

MVTA Update

May 2007

STRATEGIC AREA LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Next Board Meeting: May 23 at Eagan Bus Garage

The next meeting of the MVTA Board will be on Wednesday, May 23 at 4:30 p.m. at the Eagan Bus Garage. Please be sure to notify MVTA staff if you will be unable to attend this meeting.

Personnel Committee Met May 11

The MVTA Personnel Committee met on Friday, May 11 at the Burnsville Transit Station to discuss the ongoing review of the MVTA's Personnel Policies and the new Leave of Absence policy approved by the Board in April.

Development Committee Meeting Canceled

The MVTA Development Committee meeting scheduled for 3 p.m. on Monday, May 21, has been canceled. The purpose of the meeting, to be rescheduled when all appropriate information is available, will involve a proposed change to the lease with Tom Baker for development at the Burnsville Transit Station.

Suburban Transit Association Providers Tentative Meeting set for Thursday, May 17

The Suburban Transit Association Providers (STAP) next regular meeting is set for Friday, June 1 at 9 a.m. If necessary, there may be a meeting on Thursday, May 17 to review legislative activities. Other STAP meetings for the summer will be on Thursday, July 12 at 9 a.m., Thursday, Aug. 2 at 9 a.m., and Thursday, Sept. 6 at 9 a.m. Locations for June, July, August and September meetings are yet to be determined.

STRATEGIC AREA PLANNING

Facilities Update

APTA Emergency Response and Preparedness Program Being Reviewed by MVTA Staff

MVTA staff is reviewing APTA's Emergency Response and Preparedness Program (ERPP). This program is a voluntary, mutual-aid assistance agreement between participating agencies, and is designed to allow regional sharing of personnel and equipment for restoring or maintaining public transit systems, and/or in response to equipment failures, natural or man-made disasters, sabotage, terrorism or other situations requiring emergency response. The program does not obligate a signee to participate or contribute. Staff will review the agreement language, confer with other regional transit providers, and make a recommendation on membership to MVTA's Executive Director. In addition the RTSWG is also reviewing the APTA materials.

Site Clean-up is Under Way

Lawn maintenance spring clean-up, site sweeping, irrigation start-up, and window cleaning is under way and will be completed at all MVTA sites in early May.

DHS Consultants Conduct Threat Assessments at MVTA Facilities

Department of Homeland Security consultants conducted threat assessments at five MVTA Facilities (Apple Valley Transit Station, Burnsville Bus Garage, Burnsville Transit Station, Eagan Bus Garage, and Eagan Transit Station) during the last week of April. MVTA's Operations and Facilities Managers assisted the consultants as they examined physical security, structural ability, and infrastructure at the sites. Consultants will

provide MVTA with written reports that summarize vulnerable areas and make recommendations for improvement. The threat assessments were part of MVTA's regional security focus through the RTSWG and were free of charge. DHS also conducted similar assessments at Metro Transit and SouthWest Transit sites.

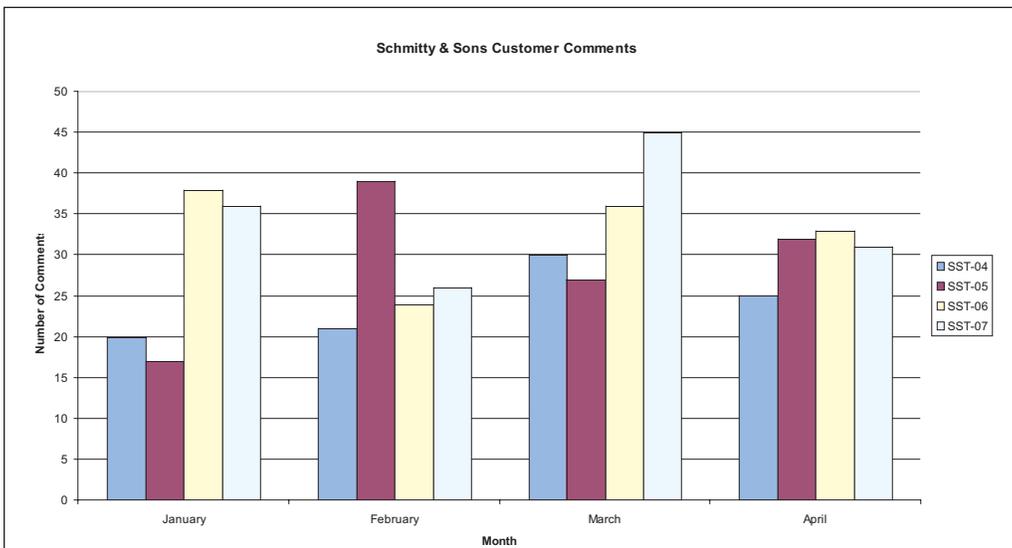
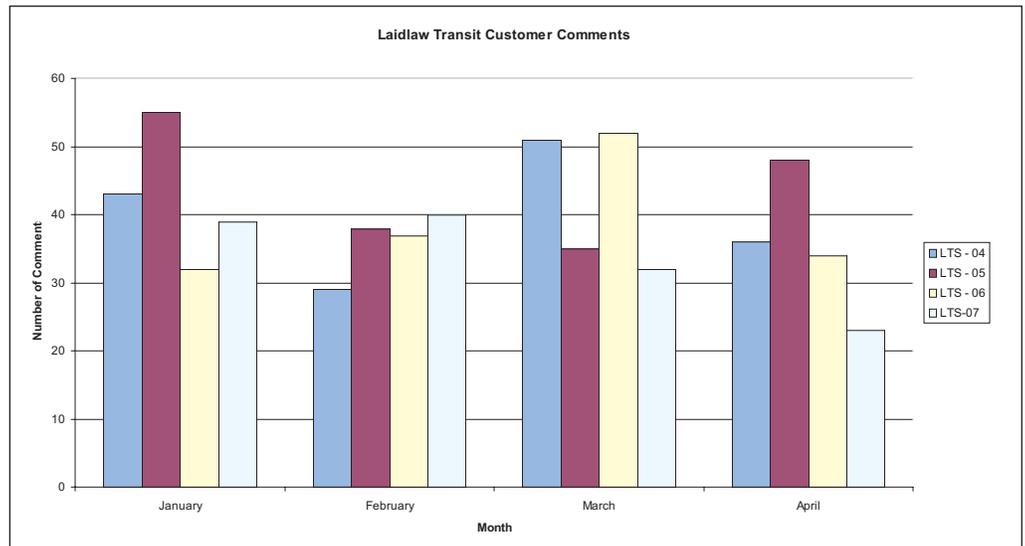
MVTA Completes LOGIS Security Audit

