This report fulfills the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) obligations under Section 393 of Public Act 268 of 2016 as shown below.

Section 393. (1) The department shall promote best practices for public transportation services in this state, including, but not limited to, the following ... (see below)
(2) The department shall report on efforts taken to implement this section as well as section 393 of article XVII of 2011 PA 63. The department shall complete and submit the report to the state budget director, the house and senate appropriations subcommittees on transportation, and the house and senate fiscal agencies on or before March 1, 2017.

Similar language was included in 63 PA 2011, PA 252 of 2014 and PA 84 of 2015. The specific best practices identified the boilerplate are listed below and for each, MDOT provides a report on all efforts undertaken since 2012 and currently underway.

**Best Practice: Transit vehicle rehabilitation to reduce life-cycle cost of public transportation through mid-life rehabilitation of transit buses.**

1. MDOT provides financial, planning, and technical support to the Michigan Public Transportation Association (MPTA) in their delivery of the annual Transit Vehicle Maintenance Seminar (TVMS). The TVMS provides public transportation technicians and mechanics the opportunity to learn hands-on practices with the latest technology and equipment and is the primary venue by which MDOT supports training and technology transfer on bus maintenance issues.

   Midwest Bus Corporation has been an active vendor supporting the TVMS since 2010. Midwest Bus Corporation is the largest re-manufacturer of transit buses in the United States. The Owosso, Michigan headquarters has over 70,000 square feet of manufacturing space with a 35 coach production capability. Their facility is equipped to perform all aspects of bus repairs. Midwest Bus has been asked to provide a presentation at each annual TVMS on the pros and cons of transit bus rehabilitation/mid-life overhaul and has not taken advantage of the offer.

2. When transit agencies opt to use federal funds for bus rehabilitation, MDOT has provided the 20 percent match for these projects.

3. MDOT solicited proposals from Michigan colleges/universities that provide vehicle maintenance curriculums to develop an evaluation protocol to assist MDOT and transit agencies in determining when it is cost effective to perform rehab/mid-life overhaul on a bus. A proposal from Kettering University was accepted and they are finalizing their recommended protocol. MDOT will review the recommendations with the rural transit industry at the annual Rural Transit Managers Workshop in April 2017 and based on that discussion may pursue a rehabilitation program making use of federal and state funds available for bus replacement.
Best Practice: Cooperation between entities using transit, including school districts, cities, townships, and counties with a view to promoting cost savings through joint purchasing of fuel and other procurements.

4. MDOT sponsors training for Michigan transit agencies to make them aware of the detailed federal regulations that govern their procurements. The trainings have all addressed the option of joint purchases and the assignment of contract rights such as “piggyback” contracting and the assignment of options. While there can be significant benefits to joint purchasing with other local governments, these governments may not be subject to the detailed procurement regulations that govern Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funded procurements. Transit agencies need to be keenly aware of both the benefits and possible pitfalls of joint purchasing with entities that are not governed by FTA regulations. MDOT addresses procurement issues in its presentations to the industry at annual meetings and as part of those presentations we discuss the benefits of partnering with other local agencies in the community for joint use of transit agency facilities or equipment highlighting the need for transit agencies to comply with the FTA regulations regarding incidental use by other agencies of assets purchased with FTA funding. Included in the information we provide the transit industry was information regarding new provisions for cooperative transit procurements in the most recent federal transportation authorization. MDOT has also assisted an ad hoc consortium of transit agencies to pursue a joint bus procurement.

5. In cooperation with the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB), MDOT executes state bus contracts that are used by Michigan transit agencies, primarily rural agencies, to purchase vehicles. The state contracts provide economies of scale, ensure compliance with Federal and State procurement requirements and save time by eliminating the need for individual agencies to process bids for buses, which they may only procure buses once every several years. Currently, MDOT has five bus contracts and plans to add a new contract for full sized vans in 2017.

6. MI DEAL is an extended purchasing program which allows Michigan local units of government to use state contracts to buy goods and services. Membership is open to cities, townships, villages, counties, school districts, universities, community colleges, and non-profit hospitals. Local governments benefit directly from the reduced cost of goods and services. There are over 400 contracts available to MI DEAL members. Transit agencies used these contracts up until October 2014 when, based on an FTA training, MDOT determined all MI DEAL contracts (other than buses and accessible vans) were not in compliance with the most recent FTA regulations. All transit agencies were notified of the determination and are no longer allowed to use MI DEAL contracts with FTA funds.

