



# 2023-2024 Annual Report

HARBOR TRANSIT MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM (HTMMS)

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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Public transportation is a vital service to the residents in Northwest Ottawa County, with numerous benefits to individuals and the community as a whole. From receiving new buses and significant grant funding, to launching a new operations software, Harbor Transit has continued to keep up with other transportation agencies in regards to implementing new technology.

We are pleased to see the successful launch of Harbor Transit's new dispatching software and how it has benefited the ridership. The implementation of the Via Technologies dispatching software was a massive undertaking in regards to training employees, educating riders, and launching the new mobile app simultaneously. Along with enabling Harbor Transit to provide a more efficient service, the mobile app creates another option for riders to schedule and manage their rides, a needed enhancement to Harbor Transit's service.

As the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) Study is underway at the site for Harbor Transit's new operations center, the Harbor Transit Board of Directors was thrilled to receive the news about the \$20,315,500 in federal and state funding awarded to Harbor Transit. This funding will be instrumental in the completion of the new operations center in Grand Haven Township and will enable Harbor Transit to offer the best service possible to the Northwest Ottawa County community for years to come.

As our community continues to grow, the demand for public transportation will only increase. For some individuals, their daily needs would not be met without the affordable service that Harbor Transit provides. As we look forward to celebrating Harbor Transit's 50th Anniversary year in 2025, we can reflect on Harbor Transit's long-standing legacy with pride, and are optimistic about what the future holds for this vital public service.

The HTMMTS Board thanks the dedicated staff at Harbor Transit for their work providing affordable, safe, and reliable transportation for our residents.

**Craig Bessinger**

President

HTMMTS Board

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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This past year has brought a great deal of change at Harbor Transit as we continue to embrace new technology, adjust our operations to best serve our community, and continue to look to the future.

One of Harbor Transit's goals was to modernize our operations by acquiring a new dispatch software system, which we were able to successfully do in a joint procurement with eight other Michigan Transit agencies. The selected software provider, Via Technologies, provided new operations software that has resulted in more efficient operations, and also a customized mobile app for our riders to use. The new app, called Lakeshore Go, has been well-received by our riders, and our data shows that more than half of our ridership utilizes the app for scheduling and managing their rides.

In addition to implementing new technology, Harbor Transit continues to make progress with our New Operations Center in Grand Haven Township. The required NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) study is underway on the parcel of land at 172nd Street and US-31, and Harbor Transit selected Christman Company as the Construction Manager.

In July of 2024, we received the exciting news that Harbor Transit will receive \$20,315,500 in federal and state funding from the FY24 Bus & Bus Facilities Grant Program for the design and construction of our new operations center to accommodate the transition to a zero-emission fleet. This award will provide funding to build our new operations center, expand our fleet, and continue to serve the growing local and regional transportation needs in our area. We are honored to receive this funding, and are grateful for the continued support of the Federal Transit Administration.

I can speak for all of us at Harbor Transit when I say that it is an honor to serve the people in Northwest Ottawa County, prioritizing their safety and well-being, and providing transportation for all who need it. We are unwavering in our commitment to excellence in our day-to-day operations, and in our intentions to secure the future of public transportation in Northwest Ottawa County and beyond.