With the completion of construction at the Burnsville Transit Station, the MVTA invited a LOGIS representative to the site to complete the security audit initiated last year. The final phase of the audit was to determine that the file servers were in a secure location and could not be easily removed or damaged by unauthorized staff. A recommendation was made regarding key access to the telephone room (re-keying after 15 years was suggested) and the MVTA is implementing this suggestion.

**STRATEGIC AREA
SERVICE
DELIVERY**

Customer Service Reports

Customer service reports are attached. Both Laidlaw Transit and Schmitty & Sons Transit experienced a decrease in customer contacts during the month of April. Through the first quarter of 2007, MVTA has paid incentives to both Laidlaw and Schmitty & Sons.



2006 Records Standards Audit Results

The records of Laidlaw Transit and Schmitty & Sons Transit were evaluated during February and March for the 2006 Records Standards Audit. The audit focused on records in the areas of driver training, staffing, driver incentives, and job site safety. The purpose of the audit is to ensure providers maintain proper records and documentation in key areas of MVTA service.

Overall, the audit revealed that providers are keeping accurate records. Detailed assessments, which outlined any missing items and areas that needed improvement, were submitted to providers.

Reduced Service Operated Near Memorial Day

Due to anticipated reduction in ridership, the MVTA will operate a modified weekday schedule on Friday, May 25 (Friday before Memorial Day). The MVTA will operate a Sunday schedule on Memorial Day (Monday, May 27). This plan eliminates a total of 15 express trips, and shifts another 10 express trips to better use the MVTA's resources.

Buses on Order

Three new medium-duty buses were ordered from Hoglund Bus in approximately mid April. These are 30-foot Glavals, similar to buses obtained late last year. Each bus seats 20 passengers and has two wheelchair locations. The buses are being acquired through the Metropolitan Council. The MVTA Board will be asked to approve this purchase at the May meeting.

Maintenance News & Notes

- The MVTA is experimenting with some 3M Safety-Walk on older mid-size buses to help prevent passengers from slipping and falling. If the experiment is successful, we anticipate installing the product on more buses.
- Four small buses have been retired from the fleet, and replaced with 2006 Ford Supremes.
- The MVTA is working on training for providers regarding the heating/ventilation/air conditioning systems.
- While not a required item, all MVTA vehicles will soon have seat-belt cutters on board as a safety precaution.

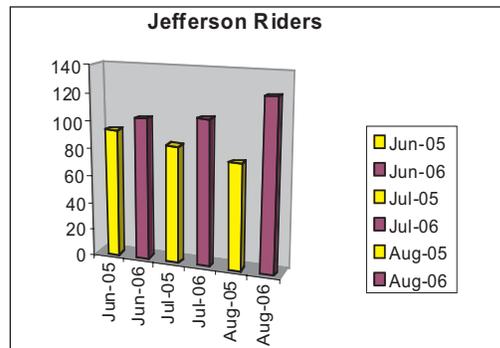
STRATEGIC AREA IMAGE

State Fair Planning in Process

Plans for the 2007 bus service to the Minnesota State Fair in under way. The MVTA is seeking quotes from our two providers for this service, and the Board will approve the service at the May meeting. Plans are to operate a schedule identical to what was done last year. This includes weekday service from Traveler's Trail and the Burnsville Transit Station and weekend service (including Labor Day) from the Burnsville and Eagan Transit Stations. MVTA staff will be meeting with Metro Transit and other staff to determine the specifics of "Hop on. Transit Day," which will be on Aug. 29. That day, bus fare will be \$3 (down from the regular \$5) and all riders will receive a transfer good for \$2 off their State Fair admission (not good with other discounts).

