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COMMITTEE MEMEBERS:

LAURA M. TOY, Chair
SCOTT MORGAN, Vice Chair
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OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL

**ELECTRONIC AGENDA PACKET FOR THE
SENIOR CITIZENS, FAMILIES AND
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2023
7:00 P.M.**

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SENIOR CITIZENS, FAMILIES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, April 19, 2022
7:00 PM

Location:

Livonia City Hall, Council Chambers, 2nd Floor
33000 Civic Center Drive
Livonia, MI 48154

Members:

Laura Toy, Chair
Scott Morgan, Vice Chair
Rob Donovic, Member

AGENDA ITEM(S)

1. [CR 917-98 Subject matter of a local bus transportation system for the City of Livonia](#)
2. [CR 74-15 Subject matter of mass transit.](#)
3. [CR 76-18 Subject matter of Livonia Community Transportation Services.](#)
4. [CR 34-23 Subject matter of transportation issues for seniors, families, and other community residents.](#)

THE FOLLOWING HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED AND ARE REQUESTED TO ATTEND:

Maureen Miller Brosnan, Mayor
Paul Bernier, City Attorney
Mike Slater, Finance Director
Ermon Sims, Interim Director of Housing
Felicia Cross, Livonia Community Transit
Nancy Bosen, Livonia Community Transit

THIS IS AN OPEN MEETING AND ALL INTERESTED PARTIES ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND.

Minutes of this meeting will be available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office
not more than eight business days following the date of the meeting.

The report from this meeting will be announced at the Regular Meeting of May 8, 2023

SUSAN M. NASH, CITY CLERK

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LETTER TO THE LIVONIA CITY COUNCIL

1.

Council Office
April 11, 2023

MEETING DATE

SFCE041923/R050823

PREPARED BY

Sara Kasprowicz, Council Office Manager,

AGENDA ITEM

CR 917-98 Subject matter of a local bus transportation system for the City of Livonia

BACKGROUND DETAILS

On a motion by Walsh, seconded by Laura, and unanimously adopted, it was:

#917-98 RESOLVED, that having considered the report and recommendation of the Director of Community Resources, dated November 23, 1998, which bears the signature of the Director of Finance and is approved for submission by the Mayor, submitted pursuant to Council Resolution 97-98, concerning the subject of a local bus transportation system for the City of Livonia, the Council does hereby refer this matter to the Finance, Insurance and Budget Committee for its report and recommendation.

PLEASE NOTE:

Public transportation was later moved under the description of the Infrastructure and Community Transit Committee, now under the Senior Citizens, Families and Environment Committee.

PREFERRED COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION/RESOLUTION (Please complete this field. Attachments are not to be used in lieu of the recommendation)

To discuss subject matter as submitted.

ATTACHMENTS

None

APPROVED BY

On a motion by Walsh, seconded by Laura, and unanimously adopted, it

was:

**LIVONIA BUS
TRANSPORTATION
SYSTEM**

Subject of a local bus
transportation system.

(Refer to Finance, Insurance
and Budget Committee for its
report and recommendation.)

#917-98 RESOLVED, that having considered the report and recommendation of the Director of Community Resources, dated November 23, 1998, which bears the signature of the Director of Finance and is approved for submission by the Mayor, submitted pursuant to Council Resolution 97-98, concerning the subject of a local bus transportation system for the City of Livonia, the Council does hereby refer this matter to the Finance, Insurance and Budget Committee for its report and recommendation



LETTER TO THE LIVONIA CITY COUNCIL

2.

Council Office
April 11, 2023

MEETING DATE

SFCE041923/R050823

PREPARED BY

Sara Kasprowicz, Council Office Manager

AGENDA ITEM

CR 74-15 Subject matter of mass transit.

BACKGROUND DETAILS

On a motion by Toy, seconded by Kritzman, and unanimously adopted, it was:
#74-15 RESOLVED, that the Council does hereby refer the subject matter of mass transit to the Infrastructure and Community Transit Committee for its report and recommendation.

PLEASE NOTE:

Public transportation was later moved under the description of the Infrastructure and Community Transit Committee, now under the Senior Citizens, Families and Environment Committee.

PREFERRED COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION/RESOLUTION (Please complete this field. Attachments are not to be used in lieu of the recommendation)

To discuss subject matter as submitted.

ATTACHMENTS

1. S030215 Req to opt back in to SMART Bus Service (Sue Longstreet) CR 74-15

APPROVED BY

On a motion by Toy, seconded by Kritzman, and unanimously adopted, it

SMART

Subject of mass transit.

(Refer to the

Infrastructure and

Community Transit

Committee for its report

and recommendation)

was:

#74-15 RESOLVED, that the Council does hereby refer the subject matter of mass transit to the Infrastructure and Community Transit Committee for its report and recommendation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS AGENDA ITEMS (Regular Meeting of March 16, 2015)

Motion by: Toy
Seconded by: Kritzman

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Meakin, Toy, Scheel, Nash, Kritzman, Pastor, and Brosnan

Nays: None

Absent: None

A communication from John C. Hertel, General Manager of SMART, dated February 18, 2015, regarding SMART Public Transit, was received and placed on file for the information of the Council.

An email communication from Allen Rush, dated February 23, 2015, regarding valid public transportation, was received and placed on file for the information of the Council.

