

Coordinated Mobility Plan Prosperity Region 3

Counties
Alcona
Alpena
Cheboygan
Crawford
Iosco
Montmorency
Ogemaw
Oscoda
Otsego
Presque Isle
Roscommon



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Prepared by
KFH Group, Inc.
Bethesda, Maryland

Acknowledgements

This plan is a component of a Veterans Transit Community Living Initiative (VTCLI) grant through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Michigan 2-1-1 and the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) Office of Passenger Transportation led a statewide transportation study to identify regional gaps in mobility, particularly for people with limited transportation options such as veterans, older adults, individuals with disabilities and people with lower incomes. The result of the statewide study is ten coordinated mobility plans based geographically on Governor Snyder's Prosperity Initiative. This is the Coordinated Mobility Plan for Prosperity Region 3.

The statewide study built upon efforts by MDOT and Regional Planning Agencies and Metropolitan Planning Organizations to document what is known about regional transit mobility. These efforts were in response to the Governor's special message to the legislature on the topic of aging, titled "Making Michigan a Great Place to Live Well and Age Well".

Advisory Committee

The statewide transportation study was guided by the following advisory committee:

Tom Page, Michigan 2-1-1
Scott Dzurka, Michigan Association of United
Ways
Maricela Alcalá, Gryphon Place 2-1-1
Andy Brush, Michigan Dept of Transportation
Gale Capling, Clinton Area Transit System
Felicia Cross, City of Livonia
Corey Davis, Muskegon Area Transit System
Sarah Green, The Rapid
Hassan Hammoud, United Way for
Southeastern Michigan Authority
Vanessa Hansle, Ann Arbor Transportation

Clark Harder, Michigan Public Transit
Association
Donna McDowell, City of Livonia
MaLissa Schutt, Shiawassee Area
Transportation Agency
Valerie Shultz, Michigan Dept of
Transportation
Sheryl D. Thompson, Michigan Dept of Health
and Human Services
Linda Tokarski, Gryphon Place 2-1-1
Sherri Vainavicz, Heart of West Michigan
United Way

Regional Assistance

The Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) serves as a multi-county organization to pool resources for the assistance of local governments in the region. NEMCOG provided assistance throughout the development of this plan, including reviewing interim documents and helping to coordinate outreach efforts.

Input from a wide range of stakeholders was a key component in the study. Special thanks to the stakeholders who participated in a regional workshop and provided input throughout the planning process. Their input was especially beneficial in the assessment of transportation needs in the region, and in the development of potential strategies, activities and projects to improve mobility.

Consultant Team

KFH Group, Inc. conducted outreach efforts, facilitated the regional workshop and led the development of this regional plan.

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Chapter 1

Background

INTRODUCTION

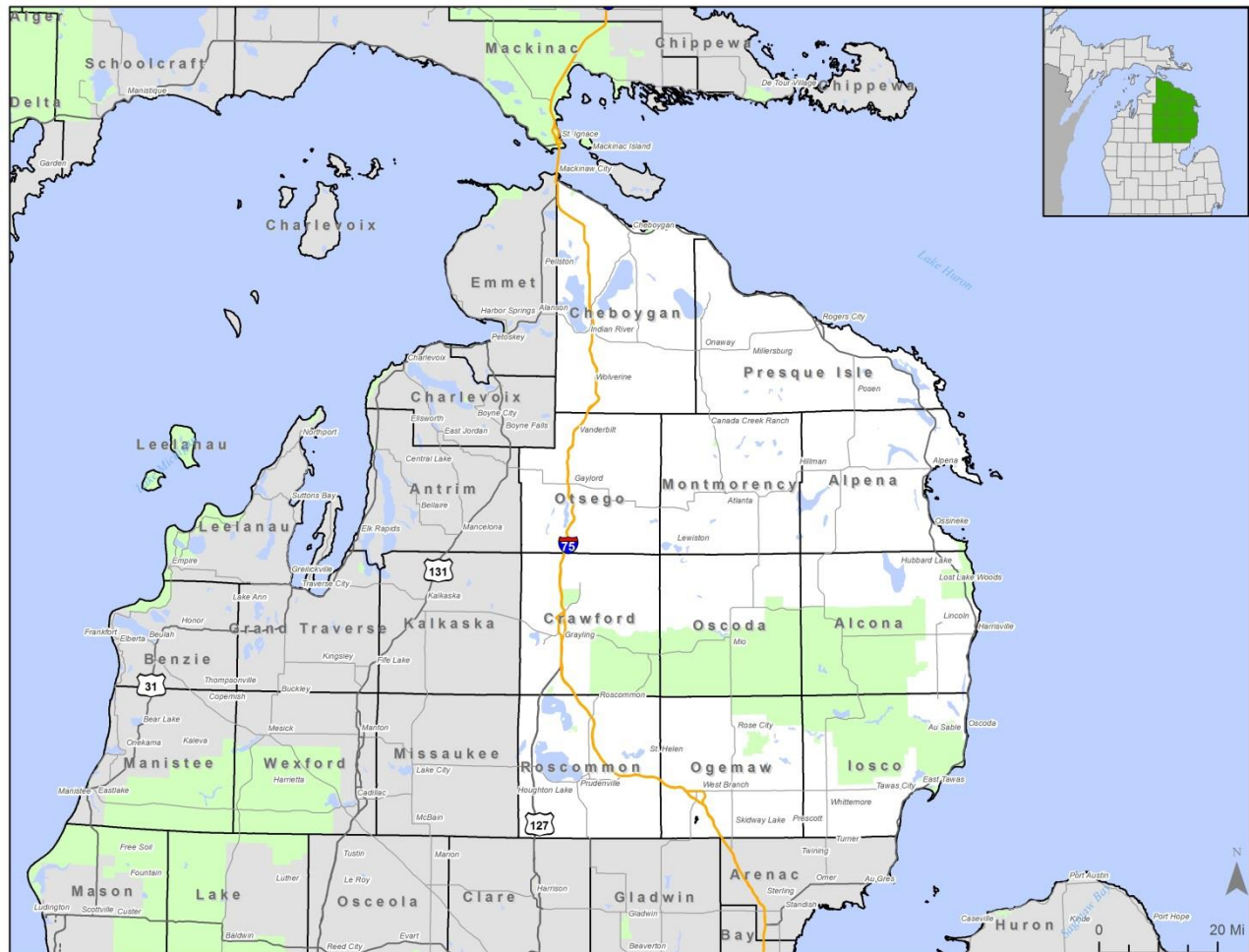
Michigan 2-1-1 is a free, confidential service that provides information and referral to transportation services, health and human services, community preparedness, and crisis information. A program of the Michigan Association of United Ways (MAUW), Michigan 2-1-1 works with eight regional 2-1-1 providers on a shared/common delivery platform to connect Michiganders with over 7,800 agencies offering over 29,000 services across the State.

With funding from a Veterans Transit Community Living Initiative (VTCLI) grant through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Michigan 2-1-1 and their partners are developing the joint capacity to provide One-Call/One-Click service to Michigan residents to assist with individual trip planning and to address transportation barriers limiting opportunities for employment, health care, recreation and other personal needs. The VTCLI grant, supplemented with state and federal funding administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) Office of Passenger Transportation, involved a statewide transit study to identify regional gaps in mobility, particularly for people with limited transportation options such as veterans, older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with lower incomes. The study also involved identifying actions that can be taken by local transportation providers and Michigan 2-1-1 to increase regional mobility.

Input from a wide range of stakeholders was a key component in the study. Outreach efforts were based on Governor Snyder's Regional Prosperity Initiative that established ten regions to create a better structure for collaboration. Workshops were conducted in each region, and provided the opportunity to discuss transportation needs and to obtain input on potential strategies, projects, and services to improve regional mobility.

The result of the statewide transit study is coordinated mobility plans based geographically on the Governor's Prosperity Initiative. This is the Coordinated Mobility Plan for Prosperity Region 3 that includes Alcona, Alpena, Cheboygan, Crawford, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle, and Roscommon Counties as shown in Figure 1-1.

Figure 1-1: Prosperity Region 3



BUILDING UPON THE GOVERNOR'S SPECIAL MESSAGE ON AGING

The statewide transit study built upon efforts to document what is known about regional transit mobility. On June 2, 2014, Governor Snyder released a special message to the legislature on the topic of aging, titled “Making Michigan a Great Place to Live Well and Age Well”. The message regarding access to transportation said, “Michiganders, including many older adults, need regional mobility and transit providers need to become more regionally focused. This is both an urban and rural issue”.

The Governor asked MDOT to partner with the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and Regional Planning Agencies (RPA) across the state to work on the issue of regional transit mobility. Subsequently, MDOT worked with MPOs and RPAs to undertake a planning effort that documented what is known about the need for regional transit mobility and the ability for customers to use current transit services for cross county or cross system trips. Information from the reports that resulted from this planning effort has been incorporated into this regional plan.

MEETING THE FEDERAL COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

In July 2012, President Obama signed into law Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) that went into effect on October 1, 2012. This legislation continued the coordinated transportation planning requirements for the Section 5310 Program administered by FTA. The purpose of the Section 5310 Program is to enhance mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities by providing funds for programs to serve the special needs of transit-dependent populations beyond traditional public transportation services and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services.

This Coordinated Mobility Plan is designed to meet the coordinated transportation planning requirements. Along with plans in other regions, it ensures that the entire State of Michigan is covered by plans that meet the federal requirements. Each of the plans incorporates the four required elements:

1. An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers (public, private and nonprofit).
2. An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities and seniors. This assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts, and gaps in service.
3. Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, and opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery.
4. Priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified.

Guidance from FTA on the coordinated transportation planning process is included in Appendix A.

During the development of this plan President Obama signed the ‘Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act’, or the ‘FAST Act’. The FAST Act serves as the authorizing legislation for future funding for Section 5310 and other FTA funding programs. While FTA has yet to issue updated guidance related to the coordinated transportation planning requirements, it appears there are no changes in the FAST Act legislation that would impact the current requirements. The implementation of the FAST Act should be monitored so that any modifications to the current requirements can be considered for future updates of this plan.

The FAST Act legislation includes a new discretionary pilot program for innovative coordinated access and mobility - open to Section 5310 recipients and subrecipients – to assist in financing innovative projects for the transportation disadvantaged that improve the coordination of transportation services and non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) services. This program could include the deployment of coordination technology, or projects that create or increase access to community One-Call/One-Click Centers. The implementation of this program should be monitored for possible future funding opportunities that would support the strategies included in this plan.

A BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE

This plan is consistent with FTA coordinated transportation planning guidance that encourages broad efforts that incorporate activities offered under a variety of transportation programs sponsored by federal, state, and local agencies to greatly strengthen its impact. Taking into account the VTCLI grant, efforts through the Governor’s Special Message on Aging, and the Section 5310 coordinated transportation planning requirements, this plan takes a wide approach and includes information on a variety of transportation services offered in the region. It also provides strategies and potential projects beyond public transit services.

The Coordinated Mobility Plan for Prosperity Region 3 is designed to serve as a blueprint and practical document for future discussions and efforts in the region to improve regional mobility, especially for veterans, older adults, people with disabilities, people with lower incomes, and young people without access to transportation. However, this plan is not directly connected to any additional funding programs or sources, and does not obligate any agencies or organizations at the local, regional or state level to fund services included in the plan. Additional assessment would be needed to determine the costs and benefits prior to pursuing any of these recommendations and implementation would require re-allocation of existing financial resources.

PLAN CONTENTS

The Coordinated Mobility Plan for Prosperity Region 3 is presented in the following order:

- **Chapter 1** (this chapter) provides background information on planning process.
- **Chapter 2** discusses the outreach process and the involvement of regional stakeholders in the coordinated mobility planning process.
- **Chapter 3** provides a review of recent plans and studies in the region that are relevant to the study process or provide information on community transportation needs. This includes a report produced by Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) on what is known about the need for regional transit mobility.
- **Chapter 4** provides an assessment of the transportation needs in the region based on qualitative data (input on needs from key stakeholders).
- **Chapter 5** provides an assessment of transportation needs in the region through quantitative data (U.S. Census and American Community Survey).
- **Chapter 6** provides an inventory of current transportation services in the region.
- **Chapter 7** presents strategies and potential projects to meet transportation needs as identified and prioritized by regional stakeholders.
- **Chapter 8** discusses proposed on-going arrangements in the region to continue the momentum from the coordinated mobility planning process.

- **Chapter 9** provides the process for approval of this coordinated transportation plan.
- Various documents relevant to the planning process and noted throughout this plan are included in the appendix.

Chapter 2

Outreach and Planning Process

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses outreach efforts for the statewide transit study and the involvement of regional stakeholders in the coordinated mobility planning process. Federal coordinated transportation planning guidance served as the foundation for these outreach efforts. These guidelines encourage participation of individuals, groups, and organizations representing older adults, people with disabilities, and populations that may have limited transportation options. Based on these guidelines a broad approach was developed that provided the opportunity for a diverse group of organizations to be involved in the coordinated mobility planning process.

REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

The primary outreach process for the statewide transit study involved regional workshops that offered the opportunity to engage a variety of stakeholders, confirm transportation needs, and discuss potential strategies, projects, and services to improve regional mobility. With assistance from regional planning agencies and input from the project advisory committee, ten workshops were scheduled for September 2015 based on the Governor's Prosperity Regions.

Recognizing that some stakeholders would have interest in multiple workshops, marketing for the workshops was conducted through a statewide outreach effort that highlighted the workshop in Prosperity Region 3 and those in the other nine regions. A statewide invitation list was developed that included various agencies and organizations familiar with transportation issues, especially in regard to veterans, people with disabilities, older adults, and people with lower incomes.

Collectively the invitation list was distributed to over 350 stakeholders. Stakeholders were encouraged to share the invitation to their contact lists to help ensure an even broader outreach effort. Ultimately the invitation to the regional workshops was distributed to:

- Transportation planning agencies
- Public transportation providers
- Public transit associations
- Local and regional mobility managers
- Regional 2-1-1 contact centers
- MichiVan and local rideshare offices
- Private transportation providers
- Nonprofit transportation providers
- Volunteer transportation providers

- Past or current organizations funded under the Section 5310, JARC, and/or the New Freedom Programs
- Human service agencies funding, operating, and/or providing access to transportation services
- Advocacy organizations working on behalf of targeted populations
- Agencies that administer health, employment, or other support programs for targeted populations
- Nonprofit human service provider organizations that serve the targeted populations
- Job training and placement agencies
- Housing agencies
- Healthcare facilities
- Mental health agencies
- Economic development organizations
- Faith-based and community-based organizations
- Employers and representatives of the business community
- Appropriate local or state officials and elected officials
- Policy analysts or experts

PROSPERITY REGION 3 WORKSHOP

On September 23, 2015 the workshop for Prosperity Region 3 was conducted in Gaylord. The agenda is included in Appendix B. The workshop attracted 17 participants including representatives from:

- Aging programs
- Human service agencies
- Local transit systems
- Michigan 2-1-1
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- Planning agencies
- Workforce development agencies

The workshop began with discussion of previous work between MDOT and the regional planning agencies, objectives for the study, and projected outcomes. A majority of the workshop was focused on obtaining input from participants on unmet transportation needs. Through breakout groups, stakeholders were asked to provide input on transportation needs related to a variety of issues, including services, marketing, coordination, land use and policy changes, coordination, and policies. They were encouraged to think beyond public transportation and to consider needs that could be addressed through mobility options. Regional stakeholders provided input on potential solutions to help meet identified needs.

Workshop Results

Stakeholders identified the following overall needs as most important to improving mobility in the region:

- Greater regional connectivity
- Expanded transportation services
- Improved and expanded outreach, marketing, and education
- Improved coordination and collaboration
- Additional funding
- Exploration of a variety of transportation services and options
- Capital and infrastructure improvements

These needs are detailed in Chapter 4. Additional input from regional stakeholders who attended the workshop is included in various sections of this plan. Needs and gaps identified by the group were considered in the development of potential strategies, activities, and projects and are included in Chapter 7.

ONGOING STAKEHOLDER INPUT

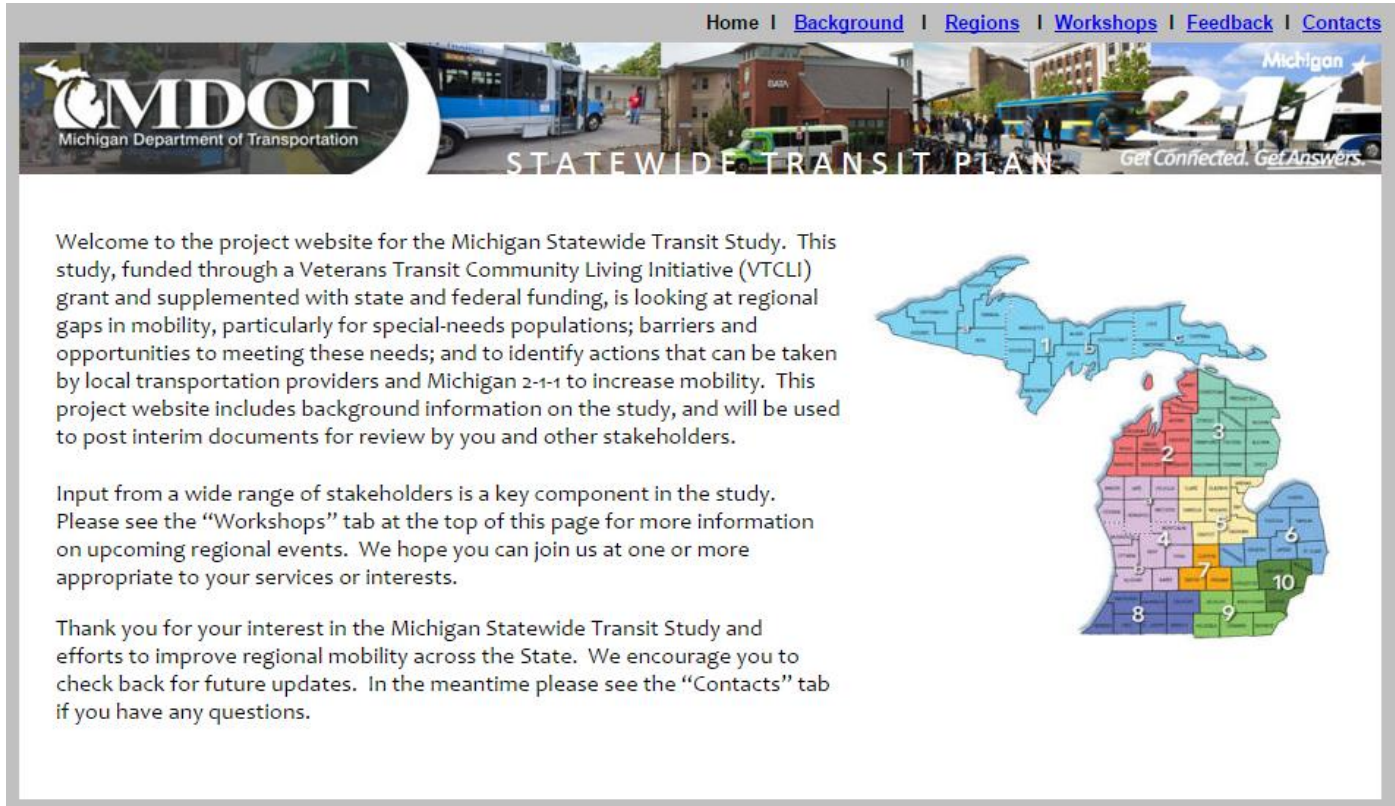
While the workshop served as the only formal gathering of regional stakeholders, they had multiple opportunities throughout the planning process to review interim documents and provide input. This ongoing involvement included:

- Reviewing and commenting on a summary of the transportation needs from the regional workshop.
- Reviewing and providing input on potential strategies, activities, and projects to be included in the regional plan.
- Prioritizing strategies identified as the most appropriate for improving mobility in the region.
- Reviewing and providing input on a draft version of this plan.

MICHIGAN STATEWIDE TRANSIT PLAN WEBSITE

To assist in outreach and planning efforts a project website was established at <http://www.kfhgroup.com/michigan/statewidetransitplan.html>. Shown in Figure 2-1, this website offered background information on the study, details on regional workshops, the opportunity for stakeholders to register on-line, and was used to post interim documents.

Figure 2-1: Home Page of the Michigan Statewide Transit Plan Project Website



Chapter 3: Previous Plans and Studies

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a review of recent plans and studies in the region that are relevant to the study process, or provide information on community transportation needs and potential solutions. This review began with work completed by NEMCOG for MDOT that incorporated previous planning efforts. The chapter includes information from appropriate local county plans.

