



# 2021-2022 Annual Report

**HARBOR TRANSIT MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM (HTMMTS)**





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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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As the President of the Harbor Transit Board of Directors, it has been rewarding to see firsthand Harbor Transit's continued growth over the past year. The benefits of having public transportation here in the Northwest Ottawa County community cannot be understated, and the services that Harbor Transit offers enables our community residents to access medical care, shop for groceries, get to work, and so much more. For some, without Harbor Transit, these activities would be extremely difficult.

Regional transportation has been an ongoing discussion amongst West Michigan's transit agencies for several years, and Harbor Transit continues to support efforts to connect communities via public transportation services. Harbor Transit and Muskegon Area Transit (MATs) partnered in the spring of 2022 to establish a shared stop enabling residents to easily travel between Harbor Transit and MATs service areas. The shared stop at Trinity Health at The Lakes has been very successful, and I look forward to seeing more partnerships like this one formed between municipalities that offer their respective residents greater access to medical care, shopping, education and recreational opportunities.

Harbor Transit also launched two new trolley routes with new trolley cars purchased from HomeTown Trolley of Crandon, Wisconsin. The Buccaneer Loop gives riders the full experience of downtown Grand Haven and the beaches, and The Laker Loop traverses Spring Lake, Ferrysburg and Pomona Park in the Village of Fruitport. Located in Muskegon County, the Pomona Park stop gives Fruitport residents the opportunity to travel into our Tri-Cities community via public transportation during the summer months.

As an organization, Harbor Transit is truly for the people of the Northwest Ottawa County community and continues to seek ways to expand the services it offers its riders. We are proud of Harbor Transit's long legacy of service to the Ferrysburg, Grand Haven, Grand Haven Township, Spring Lake and Spring Lake Township communities and the Harbor Transit Board looks forward to another year of growth.

**Craig Bessinger**

President

HTMMTS Board

# LETTER FROM THE TRANSPORTATION DIRECTOR

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The past year has been one of growth for Harbor Transit. Ridership has continued its upward trend as our ridership base grows more comfortable returning to public transportation, and with the expansion of our services as Harbor Transit champions regional transportation. Harbor Transit's staffing level has also increased and we are on the way to reaching staffing levels that would enable us to operate at full capacity.

We are pleased to share that we have begun the planning phase of our New Operations Center by selecting a land acquisition firm, A&E firm, and started the process of selecting the engineering firm for the project. This will be a state-of-the-art facility that would provide much-needed space for our fleet and employees with room to grow. The New Operations Center will bring Harbor Transit to the next level in terms of operational capacity, technology and customer experience.

In the spring of 2022 Harbor Transit and Muskegon Area Transit System (MATS) launched a pilot program to test a shared stop that would allow riders to gain access to both Harbor Transit's and MATS' service areas. The shared stop is located in MATS' service area at Trinity Health at The Lakes, with Harbor Transit having access to this stop to drop off and pick up passengers. The pilot program has been a success with more riders utilizing it each month, demonstrating the great need for regional transportation.

In addition to the pilot program with MATS, Harbor Transit also launched two new trolley routes after receiving two brand new trolleys from HomeTown Trolley of Crandon, Wisconsin. The two "Lakeshore Trolley" routes, the Buccaneer Loop and Laker Loop, were tremendously popular with more than 14,000 rides completed by the end of the summer season. The Laker Loop features a stop at Pomona Park in the Village of Fruitport, allowing residents outside of Harbor Transit's service area to gain access to the wonderful attractions in our community during the summer months.

Besides providing our regular services in the community, Harbor Transit has also had the wonderful opportunity to collaborate with Ferry Voyager Elementary School as a business partner through the Chamber of Commerce. Harbor Transit was paired with a fourth grade class and together with the teachers and the Chamber of Commerce, we planned a bus route and facility tour experience that showcased the different job positions in public transit. At a later date following their visit to the Harbor Transit facility, I had the opportunity to visit their classroom and share more information about the logistics of dispatching and how that impacts operations. Interacting with the students is always enjoyable and some of their questions are very insightful. We at Harbor Transit look forward to continuing this partnership for years to come.

