



**REGIONAL  
TRANSIT AUTHORITY**  
OF SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

## RTA Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, July 16, 2015

2:00 PM

Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan

1001 Woodward Ave., Suite 1400

Detroit, MI 48226

### AGENDA

1. Call to order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of the June 18, 2015 Board of Directors meeting summary
4. Public comment
5. Reports of Standing Committees
  - a. Executive and Policy Committee Meeting (EPC)
    - i. Title VI Non-discrimination Plan - Action
    - ii. Limited English Proficiency Plan - Action
    - iii. Freedom of Information Act Policy - Action
    - iv. Drug-Free Work Place Policy - Action
  - b. Finance and Budget Committee (FBC)
    - i. Treasurer's Report – June 2015 – Action
  - c. Planning and Service Coordination Committee (PSCC)
    - i. Purpose and Need documents
      1. Michigan Avenue
      2. Gratiot Avenue
    - ii. Survey Research Consultant recommendation – Action
    - iii. Master Agreement timeline
    - iv. Federal Fund Allocation - Update
  - d. Transit Providers Advisory Committee (PAC)
    - i. Fare Study
    - ii. Sub-committees
  - e. Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) – Update
6. New Business
7. Adjourn

*The Committee may, at its discretion, revise this agenda or take up any other issues as need and time allow.*

*Request for reasonable accommodations at RTA meetings require advance reservations. Individuals with disabilities requiring assistance should contact RTA Information Services at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Contact Virginia Lickliter at 313-402-1020.*

*Documents and information are available in a variety of formats. Contact the RTA Information Center at [info@rtamichigan.org](mailto:info@rtamichigan.org) or call 313-402-1020 to discuss your format need. Further information can be found at [www.rtamichigan.org](http://www.rtamichigan.org) or by calling Virginia Lickliter at 313-402-1020.*

Proposed Meeting Summary  
Regional Transit Authority  
Board of Directors  
Thursday, June 18, 2015

1. Call to order 2:03 PM

Committee Members Present:

Paul Hillegonds, Chair; Freman Hendrix; Alma Smith; Don Morandini; Roy Rose; Tim Soave; Elisabeth Gerber; Chuck Moss; Mark Gaffney

RTA Representatives Present:

Michael Ford; Tiffany Gunter; Virginia Lickliter; Benjamin Stupka; Travis Gonyou

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Chuck Moss and supported by Alma Smith to approve the agenda. Approved unanimously.

3. Approval of the April 16, 2015 Board of Directors Meeting Summary

Moved by Alma Smith and supported by Chuck Moss to approve the April 16, 2015 Board of Directors Meeting Summary. Approved unanimously. Liz Gerber abstained as she was not in attendance at the April 16, 2015 Board of Directors Meeting.

4. Public Comments

**Jim Casha**

Mr. Casha brought two newspaper articles to the attention of the board – “Plan for airport shuttle takes off” and “There goes the neighborhood: Neighborhood redevelopment plan”. Regarding the airport shuttle, Mr. Casha asked why the service wasn’t already provided by SMART and why it couldn’t be started immediately. Regarding the Herman Keifer development, he stated that the RTA missed to opportunity to own the land and be a part of the development to generate revenue for the RTA. Regarding the Bloomfield Hills opt-out, he stated that had the RTA aggressively sought the opportunities to be developers, created a regional transportation system and generate revenue, perhaps one of the members of the Bloomfield Hills commission that voted no would have thought that it was a great effort on the part of the RTA and would have voted yes and SMART would have gotten \$750,000 more per year. Mr. Casha stated that he and Brian Colfer attended a community listening session at the Birmingham United Church the following week and stated that they are people who want to help even if they don’t use public transportation.

**Brian Colfer**

Mr. Colfer noted that he had been at a community listening session at Good Cakes and Bakes. He stated that he attended the event because Frank and Karen Hammer of the State Fairgrounds Coalition gave a presentation as to why the State Fairgrounds should be the main transit hub for the region. He stated that he requested that the CAC Executive Committee allow Mr. and Mrs. Hammer give a presentation regarding this issue. He stated that the request was denied and questioned why. He stated that he read the minutes of the June 8th CAC Executive Committee meeting and it stated that Michael Ford said that the RTA would not pursue the State Fairgrounds as a regional transit hub and does not plan to acquire the land. Mr. Colfer questioned why not. He stated that the RTA should be using every possibly opportunity to have public land used for regional transit hubs. He stated that he is very disappointed that there cannot be an honest discussion concerning this and believes that if the RTA doesn't act soon, the State will give away the land for private development and that is not something that he would like to see happen. He stated that he is very disappointed that someone can't come to give a presentation at the CAC meeting on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. He also stated that if the land cannot be acquired for a regional transit hub he believes the RTA should fold because it is basically a sham and is just being used to build M-1.

#### **Joel Batterman**

Mr. Batterman identified himself as a member of the A2D Rail Alliance which is an organization working to build support for the restoration of commuter rail service between Ann Arbor and Detroit. He stated that some form of commuter rail service along this corridor has existed for most of the past 200 years ever since the State launched the Michigan Central Railroad Project between those communities in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. He stated that the A2D Rail Alliance just concluded their out roll "Week of Track-tion" which is a series of events in communities along the Ann Arbor to Detroit corridor intended to build awareness about the possibility that the RTA offers to bring commuter rail to fruition. He stated that they have found enthusiastic support for the service everywhere from Woodward Avenue to Washtenaw Avenue and from everyone from students to senior citizens. He also stated that they are not arguing against bus rapid transit or rolling transit along the Michigan Avenue corridor but when commuting from Ann Arbor to Detroit, people would prefer to not spend the time bus transit would take and rail transit would be faster. He stated that it is important to have both options along the corridor. He stated that Michigan Avenue is considerably longer than the other corridors under consideration by the RTA. He stated that as the RTA works to develop its regional plan, the alliance will continue to build enthusiasm for this long overdue service.

#### **Larry Krieg**

Mr. Krieg identified himself as a resident of Ypsilanti Township. He requested the board to review a packet that was given to them concerning coordination of service between Washtenaw County and various other communities. He observed that there is a great need for coordination between DDOT and SMART but there is also a gap in service between Eastern Washtenaw County and Wayne County. He stated that the reason he believes this is a critical issue is underlined by a study commissioned by the Washtenaw County Office of Economic Development. The study shows severe housing value disparities and many families, particularly in Eastern Washtenaw County, who are financially distressed. When the AAATA was working to build support for a millage in May of

2014, Mr. Krieg had the opportunity to ride buses around Eastern Washtenaw County and found that people who are looking for a job have a “wall” at the county line that prevents them from searching further east. He stated that there are several jobs available along the Michigan Avenue corridor in Western Wayne County but are not accessible to people living in Eastern Washtenaw County. Mr. Krieg stated that his ask is that the RTA not forget to work on coordination in service between Washtenaw and Wayne Counties.

5. Reports of Standing Committees

a. Executive and Policy Committee (EPC)

i. Committee Assignments – Action

Paul Hillegonds reported that the committee did not meet however committee assignments for the coming year need to be addressed. The assignments will remain the same with Freman Hendrix taking the assignments left vacant by Lisa Franklin’s resignation with the exception of the Citizens Advisory Committee. Mr. Hillegonds reported that a second liaison to the CAC is still needed. Don Morandini volunteered to be the second liaison to the Citizens Advisory Committee.

Moved by Chuck Moss and supported by Liz Gerber to approve the 2015 Committee Assignments. Approved unanimously.

b. Finance and Budget Committee (FBC)

i. Treasurer’s Report – April 2015 – Action

Tim Soave gave the Treasurer’s Report for April 2015. He reported that during April there was \$80,827 in expenses. He reported that there was also State revenue in revenue.

Roy Rose asked if the revenue from the Federal grant and State Match grant is for planning purposes of RTA staff. Tiffany Gunter indicated that the Federal grant and Statematch will be used for planning only and that the funding is reimbursement based.

Chuck Moss asked if the State’s budget plans would affect RTA funding. Ms. Gunter stated that the RTA was given a one-time appropriation of \$1.1 million and no further appropriations are expected at this time. Paul Hillegonds confirmed with Ms. Gunter that MDOT funds would not continue on an ongoing basis.

Alma Smith asked if transit would get additional money from the State’s budget plans and if so, is the RTA a part of that. Michael Ford said the RTA would follow up on that question.

Moved by Roy Rose and supported by Mark Gaffney to approve the April 2015 Treasurer’s Report. Approved unanimously.

ii. Treasurer's Report – May 2015 – Action

Tim Soave reported that there was \$89,557 in expenses in the month of May.

Moved by Freman Hendrix and supported by Don Morandini to approve the May 2015 Treasurer's Report. Approved unanimously.

c. Transit Providers Advisory Committee (PAC) and Planning and Service Coordination Committee (PSCC) – Update from joint meeting

i. Federal Fund Allocation Method

Michael Ford reported that the Federal Funding Allocation was discussed at the meeting. He reported that the RTA is a designated recipient of Federal transportation formula funds in the areas of Urbanized Area formula programs. The RTA is responsible for distributing those funds. In 2013, SEMCOG established the current allocation process. The RTA followed that model for 2014 and 2015. The RTA is committed to reevaluate the process and a memorandum that lays out the programming schedule was discussed at the June 11, 2015 meeting as well as the methodology and formula that the RTA is anticipating adopting. That memorandum was included in the board meeting packet.

Freman Hendrix asked in what format the RTA will accept comments. Mr. Ford stated that written comments would be preferred.

Chuck Moss asked if he understood correctly that the recommendation is to change the current split from 35%/65% to approximately a 50/50 split. Mr. Ford stated that the 35/65 split had been changed approximately three years ago to a 47.5/51.5 split with 1% going to the People Mover. Mr. Ford stated that the currently split is being re-evaluated to propose a methodology based on wear and tear as well as other considerations to make the process more data driven. He also stated that the RTA is accepting comments to make sure the methodology is workable and everybody is in agreement but that an actual split has not been determined yet.

Mark Gaffney asked if all of the fund types would be added together and then run through the formula. Mr. Ford stated that each fund type would be calculated individually. Mr. Gaffney asked if there was a reason each fund type would have the same split since they would be calculated individually. Mr. Ford stated that they would likely be calculated individually but he wanted to work through the approval process and not presuppose the outcome.

Elisabeth Gerber stated that she appreciated that the current methodology is being used as a starting point. She stated that the possibility of a thoughtful split creating a

drastic change in a provider's budget should be taken into consideration. She reiterated that she appreciates that a thoughtful methodology is being considered.

Freman Hendrix confirmed that the discussion will center on the proportion of ridership, revenue miles, capital improvement and the overarching philosophy of the RTA's purpose. He stated that at the end of the day, the rider should be who the RTA is looking out for. He also stated that he is looking forward to the input from the different sources and the following discussion.

Elisabeth Gerber asked if the RTA is requesting feedback on the proportion of the formula that should be taken by revenue miles, ridership and capital improvements. Mr. Ford stated that the RTA wants feedback on all three proposed criteria as well as the weighting percentage and criteria.

Paul Hillegonds stated that revenue miles and ridership are easily predicted but asked if capital improvements are easily predicted. Mr. Ford stated that the RTA would have to work with the providers to extract that information.

Don Morandini recalled that the providers stated that they have 5 years plans in place but that they were more "wish lists". Mr. Ford stated that that information submitted would need to be evaluated.

Mark Gaffney stated that the RTA has certain goals and that they should include becoming familiar to everyone we work with including providers. Those goals are things as obvious and familiar as a common fare card but also things not as obvious such as common, merged and more efficient and usable routes. Mr. Gaffney asked how those goals will be considered in this process especially given that the providers already have 5 year plans in place. Mr. Ford stated that those considerations need to be part of the regional plan and that regional connectivity needs to be adopted into the methodology. Mr. Gaffney asked if the RTA should ask the providers to address what should be common goals in their comments. Mr. Ford stated that part of the RTA's existence is cooperation and collaboration so that needs to be part of the plan and is part of the discussion going forward.

Roy Rose asked if the methodology can be looked at again after the Master Plan is finalized. Mr. Ford said the plan should be always moving to meet the current needs and future conditions so he sees it as a plan that is "alive" that would regularly be under review.

Tim Soave stated that, considering the providers already have capital plans in place based on assumptions of what they feel they need to run, and that what we're hearing is that the methodology may change how that is done so maybe the capital plan portion of the plan should be written based on what the RTA thinks the general capital needs are and how the individual plan fit into regional need.

ii. Master Agreement Update

Michael Ford reported that the master agreement will expire on September 30, 2015. Our timeline for completion of the RMTP is in December 2015. Article III of the master agreement is contingent upon the development of specific coordination directives that will guide RTA decision making and prioritization of projects. We will continue to operate under Article II of the Master Agreement until completion of the plan. Staff is working to develop a timeline that illustrates the process.

Elisabeth Gerber, to make sure she understood correctly, stated that Article II of the Master Agreement will remain in place through the end of the calendar year and then Article III which lays out the next phase of the relationship between the RTA and the providers, asked if the intention is for that to stay in place for the calendar year or if this is something that needs to be decided. She stated that it is important for the providers in terms of their planning process and their expectations to know how long each of the different phases of the Master Agreement will be in place. Mr. Ford stated that the RTA will meet again with the providers to discuss the timeline and next steps but that the RTA will operate under Article II until the Master Plan is done.

Paul Hillegonds asked if those board members involved with the PAC understood what the Master Agreement is. He stated that the agreement governs the RTA's relationship with the providers and what the RTA's role would be and how much power would be asserted. Tiffany Gunter added that the agreement is broken into three articles. Article I supported the RTA in its early stages and didn't have an official identity with the FTA and didn't have to perform any oversight of the transit providers. Article II, which is where the relationship exists today, the RTA has an official status as a direct recipient with the FTA and provides concurrent review of budgets and applications of funding for the providers. The RTA must also pin a supplemental agreement before a provider can execute a contract. Article III takes the relationship beyond the status of just pinning a supplemental agreement that states the RTA has understanding of what the provider is planning to do in terms of executing a contract and allows the RTA to execute its full authority through the establishment of coordination directives. Mr. Hillegonds stated that it would be a good idea that the agreement be re-circulated among the board. Ms. Gunter also stated that the RTA has had conversations with the State of Michigan because the process involves funding that MDOT has oversight of with regards to pass-through agreements. They are aware of the extension that the RTA is seeking and are supportive.

iii. B.E.S.T. Regional Master Plan presentation

Ehren Bingaman with HNTB presented an overview update of the progress of the Regional Master Transit Plan. The objective of the Regional Master Transit Plan is to establish a high level vision and framework for a regional transit network.

Mr. Bingaman concluded his presentation, noting that four repeating comments that they have received are that people want more transit, they want to go more places, they want to get there more frequently and they want more reliability. The group has done some preliminary evaluation of workforce data for the region and every county is exporting workers to every other county in Southeast Michigan every day. Regional mobility goes sideways, not just in and out of Detroit and will be representative of the recommendations they make going forward.

Mark Gaffney asked when public outreach is done at farmer's markets and fairs, if a booth is actually set up and how people are attracted. Mr. Bingaman reported that his group is currently looking for volunteers and have reached out to the CAC and other partners to help staff booths. They have comment cards and provide basic information about the plan to the public. They also have a messaging kit that is provided to volunteers.

Don Morandini asked if HNTB's findings have been shared with employers or if employers have been engaged, specifically community colleges, hospitals, and major manufacturing facilities. Michael Ford reported that the contractors and staff have been speaking with colleges, hospitals and businesses as well as leaders from those institutions. He reported that Tiffany Gunter had also met with a coalition of student leadership at colleges and universities throughout the region. Mr. Morandini asked if there was a feeling that these institutions are willing to make a commitment to transit. Mr. Ford indicated that there is interest and in many cases, a commitment to improved transit.

Michael Ford gave an update on the Michigan and Gratiot projects. He reported that the projects are actively integrating technical information and public input into a formal purpose and need document that will be brought to the board in July. The technical information includes review of existing transportation networks, review of existing and future demographics, land use, planning priorities and environmental conditions. Based on the outreach and technical information to date, priorities should be on transit service that is more reliable, runs longer, in more reliable and has more frequency. There is also a lot of support for airport service on the Michigan corridor as well as service for Ann Arbor to Detroit.

Michael Ford also reported that the RTA staff, SEMCOG staff and the FTA are working toward an agreement regarding the required level of environmental analysis. The RTA hopes to hear back from the FTA soon.

#### iv. Fare Coordination Study Update

Michael Ford gave an update on the Fare Coordination Study. There are some short term possibilities that have been identified and are being worked on.

Cornelius Henry reported that the study is at the point of reviewing and describing preferred options. He reported that at the recent PAC meeting, information on the benefits of fare integration as well as short, mid and long-term strategies that can be implemented. Items to consider are convenience, technology that is available and in place and that whatever is developed will benefit current and future riders. The impacts on the providers should also be considered. Mr. Henry stated that the PAC is also developing a draft Memorandum of Understanding. He stated that through research and case study analysis, other agencies similar to the RTA have been reviewed and these agencies have moved to smart card technology and have had to coordinate revenue sharing. The research indicated that policies need to be established early on in the process. He stated that the PAC and the contractor are asking for comments regarding the draft MOU.

Mark Gaffney asked Mr. Henry to discuss the specific items that the consultant presented at the joint PAC/PSCC meeting. Mr. Henry reported that once the study is completed and draft reviewed, a working group could be gathered, made up initially of the providers, to develop any necessary MOU's and fare policy. He also stated that once that is done, support letters need to be gathered to show potential grantor agencies the path that has been chosen.

Elisabeth Gerber asked in terms of a timeline, are there funding opportunities that have application deadlines or programs that would argue having decisions made or having outcomes from the planning process done so that the RTA is well positioned to apply and if so, what is the timeline. Tiffany Gunter reported that the State grant program for Service and New Development Technology can be reviewed for potential funding. The next opportunity to apply for funding would be in March 2016.

Chuck Moss asked if M-1 Rail would work with us on this. Mr. Henry stated that M-1 Rail was asked to participate in the study and it would be a good idea to include them in planning and there is an opportunity to coordinate service. It is also important to make sure that fare systems are compatible so that service can be coordinated.

Alma Smith confirmed that the deadline for comment on the Fare Study Memorandum of Understanding is June 25<sup>th</sup> and that they should be sent to Cornelius Henry.

Mr. Henry also reported that the next step for the Regional Map would be to create a foldout map to be distributed to the public.

- d. Citizens Advisory Committee – Update on activities
  - i. Committee Update

Megan Owens reported that the Citizens Advisory Committee had a robust meeting in April that included a Human Services Plan presentation by DDOT and receiving feedback from the committee. There was also an overview update by Elnora Austell and her team regarding the Transit Planning and BEST projects and listed opportunities for community engagement involvement. The CAC has liaisons from the CAC to all RTA committees. She reported that several members volunteered with the May 12<sup>th</sup> Kick-Off event as well as the individual county events. She reported that the CAC has also been speaking with Michael Ford and Travis Gonyou on how to best coordinate and get community and CAC members involved in the outreach efforts. She also reported that Mr. Ford met with the CAC Executive Committee and noted that Mr. Ford has communicated with decision makers concerning the State Fairgrounds property and has pushed for improved transit connectivity at the fairgrounds. Based on those discussions and the policy statement the CAC developed last year, they have chosen at this time to not spend further time discussing the State Fairgrounds. Ms. Owens also reported that the CAC has several sub-committees working on the challenge of winter maintenance of bus stops and working on providing input to the PAC on the Fare Study.

## 6. New Website and Social Media Update

Travis Gonyou presented the new website and improvements that have been made to it. The new website utilizes the RTA's new branding and color schemes. The focus on redevelopment of the website was to improve functionality and usability. The new website also has a page devoted to the BEST Projects with each project having their own sub-page. Each project page also has a link to its own My Sidewalk page as well as the project overview documents that are available for download.

Mr. Gonyou also reported that the RTA had 144 mentions during the month of May with re-tweets of over 200. That reach equated to 287,000 people. On Facebook, the RTA has gone up 7.1% in likes for the month of May. He reported that some of the things that have been put out on social media are news articles related directly to the RTA; news articles related to transit in general happening around the state or the nation, asking for the public's feedback; and most recently, narratives from people that have been engaged at community events.

Mr. Gonyou reported that for traditional media, the RTA had 51 features during the month of May. This includes print, online and broadcasts from 26 different national, regional and local outlets. This included two editorials and four live broadcasts. He stated that he is working on determining what that reach includes but that one of the local editorials during the month of May had a reach of approximately 700,000 people.

## 7. Procurement

Paul Hillegonds reported that the RFPs for various contracts were sent to the board and feedback was requested. Michael Ford reported that the feedback was incorporated into the Airport RFP prior to further movement.

Mr. Hillegonds stated that Alma Smith raised an issue concerning the issuance of RFPs. He summarized that the current policy does not require the board to approve the issuance or content of RFPs. He stated that the RTA has taken the step of providing RFPs to the board in advance and asking for feedback. He stated that Ms. Smith reviewed the statute and the statute reads in part that “a Board shall make all discretionary decisions concerning the solicitation, award, amendment, cancelation and appeal of Authority contracts.” Mr. Hillegonds stated that the question is if this requires the board to approve RFPs. He stated that the RTA’s attorney needs to be consulted and if he feels that the process should be amended or that it is a gray area, it should be discussed at the next Executive and Policy Committee meeting with possible amend of the policy. Mr. Hillegonds stated that while the current policy does not require it at this time, a formal motion approving the release of the RFPs would be welcomed at this point. Michael Ford stated that it would be and that discussion and possible amendments could take place at the next Executive and Policy Committee meeting.

Mark Gaffney asked Ms. Smith if, given that the RFPs were made available with enough time for review, she was comfortable moving forward with them at this point. Ms. Smith asked if today they would be approving just the Airport RFP or all of them. Mr. Ford stated that proposals had already been received for the Survey RFP and that the Communications and Legislative RFPs had already been released so the only one that needed action is the Airport RFP.

### a. Survey RFP

Michael Ford reported that seven proposals had been received for the Survey RFP and that the names of those who responded will be listed on the website. He also stated that an evaluation team would be assembled and if any board members are interesting in being part of the team to let staff know. He stated that staff would also be working with the chairs of the planning and transit providers committees as well as the CAC and PAC liaisons.

Freman Hendrix asked what the timeline for selection is. Mr. Ford stated that the timeline will be sent along with the proposals would be sent on June 19<sup>th</sup>. Elisabeth Gerber asked what the selection committee would be asked to do. Mr. Ford stated that it would involve the evaluation of the proposals in relation to the selection percentages designated for the evaluation criteria. He stated that it would probably only involve one meeting.

### b. Airport RFP

Mr. Ford reported that the airport RFP is scheduled for release immediately following today's meeting. The purpose of this RFP is to explore possible costs and service plans to provide transit service to the airport from each county within the region.

Mr. Ford stated that this RFP is the product of a fruitful partnership between the RTA and the Wayne County Airport Authority. From draft to now, the WCAA has been involved in the process and it shows a great enthusiasm to move forward and develop what regional transit can look like for our region. We have been happy to work together towards our common goals of advancing southeast Michigan.

We anticipate that the cost of implementing airport service is somewhere between \$5 and \$10 million, however the exact costs will be ascertained through the RFP process. Due to the overall cost of implementing airport service to the entire region, it is possible that an incremental roll out of this service will be required. Staff is working diligently to secure grant funding to support operations. It is yet to be determined how much funding we will have available. We will be weighing ridership potential across the different regions and looking at possible demand to determine how we are able to best phase in the service.

Alma Smith asked if she understood correctly that 35% of the evaluation is excluded by the RFP from public review until the subcommittee meets to review the proposals. She stated that the cost factor is isolated but there could be RFPs in which the cost is so critical to the evaluation that it shouldn't be excluded from public view from the beginning of the process. She asked if the Airport RFP so cost dependent that the cost should not be excluded from public release of information. Mr. Ford stated that it is a valid point and that there are various components. There currently is not enough funding for all of the components so each element should be addressed and cost considerations should be evaluated at the same time as content. Ms. Smith asked if the RFP should be changed to reflect to the vendors that the entire response to the RFP will be released at the deadline. Mr. Ford stated that an adjustment can be made to the RFP to reflect that before the release.

Moved by Tim Soave and supported by Elisabeth Gerber to release the Airport RFP.  
Approved unanimously.

c. Legislative RFP

Michael Ford reported that the Legislative RFP had been released and that it closes on July 8<sup>th</sup>.

d. Communications RFP

Michael Ford reported that the Communications RFP is for help with media relations and ongoing communication strategy. This RFP also closes on July 8<sup>th</sup>.

8. New Business

a. FTA Triennial Certification review process

Michael Ford reported that new policies for FOIA, Limited English Proficiency, Title VI, DBE programs and Drug Free Workplace would be presented to the board within the next month. These policies are necessary for compliance for the Triennial Certification.

b. Transportation Appropriation (from earlier in the meeting)

Paul Hillegonds stated that from his understanding, \$140 million of the \$400 million appropriated will be designated to match Federal aid and go through the regular formula. The rest will not go through the PA51 formula but will go through a formula for cities, counties and MDOT and it is his assumption that it is for roads and not transit.

c. Alma Smith stated that she has a proposed amendment to the Procurement Policy for consideration at the Executive and Policy Committee Meeting.

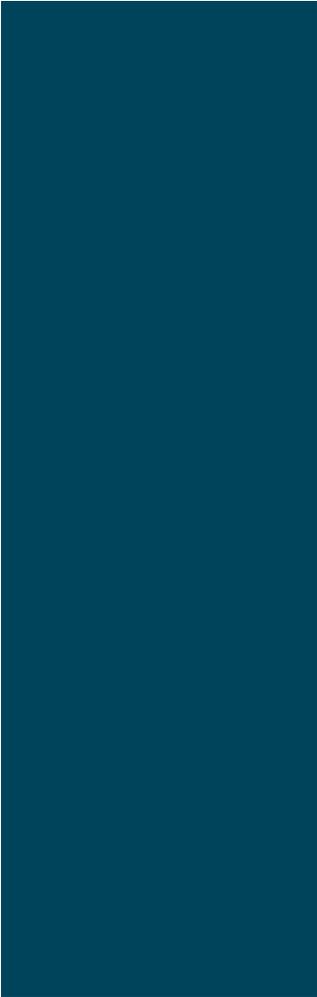
d. Mark Gaffney proposed, given the construction downtown, that the location for the board meetings be moved throughout the region.

e. Chuck Moss reported that there were public listening sessions in the communities during May and that Mr. Ford did an admirable job.

f. Michael Ford reported that the issue of the State Fairgrounds was a consideration of the CAC Executive Committee and a presentation will happen but the committee decided that now is not the appropriate time.

g. Michael Ford acknowledged that Paul Hillegonds was awarded the New Detroit John Rakolta Award for Leadership and Race Relations.

9. Meeting adjourned at 4:13.



**Title VI  
Non Discrimination  
Policy and Procedures  
DRAFT**

July 2015



**RTA**

**REGIONAL  
TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
OF SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN**

**Table of Contents**

I. INTRODUCTION..... 2

II. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT..... 2

III. GOVERNANCE, BOARDS, AND COMMITTEES ..... 3

IV. RTA TITLE VI ASSURANCES ..... 4

V. TITLE VI COMPLIANCE RESPONSIBILITIES ..... 5

VI. TITLE VI SELF MONITORING AND REVIEW PROCESS..... 5

VII. PROGRAM GROUPS ..... 6

VIII. GENERAL PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION..... 6

    A. Title VI Complaint Procedures ..... 6

    B.. Public Dissemination..... 8

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ..... 8

X. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ..... 9

XII. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION ..... 10

**APPENDICES:**

Appendix A: Title VI Complaint Form

## I. INTRODUCTION

A new Regional Transit Authority (the “RTA”) for Southeast Michigan was created through state legislation on December 19, 2012 (MI P.A. 387, 2012). The RTA service area is comprised of the counties of Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne. It is governed by a ten member board with two representatives from each of the participating counties, one representative from the City of Detroit, and one non-voting member appointed by the governor who serves as the chair. The purpose of the RTA is to coordinate the activities of the existing transit agencies within its jurisdiction and secure funding to improve and enhance public transportation within the four county area and the city of Detroit.

## II. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

The Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA) assures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or sex, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (P.L. 100.259), be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity. The RTA further assures every effort will be made to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its programs and activities, whether those programs and activities are federally funded or not. Furthermore, the RTA will not exclude persons based on age, religion, disability, or sexual orientation. More specifically, the RTA assures that efforts will be made to prevent discrimination through the impacts of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low income populations. Additionally, the RTA will take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). In the event the RTA distributes federal-aid funds to another governmental entity, the RTA will include Title VI language in all written agreements and will monitor for compliance. The RTA’s Title VI Officer is responsible for initiating and monitoring Title VI activities, preparing required reports, and other RTA responsibilities as required by 23 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) 200 and 49 Code of Federal Regulation 21. Complaints of discrimination under Title VI will be promptly addressed by the RTA Title VI Officer.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael G. Ford  
Chief Executive Officer

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Hillegonds  
Chairman of the Board of Directors

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **III. GOVERNANCE, BOARDS, AND COMMITTEES**

#### **RTA Officers**

The RTA is governed by a ten member board with two representatives from each of the participating counties, one representative from the City of Detroit, and one non-voting member appointed by the governor who serves as the chair.

#### **RTA Committees**

The RTA committees include the Executive and Policy Committee, Finance and Budget Committee, and Planning and Service Coordination Committee. The purpose of these committees is to set the direction of the RTA through policy making, budget considerations, and coordination of existing transit services.

Additionally, the RTA has developed advisory committees to assist in the decision making and development of the organization. The Public Transportation Provider's Advisory Council consists of each transit provider that falls under the jurisdiction of the RTA. Their purpose is to discuss opportunities for coordination and evaluate the impacts of decisions being made by the RTA on their respective organizations,

The Citizens Advisory Committee was formed to ensure that the public is represented across the jurisdiction of the RTA and that advocates for ADA, elderly, faith-based, business, civic leadership and transit riders would have the opportunity to provide input to the RTA as a decision-making body.

## IV. RTA TITLE VI ASSURANCES

Pursuant to the requirements of Section 22(a) of the Federal Highway Act of 1968, RTA, desiring to avail itself to the benefits of Chapter 1, Title 23, United States Code, and as a condition to obtaining the approval of the State of Michigan for all programs for projects as provided for in Title 23, United States Code, Section 105(a), hereby gives its assurance that employment in connection with all proposed projects approved, will be provided without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, or national origin.

More specifically, and without limiting the above general assurance, the RTA, gives the following specific assurances:

1. The RTA will establish an equal opportunity program in furtherance of the above general assurance, which shall include a system to ascertain whether contractors and sub-contractors are complying with their equal employment opportunity contract obligations and the degree to which such compliance is producing substantial progress on the various project sites in terms of minority group employment.
2. The RTA's transportation program shall include effective procedures to assure that discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, disability, sex, age, or national origin will not be permitted on any project and if discrimination exists at the time this assurance is made it will be corrected promptly.
3. The RTA will, on its own initiative, take affirmative action, including the imposition of contract sanctions and the initiation of appropriate legal proceedings under any applicable state or federal law to achieve equal employment opportunity on federal-aid highway projects and will actively cooperate with the Federal Highway Administration in all investigations and enforcement actions undertaken by the Federal Highway Administration.
4. The RTA hereby agrees that its own employment policies and practices with regard to the RTA employees, any part of whose compensation is reimbursed from Federal funds, will be without regard to race, color, religion, disability, sex, age, or national origin.
5. The RTA shall include the advertised specifications notification of the specific equal employment opportunity responsibilities of the successful bidder as those responsibilities are currently defined and required by the Federal Highway Administration. See Appendix B for standard contracting language concerning non-discrimination.

---

Michael G. Ford  
Chief Executive Officer

## V. TITLE VI COMPLIANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Title VI Officer is responsible for ensuring implementation of the Title VI plan. The Officer will be responsible for the overall management of the day-to-day administration of the Title VI Plan. The current information for this individual is as follows:

Tiffany J. Gunter, Title VI Officer  
Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan  
1001 Woodward Avenue, Suite 1400  
Detroit, MI 48226  
Phone: (313) 402-1020  
Email: [tgunter@rtamichigan.org](mailto:tgunter@rtamichigan.org)

The Title VI Officer is responsible for Title VI compliance and is assigned the responsibility for implementing, monitoring, and ensuring RTA's compliance with the Title VI regulations. The Title VI responsibilities are as follows:

1. Process Title VI complaints received by RTA. Reference Complaint Procedures for additional information regarding complaints processing.
2. Review internal policies and practices and where applicable, incorporate procedures to ensure compliance with Title VI.
3. Conduct periodic training programs on Title VI for staff.
4. Develop Title VI information for dissemination to the general public and entities to which RTA distributes federal aid funds.
5. Identify, investigate, and eliminate discrimination when found to exist.

### *Responsibilities of Other Staff Members*

In addition to the Title VI Officer, other staff members share responsibility for day-to-day administration of the Title VI program, including implementation of the plan and the Title VI compliance, program monitoring, reporting, and education within an applicable group, as described in the Program Groups section of this document.

## VI. TITLE VI SELF MONITORING AND REVIEW PROCESS

RTA's Title VI plan implementation relies on a preventive team approach to Title VI compliance, meaning that staff are aware of the Title VI protections and are working proactively to ensure organizational compliance. RTA's CEO reviews and monitors the maintenance of data showing impacts of RTA programs and activities on protected groups; monitors and/or oversees the implementation of established decision-making criteria; monitors and annually reviews minority representation; oversees public involvement; and oversees data collection.

## VII. PROGRAM GROUPS GENERAL PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

### A. Staffing

Staffing for the RTA will be minimal in the first two to three years. Program administration will be the responsibility of all staff, which will include the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating/Compliance Officer, Executive Assistant, Community Outreach Manager and Manager of Planning and Financial Analysis.

### B. Title VI Complaint Procedures

The following pertains to Title VI complaints regarding the federally funded programs of the RTA. For Title VI complaints against other agencies, or if a person believes they have suffered housing or employment discrimination, please contact the appropriate agency. Title VI, 42 U.S.C. §2000d et seq., was enacted as part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. At the heart of the regulation is the statement that: No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. RTA has in place a Title VI Complaint Procedure, which outlines a process for local disposition of Title VI complaints and is consistent with guidelines found in Chapter VII of the Federal Transit Administration Circular 4702.1A, dated May 13, 2007. If a person believes that RTA's federally funded programs have violated their civil rights on the basis of race, color, or national origin they may file a written complaint by following the procedure outlined below:

#### 1. *Submission of Complaint.*

Any person who feels that he or she, individually or as a member of any class of persons, on the basis of race, color, or national origin has been excluded from or denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination caused by RTA, may file a written complaint with RTA's Chief Executive Officer. A sample complaint form is available in hard copy that will be made available by the RTA Office Manager and is attached as Appendix A. Such complaints must be filed within 180 calendar days after the date the discrimination occurred. If a person could not reasonably be expected to know that the act was discriminatory within the 180 day period, they have 60 days after becoming aware to file a complaint. Note: Upon request, assistance in the preparation of any necessary written material will be provided to a person or persons who are unable to read or write. The complaint procedures will be posted on the RTA website: [www.rtamichigan.org](http://www.rtamichigan.org).

Signed complaints should be mailed to:  
The Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan  
Chief Executive Officer  
1001 Woodward Avenue, Suite 1400  
Detroit, MI 48226

## *2. Referral to Review Staff.*

Upon receipt of the complaint, RTA's Chief Executive Officer shall appoint one or more staff, as appropriate, to evaluate and investigate the complaint, in consultation with RTA legal counsel. If necessary, the Complainant shall meet with the staff to further explain his or her complaint. The staff shall complete their review no later than 45 calendar days after the receipt of the complaint. If more time is required, the Chief Executive Officer shall notify the Complainant of the estimated timeframe for completing the review. Upon completion of the review, staff shall make a recommendation regarding the merit of the complaint and whether remedial actions are available to provide redress. If the Chief Executive Officer concurs, he or she shall issue the written response to the Complainant. Additionally, the Executive and Policy Committee may recommend improvements to the processes relative to Title VI, as appropriate to the Board of Directors.

Note: If a Title VI complaint is received on a Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) related contract against RTA, MDOT will be responsible for conducting the investigation of the complaint. Upon receipt of a complaint filed against RTA, the complaint and any pertinent information will be immediately forwarded to the MDOT, Office of Civil Rights Programs.

## *3. Request for Reconsideration.*

If the Complainant disagrees with the Chief Executive Officer's response, he or she may request reconsideration by submitting the request, in writing, to RTA's Chief Executive Officer within 10 calendar days after receipt of the response. The request for reconsideration shall be sufficiently detailed to contain any items the Complainant feels were not fully understood by RTA's Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer will notify the Complainant of his or her decision either to accept or reject the request for reconsideration within 10 calendar days.

## *4. Appeal.*

If the request for reconsideration is denied, the Complainant may appeal RTA's Chief Executive Officer's response by submitting a written appeal to the RTA Board Chairperson no later than 10 calendar days after receipt of RTA's Chief Executive Officer's written decision rejecting reconsideration.

## *5. Submission of Complaint to the State of Michigan Department of Transportation.*

If the Complainant is dissatisfied with the resolution of the complaint, he or she may also submit a written complaint within 60 days after the alleged date of discrimination to the State of Michigan for further investigation.

Michigan Department of Transportation  
Office of Civil Rights

Van Wagoner Building  
425 W. Ottawa Street  
P.O. Box 30050  
Lansing, MI 48909

A copy of the complaint form can be found in Appendix A.

### C. Training Program

The RTA strives to further the goal of ongoing professional development; management assists in developing the professional skills of staff through various methods. The use of any of these methods is tied to the RTA's mission to ensure fiscal accountability, and include: 1) Cross-departmental team participation; 2) In-house and online training, Webinars, seminars, and conferences; 3) The RTA will assist staff in maintaining and/or advancing their professional skills for work-related courses; and 4) Enhanced work assignments.

### D. Public Dissemination

A copy of the Title VI plan will be published on the RTA Web site ([www.rtamichigan.org](http://www.rtamichigan.org)) for persons with Internet access to download and will be available upon request by calling (313) 402-1020. The plan will be translated for LEP persons upon request. All staff members and RTA Officers will receive a copy of the plan.

## VIII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The RTA is strongly committed to providing information to citizens regarding its Regional Master Transit planning efforts, corridor studies, and other quality of life public transportation issues that impact the transit region. The RTA also encourage citizens to participate in plan development and implementation. The RTA strives to ensure that adequate information is available for interested parties who want to evaluate and have an impact on RTA projects. The RTA will provide opportunities for meaningful public engagement and make presentations to local governments and citizen's groups to ensure that citizen views are heard on all projects

The RTA's public involvement activities revolve around five goals:

- **Educate** to raise awareness of the planning process, to communicate how and when to get involved, and to illustrate good government practices.
- **Encourage** specific individual actions to help carry out planning work.
- **Solicit** input/feedback from the public to influence planning work.
- **Continue** to improve through ongoing evaluation.
- **Establish a** trusted network of community and civic leaders and nurture an on-going relationship as the RTA continues to grow and enhance transit infrastructure throughout the region.

Taken together, these activities provide members of the public with complete information, timely notice of meetings, full access to key decisions, and support for early and continuing involvement in every aspect of the planning and decision making process at the RTA. The RTA's *Public Participation Plan* details the specific ways in which the RTA works to achieve these public involvement goals.

