



# THE VEHICLE

## Washtenaw Area Transportation Study

January 2007

Vol. 1

### WASHTENAW COUNTY TRANSIT PLAN – UPDATE

In the months of October and November, WATS conducted five public participation meetings to get initial public comments on the direction of the plan at the following locations: Ypsilanti Senior Center, Washtenaw Community College, Ann Arbor DDA, and the City of Chelsea.

Thirty-one residents of Washtenaw County attended the Washtenaw County Transit Plan public participation meetings. The public participation meetings included a PowerPoint presentation about the development of the plan, surveys for attendees to fill out and a transit funding activity. Attendees were provided WATS dollars in the amount of one hundred dollars (2 twenties, 5 tens and 2 five dollar bills) and were given the option to fund different types of transit service/projects. The transit funding options included:

- ◆ Existing Service – The current transit service of Washtenaw County meets all of a persons needs and does not need to be expanded in any way (no need for new routes, increased frequency or longer hours).
- ◆ Extended Service – Extend week day hours, extend weekend hours, and add new fixed route service.
- ◆ Trolley/Street Car – A transit service that operates between Downtown Ann Arbor & Ypsilanti.
- ◆ Community to Community - Transit service that links communities within Washtenaw County. Such as, Dexter to Ann Arbor, etc.
- ◆ Human Services Route – Fixed route service that links human services within the County.
- ◆ Increased Park & Ride Lots – More park and ride lots with service direct to major employers.
- ◆ Increased Specialized Services in Urban Area – Extended or increased demand response trips for seniors and persons with disabilities that live within the urban area.
- ◆ Life Line Rural Transit – Demand response transit service for rural areas.
- ◆ More Frequent Service – Reduce time between buses arriving at stops.
- ◆ Regional Bus – Bus service that links Washtenaw County with Metro Airport & surrounding counties.
- ◆ Regional Rail – Rail service that links Washtenaw County with Metro Airport & Detroit as well as north/south service to Livingston & Monroe Counties.

The results of the public participation funding activity are only representative of the citizens who attended the public participation

*Continued on page 4*

Results for the funding activity			
	County Totals	Percentage of Total	Preliminary County Rankings
Existing Service	\$5	0.2%	11
Extended Service	\$385	12.4%	<b>3</b>
Trolley/Street Car	\$255	8.2%	6
Community to Community	\$455	14.7%	<b>2</b>
Park & Ride	\$205	6.6%	9
Human Services	\$160	5.2%	10
Increased Specialized Services in Urban Area	\$220	7.1%	8
Life Line Rural Transit	\$355	11.5%	4
More Frequent Service	\$235	7.6%	7
Regional Rail	\$520	16.8%	<b>1</b>
Regional Bus	\$305	9.8%	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,100</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