The issues and needs identified by previous planning processes were similar to those identified during the workshop in Prosperity Region 3. Key issues from the previous planning reports and projects are summarized and, along with stakeholder input and the demographic analysis (discussed in later chapters) provide a broad transportation needs assessment.

IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S SPECIAL MESSAGE ON AGING: PHASE 1

As discussed in Chapter 1, MDOT partnered with regional planning agencies regarding the issue of regional transit mobility in support of the Governor's Special Message on Aging. These agencies worked with local transit agencies to document what is known about the need for regional transit mobility and the ability for customers to use current transit services for cross county or cross system trips.

In Region 3, NEMCOG completed an inventory of existing transit systems in the eleven-county region. Information from this inventory was used in the development of the transportation resources section of this plan (Chapter 6), and the full report is included in Appendix C. The NEMCOG inventory documented that seven of the counties in Prosperity Region 3 have demand response transit systems, two counties have specialized services transit systems, and two counties (Alcona and Montmorency) do not have county based transit systems. Specific information on these transit systems is included in Chapter 6.

The NEMCOG report to MDOT included information from the Northeast Michigan Prosperity Initiative 5-Year Plan. This plan noted that there are two main challenges to using public transit for work trips:

- Demand response transit systems are not always able to provide “on-time drop-off and pick-up” for riders since buses do not operate on fixed routes with timed stops. As a result workers need to have jobs with flexible start and stop times.

- Public transit services do not operate evenings and weekends, when entry level jobs often require employees to work schedules that involve these timeframes.

The Northeast Michigan Prosperity Initiative 5-Year Plan discussed higher education transportation needs. The plan noted that students accessing vocational training at Alpena Community College (ACC), Kirtland Community College (KCC) and the Gaylord University Center are able to use public transit if they live in the counties where these educational facilities are located, provided they do not take evening classes. The need is for more extensive inter county public transportation.

In regard to transportation, the Northeast Michigan Prosperity Initiative 5-Year Plan included the following recommendations:

1. Develop an information packet about transit services in the region that includes brochures from each transit system and a regional brochure.
2. Provide information to employers, employment agencies, colleges and schools
3. Hold coordination meetings:
 - a. College admissions offices and transit agencies
 - b. Employment agencies and transit agencies
 - c. High schools and transit agencies
4. Develop collegiate portals. College admissions offices should function as a portal for transit information, advice, brochures, web site, and ride share bulletin boards.
5. Develop employment agency portals. Employment agencies should function as a portal for transit information, advice, brochures, web site, and ride share bulletin boards.
6. Work with regional transit systems to identify opportunities to better serve transit dependent population in relation to workplace or educational transportation needs.
7. Explore use of route deviation service and point deviation service for county and regional transit systems to provide timely and predictable transportation to work and school.

COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLANS

The review of previous plans and studies involved local coordinated transportation plans. While some of these plans are several years old, they offer insight into current regional mobility needs. Common themes identified in the coordinated plans include a need for more transportation, increased hours, increased number of service areas, services for older adults and people with low incomes, and transportation to employment and healthcare. The following section provides a synopsis of key findings in these plans.

Public Transportation Coordination Plan for Cheboygan County

This FY2012-2013 plan provided an assessment of transportation needs within Cheboygan County and a listing of existing transportation options. The plan detailed strategies for optimization of transportation services, noting that the recently formed Cheboygan Area Transportation Services (C.A.T.S.) would assume the responsibility to study, correlate, review, and implement these efforts. Identified strategies were:

- **Prioritization:** C.A.T.S would continue to foster current community efforts and prioritize the next steps in resolving identified transportation barriers in the county.
- **Focus on Ongoing Transportation Services:** An evaluation of existing services was underway and new volunteer driver pool was being developed.
- **County Commitment:** The county had expressed a cautious approach but would be open to support reasonable transportation solutions.

Iosco Transit Corporation Coordinated Public Transportation – Human Services Coordination Plan

This 2007 plan included information on existing transportation services and transportation needs in the county. Identified gaps in service were:

- Existing transportation services were not available early enough to meet work travel needs
- Evening services were not available to meet employment needs
- Weekend services for work, medical, and social trips do not exist

Strategies in the plan to meet these needs and gaps were:

- Change transit services hours to begin earlier in the morning and operate later in the day
- Make transit services available on weekends

Priorities in the plan were:

- Work related earlier hours were identified as a high priority
- Weekend availability was identified as a medium to low priority

Presque Isle County Council on Aging Transportation Coordination Plan

This 2007 plan included a review of transportation services provided by the Council on Aging and the results of service assessment. Identified strategies were to continue with capital and vehicle replacement and to continue to provide operating funding assistance.

Stakeholders expressed that they would like to see the development of transit services in the six-county region of Alcona, Alpena, Cheboygan, Montmorency, Iosco, Oscoda, and Presque Isle. Future meetings were scheduled to discuss opportunities to meet more transportation needs.

Thunder Bay Transportation Authority Coordination Plan

This 2007 plan (updated in 2008) included an assessment of transportation and identified strategies to meet these needs and gaps in service. These strategies were:

- A more comprehensive marketing plan to ensure all human service agencies were aware of existing transit services. This strategy was noted as the highest priority.
- Additional service hours of operation incorporated into current schedules.
- Coordinating transportation between Thunder Bay Transportation Authority and Oscoda County Area Transit Specialist.
- Purchase and installation of bike racks.

REGIONAL PLANS

Northeast Michigan Regional Non-Motorized Transportation

This 2009 plan was initiated by NEMCOG through funding from MDOT. The purpose was to develop a comprehensive, regional Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and Investment Strategy for Alcona, Alpena, Cheboygan, Crawford, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle and Roscommon Counties. As noted in the plan, the end product can be used by MDOT and local officials to prioritize projects, identify funding sources and guide investment in the region's non-motorized transportation system. In addition, local officials may use or adopt any portion of the plan as their own.

The plan defines non-motorized facilities to include bicycle, pedestrian, hiking, horseback riding and in some instances, such as rail-trails, snowmobiles may be allowed. The Regional Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and Investment Strategy focuses on bicycle facilities and is designed to complement other statewide non-motorized and trails initiatives. The plan states that bicycle facilities should link communities to each other, link communities to regional trail systems, link communities to parks and forestlands, link people to their community and to their environment, and link communities and recreational facilities to commercial centers.

One of the primary goals in the plan was connectivity, including the need to create a network of safe, accessible, convenient, non-motorized transportation routes that promote walking and biking as an alternative form of transportation and are integrated into other modes of transportation. The plan provided a series of projects and priorities to improve non-motorized transportation in the region.

Chapter 4

Assessment of Transportation Needs

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of the unmet transportation needs and gaps in mobility identified by regional stakeholders at the Prosperity Region 3 workshop conducted on September 23, 2015. The results from the workshop are part of an overall transportation needs assessment that also involved transportation needs identified in previous plans and studies (Chapter 3) and the analysis of demographic data using current information from the U.S. Census (Chapter 5).

While various transportation needs are interrelated, the following subsections summarize issues that were noted by participants during the regional workshop.

GREATER REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY

- Regional stakeholders noted that providing cross county transportation can be challenging. There is a need to determine barriers and work through the invisible boundaries of county lines to provide expanded regional services.
- Greater regional services are especially needed to fill gaps that exist due to the distance between where services are operated and the destinations where residents need to access.

EXPANDED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Trip Purpose

- There is a need for more transportation services to employment opportunities and education facilities, especially in rural areas of the region.
- In particular, veterans and low income populations in the rural areas need more travel options to employment sites, as many of these positions require people to work night shifts and weekends.
- There is a need for transportation for low income families that want to come to the University Center Gaylord to get degrees but lack transportation.

- There is need for transportation services that meet a wide range of travel needs. Regional stakeholders noted that there is a major difference between transportation services needed by older adults to access doctor appointment that are between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., and work shifts that can begin much earlier and end much later in the day.
- The unpredictable nature of dial-a-ride services is not always suited for employment trips. There is need for transportation services are that more employment focused. Possible solutions include employment transportation that is coordinated with employers to schedule people from the same area on the same shifts, and to work with employers to facilitate transit or carpooling options.
- Expanded transportation services for dialysis treatments are needed, especially with the opening of a new center in Roscommon County.
- Costs for available transportation services are often cost prohibitive for people with lower incomes who do not qualify for Medicaid-funded services.

Time Related

- There is need to work with hospitals in the region to educate them on available transportation services. This effort would help to reduce occurrences of patients getting discharged late at night when no services are available.
- Scheduling on demand service/dial-a-ride services is a challenge. There is a need to consider more scheduled services where appropriate and feasible.
- Overall there is need for expanded services that operate longer hours.
- At times people have to wait hours for a pickup to go home after a medical appointment. There is need to identify options that could help fill this gap. South Branch was noted as one of these destinations.

Place/Destination

- There is a need for more services in rural areas. Specific needs noted were:
 - Older adults in Otsego County have an increasing need for doctors' appointments, and therefore need more transportation options.
 - Connecting people from the northern portion of the region to services and facilities in Gaylord.

IMPROVED AND EXPANDED OUTREACH, MARKETING AND EDUCATION

- Unmet transportation needs in the region are often hidden while they keep growing. There is need to educate stakeholders/funders about current and future transportation demands.
- A marketing and outreach campaign is needed that supports transportation providers working together, uses appropriate technology, and helps new customers learn how to ride transit.
- The marketing campaign needs to involve and be marketed to their clients, hospital centers, and colleges. It needs to have clear, easy to follow directions for using transit and other available transportation services in the region and should leverage the seasonal nature of the region, including outreach to tourists and visitors.
- Marketing is needed to help offset the stigma about public transit.
- Regional branding needs to be considered. One possibility is to standardize vehicle colors between different systems that operate across county boundaries.

IMPROVED COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

- Due to demand for mobility combined with the rural nature of the region, there is a need for constant coordination that helps to group and consolidate as many trips as possible. Regional stakeholders expressed the need for open communication between stakeholders, and for a primary point of contact that could develop a list of primary contacts for human service providers and transit operators to foster collaboration.
- Building upon current connections between county public transit providers where they take turns operating in adjacent counties, there is a need to consider various options:
 - Arranging more time points for connections between counties.
 - Limiting pick-ups points to once or twice a day, and then marketing these times to customers, and doctor offices.
 - Scheduling trips to medical centers on certain days during the week from each county so riders can coordinate trips.
 - Establishing consolidated pick-up areas (i.e. park and ride with shelter, food, and amenities) and conducting less single person pickups at customer homes.
- There is a need to improve coordination of long distance medical trips between transportation providers.
- There is a need for improved coordination with employers to help connect work times with available transportation options.

- There is a need to coordinate with hospitals and medical facilities to coordinate more trips from parts of the region on the same day.
- Improved coordination is needed with veteran’s transportation services.
- There is need to explore coordination opportunities with vehicles operating in the region. This could include possible use of public school buses when they have down time and the use of senior center vans when not in operation.
- Forms and policies (i.e. no-show policies) could be coordinated between different providers.
- There is need to improve coordination between Michigan 2-1-1 and transit providers. The group noted that this could include 2-1-1- sending reports to local transit providers on identified needs.
- There is a need to collect appropriate information and data. Possibilities noted by regional stakeholders included;
 - Collecting more detailed information on origins and destinations for service planning efforts.
 - Developing a report to help transit and human services demonstrate the need for regional public transit for stakeholders, decision makers, and funders.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

There is a need to explore additional public/private partnerships that may help to increase funding. These include work with private retailers, dialysis centers, higher education sites, and employers who benefit from transit services that bring customers or employees to their location.

Regional funding for transit services needs to be explored, since the current local millage structure makes providing services that go beyond a county line difficult to sell to local elected officials and residents.

EXPLORE A VARIETY OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AND OPTIONS

Recognizing that public transit, especially in rural areas, cannot be all things to all people, there is need to explore options to improve and expand mobility in the region.

- Developing more private transportation providers in rural areas
- Expanding carpooling and ridesharing services
- Exploring carpooling apps and internet service in busses for passengers
- Working through real or perceived barriers to expand volunteer driving programs
- Considering programs that assist low income individuals with car repair and fuel costs

CAPITAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Regional stakeholders expressed the need for a variety of improvements.

- Improving park and ride facilities - better amenities, lighting and shelters
- Equipping transit vehicles with Wi-Fi
- Addressing land use issues to ensure more walkable community designs, establishing more regional centers, and supporting co-locating services and combining retail and other services.

OTHER VARIOUS NEEDS AND ISSUES

Transit providers in the region noted that it is becoming increasingly difficult to find qualified employees, especially drivers with a Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

Chapter 5

Demographic Analysis

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an analysis of current and future population trends in Region 3, as well as an analysis of the demographics of population groups that often depend on transportation options beyond an automobile. Data sources for this analysis include the 2010 U.S. Census and the American Community Survey (ACS) 2009-2013 5-year estimates.

This demographic analysis, coupled with input from regional stakeholders documented in the preceding chapters, provides a broad transportation needs assessment. This assessment can be used to develop strategies, projects and services to meet identified needs, expand mobility and generate recommendations to improving coordination within the region (detailed in Chapter 7).

POPULATION ANALYSIS

This section examines the current population and population density in Region 3, and future population projections for the region.

Population

Table 5-1 shows the census population counts from 1990-2010. During 1990-2010, Iosco County experienced the greatest population percent decrease in the region (-14.3%). Presque Isle, and Alpena Counties experienced population decline from 1990-2010. Otsego County experienced the largest population percent increase (34.6%). Alcona, Cheboygan, Crawford, Montmorency, Ogemaw, and Oscoda Counties had overall population increases during 1990-2010.

Table 5-2 features recent population estimates from the American Community Survey. Data shows that every county in Region 3 has experienced population decline from 2010-2014, with the exception of Otsego County. Montmorency County had the largest population decline (-4.8%). Cheboygan and Iosco Counties experienced the smallest population decline. Otsego County's population remained relatively unchanged from 2010-2014.

Table 5-1: Historical Populations for Region 3

Place	1990 Pop.	2000 Pop.	2010 Pop.	1990-2000 % Change	2000-2010 % Change	1990-2010 % Change
Alcona	10,145	11,719	10,942	15.5%	-6.6%	7.9%
Alpena	30,365	31,314	29,598	3.1%	-5.5%	-2.5%
Cheboygan	21,398	26,448	26,152	23.6%	-1.1%	22.2%
Crawford	12,260	14,273	14,074	16.4%	-1.4%	14.8%
Iosco	30,209	27,339	25,887	-9.5%	-5.3%	-14.3%
Montmorency	8,936	10,315	9,765	15.4%	-5.3%	9.3%
Ogemaw	18,681	21,645	21,699	15.9%	0.2%	16.2%
Oscoda	7,842	9,418	8,640	20.1%	-8.3%	10.2%
Otsego	17,957	20,752	24,164	15.6%	16.4%	34.6%
Presque Isle	13,743	14,411	13,376	4.9%	-7.2%	-2.7%
Roscommon	19,776	25,469	24,449	28.8%	-4.0%	23.6%

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

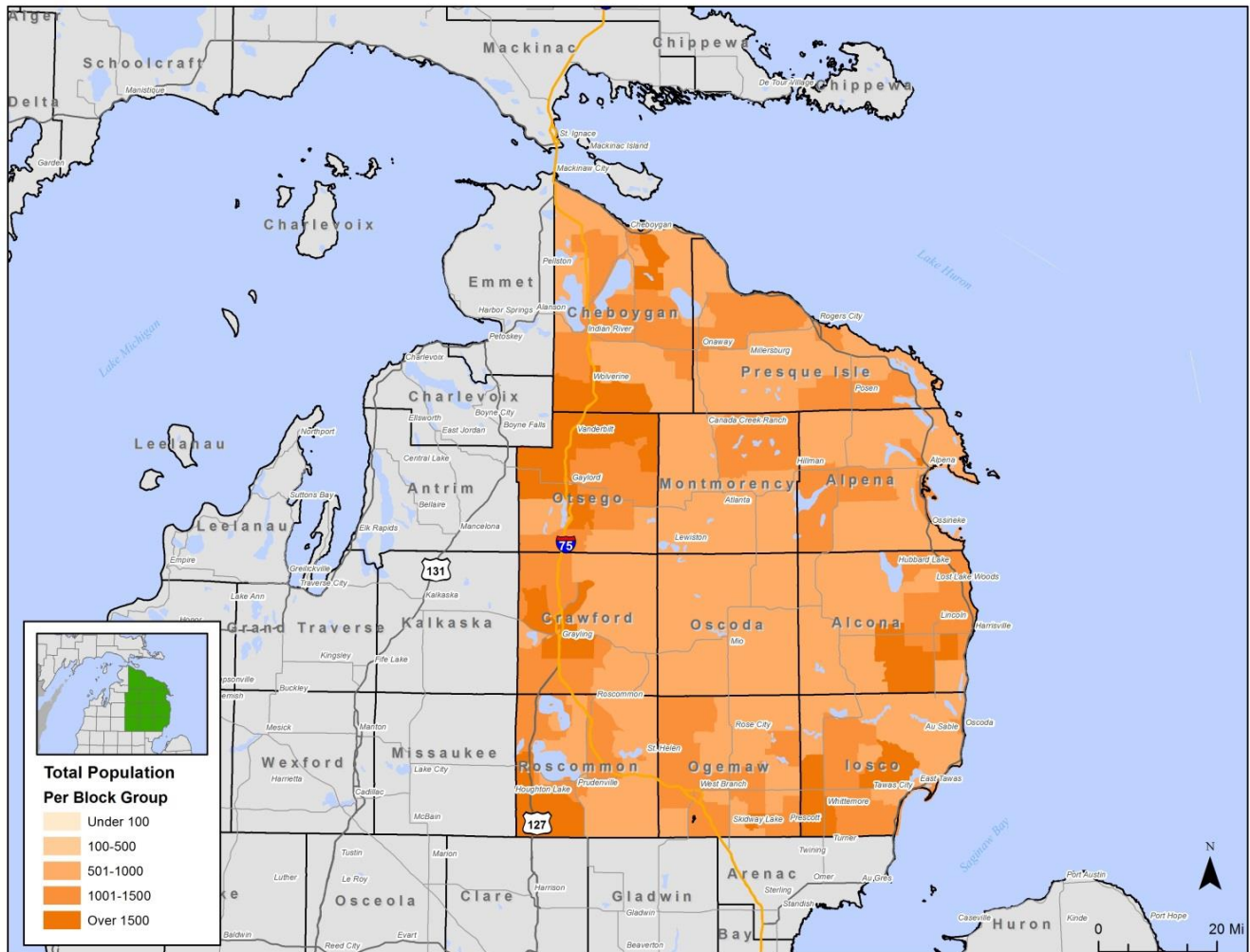
Table 5-2: Recent Population Trends for Region 3

Place	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2010-2014 % Change
Alcona	10,942	10,769	10,599	10,577	10,454	-4.5%
Alpena	29,598	29,356	29,240	29,081	28,988	-2.1%
Cheboygan	26,152	25,940	25,774	25,635	25,675	-1.8%
Crawford	14,074	14,022	13,985	13,908	13,745	-2.3%
Iosco	25,887	25,536	25,370	25,385	25,420	-1.8%
Montmorency	9,765	9,595	9,492	9,368	9,300	-4.8%
Ogemaw	21,699	21,538	21,425	21,219	21,039	-3.0%
Oscoda	8,640	8,655	8,602	8,388	8,371	-3.1%
Otsego	24,164	24,138	24,049	24,133	24,158	0.0%
Presque Isle	13,376	13,181	13,112	13,044	13,004	-2.8%
Roscommon	24,449	24,283	24,091	23,930	23,955	-2.0%

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Population and population density are often used as indicators for feasibility of public transit services. Typically an area with a density of 2,000 persons per square mile will be able to sustain daily fixed route transit services. An area with a population density below 2,000 but above 1,000 persons per square mile may be a better candidate for deviated fixed route or demand response services. Figure 5-1 illustrates the total population of Region 3 at the census block group level.