## **IX. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

A critical step in the development of the Regional Master Transit Plan is identifying the location of the defined EJ populations. Minority populations are defined in the USDOT order as persons who are African-American, Asian-American, Native American, or of Hispanic descent. Low-income means persons whose household income is at or below the Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines. Based on regional totals developed by SEMCOG, minority persons make up 27 percent of the region's total population. In addition, 10 percent of households in the region are living at or below the poverty level.

For both minority populations and low-income households, 2010 U.S. Census block groups where the percentage population of either group meets or exceeds the regional average are identified as EJ block groups. SEMCOG indicates that regionwide, 12 percent of total land area is home to a significant EJ population.

Because of the importance of public involvement, RTA will endeavor to meet with representatives from various EJ populations and encourage involvement in the planning process. RTA has an active general media strategy for using television, radio, cable television, and editorial boards to disseminate important messages. Specific actions taken by RTA to reach out to EJ populations include placing advertisements in various news publications reaching African-American, Asian-American, Native American, and Hispanic persons and low-income residents and focusing efforts to meet with and present information to these various groups. Information is also disseminated through transit providers, local block clubs, libraries, and various grass roots organizations.

## **X. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

RTA will complete the requirement that all staff be trained and understand the significance of Title VI as it relates to the organization and their daily responsibilities. The Title VI web page will function as a resource for individuals seeking information. Staff will translate the Title VI brochure and complaint form in Spanish and Arabic (for publication on the web site) and develop a stand-alone LEP plan.

### Regional Transit Authority for Southeast Michigan Title VI Complaint Form

The purpose of this form is to assist you in filing a complaint with the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA). You are not required to use this form; a letter containing the same information will be sufficient. It is important, however, to include all information, whether or not the form is used.

Instructions: If you would like to submit a Title VI complaint to RTA, please fill out the form below and submit it via email to: [tgunter@rtamichigan.org](mailto:tgunter@rtamichigan.org) or mail it to:

Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan  
 Attn: Tiffany J. Gunter, Title VI Officer  
 1001 Woodward Avenue, Suite 1400  
 Detroit, MI 48226

For questions, please contact Ms. Gunter at (313) 402-1020.

For a copy of the Title VI Policy and Procedures document, please contact Ms. Virginia Lickliter at (313) 402-1020.

Complainant Information				
Name:	Telephone:	Email:		
Street Address:	City:	State:	Zip:	
Mailing Address:	City:	State:	Zip:	
Respondent Information				
Name:	Telephone:			
Street Address:	City:	State:	Zip:	
Mailing Address:	City:	State:	Zip:	
Alleged Discriminatory Incident				
<b>Basis for Discrimination:</b> <i>Check all that apply.</i>				
<input type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupation			
<input type="checkbox"/> Creed	<input type="checkbox"/> Marital Status			
<input type="checkbox"/> Color	<input type="checkbox"/> Political Opinion			
<input type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Appearance			
<input type="checkbox"/> Origin	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Handicap			
<input type="checkbox"/> Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Handicap			
Give the name, address and telephone number of any other agency you contacted about this complaint:			Have you filed a complaint with the RTA previously? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No  Date of Previous complaint: _____	
How did you hear about the RTA?				

Date of Incident:	Time of Incident:
-------------------	-------------------

Did anyone witness the events you described above?  Yes  No Please list the name, address and telephone number (if possible) of this person(s):

**Describe what happened:** Please explain as briefly and clearly as possible what happened and how you believe you were discriminated against. Indicate who was involved. Be sure to include how you feel other persons were treated differently than you. Also, attach any written material pertaining to your complaint.

DRAFT

What specifically would you like the RTA to do concerning your complaint?

What other steps have you taken to try to resolve this complaint? What resulted from your attempts to resolve this complaint?

Are you represented by an attorney with regard to anything related to this matter? If so, please provide contact information.

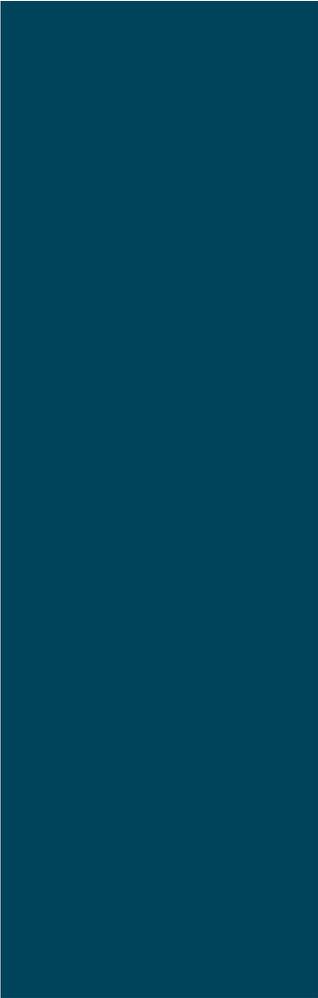
**Please sign below. You may attach any written materials or other information you think is relevant to your complaint. We cannot accept your complaint unless it's been signed.**

Parties to complaints may voluntarily resolve their differences without an extensive investigation or expenditure of resources by participating in a mediation process. Are you interested in participating in such a process?  Yes  No

I do hereby attest that I have submitted the foregoing complaint and to the best of my knowledge, it is true and correct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Complainant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



Limited English Proficiency Plan  
July 2015  
**DRAFT**



**RTA**

**REGIONAL  
TRANSIT AUTHORITY**  
OF SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN



**REGIONAL  
TRANSIT AUTHORITY**  
OF SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

**What is the RTA?**

The RTA was created by the Michigan Legislature through Public Act No. 387 of 2012. A 10-member board that is appointed for three-year terms by the county executives of Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties, the chair of the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners, the Mayor of Detroit, and the Governor of Michigan governs it. The Governor's appointee serves as chair, without a vote.

The purpose of the RTA is to plan for and coordinate public transportation in the four-county region, including the City of Detroit, and to deliver rapid transit in a region where none exists. It is the entity through which transit providers must apply for state and federal funds, and through which those funds are allocated to providers. The RTA is also responsible for developing a Regional Master Transit Plan to guide present and future service and is empowered to put funding questions on the ballot for public vote.

# Limited English Proficiency Plan

July 2015

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## Overview

Individuals who do not speak English well and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English are entitled to language assistance under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The RTA, as the recipient of federal funding, will ensure these Limited English Proficient individuals have access to programs and services, as identified in this plan.

Preparation of this document may be financed in part through grants from and in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Transportation and Federal Transit Administration.

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Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan  
1001 Woodward Avenue, Suite 1400  
Detroit, MI 48226  
313-402-1020  
[www.rtamichigan.org](http://www.rtamichigan.org) • [info@rtasoutheastmichigan.org](mailto:info@rtasoutheastmichigan.org)

# Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Elements of an Effective LEP Policy	2
Methodology for Assessing Needs and Reasonable Steps for an Effective LEP Policy	2
The Four-Factor Analysis	3
Safe Harbor Stipulation	5
Providing Notice to LEP Persons	6
Options and Proposed Actions	7
LEP Complaint Procedures	9
Monitoring and Updating the LEP Plan	9
RTA Staff Training	9
LEP Plan Access	9

# Introduction

On August 11, 2000, President William J. Clinton signed an executive order, Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Service for Persons with Limited English Proficiency<sup>1</sup>, to clarify Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It had as its purpose, to ensure accessibility to programs and services to otherwise eligible persons who are not proficient in the English language.

This executive order stated that individuals who do not speak English well and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English are entitled to language assistance under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with respect to a particular type of service, benefit, or encounter<sup>2</sup>. These individuals are referred to as being limited in their ability to speak, read, write, or understand English, hence the designation, “LEP,” or Limited English Proficient. The Executive Order states that:

“Each federal agency shall prepare a plan to improve access to its federally conducted programs and activities by eligible LEP persons. Each plan shall be consistent with the standards set forth in the LEP Guidance, and shall include the steps the agency will take to ensure that eligible LEP persons can meaningfully access the agency’s programs and activities.”

Not only do all agencies have to develop LEP plans as a condition of receiving federal financial assistance, recipients have to comply with Title VI and LEP guidelines of the federal agency from which funds are provided as well.

Federal financial assistance includes grants, training, use of equipment, donations of surplus property, and other assistance. Recipients of federal funds range from state and local agencies, to nonprofits and organizations. Title VI covers a recipient’s entire program or activity. This means all parts of a recipient’s operations are covered, even if only one part of a recipient’s organization receives the federal assistance. Simply put, any organization that receives federal financial assistance is required to follow this Executive Order.

RTA is the designated recipient of Federal Transit Administration funds under Michigan Public Act 387 of 2012, and intends to apply for competitive Federal Transit Administration grants during the BEST transit planning process.

The US Department of Transportation published *Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients’ Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient Person* in the December 14, 2005 Federal Register.<sup>3</sup>

The guidance policy implies that RTA is an organization that must follow this guidance.

This guidance applies to all DOT funding recipients, including state departments of transportation, state motor vehicle administrations, airport operators, metropolitan planning organizations, and regional, state, and local transit operators, among many others. Coverage extends to a recipient’s entire program or activity, i.e., to all parts of a recipient’s operations. This is true even if only one part of the recipient receives the Federal assistance. For example, if DOT provides assistance to a state department of

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<sup>1</sup> The executive order verbatim can be found online at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/Pubs/eolep.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients’ Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons. Federal Register: December 14, 2005 (Volume 70, Number 239)

<sup>3</sup> The DOT has also posted an abbreviated version of this guidance on their website at <http://www.dotcr.ost.dot.gov/asp/lep.asp>.

transportation to rehabilitate a particular highway on the National Highway System, all of the operations of the entire state department of transportation – not just the particular highway program or project – are covered by the DOT guidance.

## Elements of an Effective LEP Policy

The U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, has developed a set of elements that may be helpful in designing an LEP policy or plan. These elements include:

1. Identifying LEP persons who need language assistance
2. Identifying ways in which language assistance will be provided
3. Training staff
4. Providing notice to LEP persons
5. The recommended method of evaluating accessibility to services, programs, and decision-making is the Four-Factor Analysis identified by the U.S. DOT.

These recommended elements have been incorporated into this plan.

## Methodology for Assessing Needs and Reasonable Steps for an Effective LEP Policy

The DOT guidance outlines four factors recipients should apply to the various kinds of contacts they have with the public to assess language needs and decide what reasonable steps they should take to ensure meaningful access for LEP persons:

1. Number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by a program, activity, or service of the recipient or grantee.
2. Frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program.
3. Nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the recipient to the LEP community.
4. Resources available to RTA and overall cost.

The greater the number or proportion of eligible LEP persons, the greater the frequency with which they have contact with a program, activity, or service; and the greater the importance of that program, activity, or service, the more likely enhanced language services will be needed. The intent of DOT's guidance is to suggest a balance that ensures meaningful access by LEP persons to critical services while not imposing undue burdens on small organizations and local governments.

Smaller recipients with more limited budgets are typically not expected to provide the same level of language service as larger recipients with larger budgets.

The DOT guidance is modeled after the Department of Justice's guidance and requires recipients and sub-recipients to take steps to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities to LEP persons. More information for recipients and sub-recipients can be found at <http://www.lep.gov>.

# The Four-Factor Analysis

This plan uses the recommended four-factor analysis of an individualized assessment considering the four factors outlined below. Each of the following factors is examined to determine the level and extent of language assistance measures required to sufficiently ensure meaningful access to RTA services and activities. These activities include those that may affect LEP individuals' quality of life or ability to participate in the decision-making process concerning planning, services, and programs. Recommendations are then based on the results of the analysis.

## Factor 1: Proportion, Numbers and Distribution of LEP Persons

RTA performed an analysis to determine the most common languages spoken by people in the four-county planning area of Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties. The results can be found in Table 1. Three languages were identified that are spoken by greater than one percent of the four-county area population – English, Spanish, and Arabic—with a notable proportion of Macomb County residents speaking Syriac languages.

Based on this analysis, RTA determined that it is likely that staff will encounter individuals that speak English, Spanish, and/or Arabic, with some chance of encountering Syriac language-speaking persons in Macomb County. It is less likely that staff will encounter individuals that speak other languages listed in Table 2.

**Table 1: Languages Spoken at Home by 1% or more of the RTA Planning Area Population, 2013**

LANGUAGE	PLANNING AREA TOTAL		DETROIT	CITY	MACOMB COUNTY		OAKLAND COUNTY		WASHTENAW COUNTY		WAYNE COUNTY (LESS DETROIT)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
English	3,673,063	87.13%	604,272	90.34%	730,357	85.50%	1,071,721	87.06%	311,505	87.80%	955,208	86.32%
Spanish	114,445	2.71%	42,411	6.34%	13,215	1.55%	24,808	2.02%	8,992	2.53%	25,019	2.26%
Arabic	111,394	2.64%	6,770	1.01%	19,646	2.30%	18,977	1.54%	4,179	1.18%	61,822	5.59%
Syriac	30,787	*	0	*	20,087	2.35%	10,232	*	84	*	384	*
TOTAL 5 years and older	4,215,411		668,889		854,204		1,230,945		354,802		1,106,571	

\*denotes less than 1% of population 5 or older speaks language

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 1-year PUMS Data File

**Table 2: All Languages Spoken in RTA Planning Area, 2013**

Language	#	%	Language	#	%
<b>English</b>	<b>3,673,063</b>	<b>87.13%</b>	Persian	1,183	0.03%
<b>Spanish</b>	<b>114,445</b>	<b>2.71%</b>	Serbian	1,154	0.03%
<b>Arabic</b>	<b>111,394</b>	<b>2.64%</b>	Ilocano	1,015	0.02%
<b>Syriac</b>	<b>30,787</b>	<b>0.73%</b>	India N.E.C.	959	0.02%
Chinese	22,414	0.53%	French Creole	897	0.02%
Albanian	19,506	0.46%	Amharic	833	0.02%
Polish	16,075	0.38%	Lithuanian	828	0.02%
German	15,372	0.36%	Swedish	751	0.02%
Japanese	14,391	0.34%	Thai	732	0.02%
Italian	13,050	0.31%	Irish Gaelic	670	0.02%
Bengali	12,583	0.30%	Hawaiian	650	0.02%
Hindi	11,887	0.28%	Dutch	540	0.01%
Korean	11,389	0.27%	Slovak	529	0.01%
French	11,067	0.26%	Turkish	529	0.01%
Tagalog	10,746	0.25%	Marathi	526	0.01%
Gujarati	9,708	0.23%	Yiddish	490	0.01%
Telugu	9,496	0.23%	Patois	460	0.01%
Russian	8,359	0.20%	Bulgarian	450	0.01%
Urdu	8,327	0.20%	Bantu	424	0.01%
Romanian	7,351	0.17%	Czech	396	0.01%
Vietnamese	6,915	0.16%	Finnish	366	0.01%
Tamil	6,655	0.16%	Kurdish	359	0.01%
Serbo-Croatian	6,617	0.16%	Mande	333	0.01%
Malayalam	6,249	0.15%	Sindhi	307	0.01%
Macedonian	5,285	0.13%	Mon-Khmer, Cambodian	299	0.01%
Ukrainian	4,453	0.11%	Bisayan	295	0.01%
Panjabi	4,453	0.11%	Formosan	286	0.01%
Mandarin	4,204	0.10%	Pashto	244	0.01%
Greek	3,973	0.09%	Norwegian	208	0.00%
Kru, Ibo, Yoruba	3,449	0.08%	Nepali	183	0.00%
Hmong	3,031	0.07%	Danish	173	0.00%
Hebrew	2,104	0.05%	Latvian	112	0.00%
Portuguese	1,699	0.04%	African	106	0.00%
Kannada	1,669	0.04%	Ojibwa	105	0.00%
Cantonese	1,625	0.04%	Other languages	104	0.00%
Armenian	1,334	0.03%	Croatian	101	0.00%
Hungarian	1,253	0.03%	Pennsylvania Dutch	95	0.00%
Swahili	1,251	0.03%	Jamaican Creole	90	0.00%
			<b>Total population 5 years and older</b>	<b>4,215,411</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013 1-year PUMS Data File

## Factor 2: Frequency of Contact with LEP Individuals

RTA informally surveyed its employees, SEMCOG Title VI coordinators, and RTA-affiliated transit providers (DDOT, SMART, AAATA, and DTC) on the nature and frequency of their contact with LEP persons while performing daily job functions, and anticipates that further interaction with LEP persons is somewhat likely. The RTA office is publicly accessible, and numerous public engagement events are part of the public transit planning processes. Programs, services, and activities that have potential impact for LEP persons include, but are not limited to:

- Public involvement and public engagement meetings/hearings for transit projects affecting LEP communities or individuals (Regional Master Transit Plan, Woodward, Gratiot, and Michigan Avenue Corridor studies);
- Federal funding sub-recipients (transit providers);
- Internet access: Websites must be accessible to LEP persons;
- Phone communications: notices/greetings in languages other than English.

## Factor 3: Nature and Importance of the Program, Activity, or Service to LEP

The RTA is responsible for completing a Regional Master Transit Plan, planning and coordinating public transportation in the four-county region, including the City of Detroit, and delivering rapid transit service along key regional corridors. The nature of the RTA's planning activities is very important to LEP communities. Given the number of LEP individuals in the region, we will ensure reasonable accessibility to all of our programs, services, and activities consistent with DOT Guidance.

## Factor 4: Resources Available to RTA and Overall Cost

U.S. Department of Transportation Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients' Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons published in the Federal Register: December 14, 2005 (Volume 70, Number 239) states:

*“A recipient’s level of resources and the costs imposed may have an impact on the nature of the steps it should take in providing meaningful access for LEP persons. Smaller recipients with more limited budgets are not expected to provide the same level of language services as larger recipients with larger budgets. In addition, “reasonable steps” may cease to be reasonable where the costs imposed substantially exceed the benefits. Recipients should carefully explore the most cost-effective means of delivering competent and accurate language services before limiting services due to resource concerns.”*

Based on this guidance, RTA has reviewed its resources and deemed that, upon request, we will translate vital documents into the language requested to ensure accessibility. Our Title VI policy, LEP policy, and complaint forms will be available in English, Spanish, and Arabic.

RTA-funded planning activities have funds dedicated for interpreter services at public meetings and translation of documents. Contractor and sub-contractor activities are also covered under these resources. The RTA will provide translation and interpreter services if given sufficient notice.

## Safe Harbor Stipulation

Federal law provides a “Safe Harbor” situation so that recipients can ensure with greater certainty that they comply with their obligation to provide written translations in languages other than English. A “Safe

Harbor” means that if a recipient provides written translation in certain circumstances, such action will be considered strong evidence of compliance with the recipient’s written-translation obligations under Title VI. RTA defines an interpreter as “a person who translates spoken language orally,” as opposed to a translator, who translates written language or who transfers the meaning of written text from one language into another. The person who translates orally is not a translator, but an interpreter. RTA will, upon request, make an interpreter available, in circumstances where written translations are not required.

Failure to provide written translations under the circumstances does not mean there is non-compliance, but rather provides a guide for recipients that would like greater certainty of compliance than can be provided by a fact-intensive, four-factor analysis. For example, even if a Safe Harbor is not used, if written translation of a certain document(s) would be so burdensome as to defeat the legitimate objectives of its program, it is not necessary. Other ways of providing meaningful access, such as effective oral interpretation of certain vital documents, might be acceptable under such circumstances.

Strong evidence of compliance with the recipient’s written translation obligations under “Safe Harbor” includes providing written translations of vital documents for each eligible LEP language group that constitutes five percent or 1,000, whichever is less, of the population of persons eligible to be served or likely to be affected or encountered. Translation of other documents, if needed, can be provided orally.

This “Safe Harbor” provision applies to the translation of written documents only. It does not affect the requirement to provide meaningful access to LEP individuals through competent oral interpreters where oral language services are needed and reasonable.

## Providing Notice to LEP Persons

U.S. DOT LEP guidance says:

Once an agency has decided, based on the four factors, that it will provide language service, it is important that the recipient notify LEP persons of services available free of charge. Recipients should provide this notice in languages LEP persons would understand.

The guidance provides several examples of notification including:

1. Signage in languages that an LEP individual would understand when free language assistance is available with advance notice.
2. Stating in outreach documents that free language services are available from the agency.
3. Working with community-based organizations and other stakeholders to inform LEP individuals of the recipient’s services, including the availability of language assistance services.

Statements in languages that an LEP individual would understand will be placed in public information and public notices informing LEP individuals that those requiring language assistance and/or special accommodations will be provided the requested service free of charge, with reasonable advance notice to the RTA.

# Options and Proposed Actions

## Options

Federal fund recipients have two (2) main ways to provide language services: oral interpretation either in person or via telephone interpretation service, and written translation. The correct mix should be based on what is both necessary and reasonable in light of the four-factor analysis<sup>4</sup>.

RTA defines an interpreter as “a person who translates spoken language orally,” as opposed to a translator, who translates written language or who transfers the meaning of written text from one language into another. The person who translates orally is not a translator, but an interpreter<sup>5</sup>.

Considering the size of the RTA planning area, the concentration of LEP individuals in the service area, and RTA’s financial resources, it is necessary to limit language aid to the most basic and cost-effective services. Other than the previously mentioned vital documents, if there are additional language assistance measures required for LEP individuals, RTA shall proceed with interpretation options to meet all requests for those language groups to ensure equal access, while also complying with LEP regulations.

## Proposed Actions

- Notify the public that interpreter services are available upon request, with seven-day advance notice.
- With advance notice of seven calendar days, RTA will provide interpreter services at public meetings, including language translation and signage for the hearing impaired.
- RTA will utilize the Translators Resource List as provided by MDOT for translation services and verbal interpretation.
- The Census Bureau “I-speak” Language Identification Card will be distributed to all employees that may potentially encounter LEP individuals.
- Once the LEP individual’s language has been identified, an agency from the Translators Resource List will be contacted to provide interpretation services.
- RTA’s Title VI webpage will be published in English, Spanish, and Arabic.
- Publications of RTA’s Title VI Complaint Form and Title VI Plan will be made available on RTA’s website in English, Spanish, and Arabic, as well as other languages upon request.
- Translation of other vital RTA documents will be made available upon request.
- In the event that an RTA employee encounters a LEP individual, they will follow the procedure listed below:

### Office Encounter

1. Provide an I-speak language identification card to determine the language spoken of the LEP individual.
2. Once the foreign language is determined, provide information to Title VI coordinator who will contact an interpreter from MDOT’s Translators Resource List.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.dotcr.ost.dot.gov/asp/lep/asp>

<sup>5</sup> Department of Justice Final LEP Guidelines, Federal Register June 18, 2002-Vol. 67-Number 117.

3. If the need is for a document to be translated, the Title VI coordinator will have the document translated and provided to the requestor as soon as possible.

**In Writing**

1. Once a letter has been received it will be immediately forwarded to the Title VI Coordinator.
2. The Title VI Coordinator will contact a translator from the MDOT's Translators Resource List to determine the specifics of the letter request information.
3. The Title VI Coordinator will work with the selected agency to provide the requested service to the individual in a timely manner.

**Over the Phone**

1. If someone calls into RTA's office speaking another language, every attempt will be made to keep that individual on the line until an interpreter can be conferenced into the line and, if possible, determine the language spoken of the caller.
2. Once the language spoken by the caller has been identified, RTA will proceed with providing the requested assistance to the LEP individual.

# LEP Complaint Procedures

Complaints of discrimination involving LEP, Title VI, and related statutes will be investigated using the Title VI complaint procedures and form described in the Title VI Plan.

## Monitoring and Updating the LEP Plan

This plan is subject to revision based on the changes in demographics as reported by the Census and any Environmental Justice (EJ) analysis done by the RTA or SEMCOG. It is viewed as a work in progress and will be updated as needed, but at a minimum every four years. RTA will also use self-reported information from public meeting sign-in sheets during LEP Plan updates. The LEP will be examined and updated based on the following:

- How the needs of LEP persons have been addressed
- Whether local language assistance programs have been effective and sufficient to meet the needs of LEP persons
- Whether RTA's financial resources are sufficient to fund language assistance resources
- Whether complaints have been received concerning the agency's failure to meet the needs of LEP individuals.

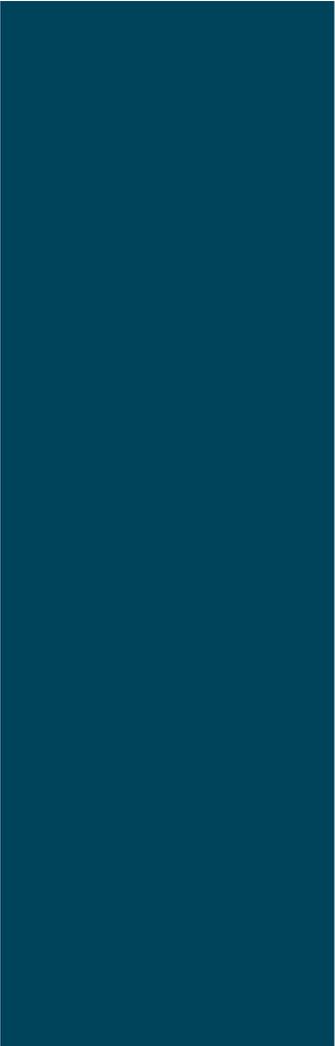
## RTA Staff Training

RTA staff will receive training on the requirements for providing meaningful access to services for LEP persons. All RTA employees will be trained or made aware of the Title VI and LEP policies and complaint procedures through an annual staff training. Key staff with the higher potential to interact with LEP persons will receive in-depth training on their roles and responsibilities related to LEP persons.

## LEP Plan Access

A copy of the LEP plan document can be requested at RTA's main office during normal business hours and RTA will make the plan available on the website at [www.rtamichigan.org](http://www.rtamichigan.org). Any person or agency may also request a copy by contacting:

Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan  
1001 Woodward Avenue, Suite 1400  
Detroit, MI 48226  
313-402-1020  
[www.rtamichigan.org](http://www.rtamichigan.org) • [info@rtasoutheastmichigan.org](mailto:info@rtasoutheastmichigan.org)



**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
ACT PROCEDURES &  
GUIDELINES**

July 16, 2015

**DRAFT**



**RTA**

**REGIONAL  
TRANSIT AUTHORITY**  
OF SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

# REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY FOR SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN (RTA)

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT PROCEDURES & GUIDELINES

### Introduction

The RTA's policy with respect to FOIA requests is to comply with State law in all respects and to respond to FOIA requests in a consistent, fair, and even-handed manner.

The RTA acknowledges that it has a legal obligation to disclose all nonexempt public records in its possession pursuant to a FOIA request. The RTA acknowledges that sometimes it is necessary to invoke the exemptions identified under FOIA in order to ensure the effective operation of government and to protect the privacy of individuals.

The RTA will protect the public's interest in disclosure, while balancing the requirement to withhold or redact portions of certain records. The RTA's policy is to disclose public records consistent with and in compliance with State law.

### Section 1: General Policies

The RTA, acting pursuant to MCL 15.236 designates its Chief Operating Officer as the FOIA Coordinator. He or she is authorized designate other RTA staff to act on his or her behalf to accept and process written requests for the RTA's public records and approve denials.

If a request for a public record is received by facsimile or e-mail, the request is deemed to have been received on the following business day. If a request is sent by e-mail and delivered to a RTA spam or junk-mail folder, the request is not deemed received until one day after the FOIA Coordinator first becomes aware of the request. The FOIA Coordinator shall note in the FOIA log both the date the request was delivered to the spam or junk-mail folder and the date the FOIA Coordinator became aware of the request. The FOIA Coordinator shall review RTA spam and junk-mail folders on a regular basis, which shall be no less than once a month.

The RTA is not obligated to create a new public record or make a compilation or summary of information which does not already exist. Neither the FOIA Coordinator nor other RTA staff are obligated to provide answers to questions contained in requests for public records or regarding the content of the records themselves.

The FOIA Coordinator shall keep a copy of all written requests for public records received by the RTA on file for a period of at least one year.

### Section 2: Requesting a Public Record

A person requesting to inspect or obtain copies of public records prepared, owned, used, possessed or retained by RTA must do so in writing. The request must sufficiently

describe a public record so as to enable RTA personnel to identify and find the requested public record.

No specific form to submit a request for a public record is required. However the FOIA Coordinator may make available a FOIA Request Form for use by the public.

Written requests for public records may be submitted in person or by mail to the RTA office. Requests may also be submitted electronically by facsimile and e-mail. Upon their receipt, requests for public records shall be promptly forwarded to the FOIA Coordinator for processing.

A person may request that public records be provided on non-paper physical media, electronically mailed or other otherwise provided to him or her in lieu of paper copies. The RTA will comply with the request only if it possesses the necessary technological capability to provide records in the requested non-paper physical media format.

A person may subscribe to future issues of public records that are created, issued or disseminated by the RTA on a regular basis. A subscription is valid for up to 6 months and may be renewed by the subscriber.

A person who makes a verbal, non-written request for information believed to be available on the RTA's website, where practicable and to the best ability of the employee receiving the request, shall be informed of the pertinent website address.

A person serving a sentence of imprisonment in a local, state or federal correctional facility is not entitled to submit a request for a public record. The FOIA Coordinator will deny all such requests.

### **Section 3: Processing a Request**

Unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the person making the request, within 5 business days of receipt of a FOIA request the RTA will issue a response. If a request is received by facsimile, e-mail or other electronic transmission, the request is deemed to have been received on the following business day. The RTA will respond to the request in one of the following ways:

- Grant the request.
- Issue a written notice denying the request.
- Grant the request in part and issue a written notice denying in part the request.
- Issue a notice indicating that due to the nature of the request the RTA needs an additional 10 business days to respond. Only one such extension is permitted.
- Issue a written notice indicating that the public record requested is available at no charge on the RTA's website.

If the request is granted, or granted in part, the FOIA Coordinator will require that payment be made in full for the allowable fees associated with responding to the request before the public record is made available. The FOIA Coordinator shall provide a detailed itemization of the allowable costs incurred to process the request to the person making the request. A copy of these Procedures and Guidelines shall be provided to the requestor with the response to a written request for public records, provided however, that if these Procedures and Guidelines, and its Written Public Summary are maintained on the RTA's website, then a website link to those documents may be provided in lieu of providing paper copies.

If the cost of processing a FOIA request is \$50 or less, the requester will be notified of the amount due and where the documents can be obtained.

If based on a good faith calculation by the RTA, the cost of processing a FOIA request is expected to exceed \$50, or if the requester has not fully paid for a previously granted request, the RTA will require a good-faith deposit before processing the request. In making the request for a good-faith deposit the FOIA Coordinator shall provide the requester with a detailed itemization of the allowable costs estimated to be incurred by the RTA to process the request and also provide a best efforts estimate of a time frame it will take the RTA to provide the records to the requester. The best efforts estimate shall be nonbinding on the RTA, but will be made in good faith and will strive to be reasonably accurate, given the nature of the request in the particular instance, so as to provide the requested records in a manner based on the public policy expressed by Section 1 of the FOIA.

If the request is denied or denied in part, the FOIA Coordinator will issue a Notice of Denial which shall provide in the applicable circumstance:

- An explanation as to why a requested public record is exempt from disclosure; or
- A certificate that the requested record does not exist under the name or description provided by the requestor, or another name reasonably known by the RTA; or
- An explanation or description of the public record or information within a public record that is separated or deleted from the public record; and
- An explanation of the person's right to submit an appeal of the denial to either the RTA Board or seek judicial review in the Wayne County Circuit Court, or in the circuit court in the county in which the public record or RTA office is located,
- An explanation of the right to receive attorneys' fees, costs, and disbursements as well actual or compensatory damages, and punitive damages of \$1,000, should they prevail in Circuit Court.
- The Notice of Denial shall be signed by the FOIA Coordinator.

If a request does not sufficiently describe a public record, the FOIA Coordinator may, in lieu of issuing a Notice of Denial indicating that the request is deficient, seek clarification or amendment of the request by the person making the request. Any clarification or amendment will be considered a new request subject to the timelines described in this Section.

The RTA shall provide reasonable facilities and opportunities for persons to examine and inspect public records during normal business hours. The FOIA Coordinator is authorized to promulgate rules regulating the manner in which records may be viewed so as to protect RTA records from loss, alteration, mutilation or destruction and to prevent excessive interference with normal RTA operations.

The FOIA Coordinator shall, upon written request, furnish a certified copy of a public record at no additional cost to the person requesting the public record.

#### **Section 4: Fee Deposits**

If the fee estimate is expected to exceed \$50.00 based on a good-faith calculation by the RTA, the requestor will be asked to provide a deposit not exceeding on-half of the total estimated fee.

If a request for public records is from a person who has not fully paid the RTA for copies of public records made in fulfillment of a previously granted written request, the FOIA Coordinator will require a deposit of 100% of the estimated processing fee before beginning to search for a public record for any subsequent written request by that person when all of the following conditions exist:

- the final fee for the prior written request is not more than 105% of the estimated fee;
- the public records made available contained the information sought in the prior written request and remain in the RTA's possession;
- the public records were made available to the individual, subject to payment, within the time frame estimated by the RTA to provide the records;
- 90 days have passed since the FOIA Coordinator notified the individual in writing that the public records were available for pickup or mailing;
- the individual is unable to show proof of prior payment to the RTA; and
- the FOIA Coordinator has calculated a detailed itemization that is the basis for the current written request's increased estimated fee deposit.

The FOIA Coordinator will not require an increased estimated fee deposit if any of the following apply:

- the person making the request is able to show proof of prior payment in full to the RTA;
- the RTA is subsequently paid in full for the applicable prior written request; or
- 365 days have passed since the person made the request for which full payment was not remitted to the RTA.

## **Section 5: Calculation of Fees**

A fee will not be charged for the cost of search, examination, review and the deletion and separation of exempt from nonexempt information unless failure to charge a fee would result in unreasonably high costs to the RTA because of the nature of the request in the particular instance, and the RTA specifically identifies the nature of the unreasonably high costs.

The following factors shall be used to determine an unreasonably high cost to the RTA:

- The particular request incurs costs greater than incurred from the typical or usual request received by the RTA. *See Bloch v Davison Community Schools, 2011 Mich App Lexis 771, 2011 WL 1564645*
- Volume of the public record requested
- Amount of time spent to search for, examine, review and separate exempt from non-exempt information in the record requested.
- Whether public records from more than one RTA department or various RTA offices is necessary to respond to the request.
- The available staffing to respond to the request.
- Any other similar factors identified by the FOIA Coordinator in responding to the particular request.

The RTA may charge for the following costs associated with processing a FOIA request:

- Labor costs directly associated with searching for, locating and examining a requested public record.
- Labor costs associated with a review of a record to separate and delete information exempt from disclosure of information which is disclosed.
- The actual cost of computer discs, computer tapes or other digital or similar media.
- The cost of duplication of publication, not including labor, of paper copies of public records.
- The cost of labor associated with duplication or publication, including making paper copies, making digital copies or transferring digital public

records to non-paper physical media or through the Internet or other electronic means.

- The actual cost of mailing or sending a public record.

Labor costs will be calculated based on the following requirements:

- All labor costs will be estimated and charged in 15 minute increments with all partial time increments rounded down. The cost of labor directly associated with duplication, publication or transferring records to nonpaper physical media can be charged in time increments of the RTA's choosing with all partial increments rounded down.
- Labor costs will be charged at the hourly wage of the lowest-paid RTA employee capable of doing the work in the specific fee category, regardless of who actually performs work. If the RTA uses contract or outside labor to separate and delete exempt material from non-exempt material, it will clearly note the name of person or firm who does the work and the total labor cost may not exceed an amount 6 times the state minimum hourly wage, which is currently \$8.15.
- Labor costs will also include a charge to cover or partially cover the cost of fringe benefits. The RTA may add up to 50% to the applicable labor charge amount to cover or partially cover the cost of fringe benefits, but in no case may it exceed the actual cost of fringe benefits.
  - Overtime wages will not be included in labor costs until agreed to by the requestor; overtime costs will not be used to calculate the fringe benefit cost.

The cost to provide records on non-paper physical media when so requested will be based on the following requirements:

- Computer disks, computer tapes or other digital or similar media will be at the actual and most reasonably economical cost for the non-paper media.
- This cost will only be assessed if the RTA has the technological capability necessary to provide the public record in the requested non-paper physical media format.
- In order to ensure the integrity and security of the RTA's technological infrastructure, the RTA will procure any requested non-paper media and will not accept non-paper media from the requestor

The cost to provide paper copies of records will be based on the following requirements:

- Paper copies of public records made on standard letter (8 ½ x 11) or legal (8 ½ x 14) sized paper will not exceed \$.10 per sheet of paper. Copies for non-standard sized sheets of paper will reflect the actual cost of reproduction.

- The RTA may provide records using double-sided printing, if cost-saving and available.

The cost to mail records to a requestor will be based on the following requirements:

- The actual cost to mail public records using a reasonably economical and justified means.
- The RTA may charge for the least expensive form of postal delivery confirmation.
- No cost will be made for expedited shipping or insurance unless requested.

If the FOIA Coordinator does not respond to a written request in a timely manner, the following shall be required:

- Reduce the labor costs by 5% for each day the RTA exceeds the time permitted under FOIA up to a 50% maximum reduction, if any of the following applies:
  - The late response was willful and intentional.
  - The written request, within the first 250 words of the body of a letter facsimile, e-mail or e-mail attachment conveyed a request for information.
  - The written request included the words, characters, or abbreviations for “freedom of information”, “information”, “FOIA”, “copy” or a recognizable misspelling of such, or legal code reference to MCL 15. 231 et seq or 1976 Public Act 442 on the front of an envelope or in the subject line of an e-mail, letter or facsimile cover page.
- Fully note the charge reduction in the Detailed Itemization of Costs Form

## **Section 6: Waiver of Fees**

The cost of the search for and copying of a public record may be waived or reduced if in the sole judgment of the FOIA Coordinator a waiver or reduced fee is in the public interest because such can be considered as primarily benefitting the general public.

The FOIA Coordinator will waive the first \$20.00 of the processing fee for a request if the person requesting a public record submits an affidavit stating that they are:

- indigent and receiving specific public assistance; or
- if not receiving public assistance stating facts demonstrating an inability to pay because of indigency.

An individual is not eligible to receive the waiver if:

- the requester has previously received discounted copies of public records from the RTA twice during the calendar year; or
- the requester requests information in connection with other parties who are offering or providing payment or other remuneration to the individual to make the request.

An affidavit is sworn statement. The FOIA Coordinator may make a Fee Waiver Affidavit Form available for use by the public.

The FOIA Coordinator will waive the first \$20.00 of the processing fee for a request if the person requesting a public record is a nonprofit organization designated by the State to carry out activities under subtitle C of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 200 and the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Act, or their successors, if the request meets all of the following requirements:

- is made directly on behalf of the organization or its clients;
- is made for a reason wholly consistent with the mission and provisions of those laws under Section 931 of the Mental Health Code, MCL 330.1931;
- is accompanied by documentation of its designation by the State.

## **Section 7: Appeal of a Denial of a Public Record**

When a requester believes that all or a portion of a public record has not been disclosed or has been improperly exempted from disclosure, he or she may file an appeal of the denial with the RTA Board. The RTA Board will not be considered to have received a written appeal of a denial until its first regularly scheduled meeting following the submission of the appeal. It then has 10 business days to respond to the appeal. The appeal must be in writing, specifically state the word "appeal" and identify the reason or reasons the requester is seeking a reversal of the denial.

