

# **Twin Cities Transit System Performance Evaluation**

Updated 2007 Statistics

April 28, 2008

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# 2007 Regional Transit System Summary

## *Characteristics of the Transit System*

There are currently three modes of public transit service in the Twin Cities area: regular-route bus service, dial-a-ride service and light-rail transit service.

- Regular-route service is repetitive service provided on a fixed schedule along specific routes, with vehicles stopping to pick up and deliver passengers to specific locations. Each fixed-route trip serves the same origins and destinations.
- Dial-a-ride (DAR) service does not follow a fixed route. Passengers board and arrive at prearranged times at any location within the designated service area. Typically, each trip is scheduled separately.
- Light-rail transit (LRT) service was added to the regional system in 2004 as the first fixed-guideway rail transit in the region. This report will examine the performance of light rail after several years of operation.

## *Twin Cities Transit Service Providers*

The Twin Cities transit system is made up of the following types of transit service providers:

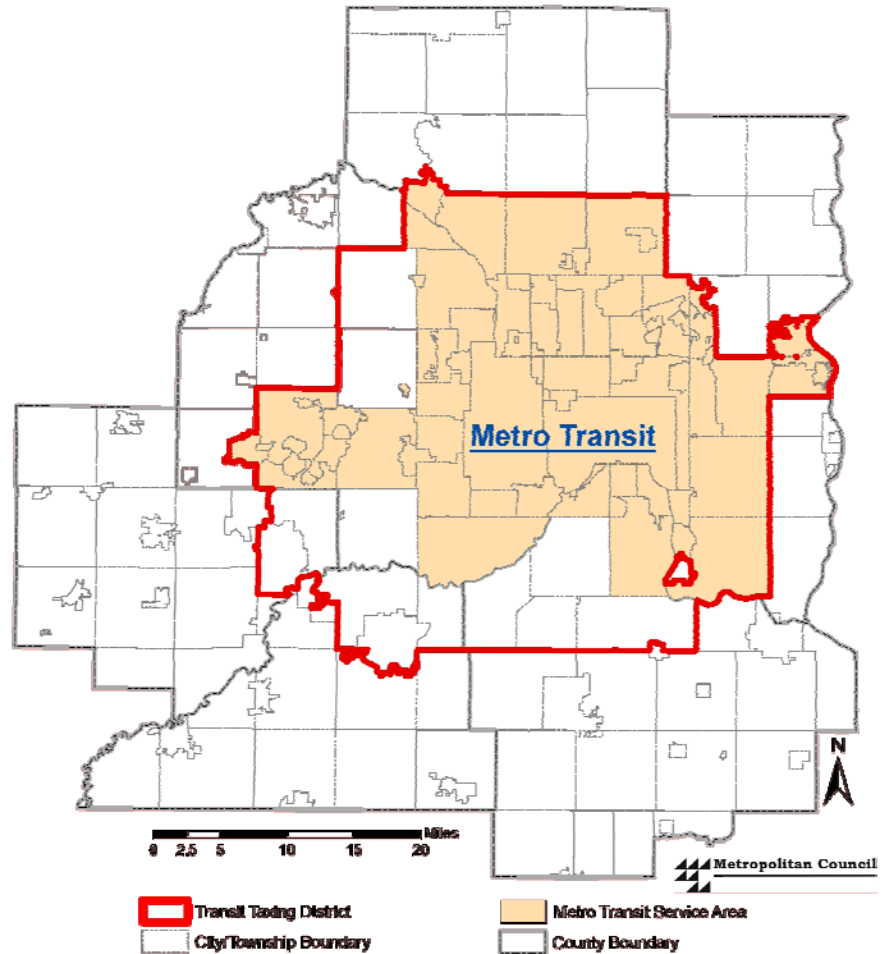
- Metro Transit (Metropolitan Council's directly provided transit service)
  - Metro Transit Bus
  - Metro Transit Rail
- Suburban Transit Providers
  - SouthWest Transit Commission
  - Minnesota Valley Transit Authority
  - Maple Grove Transit
  - Plymouth Transit
  - Shakopee Transit
  - Prior Lake Transit
  - City of Minnetonka
- Metropolitan Transportation Services (Metropolitan Council's contracted transit programs), made up of several programs:
  - Contracted regular route
  - General dial-a-ride (DAR)
  - Metro Mobility
  - Public vanpools
- Other public transit:
  - Northstar Corridor Development Agency (NCDA) commuter service
  - City of Ramsey commuter service (Ramsey Star, operational in 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2007)
  - University of Minnesota campus system (U of M)

The following pages describe each service, include a map of its service area, and provide 2007 preliminary service statistics.

## METRO TRANSIT BUS

Metro Transit, a division of the Metropolitan Council, is the largest provider of regular-route bus transit service in the Twin Cities region. As of June 2007, it provided scheduled bus service on 118 routes – 64 local routes, 48 express routes, and 6 routes under contracts to suburban transit providers. It operated 702 buses (at peak) from five garages and approximately 72 park-and-ride facilities throughout the region.

Services consist of urban local, suburban local, and express routes operated on a fixed schedule.



**Table 1. 2007 Operating Statistics: Metro Transit Bus**

System (2007 NTD statistics) <sup>1</sup>	Operating Cost	Fare Revenue <sup>2</sup>	Passengers	Revenue Hours	Subsidy Per Passenger	Cost Per Revenue Hour
Metro Transit Bus	\$218,318,774	\$66,762,274	67,865,688	1,937,292	\$2.23	\$112.69
Included both in Metro Transit and Suburban <sup>3</sup>	\$1,983,048	\$1,152,482	595,552	12,479		

<sup>1</sup> NTD = National Transit Database, a required annual reporting program administered by the Federal Transit Administration. Fare revenues have been adjusted to reflect convenience fares collected for contracted regular routes operated by the Metropolitan Council.

