

Representing Our Routes

Legislative Roundtable to Fund the Transit Service We Deserve



Pittsburghers for Public Transit



Pittsburghers for Public Transit and elected officials are championing legislative opportunities to fund the frequent, reliable and world-class public transit service our region deserves.

From Fox Chapel to Brentwood, McKeesport to McKees Rocks, all of us want our communities to be inclusive and vibrant. Public transit gives us a healthy, clean and affordable way for everyone to get around. But for too long, politicians at our local, state and federal level have not funded the transit service our regions need—and that has come at a big cost to our economy, our air quality, and our access to jobs and critical services.

We're here today to lay out a bold vision for quality baseline transit service, and to celebrate the legislative champions for the public transit operating funding opportunities at the local, state and federal levels that could make this vision a reality.

See how elected officials are taking action at all levels:



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Investment in quality public transit service yields dividends



Economy

For every \$10 million invested in transit service, businesses in the community see \$32 million in increased sales.¹



Equity

Investing in quality transit service is the most profound way to support economic mobility, because commute times are the #1 indicator of whether a household can come out of poverty.²



Environment

A trip on public transit emits 55 percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions than driving or ride hailing alone,³ and significantly reduces local air pollution. This is especially necessary as transportation emissions are the largest contributor to climate change in the US.

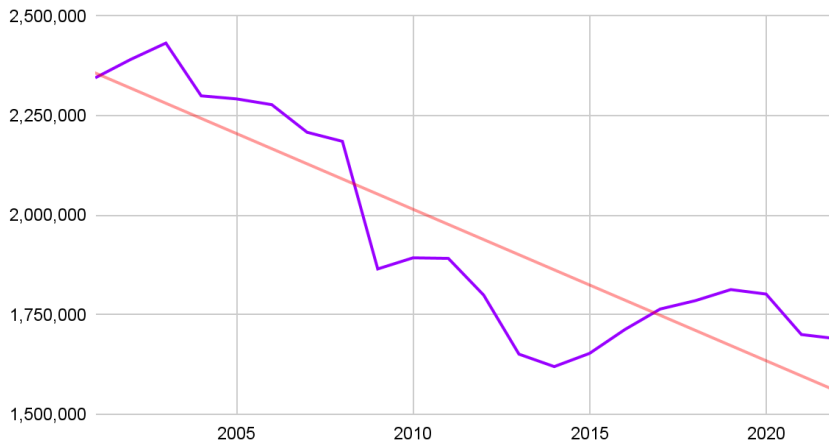


Health and Aging in Place

Choosing public transit over a private vehicle reduces an individual's traffic crash risk by 90%.⁴ High-quality local public transit is essential for maintaining independence and social connection for people of all ages.

The inaction of some elected officials has led to a huge decline in transit service coverage, frequency and span in Allegheny County.

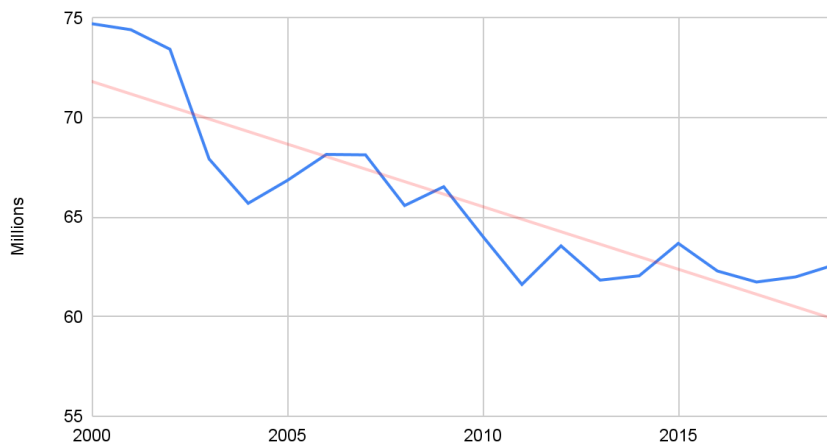
Total PRT Transit Service: Vehicle Revenue Hours (VRH)



In the last twenty years, due to inadequate investment, **more than 37% of total PRT transit service has been cut** in our region. That has led to a transit system that doesn't go where we need it to go, long wait times between buses, and service that doesn't always run at the times we need it.

Over the last 20 years, the funding for Pittsburgh Regional Transit operations has been cut or remained static, which has not kept pace with inflation and rising costs.

