

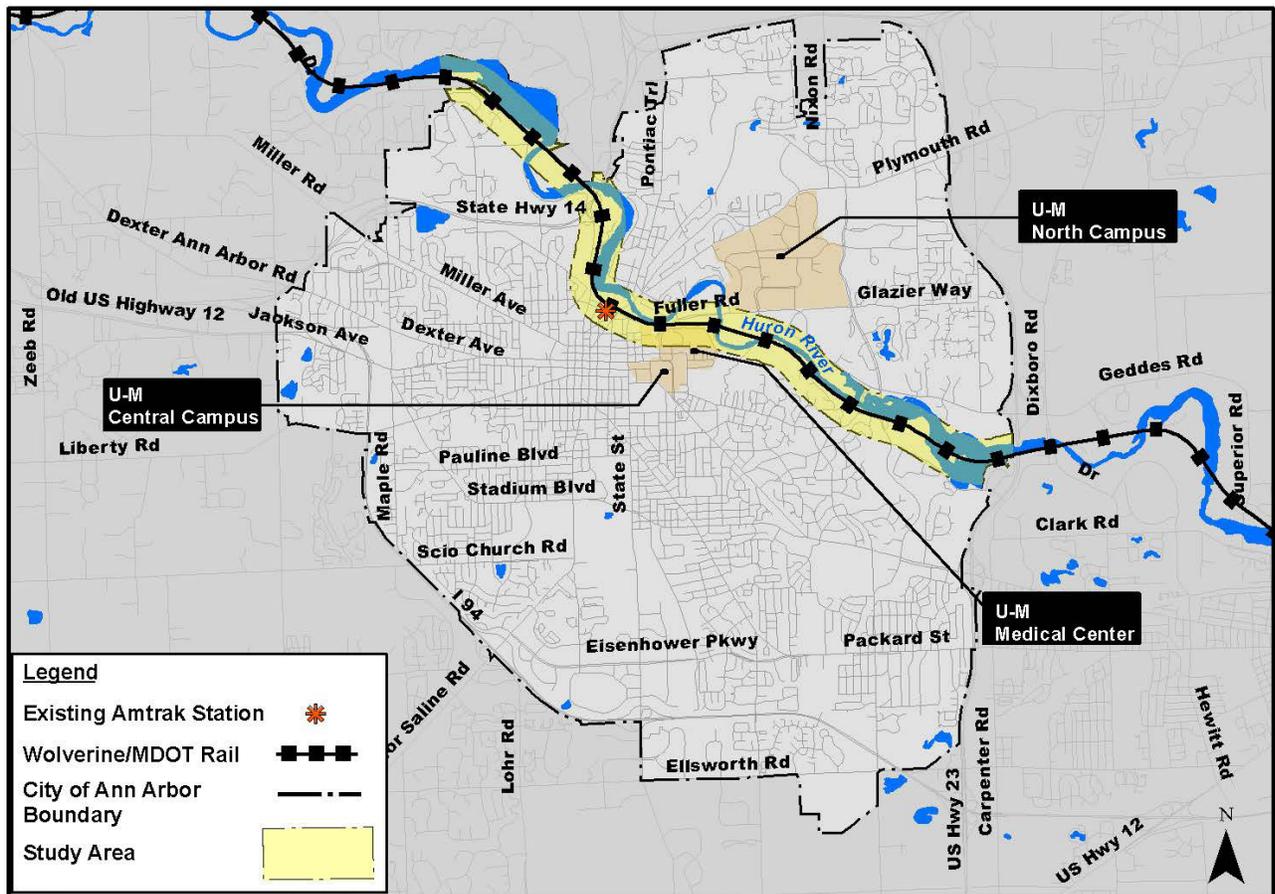
# 1.0 Purpose and Need of the Proposed Action

## 1.1 Description of the Proposed Action

The City of Ann Arbor, Michigan in partnership with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) have proposed to construct an intermodal station within the City of Ann Arbor. This project would support the existing Amtrak intercity service between Detroit, Michigan and Chicago, Illinois, the planned Midwest High Speed Rail service between Detroit/Pontiac and Chicago and the future proposed regional commuter rail service (see Section 1.6, Relationship to other Transportation Planning Initiatives). This Environmental Assessment will include an evaluation of the existing station location along with other alternatives in Ann Arbor, and will assess their ability to support current and future Intercity Passenger rail service, in addition to local and regional transit, pedestrian and bicycle transportation.

## 1.2 Project Study Area

Exhibit 1.1: Project Study Area



Source: ESRI

The project study area is located in the City of Ann Arbor, Michigan, along the rail line used by the Wolverine Intercity Passenger rail service, (see Exhibit 1.1) from where the City boundary on the northwest meets the rail line, southwest through the city to the city limits at the intersection of US Highway 23 and the rail line. The project study area for the proposed intermodal station is completely within the city limits of Ann Arbor as the City of Ann

Arbor will assume ownership of a new station. The existing station is located at 325 Depot Street, northwest of the central Ann Arbor downtown area, the University of Michigan (U-M) central campus and the U-M Medical Center.

The Huron River winds in and out of the study area, along both sides of the rail line. Trails and Parks, including playfields and a pool, are located along the Huron River banks throughout the project study area. Also located in the project study area are local businesses, a hospital (U-M Medical Center), restaurants, community organizations (including a community art group), a golf course, and a racquet club.

Ann Arbor is a destination within the region for tourists, visitors, students and workers. Major tourist attractions in Ann Arbor include U-M football games (112,252 attending on average per game in 2012), local art museums, Zingerman's Deli, and local festivals that alone bring in over a million visitors per year. Ann Arbor is home to outstanding schools and medical facilities such as U-M, and the U-M Medical Center, anchor institution industries for the entire Midwest.

