

Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority



Annual Report
2019

Message from the Director

As the new Executive Director of the Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority (TCATA), I would like to take this opportunity to present the Fiscal Year 2019 Annual Report to the TCATA Board of Directors as well as other governmental bodies of the TCATA service area. In this report, I have tried to compile some basic information concerning the scope of our services as well as information about our funding and expenses. As time goes by and in future years, I hope to incorporate other data and information to aid policymakers in their decision making. If there is anything that you believe should be part of this report that presently is not, please let me know and I will try to provide it.

TCATA is now embarking on our 45th year of operation, and we will soon provide transportation to our 7 millionth passenger! This is a legacy that we can all be proud of. It is a testament to the hard work and dedication of everyone who, since 1974, has built, defended, and grown this Authority. All of us; drivers, dispatchers, maintenance people, and our management staff have the responsibility to continue and enhance the work that has gone before. The rides we provide are absolutely essential to the lives of the people we serve, and that should always be foremost in our mind. Additionally, the taxpaying citizens of the United States, Michigan, and the city of Benton Harbor deserve excellent quality and transparent accountability in everything we do.

We should never become complacent or standstill when it comes to providing great transportation options to the Twin Cities area. We need to always be listening to our customers, incorporating new technology, and looking into expanding our fixed routes and services. The world of urban mobility is a fascinating and ever changing landscape, and as Director, I want to make sure TCATA is not only keeping up, but leading the way in providing great public transportation. I hope this annual report is a clear and concise snapshot of where we are now, so that we can move forward to where we'd like to be in the future.

Paul Gillespie
Executive Director



2019 Board of Trustees:

Anthony Andrews, Chairperson
Emma Kinard, Secretary

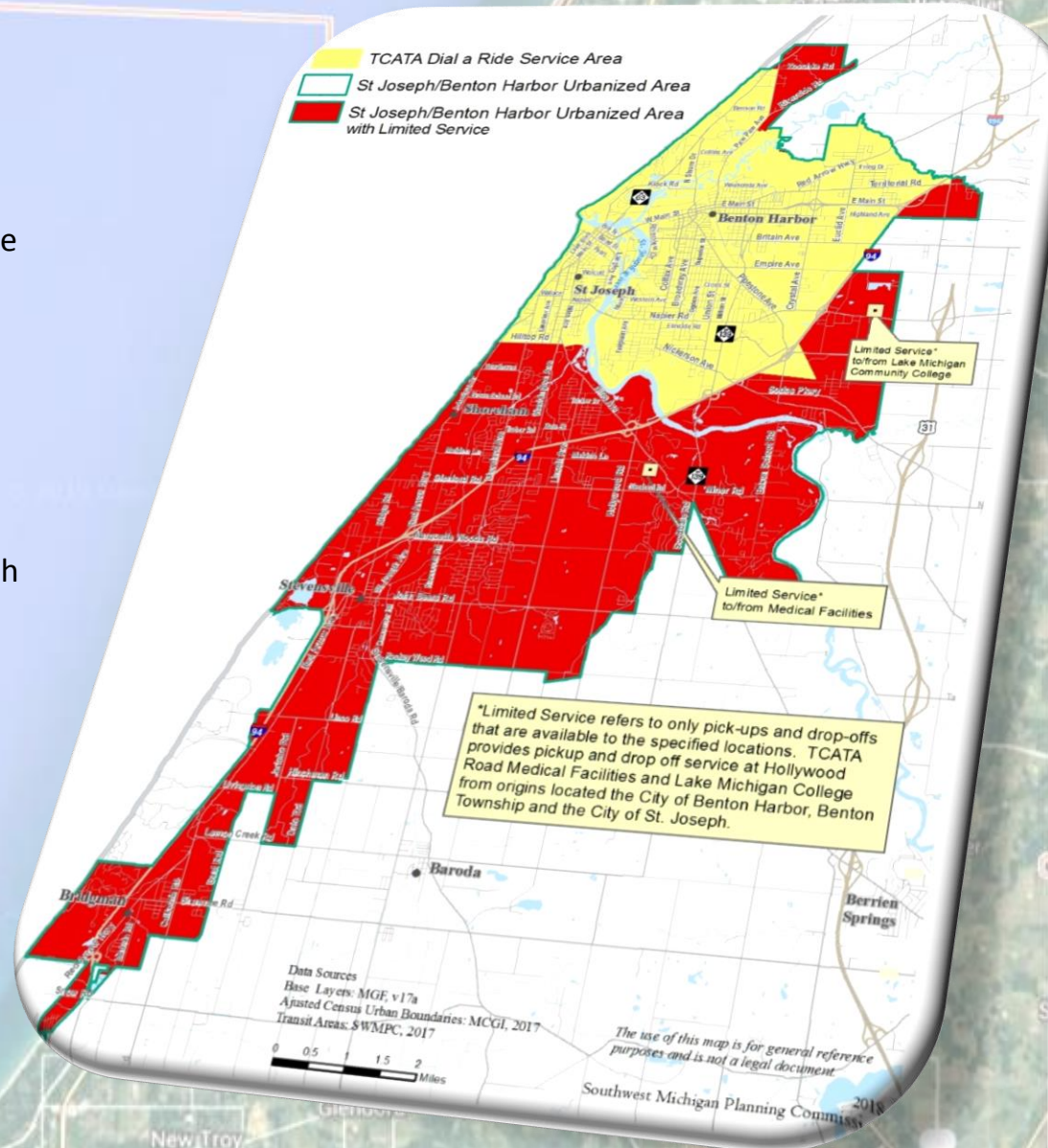
James Childs, Trustee
Juanita Henry, Trustee
Lisa Varrie, Trustee

Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority Service Area

Today, TCATA offers demand response and fixed route service to approximately 33,000 residents within a fourteen square mile service area, about fifty three percent of the St. Joseph-Benton Harbor urbanized area.

