Manistee Transit Survey Analysis

Report

January 25, 2018

Prepared for
Manistee County Transportation, Inc.

Prepared by
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Bethesda, Maryland
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Public outreach and stakeholder involvement are essential to maintaining and implementing successful transit services with strong community support. A dynamic approach to public involvement can result in creative ideas for problem-solving, build community understanding and support, increase public awareness of transit in a positive manner, and build support for using public tax dollars to fund transit.

While current customers provide a “captive” audience and are readily available for distribution of a rider survey, experience indicates that a variety of innovative approaches are necessary for engaging the community as a whole. Manistee County Transportation, Inc. (MCTI) and the KFH Group, Inc. developed a public input process to evaluate MCTI’s services and identify areas for improvement and expansion. This process included both riders and non-riders, as both groups provide valuable input.

A number of approaches were utilized to draw out comments for this study. Current customers provided important information on where services are lacking or could be improved to meet their needs. People in the community provided helpful information on why they do not use the system, be it from the service not meeting their schedule to simply unawareness that services are available. MCTI staff shared their expertise and experience with the study team as well.

This report is presented in three sections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Section Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduces the study and presents the survey development and methodology</td>
<td>Presents the survey results for, first the rider survey and then the community survey</td>
<td>Provides an analysis of the rider and community survey results</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The four Appendices include the survey instruments and comments collected from the surveys.
Section One

Survey Development and Distribution

The following section outlines the steps taken to engage the community and gather public input on MCTI’s services. Both surveys and informal meetings were used to engage the public and gather data.

Methodology

The KFH Group project team, Dan Dalton, Senior Transportation Planner and Lucinda Shannon, Transportation Planner, initiated this project by conducting a Kick-Off Meeting conference call with MCTI’s Richard Strevey, General Manager, Denise Peters, Operations Manager, and Shawn Wager, Office Manager. This initial task provided background information for the study team, as well as setting priorities for the study. The Kick-Off Meeting provided an opportunity to refine the project goals and objectives, review previous planning efforts, and discuss on-going project management and communications.

The goals established for this project were to:

- Engage MCTI riders and the public in improving MCTI’s services
- Gather rider and public opinions and impressions of MCTI’s services
- Identify areas for improvement and/or expansion in MCTI’s services

Survey Development

Based on their knowledge from previous outreach projects and information gathered from MCTI, the KFH Group developed two surveys:

1) Rider survey for distribution to current customers and
2) Community survey for Manistee’s general public and prospective MCTI riders.

The surveys were designed to identify existing or perceived gaps in transit services, and general suggestions from customers and the community that can be used in the modification of existing services or development of new services.

The draft surveys were distributed to MCTI and appropriate stakeholders for review and comments. Once the surveys were finalized, the KFH Group coordinated with MCTI to be on-site for distribution. The rider and community surveys are available in Appendix A.
**Rider Survey**

The rider survey was designed to provide information that MCTI can use to better understand the travel needs and level of satisfaction of current riders. Overall the rider survey provided the opportunity to:

- Gather opinions from current customers on MCTI services
- Obtain information on current users of MCTI services

The rider survey focused on obtaining input on the following.

- Trip purpose (i.e. medical, work, shopping)
- Rider satisfaction with current MCTI services
- Is the current fare structure reasonable and appropriate?
- Desired service improvements
- Overall likes and dislikes

Answering survey questions was voluntary (especially since the MCTI services are primarily demand response and customers are known individually), therefore the survey tried to allow for respondents to complete their surveys anonymously. The survey gathered general information on current customers and developed a rider profile with the following characteristics.

- Ridership frequency
- Age
- Employment status
- Household income
- Car ownership/availability

**Community Survey**

The community survey was developed for and targeted to people in the Manistee community who may become MCTI riders or serve transit dependent populations. The project team utilized online and paper surveys to collect information about the transit services needed by Manistee County residents and their perceptions of MCTI. The questions were designed to collect information about the following aspects from survey participants:

- Availability of vehicles for travel and most popular method of travel
- Destinations most frequented
- Destinations Manistee County residents need to access and are not able to
- Reasons survey respondents did not use MCTI
- Areas for improvement in MCTI’s services
- Overall impression of MCTI by the general public
Survey Dissemination

The KFH Group engaged the community as a whole, to ensure that all residents of Manistee County had a reasonable opportunity to complete both surveys.

**Rider Survey**

The rider survey was mostly disseminated on MCTI’s vehicles. KFH Group staff was on site in Manistee the week of October 16th, 2017, working with MCTI’s drivers and dispatch staff to reach as many riders as possible. Riders were asked to fill out a survey as they boarded the bus. KFH Group staff and MCTI drivers assisted riders with completing surveys when appropriate. Riders who were not comfortable filling out surveys on the bus were encouraged to take surveys home to fill out and return them to drivers the next day.

Some of MCTI’s riders are school children who were not able to fill out the survey. MCTI staff distributed the surveys for these clients to their caregivers. Riders who came into MCTI’s facilities to purchase bus passes and ask questions were also asked to complete surveys.

**Community Survey**

The KFH Group and MCTI staff worked together to disseminate the community survey which was available, in both paper and online format, from September 18th through October 9th, 2017:

- An on-line community survey was placed on the MCTI website, and MCTI and local stakeholders promoted the availability this survey. Outreach efforts to point residents toward the survey included the use of a press release, social media, distribution networks, and through the Human Services Coordination Body.

- In recognition of the possibility that many potential and current transit riders may not have convenient Internet access, paper copies of the community survey was placed at key locations around the county. These places included the Adult Day Centers, Council on Aging Meal Sites, and Hospital Centers. While on site, KFH Group and MCTI staff also visited senior meal sites to inform seniors about the study and distribute surveys.
Section Two

Survey Results

This section provides a summary of the results from both the rider and the community survey. Overall, over 200 surveys were collected through this effort. The results are presented with summaries from each survey question. Then the following section provides an analysis of the results.

Rider Survey

This section summarizes the results for each question on the rider survey. There were 104 rider surveys collected. While most surveys were complete, some respondents did not answer all of the questions. The percent calculated for each answer is based on the number of respondents that answered each question. Initial questions on the survey were designed to obtain information on current customers and to have a better understanding of who is using MCTI services.

