems.

The Council adopted equity as one of the outcomes of Thrive MSP 2040, its regional growth and development plan, and we use our influence and investments to build a more equitable region. We work to create real choices for where we live, how we travel, and where we recreate for all residents – across race, ethnicity, economic means, and ability.

The Metropolitan Council prepares a long-range plan for the Twin Cities region every 10 years. The region's 2050 long-range plan, Imagine 2050, has advanced significantly including engagement with our advisory committees, local government officials, and other government and community partners. The plan was released for public comment in August 2024 and is anticipated to be adopted in early 2025.

Our transportation budget supports Thrive MSP 2040 through investments and programs, including the Arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Program, Better Bus Stops, Better Bus Routes/Speed and Reliability, Transit Assistance Program (TAP), Metro Transit Police Department Homeless Action Team (HAT), and increasing transit personnel presence on vehicles and at stations.



With the pandemic, we have faced the sudden loss of between 60% to 70% of our ridership while initiating an extensive maintenance cleaning program for all vehicles, customer facilities, and support facilities. Ridership on most of our services in 2023 continued to increase over 2022 levels, with bus ridership 14% over 2022 levels and forecasted to continue to increase in 2024. In 2024, Metro Mobility ridership is forecasted at pre-pandemic levels, bus and light rail ridership is forecasted at 60% of pre-pandemic levels, and Northstar commuter rail is forecasted at 15% of pre-pandemic levels. The Metropolitan Council continues to monitor and evaluate ridership impacts from the pandemic on a daily and weekly basis to evaluate services and the need for service adjustments.

SERVICES PROVIDED

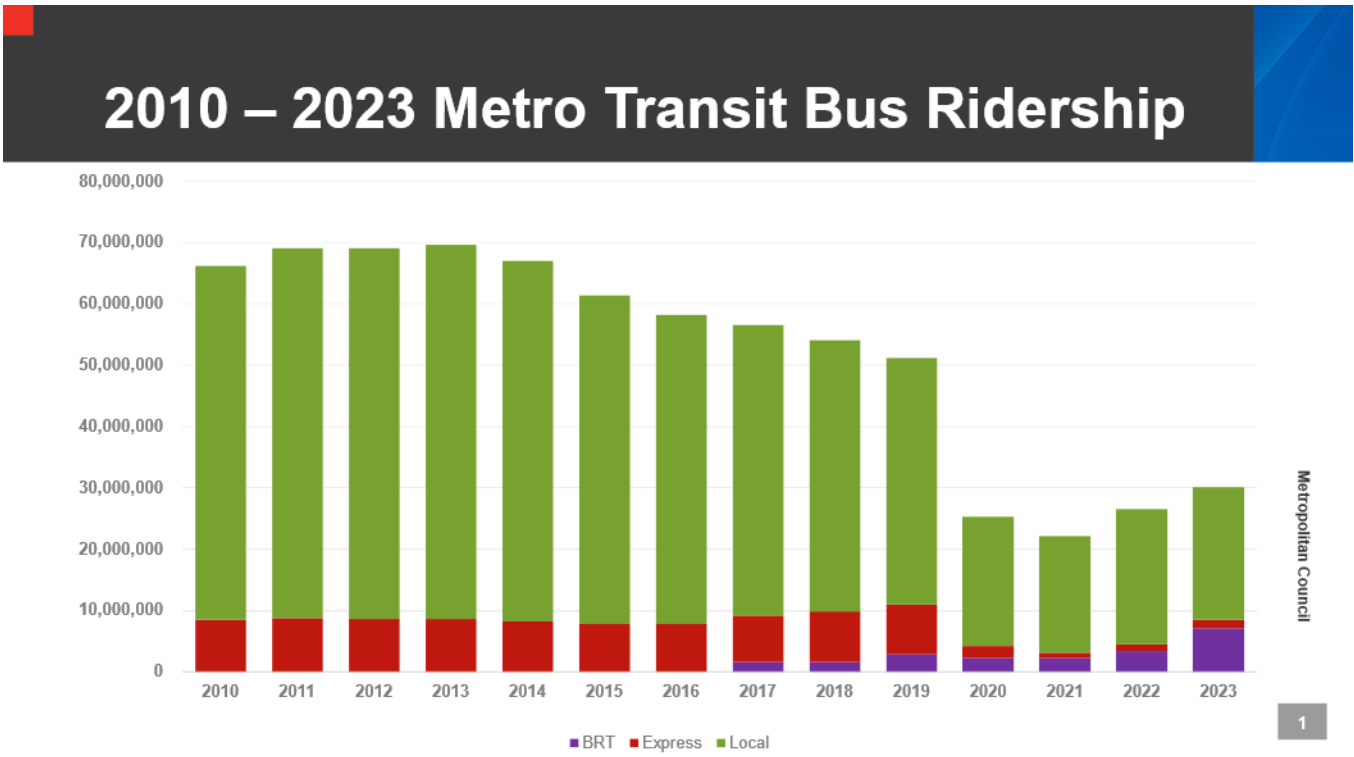
The Metropolitan Council is responsible for the state’s largest public transit system, which provided 48.7million rides on bus and rail in the region in 2023, which is an overall 16% increase over 2022 levels. Metro Transit, which operates METRO light rail, bus services, and Northstar Commuter Rail, provides the bulk of those regional rides. Metro Transit has been at the forefront of improvements in our regional transit system, creating communities that are more equitable, economically competitive, and sustainable. The American Public Transportation Association named Metro Transit the 2016 System of the Year, recognizing the service for its safety, vehicle and facilities maintenance and operations, and record pre-pandemic ridership.

Metro Transit is the largest operator of regular-route bus service in the Twin Cities region and is a key part of the Council’s commitment to operating quality transit service in an inclusive, customer-focused, and efficient manner. Metro Transit is one of the country’s largest transit systems, providing nearly 92% of the regular-route public transportation rides in the Minneapolis St. Paul metro area. Metro Transit directly operates a network of regular routes served by a fleet of 677 buses on a network of 130 fixed routes. All Metro Transit buses are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps, and racks for bicycles.

RESULTS

Transit Ridership

This chart shows transit ridership provided by Metro Transit Bus Operations.



Metropolitan Council

With the pandemic, Metro Transit bus ridership lost over 70% of its pre-pandemic ridership. Ridership trends have continued to improve, with 2023 exceeding 2022 levels by 14%.

