

Minutes of the 1st Meeting of the

WAUKESHA AREA TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DATE: April 10, 2019
TIME: 1:00 p.m.
PLACE: Waukesha Metro Administration and Maintenance Facility
2311 Badger Drive
Waukesha, WI

Members Present

Mary Smith Manager, Waukesha County Department of Health and Human Services
Aging and Disabilities Resource Center
Jennifer Andrews Director of Community Development, City of Waukesha
Community Development Department
Evonne Johnson Transportation Manager, School District of Waukesha
Michelle Schaefer Chief Operating Officer, Easter Seals of Southeast Wisconsin
Kathy Gale Executive Director, Eras Senior Network
Nancy Justman President/CEO, Visit Brookfield
Dan Ertl Director of Community Development, City of Brookfield
Sarah Butz Director, Community Benefit, ProHealth Care
Amanda Payne Vice President, Public Policy, Waukesha County Business Alliance
Mark Blegen Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Carroll University
Joe Peterangelo Senior Researcher, Wisconsin Policy Forum
Maria Pandazi City Planner, City of Waukesha Community Development Department
Prasanna Nanda Director, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee Transportation Services
Tom Hagie Administrator, Town of Brookfield

Guests and Staff Present

Fred Abadi Director of Public Works, City of Waukesha
Matt Abrahamson Intern, ProHealth Care
Allison Bussler Director of Public Works, Waukesha County
Rhiannon Cupkie Manager, Administration, Waukesha County Department of Public Works
Brian Engelking Transit Director, City of Waukesha Metro
Kevin Muhs Executive Director, SEWRPC
Jennifer Sarnecki Principal Transportation Planner, SEWRPC
Xylia Rueda Transportation Planner, SEWRPC

ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Muhs called the first meeting of the Waukesha Area Transit Development Plan Advisory Committee to order at 1:05 p.m. Mr. Muhs indicated that a Chairperson will be selected before the next meeting. Mr. Muhs offered to facilitate the first meeting of the Advisory Committee unless there were objections from any Committee members. Mr. Muhs thanked everyone for attending and agreeing to serve on the Advisory Committee. Mr. Muhs stated that this process will take approximately 12 to 18 months and that there would

be approximately six additional meetings to discuss the City of Waukesha and Waukesha County Transit Development Plan. Attendance was taken by circulating a sign-in sheet for signature. Mr. Muhs asked the Committee members, guests, and staff to introduce themselves.

CONSIDERATION OF OUTLINE FOR SEWRPC COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PLANNING REPORT NO. 336, “WAUKESHA AREA TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN: 2021-2025”

Ms. Sarnecki provided an overview of the outline and a brief description of each chapter contained within the outline. During the review of the outline, Ms. Sarnecki noted that Commission staff propose combining the transit development plans for Waukesha Metro Transit and Waukesha County Transit, which would offer efficiencies in presenting information while providing recommendations for each transit service separately, as needed. She continued that the Racine County Public Transit Plan: 2013-2017, successfully combined the City and County transit services into one plan, while separating recommendations for the City of Racine Transit System and Racine County. Mr. Muhs further indicated that recommendations approved by the Advisory Committee related to Waukesha Metro Transit will be presented to the Waukesha Transit Commission and the recommendations for Waukesha County Transit will be presented to the Waukesha County Board. Ms. Sarnecki noted that Chapter 3, Public Transit Service Objectives and Standards, would be a key section in which the Commission staff would look to the Advisory Committee for input as to which transit service objectives, standards, and design criteria should be used to evaluate the performance of the existing bus service and identify any system changes.

