

# Kent County Transit Needs Assessment

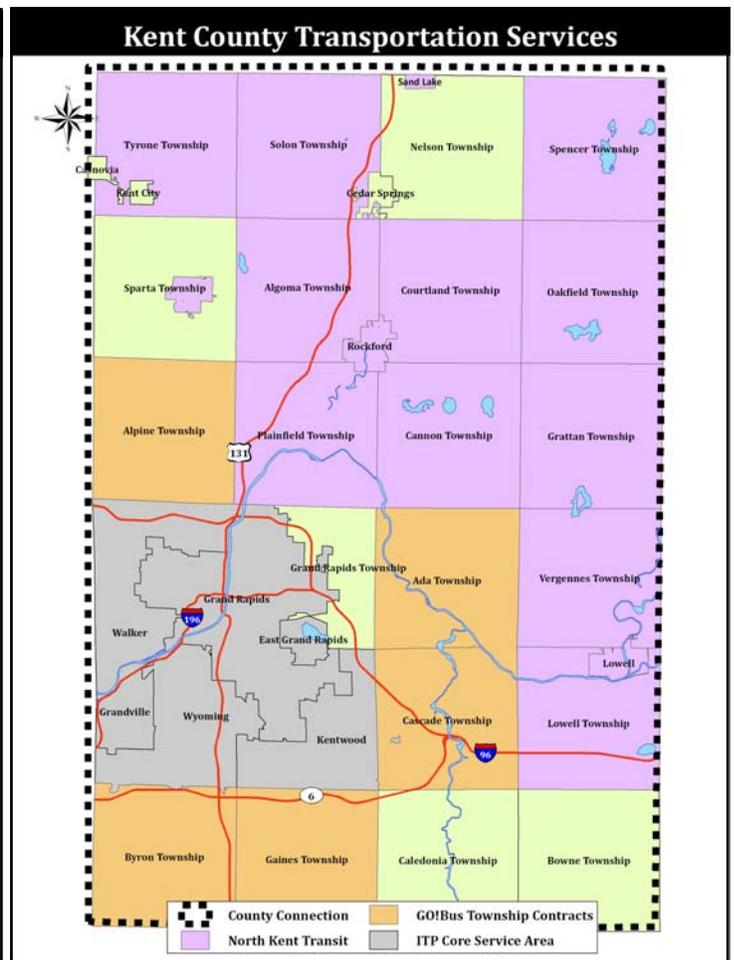
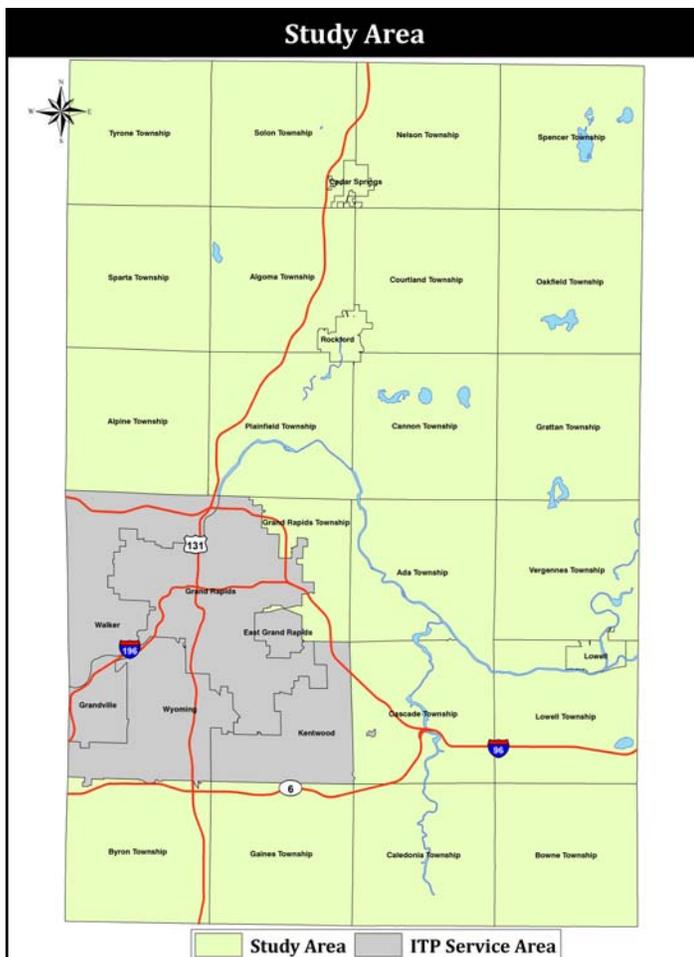
**Goal** —The Kent County Transit Needs Assessment is a study to determine the overall demand for transportation service in areas of Kent County with minimal public transportation service or without any altogether. This study assesses the transportation needs of Kent County through a latent demand analysis and a feasibility study of improved transportation service in the County.

