

## Chapter I

# INTRODUCTION

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At the request of Washington County, the Regional Planning Commission prepared this transit system operations analysis and short-range service plan for the County. The last short-range transit development plan prepared by the Commission for the County covered the period from 1998 through 2002.<sup>1</sup> This new plan is needed in order for the transit system to respond to changes in residential, industrial, and commercial development occurring within the County and the Southeastern Wisconsin Region, as well to adjust service to reflect the needs of existing Washington County Transit System users.

This operations analysis and short-range service plan was conducted within the context of the continuing regional transportation planning program. In 2010, the Commission reviewed, updated, and reaffirmed a regional transportation system plan with a design year of 2035.<sup>2</sup> That plan includes a public transit element that recommends a doubling of transit service in the Region over a 30-year period (see Map 1). The regional plan also has some specific recommendations that pertain to Washington County:

- Initiate new and expand existing rapid transit connections—provided by buses with commuter seating and amenities operating over freeways—between Washington, Waukesha, and Milwaukee Counties. The regional plan recommends that the existing service be extended, with the route starting just north of the City of West Bend. A second route is recommended starting in the City of Hartford, and providing service through the Village of Slinger to Milwaukee County. Under the recommended plan, both routes would operate in both directions all day and evening, providing both traditional commuter and reverse-commute service between Washington, northeastern Waukesha, and Milwaukee Counties. Buses would leave every 20 minutes during peak periods, and every 30 to 60 minutes during off-peak periods.
- Initiate local shuttle service within the City of West Bend and the Village of Germantown to provide access to employers from the reverse-commute rapid transit service from Milwaukee and northeastern Waukesha Counties. The shuttle service would operate a schedule that coordinates with the arrival and departure of rapid transit buses from park-ride lots in the Village of Germantown and City of West Bend.

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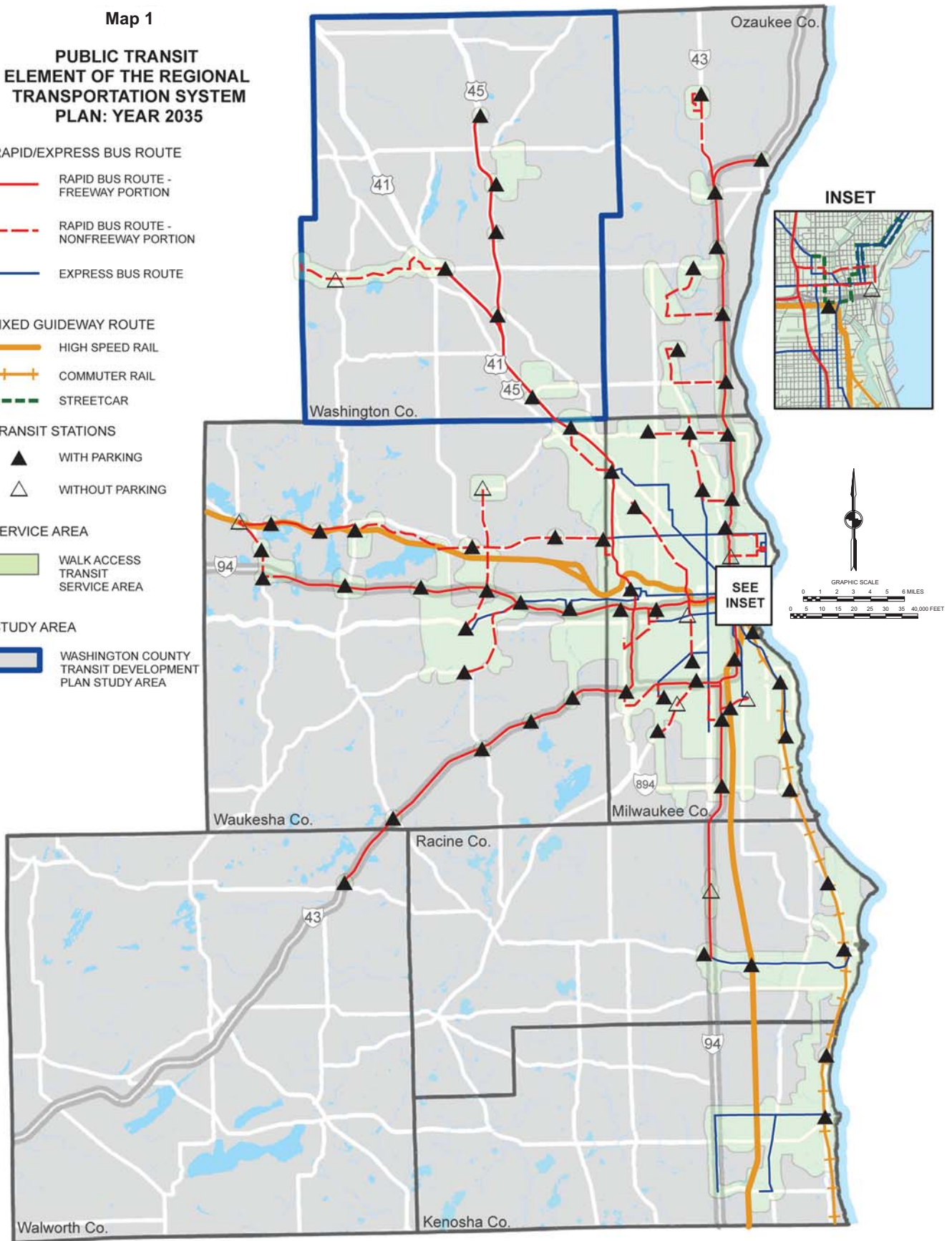
<sup>1</sup>See *SEWRPC Community Assistance Planning Report No. 223, A Public Transit Service Plan for Washington County: 1998-2002, November 1996.*