Residence

Customers were first asked if they were a Manistee County resident, or a visitor or tourist. Ninety eight percent of the 104 rider survey respondents reported living in Manistee County. When asked what city, village, or township they live:

- 33% of the 39 respondents answering this question reported living in Manistee City.
- 13% reported living in Irons
- 10% reported living in Kaleva
- 8% reported living in Filer
- 5% reported living in Arcadia, Brethren, Mason, Onekama, or Wellston
- Less than 5% reported living in Eastlake, Norman, Park Dale, or Stronach.

Age

More than half of the survey respondents (57%) riding MCTI indicated that they were in the 25 to 64 year old age range. Eighteen percent indicated that they were under 18 years old, and 13% indicated that they were 65 to 79 years old. Figure 2-1 illustrates the age range of the rider survey respondents.
Figure 2-1: Age of Rider Survey Respondents

Race

Eighty percent of the rider survey respondents classified themselves as white, 8% indicated that they were Native American, and 6% indicated that they were Hispanic. Figure 2-2 provides all the answers given for this question about race. One hundred of the respondents answered this question and four skipped it.

Figure 2-2: Race of Rider Survey Respondents
**Employment Status**

When asked about their employment status, as illustrated in Figure 2-3 respondents to the rider survey were mostly employed, retired or a student, with only 11% of the respondents reported being unemployed.

**Figure 2-3: Employment Status of Rider Survey Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full or Part-time</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Household Income**

While 31% of the rider survey respondents reported being employed, as shown in Figure 2-4 59% reported making under $20,000 a year. Eighty seven respondents answered this question about household income.

**Figure 2-4: Annual Household Income of Rider Survey Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over $60,000</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000 - $59,999</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 - $39,999</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under $20,000</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Results

**Driver’s License and Access to Car**

As seen in Figure 2-5, 60% of survey respondents did not have a valid driver’s license. Figure 2-6 indicates that 74% of respondents did not have access to a car for their trip.

**Figure 2-5: Valid Driver’s License**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you have a valid driver’s license?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2-6: Access to a Car**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did you have access to a car for this trip?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Type of MCTI Service**

More than half (57%) of survey respondents reported that they were riding the MCTI city service, 40% reported that they were riding the county service, and only 2% reported riding the West Shore Community College service. Figure 2-7 illustrates the types of MCTI service that riders reported using.

**Figure 2-7: Type of Manistee County Transportation Service of Rider Survey Respondents**

- **City service** (57%)
- **County service** (41%)
- **West Shore Community College** (2%)
**Frequency in Using MCTI Services**

As indicated in Figure 2-8, 63% of the riders answering this survey reported that they rode three to five days a week. Thirty three percent reported riding five days a week and 30% reported riding three or four days a week.

**Figure 2-8: Rider Frequency of Rider Survey Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 days per week</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or 4 days per week</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than once a month</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few times a month</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or 2 days per week</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Length of Time in Using MCTI Services**

More than half of the survey respondents (60%) reported that they have been riding MCTI for more than two years. Figure 2-9 illustrates the responses to the question about how long respondents have been riding MCTI. The second most popular answer selected for the length of time that respondents have been riding was less than six months.

**Figure 2-9: Length of Ridership**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Time</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than 2 years</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 6 months</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months to a year</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Trip Purpose

When asked about the purpose of their trips, riders indicated that they use MCTI services for a variety of trip purposes. As shown in Figure 2-10 responses were fairly evenly distributed between social and/or recreational purposes, medical or school purposes, work, and errands or shopping.

Figure 2-10: Trip Purpose

Some riders provided additional comments to the question about their trip purpose. These comments are listed below. Some riders were on a Chamber Leadership Group trip and indicated this was their first time riding MCTI.

- Court
- ABA Therapy
- Court
- DHS
- On a tour
- Manistee Chamber Leadership Group
- Manistee Chamber
- Leadership group event
- Meetings
- Fun
- Personal
- Drop-in
- Home
- Friendship
- Mom's place
- Friendship
- Volunteer service
Marketing

More than half of rider survey respondents (53%) said they found out about MCTI through family or friends. As shown in Figure 2-11, others reported that they called MCTI, found out about MCTI through agency staff, or found MCTI through their website.

Figure 2-11: MCTI Marketing

When asked if there were places in Manistee County or in the region where they would like to go on a regular basis, but cannot because there is no public transportation available for the trip, most rider survey respondents (73%) answered no. Most riders on MCTI were satisfied with the geographic range of service. The 27% who answered yes there were places that they would like to go but cannot provided the following comments about places they would like to access:

- To and from Traverse City
- To Traverse City and Ludington
- Manistee to Traverse City
- More frequent trips to Wellston/Wellston medical clinic; I have to wait there all day with the current bus schedule
- Out of town; have more frequent longer distance rides, back and forth to work, and medical appointments
- To other counties like Ludinton and Cadillac
Survey Results

- Out of town, like Benzie
- Service on Sundays
- Church on Saturday
- From Manistee to Ludington Walmart
- From my home to anywhere I like to go
- Sunday all city and county
- From school to Dublin General Store
- To Ludington
- To Mac Donald’s
- TC Ludington
- Work, social trips; I live out county with limited bus service
- Out of town
- Shopping
- More hours to and from Bear Lake
- Saturdays after 4:00 (evening venues)
- Aki - need more times available
- Night time until 12:00 a.m.
- Fall color tours
- Thompsonville
- Century Terrace to and from St. Joe Parrish, Thursdays, 4 - 7:30 p.m.
- Irons

Satisfaction with MCTI Services

The next question asked riders to rate their satisfaction with MCTI’s services in the following areas:

- Trip scheduling process
- Telephone customer service
- On-time performance
- Days of service
- Hours of service
- Cost of service
- Cleanliness of the vehicles
- Driver courtesy
- Availability of information
- Usefulness of website
- Safety and security

The response to this question was overwhelmingly positive. Almost half of the riders reported being very satisfied with all of the areas they were asked about. Figure 2-12 illustrates the extent of satisfaction with MCTI’s services. As can be seen from Figure 2-12, almost 70% of survey respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with all of the areas they were asked about. Driver courtesy received a 100% satisfaction rating. All respondents reported being very satisfied (75%) or satisfied (25%) with MCTI drivers and the services they provide.
Areas for Improvements and Expansion

Survey respondents were asked to check service improvements that would be most useful to them. They could choose from the following list and were asked to select their top three areas for improvement.