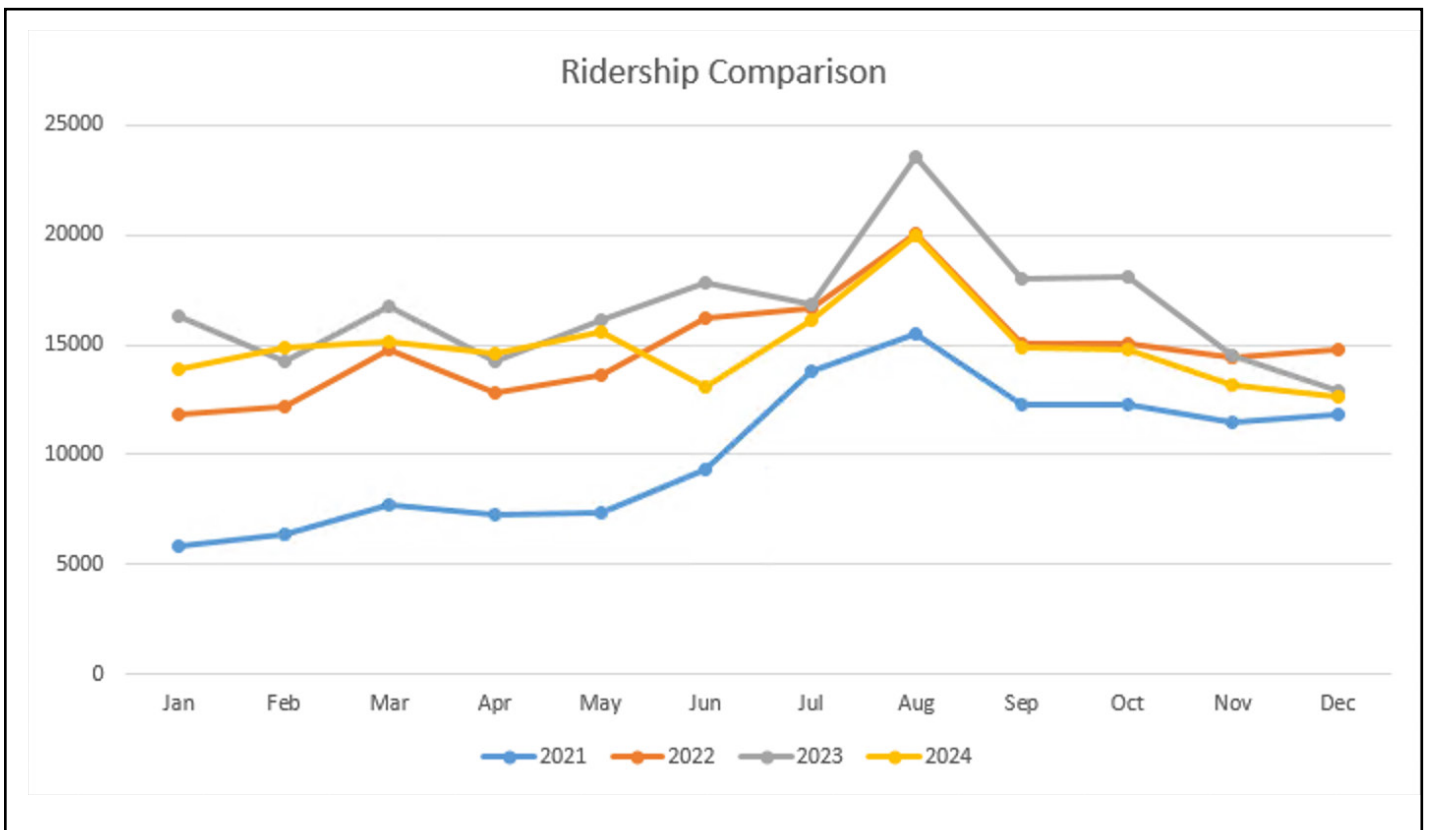


**Scott Borg**  
Executive Director  
Harbor Transit



# RIDERSHIP REPORT

Harbor Transit ridership was higher in Q4 of 2023 than the preceding years. Due to Harbor Transit reinstating fare collection in December of 2023, ridership in 2024 decreased slightly, but remained fairly steady from month to month.





## NEW TECHNOLOGY AT HARBOR TRANSIT

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In keeping with Harbor Transit’s strategic plan, and at the recommendation of our Board of Directors and community we serve, Harbor Transit leadership began searching for a new operations software system and a mobile app for our riders. Harbor Transit completed procurement process in the Spring of the 2022-2023 fiscal year, in a joint procurement with eight other Michigan transit agencies. Via Technologies, a global leader in transit technology, was the provider selected for the new operations software and rider app.

