



**TRANSPORTATION RIDERS UNITED**

**Annual Report  
For  
2004**

**January 25, 2005**



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is very easy to become caught up in all of the media attention surrounding the International Auto Show, but this year there is a new twist to the age old story. As I write this message, Detroit's First Annual Winter Blast is in full swing. My hope is that this is just one sign of a city beginning to turn the corner, and start to accept the "invitation out of exile" that many have been extending for so long. There are many issues still facing us, but this winter's festivities are, I think, a sign of the optimism building in the region for Detroit once again. While there is much to be hopeful for, there are many concerns looming in the upcoming year.

As I wrap up my first year as President of the Board, I reflect on the hard work put in during previous years by Past President Karen Kendrick-Hands. Karen helped build TRU to the point we are now, and indeed left some rather large shoes to fill. One does not see how enormous a job she did until trying to follow in her footsteps. Thank you Karen, for your years of hard work and continued dedication to TRU's mission.

Speaking of thanks let me go on record now with an apology for those I may leave out of this message. It is inevitable that someone will not get the mention that they deserve, but it is certainly not by design. TRU could not succeed without the many who work silently, often with no thanks, to further our goals and mission.

TRU has become entrenched in the front lines in the uphill struggle to educate the public and our public officials on the importance of public transportation options in Greater Detroit. As I was preparing to take transit to downtown Detroit for a business lunch at the end of last week, I received a call from the gentleman I was to meet with who reminded me that the Winter Blast was in full swing, and he suggested that we should make our meeting for another day. I am not sure if it was so much the current crisis at DDOT, or perhaps the overall budget crisis in the city of Detroit, or just the bitter cold, but we agreed that taking transit to a meeting in downtown Detroit would not be such a good idea on this day, and we decided to postpone our meeting until things had "calmed down" a bit.

Since I consider myself a particularly astute transit rider, I find myself reflecting on what it could be like if transit were as dependable as my car. I could step outside, and in a few minutes be cozy and warm, and on my way to my destination. Upon arriving downtown, and after driving around to my favorite parking spot, (Do drivers in other cities have a "favorite" parking spot?) I could have been able to walk a couple of blocks, and been at my meeting destination.

Rather than dwell on the problems for overlong, I would like to take this time to encourage all of us working on transit-related issues to hold ourselves high and to look forward to what the possibilities are. As the current administration is preparing to once again balance the city's budget on the backs of transit riders, I expect that my thoughts of encouragement and optimism are as much for myself as for anyone. It is starting to become evident that the administration does not grasp the importance of transit as the catalyst for economic and community development that other parts of the nation seem to have discovered, and I wonder if the city of Detroit can withstand another blow to an already inept and crippled transit system. I am reminded of a statement by Anne Frank many decades ago, however, during a particularly dark period in her life: *"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world"*. Let us use these words to guide our spirits into 2005 and beyond.

Let me outline a few of TRU's successes from last year, and lean forward just a bit to 2005.

TRU's new office location:

Transportation Riders United has moved into the beautiful Guardian Building, truly one of Detroit's most elegant locations. I would like to invite all of our past and also our present and future supporters to visit us there, and to become more actively involved in TRU's work. We are truly a volunteer organization, and depend on your contributions to succeed.

"Transit On The Woodward Corridor- Our Economic Engine":

During "Transit On The Woodward Corridor- Our Economic Engine", this past September at Wayne State University, we learned how important permanent, dependable transit is to economic and community development and vital, sustainable growth. I have heard civic "leaders" refer to construction of transit as a "Noble Experiment", and wonder why they cannot or will not see the explosive possibilities that transit offers for our region. Nonetheless, the Forum was a huge success, and TRU imparted a strong sense of urgency to those attending, and we were received by members of the community quite positively.

Staffing changes:

With Mike Whims resigning from the board to take the newly created position of Operations Director, and taking on the task of contacting our membership, you may have noticed more frequent and pertinent postings from TRU recently. Many thanks to both Mike and Virginia Lingham, who have taken on the daunting task of organizing our database this past year. I look forward to heading to TRU's office and being able to get a contact number for one of our members. This will make it infinitely easier for TRU to find the right person for each task as circumstances dictate in the future. Thanks again, to the both of you.