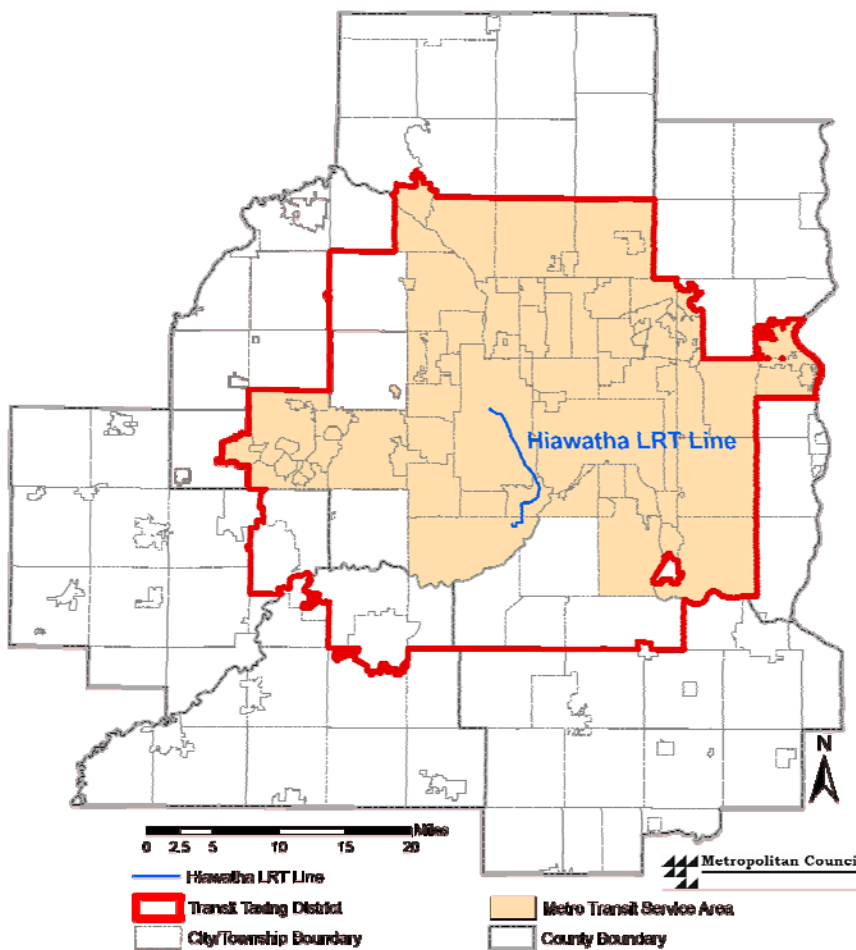
<sup>2</sup> The total fare revenue figure for each program includes estimated convenience fare revenues totaling \$1,370,325 because only cash fare revenues are reported by contractors. These revenues were originally reported by Metro Transit Bus, who collects convenience fare revenues for contracted service. They have been moved from Metro Transit Bus and applied to this section.

<sup>3</sup> Ridership on service contracted by the suburban providers from Metro Transit is included both in the above figures for Metro Transit and in suburban provider figures, which means it is double counted under both tables. Because both agencies record the data for this service, the information is presented in each agency profile.

## METRO TRANSIT RAIL

Metro Transit, a division of the Metropolitan Council, operates the only fixed-guideway rail route in the regional transit system, the Hiawatha light rail line (LRT). The route, which initially opened in June 2004 but was not in full service until December 2004, operates on 11.92 miles of track and serves 17 stations. It operates 24 light rail vehicles (at peak) from a central maintenance facility just north of Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis. The rail line also serves three park-and-ride facilities that included over 1,850 free spaces total at the end of 2006.

The Hiawatha light rail line carried 9,101,036 trips in 2007, which equates to over 10% of the total transit trips in the region. A significant portion of the increase in the cost of LRT operation over 2006 (17.1%) can be attributed to the warranty expiration on service parts.



### Hiawatha LRT Line and Stations

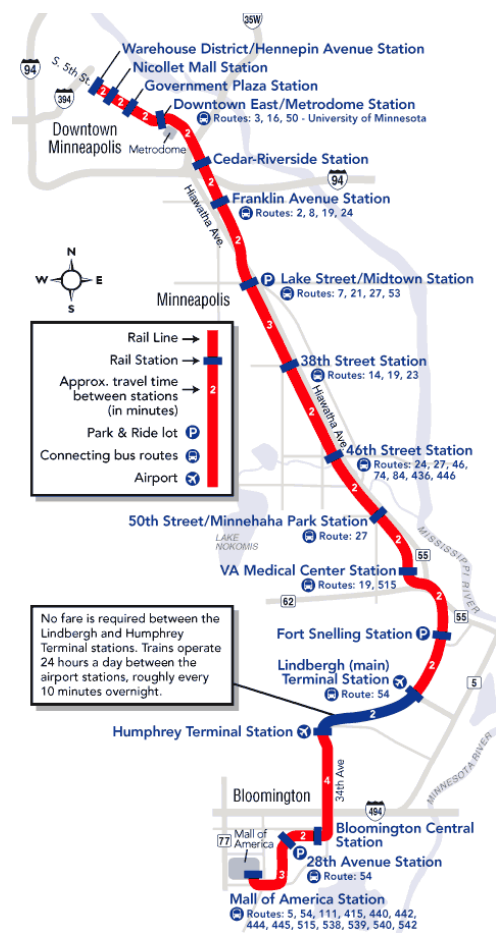


Table 2. 2007 Operating Statistics: Metro Transit Rail

System (2007 NTD statistics)	Operating Cost	Fare Revenue	Passengers	Car Revenue Hours	Subsidy Per Passenger	Cost Per Car Revenue Hour
Metro Transit Rail	\$21,926,838	\$8,077,906	9,101,036	129,999	\$1.52	\$168.67

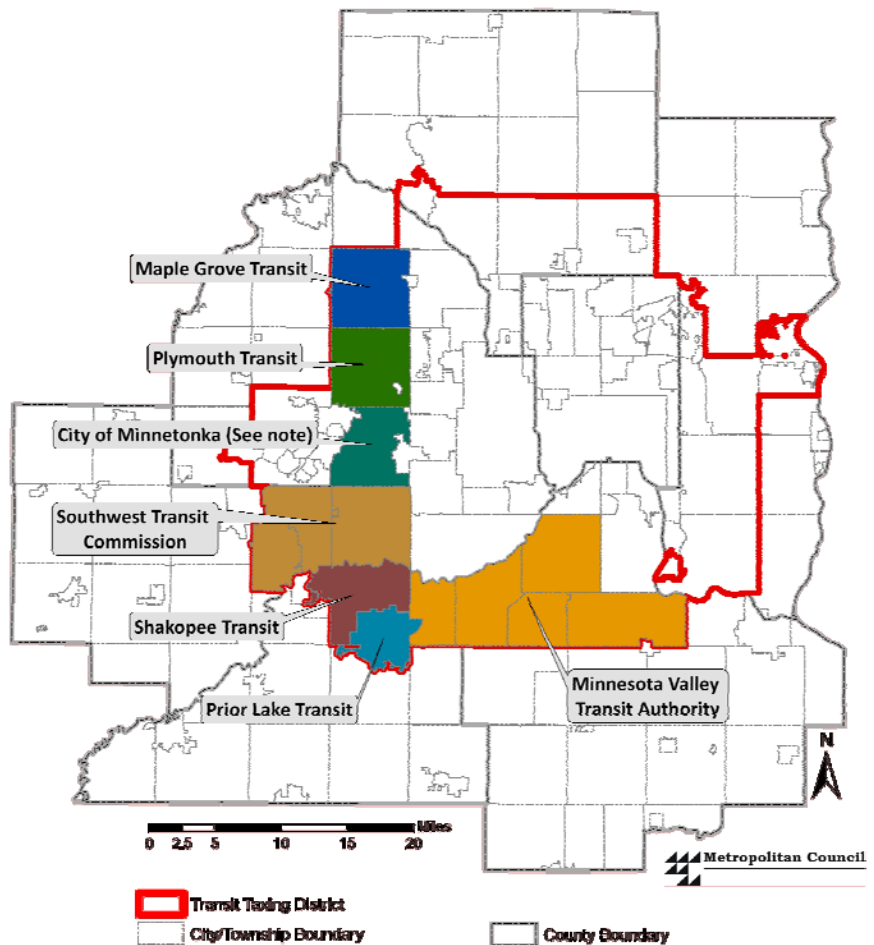
## SUBURBAN TRANSIT PROVIDERS<sup>4</sup>