- Later evening hours
- More Saturday service
- Sunday service
- More destinations
- Better reservation system

Seventy-nine respondents answered this question; half reported that later evening hours and Sunday service would be beneficial. Thirty-eight percent wanted more Saturday service, 20% wanted more destinations and only 11% wanted a better reservation system. Figure 2-13 shows how survey respondents answered this question about needed improvements.
When asked to provide comments about MCTI and public transportation in the region, rider survey respondents provided 58 comments. All comments are available in Appendix B. Most comments were complimentary; respondents commented on how they rely on service, enjoy riding, like the drivers, and find vehicles to be in good shape. For example respondents submitted the following comments.

- *This has been a good opportunity for me. It has been a blessing!*
- *It has been good. I’ve been riding it for 30 years.*
- *As of yet, I have never had a negative experience with the bus service, and I look forward to continued use in the future.*
- *You have helpful, friendly, and kind drivers.*
- *I’m thankful for your service, it’s the only transportation I have. Much appreciated! Thanks!!*

There were 27 comments that had suggestions for service improvements. A majority of them were about expanding service hours, especially on Sundays and in the evenings. This correlates with the answers from the question asking about the top three improvements which also found that riders wanted more Sunday and later evening service hours.
Community Survey

One-hundred-six people participated in the community survey. The majority of surveys were completed online (83%). The majority of community survey respondents (95%) reported that they were residents of Manistee County. Seventy-eight of respondents commented on what city, township or village they lived in. Of those 78 respondents:

- 44% lived in Manistee City
- 12% lived in Bear Lake
- 10% lived in Norman and Wellston
- 9% lived in Filer
- 6% lived in Onekama

Less than 5% of respondents reported living in Stronach and Arcadia.

Community Travel Modes and Patterns

Most community survey respondents (90%) reported that they had a valid driver's license and 91% reported having one or more car. Figure 2-14 displays the number of working vehicles that respondents reported having available in their households. Ninety-two percent of respondents reported having at least one vehicle available in their household.

Figure 2-14: Number of Working Vehicles Available in Household

The survey asked respondents about their primary mode of transportation for the following types of trips:

- Work
- Medical
- School
- Social and recreational
- Shopping and errands
Answers were not required for each destination and some respondents did not list modes for all of the destinations. One hundred and two respondents answered this question and four skipped the question. Results of the survey can be seen in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1: Primary Mode of Transportation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location Traveling To</th>
<th>Drive Myself</th>
<th>Ride W/ Family or Friend</th>
<th>Public Transit</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bicycle</th>
<th>Taxi Uber/Lyft</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social/Rec</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping/Errands</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since almost all respondents had a driver license and car available, most respondents reported driving as their primary mode to all of the destinations listed on the survey. Also, as expected in this rural area, none of the survey respondents reported using a taxi, Uber, or Lyft as a primary mode for any destinations. Eighty percent of respondents reported driving themselves to work, the second most prevalent transportation mode for getting to work was taking public transit (7%). Riding with family or a friend was selected for 6% of respondents, 2% walked, and 1% bicycled. Figure 2-15 and Table 2-1 illustrate the results from this question.

Figure 2-15: Primary Mode of Transportation

Survey respondents were asked to write in their three most frequent destinations. Ninety-six respondents answered this question, not all listed three destinations; some respondents listed only one or two destinations. The most frequent destinations listed by the community survey respondents were:

- Grocery shopping
- Manistee City
- Work
- Shopping/errands
- Medical
- School
Survey Results

Figure 2-16 lists the destinations that had a frequency of five percent or higher.

**Figure 2-16: Most Frequent Destinations of Community Survey Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grocery</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manistee</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping/Errands</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Community Impression of MCTI**

About 90% of community survey respondents have driver’s licenses and vehicles, and the majority of them (67%) reported they never ride MCTI, see Figure 2-17. Nineteen percent reported riding less than once a week, 8% reported riding two to four times a week, 3% reported riding about once a week, and 3% reported riding every day.

**Figure 2-17: Frequency that Community Survey Respondents Ride MCTI**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than once a week</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4 times a week</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every day</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About once a week</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The respondents that reported never riding MCTI were asked to select from twelve reasons why they do not ride MCTI. Fifty-six respondents answered this question. Forty-three percent answered that they do not ride MCTI because they need their car for work or school. Other reasons for not using MCTI had a fairly low selection rate; 17% said that there is no service near their home, work or school and 11% said the hours of operation are too limited.

These answers fit with the geographic and service characteristics of MCTI. In rural areas, people find driving more convenient than riding public transit. Traffic is minimal and there are plenty of parking spaces. Distances between destinations are also further apart. Figure 2-18 illustrates all answers selected in response to the question about reasons respondents did not ride MCTI. In keeping with observations from the field and the rider survey, none of the respondents gave safety or cost of the fare as a reason for not riding MCTI.

**Figure 2-18: Reasons for Not Riding MCTI**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percent of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need my car for work/school</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No service near my home/work/school</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The hours of operation are too limited</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have limited mobility/hard to use the bus</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trip is too long/takes too much time</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have to wait too long for the bus</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The days of operation are too limited</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not know about public transit</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the bus is confusing</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bus is uncomfortable</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fare is too expensive</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t feel safe on the bus</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Results

Respondents answering this question about why they did not ride MCTI were able to provide open ended comments. There were 25 comments giving reasons why they do not ride MCTI. Most comments said they had a car and did not need to ride. The second reason respondents chose was that service did not meet their needs.