Jefferson Lines Bus Traffic Steady at BTS

The MVTA continues to sell Jefferson Lines bus tickets to transport travelers to Duluth, MN; Mason City, IA; Chicago, IL; Dallas, TX; and other destinations across the United States. The MVTA earns a 15 percent commission on all ticket and package sales. The attached chart shows an increase in ridership from the summer of 2005 to the summer of 2006. With the new storage area near the Customer Service counter, Jefferson has plans to promote the package express service they offer. The MVTA has seen numerous car bumpers, antique chairs and other items that have been shipped via Jefferson.



Striping of MVTA Buses Continues

Re-striping of the MVTA fleet with the new logo is an ongoing project. Currently, five 2005 model year Gilligs are slated to be striped next week. This will mean that nearly half the MVTA fleet is striped with the new logo.

SES Students Ride the Bus to the U of M

Again in 2007, MVTA staff conducted a How to Ride the Bus seminar at the School for Environmental Studies (SES), and then some 180 students boarded MVTA buses throughout the system on Wednesday, April 25. Customer Relations Manager Robin Selvig made presentations to the two groups, and Customer Service Representative Pete Feuk assisted students in determining which trips and from which location they should ride.

Summer Newsletter Attached to this Issue

The MVTA's summer newsletter, featuring information about June service changes, upcoming holiday schedules, an update on the Cedar Avenue BRT project, the new Shakopee service and the Driver of the Year Awards ceremony is attached to this edition of the *Update*.

STRATEGIC AREA PERSONNEL

Facilities, Operations Managers Attend Planning Meeting

MVTA's Facilities and Operations Managers recently attended a 2008 Republican National Convention transportation security kick-off meeting at MnDOT facilities in St. Paul. The meeting, hosted by the State's Department of Public Safety, was attended by MnDOT and regional Public Safety and Transit staff. The convention is scheduled for Labor Day weekend 2008 and is expected to bring thousands of delegates, press and protesters to the Twin Cities (specifically downtown St. Paul). This will significantly impact MVTA routes in the area. In addition, regional transit providers (MT/MVTA/SWMT/others) will be part of a team providing transportation for security and public safety personnel working at the convention. (Note, the State Fair will also be going on at the same time.) The Minnesota Department of Public Safety will coordinate regional transit assistance to the host city and convention organizers, and will organize future meetings to develop regional transit planning for the event.

Customer Relations Manager Attends Chamber Event

Robin Selvig, MVTA's Customer Relations Manager, recently attended a training event hosted by the Northern Dakota County Chamber of Commerce regarding Customer Service Training.

Finance Officer Attends LMC Workshop

Lois Spear, MVTA Finance Officer, recently attended a Loss-Safety workshop sponsored by the League of Minnesota Cities.

STRATEGIC AREA FINANCE

News from the Finance Department

- The external auditors (Kern, DeWenter, Viere) began their work on site at the MVTA this week. They were here earlier in the month to begin the fieldwork portion of the audit.
- The MVST revenue chart is attached.

