Transportation Demand Management

Existing Practices and Opportunities
Washtenaw Avenue Corridor

February 2013
Creating jobs and economic development in Michigan by removing barriers to coordinated federal, state and local public transportation investment and management

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The Rockefeller Foundation fosters innovative solutions to many of the world’s most pressing challenges, affirming its mission, since 1913, to “promote the well-being” of humanity. Today, the Foundation works to ensure that more people can tap into the benefits of globalization while strengthening resilience to its risks. Foundation initiatives include efforts to mobilize an agricultural revolution in Sub-Saharan Africa, bolster economic security for American workers, inform equitable, sustainable transportation policies in the United States, support access to affordable and high-quality health systems in developing countries, accelerate the
1 CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Washtenaw Avenue is a gateway to Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. But the corridor is also a destination unto itself. The 4.5-mile segment of Washtenaw Avenue between East Stadium Boulevard and the water tower in Ypsilanti connects numerous retail and commercial, institutional, recreational, and residential areas. While this activity is significant for the local economy, efficient travel along the corridor has been increasingly difficult. Automobile-oriented development patterns dominate. Facilities and networks for non-motorized travel are piecemeal or missing entirely. Transit operates in mixed-flow traffic subject to the same congestion constraints as automobile travel with few of the benefits.

- Daily traffic volumes on the corridor (2011) range from 23,000 at the eastern end near Ypsilanti to 41,900 near the US-23 interchange. This is nearly as high as or higher than traffic on some portions of the limited access highways of M-14 and I-94.
- Route 4 on TheRide has the highest ridership of any route in the transit system, reaching an all-time high of 1,128,019 riders in 2012.
- 100 acres or 40 city blocks within a quarter mile of Washtenaw Avenue are identified as underutilized and appropriate for infill development or redevelopment.
- Nearly 250 acres of preserved parkland and/or open space lies within that same area.

2 EXISTING STUDIES AND EFFORTS

Washtenaw Avenue crosses four jurisdictions, each with their own plans and priorities. Therefore, numerous studies within the region affect Washtenaw Avenue in some way. This section highlights studies and efforts that affect the corridor most directly.

RE-IMAGINE WASHTENAW

This planning initiative is the primary force behind current efforts to revitalize and invest in Washtenaw Avenue. Started over four years ago, this long-term project seeks to create a corridor that supports a high quality of life by encouraging a diversity of housing and shopping options, more efficient transit service, bike paths and better pedestrian infrastructure, sensible parking options, and access to educational, cultural and employment centers. The initial 2009 technical study identified many deficiencies
along the corridor, including:

- Expansive, half-empty parking lots
- Frequent traffic congestion
- Higher-than-average crash rates
- Inadequate pedestrian crossings
- Numerous vacant parcels
- High vacancy rates of commercial storefronts
- Missing sidewalks
- No amenities for bicyclists

A Joint Technical Committee (JTC), with representatives from each municipality and many other private and public stakeholders, meets regularly to further redevelopment efforts and implement identified revitalization strategies. This multi-jurisdictional effort has received significant attention at the local, state, and federal level. Under the umbrella of the Re-Imagine Washtenaw project, the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA) and Washtenaw County have each received large federal grants ($2.6 and $3 million, respectively) to implement some of the project's recommendations. A more detailed discussion of these grants occurs in subsequent sections of this report. The most recent major development for the project occurred in 2012 when the Michigan legislature also approved a bill that would allow city leaders to create a Corridor Improvement Authority for Washtenaw Avenue.

**LET’S ROLL: REIMAGINING TRANSIT ON WASHTENAW AVENUE**

Looking at transit service along Washtenaw Avenue specifically, University of Michigan graduate planning students suggest a phased approach to improving and increasing transit service along the corridor in their April 2012 report, “Let’s Roll: Reimagining Transit on Washtenaw Avenue.” The study looked at the primary types of delay transit services experience, finding that of the total travel time on Route 4 – Washtenaw Avenue, 49% was spent waiting at signals during the PM peak hours. Dwell time delays accounted for 26% of total travel time, while moving delays (slow speeds) accounted for 14%.

In the next one to three years, the study suggests, AATA should implement an Enhanced Bus service on Route 4, including consolidating and improving stops, moving stops to the far side of intersections, marking right-turn lanes as bus through lanes, implementing transit signal priority, and completing the pedestrian network. AATA has already begun some projects that will help meet these goals. Following Enhanced Bus implementation, Let’s Roll recommends a “Bus Rapid Transit Lite” line in the next three to seven years, and a full Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in seven to 15 years.

