

Moving Forward

With Transit in Southeast Michigan

Benefits

Options

Opportunities

The Opportunity

Benefits of Transit for All

Funding Transit

***Our Goal: An integrated system
of the right modes to provide
efficient travel across the region***

***The Regional Transit Authority
of Southeast Michigan***

***Your Roles as a
Transit Stakeholder***

The Opportunity



Downtown Streetcar in Portland, OR



A BRT Station in Eugene, OR

The new **Regional Transit Authority (RTA)** provides Southeast Michigan with a great opportunity . . . a regional transit system that coordinates a variety of transit resources **to provide transportation that is efficient and safe serving Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw and Wayne Counties.**

In addition to moving people where they need to go and want to go, these systems will **stimulate economic growth, reduce congestion, improve our environment and make our region more attractive and vibrant.**

This pamphlet tells you more about the RTA, the benefits of transit to our region, and your role as a citizen/voter and a transit stakeholder.

Recent studies have found that city and suburban fortunes tend to rise and fall together. The faster a metro area's city portion grew, the faster its suburbs grow as well.

– The Metropolitan Revolution

We all have a stake in transit whether we ride it or not. Transit helps to stimulate economic growth, gets workers to jobs and students to education, improves the environment, reduces congestion and makes our region more attractive to potential residents and investors.

Transit impacts everyone, whether you choose to ride or not.

Transit is a good investment with exceptional economic returns: Across the nation, communities have learned that transit is a good investment, and is good for workers and for the tax base.

Investments: Experience indicates that every dollar communities invested in public transportation generates at least \$4 in additional local economic investments. Some regions, like Portland, have seen construction projects costing over ten times their modern streetcar line within two blocks of its route.

Every \$10 million investment in public transportation yields \$30 million in increased business sales. (APTA)

Jobs and Workers: Building and operating transit creates many jobs itself. In addition transit creates new businesses and increases sales leading **to even more new jobs** . . . transit also provides the way for workers across the region to get to those jobs, without relocating, without sitting in traffic and without the expenses of auto purchase, fuel, maintenance and insurance.

Finally, availability of excellent transit has become a significant factor in attracting the **highly skilled workers** to a region . . . the "creative class," the technological innovators and the entrepreneurs who drive the economy.

Tax Base: All of these companies, sales and workers lead to a **stronger tax base** for the communities and regions with excellent transit systems. In addition, property values near transit rise, creating income for communities to improve and serve their residents.

Reduction of Congestion: Americans living in areas served by public transportation save 865 million hours in travel time and 450 million gallons of fuel annually in congestion reduction alone. (APTA) In fact, transit also helps those who don't use it by taking others off the roads that they are driving on.

Our Health: Many people who live in communities with high quality transit services drive less, and walk or bike more. **"This reduces traffic crashes and pollution emissions, increases physical fitness and mental health, and provides access to medical care and healthy food.** Improving public transit can be one of the most cost effective ways to achieve public health objectives, and public health improvements are among the largest benefits provided by high quality public transit and transit-oriented development." (APTA)

Modern Transit contributes to cleaner environment locally and independence from foreign oil nationally:

In 2011, 36.6% of buses were powered by alternative fuels (only about 3.2% of cars were capable of being powered by alternative fuels). (APTA)

"In 2006, our regional transit authority had gotten the funding and started construction of the BRT along Euclid Avenue. That was critical and the biggest factor in my decision to buy the Baker Building in June of 2006."

Dick Pace - Cleveland Business Owner



Renovated Baker Electric Building with Healthline BRT Station

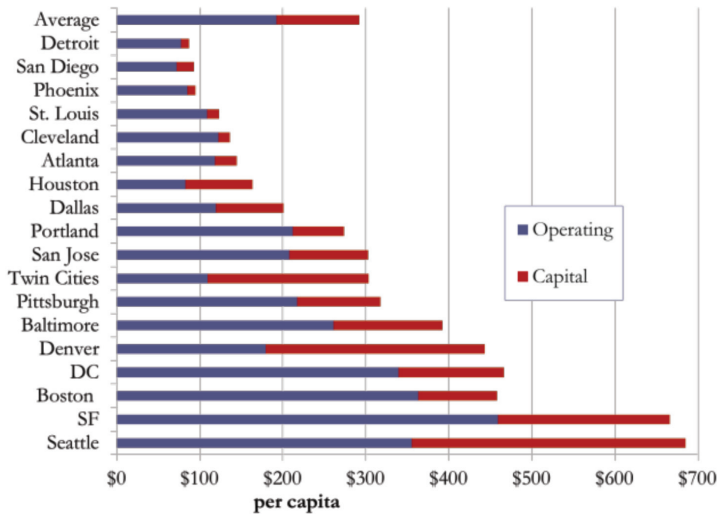
Keeping our Young Talent

Michigan universities graduate some of the best technical talent in the nation, but they are increasingly leaving the region, looking for more vibrant communities with better services including quality transportation options. If we want to keep the talent that will drive our economy forward, we need to provide such a vibrant environment and great transit in our region.

