

**In Support of Regional Transit Authorities
in the Fox Cities and Greater Green Bay Metro regions
March 2010**

We the undersigned individuals, organizations, businesses and institutions are in strong support of developing integrated and efficient transportation systems in the Fox Cities and Greater Green Bay Metro regions. And in providing reliable and sufficient funding to maintain, develop and operate these systems.

The future of transit in this region is in jeopardy. Upon the completion of the 2010 census, the Fox Cities and Greater Green Bay Metro areas are expected to exceed 200,000 in population. This is the threshold level for Federal Transportation funding. Both areas will lose federal transit operating funds.

- For Green Bay Metro, estimates range from \$550,000 up to \$2,500,000 in operating funds or up to 25% of Metro's 2008 operating budget.
- For Valley Transit, estimates are about \$1,500,000 in operating funds or 20% of its budget.
- Federal funds available to cities over 200,000 in population can be used for capital purchases but not for transit operations.

Under Wisconsin's current, antiquated rules, cities that provide transit must contract with one another and squeeze transit funding out of their general revenues, mainly from property taxes. The resulting unstable, under-funded transit systems cannot compete and cannot provide effective, equitable and sustainable service to our communities.

- For example, a study was completed in August 2009 of Green Bay Metro and its ability to serve the needs of low income residents, in particular providing access to jobs. The study found that more than half (59%) of those relying on bus transportation to work felt that transportation is a significant or moderate barrier to being employed.

We recognize the region as a dynamic one with a bright future. Building transportation connections between the Fox Cities and Greater Green Bay Metro areas, Great Lakes shipping, the Austin Straubel International and Outagamie County Regional Airports and the Lake Michigan transportation corridor are essential to this future. Our region needs the ability to create regional transit authorities.

Regional transit authorities provide the mechanism to make transit planning regional and systematic, rather than piecemeal. The current system of each municipality planning, developing and providing service on its own no longer makes sense. Authorizing the creation of regional transit authorities in our region will provide the framework and the ability to develop stable funding for transit services.

- In the Fox Cities area, over 15 letters of support for forming a Fox Valley Regional Transit Authority have been received from a variety of county, city, town and other local sources;
- In the Green Bay Metro service area, six resolutions supporting the formation of a Greater Green Bay Regional Transit Authority have been passed by City councils or Village boards.

Research shows that access to transportation is a major priority for business owners and commuters because it leads to economic growth while also providing options for getting around. New businesses will locate in cities where they will have reliable access to workers, and where travel connections with other large economic centers are quick, easy and help them grow their operations.

Moving forward, the need for public transit will only increase. Easy and modern transportation systems are moving higher on the checklist for businesses and workers looking for new places to locate. The Fox Cities and Greater Green Bay areas need to be positioned to compete with other cities and metropolitan areas.

Finally, the transportation sector accounts for 24% of Wisconsin's greenhouse gas emissions. According to the Urban Land Institute's report (July 2009) *Moving Cooler*, greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector can be reduced by improving the energy efficiency of vehicles, reducing the carbon content of fuels, reducing the number of vehicle miles driven, and improving the efficiency of the transportation system.

In conclusion, we support efforts to provide the Fox Cities and Greater Green Bay Metro areas with the tools, such as enabling legislation to create regional transit authorities, to develop integrated and efficient transportation systems and provide reliable and sufficient funding to maintain, develop and operate these systems.

IN SUPPORT:

Coalition for Advancing Transit (C.A.T.)
Southeastern Wisconsin Region
www.coalitionforadvancingtransit.wordpress.com

ECOS Fox Valley
516 Riverway
Menasha, WI 54952

Fox Valley Sierra Group of the John Muir
Chapter of the Sierra Club
P.O. Box 264
Appleton, WI 54912-0264
<http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/foxvalley/>

Green Bay Metro
901 University Avenue
Green Bay, WI 54302
<http://www.ci.green-bay.wi.us/transit/>

Green Bay Transit Alliance
www.savegreenbaymetro.com

League of Women Voters of Appleton
President, Shirley Strange
W3435 Equestrian Trail
Appleton, WI 54913
www.lwvappleton.org

League of Women Voters of Door County
PO Box 306
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

League of Women Voters of Greater Green Bay
1517 N Bay Highlands Drive
Green Bay, WI 54311
<http://greatergreenbay.wi.lwvnet.org/>

League of Women Voters of Manitowoc County
www.lwvmanitowoc.org

League of Women Voters of the Ripon Area
P.O. Box 5
Ripon, WI 54971
<http://riponarea.wi.lwvnet.org/>

League of Women Voters of Winnebago County
Kathleen Propp, President
1936 Hazel St.
Oshkosh WI 54901
<http://lwvwinnebago.org/>

Roger Kanitz
Connie Kanitz
516 Riverway
Menasha, WI 54952

David Littig, Ph.D.
former chairman, Green Bay Transit
Commission. and
Board Member, Bay Area Community Council

NEW North Sustainability Committee
C/O ISO International LLC
P.O. Box 463
De Pere, WI. 54115
www.thenewnorth.com/thenewnorth/home/sustainability+committee.asp

Sierrans on the Move
a project of:
The John Muir Chapter of the Sierra Club
222 S Hamilton St., Suite
Madison, WI 53703
<http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/>

Specialized Medical Vehicle Association of
Wisconsin
Wisconsin Rapids, WI

Sustainable Green Bay
C/O ISO International LLC
P.O. Box 463
De Pere, WI. 54115
www.ci.green-bay.wi.us/SGB/index.html

Valley Transit
801 S. Whitman Avenue
Appleton, WI 54914
www.MyValleyTransit.com

Liz Wessel, Owner
Green Concierge Travel
www.greenconciergetravel.com

Wisconsin Urban and Rural Transit Association
754 Williamson St
Madison, WI 53703
<http://www.wurta.com/wurta/>

Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually
Impaired
754 Williamson St
Madison, WI 53703
<http://www.wcblind.org/>

Wisconsin Association of Taxicab Owners
Viroqua, WI

Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group
(WISPIRG)
www.wispirg.org