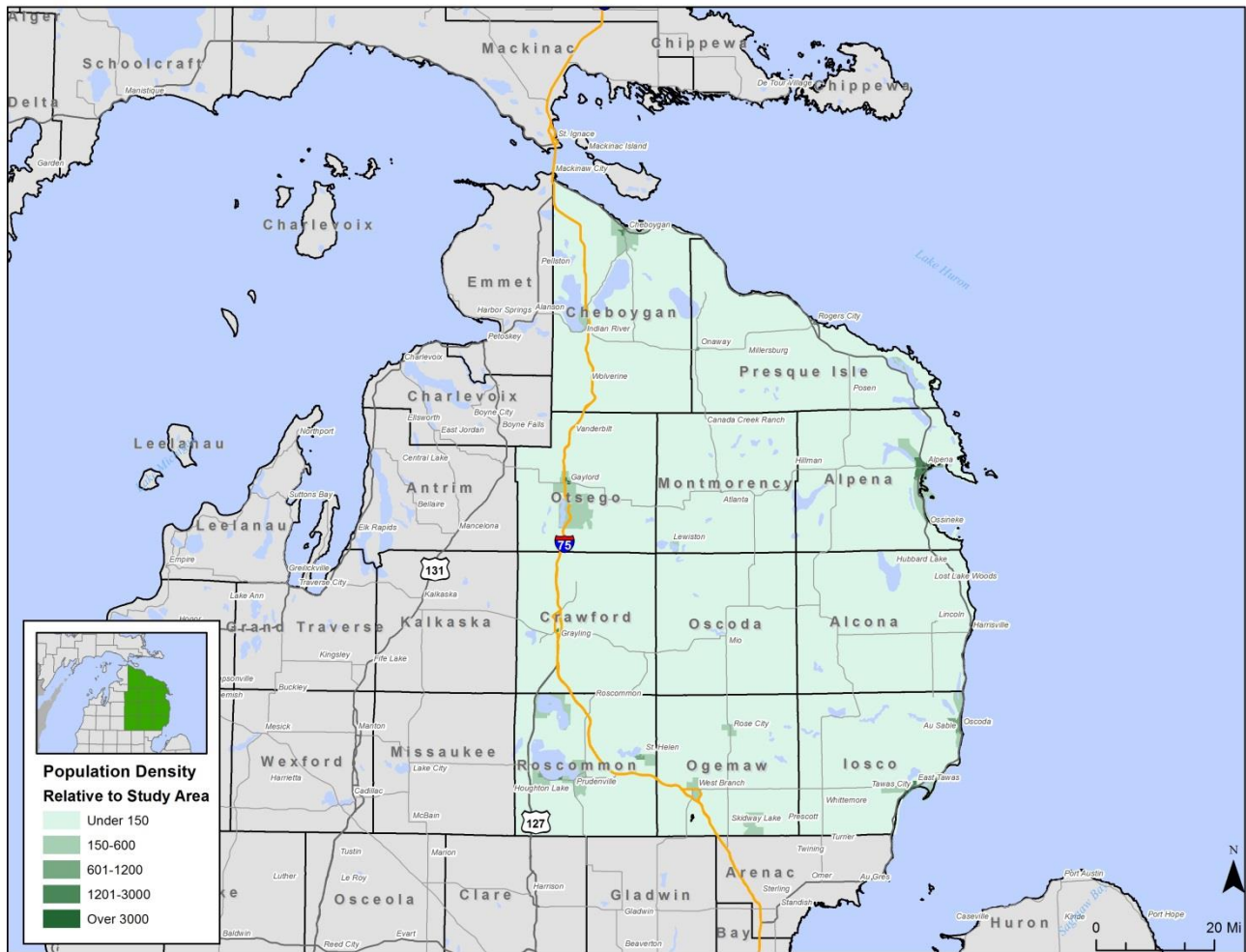
Figure 5-1: 2010 Census Population



Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Figure 5-2 shows the population density of Region 3 at the census block group level. Region 3 is not densely populated.

Figure 5-2: 2010 Census Population Density



Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Population Forecast

Future forecasts for the region anticipate minimal population growth. As indicated in Table 5-3, the overall region is expected to experience only a 2% growth rate during the period from 2020 to 2040. Cheboygan County is expected to have the highest population growth in the region, with projections indicating an increase from 27,516 to 31,204 (13%). Otsego (11%) and Ogemaw (7%) are expected to have population increases between 2020 and 2040. The population of Alcona, Alpena, Crawford, Montmorency, and Roscommon Counties are projected to remain nearly the same between 2020 and 2040. Iosco, Oscoda, and Presque Isle Counties are projected to have population declines between 2020 and 2040.

Table 5-3: Population Forecasts

County	Year				
	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Alcona	11,241	11,432	11,508	11,429	11,237
Alpena	28,313	28,282	28,412	28,444	28,266
Cheboygan	27,516	28,470	29,471	30,400	31,204
Crawford	13,775	13,929	14,026	14,020	13,903
Iosco	25,081	24,799	24,282	23,424	22,405
Montmorency	10,025	10,233	10,329	10,282	10,165
Ogemaw	22,533	23,061	23,539	23,879	24,189
Oscoda	8,063	8,084	8,029	7,853	7,608
Otsego	24,937	25,715	26,485	27,098	27,611
Presque Isle	12,532	12,372	12,234	12,022	11,741
Roscommon	24,655	24,843	24,879	24,673	24,400
Total Region	208,671	211,220	213,194	213,524	212,729

Source: Institute for Research on Labor, Employment, and the Economy, University of Michigan.
Prepared for Michigan Department of Transportation, March 2012

TRANSIT DEPENDENT POPULATIONS

Transit Dependence Index

The need for public transportation is often derived by recognizing the size and location of segments of the population most dependent on transit services. Transit dependency can be a result of many factors such as no access to a personal vehicle, a disability that prevents operating a personal vehicle, age, and income. Establishing the location of transit dependent populations aids in the evaluation of current populations while identifying potential gaps in transit services.

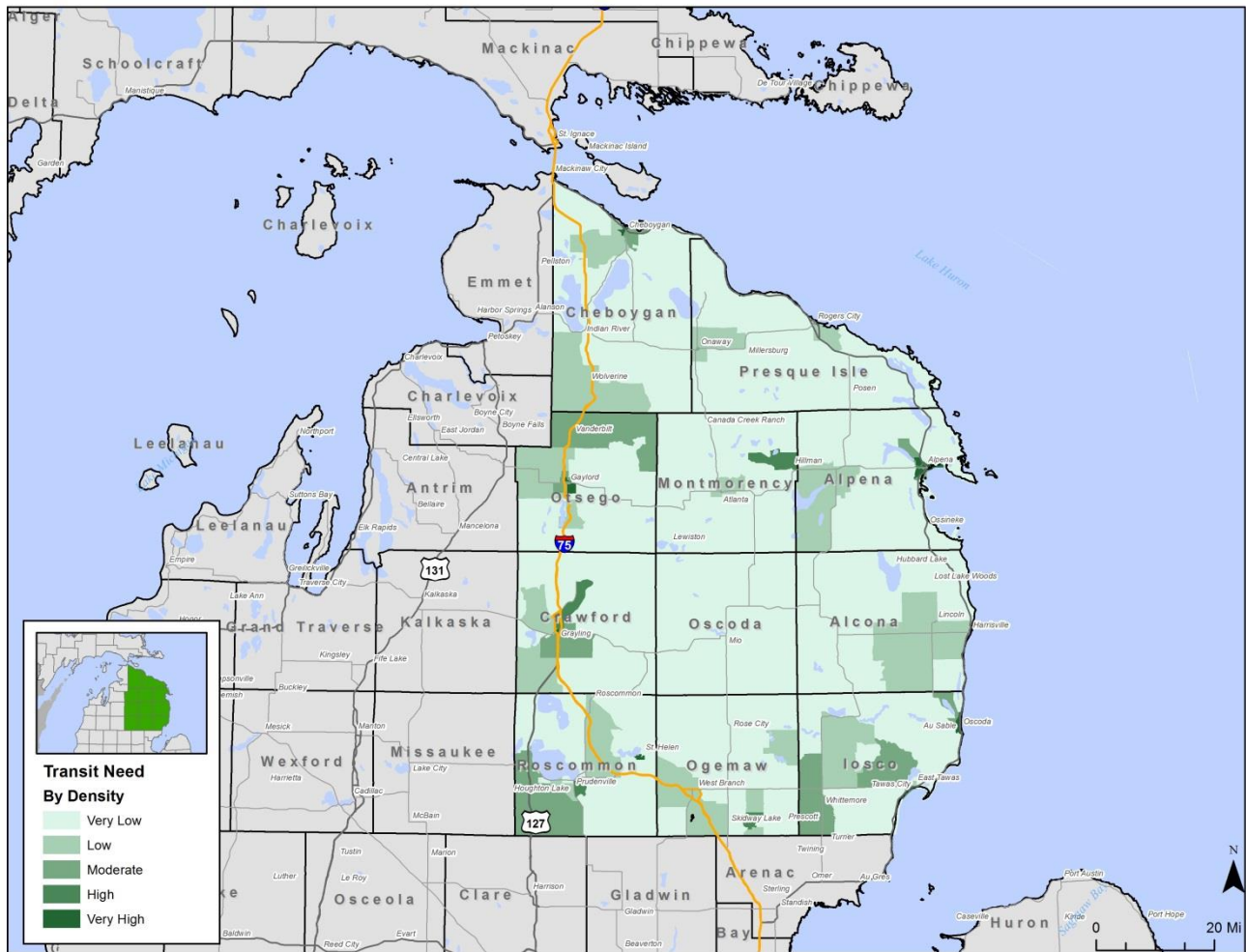
The Transit Dependence Index (TDI) is an aggregate measure displaying relative concentrations of transit dependent populations. Five factors make up the TDI calculation; population density, autoless households, elderly populations (age 65 and over), youth populations (ages 10-17), and below poverty populations.

The factors mentioned above represent specific socioeconomic characteristics of Region 3. For each factor, individual block groups were classified according to the frequency of vulnerable populations relative to county averages. Factors were then put entered into the TDI equation to determine the relative transit dependence of each block group.

The relative classification system utilizes averages in ranking populations. For example, areas with less than average transit dependent population fall into the “Very Low” classification, where areas that are more than twice the average will be classified as “Very High.” The classifications “Low”, “Moderate”, and “High” fall between the average and twice the average; these classifications are divided into thirds.

Figure 5-3 displays TDI rankings for Region 3. Alpena and Alpena Counties have the most block groups with “Very High” transit need with respect to density in the region. Crawford, Roscommon, Otsego, Presque Isle, Cheboygan, and Iosco Counties have “Very High” transit need according to density.

Figure 5-3: Transit Dependence Index Density



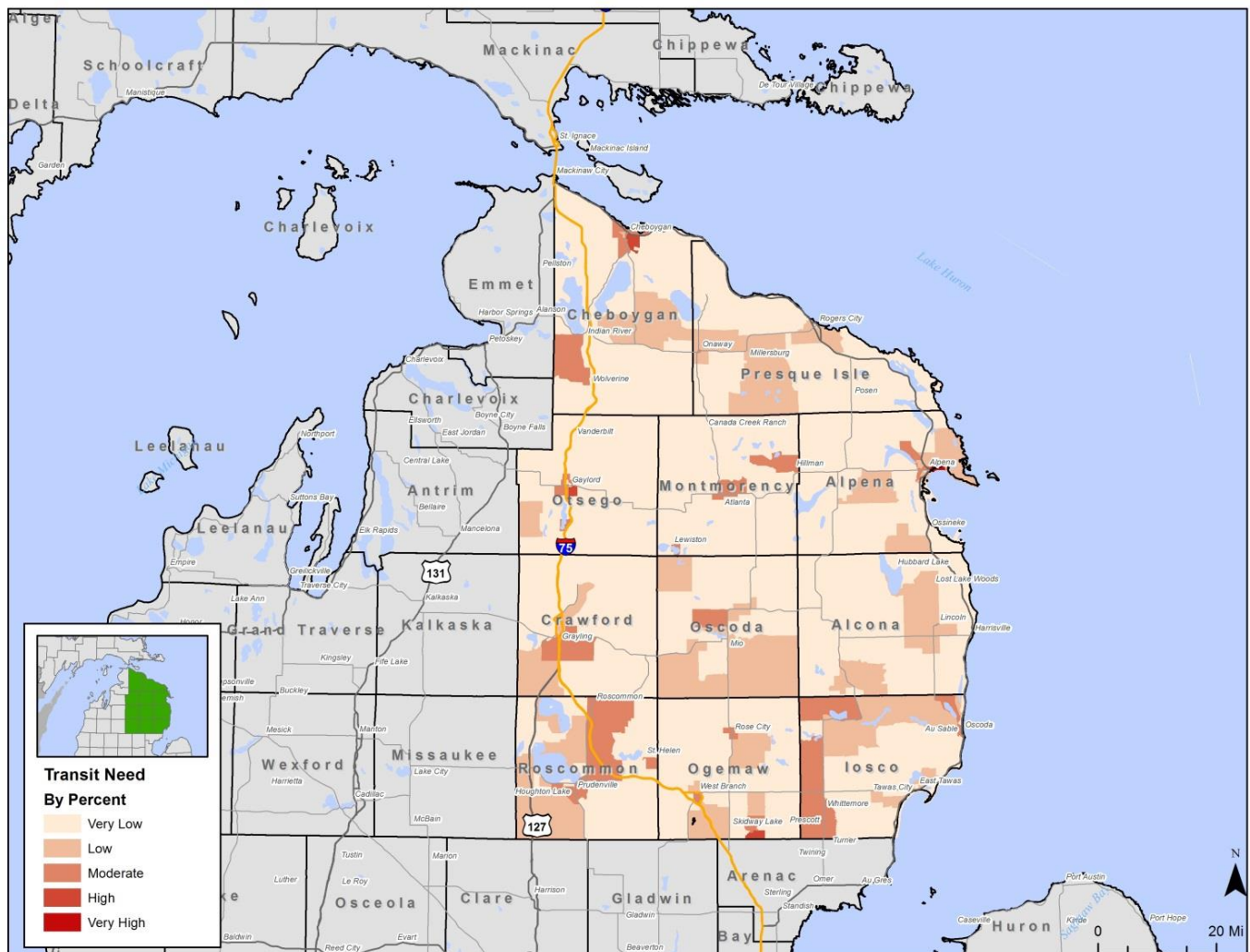
Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

The Transit Dependence Index Percent (TDIP) provides an analysis to the TDI measure. It is similar to the TDI measure however it excludes the population density factor. The TDIP for each block group in the study area was calculated based on autoless households, elderly populations, youth populations, and below poverty populations.

By removing the population density factor, the TDIP is able to measure the degree of vulnerability. It represents the percentage of the population within the block group with the above socioeconomic characteristics, and follows the TDI's five-tiered categorization of Very Low to Very High. It does not highlight block groups that are likely to have higher concentrations of vulnerable populations because of their population density.

Figure 5-4, illustrates transit need based on percentage. According to the TDIP, only Alpena County has a block group with "Very High" transit need in respect to percentage. Ogemaw, Otsego, and Cheboygan have block groups with "High" transit need according to percentage.

Figure 5-4: Transit Dependence Index Percentage



Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

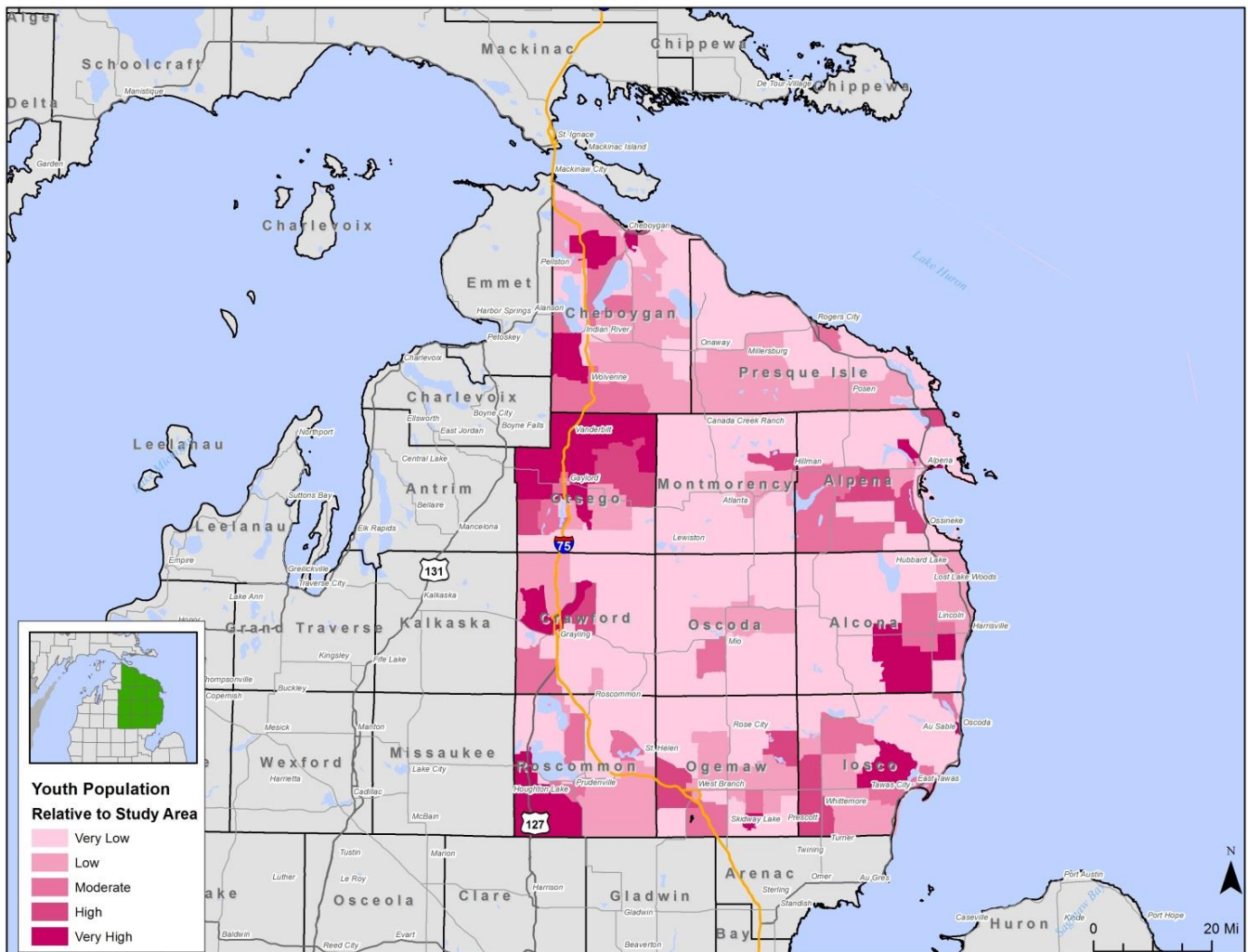
Transit Dependence Index Factors

This subsection will review three of the five factors that make up the transit dependence index: youth population, senior adult population, and zero car households. Other than population, the fifth factor, individuals living at or below the poverty level, will be reviewed in the section, Title VI Demographic Analysis. This section provides a similar index for individuals with disabilities. While this data is not included in the TDI it is still important to review as those with disabilities may have difficulty driving a personal automobile.

Youth Population

The youth population is often used as an identifier of transit dependent population. Persons ages 10 to 17 either cannot drive or are just beginning to drive and often do not have a personal automobile assessable to them. For this population, public transit is often the means that offers mobility. Figure 5-5 illustrates concentrations of youth populations relative to the study area. The northern and central areas of Otsego County, Cheboygan, Alpena, Crawford, Alcona, Houghton Lake and southeastern area of Roscommon, Skidway Lake area of Ogemaw, Iosco, and the south eastern part of Alcona County have high youth populations.

