



News Advisory

Blue Water Area Transportation Commission

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Despite Lower Gas Prices at the Pump,

Local Bus Ridership Continues to Climb and Break Records

PORT HURON, MI — Despite plummeting gas prices, our community continues to ride the bus in record-breaking numbers. During the last quarter of 2008, ridership jumped 16.7% with 231,836 riders, compared to 198,640 riders during the same quarter in 2007.

Month-to-month comparisons also illustrate the trend of increasing ridership. The largest jump of 24.8% happened in October, when there were 83,738 riders compared to 67,073 in October 2007.

“I think people are probably surprised by how easy, comfortable, and economical it can be to ride the bus,” says Jim Fisher, BWATC Board vice chairman and Port Huron City Council mayor pro-tem. “This is probably one of the biggest reasons why our ridership has continued to climb, even though gas prices have gone down.”

Our local trend echoes what is happening throughout the country. During the third quarter of 2008, Americans took 2.8 billion trips on public transportation, representing an increase of 6.5% over the third quarter of 2007, according to reports from the American Public Transportation Association. This is our nation’s largest quarterly increase in public transportation ridership in 25 years.

By saving the equivalent of 4.2 billion gallons of gasoline annually, according to the APTA, public transportation in our country is promoting a cleaner environment and reducing our dependence on foreign oil. Public transportation provided by BWATC is having an even greater impact, due to using compressed natural gas in 63 of its 72 buses. CNG is a more efficient, cleaner alternative fuel.

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BWATC continues a proud tradition of innovation in public transit that has served Port Huron for more than a century. Port Huron was one of the nation’s first communities to operate an electrified transit system in the 1880s and one of the first to operate motor coaches when they became popular in the 1930s. Following an eight-year hiatus, the current bus service began in September 1976. Since then, BWATC has carried more than 19 million riders and continues the tradition of innovation by producing its own compressed natural gas alternative fuel since 1996.



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news release by Gloria Justice

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