

Public Transportation Feasibility Study



Submitted to:
Mackinac County Board of Commissioners

Submitted to:
The Corradino Group of Michigan, Inc.

In association with:
The Mannik & Smith Group, Inc.

May 2012

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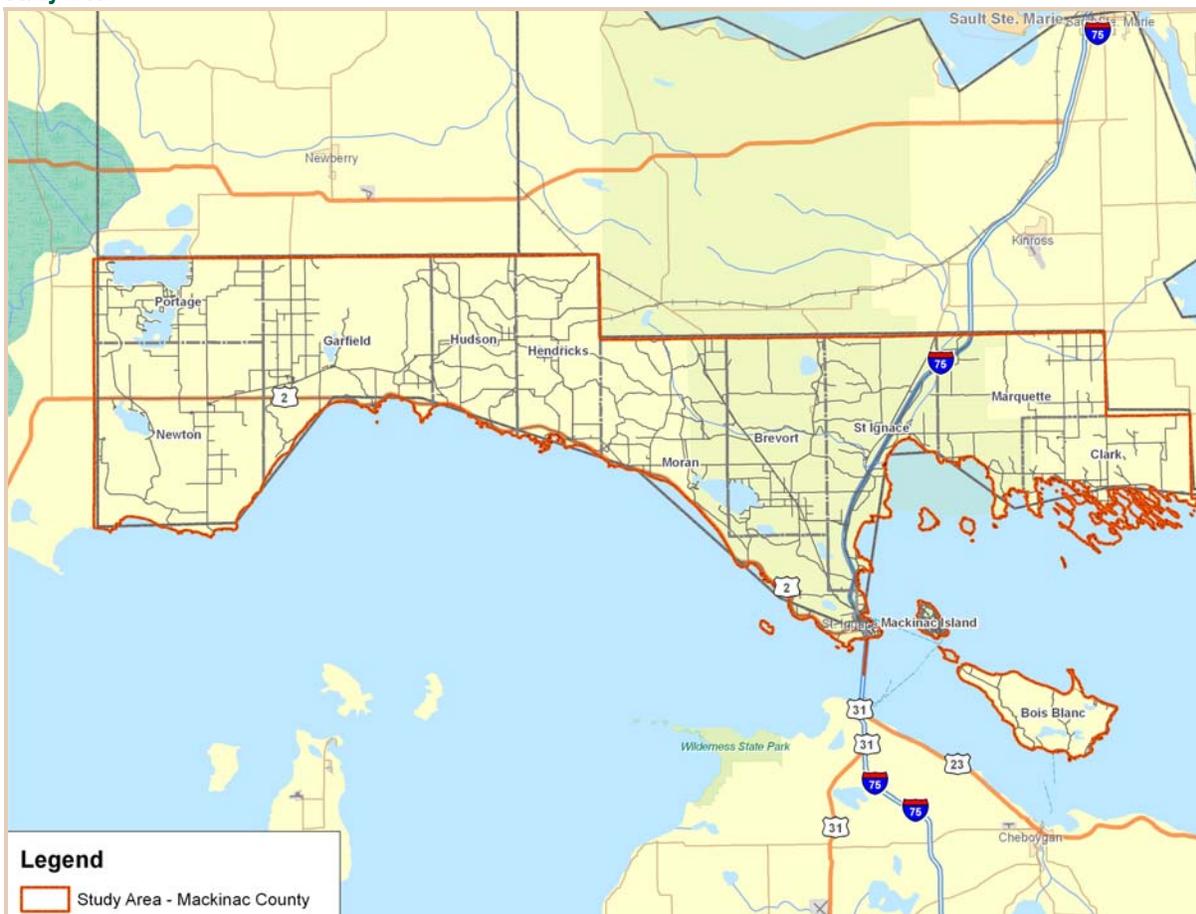
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1 Introduction

Mackinac County is a rural county in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan (Figure 1-1). As of the 2010 Census, the population of the County's 11 townships and two cities was 11,113. Tourism is important to the county and approximately 54 percent of the land in the county is owned by the federal or state government. The low population density combined with the geography of the county makes the provision of public transportation challenging.

This study includes an analysis of the existing conditions and the existing and future transportation needs, public transportation alternatives, and analysis of those alternatives. As part of the planning process, comparable Michigan counties were reviewed to determine if they had public transportation and how it was provided. Public transportation providers in adjacent counties (Schoolcraft County Public Transportation and the Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority (EUPTA)) were also contacted to determine the willingness and ability to act as contract providers and to explore potential linkages in the region. Means of connecting to Mackinaw City and to the south were also examined.

Figure 1-1
Study Area



2 Demographics and Transportation Generators

Demographics

The following is a summary of demographic data from the 2010 Census and the 2005-2009 American Community Survey. The 2010 Census used a much shorter questionnaire than in years past. The only data collected were population totals, age, race, and ethnicity. The American Community Survey was developed to replace the Census long form that had been previously used. The American Community Survey is also done more frequently as a means of getting more timely data than the decennial Census. The American Community Survey data are averages of data collected for the years 2005 through 2009 and are sample data.

Mackinac County is a sparsely populated County with 11,113 residents as of the 2010 Census. As shown in Table 2-1, the population of Mackinac County has fluctuated slightly since 1960. Population increased in 1980, 1990 and 2000 and then declined by just over 8,000 between 2000 and 2010.

Table 2-1
Population Change
1960 through 2010

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Population	10,853	9,660	10,178	10,674	11,943	11,113

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The most populated area in Mackinac County is St. Ignace followed by Clark Township, Garfield Township, Moran Township, Portage Township and St. Ignace Township (Table 2-2). All of these areas are in the east half of the county with the exception of Portage Township. The only townships that experienced population growth between 2000 and 2010 were Bois Blanc and Newton Townships.

In terms of age of the population, 20.4 percent of the county's population is 19 and younger. This compares with 26.8 percent of the State of Michigan's population (Table 2-3). Conversely, those 65 and older comprise 22.4 percent of the county's population as compared to 13.7 percent of the state's population. This results in a median age for Mackinac County of 49.0 years as compared to 38.9 for the State of Michigan. Thus, the population in Mackinac County is considerably older than that of the state. In the U.S. the population is aging. This is a trend that can also be observed in the Mackinac County population. In 1980, the median age in Mackinac County was 28.1 years. It increased to 37.1 years in 1990, 42.8 years in 2000 and 49.0 years in 2010. Senior citizens comprise a large share of transit ridership for most transit systems. As the population continues to age, the need for public transportation will increase.

**Table 2-2
Population by Township and City**

Area	2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010
Bois Blanc Township	71	95	33.8
Brevort Township	649	594	(8.47)
Clark Township	2,200	2,056	(6.55)
Garfield Township	1,251	1,146	(8.39)
Hendricks Township	183	153	(16.39)
Hudson Township	214	181	(15.42)
Mackinac Island	523	492	(5.93)
Marquette Township	659	603	(8.50)
Moran Township	1,080	994	(7.96)
Newton Township	356	427	19.9
Portage Township	1,055	981	(7.01)
City of St. Ignace	2,678	2,452	(8.44)
St. Ignace Township	1,024	939	(8.30)
Total	11,943	11,113	(6.95)

**Table 2-3
Population by Age**

Age	Mackinac County		State of Michigan	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
19 years and younger	2,270	20.4	2,648,885	26.8
20 to 34	1,371	12.3	1,833,221	18.5
35 to 64	4,985	44.9	4,040,004	40.9
65 to 84	2,195	19.8	1,169,649	11.8
85 years and over	292	2.6	191,881	1.9
Total	11,113	100.0	9,883,640	100.0
Median Age (years)	49.0	--	38.9	--

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010

As of the 2010 Census, 75.7 percent of the Mackinac County population listed their race as White. This compares with the state at 76.6 percent (Table 2-4). The only major minority group in Mackinac County is American Indian at 17.2 percent of the population. The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians operates two casinos in Mackinac County, one in St. Ignace, and one in Hessel. Many tribal citizens also live in Mackinac and Chippewa counties.

Table 2-4
Race

Race	Mackinac County		State of Michigan	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White alone	8,411	75.7	7,569,939	76.6
Black or African American alone	57	0.5	1,383,756	14.0
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1,909	17.2	54,665	0.6
Asian alone	22	0.2	236,490	2.4
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	1	0.0	2,170	0.0
Some other race alone	15	0.1	9,866	0.1
Two or more races	572	5.1	190,396	1.9
Hispanic or Latino	126	1.1	436,358	4.4
Total	11,113	100.0	9,883,640	100.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010

Most Mackinac County workers drive alone in a vehicle to their place of employment. As shown in Table 2-5, 66.8 percent of workers drove to work alone. The rate of single occupant vehicle commuters for the State of Michigan is considerably greater at 82.8 percent. More Mackinac County workers carpooled, used public transportation, walked, worked at home, took a taxi, or rode a bicycle or motorcycle to work than in other parts of the state. The public transportation users in Mackinac County are those using the ferry services. Ferry operations exist in Mackinac County, Chippewa County to the north, and out of Mackinaw City to the south.

Table 2-5
Means of Transportation to Work
(workers 16 and older)

Mode	Mackinac County		State of Michigan	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Drove alone (car, truck or van)	3,022	66.8	3,608,050	82.8
Carpooled (car, truck or van)	426	9.4	392,985	9.0
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	154	3.4	55,789	1.3
Walked	216	4.8	99,172	2.3
Other (includes Taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle)	187	4.1	49,943	1.1
Worked at home	519	11.5	149,649	3.4
Total	4,524	100.0	4,355,588	100.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey

Workers in Mackinac County have shorter commute times as compared to the state average (Table 2-6). Almost 62 percent of Mackinac County workers reported a commute time of 19 minutes or less compared to 46 percent of all workers in the State of Michigan. The shorter the work commute, the less attractive public transportation is for choice riders. Traditional bus public transportation systems are unable to match the commute times associated with the personal vehicle.

Table 2-6
Travel Time to Work
(workers 16 and older)

Time	Mackinac County		State of Michigan	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than 5 minutes	696	17.4	162,155	3.9
5 to 9 minutes	836	20.9	477,397	11.4
10 to 14 minutes	528	13.2	636,568	15.1
15 to 19 minutes	412	10.3	671,718	16.0
20 to 24 minutes	350	8.7	643,162	15.3
25 to 29 minutes	222	5.5	285,427	6.8
30 to 34 minutes	358	8.9	518,374	12.3
35 to 39 minutes	134	3.3	124,757	3.0
40 to 44 minutes	118	2.9	147,796	3.5
45 to 59 minutes	153	3.8	295,178	7.0
60 to 89 minutes	113	2.8	169,105	4.0
90 or more minutes	85	2.1	74,302	1.8
Total	4,005	100.0	4,205,939	100.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey

A key indicator of the need for public transportation services is the number of households without a vehicle. As shown in Table 2-7, seven percent of Mackinac County households are without a vehicle. Vehicle availability in Mackinac County is consistent with vehicle availability for the state.

Table 2-7
Household Vehicles Available

Vehicles	Mackinac County		State of Michigan	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No vehicle available	330	7.0	268,817	7.0
1 vehicle available	1,546	32.7	1,298,679	33.6
2 vehicles available	1,870	39.6	1,539,528	39.9
3 or more vehicles available	978	20.7	753,136	19.5
Total Households	4,724	100.0	3,860,160	100.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey



Members of low income households are typically users of public transportation. Just over 29 percent of Mackinac County households have an annual income of less than \$25,000 (Table 2-8). This compares to 25 percent for all Michigan households. On the upper end of the income range, eight percent of Mackinac County households have incomes in excess of \$100,000 annually as compared to 17 percent statewide. This results in a significantly lower median household income for Mackinac County at \$39,919 as compared to a statewide median income of \$48,700.

Table 2-8
Household Income
(2008 inflation-adjusted dollars)

Household Income	Mackinac County		State of Michigan	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than \$10,000	368	7.8	308,694	8.0
\$10,000 to \$14,999	391	8.3	220,515	5.7
\$15,000 to \$24,999	612	13.0	434,594	11.3
\$25,000 to \$34,999	637	13.5	434,302	11.3
\$35,000 to \$49,999	838	17.7	576,877	14.9
\$50,000 to \$74,999	954	20.2	735,542	19.1
\$75,000 to \$99,999	539	11.4	474,955	12.3
\$100,000 to \$149,999	290	6.1	437,708	11.3
\$150,000 to \$199,999	52	1.1	131,864	3.4
\$200,000 or more	43	0.9	105,109	2.7
Total households	4,724	100.0	3,860,160	100.0
Median household income (dollars)	\$39,919		\$48,700	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey

Transportation Generators

Transportation generators are locations within a community that act as generators of transportation trips and are frequent destinations within a community. In Mackinac County, the transportation generators are clustered in the centers of population as shown in Figure 2-1. These locations include St. Ignace, Mackinac Island and to some extent, Hessel. A key transportation generator in St. Ignace is the hospital. The hospital is not only a place to receive medical care, but is also a major employer in the area. Other health care providers include the District Health Department, Hiawatha Behavioral Health and the Sault Tribe Health Center at the hospital. Social service agencies such as the MichiganWorks!, the Department of Human Services, Veterans Services, the Prisoner Re-entry Program, Sault Tribe Strategic Alliance, MSU Extension Office, and Community Action are all considered agencies where people can go and get assistance. Government offices are also frequent destinations. This includes the City offices as well as the County Court House. Grocery and retail stores are common destinations such as those in St. Ignace, Hessel and on Mackinac Island. Hotels are a common destination for tourists, but double as employers for local residents. The casinos in St. Ignace and Hessel also attract tourists and function as major employers for residents. The ferry docks are another major destination in Mackinac County. There are three ferry companies that provide service in and out of St. Ignace. The Indian Trails Transportation Center serves as a point of access to regional bus service in and out of St. Ignace and two other designated stops in the county at Gould City and Engadine.

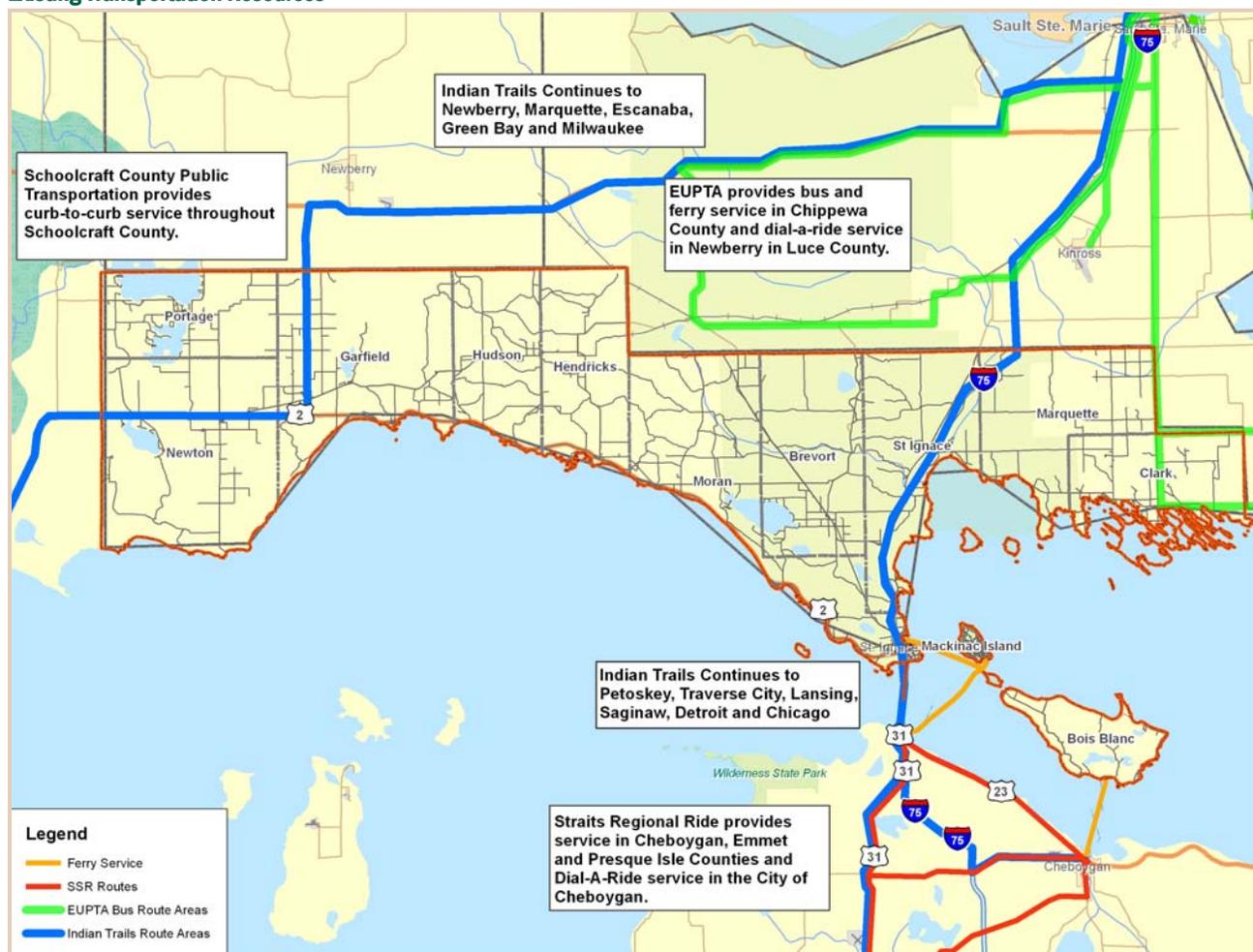
**Figure 2-1
Transportation Generators**



3 Existing Transportation Resources

Mackinac County does not have a public bus transportation system. The following describes transportation resources currently available in and near Mackinac County (Figure 3-1).

Figure 3-1
Existing Transportation Resources



In Mackinac County

Community Action Agency

The Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Human Resource Inc. (CLMCAA) provides transportation to Mackinac County senior citizens and the disabled to meal sites. Transportation is provided using two vans on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. This three-county Community Action organization also operates the Sault Ste. Marie Dial-a-Ride in neighboring Chippewa County.

Indian Trails

Indian Trails provides regional bus transportation to and from the St. Ignace Transportation Center, along with two other stops in the county in Gould City. Indian Trails provides connections to Petoskey, Traverse City, Lansing, Saginaw and Detroit to the south, as well as to Sault Ste. Marie, Newberry, Marquette and Escanaba to the north. Indian Trails also provides connections to out of state locations such as Green Bay, Milwaukee and Chicago. Indian Trails service connects with Greyhound service at some locations, making it possible to connect to locations throughout the United States. Indian Trails is a private operator of transit services, but the company's Upper Peninsula Michigan routes are subsidized by MDOT.

Ferry Services

There are three ferry services that operate between St. Ignace and Mackinac Island. These are targeted at tourists going to Mackinac Island. All are operated by privately held companies. There is one ferry service that operates between Cheboygan and Bois Blanc Island.

Arnold Transit Co.

Arnold Transit Co. provides ferry service between St. Ignace and Mackinac Island and Mackinaw City and Mackinac Island. They operate triple-deck catamarans and classic ferries.

Shepler's Mackinac Island Ferry

Shepler's Mackinac Island Ferry is another ferry service also providing service between St. Ignace and Mackinac Island and also Mackinaw City and Mackinac Island. Shepler's operates five vessels.

Star Line Mackinac Island Ferry

Star Line Mackinac Island Ferry also provides service to and from Mackinac Island between St. Ignace and Mackinaw City. Star Line operates hydro-jet ferry vessels.

Plaunt Transportation

Plaunt Transportation operates ferry service between Cheboygan and Bois Blanc Island. In addition to transporting passengers, a limited number of vehicles can be accommodated.



Straits Taxi Service

The local taxi service in Mackinac County is Straits Taxi Service. It is advertised as 24-hour taxi service. Vehicles are dispatched from St. Ignace, Mackinaw City and the Pellston Airport. Straits Taxi Service serves St. Ignace; Mackinaw City; airports in Pellston, St. Ignace, and Sault Ste. Marie; Mackinac Island Ferries; and, casinos in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. The company offers a \$48 flat rate for a trip between the Pellston Airport and all Mackinac Island ferries.

Mackinac Bridge Authority

The Mackinac Bridge Authority provides trips across the bridge from their facility on the north side of the bridge to a call box on the south side. The current fare for a trip across the bridge is \$3.50. The Bridge Authority will also transport snowmobiles and bicycles across the bridge for a fee. Service is seven days per week from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Adjacent Counties

As shown in Figure 3-1, there is some service available in adjacent counties.

Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority

North of Mackinac County in Chippewa County, the Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority (EUPTA) provides bus and ferry service in Chippewa County as well as dial-a-ride service in Newberry in Luce County. EUPTA's bus routes loop through Chippewa County and provide transit coverage with low service frequency on most routes. The exception is EUPTA's service between Sault Ste. Marie and Kincheloe providing several trips per day, late into the evening and also seven days per week.