The Environment: A single commuter switching his or her commute to public transportation can reduce a household's carbon emissions by 10%, or up to 30% if he or she eliminates a second car. When compared to other household actions that limit CO2, taking public transportation can be 10 times greater in reducing this harmful greenhouse gas.



Other Regions are investing in their transit systems, providing benefits for their citizens and their economies. This graph shows that Metro Detroit is last among these eighteen urban regions, with less than 40% of the average investment per person. These investments include all local, state and federal funding in each region.

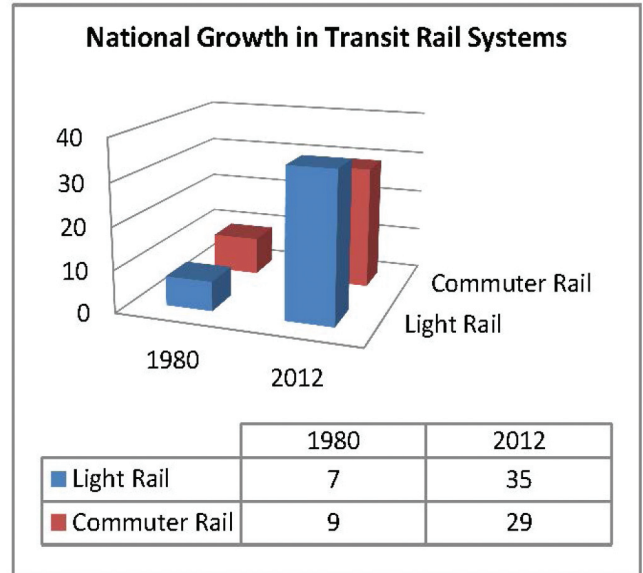


Metro Regions' Transit Investment in 2011

The regional plan being developed by the RTA of Southeast Michigan includes the creation of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system.

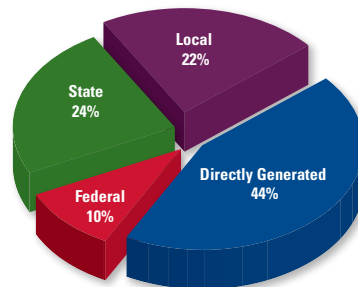
The 2013 FTA's list of their "New Starts/Small Starts" current projects included BRT systems in twelve urban regions with a total funding of \$1.66 billion. These included federal funding for new BRT systems in Hartford, CN (\$460 million) and Grand Rapids, MI (\$28 million), providing 80% of each project's cost.

Most of the nation's urban regions are moving forward with modern transit systems.

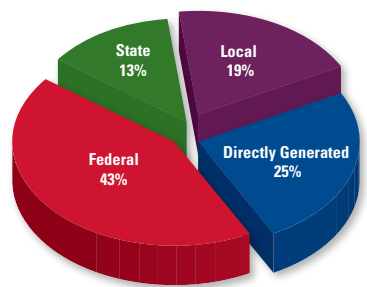


The pie-charts below show that across the U.S. most funding of both operating and capital expenses does not come from local taxation. However, the local sources are needed to meet "matching" requirements from other state and federal programs, and to provide enough funding to build and operate excellent transit systems.

Sources of Operating Funds, 2011



Sources of Capital Funds, 2011



Source: APTA Public Transportation Fact Book 2013

FACT: Federal appropriations for public transportation have increased from \$3.9 billion in 1995 to \$10.5 billion in 2010. Metro Detroit needs to get its fair share of federal transit support

Funding proportions from different sources vary greatly depending on region's structure, demographics and predominant transit modes employed.

Our Goal: An integrated system of the right modes to provide efficient travel across the region

In most major metropolitan regions in our country, a variety of local, commuter, circulator and paratransit services are provided and/or coordinated by a regional transit authority. In each region their RTA works with community leaders and developers to assure that the needs of riders are met and economic development is stimulated by using the right variety of transit modes and systems for their region and each of its routes.

The figure below shows some of the modes that are envisioned for our region's future transit system. (The locations shown are intended to provide examples of a few of the areas that will be served; many other areas will also be served by these various modes.)

Modes of Transit that May Serve SE MI in the Future



A good transit system will link the right modes together across the region, using the different modes for different purposes.



Commuter Rail in Cleveland Region



Free Circulator Bus on Pedestrian Mall Denver



"The Max" light rail at Portland Airport

While most of these transit modes are a little slower than driving your car, they provide quality time for communication, reading or just relaxing while you travel . . . without the traffic and parking issues.