Prior to 1982, the Metropolitan Transit Commission (the predecessor to Metro Transit) levied a property tax throughout the region to provide funding for transit operations. In 1982, certain communities were allowed to retain up to 90% of the property tax levied in their communities to "opt out" of Metro Transit's service and to provide transit service themselves rather than fund the regional system.

Four communities have chosen to provide their own transit service and eight others have formed two consortiums, Southwest Transit Commission and Minnesota Valley Transit Authority, to provide service.

Those authorities now determine the location of routes, type of service, service provider and frequency of routes. Some of the communities contract with Metro Transit for service and some with private, nonprofit, or other governmental transit providers. The City of Minnetonka "opted out" but has allowed Metro Transit to continue providing service under a memorandum of understanding.

Suburban transit provider communities primarily provide express service from park-and-ride facilities in their service areas. At the end of 2006, the suburban providers operated from 24 park-and-ride facilities with over 6,700 spaces. From 2002 to the end of 2006, 3,640 spaces were established with an additional 750+ spaces added in 2007.



<sup>4</sup> In 2000, the Minnesota Legislature granted the City of Minnetonka the authority to opt-out of the metropolitan transit system and in 2002, the city exercised this option. At that time, Minnetonka also decided to continue to have the Metropolitan Council plan and provide transit service for the City under a Transit Cooperation Agreement. This agreement remains in effect as of January 1, 2008. All service for Minnetonka is shown under the Metro Transit and MTS categories in this report.

**Table 3. 2007 Operating Statistics: Suburban Transit Providers (Regular Route Only)**

System (2007 NTD statistics)	Operating Cost	Fare Revenue	Passengers	Revenue Hours	Subsidy Per Passenger	Cost Per Revenue Hour
Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVTA)	\$14,310,533	\$4,856,309	2,470,702	101,353	\$3.82	\$141.19
Southwest Transit	\$7,932,421	\$2,225,885	1,012,538	50,378	\$5.64	\$157.46
Plymouth Transit	\$2,877,300	\$1,028,339	479,743	21,919	\$3.85	\$131.27
Maple Grove Transit	\$2,688,792	\$1,263,202	651,634	15,253	\$2.19	\$176.28
Shakopee Transit	\$654,581	\$85,833	48,610	6,832	\$11.70	\$95.81
Prior Lake Transit	\$482,099	\$88,424	34,547	1,578	\$11.40	\$305.51
<b>Total Reg. Route</b>	<b>\$28,945,727</b>	<b>\$9,547,992</b>	<b>4,697,774</b>	<b>197,313</b>	<b>\$4.13</b>	<b>\$146.70</b>
Included both in Metro Transit and Suburban <sup>5</sup>	\$1,983,048	\$1,152,482	595,552	12,479		

**Table 4. 2007 Operating Statistics: Suburban Transit Providers (Dial-a-Ride Only)**

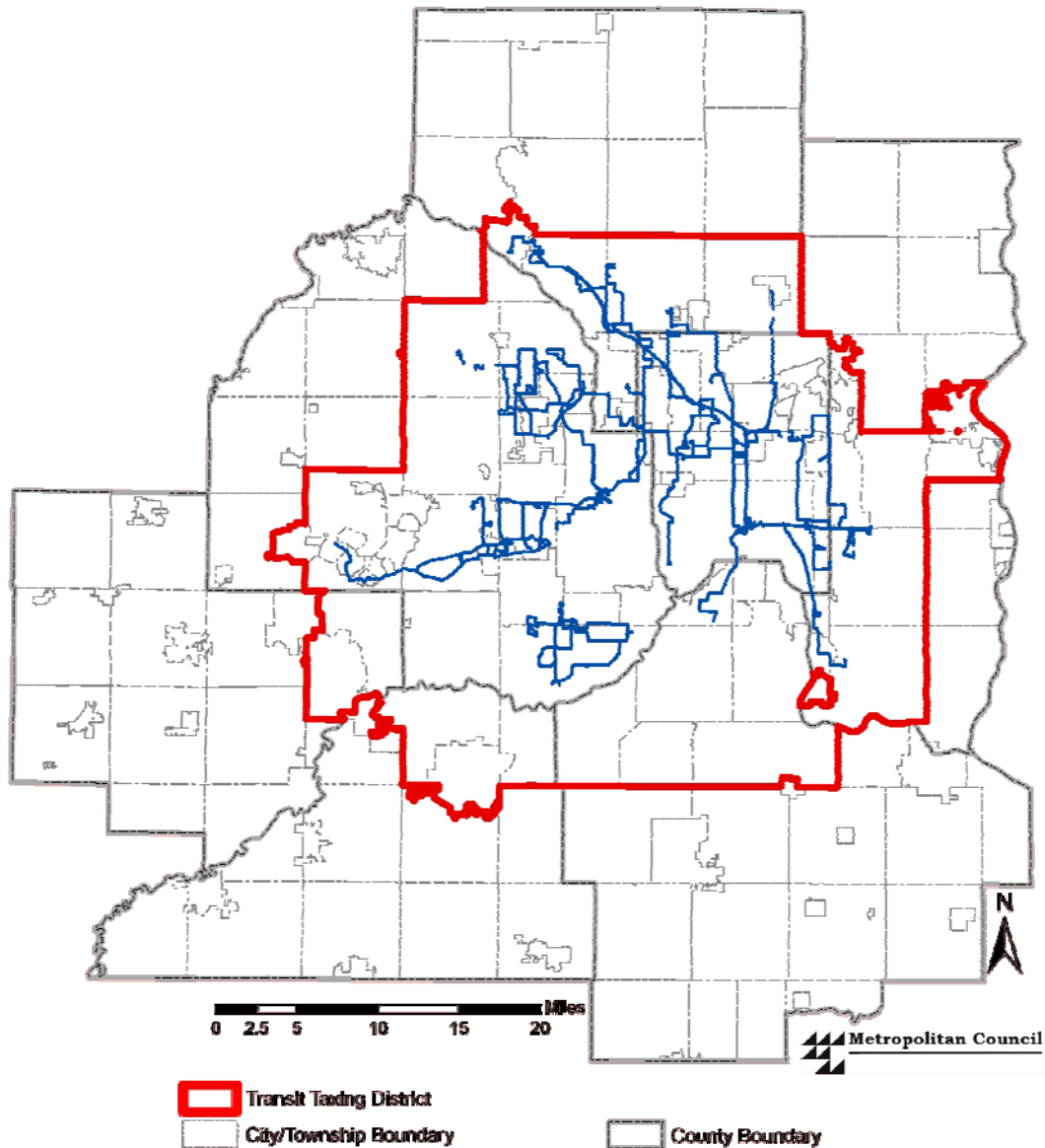
System (2007 NTD statistics)	Operating Cost	Fare Revenue	Passengers	Revenue Hours	Subsidy Per Passenger	Cost Per Revenue Hour
Plymouth Transit	\$902,696	\$97,468	54,924	17,811	\$14.66	\$50.68
Maple Grove Transit	\$416,456	\$33,117	30,876	9,562	\$12.42	\$43.55
<b>Total DAR</b>	<b>\$1,319,152</b>	<b>\$130,585</b>	<b>85,800</b>	<b>27,373</b>	<b>\$13.85</b>	<b>\$48.19</b>