Figure 5-5: Distribution of the Youth Population (Aged 10 to 17)

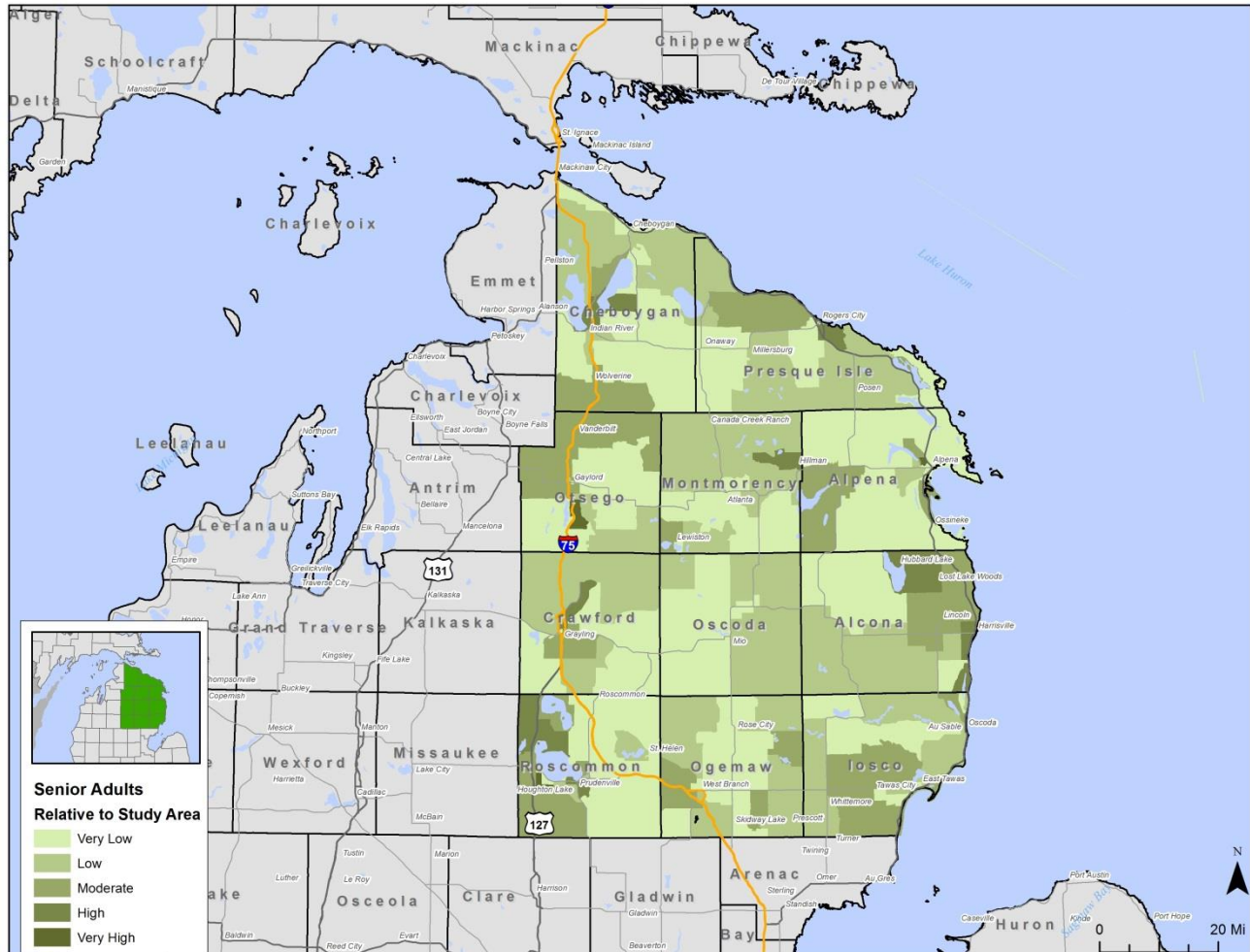


Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Senior Adult Population

The TDI and the TDIP analyzed the senior adult population, individuals 65 years and older. Persons in this age group may begin to decrease their use of a personal vehicle and begin to rely more heavily on public transit. Figure 5-6 shows the relative concentration of seniors in Region 3. The area south of Gaylord, Otsego County; Alpena, Alpena County; and the Houghton Lake area of Roscommon County have high concentrations of senior adults.

Figure 5-6: Distribution of the Senior Adult Population (Aged 65 and Above)

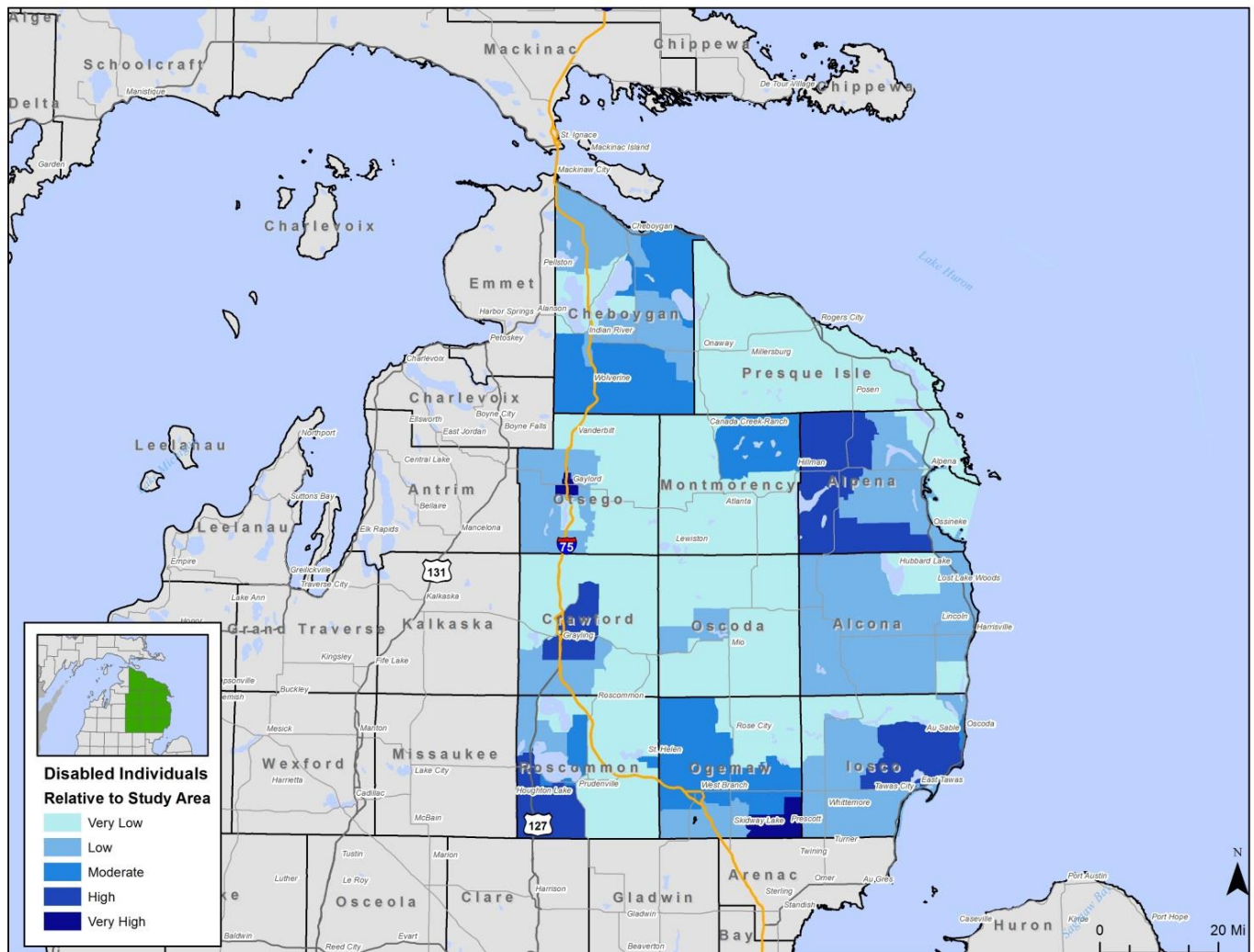


Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Individuals with Disabilities

Figure 5-7 illustrates individuals with disabilities in Region 3. The American Community Survey was used to obtain data for the disabled population. This data is only provided at the census tract level. Persons who have disabilities that prevent them or make it more difficult to own and operate a personal vehicle often rely on public transit for their transportation needs. Ogemaw and Otsego Counties are the only counties that have a block group that contains a “Very High” concentration of individuals with disabilities. Alpena, Crawford, Iosco, and Roscommon Counties have block groups with “High” concentrations of individuals with disabilities.

Figure 5-7: Distribution of Individuals with Disabilities

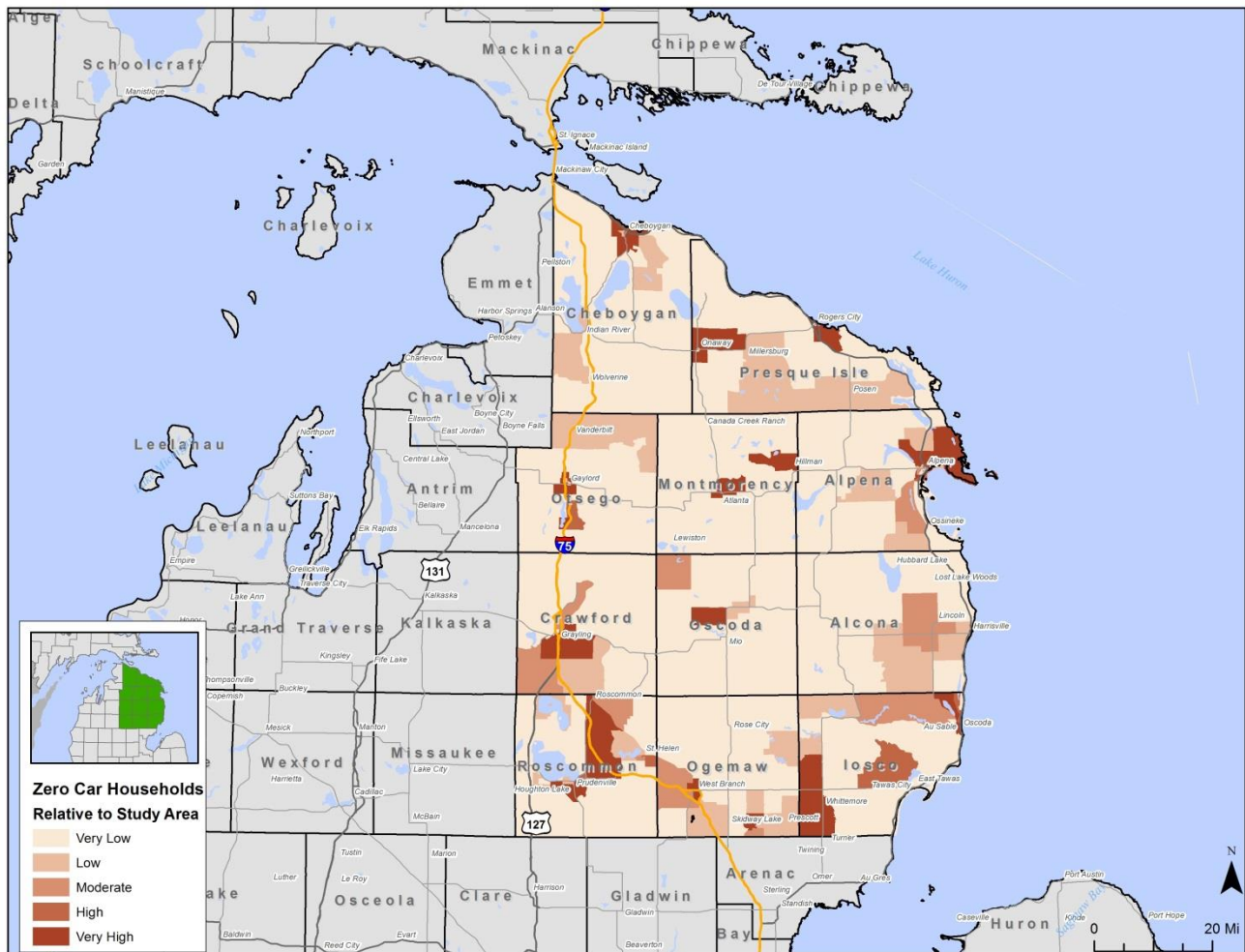


Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Zero Car Households

Households without at least one personal vehicle are more likely to depend on mobility offered by public transit. Although autoless households are reflected in both the TDI and TDIP measures, displaying this segment of the population separately is important since most land uses in Region 3 are at distances too far for non-motorized travel. Figure 5-8 displays the relative number of autoless households. Areas with “High” or “Very High” numbers of autoless households include Cheboygan, Iosco, Alpena, Montmorency, Roscommon, Otsego, Oscoda, Ogemaw, Presque Isle, and Crawford Counties.

Figure 5-8: Zero Car Household Distribution



Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

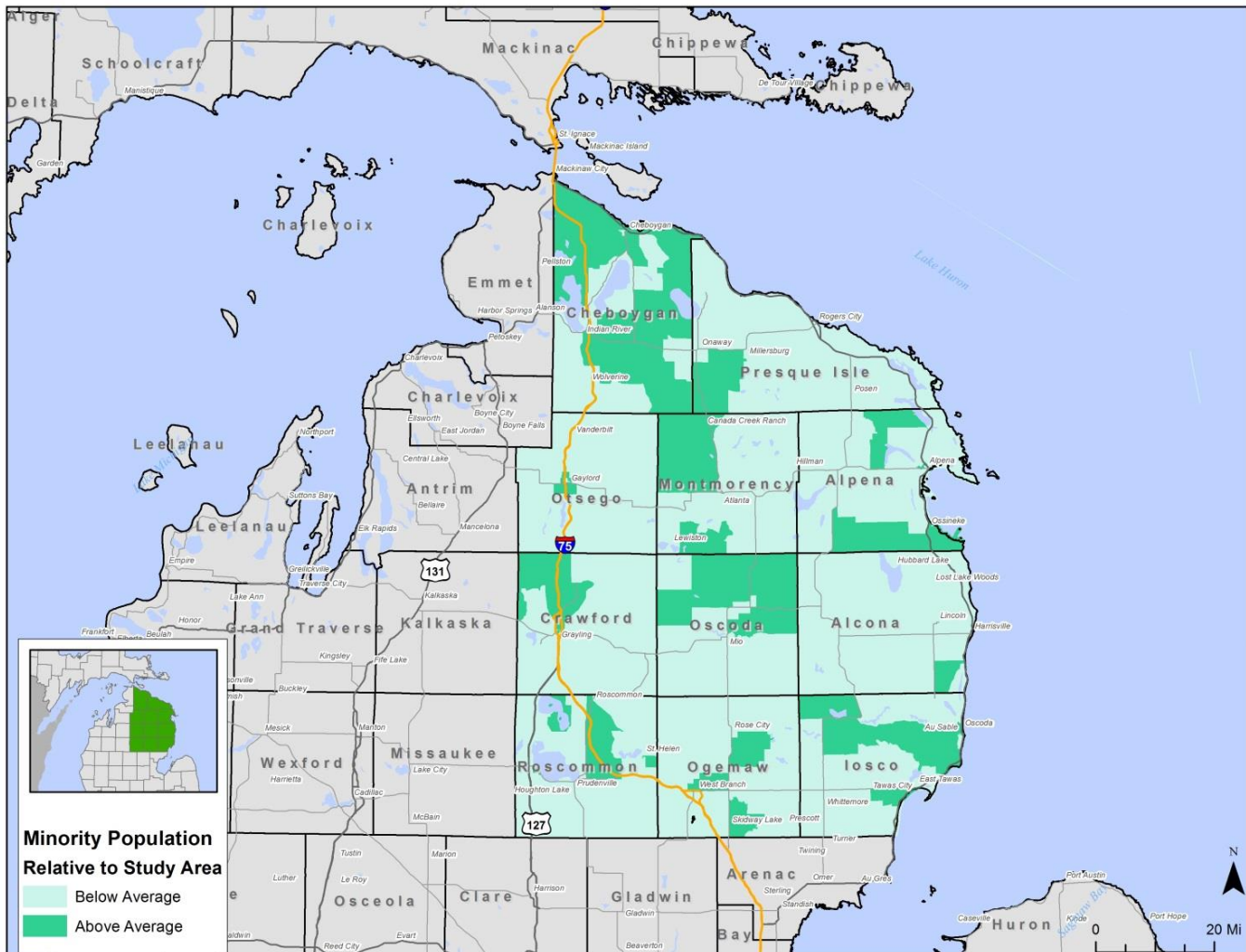
TITLE VI DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving federal subsidies. This includes agencies providing federally funded public transportation. The following section examines the minority and below poverty level populations in Region 3.

Minority Population

It is important to ensure that areas with an above average percentage of racial and/or ethnic minorities are not negatively impacted by any proposed alterations to existing public transportation services. In Region 3, the average concentration of minority population in each census block group is 4.5%. Figure 5-9 illustrates the concentration of minority populations based on the region's average.

Figure 5-9: Distribution of the Minority Population

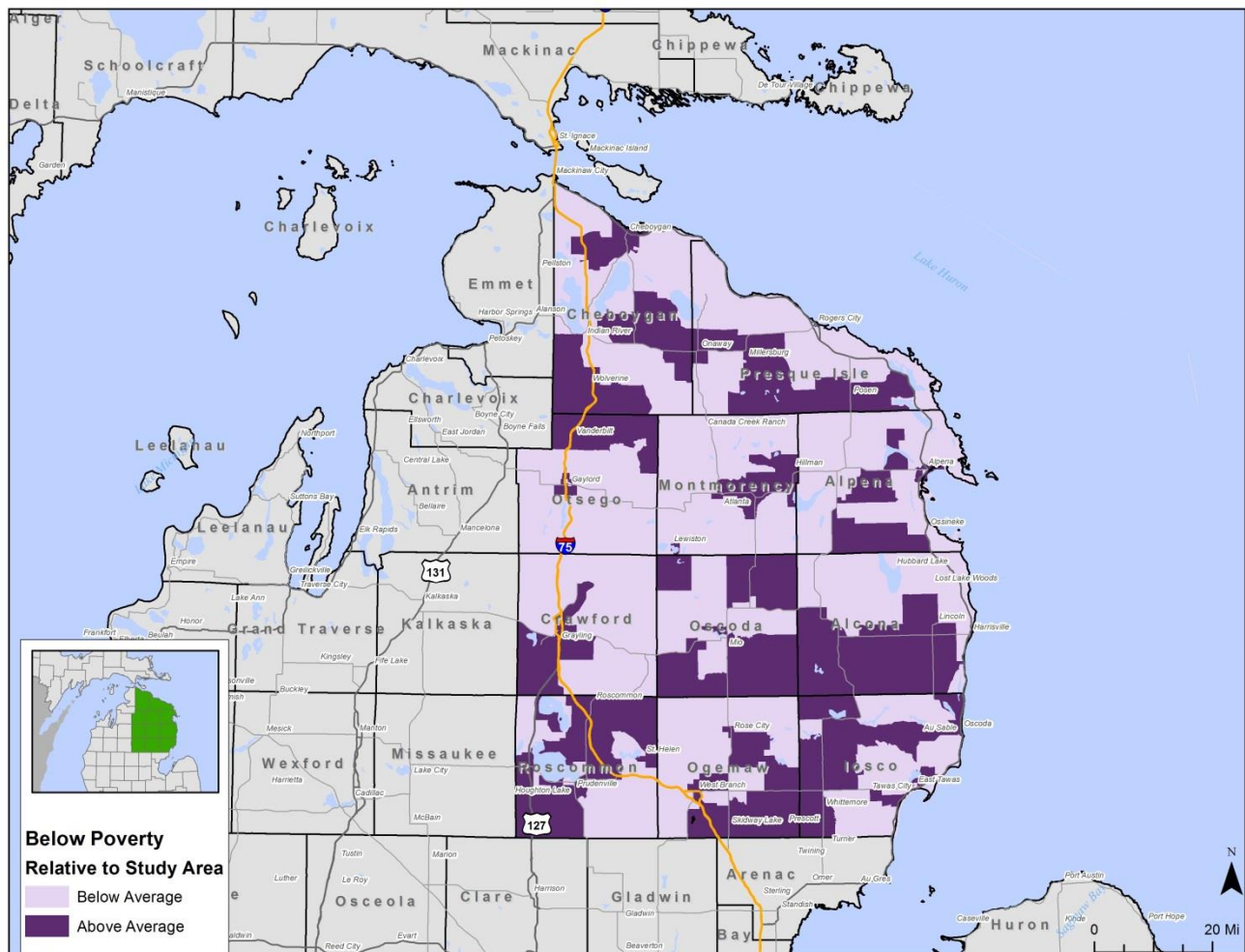


Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Below Poverty Level Population

The second group included in the Title VI analysis represents those individuals who earn less than the federal poverty level. This segment of the populations may find it a financial burden to own and maintain a personal vehicle, thus relying on public transit as their primary means of transportation. In Region 3, the average of individuals living below the federal poverty level is 16.7%. Figure 5-10 depicts the concentration of the population above or below the average relative to the study area.

Figure 5-10: Distribution of Individuals Living Below the Poverty Level



Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Limited-English Proficiency

In addition to providing public transportation for a diversity of socioeconomic groups, it is also important to serve and disseminate information to those of different linguistic backgrounds. As shown in Table 5-3, Region 3 residents predominately speak English. Indo-European languages are the second most spoken languages in most of the counties except Montmorency and Ogemaw. In Montmorency and Ogemaw Counties, Spanish is the second most spoken language. Of those who primarily speak languages other than English the vast majority are able to speak English “Very Well”.