Email communications (2) from Jeff and Betsy Everett, 37738 Munger Drive, dated March 14, 2105, regarding rejoining SMART Public Transit, were received and placed on file for the information of the Council.

On a motion by Pastor, supported by Scheel, it was:

SMART
(Sue Longstreet,
President, American
Association of
University Women,
Birmingham Branch)
Request to consider the
necessity to opt back
into the SMART bus
system.
(NO FURTHER
ACTION)

#73-15 RESOLVED, that having considered a communication from Sue Longstreet, President, American Association of University Women, Birmingham Branch, dated February 16, 2015, requesting consideration of the necessity to opt back into the SMART bus system, the Council does hereby determine to deny the request with respect to opting back into the SMART Bus System and takes no further action with regard to this matter.

Mayor Kirksey then took the floor and presented a Power Point presentation on the history of Livonia and the SMART Transit System.

President Brosnan thanked the Mayor for his presentation and opened the floor for questions from the councilmembers.

Toy thanked the Mayor for his time and explanation on the topic.

The following individuals spoke in favor of opting back into the SMART Transit System:

Lynda Franklin, 14772 Melrose, Livonia;
Valerie Przynara, 15687 Surrey, Livonia;
Joan Smykowski, 9826 Cranston, Livonia;
Angela Ryan, 15512 Liverpool, Livonia;
Bruce Keezer, 18431 Pershing, Livonia;
Linda Tomala, 32106 W. Chicago Street, Livonia;
Megan Owens, Hazel Park.

George Covintree, 31000 Six Mile, Livonia;
Denis Curran, 11726 Deering, Livonia;
Joel Batterman, Detroit;
Michael Seunagal, Highland Park.

Scheel asked if the Mayor could address where Livonia citizens could call regarding questions on bus transportation currently in use and the Mayor advised the Community Resources Department would be where they could address those questions.

Mayor Kirksey then added a footnote to the historical nature of the data presented and stated that since the SMART issue has resurfaced in the newspapers, that only ten phone calls were received from the 97,000 people who live in Livonia, some in favor of opting in and some in favor of staying opted out.

Pastor then stated his reasons he supported no further action on this item and spoke about the many facets that went into his decision.

Kritzman indicated he would need to see more improvements to the system before he could support opting in.

President Brosnan passed the gavel to Vice President Meakin at 7:58 p.m.

Brosnan pointed out that the agenda item included the word "consider" which had great importance to her and to discussion on the item. She expounded on her comment indicating the February 18, 2015 letter from John C. Hertel, General Manager of SMART, should play a strong role in the decision to consider as it indicates an invitation to sit down and talk about what Livonia needed from SMART to make it a win/win proposition. She then stated she would not be voting in favor of no further action as it is closing the door on the discussion.

Toy suggested sending this item to Committee to study not only SMART but all areas of mass transit in looking towards the future.

Following discussion by Council, a roll call vote was taken on the motion made by Pastor, seconded by Scheel, with the following result:

AYES: Toy, Scheel, Nash, Kritzman, Pastor, Meakin

NAYS: Brosnan

Vice President Meakin declared the resolution adopted.

Vice President Meakin returned the gavel to President Brosnan at 8:05 p.m.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS AGENDA ITEMS (Regular Meeting of March 16, 2015)

Motion by: Pastor

Seconded by: Scheel

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: Toy, Scheel, Nash, Kritzman, Pastor, and Meakin

Nays: Brosnan

Absent: None

City of Livonia and the SMART Decision

How we got here, and why it works



SMART Opt-Out



**Steps to the
Decision**

SMART Opt-Out Key Milestones

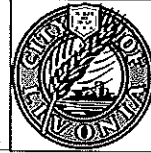


- **2004: City begins assessing participation in SMART.**
- **Using surveys of residents and businesses, City determines it could provide a better, more direct service for Livonia residents more efficiently and for less money.**
- **November 2005: Voters decide by a wide margin (55% to 45%) to opt-out of SMART.**



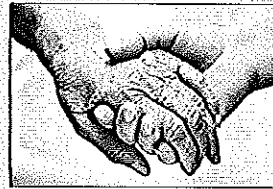
1. Livonia Chamber did a city-wide business survey of more than 4,000 businesses; 77% of the 135 businesses who responded said opting out would NOT impact their employees.
2. 2005 vote was 10,690 to 8,740 in favor of opting out

SMART Opt-Out Key Milestones



1997 – Livonia starts Livonia Community Transit.

- **Two buses served Livonia senior citizens and disabled. They ran Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**
- **This “mini” service was continued until the City opted out in the 2005 election.**



1. Highly restrictive and non-responsive for seniors who needed more personalized service.
2. Opt-out millage allowed the City to meet an increasing demand from seniors and disabled.

SMART Opt-Out Key Milestones



2005 – Finding a better way

- The City was not getting a quality return on its tax dollars
- SMART wasn't providing comprehensive service to Livonia residents.
- Quality of life issue.



- 1) No "Bang for the Buck." The City paid nearly \$16 million in taxes from 1997-2005, with a study showing very few Livonia residents using SMART.
- 2) Buses traveling through Livonia nearly empty
- 3) Majority of Park & Ride riders were coming from Plymouth, Canton, Northville, etc.