<sup>5</sup> Ridership on service contracted by the suburban providers from Metro Transit is included both in the above figures for Metro Transit and in suburban provider figures, which means it is double counted under both tables. Because both agencies record the data for this service, the information is presented in each agency profile.

## METROPOLITAN COUNCIL PRIVATELY CONTRACTED REGULAR ROUTE

The Metropolitan Council provides about 7% of the region's regular-route service through 12 contracts with private and non-profit transit providers.

Transit services are competitively contracted to reduce costs and increase flexibility. Competitively procured services are appropriate to meet new service demands, to test out new routes or different service types, to seek efficiencies on routes that are expensive or inefficient, to appropriately align service expertise with providers and to maintain current service levels as a response to fiscal pressures.



**Table 5. 2007 Operating Statistics: Contracted Regular Routes**

<b>System (2007 NTD statistics)</b>	<b>Operating Cost</b>	<b>Fare Revenue<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>Passengers</b>	<b>Revenue Hours</b>	<b>Subsidy Per Passenger</b>	<b>Cost Per Revenue Hour</b>
Anoka County Traveler	\$1,141,362	\$149,034	194,951	16,368	\$5.09	\$69.73
BE-Line	\$1,869,758	\$479,818	516,956	37,658	\$2.69	\$49.65
East Metro	\$1,176,751	\$242,617	264,436	15,347	\$3.53	\$76.68
NEST Route 219	\$324,554	\$52,349	75,747	6,294	\$3.59	\$51.57
North Metro	\$2,382,932	\$623,587	486,743	20,086	\$3.61	\$118.64
Roseville Circulator	\$1,151,403	\$195,826	210,973	24,496	\$4.53	\$47.00
Route 417	\$43,427	\$9,878	4,773	702	\$7.03	\$61.86
Route 755/756	\$502,107	\$109,213	80,682	4,267	\$4.87	\$117.67
Routes 604/615 Hopkins	\$361,104	\$46,600	50,227	8,037	\$6.26	\$44.93
Routes 641/678 <sup>7</sup>	\$45,165	\$1,830	1,124	229	\$38.55	\$197.23
South County Circulator	\$222,482	\$65,060	40,846	4,028	\$3.85	\$55.23
Two Rivers Fixed Route	\$90,816	\$6,331	2,594	914	\$32.57	\$99.36
West Metro	\$1,390,878	\$327,148	363,713	18,043	\$2.92	\$77.09
<b>Total Contracted RR</b>	<b>\$10,702,738</b>	<b>\$2,309,291</b>	<b>2,293,765</b>	<b>156,469</b>	<b>\$3.66</b>	<b>\$68.40</b>

