STATE OF MOBILITY IN MILWAUKEE

414 in Motion

The City of Milwaukee's Transportation & Mobility Plan

CONTENTS

WHAT IS 414 IN MOTION?

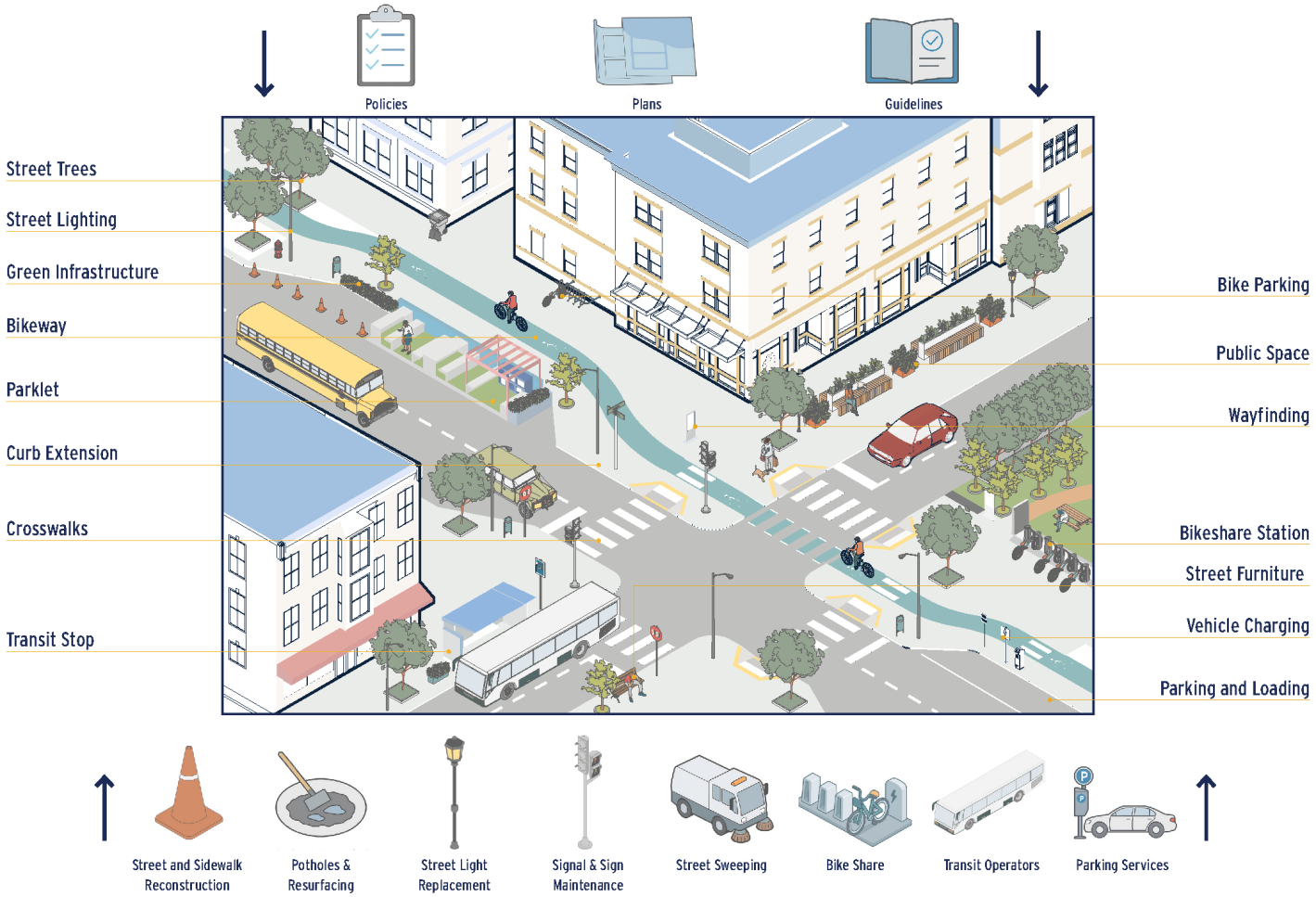
414 in Motion **is Milwaukee's first ever citywide Transportation & Mobility Plan and will guide how we design, operate, maintain, and invest in our streets.**

414 in Motion will be developed through community input and data-driven processes to:

- Set a vision for the future of mobility in Milwaukee – whether you walk, roll, bike, scoot, drive, or ride the bus
- Detail key policy needs and develop priorities for projects and programs
- Identify transformative infrastructure projects

The Plan will include an implementation and capital improvement strategy so that all of Milwaukee benefits from *414 in Motion's* recommendations. *414 in Motion* will become a part of the City of Milwaukee's Comprehensive Plan upon its completion.

TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY



TRANSPORTATION is how we get around and the infrastructure and systems that enable us to get from one place to another.

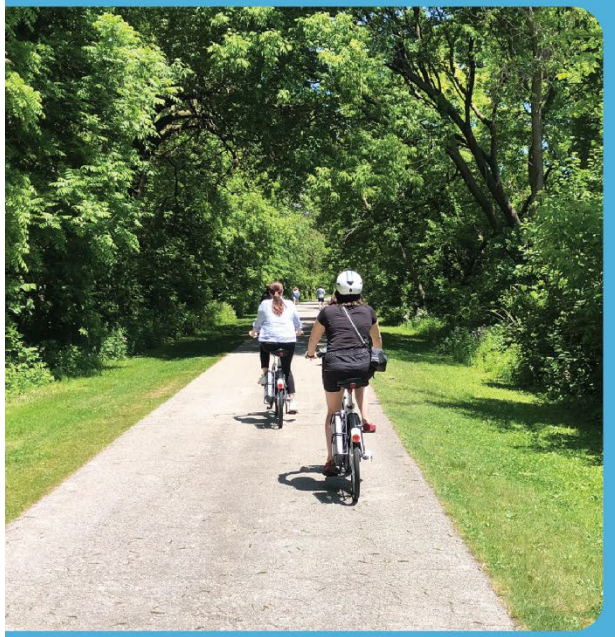
MOBILITY refers to our ability to move around our city and reach people, places, and opportunities we need in our daily lives.

For all Milwaukeeans to have the mobility they need, people in every neighborhood require access to safe, reliable, and affordable transportation choices.

STATE OF MOBILITY IN MILWAUKEE

The *State of Mobility in Milwaukee* describes the City's existing transportation system and streets, including data analysis to determine how people move in Milwaukee today.

This report identifies key challenges and opportunities for transportation in the City, which will ultimately guide the strategies and actions identified in 414 in Motion alongside feedback, ideas, and priorities gathered through community engagement.



CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Challenges

- A legacy of car-centric design
- Oversized streets
- Mobility gaps
- Varying neighborhood needs
- Rising costs
- Traffic safety
- Reliable transit

Opportunities

- Enabling walking and biking
- More affordable choices
- Vision Zero
- Reshaping our public realm
- Shifting short trips

CHALLENGE: A LEGACY OF CAR-CENTRIC DESIGN

Today, most Milwaukeeans travel by car, enabled by a legacy of historical investment choices and street design that prioritized driving above all else.

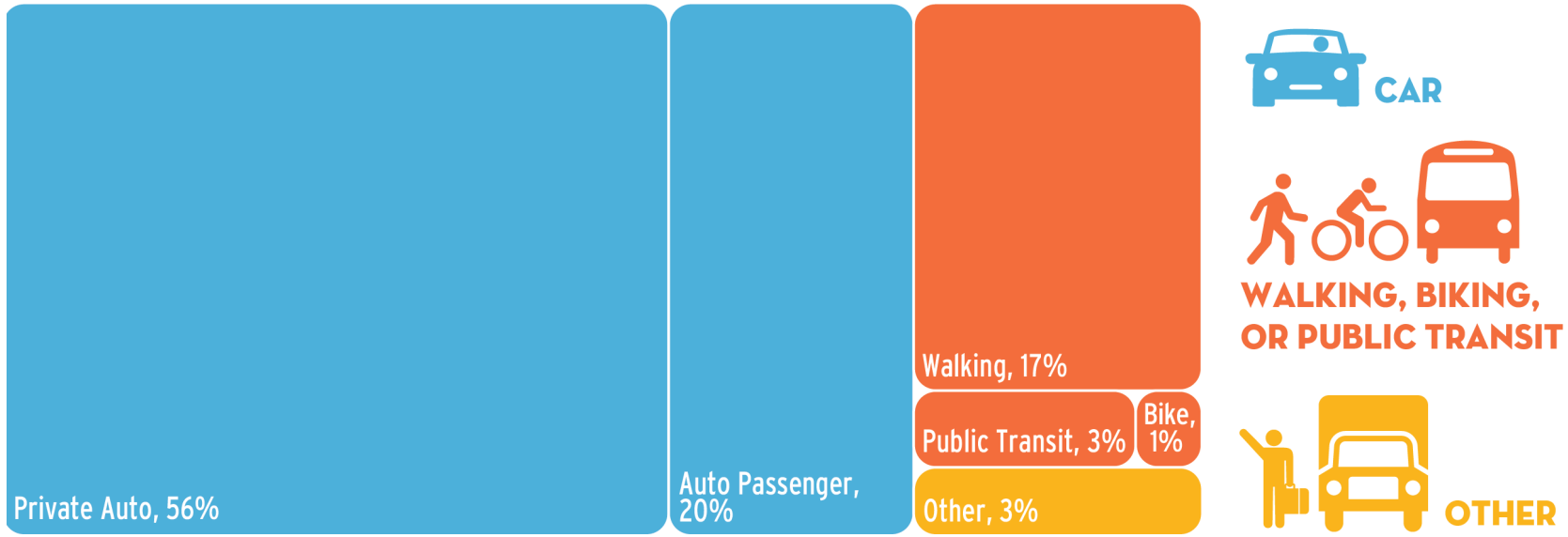
76%

of all trips that start and end within Milwaukee are made by car.[1]

21%

of all trips that start and end within Milwaukee are made by walking, biking, or transit.[2]

Mode Share for Trips within Milwaukee

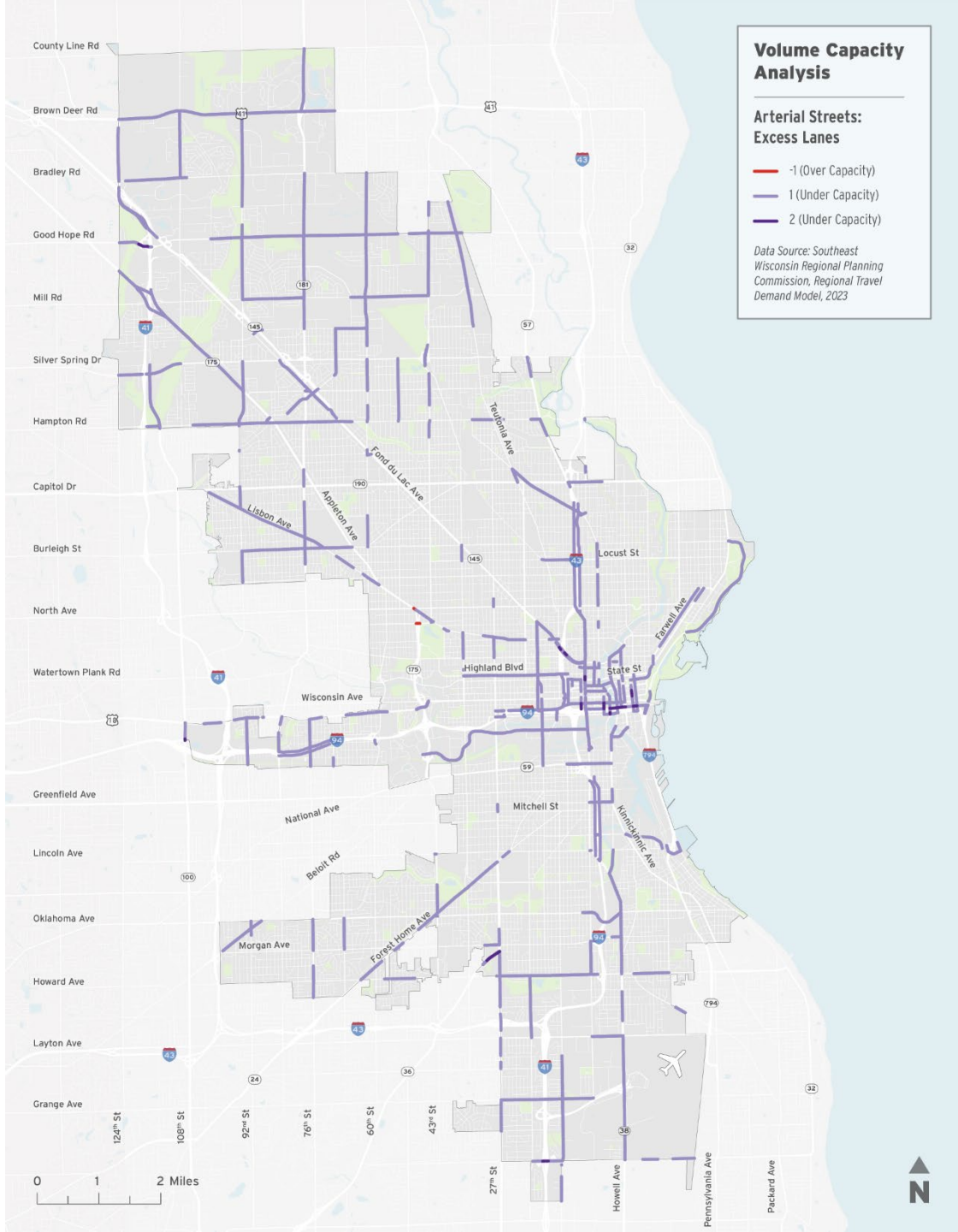


Data source: Replica, Mode Share Trips, Fall 2024.

CHALLENGE: OVERSIZED STREETS

Many of our streets were built for far more motor vehicle trips than Milwaukee experiences today, resulting in more pavement than we need. This excess pavement is expensive to maintain; encourages speeding and reckless driving; often does not include space for walking, biking, and transit; and worsens flooding, urban heat, and other climate challenges.

- Traffic volumes have been decreasing on many of Milwaukee's major streets over the last several decades.[3]
- More than a quarter (27%) of major street miles across the city have at least one travel lane that could potentially be repurposed.[4]
- Oversized streets lead to more pavement that needs to be maintained. Across the city, 25% of all lane miles are in poor condition, 40% are rated fair, and only 35% are in good or excellent condition.[5]

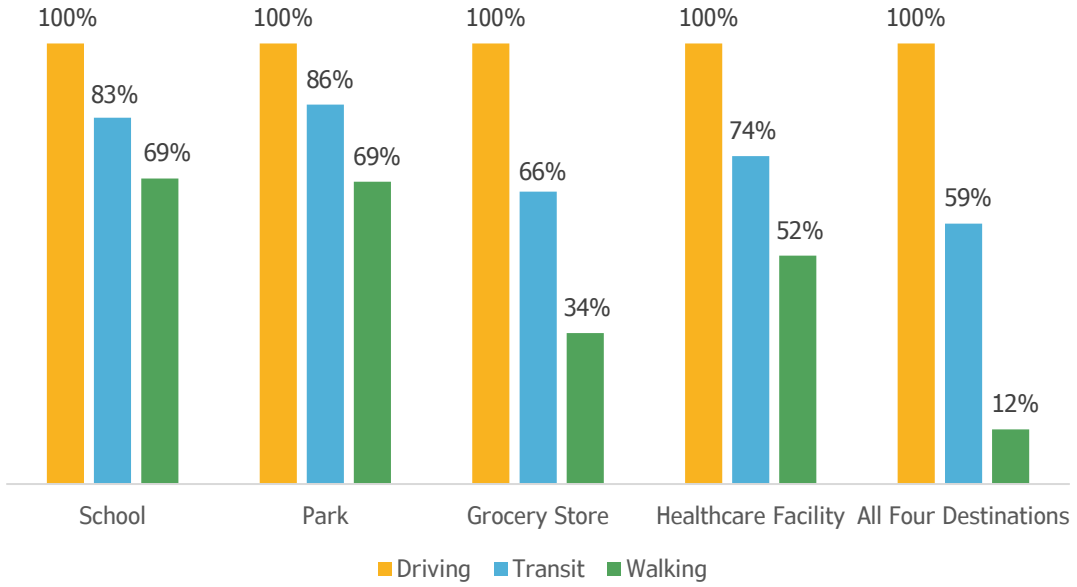


CHALLENGE: MOBILITY GAPS

One in six Milwaukee households do not own a car, but reaching opportunities and daily destinations without one is a struggle in many parts of the city.

- In addition to the 16% of households that own zero vehicles, 44% of households only have access to one vehicle.[6]
- On average, people in Milwaukee can access over 216,000 jobs within a 20-minute drive, but just over 10,500 jobs on average within a 20-minute transit trip.[7]
- All residents in Milwaukee can access a school, park, grocery store, and healthcare facility within a 20-minute drive, but only 59% of residents can do so via a 20-minute transit trip and just 12% of residents can do so via walking. [8, 9,10]

Access to Destinations within 20 Minutes



Data Source: Google, Distance Matrix API, Fall 2025; City of Milwaukee Department of City Development, Key Destinations. 2025; City of Milwaukee Health Department, Key Destinations, 2025.

* Note: this analysis only considers destinations within the city

CHALLENGE: VARYING NEEDS

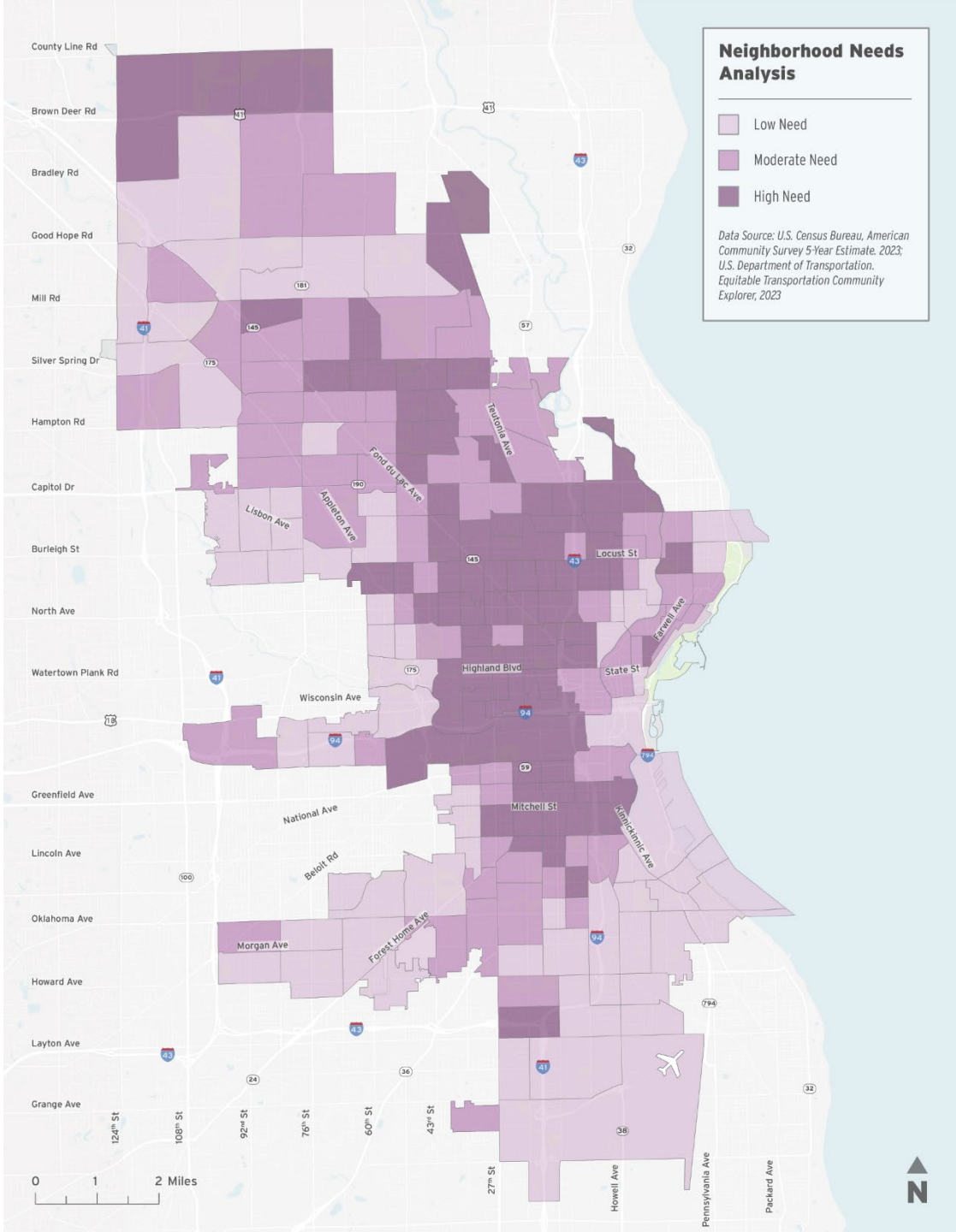
Several neighborhoods across the city have greater transportation needs and require greater investment to improve mobility and access.

Average Values by Neighborhood Need Category

Neighborhood Need Category	Percent of Population	Average Percent Poverty	Average Percent Zero Car Household	Average Percent Transportation Cost-Burdened*
Low Need	35%	11%	6%	14%
Moderate Need	34%	21%	16%	21%
High Need	32%	40%	29%	35%

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2023; U.S. Department of Transportation, Equitable Transportation Community Explorer, 2023.

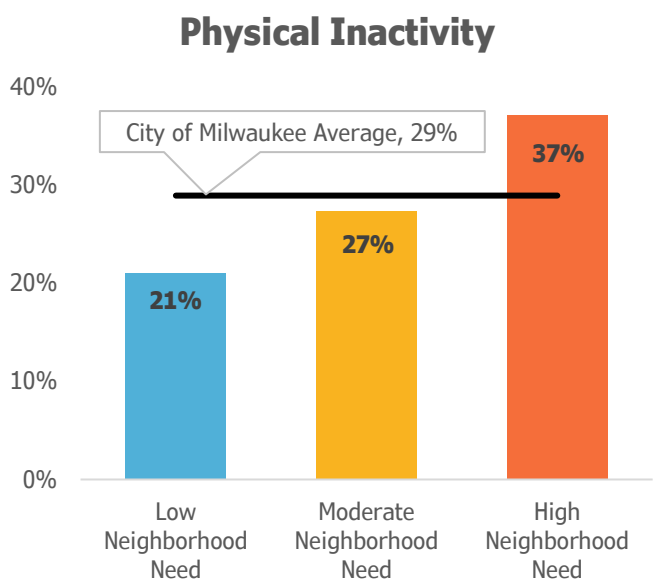
*Households that spend more than 15% of their annual income on transportation.

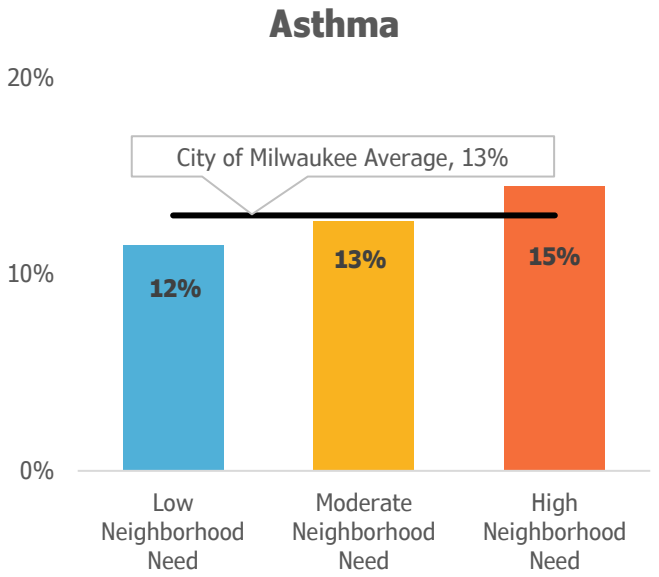


CHALLENGE: VARYING NEEDS

Many neighborhoods that have greater transportation needs also experience worse air pollution, see lower health outcomes, and are burdened by rising costs.

- High neighborhood need areas experience higher rates of physical inactivity, obesity, asthma, and diabetes along with overall lower life expectancies.[11]
- Neighborhoods in Milwaukee with the highest needs generally experience worse air pollution when compared to citywide and statewide averages. [12]





Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, PLACES: Local Data for Better Health, 2022.

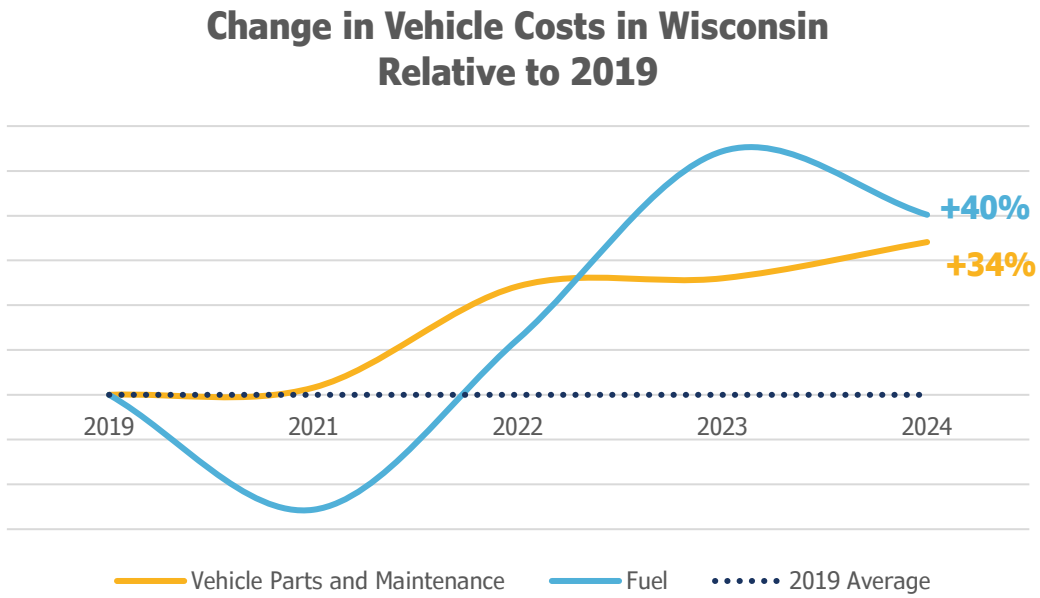
CHALLENGE: RISING COSTS

Owning a vehicle is becoming a heavier burden for Milwaukee families as costs soar.

- Transportation costs have increased significantly in recent years. The average person in Wisconsin spends 33% more on transportation today than they did in 2019, largely driven by increasing vehicle costs.[13]
- Owning, operating, and maintaining a vehicle is a major financial commitment in Milwaukee, with total annual costs averaging more than $11,000 per year.[14]
- For a median household in Milwaukee, the cost of owning a vehicle takes up 22% of their annual household income. For a family of four living at the poverty line, vehicle costs account for more than one-third (36%) of their annual income. Households that spend more than 15% of their annual income on transportation are identified as 'transportation cost burdened' by the United States Department of Transportation. [15, 16]

$11,168

Average Annual cost to own, operate, and maintain a vehicle in Milwaukee [17]



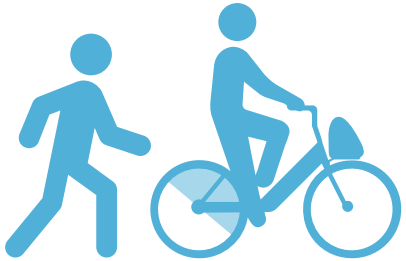
Data Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Personal Consumption Expenditures, 2024.

CHALLENGE: TRAFFIC SAFETY

While traffic deaths and serious injuries have fallen in Wisconsin statewide, levels of traffic violence in Milwaukee remain substantially higher. Black Milwaukeeans and people walking or biking are disproportionately impacted.