As our ridership numbers recover and our staffing levels continue to grow, it is of the utmost importance to keep our fleet in top shape. Harbor Transit placed an order for three new buses but due to chip and chassis shortages the buses have yet to come in, and there is no set delivery date at this point. Safety also continues to be a priority at Harbor Transit, and we procured Synexis air purification units for our facility to ensure the safety of our employees working together in close quarters. We at Harbor Transit are proud of what has been accomplished in the past year and we are looking forward to continued growth and increased capacity to serve our community well.



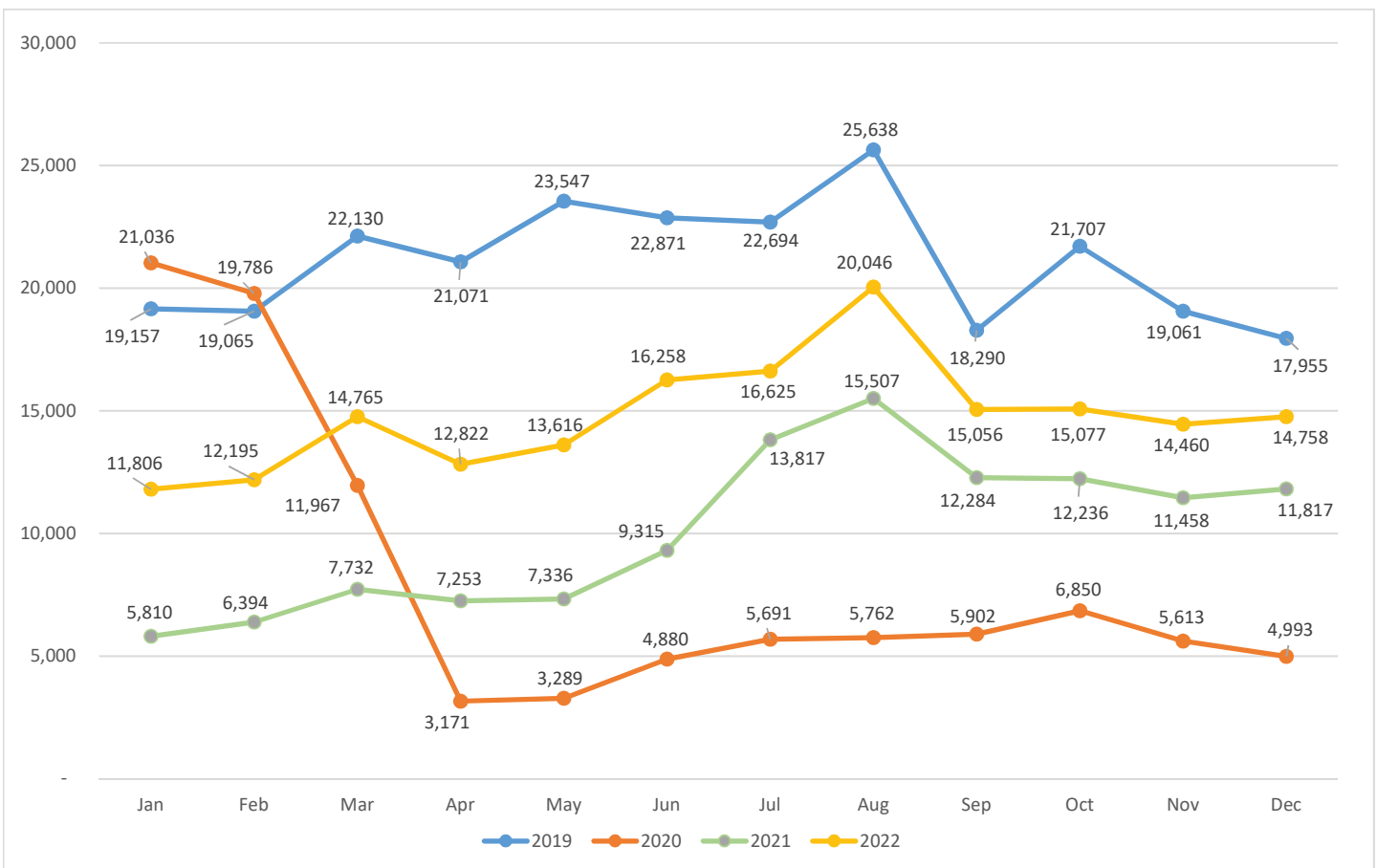
**Scott Borg**  
Transportation Director  
Harbor Transit





