



**MAX**  
Macatawa  
Area Express

# Measuring Up

2006 Annual Report

# From the Leadership



This past year was an exciting time of planning and preparation to take our developing transit system to the next level of service. Our goal is to measure up to the community's expectations for more accessible and convenient public transportation.

Last year our Five Year Plan for system expansion was approved, and in July 2006 a Transportation Authority was created to oversee and manage the transit system. Over the next year, management of MAX and ownership of its assets will be transferred from the City to the Authority. We need to recognize and thank members of the Transit Advisory Committee for their hard work developing a short range plan, which the new Authority can build upon for the future.

The Authority's first task was to propose a transit millage rate that would adequately fund operational expenses, yet at a reasonable cost to taxpayers. The transit millage request of up to 0.4 mill for five years now goes before voters in the City and Township. Local funding for transit is especially important as we continue to face high and unstable fuel prices and decreasing state funding.

We're happy to report that ridership continued its double-digit growth, thanks to our many loyal passengers who use the service regularly. MAX provided over 200,000 rides in 2006, and we expect that trend to continue, especially when we expand services to include more origins and destinations.

Finally, we must extend our sincere appreciation to the Lakeshore Disability Network (formerly the Center for Independent Living) and the newly-formed Friends of Transit and Faith in Motion groups. We appreciate their working so closely with us to build public awareness and support of our local transit system and all it has to offer. We will continue to forge partnerships in the community to ensure that we are measuring up to our mission of operating a cost-efficient, customer responsive transit system.

**Nancy Burkitt,**  
Chairperson  
MAX Transit Advisory Committee

**Linda LeFebre,**  
MAX Coordinator  
City of Holland

## Our Mission

To provide cost-effective, customer responsive public transportation services that will enhance the mobility and community access of the citizens of the Macatawa area.

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Something here about riders and the work they do for our community.

**JULY 2005 – MV Transportation Awarded Service Contract**  
The City of Holland awarded a \$4.8 million three-year contract to MV Transportation to assume daily operations of the bus service after a competitive bid process. MV worked closely with MAX staff to ensure a seamless transition between service providers.

**AUGUST 2005 – Ultra Low Floor Buses Added to Fleet**  
MAX added three new BlueBird ultra low floor buses to its fleet to replace older models at the end of their useful life. Purchased locally from Holland Bus Company in a competitive bid process for approximately \$220,489 each, the new low floor buses allow for quicker and easier boarding by passengers. Over the next five years, MAX plans to convert all of its fixed route buses to low floor models.

**SEPTEMBER 2005 - MAX Assists 'Katrina' Victims**  
The City of Holland aided Hurricane Katrina victims by sending a bus and staff from MAX. The MAX bus was one of 52 nationwide donated by transit systems in response to a request by FEMA for emergency transportation for victims and their families. The City also collected donations from employees and citizens on behalf of the Holland/Zeeland Community Foundation, which forwarded funds to the Baton Rouge Louisiana Community Foundation.

**OCTOBER 2005 – Video Cameras Installed on Buses**  
MV Transportation installed video cameras on MAX buses as a safety precaution to monitor activity and incidents that may occur. The cameras automatically activate and begin recording whenever there is motion greater than half a G-force or can be manually started by the driver. Images from the inside and outside of the bus are recorded and downloaded daily to a computer for review.

**NOVEMBER 2005 – 'Stuff the Bus' Food Drive**  
MAX collected food and personal items to restock the local Salvation Army's food pantry as part of its 3rd annual "Stuff the Bus" event. Several area establishments served as collection points and donations also were received during the holiday "Parade of Lights in downtown Holland.

**DECEMBER 2005 – Tribute to Rosa Parks**  
MAX participated in the "National Transit Tribute to Rosa Parks Day" on Dec. 1 to honor the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement." To commemorate the anniversary of Parks' act of defiance to promote equality, MAX buses carried special placards as reminders of her place in history and reserved the front seat of its buses in her honor.

**JANUARY 2006- Friends of Transit Group Formed**  
Disability Network/Lakeshore, an advocacy organization for persons with disabilities, has formed Friends of Transit, a group

that supports improved, expanded and coordinated public transportation. The group is focusing its efforts on the successful passage of the transit millage vote in November 2006 and an expanded fixed route system.