During the review of the Outline, Mr. Muhs noted that there are typically one or two rounds of public meetings, one occurring between Chapters 5 and 6 (Transit Service Alternatives and Recommended Transit Service Alternatives, respectively), with a potential additional round of public meetings held between Chapters 2 and 3 (Existing Transit Services and Travel Patterns and Public Transit Service Objectives and Standards, respectively), or after Chapter 4 (Evaluation of the Existing Transit System). Mr. Muhs indicated that Commission staff will ask the Advisory Committee if public outreach should be conducted at these points in the planning process. Mr. Muhs further noted that each round of public meetings adds approximately two to three months to the schedule. During the review of the outline for the report, Committee members had the following questions or comments:

1. Mr. Ertl asked if there is a reliable way to forecast ridership particularly in areas that do not currently have transit service. Mr. Muhs stated that the Commission’s travel demand model can help estimate forecasted ridership on a specific corridor, such as Bluemound Road in Waukesha County. He stated that potential transit ridership in neighborhoods cannot be as accurately modeled and therefore, Commission staff would research peer transit services to estimate potential ridership.

There being no further discussion, the Outline for the Waukesha Area Transit Development Plan was approved on a motion by Ms. Bussler, seconded by Mr. Ertl, and carried unanimously by the Committee.

CONSIDERATION OF CHAPTER I, “INTRODUCTION”, OF SEWRPC COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PLANNING REPORT NO. 336, “WAUKESHA AREA TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN: 2021-2025”

At the request of Mr. Muhs, Ms. Sarnecki provided a summary of Chapter 1, which had been provided to the Committee members prior to the meeting. Ms. Sarnecki stated the last transit development plans for Waukesha Metro Transit and Waukesha County Transit were finalized in 2012 and 2001, respectively and indicated that updated plans would address changes in demographics and transit needs. Mr. Muhs noted that Commission staff will prepare an Executive Summary of the entire Transit Development Plan, which will be included in the final plan before Chapter 1. He further noted that the Executive Summary is intended

to provide highlights of the plan, including the recommended service improvements, to help communicate with members of the public, and elected and appointed officials.

The following questions and comments were made after Ms. Sarnecki's overview of Chapter 1 of the Waukesha Area Transit Development Plan:

1. Responding to a question from Ms. Payne, Ms. Sarnecki clarified that the term "suburban employment centers" was another term for business parks.

There being no further discussion, Chapter 1 of the Waukesha Transit Development Plan was approved on a motion by Ms. Payne, seconded by Ms. Smith, and carried unanimously by the Committee.

PRESENTATION OF EXISTING CITY OF WAUKESHA METRO AND WAUKESHA COUNTY TRANSIT SERVICES

Prior to the presentation, Mr. Muhs encouraged members to provide input on existing transit services, particularly the members that provide specialized transportation services or coordinate with senior taxi providers. Mr. Muhs noted that the presentation lists potential alternatives that may be considered as part of the planning process. He further noted that although it is early in the process, the initial feedback will be helpful for Commission staff as they prepare the plan. Ms. Sarnecki noted a board presenting a large map of existing transit service in Waukesha County was available for members to view in the corner of the room in the event the map located on the bottom of page 2 of the handout is too small.

Ms. Sarnecki proceeded to present a slideshow reviewing existing transit services provided by Waukesha Metro, Waukesha County Transit, and other transit service providers in Waukesha County. Members and guests were provided copies of the presentation prior to the start of the meeting. The full slideshow can be found online at the following location:

<http://www.sewrpc.org/SEWRPC/Transportation/TransitDevelopmentPlans/WaukeshaArea/agendas-minutes-materials.htm>

The following questions and comments were raised by the Committee members during Ms. Sarnecki's presentation:

1. Responding to a question from Ms. Gale, Mr. Engelking confirmed that Waukesha Metro Transit still offers a summer pass at a reduced rate for youth during the months of June, July, and August, which is currently \$35.00 for students between the ages of 5 and 18 with valid school identification.
2. In reference to the decrease in linked passenger trips shown on slides 7 and 15, Mr. Muhs stated that the trend in the number of linked passenger trips is not unusual and that the decline of ridership is occurring throughout the country. He further noted that factors impacting national ridership declines may include increased use of Uber and Lyft, or factors such as the increase in availability of high-interest subprime auto loans, which make auto ownership possible for borrowers with poor credit scores. He added that it is possible that auto loan default rates, which have been recently increasing, may cause growth in transit ridership in the future, resulting in instability in transit ridership trends. Responding to questions from Ms. Gale, Mr. Muhs stated that auto dealers offer in-house financing which, in theory, can make it easier to own a vehicle. He added that vehicle purchase assistance programs are also available but agreed that the number of these programs have decreased in the Region.

