

THE VEHICLE

Washtenaw Area Transportation Study



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TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AREA

WATS provides continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning to guide the use of state and federal transportation funds in Washtenaw County

WATS Meetings

- Technical Committee
1st Wednesday 9:30 am
- Policy Committee
3rd Wednesday 9:30 am

WATS Products

- Long Range Transportation Plan
- Transportation Improvement Program

HUD Sustainable Communities Grant

Washtenaw County is a recent recipient of a US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Community Challenge Planning Grant. The County is slated to receive three million dollars in funds with a portion allocated to support the following components of the Reimagine Washtenaw project:



- Partner community planning/zoning revisions
- Transit station district planning/engineering
- Right-of-way/multi-modal improvement planning
- Engineering for non-motorized improvements

Multi-modal improvements along Washtenaw also include increased transit service. Beginning January 30 TheRide will increase Route 4 service to four trips per hour mid-day and eight trips per hour during peak periods.

Reimagine Washtenaw is a collaborative effort of the Cities of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti and Pittsfield and Ypsilanti Townships to expand affordable and energy efficient housing options and connect them to job centers and healthy food through multi-modal enhancements to the Washtenaw Avenue corridor.

New Hybrid Buses Arrive

TheRide recently received 10 new hybrid buses, pushing the agency's fleet to over 50% hybrid vehicles! The delivery of the new buses make TheRide one of the "greenest" transit providers in the country. Last year, hybrids saved TheRide 95,000 gallons of fuel for a total cost savings of \$283,000. The new hybrids will increase the greater savings this year.



Upcoming Meetings

- SEMCOG Certification Review, January 11 from 4-7pm at SEMCOG - 535 Griswold, Ste 300, Detroit, MI

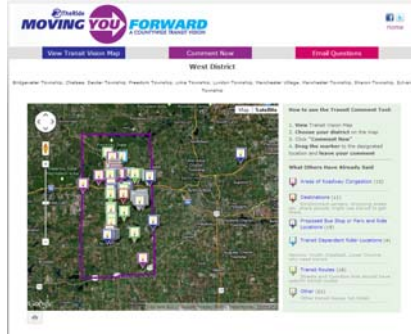
New on MIWATS.org

- FY 2011 Obligation Report

Transit Master Plan Update

Did you Know?

Ann Arbor transportation Authority board meetings take place the third Thursday of every month at 6:30 at the Downtown Ann Arbor District Library. Public welcome!



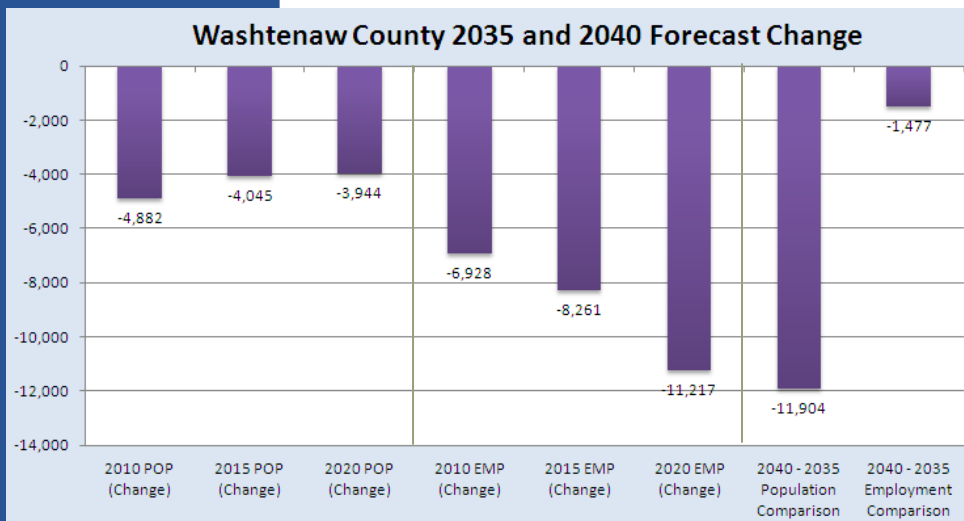
TheRide continued development of the Transit Master Plan (TMP) in November and December by hosting listening sessions with the public and countywide transit board members in each of the proposed new transit districts. At the meetings, attendees had a chance to meet their district representative and directly provide comments regarding the transit improvements they envision.

Additional comments were, and continue to be, accepted via a special web tool located at <http://communityremarks.com/theride/>. Using the web tool, select the transit district you wish to provide or view comments and select comment now!