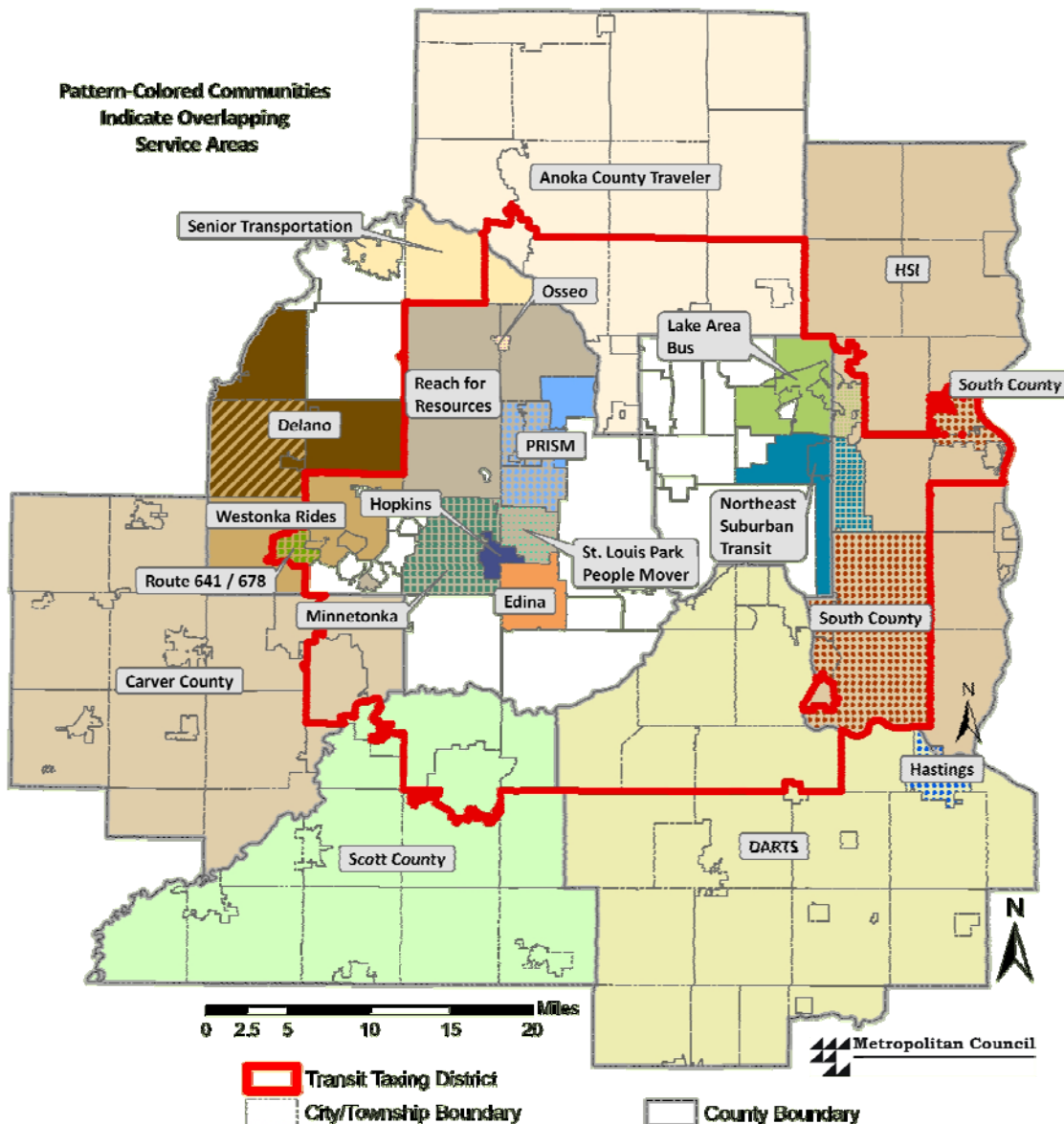
<sup>6</sup> The total fare revenue figure for each program includes estimated convenience fare revenues totaling \$1,370,325 because only cash fare revenues are reported by contractors. These revenues were originally reported by Metro Transit Bus, who collects convenience fare revenues for contracted service. They have been moved from Metro Transit Bus and applied to this section.

<sup>7</sup> Routes 641 and 678 will transition to dial-a-ride only on September 1, 2007. Both routes operated as peak pulse with fixed routes in 2006, which is an adapted fixed route.

## GENERAL DIAL-A-RIDE PROGRAMS

Dial-a-ride programs serve areas that are difficult to serve with regular route service or serve to compliment regular route service. These programs offer dial-a-ride service and primarily serve the elderly and persons with disabilities. Funding is provided from local sources and fares and all programs received some Metropolitan Council subsidy in 2007.

Some dial-a-ride programs, such as South County (now Two Rivers) and Minnetonka are provided under contracts through the Metropolitan Council. These programs operate in a similar fashion to contracted regular routes and are often part of the same contracts.



**Table 6. 2007 Operating Statistics: Dial-a-Ride Programs**

<b>System (2007 Statistics)</b>	<b>Operating Cost</b>	<b>Fare Revenue</b>	<b>Passengers</b>	<b>Revenue Hours</b>	<b>Subsidy Per Passenger</b>	<b>Cost Per Revenue Hour</b>
Anoka County Traveler	\$411,789	\$55,052	21,479	6,052	\$16.61	\$68.04
Anoka County Volunteer	\$99,125	\$18,638	6,125	6,822	\$13.14	\$14.53
Carver County	\$551,994	\$77,241	47,758	11,167	\$9.94	\$49.43
DARTS	\$974,053	\$115,900	46,221	23,060	\$18.57	\$42.24
Delano	\$73,300	\$0	6,973	1,562	\$10.51	\$46.93
Edina Dial-a-Ride	\$63,210	\$7,077	2,945	1,498	\$19.06	\$42.20
Hastings – TRAC	\$354,263	\$51,971	32,355	7,593	\$9.34	\$46.66
Hopkins Hop-a-Ride	\$116,956	\$13,866	13,504	2,568	\$7.63	\$45.54
Human Services Inc (HSI)	\$920,082	\$151,176	45,854	16,794	\$16.77	\$54.79
Lake Area Bus	\$407,652	\$36,472	28,781	8,861	\$12.90	\$46.01
Mnettonka	\$291,954	\$18,533	16,570	6,824	\$16.50	\$42.78
Northeast Suburban Transit	\$269,681	\$35,036	18,677	5,206	\$12.56	\$51.80
Osseo	\$23,627	\$0	2,276	614	\$10.38	\$38.48
St. Louis Park People Mover	\$35,466	\$1,581	2,346	1,333	\$14.44	\$26.61
PRISM	\$387,421	\$23,821	39,668	9,630	\$9.17	\$40.23
Reach for Resources	\$25,596	\$3,862	1,634	382	\$13.30	\$67.01
Route 641/678	\$235,592	\$17,733	13,172	5,050	\$16.54	\$46.65
Scott County	\$1,443,004	\$210,709	83,067	18,860	\$14.83	\$76.51
Senior Transportation	\$235,349	\$51,770	13,986	7,048	\$13.13	\$33.39
South County	\$572,486	\$24,144	34,732	11,437	\$15.79	\$50.06
Two Rivers	\$56,665	\$2,516	3,149	966	\$17.20	\$58.66
Westonka Rides	\$127,283	\$6,398	9,775	2,079	\$12.37	\$61.22
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,676,548</b>	<b>\$923,496</b>	<b>491,047</b>	<b>155,406</b>	<b>\$13.75</b>	<b>\$49.40</b>

## METRO MOBILITY

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and state statute, Metro Mobility provides specialized, demand-response service for persons whose disabilities prevent them from using the regular-route system.

Individuals call ahead of time and set up their trips. Rides are also provided through "agency" service, where a group of individuals is taken to a common location such as adult daycare programs, day training or habitation centers.

This service is provided by two private contractors and contracts with the four county providers. All are small bus dial-a-ride programs.