Also in 2004, I convened an ad hoc staffing committee to begin the search for the position of Executive Director. As of today we have not found the right person for

the position, but we are still looking for the right mix of personality, drive, experience, and capability, and I remain confident that this will happen soon. So if you are reading this, let us know how we can find you.

Riders Voice:

With Patty Fedewa chairing the Committee, the customers of Greater Detroit's transit systems have a stronger voice for their access and mobility needs. As mentioned earlier, the anticipated cuts by the administration will not go unchallenged by TRU with the Riders Voice Committee being our active and urgent mouthpiece to the City. With a victory in the defeat of fares for the disabled last year, I hope you don't mind that we lean on your experience this year as well. Thank you for all of your hard work, you are truly a bright spot in our legacy.

DARTA:

TRU has been and will continue to actively monitor the Detroit Area Regional Transportation Authority. Look for details in the body of this Annual Report. It has taken major effort to keep it "moving forward", and in no small measure the creation of DARTA is thanks to TRU's efforts.

Media exposure and TRU Communications:

TRU has been seen and heard from more regularly in the media, thanks in no small measure to our friend Larry Hands. Larry has been steadfastly getting the word out to the press that TRU is still committed to our mission, and we will continue to be an anchor of support for transit and transit riders in our community. Thanks Larry, for all of your support. TRU communications have been increasing steadily during the last several months as well. The newsletter is being coordinated by Mike Whims, and he has done an admirable job in the temporary absence of a communications committee Chairperson. I am confident that this committee will again become active in 2005, and Mike's burden will be lessened. Thanks Mike, for your commitment as well.

Strategic alliances:

TRU's alliances with Detroit Synergy, Sierra Club, Preservation Wayne, Michigan Suburbs Alliance, and MOSES to name just a few, will continue to be strengthened during the coming months, as evidenced by many of their members present tonight for our Workshop and Visioning Session. This represents a significant departure from previous annual meetings, where we had a guest presentation to the members. I hope that signals a more active and engaged membership, as we surely need all the help that we can get.

I-75 Comments:

Thanks to the hard work of Larry Hands, with assistance from the environmental Law & Policy Center, TRU filed exhaustive comments denouncing the further expansion of I-75 in Oakland County. TRU sees this as a major misappropriation of transportation dollars. Before expansion of roads, the region must design a

comprehensive transportation system for the region, and transit must be a major component of this system. If we are to once again become a great destination, we must insist that the needs of all of our citizens are met, not just the road lobbies and automotive interests. It has been proven over and over again that highway expansion does not alleviate congestion and environmental concerns, it creates it.

I never thought for one minute that this battle for transit in Greater Detroit would be a simple or short term commitment, but I do believe that we have made significant progress. There have been many stumbles and staggers along the way, but no progress worth fighting for can come without pain. I truly believe that we have made significant gains, if only evidenced by the measure of resistance that we are encountering along the way, particularly more recently. Let us grab the bull by the horns, and channel the energy that we have created towards a more healthy, sustainable and livable city, with transit as the catalyst for creating this health. Again, Anne Frank told us *"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."* Let's each of us begin this day.

Thank you for your trust:  
Robert B. Prud'homme, President

### TRU's MISSION and PURPOSES

#### Mission:

To improve transportation access and mobility in Greater Detroit.

#### Purposes:

1. Educate the public and officials about the importance of public transportation options.
2. Promote discourse on local, regional and state developments related to transportation.
3. Improve public transportation.
4. Promote alternatives to highway expansion.

### MEMBERSHIP

Our paid membership increased 29% in 2004, from 103 paid members for 2003 to 133 this year. This increased level of grass-roots financial support is appreciated and is important for obtaining program grants in the future. The campaign to seek membership renewal and to gain new members from over 1200 mailing list supporters has begun for 2005.