Sault Ste. Marie Dial-a-Ride

The City of Sault Ste. Marie operates both a dial-a-ride service and International Bridge Bus to Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. The dial-a-ride service is primarily limited to the city of Sault Ste. Marie. Both Sault Ste. Marie services operate Monday through Friday with the demand response from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. and the International Bridge Bus operating between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Schoolcraft County Public Transportation

In Schoolcraft County to the west, Schoolcraft County Public Transportation provides service Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Countywide curb-to-curb service is provided with a fleet of seven buses and two vans.

Straits Regional Ride

Straits Regional Ride (SRR) is a multi-county bus system connecting communities in Cheboygan, Emmet and Presque Isle counties. They operate 14 vehicles and provide over 40,000 trips annually. Service is curb-to-curb demand response operating on a flexible route system. A 24-hour advance reservation is required. A dial-a-ride service is also offered in the city of Cheboygan and within a five-mile radius of the city.

Straits Regional Ride publishes a schedule of routes and times that it will arrive in various communities. The communities currently served include Cheboygan, Onaway, Wolverine, Indian River, Petoskey, Alanson, and Mackinaw City.

4 Needs Assessment Survey

A survey of Mackinac County residents was conducted in June 2011 to collect information regarding transportation needs. Surveys were mailed to 3,500 randomly selected households. The survey mailing consisted of a letter that included information on the study and a request for participation, a one-page, two-sided questionnaire and a postage paid envelope for returning the questionnaire. A copy of the letter and questionnaire are presented in Appendix A. The survey resulted in 897 completed questionnaires. The following is a summary of the responses

Table 4-1 is a list of surveys received by location. The questionnaires were serial numbered by the area to which they were sent. The number of questionnaires sent to each area was roughly proportional to the percent of the county population that each jurisdiction comprises. As shown, the City of St. Ignace, Clark Township and Garfield Township represented 53.3 percent of the returned questionnaires. These three areas represent 50.9 percent of the 2010 Mackinac County population.

Table 4-1
Surveys Received by City or Township

Area	Number	Percent
Bois Blanc Township	6	0.7
Brevort Township	26	2.9
City of St Ignace	196	21.9
Clark Township	192	21.4
Garfield Township	90	10.0
Hendricks Township	12	1.3
Hudson Township	27	3.0
Mackinac Island	26	2.9
Marquette Township	34	3.8
Moran Township	93	10.4
Newton Township	41	4.6
Portage Township	76	8.5
St. Ignace Township	71	7.9
Unknown	7	0.8
Total	897	100.0

The first set of questions on the questionnaire was designed to determine how familiar Mackinac County residents were with existing transportation resources in the area. They were asked if they were familiar with the Indian Trails bus service in Mackinac County (Table 4-2). As detailed in a previous section of this report, Indian Trails provides regional bus service and connects St. Ignace with other parts of Michigan and the United States. Over half, 59.8 percent of the respondents, were aware of the Indian trails service and 19.4 percent of them had used the service (Table 4-3).

Table 4-2
Are you aware of the Indian Trails bus service in Mackinac County?

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	536	59.8
No	361	40.2
Total	897	100.0

Table 4-3
If yes, have you or anyone in your home used the Indian Trails service?

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	104	19.4
No	432	80.6
Total	536	100.0

Those surveyed were also asked if they used transportation provided by any local agency or organization (Table 4-4). Just over five percent had used some type of transportation provided by a local agency or organization. Most of the agencies or organizations were actually other public providers or private providers with taxi being the most common response (Table 4-5). Other had used the Eastern Upper Peninsula Transit Authority service which operates in neighboring Chippewa County or the Straits Regional Ride which also operates in adjacent counties. After taxi service the other most common response was service provided by the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. The Tribe has a few vans, based in Sault Ste. Marie that they use for health care programs for tribal citizens.

Table 4-4
Do you, or anyone in your home, use transportation service provided by a local agency or organization?

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	47	5.2
No	850	94.8
Total	897	100.0

Table 4-5
Other transportation service

Response	Number	Percent*
Taxi	21	44.7
Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians	8	17.0
Eastern Upper Peninsula Transit Authority	4	8.5
Community Action	4	8.5
Straits Regional Ride	2	4.3
Family independence Agency	2	4.3
Boat shuttles	2	4.3
Straits Hospital	1	2.1
Dial a ride in Cheboygan	1	2.1
Disabled American Veterans	1	2.1
Casino Shuttle	1	2.1

*Percent of 47 respondents that use some other transportation service.

More than 17 percent of the respondents indicated that they or others in their home had difficulties meeting their transportation needs (Table 4-6). Most, 79.6 percent indicated that they had difficulty arranging transportation to medical or dental appointments. Shopping was another key area of need as were transportation to social or recreational activities (Table 4-7).

Table 4-6
Do you, or others in your home, have problems getting your transportation needs met?

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	157	17.5
No	740	82.5
Total	897	100.0

Table 4-7
What does this lack of transportation keep you or others in your home from doing? (Check all that apply.)

Response	Number	Percent*
Working or seeking employment	44	28.0
Shopping	100	63.7
Attending school or training	27	17.2
Medical or dental appointments	125	79.6
Social or recreational activities	82	52.2
Other	15	9.6

*Percent of 157 respondents that have difficulty meeting their transportation needs.

Survey respondents were asked if there were reasons why they didn't drive or if they limit their driving (Table 4-8). Just over 39 percent indicated that they didn't drive or limited their driving. The most common reason for not driving or limiting driving was not driving in poor weather, followed by the cost of owning and operating a vehicle and not driving at night (Table 4-9).

Table 4-8
Are there any reasons why you, or other adults in your home, don't drive or limit the amount they drive?

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	351	39.1
No	546	60.9
Total	897	100.0

Table 4-9
Reasons why you, or other adults in your home, don't drive or limit the amount they drive. (Check all that apply)

Response	Number	Percent*
Don't drive in poor weather	118	33.6
Don't drive at night	101	28.8
Vehicle mechanical difficulties	49	14.0
Don't own a vehicle	52	14.8
Not licensed to drive	56	16.0
Have a disability and cannot drive	58	16.5
Cost of owning and operating a vehicle	107	30.5
Other	155	44.2

*Percent of 351 respondents that limit amount of driving.

Over half of all respondents, 53 percent indicated that they would consider using a public transportation service if it met their needs (Table 4-10).

Table 4-10
Because of the cost associated with owning and operating a vehicle, concern for the environment, or other convenience or personal reasons, would your other members of your household consider using a public transportation service if it met your needs?

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	475	53.0
No	422	47.0
Total	897	100.0

Of the 475 respondents that would consider using public transportation, 62.7 percent would consider using a regularly scheduled bus service while slightly less, 60.8 percent would use a door-to-door service (Table 4-11). The most common response under other was some type of medical shuttle.

Table 4-11
If yes, what type of service would you consider using? (Check all that apply)

Response	Number	Percent*
A regularly scheduled bus route	298	62.7
A door-to-door service	289	60.8
Other	44	9.3

*Percent of 475 respondents that would consider using public transit.

In terms of days of the week and time of day that people would want to use a public transportation service, Monday through Friday, between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. were the most common responses (Table 4-12). Demand for Saturday and Sunday service is about half that of weekday service. The need for service drops off significantly between 6:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. and is very light between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. The patterns of responses observed is consistent with ridership patterns of transit systems that have some type of service at all hours of the day and night.

Table 4-12
What days of the week and times of the day do you feel you, or others in your home would be most likely to use public transportation?
(check all that apply)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning (6 AM - Noon)	219	205	215	201	218	105	100
Afternoon (Noon - 6 PM)	206	197	200	199	206	111	92
Evening (6 PM to 10 PM)	84	84	83	83	103	85	66
Late Night/Early Morning (10 PM to 6 AM)	29	27	24	30	38	40	28

In addition to when they needed transportation, respondents were asked where they wanted to travel both inside and outside Mackinac County. St. Ignace was the most frequently requested destination followed by Mackinac Straits Hospital (Table 4-13). Other common destinations were the doctor, shopping, grocery store and work. People were also interested in transportation to recreational destinations, such as the casino, and to Hessel, which is also the location of a casino. Table 4-14 is a summary of where respondents wanted to go outside Mackinac County. These include other regional cities and villages such as Sault Ste. Marie, Petoskey, Cheboygan and Newberry; doctors and medical facilities; and, shopping and specifically Walmart.

Table 4-13
Where would you like to go in Mackinac County?

Destination	Number	Destination	Number
St. Ignace	115	Family Dollar	8
Mackinac Straits Hospital	70	Restaurants	8
Doctor	56	Brevort	7
Shopping/Retail	55	Naubinway	7
Glens	45	Cedarville Foods	5
Grocery Store	35	Library	5
Cedarville	26	City/County Offices	4
Work	26	Ferry Dock	4
Casino	22	Tribal Facilities	4
Church	19	Community Action	3
Bank	14	Social/Recreational Activities	3
Doud's Market	14	Bus Station	2
Dentist	12	Downtown	2
Drug Store	11	Golf	2
Hessel	10	High School Sports	2
Post Office	10	Hope Chest	2
School	9	Mackinac Island	2

Table 4-14
Where would you like to go outside Mackinac County?

Destination	Number	Destination	Number
Sault Ste. Marie	79	Drug Store	5
Petoskey	61	Movie Theater	5
Cheboygan	45	Work	5
Newberry	42	Airport	4
Shopping	39	Casino	4
Doctor	35	Dentist	4
Medical/Hospital	30	Restaurant	4
Walmart	29	VA Doctor	4
Manistique	28	Traverse City	3
Escanaba	21	Bank	2
Mackinaw City	15	DeTour	2
Grocery Shopping	13	Kewadin	2
Marquette	13	Kincheloe	2
Gaylord	7	Lake Superior State University	4
War Memorial Hospital	7	Luce County	2
Chippewa County	6	Bay Mills	2
Kinross	6	Pamida	2
Kmart	6	Rudyard	2
Northern Michigan Hospital (Petoskey)	6	Schoolcraft County	2
Pickford	6	Senior Citizen Center	2

Respondents were also asked about transit fares in terms of what they thought was a reasonable fare for both service inside St. Ignace (Table 4-15) and also service throughout other parts of the county (Table 4-16). Most respondents, 66.4 percent, thought a reasonable fare for trips in St. Ignace was in the range of \$1.25 to \$2.00 for a one-way trip. For trips within the rest of Mackinac County, the most common price range was more than \$8.00, followed by \$4.25 to \$5.00, \$2.25 to \$3.00, \$1.25 to \$2.00, and \$3.25 to \$4.00. The fact that so many respondents were at the higher end of the range for county trips indicates that they understand the cost of driving and also the significant cost of providing public transportation.

Table 4-15
Public transit user fares in neighboring counties vary. A dial-a-ride trip (one-way) in Sault Ste. Marie is \$1.50. The Eastern Upper Peninsula Transit Authority (EUPTA) charges between \$3.50 and \$5.50 for a one-way trip within Chippewa County, depending on trip length. And, in Schoolcraft County the fares range from \$2.00 for a one-way trip within Manistique to \$10 for a trip of up to 40 miles. All systems offer a half-price fare for the elderly and disabled. What would you consider a reasonable fare for a one-way public transportation trip?

Inside the City of St. Ignace?

Response	Number	Percent
Free	5	1.2
\$.25 - \$1.00	46	11.4
\$1.25 - \$2.00	269	66.4
\$2.25 - \$3.00	36	8.9
> \$3.00	49	12.1
Total	405	100.0



Table 4-16
Inside Mackinac County?

Response	Number	Percent
Free	5	1.2
\$.25 - \$1.00	5	1.2
\$1.25 - \$2.00	45	10.4
\$2.25 - \$3.00	62	14.3
\$3.25 - \$4.00	43	9.9
\$4.25 - \$5.00	107	24.7
\$5.25 - \$6.00	31	7.2
\$6.25 - \$8.00	17	3.9
> \$8.00	118	27.3
Total	433	100.0

All public transportation requires investment on the part of the local government. Respondents were asked if they would support a millage or special assessment to help support the local funding component of a public transportation system (Table 4-17). Slightly less than half (46.8%) of the respondents were in favor of financial support for public transportation.

Table 4-17
Fares alone cannot support a public transit system. They typically receive funding from several sources. These include the federal government, the state (Michigan Department of Transportation), and local funds. Would you support a millage or special assessment to help support the local funding component of a public transportation system in Mackinac County?

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	354	46.8
No	402	53.2
Total	756	100.0

Table 4-18 is a summary by age group of the number of individuals that made up the households that were surveyed. As shown, there 1,793 people represented in the 897 households that were surveyed. Of this group, 13.2 percent were under the age of 18 and 34.5 percent were over the age of 65.

Table 4-18
How many people in the following age groups make up your household?

Response	Number	Percent
18 years and under	237	13.2
19 to 65	937	52.3
Over 65	619	34.5
Total	1,793	100.0

Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide general comments, suggestions, and issues to consider relative to public transportation in Mackinac County. These responses can be found in Appendix B.

5 Review of Other Counties

Michigan public transit systems are divided up into three main categories by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). These are urbanized systems in the state’s larger cities, small community service operated in smaller cities, villages and townships, and countywide services provided by a county or an authority. There are also numerous providers of specialized services across the state. These are MDOT-funded services that provide service to the elderly and disabled. These services are typically provided by public agencies or private non-profit organizations.

Table 5-1 is a listing of counties similar in size and/or population density to Mackinac County. As shown, the 2010 population of Mackinac County was 11,113 over an area of 1,022 square miles. This results in a population density of 10.8 persons per square mile. There are 12 other Michigan counties listed and nine of them have some form of public transportation.

**Table 5-1
Comparison of Similar Counties**

2010 Population by County and Largest City or Village	Land Area & Population Density	Public Transit Service	Comments
Mackinac County – 11,113 St. Ignace – 2,452	1,022 sq. miles 10.8 pop./sq. mile	No	No public transit agency. One MDOT Specialized Service provider, The Chippewa-Mackinac-Luce Community Action Agency that provides service to the elderly and disabled.
Alcona County – 10,942 Harrisville – 493	674 sq. miles 16.2 pop./sq. mile	Yes	Thunder Bay Transportation Authority provides service to the City of Alpena, Alcona County and Montmorency County.
Alger County – 9,601 Munising – 2,355	918 sq. miles 10.5 pop/sq. miles	Yes	ALTRAN provides countywide demand response service. ALTRAN is an Act 196 transit authority.
Baraga County – 8,860 L’Anse – 2,011	904 sq. miles 9.8 pop/sq. miles	No	The county has a Specialized Service provider.
Chippewa County - 38,520 Sault Ste. Marie - 14,144	2,698 sq. miles 14.3 pop/sq. mile	Yes	EUPTA provides ferry service and bus service outside Sault Ste. Marie. The Sault Ste. Marie Dial-a-Ride provides service inside the City of Sault Ste. Marie.
Iron County – 11,817 Iron River – 3,029	1,166 sq. miles 10.1 pop/sq. miles	No	The county has a Specialized Service provider.
Keweenaw County – 2,156 Ahmeek – 146	541 sq. miles 4.0 pop/sq. miles	No	The county has a Specialized Service provider.
Lake County – 11,539 Baldwin – 1,208	568 sq. miles 20.3 pop/sq. miles	Yes	Yates Dial-A-Ride provides service throughout Lake County.
Luce County – 6,631 Newberry – 1,519	903 sq. miles 7.4 pop/sq. miles	Yes	Luce County is service by the Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority, a two-county transportation service that provides bus and ferry service. Service in Luce County consists of dial-a-ride service within the City of Newberry.
Montmorency County – 9,765 Atlanta – N/A	548 sq. miles 17.8 pop/sq. miles	Yes	Thunder Bay Transportation Authority provides service to the City of Alpena, Alcona County and Montmorency County.
Ontonagon County – 6,780 Ontonagon – 1,494	1,312 sq. miles 5.2 pop/sq. miles	Yes	Ontonagon County Public Transit (On-Tran) serves Ontonagon County.
Presque Isle County – 13,376 Rogers City – 2,827	660 sq. miles 20.2 pop/sq. miles	Yes	Straits Regional Ride connects communities in Presque Isle, Cheboygan and Emmet Counties.
Schoolcraft County – 8,485 Manistique – 3,097	1,178 sq. miles 7.2 pop/sq. miles	Yes	Schoolcraft County Public Transit offers curb-to-curb service in Schoolcraft County.

The county most similar to Mackinac County in terms of population density is Alger County with a population density of 10.5 persons per square mile compared to the 10.8 persons per square mile in Mackinac County. Alger County’s largest city, Munising, has a population very similar to St. Ignace. Alger County has a countywide public transportation system, ALTRAN. ALTRAN is an Act 196 authority. The service provided is demand response with a 24-hour advance reservation. They also provide some regional trips between Munising and Marquette. They offer three round trips per day, Monday through Friday. In addition, Friday and Saturday evening service is provided between 6:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m. ALTRAN operated 14 vehicles, provides almost 84,000 trips annually and has a yearly operating expense of approximately \$789,000.

In comparison, Iron County has a slightly lower population density than Mackinac County and the County’s largest city, Iron River has a larger population base than St. Ignace, but does not have a public transportation provider. The county does provide Specialized Services for the elderly and disabled.

Also of interest are the counties adjacent to Mackinac County. These are Chippewa and Luce counties to the north and Schoolcraft County to the east. Chippewa and Luce counties are both served by the Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority (EUPTA). Sault Ste. Marie in Chippewa County is also served by the Sault Ste. Marie Dial-a-Ride. EUPTA operates countywide routes in Chippewa County and dial-a-ride service only in the Village of Newberry in Luce County. EUPTA also operates ferry service between Sault Ste. Marie and Sugar Island, DeTour and Drummond Island, and Barbeau and Neebish Island. The EUPTA bus service costs approximately \$471,000 annually to operate and transports just over 48,500 passengers. The EUPTA ferry service provides 808,500 passenger trips annually at a cost of \$2,654,000.

The Schoolcraft County Public Transportation System provides curb-to-curb service within Schoolcraft County. It operates Monday through Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Approximately 35,000 trips are provided annually at an operating cost of \$633,400.

In general, the counties with a population density of 10 or less do not have public transportation. These include Baraga County, Iron County, and Keweenaw County. The exception is Ontonagon County that is served by Ontonagon Public Transportation, a demand response provider. On-Tran provides approximately 31,600 trips annually at a cost of \$627,000.

6 Transportation Need

There is a need for public transportation in Mackinac County. This is evidenced by data collected through the transportation needs survey. Approximately 17.5 percent of respondents indicated they or members of their household have difficulty meeting transportation needs. They need transportation for health care-related trips, shopping, social and recreational activities, working or seeking employment and attending school or training. A large percentage of those surveyed, 39 percent, don't drive or limit driving due to a number of factors. These include weather and disability issues, as well as the cost associated with owning, operating and maintaining a vehicle.

There is not only a need for public transportation, but a willingness to use it that surpasses the need. More than 53 percent of those surveyed would consider using public transportation if it were available and met their needs. This is compared to the 17.5 percent that encounter difficulty meeting transportation needs. Respondents were receptive to both regularly scheduled fixed route service and dial-a-ride service. In addition, 46.8 percent of those that responded to the survey were willing to support a transit millage.

7 Potential Service Options

Described in this section are preliminary service options for expanding the transportation services available in Mackinac County. They are grouped into two categories – specialized service or open door public transportation service. Specialized service refers to transportation services funded by MDOT and made available to the elderly and disabled. These are services such as those currently provided in Mackinac County by the Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency. These services are focused on the elderly and disabled. Open door public transportation service is any type of public transportation service available to the general public with no eligibility restrictions.

Specialized Service

The services provided under any of the specialized service options would be available primarily to the elderly and disabled.

Do Nothing

Mackinac County Commission would continue applying for Specialized Services funding from MDOT and contracting with Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency (CLMCAA) for specialized services (not open door public transit service).

Expand Specialized Services (Existing Provider)

Mackinac County Commission would seek to expand the level of Specialized Service in the county provided by CLMCAA by seeking additional MDOT funds or providing local funds (could include passenger fares) to expand the level of service in Mackinac County or seek to negotiate a higher level of services with CLMCAA based upon the existing level of funding.

Expand Specialized Services (New Provider)

Mackinac County Commission would continue applying for Specialized Services funding from MDOT and would seek to expand the level of service in Mackinac County by providing the specialized services directly through a county agency or with a private provider in Mackinac County. As with all specialized services, these would be focused on the elderly and disabled.

Expand Specialized Services for Transition to Public Transportation

Mackinac County Commission could aggressively market the existing specialized service provided by CLMCAA in order to build the specialized service ridership in anticipation of a future transition to an expanded specialized service system or for the transition to an open door public transit service. Based on the transportation needs survey conducted as part of this study and input from stakeholders, the existing service is not meeting all transportation needs. Only 1,441 passenger trips were provided in 2010.

