



News Advisory

Blue Water Area Transportation Commission

2021 Lapeer Avenue Port Huron, MI 48060
810.987.7373 fax 810.987.2431 www.bwbus.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 23, 2010

CONTACT: Jim Wilson, General Manager: 810.966.4200 jwilson@bwbus.com

Blue Water Area Transit Adds New Saturday Evening Service:

More Area Residents Can Ride the Bus to Work

PORT HURON, MI — More area residents will soon be able to ride the bus to work, after Blue Water Area Transit adds evening service on Saturdays — running as late as 10:00 p.m. along several routes, effective March 6.

“We hope our expanded service hours will better coordinate with the work schedules of area residents who need help with transportation,” says BWAT general manager Jim Wilson. “Our service helps riders save money on gas and also helps some families get by with one less car, which can be a huge savings.”

The agency recently expanded their weekday evening service until 10:00 p.m. and their morning service to start as early as 5:15 a.m. along several routes. The changes were designed to help riders connect with seven fixed-route buses that leave downtown Port Huron at 6:15 a.m., as well as new commuter routes that travel to Macomb County and stop in Marysville, St. Clair, Algonac, Clay Township, Pearl Beach, Ira Township, Anchorville, and New Baltimore.

The agency’s efforts to expand hours have been supported by a Federal program called Job Access and Reverse Commute, which addresses the unique transportation challenges faced by low-income individuals seeking to get and keep jobs. The expanded service hours are paid for with 50 percent Federal dollars and 50 percent State dollars. The program offers the unique advantage of not requiring any local matching funds.

“Our new Saturday evening service expands and opens up a wide range of options for area residents, including transportation to jobs and also shopping and entertainment,” says Linda Bruckner, Blue Water Area Transportation Commission Board vice chair. “We are continuing to serve the community by providing additional links between Port Huron and Fort Gratiot. I’m all for it!”

Saturday evening service will be identical to the weekday evening service, including all fixed routes and dial-a-ride service areas.

BWAT's expansion of services is in sharp contrast to today's national environment, where most transit agencies are cutting back services and increasing fares. BWAT's 10 percent increase in ridership last year was also contrary to national trends. The American Public Transportation Association reports a national 3.8 percent decline in public transit ridership during the first nine months of 2009.

Local officials point to several factors that have encouraged passengers to use our local bus system. These include low bus fares (75 cents for adults, 60 cents for children, and 35 cents for persons 60 years and older), extended hours that better match work schedules, easy-to-use bicycle racks, and expanded routes and services.

"When we expand services and ridership increases, the entire community benefits," Jim Wilson points out. "Increased ridership is good for the environment, because fewer cars are on the road. Our buses run on compressed natural gas, which is a clean alternative energy source, so the positive impact on our environment is even greater."

Additional information about Blue Water Area Transit services is available at www.bwbus.com or by contacting dispatchers at 810.987.7373.

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 20 million riders and continues the tradition of innovation by producing its own compressed natural gas alternative fuel since 1996.

#####



YOUR NEWS MEDIA MUSE

Savvy Strategies for Spreading Stories via News Media and New Media Sources

Gloria Justice 810.357.6817 GloJustice@SmithJusticeGroup.com <http://www.gloriajustice.com>
3560 Pine Grove Avenue Port Huron MI 48060 <http://www.yournewsmediamuse.com>