In response to a question from Ms. Gale, Ms. Sarnecki responded that the ridership and service levels shown on slides 7 and 15 do not include paratransit service. Ms. Gale subsequently requested that ridership and service trends be provided for paratransit services to understand if there has been an increase in riders due to the aging population.

[Secretary's Note: Commission staff developed separate graphs for Waukesha Metro paratransit service and Waukesha County paratransit service, which are attached to these meeting minutes.]

3. Responding to a question by Mr. Nanda, Mr. Muhs stated that revenue vehicle hours are the total number of hours that all buses provide service.
4. Mr. Ertl inquired how the State budget, which is expected to be completed by late summer 2019, will inform this planning process, and noted that the charts on slide numbers 8 and 16 showing Waukesha Metro and Waukesha County Transit Financial data, reflect the high dependency on State assistance. He emphasized the importance the State budget has on potential transit alternatives. Mr. Muhs responded that Governor Ever's proposed budget includes a ten percent increase in transit funding or approximately \$11 million by the second year of the biennium. However, changes could be made by the State Legislature through on-going budget deliberations. He added that there may be opportunities for compromise on transportation funding. Mr. Engelking added that even with the proposed increase of \$11 million, the funding levels would equate to what it once was in 2011, excluding the impact of inflation. Mr. Muhs added that the percentage of transit operating funds provided by the State have not kept pace with historical State policy goals for transit systems such as the City of Waukesha.
5. Mr. Muhs indicated that Commission staff will coordinate with Waukesha Metro staff to update the operating costs for Waukesha Metro and Waukesha County Transit provided in slide 8 and 16.

[Secretary's Note: Commission staff obtained financial statements for Waukesha Metro and Waukesha County for years 2011 through 2017 and updated the graphs, which are attached to these meeting minutes.]

6. Mr. Muhs clarified that the UW-Milwaukee campus mentioned in slide 10, Waukesha County Freeway Flyers, was in regard to the main campus on Kenwood Avenue in Milwaukee's eastside neighborhood, not the UW-Milwaukee campus in the City of Waukesha.
7. Mr. Muhs noted that a portion of the operating expenses for the Milwaukee County Transit System's Gold Line, as shown in slide 13, are paid by Waukesha County. The portion of the Gold Line that Waukesha County pays for operates on Bluemound Road from 124th to the Brookfield Square Mall.
8. Ms. Payne inquired how the ridership of 107,400 rides provided by the Route 1 extension in 2017, as shown on slide 12, compared to other years' ridership. Ms. Pandazi further asked if the ridership on the Route 1 extension was significant in relation to other Waukesha Metro routes. Mr. Engelking responded that Route 1 ridership is significant compared to ridership on the other Waukesha Metro routes and added that Route 1 has high ridership, second only to Route 4. Mr. Engelking further responded that Route 1 has experienced a slow increase in ridership in recent years.
9. Responding to a question by Mr. Peterangelo, Mr. Muhs stated that there is interest in maintaining the connection between Brookfield Square Mall and the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center, with a connection to the planned Bus Rapid Transit service to downtown Milwaukee. He added that

Milwaukee County and Waukesha County are working together to explore which entity will operate the segment. Mr. Muhs further responded that the East-West Bus Rapid Transit service, which would connect downtown Milwaukee with the Milwaukee Region Medical Center, is moving forward and that a potential operator of the connecting segment will likely be known prior to the completion of this Transit Development Plan. Responding to a question by Ms. Cupkie, Mr. Muhs estimated the Bus Rapid Transit service will begin operations in 2021, given that Milwaukee County is currently undertaking final design and that contracts are anticipated to be let this year.