When asked if they would consider using MCTI if there were services that met their needs, 58% answered, yes, they would ride MCTI. Only three percent answered, no they would not ride MCTI and 39% answered that they would not ride at this time. This fits with MCTI’s primary service objective as a support for people who are unable to drive and need public assistance. Figure 2-19 illustrates the answers to the question asking respondents if they would consider using MCTI if there were services that met their needs. Only the 71 respondents who answered that they never rode MCTI were asked this question. Sixty seven of the 71 respondents asked answered this question.

Figure 2-19: Would you ride MCTI if there were services that met your needs?

Areas for Improvements and Expansion

When the community survey asked about types of improvements needed in MCTI, respondents indicated that extending service hours and destinations would be welcome improvements. Respondents were given seven improvements to select from and asked to select their top three improvements, listed below. They could also write in their own comments.

1. Shorter travel times
2. Better reservation system
3. Greater availability of schedule information
4. Sunday service
5. Additional Saturday service
6. Serve more destinations
7. Later evening hours
Figure 2-20 provides the ranking of improvements selected from the list by survey respondents. More than half (61%) wanted later evening hours. Serving more destinations, adding Sunday service and increasing Saturday service were also high on the list. Forty six percent would like MCTI to serve more destinations, 43% wanted additional Saturday service and 38% wanted Sunday service added. While MCTI serves a large area, many long distance and out of county areas have limited pick up hours and require multiple transfers. The 46% of the community survey respondents requesting additional destinations specified a need for direct/express service to popular destinations like Traverse City.

Figure 2-20: Service Improvements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Later evening hours</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve more destinations</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Saturday service</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday service</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater availability of schedule information</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better reservation system</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorter travel times</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twelve survey respondents wrote in improvements. The comments that respondents provided are listed below.

- Better service to out-of-county areas
- Cleaner buses
- Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) has been wonderful meeting our needs
- Stop subsidizing it with tax dollars and make it self sufficient
- Hook up with connecting counties;
- Longer hours
- Follow Benzie County's program
- More efficient vehicles
- I have heard some groups are limited by evening offerings. It doesn't affect me personally.
- Bike racks on buses
- Less costly to Onekama
- Improve wait time to be picked up
- Better service for the out-of-county areas
- More availability to Little River Casino

Respondents were asked if there were locations that need additional or improved MCTI service. This was an open-ended question and 51 respondents provided comments. Twenty six comments mentioned adding to and/or improving service to the out-county areas of Manistee County. This was the most popular response to the question about additional locations. The second most frequently mentioned comment was mentioned 13 times; respondents did not know, or were happy with the service and could not think of any improvements that were needed. More than half of the respondents skipped this question, which could indicate they did not think there were locations that needed additional or improved services. The third most frequently mentioned comment topic was mentioned five times; adding evening and weekend service. All comments from this question can be seen in Appendix C.

When asked about their overall impression of MCTI, an overwhelming majority of community survey respondents answered that they have a positive impression. Only 14% of respondents indicated they had a negative impression and 4% answered that they were not aware of MCTI's services. Figure 2-21 illustrates the answers to this question.

**Figure 2-21: Overall Impression of MCTI**

Survey respondents were asked to provide additional comments about public transit and transportation in the Manistee community. Fifty-four comments were collected. The comments from this question are available in Appendix D. Almost half of the comments (48%) were in support of MCTI and the services it delivers. For example, survey respondents provided the following comments about MCTI’s services.
Survey Results

Our family used the Dial-a-Ride service when our car was being serviced and we found the experience to be excellent- reasonable wait times, comfortable rides, and excellent staff - both the drivers and those answering the phones.

I have used Dial A Ride for my son since he has been 4! Being a working parent it is great to have this service. All staff has been awesome! Love the communication and safety.

I appreciate all that the staff does - with huge hearts - above and beyond the call of duty - I know you are doing far more than most people realize - and you are doing a great job. THANK YOU

Thirty-one percent of comments contained suggestions for service improvements and an additional 9% requested out-county service. Some requests were to extend service hours to later in the evenings and weekends, use an online reservation system, and provide more services for tourists. For example, one survey respondents provided the following comment.

We need additional services in Manistee County and I understand those will require additional funding. We need longer hours, more stops, more days and better technology to support a reservation system.
Overall, from both the rider and community surveys and informal interviews with MCTI staff and riders, people are highly satisfied with MCTI’s transportation services and the organization’s management. As shown earlier in this report (Figure 2-12: Rider Satisfaction), MCTI received very high ratings in all categories on customer satisfaction. The rider survey also asked about the customer’s satisfaction with MCTI’s services and areas for improvements. Customer satisfaction was very high and there were few requests for improvements, even after prompting.

Both the MCTI riders and the general public in Manistee have a positive impression and are satisfied with MCTI’s services. The Community Survey found that 82% of respondents were aware of MCTI’s services and have an overall positive impression. From the question asking community members about their impression of MCTI services, only 4% said they were not aware of MCTI’s services and 14% indicated they were aware and had an overall negative impression.

The rider satisfaction ratings were even more favorable. With the exception of the website, all of the MCTI service areas that riders were asked to rate received a more than an 80% satisfaction rating. Driver courtesy had a 100% satisfaction rating, safety and security were rated at 94% satisfied, and cost of service was rated at 95% satisfied.

This following section presents a rider profile and provides a further analysis of key findings from both the rider and community surveys. Importantly, it also includes suggestions gathered from MCTI riders and the community on areas for improvement and expansion.

Rider Profile

The rider profile illustrates the population groups who are using MCTI’s services. It presents passenger demographics and travel characteristics. The survey found that the typical MCTI rider is transit dependent—a county resident, white, mostly employed or enrolled in an educational program, and earning under $20,000. Most MCTI riders are low income and transit dependent. Also, some MCTI riders chose not to drive and to ride MCTI instead.

Demographics

The rider survey provided the following demographic information on current MCTI customers. MCTI riders were mostly between the ages of 25 and 64 (57%), Caucasian, and residents of Manistee County.
• 57% of riders indicated they were between the ages of 25 and 64, 18% were under age 18, 13% were between ages 65 and 79, 11% were between the ages of 18 to 24 and 1% reported being over age 80.