**OTHER STUDIES**

**Connector Feasibility Study**

The City of Ann Arbor, the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA), the Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and the University of Michigan (U-M) collaborated to conduct this feasibility study of advanced transit technologies to serve the transportation needs of the City and the University in an arc from northeast Ann Arbor, through U-M campuses and downtown to south Ann Arbor.
The study found that there is a need for a high capacity transit system along the corridor, since the system is operating at capacity during peak periods. The study recommends bus rapid transit, light rail transit, or an elevated system in order to operate outside of existing traffic.

**South State Street Corridor Study**

This Plan will examine the problems facing the State Street corridor and propose solutions, so that future growth can occur in a thoughtful and sustainable manner. With this Plan, the City intends to support existing land uses and ensure future uses are compatible and complementary. These stakeholders are unified in the desire to revitalize the corridor and develop a welcoming gateway that reflects the character of Ann Arbor. The plan includes corridor-wide recommendations, area recommendations, and site-specific recommendations.

For the corridor as a whole, along with recommendations for climate, energy, place-making, culture, and Recommendations relating to transportation include:

- Enhance non-motorized transportation access throughout the corridor
- Prioritize pedestrian, cyclist, and public transportation improvements
- Anticipate and plan for future light rail transit or Bus Rapid Transit
- Consider amending City Code by adding comprehensive access management language
- Develop safe non-motorized systems

**Connecting Williams Street**

The Connecting William Street project was finalized in January 2013 and focused on five city-owned parking lots between William and Liberty Streets, including the Library Lot, the Old Y Lot, the ground floor of the 4th Street and William Street parking deck, the Palio Lot, and the Kline Lot. The Downtown Development Authority led the process, and developed evaluation criteria for prospective projects and identified several future scenarios for each lot. Recommendations included filling gaps in the pedestrian network, developing a streetscape plan, and enhancing the bicycle network.
Transit Plans

In 2011, AATA adopted a 30-year vision for expanded transit service. A 5-year Transit Master Plan (TMP) for countywide service was developed but did not gain the political support necessary to pursue a funding initiative. A more limited plan for expanded service in the urban core is in development as of January 2013. The AATA implemented some service expansion in advance of the TMP, including doubling the frequency of weekday service on the #4 Washtenaw route. The AATA is currently considering how to fund continuation of these advance services.

3 EXISTING TRAVEL CONDITIONS ALONG WASHTENAW AVENUE

AUTOMOBILE TRAFFIC

Traffic along Washtenaw Avenue is often congested, especially at peak hours. As of 2011, the average daily traffic (ADT) along the corridor reached as high as 41,900 near the US-23 interchange. This is nearly as high or higher than traffic on some portions of M-14 and I-94, which
are limited access highways with faster speeds. The lowest traffic occurs on the eastern end of the corridor, near the Ypsilanti Water Tower, reaching an ADT around 23,000. Some intersections on Washtenaw Avenue have a level of service (LOS) as low as E at peak commuting hours, particularly on the portion west of the US-23 interchange and in the eastbound direction, as shown in Figure 2. Washtenaw Avenue also has crash rates at many intersections along the corridor that are higher than comparable facilities within the region. Many motorists try to use the surrounding neighborhoods to get around the traffic, but with nonexistent or unclear connections, many end up lost and increase traffic within the neighborhoods.

Figure 2  Automobile Level of Service on Washtenaw Avenue

Source: Batterman, Joel, et.al. (2012). Let’s Roll: Reimagining Transit on Washtenaw Avenue. Taubman College of Architecture & Urban Planning, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI. Retrieved February 15, 2013 from https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B6r2yKm0hQSRYW0zLU1VZWt6ekk/edit

PARKING

Parking along Washtenaw Avenue is plentiful and free. The majority of development along the corridor came in the latter part of the 20th century when planning focused around the automobile. High parking ratios, large set-backs for large and small strip commercial areas along corridor frontage, and low priority for alternative transportation infrastructure appears to have been the paradigm of planning along Washtenaw Avenue for at least half a century. This has undoubtedly played a role in increasing congestion along the corridor. Research suggests that most businesses along Washtenaw Avenue have more than enough parking, with the exception of the Huron Village Shopping Center site. Anecdotally, this large commercial development on the western end of the Washtenaw Avenue study area, featuring stores such as Whole Foods, Panera, and Barnes & Noble, is often very busy and full to the point where shoppers will idle or cruise while waiting for a spot.
But this is the exception rather than the norm. Most parking lots are expansive, and largely empty, especially during off-peak hours. With many abandoned storefronts, free, unregulated parking has also been taken advantage of, especially by those with subsidized transit passes.