10. In reference to slide 17, Other Transit Services in the Waukesha Area, Mr. Ertl recommended adding Elmbrook Senior Taxi to the list of other transit services. Ms. Sarnecki responded that Elmbrook Senior Taxi would be added to the list of other transit services as part of Chapter 2. Ms. Smith added that the Aging and Disability Resource Centers of Waukesha County provides specialized transportation services including the RideLine Program and Shared-Fare Taxi Program. She further noted that the Elmbrook Senior Taxi is a provider in their Shared-Fare Taxi Program. She indicated that the RideLine Program, which receives funding through the State, provides transportation services to Waukesha County residents who are non- or limited-drivers aged 65 and older and require an accessible vehicle, do not have taxi service available in their community, or need to travel outside the taxi service area. She further noted that the RideLine program is also available to Waukesha County residents who are under the age of 65 and have a disability or do not have taxi service available in their community or need to travel outside the taxi service area. She indicated that the RideLine Program provided approximately 16,000 rides in 2018. Ms. Smith also noted that the Shared-Fare Taxi Program is available to Waukesha County residents who are non- or limited-drivers, age 65 or older that can enter or exit a vehicle with little or no assistance, or Waukesha County residents who are under the age of 65 and are disabled but can enter or exit a vehicle with little or no assistance. She shared that the Aging and Disability Resource Center provides \$5.25 toward each ride. Ms. Smith indicated that the Shared-Fare Taxi Program provided approximately 46,000 rides in 2018 and included six non-profit taxis and two for-profit taxis.
11. In reference to slide 19, Potential Alternatives, Mr. Ertl noted that it will be important to have Waukesha businesses involved regarding any potential funding partnerships. He further noted that the process should encourage outreach to businesses to seek their support for potential transit alternatives. Mr. Muhs agreed, and added that Commission staff and the Wisconsin Policy Forum have been working with Menomonee Valley Partners in Milwaukee on non-traditional services, such as potential partnerships with Lyft and Uber. He further noted that this process will likely provide data on potential costs and operations that will help develop estimated costs to Waukesha area businesses. Ms. Payne added that there seems to be greater willingness from employers to find ways to contribute financially to employment transportation services. She noted that flexibility is important and cited the example of vans purchased with pooled funds by employers in New Berlin to transport workers.
12. Ms. Bussler indicated that the transit system is dependent on State and Federal funding and added that rides provided by private shared-ride vehicles, such as Lyft and Uber, may not be eligible for federal funds. She continued that the County would be willing to develop a pilot project that is funded from a blend of sources such as the State, employer, local government, and the passenger. Mr. Muhs indicated that the Commute to Careers funding program, which occurred in the summer and fall of 2018, could be a potential funding opportunity if the program is continued in some form in the future. Mr. Muhs further indicated that shared-ride trips may become eligible for Federal funding if the regulations are updated as a result of a recent Federal Register notice, which could modify how Lyft or Uber trips are reported, thereby providing future partnership opportunities. Responding to a question by Ms. Bussler, Mr. Muhs stated that there are opportunities to partner with Lyft and Uber.