• 80% of riders classified their race as White or Caucasian, 8% said they were Native American, 6% Hispanic, 3% African American or Black, 2% Other and 1% identified themselves as Asian/Pacific Islander.

**Employment**

MCTI services are essential for many of their customers. The populations using MCTI services are often employed but earning a low salary. When asked about their employment status:

• 31% said they were employed full time or part-time and 21% said they were a student.

• The remaining 47% reported being retired (19%), other (17%), or unemployed (11%).

• More than half of the riders (59%) reported earning less than $20,000 a year.

Figure 3-1 provides a visual reference for the employment status of MCTI riders.
**Transit Dependent**

Many MCTI riders also lack access to vehicles and/or the ability to drive, indicating a level of transit dependence. As seen in previous sections of this report:

- 60% of survey respondents (Figure 2-5) did not have a valid driver's license and
- 74% (Figure 2-6) did not have access to a car for their trip.

The frequency that riders reported using MCTI services indicated a level of dependency on MCTI transportation services. MCTI customers reported riding frequently and with a variety of trip purposes or destinations:

- 63% reported riding three to five days a week
- 33% reported riding five days a week
- 30% reported riding three or four days a week
- 15% reported riding less than once a month
- 12% reported riding a few times a month
- 11% reported riding one or two days a week

Most transit systems have one or two main trip purposes; and MCTI rider survey respondents indicated an even split for multiple trip purposes. Figure 2-10 shows that riders are able to use MCTI services to access a variety of community services. When the survey asked about the purpose of their trips, riders indicated they could access multiple destinations:

- 23% riding for social and/or recreational purposes
- 21% riding for medical or school purposes
- 20% riding for work
- 17% riding for errands or shopping

The fact that 23% of riders were using MCTI services for non-essential services, like social and recreational, shows a high level of customer satisfaction. People are choosing to ride MCTI and enjoying the trip.

Figure 3-2 illustrates more reasons why MCTI's service is essential to its riders. More than half of MCTI riders do not have the ability to drive, and report riding MCTI frequently and for extended periods of time. This indicates a high level of dependence on MCTI services.
Figure 3-2: MCTI Riders

- **67%** do not have a driver’s license
- **74%** reported not having a car available
- **63%** ride more than three days a week
- **60%** have been riding MCTI for more than two years

While in the field, the survey team observed that passengers enjoyed riding MCTI buses. Riders often knew other passengers and drivers, and enjoyed socializing with them during their trip. For example, in the rider survey comments (Appendix B), riders expressed their gratitude for MCTI’s friendliness and the drivers’ exceptional customer service. Listed below are some quotes from survey comments.

*I’m very satisfied with the bus service. Every driver is very friendly and even points out interesting things about the city.*

*Pleasant, friendly, polite, and just happy to have them as a service for the community, happy to have them there to help.*

Participants from both the rider and community surveys reported feeling safe using MCTI services. Drivers had a 100% satisfaction rate among riders and were observed in the field making extra efforts to meet all of their customer’s needs.

**Areas for Improvements and Expansion**

When the surveys asked about areas for improvement, the rider and community survey respondents’ top choice was increasing service hours. Sixty-one percent of the community survey respondents selected later evening hours as an area for improvement and 50% of rider survey participants selected later evening hours. The second most popular choice for community respondents was to serve more destinations at 46%, while the rider survey found that 20% of respondents wanted more destinations. The second choice for service improvements for riders was Sunday service with 50% selecting this choice; and 43% of community respondents selected Sunday service. Figure 3-3 compares the improvements that community and rider survey respondents selected.
While MCTI had extraordinarily high satisfaction ratings in almost all categories that riders were asked about, almost 25% of respondents skipped rating the website. Ninety-six participants answered the question about rating services however, not all participants ranked all of the areas. Interestingly, only 74 participants rated the MCTI website; 69% were very satisfied or very satisfied and 8% were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied. Some survey respondents who did not answer this question wrote in that MCTI did not have a website and therefore they could not rate it. This indicates an opportunity to improve marketing and outreach. However, in the same question, riders replied that they were satisfied with the availability of information. Participants indicated in comments from earlier questions that most of them relied on word of mouth for information about MCTI. This could be a disadvantage for people who are visiting the community or looking for alternatives to driving.

Both riders and community members indicated a desire for expanding MCTI services to further destinations and to more weekend and evening service hours. When the community survey asked if respondents would consider using MCTI if there were services that met their needs, 58% answered, yes, they would ride MCTI. Only three percent answered, no they would not ride MCTI and 39% answered that they would not ride at this time. This supports the requests for expanded service hours on weekends and evenings, and perhaps direct trips outside of the county.

While there is always room for improvement, overall, riders and the Manistee community indicated a high level of satisfaction with MCTI services. Requests for expanding services to cover more hours and locations demonstrate support for MCTI services and a willingness to support expanding these services.
Appendix A

Rider and Community Surveys
ON-BOARD RIDER SURVEY

It is important to understand the needs of our riders. Please complete this survey and return it to the driver when you get off the bus. If you already completed a survey, you don’t need to complete a second one. Thank you!

1. □ I am a visitor/tourist
   □ I am a Manistee County resident (year round or part of the year)
   If a resident, in what city, village, or township do you live? ___________________________

2. What Manistee County Transportation service are you currently riding?
   □ City service  □ County service  □ Trolleys  □ West Shore Community College

3. How many hours in advance did you call to reserve your trip? _________ hours

4. What is the purpose of your trip today?
   □ Work  □ Social/Recreation  □ School
   □ Errands/Shopping  □ Medical  □ Other __________________________

5. How often do you ride Manistee County Transportation?
   □ 1 or 2 days per week  □ 3 or 4 days per week  □ 5 days per week or more
   □ Less than once a month  □ A few times a month

6. How long have you been riding?
   □ Less than 6 months  □ 1 to 2 years
   □ 6 months to a year  □ more than 2 years

7. How did you find out about Manistee County Transportation?
   □ Friend/Family  □ Manistee County Transportation Website  □ Agency Staff
   □ Called Manistee County Transportation  □ Other: __________________________