Traffic deaths and serious injuries remain high after peaking in 2020.[18]

Underserved communities are disproportionately impacted by crashes. Between 2020 and 2024, Black Milwaukeeans experienced a traffic crash death rate double that of white Milwaukeeans.[19]

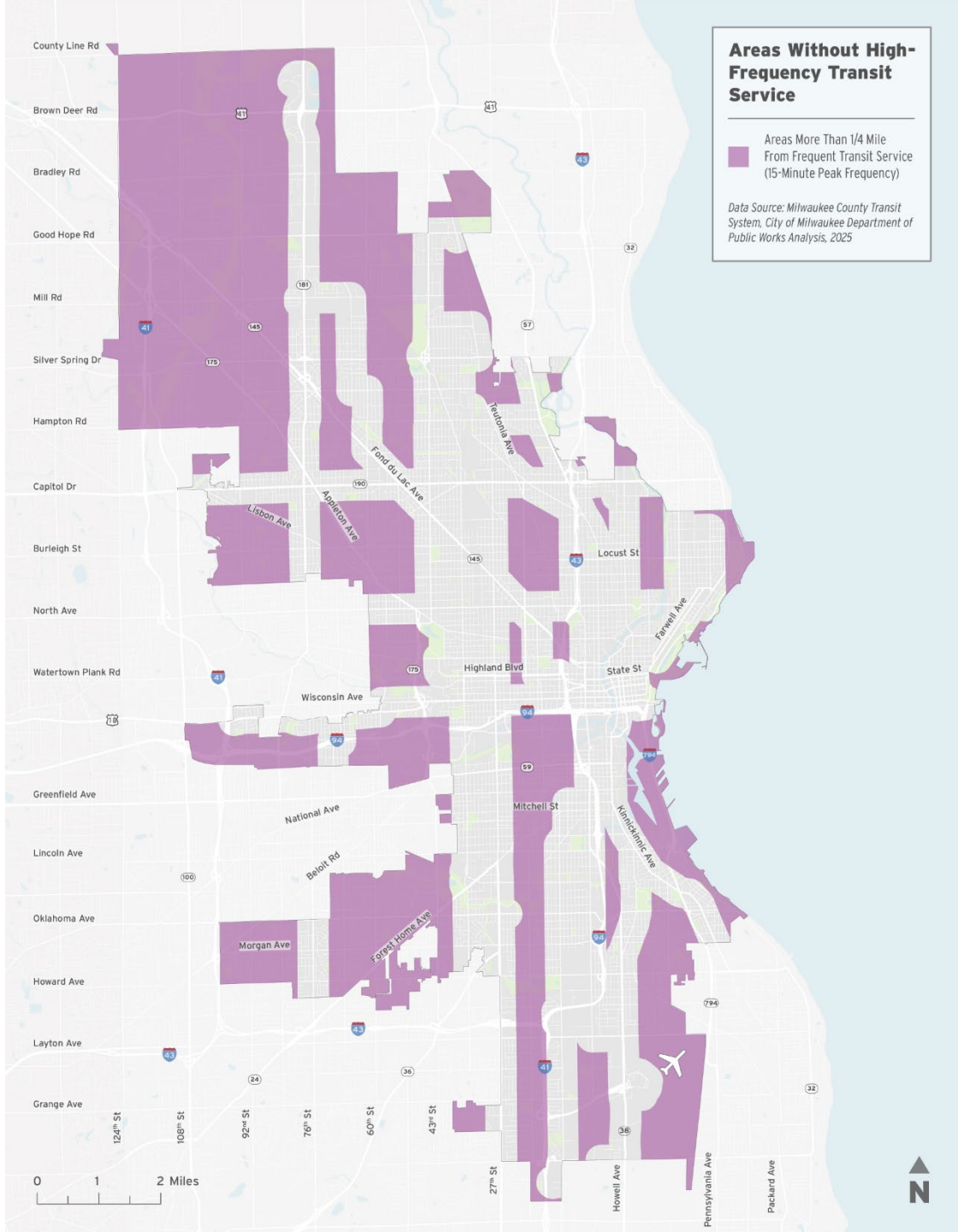


17% of pedestrian and 7% of bicyclist crashes resulted in a fatal or serious injury, compared to less than 1% of vehicle crashes.[20]

CHALLENGE: RELIABLE TRANSIT

Transit is essential to connecting Milwaukeeans with jobs, education, and daily needs—especially for those without access to a car. Decades of underfunding, however, have left the Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) without the resources needed to deliver the frequent, reliable service our residents deserve.

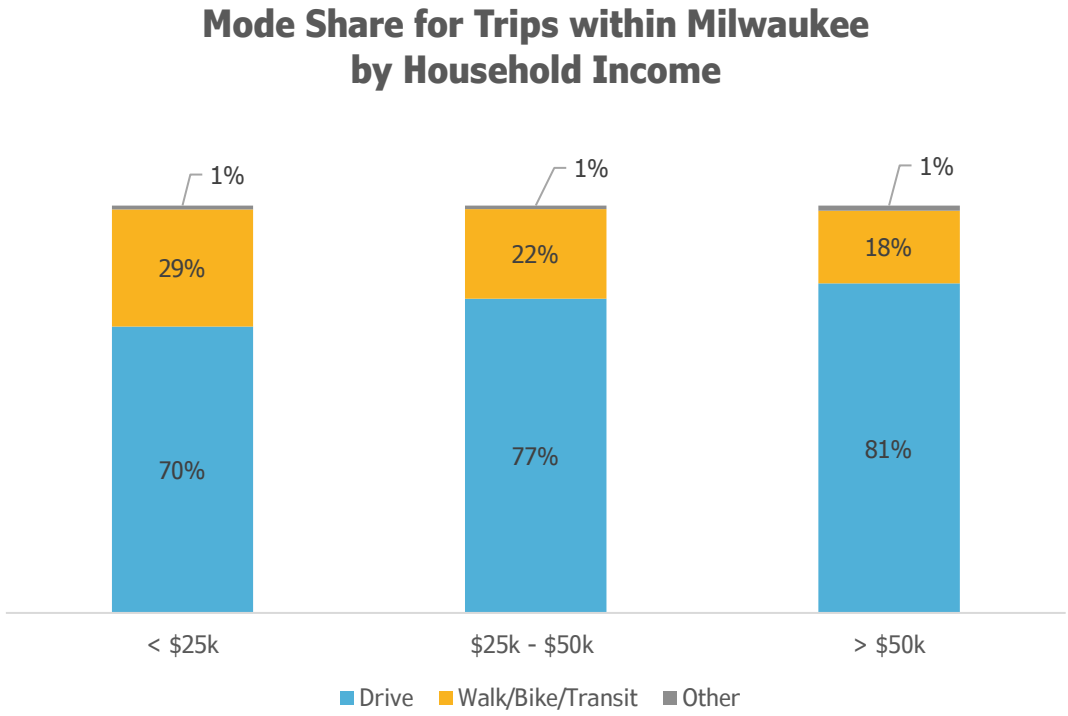
- 59% of Milwaukee residents live within ¼ mile of high-frequency service (defined by MCTS as routes that come every 15 minutes or less during peak periods).[21,22]
- Only 31% of the population lives within ¼ mile of service that is high-frequency throughout the entire day.[23, 24]
- No routes provide high-frequency service in the evenings or on Sundays.[25]
- Adjusting for inflation, MCTS's budget has shrunk 14% since 2016.[26]



OPPORTUNITY: INCREASING WALKING AND BIKING

Walking and biking account for nearly 20% of all trips within Milwaukee, but many more trips could be made by these modes with the right investment.[27] Milwaukeeans want more walkable neighborhoods, and investing in walking and biking will increase connectivity, accessibility, and quality of life across the city.

- Creating walkable, active communities is a goal in many existing citywide and neighborhood plans, including the *Housing Element* and the *Climate and Equity Plan*.
- Milwaukeeans with lower incomes are more likely to rely on walking, biking, and transit to meet their daily needs.[28]



Data Source: Replica, Mode Share Trips, Fall 2024.

OPPORTUNITY: MORE AFFORDABLE CHOICES

Walking, biking, and transit are more affordable than driving and can save families money as the costs of car ownership become an increasing burden.

- MCTS bus fares are capped at $99 month, or $49.50 for riders over 65, between the ages of 6-11, or with a qualifying disability.[29]
- Bublr Bikes offers memberships with unlimited 60-minute trips via a monthly pass that costs $30, an annual pass that costs $129, or a free access pass for income-qualified residents.[30]
- Shared scooter operators in Milwaukee offer discounted access passes for low-income residents.

OPPORTUNITY: VISION ZERO

Milwaukee is committed to Vision Zero – the goal of eliminating all traffic deaths and serious injuries by the year 2037. Vision Zero is an opportunity for Milwaukee to fundamentally rethink how our streets are designed to reduce speeding and reckless driving and prioritize safety for everyone.

- Milwaukee adopted the *Vision Zero Action Plan* in 2025, which outlines seven overarching goals and associated actions to reduce severe crashes and their consequences.

Milwaukee's Vision Zero Overarching Goals

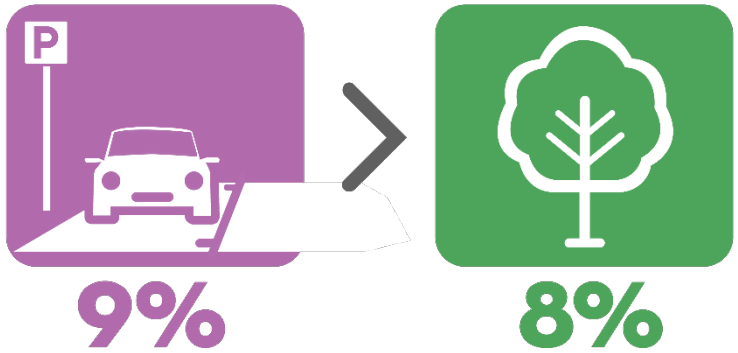
1. Build Safe Streets for All Users, Prioritizing the High Injury Network
2. Support Accountability in the Justice System with a Focus on Prevention
3. Create Vibrant, People Center Places
4. Promote Traffic Safety Through Communication, Encouragement, and Education
5. Ensure Timely and Effective EMS and Medical Care
6. Advocate for Safer Vehicles
7. Champion State Law Changes

Data Source: City of Milwaukee, Vision Zero Action Plan, 2025.

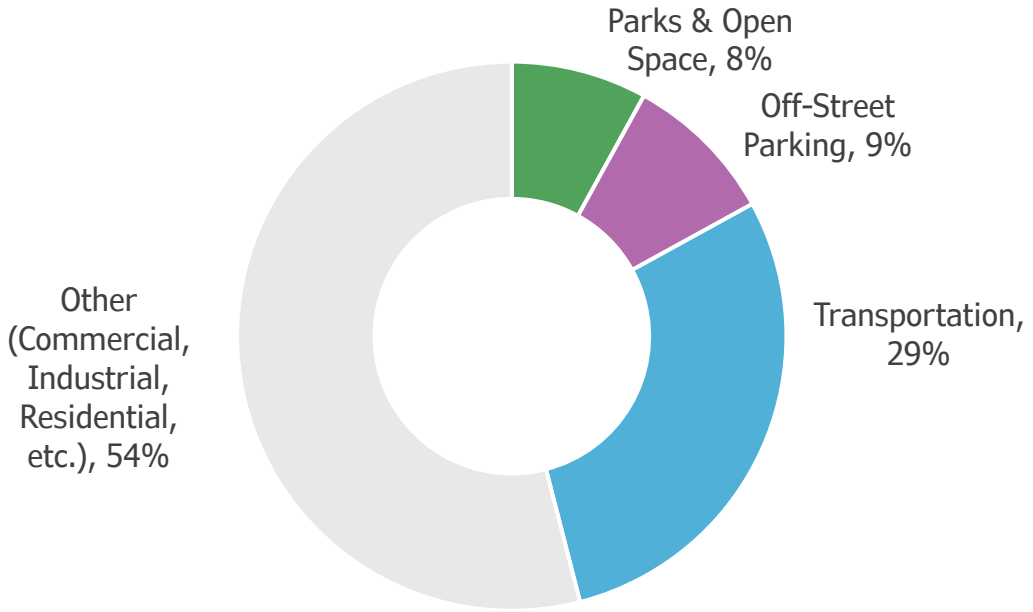
OPPORTUNITY: RESHAPING OUR PUBLIC REALM

Our transportation infrastructure, including streets, sidewalks, and driveways, accounts for 29% of the land in Milwaukee, and many of our streets have excess space that can be put to better use.[31]

- Together, transportation and parking account for nearly five times as much land as our parks, presenting a major opportunity to rethink how this space can better serve people, strengthen our public realm, and enhance Milwaukee's unique quality of place.[32]
- More than a quarter (27%) of major street miles across the city have at least one travel lane that could potentially be repurposed.[33]
- More land is dedicated to off-street parking (e.g., parking lots and garages) than all the parks and open space in Milwaukee.[34]



Breakdown of Land in the City of Milwaukee



Data Source: Milwaukee County, Planimetric Mapping Data, 2020; City of Milwaukee, Parcel Polygons, 2024.

OPPORTUNITY: SHIFTING SHORT TRIPS

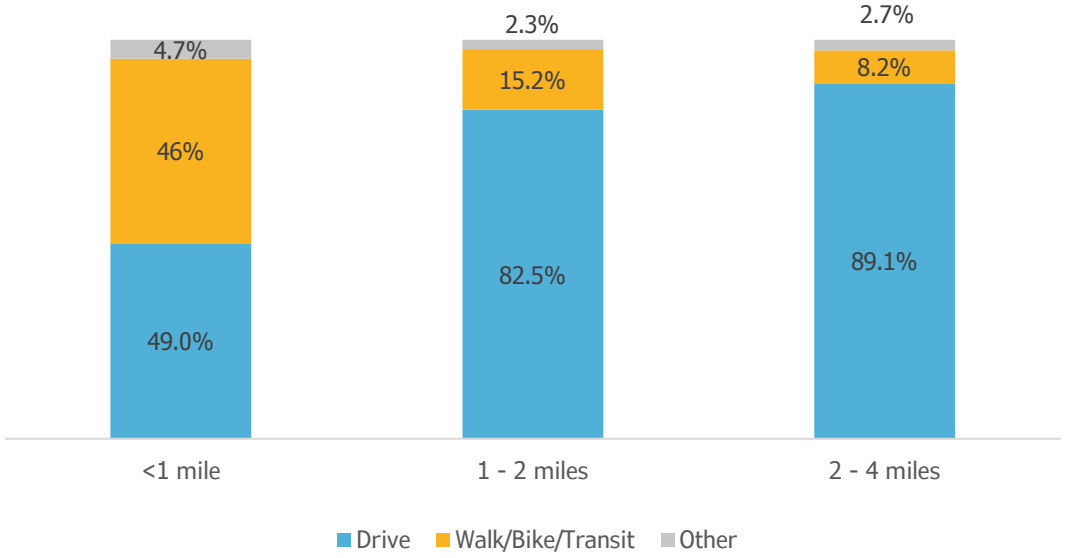
Most trips Milwaukeeans make are short and could be made by walking, biking, or transit options that are safe, convenient, and reliable.

- Even though most trips within Milwaukee are relatively short, we still rely on driving for most of these trips.[35]
- The median distance for trips that start and end within Milwaukee is 1.8 miles.[36]
- One-third of all trips within Milwaukee are less than one mile, about a 20-minute walk or 6-minute bike.[37]

20
MINUTES
Average time to walk one mile [38]

6
MINUTES
Average time to bike one mile [39]

Mode Share for Trips within Milwaukee by Trip Distance



Data Source: Replica, Mode Share Trips, Fall 2024.

MILWAUKEE TODAY

414 in Motion

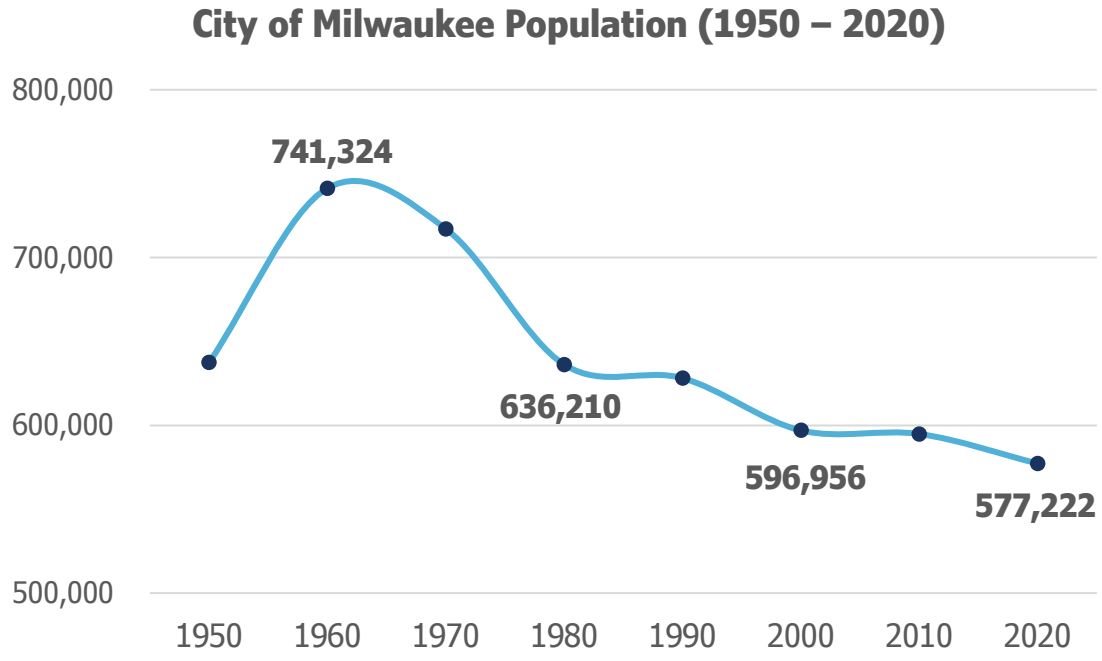
POPULATION

Milwaukee is the largest city in Wisconsin, with an estimated population of 560,000 residents as of 2023.[40]

Milwaukee's population has shrunk considerably from its peak in 1960, however, when the city had nearly 750,000 residents.[41]

This decline in population has been influenced by many factors, including deindustrialization and the loss of manufacturing jobs, the build out of the interstate system and suburbanization, housing discrimination, and shrinking household sizes.

As a result, much of the City's infrastructure, including our streets, were built for a significantly larger population than we have today.



3.3 → **2.4**

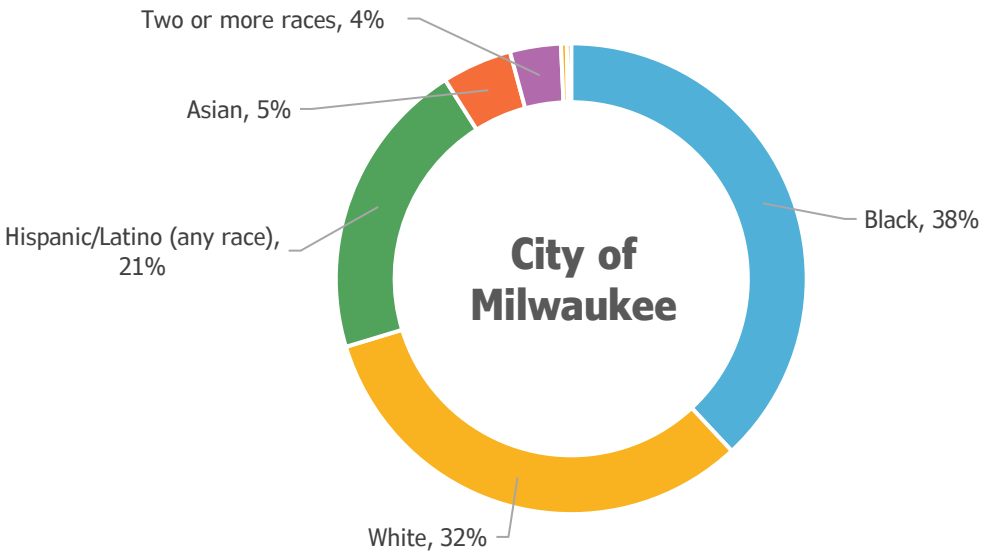
Average household size in 1960

Average household size in 2020

Data Source: United States Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1950 – 2020.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Race/Ethnicity



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2023.

Between 2010 and 2023, Milwaukee's Black and White populations declined by 12% and 20%, respectively, while the city's Hispanic/Latino and Asian populations increased by 18% and 73%.[42]

Language

4%

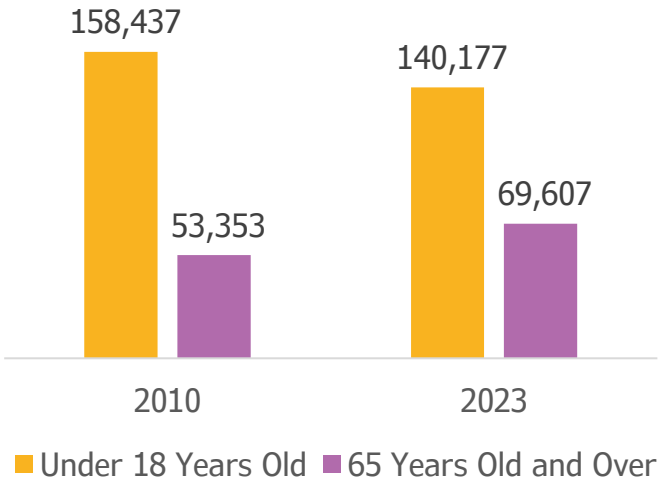
of Milwaukee households with limited English proficiency

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2023.

About 4% of Milwaukee households have limited English proficiency – lower than 2010 (5%). However, nearly a quarter of Milwaukee's population now speaks a language other than English—a 20% increase since 2010.[43]

DEMOGRAPHICS

Milwaukee Residents by Age



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2023.

Milwaukee's population is aging. From 2010 to 2023, the number of children under 18 in the city decreased 12%, while the number of adults over 65 or older increased by 30%.[44]

33

Median Age

Disability Status

1 OUT OF 7

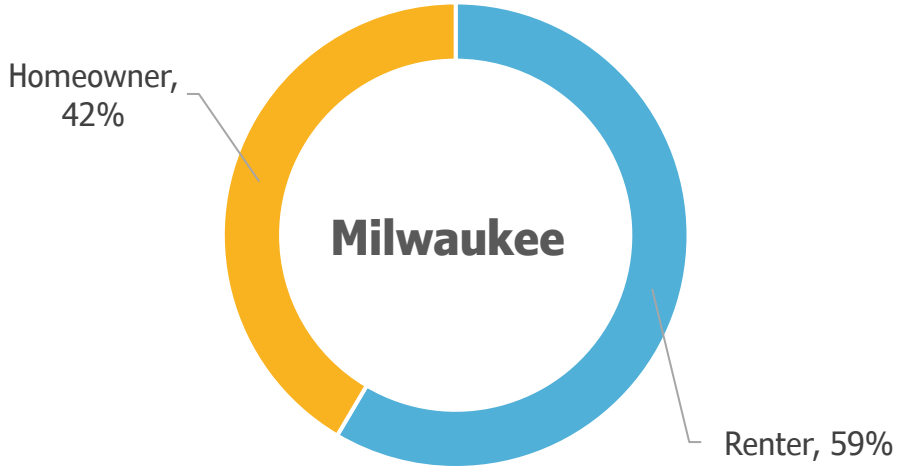
Milwaukee residents lives with a disability

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2023.

More than 75,000 Milwaukee residents identify as having a disability.[45]

DEMOGRAPHICS

Housing



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2023.

The majority of households in Milwaukee are occupied by people renting. The share of renters is higher for Black (72%) and Hispanic/Latino (60%) households compared to the citywide average.[46]

Access to a Vehicle

36,000

Households across Milwaukee do not have access to a vehicle

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2023.

Over half of all households in the city (59%) have one or fewer vehicles.[47]

JOBS & ECONOMY

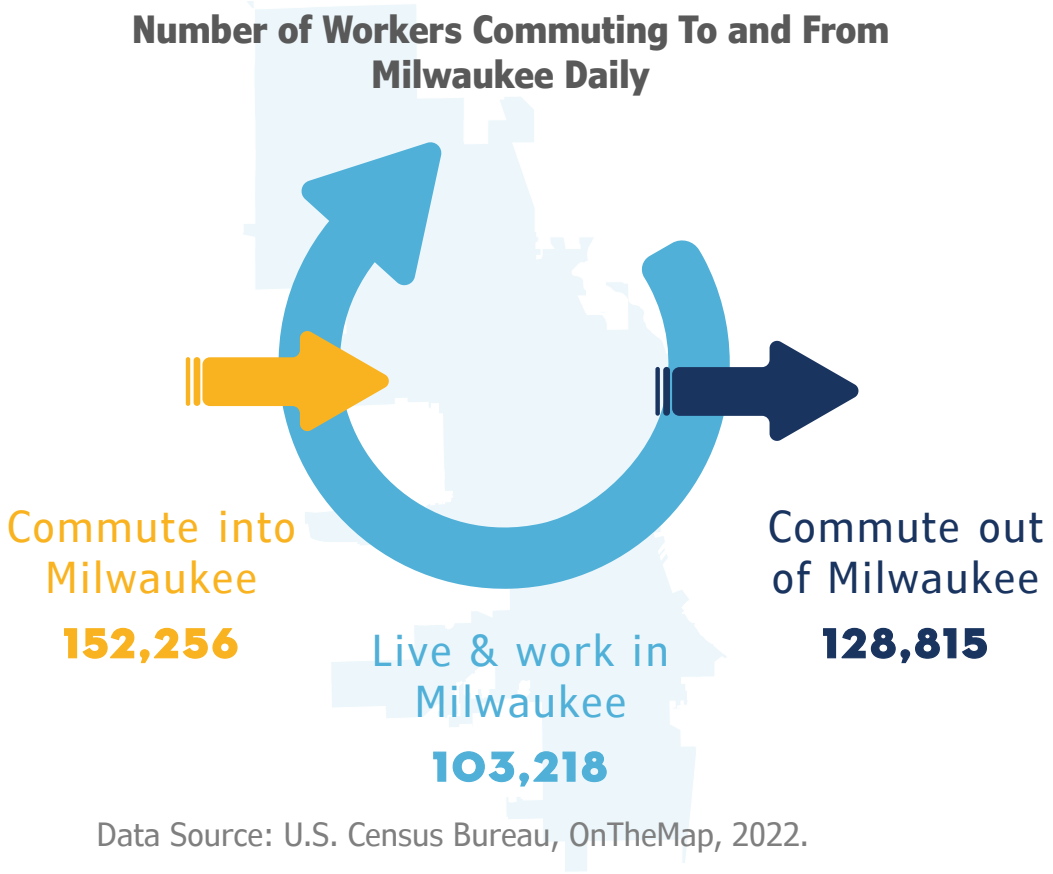
As of 2022 there were 255,000 jobs in Milwaukee. Healthcare, education, and manufacturing are the three largest sectors in Milwaukee, accounting for more than one out of every three jobs in the city (37%).[48]

The median household income in Milwaukee is $52,000. The median income for Black households is 28% lower than the citywide average ($37,000). The median income for white households is 30% higher than the citywide average ($68,000) and 80% higher than Black Milwaukeeans.[49]

Milwaukee's unemployment rate is 5%. The unemployment rate for Black Milwaukeeans is double (10%) the citywide average.[50]

Workers commuting into Milwaukee are more likely to be high earners compared to those that live and work in Milwaukee and those that commute out of the city.[51]

Number of Workers Commuting To and From Milwaukee Daily



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap, 2022.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEED

Neighborhoods throughout Milwaukee have varying levels of need for transportation investment. Three factors were used to evaluate neighborhood need:

1

POVERTY

Share of households below the Federal poverty line

2

ZERO-VEHICLE HOUSEHOLDS

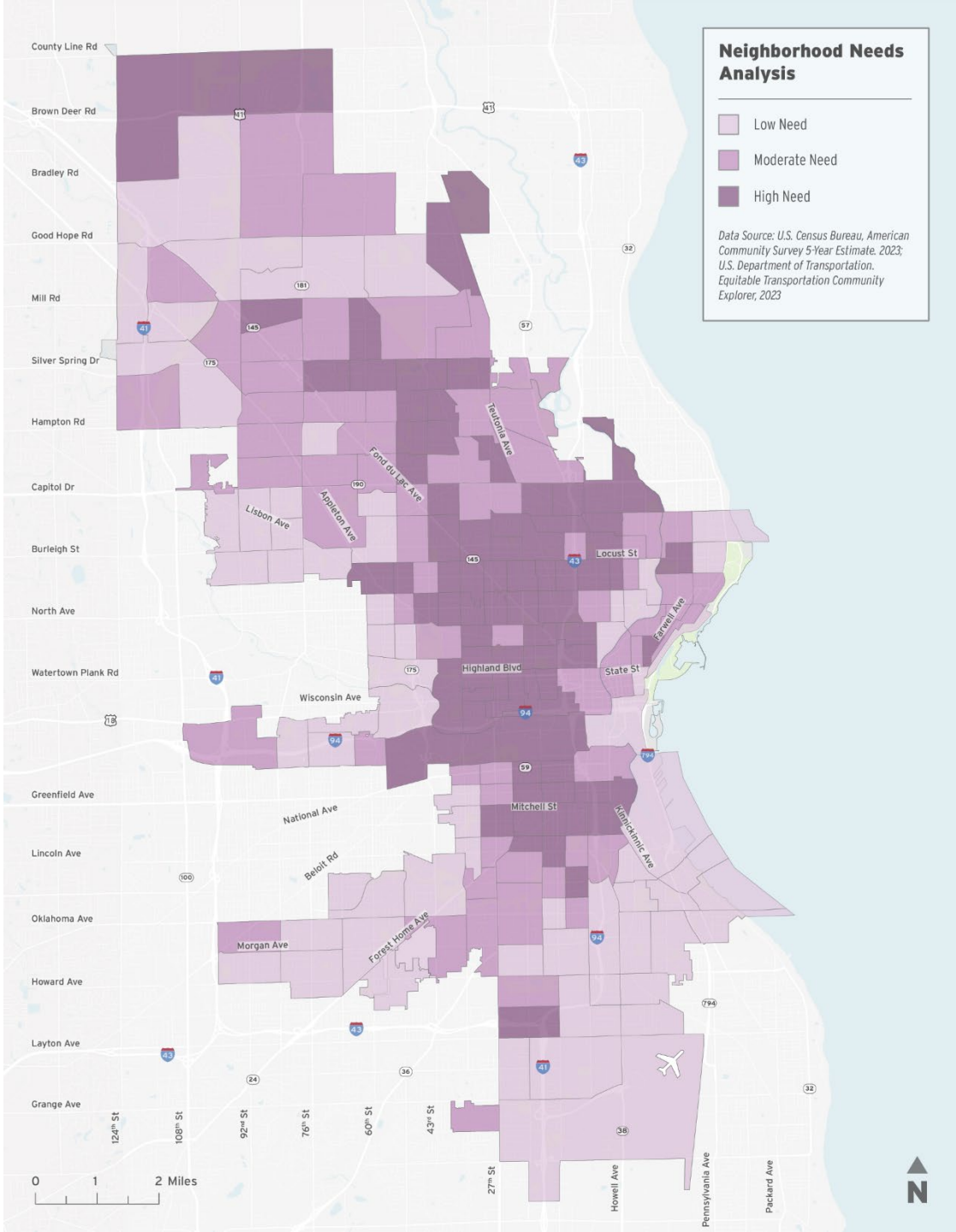
Share of households without access to a vehicle

3

TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS

Transportation cost burden

For each factor, census tracts were scored by their percentile rank. Scores from the three factors were added together resulting in a "**neighborhood need score**".