Smart Opt-Out Service Comparison

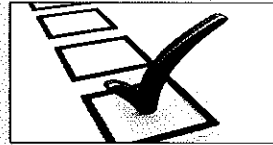


Chamber of Commerce Survey

City-wide survey of businesses conducted: 2005

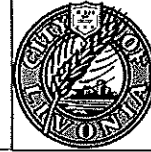
Surveys sent to more than 4,000 businesses

Businesses that responded: More than 135

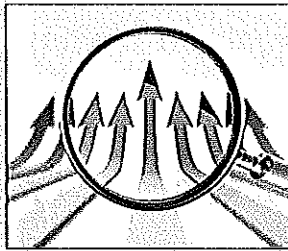


- 77 percent of those 135 businesses said employees would have no problems getting to work after SMART opt-out.
- Today, Chamber officials say: "No businesses have reported any interest in or need for bus service other than what exists now."

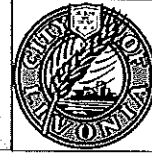
SMART Opt-Out Summary



➡ Millage Rate:	With SMART: 0.6 mills	After SMART: 0.5 mills
➡ Tax Burden:	With SMART: \$2.7 million	After SMART: \$2.3 million
➡ Tax Savings:		After SMART: \$400,000 per year



2005 Millage Transit/Capital Improvement



After SMART: 0.5 mills

Revenue (2007-2014) \$17.8 million

Expenses (2007-2014) \$17.8 million

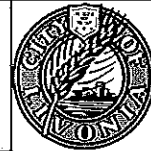
➡ **New millage also paid for capital improvements.**

**Examples: Police vehicles
 Dump trucks
 Fire vehicles**



- 1) Voters approved the .5-millage to BOTH provide transportation and capital equipment/improvements.
- 2) The .5 millage has paid for a variety of capital improvements the City couldn't have afforded otherwise.

Tax Dollars for Livonia Citizens



- Prior to the opt-out, Livonia's taxes paid for all SMART riders, of which fewer than 25% were Livonia residents (PARASTAR study, 2006).
- Currently, the vast majority of the \$2.3 million paid by taxpayers is spent on Livonia residents.



SMART Opt-Out



**Where We Are
Today**

Smart Opt-Out Service Comparison



Buses

With SMART: 60-passenger buses

After SMART: 16 vehicles* (average 20-passengers)

- All of LCT's vehicles are ADA-equipped.

*5 vans, 1 20-passenger vehicle and
ten 13- to 18-passenger buses



Smart Opt-Out Service Comparison



Current Ridership

LCT To Work and School: 98 rides/week (estimated)

Pick-ups at 6, 7 and 8 a.m.;

Drop-offs at 4, 5 and 6 p.m.

Senior/Disabled: 800-1,000 rides/week (estimated)

7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday-Friday; limited weekend service

- **The To Work program riders divided into two categories: Approx. 80% are going to work; the other 20% going to school.**



1. The senior/disabled rides are door-to-door
2. To Work/School riders are dropped off at or near schools and/or businesses

Smart Opt-Out Service Comparison



Routes To Work/School

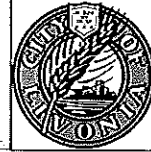
With SMART: 5 routes (plus 1 DDOT route), traveling mainly on primary roads.

After SMART: Livonia's To Work service connects with 2 routes (Millenium & Botsford), making a combined 16 stops throughout the city.



- 1) To Work service connects with DDOT and SMART hubs.
- 2) In addition, Livonia Community Transit provides expanded, door-to-door service for Seniors/Disabled residents.

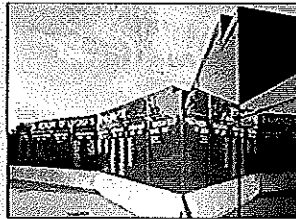
Smart Opt-Out Service Comparison



Veterans

With SMART: No service extended specifically to veterans

After SMART: We are launching a new initiative to provide a door-to-door shuttle service for veterans to the VA-Ann Arbor Hospital pick-up point in Westland.



Comparing the issue



When considering whether a community should opt back in, it's important to note different communities have different challenges.

	BIRMINGHAM	LIVONIA
Square miles:	4.79	35.70
People/square mile:	4,100	2,715
Population:	20,103	96,942
Seniors (65 & older)	13.7%	17.7%
Businesses:	3,733	10,063
Housing Units:	9,979	40,401

(Source: 2010 U.S. Census)

Higham, Jackie

From: CityCouncil@ci.livonia.mi.us
Sent: Saturday, March 14, 2015 10:41 PM
To: jeffrey.everett@gmail.com
Subject: Submission Confirmation

Name: Jeff Everett

Street: 37738 Munger Dr

City: Livonia

State: MI

Postal Code: 48154

Telephone: 734.452.9449

Email Address: jeffrey.everett@gmail.com

Summary Field: Dear City Council, I am writing in regards to the SMART bus system, which is scheduled to be discussed during the Council meeting on Monday, March 16th. Although I will be unable to attend the meeting in person, it is my hope that the Council will elect to rejoin the SMART system. Although I recognize that SMART as currently configured is not optimized to fully serve Livonia, the best way to improve this is to rejoin the transit network and work over time to increase access to all areas of Livonia. I believe strongly that providing access to public transit should be an important goal of city governments throughout the Metro Detroit region. Rejoining the SMART system would show that Livonia is committed to this goal. Thank you for your consideration. Best Regards, Jeff Everett

Higham, Jackie

From: CityCouncil@ci.livonia.mi.us
Sent: Saturday, March 14, 2015 9:47 PM
To: betsy.everett@gmail.com
Subject: Submission Confirmation

Name: Betsy Everett

Street: 37738 Munger Dr.

