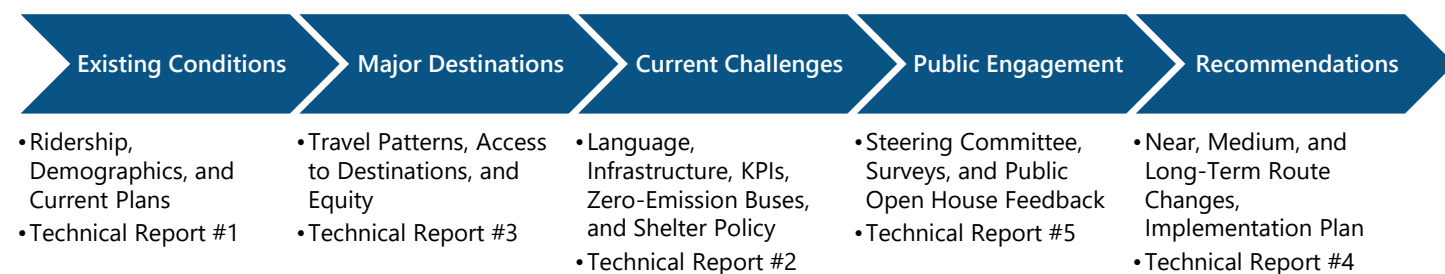


VALLEY TRANSIT 2026 TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The 2026 Transit Development Plan (TDP) outlines Valley Transit's planned service improvements for the next five years (2026-2030). Developed in partnership with the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC), the TDP documents the current state of the Valley Transit bus system, identifies key challenges and opportunities, and makes recommendations for improving transit service for riders.

Planning Process

The TDP was developed between April 2025 and March 2026 through a series of technical analyses evaluating system performance, travel patterns, and current challenges facing Valley Transit. This technical work, as well as concurrent public and stakeholder engagement activities, informed the development of project recommendations.



Key Findings

Key findings of technical analysis and public engagement efforts include the following:

- Valley Transit provides effective access to destinations throughout the Fox Cities.
- Access is equitably distributed across race and income groups, and highest for car-free households.
- Some communities and destinations are not served due to infrastructure gaps.

Existing Conditions



- Valley Transit routes have seen continued recovery since 2021.
- Service cuts related to the pandemic and workforce shortage have reduced trip options on weekday evenings and Saturdays.
- Valley Transit aims to reach pre-pandemic staffing levels, prioritizing service based on demand.

Ridership and Service Levels



- Riders and Steering Committee members have consistently requested the following improvements:
- Improved Frequency
- Extended Service Hours
- Expanded Coverage (New Destinations/Communities)

Stakeholder Feedback



Planning Priorities

Based on these findings, the project team developed priorities to guide proposed system improvements. These priorities respond to technical findings, as well as feedback from Valley Transit staff, riders, and stakeholders. Each recommendation proposed in the TDP responds



Facilitating access to essential destinations such as grocery stores and employment centers



Improving reliability on routes with on-time performance concerns



Increasing frequency on high-ridership routes



Restoring the span of service reduced during the COVID-19 pandemic



Exploring long-term strategies to expand the system's service area

Recommendations

The TDP presents a future service framework for Valley Transit that recommends service changes to improve reliability, access to key destinations, and overall system usability. Recommendations are organized into near-, medium-, and long-term scenarios to align potential service changes with anticipated staffing recovery and partnership considerations.

Scenario 1: Near-Term Improvements (1-2 Years)

Near-term recommendations focus on low-cost or resource-neutral route modifications that address immediate operational challenges, safety concerns, and planned roadway changes while maintaining access to key destinations. These changes are designed to be implemented without additional resources.

Recommendation	Description
Route 2	Remove route from Badger Avenue to avoid conflict with upcoming street redesign
Route 15	Modify route design through Woodman's parking lot to minimize vehicle and pedestrian conflict points; discontinue service at PetSmart and Home Depot
Route 20	Extend route further south on Crooks Avenue to serve Piggly Wiggly; remove portion of northbound loop in Kaukauna to preserve schedule and runtime viability
Route 30	Move outbound service from Appleton Street and Prospect Avenue to Franklin Street, Richmond Street, and Memorial Drive

Scenario 2: Medium-Term Improvements (3-5 Years)

Medium-term recommendations include coordinated route realignments and restoration of service levels reduced in 2020 and 2024. These improvements respond directly to findings from prior planning efforts and public engagement conducted during the TDP. Frequency and span of service improvements will be implemented as workforce conditions permit.

Recommendation	Description
Route 4	Extend route north on Richmond Street to Meijer, removing Northland Avenue loops to maintain schedule adherence
Route 5	Restructure route to add loop serving Ridgeview Highlands Apartments (currently served by Route 4), removing low-ridership loops at northeastern edge of route, while straightening route on Oneida Street
Route 41	Remove one-way service on Winneconne Avenue and Green Bay Road in Neenah, instead implementing bidirectional service on Main Street
Frequency	Introduce 30-minute service on Routes 12, 15, 20, and 30 between approximately 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM
Span of Service	Extend Saturday service hours to 5:45/6:15 PM, and extend weekday span of service to 9:45/10:15 PM

Scenario 3: Long-Term Improvements (5+ Years)

Long-term recommendations identify future opportunities that would require additional planning, partnership coordination, or service area expansion. Detailed operating resource needs are to be determined.

Recommendation	Description
VT Connector Expansion	Consider and discuss expansion opportunities into communities that express interest, subject to partnership and funding commitments, while also evaluating operational feasibility
College Avenue Corridor	Coordinate with "A New Avenue" project partners to incorporate transit-supportive elements into a potential future College Avenue redesign, both to enable improvements to Route 15 and create the possibility of westward expansion
Appleton Airport and Greenville Service Expansion	Work with Grand Chute and Outagamie County to explore potential transit service to the airport and nearby destinations, including evaluation of service models, infrastructure needs, and partnership requirements