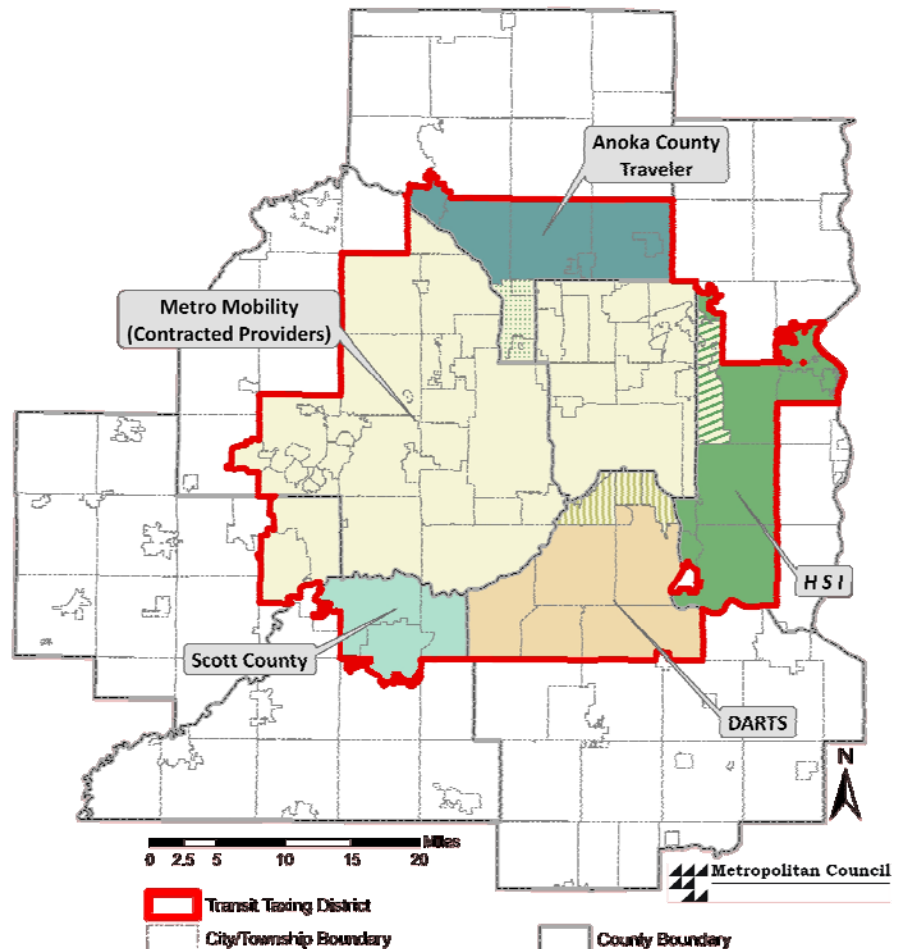


Table 7. 2007 Operating Statistics: Metro Mobility

System (2007 NTD statistics)	Operating Cost	Fare Revenue	Passengers	Revenue Hours	Subsidy Per Passenger	Cost Per Revenue Hour
<b>Metro Mobility<sup>8</sup></b>	\$35,612,345	\$4,397,705	1,363,743	657,336	\$22.89	\$54.18

<sup>8</sup> Metro Mobility statistics include all four Metro Mobility transit providers. County figures are not duplicated in the General Dial-a-Ride programs data.

## VANPOOLS

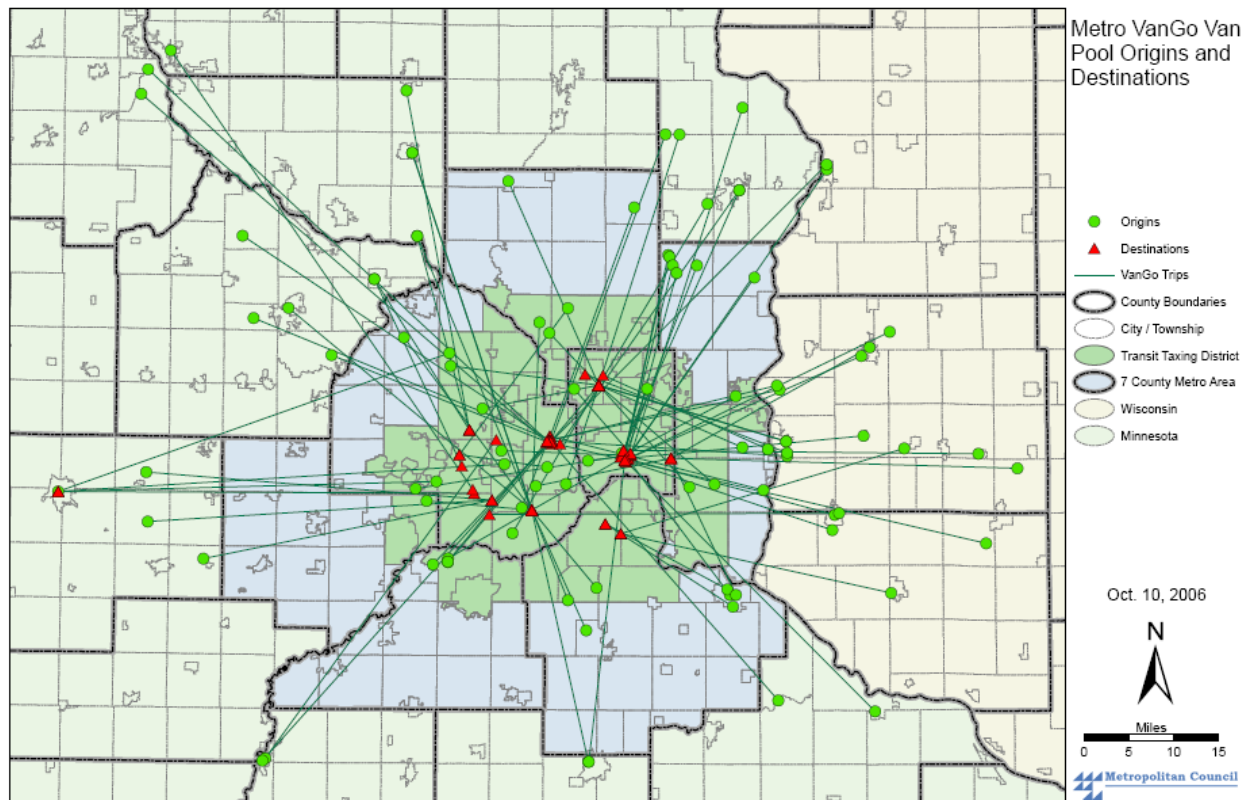
The Metropolitan Council operates a vanpool program called *VanGo!* This program started in 2001 as a way of providing transit service for persons living or working in areas not served by regular route service. People driving long distances from low-density areas add a disproportionate amount of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and thus, removing them from the road adds a larger-than-typical benefit.

A private contractor provides the vans and administers the program. The Council and employers provide a portion of the subsidy and the passengers pay the rest.