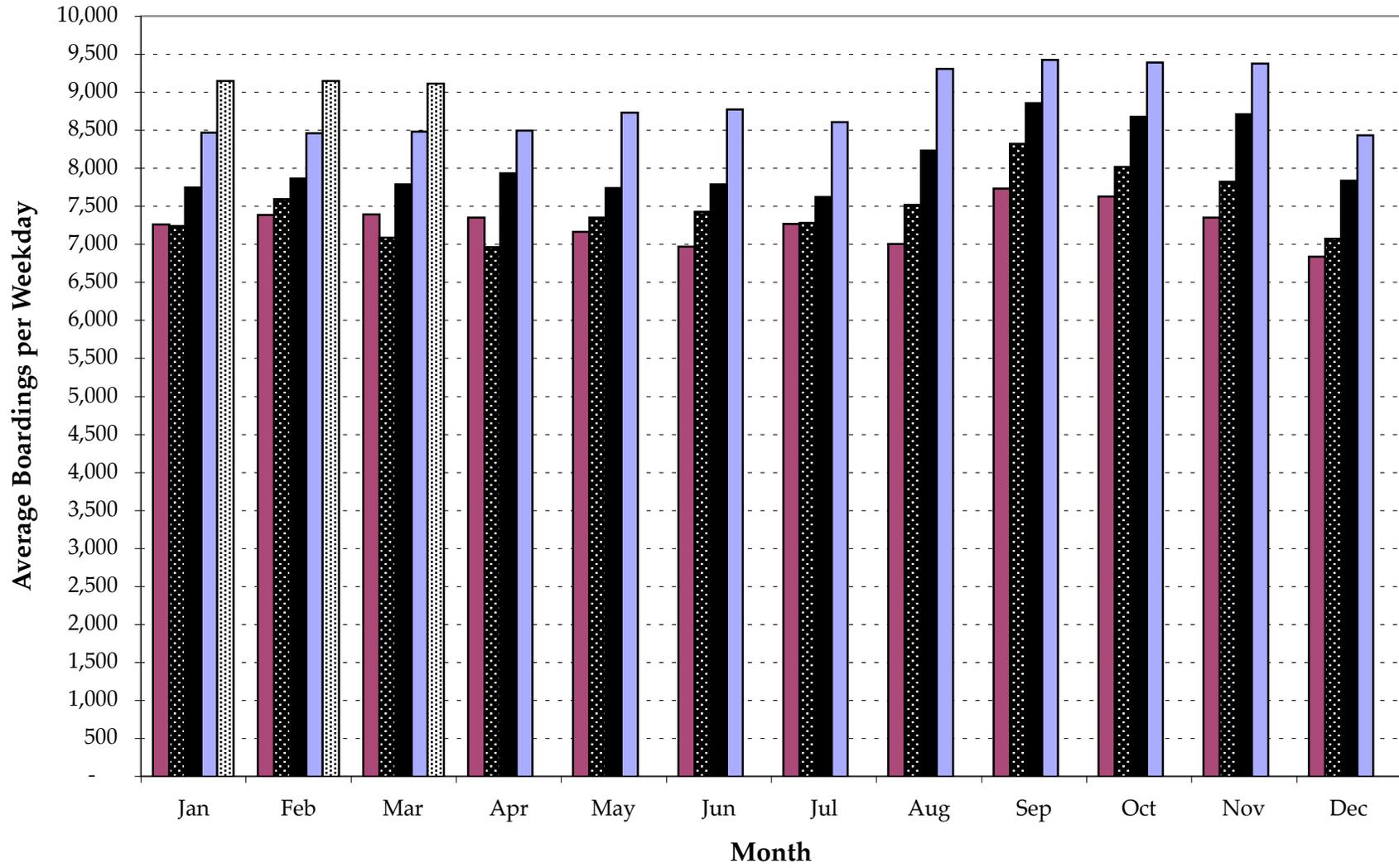
MVTA Ridership Reports Attached

MVTA ridership continues to grow. We have seen many full park & ride facilities as the price of gas has pushed up to more than \$3 per gallon. Typically, by the first of May, ridership begins its summer decline, but that is not the case this year - at least from a park & ride capacity standpoint.