13. Ms. Gale questioned if drivers for Uber and Lyft earn sufficient wages as compared to other drivers who may work for local taxi companies. She requested that local and regional taxi providers be included in any potential shared-ride partnership considered by the Advisory Committee. Ms. Gale further inquired if Waukesha County could explore a shared-ride taxi service, similar to those operated by Washington County and Ozaukee County. Ms. Gale also noted that Waukesha County is implementing the Find-A-Ride Network call center pilot in Menomonee Falls. She further noted that private funding from businesses may not be part of the long-term solution and requested more information on the local, State, and Federal contributions to the shared-ride taxi programs in Washington County and Ozaukee County. Mr. Muhs responded that staff will consider the costs of a shared-ride taxi service for Waukesha County and provide information regarding the local, State, and Federal funding assistance for each taxi service.
14. Responding to a question by Mr. Peterangelo, Mr. Engelking stated that “expanded partnerships” (as written on slide 19) is a request to the Committee for ideas that could offer greater efficiencies in the provision of transit services. Mr. Muhs stated that this topic will be discussed in more detail during the alternatives analysis portion of the plan. Ms. Bussler indicated that expanded partnerships could be explored as part of the discussions between Waukesha County and Milwaukee County regarding extending bus rapid transit westward. Ms. Butz added that partnerships could be expanded with healthcare providers and indicated that the ProHealth Cancer Center in Pewaukee may be one example where healthcare providers and Waukesha Metro could partner to extend service to that location on STH 164, approximately one-quarter mile north of IH 94. Mr. Muhs stated that route extensions can be considered as part of the transit planning process. Ms. Bussler inquired if it would be possible for businesses to consider transit service during the site selection process and suggested that economic development groups and business organizations could help to share transit service information with businesses during the site selection process.
15. Ms. Gale suggested having Committee members utilize Waukesha Metro Transit service as it is important to experience especially if serving on a Committee such as this. She stated that it would be a great way to showcase the safety of the transit system and the technical advances that have been made.
16. Responding to a question by Ms. Smith, Mr. Muhs stated that ridership demographics, such as age, will be provided in Chapter 2 of the plan entitled, “Existing Transit Services and Travel Patterns.” Mr. Engelking added that overall younger riders are not replacing baby boomers, who are retiring from their jobs and no longer commuting to downtown Milwaukee. Mr. Muhs further noted that there may also a lack of awareness among potential riders of the existing transit options. Mr. Engelking indicated that Waukesha Metro’s core riders are between the ages of 18 and 54 and that there are not many school-aged riders. He stated that younger riders are more likely to utilize transit services that are fast and efficient. Mr. Blegen added that raising awareness of available transit options is a key component. Mr. Muhs responded that a good example of raising awareness is the transit service information provided by the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Waukesha County.
17. Ms. Pandazi inquired if the Transit Development Plan will consider options to connect Waukesha County residents to the Foxconn Manufacturing Campus in Racine County, such as additional freeway flyers in combination with an expanded network of park-ride lots. Mr. Muhs stated that vanpools could be a viable transportation option because of the substantial distance between Waukesha County and Foxconn and that Commission staff will consider additional options for the Advisory Committee’s consideration. He noted that the State of Wisconsin currently operates a vanpool program between outlying communities and State office buildings in Madison.

18. In response to potential alternatives provided on slide 19, Ms. Pandazi requested that commuter rail service be included, specifically identifying potential local transit connections, even though implementation will likely occur beyond the five year planning horizon of the Transit Development Plan.
19. Responding to a question by Mr. Ertl regarding the opportunity for the Transit Development Plan to influence State and local budgets, Mr. Muhs stated that the timing of the Waukesha Area Transit Development Plan would not align with the current State budget process, which is scheduled to be completed in summer 2019. However, Mr. Muhs added that the intent is to complete the Transit Development Plan in time to be considered during 2021 budget season for the City of Waukesha and Waukesha County. He added that plan recommendations would be provided separately to the Waukesha County Public Works Committee and the City of Waukesha Transit Commission based on their implementation authority. Mr. Muhs further indicated that the plan would be framed to identify reasonable transit service recommendations under different funding levels including unchanged funding, increased funding, and decreased funding.

NEXT MEETING OF THE WAUKESHA AREA TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr. Muhs stated that the next meeting of the Advisory Committee will occur in approximately two months and that members will be contacted regarding their availability. In response to Mr. Muhs, the Committee members agreed that future meetings can be scheduled Wednesday afternoons.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on a motion by Mr. Blegen, and seconded by Ms. Pandazi, and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 2:37 p.m.