<sup>2</sup>See *SEWRPC Memorandum Report No. 197, Review, Update and Reaffirmation of the Year 2035 Regional Transportation Plan, June 2010.*

Map 1

**PUBLIC TRANSIT  
ELEMENT OF THE REGIONAL  
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM  
PLAN: YEAR 2035**

- RAPID/EXPRESS BUS ROUTE**
  - RAPID BUS ROUTE - FREEWAY PORTION
  - RAPID BUS ROUTE - NONFREEWAY PORTION
  - EXPRESS BUS ROUTE
  
- FIXED GUIDEWAY ROUTE**
  - HIGH SPEED RAIL
  - COMMUTER RAIL
  - STREETCAR
  
- TRANSIT STATIONS**
  - WITH PARKING
  - WITHOUT PARKING
  
- SERVICE AREA**
  - WALK ACCESS TRANSIT SERVICE AREA
  
- STUDY AREA**
  - WASHINGTON COUNTY TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN STUDY AREA



Source: SEWRPC.

This operations analysis and short-range service planning study is considered an initial stage of implementation of the adopted regional plan. The transit development plan is short-range in nature, covering the period 2015-2019, and is based on a performance review of the existing county transit system, and analyses of the travel habits, patterns, and needs of system users based on travel data and surveys collected in 2012. The plan proposes a set of recommended service changes for the transit system and identifies the forecasted ridership, service levels, and operating and capital expenses that would be expected from implementing the changes.

This operations analysis and service plan is documented in the following chapters of this report:

- Chapter 2, “Existing Transit Services and Travel Patterns,” which describes the public transit system in Washington County, provides the travel patterns of existing ridership, and summarizes the other major transit services presently available in the County.
- Chapter 3, “Public Transit Service Objectives and Standards,” which provides a set of transit service objectives, supporting performance standards, and design criteria that are used to evaluate the performance of the existing bus and taxi services; to design any changes to the existing transit services; and to evaluate service alternatives.
- Chapter 4, “Evaluation of the Washington County Transit System,” which describes how well the existing transit services meet the performance standards, thereby identifying service-related problems, successes, and deficiencies.
- Chapter 5, “Transit Service Alternatives for the Washington County Transit System,” which identifies, describes, and evaluates potential service changes, and provides forecasts of ridership, service levels, and costs for each alternative.
- Chapter 6, “Recommended Transit Service Plan,” which sets forth a description of the transit service improvements that have been considered and recommended by the Washington County Transit Development Plan Advisory Committee and a plan for the implementation of the identified service improvements.
- Chapter 7, “Summary and Conclusions,” which provides a brief overview of the significant findings and recommendations of the study.