Training with the Harbor Transit staff began in the fall of 2023, and the dispatching software was fully implemented in November of 2023. Along with the new operations software, Via Technologies also created a mobile app, named Lakeshore Go, for Harbor Transit riders that allows passengers to manage their own rides directly from the app, with features like ride scheduling, bus tracking, and in-app fare purchases. By the end of the 2023-2024 fiscal year, more than 3,400 riders had downloaded the Lakeshore Go app.

“The Lakeshore Go app puts more power in the hands of our riders,” Harbor Transit Executive Director Scott Borg shares. “For 48 years, the only way riders have been able to schedule a ride is by calling our dispatch center during operating hours. Now, with Lakeshore Go, our customers can book a ride on the app at their convenience, receive text updates about their exact pick-up time, and track their bus in real time.” Harbor Transit still offers the call-in option for ride scheduling, to maintain accessibility for all riders and to provide the high level of service that our riders expect.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

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## HARBOR TRANSIT OPERATING BUDGET 2023-2024

### REVENUE

Passenger Fares	\$139,321
Taxes	\$1,850,756
State Grants	\$2,010,420
Federal Grants	\$1,691,718
Interest & Other	\$285,456

**TOTAL** **\$5,977,670**

### OPERATING EXPENSES

Operations	\$3,072,967
Maintenance	\$307,320
Dispatch	\$451,035
Administrative	\$803,098

**TOTAL** **\$4,634,420**

### BREAKDOWN OF EXPENSES

Labor	\$2,261,795
Fringe Benefits	\$740,497
Professional/Contractual Services	\$416,902
Fuel and Supplies	\$403,230
Utilities	\$43,331
Casualty/Liability Insurance	\$118,682
Depreciation	\$595,669
Other	\$54,314

**TOTAL** **\$4,634,420**

# LAKESHORE GO IMPACT

Working closely alongside Via in the implementation of the new operations software and the new mobile app, Harbor Transit has been pleased at the positive impact that the new software has had. The data shows that we have a dedicated rider base that regularly uses Harbor Transit, and service efficiency increased over 2024 with an average of 4.3 trips per revenue hour.

In 2024, Lakeshore Go was popular, efficient, and maintained a high quality of service



**228,616 requests**

With a met demand rate of 98.6% on average in 2024



**160,109 rides served**

With a completed ride rate of 75% in Oct-Dec '24



**4.3 trips per rev hour**

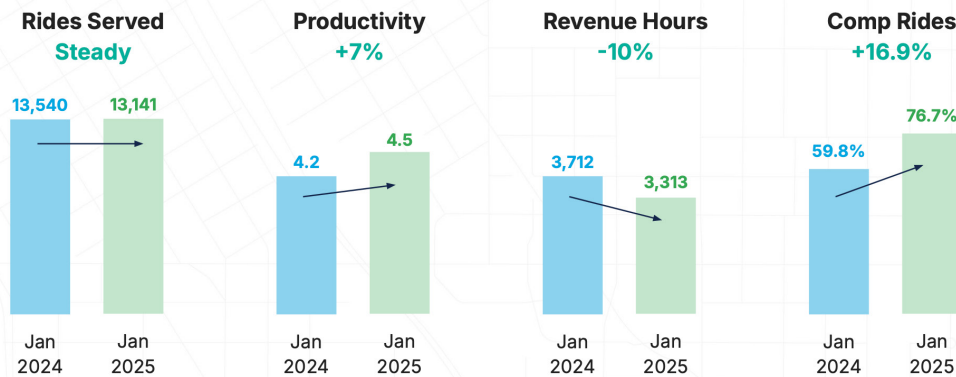
The service got more efficient as the year went on



