Metro Transit

- Metro Transit fixed-route; Metro Van; Care-A-Van; and Community Service Van program
- 21 fixed-routes: 6:00 a.m. to 10:15 p.m., Monday through Saturday; no Sunday service; serves Kalamazoo urbanized area
- 37 fixed-route buses; 15 Metro Van vehicles; 6 Community Service Vans
- $14.5 million annual operating budget; 121 employees
- In 2008—2,309,510 service miles, 196,618 service hours, and 3,094,981 passenger trips
- Funded through federal (urban), state, local (millage) and farebox
- Current fare is $1.35; transfers are free

Metro Transit was “born” January 1, 1967

Operates as a department of the City of Kalamazoo; overseen by a 7-member citizen Transit Authority Board (TAB)

Metro Transit

The Kalamazoo Transit Story:
Kalamazoo Metro Transit and Kalamazoo County
July, 2009
Presented By: William J. Schomisch, City of Kalamazoo Transportation Director
Dale R. Heit, Project Manager for the Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority

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Kalamazoo County Care-A-Van was established in 1984

Demand/response service countywide with priority for seniors and persons with disabilities

Care-A-Van
- Operated through Kalamazoo County Human Services Department
- Service delivery contracted out to a private provider
- 17 mid-sized coaches
- In 2004—408,635 service miles, 25,748 service hours, and 78,051 passenger trips provided
- Annual operating budget was $1,386,660
- Care-A-Van funded by federal (rural), state, and farebox. No dedicated local funding since 1984.
- Current fare range: $3.35 to $12.15
- In 1994, Metro Van was initiated as the result of the new ADA legislation

Between 1994 to 2003, both Metro Van and Care-A-Van operated independently, but complimented each other
- October, 2002, Care-A-Van lost a portion of its federal rural funding
- Within County, urban areas increased; rural areas decreased resulting in a loss of federal rural funding
- Care-A-Van lost $72,000 annually in rural federal funding
Care-A-Van administrators requested a portion of Metro Transit’s $1.8 million annual 5307 urban allocation. City and County could not come to agreement. City and County turned to KATS to help resolve the issue. KATS formed a sub-committee which eventually recommended Care-A-Van receive $72,000 in 5307 monies.

KATS questioned why the area had two separate transit systems. KATS urged both the County and City to combine the two systems; withheld 10% of federal funding as an incentive.

City and County finally agreed to a three-part solution in January 2009. Care-A-Van would merge with Metro Transit. A new, 9-member, countywide transit authority would be created to operate all public transit services in the county. The new authority would go to voters no later than November 2006 to secure a dedicated local funding source.
March 1, 2005—Care-A-Van transferred to City from County

December, 2005—County Board of Commissioners established a 9-member Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority (KCTA)

January to August, 2006—KCTA conducted community outreach, decided on ballot language, and went to the voters on November 4th with a 0.45 mill annual request for two years

Millage levy request approved by 51% to 49% margin

In 2007—the transition planning to move the Metro Transit System under the KCTA began in earnest

April, 2007—Three new Portage fixed-routes were added to System

November, 2007—City of Kalamazoo voters renewed 1.0 mill levy in the City of Kalamazoo for one year only (2008)

August, 2008—KCTA expanded Care-A-Van service hours and days

December 31, 2008—Existing Countywide and City millages would expire

November 4, 2008—KCTA returned to county voters with a 4-year graduated request which failed 58% to 42% margin

System is currently operating on fund balances—limited timeline

January, 2009—City and County Administration partner in 3-part tactical plan to stabilize Metro Transit’s local funding

• KCTA returns to voters in May, 2009, to fund all demand/response services countywide

• TAB would request new millage in the City of Kalamazoo only in November, 2009

• Fares to be increased to $1.50 from $1.35
May 5, 2009—Countywide vote is approved for a 4-year, 0.4 mill request by a margin of 63% to 37%

Next step—0.6 mill levy in City of Kalamazoo only for line haul services scheduled for November 3, 2009

KCTA to seek legislative amendment to Public Act 196 to allow for two millages in same service area through one countywide transit authority

Questions and Answers