## Study Area

This study area is defined as the portion of Kent County located outside the ITP/The Rapid's core service area, which is also known as the "six-city" area.

## Current Services

In addition to the transportation programs shown in the map below, agency program-related transportation is provided by Hope Network, Red Cross, Senior Neighbors, United Methodist Community House, ACSET and others.



## Shortcomings of the Current Transportation System

- A patchwork of transportation services exist in Kent County with much of it having program eligibility requirements.
- Both program and non-program related transportation services are limited and often rationed.
- This variety of transportation services can be difficult for the public to understand.
- Development continues to accelerate in areas outside of the current service district of ITP/The Rapid, leaving major destinations and residential areas without public transportation.
- Population in Kent County is aging with the over 65 age group increasing by 48.3 percent over the next ten years, which will result in a significant increase in the number of transportation disabled persons.
- There is no long term, adequate and stable funding source for public transportation outside ITP/The Rapid's service area.

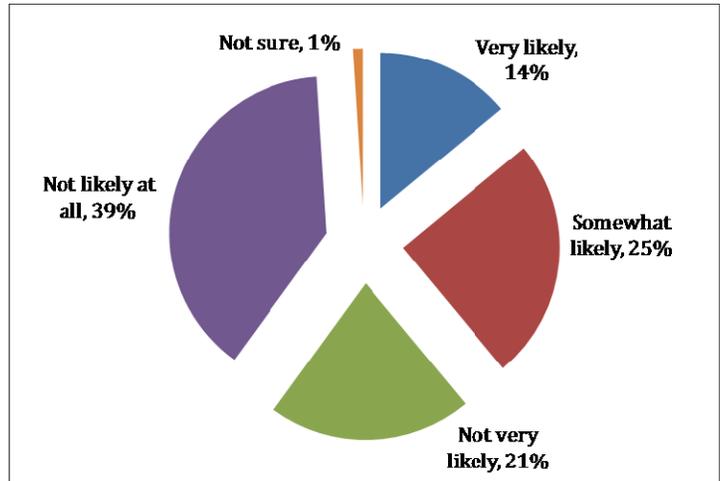
# Transportation Needs

## Identified Unmet Demand

During the months of August and September of 2010 over 1,000 Kent County households located outside The Rapid service area were surveyed on their need and interest in using public transportation. On the basic question of whether people would use public transportation if provided, about 39% said they were very likely or somewhat likely to use it.

The household survey asked a number of in-depth questions about people's travel habits. From this information, a realistic size of the transit markets in the study area were estimated. These people are not currently served by existing transportation services.

### Would you use public transportation if provided?



## Size of Transit Market

Service Type	Demand Response (Dial-a-Ride)	Fixed Route (Regular Bus Service)	Commuter Express (Park and Ride)
Market Size	15,500	12,900	1,730