**TRANSIT**

The Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA; operating as “TheRide”) provides public transit services to the city of Ann Arbor and to other surrounding communities through contract service agreements, including Ypsilanti. In 2012, TheRide provided over 6.4 million rides, a 6% increase over 2011 and a single-year ridership record. TheRide’s total operating budget in FY 2012 was $30.36 million.

TheRide has one bus route that serves Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor via Washtenaw Avenue: Route 4-Washtenaw Avenue. This route has the highest ridership of any route in the system, increasing by 27% in 2012 over 2011, while already having reached an all-time high of 886,958 riders in 2011. TheRide attributed this increase to many factors, including rising gas prices, the recovering economy, a mild 2011-2012 winter, and the agency’s commitment to improving quality of service. In addition TheRide doubled the weekday frequency of Route 4 beginning in January of 2012 to every 5-10 minutes during peak hours and every 15-20 minutes during the midday period. This improvement has been very popular with riders and the transit community. AATA has received a $2.6 million grant from the FTA Livability Program to purchase replacement buses for the service expansion on the #4 Washtenaw route.

One of the most highly used stops along Washtenaw Avenue is near Arborland shopping center, which until 2009 had a large bus shelter and acted as a transfer station for other bus routes. In July of that year, Arborland management terminated AATA’s lease on the station. This has been a cause of frustration to motorists, as the dwell times for the bus on Washtenaw Avenue near the mall can be long.

**Figure 3** Route 4 – Washtenaw Avenue (Inbound)
Ridesharing and Vanpools

Though not specific to Washtenaw Avenue, various vanpool programs in the region help to increase the available alternative transportation options along the corridor. VanRide, a service managed by AATA and operated by V-Ride, Inc., offers vanpool services for trips originating within and outside of Washtenaw County. VanRide is for groups of no fewer than five individuals (including the driver). V-Ride provides a 7-passenger van, maintenance, incident coverage, and insurance, while individuals pay usage fees and fuel costs. Costs range from $139 per rider for vanpools that originate outside of the county and have the minimum amount of ridership (five total passengers), to $79 per rider for vanpools that originate inside of the county and have six or seven passengers. Employers can organize VanRide as a benefit to employees.

MichiVan is the statewide vanpool manager and offers vanpool service even to those counties with no local rideshare office for groups of five or more. AATA is the local rideshare office for Washtenaw County, and MichiVan is referred to as VanRide.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities along Washtenaw Avenue are often nonexistent or in poor condition and compromise the pedestrian experience. The sidewalk network is incomplete, with large gaps where people have worn a path through the grass and dirt. Maintenance is a concern (cracks or unevenness), and segments of sidewalk can be too narrow in some areas. In the winter, sidewalks are even more impassable as snow and ice create hazardous conditions. This forces TheRide to stop along Washtenaw Avenue more frequently than desired.

Some intersections lack crosswalks completely. Others have crosswalks that are incomplete and viewed as dangerous. Intersections may completely lack curb cuts for individuals using strollers or mobility devices.

Washtenaw County, the City of Ann Arbor, and the City of Ypsilanti developed plans for non-motorized transportation within their jurisdictions, all of which placed an emphasis on significantly improving pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure in Washtenaw County. Benefits highlighted in all three reports included improved mobility, access, health, safety, and general welfare, benefits that extend beyond the direct users of the non-motorized system. Washtenaw Avenue is undergoing construction of pedestrian connections underneath US-23 interchange and construction is complete on a 10-foot shared-use path between Tuomy and Glenwood Roads (near Whole Foods). Due to new development on the south side of Washtenaw Avenue near Platt Road (across from Whole Foods), construction of a new shared-use path between Platt Road and Huron Parkway may soon begin. In recent years, Ann Arbor has built 12 pedestrian refuge islands and filled in 2.9 miles of sidewalk gaps throughout the city.