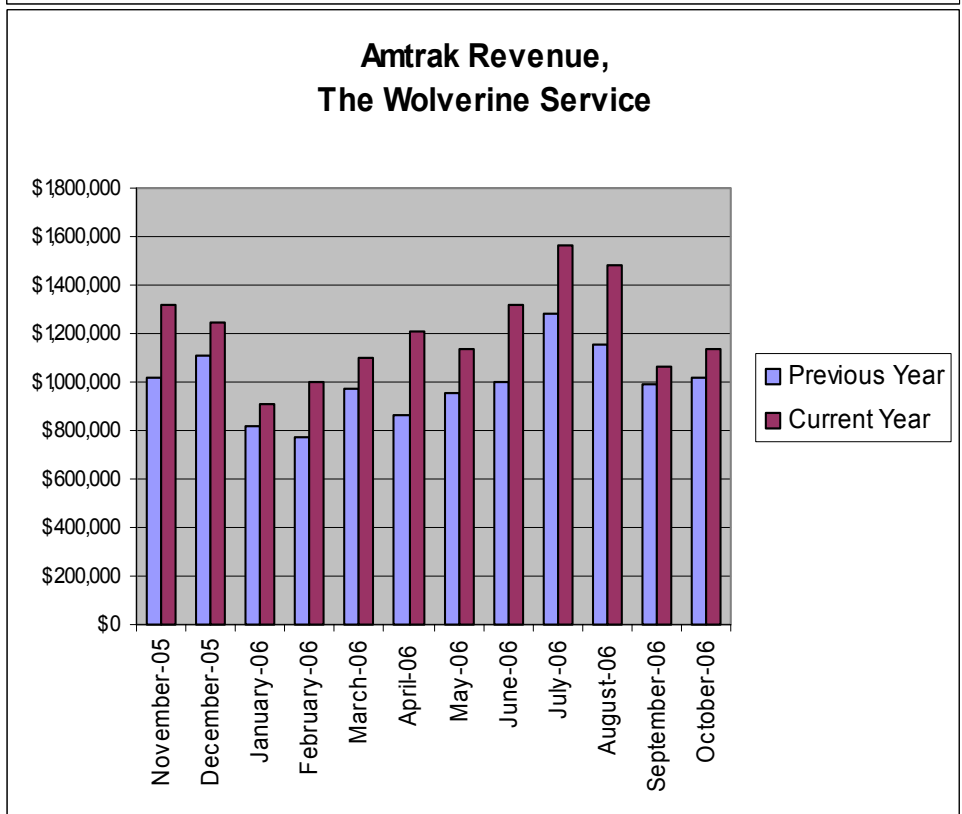
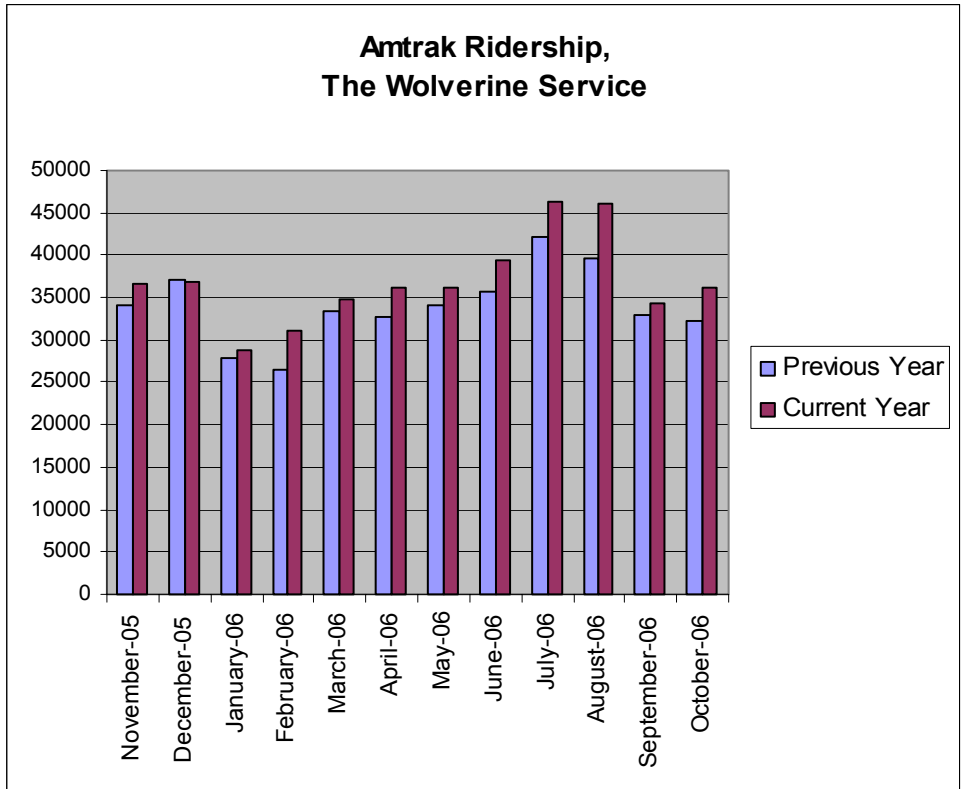
## ALL TIME RECORD FOR AMTRAK RIDERS AND REVENUE IN FY 2006

The final numbers for Michigan's three passenger rail routes in fiscal year 2006 exceeded any other previous year in ridership and revenue on each route in Amtrak history. This trend has continued into fiscal year 2007.

The Wolverine, the Amtrak route that services Washtenaw County, providing connection between Chicago and Southeast Michigan has experienced largest increase in ridership and revenue over the previous year. The Wolverine has three daily round trips from Chicago to Pontiac. The total increase for the year's ridership is 8.2% or 33,432 additional passengers to a year total of 442,348. The total increase for the year's revenue is up 21.0% or \$2,515,037 additional dollars to a year total of \$14,474,487. The revenue increase included a ticket price increase in 2006.

The Wolverine is one of Amtrak's national routes and does not require a state subsidy. The other two Michigan routes, the Pere-Marquette and Blue Water, require a state subsidy to operate. The state subsidy for the routes is \$7.1 million annually. The Pere-Marquette and Blue Water ridership has also increased by 35,308 to a year total of 451,510.

The graphs that accompany this article show this increase for the Wolverine in more detail.