The Metro Transit bus operations ridership in 2023 had 29.9 million rides, with an average of 93,873 rides per weekday. Metro Transit bus operations ridership was also positively impacted by ridership results on the region's ABRT (Arterial Bus Rapid Transit) lines, including A Line ABRT Corridor, C Line ABRT Corridor, METRO Orange Line, and the D Line ABRT Corridor which opened in late 2022. Metro Transit plans to open the METRO Gold Line BRT line in March 2025 and two new ABRT Lines in 2025: the B Line in June 2025 and E line later in 2025.

### **BRT Bus Line Service**

Metro Transit opened the region's first arterial rapid bus line in June 2016. The A Line operates along Snelling Avenue, Ford Parkway, and 46<sup>th</sup> Street, connecting the METRO Blue and Green lines and several other destinations. Rapid bus is a package of transit enhancements that adds up to a faster trip and an improved experience. A Line's ridership success has been driven by strong connections to the light rail system, shopping destinations, and colleges and universities on the corridor. The A Line was the first of several planned arterial rapid bus lines that will bring faster, more frequent service to the region's busiest transit corridors.

In 2017, Metropolitan Council broke ground on the C Line, which substantially replaced Route 19, running primarily on Penn Avenue and Olson Memorial Highway. The C Line opened for revenue service in June 2019, and provided nearly 1.8 million rides in 2023, a growth of 5% over prior year 2022 levels.

In 2022, the Metropolitan Council opened the D Line for revenue service, which replaced Route 5, the region's single busiest bus route. During rush hour, Route 5 buses make up less than 2% of vehicle traffic but carry more than 20% of people traveling through the Route 5 corridor by automobile or bus. In 2023 the D Line provided over 3.8 million rides.

The Metropolitan Council plans to open the Gold Line BRT in March 2025, B Line in June 2025 which will replace Route 21, and the E Line in late 2025 which will replace Route 6.

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The legal authority for Bus Operations comes from:

M.S. 473.385 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.385>)

M.S. 473.3925 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.3925>)

M.S. 473.371 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.371>)

**Program: Transit System Operations**

**Activity: Contracted Services**

<https://metro council.org/Transportation/Services.aspx>

### AT A GLANCE

- The Contracted Services unit provides service through contracts with private and governmental organizations.
- In calendar year 2023:
  - 53.3 million total regional transit rides
  - 48.7 million total Council transit rides
  - 2.1 million contracted rides

### PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

Transportation is the engine of our regional – and state – prosperity. A reliable, affordable, and efficient transportation system promotes a competitive economy, safety and security, a healthy environment, and a livable region.

As our region continues to grow and adds more vehicles to our transportation system, transit is an ever-more critical component to our transportation system. Transit provides a sustainable, efficient, and effective option to address increasing roadway congestion and improve air quality. It is one of the most important assets to businesses looking to attract and retain employees. Our transportation planners continually look for new and innovative ways to provide more efficient service that meets customer needs and to leverage the opportunities of emerging technologies to enhance the customer experience and improve service performance.

Transit functions are funded by Motor Vehicle Sales Tax (MVST) revenues, state appropriations, Metro Area Transportation Sales and Use Tax, passenger fares, local (county) sales taxes, federal revenue, federal relief funds, advertising revenues, and other local sources.

A ¾ cent metro-area sales and use tax for transportation took effect on October 1, 2023. The tax creates a predictable and sustainable revenue source for transit operations, maintenance, and security. The transportation sales and use tax funds will be used to support bus and rail operations, transit safety, capital maintenance projects, and technology improvements for the transportation programs, and will be disbursed to other regional transit providers to maintain, expand, and improve their systems.

The Council adopted equity as one of the outcomes of Thrive MSP 2040, its regional growth and development plan, and we use our influence and investments to build a more equitable region. We work to create real choices for where we live, how we travel, and where we recreate for all residents – across race, ethnicity, economic means, and ability.

The Metropolitan Council prepares a long-range plan for the Twin Cities region every 10 years. The region's 2050 long-range plan, Imagine 2050, has advanced significantly including engagement with our advisory committees, local government officials, and other government and community partners. The plan was released for public comment in August 2024 and is anticipated to be adopted in early 2025.

Our transportation budget supports Thrive MSP 2040 through investments and programs, including the Arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Program, Better Bus Stops, Better Bus Routes/Speed and Reliability, Transit Assistance Program (TAP), Metro Transit Police Department Homeless Action Team (HAT), and increasing transit personnel presence on vehicles and at stations.

With the pandemic, we have faced the sudden loss of between 60% to 70% of our ridership while initiating an extensive maintenance cleaning program for all vehicles, customer facilities, and support facilities. Ridership on most of our services in 2023 continued to increase over 2022 levels, with contracted service ridership 2% over 2022 levels and is forecasted to continue to increase in 2023. Metro Mobility ridership forecasted at pre-pandemic levels, bus and light rail ridership forecasted at 60% pre-pandemic levels, and Northstar commuter rail forecasted at 15% pre-pandemic levels. The Metropolitan Council continues to monitor and evaluate ridership impacts from the pandemic on a daily and weekly basis to evaluate services and the need for service adjustments.

## SERVICES PROVIDED

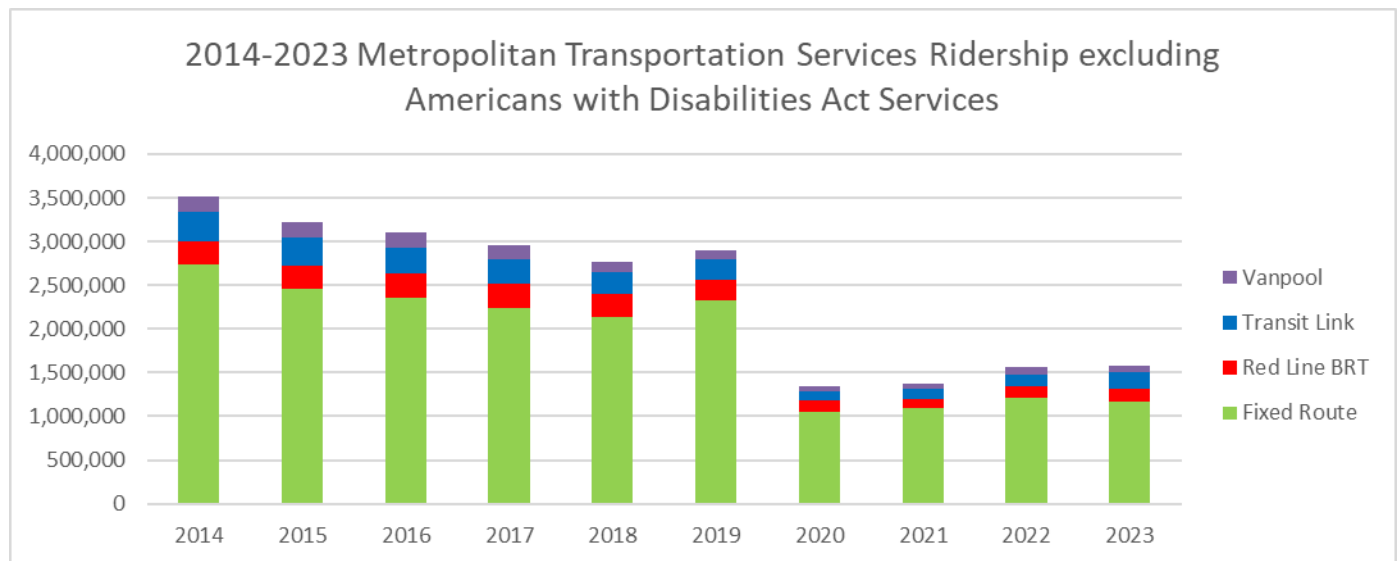
Contracted Services include Special Transportation Services, Contracted Regular-Route, Transit Link, Metro micro and Metro Vanpool. These services are provided through contracts with private and governmental organizations.