Total PRT Annual Ridership: Unlinked Passenger Trips (UPT)



**We're done with decline.
See the vision and how
we can fund it here:**

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It's time to have a transit service vision to match our region's needs.

PPT has developed a vision for the frequent, expansive, quality baseline transit service we want to see, that gets people where they need to go, when they need to get there:

1. Service Coverage

All residents should have access to transit within walking distance of their home. Currently, only 48% of residents in the county have walkable access to transit, an 11% decrease from last year.⁵ We envision service coverage that more resembles the visionary Transit Development Plan proposal in 2009.

30 routes that were proposed in the 2009 Transit Development Plan have since been cut or were never put into effect.

2. High Frequency

Buses and trains should come at a minimum of every 30 min, and higher ridership routes should come a minimum of every 15 minutes.

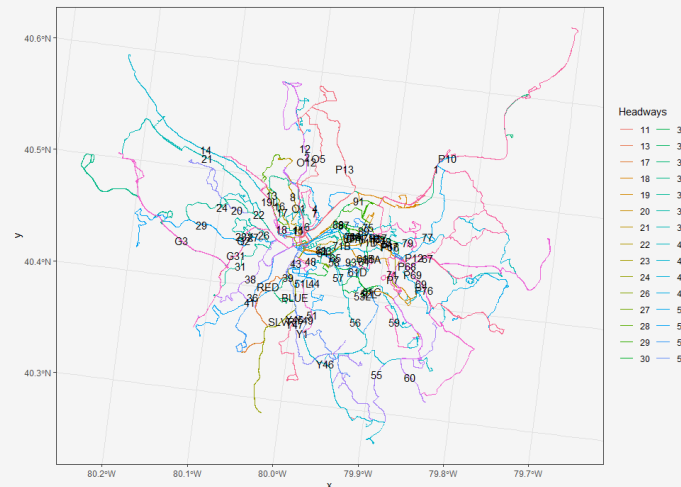
Currently, only 25.6% of Allegheny County residents currently have weekday service frequencies of 30 min or better, and only 17.8% of Allegheny County residents currently have Saturday service frequencies of 30 min or better.

3. Available at all hours, to service many kinds of jobs and needs

Transit should run at least from 4:30 am-1:30 am for all rapid, local, and coverage routes, with 24 hour service for high activity locations. 7 day/week service should continue to be available on all routes.



2023 Service Frequency by Median Headway by Route



Political leaders at all levels of government are championing the funding opportunities that could make our transit vision possible.

City/County

Bulk discount fare purchasing programs are an important source of operating revenue - in the Seattle region this program accounted for more than 50% of Sound Transit's total fare revenue. But PRT does not currently have such a fare product available for employers to purchase.

City and County officials could advocate for such a program to be implemented at PRT, purchase passes for City and County staff, and then pass Transportation Demand Management (TDM) policies to encourage employers to participate.

State

Governor Shapiro has just announced in his budget address a proposed increase in the allocation of the existing sales tax of 1.75% to the Public Transportation Trust Fund, which provides funding for transit service to all 67 counties. This would bring an additional \$40 million annually for transit service in Allegheny County riders. Elected leaders in the House and Senate can support this proposal and expand upon this important opportunity.

Federal

The federal government has long neglected its role in funding transit service. The recently released bill "Stronger Communities through Better Transit Act" introduced by Congressman Hank Johnson, would for the first time provide transit service formula funds to transit agencies of PRT's size and larger. This bill would allow for an increase of service in Allegheny County of up to 37%, which would be transformative for riders and for our region.



Whether you're at the ballot box, or on the chamber floor, sign-on to the #VoteTransit pledge to support more funding for better service.

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¹ APTAAdmin. (2023, September 28). *Public Transportation Facts - American Public Transportation Association*. American Public Transportation Association. <https://www.apta.com/news-publications/public-transportation-facts/>

² Chetty, R., Hendren, N., Kline, P., & Saez, E. (2014b). *Where is the Land of Opportunity? The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility in the United States*. <https://doi.org/10.3386/w19843>

³ *Public transportation's impacts on greenhouse gas emissions*. (2021, August 19). Center for Neighborhood Technology. <https://cnt.org/blog/public-transportations-impacts-on-greenhouse-gas-emissions>

⁴ APTA. (2016, September). *The Hidden Traffic Safety Solution: Public Transportation*.

<https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/Resources/resources/reportsandpublications/Documents/APTA-Hidden-Traffic-Safety-Solution-Public-Transportation.pdf>

⁵ PRT Annual Service Report, 2023.