In addition to being a key source of financial support for running the business of the organization, TRU's members are the source for the volunteer effort needed to manage and implement our Mission and projects. Several members came forward this year to help, and it is vital that this level of giving one's time and effort continue.

## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP EVENTS

TRU's Annual Meeting was held on January 21, 2004 at transit-accessible Hannan House, located on Woodward Avenue in Detroit. The 38 attendees braved typical Michigan winter weather to hear updates on the many activities and projects underway, and to provide input into plans for the year. Featured speakers were Marisol Simon, Deputy Director of DDOT, and Dan Dirks, General Manager of SMART. Election of new board members was conducted.

Our second event was held May 11, 2004 at Hannan House, where 24 attendees were given a first-hand view of the plans for the Detroit Downtown Transit Center by representatives of design firm Parsons Brinckerhoff and the Detroit Department of Transportation.

We held our third member event as part of the September 20, 2004 forum "Transit on the Woodward Corridor", at Wayne State University. The forum is highlighted elsewhere in the report. Many people experienced their first contact with TRU at the event, and several new members joined on site.

The fourth event for the year was held at Hannan House on November 30, 2004. The 43 attendees enjoyed appetizers and a presentation by Detroit Synergy Group as well as a viewing of the locally-produced documentary "Coda Motor City". The film was the effort of Detroitier Kelly Parker as part of an international research project in Germany, and featured TRU members.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At the January, 2004 Annual Member Meeting, an election was held to fill 13 expiring terms on the 14-member board. Each new board member was elected for a two or three-year term, at the nominee's prior direction. Fortunately for the sake of organizational continuity, approximately 70% of the nominees were incumbents. In August, 2004, board member Michael Whims resigned the board to take on new duties as TRU's Operations Director.

Following is the current board of directors as of December 31, 2004, denoting term and city of residence:

Tom Barwin	(01/04-01/06)	Ferndale, MI
Larry Birchfield	(01/04-01/06)	Detroit, MI
Frank Clark	(01/04-01/07)	Redford, MI
John DeLora	(01/04-01/06)	Detroit, MI
Patty Fedewa	(06/03-01/06)	Detroit, MI
Francis Grunow	(01/04-01/07)*	Detroit, MI
Steve Gutterman	(01/04-01/06)	Ann Arbor, MI
Larry Hands	(01/04-01/07)	Grosse Pointe Park, MI

Cheryl Horton	(01/04-01/06)*	Detroit, MI
Karen Kendrick-Hands	(01/04-01/07)	Grosse Pointe Park, MI
Tommy Meadows	(01/04-01/06)*	Detroit, MI
Bob Prud'homme	(01/04-01/07)	Ferndale, MI
Marcia Yakes	(01/04-01/07)	Detroit, MI

Resigned during 2004:  
*Michael Whims* (01/04-08/04) *Royal Oak, MI*

\*non-incumbent board member

Officers were elected by the board at its February, 2004 regular meeting. Board member, Michael Whims, was elected board secretary, and held the position until his resignation from the board in August, 2004. Board member, Francis Grunow was elected board secretary to fill the remainder of Mr. Whims' term.

Following are the officers as of December 31, 2004:

President-	Robert Prud'homme
Vice President-	Marcia Yakes
Secretary-	Francis Grunow
Treasurer-	Larry Hands

The Board held six regular meetings and one Executive Committee meeting during 2004, and was very active in establishing organization, policy and mission guidelines which are crucial for TRU's future regional impact and growth.

### COMMITTEES

Communications (standing) Committee- The committee was successful in publishing some key news releases in 2004, and helped to ensure that TRU received fair news coverage whenever possible

Finance (standing) Committee- The primary task for the committee this year was to accomplish a professional financial audit for fiscal year 2003. Certified public accounts of Boisvenu & Company were engaged by the Board of Directors, and TRU expects the audit to include a "clean" opinion of TRU's financial position.. This important accomplishment allows TRU to continue seeking grant funding in the future.

Public Policy (standing) Committee- Policy issues were taken up by the full board this year. The committee did not convene as a body during 2004.