Open Door Public Transportation Service

All of the options presented for open door public transportation service exclude Mackinac Island and Bois Blanc Township. All service would be open to the public and have no eligibility restrictions.

Mobility Manager

Mackinac County Commission could establish a Mobility Manager to coordinate and facilitate transportation services in Mackinac County. The Mobility Manager would be an employee of Mackinac County and work with existing transportation service providers as well as the healthcare and business community to coordinate and facilitate transportation. The Mobility Manager could explore establishing a ridesharing program in Mackinac County and/or coordinate with other eastern UP counties to establish a rideshare program. The Mobility Manager would document the actual transportation needs being met and those that were unmet for future consideration in establishing a public transit system.

Countywide Demand Response Service

Mackinac County Commission could establish a countywide public transit system to serve all of Mackinac County five days a week, using a 24-hour advance reservation policy for certain townships in the county (Portage, Newton, Garfield, Hudson, Hendricks, Moran, and Brevort) and a same day pick-up in the remaining areas (Marquette, Clark and St. Ignace Townships and the City of St. Ignace). The public transit system would be eligible for federal and state operating and capital funds. All of the county's population would have access to public transit service, with 54 percent having access to same day service (Figure 7-1).

Countywide Fixed Route Service

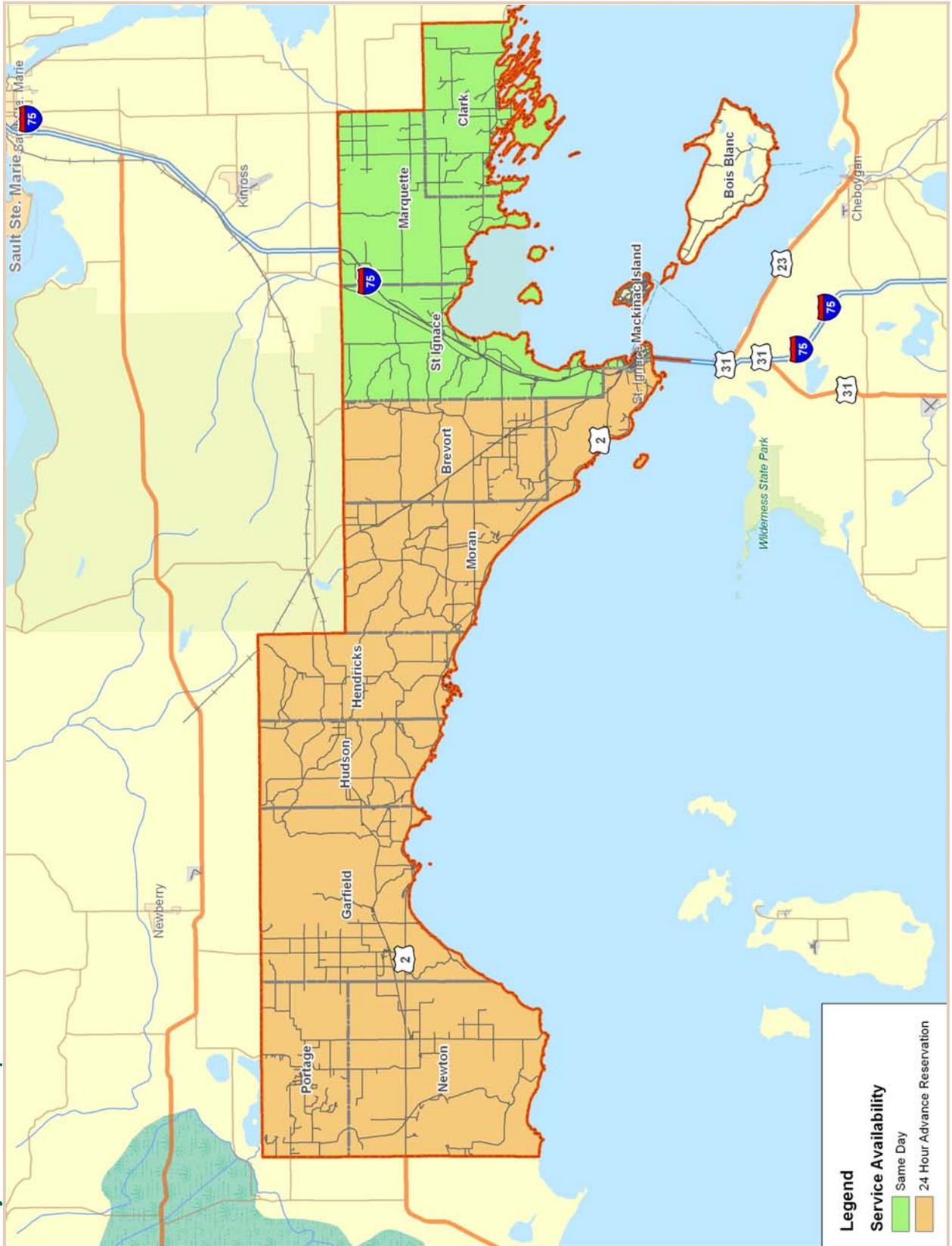
Mackinac County Commission could establish a countywide public transit system to serve all of Mackinac County through a scheduled fixed route service operating out of St. Ignace west on U.S. 2 to Gould City and east on I-75/134 to Cedarville and north on I-75 to connect with EUPTA service at Rudyard (or in lieu of I-75 to Rudyard a 123 service to Trout Lake is an alternative). The service would be two round trips a day. Basic dial-a-ride services would be provided in the City of St. Ignace and St. Ignace Township. Figure 7-2 shows potential routes and the dial-a-ride service area.

Purchase of Services

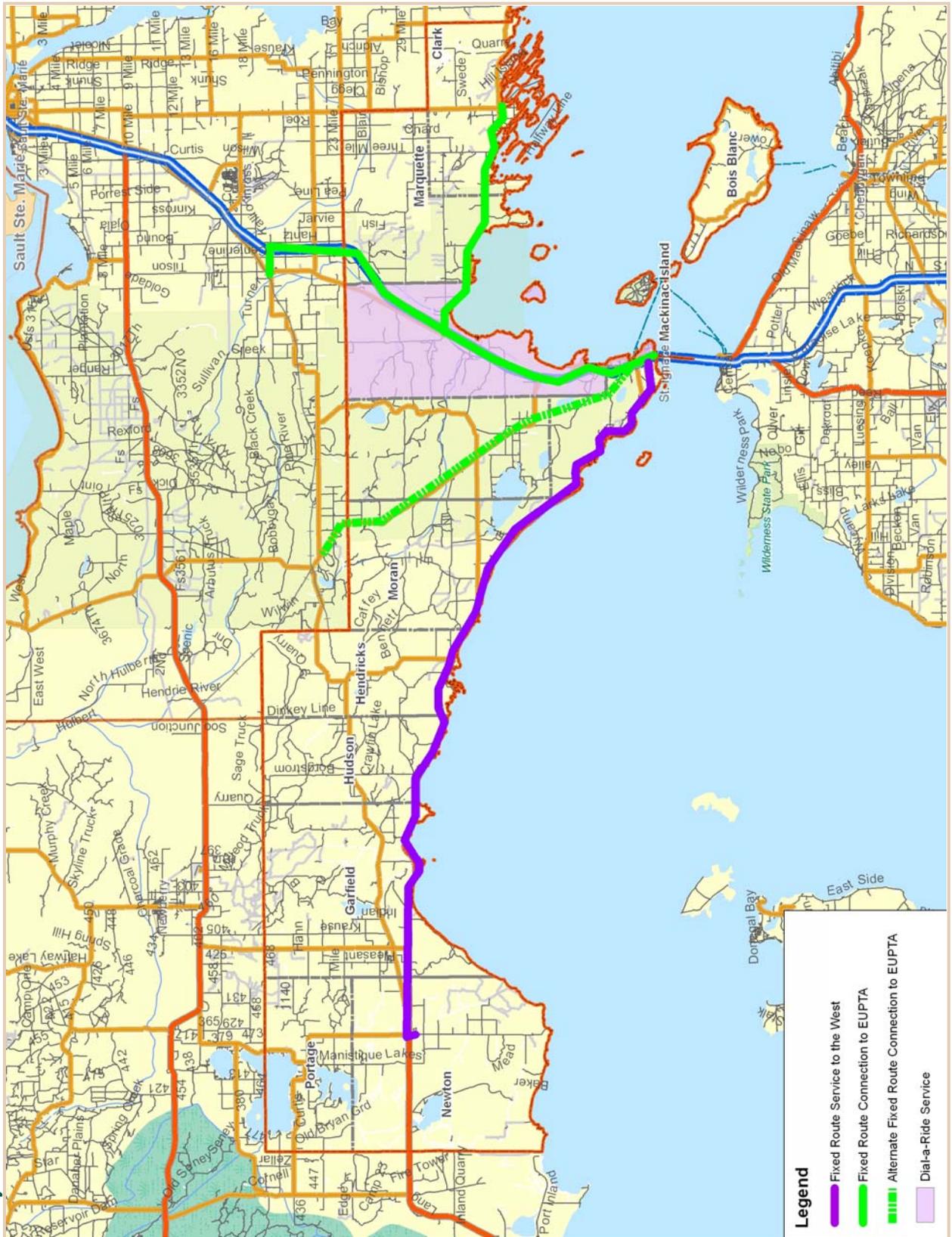
Mackinac County Commission could provide countywide service to the resident of Mackinac through a combination of service options (Figure 7-3). A purchase of services agreement could be explored with Schoolcraft County Public Transit for limited service to the western townships (Portage, Newton, and Garfield). A purchase of service agreement could be explored with EUPTA for service in the eastern townships (Clark and Marquette). A Mackinac County Commission service would be established to provide dial-a-ride and fixed-route service in the remainder of the county (City of St. Ignace, and the Townships of St. Ignace, Brevort, Moran, Hudson and Hendricks). Coordination points for passenger transfers could be established with Schoolcraft County Public Transit and EUPTA.



Figure 7-1
Countywide Demand Response Service



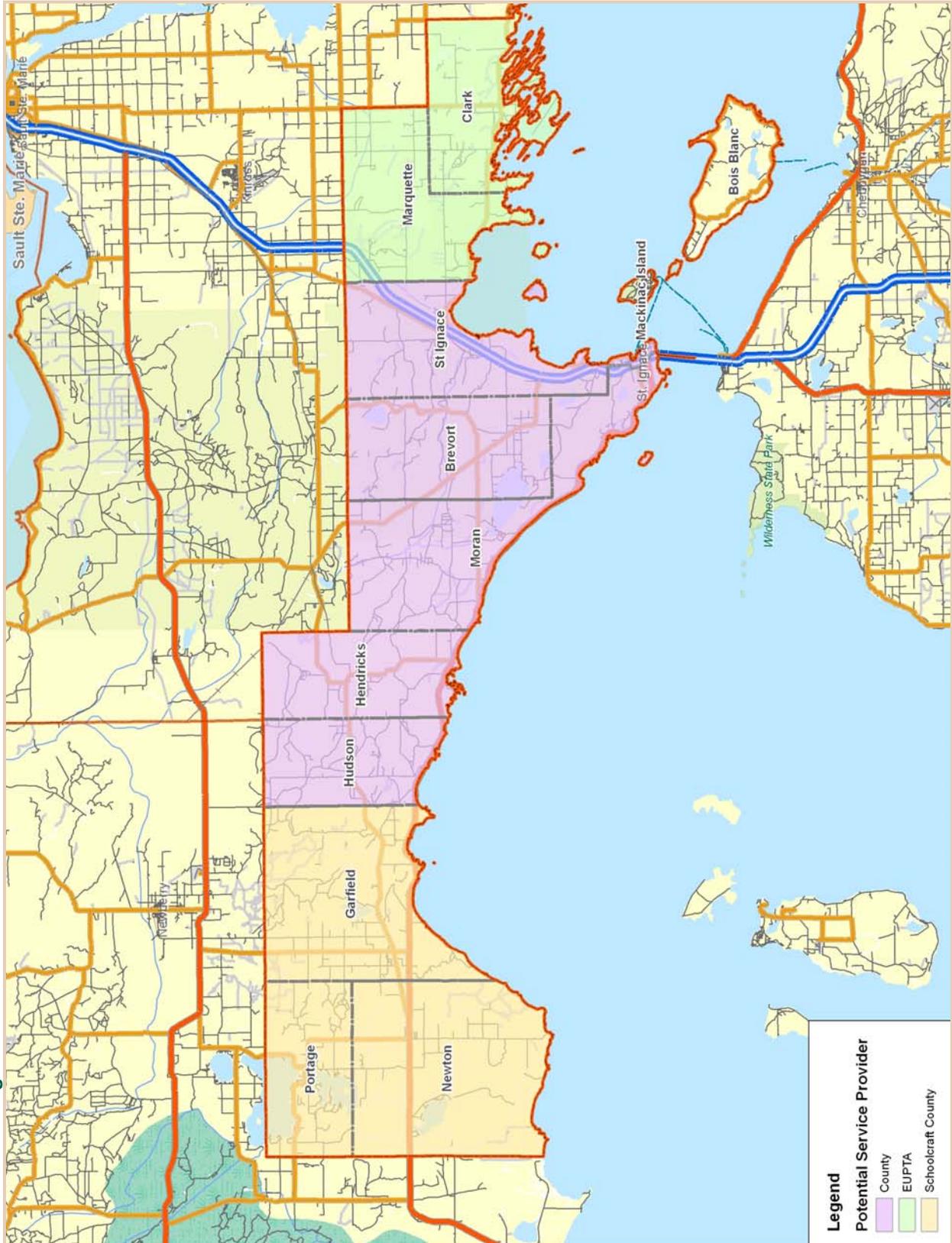
**Figure 7-2
Countywide Fixed Route Service**



Legend

- Fixed Route Service to the West
- Fixed Route Connection to EUPTA
- - - Alternate Fixed Route Connection to EUPTA
- Dial-a-Ride Service

Figure 7-3
Purchase of Service Agreements



Join an Authority

Mackinac County Commission could petition to join EUPTA based on a pre-determined negotiated level of service and local financial contribution. EUPTA is established under Public Act 7 of 1967 as amended – the Urban Cooperation Act.

Limited Area Demand Response Service

Mackinac County Commission could establish a public transit system to provide dial-a-ride service in the City of St. Ignace and the townships of St. Ignace, Moran, Brevort, Marquette and Clark (Figure 7-4). This would make dial-a-ride transportation services available to approximately 64 percent of the county’s population.

Establish a New Authority

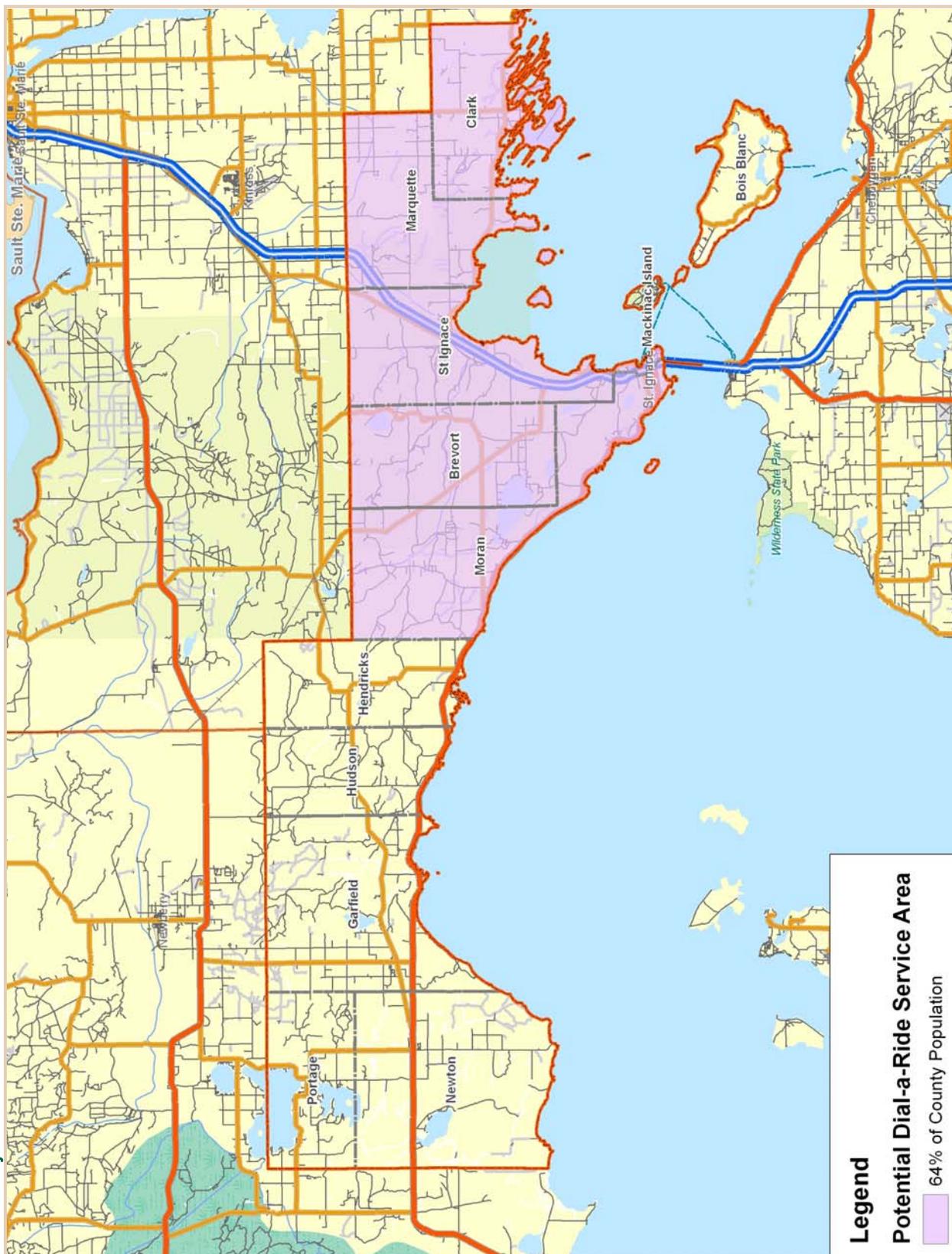
Mackinac County Commission and or the City of St. Ignace, could establish a public transit authority under Public Act 196 of 1986 – Public Transportation Authority Act of 1986 to provide dial-a-ride service within the City of St. Ignace. Adjacent political subdivisions could join the authority prior to formation or at a future date.

Coordination with Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians

American Indians and Alaska Natives make up 17.2 percent of the population in Mackinac County. The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians has facilities in Mackinac County including casinos in Hessel and St. Ignace, as well as a casino in Manistique in Schoolcraft County. The Tribe also has a medical facility in St. Ignace. The Mackinac County Commission could work in concert with the Tribe to explore the establishment of a tribal operated public transit system in Mackinac County that would serve tribal members but also provide open door service to all county residents.



Figure 7-4
Partial County Dial-a-Ride Service



8 Potential Funding Sources

The cost associated with the provision of open door public transportation services can be broken into the two primary funding categories: operating and capital. Operating costs include items such as wages and benefits for bus drivers, dispatchers, mechanics and administrative staff, fuel, insurance, utilities, marketing, etc. Capital costs include facilities and equipment, such as purchase of buses, rehabilitation of buses, radio/dispatching equipment, transit facilities including bus garage, administrative buildings, bus shelters, etc. The U.S. Department of Transportation and the State of Michigan have established programs in place that help finance a portion of the operating and capital costs associated with the provision of public transportation services.

Public transportation operating costs in Michigan are financed from three primary funding sources. The funding sources are the United States Department of Transportation through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the State of Michigan through the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Comprehensive Transportation Fund (CTF), and funds generated locally. Public Transportation capital costs have traditionally been financed by the FTA and MDOT/CTF Program, with little if any local funding. Due to the shortage of MDOT transit capital funding, in recent years local funds have been required to match certain capital projects. The following sections summarize the FTA and MDOT funding opportunities, as well as the local funding options that could be used to support the provision of public transportation services in Mackinac County.

Federal Transit Administration

The U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) through its modal operating structure administers many programs which address the transportation needs of both urban and non-urban areas. Since Mackinac County is a non-urban area the focus of this review is on the non-urban programs and the associated funding opportunities administered by the FTA.

In the late 1970s the U.S. DOT began to take on a multimodal approach with the incorporation of transit programs in the Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1978. The multimodal approach continued to expand in subsequent years with the passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1991, The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) in 1998 and The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act, A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) in 2004. Each of these landmark transportation authorization acts set the stage for federal transit programs currently administered by the FTA.

The SAFETEA-LU of 2004 is the most recent multi-year transportation authorization act passed by Congress and signed by the President. SAFETEA-LU established transportation program and funding levels for the period 2005 through 2009. SAFETEA-LU expired in 2009. Congress, however, has not enacted a new transportation authorization act to replace SAFETEA-LU, but rather has, through a series of continuing resolutions, extended the SAFETEA-LU legislation until March 31, 2012. The extension also substantially maintained the 2009 program funding authorization levels through March 31, 2012.