NEIGHBORHOOD NEED

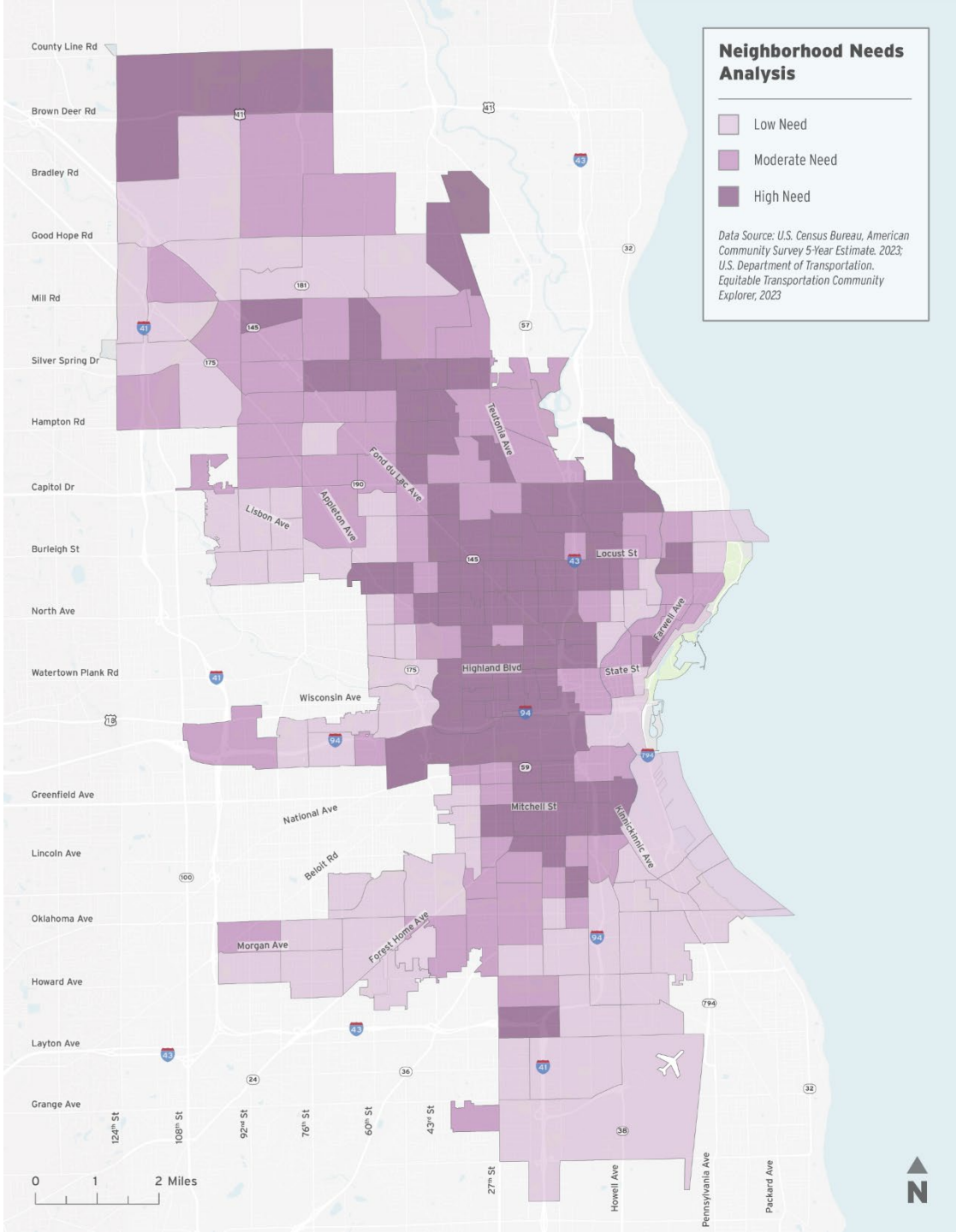
Neighborhood Need scores of Low, Moderate, and High were assigned to each census tract in Milwaukee.

Average Values by Neighborhood Need Category

Neighborhood Need Category	Percent of Population	Average Percent Poverty	Average Percent Zero Car Household	Average Percent Transportation Cost-Burdened
Low Need	35%	11%	6%	14%
Moderate Need	34%	21%	16%	21%
High Need	32%	40%	29%	35%

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2023; U.S. Department of Transportation, Equitable Transportation Community Explorer, 2023.

This analysis will help prioritize future transportation and mobility investments to support areas with the greatest need.

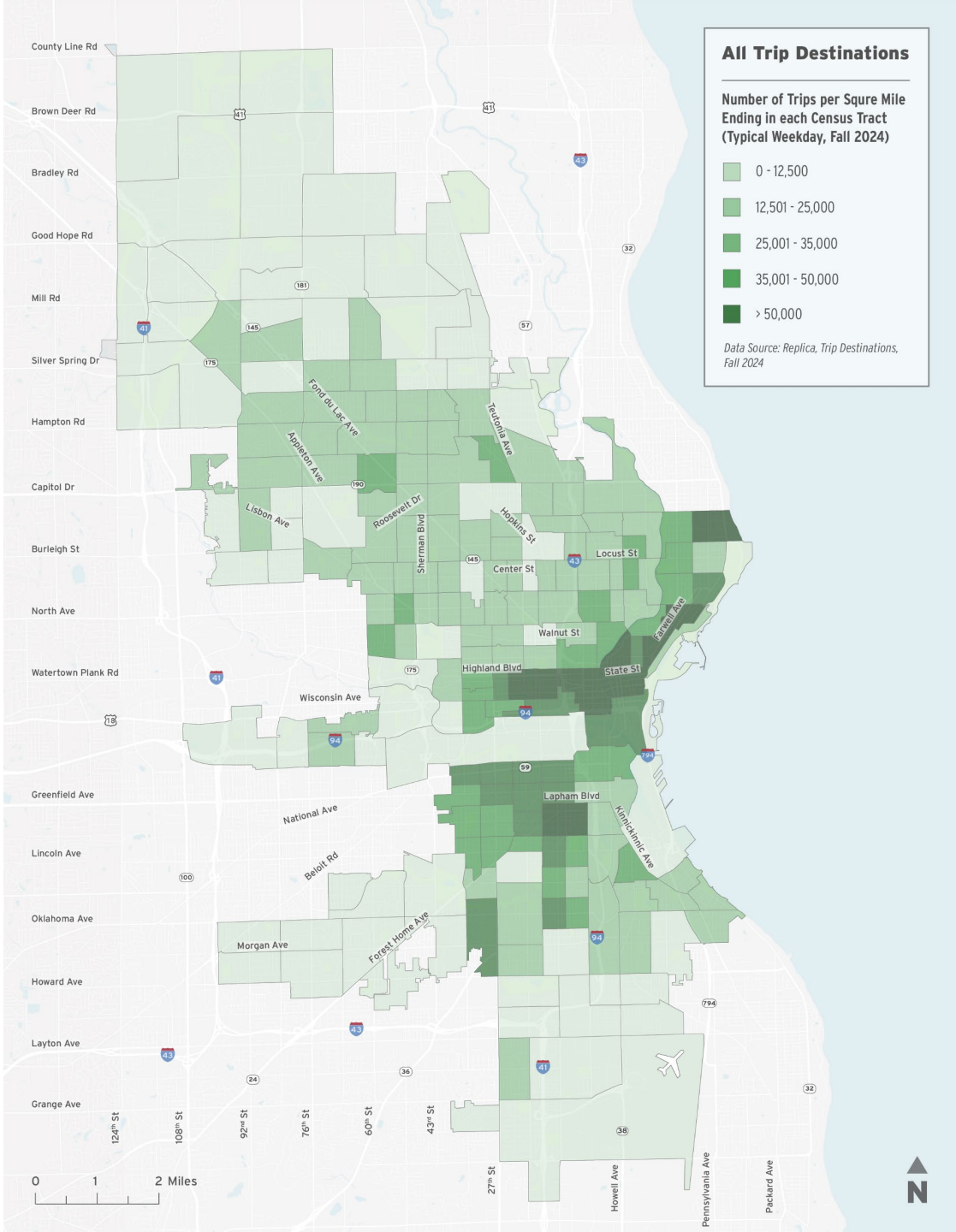


HOW WE GET AROUND

On a typical weekday, more than 2.7 million trips either begin or end in Milwaukee. Just over half of all these trips (52%) occur entirely within the city limits. [52]

The greatest concentration of trips is in the downtown area. 7.5% of all trips that end in Milwaukee end within the Historic Third Ward, Juneau Town, and Kilbourn Town. [53]

Other major areas with high concentrations of trips include the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Avenues West, the Lower East Side, and Historic Mitchell Street. [54]



HOW WE GET AROUND

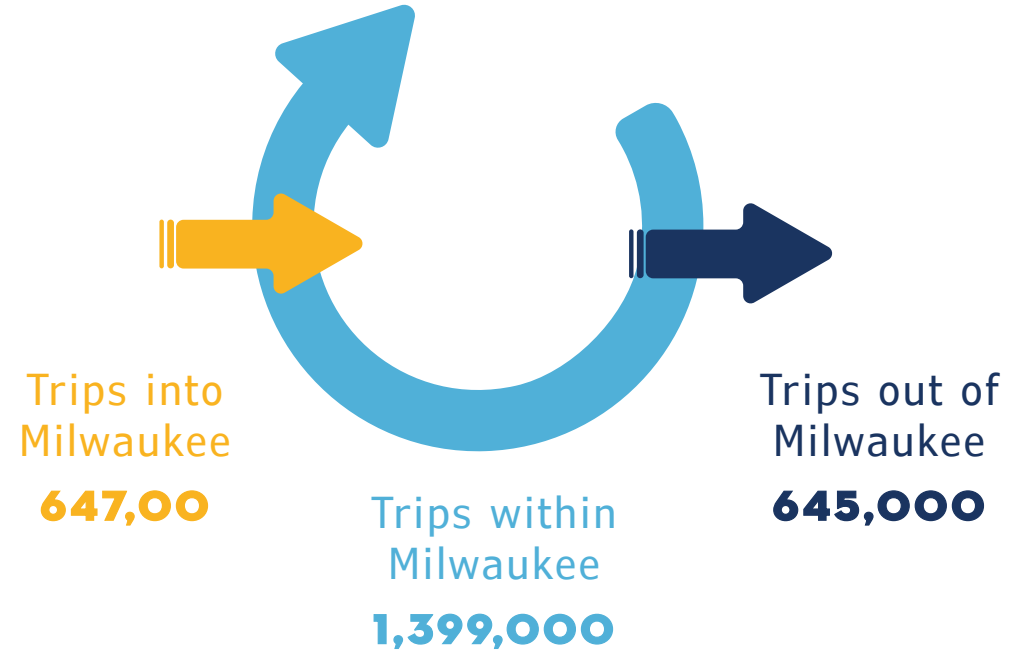
Trips that occur entirely within Milwaukee are more likely to be made by walking, biking, or transit, while trips into or out of the city are more likely to be made by driving.

Trips Into, Within, and Out of the City by Mode of Transportation

Mode	Trips Into City	Trips Within City	Trips Out of City
Driving	61%	56%	61%
Driving - Passenger	21%	20%	20%
Walking	12%	18%	12%
Public Transit	2%	3%	2%
Commercial Vehicle	2%	2%	2%
Biking	0.7%	1%	0.7%
Taxi/TNC	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%

Data Source: Replica, Trip Origin-Destination, Fall 2024.

Trips Into, Within, and Out of Milwaukee On a Typical Weekday



Data Source: Replica, Trip Origin-Destination, Fall 2024.

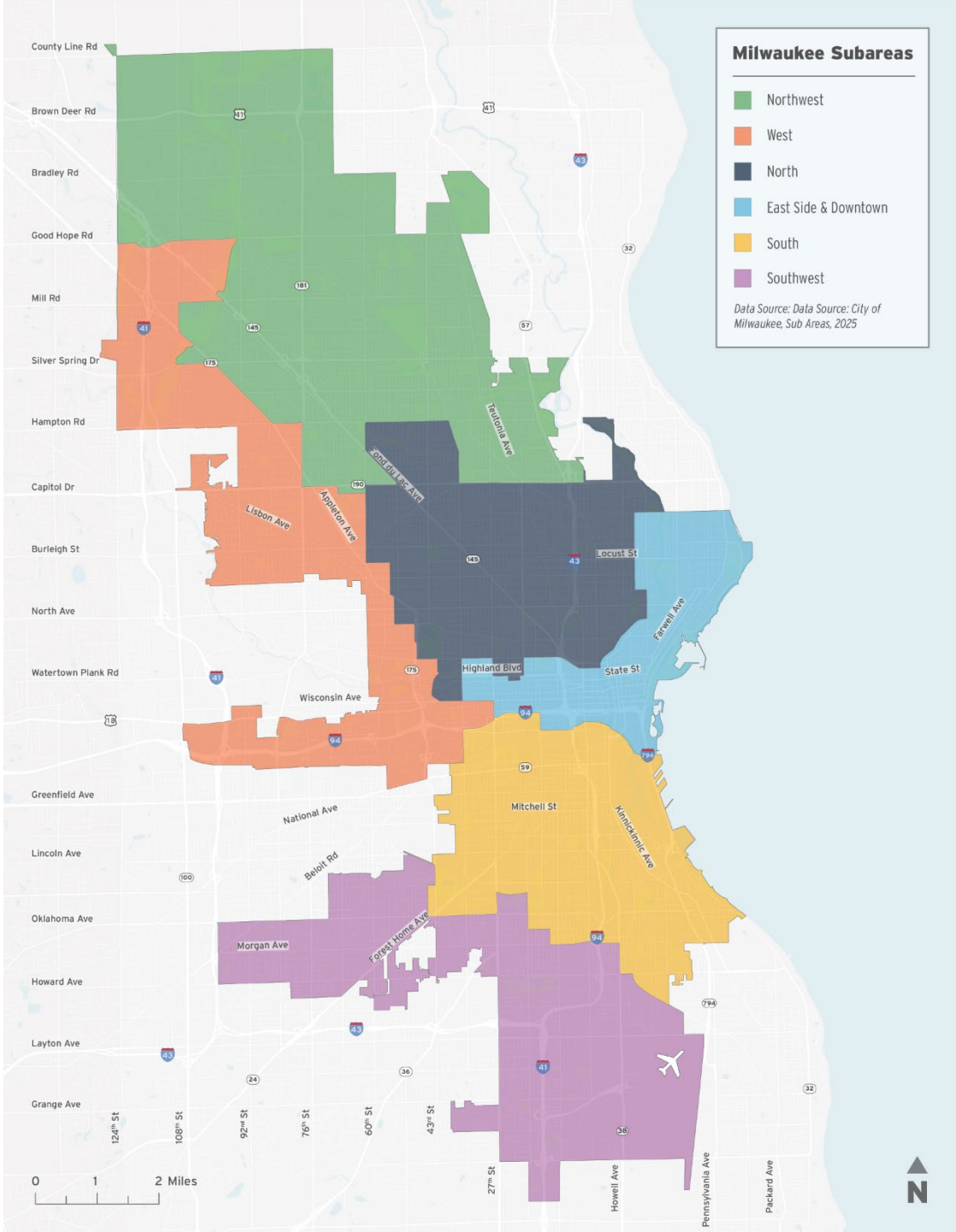
HOW WE GET AROUND

The city was divided into six subareas (East Side & Downtown, South, Southwest, West, North, and Northwest) to better understand travel patterns between different parts of Milwaukee. Across Milwaukee, most trips tend to stay within certain geographic subareas. In five out of six subareas, the majority of trips start and end within that area. Only on the West Side did more than half of trips end outside the subarea. [55]

Trips by Subarea

Subarea	Trip Starts	Trips Entirely within Subarea
Northwest	281,545	63%
West	155,725	47%
North	242,276	52%
East Side/Downtown	272,718	60%
South	295,187	65%
Southwest	151,548	59%

Data Source: Replica, Trip Origin-Destination, Fall 2024.

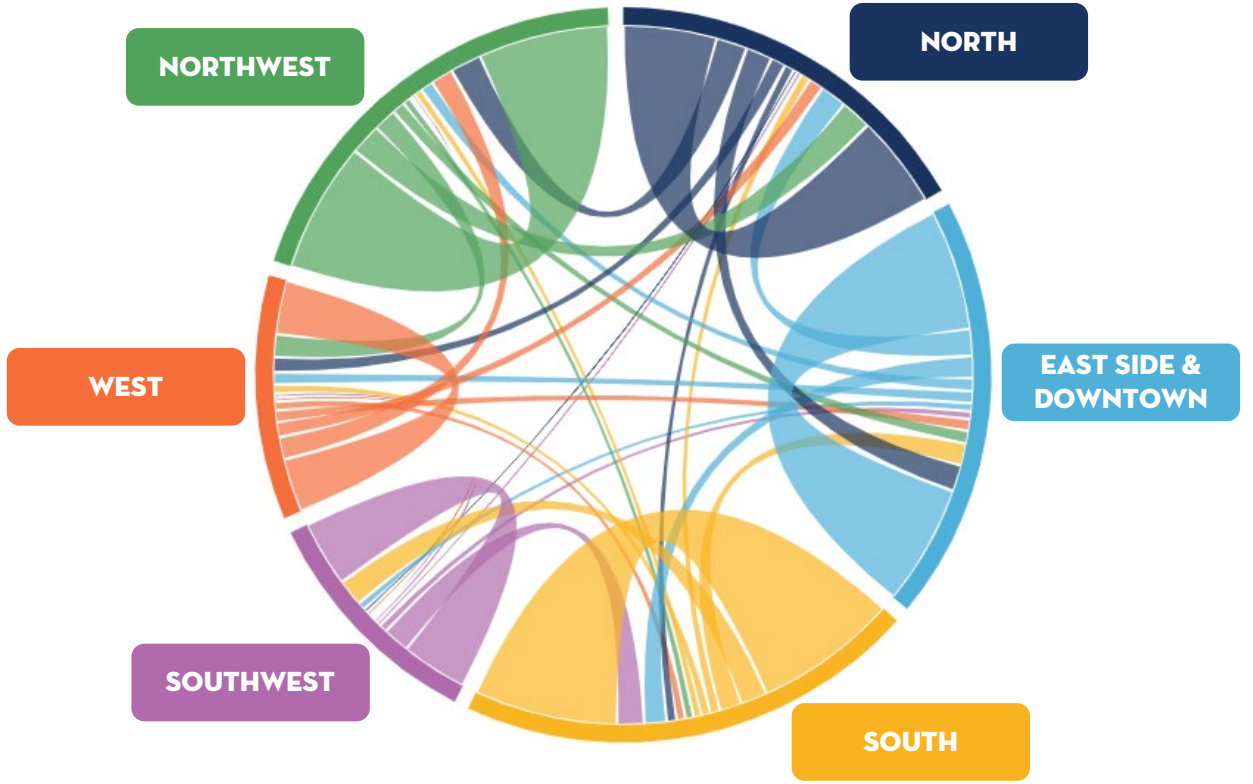


HOW WE GET AROUND TODAY

While most trips start and end within the same subarea, there are also notable patterns between subareas as well (all numbers below are for a typical weekday). [56]

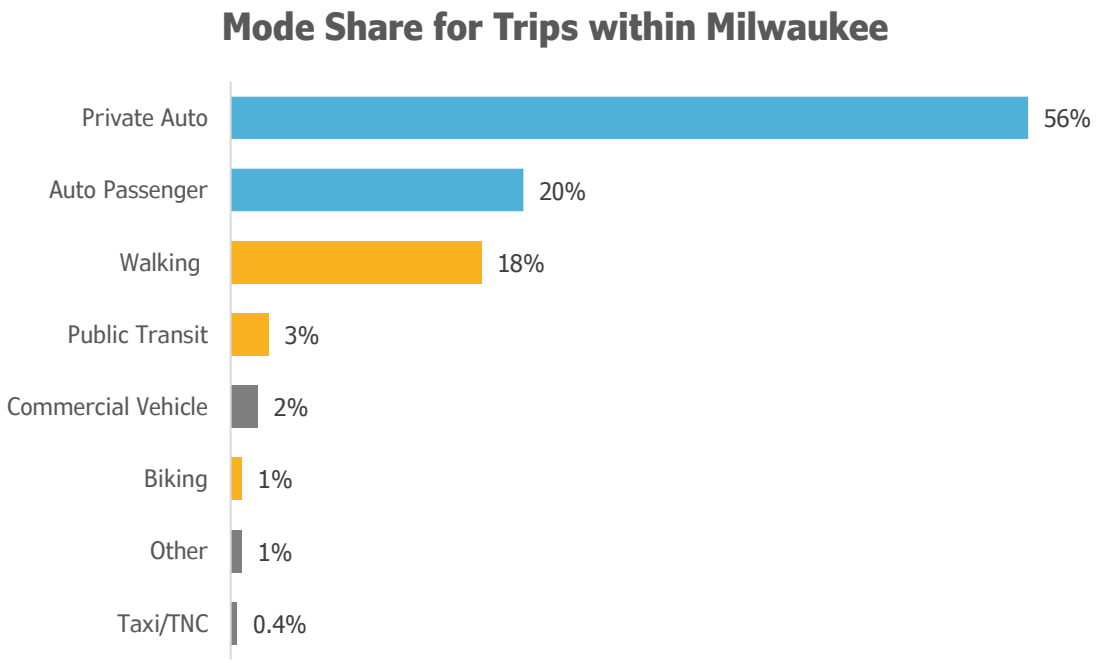
- More than 80,000 trips occur between the North and Northwest subareas
- More than 70,000 trips occur between the North and East Side & Downtown subareas
- More than 70,000 trips occur between the South and Southwest subareas
- Nearly 60,000 trips occur between the South and East Side & Downtown subareas

Origins/Destinations for Trips within Milwaukee by Subarea



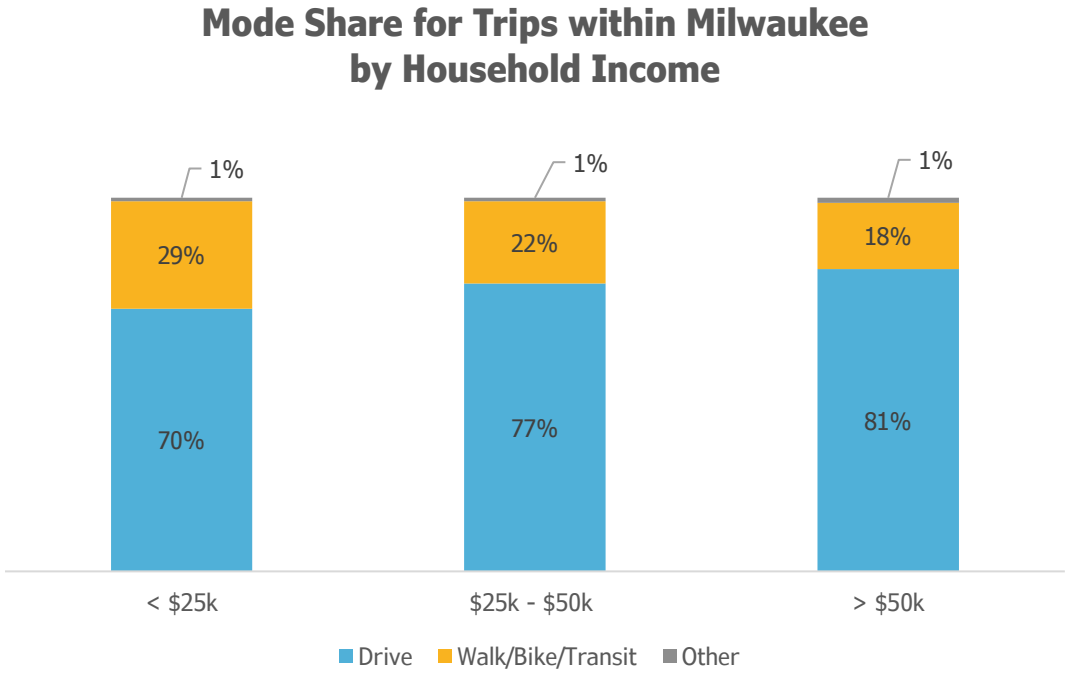
Replica, Trip Origin-Destination, Fall 2024.