Within 10 business days of receiving the appeal the RTA Board will respond in writing by:

- reversing the disclosure denial;
- upholding the disclosure denial; or
- reverse the disclosure denial in part and uphold the disclosure denial in part.
- Under unusual circumstances, such as the need to examine or review a voluminous amount of separate and distinct public

records or the need to collect the requested records from numerous facilities located apart from the office receiving or processing the request, the Board may issue not more than 1 notice of extension for not more than 10 business days to respond to the appeal

Whether or not a requestor submitted an appeal of a denial to the RTA Board, he or she may file a civil action in Wayne County Circuit Court or in the circuit court in the county in which the public record or RTA office is located, within 180 days after the RTA's final determination to deny the request.

If the court determines that the public record is not exempt from disclosure, the court will award the appellant reasonable attorneys' fees, cost and disbursements. If the court determines that the appellant prevails only in part, the court in its discretion may award all or an appropriate portion of reasonable attorneys' fees, costs and disbursements.

If the court determines that the RTA arbitrarily and capriciously violated the FOIA by refusing or delaying the disclosure of copies of a public record, it shall award the appellant punitive damages in the \$1,000 and shall also order that the public body pay a civil fine of \$1000 to the general fund of the State treasury.

### **Section 8: Appeal of an Excessive FOIA Processing Fee**

If a requestor believes that the fee charged by the RTA to process a FOIA request exceeds the amount permitted by state law, he or she must first submit a written appeal for a fee reduction to the RTA Board. The RTA Board will not be considered to have received a written appeal of a fee amount until its first regularly scheduled meeting following the submission of the appeal. It then has 10 business days to respond to the appeal. The appeal must be in writing, specifically state the word "appeal" and identify how the required fee exceeds the amount permitted.

Within 10 business days after receiving the appeal, the RTA Board will respond in writing by:

- waiving the fee;
- reducing the fee and issuing a written determination indicating the specific basis that supports the remaining fee, accompanied by a certification by the Board that the statements in the determination are accurate and the reduced fee amount complies with these Procedures and Guidelines and Section 4 of the FOIA;
- upholding the fee and issuing a written determination indicating the specific basis under Section 4 of the FOIA that supports the required fee, accompanied by a certification by the RTA Board that the

statements in the determination are accurate and the fee amount complies with these Procedures and Guidelines and Section 4 of the FOIA; or

- issuing a notice detailing the reason or reasons for extending for not more than 10 business days the period during which the RTA Board will respond to the written appeal.

Within 45 days after receiving notice of the RTA's determination of a fee appeal, a requestor may commence a civil action in **Wayne County Circuit Court** or in the circuit court in the county in which the public record or RTA office is located, for a fee reduction. If a civil action is filed appealing the fee, the RTA is not obligated to process the request for the public record until the Court resolves the fee dispute.

If the court determines that the RTA required a fee that exceeds the amount permitted, it shall reduce the fee to a permissible amount. If the appellant in the civil action prevails by receiving a reduction of 50% or more of the total fee, the court may award all or appropriate amount of reasonable attorneys' fees, costs and disbursements.

If the court determines that RTA has acted arbitrarily and capriciously by charging an excessive fee, the court shall also award the appellant punitive damages in the amount of \$500, and shall also the payment of a civil fine in the amount of \$500.

### **Section 9: Penalty for Violation of the Act**

If the court determines in either an appeal of a denial of a public record, or the appeal of an excessive fee, that the public body willfully and intentionally failed to comply with the FOIA or otherwise acted in bad faith, then in addition to any another award or sanction, the court shall impose a civil fine of not less than \$2500 or more than \$7500 for each occurrence.

The court is required to consider the budget of the public body and whether the public body has been previously been assessed penalties for violations of the FOIA.

The civil fine is to be deposited to the general fund of the State treasury.

### **Section 10: Conflict with Prior FOIA Policies and Procedures; Effective Date**

To the extent that these Procedures and Guidelines conflict with previous FOIA policies promulgated by RTA these Procedures and Guidelines are controlling.

To the extent that any provision of these Procedures and Guidelines, or any administrative rules, practices or forms promulgated by the FOIA Coordinator,

pertaining to the release of public records is found to be in conflict with any State statute, the applicable statute shall control. Further, the FOIA Coordinator shall process all FOIA requests consistent with State law, notwithstanding any provision contained herein.

These FOIA Policies and Guidelines become effective July 1, 2015.

### **Section 11: Appendix of RTA Forms**

- FOIA Request Form
- FOIA Fee Itemization Form
- Affidavit of Indigency

## **REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY OF SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN (RTA) WRITTEN PUBLIC SUMMARY OF FOIA PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES**

Consistent with Public Act 563 of 2014 amending the Michigan Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the following is the Written Public Summary of the RTA's FOIA Procedures and Guidelines.

### **1. How do I submit a FOIA request to the RTA?**

- Requests to inspect or obtain copies of public records prepared, owned, used, possessed or retained by the RTA must be submitted in writing.
- A request must sufficiently describe a public record so as to enable the RTA to find it.
- No specific form to submit a written request is required. However a FOIA Request form for your use and convenience is available on the RTA's website at [www.rtamichigan.org](http://www.rtamichigan.org)
- Written requests can be made in person by delivery to any RTA office in person or by mail.
- A request may also be submitted by e-mail. To ensure a prompt response, e-mail requests should contain the term "FOIA" or "FOIA Request" in the subject line and be sent to [www.rtamichigan.org](http://www.rtamichigan.org).
- A request may also be submitted by facsimile. To ensure a prompt response, facsimile requests should contain the term "FOIA" or "FOIA Request" in the cover sheet and be sent to Tiffany J. Gunter, at (313) 961-4869.

*Note: If you are serving a sentence or imprisonment in a local, state or federal correctional facility, you are not entitled to submit a request for a public record.*

### **2. What kind of responses can I expect to my request?**

- Within 5 business days of receipt of a FOIA request, the RTA will issue a response. If a request is received by facsimile or e-mail, the request is deemed to have been received on the following business day. The RTA will respond to your request in one of the following ways:
  - Grant the request.
  - Issue a written notice denying the request.
  - Grant the request in part and issue a written notice denying in part the request.
  - Issue a notice indicating that due to the nature of the request the RTA needs an additional 10 business days to respond.
  - Issue a written notice indicating that the public record requested is available at no charge on the RTA's website.
- If the request is granted, or granted in part, the RTA will ask that payment be made for the allowable fees associated with responding to the request before the public record is made available. If the cost of processing the request is expected to exceed \$50, or if you have not paid for a previously granted request, the RTA will require a deposit before processing the payment.

### **3. What are the RTA's fee deposit requirements?**

- If the RTA has made a good faith calculation that the total fee for processing the request exceeds \$50.00, the RTA will require that you provide a deposit in the amount of 50% of the total estimated fee. When the RTA requests the deposit it will provide you a non-binding best efforts estimate of how long it will take to process the request following receipt by the RTA of your deposit.
- If the RTA receives a request from a person who has not paid the RTA for copies of public records made in fulfillment of a previously granted written request, the RTA will require a deposit of 100% of the estimated processing fee before it begins to search for the public record for any subsequent written request when all of the following conditions exist:
  - the final fee for the prior written request is not more than 105% of the estimated fee;
  - the public records made available contained the information sought in the prior written request and remain in the RTA's possession;
  - the public records were made available to the individual, subject to payment, within the time frame estimated by the RTA to provide the records;
  - 90 days have passed since the RTA notified the individual in writing that the public records were available for pickup or mailing;
  - the individual is unable to show proof of prior payment to the RTA; and
  - the RTA has calculated an estimated detailed itemization that is the basis for the current written request's increased fee deposit.
- The RTA will not require the 100% estimated fee deposit if any of the following apply:
  - the person making the request is able to show proof of prior payment in full to the RTA;
  - the RTA is subsequently paid in full for all applicable prior written requests; or
  - 365 days have passed since the person made the request for which full payment was not remitted to the RTA.

### **4. How does the RTA calculate FOIA processing fees?**

- A fee will not be charged for the cost of search, examination, review and the deletion and separation of exempt from nonexempt information unless failure to charge a fee would result in unreasonably high costs to the RTA because of the nature of the request in the particular instance, and the RTA specifically identifies the nature of the unreasonably high costs.

- The Michigan FOIA statute permits the RTA to assess and collect a fee for six designated processing components. The RTA may charge for the following costs associated with processing a request:
  - Labor costs associated with searching for, locating and examining a requested public record.
  - Labor costs associated with a review of a record to separate and delete information exempt from disclosure of information which is disclosed.
  - The cost of computer discs, computer tapes or other digital or similar media when the requester asks for records on non-paper physical media.
  - The cost of duplication or publication, not including labor, of paper copies of public records.
  - Labor costs associated with duplication or publication, which includes making paper copies, making digital copies, or transferring digital public records to non-paper physical media or through the Internet.
  - The cost to mail or send a public record to a requestor.
  
- Labor Costs
  - All labor costs will be estimated and charged in 15 minute increments with all partial time increments rounded down.
  - Labor costs will be charged at the hourly wage of the lowest-paid RTA employee capable of doing the work in the specific fee category, regardless of who actually performs work.
  - Labor costs will also include a charge to cover or partially cover the cost of fringe benefits.
  
- Non-Paper Physical Media
  - The cost for records provided on non-paper physical media, such as computer discs, computer tapes or other digital or similar media will be at the actual and most reasonably economical cost for the non-paper media.
  - This cost will only be assessed if the RTA has the technological capability necessary to provide the public record in the requested non-paper physical media format.
  
- Paper Copies
  - Paper copies of public records made on standard letter (8 ½ x 11) or legal (8 ½ x 14) sized paper will not exceed \$.10 per sheet of paper. Copies for non-standard sized sheets of paper will reflect the actual cost of reproduction.
  - The RTA may provide records using double-sided printing, if cost-saving and available.
  
- Mailing Costs
  - The cost to mail public records will use a reasonably economical and justified means.
  - The RTA may charge for the least expensive form of postal delivery confirmation.

- No cost will be made for expedited shipping or insurance unless requested.

## **5. How do I qualify for a reduction of the processing fees?**

- The RTA may waive or reduce the fee associated with a request when RTA determines that to do so is in the public interest because release of the information is considered as primarily benefitting the general public.
- The RTA will waive the first \$20.00 of the processing fee for a request if you submit an affidavit stating that you are:
  - indigent and receiving specific public assistance; or
  - if not receiving public assistance, stating facts demonstrating an inability to pay because of indigency.
- You are not eligible to receive the \$20.00 waiver if you:
  - have previously received discounted copies of public records from the RTA twice during the calendar year; or
  - are requesting information on behalf of other persons who are offering or providing payment to you to make the request.
- An affidavit is a sworn statement. For your convenience, the RTA has provided an Affidavit of Indigency form for the waiver of FOIA fees on its website.
- The RTA will waive the fee for a nonprofit organization which meets all of the following conditions:
  - the organization is designated by the State under federal law to carry out activities under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 and the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Act;
  - the request is made directly on behalf of the organization or its clients;
  - the request is made for a reason wholly consistent with the provisions of federal law under Section 931 of the Mental Health Code; and
  - the request is accompanied by documentation of the organization's designation by the State.

## **6. How may I challenge the denial of a public record or an excessive fee?**

- Appeal of a Denial of a Public Record  
If you believe that all or a portion of a public record has not been disclosed or has been improperly exempted from disclosure, you may file an appeal of the denial with the RTA Board. The appeal must be in writing, specifically state the word "appeal" and identify the reason or reasons you are seeking a reversal of the denial. The RTA Board will not be considered to have received a written appeal of a denial until its first regularly scheduled meeting following the submission of the appeal.

Within 10 business days of receiving the appeal, the RTA Board will respond in writing by:

- reversing the disclosure denial;
- upholding the disclosure denial; or
- reverse the disclosure denial in part and uphold the disclosure denial in part.

Whether or not you submitted an appeal of a denial to the RTA Board, you may file a civil action in Wayne County Circuit Court, or in the circuit court in the county in which the public record or RTA office is located, within 180 days after the RTA's final determination to deny your request. Should you prevail in the civil action, the court will award you reasonable attorneys' fees, costs and disbursements. If the court determines that the RTA acted arbitrarily and capriciously in refusing to disclose or provide a public record, the court shall award you damages in the amount of \$1,000.00.

- Appeal of an Excessive FOIA Processing Fee

If you believe that the fee charged by the RTA to process your FOIA request exceeds the amount permitted by state law, you must first submit a written appeal for a fee reduction to the RTA Board. The appeal must be in writing, specifically state the word "appeal" and identify how the requested fee exceeds the amount permitted. The RTA Board will not be considered to have received a written appeal of a fee amount until its first regularly scheduled meeting following the submission of the appeal.

Within 10 business days after receiving the appeal, the RTA Board will respond in writing by:

- waiving the fee;
- reducing the fee and issue a written determination indicating the specific basis that supports the remaining fee;
- upholding the fee and issue a written determination indicating the specific basis that supports the required fee; or
- issuing a notice detailing the reason or reasons for extending for not more than 10 business days the period during which the RTA will respond to the written appeal.

Within 45 days after receiving notice of the RTA Board's determination of the processing fee appeal, you may commence a civil action in Wayne County Circuit Court, or in the circuit court in the county in which the public record or RTA office is located, for a fee reduction. If you prevail in the civil action by receiving a reduction of 50% or more of the total fee, the court may award all or an appropriate amount of reasonably attorneys' fees, costs and disbursements. If the court determines that the RTA acted arbitrarily and capriciously by charging an excessive fee, the court may also award you punitive damages in the amount of \$500.00.

### **Need more details or information?**

This is only a summary of the RTA's FOIA Procedures and Guidelines. For more details and information, copies of the RTA's FOIA Procedures and Guidelines are available at no charge at the RTA office and on the RTA's website, [www.rtamichigan.org](http://www.rtamichigan.org).



**Records Located on Website**

If the RTA directly or indirectly administers or maintains an official internet presence, any public records available to the general public on that internet site at the time the request is made are exempt from any labor charges to redact (*separate exempt information from non-exempt information*).

If the FOIA coordinator knows or has reason to know that all or a portion of the requested information is available on its website, the RTA must notify the requestor in its written response that all or a portion of the requested information is available on its website. The written response, to the degree practicable in the specific instance, must include a specific webpage address where the requested information is available. On the detailed cost itemization form, the RTA must separate the requested public records that are available on its website from those that are not available on the website and must inform the requestor of the additional charge to receive copies of the public records that are available on its website.

If the RTA has included the website address for a record in its written response to the requestor and the requestor thereafter stipulates that the public record be provided to him or her in a paper format or other form, including digital media, the RTA must provide the public records in the specified format (if the RTA has the technological capability), fees not to exceed the actual costs of providing the information in the specified format.

**Request for Copies/Duplication of Records on RTA Website**

I hereby stipulate that, even if some or all of the records are located on a RTA website, I am requesting that the RTA make copies of those records on the website and deliver them to me in the format I have requested above. I understand that some FOIA fees may apply.

Requestor's Signature

Date

**Request for Discount: Indigence**

A public record search **must** be made and a copy of a public record **must** be furnished **without charge for the first \$20.00 of the fee** for each request by an individual who is entitled to information under this act and who:

- 1) Submits an affidavit stating that the individual is indigent and receiving specific public assistance, **OR**
- 2) If not receiving public assistance, stating facts showing inability to pay the cost because of indigence.

If a requestor is ineligible for the discount, the public body shall inform the requestor specifically of the reason for ineligibility in the public body's written response. An individual is ineligible for this fee reduction if **ANY** of the following apply:

- (i) The individual has previously received discounted copies of public records from the same public body twice during that calendar year,
- (ii) The individual requests the information in conjunction with outside parties who are offering or providing payment or other remuneration to the individual to make the request. A public body may require a statement by the requestor in the affidavit that the request is not being made in conjunction with outside parties in exchange for payment or other remuneration.

Office Use:  Affidavit Received  Eligible for Discount  Ineligible for Discount

I am submitting an affidavit and requesting that I receive the discount for indigence for this FOIA request:

Date:

Requestor's Signature:

**Request for Discount: Nonprofit Organization**

A public record search **must** be made and a copy of a public record **must** be furnished **without charge for the first \$20.00 of the fee** for each request by a nonprofit organization formally designated by the state to carry out activities under subtitle C of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 and the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Act, if the request meets **ALL** of the following requirements:

- (i) Is made directly on behalf of the organization or its clients.
- (ii) Is made for a reason wholly consistent with the mission and provisions of those laws under section 931 of the Mental Health Code, 1974 PA 258, MCL 330.1931.
- (iii) Is accompanied by documentation of its designation by the state, if requested by the RTA.

Office Use:  Documentation of State Designation Received  Eligible for Discount  Ineligible for Discount

I stipulate that I am a designated agent for the nonprofit organization making this FOIA request and that this request is made directly on behalf of the organization or its clients and is made for a reason wholly consistent with the mission and provisions of those laws under section 931 of the Mental Health Code, 1974 PA 258, MCL 330.1931:

Date:

Requestor's Signature:

**Regional Transit Authority for Southeast Michigan  
1001 Woodward Ave, Suite 1400, Detroit, MI 48226**

**Phone- 313-402-1020 Fax- 313-961-4869**

[info@rtamichigan.org](mailto:info@rtamichigan.org) / [www.rtamichigan.org](http://www.rtamichigan.org)

**FOIA Fee Itemization Form**

**(Effective July 1, 2015)**

Component	Cost Calculations	Total
<b>1. Labor Costs – Search, Location ,and Examination of Records*</b>	<p>Enter the hourly wage of lowest paid employee capable of performing the search, location and examination \$_____ per hour</p> <p>Multiply the wage by the fringe benefit multiplier (maximum of 50% of the hourly wage); OR, if the requested information is available online and the requestor request the documents to be provided in another format, the fringe benefit multiplier may exceed 50% (not to exceed actual cost) _____%</p> <p>Multiply the hourly wage times the fringe benefit multiplier \$_____ x 1.____ = \$_____</p> <p>If stipulated by the requestor, add the hourly overtime wage increment (but do not include in the calculation of fringe benefit costs) \$_____ + _____ = \$_____</p> <p>Divide the resulting hourly wage by four (4) to determine the charge per fifteen (15) minute increment \$_____ / 4 = \$_____</p>	
	<p>Number of 15 minute increments (partial time increments must be rounded down) multiplied by the permitted rate _____ x \$_____ = \$_____</p>	<p>\$_____</p>
<b>2. Employee Labor Costs – Redaction*</b>	<p>If performed by the public body’s employee:</p> <p>Enter the hourly wage of lowest paid employee capable of performing the redaction \$_____ per hour</p> <p>Multiply the wage by the fringe benefit multiplier (maximum of 50% of the hourly wage); OR, if the requested information</p>	

	<p>is available online and the requestor request the documents to be provided in another format, the fringe benefit multiplier may exceed 50% (not to exceed actual cost)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">_____ %</p> <p>Multiply the hourly wage times the fringe benefit multiplier</p> <p style="text-align: center;">\$ _____ x 1. _____ = \$ _____</p> <p>If stipulated by the requestor, add the hourly overtime wage increment (but do not include in the calculation of fringe benefit costs)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">\$ _____ + _____ = \$ _____</p> <p>Divide the resulting hourly wage by four (4) to determine the charge per fifteen (15) minute increment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">\$ _____ / 4 = \$ _____</p>	
	<p>Number of 15 minute increments (partial time increments must be rounded down) multiplied by the permitted rate</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____ x \$ _____ = \$ _____</p>	<p>\$ _____</p>
<p><b>2. Contracted Labor Costs – Redaction*</b></p>	<p>If performed by Contracted Labor (Only permitted if the public body does not employ a person capable of redacting the records as determined by the FOIA Coordinator):</p> <p>Name of person or firm contracted:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Enter the hourly rate charged by the contractor (may not exceed six (6) times the State minimum wage (i.e. \$8.15x6=\$48.90)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">\$ _____ per hour</p> <p>Divide the hourly rate by four (4) to determine the charge per fifteen (15) minute increment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">\$ _____ / 4 = \$ _____</p>	
	<p>Number of 15 minute increments (partial time increments must be rounded down) multiplied by the permitted rate</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____ x \$ _____ = \$ _____</p>	<p>\$ _____</p>
<p><b>3. Non-Paper Physical Media</b></p>	<p>Actual and most reasonably economical cost of:</p> <p>Flash Drives \$ _____ x number used _____ = \$ _____</p> <p>Computer Discs \$ _____ x number used _____ = \$ _____</p>	

	Other Media \$ _____ x number used _____ = \$ _____	\$ _____
<b>4. Paper Copies</b>	<p>Actual total incremental cost of duplication (not including labor) up to a <u>maximum of 10 cents per page</u>:</p> <p>Letter paper (8 1/2" x 11")  number of sheets ____ x \$0.____ = \$ _____</p> <p>Legal paper (8 1/2" x 14")  number of sheets ____ x \$0.____ = \$ _____</p> <p>Actual cost of other types of paper:</p> <p>Type of Paper: _____  number of sheets ____ x \$ _____ = \$ _____</p> <p>Type of Paper: _____  number of sheets ____ x \$ _____ = \$ _____</p> <p><b>(NOTE: Must print double-sided if available and costs less.)</b></p>	\$ _____
<b>5. Labor Cost – Duplication Copying, and transferring records to non-paper physical media</b>	<p>Enter the hourly wage of lowest paid employee capable of performing the duplication, copying, or transferring digital records to non-paper physical media  \$ _____ per hour</p> <p>Multiply the wage by the fringe benefit multiplier (maximum of 50% of the hourly wage); OR, if the requested information is available online and the requestor request the documents to be provided in another format, the fringe benefit multiplier may exceed 50% (not to exceed actual cost)  _____ %</p> <p>Multiply the hourly wage times the fringe benefit multiplier  \$ _____ x 1. _____ = \$ _____</p> <p>If stipulated by the requestor, add the hourly overtime wage increment (but do not include in the calculation of fringe benefit costs)  \$ _____ + _____ = \$ _____</p> <p>Divide the resulting hourly wage by _____ to determine the charge per _____ (____) minute increment  \$ _____ / 60 = \$ _____</p> <p><b>(NOTE: May use any time increment for this category)</b></p>	
	Number of ____ minute increments (partial time increments must be rounded down) multiplied by the permitted rate _____ x \$ _____ = \$ _____	\$ _____
<b>6. Mailing</b>	Actual cost of mailing records in a reasonable and economical manner:	

	<p style="text-align: right;">Cost of mailing: \$ _____</p> <p>Cost of least expensive form of postal delivery confirmation: \$ _____</p> <p>Cost of expedited shipping or insurance only if specifically stipulated by the requestor: \$ _____</p>	\$ _____
	<b>Subtotal</b>	\$ _____
<b>Waivers and Reductions</b>	<p>Subtract any Fee Waiver or Reduction: \$20.00 for indigency or nonprofit organization as further described in the Public Body's procedures and guidelines.</p> <p>Any amount determined by the Public Body due to the search and furnishing of the Public Record determined to be in the public interest. \$ _____</p> <p>The reduction amount due to the late response of the Public Body. 5% of fee x _____ days late = _____% reduction (maximum reduction is 50%)</p>	-\$ _____
<b>Deposit</b>	Subtract any good-faith deposit received: \$ _____	-\$ _____
	<b>Total Due</b>	\$ _____

\*Note: Labor costs for search, location, examination and redaction (categories 1 and 2 on the itemization form) may not be charged unless the failure to charge a fee would result in unreasonably high costs to the public body because of the nature of the request in the particular instance, and the public body specifically identifies the nature of these unreasonably high costs.

The Court of Appeals has interpreted this provision to require that the determination be made relative to the usual or typical costs incurred by the public body in responding to FOIA requests. The key factor in determining whether the costs are "unreasonably high" is the extent to which the particular request differs from the usual request. *Bloch v Davison Cmty Schools*, (Mich.App. Apr. 26, 2011), 2011 WL 1564645.

Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA)  
1001 Woodward Ave, Suite 1400, Detroit, MI 48226  
313-402-1020 PHONE  
313-961-4869 FAX  
[info@rtamichigan.org](mailto:info@rtamichigan.org) / [www.rtamichigan.org](http://www.rtamichigan.org)

### Affidavit of Indigency

Submit this affidavit if you are seeking a waiver of costs due to indigency.

Under the Michigan FOIA, a public record search will be made and copy of a public record furnished without charge for the first \$20.00 of the fee for each request made by an individual who is entitled to information and who submits an affidavit stating that the individual is receiving public assistance or stating facts showing inability to pay due to indigency.

#### AFFIDAVIT

Date of Request \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

I am entitled to request waiver of the first \$20.00 of fees under the Michigan FOIA for the following reason(s):

I am currently receiving public assistance in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per \_\_\_\_\_  
week/month/year

Case No. \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Assistance \_\_\_\_\_

I am unable to pay the fee because of indigency, based on the following facts:

Income: \_\_\_\_\_  
Employer name and address

Length of present employment \_\_\_\_\_ Average annual gross pay \_\_\_\_\_ Average net pay \_\_\_\_\_ per \_\_\_\_\_  
week/month

Assets: State the value of all real property, vehicles, bank deposits, bonds, stocks, or other assets owned by you; use the back of this form, if necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other Facts: State any other facts showing indigency; use the back of this form, if necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Sworn or affirmed before me on \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_, Notary Public  
\_\_\_\_\_  
County, State of Michigan

Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_  
Acting in the County of \_\_\_\_\_

# Affidavit of Indigency Designated Requester Form

Complete this form only if you are preparing an Affidavit of Indigency for someone other than yourself.

1. I have personal knowledge of the facts appearing in this affidavit.
2. The person on whose behalf this affidavit is filed is unable to sign it because he/she is:

Under 18

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Please provide the person's date of birth.)

Other

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Please describe.)

Please describe your relationship to person on whose behalf the affidavit is filed: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your name (type or print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

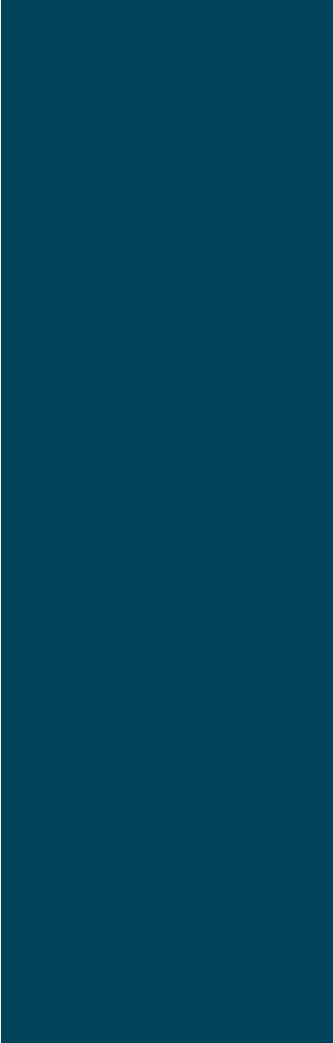
Sworn or affirmed before me on \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, Notary Public

Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ County, State of Michigan

Acting in the County of \_\_\_\_\_



**Drug-Free Workplace  
Policy and Procedures**

July 16, 2015

**DRAFT**



**RTA**

**REGIONAL  
TRANSIT AUTHORITY**  
OF SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

## **Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan Drug-Free Workplace Policy and Procedures**

### **Purpose**

In compliance with regulations governing anti-drug and alcohol programs in the transit industry, including 49 CFR Parts 40 and 655 and the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (“RTA”) has a commitment to provide a safe, quality-oriented and productive work environment consistent with the standards of the community in which the company operates, the RTA agrees that employees must be able to work in a drug and alcohol-free environment.

The RTA has established a drug and alcohol awareness program to educate employees about the dangers of drug use and alcohol abuse as well as the specifics of this Policy. In furtherance of this Policy, the RTA is committed to the following principles: Respect for an employee's dignity and right to privacy; providing assistance to employees when needed; and the recognition that alcohol and/or drug dependency are potential health problems which are treatable.

### **Scope**

This policy outlines the practice and procedure designed to correct instances of identified alcohol and drug use in the workplace.

This policy applies to all employees and all applicants for employment of the RTA. The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for policy administration.

### **Substance Abuse Awareness**

Illegal drug use and alcohol misuse have many serious adverse health and safety consequences. In addition to educating employees about the dangers of drug use and alcohol abuse, information about those consequences and sources of help for drug or alcohol problems is available from the Human Resources Administrator, who has been trained to make referrals and to assist employees with drug or alcohol problems.

### **Employee Assistance**

The RTA will assist and support employees who voluntarily seek help for such problems before becoming subject to discipline or termination under this policy. Such employees will be allowed to use accrued paid time off, placed on leaves of absence, referred to treatment providers and otherwise accommodated as required by law. Such employees may be required to document that they are successfully following prescribed treatment and to take and pass follow-up tests if they hold jobs that are safety-sensitive or require driving, or if they have violated this policy previously. Once a drug test has been scheduled, unless otherwise required by the Family and Medical Leave Act or the Americans with Disabilities Act, the employee will have forfeited the opportunity to be granted a leave of absence for treatment, and will be subject to possible discipline, up to and including discharge.

Employees should report to work fit for duty and free of any adverse effects of illegal drugs or alcohol. This policy does not prohibit employees from the lawful use and possession of prescribed medications. Employees must, however, consult with their doctors about the medications' effect on their fitness for duty and ability to work safely, and they must promptly disclose any work restrictions to their supervisor. Employees should not, however, disclose to the RTA underlying medical conditions unless directed to do so.

## **Work Rules**

1. Whenever employees are working, operating any RTA vehicle, are present on RTA premises, or conducting company-related work offsite, they are prohibited from:
  - a. Using, possessing, buying, selling, manufacturing or dispensing an illegal drug (to include possession of drug paraphernalia).
  - b. Being under the influence of alcohol or an illegal drug as defined in this policy.
  - c. Possessing or consuming alcohol.
2. The presence of any detectable amount of any illegal drug or illegal controlled substance in an employee's body system, while performing company business or while in a company facility, is prohibited.
3. The RTA will not allow employees to perform their duties while taking prescribed drugs that are adversely affecting their ability to safely and effectively perform their job duties. Employees taking a prescribed medication must carry it in the container labeled by a licensed pharmacist or be prepared to produce it if asked.
4. Any illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia will be turned over to an appropriate law enforcement agency and may result in criminal prosecution.

## ***Drug-Testing***

Employees will be subject to drug or alcohol testing if they cause or contribute to accidents that damage a vehicle, machinery, equipment or property of the RTA, an RTA employee or of a third party, or that result in an injury to themselves, an RTA employee or a third party. Employees will also be subjected to drug or alcohol testing whenever the RTA has a reasonable suspicion that an employee has violated this Policy. Reasonable suspicion means a belief that the employee has used, or is using, drugs and or alcohol in violation of this Policy, based upon such factors as: observable phenomena, such as actual observation of usage of such substances, the observation of alcohol, alcohol containers, illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia in the employee's possession, or in an area controlled or occupied by the employee (e.g., vehicle, office, desk, etc.), or a display of erratic behavior or physical symptoms of usage of such substances while on duty by a RTA representative who can describe the personal observations concerning the appearance, behavior, speech, or breath odor of the employee; reliable and corroborated reports by others that the employee has consumed alcohol or used forbidden substances while on duty; evidence that the employee has tampered with one or more prior drug/alcohol tests while employed with the RTA; or evidence that the employee has been involved in drug possession, use or sale while on RTA property or while using RTA equipment. Further, when required by state or federal law, rule or regulation, employees will be subject to random drug and/or alcohol testing,

In any of the instances described above, the investigation and subsequent testing should take place as soon as practicable. *Under no circumstances will the employee be allowed to drive himself or herself to the testing facility.*

### ***Follow-up***

Employees who have tested positive, or otherwise violated this policy, are subject to discipline, up to and including discharge. Depending on the circumstances and the employee's work history/record, the RTA may offer an employee who violates this policy or tests positive the opportunity to return to work, for example on a last-chance basis pursuant to mutually agreeable terms, which could include follow-up drug testing at times and frequencies determined by the RTA for a minimum of one year but not more than two years, as well as a waiver of the right to contest any termination resulting from a subsequent positive test. If the employee either does not complete the rehabilitation program or tests positive after completing the rehabilitation program, the employee will be subject to immediate discharge from employment.

### **Collection and Testing Procedures**

Employees subject to alcohol testing should be driven to a RTA-designated facility and will be required to provide breath specimens, or any other specimen determined by the designated facility. The specimen taken shall be tested by trained technicians using federally approved testing devices capable of producing printed results that identify the employee.

Employees subject to drug testing should be driven to a RTA-designated facility and directed to provide a urine specimen, or any other specimen determined by the designated facility. . Applicants and employees may provide specimens in private unless they appear to be submitting altered, adulterated or substitute specimens. Collected specimens should be sent to a federally certified laboratory and tested for evidence of marijuana, cocaine, opiates, amphetamines, PCP, benzodiazepines, methadone, methaqualone and propoxyphane use. (Where indicated, specimens may be tested for other illegal drugs.) The laboratory should screen all specimens and confirm all positive screens. There must be a chain of custody from the time specimens are collected through testing and storage.

The laboratory should transmit all positive drug test results to a medical review officer (MRO) retained by RTA, who should offer persons with positive results a reasonable opportunity to rebut or explain the results. Individuals with positive test results may also ask the MRO to have their split specimen sent to another federally certified laboratory to be tested at the applicant's or employee's own expense. Such requests must be made within 72 hours of notice of test results. If the second facility fails to find any evidence of drug use in the split specimen, the employee or applicant will be treated as passing the test. In no event should a positive test result be communicated to the RTA until such time that the MRO has confirmed the test to be positive.

### **Confidentiality**

Information and records relating to positive test results, drug and alcohol dependencies, and legitimate medical explanations provided to the MRO should be kept confidential to the extent required by law and maintained in secure files separate from normal personnel files. Such records and information may be disclosed among managers and supervisors on a need-to-know basis and may also be disclosed when relevant to a grievance, charge, claim or other legal proceeding initiated by or on behalf of an employee or applicant.

## **Inspections**

The RTA reserves the right to inspect all portions of its premises for drugs, alcohol or other contraband. All employees, contract employees, and visitors may be asked to cooperate in inspections of their persons, work areas and property that might conceal a drug, alcohol or other contraband. Employees who possess such contraband or refuse to cooperate in such inspections are subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including discharge.

## **Crimes Involving Drugs**

The RTA prohibits all employees, including employees performing work under government contracts, from manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing or using an illegal drug in or on company premises or while conducting company business. The RTA employees are also prohibited from misusing legally prescribed or over-the-counter (OTC) drugs. Law enforcement personnel should be notified, as appropriate, when criminal activity is suspected.

The RTA does not desire to intrude into the private lives of its employees, but recognizes that employees' off-the-job involvement with drugs and alcohol may have an impact on the workplace. Therefore, the RTA reserves the right to take appropriate disciplinary action for drug use, sale or distribution while off company premises. All employees who are convicted of, plead guilty to or are sentenced for a crime involving an illegal drug are required to report the conviction, plea or sentence to the COO within five days. Failure to comply will result in automatic discharge. Cooperation in complying may result in suspension without pay to allow management to review the nature of the charges and the employee's past record with the RTA.

## **Definitions**

**“Company premises”** includes all buildings, offices, facilities, grounds, parking lots, lockers, places and vehicles owned, leased or managed by the RTA or on any site on which the company is conducting business.

**“Illegal drug”** means a substance whose use or possession is controlled by federal law but that is not being used or possessed under the supervision of a licensed health care professional. (Controlled substances are listed in Schedules I-V of 21 C.F.R. Part 1308.)

**“Refuse to cooperate”** means to obstruct the collection or testing process; to submit an altered, adulterated or substitute sample; to fail to show up for a scheduled test; to refuse to complete the requested drug testing forms; or to fail to promptly provide specimen(s) for testing when directed to do so, without a valid medical basis for the failure. Employees who leave the scene of an

accident without justifiable explanation prior to submission to drug and alcohol testing will also be considered to have refused to cooperate and will automatically be subject to discharge.

**“Under the influence of alcohol”** means an alcohol concentration equal to or greater than the legal limit for Driving Under the Influence in the State of Michigan, or the presence of observable factors including, but not limited to, actions, appearance, speech or bodily odors that reasonably cause a supervisor to conclude that an employee is impaired because of alcohol use.

**“Under the influence of drugs”** means a confirmed positive test result for illegal drug use per this policy. In addition, it means the misuse of legal drugs (prescription and possibly OTC) when there is not a valid prescription from a physician for the lawful use of a drug in the course of medical treatment (containers must include the patient’s name, the name of the substance, quantity/amount to be taken and the period of authorization).

### **Post-Accident Related Drug and/or Alcohol Testing Protocol**

1. The employee will be advised that the RTA policy is to conduct a drug and/or alcohol test to document whether the employee was in violation of this Policy during the time of the incident.
2. The employee will be transported to any one of the RTA’s contracted testing facilities (e.g., health services, prompt care or the emergency department). One member of management or a designated attendant will accompany the employee. *Under no circumstances will the employee be allowed to drive himself or herself to the testing facility.*
3. Prior to leaving for the testing facility, supervision/management will contact the testing facility to inform it that a staff member from the RTA will be arriving and will need a drug or alcohol test completed.
4. The employee should be provided water to drink prior to leaving the company premises.
5. The employee should be given reasonable time—not to exceed 15 minutes—to secure photo ID in the company of a RTA representative.
6. The employee to be tested must present a photo ID (i.e., a driver’s license or state ID card) to the testing facility staff before the specimen can be obtained. Ensure that the employee brings the photo ID with him or her when leaving RTA premises.
7. The employee to be tested must sign a consent form provided by the testing facility. Refusal to sign is interpreted as a refusal to cooperate and will automatically be subject to discharge.
8. A RTA representative must sign as a witness to the collection procedure, along with the tested employee.
9. After returning to the company or when leaving the testing facility, the supervisor/manager must make arrangements to transport the person home (unless testing results are immediate and showed no indication of alcohol consumption or drug ingestion). Under no circumstances will the tested employee be allowed to drive himself or herself home, if the test results showed any indication of alcohol consumption or drug ingestion.

### **Enforcement**

The COO is responsible for policy interpretation, administration and enforcement.

\*\*\*\*\*

This Policy does not alter the employment status of any at-will employee. Both the RTA and an at-will employee remain free to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or notice.

## **Drug and Alcohol Policy Certificate of Receipt**

I hereby certify that I have received a copy of this latest version of the RTA Drug and Alcohol Policy, dated \_\_\_\_\_.