**3,149 active riders**

Over 50% of riders have taken more than five trips

The service has remained popular, operating more efficiently and better serving existing riders



Consistent demand

paired with

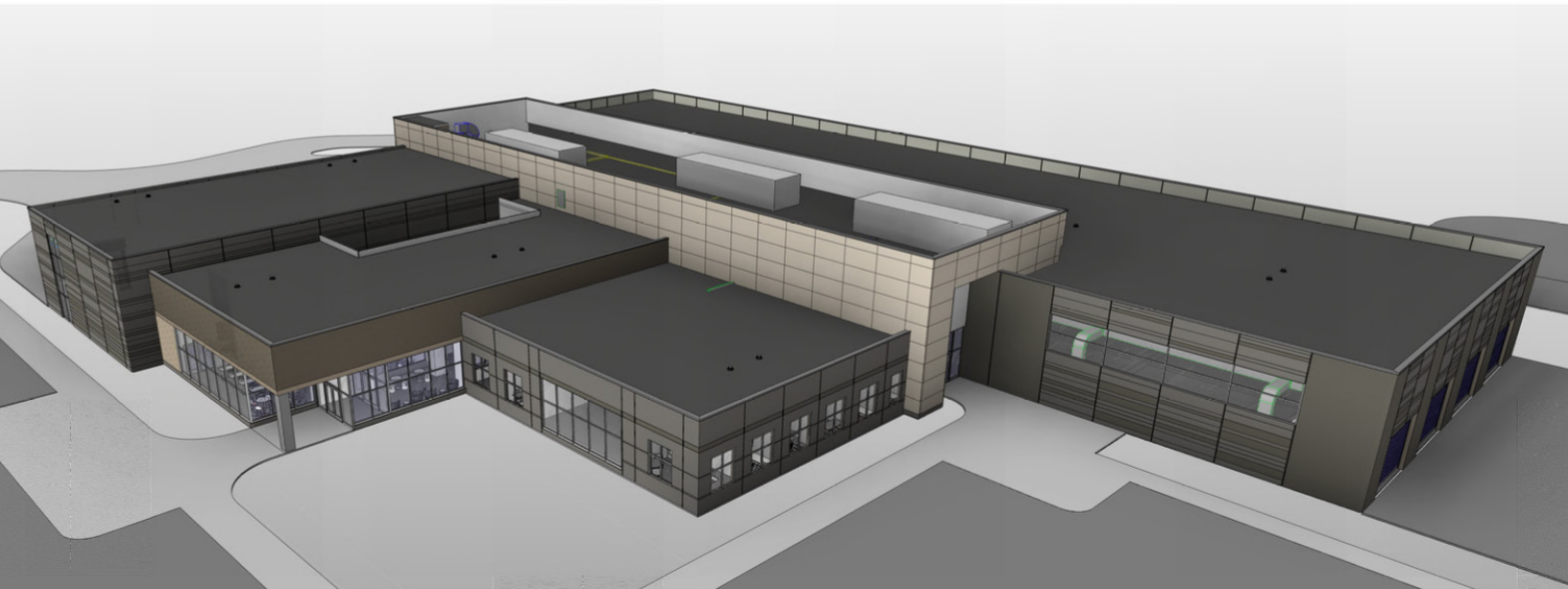
Increased efficiency



## Harbor Transit Awarded \$16.2M in Federal Funding for New Operations Center

In July 2024, Representative Hillary Scholten (MI-03) announced that Grand Haven’s Harbor Transit Multi-Modal Transportation System will receive \$16,252,400 from the FY24 Bus & Bus Facilities Grant Program for the design and construction of a new multi-modal system operations center to accommodate the transition to a zero-emission fleet. The upgrades will outfit the system with fueling and charging equipment, vehicle maintenance infrastructure, as well as electric vans and charging stations. The new facility will also accommodate administration and workforce training facilities for regional transit providers.