7. MDOT has provided the required 20 percent match for several fueling stations that benefit the transit agencies, other transportation providers, and the general public. Two transit agencies have used federal funds with state match for fueling stations that are available to other public agencies-- The Flint Mass Transportation Authority and the Blue Water Area Transportation Commission. Two other agencies (Roscommon County Transportation Authority and the Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority) have fueling stations that may become available to others in the future.
8. MDOT hired a consultant to identify cost saving practices used by the Michigan transit community and across the country. Based on guidance from MDOT and transit agencies, cost savings best practices were documented in the following areas: management practices, scheduling/dispatching, and assessing service design. A cost savings toolkit was prepared and placed on MDOT’s website as a specific resource for transit agencies and MDOT made transit agencies aware of the toolkit. The toolkit includes case studies of the best practices and can be viewed on MDOT’s website at: http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-9625_21607-293637--,00.html. One best practice document is an example of cooperation between entities (Non-profit Vehicle Maintenance Program), and can be seen at: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdot/NonProfitVehicleMaintenance_TARC_Kentucky_409364_7.pdf

9. When DTE approached DTMB about possible private-public partnerships for CNG fueling stations, DTMB came to MDOT to determine possible transit agency interest. Given the size of the bus fleet that would be required to make such a partnership feasible, MDOT contacted SMART. MDOT facilitated an initial dialogue between SMART and DTE officials, which continued for several months between the two parties. A specific proposal was submitted to the SMART Board, which would have required financial investment from DTE and SMART as well as a long term obligation from SMART to ensure a level of CNG consumption from DTE. MDOT offered a small grant to SMART to off-set a portion of their costs. If accepted, the proposal could have resulted in construction of a CNG fueling station at a SMART maintenance garage which could have been accessed by other public and private fleets. However, the SMART Board did not opt to obligate itself to CNG and the DTE requirements and chose to continue to evaluate a variety of alternative fuel options for its fleet.

Best Practice: Coordination of transportation dollars among state departments which provide transit-related services, including the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Department of Community Health. Priority should be given to use of public transportation services where available.

10. MDOT’s Office of Passenger Transportation’s Administrator sat on a multi-agency workgroup formed by DHS to identify and address transportation issues facing DHS Partnership. Accountability. Training. Hope. (PATH) clients. Based on its participation in the DHS PATH workgroup, MDOT contacted the Community Transportation Association (CTAA) (a national transit association) for technical assistance. MDOT funded CTAA to come to Michigan to provide mobility management training for transit agencies, DHS caseworkers, and Workforce Development Agency caseworkers. There were eight regional meetings that covered the entire state. Staff from DHS, MDOT, transit agencies, and Michigan Works! attended the trainings which provided an opportunity for the social service agency caseworkers to learn what transit services were available in the community and gain skills in developing transportation plans for their clients that included making use of transit when possible.
11. Upon the request of the Michigan Department of Education, MDOT has assisted in the training of school bus fleet managers on the role transit can play in pupil transportation. While there are strict federal regulations that prohibit transit agencies from providing school transportation, there are opportunities for transit to serve students – as it would any member of the public – especially in areas where school bus service has been eliminated.

12. MDOT continues to provide financial and technical support to a newly created non-profit organization, the Michigan Transportation Connection (MTC). The goal of the MTC to increase the ability of local transit agencies to provide Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT); in particular when funded by Medicaid. Increasing the use of transit to meet Medicaid NEMT needs can make more effective use of the existing state, local, and federal investment in transit. MDOT provided state funding for a small technology project that assisted with the start-up of the MTC. In 2016, MDOT applied for and received a $1.0 million FTA grant that will be passed through to the MTC to continue to begin implementing their proposed statewide brokerage program. MDOT will provide oversight and assistance to the MTC as they implement this federal grant in 2017.

13. On behalf of the Michigan Association of United Ways (MAUW), MDOT applied for and received a Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative (VTCLI) grant from the FTA. MAUW used the funds to improve the transportation information within their 2-1-1 system. Additional 2-1-1 call center improvements will provide technology improvements that will assist local social service agencies to access transit as a transportation option for their clients. MAUW is using the funds to improve the transportation information within their 2-1-1 system. MDOT continues to work with MAUW and local mobility managers to ensure the 2-1-1 call center is a useful tool to both local transit agencies and social service agencies to help people access transportation services. The MTC will make use of the 2-1-1 call center as part of their proposed statewide brokerage service (per #12 above).

In addition, as part of the VTCLI grant obligations, MAUW needed to ensure that updated “transit-human services coordination plans” were in place throughout the state. MDOT guided MAUWs planning consultant in developing “transit-human services coordination plans” for each Prosperity Region. MDOT has asked Regional Planning Agencies and Metropolitan Planning Organizations to review the final plans with transit agencies in their region to determine if there are specific regional transit needs that can be addressed over time.

