

The Opportunity:

Route 15, which connects the South Shore communities with downtown Milwaukee and beyond, was MCTS' sixth most popular route in 2023; however, public transportation is not top of mind for the majority of citizens in South Milwaukee.

The Idea:

Bring an existing MCTS "Freedom on Wheels" travel training program to the community in a very public way, reengaging South Milwaukee citizens with the benefits and ease of public transit. Special emphasis was placed on encouraging citizens to trial the bus system, while being sensitive to potential rider's apprehensions about it. Offering the event for free and in a family-friendly manner was a top priority.

The Partnership:

The community advocacy organization Strong Towns South Milwaukee organized the event—securing the location, producing the promotional materials and coordinating with MCTS staff.

MCTS participation included providing the staff, bus and event programming as well as some organic, social promotion. As a gift to participants, MCTS provided backpacks filled with MCTS swag and information about various programs.

Providing a turn-key event and marketing materials to the South Milwaukee Library proved key to the event's success, allowing the Library to provide credibility to the event and engaging the a broad audience of community members without taking up valuable library resources.

The Results:

On a Friday afternoon, 25 diverse community members attended event with a range of ages and abilities. While traveling to Lake Vista Park in Oak Creek aboard a new 6300-series bus, the participants enjoyed each other's company, learned MCTS procedures/policies, and had questions answered. Positive comments and reviews were common. A number of participants applied for the reduced fare program at the event's close.

Throughout the event's promotion and execution, a social media conversations about the importance of public transportation, MCTS service, and funding issues were common.

A photo recap of the event, posted to the community's Facebook "Town Hall," generated nearly 100 positive reactions from the community—while individual participant posts numbered in the dozens.

PROMOTIONAL POSTER
Displayed at restaurants, bars, the library and other locations throughout South Milwaukee. Design cues pulled from the recent Roots/Routes campaign and #SaveTheBus endeavors.

MILWAUKEE COUNTY

DID YOU KNOW?
ROUTE 15, WHICH CONNECTS THE SOUTH SHORE COMMUNITIES WITH DOWNTOWN MILWAUKEE, WAS MCTS' SIXTH MOST POPULAR ROUTE IN 2023, AVERAGING 3,600 RIDES PER DAY.

FREE!
FAMILY FRIENDLY!

**FREEDOM ON WHEELS
TRAVEL TRAINING**

**LEARN HOW
TO RIDE**

FRIDAY, AUG. 16 | 1 P.M.
SOUTH MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY

**INTERESTED IN TAKING PUBLIC TRANSIT MORE OFTEN,
BUT DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START? INTIMIDATED? ANXIOUS?
JOIN US!**

Freedom on Wheels Travel Training is a bus orientation program designed to equip potential riders with the skills and confidence to become MCTS regulars.

PART ONE of the presentation covers MCTS transportation options, fare payment, proper bus etiquette, safety concerns, and trip planning using the MCTS website and Umo App.

PART TWO consists of participants touring an actual MCTS bus—discovering its features—followed by a FREE bus ride to acclimatize riders with what bus transportation feels like while practicing what was discussed in the classroom.

STRONG TOWNS | South Milwaukee

6200 RideMCTS

WELCOME ABOARD

RIDEMCTS.COM **#SAVETHEBUS**

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

The library and members of Strong Towns South Milwaukee promoted the event with these social media posts in the weeks leading up to the event on their private accounts and in the South MilwaukeeTown Hall community group.



Interested in taking public transit more often, but don't know where to start? Intimidated? Anxious? Join representatives from [Milwaukee County Transit System \[tag\]](#) for a bus orientation session on Friday, Aug. 16.

