



THE VEHICLE

ANN ARBOR-YPSILANTI URBAN AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY COMMITTEE

July 2000

Support for Border-to-Border Trail Grows

The Huron River valley is one of the most significant natural features in southeastern Michigan. Meandering for over 500 miles before it enters Lake Erie, the Huron River and its tributaries flow through seven counties and numerous lakes, encompassing a watershed of over 908 square miles. It is the only river in Southeast Michigan to be designated as a "Country Scenic Natural River".

The river is of particular significance in Washtenaw County, where it travels over thirty-five miles through nine communities. Over two-thirds of the County's population, nearly a quarter million people, lives within the urban area that is bisected by the Huron River. Linking the public land in the river corridor, from border to border, is the ultimate goal in maintaining and promoting the river-based heritage of Washtenaw County.

The communities adjacent to the river have collectively acquired and preserved thousands of acres of land throughout the river valley. As a

result, a broad range of river-based recreational opportunities is provided for residents and visitors. On the eastern side of the County, Ypsilanti Township continues to develop an extensive and award winning trail and park system around Ford Lake. Similar efforts

has served as the foundation for the development of a series of parks along the banks of the river.

The City of Ann Arbor manages over 1,900 acres of parkland in 147 parks, many of which are in or near the river valley. The University of Michigan maintains the 123-acre Nichols Arboretum.



The Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission provides two parks in the river valley. East of the City of Ann Arbor and adjacent to the Forest Park Nature Area, is the County's Parker Mill Park. Historically-significant, Parker Mill is already connected to the Gallup Park trail network by a

are also underway around Bellville Lake, just over the County line.

The City of Ypsilanti also has an impressive history of parkland development. In 1905, the Olmsted brothers, the most prestigious park planners of their day, prepared the Huron River Corridor Master Plan for the City. The "Olmsted Plan"

bituminous path. Discussions are currently underway to also link this riverside mill with the University of Michigan's Matthaei Botanical Gardens, located just over a mile north of the river.

The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, a regional park authority in southeast Michigan, manages

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UATS Committees and Meeting Schedules

The Policy Committee is the decision-making body of UATS. It is comprised of elected or appointed officials of each member agency and the Michigan Department of Transportation. The committee is responsible for all activities that require official action. Meetings are held the third Wednesday of every month at 9:30 a.m., unless cancelled because there is no business.

The Technical Advisory Subcommittee is comprised of technical staff members of the various units of government. This committee is responsible for reviewing all technical aspects of the planning process and coordinating the work of member agencies and units. These meetings are held the first Wednesday of every month at 10:30 a.m., unless cancelled because there is no business.

All meetings are held at the UATS office at 278 Collingwood in Ann Arbor, Michigan. At the beginning of every meeting there is time allotted for the public to address the committees. Note that meeting times are subject to change. Any questions regarding the schedule should be directed to the UATS staff at 734-994-3127.

From the Library

UATS periodically receives reports and documents on various topics related to transportation. These publications are stored in the UATS library and can be loaned out on a short term basis.

Recently, UATS received a series of case studies and the final report for the National Bicycling and Walking Study. This study was conducted by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. The various case studies lead to the report which outlines a plan of action to promote bicycling and walking as viable transportation options for more Americans. The goals of doubling the current percentage of bicycling and walking trips and reducing by ten percent the number of pedestrians and bicyclists killed or injured are challenging, yet obtainable, and would reap significant transportation as well as other societal benefits.

The National Bicycling and Walking Study: Transportation Choices for a Changing America (Final Report).

Case Study No. 1: Reasons Why Bicycling and Walking are and are not Being Used More Extensively as Travel Modes.

Case Study No. 2: The Training Needs of Transportation Professionals Regarding the

Pedestrian and Bicyclist.

Case Study No. 3: What Needs to be Done to Promote Bicycling and Walking?

Case Study No. 4: Measures to Overcome Impediments to Bicycling and Walking.

Case Study No. 5: An Analysis of Current Funding Mechanisms for Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs at the Federal, State, and Local Levels.

Case Study No. 6: Analysis of Successful Grassroots Movements Relating to Pedestrians and Bicycles and A Guide On How to Initiate A Successful Program.

Case Study No. 7: Transportation Potential and Other Benefits of Off-Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities.

Case Study No. 8: Organizing Citizen Support and Acquiring Funding for Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails.

Case Study No. 9: Linking Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities with Transit.

Case Study No. 21: Integrating Bicycle and Pedestrian Considerations Into State and Local Transportation Planning, Design, and Operations.

UATS has a Website!

Check out the new UATS website! It's still under construction, but you can access copies of previous newsletters, link to member agencies, find out meeting dates, and request information via the web! Eventually you will be able to view traffic counts and the 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan for Washtenaw County. Check often to follow the progress!