- Special Transportation Services include two dial-a-ride programs for qualified individuals. Metro Mobility is for individuals certified as eligible under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Metro Move is for individuals served by Department of Human Services programs to include Brain Injury, Community Alternative Care, Community Access for Disability Inclusion, Development Disabilities and Elderly Waiver.
- Contracted Regular-Route service provides regular route service and includes downtown Minneapolis (via METRO Blue Line connection at the Mall of America).
- Transit Link provides dial-a-ride transit service, primarily to customers in the region where regular-route service is not available.
- Metro Vanpool provides coordination of vanpools which are typically formed either in areas without regular route service or serve people who work shifts that are outside of normal commuting times.
- “Metro Transit micro” is tech-enabled, general public shared ride transportation that operates in the space between traditional fixed route transit and traditional dial-a-ride service. Customers schedule rides, typically through use of a smart phone app, which are generally delivered within 20-30 minutes of request. Vehicles range in size from vans to small buses and operate in a geographically constrained area.

## RESULTS

### Transit Ridership

Ridership measures transit system accessibility, quality, and system growth. Growth in ridership is an indication that more people are able to meet their mobility needs using transit. Contracted Services ridership grew 2% between 2022 and 2023 and continues to show growth in the first and second quarters of 2024.



The legal authority for Contracted Services comes from:

M.S. 473.371 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.371>)

M.S. 473.388 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.388>)

**Program:** Transit System Operations

**Activity:** Light Rail

<https://metrocouncil.org/Transportation/Services/Metro-Transit.aspx>

### AT A GLANCE

- In calendar year 2023
  - 53.3 million total regional transit rides
  - 48.7 million total Council transit rides
  - 14.8 million total Council METRO light rail transit rides

### PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

Transportation is the engine of our regional – and state – prosperity. A reliable, affordable, and efficient transportation system promotes a competitive economy, safety and security, a healthy environment, and a livable region.

As our region continues to grow and adds more vehicles to our transportation system, transit is an ever-more critical component to our transportation system. Transit provides a sustainable, efficient, and effective option to address increasing roadway congestion and improve air quality. It is one of the most important assets to businesses looking to attract and retain employees. Our transportation planners continually look for new and innovative ways to provide more efficient service that meets customer needs and to leverage the opportunities of emerging technologies to enhance the customer experience and improve service performance.

Transit functions are funded by Motor Vehicle Sales Tax (MVST) revenues, state appropriations, Metro Area Transportation Sales Tax, passenger fares, local (county) sales taxes, federal revenue, federal relief funds, advertising revenues, and other local sources.

A ¼ cent metro-area sales tax for transportation took effect on October 1, 2023. The sales tax creates a predictable and sustainable revenue source for transit operations, maintenance, and security. The transportation sales tax funds will be used to support bus and rail operations, transit safety, capital maintenance projects, and technology improvements for the transportation programs, and will be disbursed to other regional transit providers to maintain, expand, and improve their systems.

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The Metropolitan Council prepares a long-range plan for the Twin Cities region every 10 years. The region's 2050 long-range plan, Imagine 2050, has advanced significantly including engagement with our advisory committees, local government officials, and other government and community partners. The plan was released for public comment in August 2024 and is anticipated to be adopted in early 2025.

Our transportation budget supports Thrive MSP 2040 through investments and programs, including the Arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Program, Better Bus Stops, Better Bus Routes/Speed and Reliability, Transit Assistance Program (TAP), Metro Transit Police Department Homeless Action Team (HAT), and increasing transit personnel presence on vehicles and at stations.

With the pandemic, we have faced the sudden loss of between 60% to 70% of our ridership while initiating an extensive maintenance cleaning program for all vehicles, customer facilities, and support facilities. Ridership on most of our services in 2023 continued to increase over 2022 levels, with light rail ridership 19% over 2022 levels and forecasted to continue to increase in 2024. In 2024, Metro Mobility ridership is forecasted at pre-pandemic levels, bus and light rail ridership is forecasted at 60% of pre-pandemic levels, and Northstar commuter rail is forecasted at 15% of pre-pandemic levels. The Metropolitan Council continues to monitor and evaluate ridership impacts from the pandemic on a daily and weekly basis to evaluate services and the need for service adjustments.

## **SERVICES PROVIDED**

The Metropolitan Council is responsible for the state's largest public transit system, which provided 48.7 million rides on bus and rail in the region in 2023, which is an overall 16% increase over 2022 levels. Metro Transit, which operates METRO light rail, bus services, and Northstar Commuter Rail, provides the bulk of those regional rides. Metro Transit has been at the forefront of improvements in our regional transit system, creating communities that are more equitable, economically competitive, and sustainable. The American Public Transportation Association named Metro Transit the 2016 System of the Year, recognizing the service for its safety, vehicle and facilities maintenance and operations, and record pre-pandemic ridership.

The METRO Blue Line is a 12-mile light rail transit line linking downtown Minneapolis and the Mall of America via the Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport and was completed in 2004. It was extended in 2009 to provide service to Target Field and the Northstar Commuter Rail line. The corridor travels through Minneapolis and Bloomington with 19 stations, including five stations shared with METRO Green Line in downtown Minneapolis.