Bike volume is low along Washtenaw Avenue, likely due to the high volume of automobile traffic on the corridor and an incomplete bicycle network. Across the city, Ann Arbor has added 19.7 miles of bike lanes in the past five years, for a total of 37.4 miles, with an additional 5.8 mile of sharrows. The DDA also recently approved construction of a bike cage in the Maynard Street garage, which will use two automobile parking spaces and allow for approximately 50 bikes. Therefore, while accommodation of bicycle commuters is happening in other parts of the city, Washtenaw Avenue remains a gap in the bicycle network.

The Washtenaw Biking and Walking Coalition (WBWC) has been active throughout the County. The Coalition helps to identify problem areas and prioritize them. Their intent is to assist local
jurisdictions in performing this groundwork. Washtenaw Avenue has not been a major focus for WBWC as it has traditionally been considered a poor corridor for these modes of travel. The recently completed Border-to-Border Trail, however, is thought to provide an attractive cycling route between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, despite being somewhat indirect. Non-motorized priorities include making connections, achieving continuity in the pedestrian and bicycling networks, and prioritizing pedestrians. Recent pedestrian improvements include improved law enforcement, installation of flashing beacons, and legislation requiring motorists to stop for pedestrians at or approaching crosswalks. WBWC believes that the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti region could be a model of bicycling and walking for the rest of the state.
4 TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Washtenaw Avenue is mostly a suburban shopping corridor that directly connects major institutions, organizations, and municipalities, many located at either end of the corridor. Because of this, transportation demand management (TDM) programs in place at major employers have significant effect on traffic along the corridor. The shopping areas along Washtenaw Avenue have little coordination amongst one another and few participate in individual or cooperative transportation management or offer benefits to reduce peak hour travel on Washtenaw Avenue.

CITY OF ANN ARBOR

The City of Ann Arbor manages several TDM programs, recently focusing resources on improving parking, bicycling, walking, and transit infrastructure and facilities. Among the many accomplishments include the construction, in cooperation with the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), of a new 744-space underground parking garage next to the library and increased bike parking throughout the downtown. Marketing and promotion, primarily through the getDowntown program, play a key role in the City’s effort to manage transportation demand. While at present most TDM efforts focus on downtown, the City hopes to expand its programs in the future.

getDowntown Program

The getDowntown Program, founded in 1999 through a partnership between the City of Ann Arbor, Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce, DDA, and AATA, provides commuting information, programs, and services for downtown Ann Arbor employers and employees. Formed as a response to the growing need for downtown commuting options, getDowntown supports all modes of transportation, including transit, bicycling, carpooling/vanpooling, walking, and car sharing.

Perhaps the most visible program offered through getDowntown is the go!pass, a downtown commuter bus pass program, discussed below in more detail. Other avenues of support include getdowntown.org, which is a comprehensive information resource on commuting to downtown Ann Arbor, the Commuter Challenge (challenging employees to use alternative transportation), Bike to Work Week, Walk to Work Week, the Bike Locker Rental Program, working with the DDA to install a downtown bike cage, and advocacy for improved infrastructure and facilities, among others. Funding for these programs comes primarily through CMAQ grants, but the city and DDA also contribute. getDowntown has grown substantially since 1999, and as the program becomes more visible and highly utilized, program leaders hope to use the program as a model for creating similar efforts in other areas of Ann Arbor.
Downtown Transit Pass Program (go!pass)

The DDA and the AATA work in collaboration to provide a subsidized transit pass through the getDowntown program, called the go!pass. The go!pass allows downtown Ann Arbor employers to provide a transit benefit for their employees at $10 per full-time employee. The DDA pays the remainder of the cost for the go!pass. The go!pass provides downtown employees access to unlimited rides on AATA fixed route buses, as well as other transportation and business discounts. Employers purchase about 6,500 passes annually, which means approximately six out of 10 downtown employees have access to this transit benefit. Approximately 450 employers participate in the program (as of January 2013), including most major employers, which helps achieve a nearly 50% alternative transportation mode split for downtown Ann Arbor.

A recent survey found that the go!pass keeps over 820 vehicles out of downtown annually. Zingerman’s, a community of nine business started in downtown Ann Arbor and a participant in the survey, found that their employees who have a pass use it an average of 15 times per month. Additional feedback from the survey indicated:

- A variety of transportation options is good for business and good for attracting employees
- Pass allows them to attract the type of workers that want to be downtown
- Pass makes it easier to encourage mixed-uses, and transit-oriented development
- Variety of modes creates sense of place – being able to walk and bike

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

UM is committed to offering a range of transportation options to meet a wide range of needs and continue to attract the best and brightest as they grow. Though many younger employees and students would support progressively more innovative transportation projects and ideas, many of the necessary connections and infrastructure are not yet in place. Through parking management programs, various transit benefits, ridesharing and vanpooling options, and non-motorized infrastructure, UM has been able manage demand effectively and maintain efficient movement of students, faculty, and staff.

