



# News Advisory

## Blue Water Area Transportation Commission

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### ***Staying "On Time" Gets Easier!***

### ***Blue Water Area Transit Expands Bus Schedules***

### ***To Better Serve Growing Number of Passengers***

PORT HURON, MI — The Blue Water Area Transportation Commission will start using new schedules on May 23 to give buses more time to pick up and drop off riders along fixed routes. The new schedules will allow buses to better serve their growing ridership by adding five minutes to the time allowed to complete each route.

The BWATC has been continually setting new ridership records since March 2008, when the agency topped its 27-year-old monthly record of 71,559 riders. Earlier this year in March, the number of riders (107,078) again surpassed any other month to date.

Annual ridership rose above one million for the first time last year, when the agency served 1,070,534 riders. This represented a 7.6% jump since 2009, when there were 994,666 riders, and a 46.1% jump since 2007, when there were 732,726 riders.

"Our drivers need to stop more often to drop off and pick up passengers, now that we are serving so many more riders," says BWATC general manager Jim Wilson. "It has become increasingly difficult to finish routes within 40 minutes. Once a driver falls behind, it's almost impossible to catch up and get back on track."

With the new schedule, buses will start each fixed route every 45 minutes. During the week (Monday through Friday), buses will start at 6:15 a.m., 7:00 a.m., 7:45 a.m., etc. The new Saturday schedule will have an earlier start time, beginning each route at 7:45 a.m., 8:30 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 10:00 a.m., etc.).

"Our drivers have done a great job, serving our growing number of passengers," applauds Jim Fisher, BWATC Board chair and Port Huron City Council member. "The new 45-minute schedule will help keep the buses running on time."

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

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