Riders' Voice Committee- The board voted to establish this committee in 2004. Previously, Riders' Voice was a project team originally established for a specific grant program. This very active group of transit riders met monthly during 2004

and had several notable accomplishments that are discussed in other sections of the report.

Staffing (ad hoc) Committee- This committee was established in 2004 by the board for the purpose of locating an executive director (fundraising person). In answer to media ads and email queries, TRU interviewed several possible candidates. An offer was extended to a qualified candidate, who declined. The work of this committee continues.

### TRU OFFICE and STAFFING

During most of the year, the TRU office was located in Detroit on the 28<sup>th</sup> floor of the David Stott Building, 1150 Griswold Street. TRU co-rented the office space with another firm, Hands & Associates under an agreement which provided TRU with office supplies and equipment under a fixed charge arrangement on a month-to-month basis.

In October, 2004, Hands & Associates and TRU both moved to new common quarters in the historic Guardian Building, 500 Griswold Street, Suite 1650. The new shared lease arrangement with Hands & Associates provides the same level of accommodation as the previous agreement, but at a lower monthly rental rate. The new location remains on a transit-accessible street.

TRU does not have employees. TRU's office was staffed through most of the year by its interim Executive Director, Susan Titus under a part-time independent contractor arrangement. Susan made a personal career decision to increase her activities in another area. In August, former board member, Michael Whims became Operations Director under a part-time independent consultant arrangement that limits his chargeable time to an average of 16 hours per week.

TRU also had the services of part-time intern staff assistants during 2004. Cheryl Horton, an AmeriCorps volunteer continued working in the office through the spring. AmeriCorps volunteer and U of M student, Andrea Perkins, conducted part-time research during the summer months. AmeriCorps volunteer and WSU student, Virginia Lingham is providing part-time research and administrative assistance during her 12-month term that ends in spring, 2005. Both Andrea and Virginia are co-sponsored under the University of Michigan's University Research Opportunity Program. Jana Cephas, a U of D student, worked part-time during the summer and fall to put together TRU's successful September forum at Wayne State University.

TRU continues to actively seek a full or part-time fundraising person. This key position is difficult to fill at the salary level that TRU can afford to pay. In the meantime, the Operations Director is learning the ropes of grant seeking in addition to his administrative and membership duties.

The office space and personnel arrangements provide TRU with cost-effective, staffed operation under a flexible, low risk arrangement. TRU plans to continue under this contracted arrangement, as opposed to hired employees, for the near term.

Contact information for the TRU office and website:

Michael Whims, Operations Director

TRU office (313) 963-8872 x13

Cell phone (248) 892-4545

Email: [mwhims@detroittransit.org](mailto:mwhims@detroittransit.org)

Virginia Lingham, Research Assistant

TRU office (313) 963-8872 x17

Email: [trumember@ameritech.net](mailto:trumember@ameritech.net)

TRU website [www.detroittransit.org](http://www.detroittransit.org)

### LEADERSHIP TRAINING & PLANNING ACTIVITIES

TRU's Board and volunteer leaders continued to develop organizational capacity and information base through training opportunities offered by our partners such as ECCO (administered by the Michigan Environmental Council, the League of Conservation Voters Education Fund, and the Michigan Land Use Institute), the Environmental Law and Policy Center of the Midwest, the Environmental Leadership Institute and the Surface Transportation Policy Project.

In addition, Board members and volunteer leaders participated in 1 ½ day leadership training on Friday and Saturday, April 30-May 1, 2004 at which goals were identified and board membership responsibilities were discussed.

### GRANTS and FUNDRAISING

During 2004, we received the final payment for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development for \$15,000 and payment for a grant from the American Public Transportation Association for \$2,000. We also received a matching gift from the Mead Witter Foundation.

We were blessed with two AmeriCorps volunteers and Virginia Lingham is still with us as an AmeriCorps volunteer through the spring of 2005. In addition, Andrea Perkins worked with us as an AmeriCorps volunteer under the University of Michigan Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program.