HOW WE GET AROUND TODAY



Data Source: Replica, Mode Share Trips, Fall 2024.

76% of all trips that start and end within Milwaukee are made by car. 21% of all trips are made by walking, biking, or taking transit.[57]



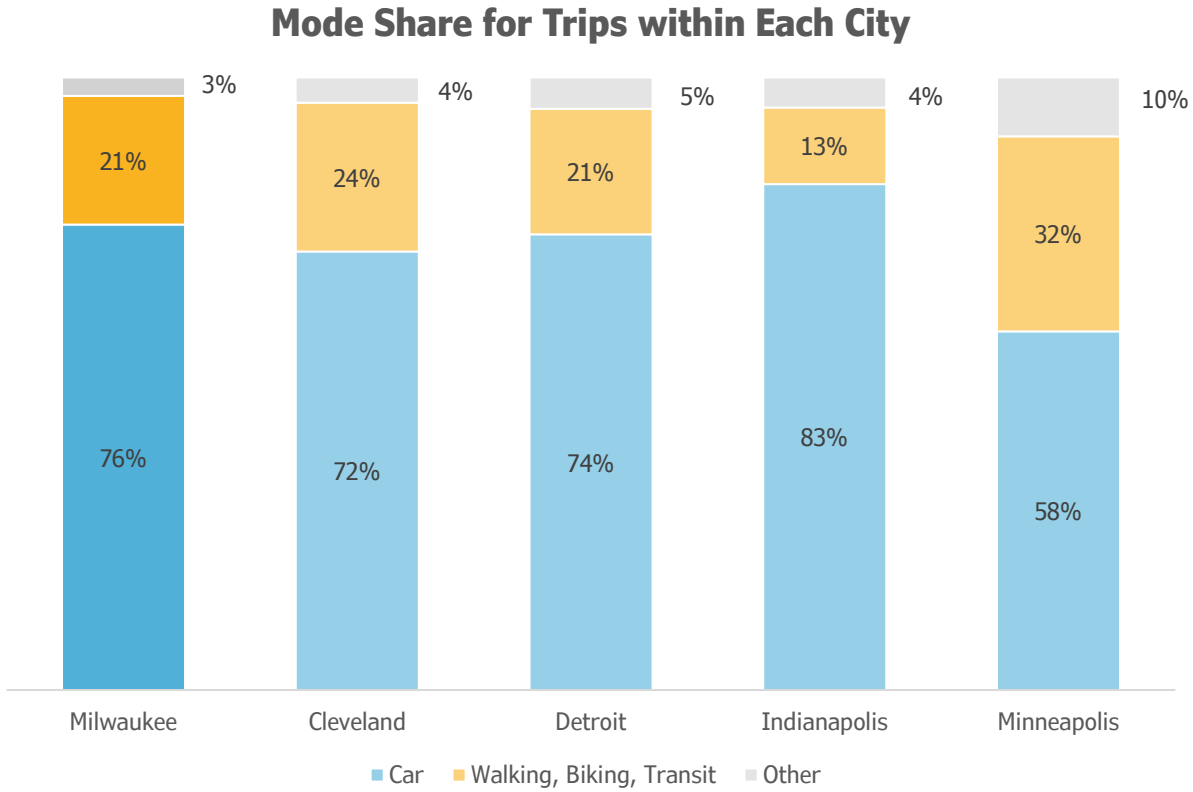
Data Source: Replica, Mode Share Trips, Fall 2024.

Milwaukeeans with lower incomes are more likely to rely on walking, biking, and transit to meet their daily needs.[58]

HOW WE GET AROUND TODAY

Milwaukee is not the only city with a legacy of car-centric design. When compared to peer cities – Cleveland, Detroit, Indianapolis, and Minneapolis – people in Milwaukee have a relatively similar reliance on driving to Cleveland, Detroit, and Indianapolis. The share of trips made by car in Milwaukee is lower than in Indianapolis but higher than both Cleveland and Detroit.[59]

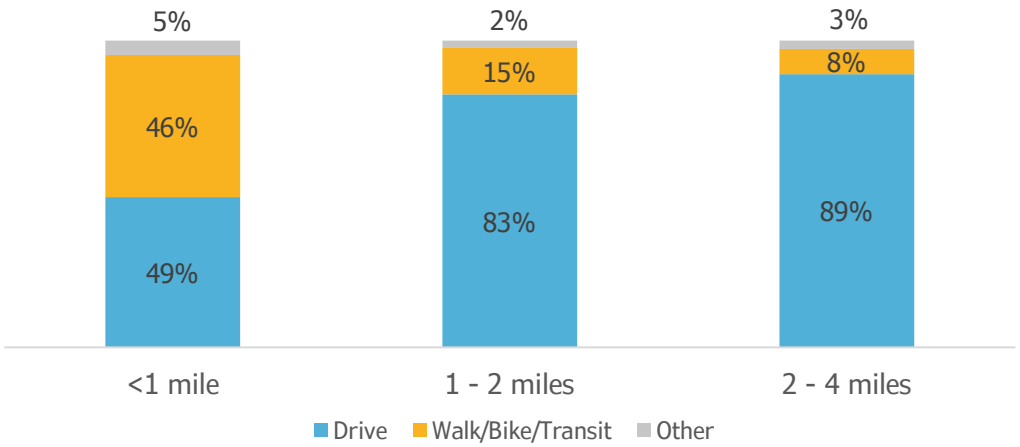
Minneapolis, which has made significant investments in walking, biking, and transit, shows a significantly higher share of trips made via these modes than Milwaukee and other peers.



Data Source: Replica, Mode Share Trips, Fall 2024.

HOW WE GET AROUND TODAY

Mode Share for Trips within Milwaukee by Trip Distance



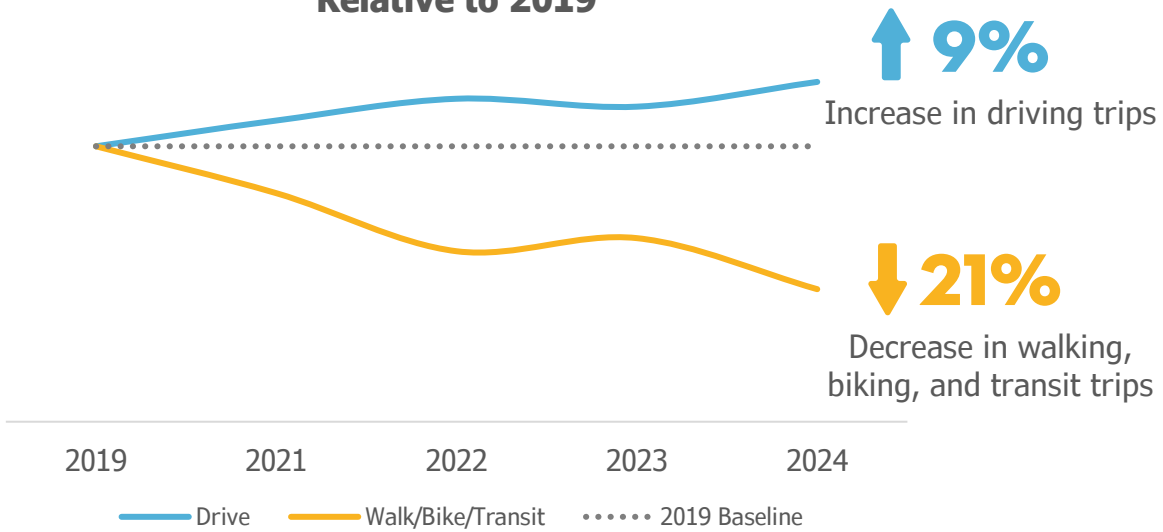
Replica, Mode Share Trips, Fall 2024.

Even though most trips in Milwaukee are relatively short, we still rely on driving for most of these trips.[60]

20 MINUTES
Average time to walk one mile [61]

6 MINUTES
Average time to bike one mile [62]

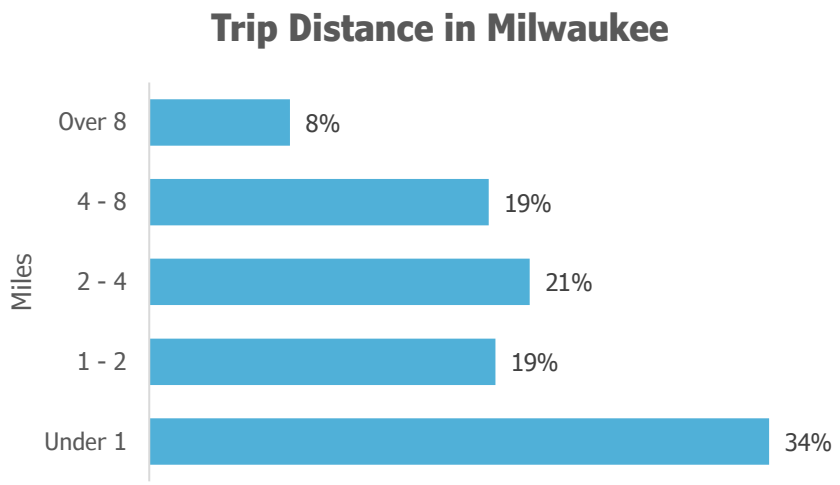
Change in Mode Share for Trips within Milwaukee Relative to 2019



Replica, Mode Share Trips, Fall 2019 – 2024.

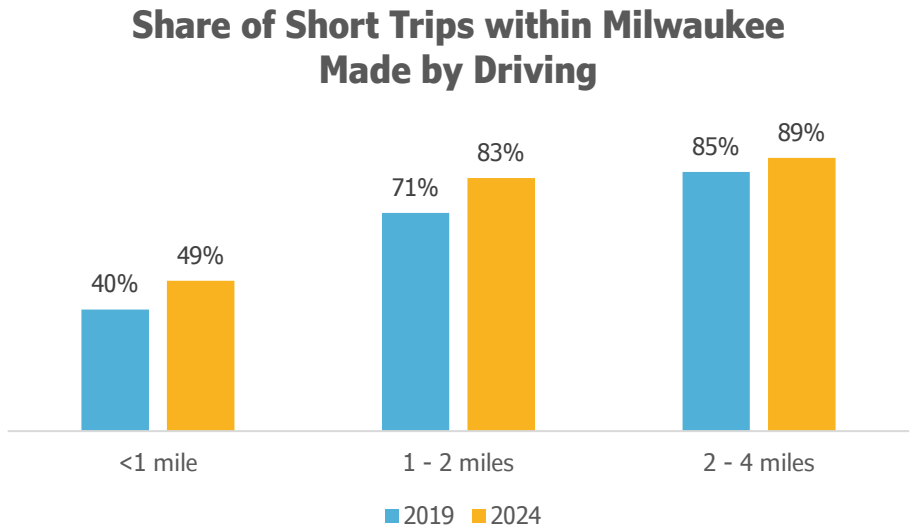
Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the share of trips made by driving has increased while the share of trips made by walking, biking, and transit has fallen.[63]

HOW WE GET AROUND TODAY



Data Source: Replica, Trip Distance, Fall 2024.

The median distance for all trips within Milwaukee is 1.8 miles. More than one-third of all trips are less than one mile.[64]



Data Source: Replica, Trip Distance, Fall 2024.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, people are driving for more short trips within Milwaukee. The share of trips less than one mile that people made by car increased by nearly 25% from 2019 to 2024. [65]

HOW WE GET AROUND TODAY

Milwaukee falls in the middle of its peers in terms of the median trip distance. The typical trip in Milwaukee is shorter than in Indianapolis and Detroit, but longer than the typical trip in Cleveland and Minneapolis. [66]

Median Trip Distance

1.3 MILES Minneapolis

1.6 MILES Cleveland

1.8 MILES Milwaukee

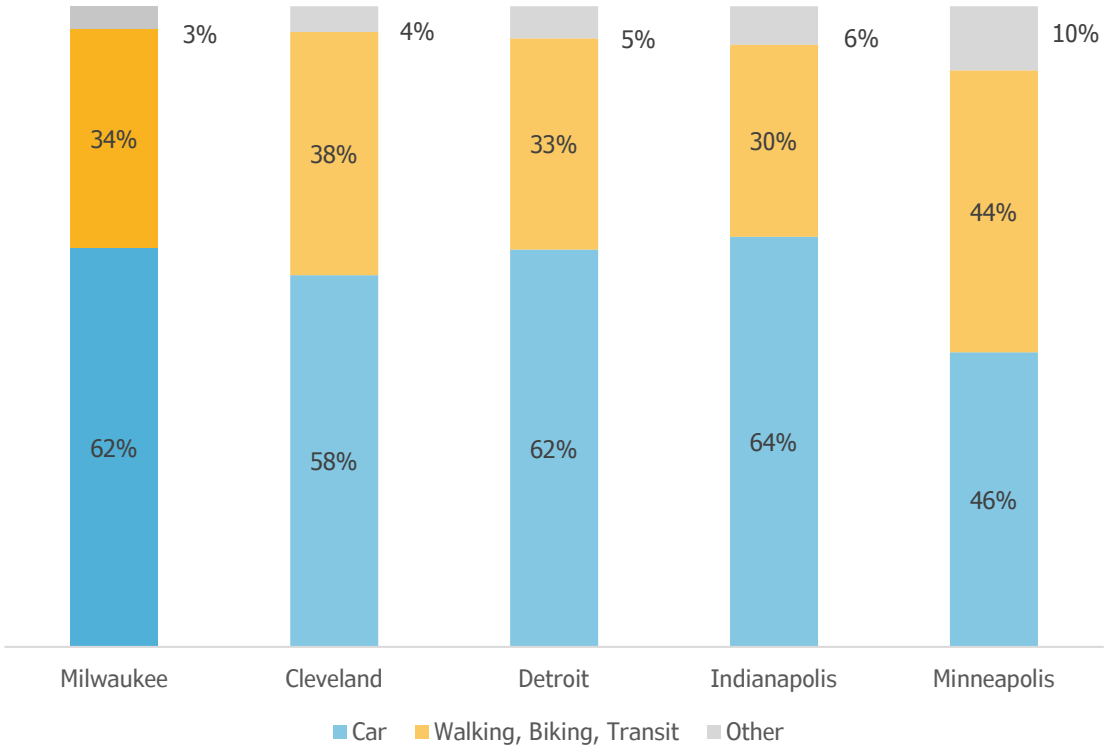
2.1 MILES Detroit

3.3 MILES Indianapolis

Data Source: Replica, Trip Distance, Fall 2024.

Compared to peer cities, Milwaukee has a higher car mode share for short trips than Cleveland and Minneapolis and is similar to Detroit and Indianapolis.[67]

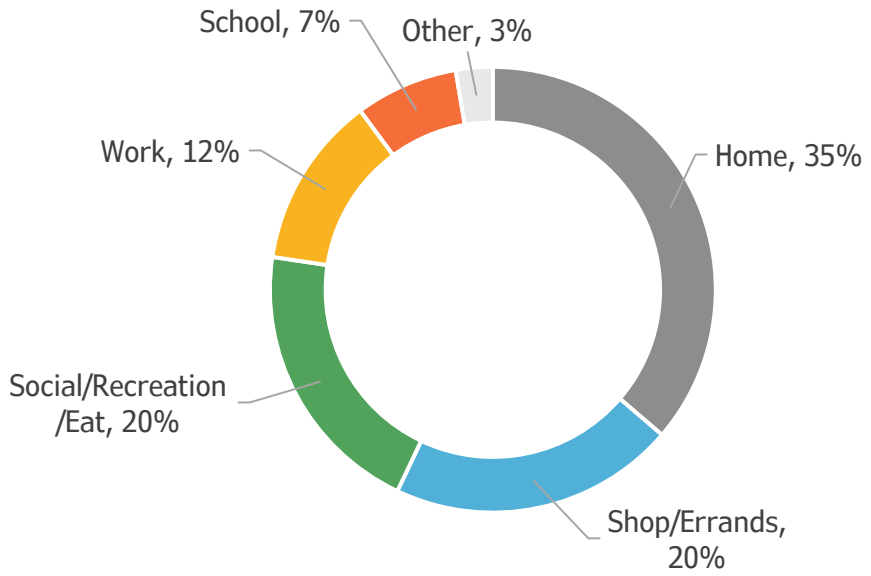
Mode Share for Trips 2 Miles and Under



Data Source: Replica, Mode Share Trips, Fall 2024.

HOW WE GET AROUND TODAY

Trip Purpose for Trips within Milwaukee



Data Source: Replica, Trips, Fall 2024.

Trips to school or work account for 20% of all trips Milwaukeeans take on weekdays. Shopping, eating, social, and recreational trips account for 40% of all trips.[68]

Change in Trip Purpose for Trips within Milwaukee (2019 to 2024)

↓ 5% Drop in work and school trips

↑ 19% Increase in social/recreation/eating trips

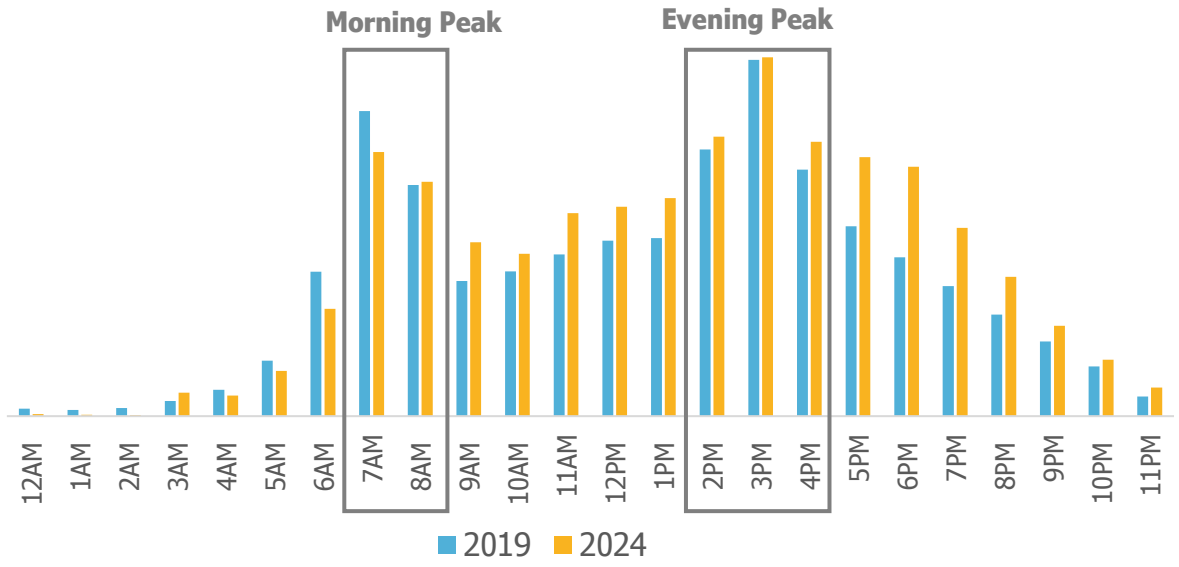
↑ 20% Increase in shop/errand trips

Data Source: Replica, Trips, Fall 2024.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, Milwaukeeans are taking fewer trips to work and school and more trips for shopping, socializing, eating out, and recreation.[69]

HOW WE GET AROUND TODAY

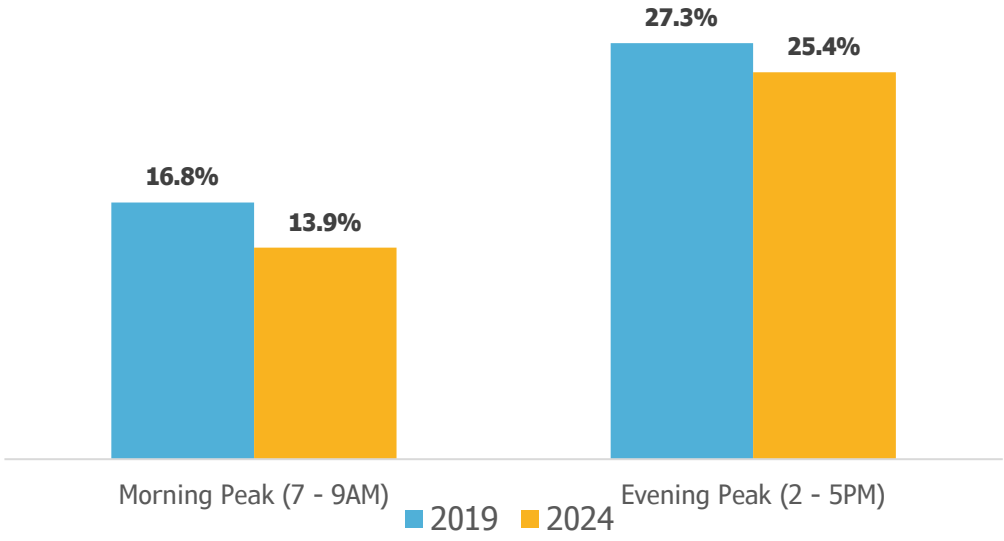
Starting Hour for Trips within Milwaukee



Data Source: Replica, Trips by Hour, Fall 2024.

The number of trips starting mid-morning through evening has increased since 2019. The number of trip starts peak in the late afternoon, with a quarter of all trips starting between 2 – 5PM.[70]

Share of Trips within Milwaukee During Peak Periods



Data Source: Replica, Trips by Hour, Fall 2024.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, trips in Milwaukee have become less concentrated during the morning and evening peak periods.[71]

OUR TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

414 in Motion

MILWAUKEE'S STREETS

Milwaukee's streets are a foundational part of daily life in the city. Our streets connect residents to family and friends, schools and jobs, essential services, and opportunities for recreation and entertainment; they move products and goods, support the city's economy, and provide public spaces where everyone can come together — whether meeting on the sidewalk, attending a street festival, or relaxing in a public plaza.

MILWAUKEE'S STREETS

There are more than 1,600 miles of streets throughout Milwaukee. Designing, maintaining, and managing these streets involves coordinating with partners throughout Milwaukee, the region, and the state. The City of Milwaukee controls the vast majority of local roads, collectors, and minor arterials. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation, though, controls most of the principal arterials—the largest and busiest streets within Milwaukee.[72]

>1,300 miles are **locally** owned

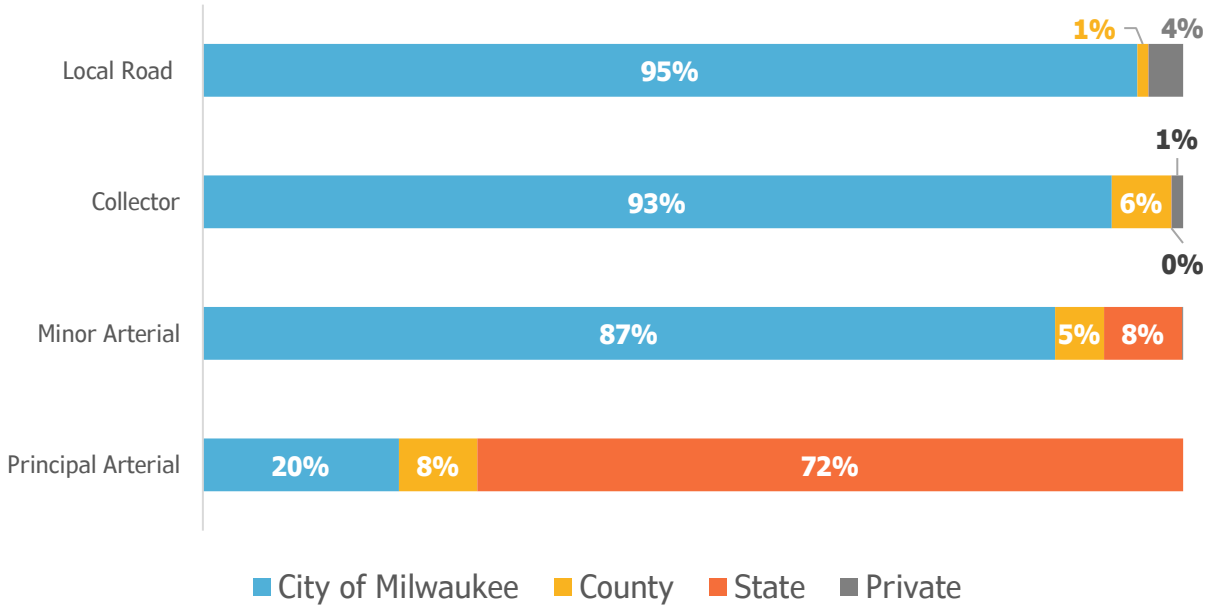
50 miles are **county** owned

177 miles are **state** owned

30 miles are **privately** owned

Data Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads, 2024.

Milwaukee's Streets by Type and Jurisdiction



Data Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads, 2024.

MILWAUKEE'S STREETS

Local

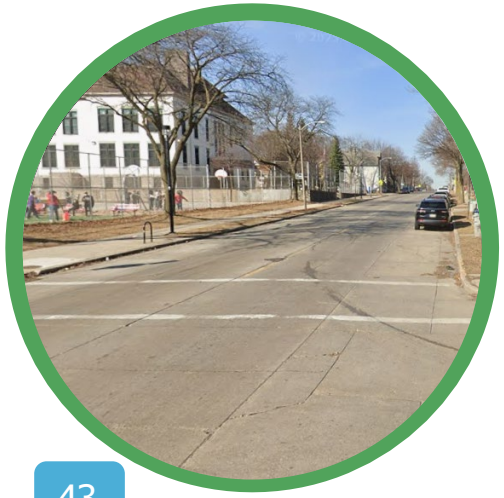
Examples:

- 37th Street
- Clarke Street
- Newberry Boulevard

Minor Arterial

Examples:

- 16th Street
- Hampton Avenue
- 35th Street



Collector

Examples:

- 84th Street
- Maryland Avenue
- Mitchell Street

Principal Arterial

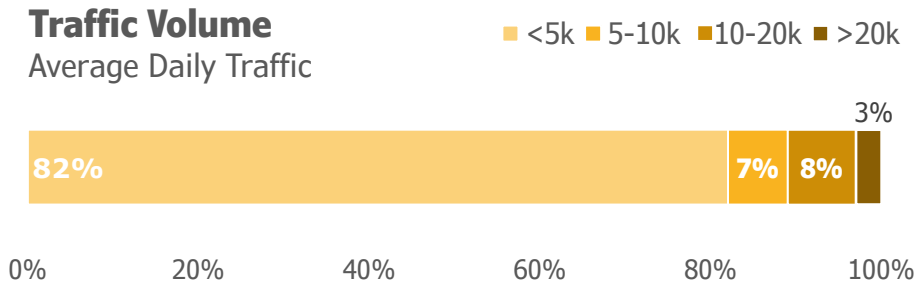
Examples:

- Fond Du Lac Avenue
- National Avenue
- Capitol Drive

MILWAUKEE'S STREETS

Streets in Milwaukee range from local streets that only a few hundred people per day drive on to principal arterials that see tens of thousands of trips each day. While the City of Milwaukee owns the local streets, most of the principal arterials are owned and managed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.[73]

Residential streets account for the largest share of Milwaukee's streets. These streets typically have lower speed limits, two lanes, and carry relatively small traffic volumes. While there are relatively fewer collector and arterial streets in Milwaukee, they have an outsized impact on the network and how people travel. These streets tend to be wider, carry higher volumes of traffic, and have higher speed limits.



