

Green Bay **METRO**

2017–2021 Strategic Plan



WHERE
is my bus?



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Introduction

In early 2011, Green Bay Metro created a group to work on a strategic plan. The group consisted of Green Bay Metro staff, a Green Bay Transit Commissioner, Brown County Planning Commission (Metropolitan Planning Organization) staff, and representatives from the business community.

In 2017, Green Bay Metro and the Brown County Planning Commission worked to complete the strategic plan. The following people served on the committee to complete the plan:

2017 Strategic Plan Committee

Participants	Title	Agency
Patty Kiewiz	Transit Director	Green Bay Metro
Essie Fels	Paratransit Coordinator	Green Bay Metro
Lisa J. Conard	Senior Planner	Brown County Planning Commission/MPO
Cole Runge	Principal Planner	Brown County Planning Commission/MPO

Green Bay Metro System

From 1916 through 1972, the Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS), a privately-owned utility company, provided streetcar and bus service in the Green Bay area. In the late 1960s, bus ridership decreases combined with rising expenses forced WPS to reduce deficits by cutting back on service. Service cutbacks, in turn, contributed to further decreases in ridership and even greater revenue losses, resulting in a downward spiral of service, ridership, and revenue. In April of 1972, WPS offered to sell the bus company to the city of Green Bay with an agreement to reimburse the city for the full purchase price of \$270,000 in the form of an operating subsidy over a five-year period.

Fixed Route Service

Green Bay Metro operates 15 full-service bus routes throughout the urbanized area. In addition, several limited service routes operate during Packers home games.

Paratransit Service

Paratransit is an alternative to the fixed route system. It is intended for people who cannot be served by fixed route buses due to disabilities. Service is more flexible in terms of scheduling and routing, is offered on a demand-response basis, and is usually provided by low capacity vehicles such as vans. Paratransit is meant to be complementary to the fixed route system in terms of service area, service days and hours, and cost.

Green Bay Metro currently contracts with a private transportation provider (MV Transportation) to provide this service.

Service Area and Hours of Operation

Service is currently provided to the cities of Green Bay and De Pere and the villages of Allouez, Ashwaubenon, and Bellevue. Service is provided Monday through Friday from 5:15 a.m. to 9:45 p.m. and on Saturday from 7:15 a.m. to 6:45 p.m. Full service routes do not operate on Sunday. However, limited service routes operate during all Packers home games.

Strategic Planning Defined

(Source: BusinessDirectory.com – July 2011)

Strategic Planning is a systematic process of envisioning a desired future, and translating this vision into broadly defined goals or objectives and a sequence of steps to achieve them. In contrast to long-term planning (which begins with the current status and lays down a path to meet estimated future needs), strategic planning begins with the desired end and works backward to the current status. At every stage of long-range planning the planner asks, "What must be done here to reach the next (higher) stage?" At every stage of strategic-planning the planner asks, "What must be done at the previous (lower) stage to reach here?" Also, in contrast to tactical planning (which focuses at achieving narrowly defined interim objectives with predetermined means), strategic planning looks at the wider picture and is flexible in choice of its means.

Mandate/What Does Green Bay Metro Do?

Green Bay Metro exists to ensure that everyone has access to a relatively low-cost means of traveling throughout the greater Green Bay area. Specifically, Green Bay Metro:

- Provides access to jobs that serve the residents of Green Bay, De Pere, Allouez, Ashwaubenon, and Bellevue.
- Provides access to job training, social services, rehabilitation programs, meal sites, and other resources.
- Provides access to schools, which leads to a more educated workforce and community.
- Provides access to medical care.
- Provides access to retail, recreation, and entertainment.
- Creates independence for seniors and persons with disabilities.
- Reduces the negative effects of automobile use such as traffic congestion, delay, productivity losses, and pollution.

Vision and Mission Statement Definitions

(Source: BusinessDirectory.com – July 2011)

Vision Definition

An aspirational description of what an organization would like to achieve or accomplish in the mid-term or long-term future. It is intended to serve as a clear guide for choosing current and future courses of action.

Mission Definition

A written declaration of an organization's core purpose and focus that normally remains unchanged over time. Properly crafted mission statements (1) serve as filters to separate what is important from what is not, (2) clearly state which markets will be served and how, and (3) communicate a sense of intended direction to the entire organization.

A mission is different from a vision in that the former is the cause and the latter is the effect. A mission is something to be accomplished whereas a vision is something to be pursued for that accomplishment.

The following Vision and Mission Statements were developed by the strategic plan committee for Green Bay Metro:

Vision: To be a partner in the community by providing transportation that is convenient and accessible to the public.