The remaining forty seven percent of the St. Joseph-Benton Harbor Urbanized Area receives limited service from TCATA in portions of Royalton, St. Joseph Charter Township and Lincoln Township. This service includes:

- Drop-off and pick up service to medical facilities along Hollywood Road
- Fixed route service to employment destinations along Red Arrow Highway.
- Drop-off and pick up service at Lake Michigan College and Berrien County Health Department.

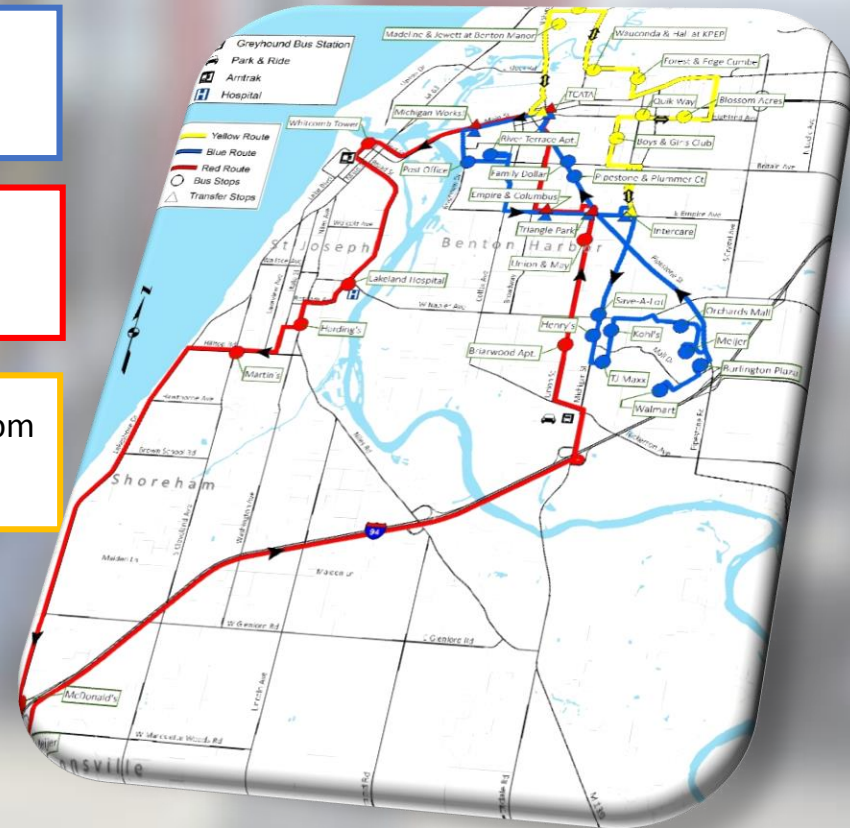


TCATA Fixed Route Service

Blue Route The route operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 am – 10:00 pm and on Saturday from 8:00 am – 10:00 pm.

Red Route The route operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 am – 10:00 pm and on Saturday from 8:00 am – 10:00 pm.

Yellow Route* The route operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 am – 5:00 pm