City: Livonia

State: MI

Postal Code: 48154

Telephone: 734-452-9449

Email Address: betsy.everett@gmail.com

Summary Field: I was glad to see that the City Council will be reexamining SMART bus service in the city at Monday's city council meeting. I am highly in favor of Livonia adding Livonia stops to the SMART routes again. Not using bus service myself, I hadn't even realized that Livonia had opted out of participation, leaving no SMART routes to the city. I think it would be worth paying extra in property taxes to support a service that can get working people without their own vehicles where they need to go more effectively. Thanks, Betsy Everett



Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation

NEW DATA FOR
REGULAR MTG
OF 3/16/15

Buhl Building • 535 Griswold Street, Suite 600 • Detroit, MI 48226 • (313) 223-2100

February 18, 2015

Mrs. Maureen Miller Brosnan, President
City of Livonia
11320 Arden
Livonia, MI 48154

Dear Mrs. Miller Brosnan;

Recently, there has been a significant amount of media attention given to the state of public transit in the region. The interest was spurred by a story surrounding one man's quest to get to work everyday. Certainly, his work ethic and commitment are commendable.

However, because of the attention given to this issue, we thought you may have some questions regarding SMART and how you can further benefit from additional SMART service in your community.

One misunderstanding regarding SMART is that your community is not a part of SMART. In fact, the entirety of Macomb, Oakland and Wayne Counties and all the communities within currently benefit from certain services provided by SMART. Your community may have already availed itself of some of the programs SMART administers, including, but not limited to the municipal credit program, specialized services program, and federal or state grants.

Since your community is already eligible to benefit from SMART, you have the opportunity to gain a higher level of service. You can consider adding SMART bus service for your residents so they can connect to jobs, local businesses, schools, medical facilities and shopping areas in the region.

We would be happy to talk with you and work together on expanding bus service to your community. SMART has a team of experts on staff that can assess your transit needs, plan, implement, and promote the service to your residents. Please feel free to call me at (313) 223-2106 to further discuss how, together, we can build a transit program that will work for your community.

Sincerely,

John C. Hertel
General Manager

cc: SMART Board of Directors



**CITY OF LIVONIA – CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF STUDY MEETING HELD MARCH 2, 2015**

Meeting was called to order at 8:00 p.m. by President Brosnan. Present: John Pastor, Laura Toy, Lynda Scheel, Susan Nash, Brandon Kritzman, Brian Meakin, and Maureen Miller Brosnan. Absent: None.

Elected and appointed officials present: Todd Zilincik, City Engineer; Mark Taormina, Director of Planning and Economic Development; Don Knapp, City Attorney; Susan Hoff, City Clerk; and Mayor Jack Kirksey.

1. REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION TO OPT BACK IN TO THE SMART BUS SERVICE: Sue Longstreet, President, American Association of University Women, Birmingham Branch, re: same.

President Brosnan indicated that the petitioner was unable to attend the meeting but wished for the Item to be considered by Council.

Toy asked if the Item could be moved to a later Study Meeting so the petitioner could be present.

Vice-President Meakin indicated he has many conversations with numerous people regarding opting in or out of Smart Bus Service. He said the residents overwhelmingly voted not long ago to opt out of the Smart Bus Service. He said he is not in favor of moving this forward or considering this matter further.

Vice-President Meakin offered a denying resolution for the Regular Agenda.

Kritzman offered the resolution requesting additional information relative to whether or not this subject has already been assigned in a committee for the Regular Agenda.

Kritzman offered the resolution referring the matter of whether or not to opt in to the Smart Bus Service to the Infrastructure and Community Transit Committee for its report and recommendation for the Regular Agenda.

Toy recalled when the City opted out of the Smart Bus Service. She said she is not opposed to discussing the matter.

Mayor Kirksey said in the not too distant past an extensive study was done. The City continues to opt out of the Smart Bus Service and instead provides its own City Bus Service that connects to the Smart Bus Service and DDOT Bus Service and services approximately 1,000 residents on a weekly basis. He offered to provide Council will a complete report at a future Study Meeting of its choice.

DIRECTION:

- 1) DENYING
- 2) REQUESTING ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION RELATIVE TO
WHETHER OR NOT THIS SUBJECT
IS ASSIGNED TO A COMMITTEE
- 3) REFER MATTER OF WHETHER OR NOT
TO OPT IN TO THE SMART BUS
SERVICE TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE &
COMMUNITY TRANSIT COMMITTEE FOR
IT'S REPORT & RECOMMENDATION

REGULAR

Priebe, Judy

From: Allen Rush <arush4u@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2015 8:09 AM
To: CityCouncil
Subject: Valid Public Transportation

NEW DATA FOR
S030215 MTG.

Please review the "Fix it fast and right" section. In particular SMART opt-ins. Livonia needs to face up to the fact that as a City, we have an obligation to provide people that want to work Valid Public Transportation. Please don't fall back on the misleading ballot several years ago that would have confused Einstein regarding the elimination of the five SMART routes within Livonia. The voters were too confused to cast a valid vote on the matter. ABC Cab company was the only beneficiary of the rigged election.

Please contact the SMART Agency.

