



Office of the Legislative Auditor
State of Minnesota

Governance of Transit in the Twin Cities Region

October 2011

Twin Cities Region Transit Overview

- Regular-route bus
 - Express
 - Local
- Light rail transit
- Commuter rail
- Bus rapid transit
- 2009 operating costs: \$319 million
- 2009 riders: 81 million

Key Legislative Recommendations

- The Legislature should restructure the Metropolitan Council.
- The Legislature should extend the transit taxing district.
- The Legislature should allow consideration of the Dan Patch corridor.
- The Legislature should clarify the goals and priorities of transit in the Twin Cities region.

The Region's Transit System Performs Relatively Well

- Compared to 11 peers, including Denver, Phoenix, Portland, and Seattle
- Performed well on “efficiency” measures
 - Operating cost per passenger
 - Fare-recovery percentage
 - Subsidy per passenger
 - Subsidy per passenger mile

Efficiency Measures

Measure	Twin Cities Region	TC Region Rank	Best	Worst
Operating cost per passenger	\$3.24	4	\$2.59 (San Diego)	\$5.36 (Dallas-Fort Worth)
Fare-recovery percentage	31%	2	35% (San Diego)	13% (Dallas-Fort Worth)
Subsidy per passenger	\$2.24	2	\$1.68 (San Diego)	\$3.59 (Pittsburgh)
Subsidy per passenger mile	\$0.45	2	\$0.35 (San Diego)	\$0.82 (Dallas-Fort Worth)

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- Performed well on “efficiency” measures
 - Operating cost per passenger
 - Fare-recovery percentage
 - Subsidy per passenger
 - Subsidy per passenger mile
- Performed well on “service-use” and “access” measures

Service-Use Measures

Measure	Twin Cities Region	TC Region Rank	Best	Worst
Passengers per revenue hour	37	4	49 (Baltimore)	21 (Tampa)
Passengers per revenue mile	2.8	3	3.2 (Portland)	1.5 (Tampa)
Passenger miles per revenue hour	183	3	315 (Baltimore)	104 (Tampa)
Passenger miles per revenue mile	14.2	3	19.7 (Baltimore)	7.7 (Tampa)

But the Region's Transit Governance Structure is Far From Ideal

Washington County Regional
Railroad Authority

Washington County Board

Anoka County Regional
Railroad Authority

Anoka County Board

Carver County Regional
Railroad Authority

Carver County Board

The Metropolitan Council
- Metro Transit
- Metropolitan Transportation Services

Transportation
Advisory Board
(TAB)

Scott County Regional
Railroad Authority

Scott County Board

Ramsey County Regional
Railroad Authority

Ramsey County Board

Hennepin County Regional
Railroad Authority

Hennepin County Board

Dakota County Regional
Railroad Authority

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Dakota County Board

Shakopee Transit

Prior Lake
Transit

Maple Grove
Transit

SouthWest Transit

Plymouth Metrolink

The Minnesota Valley
Transit Authority

Red Rock Corridor
Commission

I-35W Solutions
Alliance

Gateway Corridor
Commission

I-494 Corridor
Commission

Rush Line Corridor
Task Force

Challenges Due to the Transit Governance Structure

- Fragmentation and complexity
- Distrust among some of the transit organizations
- Time-consuming coordination
- No agreed-upon set of priorities

The Composition of the Metropolitan Council Contributes to the Challenges

- Appointed by the Governor
- Limited accountability to the public
- Limited credibility with stakeholders and other transit organizations in region
- Limited stability
- Contributes to large number of transit organizations in the region

The Legislature Should Restructure the Metropolitan Council

- Mix of appointed and elected members
- Serve staggered terms
- Would improve:
 - Accountability
 - Credibility
 - Stability
- Could lead to more streamlined governance

Other Governance Recommendations

- Transportation Advisory Board (TAB)
- Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB)
- Metro Transit and the Metropolitan Council
- Suburban transit providers

Other Recommendations

- The Legislature should extend the transit taxing district to include all communities under the Council's jurisdiction
- The Legislature should allow consideration of the Dan Patch corridor

***Governance of Transit in the
Twin Cities Region***

is available at:

www.auditor.leg.state.mn.us