

To: Board of Directors
From: Michael Ford, Chief Executive Officer
Date: September 10, 2010
Re: Monthly Report



August 19 Board Meeting

The Board meeting was canceled, due to the absence of a quorum. The evening was not without its merits; however, as the Board members present and staff had the opportunity to get familiar with the new meeting space. We look forward to meeting at the Library next week.

Board Committee Meetings

The Board committees will meet just prior to the Board meeting this month. The Planning and Development Committee will consider three action items: the FY2011 Work Plan, the FY2011 Operating Budget, and the MRide Agreement. The committee will discuss revisiting the meeting schedule for the coming fiscal year due to the change in schedule of the Board meetings to the third Thursday of each month, and staff is scheduled to provide several updates.

The Performance Monitoring and External Relations Committee will consider award for a contract for Auditing Services. Staff will provide reports on financial and operating data and analysis reports, as well as updates on several topics.

Blake Transit Center

A significant effort is now being placed on the Blake Transit Center project. The Stakeholder Action Group (SAG) held its second meeting in late August. At that time, the announcement was made that the City informed AATA that the surface lot to the south of the site is not available for additional on-site bus parking capacity.

There is a prospective new look to the project; however. Consideration is being given for relocating the structure on the existing footprint, which would make possible expansion of the facility easier, should a portion of the adjacent surface lot become available in the future. The SAG reviewed the new site design option where the BTC would be positioned along the south property line and "centered" on the site. This would result in bus circulation directed toward Fifth Avenue, as opposed to away from Fifth, which is currently the case. The project team is studying the revised site proposal to make certain that the proposed design would not affect pedestrian and vehicular circulation for Library patrons.

A strong emphasis will be placed on making the facility "green", expanding transparency for the public, and maintaining strong relationships to the "street/sidewalk-front". There is a desire among community members to include commercial or concession space, a bicycle station,

rental space as well as other multi-modal uses. The project team has also discussed establishing “connectivity” with other modes of transportation to allow for growth.

Project team members, including representatives from DLZ have been engaged in a number of meetings with City officials and representatives from the Downtown Development Authority, regarding pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow and site design.

Connector Study

A meeting was held recently with representatives from the Connector Study partners. We began planning for outreach in November with the public regarding Connector Study and what needs to be conveyed at that meeting. We discussed Phase II efforts on the project and the specific deliverables that will come from the \$640,000 being spent between AATA, U of M, and the DDA. We identified prospective benefactors of the Connector Study project could aid us with ensuring that this project is successful. Our discussions will continue as AATA provides a leadership role on this project.

Fuller Road Station

As I have communicated in previous reports, AATA has made numerous applications, and I have made in-person requests to elected officials in Washington, D.C. and Chicago, for funding for the Fuller Road Station project.

I have conveyed to the City and to University, most recently over the last few months, that the current plans for the Fuller Road project needs to show case a higher focus on transportation components, i.e., a train station and intermodal facility to attract federal monies to the project between the U of M and the City. Going forward I have asked the FTA Administrator personally for her consideration in expediting the environmental assessment (environmental proposal by the City on Fuller Road and her recap of the pathway forward towards heighten consideration for the project which could allow for federal monies). Most recently, staff and I have been working with and commenting on a timeline produced by Eli Cooper and a clear series of events and next steps that must take place to move further consideration of federal funds forward. A draft document and narrative is being developed and is scheduled to be available in the next couple of weeks.

Chris White and Michael Benham along with City and UM staff met with three officials from AMTRAK about the proposed relocation of the AMTRAK station to Fuller Road Station this week. The AMTRAK officials included two people from Washington responsible for station planning and design, as well as the director of government affairs for the Midwest.

AMTRAK is aware of the proposal for FRS, and contacted the City to arrange the visit because the station planning and design officials were coming through this area. The group first met at City Hall to go over the plans and then visited the existing station and site of FRS.

Specifically regarding transit service, Chris and Michael were able to point out how the current station location constrains our ability to provide the best connection between bus and rail. At

the FRS site, they were able to show how the location would enable both AATA and UM to greatly enhance people's ability to use bus service to get to and from AMTRAK.