MVTA Average Weekday Ridership

by month, 2002-2007

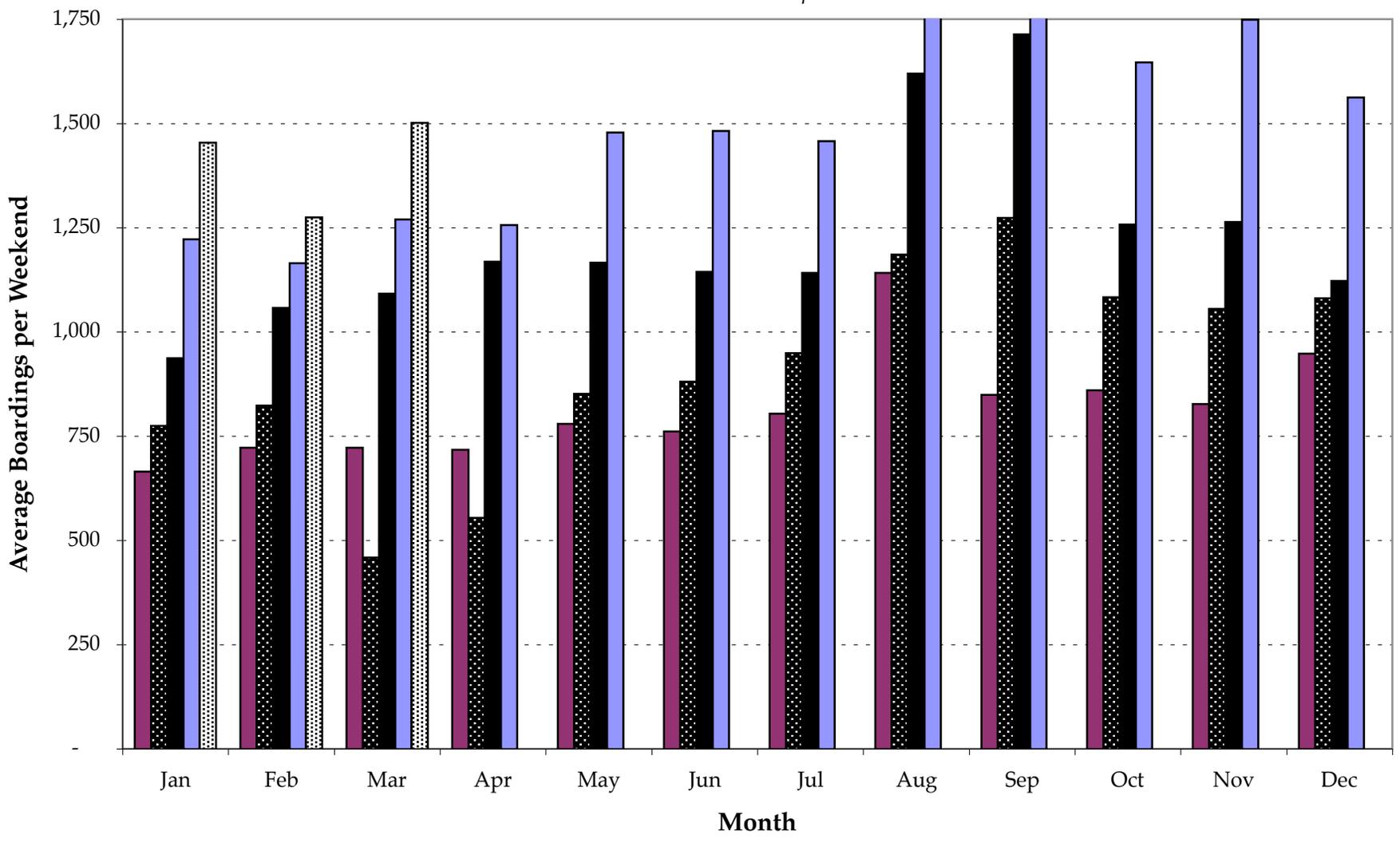
2003 2004 2005 2006 2007



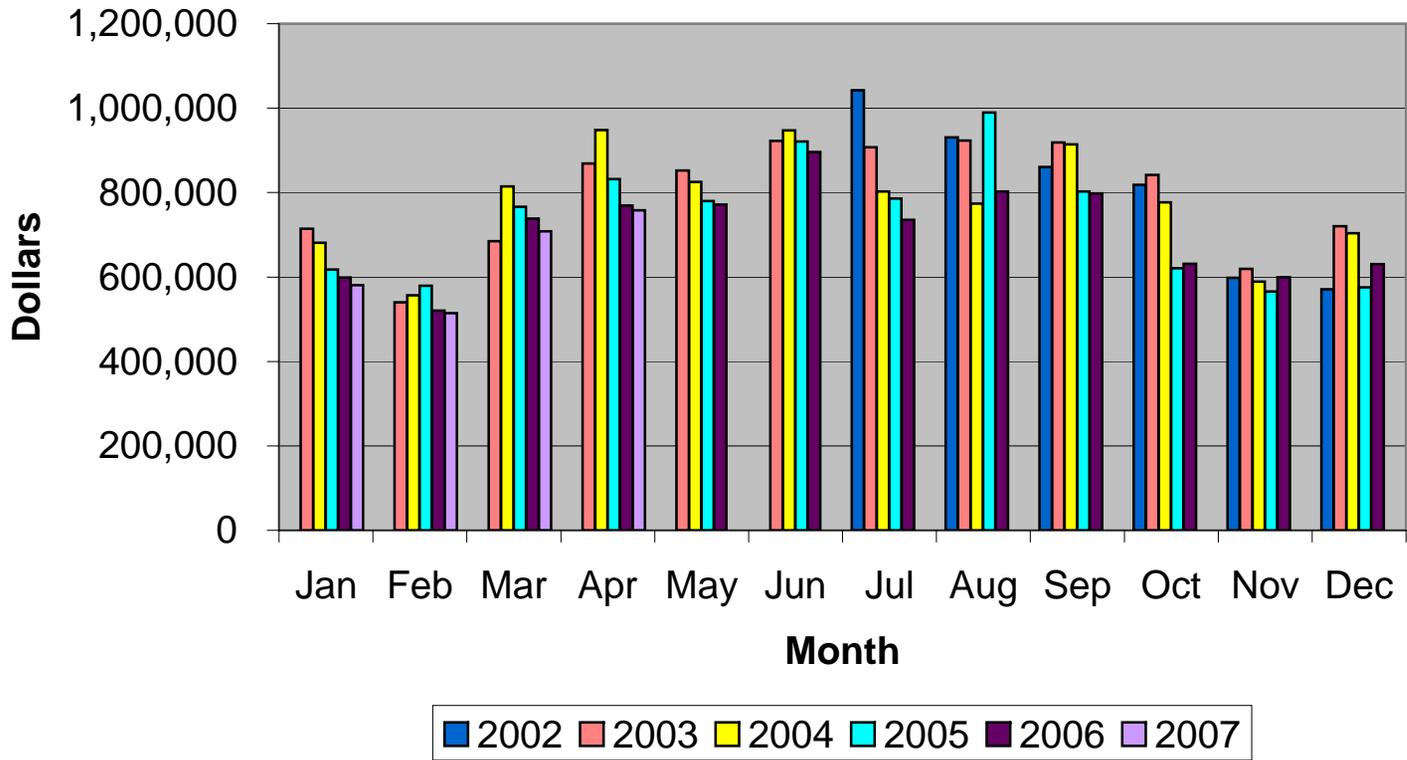
MVTA Average Weekend Ridership

by month, 2003-2007
Excludes State Fair ridership

■ 2003 ■ 2004 ■ 2005 ■ 2006 ■ 2007



MVET REVENUES



June Changes Listed; Pick Up New Schedules

The following MVTA routes will change on June 2, 2007. Riders are advised to pick up new schedules:

Route 445

- Eastbound trips from Mall of America at 4:33 and 5:03 p.m. will no longer serve the loop through the Blue Cross Blue Shield main building.

- Westbound trips beginning at 5:57 and 6:27 a.m. will no longer serve the loop through the Blue Cross Blue Shield main building. These trips will begin one minute later, and will pick up one minute later at all stops between Donald and Yankee Doodle Road.

Route 465

- Minor running time adjustments throughout schedule.

Route 470

- Northbound trip at 8:02 a.m. moved to 8:05 a.m.
- All northbound trips will terminate at 2nd Ave. and 1st St. S., with some minor running time adjustments throughout northbound schedule.

ments throughout northbound schedule.

Route 472

- All northbound trips will terminate at 2nd Av. and 1st St. S., with some minor running time adjustments in the downtown area.

- All southbound trips will begin at Gateway Ramp (consistent with other Route 47x buses), and running times will be adjusted throughout the schedule.

- Southbound trip at 5:36 p.m. moved one minute later.