8. Are there places in Manistee County or in the region where you would like to go on a regular basis, but cannot because there is no public transportation available for the trip?
   □ No  □ Yes  If yes, from where to where? ____________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

OVER, PLEASE
9. Please rate your satisfaction with Manistee County Transportation in the following areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Very Unsatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trip scheduling process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone customer service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-time performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Days of service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hours of service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness of the vehicles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver courtesy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Usefulness of website</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Safety and security</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

10. If Manistee County Transportation made improvements, what would be most useful to you?

- Later evening hours
- Sunday service
- Better reservation system
- More Saturday service
- More destinations
- Other: _______________________

11. Do you have a valid driver’s license?  
   - Yes  
   - No

12. Did you have access to a car for this trip?  
   - Yes  
   - No

13. Please indicate your age.

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-64
- 65-79
- 80+

14. How would you classify yourself?

- Caucasian/White
- Hispanic
- African American/Black
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Native American
- Other

15. Which best describes your current employment status?

- Full or part-time
- Retired
- Student
- Unemployed
- Other

16. What is your annual household income?

- Under $20,000
- $20,000-$39,999
- $40,000-$59,999
- Over $60,000

17. Please provide comments concerning public transportation in Manistee County and the region.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Community Transportation Survey

Manistee County Transportation needs your help to better understand travel patterns and transportation needs in the area. Please take a few minutes to complete the following Community Transportation Survey. To complete this survey online, please visit (https://www.surveymonkey.com/INSERT LINK HERE). Please complete only one survey.

Individual survey responses will be kept confidential. If you have any questions please contact Manistee County Transportation at 231-723-6525 or richard@manisteebus.com, or the KFH Group (the firm conducting the survey) at 301-951-8660 or lshannon@kfhgroup.com. Thank you!

1. What is your primary mode of transportation for the following trips?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of Transportation</th>
<th>Drive Myself</th>
<th>Ride w/ Family or Friend</th>
<th>Public Transit</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bicycle</th>
<th>Taxi/Uber/Lyft</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social/Rec</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping/Errands</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Where do you travel to the most? Please indicate your three most frequent destinations.

1: ___________________________  2: ___________________________  3: ___________________________

3. What is your impression of Manistee County Transportation services?

- Aware of Manistee County Transportation services, overall positive impression
- Aware of Manistee County Transportation services, overall negative impression
- Not aware of Manistee County Transportation

4. How often do you ride Manistee County Transportation?

- Never
- Less than once a week
- About once a week
- 2-4 times a week
- Every day

5. If you don’t use Manistee County Transportation, what are your reasons? Choose as many as needed.

- Did not know about public transit
- Need my car for work/school
- No service near my home/work/school
- Trip is too long/takes too much time
- The bus is uncomfortable
- I have limited mobility/hard to use the bus
- The hours of operation are too limited
- The days of operation are too limited
- Have to wait too long for the bus
- Don’t feel safe on the bus
- The fare is too expensive
- Using the bus is confusing
- Other ___________________________
6. Would you consider using Manistee County Transportation if there were services that met your needs?
   ■ Yes  ■ No  ■ Not at this time

7. Are there locations that need additional or improved Manistee County Transportation service?

   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

8. What other improvements are needed? Please choose your top three.
   ■ Serve more destinations  ■ Better reservation system
   ■ Additional Saturday service  ■ Sunday service
   ■ Shorter travel times  ■ Greater availability of schedule information
   ■ Later evening hours
   ■ Other: __________________________________________________

9.  ■ I am a visitor/tourist
    ■ I am a Manistee County resident (year round and/or part of the year)
    If a resident, in what city, village, or township do you live? ___________________________

10. Do you have a valid driver’s license?  ■ Yes  ■ No

11. How many working vehicles are available in your household?
    ■ 0  ■ 1  ■ 2  ■ 3 or more

12. Please provide any other comments about public transit and transportation in the community.

   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

Thank You!
If you have any questions please contact Manistee County Transportation at 231-723-6525 or richard@manisteebus.com, or the KFH Group (the firm conducting the survey) at 301-951-8660 or lshannon@kfhgroup.com.
Please return your survey to: 180 Memorial Drive, Manistee, MI 49660
Appendix B

Comments about MCTI
Appendix B
Comments about MCTI

Comments from Rider Survey answering the following question:

*Please provide comments concerning public transportation in Manistee County and the region.*

Complimentary Comments (31 Comments)

1. This has been a good opportunity for me. It has been a blessing!
2. You provided service for my homeless sister many times without charge. Thank you, Joyce Copeland Bauer House, A.F.C.
3. Great on time friendly service.
4. I'm very satisfied with the bus service. Every driver is very friendly and even points out interesting things about the city.
5. Fast, friendly, very helpful. Life saver!!
6. I am a homemaker.
7. But not all workers are as nice as others in all jobs.
8. The drivers are awesome!
9. As of yet, I have never had a negative experience with the bus service, and I look forward to continued use in the future.
10. Glad you are here.
11. Thankful for this service.
12. It has been good. I've been riding it for 30 years.
13. If I'm hot or cold - driver accommodates. Very, very courteous drivers! Water spots on windows :( I love the service you do for our county!
14. Pleasant, friendly, polite, and just happy to have them as a service for the community, happy to have them there to help.
15. I think it is pretty good.
16. You have helpful friendly, kind drivers.
17. I'm thankful for your service, it's the only transportation I have. Much appreciated! Thanks!!
18. D.A.R. is wonderful! Thanks!!
19. First time using the service.
20. Driver was very friendly and bus was in great condition (very clean).
21. The gentleman said that he couldn't read good enough to fill one out but wanted it to be known that he said that we are doing great and that if it wasn't for us he would be walking.
22. Thank you for taking me to school! :) 
23. Our driver is very nice and he tries his best to make everyone happy. 
24. Great bus driver. Richard is funny. 
25. Every driver is amazing and kind. Very prompt. 
26. In general the service is friendly. Love to work part-time, fun and great people to be with. 
27. Very convenient 
28. Let Sally (the driver) get more money she is the best. 
29. Very good service. 
30. They are a big help to me and my family. 
31. I don't want to put. 