<http://www.freep.com/story/opinion/columnists/stephen-henderson/2015/02/22/detroit-bus-transit/23775245/>

Region's transit system can't get many to job centers

Stephen Henderson and Kristi Tanner, Detroit Free Press 11:14 a.m. EST February 22, 2015



(Photo: Romain Blanquart/Detroit Free Press)

If you live in Detroit and work in Livonia, you'd better have a car.

Relying on a bus means long waits and long walks. The suburban bus system doesn't run at all in the job-rich western suburb because the city has opted out of public transit. Though the city bus system transports passengers to the fringes of Livonia, it doesn't touch the vast majority of the suburb's 35 square miles.

And yet 4,300 people who live in Detroit, Highland Park and Hamtramck make the trip to Livonia every day to reach low-wage jobs, according to an analysis of census data by [Data Driven Detroit](http://blog.datadrivendetroit.org/2015/02/10/uphill-both-ways-chronicling-metro-detroit's-transit-mismatch/) (<http://blog.datadrivendetroit.org/2015/02/10/uphill-both-ways-chronicling-metro-detroit's-transit-mismatch/>).

That's the story all over metro Detroit.

Where most poor people live, along vast stretches of the east and west sides of Detroit's core, there are fewer jobs per capita than in almost any other major city in the nation.

And where the jobs are — in far-flung suburbs — our woeful public transit system either doesn't provide service, doesn't go the distance, or isn't reliable enough to get people consistently from where they live to where they work.

More than 10,000 Detroit, Hamtramck and Highland Park residents travel daily to low-paying jobs in suburban communities that opted out of public transit, the Data Driven Detroit analysis found. So the workers drive. Or patch together multiple-mode commutes. Or they hoof it.

This is what's most instructive about the tale of James Robertson, the 56-year-old Detroiter [who walked up to 21 miles](http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/oakland/2015/01/31/detroit-commuting-troy-rochester-hills-smart-ddot-ubs-banker-woodward-buses-transit/22660785/) ([/story/news/local/michigan/oakland/2015/01/31/detroit-commuting-troy-rochester-hills-smart-ddot-ubs-banker-woodward-buses-transit/22660785/](http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/oakland/2015/01/31/detroit-commuting-troy-rochester-hills-smart-ddot-ubs-banker-woodward-buses-transit/22660785/)) five days a week to and from his job in Rochester Hills. The area's job sprawl and its inadequate transit system are isolating the urban poor — creating a vast geographic gulf between them and the financial stability that steady work provides. The transit barrier erodes the ease of access that is typically one of the advantages of urban living. An impoverished east side Detroiter seeking work in Wixom faces the prohibitive isolation we associate with pockets of sprawling rural poverty, in places like Michigan's U.P. or Appalachia.

Robertson's story should inspire efforts across the region to finally build the transit system we need to provide the path from poverty to opportunity.

"While we want jobs to come to Detroit, the most important step for the city and suburbs is access to jobs, regardless of where they are," said demographer Kurt Metzger, who is also mayor of Pleasant Ridge. "We have organizations and leadership talking about education and skills training. We need these same leaders demanding a transportation system."



DETROIT FREE PRESS

[Heart and sole: Detroiter walks 21 miles in work commute](http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/oakland/2015/01/31/detroit-commuting-troy-rochester-hills-smart-ddot-ubs-banker-woodward-buses-transit/22660785/)

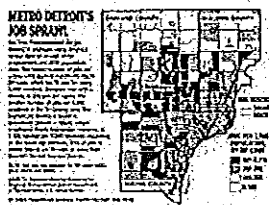
[\(http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/oakland/2015/01/31/detroit-commuting-troy-rochester-hills-smart-ddot-ubs-banker-woodward-buses-transit/22660785/\)](http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/oakland/2015/01/31/detroit-commuting-troy-rochester-hills-smart-ddot-ubs-banker-woodward-buses-transit/22660785/)

Reeling from the sprawl

Detroit has long been known for the rapid and robust growth of its suburbs, beginning in the 1950s and continuing into the 21st Century.

But perhaps less known is how dramatically the population sprawl carried jobs away from the city's core and into the far reaches of the metro area.

A Brookings Institute study (<http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports/2013/04/18-job-sprawl-kneebone>) from 2013 made it plain: The job sprawl in Detroit is among the nation's worst.



Buy Photo

metro Detroit's job sprawl, by ZIP code (Photo: Martha Thierry/Detroit Free Press)

By the numbers, 77% of the jobs in the metro area are at least 10 miles (and as many as 35 miles) from the city's central business district. In the nation's 100 most populous cities, Brookings found 57% of the jobs were closer than 10 miles to the city's core.

Detroit is also an outlier in Michigan in that regard. Look at Grand Rapids, for instance, where 85% of the jobs are within 10 miles of the city's core, and the ZIP codes in and immediately around the city boast 500 jobs per 1,000 residents or more. You'll find similar trends in Lansing.



Buy Photo

Grand Rapids and Lansing winners in job density (Photo: Martha Thierry/Detroit Free Press)

In Detroit, some of the ZIP codes closest to the central business district have 100 jobs per 1,000 residents or fewer; several of them have fewer than 65.

At the same time, job sprawl exacerbates economic imbalances in the region.

Only 28% of Detroit jobs are held by Detroiters, and those who leave the city for work are often traveling long distances for meager wages. Census data from 2011 show 42% of Detroiters who travel outside the city limits for a job earn \$15,000 or less annually. More than 80% earn \$40,000 or less.