Ann Arbor is a community that prides itself on having bicycle and pedestrian-friendly transportation options that are heavily used. The City of Ann Arbor promotes non-motorized transportation options and has adopted a non-motorized transportation plan<sup>1</sup> that includes future improvements for walking and bicycling. Meanwhile, vehicle parking in Ann Arbor is limited. These factors encourage walking and biking as transportation options within the community that serve as important connections to transit and rail transportation for local residents, workers and visitors alike. According to the 2013 update to the non-motorized transportation plan, Ann Arbor has more than twice the trips taking place by walking and bicycling than the national average.

### **1.3 Project Background**

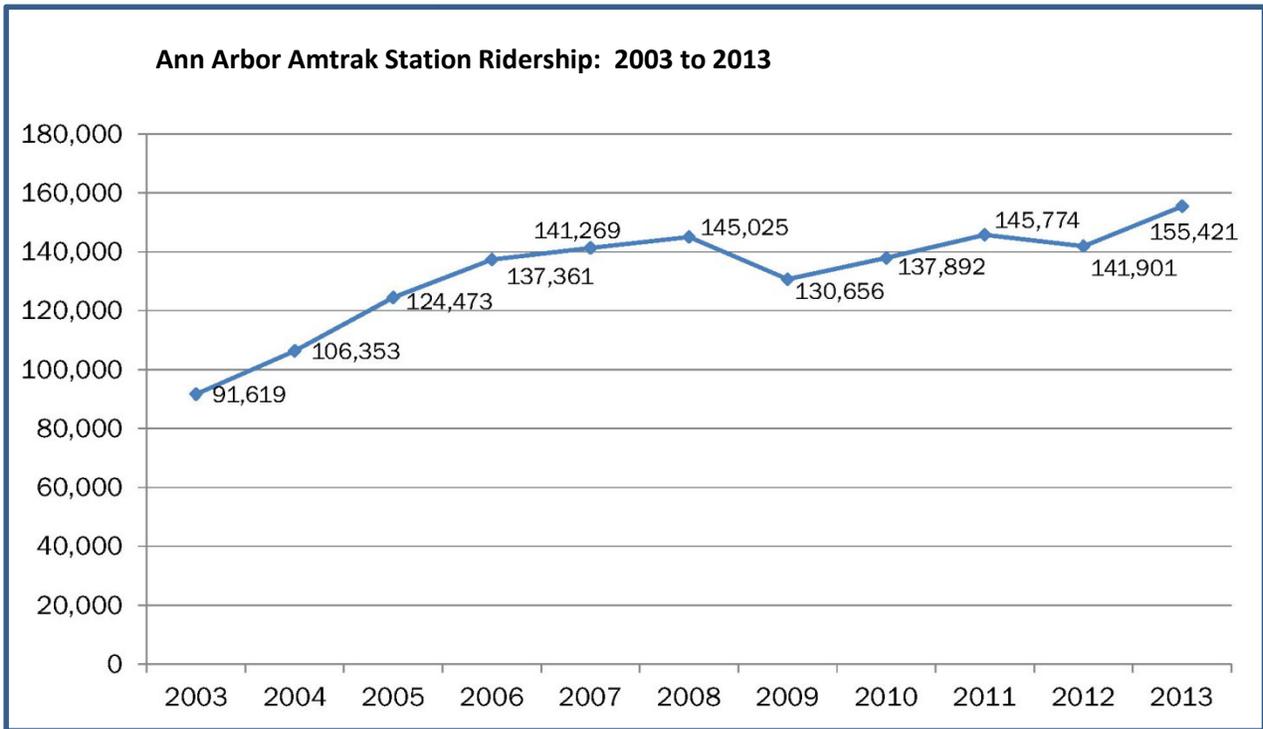
Ann Arbor has long been successfully served by passenger rail service. The existing Ann Arbor rail station, located in the City of Ann Arbor, Michigan opened in 1983 and is the busiest in the state. It is frequently unable to accommodate existing passenger volumes. The station lacks modern amenities, such as convenient and adequate long-term parking, bicycle storage, seating in the waiting area. It also lacks intermodal connectivity for passengers accessing the station by walking, biking, local transit, or automobiles. Meanwhile, the number of passengers the station serves has increased by almost 70% in the past decade (See Exhibit 1.2). Given the projected continuation of this trend in ridership, the station's inability to support intercity rail passengers will increase. Furthermore, intercity passenger rail service improvements (operating between Chicago and Detroit/Pontiac) are currently under consideration that could significantly increase the number of passengers using the Ann Arbor Station. Additionally, an introduction of commuter rail service is being considered to serve Ann Arbor (Ann Arbor – Detroit Commuter Rail). Because of these factors, any build alternative under consideration for a new Ann Arbor Intermodal station would be designed to be implemented in phases in order to handle these proposed future improvements in rail service and increases in ridership. For example, a second track would be installed at the station to accommodate additional trains before commuter rail services would begin.