**FEBRUARY 2006 – Door-to-Door Assistance Begins**  
MAX bus drivers began offering seniors and those with disabilities door-to-door assistance as a courtesy to improve customer service. The new policy allows drivers to secure and leave the bus to help passengers board or assist with bags. Drivers are prohibited from entering residences, but may meet passengers at their front door.

**MARCH 2006 – Educational Video Project**  
MAX received approval to produce an educational video that touts the many benefits of public transit to the community. The video will be shown during presentations to community groups as part of MAX's community outreach efforts. Portions of the video will be used to produce television cable advertisements to promote MAX.

**APRIL 2006 - Service Area Expanded**  
MAX's service area was expanded north to New Holland Street to include all of Holland Charter Township. The expanded service area also allows Kandu to continue receiving bus service for its clients. Kandu recently moved its facilities from south Holland to northern Holland Township. Kandu employs special needs workers, many of whom rely on MAX for daily transportation to work.

**MAY 2006 – Community Perceptions Survey Conducted**  
Anchor Consulting and the Frost Research Center at Hope College conducted a random survey of area residents to measure community perceptions and support of MAX. Funded by MAX and the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council, the survey found:

- 95% were familiar with MAX as the local transit system
- 96% supported MAX
- 89% rated MAX's service as good/very good
- 99% rated MAX's service as very important/somewhat important
- 84 percent rate the public reputation of MAX as very good/good
- 87 percent support MAX's Five Year Plan for fixed route expansion and free fixed rides for seniors and ADA cardholders.

**JUNE 2006 – Master Bus Schedules Updated**  
New master bus schedules were produced to reflect changes in the fixed routes and to make them more user-friendly. The pocket-sized schedules contain detailed maps of the fixed routes and information on services, hours and fares. They are available in English and Spanish.

# MAX Metrics Rolling Forward 2007

Revenue	2006	2005	Increase (Decrease)	%
<b>(operating &amp; non-operating)</b>				
<b>Passenger Fares</b>	\$217,999	\$174,777	\$43,222	24.7%
<b>Tax Levy</b>	\$112,666	\$111,020	\$1,646	1.5%
<b>Local Operation Assistance</b>	\$153,816	\$209,398	(\$55,582)	-26.5%
<b>State Assistance</b>				
Operating & Planning	\$1,046,450	\$841,336	\$205,114	24.4%
Capital Grants	\$134,559	\$75,647	\$58,912	77.9%
<b>Federal Assistance</b>				
Operating & Planning	\$1,062,746	\$858,470	\$204,276	23.8%
Capital Grants	\$566,739	\$302,590	\$264,149	87.3%
<b>Interest &amp; Other Revenues</b>	\$18,087	\$26,512	\$(8,425)	-31.8%
<b>Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets</b>	-	(\$5,916)	\$5,916	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,313,062</b>	<b>\$2,593,834</b>	<b>\$719,228</b>	<b>27.7%</b>

Operating Expenses & Transfers Out	2006	2005	Increase (Decrease)	%
<b>Operations</b>	\$2,196,790	\$1,830,335	\$366,455	20.0%
<b>Maintenance</b>	\$277,094	\$252,678	\$24,416	9.7%
<b>General Administration</b>	\$564,062	\$555,828	\$8,234	1.5%
<b>Transfers Out</b>	\$3,900	\$3,700	\$200	5.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,041,846</b>	<b>\$2,642,541</b>	<b>\$399,305</b>	<b>15.1%</b>

Ridership Figures	2006	2005	% Difference
<b>Service</b>			
<b>Fixed Route Passengers</b>	91,294	82,720	10.4%
<b>Demand/Response Passengers</b>	112,654	102,087	10.4%
<b>Total Ridership</b>	<b>203,948</b>	<b>184,807</b>	<b>10.4%</b>
<b>Fixed Route Vehicle Miles</b>	285,194	294,235	-3.1%
<b>Fixed Route Passengers/Mile</b>	0.32	0.28	13.9%
<b>Demand/Response Vehicle Miles</b>	457,716	347,886	31.6%
<b>Demand/Response Passengers/Mile</b>	0.25	0.29	-16.1%
<b>Fixed Route Vehicle Hours</b>	21,334	20,288	5.2%
<b>Fixed Route Passengers/Hour</b>	4.28	4.08	5.0%
<b>Demand/Response Vehicle Hours</b>	34,821	27,534	26.5%
<b>Demand/Response Passengers/Hour</b>	3.24	3.71	-12.7%



### Transportation Authority Board Takes the Wheel

Under Act 196, the City of Holland and Holland Charter Township formalized the creation of the Macatawa Area Express Transportation Authority in July 2006 to oversee transit operations. The new Authority will replace the former Transit Advisory Committee, which has guided the transit system for the past six years. The City will continue to provide administrative support services to the Authority under a management agreement.

