

SELECTED EXCERPTS FROM LETTERS OF SUPPORT

“Senior needs are changing and they need to be addressed in new innovative ways. The survey component of the proposal will address those issues and will help unfold a more comprehensive marketing strategy that educates and encourages seniors to access public transportation services.”

South Haven Area Senior Services

“Governor Jennifer M Granholm’s Center for Regional Excellence program and her office of Special Projects strongly supports the regional coordination effort in Van Buren, Berrien, Cass, Branch and St. Joseph Counties for improving senior transportation.”

Office of Governor Jennifer M. Granholm

“The Van Buren County Human Services Collaborative Council strongly supports the regional coordination effort in Van Buren, Berrien, Cass and St. Joseph Counties for improving senior transportation services. Member agencies of the Collaborative Council, specifically the Van Buren County Public Transit, South Haven Area Senior services and the Area Agency on Aging have the capacity to reach the targeted population of older adults and coordinate services.”

Van Buren County Human Services Collaborative Council

“The NCST’s goals of increased transit options, simplified access to transit options, and increased transportation service quality of older adults would be well-served through the implementation of this project”

Michigan Department of Transportation

“The Cass County transit system currently works with other transportation providers but we are limited by not having a means for keeping a current posting on what each provider is doing or is willing to do to provide a need trip for a senior citizen.”

Cass County Transportation Authority

“Of the 81 units more than half of the residents do not drive. The implementation of this technology would increase the services and places people could travel to. It would be invaluable to maintaining our seniors involvement in the community and their health and well being.”

Village of Paw Paw Housing Commission

“We believe that it is possible to save money, reduce or eliminate overlap of effort and services and increase the level of service to older adults better coordinating the social service providers and those who provide public transit services.”

Van Buren County Human Services Collaborative Council

“A regionalized approach to meeting diverse transportation needs will definitely improve access to health care for the seniors we collectively serve.”

Lake View Community Hospital

“This project will also provide senior mentors, advocates or caregivers to assist seniors which provides incentive to use the transportation”

Foster Grandparent Program of South Central Michigan

“The Local Advisory Committee for the Van Buren Public Transit Agency has been actively involved in the coordination efforts and plans to continue to be a partner in the initiative.”

Van Buren Transit Local Advisory Committee

“This project is regional and collaborative and unique in Michigan and also in the nation. The end result will be improved quality and better access to transportation service for older adults.”

John M. Proos, Michigan House Representatives

“We know first hand the trials and tribulations our residents have regarding ease of access to transportation services, a variety of transportation options, and even quality transportation services for their needs. The solutions are beyond any single community, which is why this approach is so promising.”

Village of Paw Paw

“Many Branch County seniors are low-income and reside in rural areas; these individuals are in need of increased transportation options.”

Community Action Agency of South Central Michigan

“Providing senior citizens with a means of transportation will most likely reduce depression in individuals who are shut in at home.”

Coldwater Housing Commission

“The goal of bringing the latest technology to our local transit systems to bring about efficiencies and expand services is applauded. The fact that Area Agency on Aging, as well as senior centers and private companies, may tie into this coordinated system when feasible, is particularly exciting.”

Area Agency on Aging Inc

“The need to provide cost effective and viable transportation services to our seniors and older adults is something we should all support. I applaud the hard work put forth by the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission.”

Neal Nitz, Michigan House of Representatives, 79th District.

“As a faith based organization which represents a broad spectrum of area churches and other community agencies we have already seen some of the practical benefits of having an improved transportation system in our city and county. We strongly support this regional effort to improve public transportation in our area.”

TRAFAC

“Providing customer oriented efficient transportation to clients residing outside of either city is difficult without effective routing software. The ability to quickly schedule or cancel a senior ride, due to health concerns or other unforeseen events is paramount to garnering senior trust and increasing ridership.”

St. Joseph County Commission on Aging

Letters of Support

State

Office of Governor Jennifer Granholm
Michigan Department of Transportation-Lansing
Michigan Department of Transportation-Southwest Region
Michigan House of Representatives-State Representative John M. Proos
Michigan House of Representatives-78th District Neal Nitz
Michigan House of Representatives-State Representative Tonya Schuitmaker
Michigan House of Representatives – District 59 – Rick Shaffer

Regional

Area Agency on Aging (IICD) Branch-St. Joseph County
Area Agency on Aging, Inc.-Region IV
Community Action Agency of South Central Michigan-Barry, Branch, Calhoun & St. Joseph Counties
Community Action Agency of South Central Michigan-Foster Grandparent Program
Van Buren County Human Services Collaborative Council (Area Agency on Aging, Board of Commissioners, Catholic Family Services, Community Action Agency, Community Hospitals, Community Mental Health, Department of Human Services, Disability Resource Center, Family Court, Friend of the Court, Head Start, Intermediate School District, MSU Extension, Michigan Works!, Parent Representatives, Public Health, Public Transit, Sheriff's Office, South Haven Area Senior Services, United Way)
St. Joseph County Human Services (Commission on Aging, Community Action Agency, Community Health Agency, Community Mental Health, County Commissioners, the County Prosecutor, Domestic and Sexual Abuse Services, Department of Human Services, Glen Oaks Community College, Intermediate School District, K-12 Superintendent's Association, Keystone Place, Inc., Michigan Works/Upjohn Institute, MSU County Extension, Probate/Juvenile Court, Community Healing Centers, Three Rivers Health, St. Joseph County Transportation Authority, and a St. Joseph County citizen).

Local

South Haven Area Senior Services
St. Joseph County Commission on Aging
Burnside Senior Center
Cass County Transportation Authority
Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority-Dial-A-Ride-Benton Harbor, MI
Branch Area Transit Authority-Coldwater, MI
Van Buren Public Transit
Van Buren County Public Transit-Local Advisory Committee

Other Local

City of Bangor, City of South Haven, Village of Paw Paw
Van Buren County Board of Commissioners
Van Buren United Civic Organization
Coldwater Housing Commission
Michigan Department of State Police-Coldwater Post
Branch County Sheriff's Office
Family Services Network

Private

Century Bank and Trust
Lakeview Community Hospital
Maple Lawn Medical Care Facility
Miller Court Apartments-Village of Paw Paw Housing Commission
Pines Behavioral Health & Pines Behavioral Health Services
South Haven & Countryside Nursing and Rehabilitation Community

Faith Based

Three Rivers Area Faith Community, Coldwater Area Ministers Association