Meanwhile, almost 3 in 4 jobs in the city are held by suburbanites, a majority of whom make \$40,000 or more — likely in jobs that require some level of advanced education, if not a four-year college degree.

Designed for failure

The region's lousy transit policies exacerbate the consequences of job sprawl for the region's working poor.

The area's two public transit systems won't even get people in job-poor Detroit to the suburbs that have the most employment opportunities. On the west side of the metro area, for instance, cities such as Plymouth, Novi, Wixom and Livonia have among the highest number of jobs per capita, stretching beyond 500 jobs per 1,000 residents. Compare that with 100 jobs per 1,000 residents in many parts of Detroit.

But public transit doesn't go to those communities, so you can't get there without a car.

The same is true of Rochester Hills, Orion Township and big parts of Shelby Township on the north side of the metro area, and parts of Brownstown Township and Romulus along the region's southern edge.

In some cases, transit is planned so poorly that workers can get just to the precipice of where they need to go on a bus, and then are left to their own devices.

That's what happens in northern Macomb County, where SMART service stops on the Van Dyke route at the Walmart located off 23 Mile.

Local transit leaders admit there are huge problems, problems that go deep into the structure of bus routes in the region.

"It's not just the routes that dead end. It's also the routes that do get you there, but service is not all day or stops before your shift is over," said Carmine Palombo, deputy executive director of the Southeast Michigan Council of Government.



DETROIT FREE PRESS

How metro Detroit transit went from best to worst

[\(http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/2015/02/06/michigan-detroit-public-transit/22926133/\)](http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/2015/02/06/michigan-detroit-public-transit/22926133/)

Where's the money?

Poor planning and a lack of coordination are some of the problems with regional transit, but there are money troubles, too.

Although operating and capital expenditures top \$250 million a year for the Detroit Department of Transportation and Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transit, the region lags far behind other cities when it comes to transit spending.

According to the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, spending among all transit agencies in the seven-county metropolitan planning region is about \$81 per capita.

In Boston, it's \$386 per resident. And in Pittsburgh, it's \$213. Of the metropolitan areas studied by SEMCOG, only Phoenix and Tampa spend less.

The state also does a less-than-competitive job of funding public transportation in Michigan.

Since 2006, the state has provided about \$167 million a year for 78 public transit agencies

(<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa/PDF/Transportation/CTFLocalBusOperating.pdf>) in Michigan. Most of that money comes from a 10% earmark from gas taxes and vehicle registration fees.

Those numbers mean Lansing provides about a third of the funding for DDOT and SMART's operating funds. That's a larger share than the top 50 transit agencies nationwide, but significantly less than other comparable urban centers.

In Ohio, for example, state funds make up 67% of the funding for public transit in Cleveland. And in Pittsburgh, the state provides more than half of the funding for local buses.

Fix it fast and right

Better transit won't cure poverty in metro Detroit, but designing a better funded, more coordinated way for people to get from where they live to where they work can make a difference for thousands.

Four pretty simple steps would get southeast Michigan headed in the right direction.

SMART opt-ins. Even the 50 suburbs that don't participate in SMART now have a chance to reverse policy. In Wayne and Oakland counties, a simple vote of a municipal governing body can create better opportunities for transit.

This has happened already in four communities over the past 25 years. A letter from SMART CEO John Hertel last week urged leaders in opt-out communities to contact the agency. Six communities followed up; more should be reaching out.

Proposal 1 on the May 5 ballot. The initiative is mostly about shifting and increasing the sources for road funding, but it would also add an estimated \$27 million to the state's Comprehensive Transportation Fund in the next fiscal year. That increase would grow to \$116 million by fiscal year 2017-18, according to House Fiscal Agency estimates.

A large portion of that money goes to buses and rail around the state.

That would help boost the per capita spending in metro Detroit — one of the key ways in which we lag behind other cities right now.

The Free Press Editorial Board hasn't taken an official position on Proposal 1 yet, principally because of questions about tax policy and road funding, but there's no question that it would be a win for public transit.

Support the Regional Transit Authority. From a planning and infrastructure standpoint, the best hope for improving regional transit is likely the RTA, which was created by the Legislature in 2012, but has yet to establish a funding mechanism for itself or establish transit routes.

The hope is that there's a plan in place to take to voters in November 2016.

Expand the RTA's vision. Frankly, the best and easiest plan to support would go further than the rapid bus lines along major spurs (Woodward, Gratiot, Michigan Avenue) that the RTA has talked about.

Grand River, according to DDOT, is the third most traveled corridor in the city, with nearly 2 million riders a year. And it's more likely to take riders from the city's most impoverished areas to job-rich suburbs on the northwest side of the metro area, such as Wixom, Farmington Hills and Novi.

The RTA also needs to help coordinate schedules and routes to help ease transfers between SMART and DDOT and get people to where they need to go, regardless of which system is carrying them there.

One dynamic that is often overlooked is the growing number of poor residents in the suburbs. They, too, need decent public transit to get to work and are often thwarted by the same inadequacies in the system that confound Detroiters.

Ideally, funding for the RTA would also go beyond the bus lines to increase the per capita spending on public transit in metro Detroit.

The RTA's planning process is well under way, and its leaders are scheduling public meetings in all four metro Detroit counties over the next few months.

The opportunity to make change is now — for thousands of people all over the region whose transit nightmares are a daily reality.