The President’s Fiscal Year 2012 budget recommendation includes the enactment of a new six-year transportation reauthorization legislation which would authorize approximately \$556 billion over the six year period. Entitled “Investing in Tomorrow and Creating Jobs Today,” the President’s reauthorization proposal includes increased funding for the FTA (operating and capital), as well as a \$50 billion up front economic boost to stimulate job creation. The \$50 billion up front funding includes over \$10 billion for federal transit programs. Congress is currently working on legislation to re-authorization the transportation act. At this point it is unclear when a transportation reauthorization bill will be considered or voted on by Congress. Likewise, while the President’s proposal increases federal transportation program authorization levels, there are some members of Congress that are proposing to reduce federal programs and spending as part of the effort to raise the debt ceiling. At this time it is not possible to predict when new transportation reauthorization legislation will be enacted and what the program authorization levels will be, nor other importation program provisions the legislation may contain.

As we undertake a review of the federal transit programs described below it is important to note that a new transportation reauthorization act may refine, expand or eliminate any of the programs described below and likewise it is also possible that new transit programs may be authorized by Congress beyond those described below.

The federal transit programs described below are those programs that have been established to provide financial support for the provision of local public transportation services in non-urbanized areas such as Mackinac County.

Non-urbanized Area (Rural) Formula Program – Section 5311

This federal transit program provides formula funding to the states for the purpose of supporting public transportation in areas of less than 50,000 population. There are five goals for the Section 5311 Program: (1) to enhance access to public transportation in non-urbanized areas for health care, shopping, education, employment, public services and recreation; (2) to assist in the maintenance, development , improvement and use of public transit systems in rural and small urban areas; (3) to encourage and facilitate the most efficient use of all federal funds used to provide passenger transportation services in non-urbanized areas through the coordination of programs and services; (4) to provide for the participation of private transportation providers in non-urbanized transportation to the maximum extent feasible; and (5) to assist in the development of and support of intercity bus transportation service. Section 5311 funds are apportioned to each state for distribution to eligible recipients. Eligible recipients of this funding include the state and local governments, Indian Tribes, non-profit organizations and public transportation operators. Each year these eligible recipients must submit an application to MDOT for funding through this program. The Section 5311 federal funds may be used to pay for capital, operating, planning and administrative costs. The maximum federal share for capital projects and project administration is 80 percent. The maximum federal share for operating assistance is 50 percent of eligible operating expenses. For budget planning purposes MDOT has advised public transportation agencies to anticipate in their individual budget plans that the Section 5311 operating funds will cover approximately 16 percent of eligible operating expenses in FY 2012. The federal apportionment to Michigan under the Section 5311 Program for FY 2011 is approximately \$17.2 million.

Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities – Section 5310

This Federal Transit Administration program provides formula funding to the state for the purpose of assisting private non-profit groups in meeting the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities, when traditional transportation service is unavailable, insufficient or inappropriate. The program goal is to improve the mobility for elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities in urban,

small urban and rural areas of the country. Section 5310 funds are apportioned to each state for distribution. Eligible sub-recipients of this funding are private non-profit organizations or a governmental authority. The Section 5310 federal funds may be used for capital expenses to support the provision of transportation services. Eligible project activities include purchase or lease of buses, vans, radios, vehicles, and wheelchair lifts, etc. The maximum federal share is 80 percent, except for vehicle related equipment and facilities required by the Clean Air Act (CAA) or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in which case the maximum federal share is 90 percent. Applications for these funds are made annually through the Michigan Department of Transportation. Proposed projects must be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. The federal apportionment to Michigan under the Section 5310 Program for FY 2011 is approximately \$4.3 million. The Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency (CLMCAA) has been a recipient of these funds for capital equipment. Two of the buses financed through this program are utilized by CLMCAA to provide service in Mackinac County.

Bus and Bus Facility Discretionary Grant Program – Section 5309

This federal transit program provides capital assistance for new and replacement buses, related equipment and facilities. The program goal is to support, maintain and expand existing transit services and support development of new and expanded transit services. Eligible recipients of this funding are states, public transit agencies, public boards and commissions, Indian Tribes, etc. Eligible projects activities include purchase or lease of buses, construction or purchase of bus maintenance and administrative facilities, intermodal terminals, park-and-ride stations, shelters, signs, parts, radios, computers, and shop and garage equipment, etc. The maximum federal share is 80 percent. SAFETEA-LU provides the Secretary of Transportation the discretion to allocate these funds, although historically Congress has fully earmarked all available funding under this program. Transit operators in the Michigan have in the past worked closely with MDOT and their Congressional Representative and United States Senators to secure funding from this federal transit program for transit capital projects. This is a nationally competitive program so there is no established apportionment to each state. Michigan’s transit operators have traditionally worked together to prioritize capital needs and have successfully pursued funds under this program.

Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC) – Section 5316

This FTA program was established to address the unique transportation challenges faced by welfare recipients and low-income persons seeking to obtain and maintain employment. Many new jobs are located in suburban areas and many entry level jobs require working late at night or on weekends, when traditional transit services may be reduced or not available. Across the United States, the eligible direct recipient of this funding in non-urbanized areas is the state. The Michigan Department of Transportation is the direct recipient of these funds for non-urbanized areas in Michigan. Eligible sub-recipients include private non-profit organizations, state or local governmental authorities and operators of public transit services. Eligible project activities include late-night and weekend service, guaranteed ride home, demand response service, marketing activities, etc. The maximum federal share for capital projects is 80 percent and the maximum share for operating cost may not exceed 50 percent of the net operating cost of the proposed activity. Some technical and planning costs can be funded up to 100 percent by the FTA. The federal apportionment to non-urbanized areas in Michigan for FY 2011 is approximately \$1 million. Applications for JARC funding in non-urbanized areas is made through the MDOT annually. The proposed project must be derived from a locally developed coordinated public transit – human services transportation plan.

New Freedom Formula Grant Program – Section 5317

This federal transit program seeks to reduce barriers to transportation services and expand the transportation mobility options available to persons with disabilities beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Eligible direct recipients of this funding for the non-urbanized areas are the states. Eligible sub-recipients include private non-profit organizations, state or local governmental authorities and operators of public transit services. Eligible Project activities include new transportation services beyond ADA requirements and enhancing para-transit beyond minimum requirements of ADA. Funds may also be used to purchase and operate accessible vehicles for taxi use, ridesharing or carpooling, support for new volunteer driver and aide programs, and other innovative approaches. The maximum federal share for capital projects is 80 percent and the maximum share for operating costs may not exceed 50 percent of the net operating cost of the activity. Some technical and planning costs can be funded at up to 100 percent by the FTA. Application for New Freedom funding in non-urbanized areas is made annually through MDOT. The federal apportionment to non-urbanized areas in Michigan for FY 2011 is approximately \$670,000. The proposed projects must be derived from a locally developed coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.

Transit in the Park Discretionary Program – Section 5320

This federal transit program funds capital and planning expenses for alternative transportation systems in parks and public lands. The goals of the program are to conserve natural, historic and cultural resources; reduce congestion and pollution; improve visitors mobility and accessibility; enhance visitors experience; and, insure access to all including persons with disabilities through alternative transportation projects. Project include the purchase of buses, the purchase or construction of bus facilities, installation of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), bike way and trail connections (that mitigate the number of automobile trips) and feasibility studies. Eligible recipients of this funding include federal land management agencies, and state, Tribal and local governments acting with the consent of a federal land management agency. The National Forest Service is an eligible federal Land Management Agency. The Hiawatha National Forest comprises 23 percent of the land acreage in Mackinac County. This is a very competitive program with a yearly call for projects. In 2010 a total of \$26.8 million was appropriated for this program and a total of 73 applicants were received for projects totaling \$83 million. Projects can be funded at up to 100 percent federal share.

Tribal Transit Program – Section 5311 (c)

Public Transportation on Indian Reservations Discretionary Program is the primary program administered by the FTA to address tribal transportation needs. This program provides tribal transit grants made directly to a federally recognized tribes from the FTA, respecting tribal sovereignty issues. The goals of the program are to:

- Enhance the access of public transportation on and around Indian reservations in non-urbanized areas to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services and recreation;
- Assist in the maintenance, development, improvement and use of public transit systems in rural and small urban areas;
- Encourage and facilitate the most efficient use of all federal funds to provide passenger transportation services in non-urbanized areas through coordination of programs and services; and,
- Provide for the participation of private transportation providers in non-urbanized transportation to the maximum extent feasible.



SAFETEA-LU authorized \$15 million for this program in 2009. The funds may be used for capital, operating, planning and administrative purposes. Projects selected for funding can be funded up to 100 percent of their cost. Funds are allocated based on an annual national competitive application process conducted by the FTA. On March 9, 2012, the FTA issued an announcement that \$15 million was available under the Tribal Transit Program and that it would begin accepting applications for the funding. The application due date was May 10, 2012. Mackinac County is included within the service area of the Sault Ste. Marie Band of Chippewa Indians.

Other FTA Program and Funding Opportunities

In addition to the traditional FTA programs listed above there are other federal discretionary programs through which transit projects are eligible for funding. These programs include Transportation Investment for Greenhouse Gas and Energy Reduction (TIGGER Grants), Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) and specific livability and sustainability initiatives. These are competitive initiatives with a nationwide solicitation for projects. In addition there are also specific Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) programs that allow for highway program funds to be used for either roadway projects or transit projects. The allocation of the highway federal funds for transit projects is often made locally by the Federal Aid Committee, of which the local transit agency is a member.

Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)

In addition to the federal transit programs described above, the state of Michigan, through the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) also provides state funds for the support of various public transit programs. The MDOT transit programs and funding are authorized in Public Act 51 of 1951 as amended (Public Act 51). The direct participation in the MDOT financed transit programs are limited to eligible authorities and eligible governmental agencies as defined in Public Act 51.

The MDOT financed transportation programs described below complement and support may of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs listed above by providing all or portion of the non-federal match for capital projects or supplement the federal and local funding of eligible operating expenses. The MDOT transit programs described below are those programs most applicable to the provision of local public transportation services in non-urbanized areas such as Mackinac County.

Local Bus Operating Assistance

The Local Bus Operating Assistance program annually provides a distribution of MDOT funds to eligible authorities and governmental agencies for the payment of eligible transit operating expenses. The Local Bus operating assistance distribution supplements federal and local funds used to pay transit operating expenses. The Local Bus Operating Assistance funds are distributed to local transit agencies through a formula that is based upon the annual state appropriation for this program and the eligible operating expenses of all of the transit agencies in the state. Public Act 51 authorizes non-urban transit systems to receive up to 60 percent of their eligible expenses through this program. Due to limited state revenues; MDOT has advised transit agencies to assume the FY 2012 Local Bus Operating Assistance will provide approximately 36.24 percent of the eligible operating expense for non-urban/rural transit systems. This is MDOT's largest public transit program distributing approximately \$166.6 million to more than 70 transit system across the state.

Bus Capital

MDOT assists local transit agencies by providing matching funds for the non-federal share of capital grants. The FTA provides capital grants for items such as the purchase of buses, the purchase and construction of bus facilities, certain equipment, bus shelters, radio and dispatch equipment, fueling facilities, etc. The FTA provides 80 percent of the capital cost and historically MDOT has provided the 20 percent match for federal transit capital grants. However due to the lack of state transportation revenue in recent years MDOT has not been able to match all of the federal capital funds and has prioritized the use of the bus capital funds, giving a higher priority to capital replacement items such as the replacement of buses over expansion or new items. In FY 2012 MDOT was appropriated approximately \$16.7 million in Comprehensive Transportation Funds (CTF) to distribute as match for bus capital projects across the state. Due to the shortage of state funds, MDOT has also used toll credits as a match for federal transit capital funds.

Specialized Service Program

The Specialized Service Program focuses on supporting transit services specifically for the elderly and handicapped in areas where transit service does not exist or where transit services do not meet the needs of elderly and handicapped. local coordination is a requirement for submitting an application for funds. The coordination may be with existing transit operators, Section 5310 agencies and non-profit corporations representing specialized service interest, such as an area agency on aging or the Department of Human Services. This program provides operating support and complements the Federal Section 5310 Program mentioned above. Operating funds are based on a rate per mile or a rate per one-way passenger trip. The operating funds can also be used to pay volunteer drivers. The existing rates are \$1.20 per mile, \$4.07 per one way trip and 0.29 per mile for volunteer drives. There is an established maximum dollar amount e for each entity receiving funds through this program. For FY 2012 the appropriation for this program is approximately \$3.9 million from the CTF. Mackinac County currently receives funding through the Specialized Service Program and passes the funding on to the Chippewa, Luce, Mackinac Community Action Agency, which in turn provides the specialized service in Mackinac County. The current level of operating funds is \$25,842.

Transportation to Work

The Transportation to Work Program provides state funds to match the FTA Section 5316 Jobs Assess/Reverse Commute Program and Section 5317 New Freedom Funds Program. As noted above the Section 5316 Program focuses on providing transit services to address the unique transportation challenges faced by welfare recipients and low-income person seeking to obtain and maintain employment, while the Section 5317 program focuses on reducing barriers to transportation services and expanding transportation mobility options to person with disabilities beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In FY 2012 approximately \$ 4.7 million was appropriated for this program from the CTF.

Van Pooling

MDOT provides limited operating support for the Michigan Van Commuter Vanpool Program. The program is administered by VPSI Inc. This program is designed to provide commuters who live and work in the same area the ability to ride to and from work each day in a comfortable van. There can be multiple pick-up and drop off points, so all of the riders do not have to work at the same location. The person designated to drive the van rides free in exchange for taking care of the van. Taking care of the van



includes washing and cleaning the van, providing scheduled and unscheduled maintenance and preparing and submitting reports per MDOT requirements. Vans range in size from a seven-passenger minivan to a 15 passenger full-size van. The driver also may use the vehicle after work and on weekends for up to 200 miles per month. The riders are assessed a monthly fee that can be paid by the rider, the employer or a combination of both. The minimum ridership requirement including the driver is five people. The monthly passenger fare is based upon the miles driven and the size of the van. Prices can range from \$60 per month per person for use of a 15 passenger van traveling up to 30 one way miles per day to \$220 per month per person for use of a 7 passenger van traveling 61 to 90 one way miles per day. The Van Pooling Program was appropriated \$195,000 in Fiscal Year 2012 from the CTF.

Intercity Bus Program

In addition to the MDOT state transportation programs listed above both the Federal Transit Administration through the Section 5311 Program and MDOT through the Intercity Bus Program provides operating and capital funding to support Intercity Bus Service. MDOT subsidizes Intercity Bus service routes in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan with routes from Mackinac County to major communities such as Sault Ste Marie, Houghton/Hancock, Ironwood, Menominee, as well as other locations along the routes. MDOT also subsidizes Intercity Bus services on routes from Mackinac County to Grand Rapids, Lansing and Bay City, as well as other locations along the routes. This service is provided by Indian Trails through an operating contract with MDOT. Intercity bus riders in Mackinac County have the opportunity to travel to locations throughout Michigan and the United States through interline connections. Residents from other locations can use this intercity bus service to come to Mackinac County. MDOT encourages Indian Trails to work with local communities and transit providers in the coordination of transportation services and facilities.

There are three Indian Trails bus stops in Mackinac County, with the primary stop being the city-owned Transportation Center in St. Ignace. Other stops in Mackinac County include Engadine (Mobile Gas Station) and Gould City (FOE).

Locally Generated

There are four primary sources of locally generated funds to support public transit services. It is important to note that local transit agencies have traditionally used and depended on a combination of these four funding sources to provide the locally generated funds to support their operations.

Local Tax Support

There are two options:

- (a) **Local Public Transit Dedicated Millage:** The authority to seek voter approval for a dedicated millage to support public transit operations is dependent on the organizational structure under which the transit agency is established. Certain public acts allow public transit agencies to seek a dedicated millage. Approximately 59 transit agencies have a dedicated millage. The millages vary significantly in amount and duration between individual local transit agencies. See the structure and governance chapter of this report for more information on the transit related public acts that allow local millages.

- (b) **Local Governmental Contribution:** Local governments, through their respective budget process, can and do allocate local tax dollars to support the provision of public transit services. This is most common in city- and county-operated transit services.

Farebox Revenue

The vast majority of local transit agencies in the state charge passengers a fare to ride the bus. The amount of the fare is established locally. State law requires transit agencies to provide senior citizens and disabled/handicapped riders half fare rates during non-peak hours. There are a number of factors that can go into establishing a fare structure including distance traveled, time of day, ease of collection, fares for other services, etc. Another factor that can drive the establishment of the fare structure is the philosophical/policy consideration involving how much a user of the transit service pays versus how much non-users pay through local tax support. This is often influenced by the how local leaders view public transit. It is important to establish a fare policy when starting a new public transit system.

Contract/Purchase of Services Agreements

Many local transit agencies enter into contracts with other organizations, often human service agencies, for purchase of transit service for their clients. The contract service rates, type of service, hours of service and other service elements are negotiated by the local transit agency and the organization purchasing the services. Structured properly, a purchase of services agreement can benefit both the local transit agency and the organization purchasing the services. A purchase of services agreement between a local transit agency and a human services agency for example can benefit the local transit agency by providing a continuous source of revenue and ridership to the local transit agency, while benefiting the human services agency by eliminating the operating burden of providing transportation services for their clients. This in turn allows the purchaser of the services to focus on their core services.

Advertising Revenue

Local transit agencies can also generate local revenue by allowing advertising on their vehicles or on printed materials such as schedules or on other agency-owned assets, such as bus shelters, benches, etc. The decision to pursue advertising revenue should proceed only after the development and adoption of a policy or guidelines that identify the type of advertising that will be allowed, the rates, the duration of the advertising and other related issues.

9 Governance and Organizational Alternatives

Unlike other counties that already have a public transit agency established and operating, Mackinac County has the opportunity to start with a clean slate and establish a public transit agency with a governance and organizational structures that best meets the transportation needs of the residents of Mackinac County. The identification and selection of a particular governance and organizational structure should be a decision made in conjunction with and in consideration of the particular transit service option that best meets the public transit needs of the residents of Mackinac County. The following information will provide the basic overview of governance and organizational options and issues that must be addressed for the establishment of a standalone public transit agency within Mackinac County.

Statutory Governance Options

The establishment of a standalone public transit service agency in Mackinac County requires the legal incorporation of a public transit agency under a specific state statute. The legal incorporation of the public transit agency will make that public transit agency eligible for funding from both state and federal transportation programs. The selection of the appropriate state statute under which the public transit agency is organized is a very important decision. The state statute will define not only the governance structure of the public transit agency, but will also address other important items such as the operating service area of the public transit agency and the local funding options.

The list of state statutes which can be used to incorporate public transit agencies and allow the public transit agency to be eligible for state and federal funding can be found in Public Act 51 of 1951 as amended. Public Act 51 of 1951 as amended (PA 51) is the public act that establishes the state of Michigan's Transportation Program, including the Comprehensive Transportation Fund (CTF). The revenue within the CTF funds a portion of the operating expenses and capital costs of the public transit agencies in the State of Michigan. PA 51 further defines who is eligible to receive funding from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) through the CTF for the provision of public transit services. PA 51 also establishes the method for distributing the CTF to local transit providers.

There are two key definitions contained in PA 51 that identify who is eligible to receive CTF funds from MDOT for public transit services. Those two definitions are:

- (1) "Eligible Authority" - Section 10c (b) of PA 51 defines an "Eligible Authority" to mean an authority organized pursuant to Act No. 204 of the Public Acts of 1967 (The Metropolitan Transportation Authorities Act of 1967).
- (2) "Eligible Governmental Agency" - Section 10c(c) of PA 51 defines "Eligible Governmental Agency" to mean a county, city or village or an authority created pursuant to one of the following Public Acts, (listed by date of enactment):

- Act No. 94 of the Public Acts of 1933 (The Revenue Bond Act of 1933);
- Act No. 35 of the Public Acts of 1951 (Intergovernmental Contracts Between Municipal Corporations) ;
- Act No. 55 of the Public Acts of 1963 (The Mass Transportation System Authorities Act of 1963);
- Act No. 7 of the Public Acts of the Extra Session of 1967 (Urban Cooperation Act of 1967 Ex Session);
- Act No. 8 of the Public Acts of the Extra Session of 1967 (Intergovernmental Transfer of Functions and Responsibilities Act of 1967 Ex Session); and,
- Act No. 196 of the Public Acts of 1986 (Public Transportation Authority Act of 1986).

As stated above, a public transit agency must be an “eligible authority” or an “eligible governmental” agency to be considered eligible to receive CTF operating and or capital funds from MDOT.