Parking

The University of Michigan and the UM Health System are the number one and two employers in the Ann Arbor region. Together, they account for nearly 50% of all regional employees. There are also nearly 43,500 enrolled students at UM. It goes without saying that moving UM students, faculty, and staff efficiently is vital to the region’s economy.

Parking at the university is on a tiered system by color, with faculty and staff eligibility based on percent appointment and student passes available in some parking areas to registered juniors, seniors, and graduate students. The University operates and maintains over 22,000 parking spaces in 13 ramps and 100 lots. It is a self-sustaining system, generating $16 million annually to fund operations, maintenance, and debt service in addition to funding major renovations and new construction.

Parking spots are designated Gold, Blue, Yellow, or Orange, where Gold spots are very close to campus and limited in number and Orange spots are further away in large lots. Undergraduates are only eligible for Orange passes, while graduate students are eligible for either Yellow or Orange passes. In many cases, UM buses serve the UM parking lots to act as a shuttle.
The UM Health System (UMHS) has had a strong history of encouraging its employees to use alternative transportation; however, pressure to increase parking has been intense, especially after the opening of the new C.S. Mott Children’s Hospital and Von Voigtlander Women's Hospital. As a result of this construction, 500 new jobs were created and 300 employee parking spaces were reallocated for patients and visitors. Approximately 2,500 employees park at a remote site and take a UM bus or shuttle to the hospital. Ridesharing, vanpooling, and riding the bus from home have also been popular: approximately 1,500 employees utilize these services. UMHS provides four paid parking structures for patients and visitors. An additional parking structure approved this past summer will provide an additional 500 permit parking spaces near the UMHS campus. This $34 million project, located at an existing 200-spot surface lot on Wall Street, is expected to be complete by Winter 2014.

**UM On-Campus Transit**

Campus bus service is offered year round with a fleet of 60 buses linking the four main campuses. In 2011, the system carried over 6.75 million passenger trips.

UMHS provides funds for the UMHS Intercampus bus that serves most major locations for UM health services around Ann Arbor and some of the park and ride lots that employees may utilize.

**AATA Transit Pass Programs**

Nearly half of all AATA riders have their fare paid by a third party – typically their employer or institution. The largest program is the result of the MRide agreement between AATA and the University of Michigan (UM). Beginning in 2004, UM students, faculty, and staff board AATA local fixed-route buses at no personal cost using their MCard. UM covers the cost of the pass through a combination of federal and university funds. The current five-year contract between AATA and UM is valued at more than $2 million per year and around 2.5 million passenger trips are made by university affiliates each year. Other major pass programs include the go!pass, described above, and agreements with Eastern Michigan University (described below), the Ann Arbor Public Schools, Washtenaw Community College, and other area employers.

**Ridesharing and Vanpools**

The Parking and Transportation Services (PTS) Department of the University of Michigan offers subsidized vanpools to employees as well as assistance in forming carpools. UM offers special parking for vanpoolers close to campus. Currently, there are 500 employees who take advantage of the vanpool program. The Department administers “The Ride Home” program that provides shared cab rides for the hours when the campus bus service is not operating.

21 ZipCars, car sharing vehicles, are available at eight locations for use by members of that program. This program allows members to rent cars by the hour for a small annual and hourly fee using a simple online reservation system and RFID unlock/locking system. Members can travel up to 180 miles per day and gas, insurance, and maintenance are included.

**Non-motorized Transportation**

UM recently implemented the Blue Bike rental program, which allows students to rent a bike for $5 per day, $10 per week, or $75 per semester. The university also plans to implement a bike share program within a year and is a bronze-level Bike Friendly University as awarded by the League of American Bicyclists.
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Eastern Michigan University (EMU) has approximately 23,000 students total, only a small percentage of whom live on campus - about 3,500. During peak class times there are approximately 5,600 students in class with a roughly equivalent number on campus for other purposes for a total weekday student population of roughly 11,200. An overwhelming majority of commuter students drive to campus. The university is growing, and as more and more students come to campus, they are interested in keeping Washtenaw Avenue moving through park and rides, enhanced transit, and safer conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.