Take action

Does your community opt out of SMART bus service? Urge your public officials to make sure your city is a part of regional transit in metro Detroit. Go to [Freep.com/TransitAction](http://www.freep.com/TransitAction) ([/story/opinion/editorials/2015/02/03/take-action-transit-metro-detroit/22796449/](http://story/opinion/editorials/2015/02/03/take-action-transit-metro-detroit/22796449/)) for phone numbers to the city halls in all of the opt-out communities.

Tune in

Tune in to "Detroit Today" on WDET-FM (101.9) at 9 a.m. Monday, when hosts Stephen Henderson and Laura Weber Davis will discuss how our region's poorly designed transit system affects opportunity throughout metro Detroit.

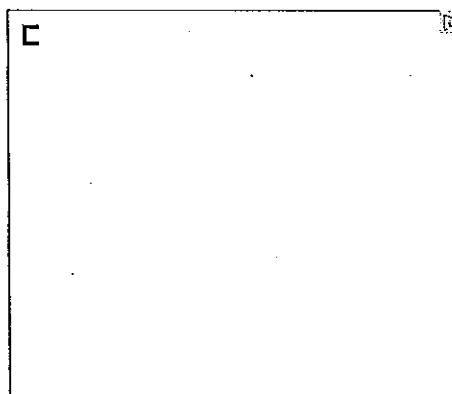


DETROIT FREE PRESS

Awful transit policy fails everyone in metro Detroit

[\(http://www.freep.com/story/opinion/columnists/stephen-henderson/2015/02/02/henderson-robertson/22721409/\)](http://www.freep.com/story/opinion/columnists/stephen-henderson/2015/02/02/henderson-robertson/22721409/)

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JAMES ROBERTSON (/TOPIC/E1C511FC-81E8-4287-A43A-9A610572D25B/JAMES-ROBERTSON/)



Detroit's hard-walkin' worker goes to school

[\(/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2015/02/19/james-robertson-detroit-walking-man-children-elementary-school-inspiration/23658897/\)](http://story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2015/02/19/james-robertson-detroit-walking-man-children-elementary-school-inspiration/23658897/)

By Bill Laitner

Kids write letters to Detroit's hard-walkin' worker



[\(/story/news/local/michigan/2015/02/19/walking-man-james-robertson-detroit/23641867/\)](/story/news/local/michigan/2015/02/19/walking-man-james-robertson-detroit/23641867/)

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[Heart and sole: Detroiters walk 21 miles in work commute](#)

[\(/story/news/local/michigan/oakland/2015/commuting-troy-rochester-hills-smart-ddot-ubs-banker-woodward-buses-transit/22660785/\)](/story/news/local/michigan/oakland/2015/commuting-troy-rochester-hills-smart-ddot-ubs-banker-woodward-buses-transit/22660785/)

[\(/story/news/local/michigan/oakland/2015/01/31/detroit-commuting-troy-rochester-hills-smart-ddot-ubs-banker-woodward-buses-transit/22660785/\)](/story/news/local/michigan/oakland/2015/01/31/detroit-commuting-troy-rochester-hills-smart-ddot-ubs-banker-woodward-buses-transit/22660785/)

By Bill Laitner



[Police help hard-walkin' Detroiters move to safer home](#)

[\(/story/news/local/michigan/oakland/2015/robertson-detroit-commuter-gofundme-aurus-crime/23197645/\)](/story/news/local/michigan/oakland/2015/robertson-detroit-commuter-gofundme-aurus-crime/23197645/)

[\(/story/news/local/michigan/oakland/2015/02/10/james-robertson-detroit-commuter-gofundme-aurus-crime/23197645/\)](/story/news/local/michigan/oakland/2015/02/10/james-robertson-detroit-commuter-gofundme-aurus-crime/23197645/)

By Bill Laitner



[James Robertson, others receive Spirit of Detroit Awards](#)

[\(/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2015/0/detroit-award/23548699/\)](/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2015/0/detroit-award/23548699/)

[\(/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2015/02/17/robertson-detroit-award/23548699/\)](/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2015/02/17/robertson-detroit-award/23548699/)

Bill Laitner, Detroit Free Press

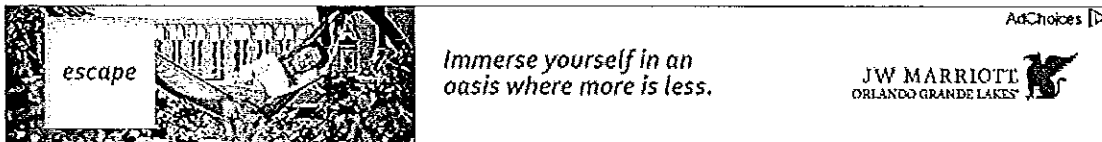
[SMART asks communities to join bus system](#)



[\(/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2015/02/18/smart-asks-communities-join-bus-system/23638787/\)](http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2015/02/18/smart-asks-communities-join-bus-system/23638787/)

[\(/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2015/02/18/smart-asks-communities-join-bus-system/23638787/\)](http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2015/02/18/smart-asks-communities-join-bus-system/23638787/)

By Eric D. Lawrence



escape

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Monday, February 16, 2015

To All Elected Officials:

Dear Sirs/Madams,

James Robertson's long walk to work is an example of the hardship facing many working people. Inadequate public transportation negatively impacts economic growth, job opportunities, and availability of the many educational activities in the area.

This crisis has continued for far too long.