---

Signature, Date



# REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY OF SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

As created under Public Act 387 of 2012

## Treasurer's Report

Report for the month of: June 2015

### RTA BOARD

CHAIR  
*Paul Hillegonds*

VICE CHAIR  
*Elisabeth Gerber*

SECRETARY  
*Mark Gaffney*

TREASURER  
*Dr. Curtis Ivery*

*Freman Hendrix*  
*Don Morandini*  
*Chuck Moss*  
*Roy Rose*  
*Alma Wheeler Smith*  
*Timothy Soave*

	Beginning Balance FY 15				<b>\$ 571,381.00</b>
<b>REVENUES</b>	<b>Monthly</b>	<b>Obligated</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Remaining</b>
Beginning Balance FY 15	-	-	-	571,381	571,381
Federal Grants (Administration)	7,080.57	-	19,483	259,200	239,717
State Match (Administration)	1,770.14	-	4,871	64,800	59,929
State Revenue	-	-	400,000	900,000	500,000
Other	-	-	-	100,000	100,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE:</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>424,353</b>	<b>1,895,381</b>	<b>1,471,028</b>
<b>EXPENSES:</b>	<b>Monthly</b>	<b>Obligated</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Remaining</b>
Salary	42,403	-	304,774	571,367	266,593
Fringe	10,369	-	123,541	258,063	134,522
<b>Total Compensation</b>	<b>52,772</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>428,315</b>	<b>829,430</b>	<b>401,115</b>
Administrative Contracts					
D&O Liability Insurance	-	-	-	20,000	20,000
Legal	9,355	-	60,188	75,000	14,812
ASO	-	-	-	3,000	3,000
Accounting Services	280	-	5,360	15,000	9,640
Audit	-	-	-	15,000	15,000
Website	-	-	4,500	12,500	8,000
Communications	3,200	-	30,400	50,000	19,600
Public Education Initiatives	2,737	-	2,737	100,000	97,264
User Satisfaction Survey	-	-	-	150,000	150,000
IT Support	-	-	-	7,600	7,600
Other Contract	-	-	12,726	25,000	12,274
<b>Total Administrative Contracts</b>	<b>15,572</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>115,910</b>	<b>473,100</b>	<b>357,190</b>
Marketing/Printed Materials*	-	24,253	7,296	200,000	168,451
Rent	-	-	-	20,000	20,000
Hardware/Software	171	-	2,266	20,000	17,734
Phone Equipment	-	-	-	2,500	2,500
Phone and Internet Service Fees	12	-	2,185	5,780	3,594
Supplies	-	-	2,700	5,000	2,300
Utilities	-	-	-	1,200	1,200
Furniture	-	-	-	15,000	15,000
Meetings/Retreats	197	-	8,662	40,000	31,338
Travel/Professional Development	5,028	-	26,394	35,000	8,606
Subscriptions/Memberships	-	-	5,556	10,000	4,444
Board Reimbursement	-	-	1,708	15,000	13,292
Miscellaneous Expense	844	-	844	-	(844)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>73,752</b>	<b>24,253</b>	<b>601,837</b>	<b>1,672,010</b>	<b>1,046,764</b>

Treasurer's Signature:

Dr. Curtis L. Ivery

\* Future obligation of Marketing/Printed Materials - Maps - \$24,253

# **BEST: Michigan Avenue**

Purpose and Need Statement

DRAFT June 30, 2015

[PLACEHOLDER FOR FORMATTED COVER]



OF SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

**AECOM**

**Table of Contents**

1.0 Introduction ..... 1  
2.0 Public and Stakeholder Involvement ..... 4  
3.0 Goals and Objectives..... 6  
4.0 Evaluation Criteria..... 8  
5.0 Project Need #1..... 10  
6.0 Project Need #2..... 14  
7.0 Project Need #3..... 25  
8.0 Project Need #4..... 28

**Table of Figures**

Figure 1-1: BEST: Michigan Avenue Study Corridor..... 2  
Figure 2-1: Points of Interest Identified during May 2015 Open Houses ..... 5  
Figure 5-1: BEST: Michigan Avenue Corridor Transit Network..... 11  
Figure 5-2: BEST: Michigan Avenue Corridor Commute Flows..... 12  
Figure 6-1: BEST: Michigan Avenue Corridor – Percent of Population below the Poverty Line..... 17  
Figure 6-2: BEST: Michigan Avenue Corridor – Percent of Population Age 65 and Older ..... 20  
Figure 6-3: BEST: Michigan Avenue Corridor: Percent of Zero-Car Households ..... 22  
Figure 6-4: BEST: Michigan Avenue Percent of Population in College/University..... 24

**Table of Tables**

Table 2-1: May 2015 Open House Activity Results: Prioritized Needs for Transit Investment ..... 6  
Table 3-1: BEST: Michigan Avenue Goals and Objectives..... 7



Table 4-1: BEST: Michigan Avenue Preliminary Evaluation Criteria .....	9
Table 5-1: Commute Flows between Eastern and Western End of the Corridor .....	12
Table 5-2: Transit Travel Time Comparison to/from Employment Centers .....	13
Table 5-3: Transit Travel Time Comparison to Metro Airport .....	14
Table 6-1: Percent of Population below the Poverty Line, 2000 to 2013.....	16
Table 6-2: National Data on Household Spending on Transportation (2013) .....	18
Table 6-3: Population Age 65 and Older, 2000 to 2013.....	18
Table 6-4: Zero-Car Households, 2000 to 2013 .....	21
Table 6-5: College/University Student Population: 2000 to 2013 .....	23
Table 7-1: 2010 Population and 2040 Forecast Population.....	26
Table 7-2: Employment Density, 2010 and 2040.....	27

# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Project Description

The Building Equitable Sustainable Transit (BEST): Michigan Avenue Corridor Study is a 12-month study that is being led by the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA). The study, which is being funded through a combination of federal (Federal Transit Administration) and state (Michigan Department of Transportation) funds, will identify and evaluate a series of transit investment alternatives to improve transit service between Detroit, Ann Arbor, Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County (Metro) Airport, and intermediate communities. The Corridor is roughly 40 miles in length, as measured from the Blake Transit Center in Ann Arbor to Campus Martius in downtown Detroit (four blocks east of the Rosa Parks Transit Center).

The study area (Figure 1-1) includes all areas within one mile of Michigan Avenue, Washtenaw Avenue, Merriman Road, and other streets that are candidate locations for arterial transit between Detroit and Ann Arbor. The study area includes most of the parallel state-owned railroad corridor along which Amtrak Wolverine service operates (with stations located in Ann Arbor and Dearborn). The Detroit/New Center Amtrak Station falls outside the study area.

The corridor communities include the following cities and townships within Wayne and Washtenaw Counties:

- Ann Arbor
- Dearborn
- Dearborn Heights
- Detroit
- Inkster
- Romulus
- Wayne
- Westland
- Ypsilanti
- Ann Arbor Township
- Canton Township
- Pittsfield Township
- Superior Township
- Van Buren Township
- Ypsilanti Township

The Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Region refers to Macomb, Oakland, Wayne, and Washtenaw Counties.

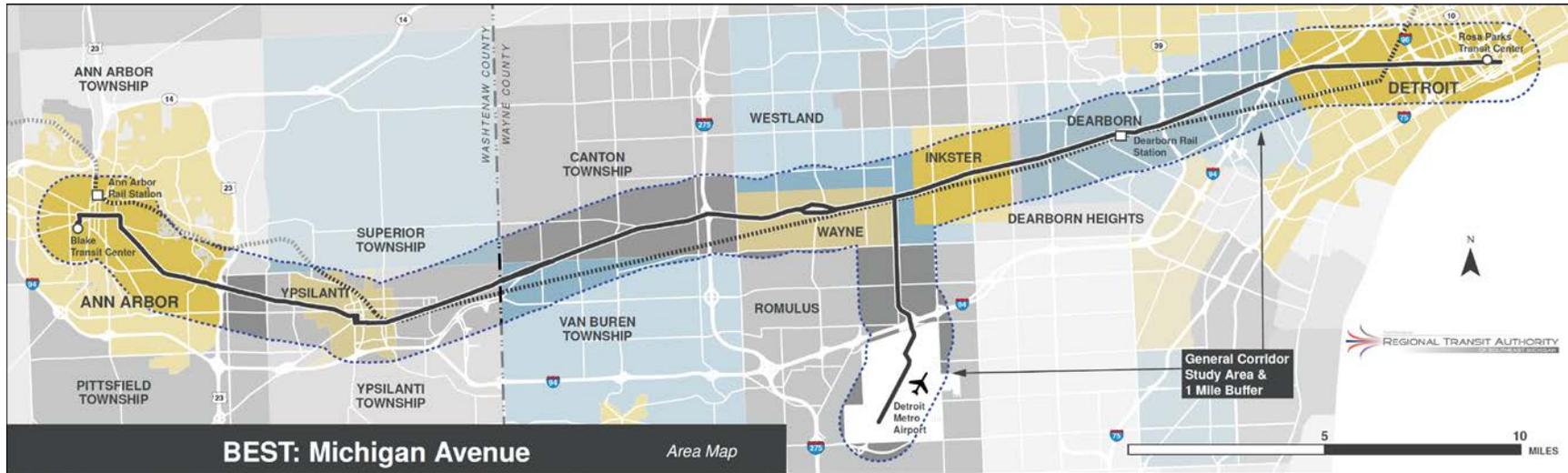
The study will expand on previous planning work to identify a locally-preferred transit investment alternative that facilitates safe, efficient and expanded levels of mobility within the study corridor, and to improve connectivity between corridor communities and the region. Additional reasons for this study include improving connections with other local and regional transit routes (including the Gratiot and Woodward Avenue corridors), supporting future development within the corridor, and increasing transit accessibility to Metro Airport.

Following a multi-phase, iterative alternative development and evaluation process that is supported by extensive public engagement activities, the RTA Planning and Service Coordination Committee will recommend the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) to the RTA Board of Directors (Board) for adoption. The LPA will be the transit investment alternative that best meets the purpose and need for the project (as defined in this report) and is competitive for funding through the FTA’s New/Small Starts capital funding program. The RTA Board will submit the LPA to the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) for adoption into its 2040 Regional Transportation Plan for Southeast Michigan.

The study is scheduled for completion in Spring 2016.



Figure 1-1: BEST: Michigan Avenue Study Corridor



## 1.2 Summary of Project Purpose and Need

### Purpose

High-capacity transit investment in the BEST: Michigan Avenue corridor will accommodate anticipated growth in travel demand, support mobility options that match emerging demographic trends and preferences, leverage existing transportation infrastructure to improve connectivity, and encourage sustainable development patterns that reduce reliance on single-occupant vehicles and support transit, bicycle, and pedestrian mobility.

### Need

- **Current BEST: Michigan Avenue corridor transit service does not efficiently, effectively, or competitively connect corridor residents, employees, and visitors with their destinations.** High capacity transit investments are needed to leverage existing transit service and infrastructure to support expanded corridor-wide mobility.
  - **There are strong transit markets at the western and eastern ends of the study corridor, but no transit connections between them.** The corridor transit networks in Wayne and Washtenaw Counties are separated by a 10-mile gap that has no transit service.

- **Employment destinations are spread throughout the corridor; the existing transit network does not facilitate efficient, auto-competitive service options to match existing corridor commutes.** Improved transit connectivity between homes and jobs across the corridor would expand job access and opportunity. Transit travel times between Wayne and downtown Detroit (60 to 110 minutes) are at least twice as long as the same trip by car (30 to 50 minutes).
- **Transit connections from the eastern half of the corridor to Metro Airport take three to four times longer than the same trip made by car.** Transit travel times between Detroit and Metro Airport (100 to 135 minutes) are at least three times longer than the same trip by car (24 to 40 minutes); transit travel times between Central Dearborn and Metro Airport (85 minutes) are four times longer than the same trip by car (16 to 22 minutes).
- **The BEST: Michigan Avenue corridor includes many population groups that are likely to be dependent on transit.** High-capacity transit investment is necessary to support access to opportunities and improved quality of life for transit-dependent residents.
  - **A significantly higher percentage of the study area population lives below the poverty line, compared to the State of Michigan and the US, and that percentage is increasing.** Nearly 30 percent of the study area population lives below the poverty line, compared to 16.8 percent in the State of Michigan and 15.4 percent in the US. The percent of study area residents living below the poverty line has grown by more than 77 percent between 2000 and 2013.
  - **The senior population is growing the fastest in areas with limited or no transit service;** the largest senior populations continue to be located in areas with comparatively high levels of transit service. Canton Township’s senior population grew the fastest between 2000 and 2013 (an increase of more than 3,600), but Detroit has a senior population that is more than seven times larger than any other corridor community (almost 84,000).
  - **The number of zero-car households within the corridor is increasing.** The highest rates of growth in number of zero-car households (Pittsfield Township, Superior Township, and Ypsilanti Township) are occurring outside of the communities with the greatest number of zero-car households (Detroit, Ann Arbor, and Westland).
  - **The corridor college student population is large and growing.** The share of study area college student population is double the student share of the population found at the State and US levels.
- **Study area population and employment densities are higher than regional densities, and growth is forecast to more evenly distribute throughout the corridor.** High-capacity transit investment is necessary to accommodate this growth and to improve multimodal connections between growing communities throughout the corridor.
  - **Total study area population is forecast to remain steady through 2040, but will redistribute among the corridor communities.** Detroit is forecast to remain the largest corridor community (by a factor of five) despite forecast population losses; the communities with the greatest forecast increase in actual population are on the western end of the corridor (Ann Arbor, Pittsfield Township, Superior Township, and Ypsilanti Township).

- **Study area employment density is almost four times greater than the four-county RTA region.** The highest concentrations of employment density in 2010 were spread throughout the corridor: Ann Arbor, Dearborn, Detroit, Wayne, and Ypsilanti. These communities will continue to have the highest concentrations of employment density through 2040.
- **The communities in the study area have demonstrated a commitment to sustainable growth strategies in their adopted plans and policies.** Detroit, Dearborn, Ann Arbor, Wayne, and Ypsilanti are among corridor communities whose plans identify targeted, transit-supportive development patterns as priorities for the community and the BEST: Michigan Avenue corridor. High-capacity transit system investment that leverages existing transportation facilities while reducing reliance on single-occupant vehicles will be necessary to achieve these goals.

## 2.0 Public and Stakeholder Involvement

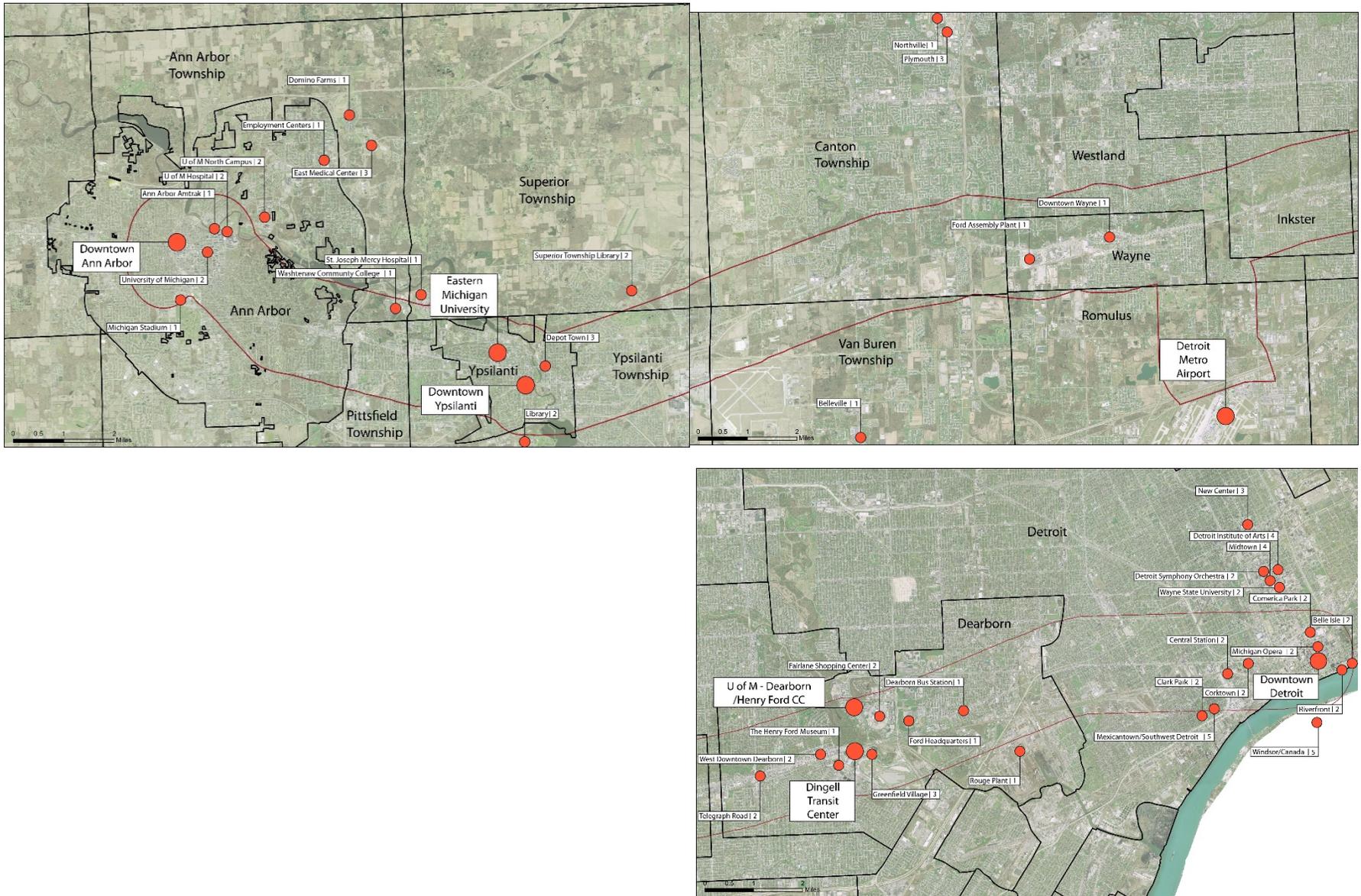
The public involvement preparation process for the BEST: Michigan Avenue corridor study began with internal team meetings with the RTA to select Policy and Technical committee members, compile stakeholder lists and to organize website and publicity activities.

Phase one of project public involvement officially launched on May 12, 2015 with a project rally in Campus Martius in Downtown Detroit. The event featured stakeholder speakers and an introduction to the project by the CEO of the RTA. Attendees were provided with multiple outlets to provide feedback including both written and online interaction.

Following the launch Rally the project team participated in five full-day public outreach events, one held in each of the four counties (Wayne, Oakland, Macomb and Washtenaw) and the City of Detroit. The events were held in an open house style, offering attendees the opportunity and flexibility to come and go as they please to learn about the projects and to give feedback.

The initial outreach events attracted about 500 attendees. We received 229 in-person comments and 55 virtual comments. During the County sessions, informational boards for the BEST: Michigan Avenue Corridor included area demographic information, a project schedule, rapid transit definitions/explanations and two public input activities. We asked attendees to map destinations of interest the corridor and to vote on transit goals and priorities. The results of the activities can be found below.

Figure 2-1: Points of Interest Identified during May 2015 Open Houses



**Table 2-1: May 2015 Open House Activity Results: Prioritized Needs for Transit Investment**

	<b>1 (Least Important)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6 (Most Important)</b>
Corridor Connections	1	0	1	2	2	27
Speed	4	1	2	3	0	22
Economic Development	2	2	3	3	2	24
Efficiency	4	4	2	0	2	13
Airport Access	7	1	5	2	1	16

Overall, equity, better connections and economic development were repeated themes throughout the outreach effort. The airport and urban areas loomed as desired destinations, while large employment and entertainment district also were popular selections.

Following the broad public outreach events the project team reached out to local communities and stakeholders to host location targeted meetings. These meetings included presentations for Downtown Development Authorities, Chambers of Commerce, the Airport Authority, local governments, farmers markets and community events. These smaller meetings allowed the project team to narrow in from the larger concepts received from the public on specific needs and goals of the project.

### **3.0 Goals and Objectives**

Based on public involvement input and analyses of existing conditions, the following six goals and related objectives have been established for the BEST: Michigan Avenue corridor. These will be utilized for the development of evaluation criteria used in comparing the alternatives for the corridor.



**Table 3-1: BEST: Michigan Avenue Goals and Objectives**

Goals	Objectives
<p>Increase the efficiency, attractiveness and utilization of transit for all users</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide reliable, frequent service that improves the experience of existing customers</li> <li>• Provide capacity for future growth</li> <li>• Provide improved passenger amenities and infrastructure</li> <li>• Ensure safe and comfortable transit services and facilities for all users</li> </ul>
<p>Improve multi-modal connectivity between the eastern and western ends of the study area and intermediate communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide frequent, high-capacity, one-seat transit connections between key study area activity generators</li> <li>• Improve pedestrian and non-motorized access to corridor transit stops/stations</li> <li>• Ensure sufficient park-and-ride access to the system</li> </ul>
<p>Enhance connectivity of the corridor to the regional transportation network</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support regional planning efforts for a more balanced, multi-modal transportation network in the region</li> <li>• Coordinate with existing and planned transit services</li> <li>• Ensure connectivity to services connecting travelers to destinations within and beyond the study area</li> <li>• Provide for acceptable traffic operations and parking options in the study area</li> <li>• Enhance connections to non-motorized transportation</li> </ul>
<p>Support land use and development patterns that reflect the vision for growth contained in local and regional plans and policies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximize the economic development and revitalization efforts of local communities</li> <li>• Improve access to employment concentrations to support regional economic development</li> <li>• Support institutional and key stakeholder planning efforts, particularly strategic growth planning for study area educational institutions and major employers</li> <li>• Support local and regional goals for transit-friendly development within the study area</li> </ul>

Goals	Objectives
Contribute to regional equity, sustainability and quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a more efficient and sustainable transportation system that reduces energy usage, pollution and costs of living</li> <li>• Minimize impacts to the natural environment</li> <li>• Increase mobility and accessibility for transit-dependent populations</li> <li>• Maximize opportunities for place making and enhanced character in study area communities</li> </ul>
Develop and select an implementable and community-supported project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define and select transit improvements with strong public, stakeholder and agency support</li> <li>• Define and select transit improvements that are cost-effective and financially feasible, both in the short- and long-term</li> <li>• Define and select transit improvements that are competitive for Federal Transit Administration funding</li> </ul>

## 4.0 Evaluation Criteria

In order to evaluate the different transit modes and alignment options and identify the appropriate mode-alignment pairings that will define the detailed alternatives, the BEST: Michigan Avenue study will follow a three-step method.

- The first step (“Tier 1: Fatal Flaw Analysis”) will entail the assessment of each mode and alignment relative to overall implementation viability.
- The second step (“Tier 2: Detailed Evaluation”) will assess the mode/alignment pairing that passed the Tier 1 Analysis.
- The alternative(s) that fare(s) best against the detailed criteria in this second step will be identified as Preferred Alternative(s) and further refined in the third step (“Tier 3: Refine the LPA”). The Locally Preferred Alternative will be identified at the conclusion of the third step.

The evaluation criteria associated with each step are a combination of quantitative and qualitative performance measures. The Tier 1 phase will apply fewer and broader measures, including information from previous corridor/area studies. The Tier 2 phase will apply more and finer performance measures and will identify the Preferred Alternative(s), and the third step will evaluate the Preferred Alternative(s) against federal criteria to determine the Locally Preferred Alternative. This three-step process will result in the identification of an LPA that not only meets locally-identified project purpose and needs, but is also competitive for federal funding.

Table 4-1 presents the evaluation criteria that are likely to be used during the three steps of alternative evaluation. Note that each successive step builds upon the criteria from the previous step, ensuring a consistent rating throughout.

**Table 4-1: BEST: Michigan Avenue Preliminary Evaluation Criteria**

Project Goals	Tier 1: Fatal Flaw Analysis (Qualitative)	Tier 2: Detailed Evaluation (Qualitative and Quantitative)	Tier 3: Refine the LPA (Quantitative and Qualitative)
Increase the efficiency, attractiveness and utilization of transit for all users	Ridership capacity	Ridership Number of passengers per service-hour Estimated vehicle hours travelled (VHT) Ability to provide appropriate transit capacity	Mobility improvements*
Improve multi-modal connectivity between the eastern and western ends of the study area and intermediate communities	Multi-modal connectivity	Connections between activity centers Community mobility improvements	Mobility improvements* Congestion relief*
Enhance connectivity of the corridor to the regional transportation network	Regional connectivity	Potential right-of-way impacts Bicycle and pedestrian safety Parking and traffic impacts	Congestion relief*
Support land use and development patterns that reflect the vision for growth contained in local and regional plans and policies	Land use / economic development	Compatibility with local and regional plans Land use and economic development opportunities	Economic development* Land use*
Contribute to regional equity, sustainability and quality of life	Environmental impacts	Consistent with existing community character Environmental impacts/benefits	Environmental benefits*

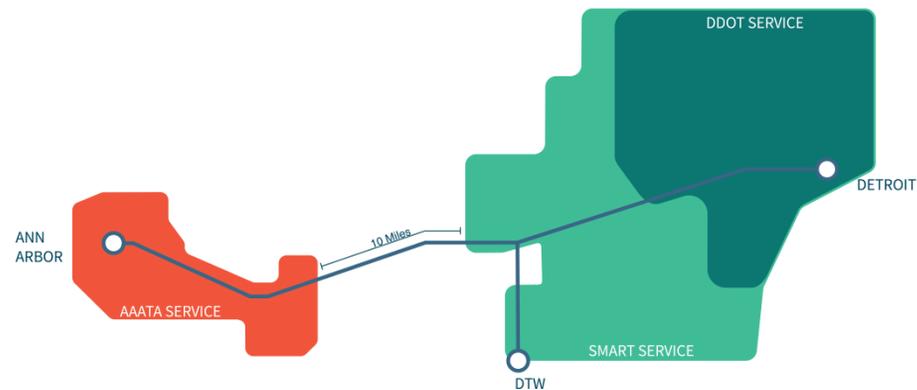
Project Goals	Tier 1: Fatal Flaw Analysis (Qualitative)	Tier 2: Detailed Evaluation (Qualitative and Quantitative)	Tier 3: Refine the LPA (Quantitative and Qualitative)
Develop and select an implementable and community-supported project	Capital cost Community support	Capital and operating and maintenance costs Cost effectiveness Community support	Financial capacity analysis* Cost effectiveness*

\*consistent with FTA New Starts/Small Starts criteria

## 5.0 Project Need #1

**Current BEST: Michigan Avenue corridor transit service does not efficiently, effectively, or competitively connect corridor residents, employees, and visitors with their destinations.** High capacity transit investments are needed to leverage existing transit service and infrastructure to support expanded corridor-wide mobility.

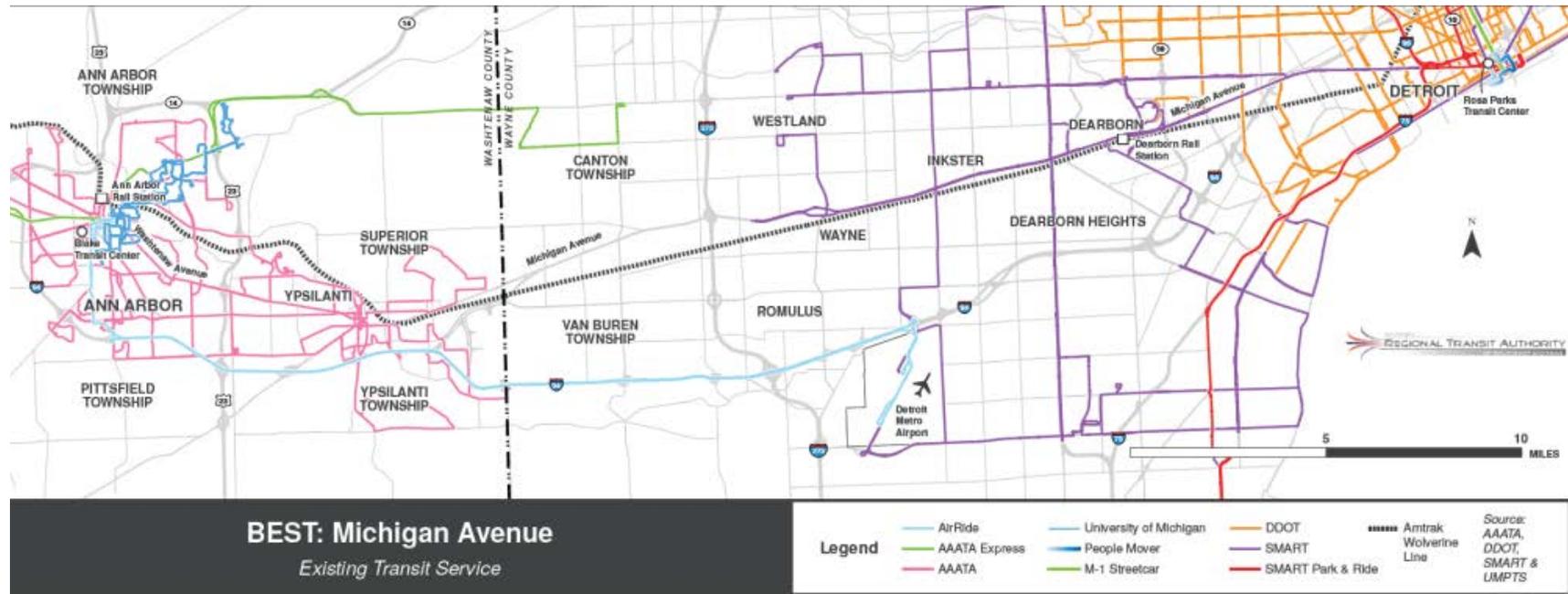
### CURRENT TRANSIT DOESN'T SERVE ALL RESIDENTS



**5.1 There are strong transit markets at the western and eastern ends of the study corridor, but no transit connections between them.** The corridor transit networks in Wayne and Washtenaw Counties are separated by a 10-mile gap that has no transit service.

As shown in Figure 5-1, Ann Arbor and Detroit both have strong transit networks comprised of multiple providers, but this network gap effectively reduces the full benefit of each community’s transit investments by preventing connectivity between them. This gap in the corridor transit network limits the mobility of the residents within that gap, limits access to the businesses that operate within the gap, and prevents the expanded access to opportunity that would result from a corridor-wide transit network.

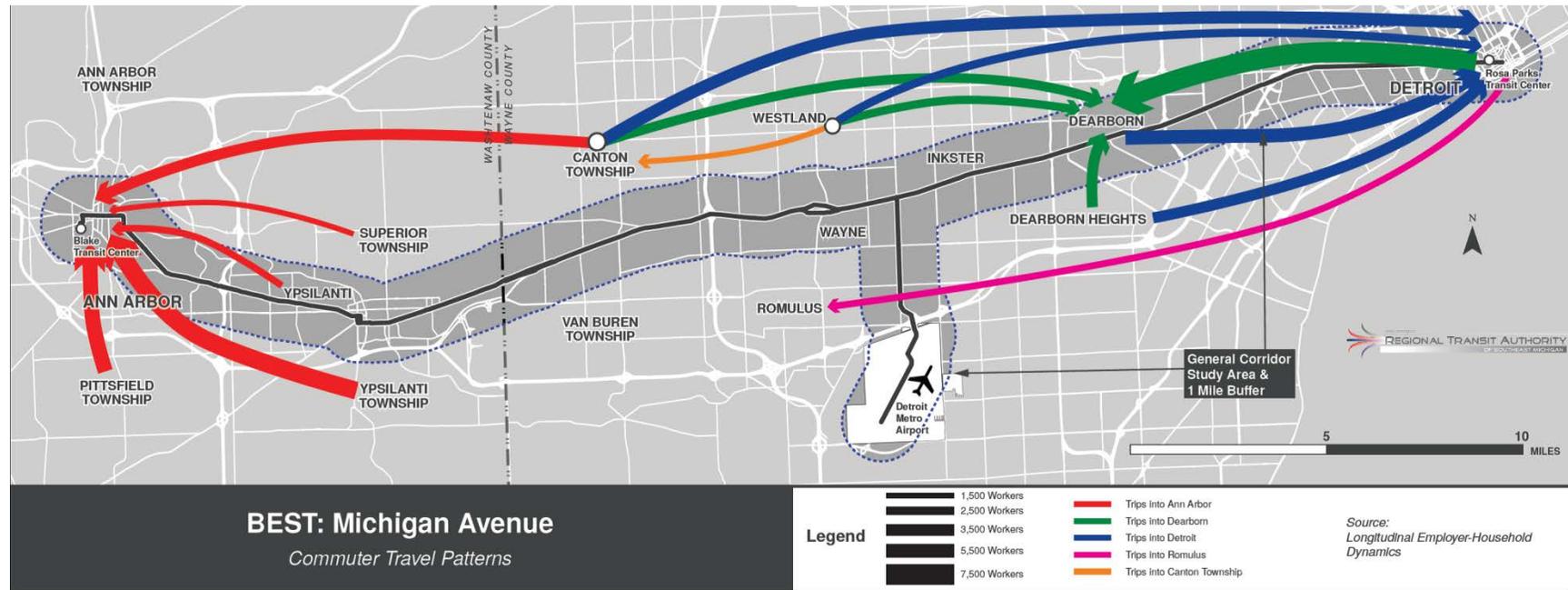
Figure 5-1: BEST: Michigan Avenue Corridor Transit Network



5.2 **Employment destinations are spread throughout the corridor; the existing transit network does not facilitate efficient, auto-competitive service options to match existing corridor commutes.** Improved transit connectivity between homes and jobs across the corridor would expand job access and opportunity. Transit travel times between Wayne and downtown Detroit (60 to 110 minutes) are at least twice as long as the same trip by car (30 to 50 minutes).

As shown in Figure 5-2, the largest corridor community commute flows are directed towards the employment centers of Ann Arbor on the western end of the corridor and Dearborn and Detroit on the eastern end of the corridor. Residents of Canton Township are the only corridor commuters that comprise comparatively large flows to both ends of the corridor; corridor workers living on the eastern end of the corridor tend to work on the eastern end of the corridor, and corridor workers living on the western end of the corridor tend to work on the western end of the corridor.

**Figure 5-2: BEST: Michigan Avenue Corridor Commute Flows**



As shown in Table 5-1, only 3,385 corridor resident commuters (1.5 percent) travel from one end of the corridor to the other for work, despite the fact that Ann Arbor, Dearborn and Detroit are major centers of both population and employment. The low commute flow between these three centers of population and employment likely is not reflective of market potential, but instead is indicative of deficiencies in the corridor transit and transportation network. Connecting the transit networks on each end of the corridor will support existing commuter demand for cross-corridor trips and enable the growth of that market by improving access to job opportunities across the corridor.

**Table 5-1: Commute Flows between Eastern and Western End of the Corridor**

Place of Residence	Place of Work	Number of Commuters
Ann Arbor	Detroit	1,099
Ann Arbor Township	Detroit	56
Pittsfield Township	Detroit	407
West End of Corridor to East End of Corridor Commuting		1,562
Detroit	Ann Arbor	1,324



Place of Residence	Place of Work	Number of Commuters
Dearborn	Ann Arbor	499
Commuting from Eastern Wayne County to Ann Arbor		1,823
<b>Total number of people who both live and work in the corridor</b>		<b>232,458</b>

Source: Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics 2010

As shown in Table 5-2, transit travel times between centers of population and employment often compare unfavorably to the same trip made by car – and are not an option for cross-corridor commuters or those commuting to or from the mid-corridor transit network gap.

The reverse commute market – those that live in a major employment center (like Detroit, Dearborn or Ann Arbor) but commute to another community for work – is not well-served by the existing transit network, which is oriented towards moving people into large employment centers during the peak hour. Federal transit funding programs that could be leveraged to support these reverse commute transit trips (including Job Access and Reverse Commute and New Freedom) are subject to fluctuations in federal funding levels, which make them unstable as a viable, long-term option to fund commuter-oriented service.

The connection of and investment in the corridor transit network will make transit an alternative that commuters *choose* over driving because it is faster, saves them money, reduces their carbon footprint, and creates additional time to work, email, read, or relax; it will also expand access to job opportunities for workers who *need* transit to commute.

**Table 5-2: Transit Travel Time Comparison to/from Employment Centers**

Origin/Destination Pair	Transit Service Provider	Transit Trip Time (Minutes)	Automobile Driving Time (Minutes)
Wayne to Central Dearborn	SMART	30	20-30
Wayne to downtown Detroit	SMART	60	30-50
Wayne to downtown Detroit	SMART and DDOT (Transfer)	65-110	
Central Dearborn to Downtown Detroit	SMART	25	18-30
Central Dearborn to Downtown Detroit	DDOT	35	
Ann Arbor to Detroit	Not Available	NA	40-60

Sources: Peak Hour Travel Times provided by DDOT, SMART, TheRide, and Google Maps



**5.3 Transit connections from the eastern half of the corridor to Metro Airport take three to four times longer than the same trip made by car.** Transit travel times between Detroit and Metro Airport (100 to 135 minutes) are at least three times longer than the same trip by car (24 to 40 minutes); transit travel times between Central Dearborn and Metro Airport (85 minutes) are four times longer than the same trip by car (16 to 22 minutes).

Transit travel times from the western end of the corridor (Ann Arbor, in particular) are competitive with auto travel times, unlike the same trip made to or from the eastern end of the corridor. Ensuring equitable levels of high-quality transit access to the airport from across the corridor will improve multi-modal connectivity to destinations beyond the corridor and may expand airport-related job opportunities for transit-reliant residents on the eastern end of the corridor.



**Table 5-3: Transit Travel Time Comparison to Metro Airport**

Origin/Destination Pair	Transit Service Provider	Transit Trip Time (Minutes)	Automobile Driving Time (Minutes)
Ann Arbor to Metro Airport	AirRide	45-55	30-50
Downtown Detroit to Metro Airport	SMART	100	24-40
Metro Airport to Downtown Detroit	DDOT and SMART (Transfer)	125-135	
Central Dearborn to Metro Airport (McNamara Terminal)	SMART (2 Transfers)	85	16-22

Sources: Peak Hour Travel Times provided by DDOT, SMART, TheRide, and Google Maps

## 6.0 Project Need #2

**The BEST: Michigan Avenue corridor includes many population groups that are likely to be dependent on transit.** High-capacity transit investment is necessary to support access to opportunities and improved quality of life for transit-dependent residents.

POPULATION GROUPS LIKELY TO DEPEND ON TRANSIT ARE GROWING

**30%**

OF STUDY AREA  
RESIDENTS LIVE  
IN POVERTY

**2.2 X**

MORE STUDENTS  
PER CAPITA  
THAN THE STATE

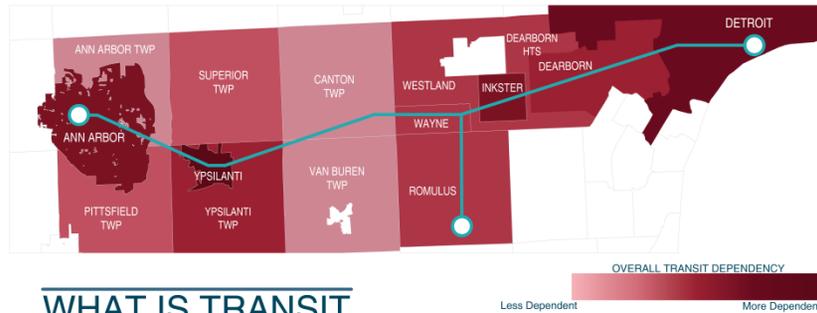
**17.5%**

INCREASE IN  
SENIORS BETWEEN  
2000 & 2013

TRANSIT DEPENDENCY IS GROWING FASTEST IN AREAS WITHOUT SERVICE



HIGH OVERALL TRANSIT DEPENDENCY AT THE ENDS OF THE CORRIDOR



**WHAT IS TRANSIT DEPENDENCY?**

- STUDENT POPULATION
- ZERO CAR HOUSEHOLDS
- POPULATION LIVING IN POVERTY
- SENIOR POPULATION



**6.1 A significantly higher percentage of the study area population lives below the poverty line, compared to the State of Michigan and the US, and that percentage is increasing.** Nearly 30 percent of the study area population lives below the poverty line, compared to 16.8 percent in the State of Michigan and 15.4 percent in the US. The percent of study area residents living below the poverty line has grown by more than 77 percent between 2000 and 2013.