Posted Speed Limit

74% of streets are 25 MPH

19% of streets are 30 MPH

Number of Total Lanes

89% of streets have 1 – 2 lanes

10% of streets have 3 – 4 lanes

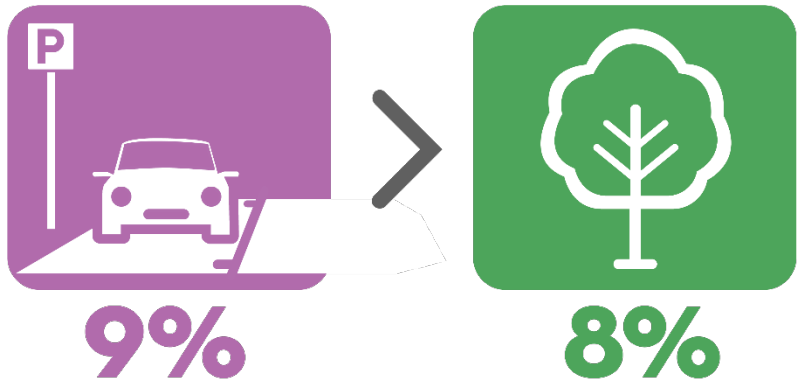
1% of streets have 5 or more lanes

Data Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads, Accessed Fall 2025.

MILWAUKEE'S STREETS

Milwaukee's transportation infrastructure* accounts for 29% of the city's total area, and off-street parking occupies an additional 9% of the city's land.[74]

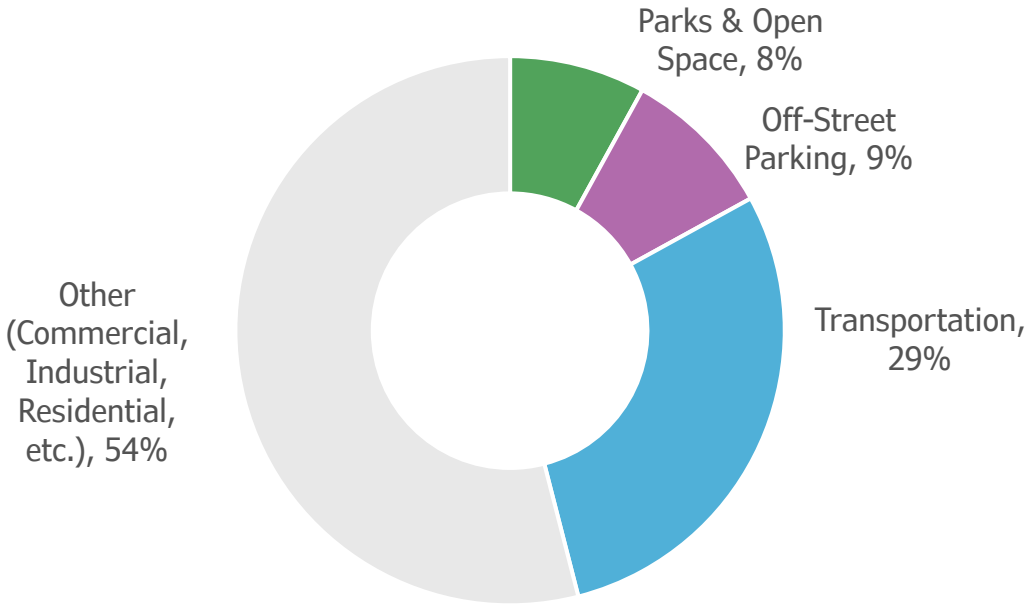
More land is dedicated to off-street parking (e.g., parking lots and garages) than all the parks and open space in Milwaukee.[75]



Together, transportation and parking account for nearly five times as much land as our parks, presenting a major opportunity to rethink how this space can better serve people, strengthen our public realm, and enhance Milwaukee's unique quality of place. [76]

*Includes paved driveway, paved road, paved road median or boulevard, paved shoulder, sidewalks, unimproved roads, and unpaved driveways and shoulders

Breakdown of Land in the City of Milwaukee



Data Source: Milwaukee County, Planimetric Mapping Data, 2020; City of Milwaukee, Parcel Polygons, 2024.

MILWAUKEE'S STREETS

Traffic volumes have been decreasing on many of Milwaukee's major streets over the last several decades, with some streets seeing decreases in traffic volumes of one-third or more. [77] Sustained reductions in traffic volumes indicate that corridors may be operating with greater vehicle capacity than current demand requires. This presents potential opportunities to reallocate excess space for roadway reconfigurations, safety enhancements, multimodal improvements, or new public spaces.

Historical Traffic Volume Analysis

Street Name	AADT in Earliest Year	AADT in Most Recent Year	Percentage Difference
Hampton Avenue at 60th Street	28,200 (2004)	17,700 (2023)	-37%
Atkinson Avenue at Capitol Drive	12,800 (2004)	8,400 (2023)	-34%
National Avenue at Layton Boulevard	24,700 (2004)	16,300 (2024)	-34%
1st Street at Pierce Street	21,000 (2008)	16,000 (2024)	-24%
Howard Avenue at 27th Street	12,200 (2005)	9,300 (2024)	-24%

Data Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Traffic Count Map, 2025.

MILWAUKEE'S STREETS

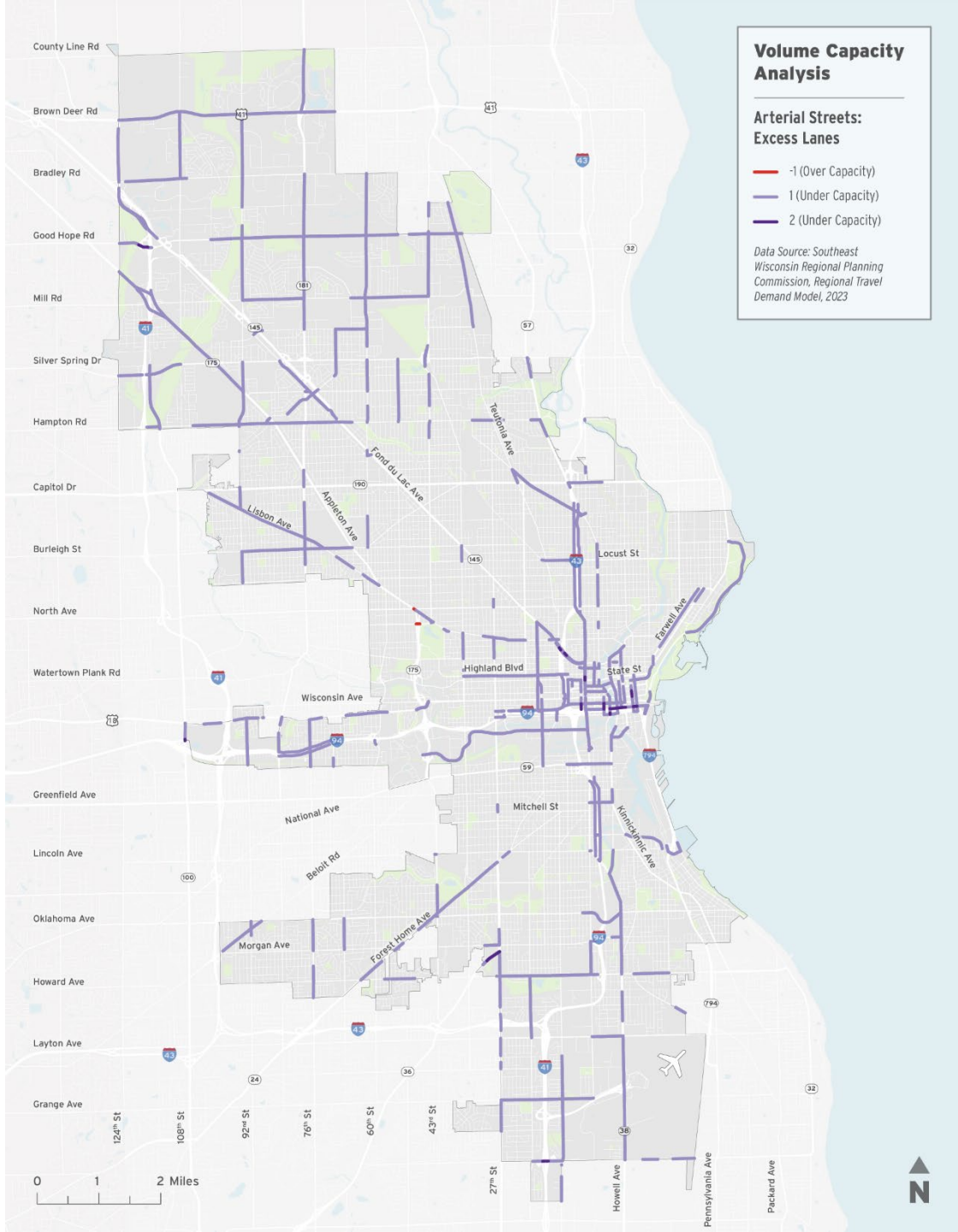
Using traffic volume data from 2023, Milwaukee's major streets were examined to determine how many lanes are needed to maintain relatively smooth traffic flow and minimal congestion given existing volumes.

Based on this analysis, many major streets have more lanes than necessary to accommodate existing volumes. More than a quarter (27%) of all the major street miles in Milwaukee have at least one lane that could potentially be reallocated with relatively minimal impact on traffic.[78]

Volume Capacity Analysis

Number of Excess Lanes per Direction	Total Mileage	Percent of Arterial Roadway Miles
-1 (Over Capacity)	0.10 miles	0.01%
0 (Meets Capacity)	569 miles	73%
1 (Under Capacity)	214 miles	27%
2 (Under Capacity)	2 miles	0.2%

Data Source: Southeast Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Regional Travel Demand Model, 2023.



WALKING IN MILWAUKEE

Walking is foundational to everyday life in Milwaukee. Supported by a dense urban form, an expansive sidewalk network, and neighborhood retail corridors, walking connects residents to schools, parks, and other neighborhood amenities. Every trip — whether by bus, bike, or car — begins and ends on foot, making walking the most universal mode of transportation in the city.

Walking also advances broader city goals. It supports access to transit, improves public and environmental health, reduces transportation costs, and strengthens neighborhood vitality. The importance of walking is reflected in numerous city plans, including the Vision Zero Action Plan, Milwaukee Pedestrian Plan, Climate & Equity Plan, and Housing Element, all of which recognize safe and comfortable pedestrian access as central to Milwaukee's future.

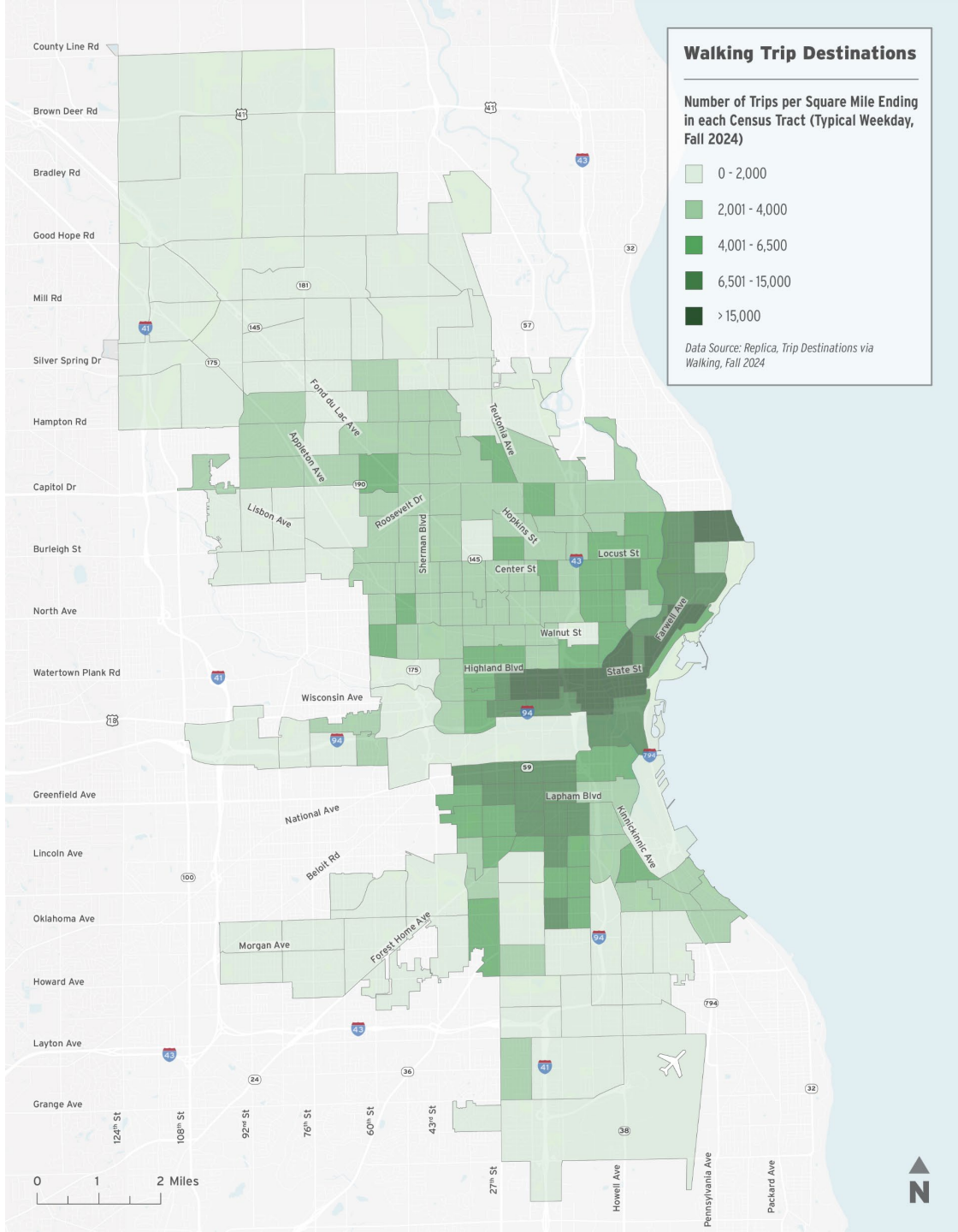
WALKING IN MILWAUKEE

Milwaukeeans make nearly 250,000 walking trips on a typical weekday.[79]

The highest concentration of walking trips end in downtown, the Lower East Side, Avenues West, and around the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Other areas with high levels of walking trips include the Historic Third Ward, Marquette University, the near South Side, and the East Side. Many other neighborhoods throughout the city see thousands of people walking every day. [80]

The average walking trip is relatively short, lasting about 9 minutes. Two-thirds of all walking trips are less than 0.5 miles.[81]

The purpose of walking trips differs from other trips. Nearly one-third (30%) of walking trips are for shopping or running errands. Across the city 23,000 walking trips end at schools [82]



WALKING IN MILWAUKEE

Most Milwaukeeans could walk to a school (69%), park (69%), or healthcare facility (52%) within 20 minutes; however, two-thirds can't walk to a grocery store within 20 minutes.[83, 84, 85]

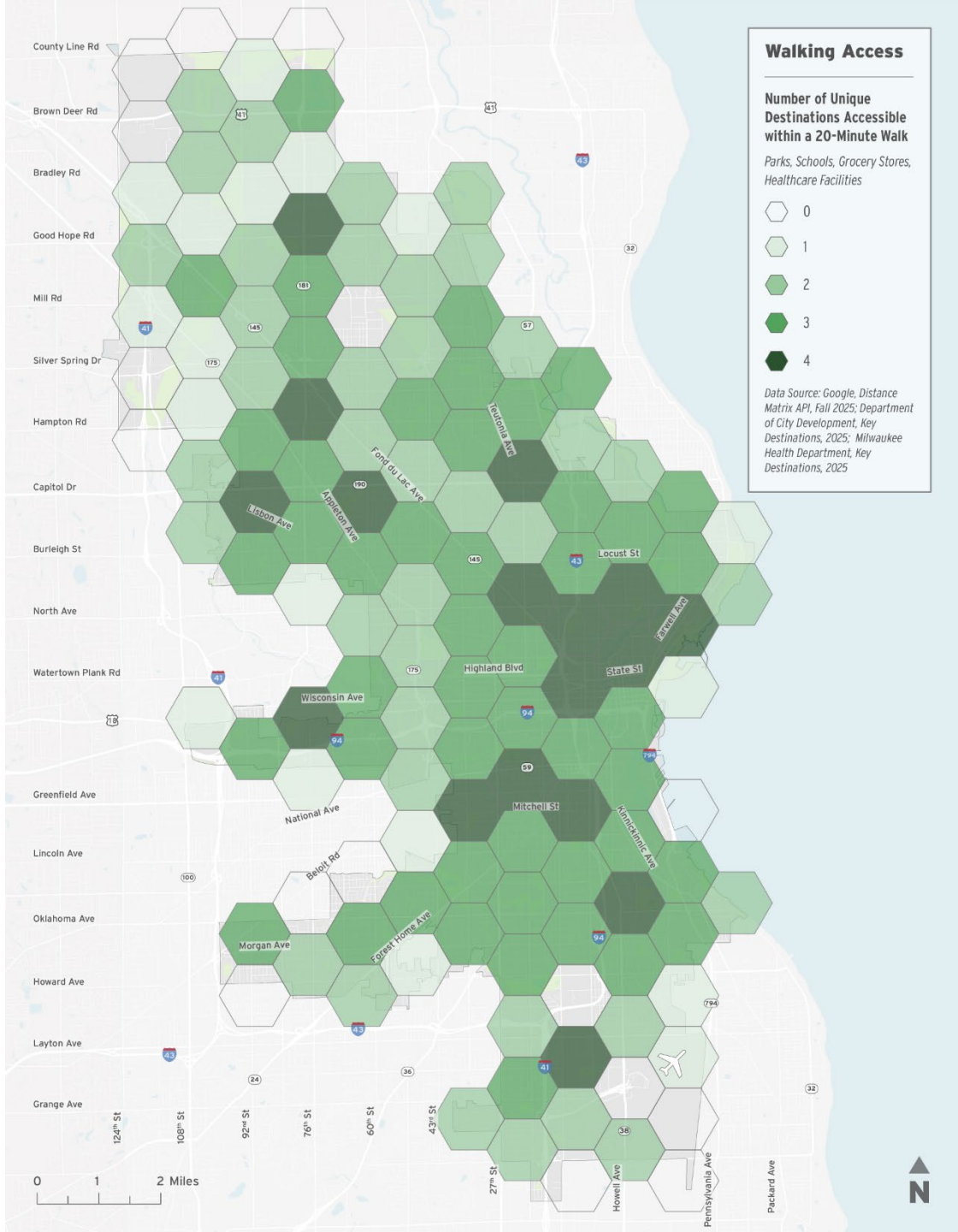
Only 12% of city residents can walk to a school, park, grocery store and healthcare facility within 20 minutes, and 12% can't access any of these key destinations within a 20-minute walk. Areas with the least access to destinations are concentrated in northwest and southwest Milwaukee.[86, 87, 88]

Walking to Key Destinations

Key Destinations Accessible Within a 20-Minute Walk*	Percent of Milwaukee Residents
0	12%
1	13%
2	27%
3	36%
4	12%

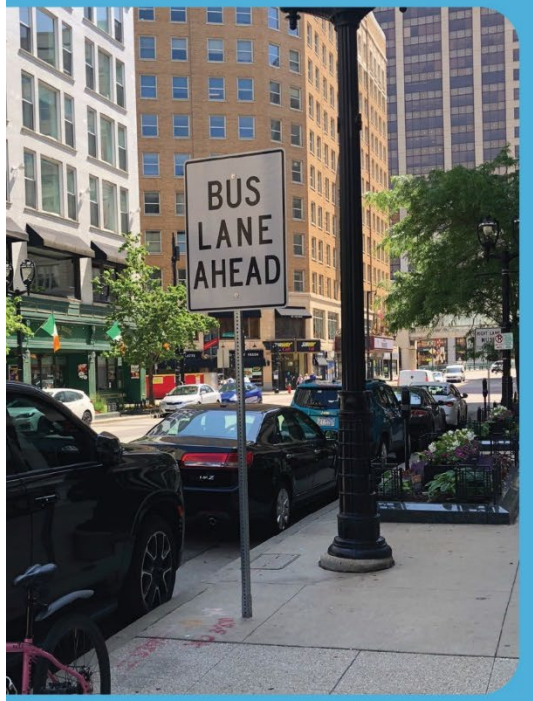
Data Source: Google, Distance Matrix API, Fall 2025; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2023.

* This analysis only considers destinations within the city



TRANSIT IN MILWAUKEE

Public transit plays a critical role in Milwaukee by providing essential mobility for residents to access jobs, education, healthcare, and daily needs. For many households — particularly those without access to a car — transit is not a choice but a necessity, connecting people to destinations and opportunities. A strong, reliable transit system also helps reduce congestion, lower transportation costs, and supports the city's climate and equity goals.



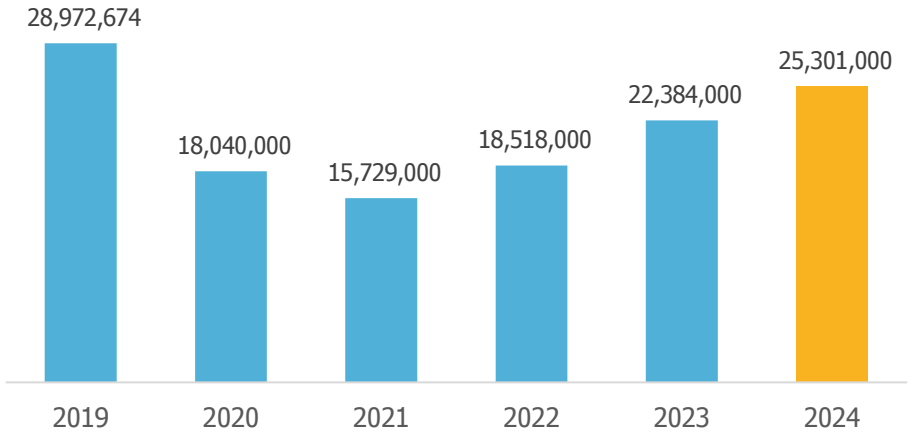
TRANSIT IN MILWAUKEE

Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) operates 49 bus routes across Milwaukee County and provided more than 25 million rides in 2024 — a 13% increase from 2023.[89]

Milwaukee's first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route, Connect 1, opened in 2023 and links the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center to downtown Milwaukee.[90]

Systemwide on-time performance was 81% in 2024 compared to 80% in 2023 and 86% in 2022.[91]

MCTS Annual Ridership



Highest Ridership Routes

Route	Average Weekday Rides (Fall 2024)
Route 30 – Sherman – Wisconsin	8,470
PurpleLine – 27th Street	6,610
RedLine – Capitol Drive	5,010
GreenLine – Bayshore - Airport	4,785
Route 19 – M.L. King – S. 13th Street	4,064

Data Source: Milwaukee County Transit System, Fall 2024 Ridership Data, 2024.

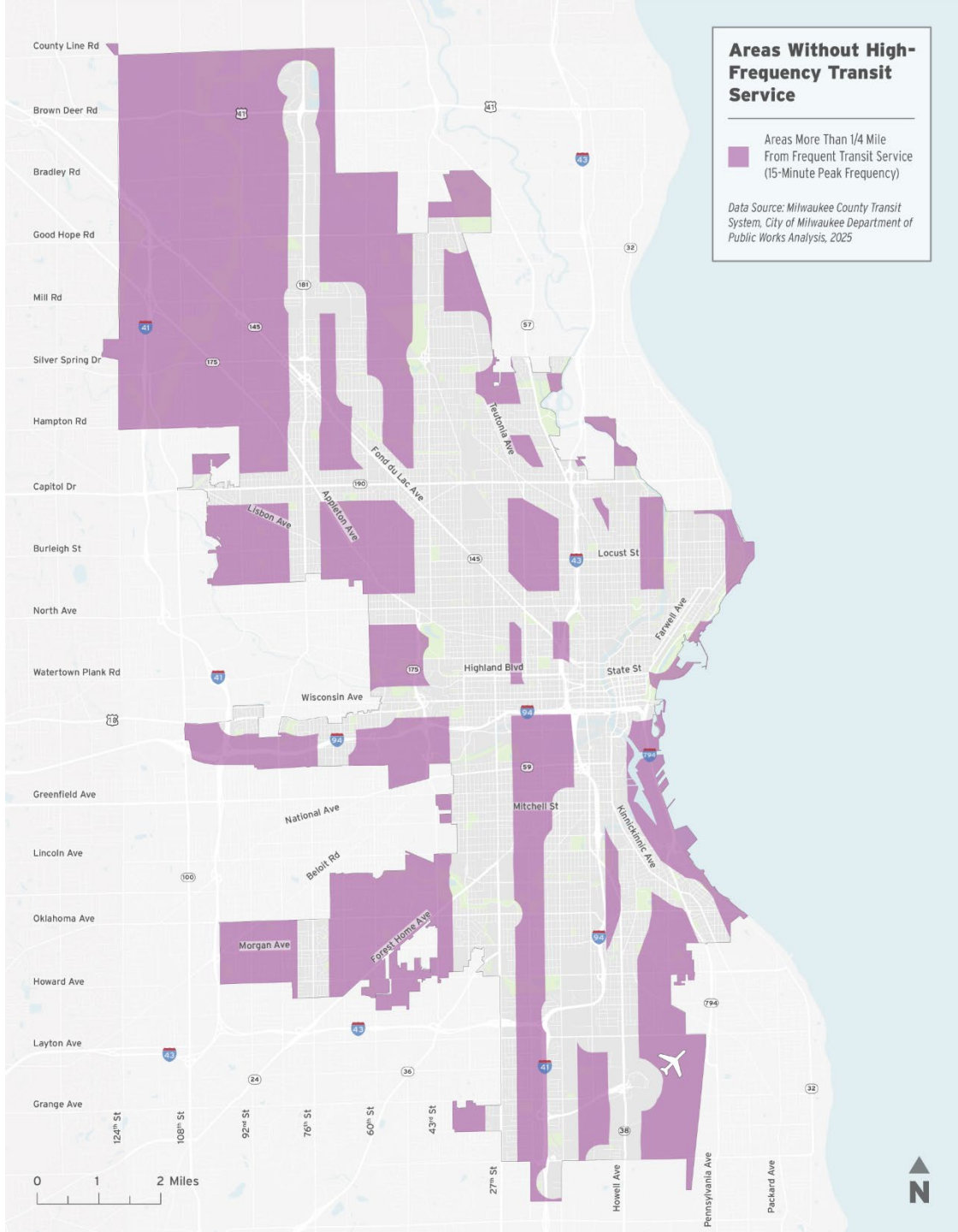
TRANSIT IN MILWAUKEE

Nearly all of Milwaukee is served by MCTS' bus network, with 99% of both people and jobs located within a half-mile of a bus route.[92]

59% of Milwaukee residents live within a ¼-mile of high-frequency service (routes that come ever 15 minutes or less during peak periods). However, only 31% of the population lives within ¼ mile of service that is high-frequency throughout the day, and no routes provide high-frequency service in the evenings or on Sundays.[93, 94]

Milwaukee residents have significantly better access to high-frequency transit than peer cities like Cleveland, Detroit, and Indianapolis, but the city lags behind leading peers like Minneapolis, where 7 out of 10 residents have access to high-frequency transit options throughout the day.[95]

Adjusting for inflation, MCTS's budget shrunk 14% from 2016 to 2024.[96] Despite this decline in real funding, MCTS continues to deliver highly cost-effective service — ranking first among 10 peer systems in 2024 in terms of operating expense per passenger trip. This performance demonstrates that transit in Milwaukee remains a strong and efficient public investment. [97]

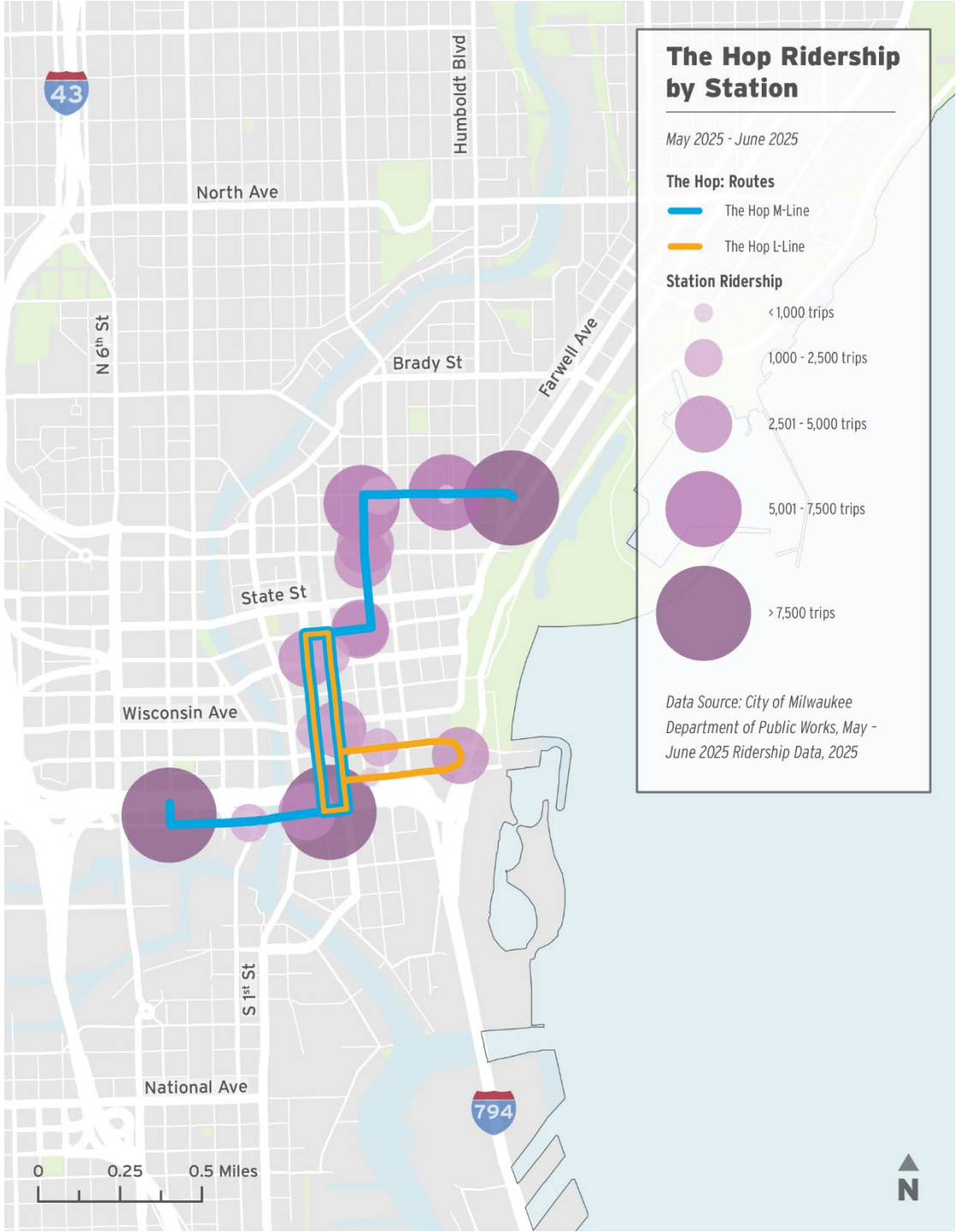


TRANSIT IN MILWAUKEE

The Hop, Milwaukee's streetcar system, launched in November 2018 as part of the city's effort to enhance downtown mobility and stimulate transit-oriented development.