We urge our region's leaders to address this long standing problem, beginning by opting in to the SMART bus service.

On behalf of the American Association of University Women, we respectfully request that you place this item on your agenda for consideration.

Sincerely,

Sue Longstreet, president
American Association of University Women
Birmingham Branch

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officials
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48154309799





LETTER TO THE LIVONIA CITY COUNCIL

3.

Council Office
April 11, 2023

MEETING DATE

SCFE041923/R050823

PREPARED BY

Sara Kasprowicz, Council Office Manager

AGENDA ITEM

CR 76-18 Subject matter of Livonia Community Transportation Services.

BACKGROUND DETAILS

On a motion by McIntyre, supported by White, and unanimously adopted, it was:

#76-18 RESOLVED, that having considered the request of Councilmember Kathleen McIntyre, at the Study Meeting held February 12, 2018, the Council does hereby refer the subject matter of Livonia Community Transportation Services to the Senior Citizens and Families Committee for its report and recommendation.

PREFERRED COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION/RESOLUTION (Please complete this field. Attachments are not to be used in lieu of the recommendation)

To discuss subject matter as submitted.

ATTACHMENTS

1. R022618 Subject matter of transportation to SCFE CR 76-18

APPROVED BY

Regular Meeting Minutes of February 26, 2018

On a motion by McIntyre, supported by White, and unanimously adopted, it was:

CITY COUNCIL

(Councilmember Kathleen McIntyre)

Subject matter of Livonia Community Transportation Services.

(Refer to the Senior Citizens and Families Committee for its report and recommendation)

#76-18 RESOLVED, that having considered the request of Councilmember Kathleen McIntyre, at the Study Meeting held February 12, 2018, the Council does hereby refer the subject matter of Livonia Community Transportation Services to the Senior Citizens and Families Committee for its report and recommendation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS AGENDA ITEMS (Regular Meeting of February 26, 2018)

Motion by: McIntyre

Seconded by: White

ROLL CALL:

Ayes: McIntyre, Jolly, Kritzman, Bahr, White, and Toy

Nays: None

Absent: Meakin

**CITY OF LIVONIA – CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF STUDY MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 12, 2018**

Meeting was called to order at 8:05 p.m. by President Toy. Present: Kathleen McIntyre, Brian Meakin, Jim Jolly, Brandon Kritzman, Cathy White, and Laura Toy. Absent: Scott Bahr.

Elected and appointed officials present: Don Knapp, City Attorney; Susan M. Nash, City Clerk; Mark Taormina, Director of Planning and Economic Development; Todd Zilincik, City Engineer; Dennis Wright, Mayor; Don Rohraff, Director of Public Works; Doug Moore, Superintendent, Public Services; and Ted Davis, Superintendent, Parks and Recreation.

7. REQUEST TO APPROVE SPECIALIZED SERVICES TRANSPORTATION OPERATING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM THIRD PARTY CONTRACT FOR THE PERIOD OF OCTOBER 1, 2017 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2018 BETWEEN THE CITY OF LIVONIA AND SMART: Department of Community Resources, re: with grant funds to be used for the Livonia Community Transit Program to provide lift-equipped transportation to the senior and disabled residents of the City.

Meakin said this is another request utilizing grant funds for the Livonia Community Transit Program that services seniors and disabled residents of the City.

Meakin offered the approving resolution for the Consent Agenda.

McIntyre offered the resolution referring the subject matter of Transportation Services to the Senior Citizens and Families Committee for its report and recommendation for the Regular Agenda.

DIRECTION:

- 1) APPROVING
- 2) REFER SUBJECT MATTER OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES TO THE SENIOR CITIZENS AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE FOR ITS REPORT & RECOMMENDATION

CONSENT
REGULAR



LETTER TO THE LIVONIA CITY COUNCIL

4.

Council Office
January 23, 2023

MEETING DATE

SFCE041923/R050823

PREPARED BY

Sara Kasprowicz, Council Office Manager

AGENDA ITEM

CR 34-23 Subject matter of transportation issues for seniors, families, and other community residents.

BACKGROUND DETAILS

On a motion by Councilmember McIntyre, and supported by Councilmember McCullough, and unanimously adopted, it was:

CR 34-23 RESOLVED, that having considered the request of Councilmember Kathleen McIntyre, at the Study Meeting held January 18, 2023, the Council does hereby refer the subject matter of transportation issues for seniors, families, and other community residents to the Senior Citizens, Families and Environment Committee for its report and recommendation.

PREFERRED COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION/RESOLUTION (Please complete this field. Attachments are not to be used in lieu of the recommendation)

To discuss subject matter as presented.

ATTACHMENTS

1. R013023 Subject matter of transportation issues to SCFE CR 34-23

APPROVED BY

On a motion by Councilmember McIntyre, and supported by Councilmember McCullough, and unanimously adopted, it was:

#034-23 RESOLVED, that having considered the request of Councilmember Kathleen McIntyre, at the Study Meeting held January 18, 2023, the Council does hereby refer the subject matter of transportation issues for seniors, families, and other community residents to the Senior Citizens, Families and Environment Committee for its report and recommendation.

<i>UNFINISHED BUSINESS ITEM 7 (Regular Meeting of January 30, 2023)</i>

Motion:	McIntyre
Second:	McCullough
Ayes:	Donovic, Morgan, McCullough, McIntyre, Bahr, Jolly
Nays:	None
Absent:	Toy