

2007 TransportationThe Year in Review

2007 has been a significant year for the growth and evolution of public transit in Kalamazoo County. The KCTA spent the year preparing for the fast approaching merger of the system. The following is a listing of important benchmarks reached by the KCTA, as well as the Metro Transit and Care-A-Van programs.

January

- The year began with the celebration of Metro Transit's 40th Anniversary of providing public transportation services to the Kalamazoo area.
- A new Metro Transit website went live.
- An announcement was made that Indian Trails and Greyhound buses would be moving back to the Kalamazoo Transportation Center (KTC) after briefly operating out of the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport.
- Surveys handed out and collected for the Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority (KCTA) to help in the planning of new routing for the Portage area.
- It was announced that Metro Transit has provided more than 78.5 million passenger trips in its 40-year history.
- The KCTA Board contracts with Miller Johnson for legal services.
- The KCTA holds focus groups in Portage regarding the proposed new line haul routes

February

- Two Metro Transit employees working on the Care-A-Van service were temporarily relocated to the Pride Care office to help with the workflow there.
- Indian Trails and Greyhound moved back to the KTC.
- For the first time, Metro Transit customer service staff operated as ticketing agents for intra-city buses.
- Metro Transit passed a Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) inspection on wheelchair lifts and ramps.

- The Metro Transit System began the process of undergoing a Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) of its fixed-route bus system.

March

- New bus routing was proposed to the KCTA. New routing was approved and slated to go into effect in April.
- A keyless entry system was installed at both the KTC and the Administration Building.
- Routing changes for Western Michigan University (WMU) campus area service were proposed to officials.

April

- An inauguration of three new bus routes in the Portage area was held.
- Metro Transit became one of many public transportation providers across the nation who signed an agreement with the American Public Transit Association (APTA) to participate in an Emergency Response and Preparedness Agreement.
- Transportation Director Bill Schomisch was awarded the American Institute of Architects Southwest Michigan Chapter Owner's Award.
- The Kalamazoo Historic Preservation Commission elected to present the Transportation Department with the 2007 Historic Preservation Merit Award for the spectacular restoration of the historic Michigan Central Depot (the KTC).

May

- A new Route #25-Parkview Campus schedule went into effect. It accommodated the anticipated needs of WMU students attending during the summer months.
- The KCTA Project Manager was hired

June

- Metro Transit joined public transportation providers across the nation in celebrating Dump the Pump Day.
- A contract was renewed with the Kalamazoo Advantage Academy (KAA) for the 2007-08 school year to allow KAA students and monitors to ride Metro Transit

buses throughout the year on a pre-paid program.

- A contract was signed between WMU and Metro Transit allowing WMU students to ride any Metro Transit bus for free, continuing the #21-Solon/Kendall and #22-Lafayette routes, and providing a new route-#18-Howard.
- The KCTA board retreat established the Authority's Vision and Mission

July

- One-year contracts between Western Michigan University and Metro Transit and the Poine Apartments and Metro Transit were approved by the Kalamazoo City Commission.
- The Metro Transit customer service staff received an award from Greyhound for achieving an outstanding audit score.
- The Public Transit/Human Services Coordinated Transportation Project under the auspices of the KCTA got underway.

- The KCTA By-laws were revised.

- The KCTA Board Chair and the Project Manager met with MDOT officials in Lansing to discuss transition issues

- The KCTA appointed policy committees staffed by the project manager to begin the development of a comprehensive set of policies to guide Board activities

- The KCTA adopted investment policies and procedures.

- KCTA Budget/Finance Committee was charged and began monthly meetings.

August

- The Care-A-Van Service experienced a brief service interruption following the onset of an employee strike at the Pride Care Ambulance Co.
- Fall routing changes went into effect.
- Supervisors of safety sensitive employees from Metro Transit and those from Pride Care who work with the Metro Van and Care-A-Van programs attended the Transportation Safety Institute's (TSI) "Substance Abuse Management and Program Compliance" courses.
- Downtown Kalamazoo Incorporated (DKI) worked with WMU and Metro Transit to hold an event known as Click Downtown. The event was designed to bring approximately 1,400 WMU freshmen to the downtown area and to demonstrate how to use the bus system.
- * KCTA Project Manager met with members of SCORE (Senior Retired Executives) who operate through the Kalamazoo Chamber of Commerce. The purpose was to glean useful administrative information from veterans of the business with application to the transition
- A presentation and one-on-one assistance on how to use the Metro Transit System were given to WMU International students during their orientation.
- KCTA Board members and the Project Manager met with representatives from Senator Levin's and Senator Stabenow's office to alert them to the KCTA and its plans.

September

- 5,000 packets of Metro Transit bus information and promotional umbrellas were distributed at WMU's Bronco Bash event.
- The Greater Kalamazoo United Way Campaign was launched as a way for Metro Transit employees to participate in a program to help members of our community.
- Metro Van celebrated the 200th Metro Van Subscription Service being issued to a passenger.
- A new discount fare for children who are not certified as disabled using the Care-A-Van service became available. Children ages 6 through 17 accompanied by a

parent or guardian will pay \$3.35 per one-way trip and unaccompanied children not certified as disabled (ages 6 through 17) will pay \$10.00.

- A Care-A-Van passenger survey was mailed to every registered passenger to help determine passenger satisfaction and to help identify areas needing improvement.

October

- Metro Transit employees staffed a booth at Senior Expo.
- A New Service Inquiry Form was developed and put into effect to help document requests for new services.
- Results from a Care-A-Van Customer Satisfaction Survey showed that 88% of respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the Care-A-Van service.

November

- The TAB Placed a one-year one-mil levy request on the general election ballot to generate \$1.6M for public transit services in the City of Kalamazoo for 2008. It was approved with 72% of City of Kalamazoo voters in favor.
- The Holly Jolly Trolley began operating in the downtown Kalamazoo area for the third season.
- Eight new Care-A-Van buses arrived, were prepped and put into service.
- KCTA as part of the PTHS Team held a public input/dialogue session in Vicksburg for the purpose developing a coordinated public transportation plan
- Metro Van broke the record for passenger trips provided in a single month with 3,935 trips-more than 500 trips over the previous record set in May, 2007.
- The 2008 KCTA budget was approved
- KCTA Chair and Project Manager met with Director of the "Rapid" in G.R. to discuss transition issues and gain insight from the Grand Rapids experience.

December

- A new trolley service, the South Westnedge Holiday Express, was piloted in the

Portage retail corridor. It was partially funded by the KCTA.

- Metro Transit joined forces with WKFR-FM 103.3 to help stuff a bus full of toys for the Toys for Tots Program.

2008 promises to be a challenging and eventful year highlighted by the growth the KCTA and the dissolution of the TAB. Much needs to be accomplished for the administrative transition to be seamless.