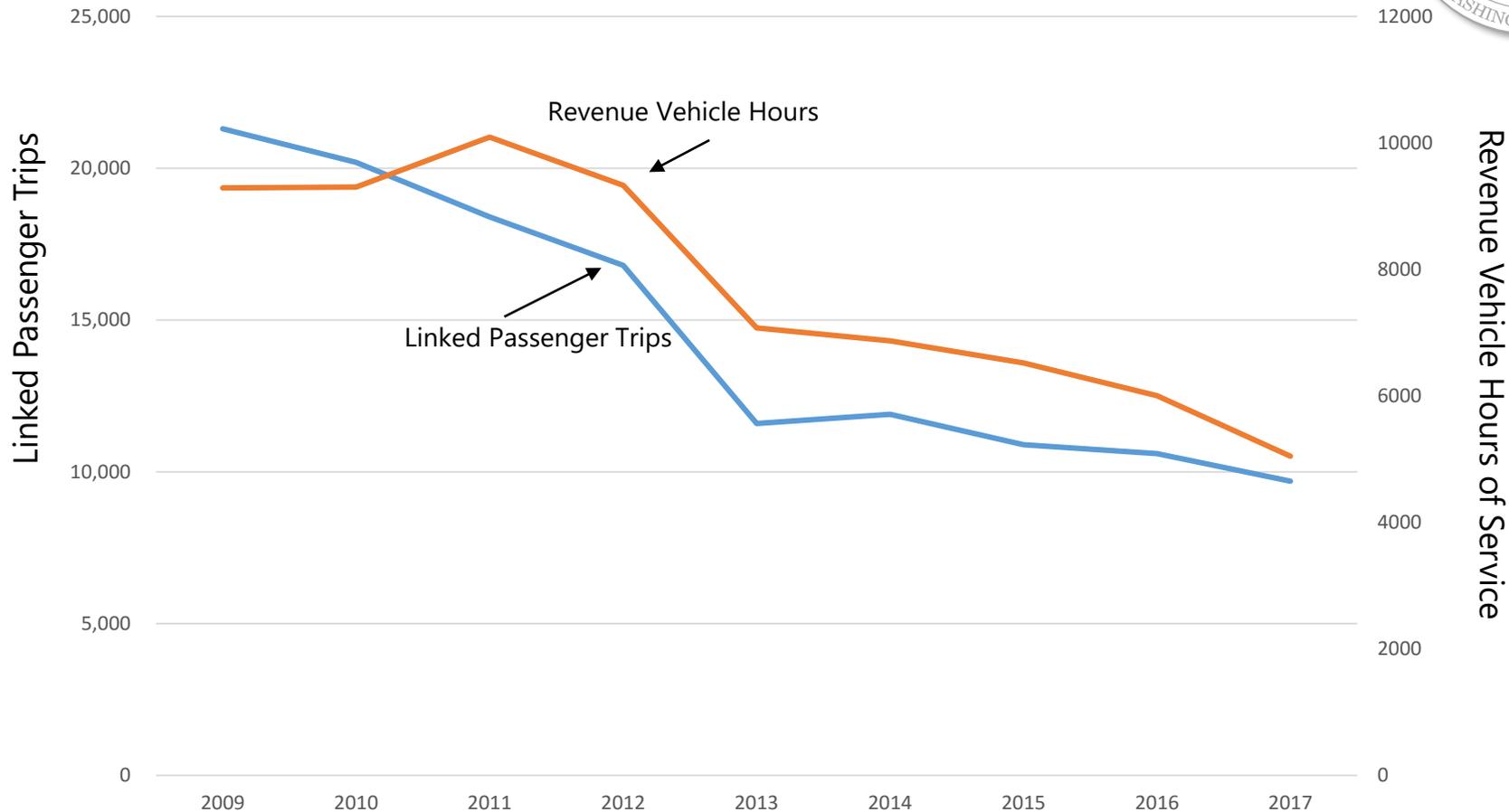
Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Muhs
Recording Secretary

