



**June 28, 2018**

**Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti Regional Chamber Statement of Support for AAATA 2018 Millage Renewal**

In May 2014 the A2Y Chamber supported the five year, 0.7mill ask from the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority (The Ride). This millage increase was proposed to provide expanded services within The Ride's current jurisdiction, and to expand services to the City of Ypsilanti and Ypsilanti Township. The Ride is seeking renewal of this 0.7 mill proposal in August 2018, which means this is not a tax increase from the 2014 initiative. The A2Y Chamber supports this renewal because The Ride made commitments about how it would use this additional funding to improve and expand services, and over the last four years, The Ride has kept its commitments.

Viable public transportation is key to economic success for communities. Failure to provide such services on the regional level has cost Southeast Michigan, as is evident in Amazon's decision not to locate a headquarters here in 2018. In the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area we are fortunate to have quality public transportation provided through The Ride. These services get employees to and from their jobs, they reduce overall traffic, and they make our community a more attractive place for businesses and individuals to locate and stay.

The Ride has a large amount of data to show the efficacy of the expansion millage. A look at <http://theridecitizenreport.org> will show that services have been expanded as promised while both ridership and customer satisfaction are up. One important piece of data is that over 80% of respondents feel the improvements made it easier to get to and from work, which is vital in terms of the needs faced by employers and employees in Washtenaw County. The data also shows great satisfaction with The Ride's record of providing transit responsibly in terms of environmental impact, fiscal discipline, and rider safety.

In advocating for its expansion millage in 2014, The Ride made a series of commitments about what it would do with these funds. At the time, the A2Y Chamber said The Ride: "must remain focused on maximizing efficiencies wherever possible" and "continue to demonstrate consistent efficiency in its operations and to build on these efficiencies as feasible." The data shows The Ride kept its commitments. With its record of promises kept and its important role in our business community, The Ride has earned the A2Y Chamber's support for its millage renewal on Tuesday, August 7, 2018.