### Five year Plan Implementation

MAX hopes to implement its Five Year Plan for system improvements as early as the fall of 2007. The plan calls for increasing the fixed routes from three to seven, and creating a central transfer hub. The Padnos Transportation Depot, which currently services Amtrak and Indian Trailways, is being considered as the most desirable site for MAX's transfer center. Buses would converge at the hub, offering easy transfers between the routes. The parking lot would need to be configured to provide adequate spaces for the buses to dwell during transfers. The former Wendy's restaurant site adjacent to the depot would be used as overflow parking.

### New Transportation Facility

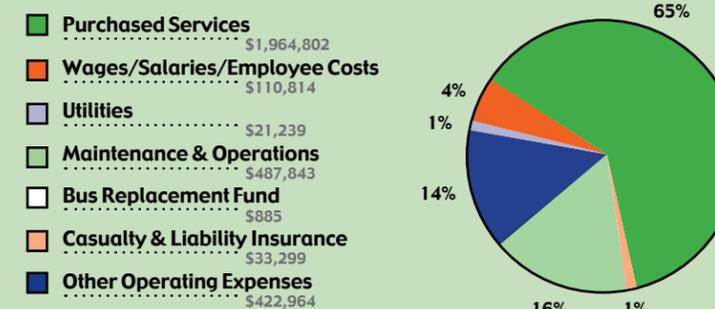
Plans to build a new \$3.3 million transportation facility to house a growing fleet and staff are progressing as planned. The Authority is planning to construct a new 31,500 sq. ft. garage and office facility near the City of Holland's Transportation Services Building located on Wyngarden Way in south Holland.

### Exploring School Transportation

MAX representatives held preliminary discussions with Holland Public School officials to discuss the feasibility of having junior and senior high schools students use the fixed routes for daily transportation to and from school. Currently, MAX provides daily transportation to school for approximately 150 children attending several school districts as well as charter schools. The City's middle and high schools are located on MAX's fixed routes.



### Breakdown of Expenses 2006



# MAX Facts

## Passenger Demographics

- Typical rider is 40-year old Caucasian female
- 47% of passengers are homeowners
- 29% are persons with disabilities
- 15% of passengers are seniors 65+
- 15% of passengers are students

## Ridership Figures

- Nearly 204,000 rides in 2006, a 10.4% increase over 2005
- 45% of passengers ride MAX to work or school
- 26% use MAX for shopping/groceries
- 18% take MAX to medical appointments
- 55% ride the fixed route; 45% use demand response
- 54% of current bus riders use MAX daily

## Benefits to the Community

- MAX generates \$13 million in economic development
- MAX creates more than 100 direct and indirect jobs annually
- MAX reduces traffic, congestion
- MAX increases property values
- MAX provides the community with a higher quality of life
- MAX reduces road traffic and congestion
- MAX provides an economical alternative to the high cost of owning and maintaining a personal vehicle
- MAX reduces overall fuel consumption and promotes cleaner air



Macatawa Area Express  
429 E 24th St  
Holland, Michigan 49423

616.355.1010

Website: [www.catchamax.org](http://www.catchamax.org)  
Email: [max@cityofholland.com](mailto:max@cityofholland.com)

## 2006 MAX Transit Advisory Committee

- Nancy Burkitt, Chairperson
- Al Dannenberg, Vice Chairperson
- Doug Bazuin, City of Holland
- Steve Bulthuis, MACC
- Donald Komejan, Holland Charter Township
- Ron Martin, Holland Charter Township
- Amy VanderPloeg, City of Holland
- Robert VanderVusse, City of Holland Liaison
- Robert Zwiers, City of Holland

## 2007 Authority Board Members

- Nancy Burkitt, Chairperson  
Holland Charter Township
- Polly Diehl, Vice Chairperson  
City of Holland
- Robert VandeVusse, Secretary/Treasurer  
City of Holland
- Joe Baumann, Member  
Holland Charter Township
- Steve Bulthuis, Member  
Macatawa Area Coordinating Council
- Al Dannenberg, Ex-officio  
City of Zeeland
- Russ TeSlaa, Member  
Holland Charter Township