The METRO Blue Line operates service every 10 minutes during rush hours and midday, every 15 minutes in the early morning and evening hours, and less frequent service overnight. There are park-and-ride facilities at the Fort Snelling and 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue stations, and there is connecting bus service available at most other stations. In 2023, the METRO Blue Line provided 6.5 million rides, an increase of 18% over 2022 levels. The METRO Blue Line also provides special event service.

The METRO Green Line, completed in June 2014, is 11 miles long and connects downtown Saint Paul and downtown Minneapolis via University Avenue and the University of Minnesota. The corridor also travels through the State Capitol complex and the Midway area. The line has 18 stations and shares five stations with the METRO Blue Line in downtown Minneapolis. The Line makes three stops in downtown St. Paul, connects directly to the U.S. Bank Stadium Station and Target Field, and connects to the Northstar Commuter Rail line at Target Field.

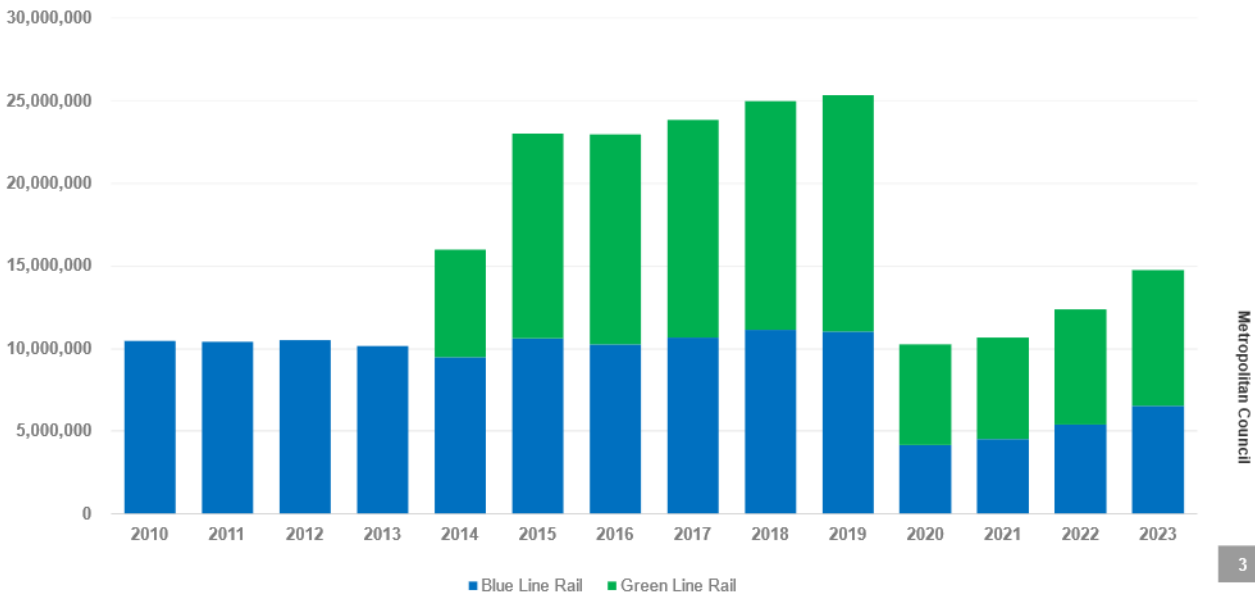
The METRO Green Line operates service every 10 minutes during rush hours and midday, every 15 minutes in the early morning and evening hours, and less frequent service overnight. In 2023, the METRO Green Line provided 8.2 million rides, an increase of nearly 21% over 2022 levels.

## **RESULTS**

### **Transit Ridership**

This chart shows transit ridership provided by METRO Light Rail (Blue and Green lines).

# 2010 – 2023 Metro Transit LRT Ridership



In 2023, the METRO Green Line LRT carried 8.2 million annual rides, with average weekday rides of 24,503. In 2023, the METRO Blue Line LRT had 6.5 million annual rides, with average weekday rides of 18,143.

With the pandemic, METRO light rail ridership lost nearly 70% of its pre-pandemic ridership. Ridership trends have continued to improve with 2024 light rail ridership forecasted at 60% of pre-pandemic levels.

The legal authority for Light Rail comes from:

M.S. 473.3993 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.3993>)

M.S. 473.3997 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.3997>)

M.S. 473.3999 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.3999>)

M.S. 473.4051 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.4051>)

**Program:** Transit System Operations

**Activity:** Commuter Rail

<https://metrocouncil.org/Transportation/Services/Metro-Transit.aspx>

### AT A GLANCE

- In calendar year 2023
  - 53.3 million total regional transit rides
  - 48.7 million total Council transit rides
  - 97,264 total Council Commuter Rail Rides

### PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

Transportation is the engine of our regional – and state – prosperity. A reliable, affordable, and efficient transportation system promotes a competitive economy, safety and security, a healthy environment, and a livable region.

As our region continues to grow and adds more vehicles to our transportation system, transit is an ever-more critical component to our transportation system. Transit provides a sustainable, efficient, and effective option to address increasing roadway congestion and improve air quality. It is one of the most important assets to businesses looking to attract and retain employees. Our transportation planners continually look for new and innovative ways to provide more efficient service that meets customer needs and to leverage the opportunities of emerging technologies to enhance the customer experience and improve service performance.

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A ¼ cent metro-area sales tax for transportation took effect on October 1, 2023. The sales tax creates a predictable and sustainable revenue source for transit operations, maintenance, and security. The transportation sales tax funds will be used to support bus and rail operations, transit safety, capital maintenance projects, and technology improvements for the transportation programs, and will be disbursed to other regional transit providers to maintain, expand, and improve their systems.

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Our transportation budget supports Thrive MSP 2040 through investments and programs, including the Arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Program, Better Bus Stops, Better Bus Routes/Speed and Reliability, Transit Assistance Program (TAP), Metro Transit Police Department Homeless Action Team (HAT), and increasing transit personnel presence on vehicles and at stations.

With the pandemic, we have faced the sudden loss of between 60% to 70% of our ridership while initiating an extensive maintenance cleaning program for all vehicles, customer facilities, and support facilities. Ridership on



most of our services in 2023 continued to increase over 2022 levels, with commuter rail ridership 26% over 2022 levels and forecasted to continue to increase in 2024. In 2024, Metro Mobility ridership is forecasted at pre-pandemic levels, bus and light rail ridership is forecasted at 60% of pre-pandemic levels, and Northstar commuter rail forecasted at 15% of pre-pandemic levels. The Metropolitan Council continues to monitor and evaluate ridership impacts from the pandemic on a daily and weekly basis to evaluate services and the need for service adjustments.

