

Metro Ride

2020 Executive Summary



❖ SERVICES PROVIDED

- 7 regular routes operating on Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m.
- 10 express routes operating on school days.
- Weekly grocery shopping route for seniors.
- ADA Paratransit service for persons with disabilities.

❖ COVID-19 RESPONSE

- Metro Ride remained in operation to provide transportation for essential workers.
- Express routes were eliminated when schools were closed.
- Bus operators were reassigned to carry out new cleaning/disinfecting protocols.
- Passenger capacity was limited to ensure proper social distancing.
- Passenger fare collection was suspended.
- Plexiglass barriers were installed in driver compartments on all buses.

❖ CARES ACT FUNDS

- Purchased driver barriers.
- Offset the loss of passenger revenue and made transportation access affordable for customers.
- Offset the cost of PPE, cleaning and disinfection equipment.
- Provided temporary relief for structural funding gap (declining state/federal funds).
- Future replacement of fareboxes.
- Future acquisition of technology to provide real-time information to customers.

❖ VW FUNDS

- Replacement of seven buses.

❖ CHALLENGES AHEAD

- Cares Act funds are temporary and not a sustainable funding source for ongoing operations.
- State transit funding is lower today than it was a decade ago and a greater share of transit expenses has shifted to the City of Wausau.
- Levy limits and reduced shared revenue payments leave the City with few transit funding options. That has caused significant service cuts, higher passenger fares and declining ridership over the last decade.
- Many employment and retail opportunities in the Wausau area are not accessible to transit users.
- Transit service levels are insufficient to meet the needs of workers and employers as the economy rebounds in the Wausau area.



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