Table 5-3: Limited English Proficiency Populations for Region 3

County	Alcona		Alpena		Cheboygan		Crawford	
Age 5 years and up	10,341		27,782		24,752		13,387	
Languages Spoken	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
English	10,117	97.8%	26,929	96.9%	24,227	97.9%	13,224	98.8%
Speak Non-English	224	2.2%	853	3.1%	525	2.1%	163	1.2%
Spanish	54	0.5%	320	1.2%	181	0.7%	46	0.3%
Indo- European languages	134	1.3%	413	1.5%	224	0.9%	76	0.6%
Asian/Pacific Island languages	26	0.3%	84	0.3%	41	0.2%	34	0.3%
Other	10	0.1%	36	0.1%	79	0.3%	7	0.1%
Ability to Speak English	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
"Very Well" or "Well"	211	2.04%	716	2.58%	506	2.04%	137	1.02%
"Not Well" or "Not at All"	13	0.13%	137	0.49%	19	0.08%	26	0.19%
County	Iosco		Montmorency		Ogemaw		Oscoda	
Age 5 years and up	24,499		9,176		20,351		8,117	
Languages Spoken	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
English	23,837	97.3%	9,018	98.3%	19,971	98.1%	7,580	93.4%
Speak Non-English	662	2.7%	158	1.7%	380	1.9%	537	6.6%
Spanish	242	1.0%	93	1.0%	167	0.8%	56	0.7%
Indo- European languages	303	1.2%	52	0.6%	140	0.7%	466	5.7%
Asian/Pacific Island languages	81	0.3%	0	0.0%	70	0.3%	0	0.0%
Other	36	0.1%	13	0.1%	3	0.0%	15	0.2%
Ability to Speak English	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
"Very Well" or "Well"	652	2.7%	156	1.7%	355	1.7%	379	4.7%
"Not Well" or "Not at All"	30	0.1%	2	1.3%	25	0.1%	58	0.7%

County	Otsego		Presque Isle		Roscommon	
Age 5 years and up	22,802		12,652		23,244	
Languages Spoken	#	%	#	%	#	%
English	22,204	97.4%	12,211	96.5%	22,759	97.9%
Speak Non-English	598	2.6%	441	3.5%	485	2.1%
Spanish	98	0.4%	67	0.5%	118	0.5%
Indo- European languages	390	1.7%	343	2.7%	3,130	1.3%
Asian/Pacific Island languages	87	0.4%	28	0.2%	400	0.2%
Other	23	0.1%	3	0.0%	140	0.1%
Ability to Speak English	#	%	#	%	#	%
"Very Well" or "Well"	525	2.3%	392	3.1%	437	1.9%
"Not Well" or "Not at All"	73	0.3%	49	0.4%	48	0.2%

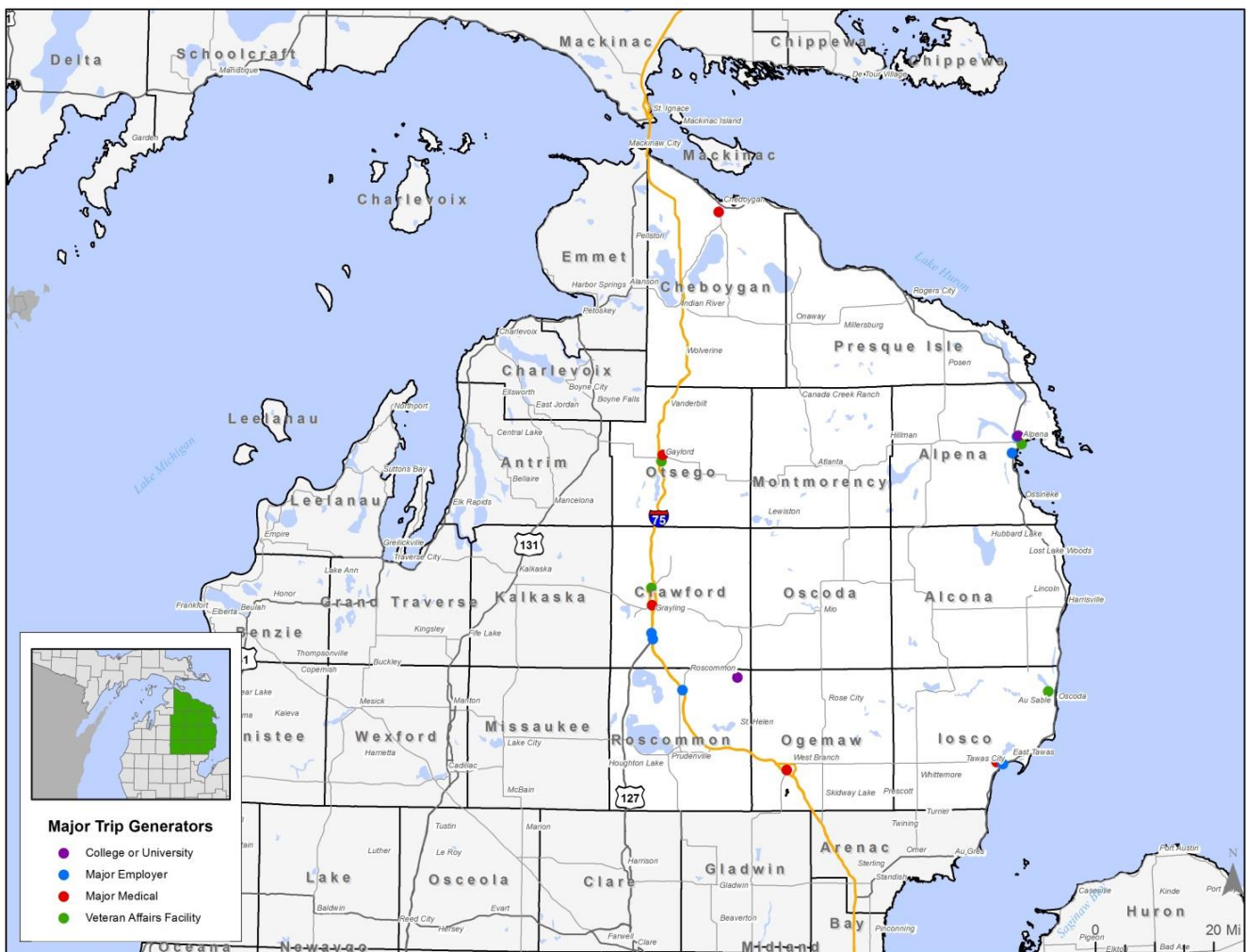
Source: American Community Survey, Five-Year Estimates (2010-2014), Table B16004

LAND USE PROFILE

Regional Trip Generators

Identifying regional trip generators serves to complement the previous demographic analysis by indicating where transit services may be most needed. Trip generators attract transit demand and include common origins and destinations. Examples include higher level educational facilities, major employers, regional medical facilities, and Veteran Affairs Medical Centers and Clinics. Figure 5-11 provides a map of the regional trip generators in Region 3. Trip generator categories are detailed below.

Figure 5-11: Regional Trip Generators



Educational Facilities

Many of the individuals that comprise the school age population are unable to afford or operate their own personal vehicle; therefore, it may be assumed that this segment of the population is reliant upon

public transportation. Additionally, many faculty and staff members are associated with these institutions as a place of employment. Colleges and universities located in Region 3 include Alpena Community College and Kirtland Community College.

Major Employers

Employers included in this category are those that employ 500 or more workers. Providing transit services to major employment locations is advantageous to both the employee, as the individual is provided with direct access to their occupation and subsequent source of income, and the employer, as this entity will have assurance that their current or potential workforce will have diverse options of accessing the destination. Some of the major employers in Region 3 include Alpena Public Schools, Alpena General Hospital, the St. Joseph Health System, Lear Corporation, and Camp Grayling.

Major Medical Facilities

Major medical facilities, classified as regional and general hospitals, represent a significant destination for users of public transportation. Older adults and persons with disabilities often rely more heavily on services offered by medical facilities than other population segments. Since older adults and persons with disabilities represent a large fraction of the transit dependent population, it is imperative that these facilities are made accessible through public transit services. The major medical facilities in Region 3 are Alpena Regional Medical Center, St. Joseph Hospital, Cheboygan Memorial Hospital, Munson Healthcare Grayling Hospital, Otsego Memorial Hospital, and West Branch Regional Medical Center.

Veteran Affairs Medical Facilities

The Department of Veterans Affairs oversees a network of medical centers and smaller community based outpatient clinics. Locating transportation to these facilities can be a major barrier for veterans who rely on healthcare that these facilities provide. Region 3 is home to the Clement C. Van Wagoner Outpatient Clinic, Gaylord Community Based Outpatient Clinic, Grayling Community Based Outpatient Clinic, and Oscoda Community Based Outpatient Clinic.

Local Trip Generators

It is important to identify communities containing local trip generators. Local trip generators attract transit demand and include common origins and destinations, like colleges and universities, multi-unit housing, non- profit and governmental agencies, major employers, medical facilities, and shopping centers.

Another source of data that provides an understanding of employee travel patterns is the Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) dataset. Table 5-5 provides the results of this analysis for Region 3. Alpena in Alpena County is ranked in the top five employment destinations for three of the counties in the region.

Table 5-4: Local Trip Generators

Trip Generators	College/ University	High Density Housing	Human Service Agency	Major Employer	Medical Facility	Shopping Destinations
Alcona County						
Harrisville		X			X	
Alpena County						
Alpena	X			X	X	X
Cheboygan County						
Cheboygan		X	X		X	
Crawford County						
Grayling		X	X	X	X	
Iosco County						
East Tawas			X			
Tawas City				X	X	
Montmorency County						
Atlanta			X			
Ogemaw County						
West Branch			X		X	
Oscoda County						
Mio			X			
Otsego County						
Gaylord		X	X			
Presque Isle County						
Rogers City		X	X			
Roscommon County						
Roscommon	X	X	X	X		

Employment Travel Patterns

It is beneficial to account for commuting patterns of residents intra- and inter-regionally.

Table 5-4 presents results of the Census Bureau's Journey to Work data which provides location of employment (in county vs. out-of-county and in state vs. out-of-state) and means of transportation to work. Residents of Region 3 typically work in their county of residence and drive alone to work. Alcona County has the highest percentage of residents who work outside of the county (47%).

Table 5-4: Journey to Work Patterns for Region 3

County	Alcona		Alpena		Cheboygan		Crawford	
Workers 16 Years and Older	3,175		11,947		9,739		5,032	
Location of Employment	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
In State of Residence	3,092	97.4%	11,881	99.4%	9,658	99.2%	4,983	99.0%
In County of Residence	1,601	50.4%	10,805	90.4%	6,246	64.1%	3,037	60.4%
Outside County of Residence	1,491	47.0%	1,076	9.0%	3,412	35.0%	1,946	38.7%
Outside State of Residence	83	2.6%	66	0.6%	81	0.8%	49	1.0%
Means of Transportation to Work	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Car, Truck, or Van - drove alone	2,557	80.5%	9,744	81.6%	7,787	80.0%	3,939	78.3%
Car, Truck, or Van - carpooled	276	8.7%	1,269	10.6%	1002	10.3%	631	12.5%
Public Transportation	7	0.2%	70	0.6%	67	0.7%	53	1.1%
Walk	107	3.4%	171	1.4%	183	1.9%	158	3.1%
Taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, other	57	1.8%	210	1.8%	142	1.5%	67	1.3%
Work at Home	171	5.4%	483	4.0%	558	5.7%	184	3.7%
County	Iosco		Montmorency		Ogemaw		Oscoda	
Workers 16 Years and Older	8,563		2,735		7,445		2,667	
Location of Employment	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
In State of Residence	8,519	99.5%	2,714	99.2%	7,336	98.5%	2,650	99.4%
In County of Residence	7,215	84.3%	1,704	62.3%	5,561	74.7%	1,919	72.0%
Outside County of Residence	1,304	15.2%	1,010	36.9%	1,775	23.8%	731	27.4%
Outside State of Residence	44	0.5%	21	0.8%	109	1.5%	17	0.6%
Means of Transportation to Work	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Car, Truck, or Van - drove alone	7,081	82.7%	2,326	85.0%	6,234	83.7%	2,002	75.1%
Car, Truck, or Van - carpooled	720	8.4%	177	6.5%	665	8.9%	276	10.3%
Public Transportation	13	0.2%	0	0.0%	19	0.3%	2	0.1%
Walk	227	2.7%	90	3.3%	128	1.7%	88	3.3%
Taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, other	166	1.9%	6	0.2%	133	1.8%	133	5.0%
Work at Home	356	4.2%	136	5.0%	266	3.6%	166	6.2%
County	Otsego		Presque Isle		Roscommon			
Workers 16 Years and Older	10,267		4,462		7,227			
Location of Employment	#	%	#	%	#	%		
In State of Residence	10,155	98.9%	4,377	98.1%	7,121	98.5%		
In County of Residence	8,581	83.6%	2,835	63.5%	5,119	70.8%		
Outside County of Residence	1,574	15.3%	1,542	34.6%	2,002	27.7%		
Outside State of Residence	112	1.1%	85	1.9%	106	1.5%		

Means of Transportation to Work	#	%	#	%	#	%
Car, Truck, or Van - drove alone	8,613	83.9%	3,508	78.6%	5,619	77.8%
Car, Truck, or Van - carpooled	1,054	10.3%	510	11.4%	839	11.6%
Public Transportation	33	0.3%	6	0.1%	74	1.0%
Walk	173	1.7%	90	2.0%	197	2.7%
Taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, other	72	0.7%	108	2.4%	123	1.7%
Work at Home	322	3.1%	240	5.4%	375	5.2%

Source: American Community Survey, Five-Year Estimates (2010-2014), Table B08130

Table 5-5: Top Five Employment Destinations for County Residents

Alcona County			Alpena County			Cheboygan		
Place	#	%	Place	#	%	Place	#	%
Hubbard Lake CDP	48	3.1%	Alpena	2682	22.6%	Cheboygan	695	12.9%
Alpena	46	3.0%	Ossineke CDP	248	2.1%	Indian River CDP	197	3.6%
Lincoln	43	2.8%	Rogers City	108	0.9%	Mackinaw City	65	1.2%
Harrisville	40	2.6%	Hubbard Lake CDP	87	0.7%	Rogers City	65	1.2%
Lost Lake Woods CDP	17	1.1%	Presque Isle Harbor CDP	83	0.7%	Onaway	55	1.0%
All Other Locations	1,348	87.4%	All Other Locations	8,639	72.9%	All Other Locations	4,326	80.1%
Crawford County			Iosco County			Montmorency County		
Place	#	%	Place	#	%	Place	#	%
Grayling	217	7.1%	East Tawas	540	7.6%	Lewiston CDP	108	4.9%
Roscommon	39	1.3%	Tawas City	376	5.3%	Atlanta CDP	90	4.1%
Houghton Lake CDP	29	0.9%	Au Sable CDP	297	4.2%	Hillman	71	3.2%
Gaylord	23	0.7%	Oscoda CDP	194	2.7%	Sault Ste. Marie	53	2.4%
Cheboygan	19	0.6%	Sand Lake CDP	194	2.7%	Alpena	49	2.2%
All Other Locations	2,745	89.4%	All Other Locations	5,510	77.5%	All Other Locations	1,824	83.1%
Ogemaw County			Otsego County			Oscoda County		
Place	#	%	Place	#	%	Place	#	%
West Branch	374	7.2%	Gaylord	712	8.3%	Mio CDP	174	11.8%
Skidway Lake CDP	203	3.9%	Vanderbilt	101	1.2%	Lewiston CDP	13	0.9%
Rose City	79	1.5%	Lewiston CDP	71	0.8%	Atlanta CDP	8	0.5%
St. Helen CDP	66	1.3%	Cheboygan	56	0.7%	Prudenville CDP	8	0.5%
Lupton CDP	42	0.8%	Petoskey	49	0.6%	Alpena	7	0.5%
All Other Locations	4,464	85.4%	All Other Locations	7,582	88.5%	All Other Locations	1,270	85.8%

Presque Isle County			Roscommon County		
Place	#	%	Place	#	%
Rogers City	440	17.5%	Houghton Lake CDP	384	7.5%
Alpena	96	3.8%	St. Helen CDP	189	3.7%
Onaway	89	3.5%	Prudenville CDP	155	3.0%
Posen	28	1.1%	Roscommon	149	2.9%
Millersburg	25	1.0%	Grayling	31	0.6%
All Other Locations	1,839	73.1%	All Other Locations	4,238	82.4%

Source: Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics, 2013

Chapter 6: Current Transportation Services and Resources

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a review of the variety of public transit, human services transportation, private transportation services, non-motorized transportation services, and other transportation services that are provided in Region 3. The process to identify various transportation resources available in the region included:

- Using information from previous planning efforts (discussed in Chapter 3)
- Obtaining input from regional stakeholders through coordinated mobility planning workshop.
- Reviewing reports produced by MDOT
- Conducting on-line research and obtaining appropriate information on current transportation services, including the Michigan 2-1-1 database

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Region 3 is served by the following transit systems:

- Crawford County Transportation Authority
- Iosco Transit Authority
- Ogemaw County Public Transportation
- Otsego County Bus System
- Roscommon County Transportation Authority
- Straits Regional Ride
- Thunder Bay Transportation Authority

The next section provides an overview of each public transit system. A summary of public transit services in the region follows, along with operating and performance data.

Crawford County Transportation Authority (CCTA)

CCTA provides public transportation services to residents of Crawford County through demand response, dial-a-ride services. Service hours are 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.



For outlying areas, scheduled services operate between the following areas and Grayling:

- Frederic and Maple Forest
- Beaver Creek, South Branch, and Roscommon
- M-72 East
- M-72 West
- Lovells

Fares for CCTA services are:

	In County	Out of County
Children	\$0.50	\$1.00
Adults Age 18-59	\$1.00	\$2.00
Seniors Age 60 and over	\$0.50	\$1.00
People with Disabilities	\$ 0.50	\$1.00

Iosco Transit Corporation (ITC)

ITC serves the citizens of Iosco County, providing demand response service in Oscoda and Tawas as well as time share-flexible route services to other areas of the county. Service hours are Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Ogemaw County Public Transportation (OCPT)

OCPT is operated by the County of Ogemaw, providing demand response transit services throughout the county. Service hours are Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., and Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Fares are as follows:

	Within City Limits	Outside City Limits
Adults Age 16-59	\$1.50	\$1.50 + \$0.10/mile
Seniors Age 60 & over	\$ 0.75	\$.75 + \$0.05/mile
Children Age 15 & under	\$1.00	\$1.00 + \$0.10/mile
People with Disabilities	\$ 0.75	\$0.75 + \$0.05/mile



Otsego County Bus System

The Otsego County Bus System, a department of Otsego County, provides curb-to-curb demand response services throughout the county. Services are operated Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and on Saturdays from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Fares for service are as follows:



Category	Fare
General Passengers Under 60 years old	\$3.00 One Way
Seniors Age 60 & over	\$2.00 One Way
Students Head Start - College	\$2.50 One Way
Disabled Passengers	\$2.00 One Way

Otsego County Bus System works in close coordination with Otsego County Commission on Aging (OCCOA), including assisting with the Meals-On-Wheels delivery program.

Roscommon County Transportation Authority (RCTA)

RCTA provides demand response service anywhere within the Roscommon County borders, and offers connecting transportation to any of the surrounding counties that have available transportation and to Indian Trails. Services operate Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., and on Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



RCTA fares are based on zones, with a maximum one-way out of county fare of \$3.00. In-county fares range from \$.75 to \$1.50, and the senior/disabled fare is \$.75. Riders can also purchase tokens at a discount of 12 for the price of 10.