## **SERVICES PROVIDED**

The Metropolitan Council is responsible for the state's largest public transit system, which provided 48.7 million rides on bus and rail in the region in 2023, which is an overall 16% increase over 2022 levels. Metro Transit, which operates METRO light rail, bus services, and Northstar Commuter Rail, provides the bulk of those regional rides. Metro Transit has been at the forefront of improvements in our regional transit system, creating communities that are more equitable, economically competitive, and sustainable. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) named Metro Transit the 2016 System of the Year, recognizing the service for its safety, vehicle and facilities maintenance and operations, and record pre-pandemic ridership.

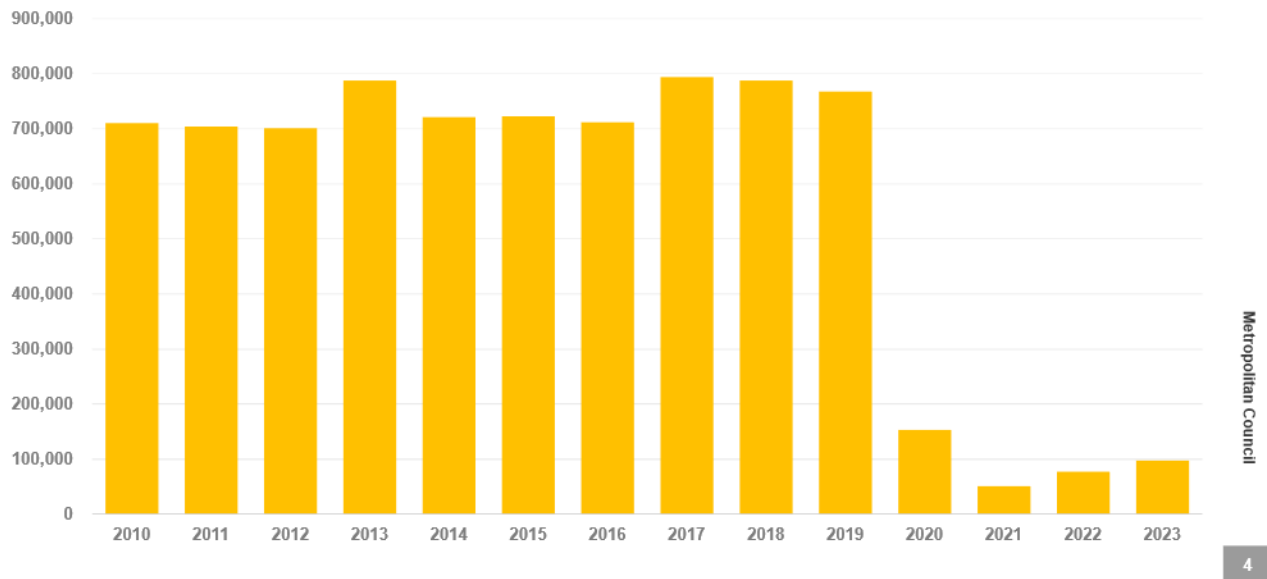
The Northstar Commuter Rail line, completed in 2009, travels 40 miles from Big Lake in Sherburne County to downtown Minneapolis, where it connects with the METRO Blue Line and the METRO Green Line at the Target Field Station. The project included an extension of the METRO Blue Line from the Warehouse District Station to Target Field Station, where it connects with the Northstar. Prior to the pandemic, the Northstar line provided 12 weekday trips. This breaks down to five inbound and five outbound trips, and one reverse-commute peak trip each morning and afternoon. The line serves six suburban park-and-ride stations on its way to downtown Minneapolis at Big Lake, Elk River, Ramsey, Anoka, Coon Rapids, and Fridley. Three round trips were offered on weekends with special event service. With the pandemic, service on the Northstar line was reduced and returned to eight weekday trips and special event service in October 2023, carrying 97,264 rides in 2023. The 2024 service is to continue eight weekday trips and provide event rides to Target Field Station for Twins and Vikings games and other special events.

## **RESULTS**

### **Transit Ridership**

This chart shows transit ridership provided by Northstar Commuter Rail. The Northstar Commuter Rail line in 2023 carried 97,264 rides.

# 2010 – 2023 Metro Transit Commuter Rail Ridership



The legal authority for Commuter Rail comes from:  
M.S. 473.4057 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.4057>)

**Program: Transit System Operations****Activity: Planning**[https://metro council.org/Transportation/Planning-2/Transportation-Planning-Process/Metropolitan-Planning-Organization-\(MPO\).aspx](https://metro council.org/Transportation/Planning-2/Transportation-Planning-Process/Metropolitan-Planning-Organization-(MPO).aspx)**AT A GLANCE**

- The Metropolitan Council serves as the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Twin Cities metro area.
- Prepares a long-range (20-year) Transportation Policy Plan for the region every four years.
- Selects projects for federal funding and prepares a four-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), through the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB), made up of local elected officials, and TAB's Technical Advisory Committee.

**PURPOSE AND CONTEXT**

Transportation is the engine of our regional – and state – prosperity. A reliable, affordable, and efficient transportation system promotes a competitive economy, safety and security, a healthy environment, and a livable region.

The Metropolitan Council serves as the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Twin Cities metro area. Federal funding for transportation projects and programs is channeled through the MPO planning process. Congress created MPOs to ensure that existing and future expenditures of governmental funds for transportation projects and programs are based on a "continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3-C)" planning process.

The Council adopted equity as one of the outcomes of Thrive MSP 2040, its regional growth and development plan, and we use our influence and investments to build a more equitable region. We work to create real choices for where we live, how we travel, and where we recreate for all residents – across race, ethnicity, economic means, and ability.

Our planning supports the current Thrive MSP 2040 and future Imagine 2050 plans through leading the investment of funds in the regional solicitation process. The regional solicitation process allocates federal transportation funds to locally initiated projects to meet regional transportation needs. As the region's federally designated MPO, the Council works with the Transportation Advisory Board to review and allocate these funds, using an objective, data-driven, and transparent process.

**SERVICES PROVIDED**

The Metropolitan Council is responsible for regional transportation planning, including aviation, highway, and transit systems and operations. As the federally designated MPO for the seven-county metropolitan area, the Council must provide a continuing, coordinated, comprehensive transportation planning process in order to obtain federal transportation funds.

The Council must prepare a long-range (20-year) Transportation Policy Plan for the region every four years. We select projects for federal funding and prepare a four-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), through the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB), which is made up of local elected officials, and the TAB's Technical Advisory Committee. The TIP includes all federally funded transportation projects and is developed with significant input from citizens and interested groups.