With the trend in intercity passenger rail ridership, limited capacity of the existing Amtrak station, and regional transportation plans to implement a commuter rail service that would share the Wolverine service rail tracks and the station, a new intermodal station in Ann Arbor was proposed. Potential station locations along the tracks within the city limits are located near key employment and population centers including the U-M, which will contribute to increased ridership. Exhibit 1.1 indicates the location of U-M campuses near the study area.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.a2gov.org/Documents/Ann%20Arbor%20NTP%20Update%202013.pdf>

**Exhibit 1.2: Ann Arbor Station Ridership<sup>2</sup>**



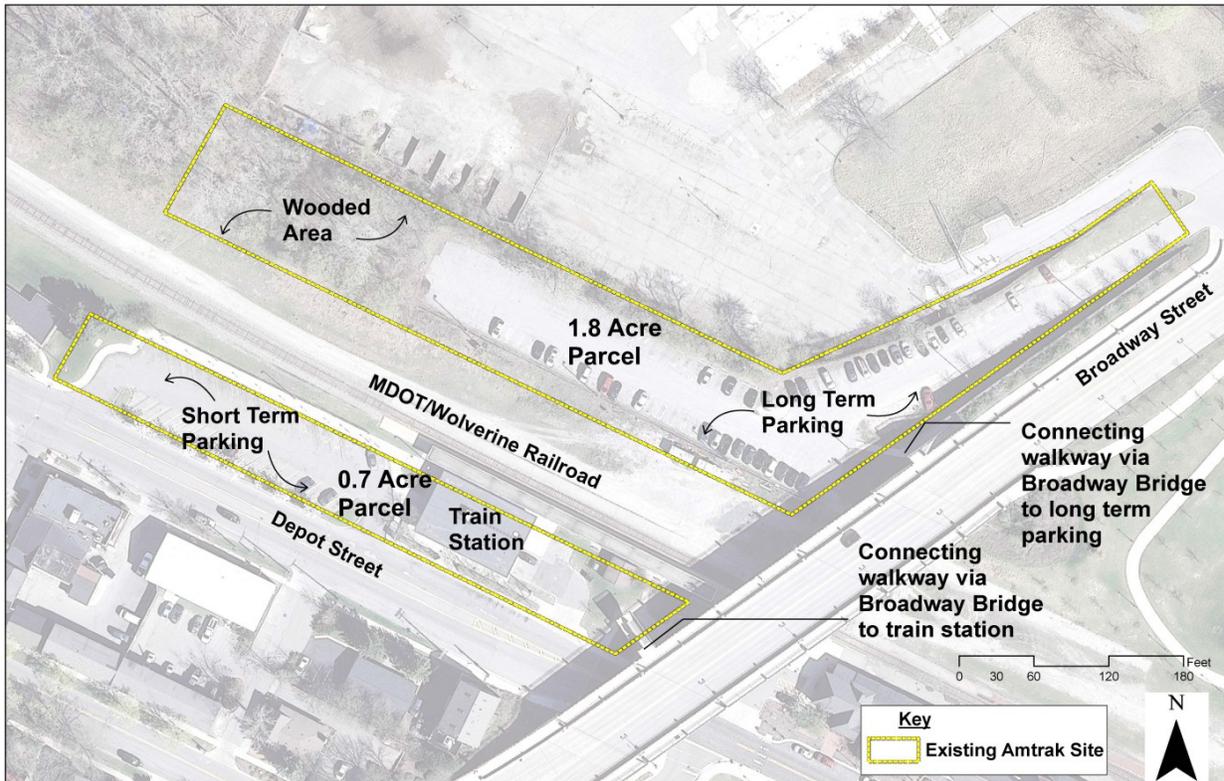
The proposed intermodal station would offer an efficient and convenient way to connect Ann Arbor residents and visitors to auto, air, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, and rail services. The development of a new station would also represent an opportunity for urban strengthening and revitalization, serving as a gateway to the City of Ann Arbor. The station itself may attract businesses to serve passengers, but also may serve as a catalyst for development around the station.

In 2011, MDOT was awarded an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) grant from the FRA for the completion of a project-level environmental document and preliminary engineering for a proposed new intermodal station in Ann Arbor. Subsequently, MDOT sub-awarded this grant to the City of Ann Arbor for the completion of the work, with the City holding responsibility for managing the work, contracts and procurement.

In January 2014, the City of Ann Arbor began the work to complete this Environmental Assessment (EA). Other federal, state, regional and local transportation efforts and projects related to the station and intermodal connections in the Ann Arbor area are discussed in Section 1.6.

<sup>2</sup> MDOT's Transportation Management System: Intermodal Management System

### Exhibit 1.3: Existing Ann Arbor Amtrak Station Site



Source: City of Ann Arbor GIS Data

#### 1.4 Purpose of the Proposed Action

The purpose of the project is to provide an intermodal facility that will accommodate existing and future intercity passenger rail ridership; improve intermodal connectivity within the City of Ann Arbor and its neighboring communities, including proposed commuter rail in the City of Ann Arbor; and improve the integration of the station within the City of Ann Arbor.

#### 1.5 Need for the Proposed Action

The following elements contribute to the need for an Intermodal Station in Ann Arbor:

- Insufficient quality and comfort for passengers provided by the existing station
- Inadequate space for intermodal connectivity at the existing station
- Substantial existing and projected future passenger demand
- Limited Integration of the Existing Station within Ann Arbor and Limited Access to City Neighborhoods and the Region

##### 1.5.1 Insufficient Quality and Comfort Provided for Passengers by the Existing Station

MDOT is currently working on improvements to the Amtrak Wolverine service corridor including track and signaling upgrades which will result in a faster, more reliable service while providing a smoother, more comfortable ride for passengers. Meanwhile, the Illinois Department of Transportation is leading an effort to purchase modern locomotives and rail cars to replace the existing, outdated train equipment used for Amtrak

service in Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, and Michigan. The equipment will be upgraded to include modern amenities including Wi-Fi internet connections and food service, and will contribute to more reliable locomotives and service while providing an environment that will enhance the experience for all passengers, resulting in travel that is both enjoyable and competitive with air and auto travel. These efforts will enhance the quality and comfort for passengers while using the service, but the Ann Arbor station itself does not provide amenities at a similar level of quality. The existing Ann Arbor Amtrak station opened in 1983 and provides seating for only 60 people, while 80 to 120 passengers can crowd the station waiting to board the train. In addition to inadequate seating, the station does not have food service, messaging systems providing updated train arrival and departure information, or Wi-Fi service; therefore, the existing Ann Arbor Amtrak station is not consistent with the amenities provided on the Wolverine service corridor.

