



FEET

Friends Enhancing EMMET TRANSIT




Public Transportation in Emmet County

What's Going On?





Your neighbors are working to build Emmet Transit, a county-wide transportation system that would provide limited fixed/flex route and demand-response (dial-a-ride) bus service.

Emmet County residents will decide this issue on the 2010 ballot.

Who is involved?

-  *FEET – Friends Enhancing EMMET TRANSIT* is a community initiative. Members include representatives from non-profit agencies, employers, disabled people, and others.
-  *FEET* is an offshoot of the Transportation Workgroup of the Charlevoix-Emmet Human Services Coordinating Body (HSCB).
-  We are building upon the findings and recommendations of Emmet 20/20, a community visioning project conducted in 2000.

What do we hope to accomplish?

-  Place a .25 mill public transportation millage on the Emmet County ballot in 2010.
-  Approve millage passed.
-  Form a Public Transportation Authority or County Transportation Dept. to operate a county-wide public transit system.
-  Expansion of public transportation solutions through the creation of a dial-a-ride and limited fixed routes.

Background







- 🚌 For decades, human service providers have recognized that lack of public transportation is a major problem in Emmet County.
- 🚌 In Fall of 2000, a visioning project called Emmet 20/20 was begun.
- 🚌 Emmet 20/20 conducted a Community Quality of Life Assessment in 2001. It showed that access to public transportation was one of the top areas of concern.

- 🚌 Emmet 20/20 formed the Community Access to Transportation Team (CATT) with the vision “Public transportation that meets the needs of our community.”
- 🚌 The group identified the need to complete a detailed study and to develop a countywide coordination plan.
- 🚌 With the aid of MDOT and Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) and funding from the Petoskey-Harbor Springs Community Foundation, a thorough study was conducted.
- 🚌 In 2004, the Emmet County Transportation Coordination Plan was completed. It provides a blueprint for a viable public transportation plan for Emmet County.
- 🚌 CATT became a workgroup of the HSCB, which has now become FEET.







What does the Plan call for?

The Plan is closely based on the Emmet County Transportation Coordination Plan created by NEMCOG.

It calls for:

-  Expansion of public transportation solutions in three Phases, through the development of a dial-a-ride service and limited fixed routes.
-  Creation of a public transportation authority or a county department of transportation to run the system.
-  Funding through millage and fares.
-  State and Federal sources for startup and operations.
-  Enter into an arrangement with the Friendship Center to incorporate their bus garage and buses.
-  Coordination with Charlevoix Transit and Straits Regional Ride.

When will it run?

-  We anticipate a Three Phase implementation.
-  Starting with limited hours and service, primarily demand-response (dial a ride) in and around Petoskey, Harbor Springs, and Alanson with a Pellston/Mackinaw flex/route.
-  Expanding services, routes, and hours, as demand and funding opportunities for capital are developed.
-  Ultimate goal is scenario identified in NEMCOG Plan to include a rural demand/response service.
-  The proposed hours of operation would be about 12 hours a day Monday through Friday.
-  Specific routes and services will be evaluated and adjusted, to meet usage and demand.