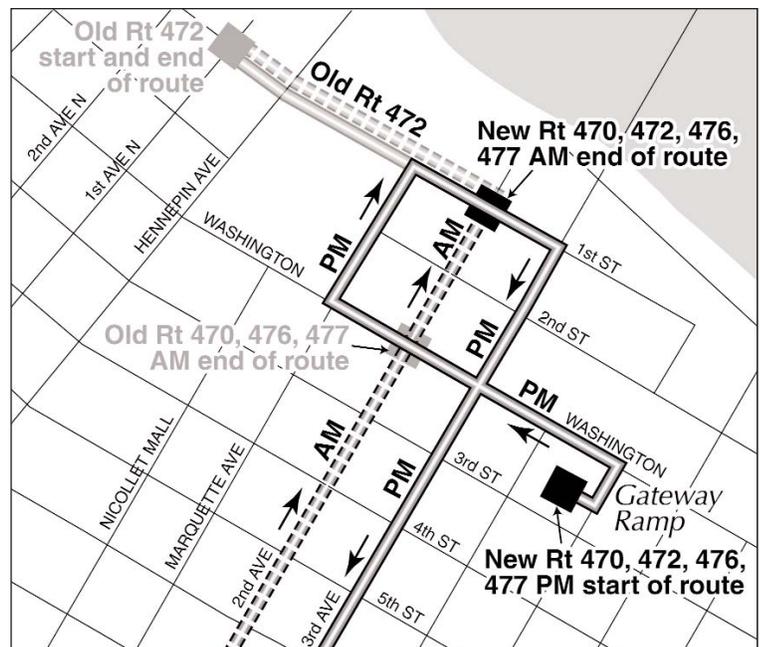
Route 476

- All northbound trips will terminate at 2nd Av. and 1st St. S., with some minor running

time adjustments throughout northbound schedule.

Route 477

- All northbound trips will terminate at 2nd Av. and 1st St. S., with some minor running time adjustments throughout northbound schedule.



Catch the BlueXpress Bus to Downtown Minneapolis

Beginning June 4, Scott County residents can catch the **BlueXpress** bus to downtown Minneapolis from the Southbridge Crossings Station Park & Ride at CR 18 and Crossing Blvd. in Shakopee. The route will also serve the Shepherd of the Lake Park & Ride at 13760 McKenna

Rd. NW in Prior Lake.

Operated by both the City of Shakopee's Shakopee Transit and Prior Lake's Laker Lines, the **BlueXpress** bus service will initially offer a total of eight morning and eight afternoon runs. All morning routes drop along 2nd Avenue between 12th Street and Washington Avenue. **BlueXpress** afternoon routes pick up along Marquette Avenue from Washington Avenue to 12th Street.

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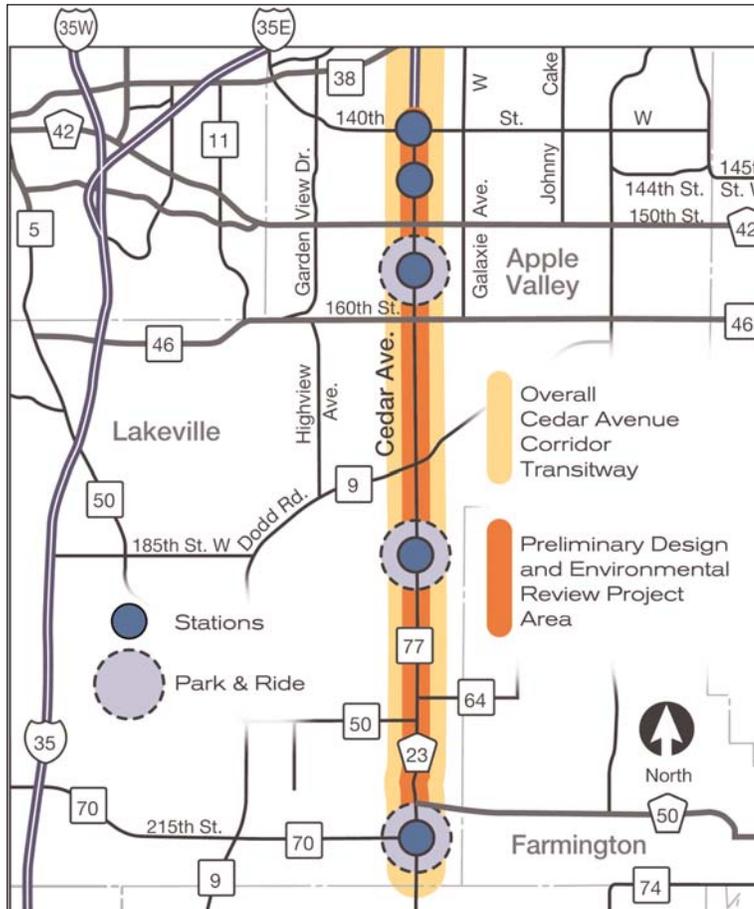


Bus Rapid Transit and Highway Improvement Plans: Finding the Best Solution

As a transit rider, you regularly experience the rapid traffic growth that is causing a steady decrease in travel speeds in the Cedar Avenue Corridor through Lakeville, Apple Valley and Eagan into Bloomington. Out the bus window, you can see congestion that often extends seven miles from the Minnesota River

Bridge to County Highway 42.