Take a look at the new website at www.uats.20m.com

WTS Announces Scholarship Opportunities

The Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) is a national organization dedicated to excellence in transportation through the achievement and success of women. Every year the organization offers two scholarships, one for a graduate student and another for an undergraduate student.

The Helene M. Overly Memorial Scholarship was established in 1981 by WTS to encourage women to pursue career paths in transportation. The \$3000 scholarship is available to women currently enrolled in a graduate degree program in a transportation-related field, such as engineering, planning, finance or logistics. The candidates must have a 3.0 grade point average or higher and plan to pursue a career in a transportation-related field.

Part of the WTS goal of fostering the development of women in the transportation field can be realized by encouraging bright new professionals to undertake careers in the area of transportation. The Sharon D. Banks Memorial Scholarship is awarded to women pursuing undergraduate studies in transportation or a related field, such as engineering, planning, finance or logistics. The candidates must have a 3.0 grade point average or higher and plan to pursue a career in a transportation-related field. The amount to be awarded is \$2000.

For an application form or more information, contact Annette Dentel at 734-994-3127. Completed applications are due to the Michigan Chapter of WTS by October 27.

Shuttle Bus Service for the Art Fairs



This year the Ann Arbor Art Fairs will be held July 19, 20, 21 and 22. Once again, the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA) will provide shuttle bus and trolley service during the week of the Art Fair. Fair goers are encouraged to park their cars at Briarwood Mall or Pioneer High School, where there is FREE parking, and take the AATA Shuttle Bus to the Fairs. There will be signs on the highways that service Ann Arbor directing visitors to the shuttle parking lots.

The two shuttle bus destinations are: the Main Street Stop, at the intersection of Main and William Streets and the South University Bus Stop at the corner of State Street and South University. The round-trip fare for riding the shuttle is only \$2, which also includes free trolley rides and children under age 7 ride free. The shuttle bus hours are Wednesday through Friday, 9 AM to 9 PM and Saturday, 9 AM to 6 PM.

Like in the past, a trolley service will also be available to travel between the three different fairs. The trolley circulates the Art Fairs providing travel to various locations. The cost is 50¢ per ride, but is free with a shuttle ticket.

Looking for Comments from the Public

The public is invited to submit comments on amendments to the 2000-2002 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Southeast Michigan. The TIP is a planning document used to prioritize projects from the Regional Transportation Plan which are expected to use federal funding within the next three years.

The majority of amendments are to prepare for the 2001 funding cycle. New funding is added for the Fiscal Year 2001 Critical Bridge and Enhancement programs. Additional changes are proposed by transit agencies, federal aid committees or the Michigan Department of Transportation. A complete list of amendments is available by querying TIP Online at www.semcog.org/cgi-bin/data/tip.cfm for all "proposed" projects.

Proposed amendments to the TIP must undergo the same scrutiny as the projects included in the original document. They must meet air quality conformity guidelines, have identified funding sources and be made available for public comment.

Comments will be accepted until the Executive Committee considers the amendments at their July 21 meeting. Anyone wishing to voice opinions on the amendments may do so at the Executive Committee Meeting, beginning at 1 PM at SEMCOG offices. Written comments are also being accepted at SEMCOG.

For Your Information:

<i>Detroit to Traverse City fuel costs (roundtrip 500 miles), at 20 mpg:</i>			
Last year	\$29.12	At \$2/gallon	\$50.00
<i>Detroit to Orlando fuel costs (roundtrip 2,360 miles) at 20 mpg:</i>			
Last year	\$137.47	At \$2/gallon	\$236.00

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nearly two thousand acres of parkland in three parks along the river. A seven mile riverside trail from Hudson Mills Park to the Village of Dexter is also being proposed. The HCMA is exploring options to fund the construction of this trail.

UATS, as the intergovernmental agency responsible for coordinating transportation planning efforts within Washtenaw County, has initiated an effort to formally establish a "border to border" non-motorized trail network in Washtenaw County. UATS has incorporated the pursuit of such a trail network as a recurring work task in its annual work program. Obviously, the continuing support and participation of local communities and park authorities is critical to the success of this

considerable intergovernmental effort.

In 1984, UATS commissioned the Huron River Bikeway Study. That report considered a range of factors such as the natural conditions, historical/cultural/political aspects, recreational opportunities and traffic engineering concerns along Huron River Drive between the City of Ann Arbor and the Village of Dexter. A grant is pending to update the findings of the 1984 study.

Following that update, the project will proceed to address the environmental and engineering challenges to implement a non-motorized trail between the City of Ann Arbor and the Village of Dexter. Thereafter, logical segments of the corridor will be prioritized and constructed as

funding becomes available.

A non-motorized trail linking the public lands and communities in the river corridor will be the "crown jewel" of a countywide network. It will serve as a catalyst for other key segments linking communities and activity centers throughout Washtenaw County. It will be the legacy of our time, preserving the river valley for future generations of residents and visitors.



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