There are 78 public transit agencies in Michigan, providing fixed-route and or demand-response services. Of the 78 public transit agencies 20 are classified as urbanized public transit agencies because they operate primarily in urbanized areas of the state and the remaining 58 are classified as non-urban public transit agencies because they operate primarily in non-urbanized areas of the state. If a public transit agency is established in Mackinac County it would be classified as a non-urban public transit agency.

The number of public transit agencies organized under each of the specific Public Acts listed above is summarized as follows:

- Act No. 204 of 1967 – 1;
- Act No. 94 of 1933 – 21;
- Act No. 35 of 1951 – none;
- Act No. 55 of 1963 – 4;
- Act No. 7 of 1967 Ex Session – 8;
- Act No. 8 of 1967 Ex Session – none; and,
- Act No. 196 of 1986 – 22.

In addition to the specific public acts identified above a public transit agency can, as defined in PA 51 also meet the definition of “eligible governmental agency” if they are part of the service structure of a county, City or Village.

Of the 78 public transit agencies in the State of Michigan 21 of the public transit agencies are operated as departments or agencies of a county. Since there is no public act that authorizes or identifies general county functions and services, Act No. 94 of the Public Acts of 1933 as amended (The Revenue Bond Act of 1933) is utilized as the legal basis of eligibility for all 21 county operating public transit agencies. The following is a list of the 21 counties that operate transit service directly or indirectly under Public Act 94 of 1933 as amended.

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Allegan County | Gladwin County | Muskegon County |
| Antrim County | Huron County | Ogemaw County |
| Barry County | Iosco County | Ontonagon County |
| Berrien County | Lenawee County | Otsego County |
| Charlevoix County | Livingston County | Sanilac County |
| Cheboygan County | Manistee County | Schoolcraft County |
| Clare County | Midland County | Van Buren County |

It is important to note that other counties not listed above may be involved in the incorporation of a public transit agency, through one of the other public acts mentioned above.

Public Act No: 279 of the Public Acts of 1909 as amended (The Home Rule City Act) is the public act which provides for the incorporation of a city and authorizes various city functions including the provision of transportation services. In Michigan 21 public transit agencies operate under the Home Rule City Act. The following is a list of the 21 cities organized and providing public transit services under The Home Rule City Act.

Adrian	Dowagic	Ionia
Alma	Grand Haven*	Kalamazoo
Alpena	Greenville	Marshall
Battle Creek	Hancock	Midland
Belding	Hillsdale	Milan
Buchanan	Holland	Niles
Detroit	Houghton	Sault Ste. Marie

* Note: The City of Grand Haven in conjunction with three of the neighboring governmental entities has established a Public Act 196 Authority and is currently in the process of transitioning from a City Department to the new authority, Harbor Transit Multi-Modal Transportation System.

Although not specifically referenced in PA 51, information provided by MDOT indicates that a public transit agency may also legally be organized under Public Act No 359 of the Public Acts of 1947 as amended (The Charter Township Act) based on the Attorney General’s Opinion No. 5043 dated June 24, 1976. In that opinion the Attorney General determined in part that chartered or un-chartered townships may establish public transportation systems either independently or through a joint entity created pursuant to the Urban Cooperation Act of 1967 (Act No. 7 of 1967 Ex. Session). Further that a chartered or unchartered township may avail itself of the financing alternatives (special assessments and special assessment bonds) available under the Township and Village Public Improvement Act (Public Act No. 116 of the Public Acts of 1923 as amended) and the Revenue Bond Act (Public Act No 94 of the Public Acts of 1933 as amended). The Yates Township Dial-A-Ride, located in Lake County is the only public transit agency organized under Act No. 359 of the Public Acts of 1947 (The Charter Township Act).

Of the list of the statutory options under which a public transit agency can be established, there are certain statutory options that are not applicable to the establishment of transit services in Mackinac County. The following public acts are not being considered as the legal basis for the establishment of a new public transit agency in Mackinac County for the following reasons:

- Public Act No. 204 of 1967 – The Metropolitan Transportation Authorities Act of 1967, because the provisions in Act 204 are only applicable to the governmental entities in the Southeast Michigan Metropolitan Region.
- Public Act No. 35 of 1951 – Intergovernmental Contracts Between Municipal Corporations, because no public transit agencies in Michigan are currently organized under this act
- Public Act No. 8 of the Extra Session of 1967 – Intergovernmental Transfer of Functions and Responsibilities Act of 1967 Ex Session, because no public transit agencies in Michigan are organized under this act and there is no existing public transit function in Mackinac County to be transferred.
- Public Act No 359 of 1947 – The Charter Township Act, because it is not one of the public acts identified in PA 51. As reflected in the Attorney General’s opinion referenced above a Township chartered or unchartered can own, operate, etc a public transit system under the authority provided within the Urban Cooperation Act or the Revenue Bond Act, which will be summarized below. Further the Attorney General’s opinion was written in 1976, prior to the passage of PA

196 of 1986. Public Act 196 incorporates Townships as entities that can form public transportation authorities.

- Public Act No. 55 of 1963 – Mass Transportation Authorities Act, because only cities with a population of less than 300,000 can organize a public transit agency under this Public Act.
- Public Act No. 279 of 1909 – The Home Rule City Act, because only a city can organize a public transit agency under this Public Act.

The following is a summary of the key provisions for the remaining three public acts under which 51 of the 78 public transit systems in Michigan are established. These three remaining Public Acts provide Mackinac County with alternative governance and organizational options that can be used to establish a public transit agency that can best serves the citizens of Mackinac County.

	PA 94 of 1933 Revenue Bond Act	PA 7 of 1967 Ex Session Urban Cooperation Act	PA 196 of 1986 Public Transportation Authority Act
# of System	21	8	22
Who can organize:	One of the following or a combination:	Two or more of the following:	One of the following or a combination:
City	Yes	Yes	Yes
Village	Yes	Yes	Yes
Township	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ch. Township	Not identified	Yes	Not identified
County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Others	Yes	Yes	No
Organization	A Public Corporation	An administrative/legal entity i.e. commission, board or council	A Public Authority
Board Membership	If necessary established by Charter of Public Corp.	Established in a contract between governmental entities	Established by Articles of Incorporation
Activities	Undertake Public Improvements set forth in statute; including transportation system	Joint exercise of powers that agencies share in common and that each might exercise separately.	Plan, promote, finance, improve, enlarge, extend, own, construct, operate, maintain, and contract for public transit services.
Taxing Authority	No	No	Yes
Bonding Authority	Yes	Yes	Yes
Service Area	Within Corporate limits and outside of corporate limits subject to legal rights of the subdivision.	Limited to the jurisdiction of the member units	Established by Articles of Incorporation – may follow precinct lines
Comments	Used by 21 counties as legal basis to operate a Public Transit Service and secure MDOT funds.	Not Public Transit focused but can be used to carry out transit services. Flexible, and requires Governor approval	Public Transit focused. Flexible. Most comprehensive Public Transit Leg. Powers defined.

There is no one correct public act under which to organize a public transit agency. The number of public transit agencies organized under the public acts listed above reflects that fact. The consideration and



selection of a preferred governance option should be made based upon a structure that can operate successfully within Mackinac County.

The following sub-section is intended to help further refine which governance and organizational structure will work best in Mackinac County by examining five very important governance and organizational policy issues.

Governance and Organizational Policy Issues

The determination of which of the three public acts describes above can be used to establish a public transit system for Mackinac County, that best meets the public transit needs of the residents, requires, at a minimum, the review and consideration of the following five primary governance and organizational policy issues:

- Governing Body
- Membership
- Services Area
- Funding
- Operations/Staffing

It is important that there be general concurrence concerning the governance and organizational policy issues early in the process in order to avoid conflicts when actually establishing a public transit agency. The governance and organizational policy issues should also be reviewed at a later date with the development of the service plan options to assure proper integration of the governance/organizational structure with the preferred service plan.

Governing Body Policy Issue

A governing public body must be in place to oversee and guide the operation of the public transit agency. The role and responsibility of the governing body may include items such as hiring the director of the public transit agency, approving contracts, accepting federal and state funding, approving budgets, setting hours of operation and fares, making decisions on local funding and other operating and policy considerations as required by federal and state statutes, regulations and rules.

Policy Consideration: Who should undertake the role of the governing body in Mackinac County? The County Commission or an independent authority established by the County Board or other units of government?

Governing Body Membership Policy Issue

Local Officials or members of the public may comprise the membership of the governing body. If the public transit agency is established as a county department or agency of the county the governing body membership will most likely be comprised of the County Commissioners or individuals appointed by the County Commissioners. However, if an independent authority, commission or board is used to govern the public transit agency, the makeup of the governing body membership will have to be determined including number of members, term, quorum, etc.

Policy Consideration: What would be the ideal make up of the governing body of a public transit agency in Mackinac County?

Service Area Policy Issue

Each public transit agency in the State of Michigan has a specific service area within which it is authorized to provide service. Service area limits are set forth within the public acts listed above. The service area of a public transit agency in Mackinac County could include the total county, individual or linked communities (cities/townships) within the county or include specific geographic areas in the county. The service area consideration and the preferred service plan must be compatible to the extent that the actual transit services do not operate outside of the service area. The consideration of the service area can also impact the decision on governing body membership and local funding options.

Policy Consideration: Should the service area for Mackinac County be the total county or a focused geographic area within the county?

Funding Policy Issue

The existing structure for financing the operations of public transit agencies in the State of Michigan requires the establishment of a local source of funds to support for the provision of transit service. The local source of funds can include a contribution of funds from the county or other governmental agencies or special voter approved taxes (millage) to support transit service along with farebox revenue. As noted above consideration and decision on local funding can impact service area and governing body membership.

Policy Consideration: What is the preferred way to provide local financial support for a public transit agency in Mackinac County? Options include a governmental contribution, countywide millage, millage in just the areas receiving public transit service, other.

Operations/Staffing Policy Issue

The day-to-day operation of a public transit agency in Mackinac County will require bus drivers, dispatchers, administrative staff, and perhaps the use of mechanics. To the extent that individuals will be hired for these positions, those employees will be entitled to wage and benefit packages made available from their employer. Thus, for a county run transit system, the employees would most likely be subject to county wage and benefit packages. Likewise employees of an authority, commission or board would be subject to the wage and benefit package established by the governing body of the authority, commission or board. In lieu of hiring new employees it may be possible to re-assign existing employees to the transit system. Another alternative is to solicit competitive contracts for the provision of transit service from private service providers. The range of services provided by a private provider can be limited to just management staff or extend to full staffing including drivers, mechanics.

Policy Consideration: Does Mackinac County have a preference on whether the employees are under the control of the county or the control of an independent authority, commission or board separate from the county? Is there a preference for the public transit service to be provided by government employees or the employees of a private operation? Compensation/benefits and other issues may impact this policy consideration.



Alternative Option

As indicated in the first paragraph of this section the options presented above are based upon the establishment of a “standalone” public transit agency in Mackinac County. In addition to the governance and organizational structure options described above, Mackinac County may consider joining the Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority (EUPTA). EUPTA is a Public Act 196 Authority. By joining EUPTA many of the governance and organizational issues will have been addressed within the EUPTA articles of incorporation. However, the governance and organizational issues that would need to be addressed include membership on the EUPTA Board, the inclusion of all or part of Mackinac County within EUPTA, the amount of local financial support and the level of service that EUPTA would provide.

10 Recommendations

The recommendations of the Mackinac County Public Transportation Feasibility Study are grouped into three time periods, short-term, mid-term and long-term. The recommendations for each time period have been developed with a specific goal or a focus for the time period.

Short-term Recommendations

The goal in the short term is to maximize existing service and prepare for implementation of demonstration service. As a means of achieving this goal, two projects have been identified. The first of these is a review of the existing Specialized Service program in Mackinac County and maximize its use through a series of actions. This is the program designed to serve senior citizens and persons with disabilities. These are typically transit dependent populations and are individuals most in need of public transportation. The second is to hire a mobility manager for the county.

Maximize Specialized Services Program

Currently, Mackinac County provides funding to the Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency for the provision of Specialized Transportation service in Mackinac County for the senior lunch program. The CLMCAA provides the service. CLMCAA operates two vehicles, and transports 1,441 total passengers per year. The current service averages only 14 passengers per week. The service is provided on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and the vehicles are also used to make meals-on-wheels deliveries.

Several subtasks, as identified below, will need to occur to maximize the service provided with the existing Specialized Services resources.

Transportation for Other Types of Trips beyond Senior Lunch Trips

One way to increase the use of the existing Specialized Services vehicles is to make them available for trips other than just to meal sites.

This would require renegotiating service with the CLMCAA to provide trips to the elderly and disabled for other purposes such as medical trips, grocery shopping and perhaps some social outings. It would also require additional operating funds. The current annual Mackinac County Specialized Services operating funding from MDOT is \$25,842. This covers transportation to meal sites three days per week.

Quarterly Reporting

In order to monitor progress a quarterly reporting process should be set up with CLMCAA to brief the Mackinac County Commission on services provided. The quarterly reports could also be a mechanism to document any unmet transportation needs.

Marketing Campaign

The existing service may be underused because the elderly and disabled population is unaware of the service. Only 8.5 percent of transportation needs survey respondents were aware of the service. The county could work through the appropriate social service agencies as a means of informing the elderly and disabled of the service. Agencies and organizations that could distribute information on available transportation resources include the Department of Human Services, the Health Department, veterans' services, and the Sault Tribe Strategic Alliance.

Fare Policy

In the event service to the general public is developed, there will need to be a fare. Thus, a fare policy should be established and a fare per trip implemented. Agencies and organizations will have the ability to subsidize or buy passes for their clientele.

Additional Specialized Service Funding

In the event that demand exceeds the existing Specialized Service resources, the county should seek additional Specialized Service funding through MDOT.

New or Additional Provider

Providing additional Specialized Services may be outside the mission or capabilities of the existing provider. It may be necessary for the county to work with a different human services agency or organization to provide expanded Specialized Service.

Hire a Transportation Mobility Manager for Mackinac County

The primary focus of the mobility manager would be to improve local public transit services in Mackinac County. The primary responsibilities of a mobility manager include: coordination of existing public and private transportation services and service providers and the marketing of their services; working with human service agencies, businesses, employers and others such as the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians; identification and documentation of unmet transportation needs; applying for federal and state transportation grants; and, representing Mackinac County in the development of a new or revised locally developed Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan. The Mobility Manager will be tasked with coordinating the planning for the establishment of public transit demonstration projects in Mackinac County as described in the mid-term recommendations. There must be a person responsible for coordinating this effort, making all necessary contacts and collecting all of the required data. A sample job description for a mobility manager is in Appendix C. The annual cost of this position will be approximately \$75,000 with salary and fringe benefits. Additional funds will be required for setting up the office.

In non-urbanized areas such as Mackinac County, federal funding for Mobility Management Activities is available through the following Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Programs:

- Section 5310 – Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities¹
- Section 5316 – Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program
- Section 5317 – New Freedom Formula Grant Program

Also federally recognized Indian Tribes are eligible to receive federal funding for Mobility Management Activities through the following FTA Program:

- Section 5311(c) – Tribal Transit Program

Additional information about each of these programs can be found in Chapter 8 of this report.

Mobility Management Activities are an eligible capital expense under the Section 5310, 5316 and 5317 FTA Programs. FTA will provide up to 80 percent of the funding for this eligible activity. Historically the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has provided the 20 percent non-federal match for capital projects. Mobility Management Activities are also eligible capital expenses under the Section 5311 (c) Tribal Transit Program. Under the Section 5311 (c) Tribal Transit Program the FTA will provide up to 100 percent of the funding for eligible activities.

Eligible Mobility Management Activities include:

- The promotion, enhancement and facilitation of access to transportation services, including the integration and coordination of services for individuals with disabilities, older adults and low income individuals;
- Support for short-term management activities to plan and implement coordinated services;
- Support local partnerships that coordinate transportation services;
- The operation of transportation brokerages to coordinate providers, funding agencies and customers;
- The development and operation of one-stop transportation traveler call centers to coordinate transportation information on all travel modes and to manage eligibility requirements and arrangements for customers travel
- Plan and implement the acquisition and purchase of intelligent transportation technologies to operate a coordinated transportation system.

Individual projects funded through the Section 5310, 5316 and 5317 Program including mobility management activities must be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.

¹ The capital cost associated with the buses currently used for Specialized Transportation Service in Mackinac County provided through the Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency (CLMCAA) were financed with federal funds through the Section 5310 –Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities Program.

The steps for implementation of mobility management activities in Mackinac County should include:

1. A review of the existing locally developed coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan to determine if there are any mobility management activities identified in the existing plan. The Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority (EUPTA) developed the existing plan;
2. The identification and development (goals/objectives) of specific mobility management activities Mackinac County would like to pursue.
3. The amendment of the locally developed coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan to include the selected mobility management activities, if those activities are not included within the existing plan.
4. Coordinate and work with the MDOT project manager (currently Chuck Lindstrom) on the implementation of a mobility management program in Mackinac County. Working with the MDOT project manager, Mackinac County should identify which of the federal programs listed above (Section 5310, 5316 or 5317) provides the best opportunity for funding and identify the application process, forms and deadlines that must be met in order to apply for federal and state funds for the proposed mobility management activities.
5. Prepare and submit the application for funding of the mobility management activities.

In lieu of Mackinac County pursuing a direct grant for the implementation of mobility management activities, the County could initiate discussions with the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians regarding the Tribe submitting a Section 5311 (c) Tribal Transit Program funding application for mobility management activities within the tribal service area. The tribal service area of the Sault Ste Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians is a seven-county area in the Upper Peninsula which includes Mackinac County. While the primary focus of a tribal Transit Grant for mobility management purposes would focus on tribal mobility issues, it could possible incorporate some benefits for Mackinac County.

Mid-term Recommendations

The goal of the mid-term recommendations is the implementation and evaluation of demonstration services. The outcome of the demonstration service(s) will indicate the receptiveness of Mackinac County residents to public transit services.

Establish a Demonstration Public Transit Service in Mackinac County (City of St. Ignace, St. Ignace Township, Mackinac Township and Clark Township)

This can be done by either contracting with EUPTA in the form of a purchase of services agreement or Mackinac County can provide the services directly. The most cost effective method and the method that would be easiest to implement would be the contracting with EUPTA.

The minimum service area for the demonstration services should include: City of St. Ignace, St. Ignace Township, Mackinac Township and Clark Township. This would make transit service available to approximately 57 percent of the county's population (excluding island population). On-call dial-a-ride service should be the service in the City of St. Ignace with scheduled services from the City of St. Ignace to Hessel/Cedarville and Kincheloe to coordinate with EUPTA service (Figure 10-1). The minimum

demonstration period should be three to four years. A demonstration period of three to four years will allow for start-up, marketing, summer tourist service, service adjustments/evaluation and time for transitional planning.

The organization's structure would depend on whether service was purchased from EUPTA or if the county operated the service directly. If the service was provided under contract by EUPTA, Mackinac County would negotiate a Public Act 7 Inter-Local Agreement and a purchase of services agreement with EUPTA. The agreed to level of service will drive the cost and level of financial support required by the service users through fares and by Mackinac County residents. If the county operated the service directly, Mackinac County would establish a public transit agency under the provision of Public Act 94 of 1933, The Revenue Bond Act, for the provision of transit service. The use of Public Act 94 of 1933 would allow Mackinac County to remain in direct operational control of the public transit service during the demonstration period and receive federal and state transit funding for a portion of the operating cost.

The cost of providing the service would be dependent on the amount of service provided. Assuming eight hours of service per day on weekdays, with one vehicle, the operating cost would be approximately \$146,000 per year. This is based on an estimated hourly operating cost of \$70.

For Michigan transit systems operating in non-urbanized areas, approximately 16 percent of annual operating expenses are covered by the FTA. The state, on average, provides assistance totaling 36.4 percent of annual operating costs. This leaves approximately 47.6 percent of the operating costs which must be covered by fares, contracts and other locally generated funds. For this service option, Mackinac County would need to come up with approximately \$69,500 annually from fares, contracts and other local funds on an annual basis to fund operations.

Establish a Demonstration Public Transit Service in Mackinac County (Newton, Garfield, Hudson, Hendricks and Moran Townships)

It is recommended that the county negotiate a purchase of services contract with Schoolcraft County Public transportation for services into Mackinac County. The primary minimum service area for the demonstration service would be along U.S. 2 from the Counties western border to Naubinway or St. Ignace. This would be fixed-route service with designated stops along U.S. 2. Service would be provided two times per day (Figure 10-2). This would provide limited service options to individuals in Newton, Garfield, Hudson, Hendricks and Moran Townships. Approximately 26 percent of the county's population resides in these townships. The minimum demonstration period should be two to three years. Another alternative would be a demonstration service in the form of a fixed route connection from Schoolcraft County to Curtis in Portage Township. The service to Curtis should also incorporate a designated stop and pick-up point in Newton Township if US-2 is used as the route to provide the service to Curtis. Portage and Newton account for approximately 12 percent of the county's population. A demonstration period of two to three years allows for start-up, marketing, establishment of pick-up points, service adjustments/evaluation and time for transitional planning.