Waukesha Metro Paratransit (Metrolift) Ridership & Service Levels



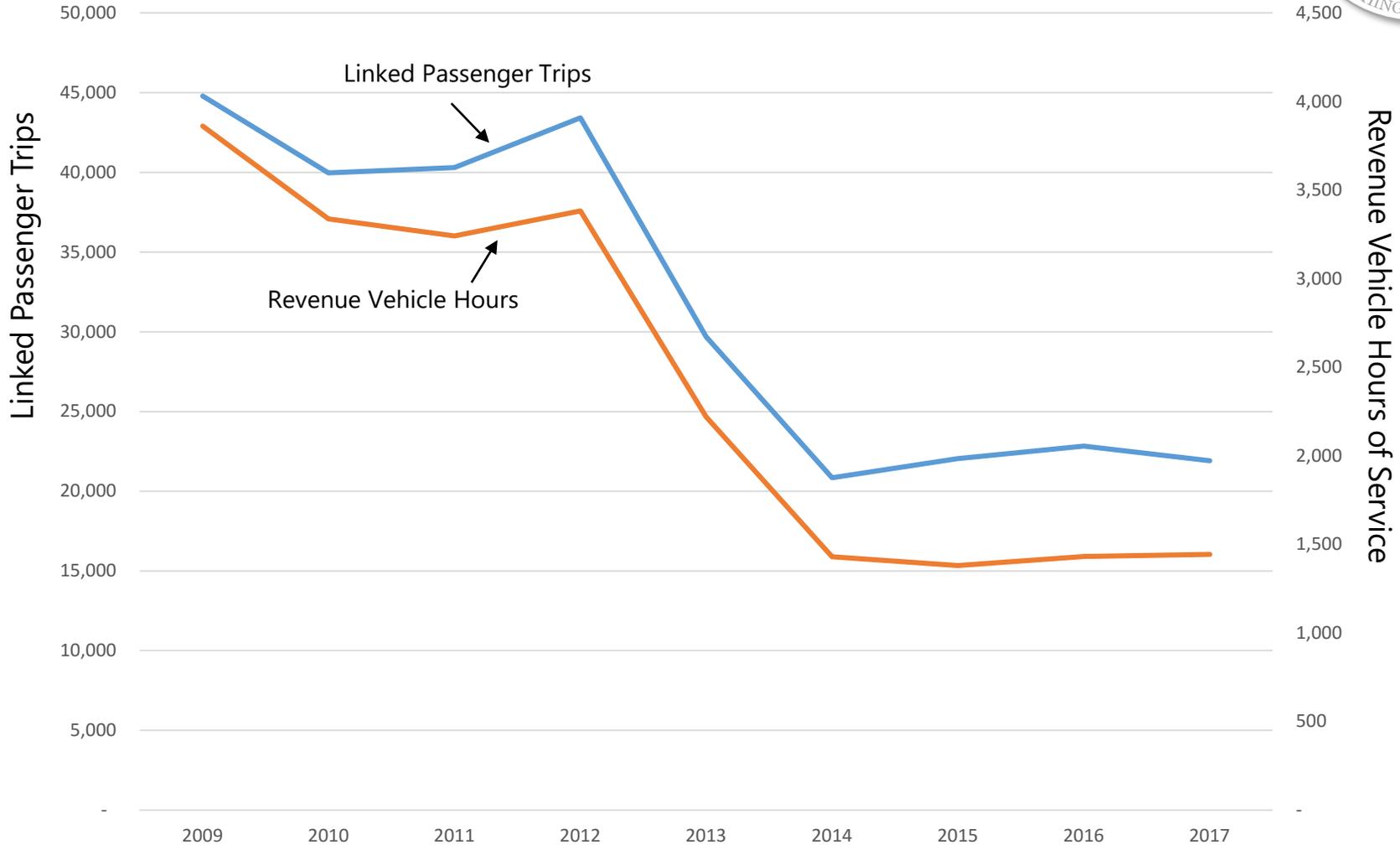
Added May 2, 2019



Waukesha County Paratransit Ridership & Service Levels



