



History

- The 2020 Transit study identified the need for a comprehensive county-wide transportation network through the creation of a transit authority.
- BCGO, a county-wide transit pilot in Battle Creek, uses minivans for public transit and showed the need for transit in Calhoun County. A new transit authority would operate these vehicles (and more) within the participating municipalities.
- BCGO has 3,655 current users and averages 160 new users per month
- Since its inception, BCO has received 78,054 trip requests but was only able to complete 16,283 (21%). **There is significantly more demand than available service.**

Need for Transit in Calhoun County

- 69% of the population in Calhoun County lives at or below 150% of the poverty line.
- 6% more senior citizens than the national average.
- 2% more people with disabilities than the national average.
- A significant number of households with no access to a personal vehicle.
- Estimated unmet transportation needs of 26,000 trips per year.
- In a rider survey, the top three problems BCGO is addressing for residents:
 - (1) No access to a car
 - (2) Affordability (cheaper than owning a car)
 - (3) Stress of the commute

BCGO in the Marshall Area

- The following trips had an **ORIGIN** within these cities/townships.
 - Marshall (city) - 967 trips
 - Fredonia - 19 trips
 - Marshall Township - 447 trips
 - Marengo - 209 trips
- The following trips have a **DESTINATION** within these cities/townships.
 - Marshall (city) - 1216 trips
 - Eckford - 2 trips
 - Fredonia - 16 trips
 - Marshall Township - 444 trips (the most common are Oaklawn Endocrinology and Arbor Inn.)
 - Marengo - 155 trips

Opt-out period

- All municipalities have the opportunity to opt-out of the authority within a 30-day window after the authority is created by the Board of Commissioners (BOC). The BOC is expected to consider the articles of incorporation at its regularly scheduled meeting on Sept 7, 2023. The deadline to opt-out will be Oct. 9, 2023.
- If a political subdivision withdraws, no millage vote will go to its residents, no millage could be collected in that subdivision, and no transportation services would be provided. Also, no incoming or outgoing rides would be available to the political subdivision, its residents, or businesses for the remainder of the millage term.
- If a municipality does not withdraw, and a millage was passed or other sufficient operating revenues are secured, transit services will be provided. The goal of creating the TACC is to provide transportation access to all county residents, connecting them to essential services in the county and beyond.
- If the authority is created:
 - A transition manager/consultant would need to be hired.
 - The level of service would be finalized and a budget created.
 - An authority board would be appointed and composed of members from the municipalities within the authority.
 - Potential millage vote in August of 2024.

What would service look like?

- If created, the new Transportation Authority of Calhoun County (TACC) would assume the role of transportation provider for the entire county and become the recipient of federal and state funding for transportation.
- The TACC would take over the roles of other municipal providers (City of Battle Creek, City of Marshall, and the Albion/Marshall Connector).
- A comprehensive system under one agency provides cost efficiencies in administration, a consistent fare structure, and is easier for riders.
- Anyone in the community that lives within the authority boundary would be able to call and/or book online and get a ride on the same day, once the authority is fully operational.
- **The proposed model would provide service to Marshall Township residents during:**
 - Monday through Friday 5:00 am – 12:00 am
 - Saturday 8:00 am – 12:00 am
 - Sunday 8:00 am – 6:00 pm

The Cost of a Comprehensive System

- In order to provide county-wide transit a millage would likely need to be placed on the ballot by the authority board.
- The millage needed to support transit depends on the number of municipalities that remain within the authority. **The estimated millage amount is 1.3-1.5 mills.**