Reliable, high-quality transit service is a critical link to connect those living below the poverty line with employment opportunities, education and services that otherwise may not be accessible without a car. While the percent of population living below the poverty line has grown for every community along the corridor, some of the higher rates of growth are found in communities with little or no transit service, including Westland, Canton and Van Buren Townships, and Dearborn Heights, as shown in Table 6-1. While the percent of residents in these communities living in poverty is comparatively lower than other corridor communities, the strong growth rate in that population indicates a

Auto ownership accounts for 17% of spending by the average American household



growing demand to make transit network investments that support each resident’s mobility and quality of life. Poverty rates in within the study area and corridor communities exceed the poverty rates of Wayne and Washtenaw Counties, the RTA Region, the State of Michigan, and the US.

**Table 6-1: Percent of Population below the Poverty Line, 2000 to 2013**

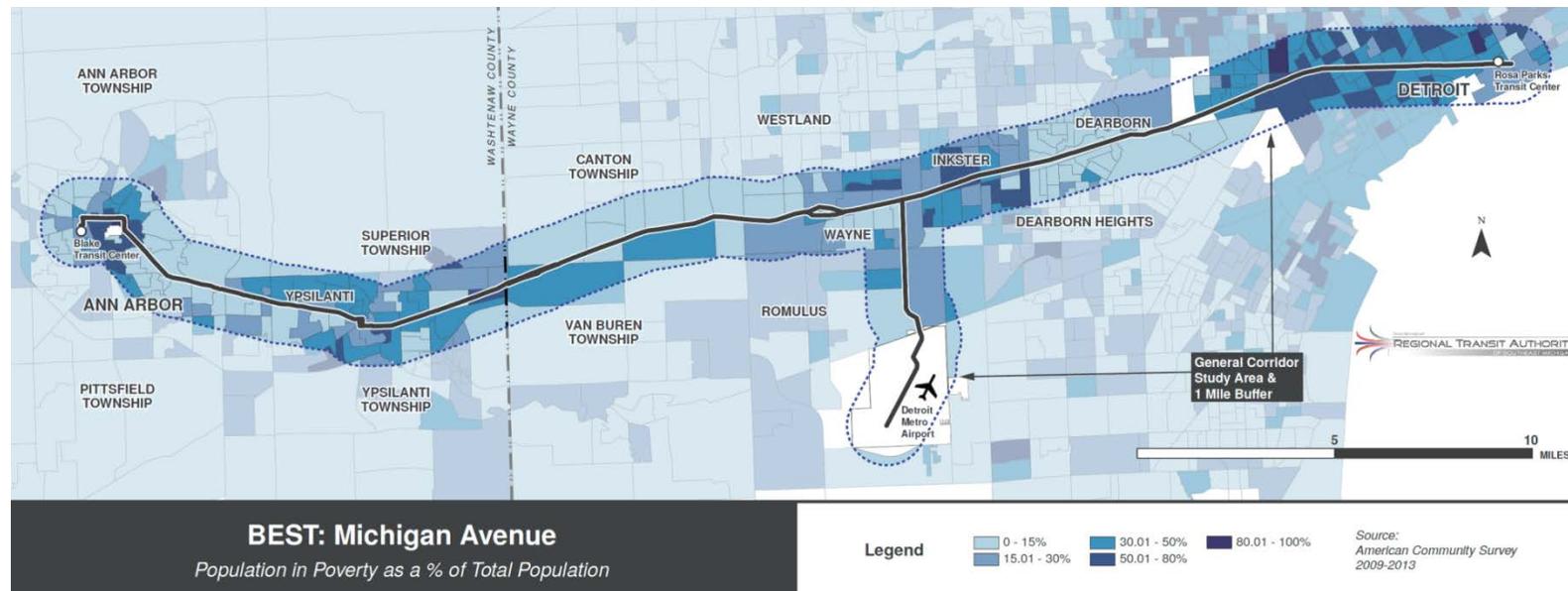
Communities Along Corridor	2000	2013	% Change ('00-'13)
Ann Arbor	16.6%	22.1%	34.9%
Ann Arbor Township	3.2%	6.0%	92.6%
Canton Township	3.7%	6.0%	90.0%
Dearborn	16.1%	27.5%	69.7%
Dearborn Heights	6.1%	19.0%	206.3%
Detroit	26.1%	39.3%	11.9%
Inkster	19.5%	38.2%	64.0%
Pittsfield Township	9.1%	10.7%	37.6%
Romulus	12.6%	21.4%	75.7%
Superior Township	9.6%	10.3%	31.6%
Van Buren Township	6.3%	12.4%	138.5%
Wayne	9.1%	17.5%	75.9%
Westland	6.8%	15.5%	119.7%

Communities Along Corridor	2000	2013	% Change ('00-'13)
Ypsilanti	25.8%	30.2%	3.4%
Ypsilanti Township	10.5%	20.6%	113.9%
Study Area	19.2%	29.9%	77.6%
Corridor Communities	20.2%	29.4%	25.1%
Wayne + Washtenaw Counties	15.7%	23.0%	32.6%
RTA Region	11.1%	17.2%	50.2%
State of Michigan	10.5%	16.8%	59.2%
United States	12.4%	15.4%	37.5%

Source: Census 2000 and 2009-2013 ACS 5-Year Estimates

As shown in Figure 6-1, some of the highest concentrations of people living below poverty can be found in communities that do have robust transit service – Detroit and Ann Arbor. Expanding the mobility of these residents outside of their communities through a corridor-wide transit network will also improve their access to employment, education and services that are currently inaccessible other than by car.

**Figure 6-1: BEST: Michigan Avenue Corridor – Percent of Population below the Poverty Line**



For the average American household, transportation accounts for the second biggest slice of household budgets after housing, accounting for over 17 percent of all expenditures in 2013. Moreover, as incomes increase, the share spent on transportation decreases. As shown in Table 6-2, low-income households spend a significantly larger percentage of their income on transportation in comparison to wealthy households. For low-income households who acutely experience the cost of car ownership, expanding transit options may help to decrease household transportation expenses and allow for additional spending on other household budget items like food and healthcare and better access to job opportunities.

**Table 6-2: National Data on Household Spending on Transportation (2013)**

	Low Income Household Income	Average Household Income	Wealthy Household Income
	\$17,508	\$63,784	\$238,245
% of Annual Income	21.3%	14.1%	8.4%
% of Annual Expenditures	14.6%	17.6%	15.8%
<i>Based on data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics</i>			

**6.2 The senior population is growing the fastest in areas with limited or no transit service; the largest senior populations continue to be located in areas with comparatively high levels of transit service.** Canton Township’s senior population grew the fastest between 2000 and 2013 (an increase of more than 3,600), but Detroit has a senior population that is more than seven times larger than any other corridor community (almost 84,000).

Study area residents over age 65 will become less reliant on cars either by choice or because they are unable to continue to drive themselves. Having transit options readily available to all age groups will ensure a well-utilized system and continued mobility through all stages of life. While the percent of study area population over age 65 is slightly lower than at the region, state or national level, and has slightly declined between 2000 and 2013 (Table 6-3), pockets of strong growth in areas of low/no transit service - such as Canton Township – demonstrate a need for transit service to support aging in place and quality of life for the study area’s seniors.

Transit investment and increased corridor connectivity will also benefit the majority of corridor community seniors, who are living in Detroit and have access to a robust transit system. Expanding transit connectivity along the length of the corridor will increase their access to health care and recreational opportunities that are currently only accessible by car.

**Table 6-3: Population Age 65 and Older, 2000 to 2013**

Communities along Corridor	2000		2013		Absolute Change ('00-'13)	% Change ('00-'13)
	Total	% of Pop.	Total	% of Pop.		
Ann Arbor	9,017	7.9%	11,393	9.9%	-15,483	26.4%
Ann Arbor Township	719	16.4%	787	17.5%	639	9.5%



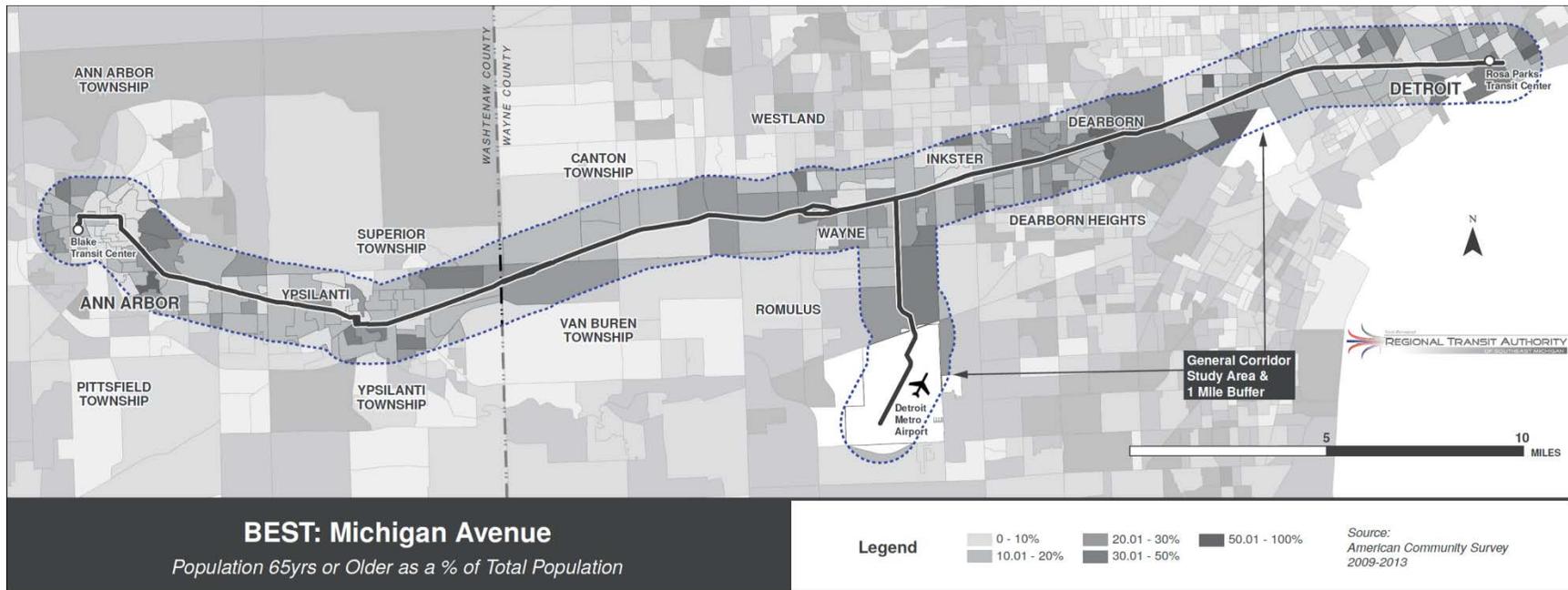
Communities along Corridor	2000		2013		Absolute Change ('00-'13)	% Change ('00-'13)
Canton Township	4,534	5.9%	8,212	9.2%	-3,713	81.1%
Dearborn	15,232	15.6%	11,519	11.9%	2,376	-24.4%
Dearborn Heights	10,914	18.7%	9,156	16.0%	-1,758	-16.1%
Detroit	99,056	10.4%	83,573	11.8%	3,678	-15.6%
Inkster	3,251	10.8%	2,795	11.1%	1,181	-14.0%
Pittsfield Township	1,722	5.7%	3,013	8.5%	1,291	75.0%
Romulus	1,804	7.9%	2,731	11.5%	-456	51.4%
Superior Township	834	7.8%	1,627	12.4%	927	95.1%
Van Buren Township	1,551	6.6%	2,532	8.9%	981	63.2%
Wayne	2,230	11.7%	2,488	14.3%	258	11.6%
Westland	11,456	13.2%	12,095	14.5%	87	5.6%
Ypsilanti	1,571	7.1%	1,658	8.4%	793	5.5%
Ypsilanti Township	3,536	7.2%	4,717	8.8%	68	33.4%
<b>Study Area</b>	<b>25,027</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>29,342</b>	<b>10.6%</b>	<b>4,315</b>	<b>17.4%</b>
<b>Corridor Communities</b>	<b>167,427</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	<b>158,296</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	<b>-9,131</b>	<b>-5.5%</b>
<b>Wayne + Washtenaw Counties</b>	<b>275,253</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	<b>270,796</b>	<b>12.6%</b>	<b>-4,457</b>	<b>-1.6%</b>
<b>4 County RTA Region</b>	<b>517,863</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>561,310</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>43,447</b>	<b>8.4%</b>
<b>State of Michigan</b>	<b>1,219,018</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>1,405,233</b>	<b>14.2%</b>	<b>186,215</b>	<b>15.3%</b>
<b>United States</b>	<b>34,991,753</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>40,267,984</b>	<b>12.9%</b>	<b>5,276,231</b>	<b>15.1%</b>

Source: Census 2000 and 2009-2013 ACS 5-Year Estimates

As shown in Figure 6-2, high-density pockets of residents over age 65 can be found throughout the corridor, including in areas not currently served by transit. While they may comprise a smaller number of seniors than is found in Detroit, they face the same age-related transportation challenges, which can be mitigated through high-quality, corridor-wide transit investment.



**Figure 6-2: BEST: Michigan Avenue Corridor – Percent of Population Age 65 and Older**



**6.3 The number of zero-car households within the corridor is increasing.** The highest rates of growth in number of zero-car households (Pittsfield Township, Superior Township, and Ypsilanti Township) are occurring outside of the communities with the greatest number of zero-car households (Detroit, Ann Arbor, and Westland).

A zero-car household is one that does not have access to a car, either by financial necessity or by choice. For those who cannot afford a car, high-quality transit is particularly critical, as it is often the only transportation option that is available to them. Expanding corridor transit access will better connect these zero-car households to additional job and educational opportunities and services throughout the corridor and region.

Research has increasingly focused on the role that age plays in making the choice to become a zero-car household. The Millennial generation (born between 1980 and 2003) is leading trends toward lifestyles that are less dependent on driving. Literature shows that Millennials are more likely to want to live in urban and walkable neighborhoods, they are eager to take other modes of transportation (especially transit), and they embrace technologies that open up new and non-driving transportation options.<sup>1</sup> Attracting this generation to live and work within the study area will contribute to sustainable economic growth, as these are the workers that are increasingly driving the locational choices of major

<sup>1</sup> U.S. PIRG Education Fund and Frontier Group, Millennials in Motion: Changing Travel Habits of Young Americans and the Implications for Public Policy, October 2014.

employers, as described in more detailed in Section 7.2. Transit investment will be a key tool in creating the transportation network and quality life that is attractive to this generation.

As shown in Table 6-3, the number of study area zero-car households increased by more than 20 percent between 2000 and 2013, compared to declines at the county, region and national levels. The State of Michigan saw a modest increase during that time period. The largest growth in number of zero-car households is found at the western end of the corridor – in Ann Arbor, Westland and Ypsilanti Township – while the largest declines can be found at the eastern end of the corridor – in Detroit and Dearborn.

As shown in Figure 6-3 and Table 6-4, however, the highest densities of zero-car households are found in Detroit and Ypsilanti. Parts of many communities along the study corridor, including Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Superior Township, Van Buren Township, Wayne, Romulus, Inkster, and Dearborn, have a greater percent of zero-car households than region, state, or national averages.

This data shows that whether a household is car-free by choice or necessity, the percentage of those households within the study area is comparatively high, the number of them is growing, and the growth is occurring fastest in areas that currently have limited or no transit service. An expanded corridor-wide transit network will positively impact the mobility of zero-car households throughout the corridor.

**Table 6-4: Zero-Car Households, 2000 to 2013**

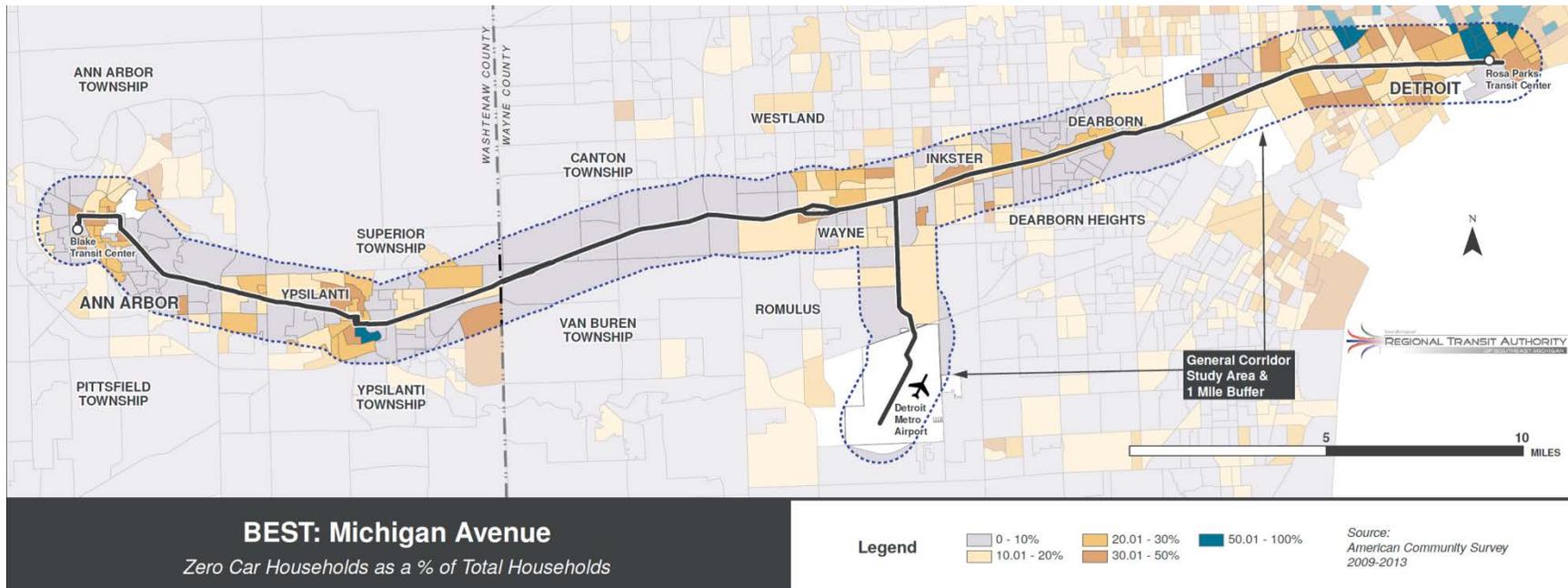
Communities along Corridor	2000		2013		Absolute Change ('00-'13)	% Change ('00-'13)
	Total	% of Total HH	Total	% of Total HH		
Ann Arbor	4,361	9.5%	5,405	11.8%	1,044	23.9%
Ann Arbor Township	38	1.9%	19	1.1%	-19	-50.0%
Canton Township	935	3.4%	1,120	3.6%	185	19.8%
Dearborn	3,909	10.6%	2,607	8.1%	-1,302	-33.3%
Dearborn Heights	1,582	6.8%	1,428	6.7%	-154	-9.7%
Detroit	73,682	21.9%	61,752	24.1%	-11,930	-16.2%
Inkster	1,664	14.9%	1,518	16.0%	-146	-8.8%
Pittsfield Township	578	4.9%	927	6.7%	349	60.4%
Romulus	598	7.1%	695	7.7%	97	16.2%
Superior Township	282	7.1%	410	8.3%	128	45.4%
Van Buren Township	406	4.1%	479	4.2%	73	18.0%
Wayne	695	9.4%	860	12.6%	165	23.7%
Westland	2,840	7.8%	3,301	9.6%	461	16.2%
Ypsilanti	1,209	14.1%	1,354	17.6%	145	12.0%
Ypsilanti Township	1,264	6.3%	1,695	7.7%	431	34.1%



Communities along	2000		2013		Absolute	% Change
Study Area	13,718	14.1%	22,913	15.3%	9,195	20.4%
Corridor Communities	94,043	16.1%	83,570	16.2%	-10,473	-11.1%
Wayne + Washtenaw Counties	114,673	12.8%	103,449	12.8%	-11,224	-9.8%
4 County RTA Region	157,664	9.4%	152,514	9.4%	-5,150	-3.3%
State of Michigan	290,240	7.7%	299,812	7.8%	9,572	3.3%
United States	10,861,067	10.3%	10,483,007	9.1%	-378,060	-3.5%

Source: Census 2000 and 2009-2013 ACS 5 Year Estimates

Figure 6-3: BEST: Michigan Avenue Corridor: Percent of Zero-Car Households



**6.4 The corridor college student population is large and growing.** The share of study area college student population is double the student share of the population found at the State and US levels.

While the greatest concentration of college students is found in and around the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, there are also concentrations of students around Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, the University of Michigan’s Dearborn campus, and Wayne State’s campus in Detroit (see Table 6-5 and Figure 6-4). While the University of Michigan offers its own campus transit service (see Figure 5.1), college students across the corridor rely on public transit to access their campuses from off-campus housing and to access destinations in communities that surround the campuses.

A corridor-wide transit network would not only allow existing students to access destinations outside of their campuses, it would also enable residents living within the study area to consider educational opportunities that were previously unavailable to them because of transportation challenges.

**Table 6-5: College/University Student Population: 2000 to 2013**

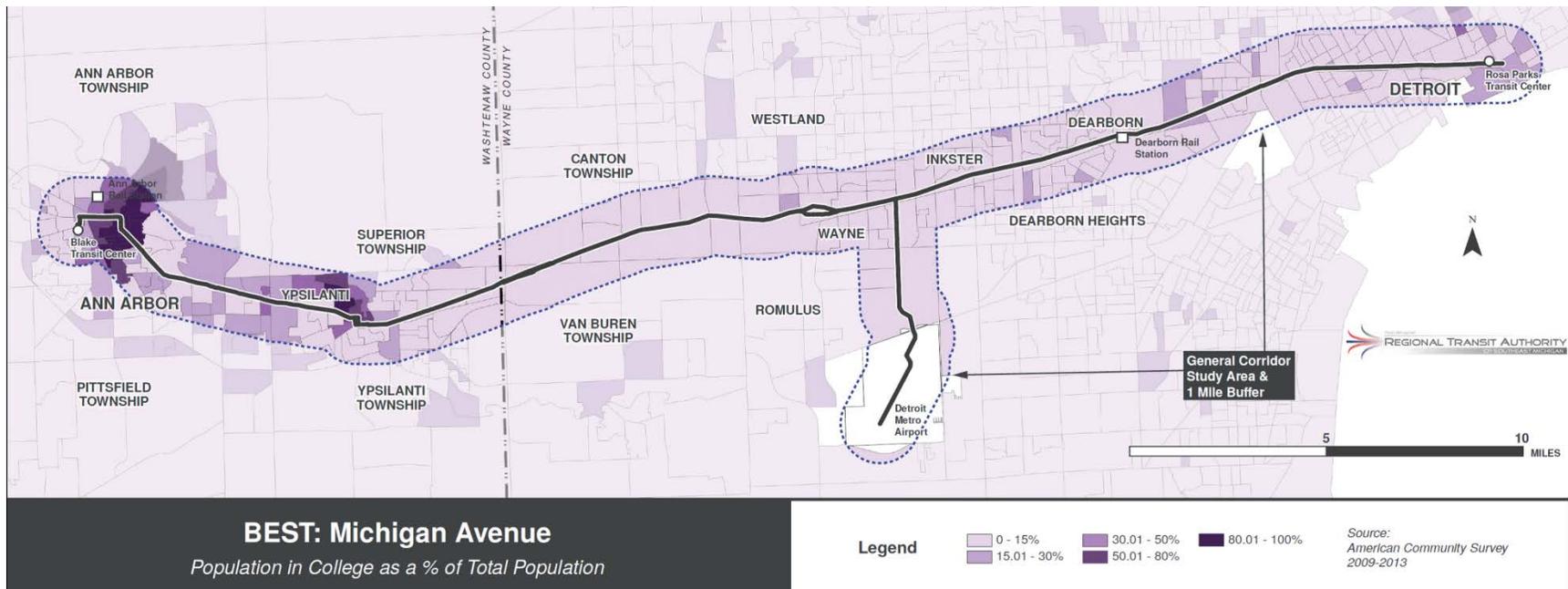
Communities along Corridor	2000		2013		Absolute Change ('00-'13)	% Change ('00-'13)
	Total	% of Pop.	Total	% of Pop.		
Ann Arbor	36,892	32.4%	40,814	35.4%	3,922	10.6%
Ann Arbor Township	377	8.6%	347	7.7%	-30	-8.0%
Canton Township	5,405	7.1%	7,490	8.4%	2,085	38.6%
Dearborn	6,741	6.9%	9,476	9.8%	2,735	40.6%
Dearborn Heights	3,436	5.9%	4,362	7.6%	926	26.9%
Detroit	48,926	5.1%	56,084	7.9%	7,158	14.6%
Inkster	1,574	5.2%	1,837	7.3%	263	16.7%
Pittsfield Township	3,749	12.4%	4,555	12.9%	806	21.5%
Romulus	848	3.7%	1,844	7.8%	996	117.5%
Superior Township	758	7.1%	1,229	9.3%	471	62.1%
Van Buren Township	1,579	6.7%	2,942	10.3%	1,363	86.3%
Wayne	848	4.5%	1,196	6.9%	348	41.0%
Westland	4,737	5.5%	7,125	8.5%	2,388	50.4%
Ypsilanti	8,827	39.7%	7,459	38.0%	-1,368	-15.5%
Ypsilanti Township	4,637	9.4%	5,358	10.0%	721	15.5%
<b>Study Area</b>	<b>37,535</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	<b>48,092</b>	<b>17.7%</b>	<b>10,557</b>	<b>28.1%</b>
<b>Corridor Communities</b>	<b>129,334</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>152,118</b>	<b>11.1%</b>	<b>22,784</b>	<b>17.6%</b>



Communities along	2000		2013		Absolute	% Change
Wayne + Washtenaw Counties	170,878	7.2%	205,286	9.5%	34,408	20.1%
4 County RTA Region	292,330	6.7%	357,699	8.5%	65,369	22.4%
State of Michigan	635,836	6.4%	804,956	8.1%	169,120	26.6%
United States	17,483,262	6.2%	23,454,805	7.5%	5,971,543	34.2%

Source: Census 2000 and 2009-2013 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Figure 6-4: BEST: Michigan Avenue Percent of Population in College/University



In addition to college and university students, some study area high school students may benefit from increased educational opportunities as a result of corridor transit investment. Detroit Public Schools (DPS) provides City of Detroit Department of Transportation bus passes to regular education students in grades 9 through 12, provided that the student attends his/her neighborhood school and resides more than two miles

from that school, and the student meets low-income guidelines traditionally used for free or reduced meal eligibility.<sup>2</sup> According to the City of Detroit Department of Transportation, DPS purchased 5,500 daily bus passes and 2,000 student reduced fare cards for the 2014-2015 school year.<sup>3</sup> Increased corridor connectivity may improve student access to their existing schools, and may improve connectivity to educational opportunities beyond his/her neighborhood school.

## 7.0 Project Need #3

**Study area population and employment densities are higher than regional densities, and growth is forecast to more evenly distribute throughout the corridor.** High-capacity transit investment is necessary to accommodate this growth and to improve multimodal connections between growing communities throughout the corridor.

### STUDY AREA POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT DENSITIES ARE HIGHER THAN REGIONAL DENSITIES



<sup>2</sup> Detroit Public Schools, Office of Transportation, <http://detroit.k12.mi.us/admin/operations/transportation/>

<sup>3</sup> Email from Casey McNeill, Grants Administrator for the City of Detroit Department of Transportation.

**7.1 Total study area population is forecast to remain steady through 2040, but will redistribute among the corridor communities.** Detroit is forecast to remain the largest corridor community (by a factor of five) despite forecast population losses; the communities with the greatest forecast increase in actual population are on the western end of the corridor (Ann Arbor, Pittsfield Township, Superior Township, and Ypsilanti Township).

As shown in Table 7-1, total study area population is forecast to change by just 0.1% through 2040, but communities along the corridor are forecast to fluctuate between 19 percent losses and 33 percent gains in population. Forecast population losses are clustered in the communities on the eastern end of the corridor, while population gains are forecast to occur along the western half of the corridor. The majority of corridor community population is forecast to live on the eastern side of the corridor, anchored by Detroit.

As population redistributes throughout the study area, an improved corridor-wide transit network can play a critical role in meeting the shifting travel demand on the corridor transportation network. More people will be moving to areas that have little or no transit service; improved corridor-wide transit service will enable those residents to choose transit and – for those who rely on transit to meet their travel needs – will support their continued mobility. Transit investment is also a tool that can help communities to focus growth and guide development patterns to achieve their visions for the future; this is discussed in more detail in Section 8.0, Project Need #4.

**Table 7-1: 2010 Population and 2040 Forecast Population**

Communities Along Corridor	2010 Population	2040 Population	Absolute Change ('10-'40)	% Change ('10-'40)
Ann Arbor	113,934	123,786	9,852	8.6%
Ann Arbor Township	4,067	5,414	1,347	33.1%
Canton Township	90,173	91,820	1,647	1.8%
Dearborn	98,146	95,436	-2,710	-2.8%
Dearborn Heights	57,774	57,967	193	0.3%
Detroit	713,862	614,969	-98,893	-13.9%
Inkster	25,369	20,612	-4,757	-18.8%
Pittsfield Township	34,663	39,376	4,713	13.6%
Romulus	23,989	22,685	-1,304	-5.4%
Superior Township	13,058	17,021	3,963	30.3%
Van Buren Township	28,821	30,265	1,444	5.0%
Wayne	17,593	16,250	-1,343	-7.6%
Westland	84,094	78,602	-5,492	-6.5%
Ypsilanti	19,435	19,937	502	2.6%
Ypsilanti Township	53,362	60,031	6,669	12.5%



Communities Along Corridor	2010 Population	2040 Population	Absolute Change ('10-'40)	% Change ('10-'40)
Study Area	290,796	290,472	-324	-.1%
Corridor Communities	1,378,340	1,294,171	-84,169	-5.6%
Wayne + Washtenaw Counties	2,165,375	2,043,166	-122,209	-5.1%
RTA Region	4,208,715	4,195,419	-13,296	-3.9%
SEMCOG Region	4,704,809	4,742,083	37,274	0.4%

Source: 2009-2013 ACS 5-Year Estimates and SEMCOG 2040 Regional Forecast Report

**7.2 Study area employment density is almost four times greater than the four-county RTA region.** The highest concentrations of employment density in 2010 were spread throughout the corridor: Ann Arbor, Dearborn, Detroit, Wayne, and Ypsilanti. These communities will continue to have the highest concentrations of employment density through 2040.

The study area is one of the employment engines for the four-county RTA region. From Metro Airport to Ford Motor Company World Headquarters to mom-and-pop shops, the study area includes a density of job opportunities that draws employees from within the corridor, from throughout the region, and beyond. Corridor-wide transit service will give employers access to a broader employment pool while giving study area residents increased access to job opportunities throughout the corridor. This expanded connectivity to a larger talent pool will help study area businesses to stay competitive and can help to provide study area employees with a foundation for economic sustainability.

**Table 7-2: Employment Density, 2010 and 2040**

	2010	2040
Study Area	3,175	3,465
Corridor Communities	1,628	1,785
Wayne + Washtenaw Counties	817	883
Four County RTA Region	842	939

Source: SEMCOG 2040 Regional Forecast Report

As discussed in Section 6.3, Millennials – the 18- to 34- year olds that will rival the Baby Boomers in size and cultural influence – have repeatedly stated a preference for built environments that support a car-light or car-free urban-style existence. These Millennials are the rising “creative class” – those workers whose career orientation is towards ideas and innovation rather than heavy manufacturing and assembly lines. As businesses – particularly tech-oriented businesses – look for lower-cost and more Millennial-friendly environments than auto-centric suburban office parks, study area communities can increase their attractiveness through transit investment. Improved connectivity will not only improve



access to Detroit- and Ann Arbor-based talent, but can draw these “creative class” workers (and the companies that want to hire them) to communities throughout the study corridor.

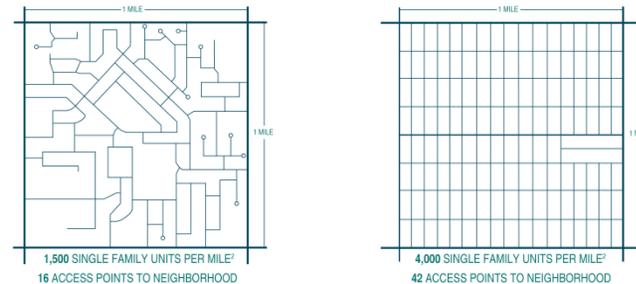
## 8.0 Project Need #4

**The communities in the study area have demonstrated a commitment to sustainable growth strategies in their adopted plans and policies.** Detroit, Dearborn, Ann Arbor, Wayne, and Ypsilanti are among corridor communities whose plans identify targeted, transit-supportive development patterns as priorities for the community and the BEST: Michigan Avenue corridor. High-capacity transit system investment that leverages existing transportation facilities while reducing reliance on single-occupant vehicles will be necessary to achieve these goals.

While existing development patterns and land uses vary along the length of the study area, communities have adopted plans and policies that explicitly call for transit and/or include strategies to create transit-friendly environments through infrastructure investments and policy guidance, including:

### STUDY AREA COMMUNITIES ARE COMMITTED TO SUSTAINABLE GROWTH STRATEGIES

High quality transit allows for a more efficient use of land and vice versa



- For the portion of the corridor in the City of Detroit, Detroit Future City has identified Michigan Avenue as a Tier 1 corridor for bus rapid transit investment; citywide Tier 1 bus rapid transit routes are planned to comprise a network of dedicated center- or side-running, high-speed connections to regional employment centers.
- Dearborn’s 2030 Master Plan identified opportunities along Michigan Avenue for walkability improvements, transit network connections to the new Amtrak station, promotion of transit-oriented design, and recommends the adoption of a Complete Streets Plan in the near future.
- The City of Inkster’s Comprehensive Plan 2025 references the need for lane reductions, on-street parking, bike lanes, and enhanced pedestrian crossings along Michigan Avenue.
- The Wayne Downtown Plan outlines the community’s desire to increase density, support transit, and promote walkability. Planned development patterns along Michigan Avenue are geared towards transit-oriented development: mixed-use, well-connected, and multi-

modal friendly. Narrowing of roads is emphasized, especially along the Michigan Avenue one-way pair, and non-motorized access and transit services are emphasized.

- Canton Township’s 2012 Comprehensive Master Plan highlights Michigan Avenue as a future mixed-use area that may support office, light industrial, and regional commercial uses.
- The Ypsilanti Township Master Plan calls for transit-friendly higher-density residential with mixed-use infill along Michigan Avenue.
- The Shape Ypsilanti Plan highlights transit and multi-modal transportation goals as a priority for the community, and outlines plans for non-motorized transportation improvements along Michigan Avenue, increasing TheRide service, and potential transit-oriented development around a planned future commuter train station.
- The City of Ann Arbor’s Master Plan and the ReImagine Washtenaw Plan include goals of transforming the Michigan Avenue corridor into a multi-modal transit hub, encouraging mixed-use development and transit-oriented development, and adding higher density residential uses with mixed-use infill development.
- Ann Arbor’s Transportation Plan emphasizes the need for signature and express transit services along the corridor, with the possibility of bus rapid transit or streetcars, and also supports the implementation of commuter rail services to and from the City Center.
- The Romulus Master Plan calls for enhanced transit connections to the airport.

Transit investment is necessary to help each of these communities achieved their stated visions for growth and economic development, and will help transform Michigan and Washtenaw Avenues into “main streets” for each of these communities.

# **BEST: Gratiot Avenue**

## **Purpose and Need Statement**

DRAFT July 5, 2015



## Table of Contents

1	Introduction .....	2
2	Public and Stakeholder Involvement.....	9
3	Goals and Objectives.....	10
4	Evaluation Criteria.....	11
5	Corridor Demographics.....	12
6	Corridor Land Use.....	19
7	Corridor Transportation.....	22
8	Current and Future Travel Patterns .....	39
9	Previous and Current Planning & Construction Efforts .....	44

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Project Description

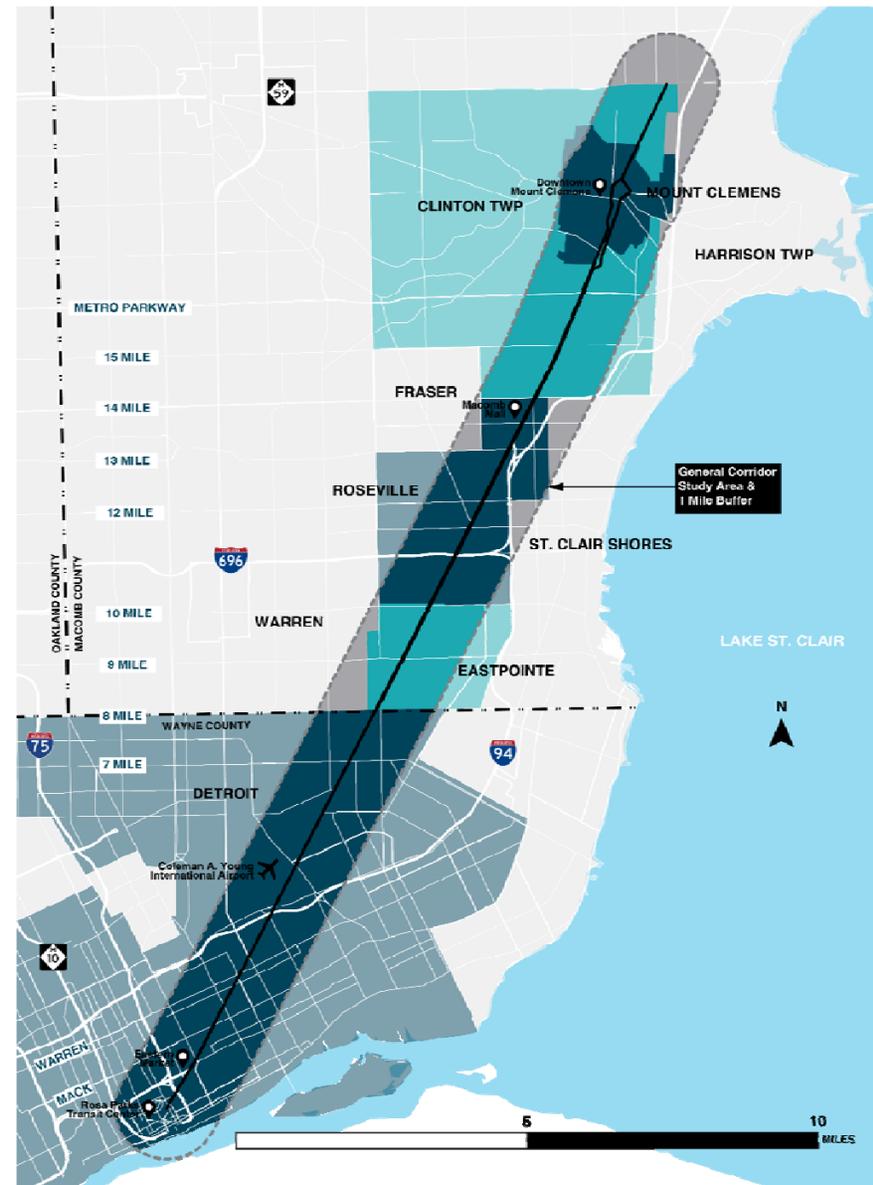
The Building Equitable Sustainable Transit (BEST): Gratiot Avenue Corridor Study represents a crucial early step in the development of enhanced transit along Gratiot Avenue. This 12-month study is being led by the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA) and will include the development and evaluation of multiple rapid transit alternatives between Downtown Detroit and M-59. BEST: Gratiot Avenue was initiated in April 2015 with an anticipated selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) in March 2016. The study area spans the 23-mile Gratiot Avenue corridor that serves portions of Wayne and Macomb counties.