We had a fundraiser this spring honoring the work of Jack Schramm. The event was chaired by Francis Grunow and was held at the International Institute. Francis did a great job organizing the event and we stretched our board by

asking that they find sponsors and contributors. Through this project, we raised close to \$3,000 and forwarded TRU's mission.

For the Transit on the Woodward Corridor forum event in September, we again asked our board to find sponsors, and were effective in obtaining sponsorship from a number of individuals and companies including Ford Motor Company, The Sterling Group, Wayne State University, Burton Katzman Development Co., Ecovelopment, Hotel St Regis, and American Flag and Banner. In addition, Jana Cephas, the program manager for the event, contacted numerous foundations for funding the program.

In 2004, we applied for a number of grants that we did not receive funding on including a grant from the Beldon Fund.

In 2005, foundation grants will be sought to expand the public education activities of TRU, as well as public policy development. We look forward to another fundraiser and will continue our efforts to expand paid membership.

#### MEMBERS AS AMBASSADORS AND MEDIA EXPOSURE

Many TRU members have attended dozens of meetings this year, as TRU representatives, as representatives of other entities or as private citizens. In any event, TRU's perspectives on transportation issues are being voiced by these members within the public and business communities, where it counts. Please keep up the good work.

Some of the public appearances made by TRU members in 2004 include the following:

- Monthly SEMCOG Transportation Advisory Committee meetings where TRU is a member
- MDOT's 2004 Transportation Summit where friends of transit and transit investments provided a strong minority presence
- MDOT's Context-Sensitive transportation design project meetings, where TRU is member
- City of Detroit Council meetings associated with DDOT performance
- Detroit Regional Chamber Leadership Conference at Mackinaw Island
- Monthly DARTA meetings
- Monthly DDOT Commission Meetings
- Monthly DDOT Customer Comment Meetings
- Monthly SMART meetings
- Create Detroit event with Richard Florida
- Michigan Environmental Council Land Use Subcommittee

In keeping with TRU's status as a 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit educational organization, TRU does not endorse political candidates. Public and media statements are made on behalf of TRU by Board members based on TRU's Mission and Purposes and policies adopted by the Board.

Media exposure has been significant this year. TRU is often consulted for background information in addition to being directly quoted in news coverage. In 2004, the TRU organization was recognized in the print, Television and radio media on 21 occasions, on the following major issues:

- In support of mass transit and transit investment- 13 occasions.
- In opposition to current service quality and fund allocation- 8 occasions.

For the year, TRU's press coverage was spread approximately: Detroit Free Press (29%), Detroit News (24%), Oakland Press (10%), local press (18%), television and radio (19%).

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

TRU is recognized by the community, government and business as a knowledge-based activist group with a broad range of expertise among its members. For this reason, TRU members are increasingly invited to speak before audiences on transportation issues. In 2004, TRU participated in several speaking venues at neighborhood and regional groups, educational institutions, and government meetings. We welcome TRU members to join our Speakers' Bureau by contacting the TRU office.

Following is a list of major outreach venues at which TRU participated and spoke in 2004:

- Federal Cultural Foundation-Germany- "Shrinking Cities" project- taped interviews, Detroit
- Shiver on the River
- Dally in the Alley
- New Center Taste Fest

TRU continuously reaches out to the public through its website, newsletter and email updates. The website ([www.detroittransit.org](http://www.detroittransit.org)) is voluntarily maintained by Larry Hands on an as-available basis, and we invite a member who has web experience to volunteer with the duties. TRU's mailing list for the newsletter and transit updates is now over 1,000 recipients. Most of the recipients live in metro Detroit, however several live in other Michigan communities and throughout the United States and Canada.

### MAJOR ENDEAVORS in 2004

Continuing to build organizational capacity, sometimes in the face of setbacks, is essential to moving forward with the huge task of empowering transit riders and educating the region about the benefits of and need for effective transit and sensible transportation planning.

General public awareness of transit among regional residents continues to increase, in no small part due to the efforts of TRU. We see this in the new faces among our members, and in requests for mailing list inclusion. We see this in the

sheer number of metro Detroit press articles about transit-this year numbering over 170 stories.