Figure 10-1
Demonstration Project Serving City of St. Ignace and Eastern Townships

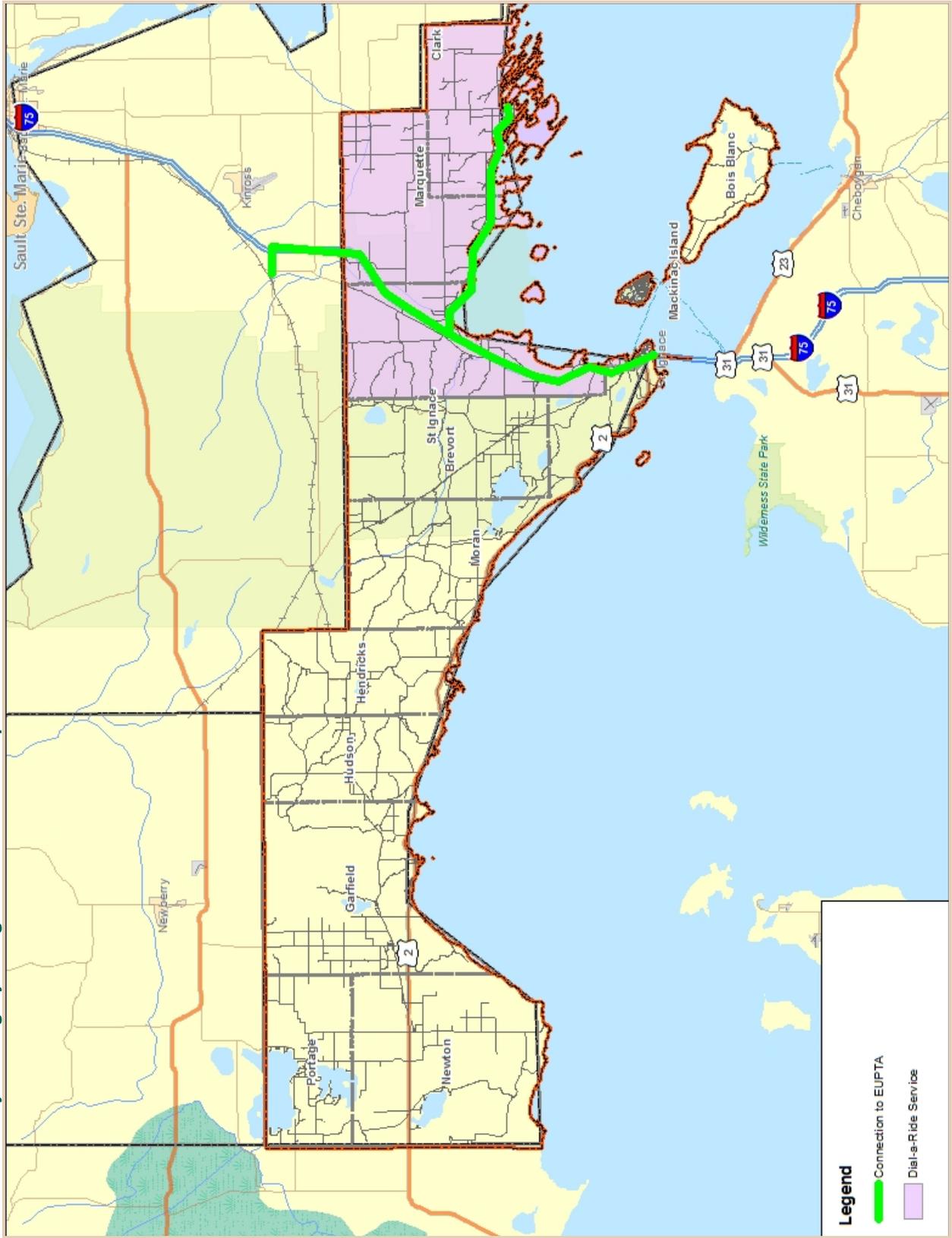
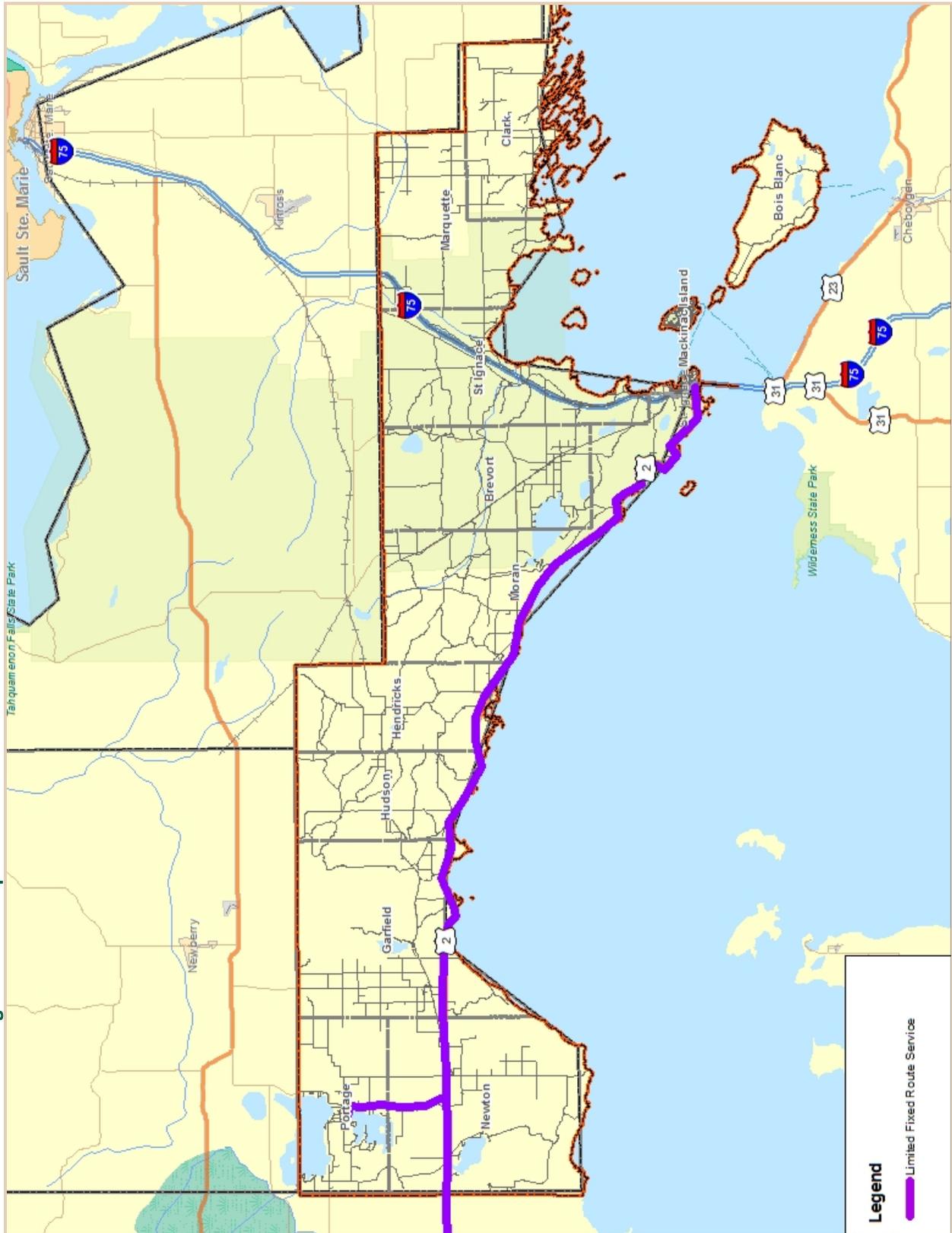




Figure 10-2
Demonstration Service Serving Western Townships



In terms of organizational structure, Mackinac County would negotiate a Public Act 7 inter local agreement and a purchase of services agreement with Schoolcraft County Transit. The agreed level of services will drive the level of financial support required by the service users through fares and by Mackinac County residents. Based on an estimated cost of \$70 per hour, it is estimated the service will cost approximately \$110,000 per year to operate. This estimate is based on providing six hours of service per day, Monday through Friday. As noted, on average, Michigan transit systems in non-urbanized areas will need to generate approximately 47.6 percent of the system’s annual operating costs from fares, contracts and other locally derived sources. This would result in an annual local share of operating costs of \$52,000.

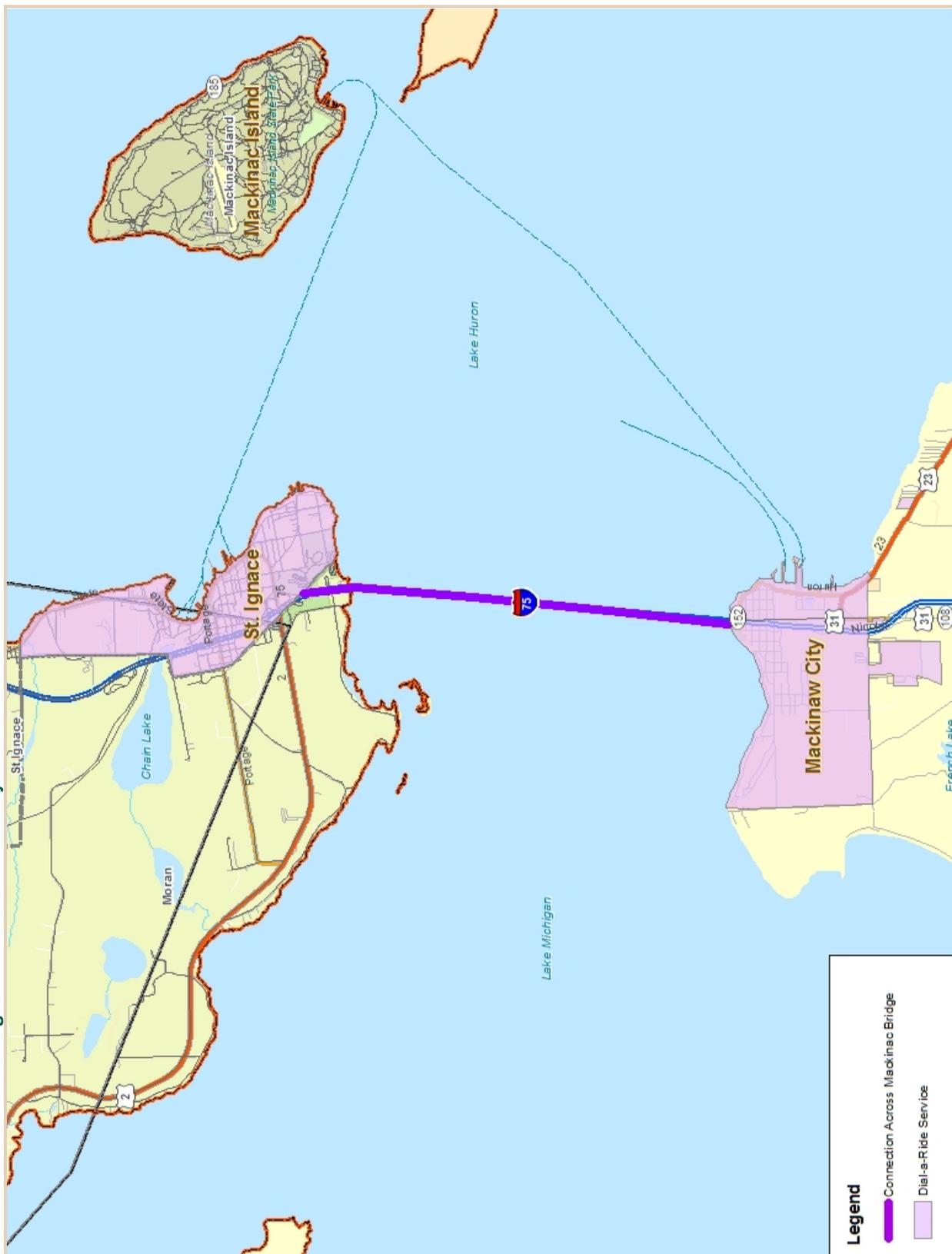
Establish a Demonstration Public Transit Service Connecting Mackinac County to Mackinaw City

Straits Regional Ride serves Cheboygan, Emmet, and Presque Island counties. In doing so, it serves Mackinaw City and provides service to the cities of Petoskey and Cheboygan. The objective of this recommendation is to provide a link to locations on the south side of the Mackinac Bridge. Currently, the Mackinac Bridge Authority provides transportation across the bridge, but only between the administrative facility on the north side of the bridge and the call box on the south side of the bridge. Users of the service need someone to drop them off and then pick them up. It is recommended that the county work to establish a service that connects the City of St. Ignace, the bridge, and Mackinaw City. The service could act as a dial-a-ride in both St. Ignace and Mackinaw City, and provide trips across the bridge as the bridge authority currently does (Figure 10-3). Once in Mackinaw City, connections could be facilitated to Straits Regional Ride for those with destinations in Emmet, Cheboygan, or Presque Island counties.

The establishment of a demonstration project connecting Mackinac County and Mackinaw City would require support from multi political jurisdictions to establish the service and make the service a success. It is important to note that no conversations have been held with Mackinaw City or Emmet County officials regarding this recommendation or public transit service needs in Mackinaw County or Emmet County. The primary political jurisdictions could include: Mackinac County, St. Ignace, Mackinaw City, and Emmet County. Public Act 196 of 1986 as amended – the Public Transportation Authority Act authorizes a diverse group of political jurisdictions to establishment an authority for the provision of public transportation services. Further Public Act 196 allows the service area of the public transportation authority to be structured in a number of ways. The public transportation authority could encompass the total geographic area of each of the political jurisdictions mentioned above or a portion of those political subdivisions based on precinct lines. In pursuing this recommendation, Mackinac County as the lead, would determine the service area it would want to have serviced in Mackinac County as it engages the other political subdivisions in discussions regarding the formation of a public transportation authority. There are a variety of governance and organizational policy issues that must be addressed in the formation of a multi-jurisdiction authority under Public Act 196 of 1986 as amended. The primary governance and organizational policy issues include: the identification of the political jurisdictions establishing the authority; the membership of the authority governing board; establishment of the service area for the authority; the source of local operating support; and, operating and staffing policy issues. These issues are addressed in Chapter 9. An outline of the service structure and a projected service cost can be developed once the governance and organizational policy issues are addressed.

As indicated above, the cost of this service would be highly dependent on the amount of service provided and the entity that provides the service.

Figure 10-3
Demonstration Service Providing a Connection to Mackinaw City



It is assumed that a dial-a-ride/bridge service operating in both Mackinaw City and St. Ignace would cost approximately \$70 per hour to operate. Two vehicles would be needed – one to operate in each city – and then they could make hourly trips across the bridge. Assuming they operate eight hours per weekday, the service would cost approximately \$295,000 annually. The estimated annual local share of operating costs of this type of service is \$140,000.

Long-term Recommendations

The goal of the long-term recommendations is to make and implement long-term recommendations based upon results of the demonstration projects.

Act Upon the Results of the Demonstration Projects

After operating the demonstration projects for two to four years, the County Commissioners should have sufficient information to make long-term decisions about the future of public transportation in Mackinac County.

The following are some potential options that are dependent on the outcome of the demonstration services.

Continue the Demonstration Projects for a Designated Period of Time

This assumes that there is some situation in the community (i.e. changing demographics, new development, difficulties in marketing the service) that makes extending the demonstration period to gain a better sense of the potential for the service as a prudent option.

Petition to Join EUPTA or Schoolcraft County Public Transit

If at the end of the demonstration services with either EUPTA or Schoolcraft County Public Transit, demand for services warrants continuation of services, Mackinac County should petition to join either EUPTA or Schoolcraft County Public Transportation.

Establish a Mackinac County Public Transit System as a Separate Authority

If the demonstration services generate ridership beyond what can be accommodated by contracting for services with either EUPTA or Schoolcraft County Public Transportation and petitioning to join either authority is not an option, Mackinac County should consider establishing its own public transit system as an authority under Public Act 196 with its own taxing authority for the operation of public transit service in all or a portion of Mackinac County. If an Authority were created, it wouldn't necessarily have to serve the entire county. So, this would be an option if there was sufficient demand for service, but it was limited to specific townships and the City of St. Ignace.

Establish a Mackinac County Public Transit System as a Department or Agency of the County

If the demonstration services generate ridership beyond what can be accommodated by contracting for services with either EUPTA or Schoolcraft County Public Transit, petitioning to join either authority is not an option, and there is support for a system that serves the entire county, Mackinac County should

consider establishing its own public transit system as a department or agency of the county. If the service was operated by the county as a department or agency, the local match would come from the county, most likely from the county's general fund. Thus, all areas of the county would need to have service, not just the most densely populated areas.

Terminate the Demonstration Projects and Continue to Operate with Only Enhanced Specialized Transportation Services

If the demonstration services are operated for two to four years and ridership does not increase to a level comparable to other systems in the area, then the demonstration services should be terminated and revert back to only enhanced specialized transportation services for seniors and the disabled.

Connections to Mackinaw City and Beyond

A decision to continue public transit service in Mackinac County, by joining an authority, creating a new authority or establishing transit service as a county department or agency should incorporate the initiation of discussions with Emmet County, Mackinaw City, the Mackinac Bridge Authority, and Straits Regional Ride and the inter-city carrier (currently Indian Trails) regarding the initiation of transit service connections into Mackinaw City and beyond.

Transit in the Parks Grant

A decision to continue public transit service in Mackinac County would provide the agency, the department or the authority operating the public transit service to pursue other transit service grants which can benefit Mackinac County. One such grant is the Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in the Park grant. This Federal Transit Administration grant could be utilized to provide capital funding to support a direct public transit connection between Mackinac County/St. Ignace and the Seney National Wildlife Refuge. The establishment of this public transit connection would provide additional access to the National Wildlife Refuge for visitors/tourists and residents of Mackinac County and strengthen the public transit service in Mackinac County.

Conclusion

In the short-term, Mackinac County should hire a mobility manager. The mobility manager could be tasked with monitoring the existing specialized services and maximizing use of the existing vehicles and funding, while quantifying existing transportation needs, assisting residents in obtaining transportation, and developing relationships with providers in adjacent counties, such as Schoolcraft County Transportation and EUPTA. In the mid-term, the mobility manager will work to develop demonstration public transportation services in Mackinac County either through contracts with adjacent providers or through county-provided service. Finally, in the long-term, the mobility manager can assist in the evaluation of demonstration services to help the county commissioners decide how to proceed at the end of demonstration services.

A

Appendix



Survey Cover Letter
and Questionnaire

MACKINAC COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

100 S. Marley Street Room 10
St. Ignace, Michigan 49781
Phone (906) 643-7300
Fax (906) 643-7302
TDD (800) 649-3777

Jim Hill – Dist. 1
Lawrence Leveille – Dist. 2

Oliver House – Dist. 3
Diane Patrick – Dist. 4
Calvin McPhee – Dist. 5

Current Date

«Name»
«Address»
«City», «State» «Zipcode»

Re: Transportation Needs Survey

Dear Mackinac County Resident:

The Mackinac County Board of Commissioners is exploring the feasibility of providing public transportation in Mackinac County. The County has secured a grant through the Michigan Department of Transportation and the Mackinac County Board of Commissioners has hired a consultant to conduct a public transportation feasibility study. The Consultant, with input from the Commissioners and a group of stakeholders, will develop an accurate inventory of current transportation resources, determine the level of need for public and agency transportation services, identify and evaluate the feasibility of options to improve transportation for residents, identify funding sources available to finance public transportation, and develop a set of realistic recommendations for expanding transportation options for the residents of Mackinac County.

Your input is critical in determining the level of need for public transportation services. Enclosed is a brief questionnaire. An envelope with pre-paid postage has been included for you to use when returning the completed questionnaire. All information you provide is completely confidential. Please complete and return your questionnaire within the next two weeks, so that we may include your input in our analysis.

If you would like more information on the study you may call Mary Lynn Swiderski at the County Extension Office at (906) 643-7307 or if you have questions about completing the survey questionnaire you may call Consultant Project Manager Alison Townsend at (800) 880-8241.

On behalf of the Mackinac County Board of Commissioners, I thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,



Commissioner Calvin “Bucky” McPhee
5th District Commissioner

I:\Projects\4058\Survey\Survey Letter (ltrhd).doc



Mackinac County Transportation Needs Survey

1. Are you aware of the Indian Trails bus service in Mackinac County?

- ₁ Yes ₂ No

If yes, have you or anyone in your home used the Indian Trails service?

- ₁ Yes ₂ No

2. Do you, or anyone in your home, use transportation services provided by a local agency or organization?

- ₁ Yes _____ ₂ No

Name of agency or organization

3. Do you, or others in your home, have problems getting your transportation needs met?

- ₁ Yes ₂ No

If yes, what does this lack of transportation keep you or others in your home from doing? Check all that apply.