The corridor communities along Gratiot Avenue include the following cities and townships within Wayne and Macomb Counties:

- Clinton Township
- Detroit
- Eastpointe
- Mount Clemens
- Roseville

For the purpose of the planning analyses leading to the development of the Purpose and Need, the study area includes a one-mile study area on each side of Gratiot Avenue, as represented in Figure 1-1. Following a multi-phase, iterative alternative development and evaluation process that is supported by input from study's Advisory Committee comprised from all of the municipalities, counties, transit agencies and other key institutional stakeholders and extensive public engagement activities,

Figure 1-1. BEST: Gratiot Avenue Study Area



.the RTA Planning and Service Coordination Committee will recommend the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) to the RTA Board of Directors (Board) for adoption. The LPA will include a recommendation of mode, alignment and generalized station locations and will be the transit investment alternative that best meets the purpose and need for the project (as defined in this report) and ideally will be competitive for funding through the FTA's New/Small Starts capital funding program. The RTA Board will submit the LPA to the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) for adoption into its 2040 Regional Transportation Plan for Southeast Michigan.

The purpose of this study is to assist the RTA by:

- Objectively evaluating potential transit options, including the type of transit, where it runs, and best locations for stations
- Developing criteria for evaluating the alternatives
- Selecting the most feasible LPA based on its ability to address transportation needs in the corridor.

The purpose of the project resulting from BEST: Gratiot Avenue is to:

- Improve mobility options along the corridor
- Encourage economic development along the corridor
- Improve job access
- Provide a competitive alternative to driving
- Improve transit connectivity along the corridor throughout the day

The identification of the project's Purpose and Need explains the transportation history that influenced the decision to study transportation improvements along the Gratiot Corridor. This document discusses current issues and how BEST: Gratiot Avenue plans to address them.

## 1.2 Gratiot Corridor Overview

Gratiot Avenue (M-3) is one of the oldest and most significant transportation corridors in southeast Michigan and continues to serve as a main artery that extends northeastward from Downtown Detroit to Macomb and St. Clair counties. Prior to the development of the interstate highway system, Gratiot Avenue was the main route connecting communities along Lake St. Clair cities and townships of Detroit, Eastpointe, Roseville, Clinton Township, Mount Clemens, New Haven, Richmond, Marysville, and Port Huron. Much of the development of these communities is due to the existence of the Gratiot Avenue corridor. Given its importance to southeast Michigan, travel along the corridor has increased throughout the years, and it remains one of the primary routes connecting Downtown Detroit to Port Huron and Canada.

Streetcars were introduced on Gratiot Avenue in 1863, which served as a very popular route. Service remained until 1956 when the transit system converted to bus only operations in parallel with the construction of Interstate I-94 at that time. Gratiot Avenue is currently served by buses by the Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT) and Suburban Mobility for Regional Transportation (SMART) and remains one of the highest ridership transit routes in southeast Michigan.

The corridor changes significantly between Downtown Detroit, Mount Clemens, and up through M-59 in Clinton Township. Gratiot Avenue transitions from a seven-lane roadway with a wider outer lane for parking along its southern section to a median-divided boulevard between 8 Mile Road in Eastpointe and Mount Clemens, to a one-way pair in Mount Clemens, and finally to a five-lane roadway near M-59. Typically, heavy traffic flows occur southbound in the morning and outbound in the evening.

Prior to the opening of I-94, Gratiot Avenue was the major route between Downtown Detroit and Port Huron and required a wide roadway to accommodate heavy traffic volumes. Today, I-94 provides faster travel time than Gratiot. However, when I-94 is congested, several points along Gratiot Avenue serve as an efficient alternate route. The planned widening of I-94 is expected to occur during the next 25 years and will likely result in reduced traffic volumes on Gratiot Avenue.

The residential density along Gratiot Avenue in Detroit is atypically lower as compared to northern parts of the corridor, due to the significant loss of population in the area. Residential density increases northward towards Macomb County. However, transit dependency is highest in the City of Detroit. Major destinations along the corridor include Eastern Market, Macomb Mall, and Downtown Mount Clemens. Several shopping centers, strip malls, schools and religious institutions are also situated along Gratiot Avenue.

## 1.3 Summary of Project Purpose and Need

### Purpose

The purpose of this study is to identify the most feasible alternative(s) for high-capacity rapid transit along the Gratiot Avenue corridor from Downtown Detroit to Mount Clemens and M-59. The objectives are to provide additional mobility options for both dependent and choice transit users, improve transit capacity and reliability, support ongoing economic development efforts within the region, encourage additional investment along the corridor, and connect with other rapid transit corridors that have been identified.

### Need #1 – Increase mobility options along the corridor

The Gratiot Avenue corridor serves several groups that are currently dependent on transit for their daily mobility needs. In addition many others could benefit from additional mobility options. High-capacity rapid transit service along Gratiot Avenue would support existing systems that are at or near capacity while providing new alternatives for the corridor's residents, employees, and visitors.

- The proportion of zero-car households within the corridor is currently 10 percent and expected to increase in the future, especially in the City of Detroit.
- Residents living in poverty account for over 30% of the study area's population, a rate that is nearly double that of the State of Michigan and the United States. This rate continues to rise, as it has grown by nearly 80% in the past decade.
- The senior population, who are dependent on transit or other alternative forms of transportation, within the Gratiot Avenue corridor is expected to grow by nearly 50% through to 2040, with the highest densities of senior populations in Clinton Township.
- Most of the communities within the study area are expected to continue to lose population through 2040 with the largest decrease occurring within Detroit. However, the communities of Clinton Township and Eastpointe are expected to increase by more than 9,000 people. Availability of transit options could help stabilize the population along the corridor or even stimulate rehabilitation of neighborhoods and new residential or mixed use development.

### Need #2 – Provide frequent, reliable, one-seat transit service that is competitive with the automobile

There are two main transit routes along Gratiot Avenue between Mount Clemens and Downtown Detroit. DDOT Route 34 operates from Downtown Detroit to 8 Mile Road, SMART Route 560 provides local service between 23 Mile Road in Macomb County and Downtown Detroit. SMART Route 565 mimics the 560 route but is a commuter route service that has three morning inbound and three afternoon outbound trips. The function of these routes, both individually and as a system, can be inefficient and lack the ability as a mode to compete with automobiles:

- Current bus service can be slow, unreliable and crowded during peak hours. Users have noted that service could be more frequent. Even with headways of 10-minutes for DDOT Route 34 and SMART Route 560, there are crush loads during peak times.

- SMART transit service between Downtown Detroit and Macomb County stops during the mid-day, causing those that want to travel between Detroit and Macomb County to transfer at 8 Mile Road, often waiting up to 15 minutes to make the transfer.
- Travel times for DDOT Route 34 is 45 minutes between 8 Mile Road and Downtown Detroit, while for SMART Route 560 travel times vary between 65 minutes during the peaks to 90 minutes in the off-peak from M-59 (Hall Road) to Downtown Detroit. Traveling via automobile on Gratiot Avenue averages 45 minutes between M-59 (Hall Road) to Downtown Detroit.
- While there is limited traffic congestion along Gratiot Avenue, there is considerable congestion along neighboring I-94. During the mid-day, a trip along I-94 between M-59 and Downtown Detroit takes around 25 minutes; however, during rush hour, this trip can easily take 70 minutes, with congestion mainly within the City of Detroit. Reconstruction along I-94 is expected to begin in 2017, causing further delay and congestion within the area. Provision of rapid transit can increase the “person” capacity of Gratiot Avenue.

### Need #3 - Stimulate economic development along the corridor

The Gratiot Avenue corridor within the City of Detroit has been hit hard during the last fifteen years. The number of homes within the City of Detroit has decreased by almost 30,000 households. Currently, there is more residential and employment density within Macomb County along Gratiot Avenue than within the City of Detroit. However, Macomb County has not been immune to this trend of population decline. Between 2000 and 2010, the City of Mount Clemens’ residential vacancy rate nearly doubled – from 6.2 percent to 11.4 percent. This 5.2 percent rate change was greater than both Macomb County (3.5 percent) and the region (5.0 percent).

While population is expected to decrease in the corridor, employment is expected to increase, with a 14 percent increase in Clinton Township and 13 percent in Mount Clemens. While the Gratiot Avenue corridor is expected to increase by 4.0 percent, the region is expected to grow by 11.5 percent. Rapid transit investment has shown to increase economic development within a corridor by \$3-4 dollars for every \$1 spent.

### Need #4 - Retain and attract people of all ages to the area

The communities along the Gratiot Avenue corridor have lost approximately 26 percent of their population during the last fifteen years. Most of that population loss was working individuals under the age of 50. Transportation may play a role in this trend:

- A recent *Crain’s Detroit Business*<sup>1</sup> article estimated that 73% of millennials “want better access to mass transit in metro Detroit”, which requires a mixture of land uses, housing types, transit-oriented development and a multi-modal transportation system. According to an American Public Transit Association (APTA) survey, most millennials prefer to utilize transit or biking over utilizing a car. Communities that attract Millennials have a multitude of transportation choices.

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<sup>1</sup> Walsh, Dustin, “What employers need to know about metro Detroit millennials”, *Crain’s Detroit Business*, March 29, 2015, <http://www.crainsdetroit.com/article/20150329/FEATURE05/303299995/what-employers-need-to-know-about-metro-detroit-millennials>

- During the last ten years more than three greenways have been built or improved that cross Gratiot Avenue. These greenways connect to other areas within the region, including Eastern Market, Eastern Riverfront, Belle Isle, and Metropolitan Beach. More millennials are looking for ways to reduce their footprint on the environment by choosing multi-modal means of transportation, with a larger percentage utilizing non-motorized transportation than any other age group that has access to an automobile.
- With an increasing senior population expected within the corridor, it is important to provide additional transportation options to retain and also assist that growing demographic. Nearly 90% of adults 65+ say they want to live independently as long as possible and 80% believe their current home is where they will always live. A 2002 study in the *American Journal of Public Health* found that men in their early 70s who stop driving will need access to transportation alternatives, such as public transportation, for an average of six years; women in the same age group will, on average, need transportation alternatives for ten years.<sup>2</sup>

**Need #5 - Develop a transit system that improves connectivity between origins and key destinations, including major regional employers**

There are many significant destinations along Gratiot Avenue between Downtown Detroit and M-59 which could be better served by improved transportation options, including:

- **Major Employers:** General Motors, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Quicken Loans, Macomb County, Faygo, Coleman A. Young International Airport, Better Made Snack Foods
- **Downtown Districts:** Detroit, Eastpointe, Roseville, Mount Clemens
- **Major Shopping:** Eastern Market, Macomb Mall, Gratiot Plaza Shopping Center, The Shops at Northeast Village Shopping Center
- **Recreational:** Dequindre Cut Greenway, Conner Creek Greenway, Metro Parkway Trail, Clinton River Spillway Trail, Lincoln Memorial Park, Better Made Snack Foods, Michigan Military Technical & Historical Society, Michigan Transit Museum, Sanders Chocolate & Ice Cream Shoppe, Selfridge Military Air Museum, Crocker House Museum
- **Educational:** Detroit Public Library, Roseville Public Library, Eastpointe Public Library, Baker College, Oakland Community College, Macomb Community College, East Detroit High School, Mount Clemens High School, Catherine C. Blackwell Institute, Dianne M. Pellerin Center

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<sup>2</sup> Foley, Daniel, Heimovitz, Harley, Guralnik, Jack and Dwight Brock "Driving Life Expectancy of Persons Aged 70 Years and Older in the United States" *American Journal of Public Health*, August 2002, Vol 92, No. 8

- **Medical Facilities:** Detroit Medical Group, Henry Ford Macomb Hospital, Select Specialty Hospital, Professional Medical, StoneCrest Center
- **Community Services:** Smart Senior Services, Matrix Human Services, Michigan Department of Human Services, Operation Get Down, Bethlehem House, Franklin-Wright Settlements, Detroit Housing Commission, Clinton Township Senior Center, Roseville Senior Center, Macomb County Action Center

## 2 PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

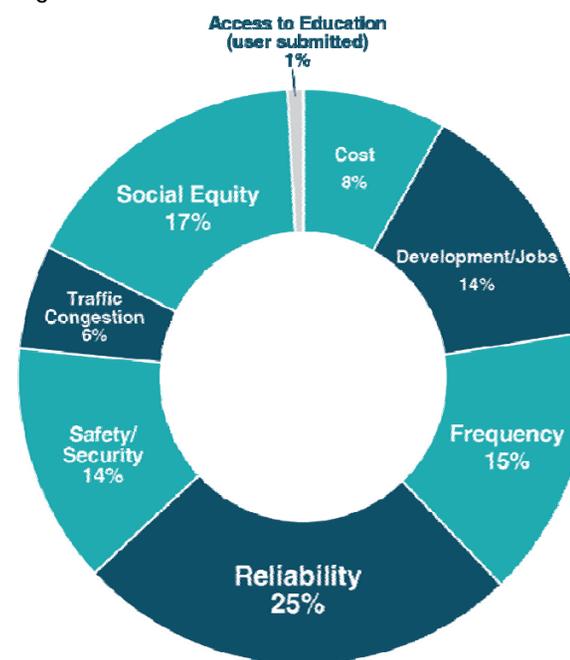
The process of community engagement began with the strategic selection of community leaders, staff, and stakeholders that would serve as members of the project's Technical and Policy Advisory Committees. The project team held targeted meetings with leadership from each corridor community to provide an overview of the planning process, confirm their participation on the Policy Advisory Committee, determine key staff to include on the Technical Advisory Committee, and uncover additional stakeholder groups within their community to engage in the planning process.

The project officially launched on May 12, 2015 with a public rally in Campus Martius Park in Downtown Detroit that included an introduction to the RTA and all four BEST projects that will be occurring simultaneously. The event also featured multiple keynote addresses provided by local, state, and federal transit policy advocates. Attendees of the event were provided with general information on each project and methods for their continued engagement, including a schedule of upcoming public events along with written and digital outlets for providing input throughout the process.

The RTA hosted events in each of the four counties between May 18 and May 21 to further introduce the RTA and all four BEST projects to attendees. The events included targeted information on each project through a variety of displays and multimedia presentations. An additional meeting was held along Gratiot Avenue in Detroit on June 9, 2015. Attendees were able to engage directly with RTA staff and the project team to learn more about each project and provide corresponding input. Several exercises were developed by the project team to determine the components of transit that attendees value most, which directly informed the purpose and need statements of each project. Additional exercises provided an opportunity for attendees to pinpoint the location of their home, work, and frequent destinations, providing the project team with an initial understanding of population and employment centers along the corridor and typical travel patterns throughout. This series of events were attended by over 500 residents, who provided input through discussions with the project team, written comments, and digital comments via mySidewalk and social media.

Through each public event, targeted stakeholder meetings, and engagement with the project's Technical and Policy Advisory committees, "reliability" consistently surfaced as the most important component of future rapid transit service. Reliability was identified as critical by many public event attendees that depend on transit service for their daily commute and other needs, and was additionally found to be important to policy-makers and technical stakeholders who viewed it as the factor that could potentially encourage more choice riders. Other themes that surfaced as part of initial outreach efforts included Social Equity, Frequency, Safety/Security, and Development/Jobs.

Figure 2-1. Public/Stakeholder Needs Evaluation



### 3 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives were developed in response to public and stakeholder input gathered throughout the first phase of the planning process along with technical analysis that examined the current and future conditions of the Gratiot Avenue Corridor.

Table 3-1. BEST: Gratiot Goals and Objectives

Goal	Objective
Provide a reliable alternative to driving	Improve on-time performance and frequency of service
Provide transportation options for people that cannot drive or do not have access to a car	Increase transit accessibility
Stimulate economic development along the corridor	Provide transit service that can influence more mixed-use development along the corridor.
Retain and attract people of all ages to the area	Provide flexible, reliable transportation options
Provide a service that is competitive with vehicular travel times	Improve transit travel times and speeds within the study area
Provide one-seat transit service between Macomb County and Detroit during the mid-day	Reduce the number of transit trips that require a transfer
Develop a transit system that improves connectivity between origins and key destinations, including major regional employers	Provide convenient and accessible transit service to activity centers
Improve safety for all users along the corridor including those using transit, non-motorized, and vehicular.	Identify improvements at high crash locations and separate modes where feasible, provide a system with security features at stations
Reduce traffic congestion within the region	Provide additional transit options that are competitive with the automobile to promote a mode-shift
Develop a rapid transit system that is economically viable for the region	Provide transit service that can be constructed, operated and maintained at low costs
Provide a transit service that is integrated with a multi-modal transportation network	Provide connections to non-motorized facilities that are along or cross the corridor and design a system that can enhance the non-motorized experience along Gratiot Avenue.



## 4 EVALUATION CRITERIA

In order to evaluate the different transit modes and alignment options and identify the appropriate mode-alignment pairings that will define the detailed alternatives, the BEST: Gratiot Avenue study will follow a three-step method.

- The first step (“Tier 1: Mode Analysis”) will involve the assessment of each mode relative to overall implementation viability.
- The second step (“Tier 2: Detailed Evaluation”) will include assessment of the mode that passed the Tier 1 Analysis. Alignment/station options will be developed and evaluated.
- The alternative(s) that fare(s) best against the detailed criteria in this second step will be identified as Preferred Alternative(s) and further refined in the third step (“Tier 3: Refine the LPA”). The Locally Preferred Alternative will be identified at the conclusion of the third step.

The evaluation criteria associated with each step are a combination of quantitative and qualitative performance measures. The Tier 1 phase will apply fewer and broader measures, including information from previous corridor/area studies. The Tier 2 phase will apply more and finer performance measures and will identify the Preferred Alternative(s), and the third step will evaluate the Preferred Alternative(s) against federal criteria to determine the Locally Preferred Alternative. This three-step process will result in the identification of an LPA that not only meets locally-identified project purpose and needs, but is also competitive for federal funding.

Table 4-1 presents the evaluation criteria that are likely to be used during the three steps of alternative evaluation. Note that each successive step builds upon the criteria from the previous step, ensuring a consistent rating throughout.

Table 4-1. BEST: Gratiot Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Percentage
Reliability / Improve on-time performance	20%
Social Equity / increase accessibility	15%
Frequency / Provide one-seat service	15%
Potential for Redevelopment / TOD	15%
Safety / Security	15%
Cost to Build, Operate and Maintain	10%
Potential for Mode Shift / Provide additional transit options	5%
Flexibility	5%

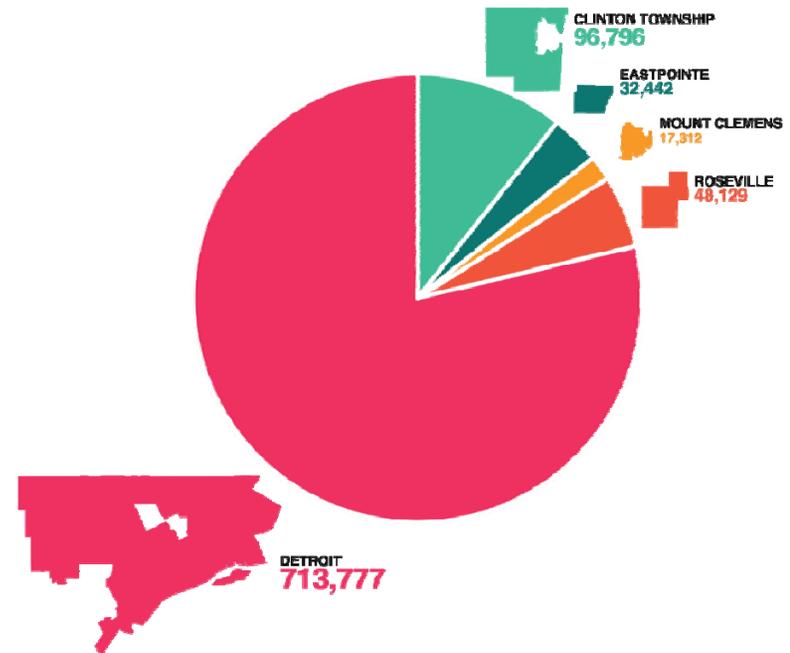
## 5 CORRIDOR DEMOGRAPHICS

### 5.1 Population

The study area is a 23-mile corridor along Gratiot Avenue, from the southern terminus of Gratiot Avenue in Downtown Detroit to its intersection with M-59. For the purposes of this project's analysis, a one-mile buffer on either side of Gratiot Avenue is included within the study area. The study area is within both Wayne and Macomb Counties and encompasses 5 municipalities, including (from south to north) Detroit, Eastpointe, Roseville, Clinton Township, and Mount Clemens. The combined population of study area communities is 906,628. Figure 5-1 illustrates the total population of each community.

Consistent with regional trends, each community (with the exception of Clinton Township) lost population from 2000 to 2010. The recession of the late-2000s contributed heavily to the population decline of these communities as the retraction of the automotive industry and mortgage crisis had a marked impact on the population of Southeast Michigan. While Eastpointe, Roseville, and Mount Clemens lost relatively small percentages of their population, Detroit declined more rapidly, losing 25% of its residents.

Figure 5-1. 2010 Population by Community



Source: 2010 Census

Despite dramatic population loss over the previous decade, Detroit is seeing renewed investment and economic activity, most significantly concentrated within the greater downtown area. As Figure 5-2 illustrates, densities near Downtown Detroit (especially within neighborhoods directly adjacent to the east) are some of the highest within the study area. A significant segment of the corridor within Detroit, particularly from the Eastern Market area to Outer Drive, is characterized by vacancy (both land and housing) that contributes to lower densities within the area. Population density tends to stabilize from the northern portion of Detroit to Mount Clemens, where most neighborhoods within this segment have populations between 2,500 and 10,000 per square mile.

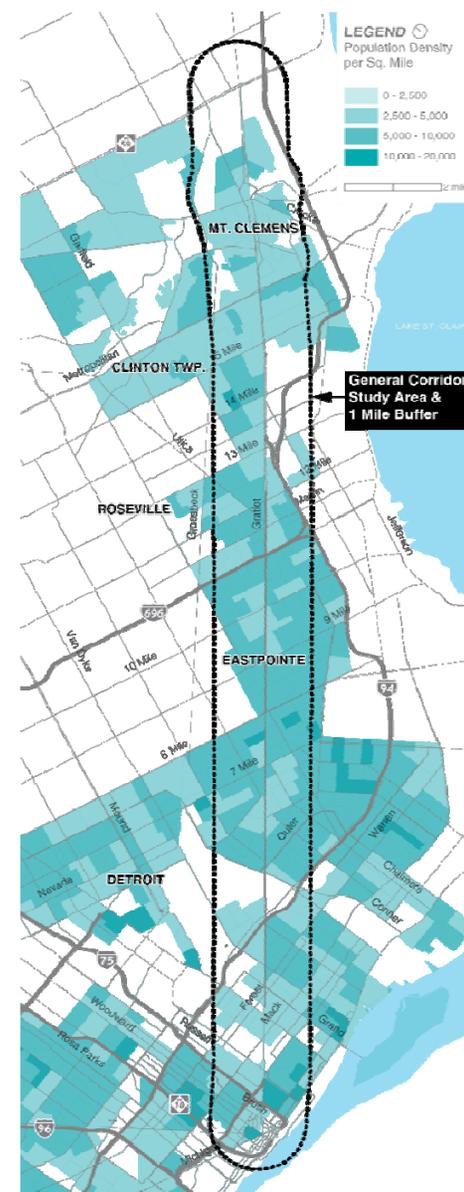
Forecasts through 2040 suggest that population trends from 2000 to 2010 will continue, with the exception of Eastpointe, which is expected to gain a significant amount of population back that was lost during the 2000s. Detroit will remain the largest community in the Gratiot Avenue corridor, but will continue to suffer significant population losses through 2040, declining by nearly 100,000 residents. Overall, communities within the Gratiot corridor are expected to lose population at a more accelerated pace than the four county RTA region, which is projected to decline only slightly through 2040. Rapid transit investments along this corridor can play a critical role in attracting new residents and reversing the expected population decline.

Table 5-1. Population Change 2010 - 2040 by Community

COMMUNITY	2010 POPULATION	2040 POPULATION	CHANGE	% CHANGE
Clinton Township	96,796	103,823	7,027	7.30%
Eastpointe	32,442	34,467	2,025	6.20%
Mount Clemens	16,314	15,461	-853	-5.20%
Roseville	47,299	45,263	-2,036	-4.30%
Detroit	713,777	614,696	-99,081	-13.90%
Gratiot Corridor	906,628	813,710	-92,918	-11.40%
RTA Region	4,208,715	4,195,419	-13,296	-0.30%

Source: 2010 Census and SEMCOG 2040 Forecast Report

Figure 5-2. Population Density



## 5.2 Transit Dependent Populations

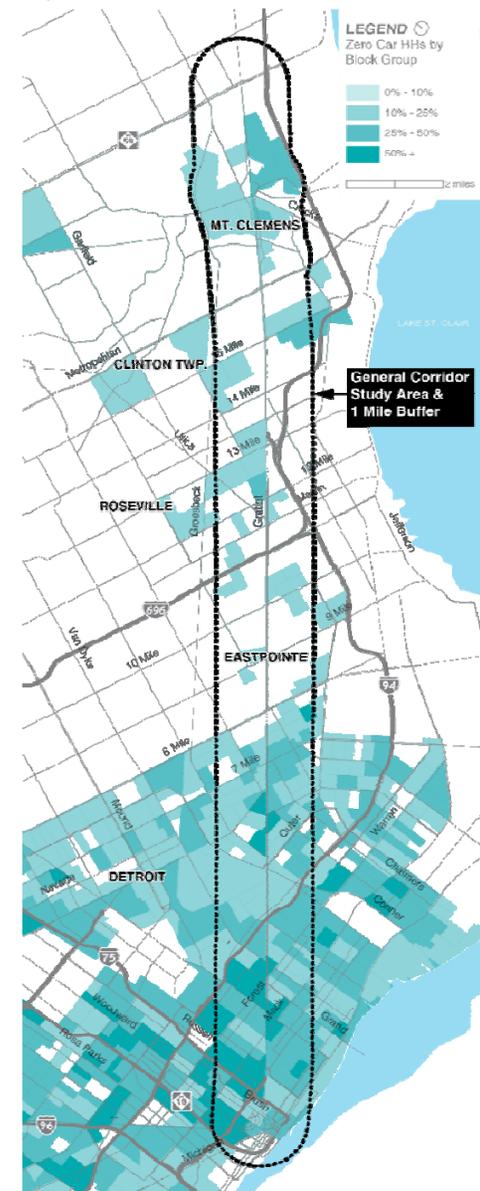
Access to transportation options directly influences the ability for residents to seek, obtain, and maintain employment. For the purposes of this project, the project team has analyzed a variety of population groups that are typically more dependent on transit than others, including zero car households, senior populations, youth and college-aged populations, and populations living below the poverty level. These groups differ from what are referred to as “choice” riders, as they aren’t as likely to have the means to own and maintain a single-occupant vehicle and thus must rely on other modes of transportation for their daily mobility needs.

### 5.2.1 Zero Car Households

In the absence of adequate transit or non-motorized transportation options, residents must rely on automobiles for virtually all of their work and non-work trips. It is estimated that it costs drivers nearly \$9,000 annually to operate a typical vehicle (Source: AAA Driving Cost Study), which would represent over 18% of the average Michigan resident’s income. Low-income households are particularly vulnerable to this cost as it represents a larger reduction of funds available for other needs. It is critical to ensure that the needs of transit-dependent residents are considered carefully when developing rapid transit solutions, as those without access to vehicles tend to rely more heavily on public transportation to access employment, education, medical facilities, and other daily needs.

Figure 5-3 illustrates the distribution of zero car households along the corridor. While all of the communities within Macomb County have relatively low shares of zero car households, over 10% of households within Detroit are without access to a vehicle.

Figure 5-3. Zero Car HH



### 5.2.2 Senior Population

As residents age, lifestyle changes and changes in their abilities result in a significant decline in the use of single-occupant vehicles as their primary means of transportation. While some residents over the age of 65 are able to arrange for other options, many seniors must rely on public transportation for their daily mobility needs. Rapid transit investments along Gratiot Avenue must not only be a reliable option for seniors, but must be designed and managed with their specific needs in mind. If functional transit systems are provided for seniors within Gratiot corridor communities, those residents will be much more apt to “age in place” while still maintaining their quality of life.

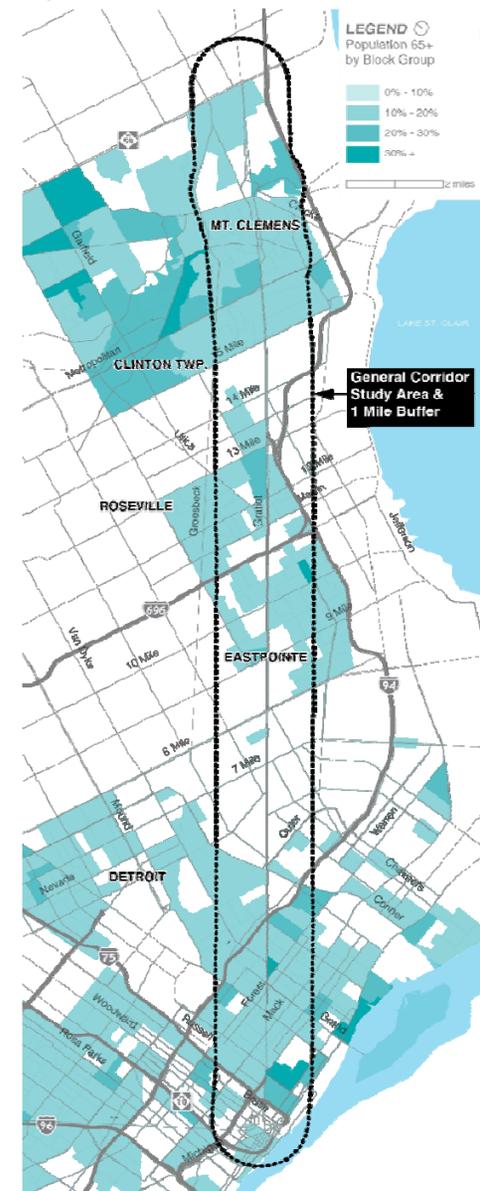
As Table 5-2 illustrates, many Gratiot Avenue corridor communities, with the exception of Clinton Township, witnessed declining senior populations from 2000 to 2010. That trend, however, is expected to reverse rapidly through 2040, as each corridor community will see its senior population grow by at least 40%. Overall, senior populations within Gratiot Avenue corridor communities are expected to grow by nearly 55% through 2040, and it is imperative to address the mobility needs of this rapidly growing population. As Figure 5-4 illustrates, the highest densities of senior populations occur in Clinton Township, with several pockets spaced intermittently throughout the corridor. As suggested by current projections, concentrations of senior population are expected to become much more consistent along the corridor, further establishing a need to provide better mobility options to the aging population.

Table 5-2. Current and Future Population 65 and Over

COMMUNITY	2000	2010	% CHANGE	2040	% CHANGE
Clinton Township	13,668	15,677	14.70%	28,179	79.75%
Detroit	99,056	81,925	-17.29%	118,756	44.96%
Eastpointe	5,607	3,677	-34.42%	7,987	117.22%
Mount Clemens	2,322	2,120	-8.70%	3,683	73.73%
Roseville	7,419	6,198	-16.46%	10,894	75.77%
Gratiot Corridor	128,072	109,597	-62.17%	169,499	54.66%
RTA Region	517,863	544,958	5.2%	993,704	82.30%

Source: 2010 Census and SEMCOG 2040 Forecast Report

Figure 5-4. Senior Population



### 5.2.3 Populations Living in Poverty

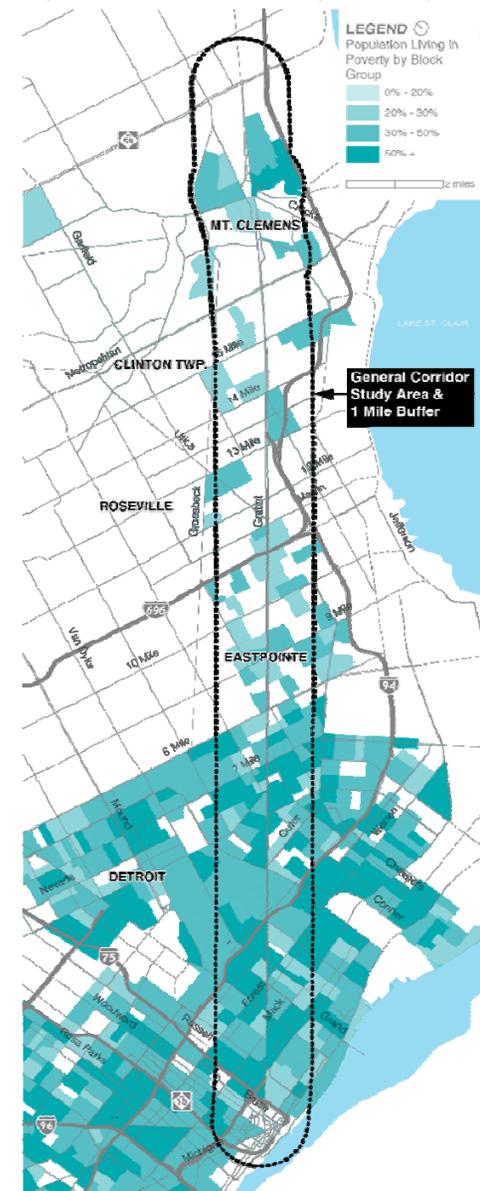
The percentage of the population living in poverty along the Gratiot Avenue corridor communities is over double the national average, and continues to rise. As illustrated in Table 5-3, some communities within the corridor are below national averages, but each community experienced a rise in residents living below the poverty level within the previous decade. Communities at both the north (Mount Clemens) and south (Detroit) termini of the study area saw the most drastic increases, and populations living in poverty comprise over 1/5 of their total population. This increase is consistent with the densities illustrated in Figure 5-5, where the highest concentrations of people living in poverty can be found in most Detroit neighborhoods and select areas of Mount Clemens. Reliable rapid transit service and increasing mobility options along Gratiot Avenue are critical to connecting residents living in poverty with better access to jobs, education, and their daily needs.

Table 5-3. Percent of Population living in Poverty, 2000 to 2010

COMMUNITY	2000	% TOTAL	2010	% TOTAL	% CHANGE
Clinton Township	5,500	5.8%	9,933	10.3%	4.5%
Detroit	243,153	26.1%	258,295	34.5%	8.4%
Eastpointe	2,174	6.4%	4,242	12.9%	6.5%
Mount Clemens	2,206	14.1%	3,139	21.5%	7.4%
Roseville	3,781	7.9%	6,169	13.0%	5.0%
<b>Gratiot Corridor</b>	<b>256,814</b>	<b>22.4%</b>	<b>281,778</b>	<b>31.1%</b>	<b>8.7%</b>
RTA Region	475,536	10.9%	623,803	14.8%	31.2%

Source: 2000 and 2010 Census

Figure 5-5. Population Living in Poverty



### 5.2.4 Youth Population

Another group that is much more likely to be transit dependent is the youth, or school-aged, population. More frequently, especially in heavily urbanized areas, youth populations are relying on public transit to get to and from school and to recreational activities within their communities. This trend is especially true in Detroit, where school busing policies only serve students who live over 3/4 mile away from their school and do not serve students who attend choice schools. As such, school transportation is supplemented by reduced fare passes through the Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT). Due to the fact that public transit already plays a major role in transporting school-aged residents to school and back, rapid transit investments along Gratiot Avenue (one of the busiest routes in DDOT’s system) would enhance the flexibility of mobility options for students, lessening the burden on already strained DDOT and school bus systems.

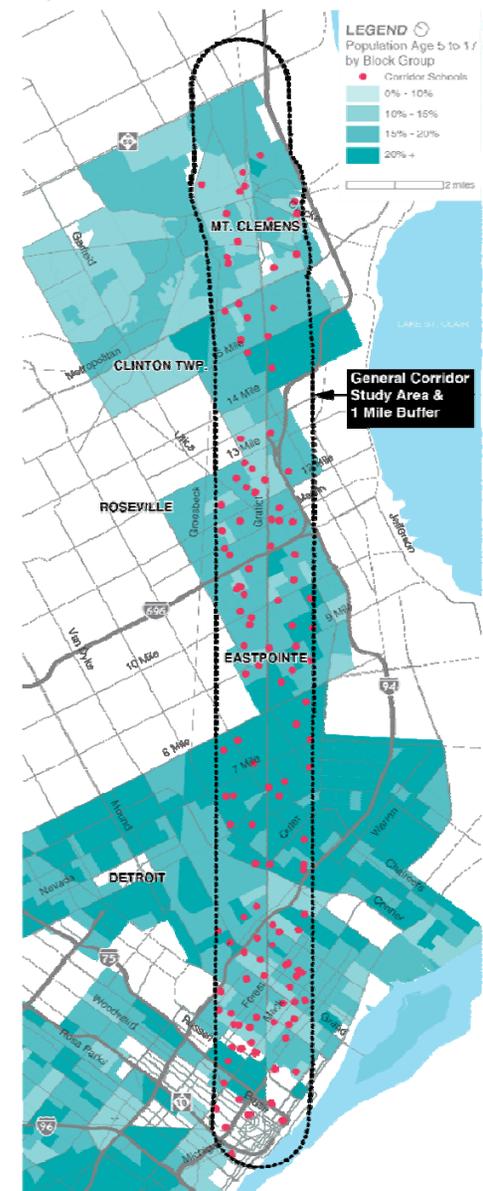
Table 5-4 illustrates the decline of youth/school-aged populations within Gratiot corridor communities over the previous decade. While this trend is consistent with the region when compared to communities within Macomb County, Detroit is losing youth population at a much more accelerated pace. Although many communities are projected to lose youth populations through 2040, there are still areas with high concentrations of youths along the corridor, especially in the northern portion of Detroit. A high capacity rapid transit alternative along one of the region’s most traveled corridors can help to retain families with school-aged children and play a critical support role for public school systems within the study area.

Table 5-4. Current and Future Population 5 to 17 Years Old

COMMUNITY	2000	2010	% CHANGE	2040	% CHANGE
Clinton Township	15,585	14,694	-5.7%	15,315	4.2%
Detroit	219,477	140,201	-36.1%	100,923	-28.0%
Eastpointe	6,161	6,213	0.8%	5,254	-15.4%
Mount Clemens	2,627	2,346	-10.7%	2,135	-9.0%
Roseville	7,997	7,910	-1.1%	6,583	-16.8%
Gratiot Corridor	251,847	171,364	-52.8%	130,210	-25.0%
RTA Region	835,353	754,599	-9.7%	629,018	-15.0%

Source: 2010 Census and SEMCOG 2040 Forecast Report

Figure 5-6. Youth Population



### 5.3 Employment

This study area, anchored by Detroit as the region's major employment center, represents a major source of employment within the RTA region. As the economies of each corridor community continue to rebound, each is expected to add jobs consistently through 2040. Overall, corridor communities will gain over 17,000 jobs, a 4.0% increase from 2010 to 2040. Detroit is expected to gain jobs at a slower pace, but due to its size in the region's economy will contribute over 7,000 jobs by 2040.