The system consists of two lines. The M-Line links the Intermodal Station, Historic Third Ward, Cathedral Square, and the Lower East Side, while the L-Line (opened in 2024) extends east towards the lakefront and its destinations.

In May and June of 2025, the Hop averaged 1,409 riders on a typical weekday and 2,085 riders on Saturdays. With more summer events, ridership rose to over 2,600 riders on the average Saturday in June.[98]



TRANSIT IN MILWAUKEE

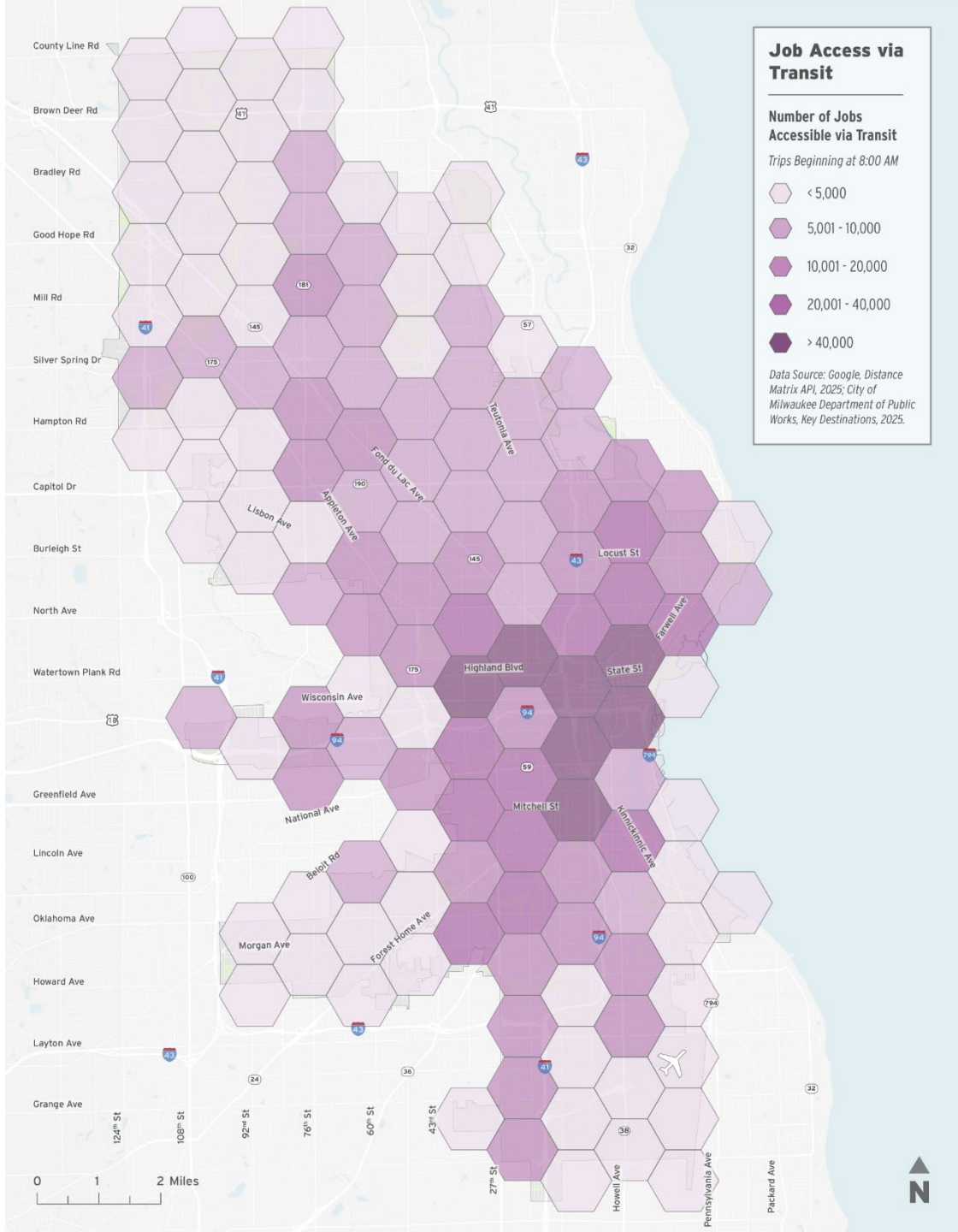
Across Milwaukee, the average resident can access over 10,500 jobs within a 20-minute transit ride. Additionally, 59% of residents can get to a school, park, grocery store, and healthcare facility within 20 minutes via transit.

There are still, though, portions of the city with limited access to important destinations via transit, primarily concentrated in northwest and southwest Milwaukee. More than one-third of residents (34%) can't access a grocery store and more than one-quarter (26%) can't access a healthcare facility via transit.[99, 100, 101]

Taking Transit to Key Destinations

Key Destinations Accessible Within a 20-Minute Transit Trip*	Percent of Milwaukee Residents
0	7%
1	9%
2	12%
3	14%
4	59%

Data Source: Google, Distance Matrix API, Fall 2025; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2023.



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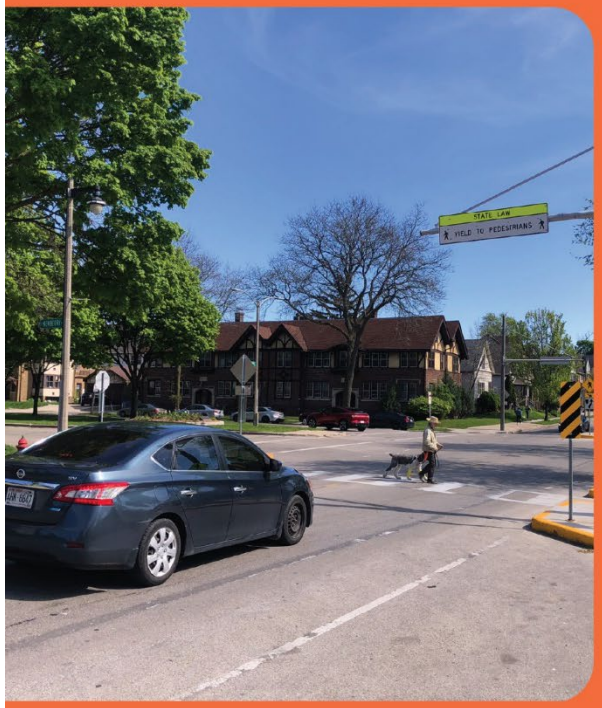
* Note: this analysis only considers destinations within the city

DRIVING IN MILWAUKEE

Driving is the primary mode of travel in Milwaukee for both long and short trips. Many residents rely on a car to access work, school, shopping, healthcare, and other daily needs, and driving provides important regional connectivity.

Milwaukee's reliance on cars did not emerge by accident, though. Over decades, public investment decisions — including the expansion of the freeway system, suburban development patterns, and street designs focused on vehicle throughput — shaped a transportation system that makes driving the most convenient option for many trips.

Understanding this historical context is essential as Milwaukee considers how to maintain a functional street system while also expanding safe, affordable, and sustainable transportation options.



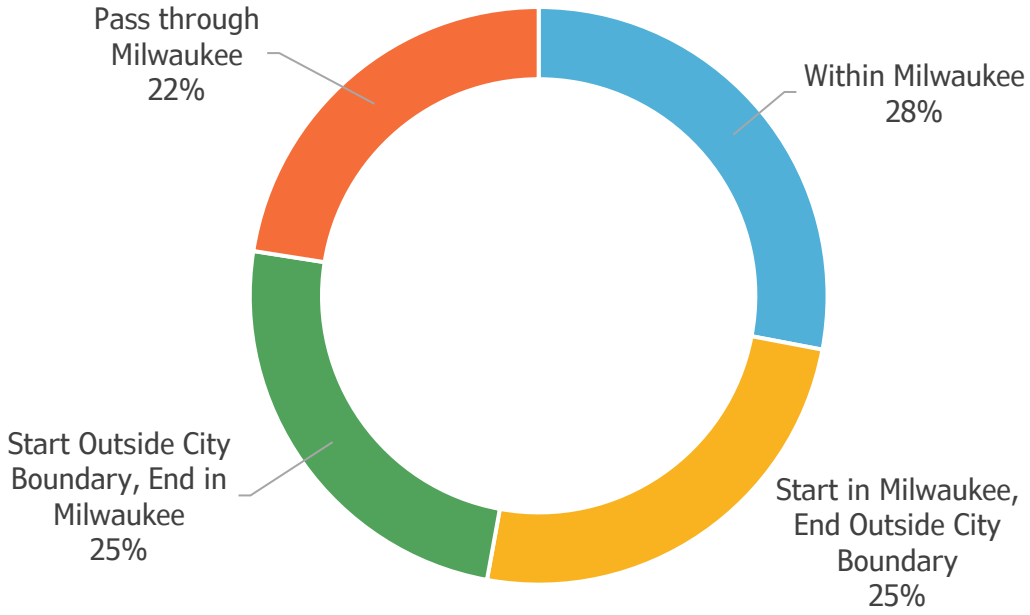
DRIVING IN MILWAUKEE

On a typical weekday, people drive 9.6 million miles on Milwaukee's streets. Only 28% of those miles come from trips entirely within the city. Half of the vehicle miles traveled are for trips that start in Milwaukee but end outside its boundary or vice versa. Nearly a quarter of the miles driven in Milwaukee (22%) are trips passing through the city.[102]

More than 1.2 million car trips end within Milwaukee's boundary on a typical weekday. The average driving trip within Milwaukee is 3.6 miles, and 42% of all driving trips are less than two miles. One out of every five driving trips is less than one mile. [103]

The total vehicle miles traveled in Milwaukee increased 13% from 2019 to 2024. More than half of the increase in vehicle miles traveled during this period was from trips entirely within Milwaukee. [104]

Vehicle Miles Traveled on Milwaukee Streets



Data Source: Replica, Vehicle Miles Traveled Typical Weekday, 2024.

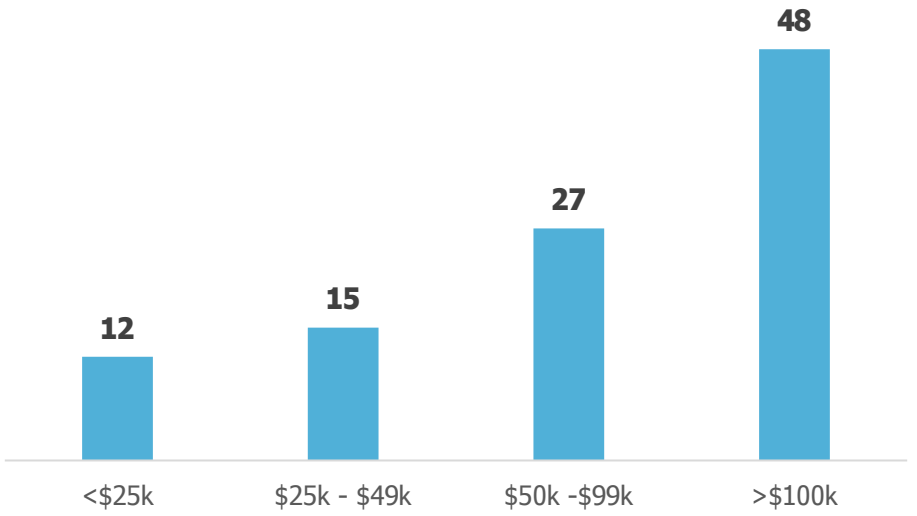
DRIVING IN MILWAUKEE

Driving patterns for Milwaukee households vary significantly based on income. As household incomes increase, so do vehicle miles traveled. 47% of households in Milwaukee have annual incomes below $50,000, but these households only account for 23% of the total vehicle miles traveled. 24% of Milwaukee households have annual incomes above $100,000, but these households account for 41% of vehicle miles traveled. [105]

Annual Household Income	Percentage of Milwaukee Households	Percentage of Vehicle Miles Traveled in Milwaukee
Less than $25k	24%	10%
$25k - $49k	23%	13%
$50k - $99k	29%	29%
Greater than $100k	24%	41%

Data Source: Replica, Vehicle Miles Traveled, 2024; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2023.

Average Vehicle Miles Traveled per Household per Day By Household Income



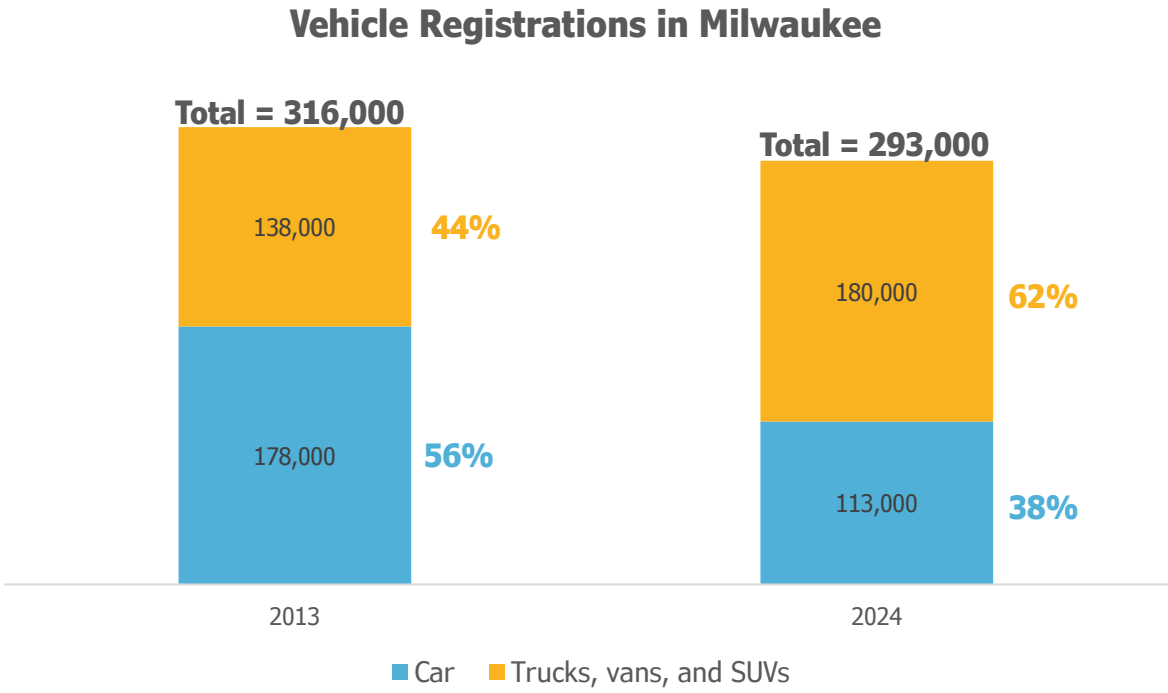
Data Source: Replica, Vehicle Miles Traveled, 2024; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2023.

VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS IN MILWAUKEE

The total number of vehicles registered in Milwaukee declined by more than 20,000 over the last decade—from approximately 316,000 in 2013 to 293,000 in 2024. At the same time, vehicle ownership per household decreased from 1.4 vehicles to 1.2 vehicles on average.[106]

The types of vehicles registered in the city also changed significantly over this period. In 2013, the majority of vehicles registered in Milwaukee (56%) were smaller passenger vehicles. By 2024, nearly two-thirds (62%) of all vehicles were larger trucks, vans, and SUVs.[107]

The growth in larger vehicles has important implications for safety, public health, and our environment. Heavier vehicles generate greater crash forces and are associated with more severe outcomes in collisions, particularly for people walking and biking. Larger vehicles also tend to have higher fuel consumption and emissions, contributing to air pollution and climate impacts.



Data Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Registered Vehicle Type by County, 2024.

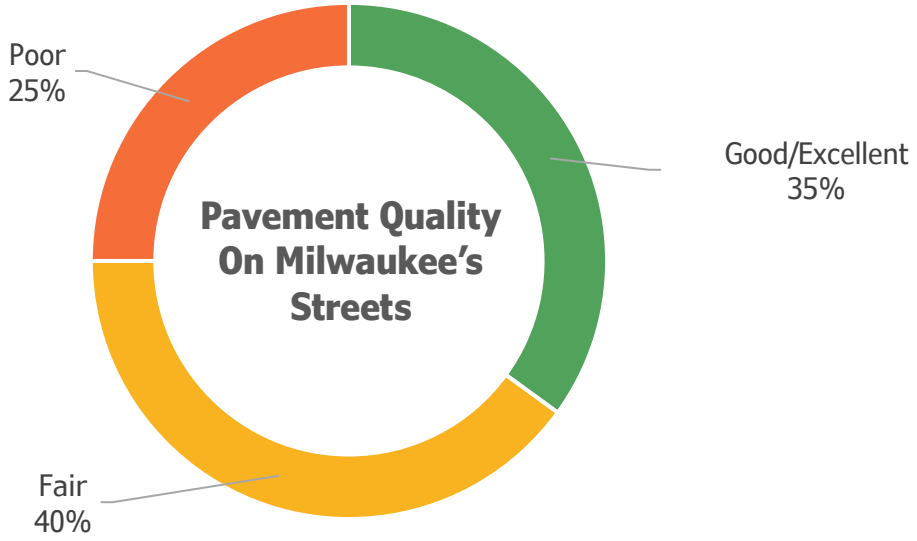
STREET CONDITION IN MILWAUKEE

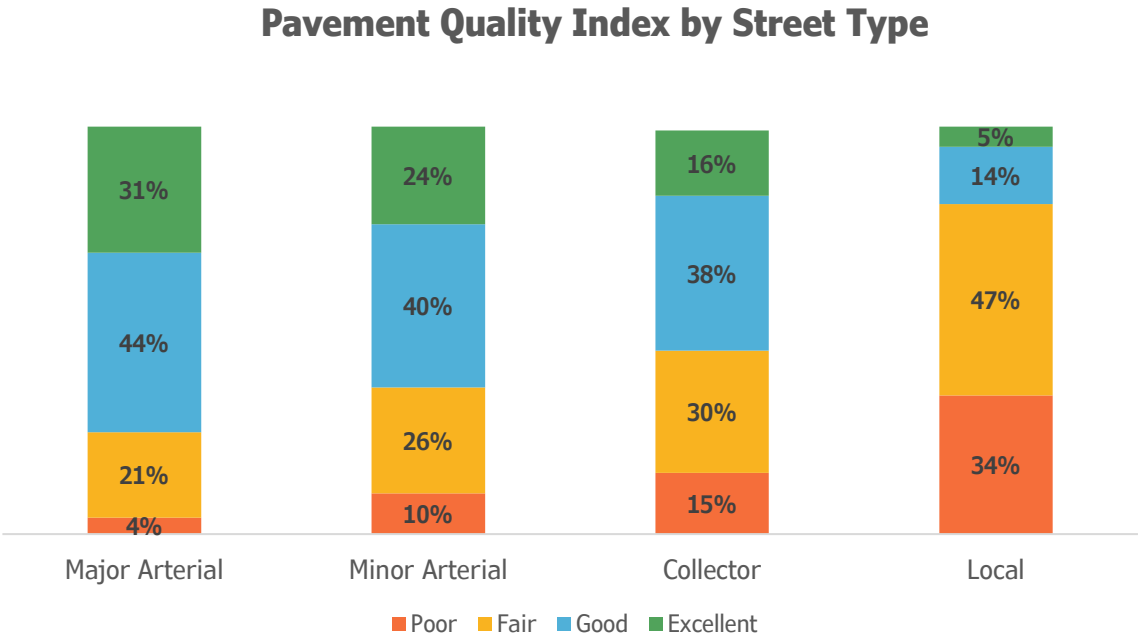
Milwaukee uses a pavement quality index (PQI) to track and measure street condition. The PQI ranks every street from 0 – 100 (<45 = poor, 45 – 70 = fair, 70 – 90 = good, and >90 = excellent).

Across the city, 35% of all lane miles are in good or excellent condition, 40% are rated fair, and 25% are rated poor.[108]

Pavement quality varies based on the type of street, largely due to differences in funding availability. The average PQI on major and minor arterials is 79 and 74, respectively. The average PQI on collector streets is 69, and local streets have the lowest average PQI at 55.[109]

DPW estimates it would cost $821 million to bring all streets currently rated poor up to good or excellent condition.[110]





Data Source: City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works, Maintaining and Improvement Pavement Quality on Streets, 2025.

VEHICLE COSTS IN MILWAUKEE

Owning, operating, and maintaining a vehicle is a major financial commitment for households in Milwaukee, with total annual costs averaging more than $11,000 per year.[111]

Consumer spending on fuel has increased 40% in Wisconsin since 2019, while spending on vehicle parts and maintenance has gone up 34% statewide.[112]

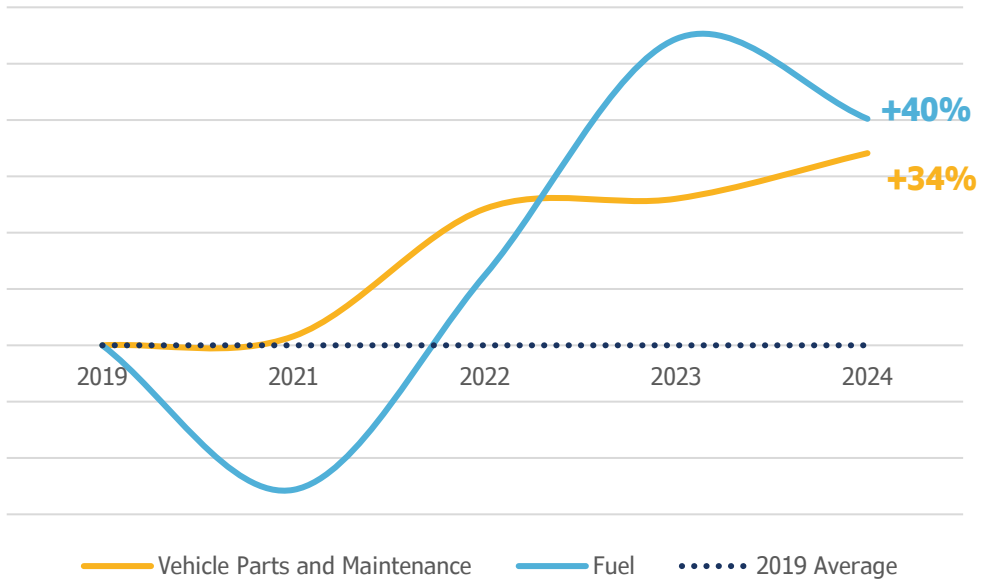
For a median household in Milwaukee, the yearly costs of a vehicle takes up 22% of their annual income. For a family of four living at the poverty line, vehicle costs are more than one-third (36%) of their annual income.[113, 114]

$11,168

Average Annual cost to own, operate, and maintain a vehicle for Milwaukee households

Data Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology, Housing + Transportation Index, 2024.

Change in Vehicle Costs in Wisconsin Relative to 2019



Data Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Personal Consumption Expenditures, 2024.

BIKING IN MILWAUKEE

Biking is one of the most flexible and affordable ways to move around Milwaukee, particularly for shorter trips that make up the majority of daily travel. As a low-cost and sustainable mode, biking offers residents a practical alternative to driving, especially in neighborhoods where access to a car may be limited or transportation costs are a burden.

Investments in protected bike lanes and trails are expanding the city's low-stress network, making biking safer and more accessible for people of all ages and abilities. In addition to reducing congestion and emissions, biking supports public health and increases access to schools, parks, jobs, and neighborhood retail corridors. It can also be an enjoyable way to get around, helping people connect with their communities and with one another.

