

Washington County Transit Needs Study

From 2025 through early 2026, Washington County will be updating a 2018 Transit Needs Study, to evaluate the transportation needs of Washington County residents, with a focus on people with disabilities, limited mobility, seniors, people with low or limited income, transit dependent populations, and those who need access to jobs with non-traditional work hours. Project objectives:

- Evaluate the current state of transportation for transit-dependent individuals in Washington County
- Identify gaps and barriers to mobility
- Identify and quantify county resources being used to provide transportation services
- Identify future transportation needs
- Recommend strategies to address those needs

The transit landscape in Washington County includes the following elements:

Local Bus Service

Local bus routes form the base of the transit network in the Minneapolis-St. Paul Region and operate on a set schedule, along designated routes, and with signed stops. Examples:

- [Metro Transit Route 219](#)
- [Metro Transit Route 323](#)



Express Bus Service

Commuter and express bus routes mostly operate during rush hour times, serving commuters going downtown or to a major employment center. These routes typically operate on highways for portions of the route between picking up passengers at a few stops in residential areas or park-and-ride facilities. Examples:

- [Metro Transit Route 294](#)
- [Metro Transit Route 363](#)



Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Bus rapid transit is a high-frequency bus service that typically operates every day of the week, early morning to late evening, and is faster than a local bus – often compared to rail service. It uses technology and infrastructure to improve speed and reliability of service, you pay before you get on the bus, and the bus stops less frequently. The region uses bus rapid transit on high-demand corridors to provide a convenient and reliable rider experience that encourages transit use. Washington County is served by **METRO Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit** Service.



Demand Response Transit Services

Demand response is a broad category of transit services that fulfill different roles based on the size of their service area, how far in advance rides must be reserved, and who is eligible to use the service. Types of demand response service in Washington County include:



General Public Dial-a-Ride Service

Transit Link is the public dial-a-ride service operated by the Metropolitan Council in Washington County. It is intended to build upon the regular-route network and is only available for trips that cannot be accomplished on regular routes alone. Transit Link trips may drop off passengers at major transfer points to complete their trip on the fixed-route network.

ADA Paratransit

Paratransit service is public transportation for certified riders who are unable to use the regular fixed-route bus due to a disability or health condition and is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. This service is operated by the Metropolitan Council and is branded as **Metro Mobility**.

Microtransit

Microtransit provides on-demand, shared-ride transit service within a defined zone. The zone is usually small enough to keep wait times for pickup short. In Washington County this service is currently operated within a zone in Woodbury and is branded as **Metro Micro**.

Community Circulators

Community Circulators are **bus loops** that help residents get to important places like grocery stores, clinics/hospitals, restaurants, banks, and businesses. On demand stops within a short distance of the regular route can be requested. Circulator routes are currently in service in the following communities:

- Forest Lake
- White Bear Lake, Vadnais Heights, and Mahtomedi
- Stillwater and Oak Park Heights
- Oakdale
- Cottage Grove

Other transportation modes include **volunteer driver services**, private ride-hailing services like **Uber** and **Lyft**, **vanpools**, and **taxis**, or **shared rides** from family or friends.