Straits Regional Ride (SRR)

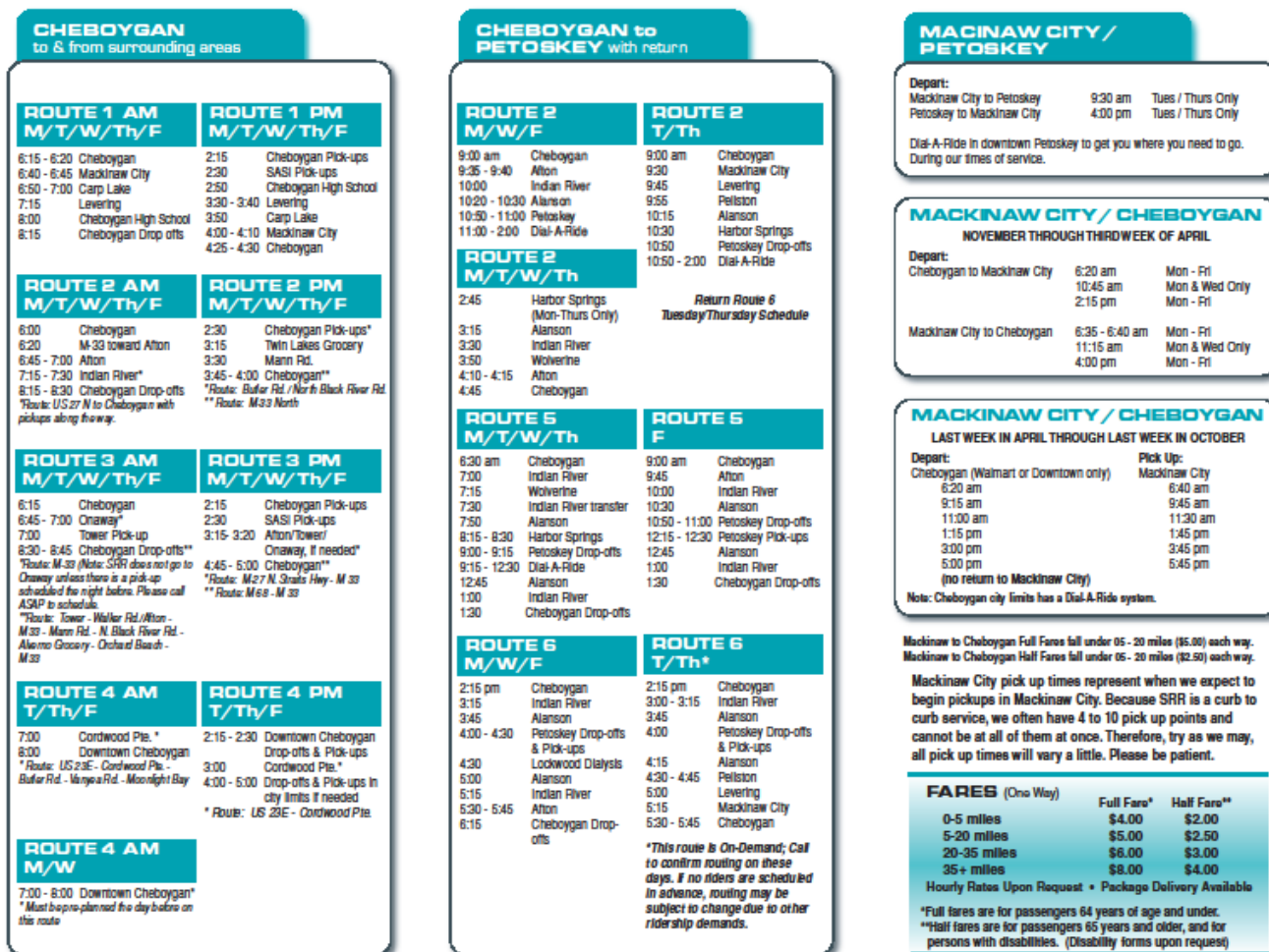
SRR serves communities in Cheboygan, Emmet, and Presque Isle Counties. The SRR facility is located at Cheboygan County Airport, west of Cheboygan. Flexible routes connect communities within Cheboygan and Emmet Counties, with major destinations of Cheboygan, Mackinaw City, Indian River, Alanson, Petoskey and Harbor Springs. Seasonal services operate from May to October between Cheboygan and Mackinaw City to transport customers to



and from tourism related employment in Mackinaw City and Mackinac Island. Another flexible route operates to and from Onaway and Rogers City servicing persons along the M-68 corridor.

The SRR services currently operate Monday through Friday. Schedules and fare information are shown in Figure 6-1.

Figure 6-1: Straits Regional Ride Route and Fare Information



Source: SRR web site

Thunder Bay Transportation Authority (TBTA)

TBTA is based in the City of Alpena, and provides service to Alpena, Alcona and Montmorency Counties, and Presque Isle County south of M-68, which includes Rogers City, Onaway and Posen.



Services include:

- Alpena Dial-A-Ride Transportation (DART) operates seven days a week on a demand response basis. Hours of service are:

Day	Time
Monday – Friday	7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	8:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Sunday	9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Holidays closed Christmas Day	9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

- Door-to-door services are available in Alpena and the commercial and residential sections adjacent to Alpena. DART services are partially funded through a 0.65 mil city property tax levy. Fares are:

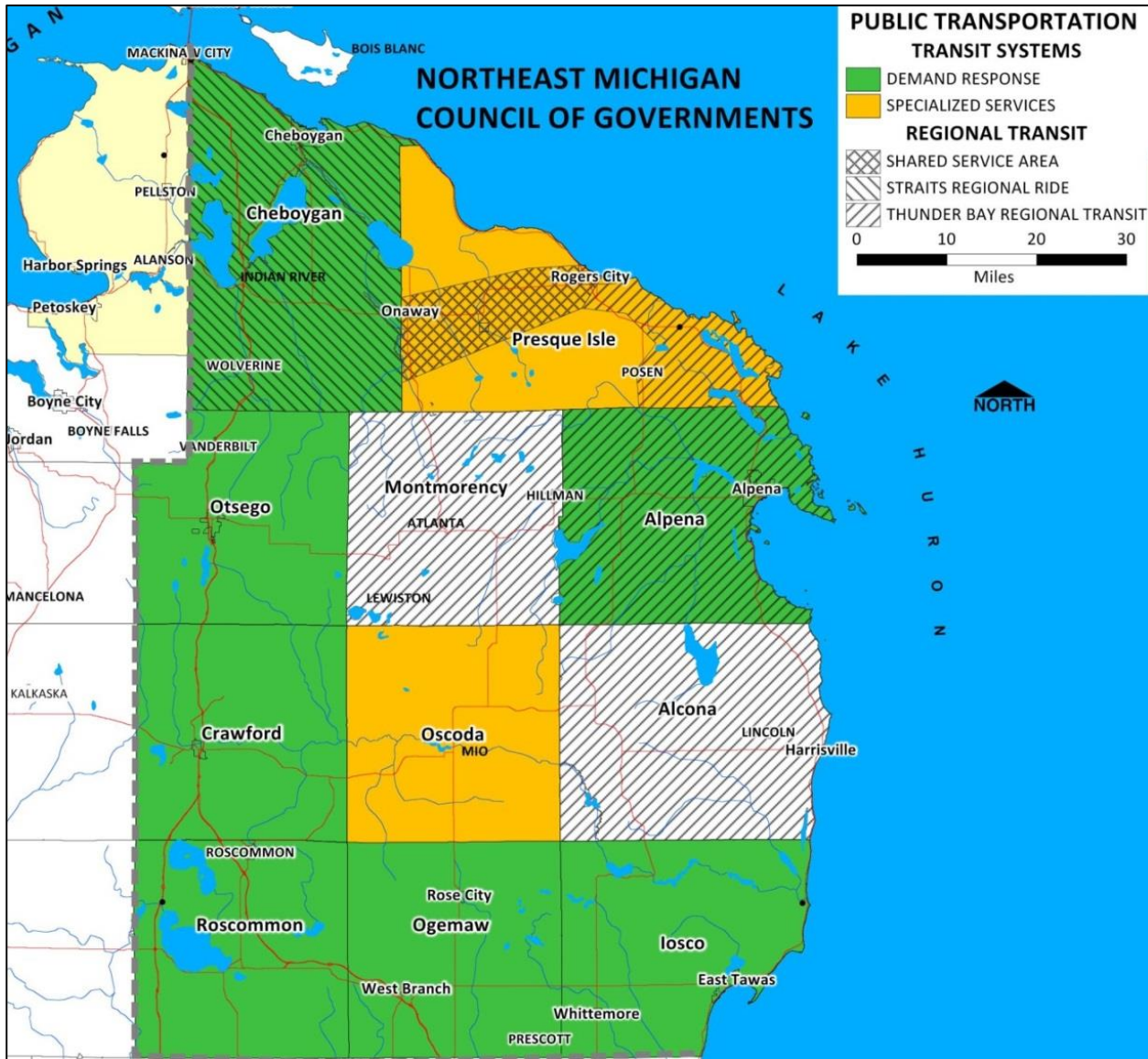
City Resident One-Way Fare	
Pick-up location and destination within the City of Alpena	
Category	Fare
Adult (14 - 64 years)	\$1.50
Youth (0 -13 years)	\$0.75
Senior (65+ years)	\$0.75
Person with disability	\$0.75
Non-City Resident One-Way Fare	
Reside within the Dial-A-Ride service area but outside the City of Alpena	
Category	Fare
Adult (14 - 64 years)	\$3.00
Youth (0 -13 years)	\$1.50
Senior (65+ years)	\$1.50
Person with disability	\$1.50

- Scheduled transportation in Alpena, Alcona, and Montmorency Counties. Buses serve these areas and arrive into Alpena by 9:00 a.m. and depart at approximately 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Fares are based on mileage.

Regional Overview

The NEMCOG report for MDOT included a map depicting the public and specialized transportation services provided in Region 3, shown in Figure 6-2. Table 6-1 provides a summary of public transit services in Region 3.

Figure 6-2: Region 3 Public Transit Systems



Source: Northeast Michigan Council of Governments

Table 6-1: Public Transit Services in Region 3

System	Service Overview	Primary Service Area	Service Hours	Regional Services/ Connectivity
Crawford County Transportation Authority (CCTA)	Demand response and dial-a-ride services	On demand services in Grayling, for outlying areas of Crawford County through scheduled departure and arrival times from Grayling	Mon – Fri 6:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.	
Iosco Transit Corporation (ITC)	Demand response and flexible routes	Demand response service in Cities of Oscoda and Tawas Flexible route services to other areas of Iosco County	Mon – Fri 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	
Ogemaw County Public Transportation (OCPT)	Demand response	Ogemaw County	Mon - Fri 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	
Otsego County Bus System	Curb-to-curb and demand response	Otsego County	Mon – Fri 6:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Saturday 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.	
Roscommon County Transportation Authority (RCTA)	Demand response	Roscommon County	Mon – Fri 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Connecting transportation to Indian Trails and to surrounding counties that have available transportation.
Straits Regional Ride (SRR)	Flexible routes	Cheboygan, Emmet, and Presque Isle Counties.	Hours and days vary based on route	Flexible routes serve three county area



System	Service Overview	Primary Service Area	Service Hours	Regional Services/ Connectivity
Thunder Bay Transportation Authority (TBTA)	Dial-a-ride and scheduled services	Dial-a-Ride in Alpena. Scheduled transportation in Alpena, Alcona, and Montmorency Counties	<u>Dial-a-Ride</u> Mon – Fri 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. Saturday 8 a.m. – 7 p.m. Sunday 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. Holidays 9 a.m. -3 p.m. <u>Scheduled transportation</u> Mon - Fri	Scheduled services in three county area

Table 6-2 provides operating data and performance data for public transit services in the region. Table 6-2 shows that in 2014 public transit systems in Region 3:

- Provided over 650,000 passenger trips
- Travelled over 2.8 million miles
- Operated over 166,000 revenue hours

Also indicated in Table 6-2, funding for public transit services was provided through a variety of federal, state, and local funding, and through passenger fares through the farebox. While each system varies, overall as a region over 39% of funding was through the state and 21% was through local sources.

Table 6-2: Public Transit Operating and Performance Data – 2014

Provider	Total Passengers	Total Miles	Total Vehicle Hrs.	Total Eligible Expenses	Federal Revenues	State Revenues	Local Revenues	Farebox Revenues
Crawford County Transportation Authority	98,898	465,627	24,724	\$1,559,698	\$182,795	\$612,961	\$389,338	\$234,928
Iosco Transportation Authority	40,164	212,651	11,398	\$532,141	\$88,835	\$209,131	\$108,121	\$99,121
Ogemaw County Public Transportation	69,081	307,783	17,167	\$817,775	\$116,057	\$321,386	\$253,563	\$98,392
Otsego County Bus System	106,033	474,061	31,828	\$1,738,617	\$197,576	\$683,276	\$306,195	\$388,490
Roscommon County Transportation Authority	150,881	687,510	34,259	\$1,714,553	\$278,828	\$673,819	\$717,265	\$261,651
Straits Regional Ride	43,759	296,064	14,465	\$801,281	\$127,805	\$314,903	\$31,404	\$327,306
Thunder Bay Transportation Authority	141,628	442,015	32,905	\$2,391,564	\$385,132	\$939,885	\$167,276	\$788,246
Region Total	650,444	2,885,711	166,746	\$9,555,629	\$1,377,028	\$3,755,361	\$1,973,162	\$2,198,134

Sources: MDOT: Michigan Public Transit Facts

HUMAN SERVICE TRANSPORTATION

The following section provides an overview of human service transportation providers identified in the region. It should be noted that the transportation services provided by these organizations are specialized in nature, and are typically provided only to agency clients for specific trip purpose, generally either medical or to access agency locations. These services may be modified due to funding or other changes.

- Previous coordinated transportation plans in the region identified the following human service transportation providers:
 - The Brook
 - Straits Area Services (SAS)
 - Tendercare, Cheboygan
- Specialized services are provided in Region 3 through Section 5310 Program funding. Table 6-3 provides an overview of these services.

Table 6-3: Section 5310 Program Funded Services

Organization	Counties Served	Number of One Way Trips 10/1/14 - 9/30/15	Number of Individuals Eligible to be Served	
			Disabled	Over age 65
Cheboygan County COA	Cheboygan	5,864	5,101	5,788
Oscoda County Area Transit Specialists	Oscoda	2,268	1,882	2,056
Presque Isle County COA	Presque Isle	5,706	1,321	3,495
Vital Care, Northern Michigan Regional Health Sys.	Emmet, Charlevoix, Cheboygan	2,188	12,949	16,574

Source: MDOT Section 5310 Program Measures

- Nonemergency transportation (NEMT) is provided in the region. NEMT is for individuals who require routine medical services and who, because of financial problems or their physical condition, are unable to use other available means of local transportation. A review of previous plans and the 2-1-1 database identified services through the following agencies and organizations:
 - Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
 - Gaylord Community Based Outpatient Clinic
 - Iosco County Medical Care Facility
 - St. Joseph Health System
 - AuSable Valley Community Mental Health Authority

PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

Intercity Bus

There are two intercity passenger bus carriers that operate in Michigan; Greyhound Lines, Inc. and Indian Trails, Inc. According to MDOT's Intercity Passenger Technical Report, these two intercity bus carriers serve 127 communities throughout Michigan. In Region 3, Indian Trails provides the intercity bus service. Below are the Indian Trail routes that have stops in Region 3:

- Route 1482: Chicago-Kalamazoo-Flint-St. Ignace
 - Iosco County (Tawas City)
 - Alpena County (Alpena)
 - Cheboygan County (Cheboygan)
- Route 1485: Detroit-Flint-Bay City- St. Ignace
 - Cheboygan County (Cheboygan - N. Huron & W. State)
 - Presque Isle County (Rogers City - Sunoco Gas Station)
 - Alpena County (Alpena - Walmart, Ossineke -BP/Subway US-23)
 - Alcona County (Harrisville - Main & State Streets)
 - Iosco County (Oscoda - Burger King)
- Route 1488: East Lansing-Alanson- St. Ignace
 - Otsego (Gaylord - I-75 Exit 282 Marathon Gas Station)
 - Crawford County (Grayling - Admiral Gas Station)
 - Roscommon County (Houghton Lake - B&B Gas Station at M-55)

Taxis/Shuttle Services

The following companies were identified that currently serve the region:

- Alpena Cab Company
- Chippewa Cab & Limousine
- Charter All Digital Cab
- Executive Taxi Service
- Mackinaw Shuttle
- Unique Care Transportation, LLC

FERRY SERVICE

Ferry service is provided between Mackinac Island and Mackinaw City by three companies:

- Arnold Mackinac Island Ferry
- Shepler's Ferry
- Star Line Ferrys

NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

Region 3 is home to a variety of multi-use and foot trails. The NEMCOG website provides a link to the UP North Trails Collaborative, a coalition of 53 organizations in Northern Michigan that promote all trail systems together for trail users.

Chapter 7

Prioritized Strategies

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a prioritized list of strategies for Region 3 based on regional stakeholder review and input. The process involved:

- Development of potential strategies, activities and projects to help address identified gaps between current transportation services and unmet needs, expand regional mobility, and achieve greater efficiencies in service delivery. These preliminary strategies, activities and projects were based on input from regional stakeholders during the September workshop, strategies identified in the report produced by Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) for MDOT, and recommendations included in recent plans and studies.
- Incorporating comments from regional stakeholders on the preliminary list of possible strategies, activities and projects.
- Prioritization of potential strategies through an on-line survey. At the September 2015 workshop, participants agreed to this process and that the results would be used to develop a list grouping strategies that were higher, medium, and lower priorities.

While many of transportation issues in the region are interrelated, the proposed strategies, activities and projects that were considered by regional stakeholders addressed the following overall goals:

- Maintain existing transportation services
- Expand and improve local transit services
- Expand regional transit services
- Improve coordination of public, private, and human services transportation
- Ensure customers and community service providers are aware of existing transportation services
- Consider a variety of transportation services to expand transportation services
- Secure additional funding to provide expanded transportation services in the region

HIGH PRIORITIES

Advocate for Additional Funding to Support Public Transit and Human Service Transportation

During the regional workshop stakeholders noted there is currently a lack of overall funding to support the variety of transportation services that are needed in the region. They expressed the need for a stronger advocacy campaign that highlights the impact that public transportation and human-services transportation has on residents of the region, and how it is a vital component of community transportation infrastructure.

This strategy involves a regional and unified effort to inform elected officials, local and national decision makers, and the general public on the dire need for additional funding to support current services. This advocacy campaign could be part of a national movement to stress the importance of community and public transit in the surface transportation reauthorization debate in Washington, D.C. The Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) and the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) have developed a variety of resources that can be used in advocacy efforts with local offices of House and Senate members, local media and state and local elected officials.

Develop Additional Partnerships and Identify New Funding Sources to Support Public-Transit and Human-Service Transportation

Coupled with expanded advocacy is the need to develop greater partnerships and identify additional funding sources to support the demand for public transit, human services transportation, and specialized transportation services that continues to grow daily. One of the key obstacles the transportation industry faces is how to pay for additional services.

This strategy would involve identifying partnership opportunities to leverage additional funding to support public-transit and human-services transportation in the region. It would include meeting multiple unmet needs and issues by tackling non-traditional sources of funding. Hospitals, supermarkets, and retailers who want the business of the region's riders may be willing to pay for part of the cost of transporting those riders to their sites. This approach is applicable to both medical and retail establishments already served, as well as new businesses. While this plan helps to document the need for these additional services, some may need to further quantify and document unmet needs and gaps in service as part of educating elected officials and potential funders.

Continue to Support Capital Projects that are Planned, Designed, and Carried Out to Meet Identified Needs

Maintaining and building upon current capital infrastructure is crucial to expanding mobility options, especially for older adults, people with disabilities, veterans, and people with lower incomes. Before the region can consider efforts for improving mobility for these population groups, it is critical to ensure the current foundation of services remains in place through a sufficient capital network.

This strategy involves acquisition of replacement buses or vans, vehicle rehabilitation or overhaul, and other appropriate vehicle equipment improvements that support the current capital infrastructure in the region. With limited capital funding to replace buses, it is essential that current vehicles are maintained and remain safe and operable beyond the typical useful life criteria.

Continue to Support Services that are Effectively Meeting Identified Transportation Needs in the Region

Financial resources are needed to operate vehicles and continue services at the current level. This strategy involves providing operating funds to support existing public transit services and human services transportation that are effectively meeting mobility needs identified in the region, especially those serving older adults, individuals with disabilities, and veterans.

While the coordinated mobility plan provides an opportunity to assess regional transportation needs transportation providers, this strategy should be coupled with a more detailed evaluation of public transit services in the region. This ongoing process would include a review of existing transit services with a major focus on the system's routes and performance of transportation services. This ongoing assessment assures that public transit systems in the region are responding to possible changing demographics in their communities and operating service that is most effective and economical. This service planning process should be supplemented with input through appropriate rider, employer, and public surveys; feedback from various stakeholders agencies and organizations; and input from staff including drivers and dispatchers on the frontline of services.

As a follow-up to a previous statewide training on providing cost effective transit services a resource is available to support ongoing service planning efforts. This resource is available through -- http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdot/TransitServicePlanningGuideAndResourcesForMDOT_409438_7.pdf

Transportation provided through human service agencies is more specialized, and not monitored through these performance measures. There are tools available these agencies can use to evaluate their transportation programs and ensure financial resources are being used effectively. An example would be for human service agencies to utilize Easter Seals Project Action's *Transportation by the Numbers* tool which provides human service organizations with ways to more easily identify expenses, revenues and performance outcomes so that agencies can make more informed decisions about their future in the transportation business.