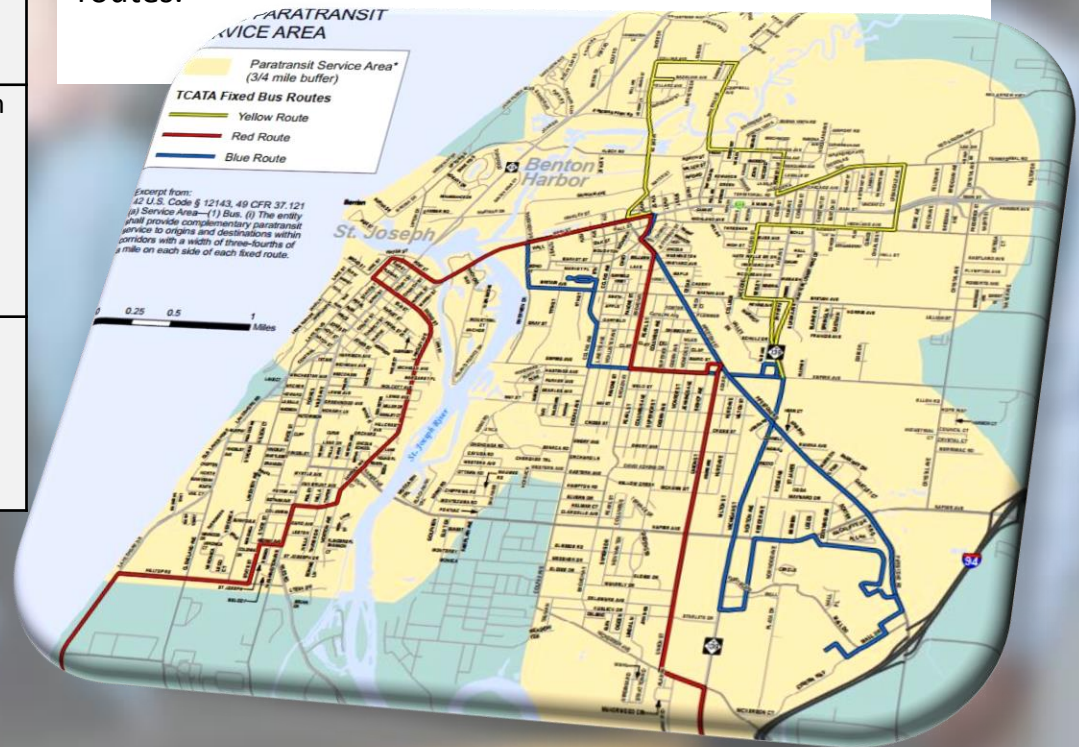


* Route launched 1/15/2020

TCATA Access – Paratransit Service

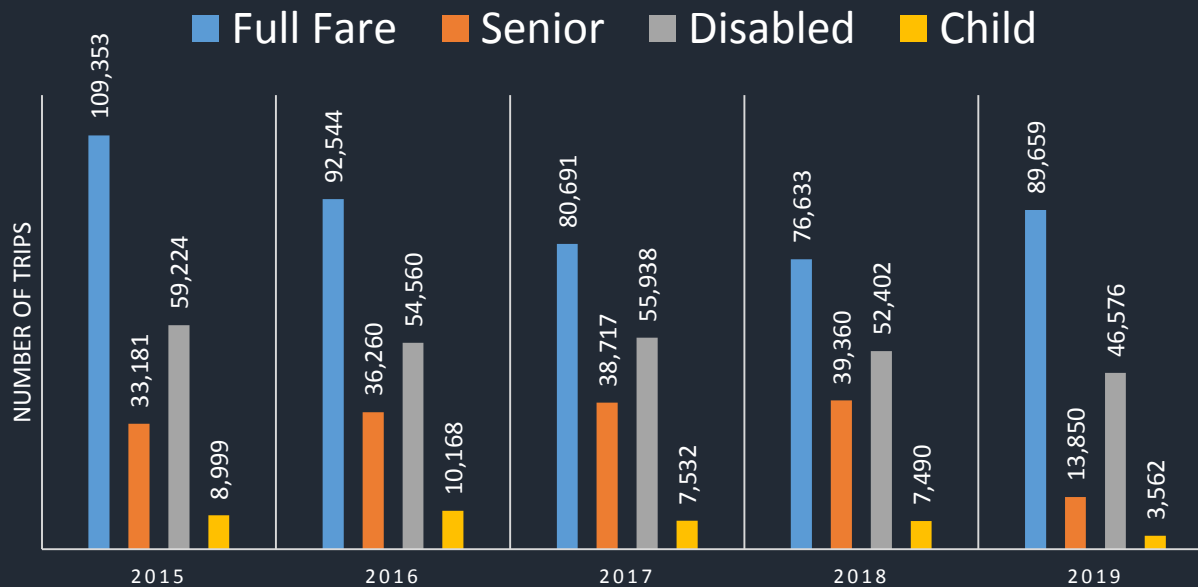
This paratransit service is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and is provided to customers whose disability or health condition prevents them from using TCATA fixed route service for some or all of their travel. Only persons who are certified by TCATA are eligible to ride TCATA Access Paratransit. Trips are provided at the same times and within the same geographic areas as fixed routes.

Service Area	Days	Hours of Service
BLUE ROUTE: Origins and destinations must be within ¼ mile of Blue Route.	Mon. – Fri. Saturday	6: 00 am -10:00 pm 8: 00 am -10:00 pm
RED ROUTE: Origins and destinations must be within 3 /4 mile of Red Route and within TCATA service area.	Mon. – Fri. Saturday	6: 00 am -10:00 pm 8:00 am -10:00 pm
YELLOW ROUTE: Origins and destinations must be within ¼ mile of Yellow Route.	Mon. – Fri.	7: 00 am -5:00 pm