14. The Michigan Departments of Community Health, Corrections, Human Services, and Transportation, and the Strategic Fund in the Michigan Department of Treasury each had boilerplate in their portions of the FY 2015 omnibus budget bill that required the agencies to form a workgroup to evaluate and respond to this question: “How can the State maximize its services and funding for transportation for low-income, elderly, and disabled individuals through consolidating all of the current transportation services for these populations under one department.” The workgroup was formed through a request from State Budget Office Director, John Roberts to each department director asking for the director to appoint members from their department. The report was filed by MDOT prior to March 1, 2015, deadline.
15. On behalf of MDOT, Michigan State University surveys Michigan transit agencies annually to determine the level of adoption of certain industry best practices. The first annual report of the survey results was posted on MDOT’s website in February 2016. The 2017 report will be posted in March 2017. The 2017 report indicates that 96 percent of the Michigan transit agencies meet at least annually with other providers to discuss service coordination issues and over half of the agencies have quarterly coordination meetings.

16. Under the FAST Act, the federal interagency transportation Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) was tasked to create an updated strategic plan on transportation coordination across federal agencies as well as a cost-sharing policy. In early 2017 MDOT participated in a CCAM webinar to learn more about the proposed efforts of this long-standing federal council. MDOT will avail itself of any new tools or guidance issued by the CCAM to provide assistance to transit and social service agencies in Michigan to help improve coordination across state and federal funding programs.

17. For the last 10 years, MDOT entered into intergovernmental agreements with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and the Michigan Department of Talent and Economic Development (workforce program) to provide financial support to the Flint area’s transit agency – Mass Transportation Authority (MTA). The MTA has long standing, successful transit services designed to provide financially-disadvantaged workers from the Flint area access to jobs throughout southeast Michigan. When changes at the federal level significantly reduced the funds available to the MTA, the three state agencies formed a unique partnership to pool resources to help the MTA continue the service. Also, in 2017, upon the request of the Michigan Department of Talent and Economic Development/Workforce Development Agency, MDOT provided a one-time grant to the MTA to procure used motor coaches to provide transportation for flint area workers to employers in Livingston County. The operating costs of the service are be subsidized by the employers.

Best Practice: Promotion of intelligent transportation services for buses that incorporate computer and navigation technology to make transit systems more efficient, including stoplight coordinating, vehicle tracking, data tracking, and computerized scheduling.

18. MDOT provided financial, technical, and planning assistance to MPTA to deliver an annual transit meeting each August. The annual meeting includes a Vendor Expo at which transit agencies and MDOT staff are able to see what is available in the marketplace and talk to other transit agencies that have purchased different types of equipment. There are several vendors of intelligent transportation services that routinely participate in the vendor show.

19. MDOT makes application for federal funds to support technology projects initiated by local transit agencies. For example, the Regional Transit Authority is studying the potential for seamless farecard integration for the region with federal/state grants awarded by MDOT.
20. In the coming years, the application of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) will be a significant aspect of the growing use of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in Michigan. BRT is an enhanced bus transit mode that provides faster, passenger-friendly service. It includes improvement to the infrastructure, vehicle road use, and stops/stations; use of cleaner, quieter and lighter vehicles; and integrating an amalgam of ITS technologies. MDOT has supported the implementation of BRT in Michigan by providing the match to federal funds as well as state operating assistance for The Rapid’s Silver Line in Grand Rapids, the state’s first BRT line. MDOT has also provided planning funds and technical assistance for BRT feasibility studies being conducted by the Capital Area Transportation Authority, the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, and the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan and is working with The Rapid to establish a BRT line on MDOT right-of-way (the Laker Line).

21. MDOT hosted the ITS World Congress in Detroit in 2014 which brought ITS innovations from around the world to Michigan. Hands on demonstrations were provided along with conference sessions to share with participants the applicability and benefits of ITS in many different facets of the transportation industry. Many transit specific applications were demonstrated and discussed with thousands of participants including public transit stakeholders from around Michigan.

22. MDOT sought assistance from FTA in identifying readily available technical assistance materials (fact sheets, manuals etc.) on ITS topics that are appropriate for small to medium sized bus systems. MDOT handed out and highlighted selected materials in its presentation at the August 2015 annual transit meeting.

23. On behalf of MDOT, Michigan State University surveys Michigan transit agencies annually to determine the level of adoption of certain industry best practices. The first annual report of the survey results was posted on MDOT’s website in February 2016. The 2017 report, which will be posted in March 2017 indicates that 70 percent of the Michigan transit agencies have initiated or pursued at ITS project in the last three years.

24. As noted under #12, the MAUW 2-1-1 call center is a significant technological advancement that can help transit agencies match riders with available rides. MDOT will continue to work with MAUW to sustain and grow the transportation functionality of Michigan’s 2-1-1 service.

25. Michigan’s public transportation system includes intercity bus. MDOT supports the intercity bus network with CTF and federal funds, through both service contracts and capital grants to the two primary carriers in Michigan – Indian Trails and Greyhound. With Indian Trails in the lead, MDOT is working with both carriers to determine the potential to add GPS to their motor coach fleet.