Finding the best transit and transportation solution is a top priority for Dakota County and the Cedar Group, a partnership of county, city and business officials working on Cedar Avenue Corridor plans.



Using extensive input from the local advisory group, business representatives, and citizens, project partners are evaluating concepts for improvements on Cedar Avenue from 138th Street in Apple Valley to County Highway 70 in Lakeville. Each concept includes shoulder-running BRT along Cedar Avenue and incorporates varying levels of high-



way improvements.

An evaluation currently underway will provide information regarding each concept's ability to relieve congestion and accommodate traffic growth, provide access to Cedar Avenue, address safety and environmental considerations, and use the space that best meets the needs of the surrounding community. Dakota County representatives will seek public input at another open house meeting later this summer when more information is known about each concept's impact.

BRT combines the flexibility of buses with the frequency, speed, and reliability of light rail transit. Buses operate on existing highways with traffic-signal priority and will have the advantages of bus-only lanes and enhanced stations.

Questions or comments about the project are encouraged and can be sent to Kristine Elwood, Dakota County, 952-891-7104 or kristine.elwood@co.dakota.mn.us. Project information, including a description of each concept under consideration, is also available at Dakota County's website, at: www.dakotacounty.us/environment-troads/transit/publictransportation/cedarave.htm

BlueXpress Bus (continued from page 1)

Mid-day service from downtown Minneapolis to the Burnsville Transit Station is available on MVTA express buses. The Scott County Dial-A-Ride "will-call" service can be reserved to return riders to the Southbridge Crossings Transit Station or Shepherd of the Lake Park & Ride. The Dial-A-Ride connection is guaranteed between 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Monday -Friday, if the ride is reserved at least one hour in advance (call 952-496-8341).

For more information about **BlueXpress**, including fares, schedules and holidays, call 952-496-8800 (952-496-8001 TTY) or visit www.BlueXpressBus.com. Information also is available on the City of Shakopee's website at www.ci.shakopee.mn.us and the City of Prior Lake's website at www.cityofpriorlake.com.

MVTA Honors Drivers of the Year

The MVTA presented its 2006 Drivers-of-the-Year at a recognition dinner following a recent MVTA Board meeting.

Jon Ulrich, Scott County Commissioner and MVTA Board Chair noted "We couldn't provide the high quality of service for which the MVTA is known, without our drivers. It is important that they understand how much we appreciate them and the work they do on a daily basis. Drivers are the first link in our comprehensive customer service system, and we could not operate without them."

The 2006 Driver-of-the-Year recipients are:

Liban Hassan, Laidlaw Transit Services

Robert Gangloff, Schmitty & Sons

In addition, the MVTA issued a special recognition award to Damon Banks, Operations Manager of Laidlaw Transit, for his outstanding service to the MVTA and the transit industry.

Liban Hassan has been a driver for Laidlaw Transit for five years. Currently he can be seen driving any MVTA route, as he serves as a back-up driver for all routes. Prior to joining Laidlaw, Hassan drove for Metro Mobility for two years, and served as a taxi driver for two years.

A native of Somalia, Hassan completed two years at Minneapolis Community College, focusing in accounting. Outside of work, he is actively involved with his family, including his wife and children. He lives in St. Paul.

"Liban is very helpful," states Tom Knier, LTS Project Manager for the MVTA contract. "He often makes the extra effort to provide exceptional customer service, and was Laidlaw Employee of the Month in December 2004." He has also been instrumental in making sure the State Fair service operates smoothly by assisting passengers as they board at BTS. Knier said, "We are proud



From left, back row: Ruth Grendahl, Apple Valley Councilmember; Elizabeth Kautz, Burnsville Mayor; Margaret Schreiner, at-large representative; Jon Ulrich, Scott County Commissioner; Beverley Miller, MVTA Executive Director; Meg Tilley, Eagan Councilmember; Wally Lyslo, at-large alternate; Jane Victorey, Savage Councilmember; William Droste, Rosemount Mayor. From left, front row: Bob Gangloff, Schmitty & Sons Driver; Damon Banks, Laidlaw Transit special award winner and Liban Hassan, Laidlaw Transit Driver.

to have Liban recognized by the MVTA as Laidlaw's 2006 Driver of the Year."

A passenger told MVTA, "Great Service! This driver is friendly, prompt and safe. Nothing but positive comments for this driver. I have been riding for 15 years and think you are doing a great job."

Bob Gangloff has been a driver with Schmitty & Sons for about 2-1/2 years, currently driving express route 484 to/from St. Paul, and flex route 420 between Apple Valley and Rosemount. He has been a driver nearly his entire life, serving for 44 years. He began his career with Faribault Bus Company, and later drove for Northfield Lines where he was also named "Driver of the Year."

Gangloff particularly enjoys driving the afternoon Route 420, because he knows the passengers so well. He enjoys a friendly camaraderie with the dispatcher about the number of off-route riders on his circuit. "Did you call them just to ride on my bus?" he asks jokingly. Connie Massengale, Schmitty & Sons Project Manager for the MVTA states, "Bob has a great attitude with everyone – staff, mechanics, his peers, and best of all, his passengers." She added that he is very reliable and "always arrives at work an hour before check-in time."