### **1.5.2 Inadequate Space for Intermodal Connectivity at the Existing Station**

The existing Ann Arbor station does not have adequate space to accommodate intermodal services (see Exhibit 1.3). The small size and awkward configuration of the site make auto, bike, pedestrian, and bus intermodal accommodations difficult. These difficulties are described below.

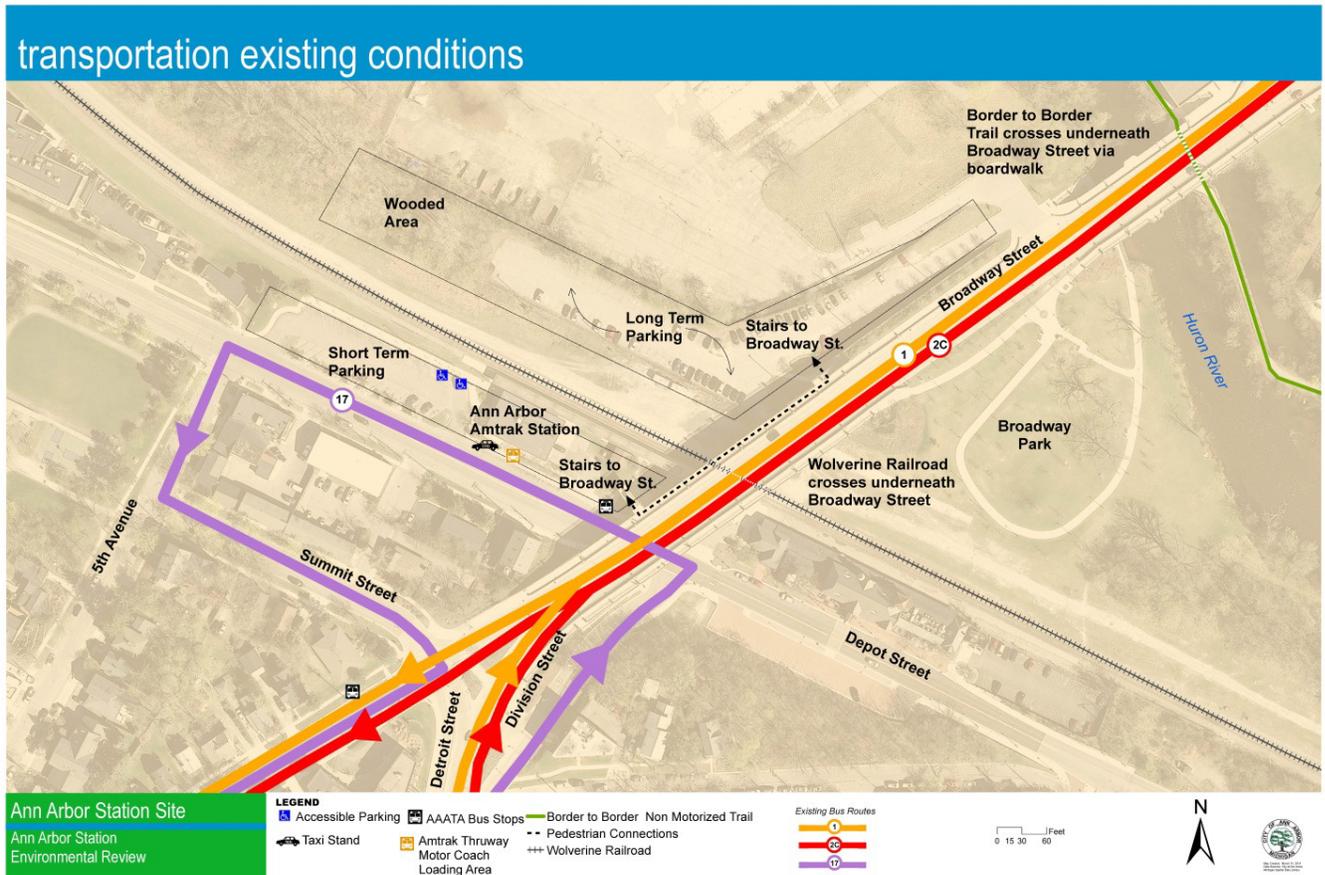
- **Vehicular Access and Parking**

Parking facilities at the existing station are inadequate, do not function well, and may cause potential passengers to choose another mode of transportation due to the inconvenience. Thirty-eight short-term parking spaces are managed by parking meters, and passengers are limited to four hours of daytime parking—no overnight parking. Most trips would be longer than four hours, so these parking spaces largely function as a waiting area for dropping off, or picking up passengers. At the same time, due to the inadequate long-term parking supply, station agents report that some customers use the short-term parking for long-term, deciding to accept the resulting parking fines. Two Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant parking spaces are available in the short-term parking area.

Long-term parking is located north of the station, on the opposite side of the railroad tracks from the station. Stairs are provided for passengers to access Broadway Street (which passes over the rail line to the immediate east of the existing station via an overpass), providing grade-separated pedestrian access to the long-term parking lot (see Exhibit 1.3). However, this access to long-term parking is not ADA accessible, and can be physically difficult for passengers, particularly those traveling with luggage.