In 2007 the Council subsidy per passenger was \$3.29. This figure only represents the lease cost of the vans. *VanGo!* participants also pay the cost of fuel, parking, and car washes.

**Table 8. 2007 Operating Statistics: VanGo!**

System (2007 NTD statistics)	Operating Cost	Fare Revenue	Passenger Trips	Revenue Hours	Subsidy per Passenger	Cost Per Revenue Hour
VanGo!	\$1,263,256	\$683,848	176,288	27,269	\$3.29	\$46.33



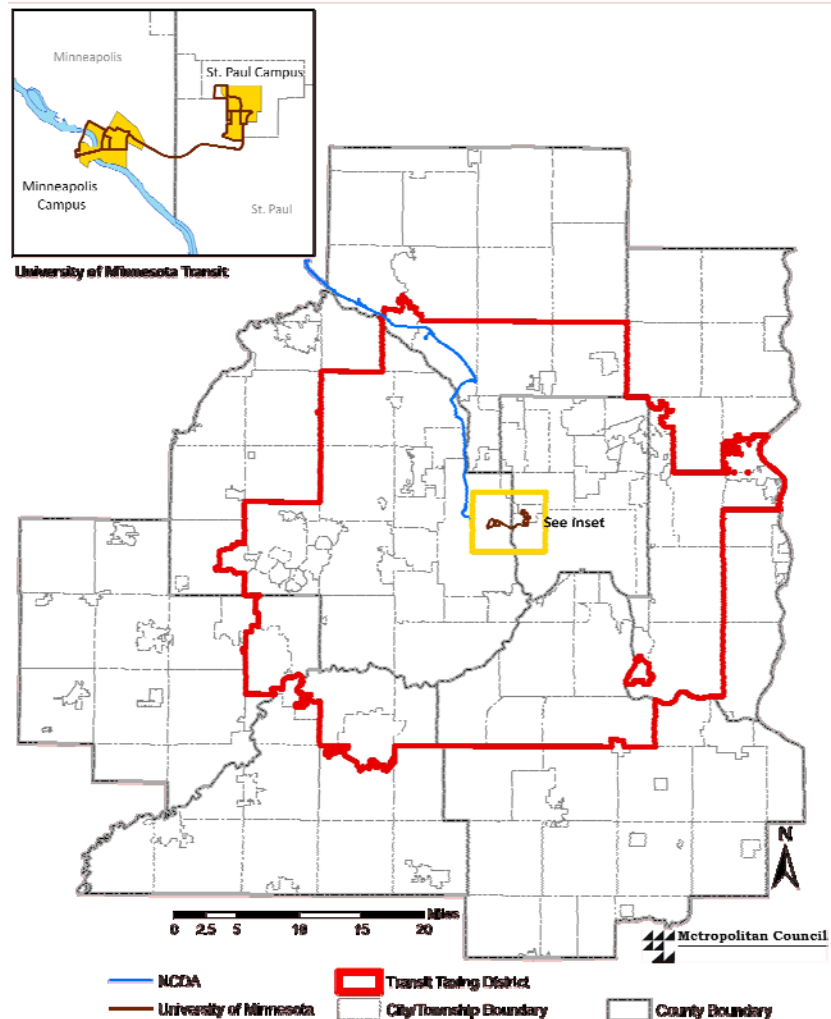
## OTHER CONTRACTED TRANSIT SERVICE

There are two agencies that contracted for their own public transit service in 2006.

One route, the Northstar Commuter Coach or route 888, is operated by the Northstar Corridor Development Authority. A similar route, the Ramsey Star Express service or route 856, serves the Ramsey Town Center and downtown Minneapolis. Together, these services operate for 1384 park-and-ride spaces.

The University of Minnesota also operates regular-route campus shuttle and circulator service that is open to the public. This service also has a small ADA-compliance component.

Both of these services are part of the regional regular route service, accessible through personal trip planning technology.