We continue to see a growing interest among the younger generation. Students are choosing research topics that include public transportation, and are seeking out TRU's expertise and input for their projects. A prime example is our staff research assistant, Virginia Lingham, a WSU student who stopped into the TRU office one day to learn about us, and came away with a job offer!

Principal efforts in 2004 continued to be directed toward substantive change utilizing a reasoned approach and offering of realistic solutions. TRU also decided to take action in court where previous attempts at change were unsuccessful. Again in 2004, TRU has done most of the work without major grants, utilizing mostly volunteer effort. The results are impressive, and show what can be done with dedication and very hard work. Following is a summary of the major endeavors this year:

#### Detroit Area Regional Transportation Authority (DARTA)

In existence over a year and a half, and somewhat crippled by an unfavorable court ruling in 2003, DARTA made no progress toward development of a regional public transportation services plan during 2004 while it continues to seek a chief executive. TRU attended uneventful monthly DARTA board meetings and moved forward with initiatives that some other organizations may view as "DARTA's responsibility." DARTA was awarded its requested federal and state start-up funds during the year, and TRU is hopeful that some significant work will begin in 2005. Nevertheless, TRU's efforts are moving the region forward and the work product will be helpful to DARTA's eventual efforts.

#### Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) issues

In 2003, SEMCOG was successful in gaining recertification as the region's MPO for another three years by federal authorities, in the face of strong testimony by TRU and others with regard to shortcomings in SEMCOG's processes. In response to a subsequent written request by TRU and others to restructure its voting structure to a one person-one vote population basis, which would reverse the discriminatory structure in place which favors outlying suburban investment, SEMCOG refused to consider changes.

In November, 2003 TRU voted to join the City of Ferndale, MOSES and individual plaintiffs in a lawsuit brought before the Third Circuit Court in Wayne County, Michigan, charging SEMCOG's voting practices were intentionally discriminatory. In October, 2004, the judge agreed in a bench opinion that indeed the practices were discriminatory, but not intentionally so, and dismissed the suit. TRU voted to join the other plaintiffs in an appeal before the Michigan Court of Appeals, which was filed in November, 2004. A decision will take several months.

TRU is taking this landmark action of joining in litigation against an MPO (which has been attempted in only one other urban area of the U.S.) because the voting practices are a major deterrent to improved transit in Greater Detroit, among other things. Curiously, in a statement issued in December, SEMCOG said:

*“Although 20 percent of the funding in the recently approved Regional Transportation Plan will be spent on transit, that amount is primarily for maintaining and operating existing services. Members of SEMCOG’s General Assembly and Executive Committee recognize the need to do better. They realize that better transit will help keep the region economically competitive, provide a higher quality of life, help alleviate road congestion, and serve those who cannot or choose not to drive. As a result SEMCOG Chairperson Joan Flynn convened a task force to discuss the impediments to improving mass transit in Southeast Michigan and the techniques and policies necessary to overcome the impediments. Issues will be discussed at Executive Committee meetings in 2005, with a final report at the June General Assembly.”*

TRU believes that this statement is the result of pressure brought by the lawsuit, and cautiously applauds this action by SEMCOG.

### Regional Transit Map

One of TRU’s 1999 founding goals was for the region to have a useful, street-based transit map that would include all regional bus agency routes. The SMART suburban bus system map did not include the DDOT routes. DDOT had not published a system map for several years and the old map was out of print. After attempts failed to interest the transit agencies or SEMCOG in developing a map, TRU obtained some funding to prepare a draft map that was placed on the TRU website in 2002.