# RIDERSHIP REPORT

Harbor Transit's ridership numbers have increased month over month since the sharp drop in 2020 and are slowly but steadily approaching pre-pandemic numbers as the public becomes more comfortable utilizing public transit. Harbor Transit's expanded services including the two new Lakeshore Trolley routes and the shared stop with Muskegon Area Transit System (MATS) have also contributed to the upward trend in ridership.







## INTRODUCING: THE LAKESHORE TROLLEYS

Easily one of the Grand Haven Area’s most iconic attractions, the trolley has been around for decades, providing summer fun for the whole family. After a hiatus during the height of the pandemic, Harbor Transit brought back the popular summer trolley in the summer of 2021, but the decades-old trolley car was frequently out of service for repairs. In the fall of 2021, Harbor Transit purchased two brand-new trolley cars from Hometown Trolley of Wisconsin.

The Lakeshore Trolleys, named by a community-wide vote, had a hugely successful first summer season with more than 14,000 riders from May 31st through September 5th. The trolley route established in 2021 was expanded to two separate loops in 2022 to cover even more of the Tri-Cities area. The “Buccaneer Loop”, named after Grand Haven Area Public School’s mascot, takes riders through downtown Grand Haven with stops at both the City Beach and State Park. The “Laker Loop”, named after Spring Lake Public School’s mascot, travels through downtown Spring Lake, Ferrysburg, and even includes a stop in the Village of Fruitport at scenic Pomona Park.

The Lakeshore Trolleys were also present in several area parades and provided a park-and-ride shuttle during the Spring Lake Sparkle festival.





# FINANCIAL REPORT

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## HARBOR TRANSIT OPERATING BUDGET 2021-2022

### REVENUE

Passenger Fares	\$ --
Tax Levy	\$1,648,851
State Operating Assistance	\$1,074,133
Federal Operating Assistance	\$525,000
State/Federal Capital	\$456,003
Interest & Other	<u>\$89,963</u>

**TOTAL** **\$3,793,950**

### OPERATING EXPENSES

Operations	\$2,623,026
Maintenance	\$237,510
Dispatch	\$379,199
Administrative	<u>\$519,939</u>

**TOTAL** **\$3,759,674**

### BREAKDOWN OF EXPENSES

Labor	\$1,721,852
Fringe Benefits	\$609,471
Professional/Contractual Services	\$409,504
Fuel & Supplies	\$395,152
Utilities	\$39,407
Casualty/Liability Insurance	\$84,288
Depreciation	\$467,245
Other	<u>\$32,754</u>

**TOTAL** **\$3,759,674**



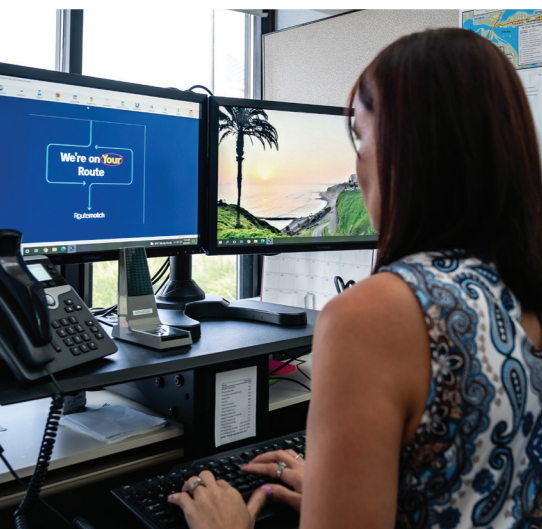
My son used Harbor Transit for a ride from Lakeshore Middle School to my job. It was a great experience for his first time. He is extremely anxious doing new things but had no problem with the driver. Thank you so much!