We have known for some time that AMTRAK is willing to move, but does not have funding. They did not know of any funding sources that we are not already pursuing. We did gain some insight from them about customer flow and security issues.

The visit provided a fine opportunity to provide them with details about the project and provide them with firsthand familiarity of the site. There's no substitute for seeing something yourself.

Transit Master Plan Meetings with Community Leaders

Our meetings have continued with community leaders to inform the Transit Master Plan (TMP). We have also held meetings with community groups, and taken our show on the road to neighboring community events. A listing of the meetings that took place over the past three weeks follows.

Elected Officials: Tony Derezinski, Ann Arbor City Council; Jerry Clayton, Washtenaw County Sheriff.

Business and Community Leaders: Tony Denton, Chief Operating Officer; University of Michigan Hospitals and Health Care Centers; Daryl Weinert, Director of UM Business Engagement Center (BEC); John Hertel and John Swatosh of SMART (both formerly of RTCC); Tom Heywood, Director of the State Street Area Association; Lovevette Williams, Director of DDOT; Russ Collins, Director of the Michigan Theatre; Caroline White, Director of UM's Turner Geriatric Center; Kirk Profit, Government Consulting Services, Incorporated; Maggie Ladd, Director, South University Area Association; Phil D'Anieri, former Program Manager at the Ann Arbor Community Foundation and current professor at UM Department of Urban Planning; Michaelene Pawlak, Director of WAVE; Sue Zielinski, Director of Sustainable Mobility Accessibility for Research and Transformation.

"Visioning" Meetings with Community Groups: Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice; CAP/DART of Scio Township; .Blueprint for Aging; Arts Alliance; Washtenaw United Way; Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living; Ypsilanti Farmer's Market; Mission Homeless Advocacy Group; Ann Arbor Ecology Center.

TMP On the Road: Dexter Daze; Employment Training and Community Services Picnic; Ypsilanti Heritage Festival; Chelsea Community Fair.

As a result of a TMP meeting with representatives from St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, an employee survey is in the process of being finalized. The survey will be launched over St. Joe's Healthstream distribution network.

Brian Clouse and Sarah Pressprich have worked to resolve a concern about ARide patient drop off logistics at the Turner Resource Center. The issue was raised during a recent TMP meeting.

We are pleased to be able to continue to glean insight into the TMP from our community partners, as well as become aware of service issues and bring them to resolution.

Transit Master Plan – Project Overview Update

Last week marked the conclusion of the public outreach part of Phase I – Visioning and Needs Assessment, although there remains additional Phase I technical work to be completed over the next few weeks. We continued our ‘inreach’ program with presentations to our Maintenance staff.

Meetings with UM Transportation Staff

Steve Dolen (Executive Director for UM Parking and Transportation Services) and I held our monthly meeting. In addition to that meeting, AATA and UM staff met for the semi-monthly Marketing and Communication Meeting late last month. Topics included three areas discussed at the Board retreat that involve UM: East Ann Arbor Health Center, work transportation between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, and vanpool services. For the first two items, we provided information on what took place at the retreat. The discussion about vanpool services was more in-depth and discussed opportunities to collaborate over the next year to transition the program to a locally-organized program. We also discussed the opening of the Central Campus Transit Center, transition of the A2-Canton service to AATA operation, and planned shelter replacement at two bus stops campus.

Central Campus Transit Center

Operations at the new Central Campus Transit Center (CCTC) began on August 30, 2010. We operated only one route (#36) at CCTC for the first week, because the remaining AATA routes were on detour during student move-in. Full operation of AATA service at the new center began on September 5th. While the CCTC is operational, it is not be complete. The shelter roof material has been delayed and will not be delivered and installed until October. The contractor, UM, and AATA are looking at options for covering the structure in the interim. The electronic signs planned for the CCTC were also not be in place at the opening. While not complete, the CCTC is a big improvement for AATA and coordination with UM.