TCATA Passengers

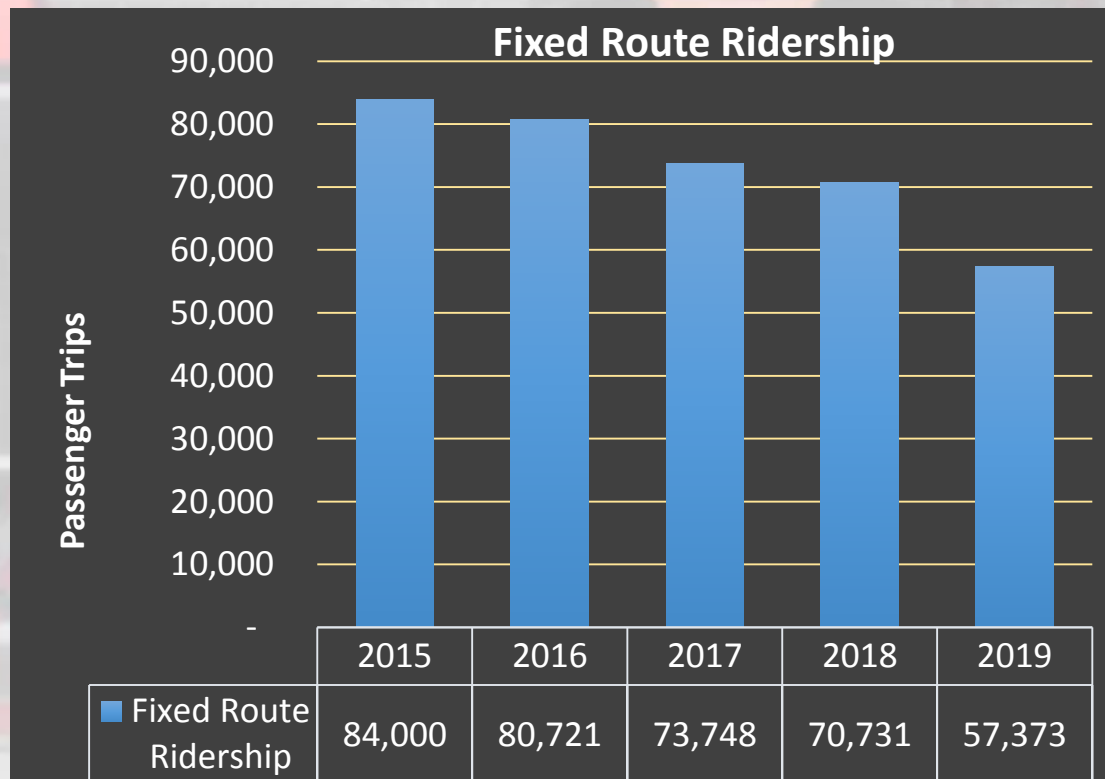
RIDERSHIP BY TYPE



Source: TCATA 2019 Operations Report



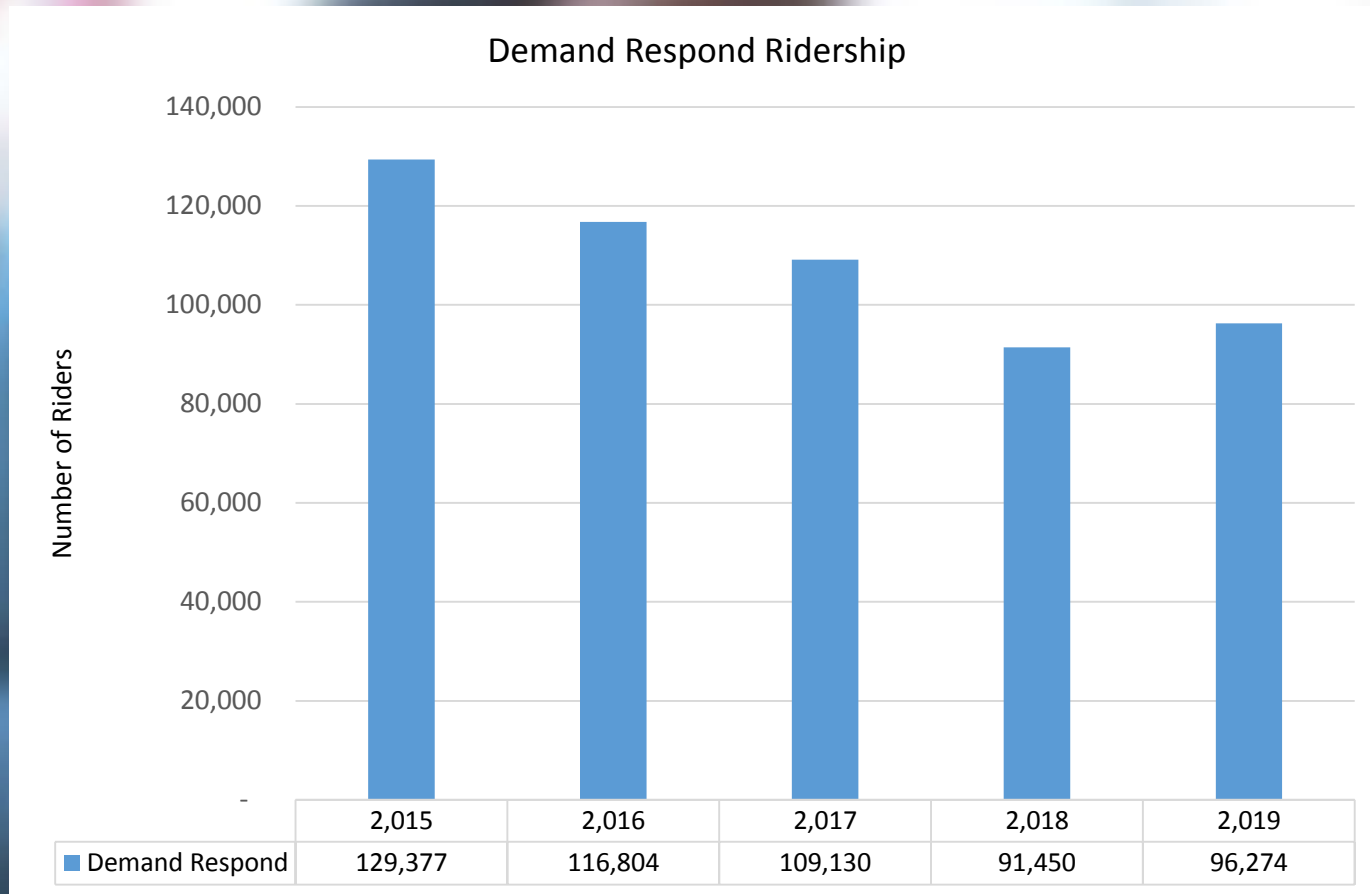
How Many People Use TCATA Fixed Route Service?