The number of parking spaces at the long-term parking lot is inadequate at times throughout the year including peak periods of passenger rail traffic during holiday travel along with seasonal local recreational activities. Parking is available at no charge and is shared by visitors to the river recreational area and hospital visitors. This leaves only about 50 percent of the lot available for use by the Amtrak passengers. Station agents report that although the lot is striped for use by 70 vehicles, at many times during these peak periods, 100 or more cars will park in the area by utilizing unmarked open space around the edges of the lot. When this parking lot is overcrowded and space is limited, minor car accidents have been reported. Station agents have also reported car break-ins, approximately three to four per year, at the long-term parking lot.

Exhibit 1.4: Existing Transportation Connections at the Ann Arbor Amtrak Station



There is no dedicated passenger drop-off area at the existing station. There is a marked area along the curb on Depot Street for taxis to pick up and drop off passengers. Taxi drivers and passengers exiting from the driver’s side of the taxi, step out adjacent to the traffic lane on Depot Street. Additionally, cars, taxis, buses, and airport and hotel shuttles use the short-term parking area as a de facto passenger drop-off area which causes vehicular and pedestrian conflicts, and is particularly complicated when snow is present.

- **Transit Access**

There is no dedicated bus terminal and no bus bays at the Ann Arbor station, so Amtrak’s thruway motor coach buses load and unload from Depot Street. However, when there is no space on Depot Street for buses to park, they are forced to enter the parking lot. After unloading, they routinely require assistance to back out onto Depot Street, because of the confined space in the parking lot.

- **Pedestrian and Bicycle Access**

Pedestrian and bike access is limited at the existing train station. Locked bicycles on the station platform have caused obstructions and mobility hazards. In March 2014, four bike hoops were installed at the station for secure bike storage away from the platform. Currently, the Wolverine service does not allow for walk-on bike storage or checked baggage, including bicycles packed in bike boxes or containers.

The Border-to Border bicycle and pedestrian trail is located within and along most of the study area, but it is located north of the train tracks and does not directly connect to the existing station. Access to the station from the trail requires the same movement as from the long-term parking area—taking the stairs at Broadway Street. Broadway Street is included as a bike path on the City of Ann Arbor Bikeway System Map<sup>3</sup>. This path is listed as a “Marginal Bike Route—good road route with problems at peak hours”. Again, the grade separated access to Depot Street and the Amtrak station is problematic.

### **1.5.3 Substantial Existing and Projected Future Passenger Demand**

The existing Ann Arbor station is the busiest in Michigan and at times operates above its designed capacity for all arriving and departing passengers. The station is equipped with 60 seats in the waiting area, but a typical train boarding 80-120 passengers overwhelms the waiting area. The total number of passengers boarding or alighting at the Ann Arbor Amtrak station was 155,421 in 2013.<sup>4</sup> This represents an increase of almost 70% over the past decade (versus total 2003 boardings and alightings of 91,619).<sup>5</sup> Annual ridership in the Wolverine corridor was 498,288 in 2013, up from 344,107 in 2003<sup>6</sup>, and is expected to continue to increase. Even absent major improvements to the Wolverine service, annual intercity rail ridership at the station is projected to increase to 209,000 by 2035. If the proposed improvements that are currently under consideration for the Wolverine service are implemented, including increasing the frequency of intercity passenger rail service beyond the current three daily round-trips, ridership at the station could grow to up to 969,000 passengers per year by 2035. Should the proposed commuter rail service be implemented, it is projected that an additional 516,600 passengers per year would use the station, resulting in nearly 1.5 million total passengers per year in 2040.

With this trend in ridership, the existing station cannot support future Amtrak intercity passenger rail demand and could not handle further increases in passenger traffic resulting from future expansion of intercity passenger rail service and the possible introduction of commuter rail service.

The factors generating an increase in ridership are outlined below:

#### **1. Population**

Several factors influence ridership. Increasing population in Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County (see Table 1.1) contribute to growing ridership at the Ann Arbor Station. Population in Washtenaw County and the City of Ann Arbor is expected to grow at higher rates than the Southeast Michigan/Metropolitan Detroit region as a whole. The large student population at the U-M, where 43,710 students were enrolled in 2013<sup>7</sup>, also contributes to ridership.

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.a2gov.org/government/communityservices/Parks-Recreation/Documents/bike.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> MDOT’s Transportation Management System: Intermodal Management System

<sup>5</sup> MDOT Rail Statistics (<http://mdotcf.state.mi.us/public/railstats/>)

<sup>6</sup> MDOT State Rail Plan, 2011

<sup>7</sup> Michigan Almanac (3rd Edition, December 2013)