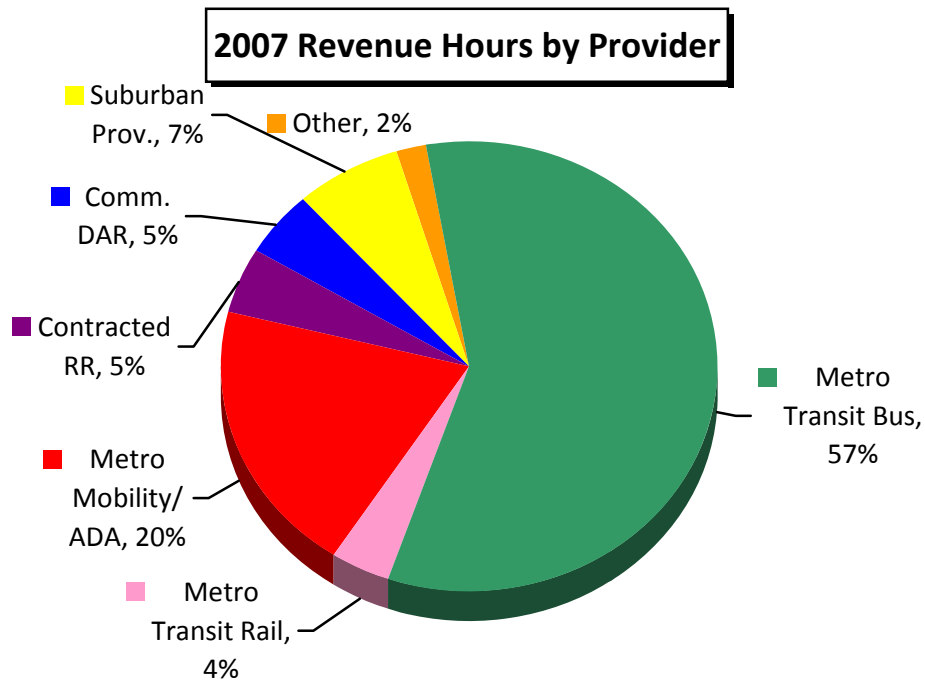


**Table 9. 2007 Operating Statistics: Other Contracted Transit Service**

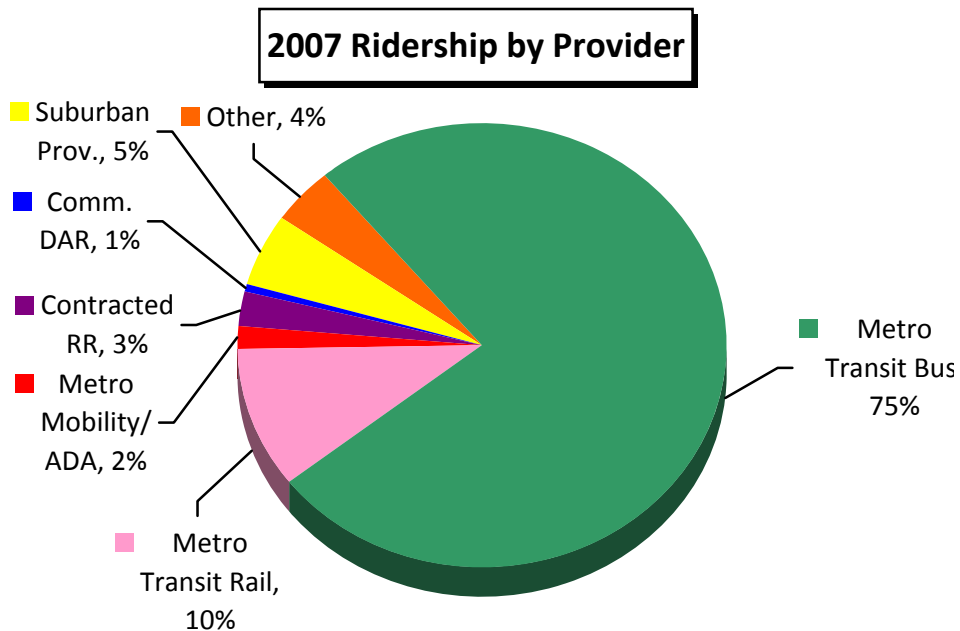
System (2007 NTD statistics)	Operating Cost	Fare Revenue	Passengers	Revenue Hours	Subsidy Per Passenger	Cost Per Revenue Hour
NCTD	\$1,162,037	\$654,469	188,008	4,734	\$2.69	\$245.19
University of Minn.	\$4,193,885	\$0	3,273,100	35,794	\$1.28	\$117.06

## Summary of Transit System Statistics

Metro Transit provides the largest number of transit service hours of any provider in the region.



Metro Transit carries 85% of the riders in the region.



The transit system of the seven-county metropolitan area, as previously described, consists of various types of transit services. Table 10 summarizes the 2007 ridership, service levels (revenue hours), operating costs, and fare revenues for the general service types in the regional system.

**Table 10. 2007 Regional Transit Operating Statistics Summary**

<b>System (2007 statistics)</b>	<b>Operating Cost</b>	<b>Fare Revenue</b>	<b>Passengers</b>	<b>Revenue Hours</b>	<b>Subsidy Per Passenger</b>	<b>Cost Per Revenue Hour</b>
<b>Metropolitan Council – Directly Operated<sup>9</sup></b>						
Metro Transit Bus	\$218,318,774	\$66,832,599	67,865,688	1,937,292	\$2.23	\$112.69
Metro Transit Rail	\$21,926,838	\$8,077,906	9,101,036	129,999	\$1.52	\$168.67
<b>Metropolitan Council – Contracted</b>						
Metro Mobility /ADA	\$35,612,345	\$4,397,705	1,363,743	657,336	\$22.89	\$54.18
Contracted Reg. Rt.	\$10,702,738	\$2,309,291	2,293,765	156,469	\$3.66	\$68.40
General Dial-a-Ride	\$7,676,548	\$923,496	491,047	155,406	\$13.75	\$49.40
Vanpools	\$1,263,256	\$683,848	176,288	27,269	\$3.29	\$46.33
<b>Non-Metro Council Providers</b>						
Suburban Providers	\$30,264,879	\$9,678,577	4,783,574	224,686	\$4.30	\$134.70
NCDA	\$1,162,037	\$654,469	188,008	4,734	\$2.69	\$245.19
University of Minn.	\$4,193,885	\$0	3,273,100	35,794	\$1.28	\$117.06
Included in Metro Transit & Suburban	\$1,983,048	\$1,152,482	595,552	12,479		
<b>Regional Total</b>	<b>\$329,138,252</b>	<b>\$92,333,842</b>	<b>88,940,697</b>	<b>3,316,506</b>	<b>\$2.66</b>	<b>\$99.24</b>

<sup>9</sup> Metro Transit also carries certain regional costs such as the cost of selling fare media, distribution of schedules and other region-wide costs.

## Trends in Regional Transit Ridership and Cost per Passenger, 2005-2007

Table 11 summarizes transit ridership change over the last three years. The regional ridership has grown by over 10% since 2005.

**Table 11. 2005-2007 Regional Transit Ridership**

Provider	2005	2006	2007	% Change
Metro Transit Bus	61,797,145	64,398,737	67,865,688	9.8%
Metro Transit Rail	7,901,668	8,957,912	9,101,036	15.2%
Metro Mobility/ADA	1,276,429	1,287,056	1,363,743	6.8%
Contracted Reg. Rt.	2,048,901	2,438,660	2,293,765	12.0%
General Dial-a-Ride	499,168	496,410	491,047	-1.6%
Vanpools	131,192	157,523	176,288	34.4%
Suburban Providers	3,953,219	4,377,498	4,786,315	21.1%
NCDA	180,235	181,924	188,008	4.3%
University of Minn.	3,801,495	3,687,649	3,273,100	-13.9%
Included in Metro Transit & Suburban	864,129	881,487	595,552	-31.1%
<b>Regional Total</b>	<b>80,725,232</b>	<b>85,101,882</b>	<b>88,943,438</b>	<b>10.2%</b>

Table 12 summarizes transit costs per passenger change over the last three years. The regional cost per passenger has grown only 1.6% since 2005 despite a growth in total transit expenses of 12.1%.

**Table 12. 2005-2007 Regional Transit Cost per Passenger**

Provider	2005	2006	2007	% Change
Metro Transit Bus	\$3.25	\$3.23	\$3.22	-0.9%
Metro Transit Rail	\$2.11	\$2.09	\$2.41	14.2%
Metro Mobility/ADA	\$23.84	\$24.97	\$26.11	9.5%
Contracted Reg. Rt.	\$4.92	\$4.40	\$4.67	-5.1%
General Dial-a-Ride	\$14.78	\$15.55	\$15.63	5.8%
Vanpools	\$7.87	\$6.98	\$7.17	-8.9%
Suburban Providers	\$6.76	\$6.54	\$6.32	-6.5%
NCDA	\$4.03	\$4.08	\$6.18	53.3%
University of Minn.	\$0.99	\$1.06	\$1.28	29.3%
Included in Metro Transit & Suburban				
<b>Regional Total</b>	<b>\$3.64</b>	<b>\$3.62</b>	<b>\$3.70</b>	<b>1.6%</b>