Source: TCATA 2015-2019 Ridership Report



How Many Demand Response Trips Are Provided Each Year?



Source: TCATA 2019 Ridership Report

Funding Basics

Public transit in Michigan is funded through a combination of federal, state and local funding sources.

FEDERAL FUNDING:

- TCATA is the designated recipient of FTA 5307 Urban formula funding for the St. Joseph Benton Harbor Urbanized Area. (Funding is formulated based on population, density and low income population.

STATE FUNDING:

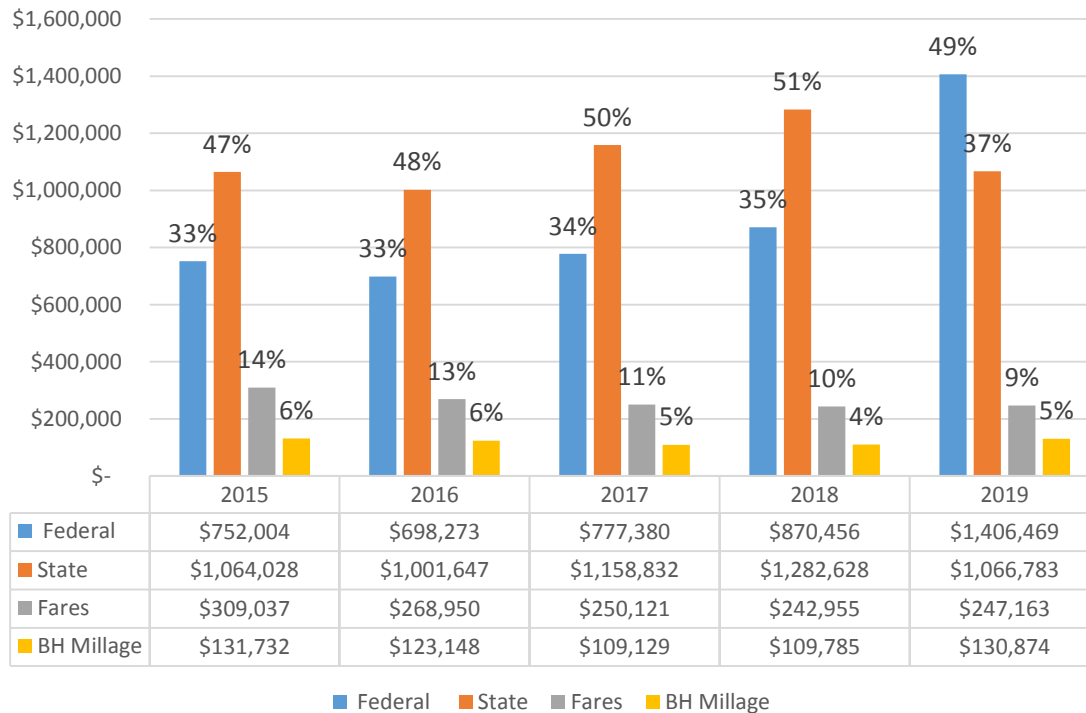
- The state of Michigan reimburses TCATA for approximately 38% of eligible operating expenses.
- The state of Michigan provides a 20 % match for capital purchases

LOCAL FUNDING:

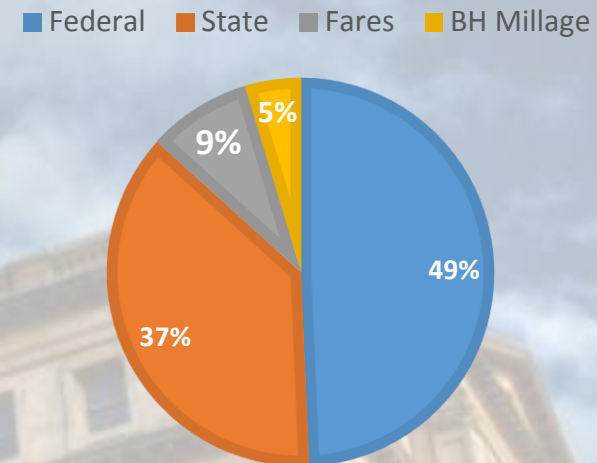
- City of Benton Harbor Millage levies 1.25 mills on all real and tangible personal property in the City of Benton Harbor for the exclusive purpose of financing the contractual obligation created by the contract between the City of Benton Harbor and the Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority for a period of 20 years beginning in 2008.
- Passenger Fares