- ₁ Working or seeking employment ₄ Medical or dental appointments
₂ Shopping ₅ Social or recreational activities
₃ Attending school or training ₆ Other _____

Please describe

3. Are there any reasons why you, or other adults in your home, don't drive or limit the amount they drive?

- ₁ Yes ₂ No

If yes, please check all that apply?

- ₁ Don't drive in poor weather ₅ Not licensed to drive
₂ Don't drive at night ₆ Have a disability and cannot drive
₃ Vehicle mechanical difficulties ₇ Other _____

Please describe

4. Because of the cost associated with owning and operating a vehicle, concern for the environment, or other convenience or personal reasons, would you or other members of your household consider using a public transportation service if it met your needs?

- ₁ Yes ₂ No

If yes, what type of service would you consider using? (Check all that apply)

- ₁ A regularly scheduled bus route (designated bus stops and pick-up times)
₂ A door-to-door service
₃ Other _____

Please describe

The survey continues on the back of this page.

B

Appendix



S u r v e y G e n e r a l
C o m m e n t s

Are there any issues we should address and consider as we conduct the Mackinac County Public Transportation Feasibility Study? Do you have any suggestions regarding the provision of establishment of public transportation in Mackinac County?
#6 above. I would support a reasonable millage or assessment if the funds would only be used for that purpose. Not stolen for other projects.
1. Put emphasis on the elderly/disabled. 2. Areas not plowed in winter?
246 S. Airport Rd., St. Ignace, 49781
A "smart car" service would be great for Mackinac Island residents.
A public transportation system is long overdue. It's time to have public transportation.
A regular schedule: A.M. and P.M. would be helpful. Bus stop locations in Hessel and St. Ignace to other destinations (e.g., Hessel, Cedarville) A.M. and P.M. daily.
A rider should be able to use his/her cell phone/land line to contact the dispatcher from the drop-off point in case of an emergency, etc. and the dispatcher should be able to contact the driver of the public transportation vehicle.
About time! Get this done.
Absolutely no millage, special assessment! We already have too much government debt and high taxes. Make users pay for complete cost, not non-users. Otherwise abandon the plan.
All routes should be coordinated with each other. Need shelter, bathrooms, food and phone services at connection sites. We live in a very rural area near Engadine. We are often forgotten in this neck of the woods when it comes to services. Many older people in this area need transportation and don't know how to get it.
All townships should be considered as important as St. Ignace. Cedarville/Hessel is a major hub and with the declining economy and aging population, transportation is becoming a major local problem.
AMTRAK or other train service would be nice.
Are you questioning everyone or just disabled? Doctor offices and medical establishments have no idea where we can get transportation. We are on a fixed income. Thank you.
As a normal "everyday" citizen, I would not know (right now, without researching it). When is the public transit available? How long would it take me from the time I got off the ferry until I could be picked up and brought to Glen's, for example. And then how long would it take to get picked up at Glen's and brought back to the ferry dock? Public transit needs more exposure. Tri-folds with schedule, rates, phone #s, times available, etc. Thank you for conducting this survey.
As a resident of West Mackinac I am prone to get services I need in Luce or Schoolcraft counties. Possibly one regional transportation service?
As I have a car right now I don't need transportation. But my neighbors could as they have no transportation and if the fare is right I would take public transportation myself with my mother. It would be nice to have something like this around here.
As long as I'm able to drive, I won't need this service.
As of August 1st we are moving out of the area.
As you realize everything is far in this county, please remember that for funding. Maybe set up routes to pick people up and drop off at their houses one or two days a week. Set up one van or whatever to take people to their medical appointments in Petoskey, Marquette, Sault Ste. Marie. Good luck. Good idea.
Asterisk #6 - Depends on cost and as long as it stays public and is not privatized.
At 75 years old out driving days are numbered, but not yet.
At this time, overall economic concerns must be considered. Food prices, increased fuel costs (auto and home), and the fact that the large senior population lives on a pension. Those who <u>need</u> the service are most likely not able to support it financially.
Availability and scheduling transport.
Bars and/or restaurant owners should buck up some subsidy or support.
Because M. County is so large and sparsely populated outlying townships would end up supporting a taxi service for St. Ignace. For a public transportation system to work county-wide, we would need a huge fleet of buses that would run nearly empty. Why not start a public transit system for the city and Eastern Moran Township that is supported by them alone?
Big government wasting taxpayer money. And county government doing the same for this survey!!!
Bike path

Comments continued

Bois Blanc Township is an island. The county of Mackinac only takes from us, as does the state. Our cost of transportation either on the island or off is outrageous. To buy gas on island is \$5.40 a gallon. To take a cab and two people to go to shore ruins a \$100 bill. To fly to St. Ignace and back is \$120. To fly to Cheboygan and back is \$160. Stranded December to May. Mackinac taxes us enough and gives us no service. Won't plow county road in winter. No medical service yet we are taxed for all above.
Can't afford NO MORE TAXES!! We do have a taxi service. Also friends and family can help and do help others that need it.
Can't answer this.
Consider a couple of qualified drivers on call for these times and days or whatever and a fare required to fit the need. Consider using one car for more than one served for one destination. Likely this is as it already exists. Thank you!
Consider the low income and those on fixed incomes.
Considering the size of Mackinac County, this doesn't seem feasible. I do not want my taxes to increase because of this transportation. You could set up an area on the county Web site for carpooling.
County too big and empty to justify huge costs of big, expensive buses and garage, air conditioned offices. Buses run with four to five people aboard and you can't charge the people that use it too much.
Cover the full county.
Current level of taxes is already high. School can't get millage passed. What makes this different?
Difficult to envision such needs in this rural area. If transportation were available to nearby restaurants it would probably be used. But would be expensive and subject to critical comments if it were not handled properly.
Disability access to bus.
Disabled or elderly with a disability should not be forced to use taxi service for shopping or hospital, and doctor calls. A door-to-door pickup should be provided for this. This also applies to financially disabled.
Do not compete with local business - St. Ignace Taxi. Insurance and fuel would be very costly. Wages also. Local shuttles would have good input on expenses. Casino shuttle, Mackinaw City Trolley, St. Ignace Taxi.
Do not exclude the reservation!
Do not know
Do not need public transportation. Federal government, state and county can't afford it. Let people be independent and make their own way!! Quit trying to dream up ways to waste money.
Do not support millage or special assessment because they don't even plow my street and fix the holes now. Keep the vehicles clean. Lots of places don't. Put the stops on back streets in waterfront areas. Don't give the UP a "downstate" look.
Doctors appointments could be on a certain day or two to consolidate trips. Shopping with others is sometimes fun. Access to library is important. Maybe certain routes on certain days. Scheduling would be sometimes difficult without much notice so trips are nice. Good luck with this!
Does not seem economically feasible given the declining population and large geographic area.
Does not seem feasible due to unique size/shape of Mackinac County and large amount of rural area. I would support it if it will help the elderly.
Don't know.
Don't do it.
Don't do it. If you are going to provide transportation, subsidize a private company to provide it.
Don't know if it makes a difference or not, but I do not live in Mackinac County. I live in Luce County.
Don't need it! Waste of taxpayers' money! Federal government broke! State of Michigan broke!
Don't need to pay for another millage, especially retirees!! Not enough people to justify this program.
Don't waste the money. There is not enough population to support.
Elderly 60+, or now drivers be able to purchase a monthly ride anytime card.
Establish daily link with EUPTA.
Fares in question 5 seem reasonable.
Fares would depend on the cost of providing public transportation. I believe these kind of services should be paid for by those who use them. Would support millage/special assessment if reasonable.
Federal government and state of Michigan have no money for this. It is not the time to spend more money. No new millage. Send the grant money back. It is irresponsible to spend more money at this time. Our buying power is at the lowest I have ever seen.

Comments continued

Fix the county roads. Mile Alley sucks and is used daily in summertime.
Fix the roads first!!
For residents of St. Martins Point and other outlying areas, where would you put a bus stop that would be close enough to be serviceable?
Forget about public transportation. Our ditches haven't been cleaned out/maintained for probably 20-30 years. How about re-digging them out so we don't have a mosquito nursery when it rains!! Do something for our tax money!!
Forget it!
Free for elderly and disabled.
FYI Send me another form in 10 years and my answers will change because of my inability to drive.
Get qualified volunteer drivers. Qualified medically and with other experience - ex-school bus drivers, etc. Organize time trips to popular facilities such as Marquette Med facility. Retired seniors this area using this facility surprising. Also possibility of carpooling?
Get the AMTRAK or something similar to South Shore Line.
Get the drunk drivers off the road!
Getting employers to flex schedules to allow employees to ride - hours.
Good luck!
Got to be clean and safe and reliable.
Half price for seniors
Handicap accessible. 1-800 phone line. 24-hour (or extended) hours for phone availability.
Handicapped accessible
Have a step low to the ground for disabled people.
Have wheelchair access.
Having public transportation would make my life a lot easier. Right now I have a 15-year-old that has activities I have to run her to and a disabled friend I also run around plus I work 12-hour night shifts. Maybe I could actually get some sleep if we did have transportation. I live on Pine River. We also need high speed internet available out here.
Hospitals and clinics important.
How about paying for the airfare for Mackinac Islanders, \$48 round trip to St. Ignace for God's sake!!! Highway Robbery!!!
How could a transportation system benefit people who live in rural Mackinac County?
How long are the federal funds/state funds guaranteed for? If "no" millage is passed or SA is passed and state funds/federal funds run out, are the vehicles sellable? Find a way to have it self sustainable without fed help or state help without too much of a burden on taxpayers! Look outside of Michigan at other public transportation! How is it funded? Find a model.
How many years longer I can drive will determine where I live and if I will need transportation. I will probably live closer to family. If I move into St. Ignace I would like to see public transportation.
I am a senior citizen. I own a car and am able to meet any transportation needs so far.
I am not in need of this service as of now, but I do think it's a wonderful idea for those in need of it.
I am sick and tired of paying for people too lazy to work, claiming disability. This survey is a total waste of our money. Get a real job!!
I believe there is a need for transportation in Mackinac County and I would support one.
I cannot believe that you would consider a public transportation system. Our state and county do not have funds for present commitments. Grants to do surveys keep someone in a job (often unnecessary) at taxpayers' expense. If we take care of our neighbors, then no public transportation is necessary. By the way, Indian Trails, I believe, is not public transportation.
I can't imagine public transportation being feasible in Mackinac County. It's too spread out with very few crucial points. I don't see a need.
I can't see western Mack. Co. benefitting. It seems St. Ignace would be the main beneficiary. I would think the majority of people who need rides hold seasonal jobs. What happens in winter? The big employers (casino, hospital) might benefit. I would rather see them operate their own shuttles. Thank you.
I can't understand why this issue of transportation, especially for seniors, has not been considered before. There are a lot of seniors who could use some type of transportation. It would be great if this would come about.
I could afford cost - but many in Engadine maybe can't. Thank you.
I do not see how you can make this work and be cost effective with this being so remote an area.
I do not want any more taxes or millage. I want the government out of my life. Too many entitlements now. I do not want to pay for it. If I need a ride, I will arrange for it myself.

Comments continued

I don't know if buses are needed, but our roads and sidewalks are long due for repair. If these are tended to, public transportation will greatly be improved and appreciated.
I don't think Mackinac Bd can make this decision alone. A larger commission of township officials might be considered. Garfield Township requested public transportation years ago.
I don't think Mackinac County can support such a system. Don't care who helps support it. Someday Mackinac County will own it and I will not support it. Dead horse right out of the gate.
I don't think Mackinac County needs this. With the economy the way it is, we should be cutting millage and special assessments and taxes for the average consumer. In the U.P., <u>there are services</u> for seniors and persons needing assistance from agencies such as social services. We don't need public transportation in Mackinac County.
I don't think we need it. Our county is broke. If the state covers it, yes. We need more jobs but cut it if the state doesn't cover it.
I feel it would be a great addition to our area. Elderly and low income would find it very useful. Door-to-door pick-up could be with special times and advanced request. Good luck and a great job in spear-heading this!!!
I feel that this is a big waste of money. With or without grants!!!
I feel the cost of this system prohibitive. I would like to see the cost per person mile of transportation.
I feel there is NO NEED for public transportation in St. Ignace.
I feel this is meant for St. Ignace and not necessarily the whole county.
I go to Newberry to doctor, dentist and grocery store. Church is five miles north of Engadine.
I have mixed feelings about competing with the local taxi, but think transportation is needed to neighboring cities.
I hope it warrants the cost of maintaining a system. The main hurdle is advertisement and schedules. Possible route: St. Ignace, U.S. 2 Curtis Corner or M77 back to Naubinway, Epoufette, Trout Lake, Strongs, SSM, then back to St. Ignace or vice versa.
I live at the Hiawatha Club so the ride would have to be door to door for Newberry shopping. Very difficult to answer and figure out. I would support your idea even if we still used share driving for ourselves here at the club.
I live at the opposite end of St. Ignace (Gould City). You are setting this up for St. Ignace area and therefore would <u>NOT</u> be available to me - too long a ride - too costly, etc. You would not meet my needs! Should be called St. Ignace Area Transit!
I live in Engadine and I'm sure people here and Naubinway would like the same transportation. Are you considering a bus in these places? If so, I would be willing to vote yes. Mackinac County is a big area. (I also worked for Indian Trails.)
I live in Luce County right at the Mack Luce Line on H-33. At this time I am not interested in public transit. I drive school bus and don't understand how this could work. Other funds are still tax dollars. Where do you think they come from?
I live on Bo Lo Island.
I live on M129. Most times I go to the Soo to shop, doctor, hospital. It is closer than St. Ignace.
I pay three ways (federal government, MDOT, local funds)? No!!
I really think there should be some kind of transportation across the bridge. At my place of employment there are four persons in our office year-round who work in Mackinaw City but live in St. Ignace. In the summer, this increases to about 12. Not all work the same shift but the numbers are there plus there are a lot of international workers with no transportation.
I seriously doubt public transportation outside of St. Ignace is feasible. Living where we do, it's still a distance to hospital and shopping. A millage only always seems to benefit those in St. Ignace.
I strongly support this!! Could help in small ways.
I support public transportation in Mackinac County. We - Jan and I - are not likely to use it except rarely.
I think it would be a good thing.
I think it would be good for St. Ignace, but not sure that there would be much benefit for west half (or more) of Mackinac County. Re #5: Variable costs for variable distances. Re #6: It would depend on the service available in the west Mackinac end - specifically the Curtis area.
I think it's a good idea that you're conducting this survey. I will be interested to learn the results.
I think it's a great idea for the old that can't drive or should not be. If they had an option it would make our roads safer and I would be calling. I think it would be life changing for some. Give some sense of freedom.
I think it's a great idea to help people.

Comments continued

I think shuttle to and from Engadine, Garfield Township (credit union, senior meals), shuttle to HN Joy Hospital for foot client, doctor appointments and grocery store could be helpful to many seniors. Perhaps doctors and dentists could schedule Engadine area appointments for two main days per week to coordinate with foot clinic and pharmacy stop with hospital cafe lunch.
I think Straits Area Taxi does a nice job in our area and at a reasonable rate. Public transportation would put yet another company out of business in our area.
I think that the fee should be the same through the county, not where you live.
I think the elderly should not be burdened with more taxes to help the younger.
I think the public bus transportation is great but I'm lucky to have three daughters that take me any place I want to go.
I think they should offer rides to Petoskey and Gaylord. Lots of people with medical issues have to travel these two areas.
I think we have more serious problems and needs than public transportation in Mackinac County.
I would be concerned of the government cost at this time. At reasonable cost a trip to a close small town (like Newberry) for doctor, shopping, etc. once or twice a month might be OK.
I would be worried that it would affect the current taxi service. It would not be fair to put them out of business.
I would like door-to-door because I am unable to leave or go anywhere without help (transportation at my door). I wouldn't be able to get to bus stop. Good idea.
I would like this service for west Mackinac County. We are always forgotten!
I would like to caution the Board in the size of the county. There are three different regions in the county. If you do this, not all people are going to St. Ignace. Cedarville would go to the Sault. Naubinway would go to Newberry.
I would support a millage of up to 1 mill for the most cost effective method for our small population spread over a large area. Personally, I would use the system maybe once or twice a year, if ever. But I think it would help folks less fortunate than me.
I would very much like a bus system along U.S. 2. I would use it often.
If public transportation cannot be self-supporting, then we do not need it.
If approved, who would pay for cost to run system?
If I was retired and time was not an issue, public transportation would be very attractive for things such as shopping and doctor visits. Older people would like to go out to eat and transportation to restaurants and bars could be good. We live in Cedarville. Cedarville to St. Ignace would be a good thing.
If it does become a reality, make sure you do a good job informing the citizens (on a regular basis) about routes, schedules, fares, etc. Government generally does a poor job of informing citizens about transportation availability (on a regular basis). Since we're retired and not on a "fixed schedule" our use would be random/sporadic.
If people using transportation for employment for five or six days a week should receive a little discount for being a steady customer due to their employment. This is a great idea for our area. I'm in support of this!!
If the public transportation system does not support itself financially, then for this low population density it should not be pursued.
If this can't serve all of Mackinac County rather than the east end as the rest do, forget it!
If you have a surplus of money, spend it on "road maintenance" which is lacking in this county.
If you plan to service all of Mackinac County, it will be extremely difficult considering the geography. Mackinac Island and Bois Blanc are a part of Mackinac County and present a special challenge. Mackinac County is somewhat unique when considering the distance from east of Cedarville to west of Curtis. Re #5: Fares should be based on cost.
I'm in a wheelchair. I need a ramp built.
I'm not in need, but many others that live in this community need public service.
I'm paying all the taxes I can afford now. Any more would really put me in a bind.
I'm retired now so my budget is a lot tighter and paying \$6.00 each trip is hard to do.
I'm sure that there is some need for public transportation, but we do NOT need any more taxes.

Comments continued

In considering this undertaking thought should be given to the overall county needs. I feel that the city of St. Ignace would be the entity to most benefit from this. Naubinway, Engadine, Rexton and such are too spread out to be of much benefit to this idea. It would be like privatizing school busing to these areas...cost prohibitive. I don't favor tax dollars being spent in this matter and would NOT support millage or special assessment to help support it.If St. Ignace feels it is needed, use city taxes to support it. The county is too big and the population too widespread to make this an option. The cost of the buses, the drivers and their salaries and benefits (as they would mostly likely be county employees) is just not common sense in my opinion.Thank you for your time in considering this endeavor.
In St. Ignace, a subsidy-per-ride arrangement with local taxi companies to pre-qualified groups (i.e., elderly, Medicaid, etc.) should be considered, as it may be less expensive than running a public transportation system.
In the past the EUPTA bus was a service that goes nowhere near where I work at nowhere near convenient times. It has always focused on the disabled or other groups that are very small. It would make more sense if it went where most carpoolers travel (M-129 is like a California freeway at 6 a.m.) when they travel. This could be used to promote businesses by taking tourists (boaters!) around St. Ignace to Cedarville and back (as an example). Also there is a bike path on M-134 that could be supplemented by a bus. Re #5: What about an annual fee like the bridge card?? Paying by trip in cash is long ago OLD and should only be done if necessary. Paying by cash each trip is why mass transportation FAILS. Study San Francisco for a CONVENIENT system. Re #6: Because it will not "go" where or when I need it. I would say yes if it would serve my needs - I carpool and would like to see a bus transport lots of us instead of several vehicles going to the same place.
It is not needed. Call the taxi.
It is very important for many seniors and people w/o cars. Other towns have the service.
It should be the same as the Loop System in Sault Ste. Marie. In the 1957 year, we could go from Portage to Skunk Road for \$0.75 also down to Sugar Island Dock for the same price. My mom and dad lived in Barbeau, Mich., and I would have to take a taxi to go home to visit them. Because of no bus going in that direction, taxi service was \$40.00. If it was from Sault Ste. Marie to Barbeau and McCarron, it would cost from \$30.00 to \$40.00 taxi ride. Without a car, I have to walk from here to the drug store, grocery stores.
It would be good to have an agency to call for a ride to and from a hospital - perhaps volunteers whose expenses would be paid for by the person requesting the service.
It would be nice. We are way off the chart to make it possible for this type of service to our location. Low population and too far off reasonable routes.
It would serve the state to have a monorail traveling the interstate medians; it would also create cartage and taxi and car rental jobs at the terminals.
It's a bad idea.
It's a great idea. However, there are so many other pressing issues in our county.
Just say no
Lack of transportation doesn't keep me from doing anything. I have to find other ways. I try to make all appointments in afternoon. With the economy as it is I can't say for certain that I would support a millage or special assessment. It's a nice thought but I think we should not take on any more debts at this time. I believe if we don't have the money we should not take on the debt.
Less government. Cut spending.
Let private transportation take care of the needs of the people, unless you are blind to this country's debt to our grandchildren.
Living on Mackinac Island we would not expect any PTS service (we do use the MI Police vehicle occasionally after November in bad weather). Purpose was to help not well off folks get employment or better jobs.
Look at the possibility of "green" vehicles - solar, electric, or bio-fuel to keep costs down and be more sustainable. Thank you! Don't give up...this has been a long time coming!
Lower taxes!!
Mackinac County is long and narrow. Not very conducive to public transportation.
Make Great Lakes Air lower. Airfares to Island rip off Islanders. Monopoly.
Make it easy; keep it clean and safe so seniors will be comfortable.
Make sure drivers know how to properly load and secure wheelchair riders. Make pick-up locations have roofs or something to protect electric wheelchair/push chairs from weather (snow/ice/cold).
Many homes may not need service now, but may need it in the future.
Many of us are fixed income so equipping transit with front-mounted bicycle racks to carry two bicycles would help. Sarasota, Fla., has them and they charge \$0.75 no transfers.

