
From: Valerie Gunchick
Sent: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:25 AM
To: City of Ann Arbor Transportation Commission
Subject: 2030 Carbon-Neutral Goal

Hello,

My name is Valerie and I've lived in Ann Arbor for the past three years, currently working at Michigan Medicine and going to school at UM's SPH. I attended undergrad at a larger institution than this, in a town that was almost exclusively a university town, much like Ann Arbor is.

I read Ryan Stanton's article on the forum that took place on Thursday, February 13th about carbon neutrality.

While I didn't attend the forum, I also did not see anything in the article mentioning the idea of increasing the number of buses on a bus route. As of now, some of The Ride's buses going from the West Side neighborhoods towards downtown/the hospital are scheduled to arrive (speaking with my experienced on route 60 and 32) about every 30 minutes, and they are late most of the time. This rarity of a bus is simply not usable for most people trying to get to work in the morning, combined with the unreliability and unpredictability since there is no app that tells you in real-time where the buses are consistently, of course people aren't going to want to take the bus. On top of that, these routes don't run in the afternoon or into the evening and night.

If buses ran every 15 minutes from 6:00 AM to 12:00 PM, people could take the buses from their homes to work and into downtown and to the hospital (much of the staff needs to be at work before 6:50 AM some days and leave after 5:40 PM other days, and the current bus times don't allow this). If a truly reliable bus app was created and made to look user-friendly, that would help even more in creating trust in the bus system. With this time change, people could take the buses when they go to dinner, meet friends, or get drinks as well (reducing the number of people drinking and driving, too). People need to feel the buses are an acceptable option for all their needs before they really adopt a bus-taking culture.

Buses are the best option, as biking and walking is great, but if you don't live right in downtown (as many people don't), that's not an option. Especially in the winter, biking and walking will never be consistently safe as it is so cold in the morning and evening, when people are going to and leaving work. Even at night in the summer, it might be nice out, but many people are uncomfortable walking alone for long distances at night.

I say this with the experience of attending undergrad elsewhere where there was a very good bus system with buses running every 8 minutes for a great majority of the day. Parking/driving was not the huge issue there that it is here.

Thanks,
Val