With local bus ridership continuing its upward trend, the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA) anticipates that fixed-route bus rides will reach the five million mark in early December, 2006.

AATA reports that ridership for the first half of calendar year 2006 stood at more than 2.6 million. By the end of October, the cumulative figure had reached 4.5 million rides, or a weekly average of more than 100,000 rides. "We are excited that we will reach this major milestone for the first time in our 37-year history. AATA is proud that fixed-route ridership has grown by 21.8 percent over the past five years," AATA Executive Director/CEO Greg Cook said. "We expect to provide our five millionth ride around the beginning of December, and are planning a celebration to thank our passengers for their contribution to this accomplishment."

The Blake and Ypsilanti Transit Centers and AATA's main office will be decorated for the occasion and AATA will be serving coffee and donuts during the early morning hours for its customers at the transit centers. AATA will also honor its employees and their contribution to reaching the five million ride mark with an in-house celebration at AATA's main office.

On a day in early December, AATA plans to thank its passengers with several giveaways, including 30-day passes, T-shirts and gift bags that will be distributed on 10 route trips selected at random by AATA staff members. "One lucky winner will be chosen at random as our five millionth rider and will receive a prize package valued at \$150," Cook said.

*AATA Press Release*

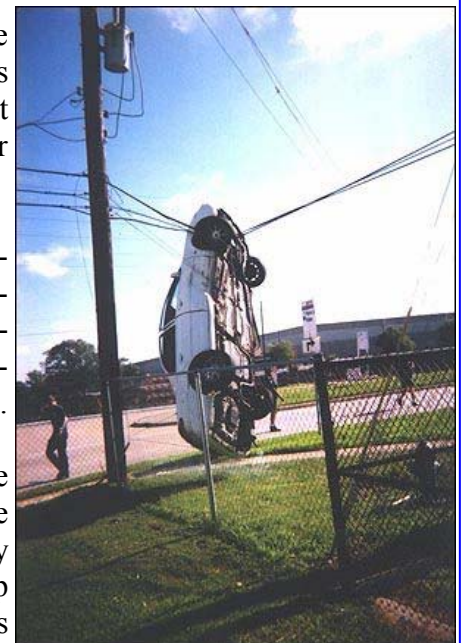
### **CRASHES ARE NOT ACCIDENTS**

Reprinted from Safety Network with permission from State of Michigan,  
Department of State Police, Office of Highway Safety Planning.

Changing how people think about events, and the words used to describe them, affects the way people behave. Motor vehicle crashes and injuries are predictable, preventable events. Continued use of the word accident promotes the concept that these events are outside of human influence or control. In fact, the majority are predictable results of specific actions.

The concept of accident works against bringing all the appropriate resources to bear on the enormous problem of motor vehicle collisions. Continuous use of accident fosters the idea that the resulting injuries are an unavoidable part of life. Crash, collision, incident and injury are more appropriate terms, and should be encouraged as substitutes for the word accident.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration will no longer use the word accident in materials published and distributed by the agency. The previous Fatal Accident Reporting System has been renamed the Fatality Analysis Reporting System. We urge others to also use these terms to help focus on the cause of crashes, and what can be done to prevent collisions and the resulting injuries.



## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

The Washtenaw Area Transportation Study is developing a draft of the Public Participation Plan for Washtenaw County. The WATS Public Participation Plan describes how the agency involves the public in the transportation planning process. Public involvement activities include, but are not limited to, posting the Transportation Improve Program (TIP) and the 2030 Long Range Plan on the agency's website ([www.miwats.org](http://www.miwats.org)) for public comment, conducting public participation meetings on county transportation issues, and conducting transportation related surveys to a diverse group of residents. The plan will be posted on the website no later than January 3rd.



WATS will be accepting comments on the draft Public Participation Plan until the end of February 2007. For more information contact Matt Raschke at [raschkem@miwats.org](mailto:raschkem@miwats.org)

*Continued from page 1*

meetings; the results are not statically sound. AATA is in the process of conducting a statistically sound sample survey, which includes 400 households within Washtenaw County, about supporting a countywide transit millage.

WATS will be conducting, at least, six public participation meetings on the Washtenaw County Transit Plan in 2007. Citizens of Washtenaw County will have opportunity at all public participation meetings, for the Washtenaw County Transit Plan, to participate in the transit funding activity.

*For more information on the Washtenaw County Transit Plan, please visit the [www.miwats.org](http://www.miwats.org) or contact Matt Raschke at [raschkem@miwats.org](mailto:raschkem@miwats.org)*