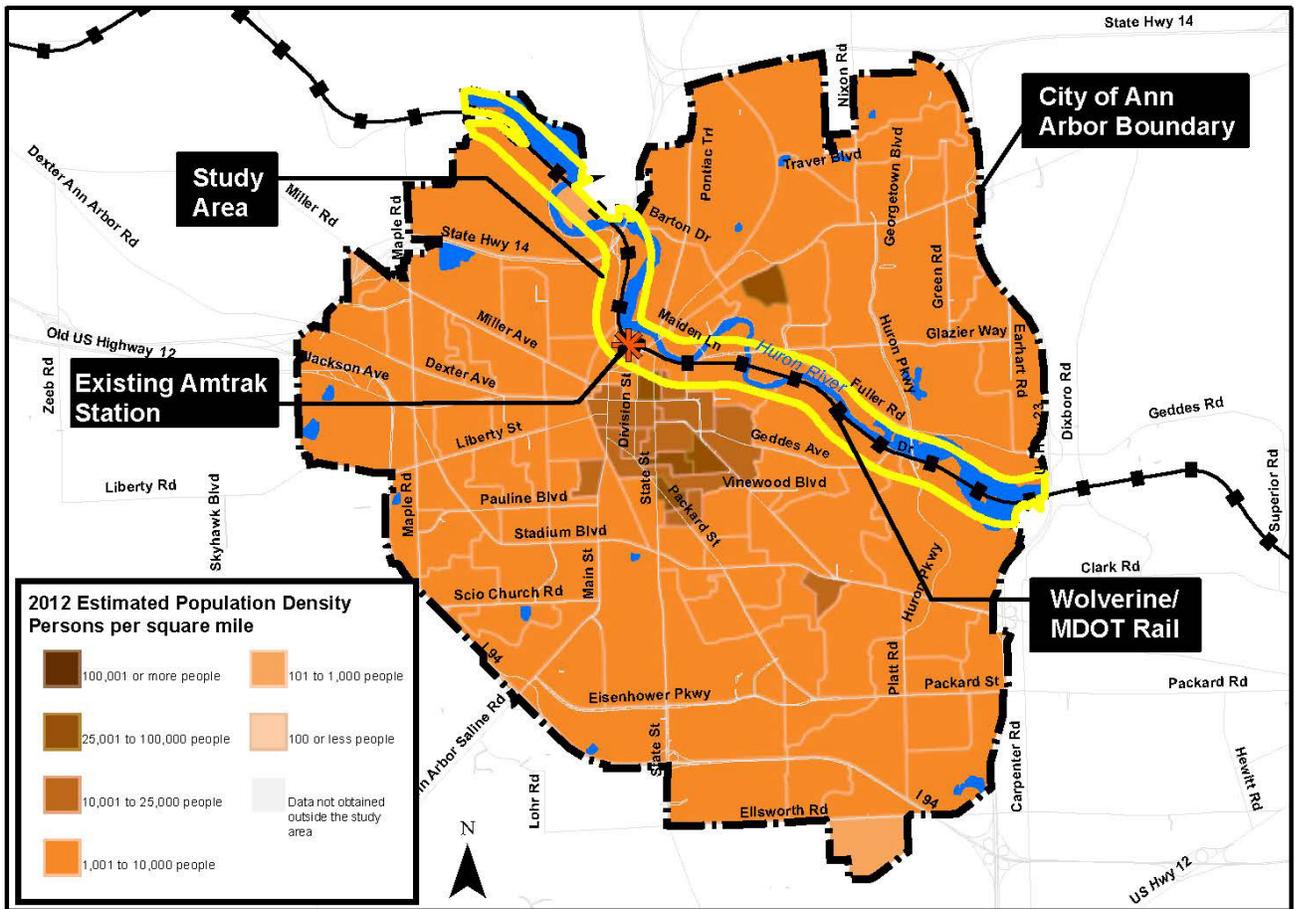
**Table 1.1: Population Forecasts**

	2000	2010	2040	2000-2010 % change	2010-2040 % change
<b>Southeast Michigan*</b>	4,833,368	4,704,809	4,742,083	-2.7%	+0.8%
<b>Washtenaw County</b>	322,770	344,791	386,235	+6.8%	+12.0%
<b>City of Ann Arbor</b>	114,024	113,934	123,786	-0.1%	+8.6%

Source: Census 2000 / 2010 and SEMCOG 2040 Regional Forecast Report  
 \*Wayne, St. Clair, Oakland, Macomb, Livingston, Monroe and Washtenaw Counties

Exhibit 1.5 presents the study area’s population density per square mile as of 2012, and demonstrates that the highest-density portions of Ann Arbor are directly south of the existing rail station near downtown Ann Arbor and the Central Campus of the U-M.

**Exhibit 1.5: Population Density in Ann Arbor**



Source: ESRI

## 2. Employment

Employment is also a factor that influences ridership. Ann Arbor is a growing regional employment center. According to regional forecasts, the employment base within Washtenaw County and the City of Ann Arbor are expected to grow at a faster pace than Southeast Michigan overall (see Table 1.2), driven by the presence of the University, education, biotechnology, and healthcare which are the largest industries in the City. The highest concentration of jobs in Washtenaw County is in the City of Ann Arbor, particularly in the downtown area and at the Medical Campus. As shown in the Table 1.2, the City of Ann Arbor accounts for approximately half of all jobs in Washtenaw County. The employment figures contribute to the ridership forecasts in the region for Amtrak's Wolverine service as well as for other transit services, including future commuter rail between Ann Arbor, Dearborn and Detroit. With future commuter rail, as well as with the Amtrak Wolverine service, regional commuters within Southeast Michigan will have access to commuter rail, air travel, and intercity rail to the region, nation and international destinations connecting to and from the Ann Arbor Intermodal Station. This will serve employers and employees within the region as they travel for, to and from work.

**Table 1.2: Employment Forecasts**

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2040</b>	<b>2010-2040 % change</b>
<b><i>Southeast Michigan*</i></b>	2,484,251	2,786,082	+12.1%
<b><i>Washtenaw County</i></b>	236,676	285,655	+20.7%
<b><i>City of Ann Arbor</i></b>	120,588	144,899	+20.2%

Source: SEMCOG 2040 Regional Forecast Report

\*Wayne, St. Clair, Oakland, Macomb, Livingston, Monroe and Washtenaw Counties

### **1.5.4 Limited Integration of the Existing Station within Ann Arbor and Limited Access to City Neighborhoods and the Region**

While situated in a central location, the existing Ann Arbor Station is not currently integrated into the activity areas of the city. Broadway Street is a busy arterial roadway that extends above the station on a bridge, but the station below can go unnoticed to passers-by. Even as one would approach the station on Depot Street, the simple, one-story brick station building can easily be missed as a transportation hub. The station lacks visibility and compelling design to serve as a gateway to the City of Ann Arbor, and the interior space is insufficient to function as a communal space within the city. This lack of visibility and integration into the city can affect potential riders' transportation modal choices and resulting ridership.