Mode	Average Speed	Stops
Streetcar	11 mph	Every ¼ - ½ mile
Local Bus	13 mph	Every few blocks
Light Rail	16 mph	Every ½ - 1 mile
BRT (separate lane in artery)	21 mph	Every ½ - 2 miles
Private Vehicle (rush hour in SE MI)	31 mph	
Commuter Rail	33 mph	Every 3 - 10 miles

The RTA of Southeast Michigan

The new RTA is just that . . . **something new**. It is not part of any local or county government, but represents the needs of our entire region for better transit. The RTA is run by transportation professionals that report to a board of directors who are citizens of the four counties and the City of Detroit, plus a non-voting chairperson appointed by the Governor of Michigan. **The law that created the RTA gives them two main jobs:**

1. The RTA will make sure that the **services provided by the current transit organizations are better coordinated**. These include the Ann Arbor Area Transit Authority (AAATA), DDOT (serving Detroit), SMART (serving the suburbs in Oakland, Macomb and Wayne Counties), the downtown People Mover and the new M-1 Rail. In addition to more efficient operations and trips, this will make trip planning and ticketing much easier for riders.
2. The RTA will create and operate **a rapid transit system** that serves the whole region. The previous plans for future transit systems are being integrated and revised to address the needs of our region using the latest in clean, efficient vehicles. This planning will involve extensive input from citizens and key stakeholder groups from the entire region.

Citizens from many regions around the nation have decided that better transit systems are a top priority for their investments. In 2012, 79% of the transit funding referendums in the U.S. passed. Even regions like Los Angeles, Denver and Cleveland that are “traditional auto cities” are investing in transit and reaping the rewards of their investments.

The RTA is committed to balancing the needs of the local bus riders and rapid transit commuters. In fact, these local buses and rapid transit work together to provide a system that picks people up close to home and gets them to their destination.

Funding: Once the plan is complete, the RTA will put a funding referendum on the ballot of a general election for all of us to approve or reject. The RTA legislation allows for either of two funding sources: a vehicle registration fee or a property tax assessment. No new fees or taxes will be collected unless the majority of voters from across our region support the referendum.

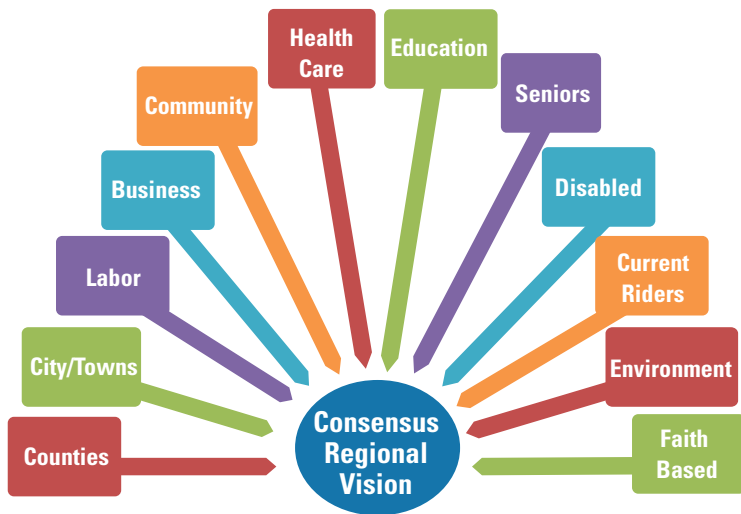
The RTA Region



“The RTA must serve the entire region and seek to provide essential basic forms of public transit (fixed route buses and paratransit), and to introduce new rapid transit options. While rapid transit will be an exciting improvement in regional mobility and a catalyst for economic development, it will not be successful if regular bus service and paratransit services are not improved and maintained.” – John Hertel, CEO elect, Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan

If you are a citizen of the four-county RTA region of Southeast Michigan shown on page 13, **you are a transit stakeholder**. With better transit, you will benefit from a stronger economy with more jobs, less congestion, cleaner air and a more vibrant community where we retain our brightest and best workers. You and everyone else will also have better options for how you want to travel to work, to school, to the doctor, to the airport, or to the big game.

In the coming months and years, you and other transit stakeholders will have a chance to influence the planning and support of our transit systems, allowing you to voice your views on what the most important aspects and impacts of transit are based on your priorities and your values. You have a voice about whether you should pay a small share of the costs so that we can all get so much more direct and indirect benefit from them. So start now by learning more about transit developments in your region and discussing these new opportunities with people in your community and in your workplace.



Stakeholders Coming Together to Develop a Consensus Vision for Regional Transit

Get Involved!

Here are some things you can do to learn about and influence the exciting transit developments occurring in the Metro Detroit region:

- Go to the Regional Transit Authority website to learn about the RTA: <http://www.semcog.org/RTA.aspx>
- Attend an RTA Board Meeting or informational meetings. (see the same RTA site for a schedule)
- Read the reports of the University of Detroit Mercy Regional Transit Study to better understand the history and recent developments of Detroit regional transit, to learn about other regions' transit successes, and to see the recommendations of the twelve UDM transit researchers. Each report is divided into chapters on various subjects like transit governance and law, transit leadership and politics, transit oriented development and transit finance. These can be found at: <http://eng-sci.udmercy.edu/opportunities/research/udmtc/reports/index.htm>
- Attend the virtual workshop on Regional Transit to see and hear the presentations from transit experts from across the country: <http://eng-sci.udmercy.edu/opportunities/research/udmtc/reports/index.htm>

A Key To Progress

Any plan that aims to respond to the diverse needs and views of many stakeholder groups in a large region will not be able to give everyone exactly what they are asking for. The Denver region has been able to develop an extensive and efficient transit system by embracing the principle, **“don’t let the perfect be the obstacle of progress.”**

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