The region's Transportation Policy Plan comes together by collaborating with counties, cities, and townships to create a vision for a shared transportation system. The Metropolitan Council builds these partnerships to help make a stronger system possible that serves people and connects places across the region. Our responsibility is to listen to our partners and the people who live in the region to hear what they need in a transportation system. We then translate a shared vision for our region's transportation system into investment plans and decisions that help build and maintain that system.

## RESULTS

Measure name	Measure type	Measure data source	Historical trend	Most recent data
Transportation Policy Plan Update	Quantity	Council process	Updated 2018, 2020, 2025	N/A
Allocate Federal Funds through Regional Solicitation Process	Quantity	Council process	Allocated 2018, 2020, 2022, 2024	N/A

We maintain and use future-year travel forecast models to support planning for new transportation facilities. We periodically conduct a Travel Behavior Inventory to validate the models used to forecast regional demands.

The Council and the TAB select projects to receive federal transportation funding through the regional solicitation process. The two-year selection process involves soliciting projects from MnDOT, cities, counties, and transit providers. TAB and its Technical Advisory Committee then evaluate and rank the projects and select the final approved projects.

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Legal authority for Planning comes from:

M.S. 473.371 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.371>)

M.S. 473.1466 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.1466>)

**Program:** Transit System Operations

**Activity:** Regional Administration

<https://metro council.org/About-Us/What-We-Do/Departments/Regional-Administration.aspx>

#### AT A GLANCE

- The calendar year 2024 adopted budget for Regional Administration was \$98.4 million and 385 FTEs
- In 2023, total expenditures in Procurement were \$619 million

#### PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

Regional Administration includes Council leadership and centralized administrative services that support the operating divisions. Costs associated with these support services are allocated to divisions using a method approved in the Council's Federal Cost Allocation Plan to assure equitable distribution.

#### SERVICES PROVIDED

The Metropolitan Council's administrative services consist of Information Services, Human Resources, General Counsel, Government Affairs, Communications, Community Relations, Risk Management, Business Continuity, Program Evaluation and Audit, Procurement, Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity, Community Relations, Enterprise Content Management, Real Estate, and Finance and Budget.

#### RESULTS

Each year, the State Auditor audits the Council's financial statement. The Council also submits the financial statement to the Government Finance Officers Association of the U.S. and Canada, which awards Certificates of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. The Council's annual comprehensive financial report (ACFR, or Annual Report) has achieved this prestigious award for 40 consecutive years. In order to be awarded a Certificate of Achievement, a governmental unit must publish a ACFR that is easily readable and efficiently organized. The Council's Annual Report satisfied both Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and applicable legal requirements.

In 2020, the Council made procurement policy changes pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 471.345 to increase the micro purchase threshold for targeted suppliers of locally funded projects valued up to \$25,000. The Council also implemented a prevailing wage policy for locally funded construction projects that are expected to exceed \$175,000. In 2020, the Council's changes to its procurement process included implementing electronic signatures and utilization of electronic submissions for bids and proposals. In 2024, a suspension and debarment policy was implemented to address vendor non-performance.

Measure name	Measure type	Measure data source	Historical trend	Most recent data	Met Council Goal
Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business Program (MCUB) Utilization – Construction and Contracted Services	Quantity	Application data and follow up monitoring data	CY 2022: 16.5%	CY 2023: 14.0%	14%

Measure name	Measure type	Measure data source	Historical trend	Most recent data	Met Council Goal
MCUB Utilization – P-Card Spend	Quantity	Application data and follow up monitoring data	CY 2022: 4.2%	CY 2023: 5.6%	10%
MCUB Utilization – Total Payments (Black, Hispanic, Indigenous, Asian)	Quantity	Application data and follow up monitoring data	CY 2022: \$16,416,871	CY 2023: \$21,845,289	33.1% Increase

A major goal of the Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business Program (MCUB) is to increase the utilization of small business firms owned by people of color, women, veterans, and people with disabilities through Council procurements using local and state funds. In 2020, the Council increased MCUB goals from 12% to 14% for Council expenditures on construction and from 8% to 10% for Council expenditures on professional and technical goods and services.

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The legal authority for Regional Administration comes from:

M.S. 473.13 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.13>)

M.S. 473.125 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.125>)

M.S. 473.142 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.142>)

M.S. 473.143 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.143>)

M.S. 473.123 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.123>)

M.S. 473.132 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.132>)

# Transit System Operations

# Program Expenditure Overview

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual	Actual	Actual	Estimate	Forecast Base		Governor's Recommendation	
	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY26	FY27
<b><u>Expenditures by Fund</u></b>								
1000 - General	90,654	34,654	45,454	72,454	32,454	32,454	0	0
1050 - Transit Assistance	355,077	381,900	387,189	393,811	418,186	432,214	418,186	432,214
<b>Total</b>	<b>445,731</b>	<b>416,554</b>	<b>432,644</b>	<b>466,265</b>	<b>450,640</b>	<b>464,668</b>	<b>418,186</b>	<b>432,214</b>
Biennial Change				36,623		16,399		(48,509)
Biennial % Change				4		2		(5)
Governor's Change from Base								(64,908)
Governor's % Change from Base								(7)

## **Expenditures by Activity**

Transit System Operations	445,731	416,554	432,644	466,265	450,640	464,668	418,186	432,214
<b>Total</b>	<b>445,731</b>	<b>416,554</b>	<b>432,644</b>	<b>466,265</b>	<b>450,640</b>	<b>464,668</b>	<b>418,186</b>	<b>432,214</b>

## **Expenditures by Category**

Grants, Aids and Subsidies	445,731	416,554	432,644	466,265	450,640	464,668	418,186	432,214
<b>Total</b>	<b>445,731</b>	<b>416,554</b>	<b>432,644</b>	<b>466,265</b>	<b>450,640</b>	<b>464,668</b>	<b>418,186</b>	<b>432,214</b>

# Transit System Operations

# Program Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual	Actual	Actual	Estimate	Forecast Base		Governor's Recommendation	
	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY26	FY27
1000 - General								
Balance Forward In				30,000				
Direct Appropriation	90,654	34,654	75,454	42,454	32,454	32,454	0	0
Balance Forward Out			30,000					
Expenditures	90,654	34,654	45,454	72,454	32,454	32,454	0	0
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(7,400)		(53,000)		(117,908)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				(6)		(45)		(100)
Governor's Change from Base								(64,908)
Governor's % Change from Base								(100)