- Deb D.



Always a speedy response and very friendly drivers. Dispatch ladies are also incredibly helpful and friendly.

- Shelby D.



## ” Kind Words From Harbor Transit Riders



This is a great service for people who don't have a car.

- Jeff M.



I cannot say anything but thanks to Harbor Transit, since we came down here there have always been kind people attending the service.

- Felipe R.



Friendly drivers and other riders, timely... Nothing I can complain about at all. Love their services!

- Danielle P.





# FERRY/VOYAGER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

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The Chamber of Commerce partnered with Ferry/Voyager Elementary School to launch a business partnership program that pairs local businesses, governments, and organizations with school classrooms to provide unique learning experiences for students outside the classroom. Harbor Transit was honored to participate in this program for the first time in the 2021-2022 school year.

A fourth grade class was paired with Harbor Transit, and Harbor Transit staff worked with the class teachers to plan a facility visit and tour. The students' visit was planned to expound upon concepts the students had been learning in class about maps and also about character traits like optimism, perseverance, flexibility, resilience and responsibility. In addition to a tour of the facility, bus garage, mechanic bay, and dispatch office, Harbor Transit provided career profiles for the different job positions represented at our facility to show students the various career paths in public transit. At a later date, Transportation Director Scott Borg visited the students' classroom for a discussion about the dispatching process and how that impacts operations.

Harbor Transit employees thoroughly enjoyed the experience with the students and feedback from the teachers and the Chamber of Commerce was very positive. We look forward to continuing this partnership with Ferry/Voyager Elementary School in the future.