Beyond the immediate station area, the existing Ann Arbor transportation network currently provides limited connectivity between the station, Ann Arbor activity areas, surrounding neighborhoods, and the wider region. The following transportation services and facilities provide existing and proposed connections between Ann Arbor and other origins and destinations in the vicinity of the station and surrounding communities.

- The Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority (AAATA) provides public transportation to local destinations within Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. The U-M also provides transit services to its various campuses. Transit connections to the existing Amtrak station, however, are limited. Currently only one AAATA transit route directly serves the Amtrak station: Route #17. This local shuttle route travels between the station area,

downtown Ann Arbor and the Blake Transit Center (AAATA's primary transit hub). It stops on Depot Street near the station and operates on half-hour weekday headways. AAATA Routes #1 and #2C, provide more frequent service to the station area as they travel between downtown and northern Ann Arbor. However, access to these routes from the station is complicated. The routes pass above the station on the Broadway Street Bridge and the nearest stops are accessed via stairways, slopes, complicated roadway crossings and indirect pathways. U-M transit routes do not connect with the Amtrak station.

- The Connector, a potential future high-capacity transit line, combines concepts developed by both the city and the University for improving transit access and mobility within Ann Arbor. None of the alternative Connector routes under consideration have planned stops near the existing Amtrak station.
- Intercity motorcoach services, operated by Greyhound and MegaBus, are currently offered in Ann Arbor. AirRide also provides an express motorcoach service between Ann Arbor and Detroit Metro Airport. None of these services connect to the existing Amtrak station.
- Several roadways conjoin in the station area, though automobile access to the existing station is difficult because of significant commuter volumes on existing roadways and limited available parking. Another challenge is that multiple flights of stairs must be navigated between the station and its existing long-term parking area.
- The proposed Ann Arbor - Detroit Regional Rail, also known as East-West Commuter Rail, would operate on the Wolverine intercity passenger rail corridor between Ann Arbor and Detroit, and, once implemented, would utilize the Ann Arbor Amtrak station.

To summarize, the existing Ann Arbor station is not well integrated into the community activity centers, and does not provide adequate transportation modal options. Transit services provided at the existing station are deficient and the immediate area lacks attractive, barrier-free paths linking with the station. Also, Ann Arbor has more than twice the trips taking place by walking and bicycling than the national average, as noted in Section 1.2, while the non-motorized connections to the existing station are limited. Even auto travel is hampered by limited parking facilities at the existing station. Because of this limited transportation connectivity, the existing station does not enable passengers to efficiently connect to and from city neighborhoods, activity areas within the City of Ann Arbor and surrounding communities.

## **1.6 Relationship to other Transportation Planning Initiatives**

There are numerous local planning initiatives that describe a vision of the future transportation system within the City of Ann Arbor, and that impact the potential function of the Ann Arbor station. A consistent theme throughout planning at the city and county level is the importance of developing a more balanced, multi-modal transportation system as a strategy to accommodate expected growth in population and employment without severely impacting the transportation systems and associated quality of life. This is particularly true for the downtown Ann Arbor area and the campus areas of the U-M; already dense zones with limited parking supply that are expected to continue to attract growth.

The city's *Transportation Master Plan Update* (2009) outlines a future transportation system where transit and non-motorized modes are prioritized in signature corridors (Plymouth-Fuller, State, Washtenaw, Jackson), with corresponding changes in land use policy to encourage concentration of growth around these same corridors. A key goal for the future local transit system is to provide the connectivity between regional transit services and clusters of employment growth.

Additionally, the U-M is also planning for improved transit connectivity between its core campus areas to sustain its growth trajectory. As part of the *Medical Center Campus and East Medical Campus Master Plan Update (2005)*, the university is prioritizing transit access to the existing core of medical facilities and has designated the Wall Street District (northwest of the existing Medical Campus across the Huron River and rail corridor) as having capacity for additional growth. The *North Campus Master Plan (2008)* outlines a high-capacity transit connection between the North Campus, Medical Campus, and Central Campus.

Other related transportation initiatives in the region include the following:

- *Michigan State Rail Plan* – As part of the Wolverine intercity passenger rail service, an Ann Arbor intermodal station was included in the MDOT State Rail Plan, listed as # 8 on MDOT’s Master List of Potential Rail Projects (2011)<sup>8</sup>.
- *Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRRI)* – The MWRRI is a group consisting of participants from several Midwestern states (Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, and Missouri) and in partnership with the FRA and Amtrak to increase the level and quality of passenger rail service in the Midwest, emanating from Chicago. The MWRRI identified several corridors in the Midwest in which to improve intercity passenger rail, with the potential of implementing high-speed rail. The MWRRI recommended the Chicago to Detroit/Pontiac corridor be studied for improvements and enhancements.
- *Service NEPA Environmental Assessment for CHI – DET/PONTIAC Corridor Improvements (2009)* – The track improvements and additions identified in the service development EA would allow for faster trains on Amtrak’s Wolverine corridor of up to 79 mph from Pontiac to Ann Arbor, and up to 110 mph from Ann Arbor to Porter, Indiana. Other additions include train traffic control and signalization that will help alleviate freight and passenger train traffic conflicts and improve on-time performance of the train service.
- *Service NEPA Environmental Assessment for Kalamazoo to Dearborn Corridor Improvements (2011)* – The improvements include track rehabilitation, replacement of track ties, turnouts, ballast, curve modifications and installation of Incremental Train Control System (ITCS)<sup>9</sup> and Active Warning Systems at all crossings. These improvements would allow for faster trains on Amtrak’s Wolverine corridor of up to 79 mph from Pontiac to Ann Arbor, and up to 110 mph from Ann Arbor to Porter, Indiana. Other additions include train traffic control and signalization that will help alleviate freight and passenger train traffic conflicts and improve on-time performance of the train service.
- *Chicago – Detroit/Pontiac Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)*, Ongoing – The Michigan, Illinois and Indiana Departments of Transportation are working with FRA to prepare a Tier 1 EIS for the Chicago-Detroit/Pontiac Passenger Rail Corridor from Chicago, Illinois to Pontiac, Michigan. This study will include:
  - An evaluation of potential route and service alternatives for the corridor.

---

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdot/MDOT\\_MI\\_SRP\\_public\\_review\\_draft\\_2011-05-23\\_600dpi\\_353776\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdot/MDOT_MI_SRP_public_review_draft_2011-05-23_600dpi_353776_7.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Incremental Train Control System is a communication-based signaling system overlaid on an existing signal system. This is one class of Positive Train Control that was designed to prevent train collisions and overspeed derailments.

- A Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that reviews the impacts and benefits of the rail service.
- A Service Development Plan (SDP) that describes how the rail service will be implemented.<sup>10</sup>

Ann Arbor will remain a stop on the Wolverine intercity passenger rail service. The improvements considered in the Chicago – Detroit/Pontiac Tier 1 EIS may affect the future train frequency and future ridership, which will affect the number of passengers served in Ann Arbor. In 2011, over 503,290 passenger trips were made between Chicago and Detroit using Amtrak’s Wolverine line.<sup>11</sup>

- *Ann Arbor - Detroit Regional Rail, also known as East-West Commuter Rail*<sup>12</sup> – This proposed 38-mile commuter rail service will operate on the Wolverine intercity passenger rail corridor between Ann Arbor and Detroit. As part of the efforts of the Southeast Michigan Commuter Rail Service (MITRAIN), 23 cars (6 cabs and 17 coaches) were refurbished to be used for this service as well as the WALLY commuter rail service from Howell to Ann Arbor.
- *WALLY (named after the counties, Washtenaw and Livingston, it would pass through), also known as the North-South Commuter Rail Line*<sup>13</sup> – The North-South Commuter Rail Line is a proposed 27-mile long north-south commuter rail service that would connect Ann Arbor and Howell, with several intermediate stops. The North-South Commuter Rail Line is being investigated as a way to provide a transit option for travel between Howell and Ann Arbor, to ease traffic congestion in the corridor along US Highway 23, and to promote sound economic development and job creation in the region. This effort is being undertaken as part of TheRide’s research and development program, in cooperation with MDOT, and with the support of a number of government and business leaders, area residents and other community groups that have worked for several years to facilitate the on-going investigation into, and development of, this project.
- *WALLY, also known as the North-South Commuter Rail, Downtown Ann Arbor Station Location Study* – AAATA completed the “N-S Commuter Rail Downtown Station Location Study” in June of 2014. The preferred location for a station is on Ann Arbor Railroad right-of-way, between Washington and Liberty Streets on the east side of the tracks, wholly within the railroad right-of-way, requiring no additional property for the station. The Ann Arbor Connector study has incorporated the study findings to pinpoint a future North-South rail downtown Ann Arbor station for the purposes of establishing a route alignment connecting the North-South commuter rail service to other transit services.
- *The Ann Arbor Connector, Ongoing* – The Connector project is an under-development plan to create a high-capacity transit line that combines the concepts developed by both the city and the university to improve transit access and mobility within Ann Arbor. Currently going through an alternatives analysis process led by the AAATA, a primary strategy for the Connector would be to link up these high-density residential and employment zones with existing and future transportation gateways to the city, including park and ride lots and rail stations.

<sup>10</sup> <http://greatlakesrail.org/~grtlakes>

<sup>11</sup> Ridership based on 3 roundtrips daily, taken from the Notice of Intent for the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement for the Chicago, IL, to Detroit-Pontiac, MI. (<http://www.fra.dot.gov/eLib/Details/L04635>)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.semco.org/AADD.aspx>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.theride.org/AboutUs/Initiatives/NorthSouthCommuterRail>

- *Washtenaw County Transit Master Plan: A Transit Vision for Washtenaw County*— The Ann Arbor Transportation Authority released the Transit Master Plan in June 2011 which includes an enhanced Ann Arbor station for the East-West Commuter Rail service.
- *Huron River Greenway Border-to-Border Trail* – The Border-to-Border trail is a multi-agency, collaborative project to construct a multi-use trail traversing Washtenaw County, from Livingston County to Wayne County, along the Huron River. When completed, the 35-mile trail will permit non-motorized travel through the Huron River corridor. The current trail travels along the Huron River to the U-M Medical Campus, Fuller Park, Geddes Park, Washtenaw Community College, St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, Eastern Michigan, Ypsilanti neighborhoods and downtown, and eventually Ford Lake. This trail provides pedestrian and bicycle transportation within the project study area, to potential Ann Arbor intermodal station locations. Amenities at the proposed station could include a bike station and shower facilities to serve commuters using the Border-to-Border trail.