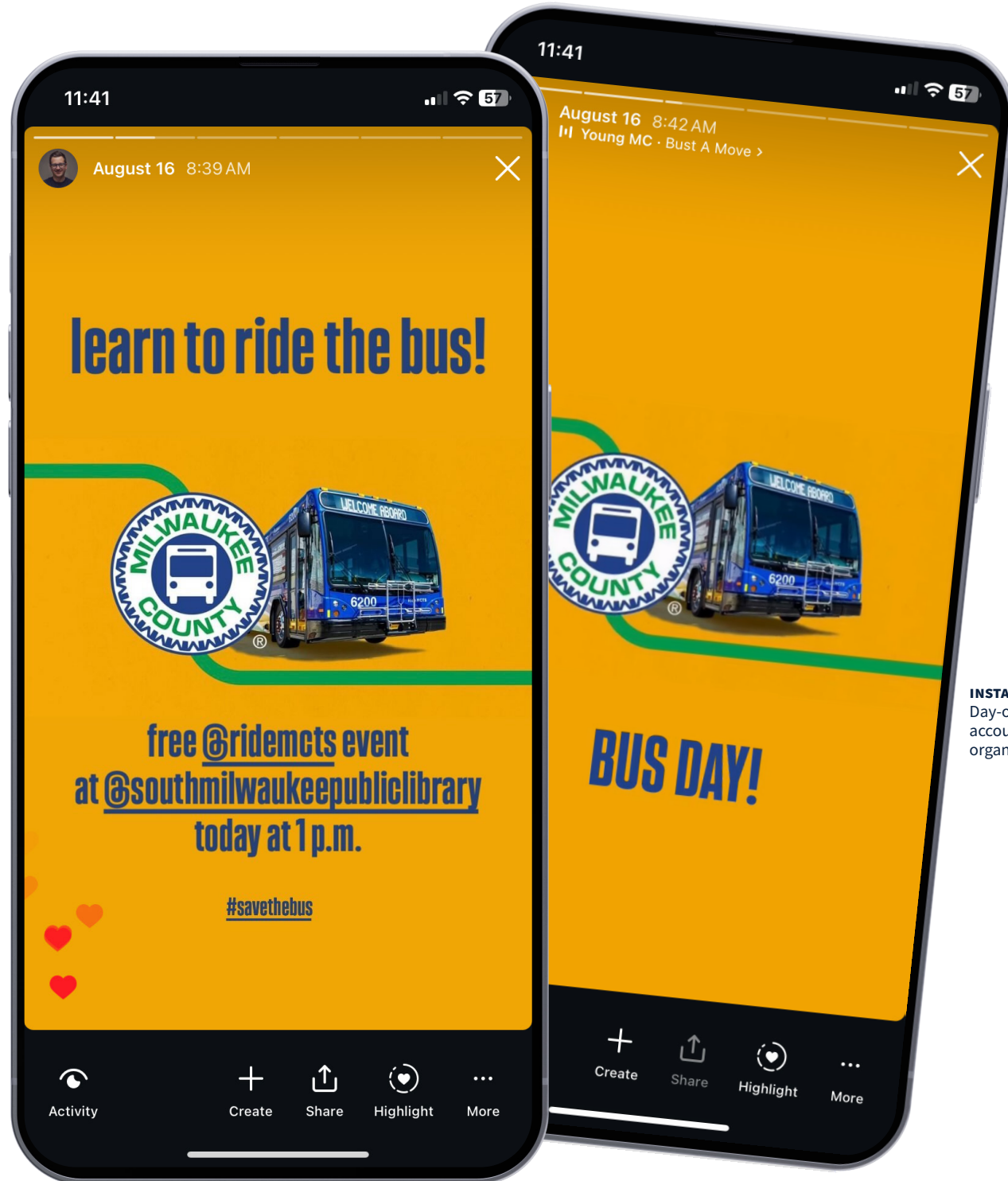


Join representatives from [Milwaukee County Transit System \[tag\]](#) for a bus orientation session on Friday, Aug. 16 at the [South Milwaukee Public Library \[tag\]](#). This family-friendly program includes a FREE bus ride—bring your kids.



Learn the ins and outs of riding a [Milwaukee County Transit System \[tag\]](#) bus on Friday, Aug. 16 at the [South Milwaukee Public Library \[tag\]](#), then put your new knowledge into practice with a FREE bus ride around the south shore.