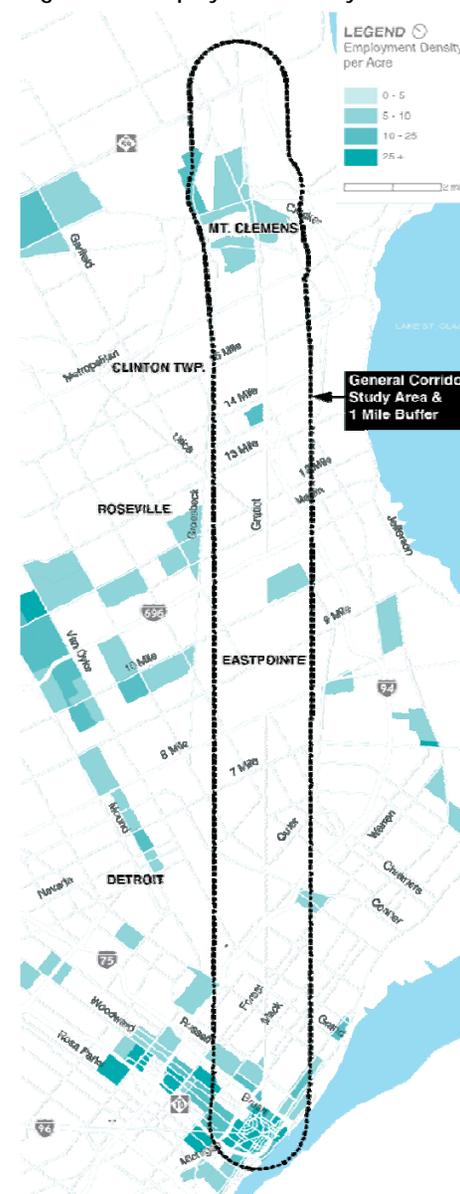
Bookended by municipal and county offices in both Detroit and Mount Clemens, the study area termini represent stable employment centers that are supplemented by a fairly consistent corridor of employment generators. Large shopping centers in Macomb County corridor communities contribute to employment densities along the corridor, whose retail and service industry jobs are typically filled by workers who are more likely to rely on public transportation. Reliable rapid transit service connecting each of these job centers can serve dependent riders as they establish themselves in the region's economy as well as attract choice riders currently relying on single-occupant vehicles to access major employment centers in Detroit and Mount Clemens.

Table 5-5. Employment by Community, 2000 to 2040

COMMUNITY	2010	2040	CHANGE	% CHANGE
Clinton Township	43,332	49,476	6,144	14.2%
Detroit	347,545	354,792	7,247	2.1%
Eastpointe	7,803	8,274	471	6.0%
Mount Clemens	16,601	18,752	2,151	13.0%
Roseville	22,241	23,634	1,393	6.3%
<b>Gratiot Corridor</b>	<b>437,522</b>	<b>454,928</b>	<b>17,406</b>	<b>4.0%</b>
<b>RTA Region</b>	<b>2,298,819</b>	<b>2,563,493</b>	<b>264,674</b>	<b>11.5%</b>

Source: SEMCOG 2040 Regional Forecast Report

Figure 5-7. Employment Density



## 6 CORRIDOR LAND USE

Gratiot Avenue is one of the five radial streets emanating from Downtown Detroit. As such it serves as a major commercial thoroughfare from Downtown Detroit to Downtown Mount Clemens and to M-59. The Gratiot Avenue study area traverses five distinct communities. Downtown Detroit is distinctly urban in nature, with a mixture of commercial, public institutional, single family, multi-family and mixed uses. Just east of downtown lies a concentration of multi-family residential uses. To the north and east of downtown is currently industrial, but is slated to be redeveloped as a mixed use neighborhood as Eastern Market and the surrounding area develops. Major industrial districts stretch across the study area from north to south near Mt. Elliot St. and Conner St. (near the Coleman A. Young International Airport). The stretch of Gratiot Avenue northeast of Coleman A. Young International Airport is lined by mostly commercial uses, with residential neighborhoods just beyond the corridor to the east and west. Farther north along the corridor, major roads crossing Gratiot Avenue (i.e. Mile Roads) also have a distinct commercial identity. Major intersections have a mixture of commercial uses and are generally planned for future mixed use development, as they will likely serve as nodes for transit oriented development. Mount Clemens serves as a second urban center along the corridor and has a traditional densely developed downtown. The northern portion of the corridor includes an industrial district to the north near M-59. Many of the communities along the corridor have specific plans for Gratiot Avenue, which are summarized below:

### 6.1 Detroit

Gratiot Avenue is a very pedestrian friendly corridor and connects Downtown Detroit to Macomb County. Mixed-use commercial development focused towards Downtown and Eastern Market with thoroughfare commercial towards the north that support s surrounding ecological, less dense neighborhoods.

#### Current Land Use

Predominately retail and service uses, including auto-oriented, restaurants, salons, and medical. Few, larger lots serve industrial and institutional uses. Many surface parking lots and empty lots create gaps along the corridor. Notable land uses along the corridor include Downtown Detroit, Eastern Market, Faygo Beverages, and Better Made Snack Foods.

#### Future Land Use

The majority of the district is planned Thoroughfare Commercial by the City Master Plan. Detroit Future City identifies the corridor as moderate to high vacancy, future planned for Innovative Ecological and Productive.

## 6.2 Eastpointe

The Master Plan identifies the need to redevelop along Gratiot to create defined commercial districts, allow mixed-use development, increase walkability, and incorporate access management techniques to increase safety and vibrancy along the corridor.

### Current Land Use

Predominately smaller lot commercial with many auto-related uses. Take-out and dine-in restaurant uses, professional and personal services, and institutional uses are also prominent along the corridor. Downtown Eastpointe is located at the intersection of 9 Mile Road and Gratiot Avenue.

### Future Land Use

The southern third is planned for redevelopment, the middle is the Central Business District with quasi-public parcels, and the northern section is planned as Non-Center Commercial.

## 6.3 Roseville

The Master Plan identifies opportunities for walkability applications, mass transit support, enhancing gateways, incorporating access management techniques, and the development of commercial districts: Town Center, General Retail, and Big Box Commercial.

### Current Land Use

Many Auto-related, drive-through and sit-down restaurants, small-scale commercial and service businesses. Pockets of big-box retail, with Macomb Mall Shopping Center, and sparse institutional uses.

### Future Land Use

The corridor is planned for Commercial use with some parcels planned for Public and Quasi-Public. The Town Center Overlay District extends from Gratiot along Utica Road, between Martin and 12 Mile. This would also include the area along Gratiot Avenue just north and south of Utica Road.

## 6.4 Clinton Township

The Township has a Downtown Development Authority (DDA), but no traditional core commercial center. The Master Plan considers expanding commercial property depth to 400 feet and promotes implementation of the DDA plan. The development of a North Gratiot Corridor DDA or CIA is outlined. There is a focus on pedestrian connections, and promoting a traditional downtown building design.

### Current Land Use

Predominately big-box retail, small-scale commercial and service typically situated in strip centers, hotel and motel, and auto-related businesses south of Mount Clemens. North of Mount Clemens is residential, institutional, small-scale commercial, and service uses.

#### Future Land Use

The Township created a special district, Gratiot Commercial, for the Gratiot Avenue corridor. Plans for the northern end of the corridor also include Industrial and General Commercial.

### **6.5 Mount Clemens**

The Master Plan includes goals to welcome mass transit and alternative modes of transportation, permit greater residential densities along the corridor, analysis to convert one-ways to two-ways, implement walkability and streetscape improvements, and permit transit-oriented development.

#### Current Land Use

Small-scale local commercial, professional and personal service, residential, institutional, sit-down and convenience restaurant

#### Future Land Use

Plans call for Commercial and Office uses, a South Gratiot District which connects with downtown but doesn't compete with it, and a pedestrian-friendly Downtown District.

## 7 CORRIDOR TRANSPORTATION

### 7.1 Public Transit

This section summarizes transit services and facilities within and along the Gratiot Avenue corridor. Four major transit service providers operate within the corridor; two of these providers operate extensive service along major portions of the corridor. Gratiot Avenue is Detroit's second busiest transit corridor within approximately 12,000 combined riders per day on the DDOT and SMART systems.

#### 7.1.1 Detroit Department of Transportation

DDOT has provided public transit service in the City of Detroit for over 90 years. DDOT originally operated streetcars; buses were introduced in 1937. Streetcar service was gradually phased out in favor of buses, with the last remaining streetcar line being discontinued in 1956. Today, DDOT operates an all-bus fixed route system.

DDOT is the largest public transit system in southeast Michigan and the state as a whole. It serves an area of 114 square miles that includes the City of Detroit and portions of 22 neighboring communities. DDOT operates a fleet of 223 buses on 35 fixed routes, as well as a demand responsive service called Detroit Metrolift. Total annual ridership is 31.2 million, with average weekday ridership totaling 107,080 (2013). Most DDOT riders are considered transit dependent—that is, they have no access to a car or ride and/or are unable to drive.

The following is a summary of routes serving (either along or crossing) the Gratiot Avenue corridor:

#### Route 34 Gratiot

Route 34 provides high frequency service seven days a week between Downtown Detroit to 8 Mile Road. Its southern terminus is the Rosa Parks Transit Center. The northern terminus is at Eastland Drive, east of Gratiot Avenue via 8 Mile Road.

This route operates from 4:00 AM to 1:40 AM on weekdays and Saturdays and from 4:00 AM to 12:40 AM on Sundays. Time between busses is every 12 minutes during AM peak periods and 10 minutes during the PM peak. The time is also every 12 minutes during off-peak periods and 30 minutes at night. Between 8 Mile Road and Third/Michigan downtown, inbound travel time during the AM peak period is 43 minutes. Outbound travel time between these two points is around 50 minutes. Route 34 currently carries over 5,600 passengers a day (2014).

#### Route 9 Chalmers

All trips of this feeder route either pass through or terminate at Gratiot Avenue and 7 Mile Road. Peak period trips cross Gratiot Avenue and terminate at 8 Mile Road and Waltham Road. Route 9 provides north-south crosstown service between Jefferson Avenue and either 7 Mile Road/Gratiot Avenue or 8 Mile Road.

#### Route 10 Chene

This downtown radial route provides north-south service in Detroit's near east side and Hamtramck and connects to downtown. The route intersects Gratiot Avenue at Chene Street.

#### Route 11 Clairmount

This feeder route, which generally provides east-west service, intersects Gratiot Avenue at Cadillac Avenue and Harper Avenue.

#### Route 12 Conant

Route 12 is a north-south crosstown feeder route connecting Jefferson Avenue and the State Fair Transit Center located along Woodward Avenue. The major portion of the route runs on Mt. Elliott Street, which intersects Gratiot Avenue.

#### Route 13 Conner

This north-south crosstown feeder route intersects Gratiot Avenue at Conner Avenue and Outer Drive and then extends north to 8 Mile Road.

#### Route 14 Crosstown

As its name suggests, Route 14 is a major crosstown route running east-west, primarily along Warren Avenue. The westbound route crosses Gratiot Avenue at Warren Avenue and the eastbound route crosses Gratiot Avenue at Forest Avenue.

#### Route 17 Eight Mile

This major east-west crosstown feeder route has Gratiot Avenue as its eastern terminus. It extends westward to Lasher Road and 7 Mile Road, with major intermediate stops at the State Fair Transit Center and Northland Center.

#### Route 31 Mack

Route 31 is an east-west crosstown route which runs primarily on its namesake street across the City of Detroit and intersect with Gratiot Avenue at Mack Avenue.

#### Route 32 McNichols

Route 32 is an east-west crosstown feeder route that intersects Gratiot Avenue at McNichols Road and Seymour Street. It extends from Mack Avenue at its eastern end to Telegraph Road at its western end.

#### Route 40 Russell

Route 40, a downtown terminus route, runs along a short segment of Gratiot Avenue between Randolph Street and Russell Avenue. It serves neighborhoods as far north as 7 Mile Road and Outer Drive.

### Route 45 Seven Mile

This east-west mainline crosstown route intersects Gratiot Avenue near Chalmers Avenue. Its eastern terminus is at Mack Avenue; its western terminus is at Lasher Road and Grand River Avenue.

### Route 48 Van Dyke-Lafayette

A mainline route, Route 48 intersects Gratiot Avenue at Van Dyke Avenue between Warren Avenue and Harper Avenue. It extends as far north as 8 Mile Road.

Table 7-1. DDOT Transit Performance

Performance Measure	Fixed Routes	Paratransit
Total Annual Boardings	30,898,800	705,110
Percent of Total Boardings	99.09%	0.91%
Vehicle Revenue Miles	9,660,800	1,862,765
Operating Cost per Revenue Mile	\$11.78	\$2.81
Boardings per Revenue Mile	3.20	0.15
Average Fare	\$1.45	\$2.21
Farebox Recovery	18.75%	11.9%

Source: National Transit Database, 2013

Table 7-2. DDOT Weekday Ridership for those routes that cross Gratiot Avenue

DDOT Route	Weekday Ridership (2014)
Route 9 Chalmers	620
Route 10 Chene	1,025
Route 11 Clairmount	545
Route 12 Conant	900
Route 13 Conner	575
Route 14 Crosstown	4,170
Route 17 Eight Mile	4,515
Route 31 Mack	2,760
Route 32 McNichols	2,815
Route 40 Russell	586
Route 45 Seven Mile	4,910
Route 48 Van Dyke	2,865

Source: DDOT, 2014

### **7.1.2 Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART)**

The Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART) is the second largest public transit system in southeast Michigan and the state as a whole. SMART was formed in 1967 as southeast Michigan's regional bus system. It serves an area of 1,074 square miles that includes the City of Detroit and over 75 communities in Macomb, Wayne and Oakland counties, with a service area population of 3,734,090.

SMART operates a fleet of 221 buses on 39 fixed and flex routes. It also operates 81 paratransit vehicles on its Connector and ADA services. Total annual ridership is 10.1 million, with average weekday ridership of 34,975 (2013). SMART operates two park & ride routes which operate on the I-96 and M-10 freeways, but does not provide similar service on I-94 parallel to Gratiot Avenue due to travel time variability along I-94 during the peaks. SMART riders are generally a mix of transit dependent riders and choice riders (those who otherwise could drive to make the same trip).

Regardless of their local or limited stop designation, the passenger pick up/drop off pattern of SMART service precludes SMART from serving passenger trips that both begin and end within the City of Detroit. Outside downtown, SMART local and commuter routes only drop off passengers within the City of Detroit on southbound trips and only drop off passengers within the City of Detroit on northbound trips. Reverse commute routes pick up northbound passengers in Detroit in the morning and drop off southbound passengers in the evening. These trips, however, do not accommodate passenger trips that both start and end within the City of Detroit. If a passenger boarding a SMART bus within Macomb County has a destination in Detroit between 8 Mile Road and the outskirts of downtown, that passenger must transfer between the SMART route and a DDOT route at 8 Mile Road.

There are two SMART routes that operate primarily on Gratiot Avenue:

#### **Route 560 Gratiot Local**

This local bus route runs between Gratiot Avenue/23 Mile Road and Gratiot Avenue/8 Mile Road. Route 560 is classified as a Main Corridor Route with frequent service in suburban communities and peak hour service in Detroit. During weekday peak periods, trips continue to/from Downtown Detroit. The route operates every 10-20 minutes during peak periods and about every 15 minutes during the off-peak. Occasional trips (about every 30 minutes during the peak and 60 minutes or wider in the off-peak) extend to beyond the northern terminus at Gratiot Avenue/23 Mile Road to 23 Mile Road/Green Road in New Baltimore. Combined with Route 565, weekday ridership currently averages 5,745.

The weekday service period is 4:20 AM to 2:30 AM and the travel times vary. Based on the closest point in the study corridor to its northern terminus, scheduled AM peak travel time from Mount Clemens (Cass Avenue) is around 31 minutes to 8 Mile Road and 60 to 64 minutes to Downtown Detroit. In the PM peak, there is a significant variation in travel time from Downtown Detroit out to Mount Clemens, from 58 to 68 minutes.

#### Route 565 Gratiot Limited

Route 565 is classified as a Commuter Route that operates during peak periods only. Its alignment is essentially the same as Route 560 between 23 Mile Road and Downtown Detroit, but the route consists of only three morning inbound and three afternoon outbound trips. Ridership for this route is combined with Route 560.

Four SMART routes operate partly along Gratiot:

#### Route 510 Van Dyke

This north-south main corridor route that operates on Van Dyke Avenue between 23 Mile Road and 8 Mile Road, with selected trips extending to/from Downtown Detroit via Van Dyke Avenue and Gratiot Avenue.

#### Route 515 Van Dyke

Route 515 is a peak period-only commuter route that runs in conjunction with Route 510.

#### Route 530 Schoenherr

This peak period-only commuter route connects Lakeside Center, a major SMART Hub located near Schoenherr Road and Hall Road with 8 Mile Road; selected trips extend to/from Downtown Detroit via Schoenherr Road and Gratiot Avenue.

#### Route 580 Harper

Generally running parallel to Gratiot Avenue to the east for most of its length, this peak period-only commuter route operates on Gratiot Avenue between Harper Avenue (next to the I-94 – Gratiot Avenue interchange) and Downtown Detroit. Its northern terminus is less than a mile east of Gratiot Avenue, located along Metro Parkway in Harrison Township.

Additional routes and service that intersects and/or runs parallel to Gratiot Avenue within the one-mile study area buffer include:

#### Route 550 Garfield

This peak period-only commuter route connects the SMART Lakeside Center Hub and Macomb Community College with the Macomb Mall Hub, where it runs via Garfield Road and 14 Mile Road. Macomb Mall is the transfer point between Route 550 and SMART's primary, Gratiot Avenue service, Route 560.

#### Route 610 Kercheval-Harper

The northern terminus of this main corridor route is at Gratiot Avenue and 15 Mile Road. It generally parallels the Gratiot Avenue corridor, with most trips ending to the south in Grosse Pointe Park. Selected peak period trips extend to/from Downtown Detroit via Jefferson Avenue.

#### Route 615 Jefferson

This community route connects the Macomb Mall Hub and St. John Hospital in Grosse Pointe Woods via Mack Avenue, Little Mack Avenue and Greater Mack Avenue.

#### Route 620 Charlevoix

Macomb Mall, located at Gratiot Avenue and Masonic Boulevard, is the northern terminus of this peak period-only commuter route that serves the Lake St. Clair communities with service to Downtown Detroit.

#### Route 635 Jefferson Express

Serving the Lake St. Clair communities, this peak period-only commuter route runs on Jefferson Avenue and Lake Shore Drive between Metro Parkway in Harrison Township and Downtown Detroit.

#### Route 710 Nine Mile

This east-west crosstown route intersects Gratiot Avenue at 9 Mile Road in Eastpointe. Eastward, the route continues to Greater Mack Avenue. Westward, Route 710 terminates at the Northland Center Hub in the City of Oak Park.

#### Route 730 Ten Mile

This east-west crosstown route intersects Gratiot Avenue at 10 Mile Road in Eastpointe. East of Gratiot Avenue, the route turns to the south, terminating in Grosse Pointe Woods. It extends as far west as Telegraph Road in Southfield, with a major intermediate stop at the Royal Oak Transit Center located in Downtown Royal Oak.

#### Route 740 Twelve Mile

This east-west crosstown route intersects Gratiot Avenue at 12 Mile Road in Roseville, near the Roseville Plaza shopping center. Route 740 continues briefly eastward from Gratiot Avenue, terminating at 13 Mile Road and Little Mack Avenue. It extends westward across Macomb County to Farmington Hills, with a major intermediate stop at the Royal Oak Transit Center in Downtown Royal Oak.

#### Route 760 Thirteen Mile/Fourteen Mile

This east-west crosstown route intersects Gratiot Avenue at 13 Mile Road, extending slightly eastward to its terminus at Little Mack Avenue. It operates along major portions of 13 Mile and 14 Mile roads, with a major intermediate stop at the Oakland Mall, and terminates at Telegraph Road.

#### Route 780 Fifteen Mile

The eastern terminus of this east-west crosstown route is at Gratiot Avenue. It extends across Macomb County with major intermediate stops at the Oakland Mall and the Somerset Collection.

### Grosecbeck Flex Route Service

SMART operates a flexible bus service centered on the Grosecbeck Highway corridor just to the west of Gratiot Avenue between 8 Mile Road and M-59 (Hall Road). It operates weekday only, with a fixed schedule and timepoints but a flexible route that allows riders to call and reserve pick-up and drop off within the designated service area.

Table 7-3. SMART Transit Performance

Performance Measure	Fixed Routes	Paratransit
Total Annual Boardings	9,464,560	650,580
Percent of Total Boardings	93.57	6.43%
Vehicle Revenue Miles	8,624,775	3,748,475
Operating Cost per Revenue Mile	\$8.65	\$5.41
Boardings per Revenue Mile	1.10	0.17
Average Fare	\$1.31	\$1.47
Farebox Recovery	16.73%	4.73%

Source: National Transit Database, 2013

Table 7-4. SMART Weekday Ridership for those routes that cross Gratiot Avenue

SMART Route	Weekday Ridership (2014)
Route 510/515 Van Dyke	2,505
Route 530 Schoenherr	150
Route 580 Harper	115
Route 550 Garfield	400
Route 610 Kercheval-Harper	940
Route 615 Jefferson	185
Route 620 Charlevoix	95
Route 635 Jefferson Express	115
Route 710 Nine Mile	2,165
Route 730 Ten Mile	860
Route 740 Twelve Mile	1,530
Route 760 13/14 Mile	580
Route 780 Fifteen Mile	845

Source: SMART, 2014

### ***7.1.3 Detroit Transportation Corporation (DTC)***

The Detroit Transportation Corporation (DTC) operates the Detroit People Mover (DPM). Opened in 1987, the DPM is a fully automated guideway system that consists of 12 computer-controlled, driverless vehicles that operate on a 2.9-mile elevated, single track guideway in a clockwise loop in Downtown Detroit. There are 13 stations in the system. It was originally planned as a downtown feeder-distributor system of a broader regional rapid transit system. As the latter component was not developed, DPM was unable to realize its initial ridership estimates. However, it does provide a comprehensive circulation function within downtown with frequent service and stops in downtown's Financial District and the Renaissance Center. It also serves special event venues with stations at Cobo Center (convention center), Joe Louis Arena, Comerica Park, Ford Field, Greektown Casino and entertainment district, and the Theatre District on Broadway. It also serves the Rosa Parks Transit Center on Washington Boulevard and Michigan Avenue. DPM carries 2.3 million annual passenger trips. Average weekday ridership of 5,135 is exceeded by average Saturday ridership of 8,225 and average Sunday ridership of 5,575 (2013).

### ***7.1.4 Transit Windsor***

Transit Windsor is the transit service provider for the City of Windsor, in Ontario, Canada; it is operated by the City of Windsor. Transit Windsor operates one bus route, Tunnel Bus, which shuttles passengers between Downtown Detroit and Downtown Windsor via the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel. The route circulates through Downtown Detroit; stops include Congress Street East at Cadillac Square, Cobo Center/Joe Louis Arena, and the Rosa Parks Transit Center. It operates seven days a week with a 30-minute headway. Annual ridership is approximately 210,000 (2014).

### ***7.1.5 Intercity Rail and Bus Services***

Although indirect to the Gratiot Avenue corridor, Amtrak provides intercity service to Detroit with its Wolverine service to Pontiac, Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, and Chicago. DDOT and SMART bus routes have stops near the Detroit Amtrak station, which is located within Midtown Detroit along Woodward Avenue.

Greyhound offers intercity bus service from its Downtown Detroit terminal. It is served by both DDOT and SMART. Megabus also provides service to Chicago, which uses the Rosa Parks Transit Center as its boarding/alighting location.

### ***7.1.6 Shuttle Services***

There are currently numerous shuttles within Downtown Detroit, but no other shuttle service along the Gratiot Avenue corridor.

### ***7.1.7 Transit Facilities***

There are a limited number of transit facilities in the Gratiot corridor:

### Rosa Parks Transit Center

Although not physically situated along Gratiot Avenue, the largest and most prominent transit center within the Gratiot Avenue corridor study area (and part of the service area) is the Rosa Parks Transit Center (RPTC), a multimodal transfer facility located in Downtown Detroit. Located on a 2.4-acre site, it is served by DDOT and SMART buses, the Detroit People Mover, and Megabus. The facility consists of a 27,700 square-foot, three-level building, with enclosed waiting areas and passenger amenities, and a central island with 12 bus bays.

### Gratiot-8 Mile

The intersection of 8 Mile Road and Gratiot Avenue is a major transfer point between SMART Route 560 and DDOT Route 34 as well as DDOT Route 17. Standard shelters provide minimal passenger amenities. There are preliminary plans to build a more enhanced transit station at this location within the City of Eastpointe.

### Macomb Mall

The Macomb Mall is located at Gratiot Avenue and Masonic Boulevard and is a major transfer point between SMART Routes 550, 560, 565 and 620. A cluster of shelters are located between southbound Gratiot Avenue and the mall parking lot. Buses operate through the mall parking lot to access the stop.

### Roseville Plaza Park & Ride Lot

A portion of this shopping center parking lot is available for commuters who choose to park and board SMART Routes 560 and 565. Buses do not serve the lot directly but stay on Gratiot Avenue; there are also no shelters or other passenger amenities.

## 7.2 Current and Future Roadway Performance

This section summarizes the current and future roadway performance for Gratiot Avenue between Downtown Detroit and M-59 (Hall Road), as well as major parallel corridors both east and west of Gratiot Avenue.

### 7.2.1 Gratiot Avenue

Gratiot Avenue, a state trunk highway designated M-3, is located in an area with significant access to several state and US highways and the interstate system. The lane configuration varies along the corridor:

- State Street/Farmer Street to Randolph Street: three lanes in the southbound direction only.
- Randolph Street to Orleans Street: boulevard with narrow landscaped median, three lanes in each direction with on-street parking allowed in the outermost lane, left turn pockets in median at major intersections.
- Orleans Street to 8 Mile Road: three lanes in each direction with on-street parking on both sides and a continuous center left-turn lane
- 8 Mile Road to Common Road: boulevard with wide landscaped median; three lanes in each directions with occasional on-street parking on both sides; mid-block left turn and u-turn lanes across median with left turn pocket lanes.
- Common Road to Stair Street/Remick Drive: boulevard with wide landscaped median; four lanes in each directions; mid-block left turn and u-turn lanes across median with left turn pocket lanes.
- Between Remick Drive and Fountain Street in Mount Clemens, Gratiot Avenue splits into a one-way pair, utilizing a parallel street, also called Gratiot Avenue, in the northbound direction. Northbound Gratiot Avenue includes three travel lanes with no on-street parking and Southbound Gratiot Avenue varies between three and four travel lanes. Northbound and Southbound Gratiot Avenues are one block apart north and south of Downtown Mount Clemens; and three to four blocks apart on either side of the downtown area.
- Fountain Street to M-59 (Hall Road): two lanes in each direction with on-street parking on both sides and center left-turn lane.

Traffic volumes along the corridor range from 22,000 vehicles per day in the southern section to around 60,000 vehicles per day in the northern section. Traffic volumes tend to drop off again north of Remick Drive.

Level of service (LOS) of key intersections along Gratiot Avenue is an important measure of traffic flow and how it relates to the purpose and need for a rapid transit service along the corridor. LOS is a rating based on the ratio between the traffic volumes on a roadway with that roadway's capacity and is used to rate roadway performance. Roadways are rated using six classifications: A, B, C, D, E, and F. Level of Service A represents optimal traffic conditions in which there is free flow traffic and demand does not exceed capacity. LOS is also often a common measure on major

arterials in large metropolitan areas. Levels of service between A and D are generally recognized as acceptable levels of service by the Michigan Department of Transportation. LOS E and F are characterized by increased traffic congestion and traffic demand that exceeds roadway capacity, and are generally recognized as undesirable or unacceptable roadway performance. Table 7-5 illustrates those intersections or approaches along Gratiot that operate at a LOS E or F either today or are anticipated to in the future (2040) based on traffic growth. Future traffic volumes were determined by utilized a six-percent growth rate obtained from the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

There are several other major roadways that are parallel to Gratiot Avenue, one include the I-94 expressway to the east and the other includes Groesbeck Highway to the west.

Table 7-5. Intersections with congestion either today or in the future

Intersection	Current (2015)	Future (2040)
Brush		X
St. Antoine	X	X
Russell	X	X
Jay	X	X
St. Aubin	X	X
Conner		X

Source: Parsons Brinckerhoff, 2015

### 7.2.2 I-94 Ford Freeway

I-94 (Edsel Ford Freeway) is a major expressway that runs parallel to Gratiot Avenue along the entire length of the study corridor to the east. I-94 was opened to traffic in the 1960s, providing an alternate route to travel on other than Gratiot Avenue for commuters living in communities along the corridor and northeast of Detroit. The increased travel speed and absence of signalized intersections makes it a faster and more attractive travel option for auto users. I-94 is an east-west freeway that connects Wayne and Macomb Counties to Michigan’s Lower Peninsula, and west to Billings Montana.

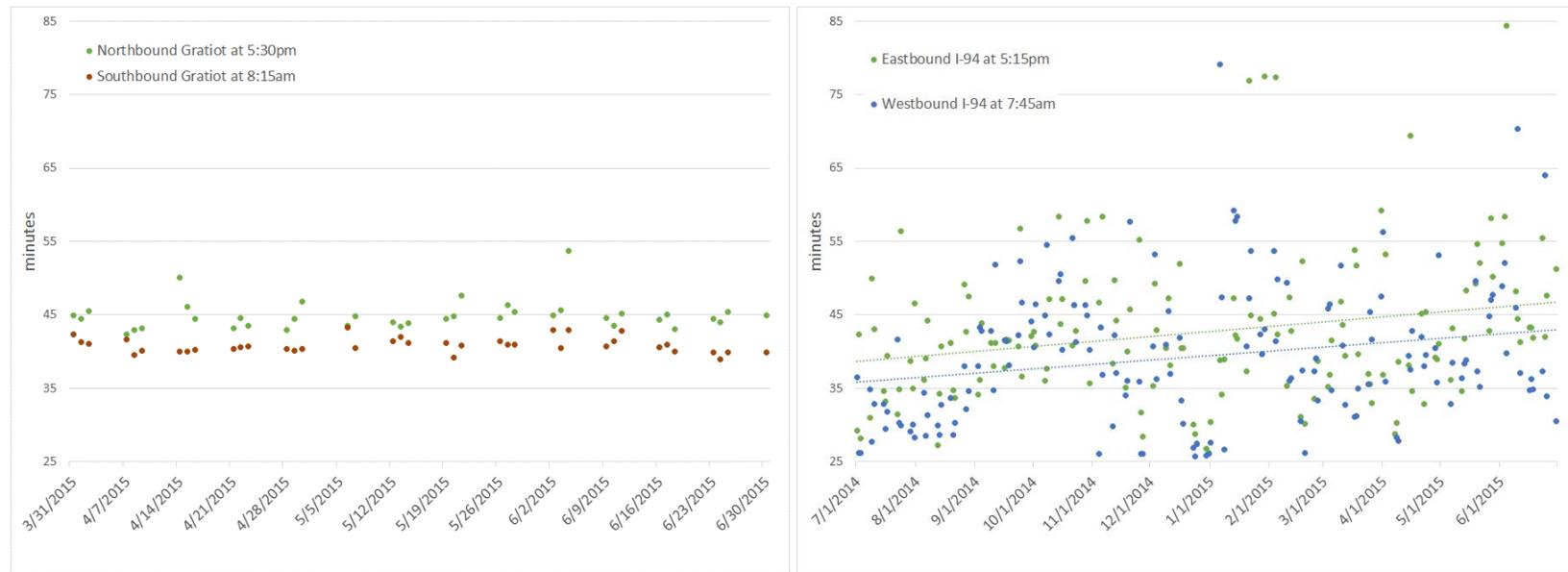
I-94 crosses Gratiot Avenue at one location, in the vicinity of the intersection of Gratiot Avenue and Harper Avenue in the City of Detroit. Outside the I-94-Gratiot crossing, the distance of the freeway from Gratiot Avenue ranges from approximately 0.2 miles at the I-94 Connector in Roseville to

approximately 2.6 miles just south of 8 Mile Road in Detroit. At the southern end of the Gratiot Avenue corridor, in Downtown Detroit, I-94 is approximately 2.3 miles northwest of Gratiot Avenue. At the southern end of the study corridor, at M-59 (Hall Road), I-94 and Gratiot Avenue are 0.5 miles apart.

In addition to the I-94 Connector near 13 Mile Road, freeway connections between Gratiot Avenue and I-94 are provided by I-75 near Downtown Detroit, and I-696 at 11 Mile Road in Roseville. Additionally, Gratiot Avenue and the freeway are connected by major arterials with interchanges at I-94 and intersections with Gratiot.

Travel conditions along I-94 vary greatly throughout the day. Typically westbound travel is congested in the morning rush hour and eastbound travel is congested in the evening rush hour. According to the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, I-94 is expected to be widened to four lanes in each direction from Conner Avenue to I-96 in the City of Detroit by the year 2035. Figure 7-1 illustrates the travel time along I-94 between M-59 and Downtown Detroit during the morning and afternoon rush hours. This figure illustrates that travel times fluctuate considerably from day to day.

**Figure 7-1. Travel Time along Gratiot Avenue and I-94 between M-59 and Downtown Detroit**



Source: RITIS, 2015



### 7.2.3 Gunston Street/Hoover Street/Groesbeck Highway (M-97)

State Route M-97, also known as Gunston Street, Hoover Street, and Groesbeck Highway, is a major north-south roadway located approximately 1.5 miles to the west of Gratiot Avenue. Known as Gunston Street and Hoover Street in the City of Detroit, M-97 is one lane in each direction with very low traffic volumes. North of 8 Mile Road, M-97 (known as Groesbeck Highway) is a major seven-lane roadway with three lanes in each direction and a continuous center left-turn lane. Traffic volumes along M-97 vary from 15,000 vehicles per day south of 8 Mile Road to 45,000 vehicles per day north of 8 Mile Road to M-59 (Hall Road). Today some minor congestion is experienced at 12 Mile Road, Utica Road, as well as approaching Cass Avenue during the peak periods. There is major congestion between 15 Mile Road and Metropolitan Parkway during the peak periods.

### 7.3 Travel Time Comparison between Roadway and Transit Systems

Automobile travel times along Gratiot Avenue and I-94 varies by time of day and direction as indicated previously. This is due to the traffic volumes being heavier southbound in the morning and northbound in the evening, as well as depending on commercial vehicle activity and safety incidents along the roadway. The average travel time for automobiles along Gratiot Avenue between M-59 (Hall Road) and Downtown Detroit falls between 45 minutes and 50 minutes during the peak periods; however, there can be times when the evening travel times can increase for both northbound and southbound travelers, specifically between I-696 to Metro Parkway and also 8 Mile Road to I-696, due to non-recurring conditions such as traffic surges or safety incidents.

Transit travel times are affected by congestion as well and are typically longer than automobile travel times due to dwelling at bus stops and by the number of stops along a route. The table below compares the average travel time by automobile during the mid-day compared to a SMART/DDOT bus. The SMART/DDOT travel times are based on schedule time rather than actual travel time, which was not available. Table 7-6 illustrates the comparison of travel times along Gratiot Avenue and I-94 for automobiles and for transit.

Table 7-6. Travel Times for Automobiles and Transit between M-59 (Hall Road) and Downtown Detroit

Mode	Mid-day	Peak Period
Automobiles along Gratiot	40 minutes	55 minutes
Automobiles along I-94	28 minutes	25 - 85 minutes
Transit along Gratiot	90 minutes	60 minutes

Source: RITIS and SMART, 2015



## 7.4 Carpooling

The Michigan Department of Transportation and Zipcar are the primary carpooling/car-sharing resources within the study corridor. MDOT sponsors a rideshare program and operates carpool lots throughout the state of Michigan. There are no MDOT carpool lots located within one mile of Gratiot Avenue; the closest is approximately 10 miles to the north at I-94 and New Haven Road between the village of New Haven and the City of New Baltimore. The lot is primarily used by commuters traveling to and from Downtown Detroit via I-94. Zipcar, a private car-sharing service, has reserved parking space locations near City Place Apartments on Antietam Avenue, which is very close the Gratiot Avenue corridor.

## 7.5 Active/Non-Motorized Transportation

Facilities created for use by pedestrians and bicyclists are generally considered active or non-motorized transportation facilities. These facilities are particularly important for transit riders as they utilize them to travel to and from stations at the beginning and end of their trips. The Gratiot Avenue corridor and the one mile buffer around the corridor includes a few facilities such as separated pathways, on-road bike lanes and shared-use paths, but the bulk of the non-motorized facilities along the corridor are limited to sidewalks.

### 7.5.1 Pedestrian Travel

The entirety of Gratiot Avenue from Downtown Detroit to Downtown Mount Clemens has sidewalks on at least one side of the road. Between Downtown Mount Clemens and M-59, sidewalks are located only sporadically; there is no continuity in this area. Major cross roads are also lined with sidewalks. Many residential neighborhoods within one mile of Gratiot Avenue have sidewalks to easily access the corridor, though due to high levels of blight and vacancy, some areas do not have a fully connected system of sidewalks. Some sidewalks are badly damaged, missing or overgrown with greenery, leaving an incomplete network.

### 7.5.2 Bicycle Travel

Bicycles allow transit users to travel beyond the five-minute walking threshold for pedestrians, thereby expanding their reach to destinations accessible from transit stops. The SEMCOG Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for Southeast Michigan outlines specific bicycling stress levels based on roadway conditions. The Gratiot Avenue corridor includes roadways in all Tiers, including Tier 1: No Stress and High Comfort, Tier 2: Low Stress and High Comfort, Tier 3: Moderate Stress and Comfort, and Tier 4: High Stress and Low Comfort. Nearly all of Gratiot Avenue itself is identified as Tier 4: High Stress and Low Comfort, due to high traffic volumes, high posted speeds and a lack of bicycle facilities. Major roadways crossing Gratiot Avenue also fall into this category. The majority of local/neighborhood roads within one mile of Gratiot Avenue are Tier 1: No Stress and High Comfort roads. These roads are typically in residential areas and are suitable for both bicyclists (of all levels) and pedestrians. Tier 1 roads are typically low speed roads. Tier 2 and Tier 3 roads are scattered throughout the corridor. Many bicyclists generally feel comfortable on these roads, although, some non-motorized facilities would help reduce stress on Tier 3 roadways, depending on context and actual travel speeds. Currently there are no marked bicycle lanes along Gratiot Avenue or that cross Gratiot Avenue.

### 7.5.3 Trails/Greenways

While there are no recreational trails along or closely parallel to Gratiot Avenue, however, there are several trails and greenways that cross Gratiot Avenue, these include:

#### Inner Circle Greenway/Dequindre Cut Greenway

The Inner Circle Greenway is a 26-mile pathway that encircles the City of Detroit while passing through Hamtramck, Highland Park, and a small portion of Dearborn. It makes use of existing trails such as the Southwest Detroit Greenlink, RiverWalk, and the Dequindre Cut, with roughly half of the pathway now complete. The largest gap is an 8.3 mile segment of abandoned railroad property north of the Eastern Market. Currently, this Greenway goes underneath Gratiot Avenue between St. Aubin Street and Orleans Street in the City of Detroit. There is a connection to the Greenway directly off of Gratiot Avenue. This Greenway connects users directly to the Eastern Market and the Detroit East Riverfront.