Assess and Evaluate Current Public Transportation Services, and Identify Possible Improvements

This strategy would be coupled with the preceding one, and would involve evaluation of public transit services in the region. It calls for support of future transit plans developed for individual counties and for the region. This planning process is crucial to identifying opportunities to provide more efficient and effective transit services.

While typically formal transit plans are conducted every five to six years, it is important for ongoing assessments to assure a public transit system is responding to possible changing demographics in their communities and operating service that is most effective and economical. This assessment

should be supplemented with input through appropriate rider, employer, and public surveys; feedback from various stakeholders agencies and organizations; and input from staff including drivers and dispatchers on the frontline of services.

This strategy responds to the main challenges to using public transit identified by NEMCOG in their recent report to MDOT. The report noted that demand response transit systems that primarily operate in the region are not conducive to work trips since they are not able to always provide “on-time drop-off and pick-up” for customers and buses do not use fixed routes with timed stops. Through an assessment of current demand response trips it is possible that patterns could emerge and scheduled services with time points could be identified.

The second challenge noted by NEMCOG was that public transit does not operate evenings and weekends, and therefore workers cannot access entry level jobs that typically require employees to work evenings and weekends. An assessment of current services could result in formal documentation of the implications and costs to expand public transit services during these times. In this way local stakeholders can effectively advocate for additional funding and local transit systems can apply through appropriate funding sources.

Improve Coordination of Services among Providers through Mobility Management Activities

Beyond the need to improve transit connectivity in the region, is the need to assess coordination efforts that include human services and private transportation services. During the regional workshop, stakeholders noted that due to the rural nature of the region there is an ongoing need for constant coordination and open communication between providers and consolidation of as many trips as possible.

This strategy calls for greater coordination of services and financial resources in an effort to use available funding as effectively as possible. The demand for public and human services transportation in the region will continue to surpass resources, so it is vital that wheelchair accessible vans in the community are fully utilized, long distance trips are consolidated when possible, training and vehicle maintenance are coordinated, and 2-1-1 services are effectively integrated into outreach and needs assessments. Regional mobility management activities, tailored to meet the region’s needs, can be implemented to improve transportation services. Mobility management is an approach for managing and delivering coordinated transportation services that embraces a “full family” of transportation services, emphasizes movement of people through a wide range of providers and services, and makes more efficient use of transportation resources. It provides the opportunity to unite a broad collaborative of transportation providers, health and human service agencies, customers and stakeholders and support the design of local and regional solutions to fit community needs and visions..

In Michigan, mobility managers have been established at several local transit systems, including one at the Roscommon County Transportation Authority. For the most part these mobility managers are county based, therefore this strategy calls for a regional approach addressing coordination opportunities expressed by regional stakeholders, including:

- Establishing a central point of contact in the region that would develop and maintain a list of primary contact people with both human service providers and transit operators to foster collaboration.
- Identifying and facilitating expanded connections between public transit providers in the region.
- Coordinating long distance medical trips between transportation providers.
- Working with employers to help connect work times with available transportation options.
- Working with hospitals and medical facilities so that transportation options are considered in the scheduling of treatments and more regional trips can be coordinated when possible.
- Improving the coordination with veterans transportation services provided in the region.
- Collecting more detailed information on regional origins and destinations for service planning efforts.

An additional opportunity is to build upon the multi-county transit systems in the region. Since county borders that often serve as barriers have been overcome in some parts of Region 3, these systems could serve as the basis for expanded regional connectivity and coordination. As noted in the NEMCOG report for MDOT, the multi-county transportation agencies have a larger opportunity to assist multi-county residents.

MEDIUM PRIORITIES

Establish or Expand Programs That Educate Customers, Human Service Agency Staff, Medical Facility Personnel, and Others in the Use and Availability of Transportation Services

Regional stakeholders expressed the need for greater marketing and outreach campaigns that support transportation providers working together, uses appropriate technology, and helps new customers learn how to ride transit. They noted that this campaign needs to involve and be marketed to their clients, potential customers, hospital centers, and colleges. The marketing campaign needs to have clear, easy to follow directions for using transit and other transportation services in the region. It should leverage the seasonal nature of the region and include outreach to tourists and visitors.

This strategy involves expanded outreach programs through Michigan 2-1-1 or other sources to ensure people helping others with their transportation issues are aware of mobility options. A regional approach, through the mobility management discussed in the preceding strategy, is one consideration. This effort could involve regional marketing that highlights individual system services and facilitates possible regional branding opportunities. It would involve appropriate marketing to stakeholders, legislators, and supporters or potential supporters.

Use Current Human-Services Transportation Services to Provide Additional Trips, Especially for Older Adults and People with Disabilities

The expansion of current human service transportation programs operated in the region is a logical strategy for improving mobility, especially for older adults and people with disabilities. This strategy would meet multiple unmet needs and issues identified by regional stakeholders, including providing mobility for people who live beyond fixed route public transit services and people who live in the more remote areas of the region. At the same time, it would take advantage of existing organizational structures. This strategy would support door-to-door transportation for customers who need assistance to travel safely and an escort from a departure point, into and out of a transport vehicle and to the door of their destination.

Operating costs – driver salaries, fuel, and vehicle maintenance – would be the primary expense for expanding demand response services by human service agencies, though additional vehicles may be necessary for providing expanded same-day and door-to-door transportation services.

Establish Ridesharing Program for Long Distance Medical Trips

Regional stakeholders expressed the need for expanded transportation services for long-distance medical trips, particularly for people who are not eligible for Medicaid funded transportation. This strategy uses a commuter-oriented model as a basis for developing a ride-sharing program for long distance medical trips. Potentially connected with mobility management efforts, a database of potential drivers and riders could be kept with a central “mobility manager,” who would match the trip needs with the available participating drivers. Riders would share expenses with drivers on a per-mile basis (i.e., similar to mileage reimbursement). This effort could involve coordinating with healthcare providers so that services are matched with available transportation services. It provides an opportunity for possible partnerships with private transportation and technology companies to facilitate additional ridesharing services

This strategy could be a cost-effective way to provide long-distance medical trips without sending a human service or public-transit vehicle out of the region for a day. However, it will require an agency or organization in the region with the organizational structure and willingness to assume the lead role and coordinate and implement the program.

LOWER PRIORITIES

Consider and Implement Vehicle Repair Programs

In the more rural areas of the region, a low-income person may have a car available for their use, but it may be inoperable. With the long trip distances and dispersed population, sometimes a repaired automobile is the most cost-effective way to provide a person with access to employment opportunities and community services. Customers may need assistance with insurance costs or fuel expenses.

While Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding programs do not allow funds to be used for vehicle repair, this strategy calls for consideration and implementation of programs funded through

donations and resources to enable car ownership. A possible model or partnership is with Vehicles for Change Inc. (VFC), a car ownership and technical training program that empowers families with financial challenges to achieve economic and personal independence.

Expand Use of Volunteers to Provide More Specialized and One-To-One Transportation Services

A variety of transportation services are needed to meet the mobility needs in the region, especially veterans, older adults and people with disabilities. Many of the needs identified by regional stakeholders are better handled through more specialized services beyond those typically provided through general public transit services. The rural nature and geographic makeup of the region are not always conducive for shared-ride services.

The use of volunteer drivers would offer transportation options that are difficult to meet through public transit and human service agency transportation, and provide a more personal and one-to-one transportation service for customers who may require additional assistance. There are numerous examples of successful volunteer driver programs throughout the country that can be used as models to design one for Region 3. A program that can address real or perceived barriers, insurance issues, or safety concerns would be ideal.

Chapter 8

Ongoing Arrangements

During the regional workshop stakeholders noted the need for expanded regional transit services that cross county lines. They noted that providing cross-county transportation can be challenging, and there is a need to determine barriers and work through the invisible boundaries of county lines to provide expanded regional services.

While this plan serves as the foundation for improved regional services, it is evident that more detailed discussions are needed. It would require a more formal structure to lead these efforts; a structure that would assess regional transit opportunities, identify possible service improvements and gain consensus on implementation of services (i.e. who would operate, how costs and how funding would be allocated).

This plan recommends the formation of a regional coordinating committee that would include a broader group of representatives and provide an ongoing forum for members to:

- Discuss improved connections between existing transit providers. While there is some connectivity between systems in the region additional connections can be discussed and implemented as appropriate.
- Consider, plan, and implement cross county services. While some jurisdictions in the region are working together to implement services that transport customers across county lines or enable transfers between services, regional stakeholders noted the need for additional cross county services that meet rural community demands and support economic development.
- Assess barriers to regional services (i.e. county millages that support local transit services but not services that operate out of the county) and identify incentives and/or funding opportunities to provide regional transit services.
- Review and discuss strategies for coordinating transit services with other regions in Michigan to help expand mobility options.
- Lead updates of this coordinated mobility plan for Region 3.

Chapter 9

Adoption Process

As discussed in Chapter 1, this coordinated mobility plan is designed to meet federal coordinated transportation planning requirements. The guidance in these requirements state that the lead agency in consultation with planning participants should identify the process for approving and adopting the plan.

The consensus in Region 3 was that stakeholders who participated in the development of this plan, and who had the opportunity to provide input and review interim portions, would serve in the adoption capacity. Through the course of the planning process these regional stakeholders had the opportunity to:

- Review and comment on identified transportation needs in the region.
- Review and provide input on potential strategies, activities, and projects to be included in the regional plan.
- Prioritize strategies identified as the most appropriate for improving mobility in the region.
- Review and provide input on the draft version of this plan.
- Approve a final version of this plan.

Appendix A: Coordinated Planning Guidance

COORDINATED PLANNING

1. The Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan

Federal transit law, as amended by MAP-21, requires that projects selected for funding under the Section 5310 program be “included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan” and that the plan be “developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and other members of the public.” The experiences gained from the efforts of the Federal Interagency Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM), and specifically the United We Ride (UWR) initiative, provide a useful starting point for the development and implementation of the local public transit-human services transportation plan required under the Section 5310 program.

Many states have established UWR plans that may form a foundation for a coordinated plan that includes the required elements outlined in this chapter and meets the requirements of 49 U.S.C. 5310. In addition, many states and designated recipients may have coordinated plans established under SAFETEA-LU, and those plans may be updated to account for new stakeholders, eligibility, and MAP-21 requirements. FTA maintains flexibility in how projects appear in the coordination plan. Projects may be identified as strategies, activities, and/or specific projects addressing an identified service gap or transportation coordination objective articulated and prioritized within the plan.

2. Development of the Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan

Overview

A locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan (“coordinated plan”) identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, seniors, and people with low incomes; provides strategies for meeting those local needs; and prioritizes transportation services and projects for funding and implementation. Local plans may be developed on a local, regional, or statewide level. The decision as to the boundaries of the local planning areas should be made in consultation with the state, designated recipient, and the MPO, where applicable. The agency leading the planning process is decided locally and does not have to be the state or designated recipient.

In UZAs where there are multiple designated recipients, there may be multiple plans and each designated recipient will be responsible for the selection of projects in the designated recipient’s area. A coordinated plan should maximize the programs’ collective coverage by minimizing duplication of services. Further, a coordinated plan must be developed through a process that includes participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private and nonprofit transportation and human service transportation providers, and other members of the public. While the plan is only required in communities seeking funding under the Section 5310 program, a coordinated plan should incorporate activities offered

under other programs sponsored by federal, state, and local agencies to greatly strengthen its impact.

Required Elements

Projects selected for funding shall be included in a coordinated plan that minimally includes the following elements at a level consistent with available resources and the complexity of the local institutional environment:

- An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers (public, private, and nonprofit)
- An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities and seniors. This assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts, and gaps in service
- Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery
- Priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified

Local Flexibility in the Development of a Local Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

The decision for determining which agency has the lead for the development and coordination of the planning process should be made at the state, regional, and local levels. FTA recognizes the importance of local flexibility in developing plans for human service transportation. Therefore, the lead agency for the coordinated planning process may be different from the state or the agency that will serve as the designated recipient for the Section 5310 program. Further, FTA recognizes that many communities have conducted assessments of transportation needs and resources regarding individuals with disabilities and seniors. FTA also recognizes that some communities have taken steps to develop a comprehensive, coordinated human service transportation plan either independently or through United We Ride efforts. FTA supports communities building on existing assessments, plans, and action items. As new federal requirements must be met, communities may need to modify their plans or processes as necessary to meet these requirements. FTA encourages communities to consider inclusion of new partners, new outreach strategies, and new activities related to the targeted programs and populations.

Plans will vary based on the availability of resources and the existence of populations served under these programs. A rural community may develop its plans based on perceived needs emerging from the collaboration of the planning partners, whereas a large urbanized community may use existing data sources to conduct a more formal analysis to define service gaps and identify strategies for addressing the gaps.

This type of planning is also an eligible activity under four other FTA programs—the Metropolitan Planning (Section 5303), Statewide Planning (Section 5304), Formula Grants for

Rural Areas (Section 5311), and Urbanized Area Formula (Section 5307) programs—all of which may be used to supplement the limited (10 percent) planning and administration funding under this program. Other resources may also be available from other entities to fund coordinated planning activities. All “planning” activities undertaken in urbanized areas, regardless of the funding source, must be included in the Unified Planning Work Program of the applicable MPO.

Tools and Strategies for Developing a Coordinated Plan

States and communities may approach the development of a coordinated plan in different ways. The amount of available time, staff, funding, and other resources should be considered when deciding on specific approaches. Regardless of the method chosen, seniors; individuals with disabilities; representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human service providers; and other members of the public must be involved in the development and approval of the coordinated plan. The following is a list of potential strategies for consideration:

- **Community planning session.** A community may choose to conduct a local planning session with a diverse group of stakeholders in the community. This session would be intended to identify needs based on personal and professional experiences, identify strategies to address the needs, and set priorities based on time, resources, and feasibility for implementation. This process can be done in one meeting or over several sessions with the same group. It is often helpful to identify a facilitator to lead this process. Also, as a means to leverage limited resources and to ensure broad exposure, this could be conducted in cooperation, or coordination, with the applicable metropolitan or statewide planning process.
- **Self-assessment tool.** *The Framework for Action: Building the Fully Coordinated Transportation System*, developed by FTA and available at www.unitedwreide.gov, helps stakeholders realize a shared perspective and build a roadmap for moving forward together. The self-assessment tool focuses on a series of core elements that are represented in categories of simple diagnostic questions to help groups in states and communities assess their progress toward transportation coordination based on standards of excellence. There is also a *Facilitator’s Guide* that offers detailed advice on how to choose an existing group or construct an ad hoc group. In addition, it describes how to develop elements of a plan, such as identifying the needs of targeted populations, assessing gaps and duplication in services, and developing strategies to meet needs and coordinate services.
- **Focus groups.** A community could choose to conduct a series of focus groups within communities that provides opportunity for greater input from a greater number of representatives, including transportation agencies, human service providers, and passengers. This information can be used to inform the needs analysis in the community. Focus groups also create an opportunity to begin an ongoing dialogue with community representatives on key issues, strategies, and plans for implementation.

- **Survey.** The community may choose to conduct a survey to evaluate the unmet transportation needs within a community and/or available resources. Surveys can be conducted through mail, e-mail, or in-person interviews. Survey design should consider sampling, data collection strategies, analysis, and projected return rates. Surveys should be designed taking accessibility considerations into account, including alternative formats, access to the Internet, literacy levels, and limited English proficiency.
- **Detailed study and analysis.** A community may decide to conduct a complex analysis using inventories, interviews, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping, and other types of research strategies. A decision to conduct this type of analysis should take into account the amount of time and funding resources available, and communities should consider leveraging state and MPO resources for these undertakings.

3. Participation in the Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Planning Process

Recipients shall certify that the coordinated plan was developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors; individuals with disabilities; representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers; and other members of the public. Note that the required participants include not only transportation providers but also providers of human services, and members of the public who can provide insights into local transportation needs. It is important that stakeholders be included in the development, approval, and implementation of the local coordinated public transit-human service transportation plan. A planning process in which stakeholders provide their opinions but have no assurance that those opinions will be considered in the outcome does not meet the requirement of “participation.” Explicit consideration and response should be provided to public input received during the development of the coordinated plan. Stakeholders should have reasonable opportunities to be actively involved in the decision-making process at key decision points, including, but not limited to, development and approval of the proposed coordinated plan document. The following possible strategies facilitate appropriate inclusion:

Adequate Outreach to Allow for Participation

- Outreach strategies and potential participants will vary from area to area. Potential outreach strategies could include notices or flyers in centers of community activity, newspaper or radio announcements, e-mail lists, website postings, and invitation letters to other government agencies, transportation providers, human services providers, and advocacy groups. Conveners should note that not all potential participants have access to the Internet and they should not rely exclusively on electronic communications. It is useful to allow many ways to participate, including in-person testimony, mail, e-mail, and teleconference. Any public meetings regarding the plan should be held in a location and time where accessible transportation services can be made available and adequately advertised to the general public using techniques such as those listed above. Additionally, interpreters for individuals with

hearing impairments and English as a second language and accessible formats (e.g., large print, Braille, electronic versions) should be provided as required by law.

Participants in the Planning Process

Metropolitan and statewide planning under 49 U.S.C. 5303 and 5304 require consultation with an expansive list of stakeholders. There is significant overlap between the lists of stakeholders identified under those provisions (e.g., private providers of transportation, representatives of transit users, and representatives of individuals with disabilities) and the organizations that should be involved in preparation of the coordinated plan.

The projects selected for funding under the Section 5310 program must be “included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan” that was “developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and non-profit transportation and human services providers and participation by other members of the public.” The requirement for developing the local public transit-human services transportation plan is intended to improve services for people with disabilities and seniors. Therefore, individuals, groups, and organizations representing these target populations should be invited to participate in the coordinated planning process. Consideration should be given to including groups and organizations in the coordinated planning process if present in the community. Examples of these types of groups are listed below.

Transportation Partners

- Area transportation planning agencies, including MPOs, councils of government (COGs), rural planning organizations (RPOs), regional councils, associations of governments, state departments of transportation, and local governments
- Public transportation providers, including ADA paratransit providers and agencies administering the projects funded under FTA urbanized and rural programs
- Private transportation providers, including private transportation brokers, taxi operators, vanpool providers, school transportation operators, and intercity bus operators
- Nonprofit transportation providers, including volunteer programs
- Past or current organizations funded under the Section 5310, JARC, and/or the New Freedom programs
- Human service agencies funding, operating, and/or providing access to transportation services

Passengers and Advocates

- Existing and potential riders, including both general and targeted population passengers (individuals with disabilities and seniors)
- Protection and advocacy organizations
- Representatives from independent living centers
- Advocacy organizations working on behalf of targeted populations

Human Service Partners

- Agencies that administer health, employment, or other support programs for targeted populations. Examples of such agencies include but are not limited to departments of social/human services, employment one-stop services, vocational rehabilitation, workforce investment boards, Medicaid, community action programs (CAP), Agency on Aging (AoA), Developmental Disability Council, community services board
- Nonprofit human service provider organizations that serve the targeted populations
- Job training and placement agencies
- Housing agencies
- Healthcare facilities
- Mental health agencies

Other

- Security and emergency management agencies
- Tribes and tribal representatives
- Economic development organizations
- Faith-based and community-based organizations
- Representatives of the business community (e.g., employers)
- Appropriate local or state officials and elected officials
- School districts
- Policy analysts or experts

Note: Participation in the planning process will not bar providers (public or private) from bidding to provide services identified in the coordinated planning process. This planning process differs from the project selection process, and it differs from the development and issuance of a request for proposal (RFP) as described in the common grant rule (49 CFR part 18 and part 19).

Levels of Participation

The suggested list of participants above does not limit participation by other groups, nor require participation by every group listed. Communities will have different types of participants depending on population and size of community, geographic location, and services provided at the local level. FTA expects that planning participants will have an active role in the development, approval, adoption, and implementation of the plan. Participation may remain low even though a good faith effort is made by the lead agency to involve passengers; representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers; and others. The lead agency convening the coordinated planning process should document the efforts it utilized, such as those suggested above, to solicit involvement.

In addition, federal, state, regional, and local policy makers, providers, and advocates should consistently engage in outreach efforts that enhance the coordinated process because it is important that all stakeholders identify the opportunities that are available in building a coordinated system. To increase participation at the local levels from human service partners, state department of transportation offices are encouraged to work with

their partner agencies at the state level to provide information to their constituencies about the importance of partnering with human service transportation programs and the opportunities that are available through building a coordinated system.