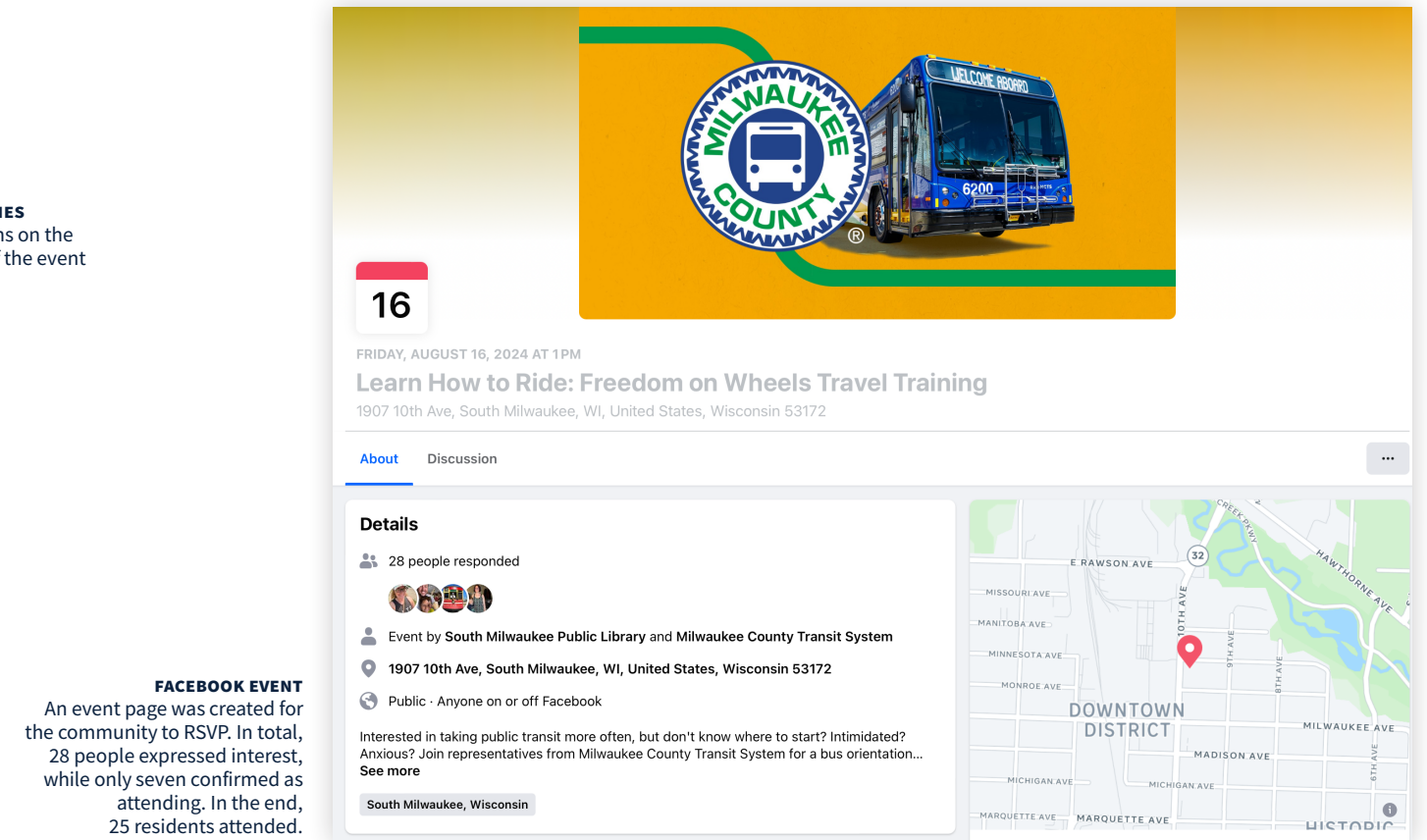
Learn How to Ride: Freedom on Wheels Travel Training
Community Event | Friday, August 16, 2024 | 1 p.m.
Promotion



INSTAGRAM STORIES
Day-of promotions on the account of one of the event organizers.



SOUTH MILWAUKEE LIBRARY WEBSITE
The event appeared in a slider of upcoming events on the library webpage in the month and a half leading up to the event.



FACEBOOK EVENT
An event page was created for the community to RSVP. In total, 28 people expressed interest, while only seven confirmed as attending. In the end, 25 residents attended.



Darcie Muckler
Thanks everyone for the help with my application for the WisGo card! Glad to see that there was a good turnout for today's event!
2d Love Reply 2

Jason Govednik
Darcie Muckler it was so easy to do!!
2d Like Reply

Darcie Muckler
Jason Govednik yes. Wanted to do it in person there. I don't have a printer hookup so wanted to save some of the hassle.

Holy cow, South Milwaukee—we packed an entire bus! While traveling to and from beautiful Lake Vista park in Oak Creek, 25 South Milwaukee residents learned all about how to use the Milwaukee County Transit System!



Massive thanks to the three members of MCTS staff who joined us, the library staff for hosting and promoting, and the members of Strong Towns South Milwaukee for planning this community event.

Most of all, thank you to everyone who came out to this wonderful, free event. Convenient, safe and reliable public transit is vitally important to our community. It makes us stronger and brings us together. #publictransit#savethebus



Evelyn Jones
I love this idea that the library helped them to learn what the bus was. how to use the bus app. how to get on and off the bus. How to pay and request stops. The end they give one free bus ride. I hope they do it again.
4d Love Reply Edited 2

View 1 reply

 **Milwaukee County Transit System**

2d Love Reply 3

Greg Balcerek
Come Ride With Us On the Bus...
3w Like Reply

Carla Jones
Love it
2d Love Reply 2

Bob Spircoff Top contributor
Looks like a big success!
2d Love Reply

Traceratops McIntyre
2 days ago
Learning all the bus amenities on a trip from SM Library to Lake Vista. The bus driver took the best photos of Casper & me. ❤️



Diane Wilburth Seegert
It was a very good introduction to the MCTS system! I thoroughly enjoyed it.
2d Love Reply 2