



City of Racine, Wisconsin AGENDA BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

AGENDA DATE: Transit Commission, January 29th, 2026

SUBJECT: Communication sponsored by Alder Horton, on behalf of the Transit & Mobility Director requesting permission to apply for funding through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's FFY26-FY31 Surface Transportation Program for replacement RYDE Racine fixed-route buses.

PREPARED BY: Trevor Jung, Transit & Mobility Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: RYDE Racine operates an aging fixed-route bus fleet that requires replacement to continue meeting service demand and operational requirements. This grant would support the replacement of five buses that have accumulated more than 500,000 miles and will have reached the Federal Transit Administration's useful life benchmark (ULB) by the year of replacement, based on both years in service and projected mileage, or that otherwise qualify under the FTA's early retirement criteria.

Useful Life Benchmark is defined by the FTA as, "the expected life cycle or the acceptable period of use in service for a capital asset, as determined by a transit provider, or the default benchmark provided by FTA." The FTA's ULB for 35' transit buses are 12 years and/or 500,000 miles. In addition to FTA standards for replacement vehicles, the deteriorating condition of the vehicles call for replacement.

The new fixed-route buses will result in improved customer experience and reduced maintenance costs. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) FFY26-31 STP-Urban, STP- Rural and Local Bridge Program grant would contribute to RYDE Racine replacing 5 35' fixed-route transit buses in the fleet.

If awarded, the grant dollars will be accessible in WisDOT's FFY2029, or the City of Racine's 2028 Capital Improvement Plan.

BACKGROUND: Originally, WisDOT was providing a combined application for STP-Urban, STP-Rural, and Local Bridge for principal arterials, minor arterials and urban and rural collectors. Due to the need to obligate the funds provided through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) in the Racine Urbanized Area this fiscal year, WisDOT has expanded the use of the funds to transit capital. Based on the definition of capital projects in 49 U.S. Code § 5302, vehicles are an eligible expense.

BUDGETARY IMPACT: Total cost of vehicle replacement project \$4,000,000 with grant amount being \$3,200,000, 20% local match of \$800,000 will be available in the 2028 capital plan under 60282011 57310.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: That the Transit & Mobility Director be granted permission to apply for funding through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's FFY26-FY31 Surface Transportation Program for replacement fixed-route transit buses. Grant Control # 00695.