In 2003, the newly-created DARTA called for a regional transit map. DDOT-itself under new management-took up the task and worked cooperatively with TRU’s Riders’ Voice Committee to produce a very useful street-based transit map that covers beyond the DDOT service territory and includes SMART routes, Transit Windsor routes, the People Mover, and modal connecting points. The map incorporates an innovative schedule table designed by TRU. The map was published in September, 2004 and is available free of charge. Although TRU does not receive name recognition on the map for its help, a statement is included that says *“DDOT extends its thanks to all of the riders that helped in the making of this map.”*

### Year 2030 Regional Community Development Vision Project

The goal of this project is to educate the public and regional leaders about the benefits of planning for a visionary future for the region that targets sustainability, vibrancy and affordability, rather than the current method of reacting to unchecked sprawl. In September, 2004, TRU hosted a public forum at Wayne State University entitled “Transit on the Woodward Corridor-Our Economic Engine.” Speakers from around the region and the country presented their views on why and how transit can be a spark plug for urban revitalization in Greater Detroit, as it has proven in other areas of the U.S.

This was a second in a series of forums hosted by TRU that TRU believes are an important element in reaching the 'million conversations' that will be needed to make change in Greater Detroit. Corporate sponsorship of this event was light, and costs exceeded revenue, however the press coverage was supportive and the conversations are continuing.

#### Involvement in Regional Expressway Expansion Projects

In February, 2004 TRU filed extensive comments to the MDOT/FHWA draft environmental impact statement for the proposed expansion of I-75 between 8 Mile Road and highway M-59. Thirty-seven pages of text and hundreds of pages of exhibits were assembled by TRU volunteers detailing the environmental and socio-economic shortcomings of the project, and suggested alternatives to reduce impact and improve regional return on investment. A key element of TRU's proposal is the inclusion of corridor transit as a companion travel mode to a scaled-down highway expansion project. MDOT has announced that the final environmental impact statement will be issued in early 2005, which will incorporate responses to comments.

#### Defeat of Proposed Transit Fare Increase

During city budget deliberations in the spring of 2004, DDOT announced its plan to increase revenue by eliminating its free fare for disabled persons, and instead charge 75 cents, or 25 cents higher fare than currently charged by the suburban agency, SMART. TRU's Riders' Voice Committee consulted with disabled riders to ascertain their position on the proposal. Overwhelmingly, the disabled community said it would support a fare increase if DDOT's fleet of coaches was ADA-compliant, but given the fleet's notorious inability to offer consistent wheelchair access, the proposal should be defeated at this time.

Riders' Voice took the issue to the City Administration, City Transportation Commission, City Council and the press, calling for and getting public hearings and public demonstrations against the fare increase. The tactics worked, and the fare increase plan was defeated at this time. TRU believes that the defeat, though appropriate, is not the solution.

Riders' Voice has continued its pressure on DDOT to focus on the ADA non-compliance issue and work cooperatively toward solutions. Recent action in Lansing to penalize DDOT monetarily until compliance is reached, and recent litigation filed in federal court against DDOT by others over ADA non-compliance -- while perhaps spurred by TRU's fare campaign -- are not solutions, either.

#### First Annual Jack M. Schramm Award

In 2004, TRU instituted a special annual award to recognize individuals who have significantly advanced the cause of public transportation in Greater Detroit. The award is dedicated to Jack M. Schramm, a former Detroit Street Railway and

DDOT employee and unofficial city historian of Detroit transit. At the inaugural event held July 15, 2004 at Detroit's International Institute, Jack humbly accepted the honor for his many years of service to the region as the caretaker of priceless records and author of nationally-acclaimed documentaries on what was the country's largest municipal transit system.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR 2004 (preliminary unaudited)

Beginning Cash Balance, 01/01/2004	\$ 47,799.69
<b>Cash Receipts</b>	
Grants and Fundraising	\$30,954.75
Member Dues & Donations	\$25,885.33
<b>Total Cash Receipts</b>	<b>\$56,840.08</b>
In-Kind Contributions	\$175.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$57,015.08</b>
<b>Expenses (cash and in-kind)</b>	
Staff and Travel	\$28,638.22
Office Rent	\$5,800.00
Programs and Education	\$17,663.72
Outside Services and Fees	\$4,238.37
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$56,340.31</b>
Year End Cash Balance, 12/31/2004	\$48,474.46

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Francis Grunow,  
Secretary