One rider commented that he "really makes every effort to make sure folks from Rosemount get where they need to go," while another said, "he makes the commute very relaxing". One passenger e-mailed in his vote for Driver of the Year to Bob and commented that Bob consistently provides us with excellent service.

Gangloff lives in Northfield with his wife Sharon. He has two sons, two daughters and two grandchildren to keep him busy when he is not driving bus.

Criteria in qualifying as a Driver-of-the-Year include:

- The driver must have received one or more customer comments commending superior driving or customer service;
- The driver must have been recognized at a provider's monthly meeting during the past year;
- The driver must have an excellent safety and attendance record.

The award consists of a plaque, an MVTA personalized jacket and a hat.

This year the MVTA also presented an "Outstanding Service Award" to Laidlaw Transit Operations Manager, Damon Banks. Banks has worked for Laidlaw for 11 years. He started his career in the

(continued on page 4)

Summer Schedules Announced

Memorial Day

The MVTA will operate regular weekend service on Saturday and Sunday, May 26-27 (Memorial Day weekend). On Friday, May 25, a modified weekday schedule will operate. On Memorial Day (May 27), the MVTA will operate a Sunday schedule.

Trips that will not operate on Friday, May 25 include:

Route 460 - Northbound trips from the Burnsville Transit Station that will not operate: 6:40, 6:53, 7:14, and 7:55 a.m. Also, the trip that begins at County Road 42/Irving at 7:10 (BTS 7:38 a.m.) will not operate. Finally, trips (BTS time) will be moved, as follows: 6:56 a.m. to 6:54 a.m. and 7:11 a.m. to 7:12 a.m.

Route 460 - Southbound trips from the Gateway Ramp that will not operate: 3:54, 4:09, 4:36, 5:02, 5:30 p.m. Trips will be moved as follows: 3:49 to 3:51 p.m., 4:32 to 4:34 p.m. and 4:58 to 5:00 p.m.

Route 470 - Northbound trips that will not operate: 6:54 a.m.; Additionally, 6:53 a.m. trip moved to 6:42 a.m. and will start at Donald and Yankee Doodle.

Route 470 - Southbound trip that will not operate: 4:45 p.m. Additionally, 4:59 p.m. to operate as 470D, terminating at Donald and Yankee Doodle.

Route 477 - Northbound trips that will not operate: 7:07 a.m. Additionally, 7:14 a.m. trip will begin at 7:12.

Route 477 - Southbound trips that will not operate: 4:32 p.m. Additionally, 4:27 p.m. trip will begin at 4:29; and 4:38 trip will begin at 4:36 p.m.

Independence Day

The MVTA will operate regular weekday service on Monday and Tuesday, July 2-3. On Wednesday, July 4 (Independence Day), the MVTA will operate a Sunday schedule. On Thursday and Friday, July 5-6, the MVTA will operate a modified service schedule.

Trips that will not operate on Thursday and Friday, July 5-6 include:

Route 460 - Northbound trips from the Burnsville Transit Station that will not operate: 6:40, 6:53, 7:14, and 7:55 a.m. Also, the trip that begins at County Road 42/Irving at 7:10 (BTS 7:38 a.m.) will not operate. Finally, trips (BTS time) will be moved, as follows: 6:56 a.m. to 6:54 a.m. and 7:11 a.m. to 7:12 a.m.

Route 460 - Southbound trips from the Gateway Ramp that will not

Drivers of the Year (continued from Page 3)

transportation industry in 1989 as a school bus driver, and then moved on to trucking before joining Laidlaw in 1996. He has served as a driver, dispatcher and became Operations Manager in 2000. He still, however, enjoys driving bus to interact with the passengers.

Banks is a graduate of Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis. He has served on the Driver Advisory Committee and the Accident Review Panel for the Minneapolis Public Schools, and was Laidlaw's "Employee of the Month" in December 2002.

"Damon has commented that he was born to work in transportation," said Tom Knier. He has reminisced that when he rode the bus to school, he was the only child on the bus to imitate every move of the driver, each and every day.

"His knowledge of the MVTA service is exceptional," said Knier, noting that Banks has worked on the

operate: 3:54, 4:09, 4:36, 5:02, 5:30 p.m. Trips will be moved as follows: 3:49 to 3:50 p.m., 4:32 to 4:34 p.m. and 4:58 to 5:00 p.m.

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contract with MVTA for all 11 of his years with Laidlaw. "He is quick to respond to any emergency and is very resourceful in helping resolve these situations," Knier said. "He is well organized and is recognized for his ability to implement service changes in a smooth manner. We offer him our congratulations!"

News that Travels is published by the MVTA, Beverley Miller, Executive Director; Robin Selvig, Editor.

For more information contact the MVTA at 100 East Highway 13, Burnsville, MN 55337 or call (952) 882-7500. Web-site: mvta.com; E-mail: mvta@mvta.com.

MVTA Board Members are: Jon Ulrich (Scott County Commissioner and MVTA Chair); Meg Tilley (Eagan City Councilmember and MVTA Vice Chair); Ruth Grendahl (Apple Valley Councilmember and MVTA Treasurer); Elizabeth Kautz (Burnsville Mayor and MVTA Secretary); Margaret Schreiner (at large representative); Wally Lyslo (at large alternate); William Droste (Rosemount Mayor); Jane Victorey (Savage Councilmember); and Will Branning (Dakota County Commissioner).