Revenue Sources

TCATA Revenue by Type



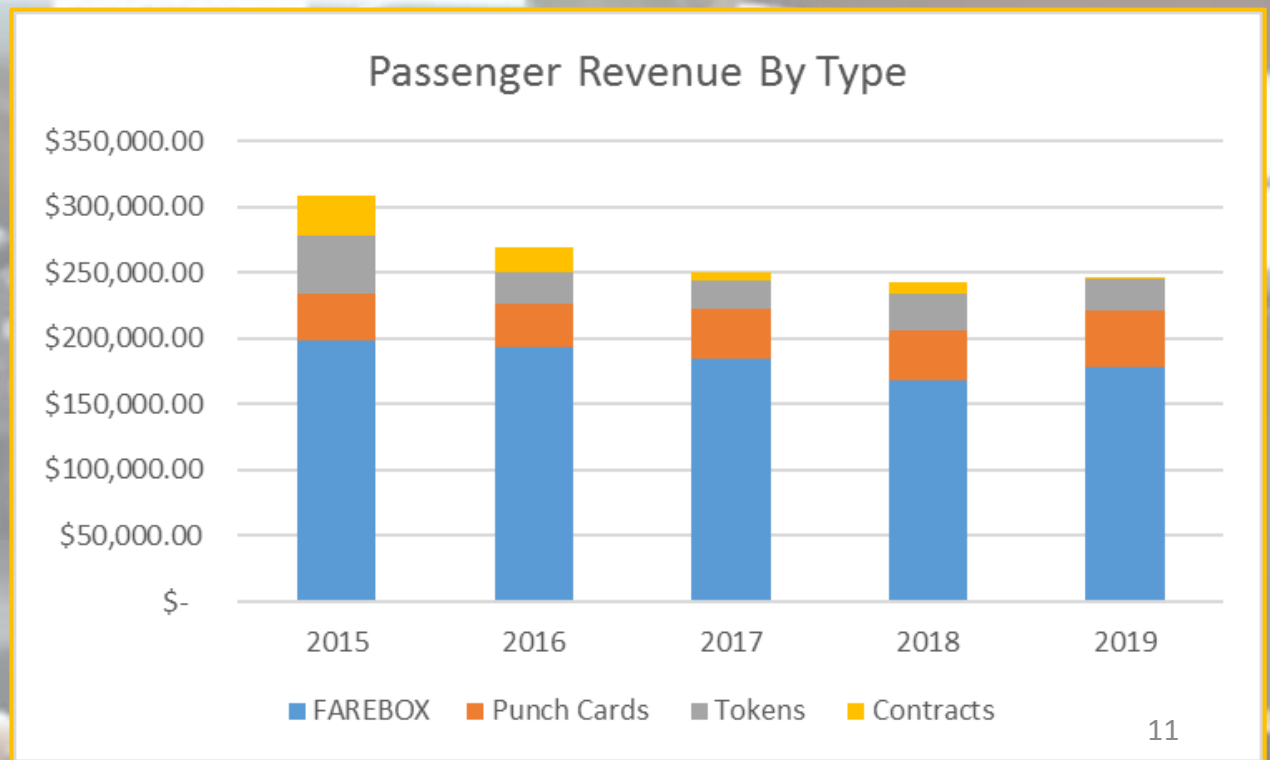
2019 REVENUE



Source: TCATA 2015-2019 Profit and Loss Reports

Passenger Revenue

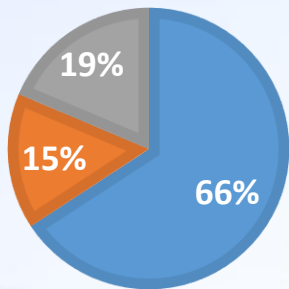
A variety of passenger fares are collected, they include farebox, prepaid Punch Cards, Tokens and contracts with human service agencies.



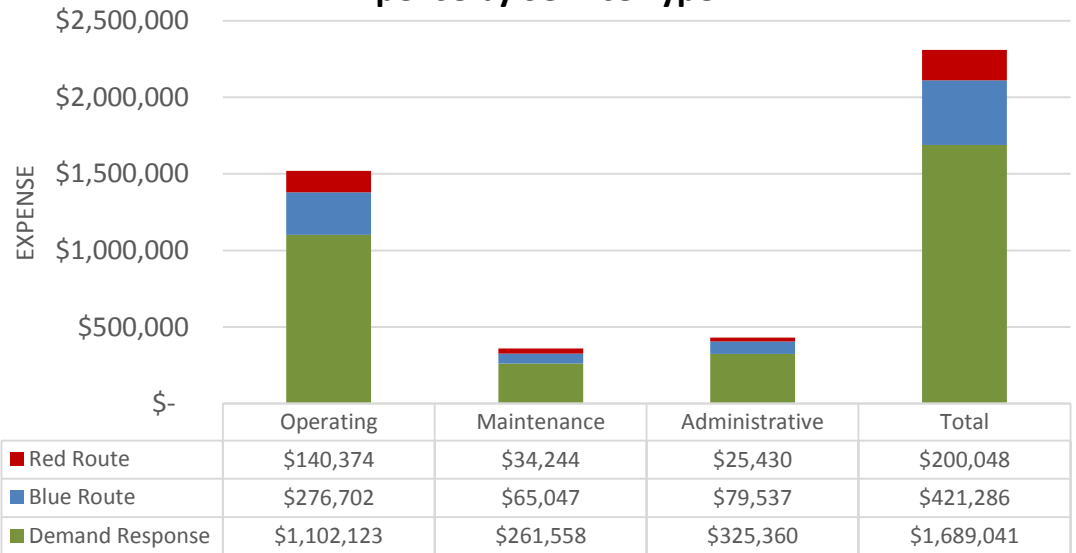
Expenses - 2019

2019 EXPENSES

■ Operating ■ Maintenance ■ Administrative



Expense by Service Type



Axis Title

■ Demand Response ■ Blue Route ■ Red Route

Source: TCATA 2019 Revenue & Expense Schedule



BUSSES

Purchased nine wheelchair accessible 14 passenger busses.