Suggested Improvement (27 Comments) 

1. Sunday service and that day between 2 and 3 because at some churches there are potlucks. It would be nice if there would be a bus to WSCC when they have service and events. 
2. Come on time. 
3. The other people (kids) riding the school bus are very loud and they are creating an unsafe environment by standing, walking, and sitting the wrong way. 
4. I had to wait an half an hour, I wanted the driver to wait while I ran in and he left me and I had to wait. 
5. I would like longer days. I would like to also be able to use the bus on Sundays. 
6. It would be nice to have service on Sunday. 
7. Extended hours would be great for dial-a-ride service. 
8. Sometimes I would have to wait 1 hour to 30 minutes longer just for the dial-a-ride to get to me and when dial-a-ride says they will pick me up on time I would like that to happen more. 
9. Wish that we didn’t always have to wait for the shuttle when going places. Also wish that we didn’t have to wait so long for bus. Thank you 
10. More buses and more hours. 
11. I would like a bus ride to be quick and quiet. It is loud and shaky. 
12. The brakes are loud and it is bumpy but other than that its good. 
13. Get to school quicker, because with Kevin we got to school around 7:25 - 7:30 but we get there (school) late. Sorry Bus Driver you need to get a move on. 
14. Less bumpy rides, buses say they arrive certain time but are always arriving later than that time causing people to be late to important things. 
15. There are a limited amount of rides from the Indian Reservation- need rides to and from Love Inc., I have classes on Thursday nights. 
16. Buses need better shocks. 
17. I would like to work as a dispatcher at the bus company. I would like to take the bus shopping. I would like to learn how to use the equipment on the bus. 
18. Need more bus drivers, different ways to do routes.
19. Public transportation is my only mode of travel. I gave up my vehicle 1 year ago. The drivers are wonderful. Would love later hours on Saturday and Friday evenings for opportunity to enjoy evening recreation.

20. Clean the windows on the inside and outside of the bus.

21. I would like to see later hours so people can go out and not worry about a DUI.

22. Need evening service pick up in town from St. Joe Parrish to Century Terrace for Love Inc. class out at 7:20pm.

23. There is definitely a need here for Sunday service. Many times I would have to pay total strangers just to get to where I was going on Sundays. I'd be willing to pay more to ride on Sundays and pay more to go farther.

24. Sunday pick up. Fix the roads in Bezie, the roads are so bad and the people have medical problems, the bumps are painful for riders.

25. More comfortable ride, better shocks on the bus. Better roads. The drivers should be paid more. I have a broken rib and the bumps on the bus hurt.

26. Sunday service is definitely needed here. I'm willing to pay more for Sundays. Makes life more difficult with no Sunday service available.

27. The bumps and jolts hurt my spine. The taxis are more comfortable. Great service, all the drivers are friendly. I would ride more if I could afford it.
Appendix C

Comments about Additional Service Area
Appendix C
Comments about Additional Service Area

Comments from Community Survey answering the following question.

*Are there locations that need additional or improved Manistee County Transportation service?*

1. Don't know
2. Would be great to be able to take it to Traverse City.
3. Unsure
4. Wellston and other out county areas
5. Not that I am aware
6. Yes; your times going to the rural communities is ridiculous... once in the morning & once in the afternoon...
7. Consideration for people who need to get to work on time.
8. Don't know since I haven't used it
9. I live in town so I wouldn't know.
10. Out county... Onekama, Bear Lake, Kaleva
11. Out county villages need more options
12. connections with other county transit
13. Rural Manistee County needs more service... Bear Lake, Arcadia, Onekama, Kaleva, Brethren, Copemish, Wellston.
14. Airport, Hotels, Restaurants, tourist locations - overall focus on the needs of tourism for economic development of the county
15. evening and weekend hours
16. Connections to Benzie bus for Arcadians. We go to Frankfort or shop and save grocery most of the time.
17. I live on the Manistee and lake county line it would be nice to take the bus into Manistee.
18. Don't know.
19. N/A
20. Farther out in county on weekends.
21. No
22. I would like to see kids with kids only... not mixing adult pick ups
23. DAR has been great with the school.
24. out county more often
25. Greater Manistee area... Arcadia, Onekama, Kaleva....
26. More runs out county
27. being on time
28. It would be nice if you ran at least until 10pm for those of us who work 3rd shift at the hospital, prison, Meijer
29. Yes. Transportation to medical facilities for those without vehicles
30. Yes. Out-county needs an additional mid-day pick up.
31. Regular scheduled runs to out county areas
32. I don't know.
33. Absolutely! The entire county pays for this transportation but the entire county is not offered assistance. Mostly, it is the city of Manistee. The outlying county has only certain hours of operation.
34. No
35. I don’t know if you go there but Crystal Mountain which is technically in Benzie County.
36. Out county
37. The rural areas of Bear Lake, Arcadia, Wellston, and Brethren.
38. Not for me...but others tell me the "C" bus is long and tiresome; others say it needs to operate later into the evening
39. More country locations
40. Additional times to the county runs.
41. Out county rides need to accommodate employment hours.
42. All out of city needs more attention
43. Sunday service to church.
44. Nor sure of this, but, more trips to and fromWSCC?
45. Communities outside the City limits; US 31 corridor
46. Onekama
47. Not that I’m aware of
48. All of the out county. We have a bus in our area at 10 am and 4 pm. If I want to go to Manistee, I have to spend all day in town. Where as the poorest county in the state has on-demand bus service for the whole county all day everyday.
49. Transportation to Little River Casino later in the evenings and all weekend until 10:00PM, at least.
50. Out county
51. YES
Appendix D

Comments about Transportation in Manistee
Appendix D

Comments about Transportation on Manistee

Comments from Community Survey answering the following question:

Please provide any other comments about public transit and transportation in the community.