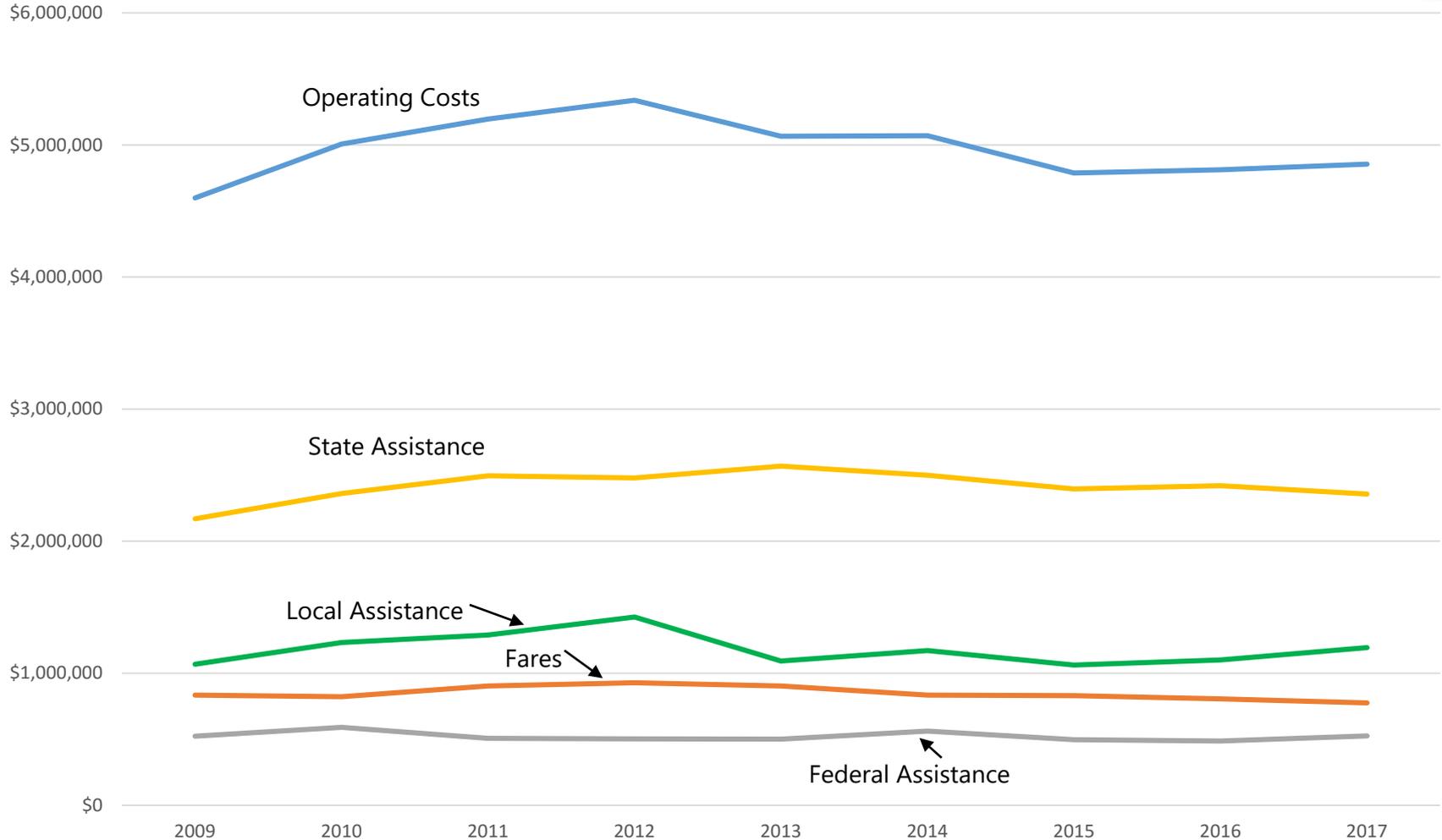
Added May 2, 2019



Waukesha Metro Financial Data



Updated May 2, 2019



Waukesha County Transit Financial Data



Updated May 2, 2019