Emmet County Transportation Plan

NEMCOG - 2005

EMMET TRANSIT INITIATIVE PROPOSED SYSTEM

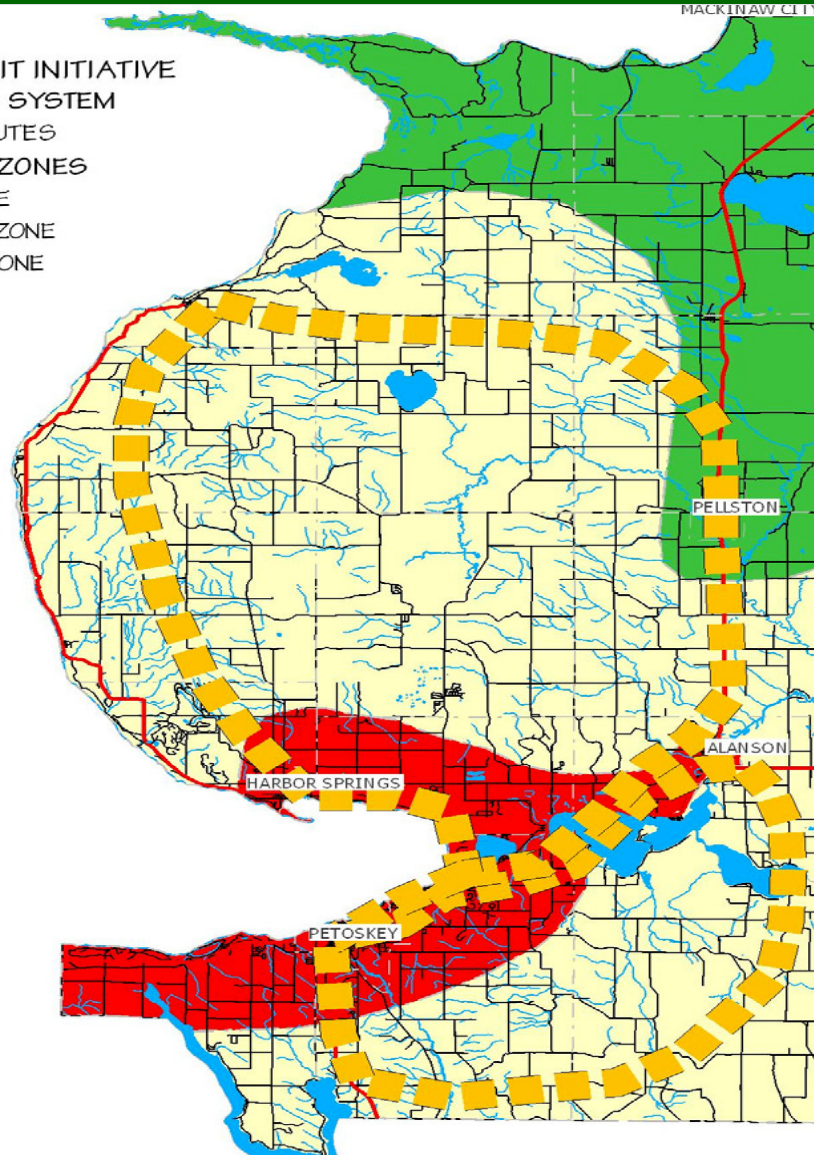
FLEX-ROUTES

SERVICE ZONES

RED ZONE

YELLOW ZONE

GREEN ZONE



What will it cost?

- 🚌 The 2005 NEMCOG Plan projected an annual operating cost of \$1.27 million for a fully functioning system.
- 🚌 MDOT recently updated the projections and developed a 3 Phase start-up for Emmet Transit.
- 🚌 Phase One costs are estimated at \$901,000 and Phase Three (full build-out) at \$1,790,000.
- 🚌 We plan to contract with Straits Regional Ride for some out-county routes until additional busses are purchased.
- 🚌 While fuel costs have increased since 2005, ridership will also be higher than that projected in the NEMCOG plan.




How will it be funded?



- 🚌 The plan calls for a .25 mill millage request on the 2010 ballot. This would generate approximately \$723,500 per year.
- 🚌 For the average home owner, the annual cost would be roughly the price of one takeout pizza.
- 🚌 Fares to ride would be between \$2 - \$3.
- 🚌 Additional support is expected to come from State and Federal funds.

Who is this for?

Anybody and everybody!

Including people tired of:

-  Traffic congestion or challenging parking.
-  The high costs of gasoline and maintaining a vehicle.
-  The dangers of driving in bad weather.

-  Seniors, youth, people with disabilities, college students.
-  Families that find themselves with too many places to go, not enough cars.

What are the benefits?

A public transportation system in our community would provide business growth and meet many needs:

- 🚌 Give people in the community greater access to cultural, leisure, and recreational activities
- 🚌 Reduce traffic congestion
- 🚌 Enhance access to downtown shopping
- 🚌 Reduce energy consumption and harmful greenhouse gas emissions
- 🚌 Bike racks on busses will allow commuters and recreational cyclists to ride the bus to work or trail heads and return by bike.
- 🚌 Racks for skis and snowboards will allow youth and others to get to ski hills without a car.
- 🚌 Provide dependable transportation to work, school, appointments, or shopping
- 🚌 Lift-equipped busses will allow the disabled mobility and independence.

Support for Public Transportation

- 🚌 The Emmet County Transportation Coordination Plan proposed a regional public transportation that would be viable, sustainable, and have an impact on the community's transportation needs.
- 🚌 The 2007 Corradino study supported the findings of the NEMCOG study.
- 🚌 In the HSCB 2008 Community Needs Assessment, both key informants and consumers/clients ranked lack of public transportation as a major issue in our community.

NEMCOG Study

How was the study done? What data was included?





- 🚌 Peer County analysis – comparison to other transit systems in similar-sized counties.
- 🚌 Direct Mailing – 1,750 random sample.
- 🚌 Survey of ridership from current transportation service providers.
- 🚌 Survey booklets dispersed through 20 agencies, distributed by agency personnel to clients.
- 🚌 A total of 694 survey booklets were returned, 36% return rate.
- 🚌 Focus Groups, consisting of community leaders from government, business/industry, and education.

Survey Findings

- 🚌 12 to 15 % of households used or needed alternative means of travel within the county ¹
- 🚌 21% of the households have someone that does not drive or limits the amount of driving due to poor weather, nighttime, elderly, or disability ¹
- 🚌 The 2005 Plan projected that 22% of households would likely ride transit if it was available
- 🚌 The survey concluded that “there is a need and interest to support a public transportation system such as a ‘dial-a-ride’ in Emmet County” ¹

A complete copy of the report is available at: www.nemcog.org/emmet_tcp.htm

Picture of Emmet County

-  In 2005, some 5,249 persons (15.7% of the County's year round population) were 65 years and older. ¹
-  607 households have no vehicle available. ¹
-  308 Families live at or below poverty level. ¹
-  Approximately 20% of the community has a disability. ²