Complimentary Comments (26 Comments)

1. I had a good ride when I went on the bus.
2. Vehicles nice, drivers friendly reasonably priced
3. I highly recommend public transit even though I may only ride 3-4 times a year.
4. I am the Director of a governmental agency in Manistee County. A significant number of individuals served by this agency are dependent upon the services of public transit. The Manistee County Transportation services are excellent. I cannot say enough positive things about the service, the staff, the program. The individuals we serve would have greatly impoverished lives with the Manistee County Transportation service.
5. Great system. Used it many times for the kids for school, but at this time, no need for me to use it. When I get older will probably use it. Keep it up!
6. Thankful for another mode of transportation when I need my children to get from one place to another and myself or my husband are not available. Glad to see them helping the elderly or others that are unable to drive...an asset to our community.
7. Manistee County Transportation is a great service to the community :)
8. Although I never use it myself, it makes me happy to see that is available if I ever need it.
9. Thanks for the opportunity
10. It is a valuable service for those who need public transportation.
11. I think it’s very important to sustain this service for people who aren't able to drive.
12. I appreciate all that the staff does - with huge hearts - above and beyond the call of duty - I know you are doing far more than most people realize - and you are doing a great job. THANK YOU
13. I’m so grateful that we have this wonderful service. Thank you for all you do and for keeping it available to the citizens.
14. I see a big need for public transportation in this county. I take care of a special-needs client who uses Dial A Ride to get to school and home every day. They do a wonderful job.
15. I have ridden the bus exclusively since 2015. The drivers are all helpful and considerate. The dispatchers friendly and professional. Great team.
16. I appreciate that this transportation service is available for us if the need was there,
also am happy for the people who need this service. It is crucial that we work hard to keep Dial Ride in our city and county.

17. Great service that we need to expand!

18. I have used Dial A Ride for my son since he has been 4! Being a working parent it is great to have this service. All staff has been awesome! Love the communication and safety.

19. There is a great need in the area and am grateful there are options out there. My mother does use your service.

20. Drivers were always helpful.

21. Our family used the Dial-a-Ride service when our car was being serviced and we found the experience to be excellent- reasonable wait times, comfortable rides, and excellent staff - both the drivers and those answering the phones.

22. Absolutely necessary. Some do not drive or are no longer able.

23. The times I have rode the drivers are very courteous and helpful.

24. We ride Dial-a-Ride for the Senior Mystery Trips and I am very pleased with the drivers and service. Otherwise, I do not use Dial-a-Ride.

25. Use it for the Senior Mystery Trips and enjoy it very much and real happy with the bus drivers. Always polite and helpful.

26. Dial-a-Ride to the cancer center in Travers City was wonderful.

Service Improvements (17 Comments)

1. It is a great asset to the community. Since I work at the casino and it is 24/7, would be nice to have the option of taking public transit

2. I feel the public transportation needs of tourists and other visitors to the county are ignored. Tourism is an economic driver for the county and public transportation should be supporting that economic development like occurs in many other tourist destinations

3. When waiting for a bus at the hospital, at times several buses will pass by the hospital towards town. Could some of these buses stop at the hospital for waiting passengers.

4. The drivers need better training. I used to have a CDL. Every time they turn corners passengers almost fall out of their seat...they drive to fast and run over curbs. It would be nice if you ran at least until 10pm so that 3rd shift people could get a ride. I work at the prison and would like a ride.

5. Need to have a bus route that goes around Manistee.

6. When my adult children were unable to drive, Dial A Ride was not an option for them to get to work because of their hours. One driver was very rude to one of my kids. As I stated before, there is a wonderful program in Benzie Co. which connects with Traverse City and operates with much longer hours. If Manistee would do this, think of all the people they could employ and all the people they could help out. It’s a real need.
7. Driving around with few to no passengers is typical government waste. Public's perception.
8. Ability to book online would be nice. Later in the evening would be nice as well. I didn't notice on the website but a monthly rate would be good.
9. I take the bus in the winter and it comes in very handy but when I have to be to work on the weekend at 6am or work on a Sunday they are not open and that causes a problem since I have no other way to get to work on the weekends.
10. We need dedicated bus routes in the summer i.e. beaches-Downtown.
11. Would be nice if it was cost effective for all incomes.
12. Extended Trolley Tours through the fall color season. At least until the end of September.
13. Dial-a-Ride operates under the radar and system is confusing to understand if coming from a place with public bus stops and/or kiosks. Bike racks would allow for a combined transportation option, both for necessities and for recreation. For instance, if there was a bus running up and down US31 every hour, someone could ride their bike to the highway, hop on to get closer to their destination, then ride their bike again to complete the trip for work, errands, or fun. It also would be wonderful to have a paved multi-use non-motorized trail to complement the Dial-a-Ride system for both walkers, bikers, etc.
14. There is way too much administration--The Administrator takes off and tells other people he can leave when he wants, because he's the boss. Strevey needs to go.
15. We need additional services in Manistee County and I understand those will require additional funding. We need longer hours, more stops, more days and better technology to support a reservation system.
16. Online reservation system would be good to have, maybe an app that helps passengers know exactly when bus arrives to avoid waiting outside in extreme weather. When I checked into a ride it was expensive round trip.
17. MTA should set up a Uber type service.

Out of County Requests (5 Comments)

1. Norman trip could use better service hours. For example, appt at 10am I have to get on a bus at 8am - can't come home till a 4pm bus. Not really fair if I pay the same millage and price as everyone else.
2. Out-county needs better service, possibly add a noon run. Presently morning and afternoon...
3. I drive Arcadia folks who don't drive for their needs. It really is important to have cross county transportation to Benzie county and most especially Frankfort.
4. Unless one is completely helpless and the ONLY thing available might be an ALL DAY stay in town, the taxes we pay for this service in the local areas is wasted. In town, it appears to work for some, but not for the rural areas.
5. Unless there is better service to out-county areas I will no longer support your
millage requests. Out-county tax payers are subsidizing city users. Also, the rudeness of some of your staff needs to be dealt with.

Requests for Information on MCTI Services (6 Comments)

1. Need more info on routes and what is available. Also, info on cost of service.
2. Don't know where or how to get info - on what is available. Also, no idea of cost.
3. I am still comfortable driving, but it may come that I no longer can drive. I need to know that I could get a bus to get to shopping, medical appts.
4. We don't know where you go. What is the price?
5. Don't know enough about this system.
6. I am handicap