Comments continued

Many senior citizens are losing driving privileges and good to see this study being done.
Many senior citizens can't get to their doctor's appointments. Cabs are expensive and people tend to rip the seniors off. Teenagers or people without a driver's license is another group.
Maybe a card for workers that they pay in advance.
Maybe fares should be decided on mileage? State suggests how much mileage is.
Model it on Straits Regional Ride. They do a great service between Mackinaw City and Cheboygan and Petoskey. But please run on weekends. They do not.
Most of the transportation would be out of the county of Mackinac. The west end of Mackinac County is closer to Schoolcraft and Luce County cities than any in Mackinac County of any size so where would the transportation take you to?
My age is 94 years. My transportation needs are satisfactorily met by relatives who live nearby. I am too old to use a bus route.
My family lives close to the northeast border of Mackinac and Chippewa counties and see no way for public transportation to benefit me or my family.
My granddaughter needs a ride from Engadine to Newberry for her job (\$5 round trip 20 miles).
My husband, Cosimir C. Matelski, passed away January 28, 1994. I'm 90 in September. My son, who lives with me, is 67. We would not need public transportation.
Need something for residents to get to local shopping and downtown.
Need vehicle with a lift for wheelchair-bound people.
Needs to be handicapped accessible.
No
No additional taxes, millages, or assessments. Should be self-funding.
No good to us as we do all our shopping in Sault Ste. Marie. Also doctor's appointments. We live in Cedarville, six miles to Chippewa County and 35 miles to the Soo.
No more millages or special assignments. Enough.
No need for it.
No need for public transportation!
No new taxes!
No public money - no government involvement
No tax dollars to support!!
No use at this time.
No.
No.
No.
No.
No. This is a huge waste of money.
None
None.
None. I will not use public transportation.
Not any as of now.
Not at this time.
Not feasible for this area. Suggest increasing volunteers to support senior programs (Council on Aging, etc.) to transport seniors.
Not sufficiently familiar to state a suggestion.
Nothing extra.
Novel idea for elderly/disabled (1/2 price or discounted) as they are generally the most in need; however, have little funds to spare and for those who don't need it will be supporting financially this adding to their debt - everyone is already financially strapped and only getting worse.
One night waiting at George's Body Shop reminded me of inner city Detroit! I use St. Ignace taxi, walk or hitch hike. Knowing the hassle of public transportation in St. Ignace makes you plan ahead. I have learned how to meet my transportation needs due to the lack of common amenities in a rural county. P.S. stores and retailers are very good to islanders - deliveries, etc.
Our household does not have a need for public transportation. I think our community does not need this service.
Our son lives in the house we own in Naubinway. He is disabled and would maybe have to use public transportation if it was available.
Our taxes are high enough.

Comments continued

Please consider teens and young adults that can't afford vehicles and the needs they have.
Please disclose the amount of taxpayer money (if any) being used to conduct this survey, in our local newspaper.
Please insure that any services attempted are sustainable and not a flash in the pan!
Price of gas a concern. Will only go up.
Probably would be helpful for those unable to drive or have no one to help them out.
Promotion of public transportation as an alternative to personal transportation - cost saving and environmentally friendly. Also, students/families could also use an efficient system of transportation. In Curtis, we have four different school districts running school buses - duplicating routes with no interest in cooperation.
Public transit is <u>vital</u> to disabled. Be sure to involve any RICC groups in the county. Contact HBH or EUPTA if unfamiliar with RICC. Disability advocacy groups statewide. <u>Regional Interagency Consumer Committee</u> . Elderly also need public transit and young people. Would support millage or special assessment if it served the entire county and connected to other transit systems.
Public transportation is needed! It would be great if Indian Trails offered more frequent routes. One/two buses a day is not enough choice.
Public transportation is of great need in Mackinac County, especially in St. Ignace!
Public transportation must be self-sustaining!! This is not a government/public obligation. All citizens should manage this need themselves.
Public transportation must have a reg. schedule.
Public transportation should rely on fares, not public monies. I will mount campaign to defeat any use of public monies. The public monies ship has sailed. T.E.A.
Public transportation will be a challenge for a county 135 miles long with several islands with year-round residents. Mackinac Island needs this for those who need health care, groceries, etc. in winter without efficient way to do those chores.
Public transportation would also aid tourism.
Public transportation would benefit the communities they serve economically. Could lottery sale proceeds help pay for such services?
Publish relevant info on progress.
Question 6 - depends on millage cost. I like your idea, but we are so isolated I just don't know how the cost could be overcome.
Question: What is a stakeholder? (per accompanying letter). Mac Cty is so spread out. West end people more likely to go to Newberry or Manistique. I anticipate low usage - difficulty meeting expenses and odd hour needs from various sections of the county.
Rather than establishing another deficit-increasing public agency, encourage the establishment of a private taxi service.
Re #5: amount inside Mackinac County could vary as Mackinac County is over 100 miles from east to west end.
Re Question 6: Not within Mackinac County. Maybe from Curtis/Newberry/Germfask area to a "city" where people can shop, i.e., to Marquette or Escanaba.
Reduce R/T bridge fee. Make programs (reduced fees) for locals. And maintain during overnight hours, or turn over to Federal Highway System, keeping four lanes open at most times and peak hours.
Re-establish train lines. We would support that with a millage.
Regarding fare: Needs to be a scale. Could be 5 miles or 87 miles.
Reliable service times!
Resident forever so have paid a good amount in taxes so figure this idea should be good.
Right now we wouldn't be using a transportation system, but perhaps in the future we would.
Safety
Seasonal needs - much lower in non-summer times
Senior nutrition dinners are served Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the community center. Some would appreciate transportation to these dinners in Cedarville.
So far I provide my own transportation. It would be nice if I ever need it. I live in Moran, and it probably would be costly. I would consider it someday if I can't drive and I would vote for it. Mildred King
So many people in Mackinac County do not have their own transportation. Single people and children have transportation issues. Public transportation costs/services should be combined with school busing.
Some people need transportation.

Comments continued

Something must be done!!! Transportation is needed for people in this area. A free or minimal fee with consistent bus stops from Engadine to Newberry (Luce Co.) not St. Ignace, though same county - is too far!
Special day trips to areas of interest as in tour bus companies (i.e., day trip to Picture Rocks, Tehquemenon Falls, etc.) from St. Ignace, Sault Ste. Marie, etc.
Spend money on our bad roads first. Do road repair, like Dura Patch. Learn how to plow them without breaking up the edges.
Spend this survey \$ more wisely.
St. Ignace does not need any more tax increases or millage bull@#\$.
Start a regular route with stops from Evergreen Shores to around the golf course with regulated stops and drops. May limit downtown traffic and provide service from 8:00 a.m. to midnight, maybe 2:00 a.m. May limit high risk drivers between areas in the city limits.
Stop paying commissioners' health insurance for elected officials. That is not a full-time job. Stop paying for all of the meetings and transportation and meals. Then you would have plenty of money. Until then I will not support a millage for the Mackinac County commissioners!!!
Student rates should be addressed.
Study the past attempts, assess what went wrong, and address these issues thoroughly before creating a new system. Would support a millage or special assessment if it had clear goals, routes, and a system for regular maintenance.
Subsidize the cab company. It's cheaper and you will get better service. The state and federal government are broke. Pay for it with county money.
Support millage or special assessment if it came to my house.
Support millage or special assessment only if it affects Bois Blanc Island! I know there will never public transportation on your Bois Blanc Island, but I can dream can't I? Mike White in Bois Blanc Township.
Take drunks home from bars.
Talk to senior citizens groups on above issues so they can ask questions.
Taxi company employs three people. Would you replace their lost jobs? How many jobs will be given? Spend it on something to be useful.
Thank you for considering the needs of Mackinac County residents.
Thank you for considering this service.
Thank you for your efforts to resolve help for those who do not have transportation to church, medical, grocery.
The ability to bring your bicycle if need be.
The county is too big and widespread to operate a public transportation system effectively and efficiently.
The issue is cost vs. benefit since our county is so far east to west and sparsely populated. I'm afraid it will benefit primarily those in and around St. Ignace while everyone else subsidizes it.
The people in the west end of the county would never benefit from it. We would never support millage!!!
The school system is eliminating bus service to students in city limits.
The survey must include seasonal need of the community. I do not believe that public transportation should impact on private businesses like Indian Trails. If you try a public transportation system, it should be on a two-year trial basis using grant funds before considering any millage support.
The system should be self supporting and without the need for public tax \$.
The taxi charges way too much in St. Ignace when income is \$4.60 an hour. The Tribe/casino will not let employees that don't drive take the shuttle to/from work.
The thought seems great, but the real need seems to be better transportation to areas within an hour's drive (i.e., Gaylord, Petoskey) due to the need for medical centers, shopping, etc.
There are elders who do not drive and could use this service just about any time.
There are only two of us living here and we both have vehicles and do all of our own driving. These questions don't pertain to our lifestyle at this time. However, I am sure older citizens and those without family members could benefit from these services.
There is a problem with transportation for medical care. The local cab charges \$12.00. Try to develop this program with the hospital.
There seems to be a lot of people without a license in St. Ignace. They have trouble getting back and forth to work. These would help them a lot. Taxi \$6.00 one way. That's \$12.00 a day to get to work and back.
There should be public transportation for the Mackinac County area for people who cannot drive at all even for the elderly people. Thank you.

Comments continued

They can't even plow the roads after 5:00 p.m. and on weekends and you want to have a bus. You need to manage your money a little different ya think?
This doesn't have anything to do with M.C.P.T., but I know some volunteers who would be happy to pull up the state's wire barrier they placed in the median of I-75. The first thing our U.P. visitors see is a wire barrier that looks like a cast-off from the M.D.O.C. Can we send it back? We don't need it. Re: Question 6: Yes, if there is a proven need. People should remember how our grandparents walked.
This form was sent to a 93-year-old who is in a long-term care facility.
This household needs transportation a further distance from Mackinac Co.
This idea is the stupidest I've heard yet by politicians. This area is not metropolitan. It's country. Use tax money to fix our roads, not put more heavy vehicles on them!! Where are Mackinac County politicians' heads anyway? Where the sun don't shine!!! My answers are as asinine and farfetched as this stupid questionnaire!!
This is a "very good" idea. And it is very well "needed" (desperately), especially here in the nine months of winter (when roads are treacherous from snow because less snow plowing is being done, especially on side streets). The two months of fall and the one month if we're lucky of summer. Please get it done. Question 6 - Sorry, I cannot afford it. I have and my wife has many, many doctor and hospital bills and high utilities bills and other big bills. Question 5 - Please - public transportation anywhere inside the city of St. Ignace \$0.50 one way. Inside Mackinac County \$1.50 one way or \$3.00 round trip includes St. Ignace to inside of Mackinac County. From outside of Mackinac County to south side (end) of Petoskey anywhere in between \$4.00 one way or \$8.00 round trip. If past Petoskey south more \$18.00 round trip. Going north or west from Mackinac County same mileage and prices as above (to Petoskey) Still \$8.00 round trip. Thank you. Sincerely - for doing this!!!!!!!
This is good and needed. If widely available it would offer our senior citizens an alternative to continue to drive! Sometimes dangerously!
This is needed.
This project would not benefit me. It may help others, but I have my own vehicle and would never think that I wouldn't have my own means of transportation.
This will become a tax issue. We do not need. Neighbors and friends provide this transportation all the time. No need for government.
Those who need it would probably need Engadine to Newberry (20 miles) or St. Ignace (50 miles) or Manistique (40 miles)
Today's economy does not support adding millage. The area covered is too large. All of Mackinac County should not have to pay for something that would probably be used most in St. Ignace.
Transportation available for elderly and disabled, especially during winter months.
Transportation should be private companies, not government operated.
Use the money to help out the new school busing route. It's totally unacceptable. Use the money to hold together what we have. The community leaders in Michigan are driving these small towns and counties into the ground with "new" services. Look at the City Boardwalk for instance! FOOLS!
Use the monies earmarked for this for education - public schools and their transportation needs for school kids...this is wasted monies that should go to education.
Use the services in a way to best serve the people.
Use vehicles that use natural gas. Use vehicles (example Toyota Prius (48-60 miles per gallon) for long trips in the county and out) with good gas mileage.
Wait till economy gets better before spending any more taxpayer dollars. Too hard to come by. No wonder country is broke. How much did this survey cost us?
We are aging. Eventually we may need it. Would support millage/special assessment only if libraries come first.
We are building a 38-unit assisted living facility and dial-a-ride is a great idea because they handle wheelchairs and those with walkers. In the Sault dial-a-ride is only available until 5 p.m. It should be available until 7 p.m. for late doctor appointments.
We are young enough to drive where we need to go. I can see a problem with the elderly getting to medical appointments. All of ours were down state this past year.
We do not have the urban center to make this feasible. Mackinac County is just too spread out.
We do not need a Mackinac public transportation system. There has been no transit system here for 250 years and we are just fine. This is a total waste of monies. Michigan is broke. The fed is broke. Why spend \$ for things that we don't need? SEMTA buses are empty - in rural areas - how stupid!
We do not need any more millage. What part of this can't people see? Taxes are too high now.

Comments continued

We do not require public transit.
We don't need or can afford more taxes!
We have teens not driving yet or sometimes without an available vehicle that public transportation would be nice for. I don't see any way for it to be practical though in rural western Mackinac County.
We live at far end of county. County seat is at far east end of county. They don't care about us. Everything is built around St. Ignace. Sorry. No vote or support on this one.
We live between Gould City and Curtis and use either the doctors in Newberry or Manistique (which is half the distance to St. Ignace). We also do all our shopping in these two towns. We have no reason to go to St. Ignace. Our tax money supports a hospital that we never use. Re #6: Yes if public transportation was provided outside of Mackinac County, i.e., Newberry, Manistique.
We live close enough to walk to town so probably would not use much until older.
We live in a rural area because of its amenities. If we wanted public transit, world famous museums, nearby medical specialists, opera and pro sports, we probably would choose somewhere else to live. Why is this "survey" printed at public expense? Why is it printed/mailed in Southfield?
We live in a sparsely populated county with any town worth visiting 60+ miles away. And how does one get around the town once arrived? A bus service would have to be long distance and/or urban.
We live in the far western part of the county. Most of the population lives in the east. Would the transportation be proportionately distributed or would it only run where the majority of people live?
We live on Bois Blanc Island and the most used public transit would be in Cheboygan County.
We need better roads. U.S. 2 should be a four-lane one or an interstate built between providing jobs! The west end of Mackinac County does not belong in the county!
We need it.
We need our roads repaired more than we need a bus.
We need this.
We pay \$5.50 to go to Newberry 25 miles one way.
We pay enough taxes in the city.
We should be supporting the resources which are all ready operating in our county like taxis, tribal bus service, etc. Also transportation across the Big Mac both ways in order to stimulate business would be beneficial. Also if there is grant money - support airfare service from and to Mackinac Island especially during winter months.
We should not allow people to be dependent on government programs - especially if they have family who can assist them.
We taxpayers should not be financing transportation for those individuals who live remotely and choose to commute to populated areas for work and services. They should instead relocate to a community that provides opportunities and services.
We would not support a millage or special assessment for public transportation. However, we would consider/support a millage or special assessment for RECYCLING!
We're Amish and are starting a community here in Engadine. We do not have motor vehicles and need transportation.
We're taxed enough and pay for others who have more money from frequent trips to the casino. Where does their money come from if they need assistance? This <u>may</u> be an option in the future - possibly 10-15 years.
What the bus lines "Indian Trails" should promote is city-to-city travel with public transportation at each city. Once you get there, how will I get around in St. Ignace for example? St. Ignace to Marquette - once there how do I get to shopping, tourist attractions, hotels, restaurants, etc.? Another idea could be buses that also promote bringing your bicycle along with you. This would really spark city travel and options. Scooters you bring along on the distance buses.
Wheelchair accessible.
Wheelchair accommodation
Who thinks of these things? Population and distance of travel cannot be feasible.
Why do you hire someone from Southfield and not from Mackinac County?!
Why doesn't the County fix the roads first. If the County didn't subcontract road maintenance out to the State of Michigan, the County would have a lot of money to fix our roads and maybe even on the west end.
Will probably need transportation near future. Thank you.
Won't this hurt the cab company? Why not get with the cab company and work together and maybe you won't need a millage. Just use the grant money and local funds. That way you won't have another business in St. Ignace closing.

Comments continued

Would be nice to have a regularly scheduled between Engadine or Newberry to Marquette, MI for medical needs.
Would it be reliable to get to places for a certain time? Ex: appointments
Would it travel outside Mackinac County to Luce?
Would like to see a service that handles just Cedarville and Hessel areas alone.
Would not benefit users in rural area (Naubinway, Reston, Garnet, Engadine, and Gould City), so why should we pay for something we can't use.
Would not use this service.
Yes to millage if there were enough people to warrant it.
Yes. The LMAS and senior citizen center refuses to publish any news out of St. Ignace in the free "Advisor" printed in Manistique. Our St. Ignace newspaper doesn't come until Thursday. Does not cover the townships of Hudson, Hendricks at all without the St. Ignace Headquarters. Updates and monthly. Newberry news covers only Newberry. The Advisor goes to every mailbox in rural areas.
Yes. Wheelchair access.
You are competing with a private enterprise that is trying to make a living in this small community (a taxi service). A taxpayer. P.S. I have nothing to do with the taxi.
You have no idea how many people need to get to places, doctor's appointments, shopping, visiting, who have no cars or money. Numerous people come into Chamber of Commerce and ask about bus service.
You may consider having wheelchair access if needed. Phone # to call when needed! Thank you!
You might check on costs to pay taxis. This might be cheaper to the tax payers.
You need well marked bus stops and in more rural areas this means a need for sidewalks as well. Fares should be calculated by distance traveled. Is it fair someone going three miles pays the same as someone going 15 miles?
You're a dollar short and years late! We don't have money to pay taxes and you want public transportation!
You're doing a great job, keep it up!

C Appendix



M o b i l i t y M a n a g e r J o b D e s c r i p t i o n

SAMPLE MOBILITY MANAGER JOB DESCRIPTION*

SCOPE OF WORK: The mobility manager in a transportation organization serves the general public through conceptualization, planning, developing and operating programs that respond to and influence the demands of the market. These actions and supportive strategies are performed directly or in collaboration with others in order to provide a full range of travel options that are more effective in meeting needs and more efficient through reasonable pricing.

This position is responsible to improve business and community support for the transportation organization. It will require the development and distribution of information that explains how to utilize the available resources in meeting the diverse travel needs of the market it serves.

Some skills, abilities and competencies that enhance the performance of this position are:

Change agent	Problem solver
Innovative thinker	Leadership
Collaborative partnerships	Negotiator
Conflict resolution	Mediator
Persuader	Empathy
Communicator	Customer focus
Initiator	Team builder
Visionary	Management skills

*This sample job description is written for a mobility manager that will be hired by a transit agency. It is likely that a Mackinac County Mobility Manager would be hired by the County and would not initially be an employee of a transit agency.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS: Below is a list of actions that are required in the fulfillment of the duties:

- Develops and directs the design, production and distribution of specific marketing materials directed at employers, employees, human service agencies and other entities;
- Serves as the liaison/salesperson to community leaders in an effort to demonstrate how transportation enhances economic development;
- Provides direct outreach to area employers and employment agencies to gain support for employer and employee transit programs;
- Researches, develops and writes grant applications for future funding;
- Plans annual conference on issues relating to transportation;
- Develops potential for future expansion of transit options across municipal boundaries;
- Plans and coordinates special promotional events and activities related to general public transportation;
- Makes public presentations on the benefits of mobility management for the community;
- Builds supportive community networks;
- Leads in the design of operational functions that are nontraditional in service delivery;
- Is familiar with technological advances that increase travel options and/or convenience;
- Is knowledgeable about techniques that foster transit ridership through links with land development.