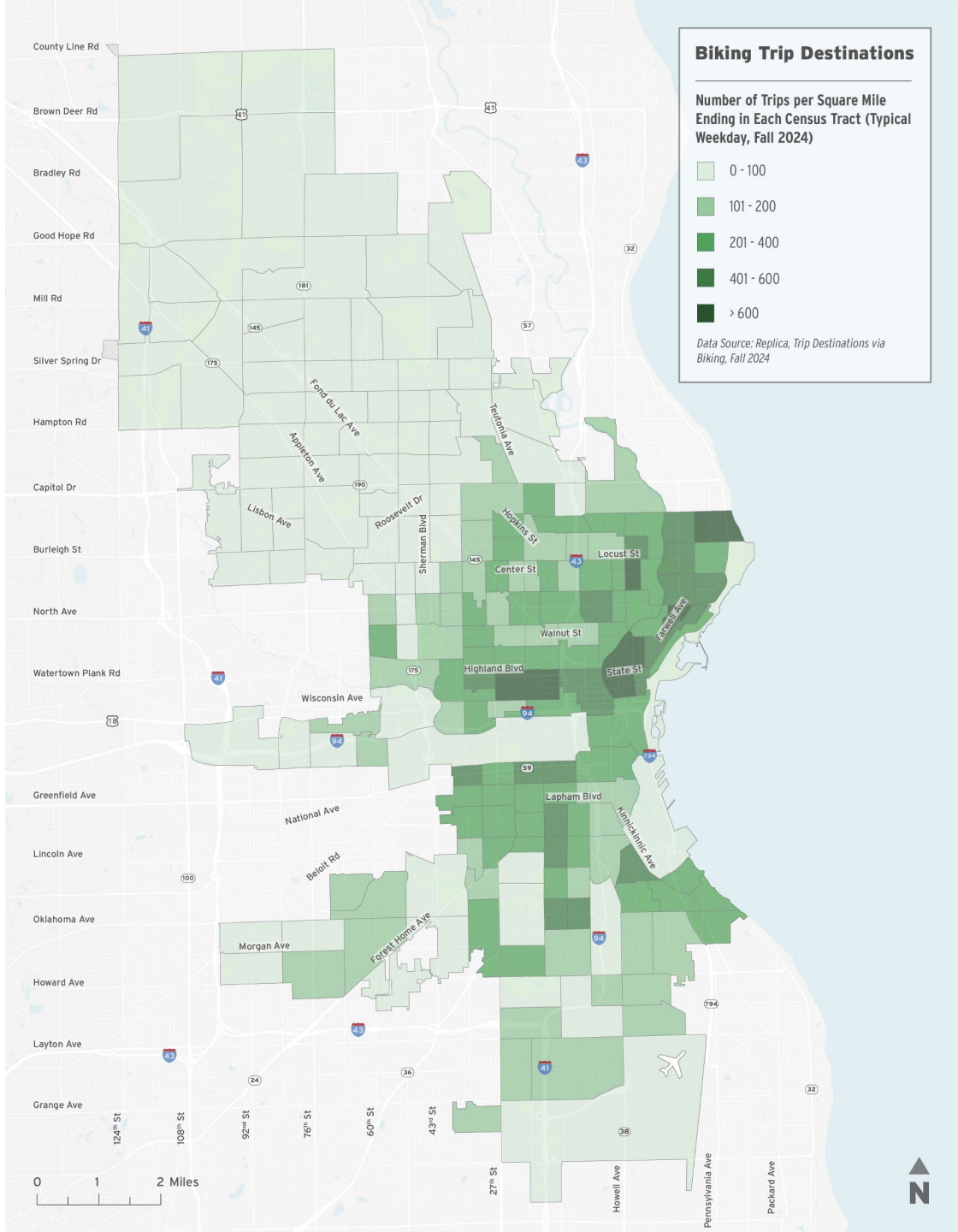
BIKING IN MILWAUKEE

More than 11,000 trips are made by bicycle on a typical weekday in Milwaukee. More than 1,300 of those trips end at a school.[115]

The greatest density of bike trips end in the Lower East Side, River West, Avenues West,and around the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

44% of bike trips in Milwaukee are taken by people from households with incomes below the citywide average. The average biking trip within Milwaukee is 1.9 miles.[116]

Biking trips in Milwaukee are split nearly evenly between males (49%) and females (47%).[117]



BIKING IN MILWAUKEE

165
Miles of On-Street Bikeways

4
Miles of bike boulevards

144
Miles of striped bike lanes

9
Miles of buffered bike lanes

8
Miles of protected bike lanes

78
Miles of Off-Street Trails

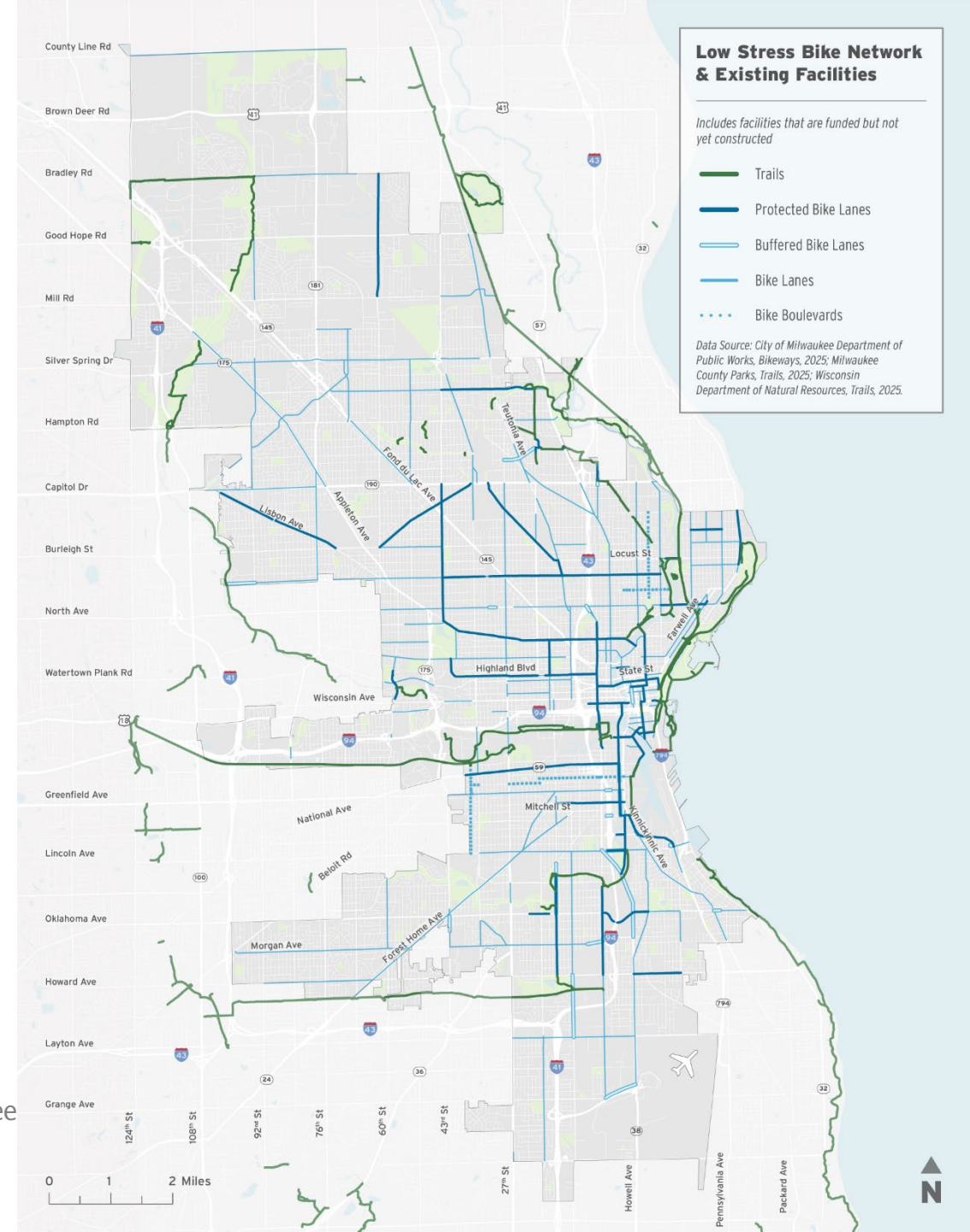
9
Miles of City of Milwaukee trails

13
Miles of Hank Aaron State Trail

56
Miles of Milwaukee County trails

50 miles of protected bike lanes built, in progress, or funded since 2023

Data Source: City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works, Bikeways, 2025; Milwaukee County Parks, Trails, 2025; Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Trails, 2025.



BIKING IN MILWAUKEE

Bublr is Milwaukee's nonprofit bikeshare program, offering both standard and electric bikes across more than 100 stations in Milwaukee. In 2024, Bublr recorded over 100,000 trips.

Bublr 2.0 is currently underway – the expansion is doubling the number of e-bikes and stations in the city.

Top Five Highest Ridership Stations[118]

Station Ridership Between June 2024 – August 2025

1. UWM Student Union (Maryland Ave & Kenwood Blvd)
2. Sandburg Hall (Maryland Ave & Newport Ave)
3. Cambridge Ave & North Ave
4. Riverside Park (Oakland Ave & Newberry Blvd)
5. Riverview (Commerce St & North Ave)

107,967

Total Bublr trips in 2024

105

Total Bublr Stations within Milwaukee city limits

1.7 MI

Median Bublr trip distance

11 MIN

Median Bublr trip duration

Data Source: City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works, Bublr Data, 2024.

SCOOTING IN MILWAUKEE

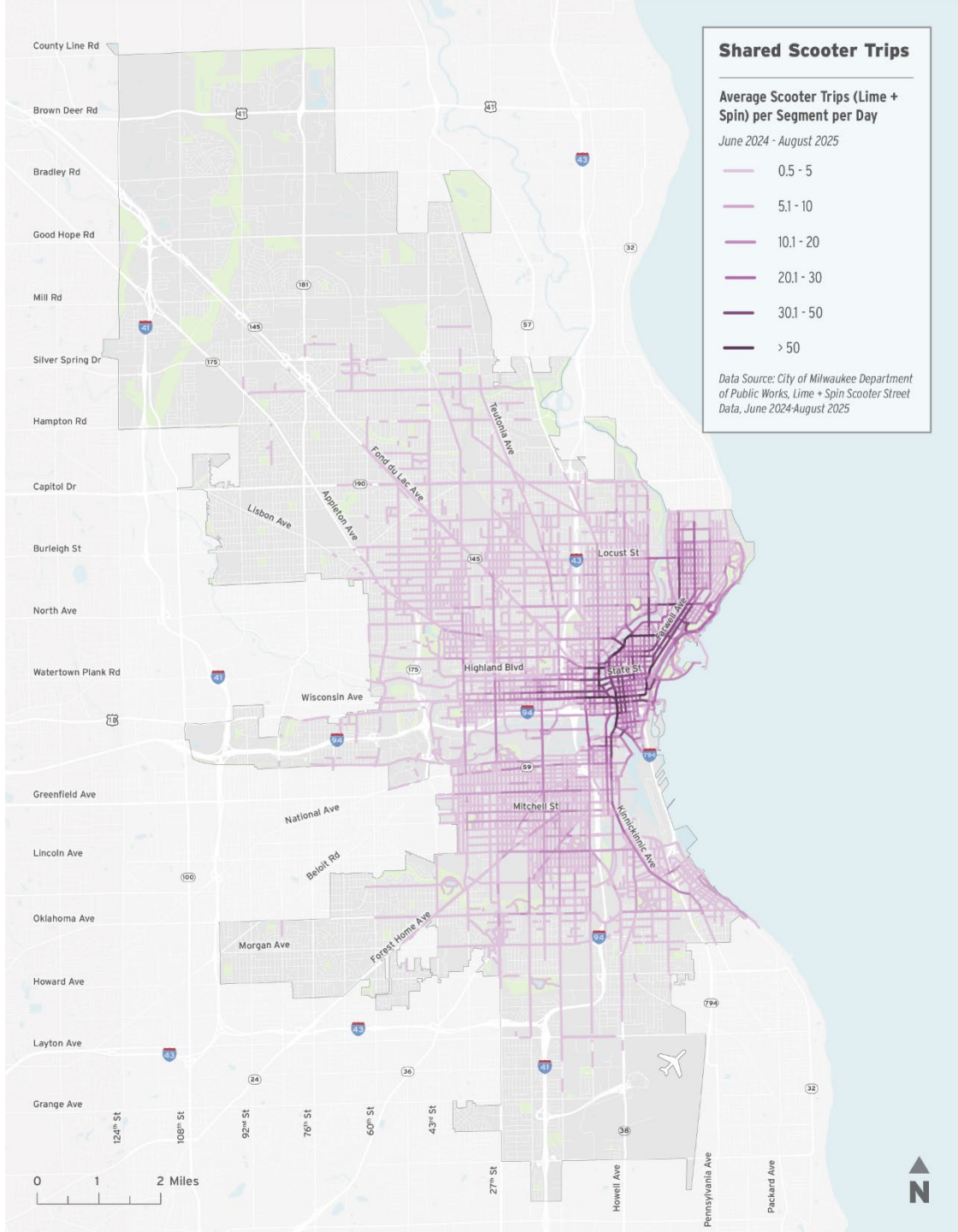
In 2025, 1,292,000 scooter trips were taken in Milwaukee, the most ever recorded in a calendar year. Dockless scooters provide Milwaukee residents with additional mobility options, including the flexibility to start and end trips wherever is most convenient.

Milwaukee scooter operators include Lime and Spin. Both companies offer discounted access programs for low-income residents.

Top Five Highest Ridership Segments[119]

Citywide Trips Between June 2024 – August 2025

1. North Water Street (Mason St to Buffalo St)
2. West/East Wisconsin Avenue (6th St to Jefferson St)
3. East Brady Street (Water St to Warren Ave)
4. North Prospect Avenue (Juneau Ave to Mason St)
5. North MLK Jr. Drive (Juneau Ave to Kilbourn Ave)



FREIGHT IN MILWAUKEE

Freight movement is essential to Milwaukee's economy, supporting local industries, businesses, and regional trade through the movement of goods by truck, rail, and water. It underpins supply chains, sustains employment, and connects the Port of Milwaukee and industrial districts to national and global markets.

At the same time, freight activity shapes how streets function — influencing roadway design, curb space allocation, traffic patterns, and land use decisions. Balancing the economic importance of freight with the safety, health, and quality of life of Milwaukee's communities is a critical part of planning for the city's transportation future.

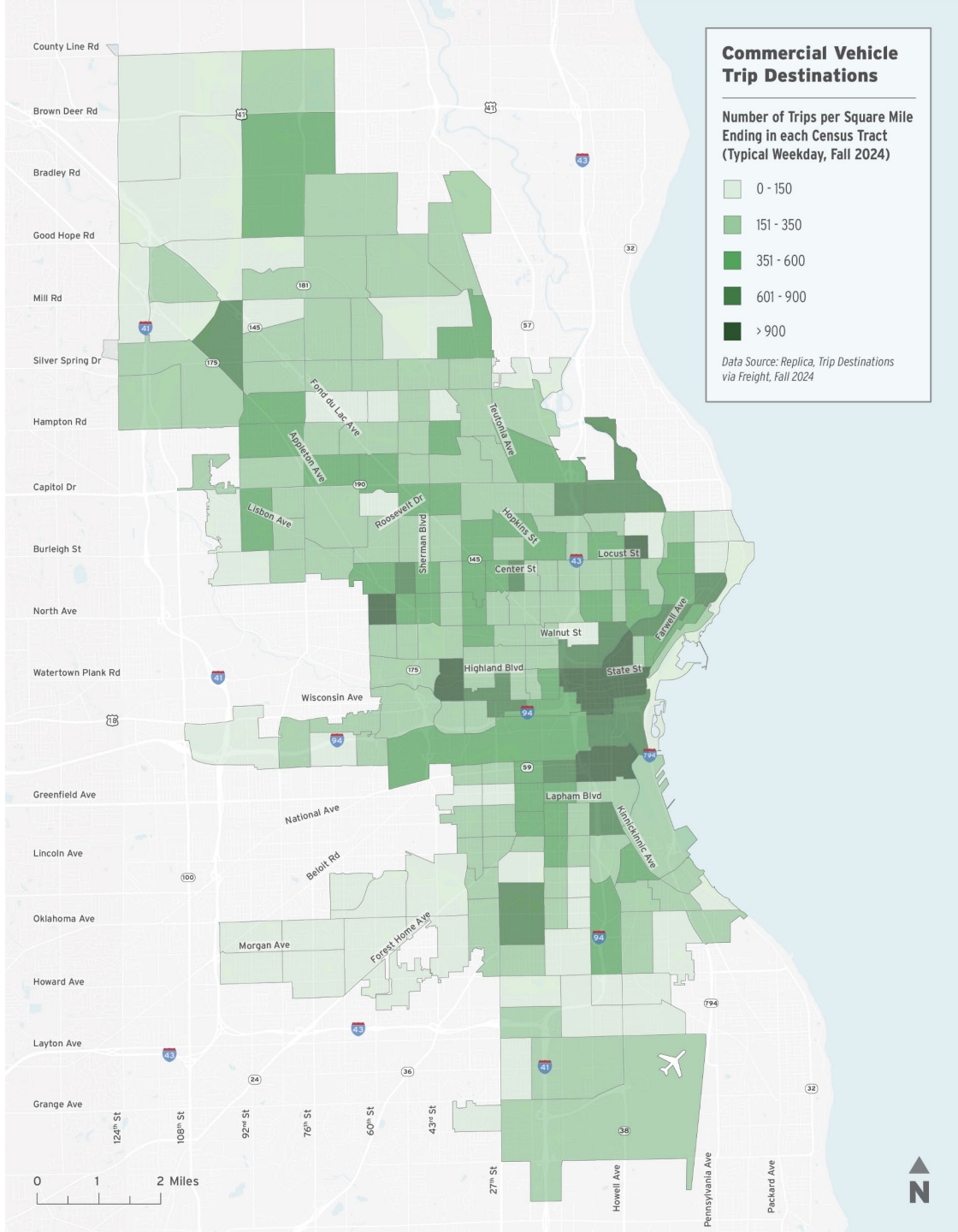
FREIGHT IN MILWAUKEE

For the purposes of this analysis, freight vehicles are defined as medium and heavy duty trucks. These vehicles make nearly 70,000 trips in Milwaukee on an average weekday. 61% of freight trips have only their origin or destination in Milwaukee, whereas almost 40% of freight trips occur entirely within the city.[120]

Hotspots for freight trips look notably different than trips made by other modes. While downtown and surrounding areas still see a high concentration of trips, the Port of Milwaukee and Menomonee River Valley are major freight trip generators, along with industrial clusters throughout the city.[121]

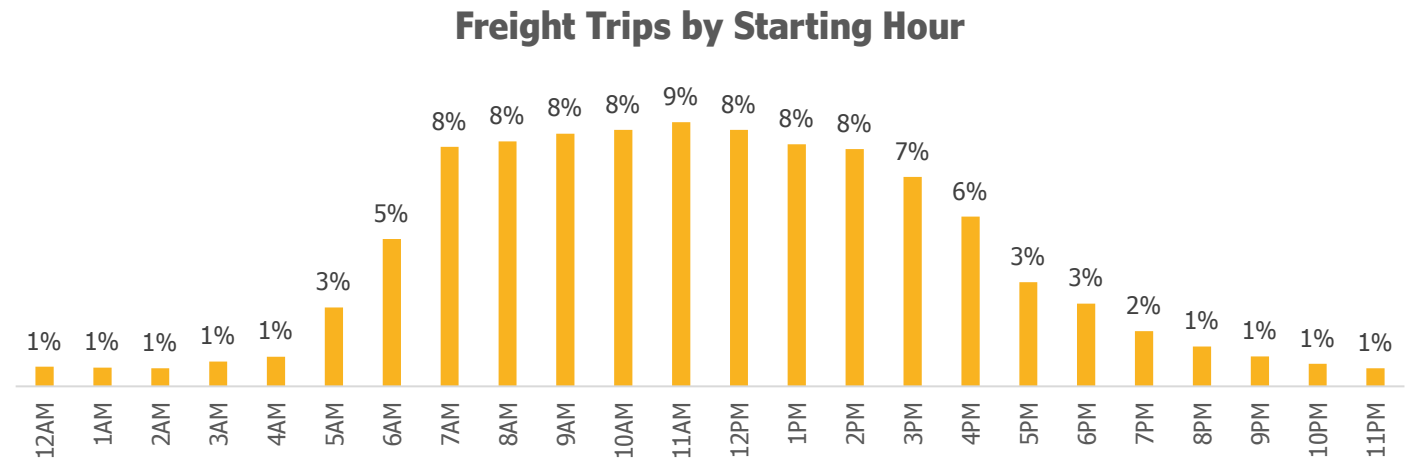
Freight trips are much longer than personal trips, with an average distance of 8.7 miles, and account for 6% of the total vehicle miles traveled within Milwaukee.[122]

Milwaukee has over 400 loading zones, many of which are located downtown, and provide designated spaces for commercial vehicles to load and unload goods. Commercial vehicles do not pay a fee to utilize loading zones.[123]



FREIGHT IN MILWAUKEE

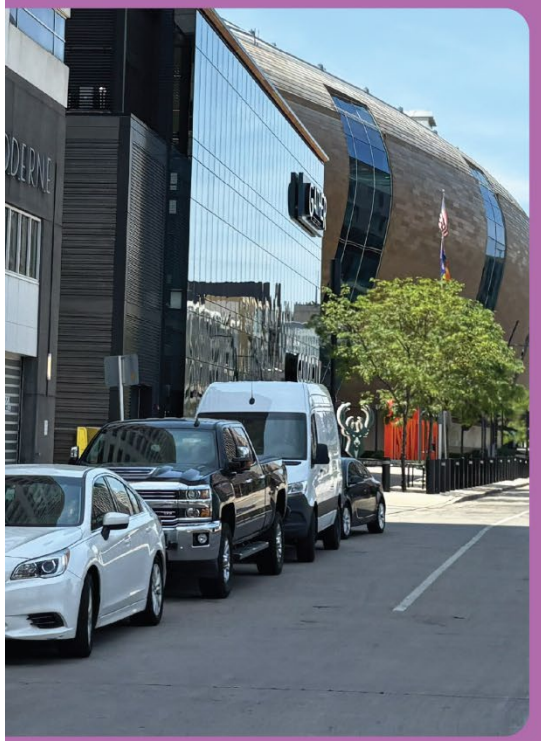
The timing of freight trips is similar to other trips in Milwaukee. 77% of all freight trips start between 7AM – 5PM. 36% of freight trips occur during peak hours (7A – 9AM, 2PM – 5PM), the same times when traffic volumes and activity are at their highest levels.[124]



Data Source: Replica, Trips by Hour, Fall 2024.

MOTOR VEHICLE PARKING IN MILWAUKEE

Motor vehicle parking encompasses a substantial portion of our city's landscape – with approximately 9% of all land dedicated to off-street parking. While parking supports access for drivers and businesses, the amount of parking we require and provide influences how people choose to travel, how streets are designed, and how new development is built. Policies such as parking minimums have historically led to more parking being built than was needed and reinforced our reliance on driving.



PARKING IN MILWAUKEE

The City of Milwaukee actively manages on-street parking to balance access, turnover, and neighborhood needs. Citywide, Milwaukee oversees curbside parking regulations as well as three publicly owned parking structures. In some areas — particularly downtown and along commercial corridors — parking is metered with time limits ranging from 15 minutes to 10 hours to encourage turnover and support local businesses. Meter costs range from $1 - $2.50 per hour. [125]

Across most residential areas, on-street parking between 2:00 AM and 6:00 AM (Monday through Saturday) requires a valid night parking permit. Even where night parking is allowed, vehicles must be moved at least every 48 hours — or more frequently depending on the location — to ensure curb access and support street maintenance operations.[126]

The City has eliminated off-street parking requirements for uses in downtown zoning districts or redevelopment zoning districts. Parking minimum reductions of 25% are available for uses within 1,000 feet of a bus stop or within the downtown area. Parking credits may apply where shared parking facilities are used or where nearby parking is available in a public lot or structure.[127]

9% of the city's total area is dedicated to off-street parking.
Data Source: City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works, Analysis of Milwaukee County data, 2025.

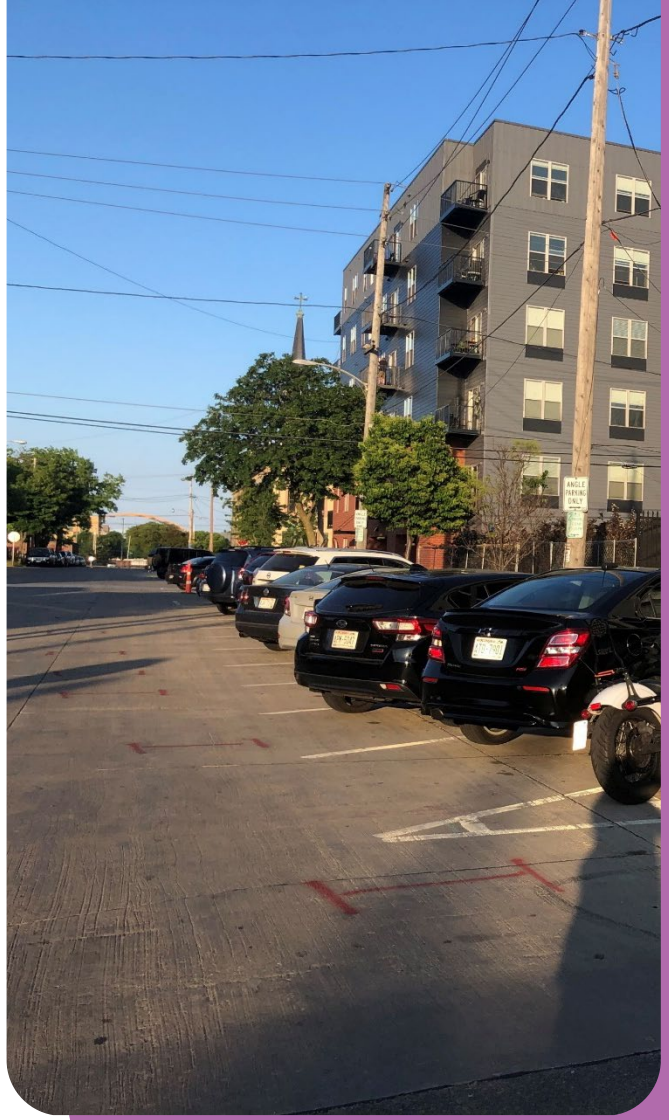
48 HOURS The amount of time vehicles can remain parked on Milwaukee streets unless there are other parking restrictions in place.
Data Source: City of Milwaukee, Parking Services, 2025.

There is **no parking on city streets between 2 AM and 6 AM** Monday through Saturday unless the vehicle has an overnight parking permit or temporary night parking permission

PARKING IN MILWAUKEE

Milwaukee has more than 5,450 metered parking spaces, equating to roughly 10 metered spaces per 1,000 residents. Metered parking is concentrated primarily in downtown and along adjacent commercial corridors. [128]

Compared to peer cities, Milwaukee meters a smaller share of its curbside parking. Minneapolis provides 23 metered spaces per 1,000 residents, and St. Louis provides 26 per 1,000 — more than double Milwaukee's rate. [129, 130] As a result, a larger portion of Milwaukee's curb space is unpriced. When parking is unpriced, vehicles tend to remain parked longer, reducing turnover and limiting the efficient use of valuable public space.



MOBILITY & ITS IMPACTS

414 in Motion

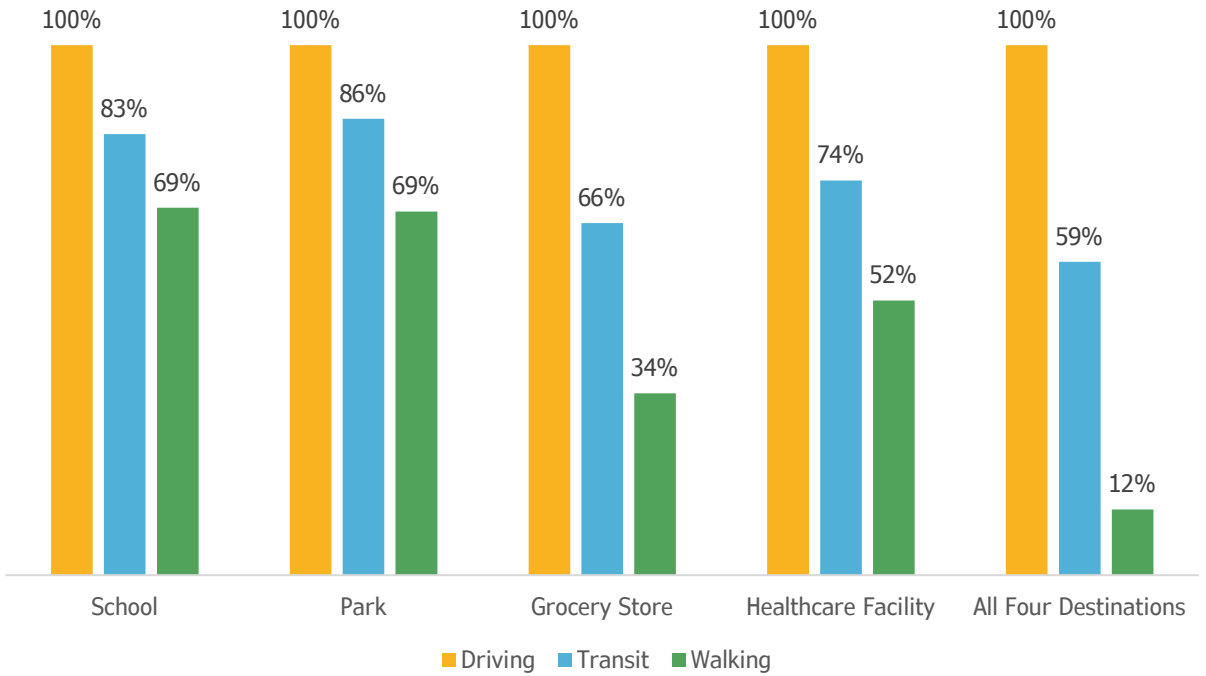
ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

One in six Milwaukee households do not have a car, but reaching opportunities and daily destinations without one is a struggle in many parts of the city.[131]

On average, people in Milwaukee can access over 216,000 jobs within a 20-minute drive, but just over 10,500 jobs within a 20-minute transit trip.