## 1050 - Transit Assistance

Balance Forward In	101	104	68	2				
Receipts	354,976	381,796	387,124	393,809	418,186	432,214	418,186	432,214
Balance Forward Out		0	2					
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>355,077</b>	<b>381,900</b>	<b>387,189</b>	<b>393,811</b>	<b>418,186</b>	<b>432,214</b>	<b>418,186</b>	<b>432,214</b>
Biennial Change in Expenditures				44,023		69,400		69,400
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				6		9		9
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0



**Program: Special Transportation Services (Metro Mobility)**<https://metro council.org/Transportation/Services.aspx>**AT A GLANCE**

- Metro Mobility is a shared-ride public transportation service for certified riders who are unable to use regular fixed-route buses due to a disability or health condition.
- In calendar year 2023
  - 53.3 million total regional transit rides
  - 48.7 million total Council transit rides
  - 2.1 million Metro Mobility rides

**PURPOSE AND CONTEXT**

Transportation is the engine of our regional – and state – prosperity. A reliable, affordable, and efficient transportation system promotes a competitive economy, safety and security, a healthy environment, and a livable region.

As our region continues to grow and adds more vehicles to our transportation system, transit is an ever-more critical component to our transportation system. Transit provides a sustainable, efficient, and effective option to address increasing roadway congestion and improve air quality. It is one of the most important assets to businesses looking to attract and retain employees. Our transportation planners continually look for new and innovative ways to provide more efficient service that meets customer needs and to leverage the opportunities of emerging technologies to enhance the customer experience and improve service performance.

Metro Mobility (<https://metro council.org/Transportation/Services/Metro-Mobility-Home.aspx>) is a shared-ride public transportation service for certified riders who are unable to use regular bus or train routes because of a disability or health condition. The service is on-demand and is mandated under the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as state law. Trips are provided for any purpose, helping people get to jobs, medical appointments, and social events.

As demand grows, our focus stays on maintaining the service we have, meeting new riders' needs, and delivering the quality service riders deserve. In the 2019 legislative session, Metro Mobility was appropriated a one-time funding increase, as well as its own budget line, separate from transit system operations.

The federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines determine eligibility for Metro Mobility services. People are generally eligible if any of the following conditions apply:

- A person is physically unable to get to the bus because of their disability or health condition within an area that the fixed-route system serves.
- A person is unable to navigate the regular fixed-route system because of their disability.
- A person is unable to board or exit the bus at some locations because of their disability.

The Premium On-Demand pilot program is a service that invites any Metro Mobility customer to book a taxi ride at a reduced rate for a same-day ride, or any other ride up to four days in advance. Premium, on-demand trips are an option for customers who are able to pay more for a faster trip, or for the convenience of a same day ride. Unlike regular Metro Mobility service, premium on-demand service is not shared-ride, so customers are brought directly to their destination. The pilot program began September 1, 2023 and runs through December 31, 2025.

Metro Move serves people who have a disability and are served by a Brain Injury (BI) waiver, Community Access for Disability Inclusion (CADI) waiver, or a Developmental Disability (DD) waiver. The service links waiver participants to day support programs, work, and other community destinations. This service opens access for those receiving waiver services to reach many communities across the Twin Cities region. Service began May 6, 2024.

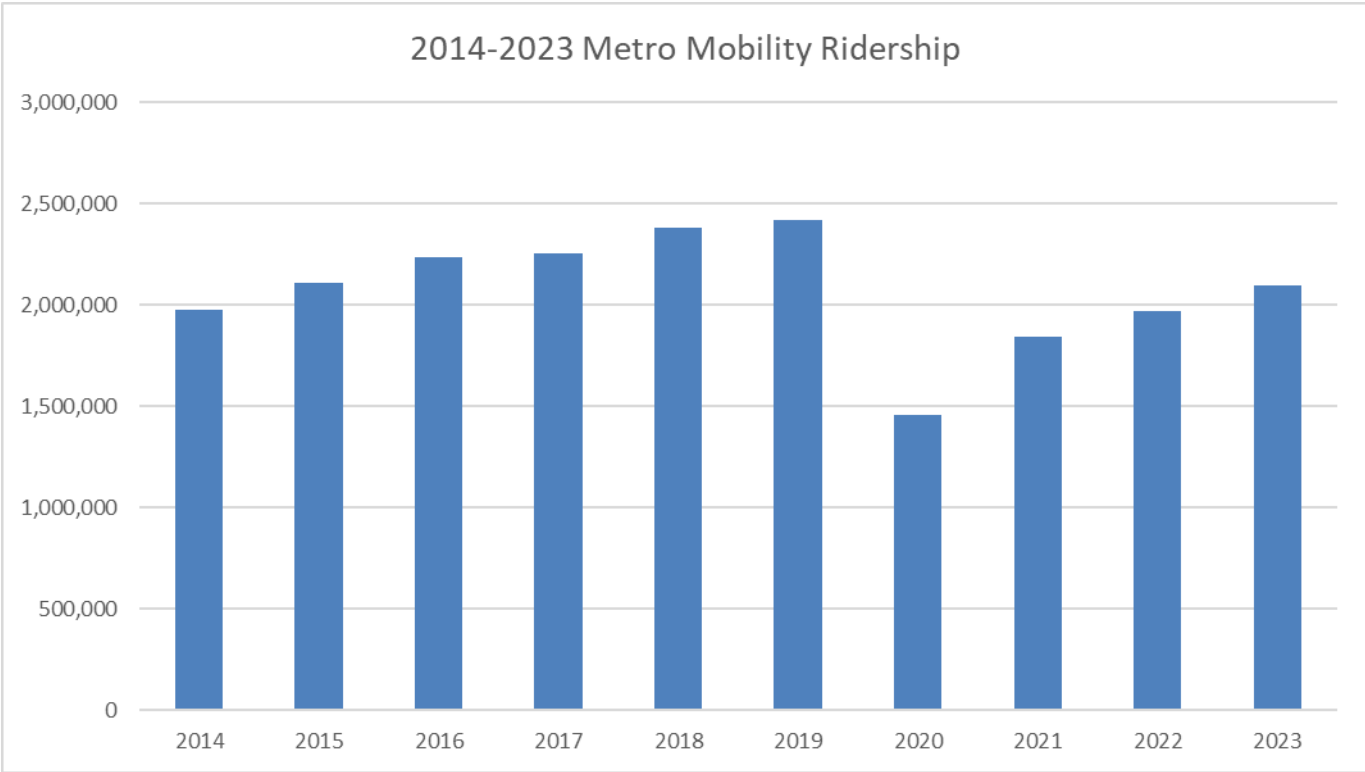
Beginning in FY 2026, Metro Mobility is a forecasted program in the state budget. State general fund forecasted spending will reflect the net costs to the Council to operate the service. Net costs refers to the difference between 1) amounts necessary to maintain service levels and the general existing condition of the bus fleet including replacement of the fleet, as well as amounts necessary to match the difference in actual costs in the prior year and forecasted costs; and 2) funding from nonstate sources.

