



News Advisory

Blue Water Area Transportation Commission

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Community Input Essential!

Blue Water Area Transit Unveils Pre-Feasibility Study: First Step to Improving Local Amtrak Station

Port Huron, Mich. – Blue Water Area Transit released a report on improving Port Huron’s Amtrak Station. The report incorporates public input provided during two public hearings in October 2017. It also outlines the advantages and challenges associated with available options for improvement.

Interested individuals may view the *Port Huron Amtrak Station Pre-Feasibility Study* on BWAT’s website (bwbus.com).

The Amtrak Station is located at 2223 16th Street in Port Huron. One train uses the station each day, arriving at 11:38 p.m. and departing at 6:20 a.m. The station is the final stop of the Blue Water Line that connects Port Huron to Chicago.

“This is just our first step in what will be a lengthy and thorough evaluation of the possible locations,” explained Jim Wilson, BWAT general manager. “Input from our community is essential.”

The consulting firm Bergmann prepared the report. The firm’s team of accomplished professionals include architects, engineers, planners, attorneys and accountants. Their services include architecture, construction management, and environmental permitting.

“Improving the Amtrak Station is important to our community,” said Linda Bruckner, Blue Water Area Transportation Commission Board chair and Fort Gratiot Township trustee. “We appreciate the input we have received from the community and hope it continues.”

BWAT will continue to explore ways to address current station needs. These include the need for additional parking spaces, additional space in the waiting room and nearby amenities for railroad passengers.

The agency expects to work with local interested parties, as well as federal, state and railroad officials, to further evaluate the options.

The Michigan Department of Transportation awarded BWAT a \$125,000 grant to pursue an evaluation of how to best improve the Amtrak Station in Port Huron. The grant includes mostly state funds, with some federal funds.

Blue Water Area Transit recently celebrated its 40th anniversary, as well as the sesquicentennial of public transportation service in the Blue Water Area.

William Pitt Edison (older brother of the celebrated inventor Thomas Edison) started the local tradition of innovation 150 years ago. He operated horse-drawn trolleys on several routes as the Port Huron & Gratiot Street Railway Company.

The Blue Water Area became one of the nation's first communities to operate electrified trolleys in the 1880s and then motor coaches in the late 1920s. Bus service started in 1927 and continued until an eight-year hiatus from 1968 to 1976. Since BWAT started publicly funded bus service in 1976, the transit agency has carried more than 31 million riders.

BWAT is Michigan's leading producer of Compressed Natural Gas, with the largest fleet of CNG buses in the state. The agency started producing the alternative fuel in 1996 and now operates four public CNG fueling stations. The station located at its headquarters at 2021 Lapeer Avenue in Port Huron is open Monday-Saturday, 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. Three more stations are open 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week: in Marine City (516 S. Parker), in Capac (15041 Downey Road) and in Port Huron (1529 Hancock Street). The agency accepts Discover, Master Card and VISA at all four stations, which are certified by the State of Michigan.

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