



Saginaw Transit Authority Regional Services



wherever life takes you.

The State of Saginaw's Public Transportation System

Presented by:

Sylvester Payne, STARS General Manager

STARS Community Engagement & Educational Campaign

- Goal: To engage the Saginaw community in a public dialogue about the STARS organization and the role public transportation plays in the economic vitality and quality of life of our region

Topics for Discussion

- I. Overview of Budget, Funding & Services
- II. Budget & Service Cuts of 2004
- III. New Challenges
- IV. Organizational Reforms/New Leadership
- V. Vision & Plan for the Future

I. Overview of STARS Budget, Funding & Services

- Beginning of FY 2004
- \$9.8 million operating budget,
 - 75% Federal & State Funding & Matching Grants
 - 25% Local Funding from Transit Millage
- 150+ employees
- Regional Service & Bus Routes: Daily Routes, Evening & Weekend Services
- Countywide Dial-A-Ride/LIFT Service for elderly & disabled
- Tri-County Regional Coordination & Planning

II. Budget & Service Cuts 2004

- January 2004: General manager suspended, widespread public scrutiny over management practices, accounting, lawsuits, etc.
- March 2004: City Voters reject Transit Millage Renewal
- Transit millage renewal defeated by 332 votes
 - 46% Yes 54% No
 - Low Voter Turnout (4576 votes cast)
 - City Divided:
 - Westside Overwhelmingly Rejects
 - Eastside Overwhelmingly Supports

II. Budget & Service Cuts

- Results of Transit Millage Renewal Defeat
 - \$4 million in budget cuts
 - Bus Routes Cut by 50%: 13 to 8, including routes to Birch Run, Frankenmuth, & Bridgeport
 - Waiting Time Increases from 40 min. to 1 hour+
 - Evening & Sunday Services Eliminated
 - Countywide Dial-A-Ride Services to Elderly & Disabled Cut by 90%
 - 60+ Jobs Eliminated

III. New Challenges, Results of Cuts, Loss of Local Funding

- 26% Decline in Ridership
- Fund Balance Depleted, Budget Deficits Projected
- Capital Projects for Buses & Infrastructure Upgrades Sidelined
- Tri-County Regional Planning Halted (T-Cup)
- Federal & State Matching Grants in Jeopardy
 - **\$3 million+ in New Budget & Service Cuts Possible**

IV. Organizational Reforms & New Leadership at STARS

- New Transit Manager hired
- New financial monitoring program implemented
- Strict new financial and administrative policies enacted to close loopholes
- New members appointed to STARS Board
- New leadership elected to STARS Board
- New 5 Year Strategic Plan

V. Vision for the Future

Five Year Strategic Plan

Goal: Preserve, Restore, & Expand Regional Services

- Cut Waiting Times (1 hour back to 40 minutes)
- Restore Evening & Sunday Services
- Eliminate Deficit & Balance Budget
- Restore regional LIFT services to elderly, disabled
- Revitalize Tri-County Regional Planning
- Protecting Federal & State Matching Grants



The Role of Public Transportation in the New Economy

Presented by:

Sara Kristal-Brandon

Chair, Friends of Saginaw Transit

Topics for Discussion

I. The Role of Public Transportation

II. Public Transportation & the New Economy

III. Establishing a Regional Framework

I. The Role of Public Transportation

Public transportation plays a critical role in the economic vitality and quality of life in our region...

- Economic Development
- Education & Workforce Development
- Quality of Life
- Equality & Social Justice

I. The Role of Public Transportation

Economic Development:

Improving the local and regional economy by connecting consumers to:

- Shopping (business districts, malls, groceries)
- Entertainment (movies, museums)
- Recreation (sporting events, leisure activities)
- According to Riders Survey:
 - **#1 Reason People Ride: SHOPPING**

I. The Role of Public Transportation

Education & Workforce Development:

Improving educational opportunities and the Saginaw workforce by connecting students and workers to:

- Employment (mfg, retail, service sector)
- Job Training
- Education (K-12 schools, colleges, libraries)
- Welfare to Work

I. The Role of Public Transportation

Quality of Life:

Improving the quality of life for all Saginaw residents by connecting people to:

- Health Care (doctors, hospitals, pharmacies)
- Worship (church, prayer groups)
- Social Organizations (senior centers, Rotary)
- Family, Friends, and the entire community

I. The Role of Public Transportation

Equality & Social Justice:

Public transportation provide *equal opportunities for all people* to access regional destinations regardless of age, income, or ability.

II. Public Transportation & the New Economy

The New Economy:

In order for Saginaw to compete in the new economy and global marketplace, we must...

- Think globally and act regionally
- Encourage collaboration and cooperation among business, institutions, and governmental units in Saginaw, Midland, and Bay Counties
- Establish Priorities for Regional Collaboration

II. Public Transportation & the New Economy

Public Transportation: A Regional Connection

Public transportation connects the regional economic hub of activities between Saginaw, Bay, and Midland Counties.

III. Establishing a Regional Framework

The Status Quo:

- Services: Piece-meal regional connections between Midland, Bay, & Saginaw
- Funding Inequities: City residents bare cost for regional services
- Limited Regional Planning: Lack of collaboration and coordination between businesses, governments, and non-profits

III. Establishing a Regional Framework

The Future:

- Establishing a Regional Public Transit Plan with Countywide/Regional Funding
- Expanded Routes & Dial-a-Ride services between Midland, Saginaw, & Bay
- Emphasis on Regional Education, Workforce Development, Employment, & Health Care Needs
- **Success depends and starts with Support for Local STARS Services & Transit Millage**