Funding

Federal: \$ 547,186

State: \$ 91,086



MAINTENANCE

Bus hoist was replaced to ensure worker safety.

Funding

Federal: \$ 17,280

State: \$ 4,320



SAFETY

Busses were outfitted with new cameras to ensure safety of our passengers and drivers.

Funding

Federal: \$ 25,834

State: \$ 6,459



VEHICLE STORAGE

Installed security fence for bus storage.

Funding

Federal: \$ 18,641

State: \$ 4,661



SCHEDULING | DISPATCH

Purchased driver tablets to improve dispatch/driver communications

Funding

Federal: \$ 25,834

State: \$ 6459



MAINTENANCE

Purchased pickup and snow plow for timely snow removal.

Funding

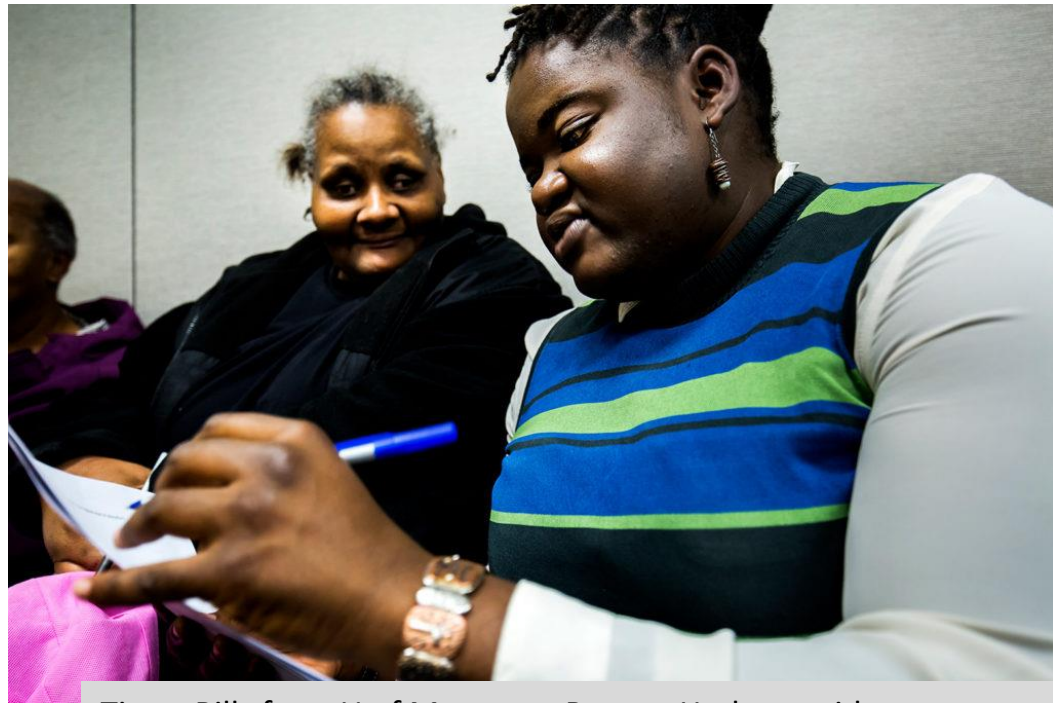
Federal: \$ 37,090

State: \$ 9,272

1.4 Million National Science Foundation Working Toward Innovative Transportation Solutions

New information and sensing technologies have opened up innovative ways of interacting with our natural and built environments. With a new, four-year \$1.4 million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF), researchers at the University of Michigan (U of M) and community partners will apply these technologies to explore new mobility solutions in Benton Harbor, Michigan.

In 2019 the U-M team has been working with TCATA to ensure new mobility solutions enhance the connectivity of the transit system with evolving workforce opportunities. The U-M team developed a project to deploy sensing technologies in Benton Harbor that will allow them to better understand resident's mobility preferences and mobility service performance. New approaches of using GPS tracking using cell phone apps and computer vision on city buses will be used to collect novel mobility data.



Tierra Bills from U of M surveys Benton Harbor residents on their travel needs.



Key Issues & Uncertainties Today and in the Future

REVENUE & COST MANAGEMENT

Sustaining a level of service while adapting to the uncertainties in future funding from state and federal funding sources

Managing fluctuations in taxable values and fares that facilitates a sustainable source of match needed for federal funds.

Examining appropriate funding options needed to meet the transportation needs of the urbanized area.

Monitoring fuel volatility and cost trends to determine the best balance of new technology.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Obtaining the skill sets needed to handle advancements in technologies associated with the operation and maintenance of transit vehicles.

Recruitment and retention of drivers with CDL.

Regulatory mandates such as physical examinations and drug tests that determine who is employable in safety-sensitive positions.



TCATA By The Numbers—2019

TCATA service area population: **33,000**

Annual Riders: **153,647**

Dial a Ride Passengers: **96,274**

Fixed Route Passengers: **57,373**

Expense Per Passenger Trip: **\$15.00**

Expense Per Mile: **\$ 4.00**

Annual Fare Received, 10% of Operating Expense: **\$ 242,884**

Annual Millage Received, 5% of Operating Expense: **\$130,873**

TCATA Current Employees: **40**



A LOOK BACK THROUGH THE YEARS...