SERVICES PROVIDED

Metro Mobility provides on-demand transit service for certified riders whose disabilities prevent them from using the regular-route transit system. Metro Move is a new transit service that serves people who have a disability and are served by a Brain Injury (BI) waiver, Community Access for Disability Inclusion (CADI) waiver, or a Developmental Disability (DD) waiver. The service links waiver participants to day support programs, work, and other community destinations. These Special Transportation Services provide service in the region to complement regular-route service, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

RESULTS

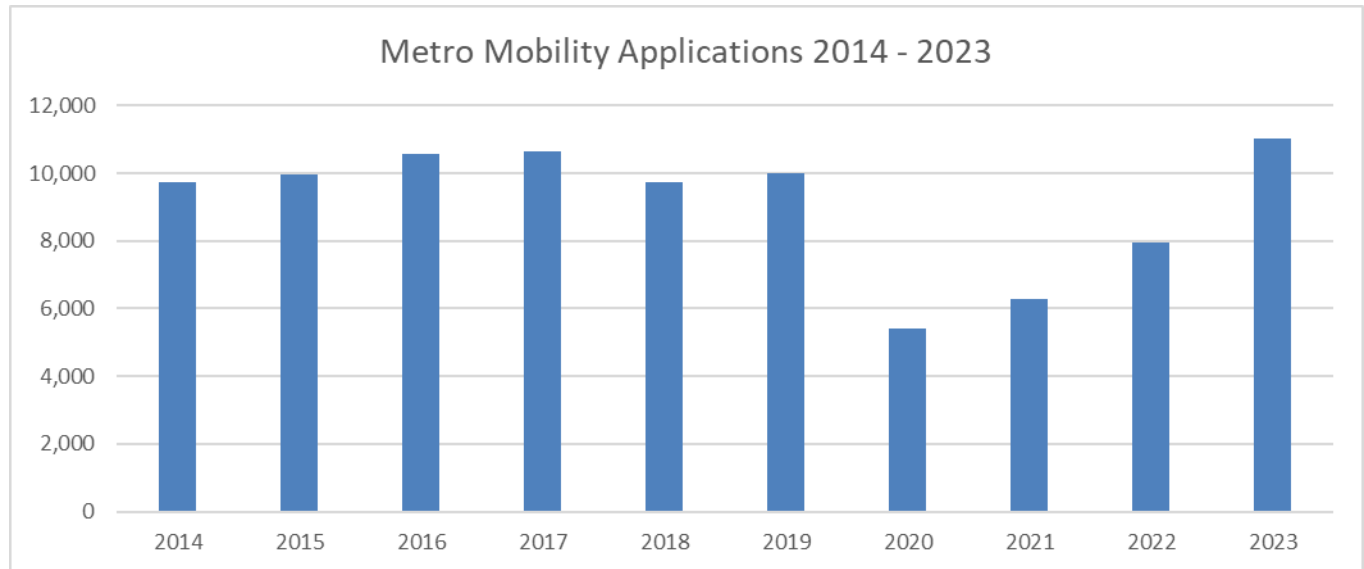
Transit Ridership



While the demand for Metro Mobility service has increased dramatically over the past decade, with ridership increasing over 80% between 2006 and 2019, regular Metro Mobility ridership was significantly impacted by Covid-19 in 2020. In 2019, system ridership exceeded 2.3 million rides, an increase of 6% over 2017. Beginning in March 2020, Metro Mobility ridership initially fell 80%, but had returned to 85% of pre-pandemic ridership by

2022. Regular Metro Mobility weekly ridership slowly increased in 2023 to over 87% of pre-pandemic levels. Total system ridership in 2023 was 2.1 million rides.

Metro Mobility also has an increasing number of active customers using the service. Active customers are defined as customers who used Metro Mobility within the past year. Prior to the pandemic, the number of applications for new certifications grew – in 2019, 63% of applications were new, compared to 48% in 2014. Applications dropped significantly in 2020 but have been recovering since. Metro Mobility is on pace to have 57% of all applications be new riders in 2024.



**Active Metro Mobility Riders by Year**

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Active Riders	18,973	19,983	20,794	20,626	21,475	21,982	19,009	17,500	16,542	17,944

The legal authority for Metro Mobility comes from:

M.S. 473.386 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473/full#stat.473.386>)

Americans with Disabilities Act (<https://www.ada.gov/>)

# Special Transportation Services (Metro Mobility)

# Program Expenditure Overview

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY22	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimate FY25	Forecast Base		Governor's Recommendation	
					FY26	FY27	FY26	FY27

## Expenditures by Fund

1000 - General	56,416	55,976	55,976	55,976	115,127	120,190	115,127	120,190
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,416</b>	<b>55,976</b>	<b>55,976</b>	<b>55,976</b>	<b>115,127</b>	<b>120,190</b>	<b>115,127</b>	<b>120,190</b>
Biennial Change				(440)		123,365		123,365
Biennial % Change				(0)		110		110
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0

## Expenditures by Activity

Special Transportation Services (Metro Mobility)	56,416	55,976	55,976	55,976	115,127	120,190	115,127	120,190
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,416</b>	<b>55,976</b>	<b>55,976</b>	<b>55,976</b>	<b>115,127</b>	<b>120,190</b>	<b>115,127</b>	<b>120,190</b>

## Expenditures by Category

Grants, Aids and Subsidies	56,416	55,976	55,976	55,976	115,127	120,190	115,127	120,190
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,416</b>	<b>55,976</b>	<b>55,976</b>	<b>55,976</b>	<b>115,127</b>	<b>120,190</b>	<b>115,127</b>	<b>120,190</b>

# Special Transportation Services (Metro Mobility)

# Program Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY22	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimate FY25	Forecast Base FY26 FY27		Governor's Recommendation FY26 FY27	
<b>1000 - General</b>								
Direct Appropriation	56,416	55,976	55,976	55,976	0	0	0	0
Open Appropriation					115,127	120,190	115,127	120,190
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>56,416</b>	<b>55,976</b>	<b>55,976</b>	<b>55,976</b>	<b>115,127</b>	<b>120,190</b>	<b>115,127</b>	<b>120,190</b>
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(440)		123,365		123,365
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				(0)		110		110
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0