TheRide has also initiated a dialog for a four-party agreement for a new countywide transit authority between the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners, the City of Ann Arbor, City of Ypsilanti and TheRide. Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti have dedicated millages to fund transit service and the County must create the new county authority. TheRide presented to the County Board of Commissioners, Ann Arbor City Council, and City of Ypsilanti in December and will seek approval in January.

2040 Forecast Data

WATS uses population and employment data forecasted by SEMCOG to develop the Long Range Transportation Plan for Washtenaw County. The forecast data is updated every four to five years to reflect changes in the population from natural growth and migration. The chart to the left depicts population and employment changes between the Washtenaw County 2035 and 2040 forecasts.



SEMCOG presented the draft data to both the WATS Technical and Policy Committees and will accept comments on the forecast through January 30.

Welcome Kris

Please join WATS in welcoming Kristopher Kleinsmith as an intern. Kris graduated from Eastern Michigan University in June 2010 with a Bachelors Degree in Urban & Regional Planning and Geographic Information Systems. At WATS, Kris will assist with the Washtenaw County Crash Data Archive Project, a joint effort between WATS and the Toyota Collaborative Safety Research Center.



Kris is also employed by the City of Monroe Department of Economic & Community Development as an Assistant City Planner. During his tenure at the City of Monroe, Kris has lead projects such as ordinance revisions, municipal land inventory analyses, and zoning map updates. Kris also holds a real estate license in the State of Michigan and uses his knowledge of real estate law to strengthen his work in economic development. He has a strong interest in sustainability and has studied the subject extensively during his academic career. Living near Lake Erie, Kris is fond of the outdoors, especially water sports, and has worked for a local marina during the summer since he was young.

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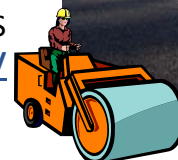
- Washtenaw County transit provider annual trips:
- TheRide 6,272,585
 - UM 5,927,027
 - People's Express 17,691
 - WAVE 35,654
 - Manchester Senior Services 3,700
 - Total 12,245,481

Annual Obligation Report

The national transportation legislation requires WATS to publish a list of improvements obligated using federal funds in the previous fiscal year (October 1 - September 30). The list increases the public awareness of federal transportation improvements spending. Federal fund obligation means that a project is guaranteed federal reimbursement, and does not necessarily indicate the project initiation or completion. The federal government does not typically fully fund eligible projects. Most federal aid projects are 80% federal funds with a required 20% match by State or local agencies.

In fiscal year 2011, improvements using \$73.7 million of federal funds were obligated. The Washtenaw County projects include highway, local road, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, streetscaping, public transit and safety projects. Of this amount, \$19.3 million were obligated for the Surface Transportation projects: \$7.2 million for urban, \$2.6 million for enhancement, \$518 thousand for rural, \$351 thousand for railroad crossings, \$1.2 million for safety, and \$7.4 million for state highway or trunkline improvements. Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funding provided \$2.9 million to Washtenaw County projects.

More information can be found in the complete report on the WATS website at [http://www.miwats.org/WATS/leftside/prgpln/Federally Obligated Projects FY2011.pdf](http://www.miwats.org/WATS/leftside/prgpln/Federally_Obligated_Projects_FY2011.pdf)



Continuing, Cooperative, Comprehensive

WATS and other Transportation Planning Areas across the state provide an arena for community planning representatives to make the best use of the limited funds available.

Mind the Plow

A steady decrease in road funding and an increase in costs have forced state and local agencies to alter their winter maintenance plans and change plowing priorities. However, one important fact has not changed: road crews must have ample room in order to safely clear snow and ice from the many miles of roadway. The Michigan Department of Transportation and County Road Association of Michigan offer motorists the following reminders for winter driving:

- Snowplows have limited visibility and plow drivers cannot see directly behind their trucks.
- Snowplows often throw up snow clouds, reducing visibility on all sides of the truck.
- Distracted driving is dangerous driving. Motorists should not text or talk on cell phones while they are behind the wheel.
- Motorists should never attempt to pass a moving snowplow on the right. With new wing-plow technology, the blade can clear the shoulder and the lane of travel simultaneously. Motorists attempting an illegal pass through a snow cloud on the right and/or shoulder of the road most likely won't see the plow blade and run the risk of a serious crash .
- Always wear your safety belt and allow extra time to reach your destinations this winter.



WATS COMMITTS TO A SUSTAINABLE OFFICE, EMAIL WATS@MIWATS.ORG
TO RECEIVE AN ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER INSTEAD OF A PAPER COPY.

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