Meeting with Latino Community

Mary Stasiak and Brian Clouse recently attended a community conversation meeting for Latino residents in Washtenaw County. Brian presented information about AATA's Fare Deal program for low income, seniors 60-64 and individuals with a disability, which allows these populations to ride our services for half-fare. A large part of the meeting was centered on what barriers exist around transportation for individuals who are not fluent in English. This included AATA services, taxis and a new State Law that prevents individuals who do not have a social security number from obtaining a drivers license. Several recommendations were suggested to make it easier for Latinos with limited English to use AATA's services. One recommendation was to provide our Ride Guide and other printed material in Spanish. We are looking into this. Another suggestion was to offer translation services through a service called "Language Line". This allows someone to have a three-way conversation between a translator, our customer and AATA personnel to assist individuals in using our services. Other areas of concern raised

included the limited services in Ypsilanti, including no service on Sundays and limited Saturday and weeknight services.

Meeting with DDA

Jesse Bernstein, Anya Dale, Charles Griffith and I met with Susan Pollay and members of the DDA Board. An update was presented to the group on how AATA is progressing with the Transit Master Plan; our outreach efforts to community leaders and groups, as well as to disenfranchised populations who are often left out of the communication and engagement cycle. We encouraged members of the DDA Board to get involved in Phase 2 of the TMP process once that begins to take shape.

The group discussed service between the Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti corridor, specifically concepts around service that could be enacted immediately to improve the availability of transit late night, on the weekend, and also express service with limited stops. A meeting with community partners will be convened in the next few weeks to review data and garner support for expanding service. We are recommending that new service run for a minimum of two years in order to be able to properly promote the service, and to provide the opportunity to attract more riders.

A downtown connector route was discussed, and we were asked to participate in designing a new route. It was noted that AATA's level of participation will depend on the cost of operating new service. We will work with DDA staff to determine the goals to be accomplished, and discuss marketing opportunities in the business community.

And finally, meeting attendees discussed aesthetics related to reconstruction of the Blake Transit Center. Topics included potential opportunities to include retail in the scenario, as well as possible use of a portion of the first floor of the Fourth and William parking structure to house offices for promoting the use of alternative forms of transportation.

AAPD Chief Jones

Ron Copeland and I met with AAPD Chief Barnett Jones, Deputy Chief John Seto and Officer Beck to request preferential treatment on Stadium Boulevard for our buses providing Football Shuttle service on game day Saturdays. This would reduce headways for returning to shuttle sites and improve the service for our customers. AAPD representatives were considerate of our request, and did accommodate us this past Saturday. This provided us with a more expedient exit from the stadium post-game. There are still a few areas that can be improved upon, and we will continue to work with AAPD and the University Of Michigan Department Of Public Safety in this resolution.

Gretchen Driskell

I had an opportunity to meet with Gretchen Driskell to discuss her role at SEMCOG, her views around the Detroit agencies SMART and DDOT and some media contacts that could be helpful in Detroit to communicate our TMP message. We also discussed our focus on regional transit

connections to enhance our service delivery to connect residents within Washtenaw County and to points beyond the county borders.

A2 Express Bus Service

Marketing plans for the A2X bus service kicked into high gear in late August with the appearance of the A2X bus in the Chelsea Festival Parade. Our own riders marched in the parade with AATA staff to promote the service to Chelsea residents who work in Ann Arbor. Free Ten-ride Tickets will be sent to anyone who filled out an application.

WALLY

An application for “TIGER II” capital funding was submitted to the United States Department of Transportation late last month. The application seeks about \$25Million in capital funding to complete construction of WALLY-related facilities required to start the service. The application is similar to the one submitted by the Michigan Department of Transportation for “TIGER I” funds last year. This time, however, funding availability is approximately one-half of what it was for TIGER I, so competition will be even more intense. In local progress on the project, staff is moving forward on a couple of different fronts in an effort to establish discussions with the Ann Arbor Railroad.

Travel

Dawn Gabay and I attended the Michigan Public Transit Association’s Annual Meeting in August.