Mission: Green Bay Metro is committed to providing safe and dependable transportation to jobs, schools, medical services, and other destinations.

Green Bay Metro Core Values

The strategic planning process identified core values that all Green Bay Metro representatives should observe while at work. The five core values and their definitions are:

1. Safety

The assurance that all passengers will be transported by professional operators on well-maintained vehicles while meeting all state and federal regulations.

2. Dependability

The assurance that route, fare, and other Metro information is accurate, that Metro vehicles will arrive and depart at their scheduled times, and that transfers can be made easily to allow customers to complete their trips.

3. Customer Service

The assurance that all passengers will be treated in an appropriate manner.

4. Economy

The assurance that Metro will provide frequent and convenient access to employers, educational and medical facilities, recreational and social opportunities, and many other destinations at a cost to customers and member communities that is comparable to transit systems of similar size.

5. Ingenuity

The assurance that Metro will constantly seek to increase the quality, variety, and scope of its transportation services through the use of innovative funding methods, establishment of new public and private partnerships, and development of other creative initiatives.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

SWOT analysis is a tool for auditing an organization and its environment. It occurs early in a strategic planning process and helps participants focus on key issues. SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Strengths and weaknesses are internal factors, which can be controlled within an organization. Opportunities and threats are external factors, which cannot be controlled from within.

The following SWOT analysis was developed by the strategic planning team:

Strengths

Value

Green Bay Metro offers low-cost transportation services to the general public.

Safety

Metro has well-trained professional drivers with excellent driving records on well-maintained vehicles.

Intergovernmental Relationships

Metro benefits from strong relationships with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), the cities of Green Bay and De Pere, and the villages of Allouez, Ashwaubenon, and Bellevue.

Public Participation

Metro has a strong public participation program which allows staff to meet and discuss important transit issues with community stakeholders and the general public.

Green Bay Transit Commission/Staff Relations

Metro benefits from strong, supportive relationships between the transit commission and staff.

Management/Labor Relations

Collective bargaining agreements for Metro's two unions are settled through 2017/2018, which allows Metro to focus on more immediate needs.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Green Bay Urbanized Area

The Green Bay Transit Commission and Metro staff benefit from an MPO staff that is experienced, has a varied skill set, and is willing to take on projects in an effort to improve the system. (The MPO is part of the Brown County Planning Commission.)

Forward Momentum

The efforts of organizations such as the Bay Area Community Council, United Way, and Justice Organization Sharing Hope and United for Action (JOSHUA) have carried the message of the importance of public transportation to the forefront. Their efforts are well demonstrated by numerous Press-Gazette newspaper articles and editorials, local TV news stories, public forums, reports, and documentaries.

Partnerships

Green Bay Metro has strong connections to the community and has built partnerships with the Green Bay Packers, Green Bay Area Public School District, The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay (UWGB), Greyhound, American Public Transportation Association (APTA), Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, Ashwaubenon School District, and Wisconsin Public Transportation Association (WIPTA).

Weaknesses

Federal and State Funding

Uncertainty of future federal and state funding programs.

Local Funding

Resistance by local funding partners to increase contributions to keep pace with inflation and/or expand services.

Fare Recovery

It is a challenge to find a balance between the desire to offer low fares and the need to recover a portion of the system's operating expenses.

Lack of Desired Transit Services

Lack of frequency and late night service prohibits Metro from effectively serving shift-oriented employers.

Lack of Local Land Use Policies that Promote or Complement Transit Services

Examples include:

- Large minimum residential lot sizes (which lead to inefficiencies in mail delivery, garbage pick-up, bus service, etc.)
- Minimum parking requirements for businesses
- Availability of free or low-cost parking
- Lack of well-connected street patterns to minimize walking distances
- Lack of sidewalks leading to and from bus stops
- Large parking lots at shopping malls and other significant transit trip generators that are inaccessible to Metro's buses

Opportunities

Economic Benefits of Transit

Public transit provides many economic benefits to the local community. Non-traditional riders can benefit from the low fares, especially in light of fluctuating fuel prices and the high cost of car ownership.

Additional Partnerships

Metro currently has strong partnerships with the Green Bay Packers and the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay (UWGB). Opportunities exist to expand the universal pass (U-Pass) program and/or introduce other programs to include businesses, other learning institutions, and other entities. (The IRS allows employers to withhold a set amount of an employee's pre-tax income for bus commuting costs. Employers may also provide a monthly fare subsidy as a part of the qualified IRS Transportation Fringe Benefit, under section 132(F) of the IRS tax code.)