Other findings

- 🚌 Northern Michigan Hospital: Patients missing routine doctors visits for such ailments as Asthma, Cancer screenings or check-ups
- 🚌 Health Dept.: Patients missing WIC and other well child visits
- 🚌 DHS: Clients missing appointments and possibly losing their benefits
- 🚌 Community Mental Health: Clients missing medication reviews, where they can obtain samples because they have no insurance or cannot afford the medication.
- 🚌 Michigan Works: Job applicants are missing possible employment opportunities, in addition they may need to check in for unemployment benefits
- 🚌 Court and substance abuse programs: People who have suspended licenses are unable to get to work, appointments, and recovery meetings

Existing Transportation Services

BUS SYSTEMS

Friendship Centers of Emmet County

Operates 6 busses serving Emmet County residents. MDOT provides vehicles and partial operating funds, with additional funding coming from Senior Millage, fares, and advertising.

While anyone can ride the system, the primary focus is for persons with disabilities and senior citizens. Provides demand-response service in Petoskey Mon – Fri from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Service to other parts of the County at least once a week.

Straits Regional Ride

A four-county regional transit system based in Cheboygan. Provides some contracted services into and within Emmet County. Operates Mon – Fri 6 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Existing Transportation Services

OTHER SERVICES

Organizational services

The Living Room Adult Day Service - provides transportation in its own vehicles to and from the facility.







Schools – each school system operates a bus system for students.

Agencies – DHS, Community Mental Health, Petoskey Club, Women’s Resource Center all provide some transportation services to their clients through reimbursement or contracts.

Taxis

There are several private taxi services covering Petoskey and Emmet County.

Public Transportation is Good for the Economy

-  The Michigan House Committee on Transportation white paper, “Public Transportation in Michigan: An Economic Development Tool Whose Time has Come” cites the economic benefits.¹
-  Public transportation not only helps to maintain and create jobs, it also moves people to and from their jobs.
-  Lowers household expenses and frees up income for other needs
-  Riding public transportation can save an individual an average of \$9,068 a year based on the June 17, 2009 national average gas price²
-  Every dollar spent on public transit returns \$6 in economic returns, yielding \$3 in local business sales.²
-  The proposed system would bring State and Federal dollars into Emmet County.







- 🚌 An April 2009 study shows that investing in public transportation provides jobs to the American workers who may need them the most. ¹
- 🚌 Public transportation provides personal mobility and freedom for people from every walk of life.
- 🚌 Public transportation offers mobility for residents of rural areas, particularly for those without cars.
- 🚌 From 2002 through 2005, ridership for small urban and rural public transportation systems jumped nearly 20 percent. ²

Why do we think this is feasible?

- 🚌 The NEMCOG plan thoroughly reviewed need data, comparable systems, and projected costs.
- 🚌 Most other rural counties in northern Michigan have effective public transit systems.
- 🚌 The Benzie Bus system was started in 2007. Ridership grew 75% in the first year.
- 🚌 Federal funding for public transit systems is increasing.
- 🚌 Public ridership in the U.S. is at its highest level since 1956.

Next Steps

Make Emmet Transit a reality by 2011

-  Build support within the community
-  Presentations to groups large and small
-  Seek endorsements from organizations, governmental units, and individuals
-  Pass millage request in 2010
-  Form a Public Transportation Authority or County Transportation Department to operate a countywide public transit system.
-  Begin Phase One service in 2011.

Endorsements

ORGANIZATIONS AND BUSINESSES

Charlevoix - Emmet Human Services Coordinating Body*
Char-Em United Way
Charlevoix – Emmet Department of Human Services
Disability Network/Northern Michigan
Great Start Collaborative
Harbor Hall, Inc.
Hospice of Little Traverse Bay
Manna Food Project
Northern Michigan Regional Hospital
Northwest Michigan 4Cs Council
Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation
Petoskey High School
Women's Resource Center of Northern Michigan, Inc.

INDIVIDUALS

David T. Buzzelli
Faith Dunshee
Dale Hull
Patsy Ketterer
James Lindeman

HSCB

Char-Em HSCB consists of the following Member and Affiliate Organizations
Endorsement by the HSCB does not imply endorsement by all members.

Member Organizations

BASES
Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Northwest Michigan
Charlevoix-Emmet Department of Human Services
Char-Em Intermediate School District
Child and Family Services of Northwestern Michigan
Disability Network of Northern Michigan
Friendship Centers of Emmet County
Harbor Hall, Inc.
Hospice of Little Traverse Bay
Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
Lutheran Child and Family Service
MSU Extension (Emmet & Charlevoix County)
North Central Michigan College
North Country Community Mental Health Services
Northern Community Mediation

Northern Michigan Regional Health System
Northwest Michigan 4C Council
Northwest Michigan Community Health Agency
Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency
Northwest Michigan Works! Agency
Planned Parenthood Northern Michigan
Probate Court - Emmet-Charlevoix
Prosecuting Attorney - Charlevoix
Prosecuting Attorney - Emmet
Women's Resource Center of Northern Michigan, Inc.

Affiliate Organizations

Charlevoix County Community Foundation
Northern Michigan Substance Abuse Services
Petoskey - Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation
Char-Em United Way