“Harbor Transit is honored to be a recipient of the Buses and Bus Facilities Grant,” said Scott Borg, Executive Director of Harbor Transit. “This award will provide funding to build our new operations center, expand our fleet, and continue to serve the growing local and regional transportation needs in our area. With the support of the Federal Transit Administration, we are committed to ensuring the successful implementation of this project and look forward to the opportunity to enhance our transit services and improve access to public transportation for those who live and work in West Michigan.”



## NEW OPERATIONS CENTER UPDATE

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Harbor Transit continues to make progress with its New Operations Center in Grand Haven Township. The new facility will be designed at 40,000 internal square feet, providing ample room for the elements necessary to modernize the system and enhance access and mobility for low-income and underserved communities by providing commuter access to the jobs in Harbor Transit's Service Area.

The NEPA process is underway on the 30-acre site in Grand Haven Township, and Progressive A&E has provided preliminary design concepts. The New Operations Center will include more vehicle storage for the current fleet with room for expansion; sound-proofed dispatch offices; sufficient office space for current staff with room for future growth; waiting and transfer area for passengers wanting to connect to regional services; maintenance space with correctly-sized lifts and equipment; fueling station placed for efficient vehicle fueling, and sufficient storage space for vehicles and equipment. The increased vehicle storage at the New Operations Center will also allow Harbor Transit to provide additional demand-response services to persons with disabilities that live in the service area.

As we move closer to breaking ground on the site, our anticipation and excitement grows. We are confident that the New Operations Center will secure the legacy of Harbor Transit for decades to come, and therefore securing mobility for all in the Northwest Ottawa County community.

# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Besides our on-demand and fixed deviated-route services, Harbor Transit seeks to be a community partner, especially to assist in alleviating area traffic for the numerous large-scale events that take place each year in the Northwest Ottawa County community. Harbor Transit provided transportation for a number of community events in the winter months, including Spring Lake's Sparkle Festival, the Grand Haven Wine About Winter event, and Grand Haven Winterfest. In August 2024, Harbor Transit transported nearly 6,000 riders during the 100th Coast Guard Festival in Grand Haven.

Besides providing rides, Harbor Transit enjoys other opportunities to partner with the community we serve. For the second year, Harbor Transit participated in a partnership program with Ferry/Voyager Elementary School, which provides the opportunity for elementary students to learn about career pathways in public transportation and visit the Harbor Transit facility. In August 2024, Harbor Transit participated in a mass casualty training with Ottawa County Emergency Management, which was also attended by various emergency personnel, multiple fire departments, ambulance services, and Ottawa County Central Dispatch.





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS & LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (LAC)

## HARBOR TRANSIT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CRAIG BESSINGER  
City of Ferrysburg

GORDON GALLAGHER  
Spring Lake Township

BILL CARGO  
Grand Haven Charter  
Township

CATHY PAVICK  
Spring Lake Township

ASHLEY LATSCH  
City of Grand Haven

BILL CATE  
Village of Spring Lake

KEVIN MCLAUGHLIN  
City of Grand Haven

DEANNA MCINTYRE  
Member at Large

JOEL TEPASTE  
Village of Spring Lake

WILL WHITTEMORE  
Grand Haven Township

## LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (LAC)

NORMAN CUNNINGHAM  
Member At Large

CARRIE UTHE  
Spring Lake Township

ANGIE DEVRIES  
City of Grand Haven

SARAH WHEELER  
Village of Spring Lake

LISA GREENWOOD  
City of Grand Haven

JOHN PHILLIPS  
Grand Haven Township

CHRYSTEEN MOELTER-  
GRAY  
Grand Haven Township

SARAH WHEELER  
Village of Spring Lake

HEATHER PHILLIPS  
Grand Haven Township

REBECCA HOPP  
City of Ferrysburg

CHRISTINA SHANNON  
City of Grand Haven

KIM SIBILSKY  
City of Grand Haven