EMU On-Campus Transit

EMU does not operate an independent campus transit system but rather utilizes the TheRide to meet campus needs. The university contracts with AATA to operate the Route 33 College of Business Shuttle that is a free service for all riders. The 34 shuttle provides connections between campus and off-campus parking facilities on Hewitt.

Parking

EMU has one parking structure and a number of lots, most of which are paid; some free parking exists on the outer edges of campus. The university sells more passes than there are spots but has never had a parking problem. Still, many students and faculty would like more convenient parking closer to their classes or offices.

Faculty pay for parking passes based on a tiered fee system in which spaces closer to campus are more expensive. Residents and commuters can also buy parking passes. Persons with a disability are eligible for free passes, while visitors pay by the hour.

AATA Transit Pass Program

The university also offers its affiliates a discounted 30-day pass through a partnership with AATA. The university pays 30% of the cost and sells the passes on campus for $40. The university charges all students a transportation fee of $0.97 per credit hour that goes toward financing these passes as well as the on-campus shuttles. Users must present an EMU ID when boarding the bus.

Car Share and Vanpools

Three years ago, EMU started a car share program with Hertz, which has met expectations though university leaders would like to see it increase in popularity. The university also promotes the MichiVan vanpool program.

Live Ypsi Loan Program

This program, created by the Eastern Leaders Group, EMU, and Washtenaw County, offers small forgivable loans to full-time faculty and staff of EMU to purchase, not rent, homes in Ypsilanti. In its second year, $45,000 in funding from EMU and the Eastern Leaders Group is available and officials are hopeful that the program will receive additional funding based on its success during its first year. Last year, the program granted nine loans worth $7,500 each.
WASHTENAW COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Washtenaw Community College, located on Huron River Drive just west of St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, has over 12,000 students enrolled each semester, a majority of whom commute to campus multiple times per week. Unlike other area colleges that have a mix of students who live on or near campus and commuters, the availability of transportation to WCC directly influences semester enrollment figures, class loads, and class times. There is no specific transportation fee for students. WCC has tried numerous TDM measures, with varying success, though they remain committed to improving traffic conditions, improving bike and transit accessibility, and preventing additional expansions of parking.

Parking

WCC has about 2,500 free on-campus parking spots. Though peak hour capacity problems do arise, this amount has typically been enough. To relieve some pressure, the college built an additional 473-spot parking structure a few years ago, funded through WCC’s general fund. College administrators want to avoid building another parking structure.

Transit

Drawing students from a relatively large area, WCC faces challenges to provide feasible incentives for students to use alternative modes of transportation. With the radial transit system focused out of downtown Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, the two bus routes that serve the college (Routes 3 and 7) can be indirect for their students. In the past, WCC offered $10 monthly bus passes for their students, but the college found that many students used the pass mostly for non-school related trips. WCC also tried giving free rides home for students with an ID (but did not bring them to campus), and worked with EMU to shuttle students from an unused university parking lot. The shuttle, which operated on a 15-minute headway from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM, proved popular, but the WCC board ultimately decided to build the new parking structure and cease funding for the shuttle.

WCC students, faculty, and staff may board TheRide for free with their WCC ID cards when boarding at WCC’s main bus stop in front of the Occupational Education Building.

Ridesharing

WCC implemented a trial rideshare program, utilizing an online registration system for students. The college found that students used the service for regional and out-of-state trips, not trips to campus, so they discontinued the program. Staff use ridesharing, but it is all by word of mouth.

Non-Motorized Transportation

Utilizing the Border-to-Border Trail that passes by the WCC campus, many students and staff bike to campus during the spring, summer, and early fall.

VETERAN’S ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL

The Veteran’s Administration Hospital employs about 2,200 people at their Fuller Road facility. Approximately 54,000 patients come to the hospital each year, many for multiple or recurring visits, and the hospital sees over 1,600 patients per day. Visitors add even more traffic to the packed parking facilities and access points.
To manage travel demand, the VA has a range of programs described below. Despite the scale of their traffic and parking problems, the VA does not think that these issues are affecting their competitiveness as a workplace.

**Transit**

The VA subsidizes passes on ExpressRide, a commuter service from Chelsea and Canton offered by TheRide, for their employees. Veterans Transportation Services (VTS) offers free trips for patients traveling to the VA. Approximately 90 patients arrive at the VA on VTS buses daily. In addition, the VA subsidizes the MichiVan vanpool program.

