



Chair

Mick Hatch
Foley & Lardner LLP

President

Bruce Keyes
Foley & Lardner LLP

Vice-President

Jeff Morgan
Allied Insulation Supply

Secretary

Michele Bria, Ph.D.
Journey House

Treasurer

Pat O'Connor
Retired - formerly BMO

Members

Jennifer Bognar Zierer
We Energies

Chytania Brown
Employ Milwaukee

Lafayette Crump
Milwaukee Department of
City Development

Bill Davidson
Harley-Davidson Museum

Ed Eberle
Wisconsin Legislature

Laura Goranson
g.moxie

Katherine Lazarski
Milwaukee Metropolitan
Sewerage District

Kerry Janovtich
Potawatomi Hotel & Casino

Paul Jones
Marquette University

Jerrel Kruschke
Milwaukee Department of
Public Works

Gene Manzanet
Wisconsin Economic
Development Corp.

Julie Penman
Penman Consulting

Steve Raasch
Zimmerman Architectural
Studios

Sheri Schmit
Milwaukee Regional
Medical Center

Craig Thompson
Wisconsin Department of
Transportation

Tracy Wymelenberg
Ascension

Dashal Young
Wisconsin Community
Services

May 17, 2023

Dear {Legislator on Joint Finance},

On behalf of Menomonee Valley Partners, I am writing to share our grave concerns about the current budget shortfall facing MCTS and the impact of that on employers and employees who depend on a safe and reliable transit system. The Menomonee River Valley is home to nearly 10,000 employees across more than 125 businesses, many of them in industries that are drivers of not only our local economy but our state economy. Between the Valley's major tourist destinations – American Family Field, Harley-Davidson Museum, and Potawatomi Casino Hotel – we see nearly 10 million visitors annually. Our stakeholders are asking for **more transit options** to serve employees and visitors, but the current budget not only doesn't meet that need, it fails to provide for the current service we rely upon every day.

MCTS is an integral part of Milwaukee's overall transportation infrastructure. Unfortunately, the system is in grave financial danger. With the end of federal ARPA funding and looming cuts at both the county and state levels, MCTS faces a projected \$26.5 million budget shortfall in 2025. If that becomes reality, service could be cut (or even eliminated) on almost **HALF OF MCTS ROUTES**.

To put that in a broader context, that means nearly 8 million MCTS bus rides won't happen, **74,000 local employees lose their ride to work**, and 2,300 businesses (including Summerfest) lose bus service. And this is more than just a Milwaukee issue. Large regional employers rely on MCTS to deliver their employees. If transit reductions cause labor-related slowdowns at Milwaukee-area companies, it's not only riders who will feel the pain.

As members of this community, we want to voice our support for increased state-level financial support for the Milwaukee County Transit System. More specifically, we support the efforts of Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley and the Move Forward MKE coalition to create sustainable local funding through at least a 1% sales tax.

Milwaukee County is the economic heart of Wisconsin and businesses across the state rely on its economic health. Please work with your colleagues to restore state funding levels for this critical part of Wisconsin's transportation infrastructure.

If you do, we all win.

Sincerely,

Corey Zetts
Executive Director