1974

The Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority (TCATA) is incorporated on July 1st to provide public transportation services under the Michigan Mass Transportation System Authorities Act 55 of 1963. It is formed as a cooperative venture by Benton Harbor, Saint Joseph, Benton Township, Saint Joseph Township, and Lincoln Township. It operates both demand response “Dial-A-Ride” service as well as two fixed routes. Fare is 50 cents, 25 cents for seniors and people with disabilities, and free for children under twelve. Service begins on September 31st. Wilbert Brown is the first Director.

1975

During its second year of operation, a local financial contribution is required to fund the system. As a result, Lincoln Township trustees, citing cost, decide to withdraw from the Authority. Other jurisdictions vote to remain in the system and provide financial support. In its first year of operation, TCATA carries 140,000 passengers. Its budget is \$194,000, of which \$150,000 is supplied by federal and state funds, and \$44,000 is generated in fares. A local resident, Joseph Mammina, owner of Twin City Motor Transit Inc., files a \$200,000 lawsuit against TCATA and participating jurisdictions, claiming TCATA illegally competes with his business and seeks a permanent injunction against its operation.

1976

Voters in Saint Joseph Township, by a 3-1 margin, reject a millage proposal to support TCATA, despite nearly 10,000 rides being given in the Township in the previous year. They withdraw on July 1st.

1977

The Saint Joseph City Commission votes to drop out of the Authority, leaving only Benton Harbor and Benton Township as members. TCATA raises regular fares to 75 cents, senior fares to 35 cents, and child fares to 50 cents.

1979

Benton Township supervisors vote to drop out of the Authority, citing financial hardship. This leaves the City of Benton Harbor as the only one of the original five jurisdictions to remain in the Authority. Benton Harbor supports TCATA through an annual contribution from the city budget.



1982

TCATA celebrates the milestone of having served one million customers (passengers) since its founding in 1974.

1984

The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission contracts with Abonmarche Consultants for a site location study for a bus storage and maintenance facility.

1985

TCATA announces plans to build new facility at 275 East Wall Street on the site of the former Milner Hotel. It has been located at 271 Market Street since its inception and has grown too big for that facility.

1987

After losing an initial vote in June, in August Benton Harbor voters approve a 1.25 mill property tax levy to provide ongoing financial support to the Authority. The levy is good for twenty years. Marketing Study is completed with recommendations for methods to increase ridership.

1988

TCATA breaks ground on a new administration and maintenance facility at 275 East Wall Street in downtown Benton Harbor.

1989

In September, TCATA opens its new facility. The \$1.5 million dollar building was paid for with 80% federal and 20% state funding. Service is extended to Saturdays as well as Monday-Friday.

1990

TCATA begins offering a fixed route service from downtown to the Mall Area along Pipestone.

1991

TCATA employees vote to join AFSCME union

1993 TCATA Board requests financial contributions from Benton Township or service could be curtailed. Township refuses to provide funding. Service continues.



2001
TCATA Board votes to name facility after 27 year Director Wilbert Brown

2003 TCATA extends service to medical facilities located in Saint Joseph and Royalton Townships on Niles Avenue and Hollywood Road. Lakeland provides seed funding to TCATA for service to new facility. (Three year program - \$100,000, \$50,000, and \$25,000 in 2005)

2006
TCATA is awarded \$619,000 in countywide competitive CMAQ federal and state funding for three new busses and a new fixed route for a two year period.

2007
After 32 years as Executive Director, Wilbert Brown retires and is replaced as Director by Bill Purvis, the longtime assistant director. Benton Harbor voters extend for twenty years the 1.25 mill tax to support TCATA. TCATA serves its 5 millionth passenger, Frances White of Benton Township, who is awarded a lifetime pass.

2009
The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) authored grant on behalf of TCATA for Red Route and additional hours for Blue Route. This grant required no local match and has funded the routes for the past 11 years. Funding totals approximately \$3.8 million dollars. (\$350,000 annually) SWMPC, TCATA plan and market routes. Products included design, production and installation of signs. (Partnered with City of St. Joseph for production and installation of signs at no cost to TCATA)

2010
SWMPC authored grant on behalf of TCATA for Mobility Manager Program. This grant required no local match and has been funded for the past 10 years. Funding total: (\$75,000 annually) TCATA receives \$730,000 in America Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding to purchase 8 busses, two staff cars, bike racks, bus shelters and shop equipment.

2012
MyWayThere.org website is launched – TCATA has online information for the first time.

2017
Executive Director Bill Purvis retires and is replaced by Alex Little.

2019
Paul Gillespie is hired to replace Alex Little

2020
Yellow Route begins serving housing in the City of Benton Harbor, Benton Township, Intercare and Boys and Girls Club.



For additional information regarding the material presented in this report contact:

Paul Gillespie, Director

Phone: 269-927-2268

Email: pgillespie@tcatabus.org

We encourage you to attend TCATA monthly board meetings.

4th Wednesday of the month

Noon

Michigan WORKS/Kinexus

499 W. Main Street

Benton Harbor, Michigan

Meeting information can be found here:

<https://www.mywaythere.org/tcatameetings.asp>