Expand and Enhance Services

Demand for service exists in portions of the village of Bellevue and the village of Howard. Opportunities exist to better serve residents, employers, students, and retail centers within the existing service area by extending service and increasing service frequency.

Advanced Technologies

Adoption of technologies to provide information to stakeholders will create consistency and reliability.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

Opportunities to implement TOD exist in the Metro service area. (TOD is a mixed-use community within walking distance of a transit stop that mixes residential, retail, office, open space, and public uses in a way that makes it convenient to travel on foot or by public transportation instead of by car.)

In-House Paratransit Service

Bringing portions of Metro's paratransit operation in-house would help to reduce the cost of providing paratransit service.

Threats

Local, State, and Federal Economies

- Economic volatility poses funding challenges for Metro to continue operating current services and to expand services.
- Uncertainty of federal and state transit funding assistance amounts on a year-to-year basis.
- Uncertainty of future state transit funding due to the possible shift of transit funding from the state budget's transportation fund to the state budget's general fund.
- Lack of a long-term funding solution such as a Regional Transportation Authority or Regional Transit Authority (RTA).

Negative View of Public Transportation

Negative community view of public transportation could impact funding and the ability to provide current and/or additional services.

Core Values, Goals, and Implementation Strategies

After identifying and defining Metro's core values and completing the SWOT analysis, the committee identified five core values and goals with accompanying strategies for achievement.

These core values and goals are:

1. Safety
2. Dependability
3. Customer Service
4. Economy
5. Ingenuity

1. Core Value and Goal: Safety

Strategies:

- Maintain Smith System Defensive Driving certification for all operational employees.
Performance Target: 100% of Metro operational employees certified at all times.
- Follow Metro's annual Safety Training Schedule.
Performance Target: 100% compliance with the annual schedule.
- Minimize the number of preventable accidents per 100,000 miles traveled.
Performance Target: Maximum of 0.7 preventable accidents per 100,000 miles traveled per year.
- Maintain Metro's facility and equipment per Metro policy and procedures.
Performance Target: 100% compliance with Metro's preventative maintenance schedule.
- Properly utilize OSHA-approved personal protection equipment.
Performance Target: Reduce occupational injuries from 20 per year to 15 per year by 2019.
- Promote safe work practices – procedures and employees.
Performance Target: Metro's Safety Committee should meet once per quarter each year.

- Continue to monitor and upgrade security on the buses and on all Metro property.
Performance Target 1: 100% of audio and video equipment on Metro’s buses and Transportation Center property should be functioning at all times.
Performance Target 2: Upgrade the video equipment on Metro’s Transportation Center property by the end of 2017.
Performance Target 3: Upgrade the audio and video equipment on Metro’s buses to a live feed audio and video system by 2020.
- Maintain ongoing staff involvement with Transit Mutual Insurance (TMI).
Performance Target: Ensure that TMI knows that Metro wants a representative to be included on TMI’s Safety Committee at all times.

2. Core Value and Goal: Dependability

Strategies:

- Maximize fixed route and paratransit on-time performance.
Performance Target 1 – Fixed Routes: Never arrive at bus stops before scheduled arrival times.
Performance Target 2 – Fixed Routes: Arrive at bus stops between zero and two minutes after scheduled arrival times a minimum of 93% each month.*
Performance Target 3 – Paratransit: Meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) definition of on-time paratransit performance for a minimum of 95% of trips each month.**
- Provide accurate and timely information to customers.
Performance Target 1: Ensure that the Metro Information Desk is staffed 100% of the time during Metro business hours.
Performance Target 2: Update the route guide and other printed and digital materials in Spanish and other requested languages a minimum of once per year.
Performance Target 3: Upgrade Metro’s current Automatic Vehicle Location- (AVL-) based trip planner and “Where’s My Bus?” application to a more user-friendly AVL-based system by 2019.

*Metro is committed to fixed route bus arrival at zero minutes early and within two-minutes late of the scheduled time. Metro’s goal is to meet this standard 100% of the time but allow for exceptions due to inclement weather, train crossings, bridge lifts, planned and unplanned detours, and other incidents.

**The ADA considers a paratransit vehicle to be “on-time” if the vehicle arrives between 15 minutes before and 15 minutes after the scheduled arrival time.

Provide accurate and timely information to customers (*continued from previous page*).

Performance Target 4: Continue to post Metro Alerts on buses, Metro's website, and social media at least one week before detours and other events occur.

