

ESTABLISHING GOALS FOR REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY LEGISLATION

South central Wisconsin is becoming an integrated urban economy that is larger, more private-sector driven, and more geographically dispersed than in the past. In this era of change, Dane County needs a modern, efficient, regional, transportation system that is focused on connecting more people to jobs.

Transit ridership in Dane County is near all-time highs, and per-capita ridership of the Madison Metro Transit System is in the top 15 in the nation, outperforming cities with far larger population such as Miami, FL (5.5 million), San Diego, CA (2.9 million), and the Twin Cities (2.6 million).

Transit services in Wisconsin are regional in their service area, yet each is owned by a single municipality. (Milwaukee's transit system is owned by a county, although by a legal definition might also be considered a municipality).

To be effective and efficient transit systems should have regional governance, budgeting, operations, and planning. Regional transportation authorities (RTA) could provide a regional focus, create predictable and stable funding, and relieve pressure on property taxpayers.

State law must authorize a process and establish standards for the creation of an RTA, but the decision whether to actually form an RTA and how much funding it would need would be made by the local residents. Enacting RTA legislation in Wisconsin would help numerous metropolitan areas including Fox Valley, Eau Claire, and La Crosse.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the details of RTA legislation should be flexible enough to adapt to local needs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the authorizing legislation for an RTA should have following basic parameters:

- A representative RTA could be formed by two or more municipal governing bodies passing resolutions in support
- A referendum would need to be adopted by a majority of voters in each municipality forming, or seeking to join the RTA
- The amount of the sales tax would need to be authorized in the referendum, but could not exceed 0.5%
- The governing board would be comprised of elected officials, representative of the communities within the RTA area.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dane County is committed to continuing discussions with community leaders, business and other local governments about advocating for RTA legislation.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor Scott Walker and the Dane County legislative delegation.