Adoption of a Plan

As a part of the local coordinated planning process, the lead agency in consultation with participants should identify the process for approving and adopting the plan, and this process must include participation by stakeholders identified in the law: seniors; individuals with disabilities; representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human service providers; and other members of the public. A strategy for adopting the plan could also be included in the state's SMP and the designated recipient's PMP, further described in Chapter VII.

FTA will not formally review and approve coordinated plans. The recipient's grant application (see Appendix A) will document the plan from which each project listed is included, including the lead agency, the date of adoption of the plan, or other appropriate identifying information. This may be done by citing the section of the plan or page references from which the project is included.

4. Relationship to Other Transportation Planning Processes

Relationship between the Coordinated Planning Process and the Metropolitan and Statewide Transportation Planning Processes

The coordinated plan may either be developed separately from the metropolitan and statewide transportation planning processes and then incorporated into the broader plans, or be developed as a part of the metropolitan and statewide transportation planning processes. If the coordinated plan is not prepared within the broader process, the lead agency for the coordinated plan should ensure coordination and consistency between the coordinated planning process and metropolitan or statewide planning processes. For example, planning assumptions should not be inconsistent.

Projects identified in the coordinated planning process and selected for FTA funding must be incorporated into both the TIP and STIP in UZAs with populations of 50,000 or more; and incorporated into the STIP for rural areas under 50,000 in population. Depending on the projects resulting from the coordinated planning and selection process, a single line item on the TIP/STIP for capital or operating projects may be sufficient. However, given the expanded project and subrecipient eligibility under MAP-21, a designated recipient and state may need to consider more detailed programming, such as categorizing the projects based on the types of projects (capital or operating) and/or types of subrecipients, e.g., nonprofit, public entity, etc.

In some areas, where the coordinated plan or project selection is not completed in a time frame that coincides with the development of the TIP/STIP, the TIP/STIP amendment processes will need to be utilized to include selected projects in the TIP/STIP before FTA grant award.

The lead agency developing the coordinated plan should communicate with the relevant MPOs, state departments of transportation or regional planning agencies at an early stage in plan development. States with coordination programs may wish to incorporate the needs and strategies identified in local coordinated plans into statewide coordination plans.

Depending upon the structure established by local decision makers, the coordinated planning process may or may not become an integral part of the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes. State and local officials should consider the fundamental differences in scope, time horizon, and level of detail between the coordinated planning process and the metropolitan and statewide transportation planning processes. However, there are important areas of overlap between the planning processes, as well. Areas of overlap represent opportunities for sharing and leveraging resources between the planning processes for such activities as: (1) needs assessments based on the distribution of targeted populations and locations of employment centers, employment-related activities, community services and activities, medical centers, housing, and other destinations; (2) inventories of transportation providers/resources, levels of utilization, duplication of service, and unused capacity; (3) gap analysis; (4) any eligibility restrictions; and (5) opportunities for increased coordination of transportation services. Local communities may choose the method for developing plans that best fits their needs and circumstances.

Relationship between the Requirement for Public Participation in the Coordinated Plan and the Requirement for Public Participation in Metropolitan and Statewide Transportation Planning

Title 49 U.S.C. 5303(i)(6) and 5304(f)(3), as amended by MAP-21, require MPOs and states to engage interested parties in preparing transportation plans, TIPs, and STIPs. “Interested parties” include, among others, affected public agencies, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, and representatives of individuals with disabilities.

MPOs and/or states may work with the lead agency developing the coordinated plan to coordinate schedules, agendas, and strategies of the coordinated planning process with metropolitan and statewide planning in order to minimize additional costs and avoid duplication of efforts. MPOs and states must still provide opportunities for participation when planning for transportation related activities beyond the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.

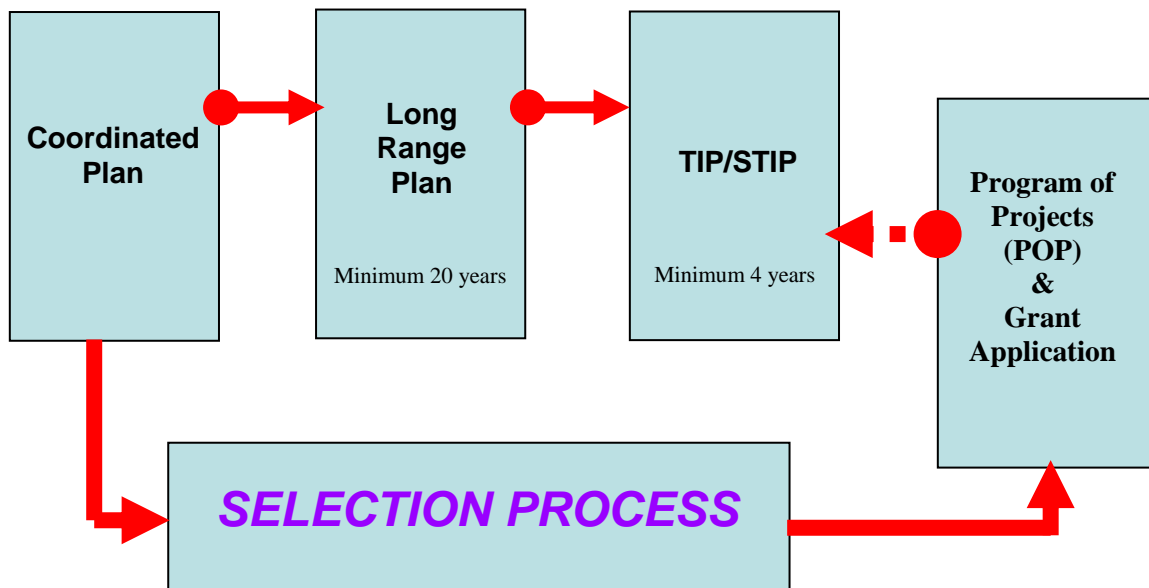
Cycle and Duration of the Coordinated Plan

At a minimum, the coordinated plan should follow the update cycles for metropolitan transportation plans (MTPs) (i.e., four years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas and five years in air quality attainment areas). States, MPOs, designated recipients, and public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation should set up a cycle that is conducive to and coordinated with the metropolitan and statewide planning processes to ensure that selected projects are included in the TIP and STIP and to receive funds in a timely manner.

Role of Transportation Providers that Receive FTA Funding Under the Urbanized and Rural Area Formula Grant Programs in the Coordinated Planning Process.

Recipients of Section 5307 and Section 5311 assistance are the “public transit” in the public transit-human services transportation plan and their participation is assumed and expected. Further, 49 U.S.C. 5307(b)(5), as amended by MAP-21, requires that, “Each recipient of a grant shall ensure that the proposed program of projects (POP) provides for the coordination of public transportation services ... with transportation services assisted from other United States Government sources.” In addition, 49 U.S.C. 5311(b)(2)(C)(ii) requires the Secretary of DOT to determine that a state’s Section 5311 projects “provide the maximum feasible coordination of public transportation service ... with transportation service assisted by other federal sources.” Finally, under the Section 5311 program, states are required to expend 15 percent of the amount available to support intercity bus service. FTA expects the coordinated planning process in rural areas to take into account human service needs that require intercity transportation.

The schematic below illustrates the relationship between the coordinated plan and the metropolitan and statewide planning processes.



Appendix B
Michigan Statewide Transit Study
Workshop: Region 3



**Michigan Statewide Transit Study Workshop
Region #3: Northeast Prosperity Region
September 23, 2015**

**University Center Gaylord
80 Livingston Boulevard
Gaylord, MI 49735**

Agenda

<i>Registration</i>	8:30-9:00
<i>Welcome / Background</i>	9:00-9:15
<i>What We Know:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Transportation Needs</i>- <i>Transportation Resources</i>	9:15-10:00
<i>Looking Ahead: Possible Service Improvements</i>	10:00-10:30
<i>Break / Assemble into Breakout Groups</i>	10:30-10:45
<i>Roundtable Discussions: What are the Priorities?</i>	10:45-11:15
<i>Reports from Groups</i>	11:15-11:45
<i>Next Steps and Wrap-up</i>	11:45-12:00

Appendix C

Northeast Prosperity Region Report

Region 3 Northeast Prosperity Region

Report 1: Public Transportation Inventory

The Region

Region 3 Northeast Prosperity Region consists of Cheboygan, Presque Isle, Otsego, Montmorency, Alpena, Crawford, Oscoda, Alcona, Roscommon, Ogemaw, and Iosco Counties. These 11 counties encompass 6,610 square miles of land and water. Figure 1 shows the region. Communities, both incorporated and unincorporated, include Alpena, Atlanta, Cheboygan, East Tawas, Gaylord, Grayling, Harrisville, Hillman, Houghton Lake Indian River, Lewiston, Lincoln, Mackinaw City, Mio, Onaway, Oscoda/AuSable, Posen, Rogers City, Roscommon, Tawas City, and West Branch.

As of 2012, the Northeast Prosperity Region (Region 3) had an estimated population of 205,830 representing 2.1 percent of the statewide population. Between 2000 and 2012, the Region's population has fallen by 9,703 residents or 4.5 percent. Over the same period, Michigan's population has remained relatively flat, inching lower by 55,500 residents or 0.6 percent. The age distribution of Region 3 residents is considerably older than the statewide average. In 2012, nearly 42 percent of residents were at or nearing retirement age (55 or older), while 18.8 percent were in the younger worker cohorts, including those 15 to 24 and those 25 to 34. With over 40 percent of residents aged 55 or older, there are potential workforce and economic implications. From possible talent shortages resulting from retirements, to increased demand for health services, demographics are sure to influence the Regional labor market and economy.

Overview

Public transportation is provided at varying service levels within the 11 county region that encompasses Alcona, Alpena, Cheboygan, Crawford, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego, Roscommon, and Presque Isle Counties. Local bus systems are funded by a combination of federal, state, and local monies, in addition to fare box and contracts with agencies. All of these publically funded transit systems operate under the guidelines and oversight of the Office of Passenger Transportation (OPT) of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), which distributes federal and state funds for the provision of local public transit services.

NEMCOG completed an inventory of existing transit systems in the 11 county region. The approach was to first obtain information from MDOT. Next, transit managers were contacted to complete the inventory and gain an understanding of transit services related to workforce and education. Seven of the counties have Demand-Response transit systems and two have specialized services transit systems. The remaining two counties, Alcona and Montmorency, do not have county based transit systems. Below is a summary of the inventory. Information about each transit agency can be found at the end of the section.

County Demand Response Transit Systems

Alpena, Cheboygan, Crawford, Iosco, Ogemaw, Otsego and Roscommon Counties have county-wide demand response bus systems, also known as “dial-a-ride.” These systems provide a high level of transportation service, Monday through Friday from approximately 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Along with providing transportation for shopping, recreation, health care, and social services, these systems are available for trips related to education and employment. All of the transit systems have additional capacity for transporting persons for education and employment purposes. Several of the county systems provide limited transportation to adjacent counties for special trips such as medical appointments and treatments.

Specialized Services Transit Systems

Oscoda and Presque Isle Counties have specialized services bus system, operated through Commission on Aging agencies that concentrate their services on elderly and persons with disabilities. While these bus systems have an open door policy and will transport general public, due to the funding allocations from the OPT and local sources, they lack the ability to provide general countywide demand response transit services.

Regional Systems

There are two regional bus systems servicing northeast Michigan.

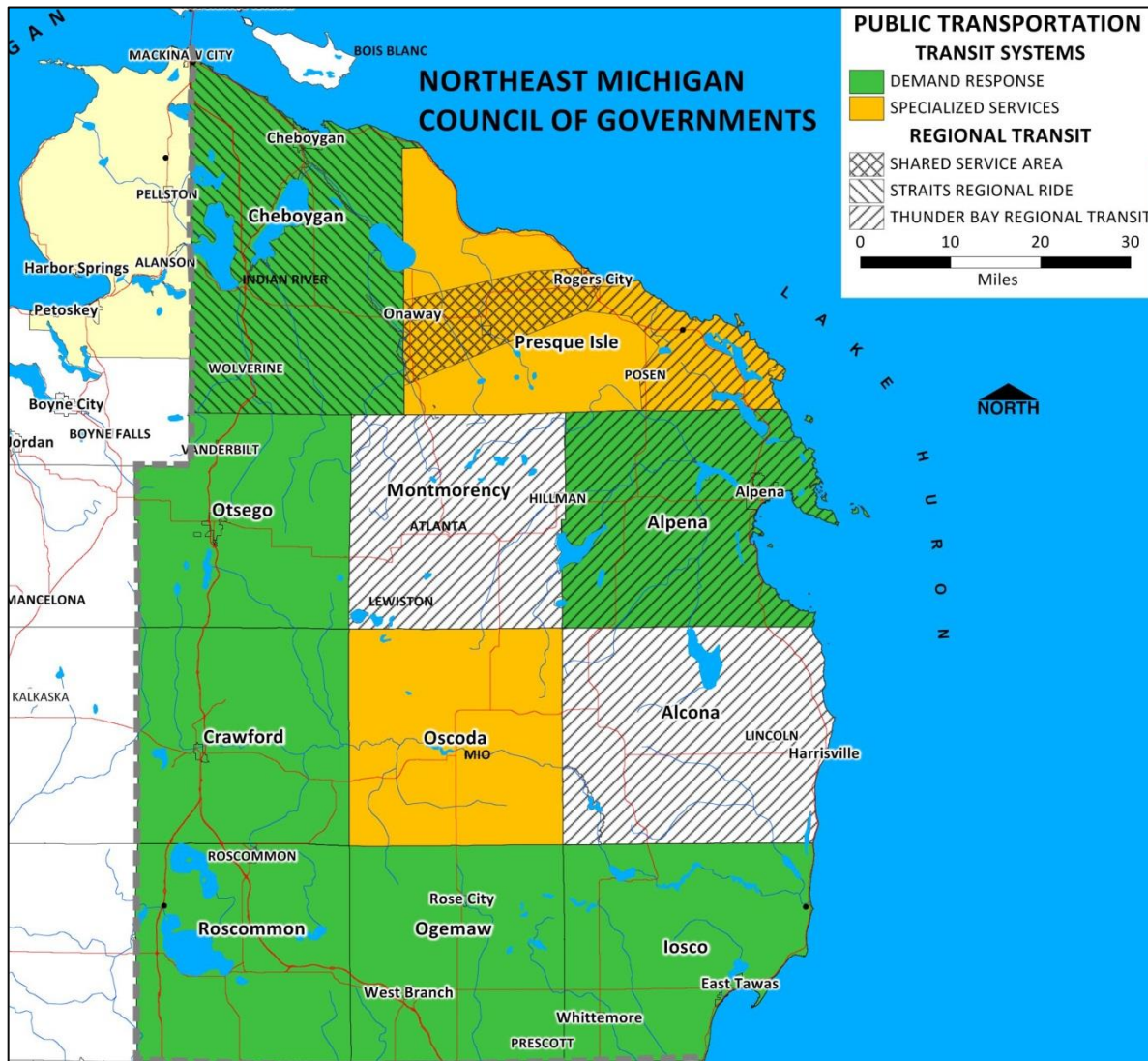
The *Straits Regional Ride (SRR)* services communities in Cheboygan, Emmet, and Presque Isle Counties. The SRR facility is located at the Cheboygan County Airport west of the City of Cheboygan. Flexible routes connect communities within Cheboygan and Emmet Counties, with major destinations being Cheboygan, Mackinaw City, Indian River, Alanson, Petoskey and Harbor Springs. From May to October a special bus route goes between Cheboygan and Mackinaw City, to transport persons to and from tourism related employment in Mackinaw City and Mackinac Island. Another flexible route runs to and from Onaway and Rogers City servicing persons along the M-68 corridor.

Flexible Routes with scheduled stops in communities; varies 2-3 miles off the route to pick up passengers.

- One route provides service between Mackinaw City and Cheboygan.
- Three routes bring people from outlying areas of Cheboygan County into the City of Cheboygan.
- Two routes move people from Cheboygan area to Petoskey.
- SRR provides transportation for DHS, Michigan Works!, courts, education, medical and shopping along with trips for employment.
- Trips to Petoskey are at 65% capacity
- Petoskey in-town service 30-40% capacity
- Cheboygan in-town service 50% capacity

The *Thunder Bay Transportation Authority (TBTA)*, a public authority formed under PA 196, provides transportation services for area elderly, handicapped, and special needs passengers. The Authority services Alpena, Alcona and Montmorency Counties as well as Presque Isle County south of M-68, including Rogers City, Onaway and Posen. Funding is clearly a limiting factor for these systems. Routes to Lincoln and Harrisville (Alcona County) and Atlanta (Montmorency County). These routes are generally daily and consisting of Primary Routes. These are not regional in nature, but they do on occasion bring riders to possible appointments in the Alpena. Because we are a three county transportation agency we have a larger opportunity to assist multi-county residents.

As the Region's population ages, the need for a higher level of public/assisted transportation will only increase. Increased costs associated with commuting to work also present opportunities and increased demand for public transportation. One of the biggest challenges facing the region over the next decade will be accommodating the increased demand for public transportation.



Information from the Northeast Michigan Prosperity Initiative 5-Year Plan

Workplace Transportation Needs

There are two main challenges to using public transit for work trips. First of all, demand response transit systems are not able to always provide “on-time drop-off and pick-up” for riders. Since the buses do not use fixed routes with timed stops, it’s not possible to follow a tight schedule. However, if a person rides the bus every day, eventually pick up and drop off times become more predictable. Still, people would need to have jobs with flexible start and stop times. The second challenge is public transit does not operate evenings and weekends. Often

times entry level jobs require employees to work evenings and weekends. The two existing regional transit systems provide intercity transportation. Both systems provide regularly scheduled flexible routes Monday thru Friday. The regional systems have the same limitations as the demand response systems.

It is difficult to quantify workplace transportation needs in rural communities. Given the services provided by the above transit systems, the transit dependent population (no vehicle available) has difficulty finding a job that will accommodate a flexible start and end times, and work schedules during transit operation days and hours.

An employer workshop was held on August 5, 2014. The participants were asked a series of questions to gain an understanding of business needs in northeast Michigan. Two of the questions focused on transportation needs of their employees. It is understood these responses were based on the employer's perception of their current employee's needs.

1. How likely would your employees use public transit to get to and from work?
Of the 23 participants, only four answered their employees would be very likely or likely to use public transit. Eighteen answered their employees would be unlikely or very unlikely to use transit.
2. How likely would your employees use public transit to attend educational/training programs?
Of the 23 participants, only three answered their employees would be likely to use public transit. Nineteen answered the employees would be unlikely or very unlikely to use transit.

Higher Education Transportation Needs

Three groups to consider are students attending college, high school students taking college classes and high school students accessing vocational training. Alpena Community College (ACC), Kirtland Community College (KCC) and the Gaylord University Center are located in counties with countywide demand response transit systems. Therefore, students living in those counties are able to access public transportation, provided they do not take evening classes.

Clearly the challenge is finding inter county public transportation. Currently, the TBTA offers limited regional transit services to residents of Alcona, Montmorency and parts of Presque Isle Counties. While the system is configured to transport riders into the City of Alpena to access services, it presents the possibility of students in adjacent counties riding a bus to ACC for classes. The Straits Regional Ride operates an inter-county transit system, servicing residents of Cheboygan, Emmet and Presque Isle Counties. Buses run the routes three times per day, and will transport students to North Central Michigan College (NCMC) in Petoskey. Limitations of the current delivery system are days and hours of operation, riding times, and lack of marketing to students.

High school students interested in taking college classes or vocational training when those classes are offered in another community must have a car. This fact limits the number of students who can access these enhanced educational opportunities. Interschool and intercity transit systems would address these limitations.

5-Year plan

1. Develop an information packet about transit services in the region. This would include brochures from each transit system and a regional brochure.
2. Provide information to employers, employment agencies, colleges and schools
3. Coordination meetings:
 - College admissions offices and transit agencies
 - Employment agencies and transit agencies
 - High schools and transit agencies
4. College admissions offices should function as a portal for transit information, advice, brochures, web site, and ride share bulletin boards.
5. Employment agencies should function as a portal for transit information, advice, brochures, web site, and ride share bulletin boards.
6. Work with regional transit systems to identify opportunities to better serve transit dependent population in relation to workplace or educational transportation needs.
7. Explore use of route deviation service and point deviation service for county and regional transit systems to provide timely and predictable transportation to work and school.

Route deviation service: Transit vehicles travel a basic fixed route, picking up or dropping off people anywhere along the route. On request the vehicle will deviate a short distance from the fixed route to pick up or deliver a passenger. Point Deviation Service: Transit vehicles stop at specified checkpoints and at specified times, but travels a flexible route between these points to service specific customer requests for service. These types of services are finding applications in rural areas.