#### Conner Creek Greenway

Conner Creek Greenway is a planned nine-mile path extending from north of 8 Mile Road in the City of Warren south along Conner Avenue to the Detroit River. Approximately seven miles has been constructed and crosses Gratiot Avenue at Conner Street. This Greenway begins at Maheras Gentry Park on the Detroit River and heads north roughly following Conner Avenue. It also is significant since it is part of the Showcase Trail between Belle Isle and Wisconsin.

#### Metro Parkway Trail/Freedom Trail

The Metro Parkway Trail, also known as the Freedom Trail, is an emerging and nearly continuous trail and greenway along the Clinton River and Metropolitan Parkway. This trail route connects to regional parks as part of the Metropark system, as well as a string of local parks. The trail crosses Gratiot Avenue at Metropolitan Parkway.

#### Clinton River Spillway Trail

The Clinton River Spillway Trail extends from Shadyside Park in Mount Clemens, across the Clinton River via a pedestrian bridge into Clinton Township, then runs parallel to the spillway, intersecting with the Metro Parkway Trail and progressing beyond it eastward until it reaches its Lake St. Clair destination two miles south in Harrison Township. Five parks are accessible near or along this important stretch of the trail network including Shadyside and historic Sleepy Hollow in Mount Clemens, Neil Reid in Clinton Township, Tucker Park and Lake St. Clair Park in Harrison Township. The Charter Township of Clinton is also implementing a Downtown Redevelopment Plan ½ mile west of the current path's location that will be significant in connecting pathway users to this vital economic undertaking.

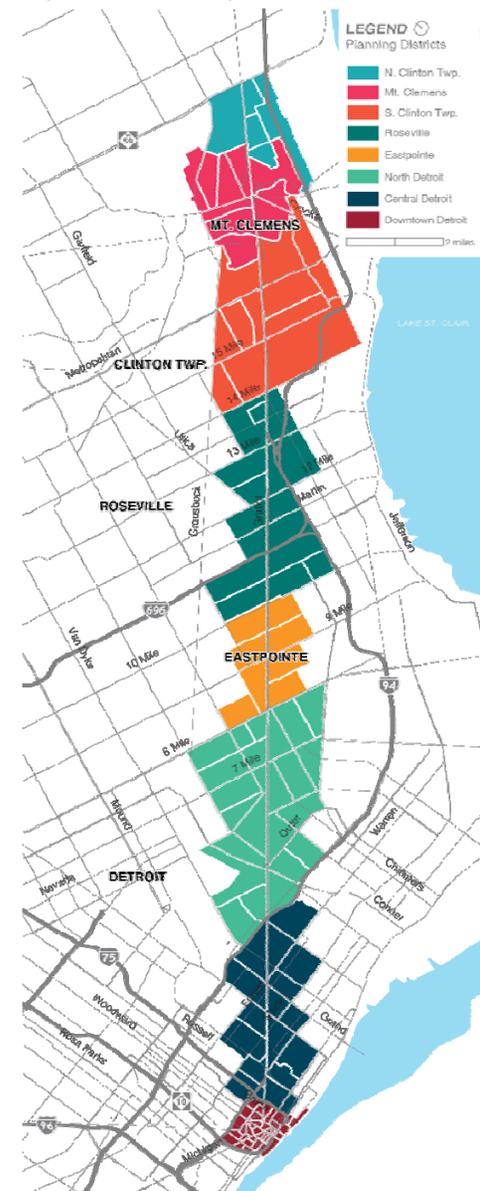
## 8 CURRENT AND FUTURE TRAVEL PATTERNS

Figure 8-1 illustrates how the region was broken into different areas to determine where trips are coming from and going to for the year 2010 and also for the future year 2040. Eight different areas have been identified along the Gratiot Avenue corridor, approximately ½ mile on either side. Trips within this ½ mile buffer typically have good access to transit either via walking or bicycling to the corridor. These eight areas are:

- Downtown Detroit – the area bounded by the M-10, I-75, and I-375 freeways
- Central Detroit – the one mile area around Gratiot Avenue between I-375 and I-94
- North Detroit – the one mile area around Gratiot Avenue between I-94 and Eight Mile Road
- Eastpointe – the one mile area around Gratiot Avenue between Eight Mile Road and 10 Mile Road
- Roseville – the one mile area around Gratiot Avenue between 10 Mile Road and 14 Mile Road
- South Clinton Township – the one mile area around Gratiot Avenue between 14 Mile Road and Wellington Crescent
- Mount Clemens – all of Mount Clemens
- North Clinton Township - the one mile area around Gratiot Avenue between Henry B Joy Boulevard and M-59 (Hall Road)

Table 8-1 summarizes the number of trips that occur between each of these districts along the Gratiot Avenue corridor.

Figure 8-1. Planning Districts

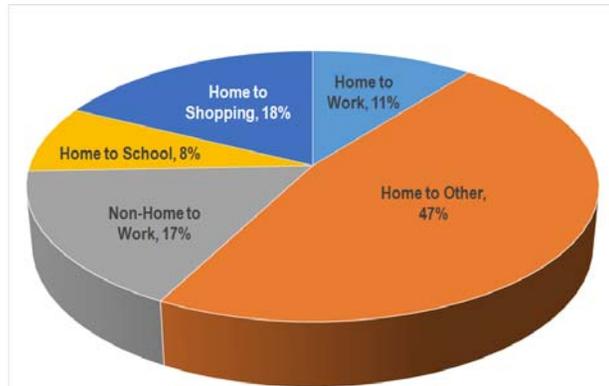


**Table 8-1. 2010 Persons Trips along the Gratiot Avenue Corridor**

From \ To	Downtown Detroit	Central Detroit	North Detroit	Eastpointe	Roseville	S. Clinton Twp	Mount Clemens	N. Clinton Twp	Total
Downtown Detroit	20,660	1,730	515	125	180	70	55	10	23,345
Central Detroit	13,690	10,155	3,140	285	255	70	50	10	27,655
North Detroit	4,370	3,760	30,370	5,425	2,880	575	340	40	47,760
Eastpointe	925	390	4,160	9,760	5,105	515	270	30	21,155
Roseville	980	310	1,905	4,065	27,650	3,910	1,250	135	40,205
S. Clinton Twp	565	145	560	555	7,995	20,830	7,135	590	38,375
Mount Clemens	290	75	245	200	1,480	3,795	12,115	1,185	19,385
N. Clinton Twp	60	15	50	40	300	700	3,135	1,315	5,615
Total	41,540	16,580	40,945	20,455	45,845	30,465	24,350	3,315	223,495

Source: SEMCOG, 2010

**Figure 8-2. Types of Trips within the Corridor**



The largest trip origin amongst the eight corridor planning areas is North Detroit, followed by the City of Roseville. The City of Roseville and Downtown Detroit are the largest trip destinations along the corridor. The largest proportion of trip type along the corridor is non-work type trips, or other trips, with the next highest being work-type trips and then shopping trips. Approximately eight percent of trips are school trips. Figure 8-2 illustrates these types of trips.

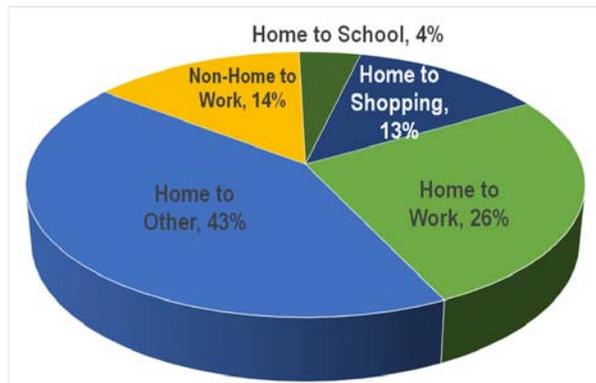
There are a significant number of trips using the corridor with either an origin or destination outside of the corridor. Those trips coming into the corridor are illustrated in Table 8-2.

**Table 8-2. 2010 Persons Trips coming into the Gratiot Avenue Corridor**

From \ To	Downtown Detroit	Central Detroit	North Detroit	Eastpointe	Roseville	S. Clinton Twp	Mount Clemens	N. Clinton Twp	Total
St. Clair County	620	120	250	145	645	750	1,795	395	4,720
Northwestern Macomb County	865	235	500	265	1,170	1,055	2,105	355	6,550
Northeastern Macomb County	1550	345	905	610	3,160	5,335	15,615	3,885	31,405
Sterling Heights/Warren/Centerline/Fraser/ Clinton Township/Harrison Twp/ St. Clair Shores	9,910	3,485	16,490	17,445	58,500	33,270	26,800	2,820	168,720
Eastern Detroit/Wayne County	22,365	12,030	25,860	6,300	6,490	1,730	1,120	140	76,035
Eastern Central Detroit	13,440	7,015	9,625	1,635	1,480	385	265	35	33,880
Western Detroit/Wayne County	79,160	13,215	7,145	1,780	2,450	895	835	115	105,595
All others (Oakland, Livingston, Washtenaw, Monroe)	16,855	3,145	4,440	1,805	4,445	2,600	3,095	470	36,855
<b>Total</b>	<b>144,765</b>	<b>39,590</b>	<b>65,215</b>	<b>29,985</b>	<b>78,340</b>	<b>46,020</b>	<b>51,630</b>	<b>8,215</b>	<b>463,760</b>

Source: SEMCOG, 2010

**Figure 8-3. Types of Trips coming into the corridor**



Trips coming from the communities adjacent to the corridor with Macomb County and into the corridor account for the most trips, at approximately 36%. Some of these trips are good candidates for a park and ride/kiss and ride-type facility, using transit along Gratiot Avenue to their final destination, especially to those communities that have issues with parking, such as Downtown Detroit and Downtown Mount Clemens. Downtown Detroit is the largest destination for trips originating outside of the corridor, at approximately 30% of all trips. As illustrated in Figure 8-3, approximately 26% of all Gratiot Avenue trips originating from outside of the corridor are home-based work trips.

The number of person-trips within the corridor is expected to decrease into the future, due to a decrease in population within the overall corridor. Table 8-3 illustrates the change in types of trip between 2010 and 2040. The overall number of trips within the corridor is expected to decrease by seven (7) percent. The largest decreases are from and to the City of Detroit, with increases to and from Clinton Township, Eastpointe, and Mount Clemens. The largest decreases are occurring in the home to other trip type and the home to school trip type. The number of work trips are expected to increase slightly.

Trips coming into the corridor are also expected to decrease as well, however, only about three (3) percent. Again, the largest decreases are

**Table 8-4. Change in Person Trips from 2010 to 2040 coming into the corridor**

Type of Trip	Person Trips in 2010	Person Trips in 2040	Change	Percent Change
Home to Work	121,540	127,905	+6,365	5%
Home to Other	197,255	181,480	-15,775	-8%
Non-Home to Work	65,750	66,480	+730	1%
Home to School	19,075	15,790	-3,285	-17%
Home to Shopping	60,140	56,200	-3,285	-7%
Total Trips	223,495	206,905	-15,905	-3%

Source: SEMCOG, 2010

**Table 8-3. Change in Person Trips from 2010 to 2040 within the Corridor**

Type of Trip	Person Trips in 2010	Person Trips in 2040	Change	Percent Change
Home to Work	23,630	24,220	+590	2%
Home to Other	105,310	94,975	-10,335	-10%
Non-Home to Work	37,230	38,205	+975	3%
Home to School	17,915	13,435	-4,480	-25%
Home to Shopping	39,410	36,070	-3,340	-8%
Total Trips	223,495	206,905	-16,590	-7%

Source: SEMCOG, 2010

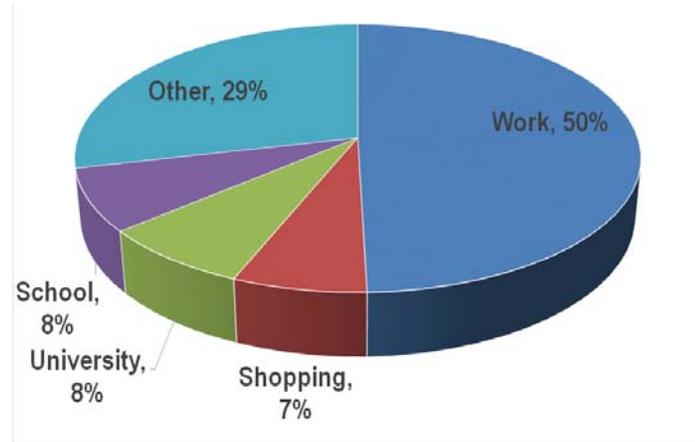
expected to be in the home to other and the home to school trip types. The amount of home and non-home work trips are expected to increase. The areas where there are increases in the number of trips are coming from St. Clair County and Macomb County. The areas of decreases are within the City of Detroit and Wayne County. The percentage of trips going from northern Macomb County/St. Clair County to Downtown Detroit is increasing.



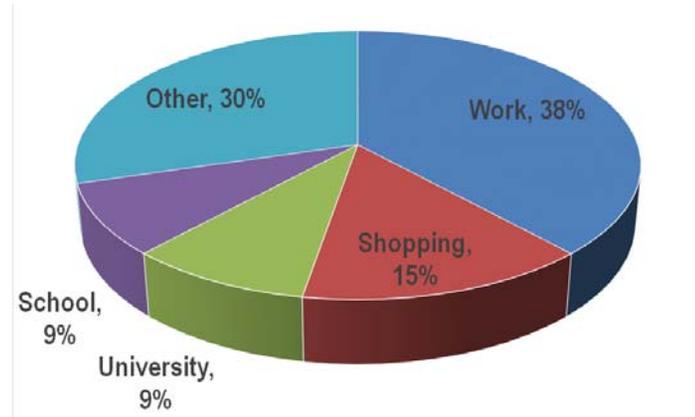
In 2010, the Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments conducted an on-board transit survey of all transit providers within the southeast Michigan region, including DDOT, SMART, and the Detroit People Mover. As shown in Table 8-5, most people walk to DDOT Route 34 and also SMART Route 560/565, while more walk for the DDOT route. The transfer rate for DDOT Route 34 is higher than that of SMART Route 560/565, which is consistent with overall DDOT transfer rate. The transfers between the two different systems indicates a higher proportion of riders transferring from DDOT to SMART.

The types of trip purposes are somewhat different between the systems, with more SMART riders have a work trip purpose as compared with DDOT riders. The school and university trips for both systems are quite substantial, indicating that the younger population need to have access to transit. The number of shopping trips are higher with on DDOT's route than with SMART.

**Figure 8-4. Type of Trips for SMART Route 560/565**



**Figure 8-5. Type of Trips for DDOT Route 34**



Source: SEMCOG Transit On-Board Survey, 2010

**Table 8-5. Types of Access to the Gratiot Routes**

Access Mode	DDOT 34	SMART 560/565
Walk	91%	79%
Drive	9%	21%
Transfer Rate from other Routes	57%	45%
Transfer Rate to/from SMART/DDOT	5%	22%

Source: SEMCOG Transit On-Board Survey, 2010



## 9 PREVIOUS AND CURRENT PLANNING & CONSTRUCTION EFFORTS

### Improving Transit in Southeast Michigan, SEMCOG, 2001

This early transit study identified Gratiot Avenue as a corridor in need of higher level transit service.

### Comprehensive Regional Transit Service Plan, Regional Transit Coordinating Council, 2008

This transit study featured a more detailed analysis of Gratiot Avenue. The study determined that Gratiot Avenue has the potential for “Arterial Rapid Transit” (“ART”). Characterized as a hybrid of the current bus route and a dedicated BRT line, ART would offer a higher level of transit service to riders along the corridor.

### Gratiot Avenue Corridor Improvement Plan, SEMCOG, 2008

Nine Gratiot communities within Macomb County banded together to develop the plan. It provided a vision for corridor management to restore and preserve road capacity, improve safety conditions, and support the long-term vision for expanded regional transit including potential streetcar or BRT, non-motorized systems, and sustainability.

### Detroit Transit Options for Growth Study, DDOT, 2009

A transit alternatives analysis which reviewed transit service within the City of Detroit and concluded that three regional corridors are candidates for higher level transit; Gratiot was identified as the second highest priority corridor.

### Gratiot Avenue Pilot Corridor, SEMCOG, 2014

As part of SEMCOG’s Creating Successful Corridors redevelopment initiative, work regarding the Gratiot Avenue corridor was guided by the Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development along with representatives from the Gratiot communities from Detroit to Mount Clemens. The recommendations ranged from creating a communication strategy and improving funding opportunities.

Figure 9-1. Previous Planning Efforts along Gratiot Avenue



### Building Equitable Sustainable Transit: Regional Master Transit Plan, RTA, 2015

The BEST: Regional Master Transit Plan will be a transit vision developed for the four-county Southeast Michigan region, guiding how transit will be expanded and improved in the next twenty years. This plan will provide a vision on improving bus service, coordinating existing service providers, and introducing rapid transit corridors throughout the region, including Gratiot Avenue.

### Building Equitable Sustainable Transit: Woodward Avenue, RTA/SEMCOG, 2014-2014

BEST: Woodward Avenue is currently entering into environmental review following the selection of a locally preferred alternative that resulted from the Woodward Avenue Rapid Transit Alternatives Analysis (AA), conducted from 2012 to 2014. The LPA recommends bus rapid transit (BRT) along the 27-mile Woodward Avenue corridor from Downtown Detroit to Downtown Pontiac that will operate within the existing right-of-way, servicing 26 stations primarily on Woodward Avenue through 11 communities in Wayne and Oakland Counties.

### Building Equitable Sustainable Transit: Michigan Avenue, RTA, 2015-2016

BEST: Michigan Avenue is a planning study to evaluate a wide range of transit options to connect Wayne and Washtenaw counties with safe, modern and efficient public transportation services. The conclusion of the study will be to determine a locally preferred alternative between Ann Arbor and Downtown Detroit defining the type of mode, the alignment, and station locations. The LPA is expected to be selected in early 2016.

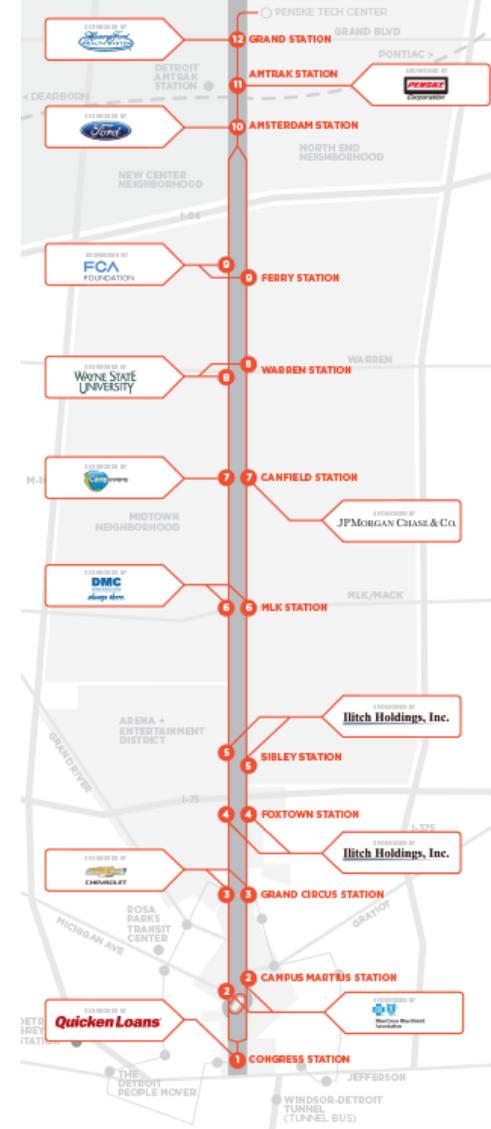
### M-1 Rail Woodward Streetcar Project, M-1 Rail, 2014-2017

Construction on the M-1 Rail Woodward Streetcar project began in 2014 and service is expected to begin in late 2016 or early 2017. Stretching 3.3 miles (6.6 miles round trip) along Woodward Avenue, the modern streetcar will connect 20 stations serving 12 locations between Congress Street in Downtown Detroit and West Grand Boulevard. Figure 9-2 illustrates the proposed station locations.

### Ann Arbor to Detroit Regional Rail Project, SEMCOG, 2005-2015

Originally a transit alternatives analysis started in 2005, the eventual recommendation proposed commuter rail service in the Detroit to Ann Arbor corridor with stops in Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Detroit Metropolitan Airport, and Detroit. The project takes advantage of existing infrastructure where possible and requires adding new station stops in Ypsilanti and at Detroit Metro Airport. Rail cars have been purchased and tracks are currently being upgraded. It is unknown when service will begin. The Detroit station will be located at the Amtrak station in New Center.

Figure 9-2. M-1 Rail Station Map



#### Gratiot Avenue Reconstruction, MDOT, 2019

The Michigan Department of Transportation is expected to reconstruct part of Gratiot Avenue between Common Road and 14 Mile Road in Macomb County in 2019. Part of the reconstruction will include modifying the ramps to and from I-94 near Masonic Boulevard.

#### I-94 Modernization Project, MDOT, 1994-2036

Nearly 30 years ago, MDOT recognized the need to reconstruct I-94 in Detroit. In the 1990s, the department conducted an extensive Environmental Impact Study (EIS) aimed at building community consensus on how to rebuild this corridor. In 2005, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) issued a record of decision that approved the reconstruction of a 6.7-mile segment of the freeway from just east of the I-94/I-94 interchange to west of Conner Avenue. Construction on the Gratiot Avenue bridge over I-94 is expected to occur in 2017 with construction of the freeway expected to be conducted in stages, beginning in 2019 and lasting until 2036.

#### I-375 Alternatives Project, Detroit Economic Growth Corporation/MDOT, 2013-2015

I-375 between I-75 and Jefferson Avenue was built nearly 50 years ago and is in need of reconstruction. The purpose of the I-375 Alternatives Project is to evaluate alternatives that will meet the existing and future needs of residents, businesses, and visitors within the context of a revitalized Downtown Detroit. Alternatives thus far have included keeping the freeway as-is to fully or partially converting the freeway to a surface street. Some options identified for the interchange area with I-75 include the eventual removal of the I-75 connector to Gratiot Avenue and changing the way access points of Gratiot Avenue and I-75.

# Memo

To: Board of Directors  
From: Michael G. Ford, CEO  
Date: July 16, 2015  
Re: RFP 2015-003 for Survey Research – Selection Committee Recommendation

## **Background**

On May 11, the RTA released RFP 2015-003 for Survey Research. On June 15 the RTA received seven responsive proposals. On July 2 a Selection Committee comprised of RTA Board Members, CAC Members, Transit Providers and RTA Staff reviewed all seven proposals based the evaluation criteria included in the RFP. The Selection Committee recommends the proposal submitted by the joint venture of Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3)/Emma White Research (EWR) for recommendation to the Board.

## **Overview of the Survey Research RFP**

Public Act 387 of 2012 (Sec. 6, (9)(c)) requires the RTA to conduct a survey of user satisfaction and a survey of general public satisfaction with the services and performance of the RTA once every three years. This will be the first survey conducted by the RTA and therefore it will serve as baseline of user satisfaction and general public satisfaction for future performance reporting.

The RFP stated that the RTA was seeking proposals from qualified firms to conduct two broad types of survey research 1) public transit user satisfaction, and 2) general public opinion of public transit. The successful Proposer will provide services to assist the RTA in collecting and evaluating information from riders and community members under its jurisdiction about their use of public transportation services, opinions of the extent and quality of service, and willingness to fund improvements to the existing service or new services through ballot issues and millage proposals in the Southeast Michigan region. The RFP also stated that the surveying should be done in two rounds: one in fall 2015 and a follow-up survey in spring 2016. This structure is unique to this period of survey research as the RTA intends to use this survey as input to its Regional Transit Master Planning process in the fall and to test the results of that process in the spring. Future surveys may have a different structure more closely aligned to assessing the performance of the RTA.

## **Description of the Survey Research RFP Process**

On May 11, the RTA released RFP 2015-003 for Survey Research. On June 15 the RTA received seven responsive proposals. On July 2 a Selection Committee comprised of RTA Board Members, CAC Members, Transit Providers and RTA Staff reviewed all seven proposals based the evaluation criteria included in the RFP. See Table 1 below for a list of the criteria and the associated weight of each.

**Table 1: Evaluation Criteria**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Demonstrated Understanding of the Project	10%
Project Approach	25%
Overall Work Plan and Schedule	25%
Experience of the Consulting Team	20%
Cost Proposal	20%

The Selection Committee provided independent scoring sheets of each proposal based on the point values described in Table 1. RTA staff reviewed the scoring and was able to see a large breakpoint between the four lower scoring proposals and the top three proposals.

Major limiting factors on the four lower scoring proposals were that they:

- 1) limited their proposal to just the general public survey,
- 2) had limited experience working with transit agencies, and
- 3) their proposals lacked clarity in survey design and project management.

The Selection Committee did review the four lower scoring proposals to ensure that no details were missed and to see if all members were in agreement regarding their original scoring.

The Selection Committee then reviewed the top three proposals in detail to come to a final conclusion. The third ranked proposal was more limited in scope than the top two. For example, the third ranked proposal did not have a follow-up survey scheduled for the spring, which was a key requirement of the RFP. This limitation caused the Committee to focus on a detailed review of the top two proposals.

The Selection Committee then compared the top two proposals, FM3/EWR and CJI Research Corporation (CJI), side by side based on the evaluation criteria. The proposals were equal in terms of Demonstrated Understanding of the Project, Experience of the Consulting Team, and Cost. The Committee did a more detailed review of the Project Approach and Overall Work Plan and Schedule. Both FM3/EWR and CJI have very strong proposals and impressive qualifications. However, there were some distinguishing factors that led to the recommendation.

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Selection Committee Rationale</b>
General Public Survey	The projected sample size and technique were the same for each proposal. The Selection Committee felt that FM3/EWR had a clearer strategy for acquiring cell phone records, which is crucial to getting a random sample of the general public.
Transit User Survey	FM3/EWR proposed an intercept survey while CJI proposed an on-board survey of transit users. The Selection Committee agreed that an intercept survey would be more effective and lead to better results than an on-board survey because it would be administered by a professional surveyor and it would allow for more in-depth questions.
Focus Group	FM3/EWR proposed a series of two focus groups that would vet the questionnaire used for the transit user and general public surveys. CJI did not propose to use a focus group. The Selection Committee

	shared the opinion that the focus groups were critical for the RTA's current surveying process because of the large scope of questions that could be asked and the diversity of purposes that the results could be used to support.
Overall Work Plan	FM3/EWR had a very clear work program with a schedule that showed how all of the pieces of proposed work fit together to provide strategic guidance to the RTA. CJI also had a very detailed work program, but it lacked a clear schedule for implementation.

### Next Steps

The RTA has contacted FM3/EWR to inform them of the Selection Committee's recommendation and explain the process for formal adoption by the Board. The recommendation of this committee is scheduled for final approval by the RTA Board at its June 16 meeting. Once the recommendation is approved, RTA will begin the contract negotiation process. The contract will be subject to MDOT approval, which will take 4-6 weeks. The RTA anticipates the following schedule for completion of this contract:

### Proposed Schedule

Date	Task
July 24, 2015	Finalize Contract with Selected Contractor
August 21, 2015	MDOT Contract Approval
August 24, 2015	Kick-off Meeting
Early September 2015	Conduct Focus Groups
Mid September 2015	Transit User and General Public Surveys
Mid October 2015	DRAFT Topline Survey Results and Cross-Tabulation Report
Late October 2015	FINAL Topline Survey Results and Cross-Tabulation Report
Early Spring 2016	Conduct Follow-up General Public Survey
Late Spring 2016	DRAFT Topline Survey Results and Cross-Tabulation Report
Late Spring 2016	FINAL Topline Survey Results and Cross-Tabulation Report

July 9, 2015

## **Senate and House transportation funding proposals: Policy and perspective**

Over the course of the past few weeks, the Michigan House of Representatives and Senate have passed two different plans for funding our state's transportation system. Both proposals have similarities. They both include:

- establishing a tax system for alternative fuel vehicles,
- taxing diesel fuel at the same rate as gasoline,
- indexing the gas tax to inflation, and
- focusing on greater use of warranted road projects.

However, there are many areas where the two plans take very different paths for funding transportation services in the future.

The House plan is estimated to generate approximately \$1.15 billion by the 2019 state fiscal year, with approximately 90 percent of that money being diverted from other parts of the state budget. The Senate plan would generate over \$1.4 billion by the 2018 state fiscal year with approximately 50 percent of the revenue being generated by a 15-cent increase in the gas tax and the other half coming from reprioritizing other parts of the state budget.

### **Senate plan and gas taxes**

The Senate plan increases the state gas tax by four cents a gallon on October 1, 2015, another four cents on January 1, 2016, and seven cents on January 1, 2017. The diesel tax, which is currently at a lower rate than gasoline, will increase at a slightly different rate but will match the gas tax at 34 cents a gallon on January 1, 2017. Per gallon fuel taxes then will increase by the rate of inflation each January thereafter. The Senate plan requires the first eight cents of the gas tax increase to be distributed according to the established funding formula. The last seven cents of the new tax will be directed to something called the "50-Year Roads Lock Box Fund." This money will not be distributed through the transportation fund, but would instead be released from the lock box only after the House and the Senate approve a resolution authorizing the money to be used for specific road projects.

### **Advantages of a gas tax**

One of the chief advantages of increasing the gas tax is that the state constitution strictly limits how the money is used. The constitution specifies that all money collected at the pumps shall be used for construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges. Money can be deducted for the cost of

collecting the revenue, and no more than 10 percent of the revenue can be used for comprehensive transportation purposes, which include mass transportation and nonmotorized programs. This means that in times of fiscal distress, the legislature has no authority to divert these funds for other state purposes.

### **Redirecting current state funds**

Both the House and the Senate plans rely heavily on reprioritizing existing state revenues to fund transportation. In both plans, the legislature has identified the state income tax as the source of the revenue. While both the House and Senate plans add money for transportation purposes starting on October 1, the Senate's plan uses the new gas tax revenue to supply the first year of revenue. The House plan requires diverting over \$500 million out of the state budget that was approved less than a month ago – a budget that did not take into account this diversion of revenues. The Senate plan does not impact other parts of the state budget until October 1, 2016.

The House plan, in general, relies on shifting the majority of the projected state general fund growth over the next four years to transportation purposes. Of course, for the first year, this money has already been allocated throughout the state budget. The House plan also identifies other specific sources of revenue. In particular, those revenues targeted are currently used for economic development projects. These include proceeds from a lawsuit against tobacco companies to offset health care costs associated with smoking, and funds paid to the state by casinos operated by Native American tribes. Both the House and Senate are considering eliminating the Earned Income Tax Credit to pay for roads. This state income tax credit is currently claimed by more than 700,000 low-income wage earners.

### **Issues with diverting current state funds**

Unlike revenues generated through the gas tax, which are constitutionally protected and can only be used for transportation purposes, all other revenues under both plans will only stay in the transportation fund as long as the legislature doesn't find a greater need. For example, when the legislature created statutory revenue sharing by dedicating portions of state taxes to assist local governments, they legally obligated this money to local governments. When the state ran into budget problems, they simply amended the law and diverted these funds to other state purposes. Outside of the money generated by the increases in fuel taxes and modest revenues associated with alternative fuel vehicle registrations, all of the remaining funding in both plans could be shifted at any time to other state priorities, just like statutory revenue sharing. These funds will be extremely vulnerable any time the state has budget concerns, which has occurred frequently over the past decades.

### **Future growth for transportation funds**

Both the House and Senate funding plans have components that will allow for natural growth, and components that will stagnate or disappear. The Senate plan indexes the 34-cent per gallon gas tax to the rate of inflation, with all revenues from the inflationary increase being diverted to the "lock box." The House plan increases the 19-cent gas tax in the future, also based on the rate of inflation. While lack of indexing has been one of the issues that created problems for funding Michigan's

roads in the past, the new plans fail to recognize the trend of less fuel consumption based on more fuel-efficient vehicles. This reduced consumption will likely result in either revenues increasing by less than inflation or possibly even being reduced year over year.

The House plan requires shifting an increasing amount of the state's income tax revenue into the transportation fund, culminating in \$792 million being shifted in the 2019 state fiscal year. The legislation then requires this amount to be increased by the rate of inflation each year thereafter. The Senate plan caps the transfer of income tax revenue in fiscal year 2018 at \$700 million, and freezes the transfer at that amount in years thereafter. As noted earlier, the House plan includes the use of \$75 million per year from the tobacco company lawsuit settlement; this payment expires in 2022 and thus creates a funding reduction in that year and thereafter.

### **Funding for mass transit**

The state constitution allows up to 10 percent of fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees to be used for comprehensive transportation purposes. This includes funding for local bus systems as well as "dial-a-ride," rail, intraurban buses, and nonmotorized programs. The last time gas taxes were increased was in 1997, but none of this revenue was directed to the Comprehensive Transportation Fund. Unfortunately, the last time revenue was increased for comprehensive transportation purposes was in 1987. This lack of funding at the state level has contributed to Michigan having a very poor mass transit system.

The House plan does nothing to change funding for mass transit; none of the revenue is dedicated to mass transit purposes. The only part of the Senate plan that goes to the Comprehensive Transportation Fund is 10 percent of the first eight cents of the gas tax increase. This would mean an annual increase of approximately \$40 million per year, or an increase of less than 15 percent following three decades of stagnant funding.

### **Impact on local road agencies**

Under Public Act 51, all fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees flow into the transportation fund. Some of the funds are taken "off the top" for specific transportation programs, including the Comprehensive Transportation Fund. The remainder is distributed to the Michigan Department of Transportation and to county, city, and village road agencies. Just under \$1.6 billion of the approximately \$2 billion collected is distributed by the formula. PA 51 specifies that 39.1 percent of the pot goes to the State Transportation Fund, 39.1 percent goes to county road agencies, and 21.8 percent goes to city and village road departments. Counties are responsible for roads within townships. Actual amounts distributed to each local government are determined based on formulas prescribed by PA 51. Neither the House nor Senate plan changes the distribution formula to local governments. However, both plans create special provisions for the use of the new revenues.

The House plan does not allow any of the new funds to be used for the Comprehensive Transportation Fund. All of the new money is directed to the 39/39/22 formula. When fully implemented, the House plan increases funding to county road agencies by approximately \$450 million per year; cities and villages would see an increase of approximately \$250 million per year.

The Senate plan creates three different scenarios for the new funds. The first eight cents of the gas tax, or about \$370 million, will flow through the existing state transportation fund formula. This means more funds for the Comprehensive Transportation Fund. The final seven-cent gas tax increase and all revenue associated with inflationary increases in the future will go to the “50-Year Roads Lock Box Fund.” None of this money will be distributed by the normal formula and it is unknown if any of the revenue will be distributed to local road agencies. The final component – the \$700 million per year from the state income tax – will all be distributed by the 39/39/22 formula. Once fully implemented, approximately \$400 million will go to counties through the PA 51 formula and \$220 million will go to cities and villages.

### **50-Year Roads Lock Box Fund**

The most controversial component of the Senate plan, outside of the source of funds, is the “50-Year Roads Lock Box Fund.” The plan starts diverting \$330 million away from the current transportation fund in 2017 and places the revenues within the Department of Treasury with the stipulation that the funds may not be expended until the legislature releases them through a resolution approved by both the House and Senate.

The funds will not be released until MDOT develops a plan that reduces the lifetime cost of building and maintaining a road by 50 percent, and stipulates that roads be built in such a way to last 50 years instead of the current 20-year design standard. It is unclear if this applies to all roads or just state roads. The plan must also meet the objective that no state road (it is assumed this means state trunkline road) will be graded in poor condition under the PASER system in 10 years and that there is no further degradation of the PASER rating on the other 92 percent of the roads in the state under local control.

There are two significant issues at play within these objectives. The first is the concept that state roads become a priority for the new revenue under the Senate plan. Currently, the condition of state trunkline roads is much better than the local road system. The 8,000 miles of Interstates, U.S. Highways, and M roads are where all of the state and the majority of federal funds are currently spent. However, this proposal does not anticipate any overall improvement in the other 114,000 miles of roads under local jurisdiction over the next decade. In Southeast Michigan, 50 percent of these roads are currently rated in poor condition; the Senate plan fails to recognize and improve them.

The second major area of concern is the thought that shifting to a 50-year design life for roads will somehow cut long-term costs. This gets into the area of asset management. A decade ago, legislation was enacted that formed a Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC). This council of engineers and other professionals was assigned the task of designing procedures on how to maintain roads at an optimal level for the least cost. The professional engineers have developed strategies that focus on extensive use of inexpensive maintenance programs that can extend the life of roads by years or even decades. The problem in Michigan has always been that our road systems are so poorly funded that we can’t afford to do the necessary maintenance, much less replace roads. The Senate plan runs contrary to the strategy developed by TAMC on how to maximize the value of transportation spending. We may end up putting so much money into building a few roads to a 50-year standard there would be no money left to maintain the rest of the system.

Some would refer to 50-year roads as the European model of road construction. Michigan has actually done a demonstration project using these higher construction standards on a portion of I-375 in Detroit. That roadway was constructed approximately 20 years ago. At this point in time, its condition is virtually indistinguishable from the adjacent pavement that was constructed at the same time using normal construction specifications. However, the “European model” doubles the cost of traditional construction.

The 50-year plan creates a huge upfront construction cost. This comes at a time when there is an unprecedented backlog in maintenance needed to preserve existing roads and an even larger list of roads that need to be replaced. The Senate plan fails to account for these upfront costs and states that the plan should proceed “regardless of funding or financing considerations.” While constructing 50-year roads is a lofty goal, implementing this concept while operating and fixing the remaining system will require far more resources than provided in either the House or Senate plan for decades to come.

Fifty-year standard roads focus on the concepts of thicker and deeper roadways. Generally, the concrete is significantly thicker than traditional roads by feet instead of inches. The road base is also much deeper than traditional roads, meaning using more sand and gravel in the road bed. Additional factors that may become significant cost barriers include the other uses of the right-of-way. Because these road beds will be significantly deeper, and potentially wider, it may also require extensive relocation of other infrastructure such as public and private utilities.

What may be the most disconcerting part of the “lock box” is that the legislature has reserved over \$300 million per year for road projects at their discretion. In the past two years, the legislature has reserved additional road funds for projects of their choosing. This process circumvents all the established procedures used to plan, prioritize, and coordinate projects across the state.

### **SEMCOG’s Legislative Policy Platform**

SEMCOG membership has adopted a Legislative Policy Platform. The very first issue area in the platform is transportation. The policy looks for the legislature to provide “adequate and sustainable funding for road and local transit systems that taken into account the changing nature of fuel consumption.”

Funding plans that depend on the yearly battle over appropriations through an ever-changing legislature impacted by term limits significantly misses on the issue of adequate and sustainable. Half of the Senate plan’s funding meets the objective; none of the House’s plan offers a solid foundation for the future. The Senate plan offers a modicum of hope for transit systems; the House plan offers nothing. The Senate lock box plan is more likely to create a scenario where all of the new revenue will be focused on very limited projects leaving the remainder of the state’s transportation system no better off than it is today.