Performance Target 5: Continue the practice of updating Metro's AVL system with new location data before making physical modifications in the field (bus stop signs, shelters, etc.).

- Maintain a strict preventative bus maintenance schedule.

Performance Target 1: Maintain a comprehensive Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and fleet replacement schedule.

Performance Target 2: Maintain a bus fleet with an average age of no more than eight years.

Performance Target 3: Maintain a spare bus ratio of a minimum of 30% of the peak bus requirement.

3. Core Value and Goal: Customer Service

Strategies:

- Maintain a strict preventative maintenance schedule for the Transportation Center.

Performance Target: 100% compliance with the schedule.

- Extend transit service into high-demand areas of communities that are not currently served by Metro.

Performance Target 1: Determine the feasibility of providing commuter service between Green Bay and Appleton by the end of 2018.

Performance Target 2: Extend fixed route and paratransit service into the village of Howard by 2020.

- Increase the service frequency of Metro bus routes.

Performance Target 1: Establish Metro's planned east side hub by the end of 2018.

Performance Target 2: Identify routes where service frequency can and should be increased by the end of 2018.

Performance Target 3: Implement the initial route frequency increases by the end of 2019.

Performance Target 4: Review the fixed route system annually after 2019 to determine where additional service frequency increases can and should be implemented.

- Provide travel training to teach people how to ride Metro’s fixed route buses.
 - Performance Target 1:** Contact a minimum of five organizations per year to offer travel training to their clients/members.
 - Performance Target 2:** Offer fixed route bus travel training to all paratransit service applicants.
 - Performance Target 3:** Provide travel training to 100% of the people who request the training.
 - Performance Target 4:** Review and update Metro’s “How to Ride the Bus” and other YouTube posts a minimum of once per year.
- Enhance rider amenities on Metro’s buses.
 - Performance Target:** Introduce free Wi-Fi on all buses by 2020.
- Improve public awareness and promote Metro services.
 - Performance Target 1:** Continue to attend annual freshman orientation programs at UWGB, St. Norbert College, and NWTC to provide incoming students information about Metro.
 - Performance Target 2:** Continue to provide public outreach by doing a minimum of three presentations per year.

4. Core Value and Goal: Economy

Strategies:

- Maintain existing and seek additional revenue from federal, state, and local government agencies, and through public and private partnerships.
 - Performance Target 1:** Expand the Universal Pass (U-Pass) program from one to five participants by 2020.
 - Performance Target 2:** Begin working with Advance/Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce in 2017 to identify businesses that would like to participate in employee transit programs.
 - Performance Target 3:** Contact a minimum of ten businesses per year to discuss Metro’s services, offer employee travel training presentations, and determine if the businesses want to purchase tax-deductible bus passes for their employees.
 - Performance Target 4:** Maintain a minimum on-bus advertising occupancy rate of 75% on full service buses at all times.
 - Performance Target 5:** Actively promote the passage of a statewide Regional Transportation Authority or Regional Transit Authority (RTA) enabling statute.

- Provide high-quality paratransit service at the lowest possible cost.

Performance Target 1: Bring the paratransit dispatching function in-house by the end of 2019.

Performance Target 2: Acquire six paratransit vehicles per year in 2020, 2021, and 2022 and lease the vehicles to a private provider.

- Explore a Demand Response/Dial-A-Ride Program.

Performance Target: Complete a study to determine if Metro would benefit from offering a Demand Response/Dial-A-Ride Program by the end of 2019.

5. Core Value and Goal: Ingenuity

Strategies:

- Metro should continue to use creative methods of providing and enhancing services that provide independence for individuals, connect people and jobs, and enhance the economy.

Performance Target 1: Continue the *Green Saturday* program that offers free bus rides to all.

Performance Target 2: Continue the Packers game day bus service and utilizing private sponsorships to pay for the service.

Performance Target 3: Continue to submit annual applications for Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds through the Green Bay MPO to fund the acquisition of vehicles and other capital items.

Conclusion

Green Bay Metro is an organization driven by strong executive leadership that approaches transit from a coordinated perspective, stresses customer focus, and operates safe, reliable public transportation. Green Bay Metro can leverage these strengths to continue improving ridership, public perception, community involvement, performance, and customer satisfaction.

In order to maintain Green Bay Metro's vision, mission, core values, and goals, Green Bay Metro's Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually to examine the effectiveness of the plan's strategies and progress toward achieving the plan's goals. The Strategic Plan will also be updated every five years to ensure it reflects current regulations, funding policies, and system priorities.

Adoption and Revision History

Adopted by the Green Bay Transit Commission on July 19, 2017.