

# TRANSPORTATION ACCESS

# in MADISON

## from **ARRIVE TOGETHER:** Transportation Access and Equity in Wisconsin

The report examined the effectiveness and equitability of transportation in nine cities and major metropolitan regions across Wisconsin. This examination is a culmination of 2010 U.S. Census data, figures provided by public transportation systems, the state of Wisconsin, and direct personal interviews with transit riders. The report concludes that, while each community faces unique challenges in providing transportation access to employment, medical services, major businesses, local attractions or other points of interest, the absence of consistent and sufficient funding for public transportation is a major hurdle across the board. Inadequate financial support from federal and state governments and an inability to raise additional resources through local funding mechanisms like Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) are making it increasingly difficult for local public transportation systems statewide to provide mobility for all.

### **MADISON METRO OVERVIEW**

Madison Metro Transit serves the City of Madison, as well as the cities of Middleton, Fitchburg, Verona, the Town of Madison, and the Village of Shorewood Hills. Madison Metro is the second largest transit system in the state of Wisconsin. With approximately 60 fixed routes, Madison Metro services many popular destinations like grocery stores, hospitals, healthcare facilities, libraries and institutions for higher education. The service includes four routes that specifically serve the UW-Madison campus. Madison Metro Transit routes heavily service popular tourist locations such as State Street, Capitol Square, and other central locations. Madison Metro offers paratransit van rides for those who are unable to use fixed routes.

### **TRANSIT SYSTEM BARRIERS**

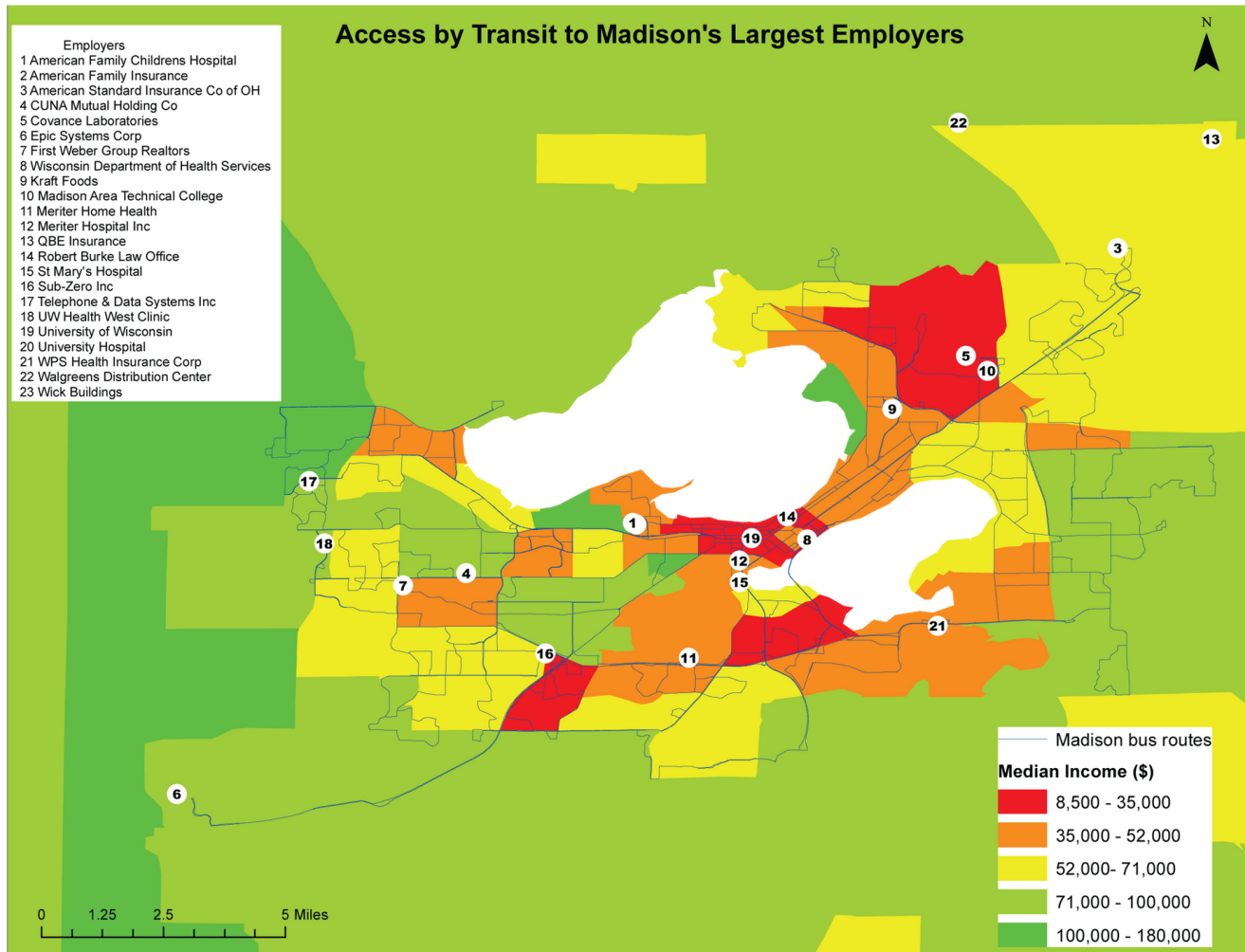
Despite various fixed routes and paratransit options, there are still large portions of Madison and its surrounding municipalities that are underserved both in number and frequency of routes. While Metro Transit would like to expand its bus fleet, the current bus garage is over capacity and without investment for a new garage, Metro says it cannot expand its fleet and is therefore add new lines that would better serve areas in the city and in surrounding municipalities.



## TRANSIT TO MADISON'S LARGEST EMPLOYERS

The map shows transit access to the 25 largest employers in the Madison area as well as median income levels (taken from the 2010 US Census). In 2011, African Americans were “almost 5.5 times more likely to be jobless than their white neighbors.” The percentage of children living in poverty is also much higher in the Black population than in the white population. Low income and high unemployment present barriers to owning personal vehicles, making transit even more important in the city's

Communities of Color. This economic inequality is not only demographic; it is also geographic, with the majority of Madison's low income population living in peripheral neighborhoods, especially on the south and northeast sides of the city.



The map was created by 1000 Friends of Wisconsin. For full report: [sierraclub.org/wisconsin/ArriveTogetherReport](http://sierraclub.org/wisconsin/ArriveTogetherReport)

## OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND SERVICE AND FUNDING

Longer hours of operation, more frequent runs, improved collaboration between municipalities, and funding methods that encourage regional transit planning could all be of great benefit to transit-users. While Metro has continued to better serve riders, investment in transit from the state has decreased, starting with the budget passed in 2011. That makes it even more challenging for smaller cities to buy into Metro transit, as local funds are often strapped between addressing other local needs. Increased funding from the state to local governments, or more coordinated funding between local municipalities, perhaps through an RTA, are two potential solutions to this problem.

“I have to get up shortly after 3:00 am, so that I can leave around 5:00 am to catch my bus in the morning. I get to work at 6:00 am. I work until 2:30 pm. I get home around 4:00 pm... But, I only live about a 19-20 minute drive from work. Every morning I have to catch three different buses to work and three different buses home from work. That means that in the winter I have two short walks and six different times I have to stand out in the freezing cold waiting for a bus... If I am one minute late, I will be 30 minutes late for work because the buses don't run frequently enough. I try to make sure this never happens, but it adds a high level of stress to my mornings and to the end of my work day.”

-Brinnan, Madison