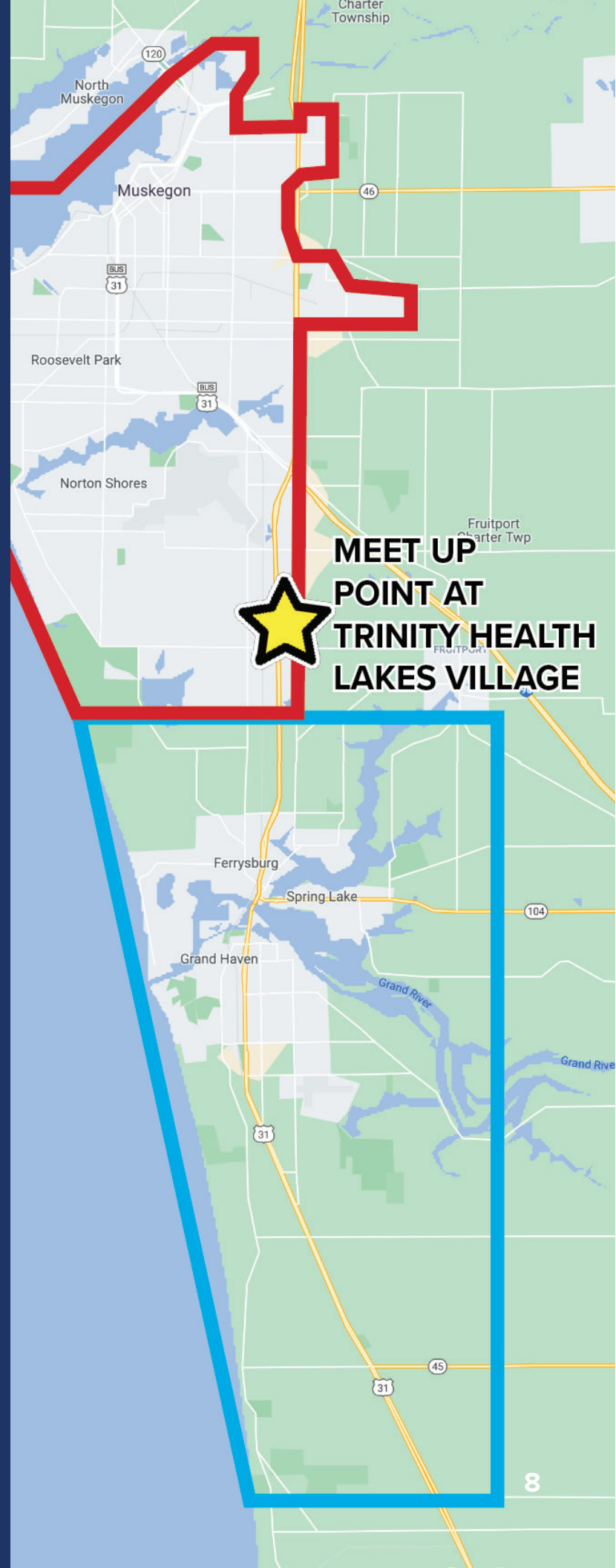


# CONNECTING MUNICIPALITIES

Transportation Director Scott Borg has been a long-time advocate for regional transportation in Northwest Ottawa County. As discussions about partnership opportunities continue, cooperation between transit systems has been evident in their joint effort to help area residents gain access to the greatest number of resources possible, including healthcare facilities, grocery stores and pharmacies, education, employment opportunities and more.

In 2022, Harbor Transit and Muskegon Area Transit System (MATS) embarked on a pilot program to connect their respective service areas via a meet-up point at the Trinity Healthcare Clinic at The Lakes (formerly Mercy Health). The health clinic is one of the Southern-most stops of MATS Route 31, and once Harbor Transit riders are dropped off at the stop, they are able to transfer to MATS and access numerous resources in Muskegon. Likewise, residents in Muskegon can ride the fixed route to the Trinity Health Clinic stop and from there, board Harbor Transit to travel to the Tri-Cities for work, shopping, recreation, social visits and more.

Since the shared stop was established, the number of riders utilizing this service has increased every month, proving the community's interest in the expanded area now available to them via public transportation. Future efforts will focus on transportation solutions for employees needing to travel from Muskegon to Grand Haven for manufacturing jobs.





An aerial photograph of the Harbor Transit facility. In the foreground, a white Harbor Transit bus is parked on a paved lot. The bus has "HARBOR TRANSIT" and "616-443-2000" printed on its side. Behind the bus is a modern building with a corrugated metal roof. To the left of the building is a large, mature tree in a landscaped area. Further back, there's a parking lot with several spaces, some of which are marked with blue paint. In the background, a body of water is visible, with a small boat docked on the left and a residential building on the far left. The right side of the image is overlaid with a dark blue semi-transparent panel containing text.

# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

## A NEW FACILITY

Harbor Transit is currently searching for land on which to build a new facility. "It is clear that our operation has outgrown our current facility," shares Transportation Director Scott Borg. "A new, state-of-the-art facility would provide much needed space not only for our fleet but our employees and customers as well."

Harbor Transit has three buses currently on order and is in the process of forming a joint procurement with MDOT for two electric buses. The new facility would have ample space for fleet expansion and charging stations for electric vehicles. Plans would also include private offices for administrative staff, an employee break area and locker rooms, and a spacious customer transfer point.

Harbor Transit is also involved in a multi-agency joint procurement along with MDOT for new dispatching software, which would enable Harbor Transit to operate at a greater capacity with its current staffing levels. The new dispatching software would also greatly benefit our riders, offering the option to schedule and pay for rides online and even track their bus.





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS & LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

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ASHLEY LATSCH  
City of Grand Haven

CHRISTINE BURNS  
Village of Spring Lake

CATHY PAVICK  
Spring Lake Township

BILL CARGO  
Grand Haven Charter  
Township

DONALD REIS  
Grand Haven Township

GORDON GALLAGHER  
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KEVIN MCLAUGHLIN  
City of Grand Haven

JOEL TEPASTTE  
Village of Spring Lake

BILL CATE  
City of Ferrysburg

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