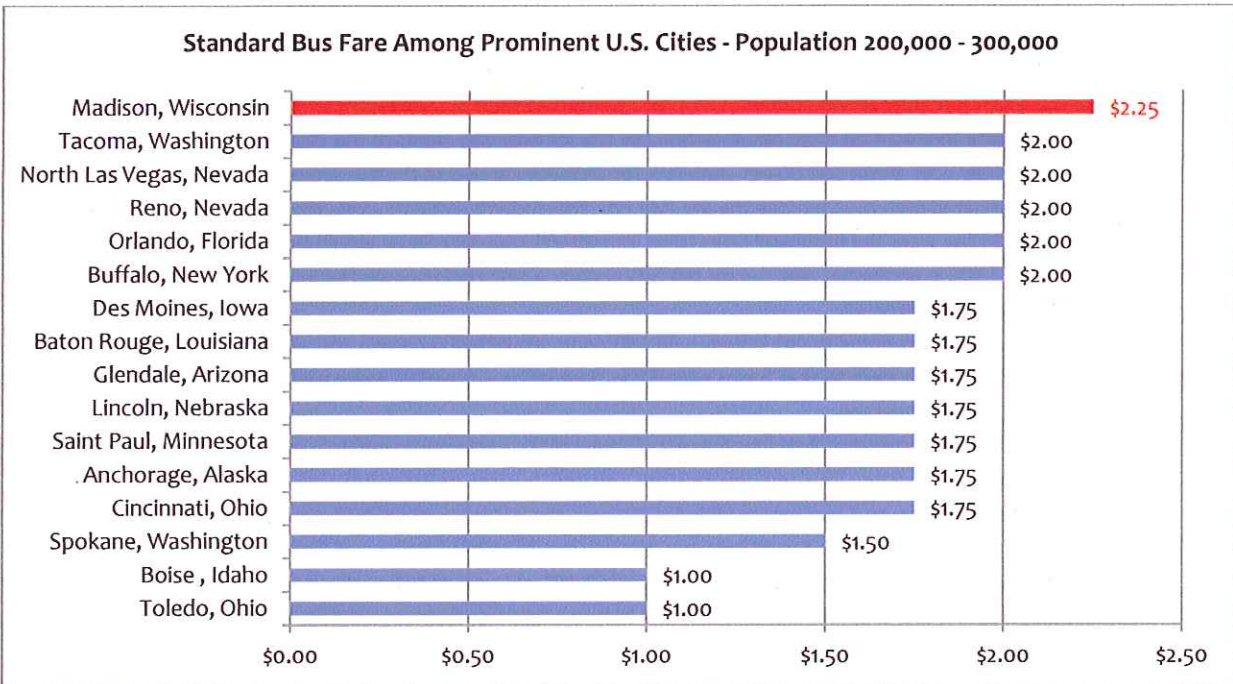


The Proposed Fares are Excessive!

Not only are the recently proposed bus rate hikes an attack on the citizens of Madison that rely on public transportation, especially senior citizens and the disabled, but they are excessive when compared with cities of similar size.

The figure below shows sixteen cities in Madison's population group (200,000 to 300,000 residents) and their standard bus fares. Madison's proposed fare of \$2.25 is higher than all cities listed, some by a significant margin.



In fact, a study which examined bus fares for cities of population 200,000 to 300,000 found that not only are the proposed base fares higher than the national average, but proposed rates for other passes and fare types are well above average as well. The proposed rates for monthly passes for seniors and the disabled, for example, are 47% higher than the national average for cities of a similar size to Madison, as shown in the table below.

Average Rates for Various Fare Types Among U.S. Cities			
	U.S. Cities - pop. 200,000 - 300,000	Madison, WI - proposed fares	Percentage Difference
Base Fare	\$1.75	\$2.25	28.6%
Senior/Disabled Base Fare	\$0.77	\$1.10	42.9%
One day pass	\$4.03	\$5.00	24.2%
Monthly Pass	\$50.94	\$62.00	21.7%
Senior/Disabled Monthly Pass	\$27.21	\$40.00	47.0%

Furthermore, the last seven winners of the American Public Transportation Association Award for Outstanding Public Transportation System have lower fares than those proposed, as shown in the figure below.



*Table includes only the winners in the 4 million to 20 million rider category – the same category for which Madison won the award in 2012

It doesn't have to be this way!

The city government claims that there are only two ways to raise the necessary \$686,000 to meet the 5 percent tax levy reduction: raise rates or cut service. But is an across the board increase really necessary? Consider the following options that would both avoid an across the board rate increase and raise funds above and beyond the \$686,000 goal:

1. **Seek a compromise with the Associated Students of Madison (ASM) to raise student rates from the current rate of \$1.15 per ride to \$1.40 per ride to generate \$687,500 per year.**
 - Current revenue from student bus pass: \$3,162,500 (2.75 million rides at \$1.15 per ride).
 - Route 80, which primarily serves students, is by far the most utilized bus route and students account for nearly 20% of all riders, despite the fact that most reside within the city for only two-thirds of the year.
 - Each student only pays about \$55.00 per semester for unlimited access to the bus system.
 - If the city negotiated with ASM to raise the per ride rate for students by \$0.25 cents (the additional amount non-students would pay were the proposed rates to go into effect) annual revenue would be \$3,850,000, which would generate \$687,500 in additional revenue for the bus system; a sum that exceeds the \$686,600 the city is hoping to raise with the overall increase.
 - This would avoid an across the board increase, and students would still receive a 30% discount on fares.
2. **Reform the transfer point system so that buses spend less time idling – thereby saving more than \$100,000 per year on fuel while expanding bus coverage.**
 - According to the Environmental Protection Agency, a typical bus burns approximately one-half gallon of diesel fuel for each hour it idles.
 - Therefore, if only the Route 2 bus (which idles for 264 minutes/4.4 hours each day) were actually moving rather than idling at the transfer point at the top of each run, the city would save 2.2 gallons of diesel fuel per day. Given a low estimate of \$3.95 per gallon, that is \$8.69 per day and \$3,171 per year saved *on that route alone*. Madison has 39 routes that idle at transfer points or park-and-rides before beginning their runs. If 80% of these were to come off the transfer point system and continue moving while the engine is running, the city would save \$100,000 per year.
 - Furthermore, with buses no longer wasting up to 15 minutes idling at transfer points, bus coverage could be expanded above and beyond the expansions proposed as buses utilize that extra time to pick up and deliver more passengers.
3. **Add express routes that carry passengers from, for example, one transfer point to the next, with no/limited stops – increased rates for these 'premium' routes would raise revenue, while the added convenience would encourage ridership and expand coverage.**
 - Not only could the city charge more for these routes, thereby adding revenue, but it would add coverage to system that struggles to transport passengers across town in a reasonable amount of time.
 - These express routes - especially if they served areas where overcrowding of buses is an issue - would likely encourage increased ridership – which would increase the net rate-payer total, thereby further contributing to revenue gains.

Join the fight for fair rates and a better public transit system!

'R. I. D. E. R' – Riders In Disagreement with Excessive Rates – Needs Your Support!



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