All residents in Milwaukee can access a school, park, grocery store, and healthcare facility within a 20-minute drive. Only 59% of residents can do so via a 20-minute transit trip and just 12% of residents can do so via a 20-minute walking trip.[132, 133, 134]

Access to Destinations within 20 Minutes



* Note: this analysis only considers destinations within the city

Data Source: Google, Distance Matrix API, Fall 2025; City of Milwaukee Department of City Development, Key Destinations, 2025; City of Milwaukee Health Department, Key Destinations, 2025.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

While traffic deaths and serious injuries have fallen in Wisconsin statewide, levels of traffic violence in Milwaukee remain substantially higher.

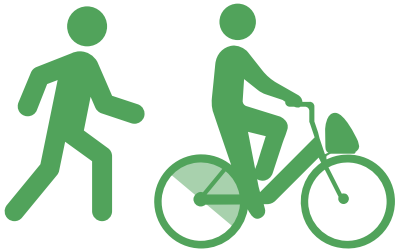
Traffic deaths and serious injuries remain high, after peaking in 2020.[135]

Underserved communities are disproportionately impacted by crashes. Between 2020 and 2024, **Black Milwaukeeans experienced a traffic crash death rate double that of white Milwaukeeans**.[136]

Speed-related fatalities increased by 127% since 2002, with 37 fatalities in 2023.[137]

TRAFFIC SAFETY

People walking and biking in Milwaukee are particularly vulnerable in traffic crashes.



17% of pedestrian and 7% of bicyclist crashes result in a fatal or serious injury, compared to less than 1% of vehicle crashes.[138]

Bicycle and pedestrian fatal and serious injury crashes were **more prevalent at night and downtown**.[139]

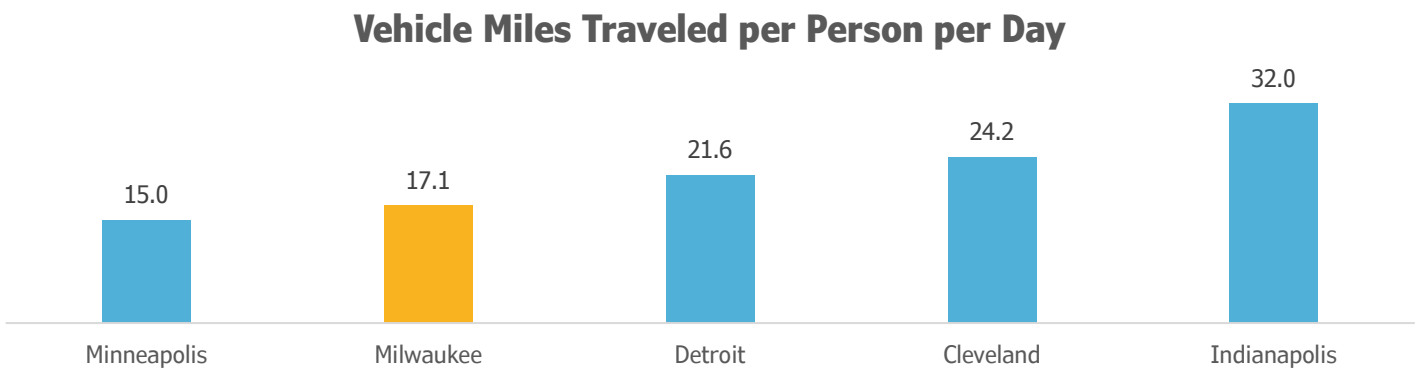
23% of all bicycle crashes occurred when drivers were **turning right** and 14% of all pedestrian crashes occurred when drivers were **turning left**.[140]

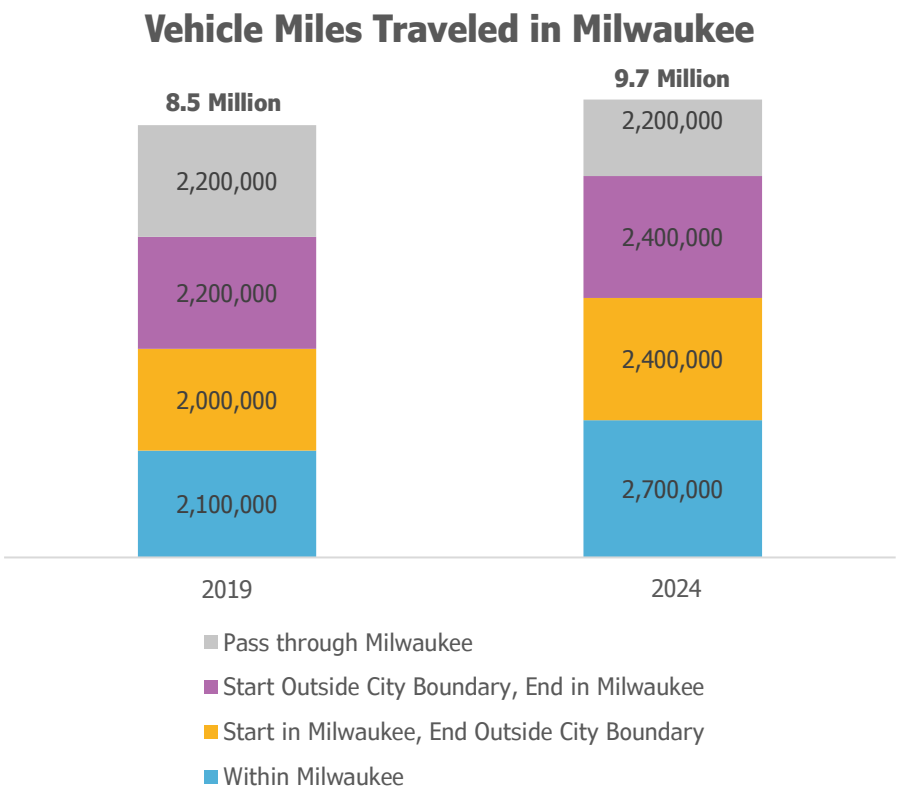
VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) is a key metric for understanding the impact of transportation choices on climate change, air quality, and congestion, because it directly correlates with greenhouse gas emissions—more miles driven typically means more fuel burned and more carbon dioxide released. Today, only 1% of vehicle miles traveled in Milwaukee are in electric vehicles.[141]

On a per capita basis, Milwaukeeans drive fewer miles than residents in some peer cities. Vehicle miles traveled in Milwaukee, though, have increased since 2019, partially driven by an increase in people driving for short trips within the city. [142]

Cities like Minneapolis and Seattle have illustrated how a combination of investment in multimodal infrastructure, policies that incentivize compact, mixed-use development, and programs that encourage mode shift can steadily reduce per capita VMT.





Data Source: Replica, Vehicle Miles Traveled Typical Weekday, Fall 2019 & 2024.

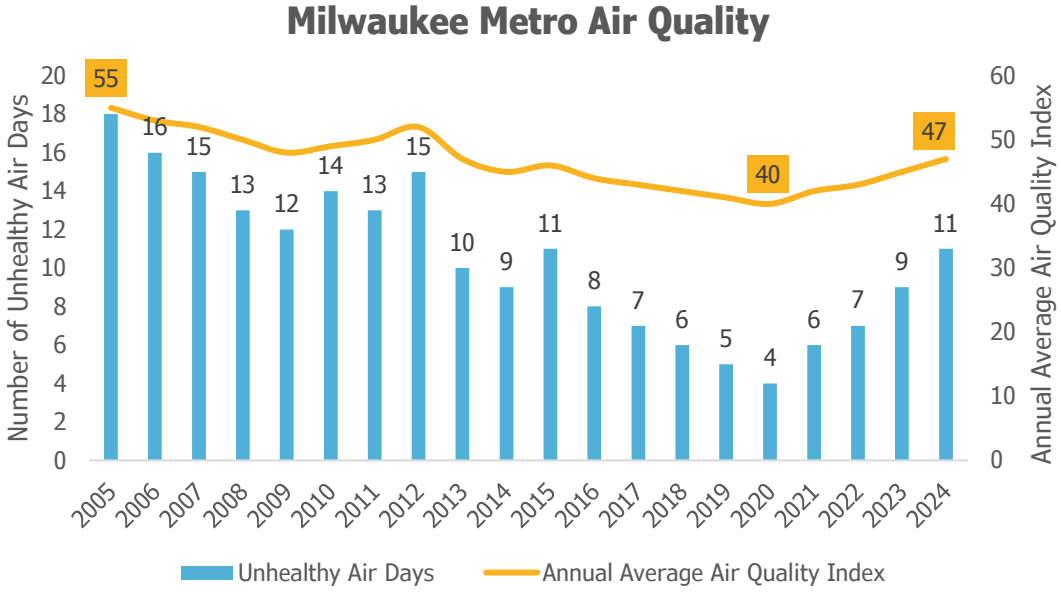
Data Source: Replica, Vehicle Miles Traveled, Fall 2024; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2023.

AIR QUALITY

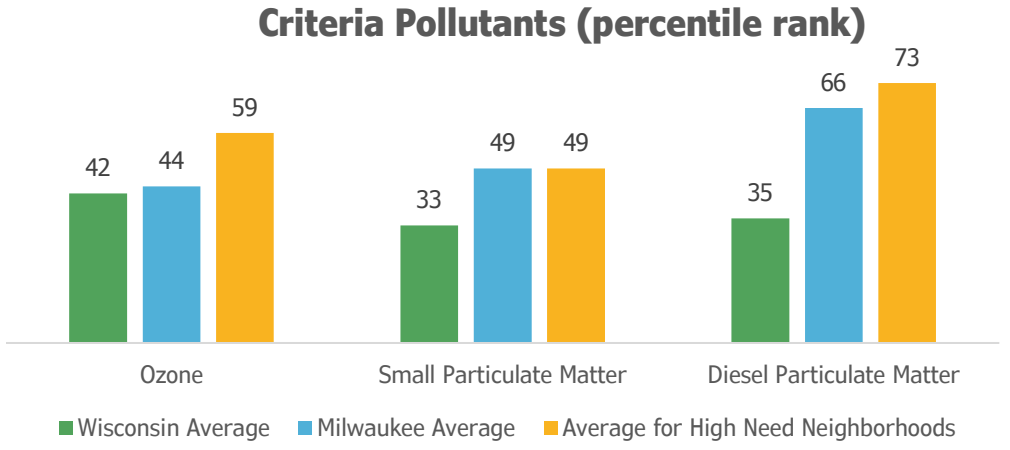
Air quality in the Milwaukee metro area has generally improved over the last 20 years; however, both the annual average air quality index and the number of unhealthy air days have increased each year since 2020.[143]

Milwaukee fares worse specifically on ozone smog and particle pollution when compared to statewide averages. Both pollutants – emitted from transportation – can cause premature death and other serious health effects.[144, 145]

Neighborhoods in Milwaukee with the highest needs generally experience worse air pollution when compared both with citywide and statewide averages.



Data Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Air Quality Index Report, 2024

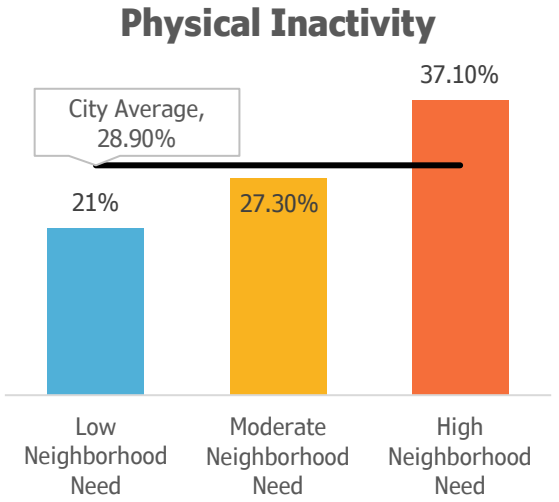


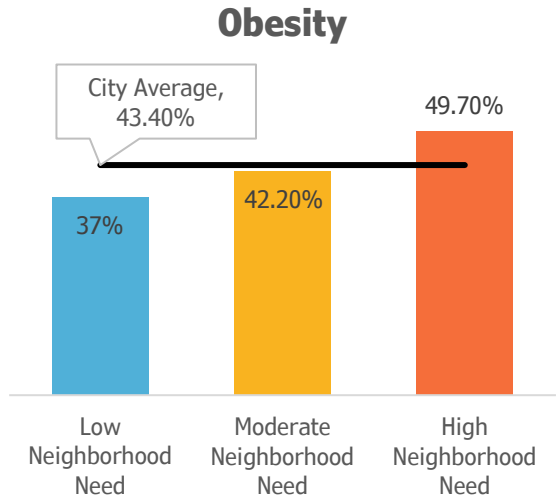
Data Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Equitable Transportation Community Explorer, 2024.

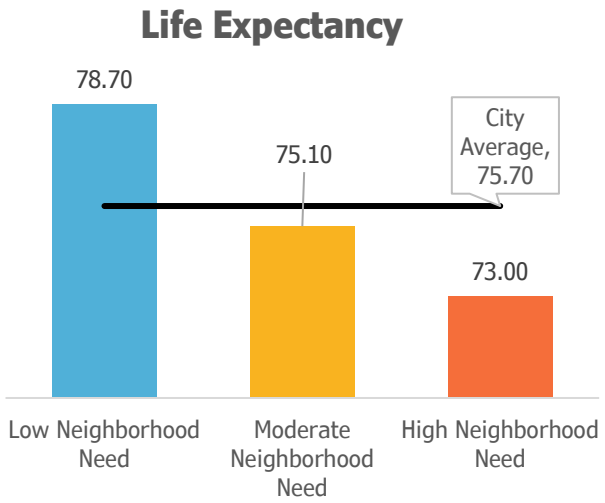
HEALTH INDICATORS

How people get around influences their health and well-being. It shapes their physical activity, air quality exposure, safety, access, and opportunity to reach their destinations.

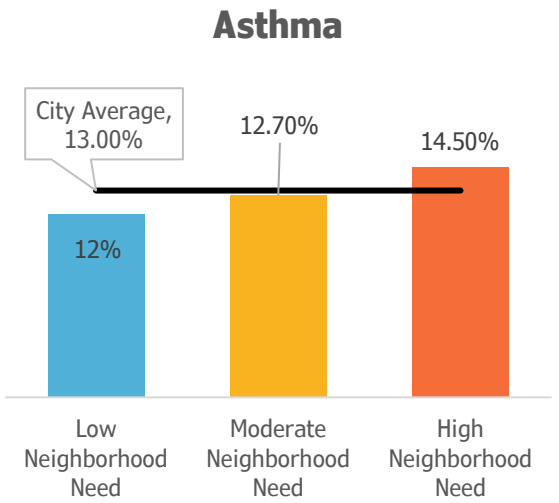
Neighborhoods with the greatest transportation need in Milwaukee currently experience worse health outcomes, ranging from higher asthma rates to greater levels of physical inactivity and, ultimately, lower life expectancy.

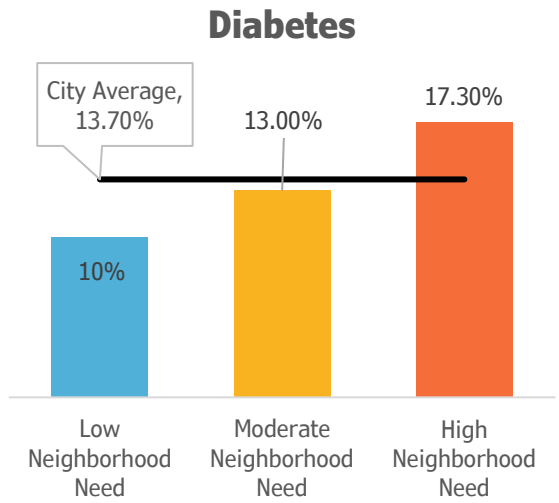






Data Source: City Health Dashboard, Life Expectancy, 2022.





Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. PLACES: Local Data for Better Health. 2022.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS IN MILWAUKEE

Climate change will have an increasing impact on Milwaukeeans' neighborhoods, health, and economy in coming years. Transportation is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, and the impacts of climate change in Milwaukee will also influence how people choose to get around and the state of our infrastructure.

29%

of properties in the City are at risk of flooding in the next 30 years[146]

Flooding in August 2025 caused $76 million in infrastructure and household damage.[147]

3X

increase in extreme heat days by 2050

By 2050, Milwaukee will have three times as many days with a heat index above 105 degrees compared to the historical average from 1990 - 2020.[148]

47%

of Milwaukee's land is impervious surface [149]

Impervious surfaces increase flood risk and urban heat, generating up to five times more stormwater runoff and increasing temperatures as much as seven degrees.[150,151]

TRANSPORTATION COSTS

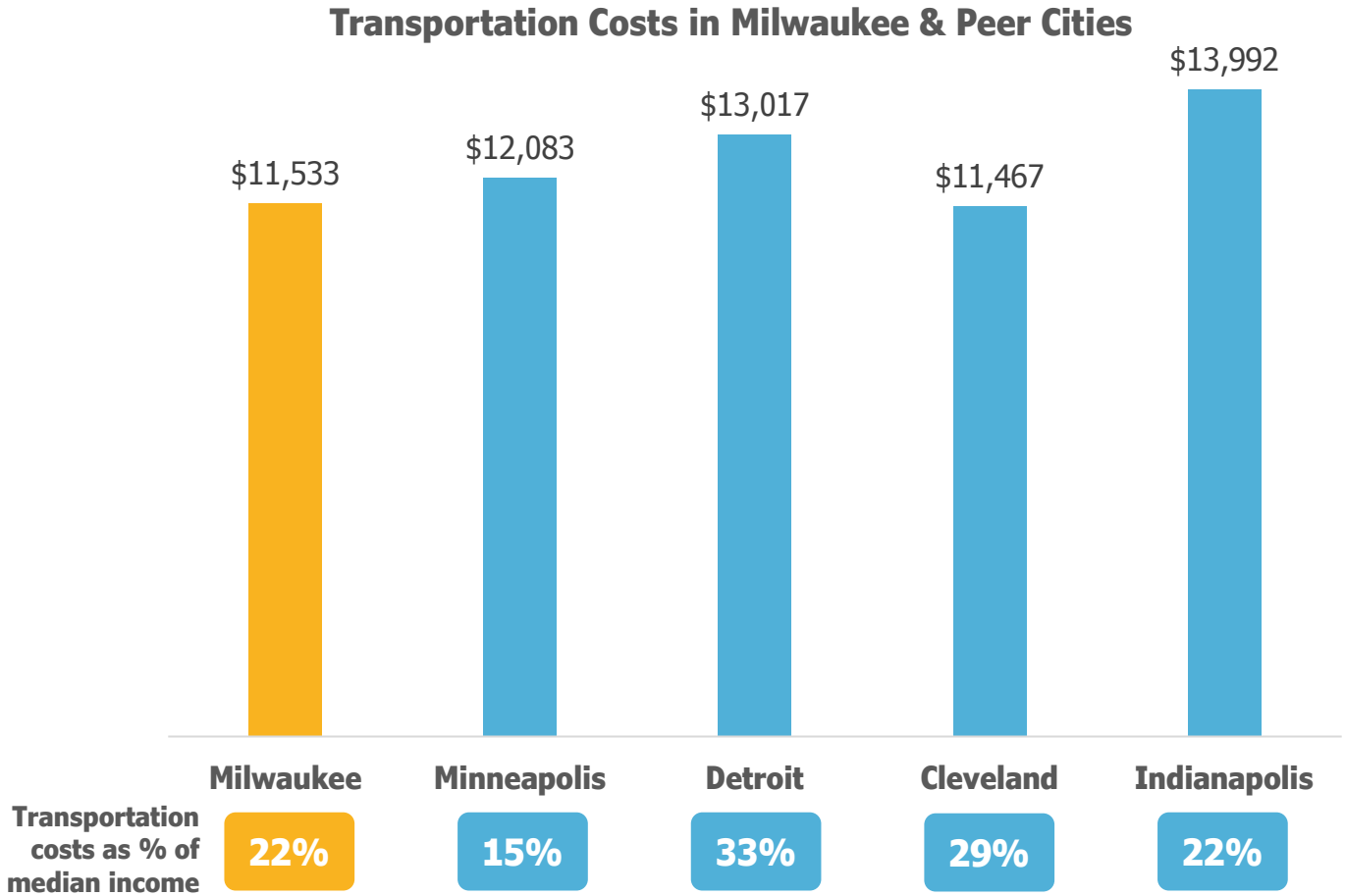
The average Milwaukee household spends 22% of their income on transportation*. This is less than peer cities like Detroit and Cleveland, similar to Indianapolis, but significantly more than Minneapolis.[152]

Transportation costs have increased significantly in recent years. The average person in Wisconsin spends 33% more on transportation today than they did in 2019.[153]

For households across the Midwest, transportation is the second largest portion of their budget after housing. Families spend more on transportation than food, healthcare, or entertainment. [154]

For a family of four living at the poverty line, the average transportation costs in Milwaukee represent 36% of their income.[155]

*Transportation costs include spending on all forms of transportation and a wide range of vehicle costs (including vehicle purchase, insurance, financing, maintenance, fuel, and other charges)



Data Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology, Housing and Transportation Affordability Inex; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2023.

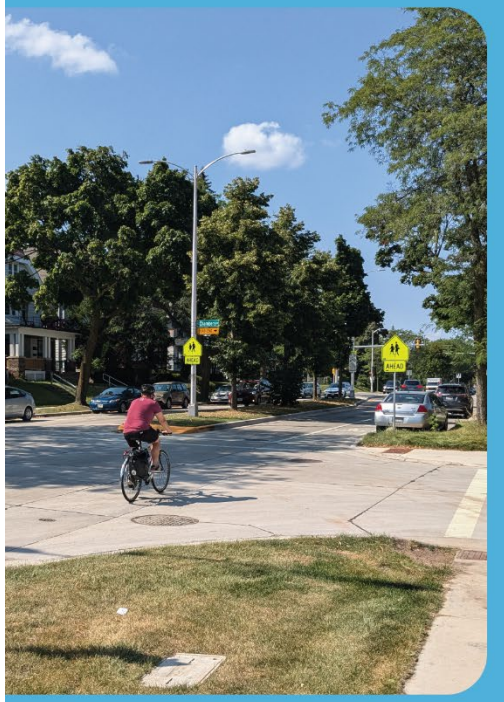
WHAT IT MEANS

The State of Mobility in Milwaukee highlights both significant challenges and meaningful opportunities. Today, most Milwaukeeans travel by car, enabled by a legacy of historical investment choices and street designs that prioritized driving above all else. Many trips people make, though, are relatively short and could easily be made by walking, biking, or transit, provided we invest in making those options safe, convenient, and reliable.

The findings also reveal inequities in safety, access, and infrastructure condition. One in six Milwaukee households does not own a car, yet accessing opportunities and daily destinations without one is still a struggle in many parts of the city. As vehicle costs continue to rise, car dependence is becoming an increasing financial burden, reinforcing the importance of affordable transportation choices.

Meanwhile, many major corridors operate with excess vehicle capacity, and transportation infrastructure occupies a substantial share of the city's land — creating opportunities to improve safety, strengthen multimodal networks, and enhance Milwaukee's public realm.

These insights set the stage for the next phase of 414 in Motion, where the City, partners, and community members will work together to translate these findings into focused strategies, projects, and policies.



APPENDIX

ABOUT THE DATA: REPLICA

What is Replica data?

Replica uses third party source data to create models using mobile location data and census data (consumer & resident data, land use & real estate, economic spend, etc.) with ground truth sources. The data is used to model trips representative of a population.

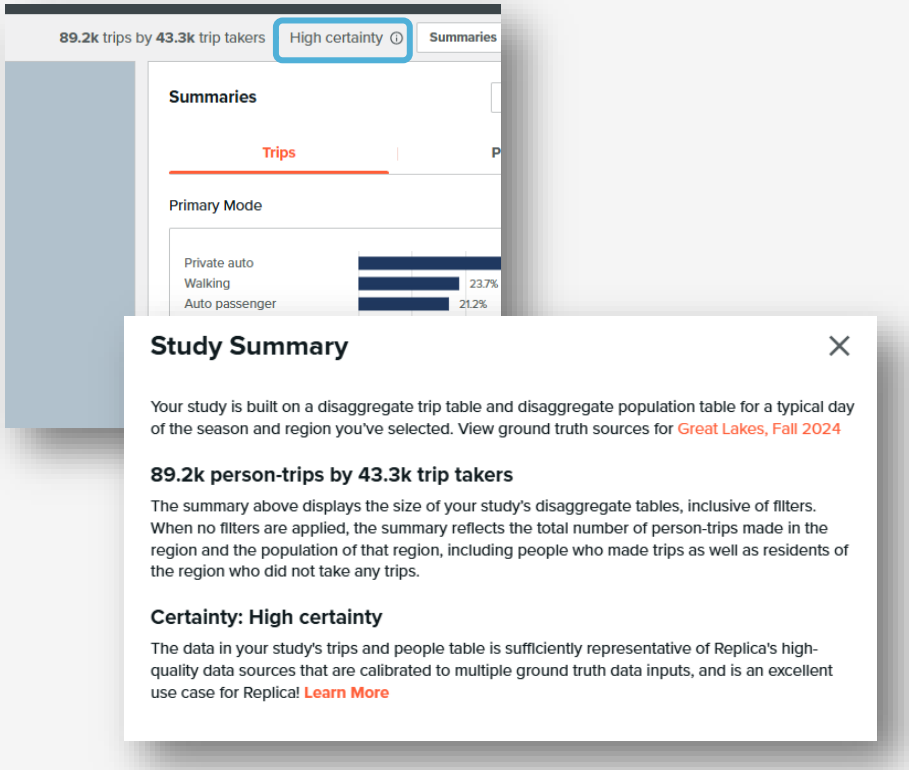
What is a 'trip'?

A trip is defined as travel between two locations with a discrete purpose at the origin and destination. Some intermediate stops with short dwell time may be captured within a single trip.

Replica reports the primary transportation mode used for the trip. A trip is often made up of multiple travel modes. Only the primary mode of travel across a set of trip segments is included. The primary mode is determined using the following ranking: 1) Public transit, 2) Driving (private auto)/Auto passenger/Taxi/TNC, 3) Biking, 4) Walking. Replica does not include E-Scooter trips. Rideshare trips, such as Uber and Lyft, are only captured in Taxi/TNC.

How certain is the data?

Replica provides a certainty level for all datasets, sharing how representative the data is of a certain population. The data used in this report for the City of Milwaukee has been determined to represent the city with a high level of certainty through statistical analysis.



ENDNOTES

ENDNOTES

1. Replica, Mode Share Trips, Fall 2024.
2. Replica, Mode Share Trips, Fall 2024.
3. Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Traffic Count Map, 2025.
4. Southeast Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Regional Travel Demand Model, 2023.
5. Data Source: City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works, Maintaining and Improvement Pavement Quality on Streets, 2025.
6. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2023.
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