**Parking**

Parking is an issue at the VA for employees, patients, and visitors, despite its 2,081 parking spots for employees and 470 spots for patients. Of the employee parking, 27 are reserved for carpooling, which are covered, on the front row to incentivize their use, and currently fully utilized. An additional 29 spots are for volunteers; 16 are reserved for employees with a disability.

Nearly 300 of the 2,200 employees park off-site and ride a shuttle from two off-site lots. One lot is one mile north of the VA at Huron Hills Baptist Church, the other three miles northeast of the city at Domino Farms. Parking at these sites is free, and the shuttles run every 30 minutes between 6:00 AM and 7:00 PM.

The VA has funding approved to build an additional 300-space parking structure, but a portion of the structure would be on UM property. A land trade or purchase is still being discussed, and the VA hopes to start construction this year and open the facility in 2014. The VA is interested in constructing a second parking garage in the future, though no concrete plans are in place.

**Bicycle Amenities**

The VA provides several bike racks on their property. One was located inside a parking structure at one time, but is now back outside. The new parking garage will also have bike parking.

**Telecommuting Initiatives**

Beyond packed parking spaces, office space is at a premium in the VA, causing them to explore teleworking initiatives. So far, 23 employees have been approved to telework three or more days per week, including administrative staff, home-based nurses, and community-based outpatient workers. Other ideas being explored include sharing office space during different shifts and allowing more flexible hours for certain types of staff.
5  ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ON WASTENAW AVENUE

Independently, leaders along Washtenaw Avenue have embraced some TDM programs on their own and are working to internally manage their own parking or transportation needs. These existing programs provide a good foundation for building more sophisticated TDM programming along the corridor. Several challenges to enhanced TDM programming still exist, however. Some are built into the suburban layout of the corridor. Others can be addressed through TDM strategies and a more regional look at transportation issues in the corridor.

APPLYING TDM ON AN INTER-URBAN ARTERIAL

Washtenaw County and especially the City of Ann Arbor have a number of TDM measures in place focused on downtown Ann Arbor. With funding partners like the DDA and support from groups like getDowntown, these TDM measures have been able to gain and sustain momentum for changes downtown. Re-Imagine Washtenaw has made significant progress in packaging Washtenaw Avenue as a cohesive corridor with TDM needs like downtown, even though it has historically not been a focus in the past and may be a hard sell to regional groups.

Many employers along Washtenaw Avenue do not feel any internal pressure or incentive to institute TDM programs. Employers in downtown Ann Arbor have been more compelled to address their own traffic and parking situations, but many further out in Ann Arbor or in Ypsilanti do not see any benefit to participating.

COORDINATION AMONG STAKEHOLDERS

Each county and municipality along the corridor, including Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, Pittsfield and Ypsilanti Townships, and Washtenaw County, are responsible for their own policies, zoning, and procedures. Coordinating among this range of jurisdictions in order to enact corridor-level TDM policies is a great challenge. Some stakeholders cited examples of regional TDM planning from Portland, Ontario, and smart growth states like Maryland and New Jersey for ways to manage so many local priorities and encourage more regional thinking.

Beyond the jurisdictions, the individual employers and stakeholders along the avenue may face coordination challenges, as well. Many operate independent shuttles that, if pooled, could provide a much more robust transit service for avenue travelers; yet ceding control of an internal program can be extremely difficult. Some stakeholders feel that the benefits of cooperating on such a level are not apparent to them as an individual stakeholder.

LIMITED MODE OPTIONS

Along Washtenaw, there is some transit access, but true high frequency, high capacity transit has a long way to go. Buses are stuck in the same traffic as cars and are presently not prioritized either physically in the road or by traffic signals. The time disparity between using a car and riding the bus outweighs any benefits of taking transit. Most employers recognize that their employees, students, and affiliates all drive.

Cycling and pedestrian facilities are also lacking, so even for those wishing to leave their car at home, walking from a bus stop can be a huge challenge.
PARKING MANAGEMENT AND FREE PARKING

Parking along the corridor is "free and ample," leaving drivers no reason or incentive to use other modes for traveling. Though some institutions charge all affiliates for parking, many provide free parking and have even more in the works.

Some attempts to manage parking better have been made, including lowering the parking requirements, but much more can be done.