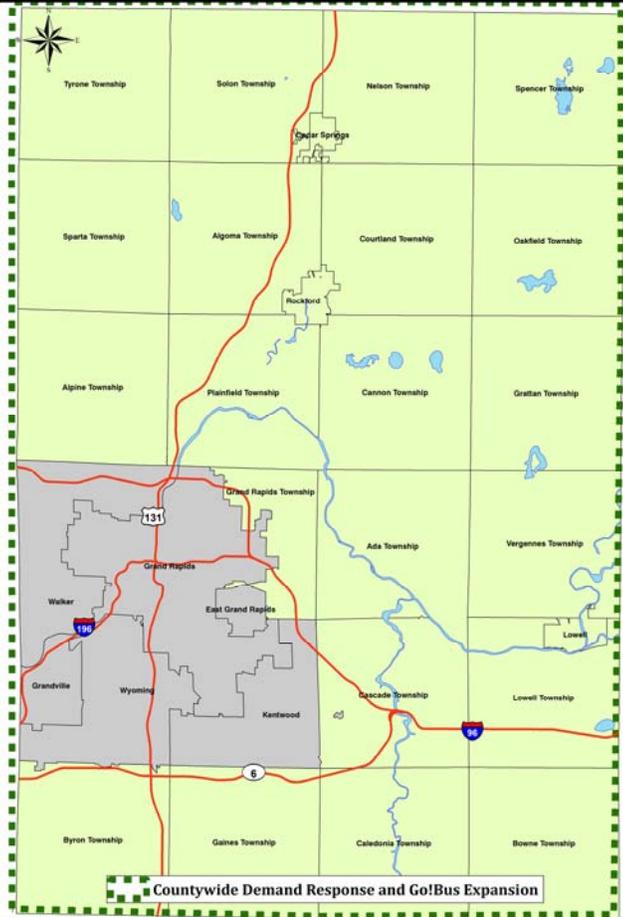
## Estimated Ridership from Latent Demand

In addition to the household survey, data from comparable areas (peer groups) and transportation demand models were used to estimate potential ridership on the three types of transit services.

Type of Service	Market Population	Annual Ridership
<b>Commuter Express</b>		
Peer Group/Comparable Areas		65,000 per route
Household Survey		124,200 total
<b>Estimated Total</b>	<b>1,730</b>	<b>80,000 total</b>
<b>Route Extensions/New Routes</b>		
Peer Group/Comparable Areas		1,657,406
Household Survey		1,019,627
<b>Estimated Total</b>	<b>12,900</b>	<b>1,260,000</b>
<b>Countywide Demand Response</b>		
Peer Group/Comparable Areas		235,856
Demand Models		154,707
Household Survey		330,747
<b>Estimated Total</b>	<b>15,500</b>	<b>150,000</b>

# Service Plan

## Countywide Demand Response Service



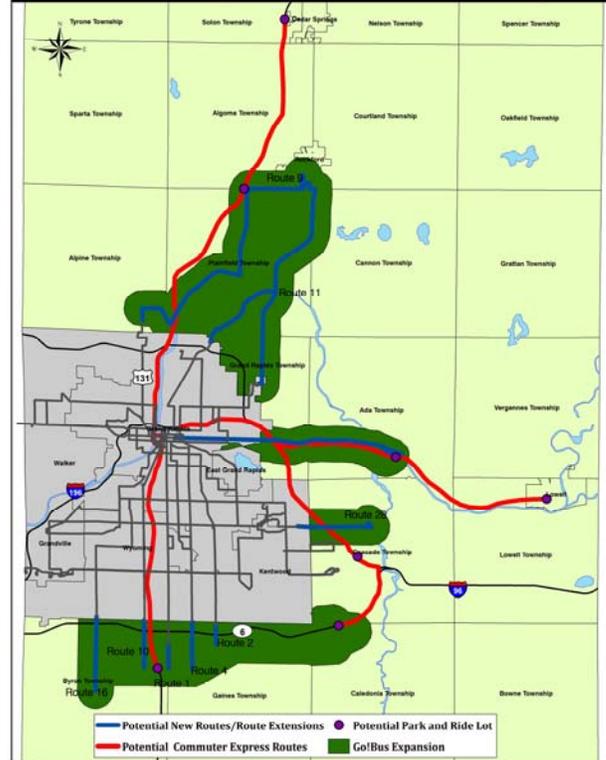
## GO!Bus Expansion & Countywide Demand Response

- **Countywide curb-to-curb demand response transportation** for residents of Kent County living outside the six-city area, and for GO!Bus eligible persons living in the six-cities;
- **Expansion of GO!Bus throughout the County** for seniors and disabled persons who live in the six-city area.

## Commuter Express/Route Extensions

- **Commuter express** service from park and ride lots to downtown Grand Rapids;
- The Rapid **fixed route extensions/new routes**.
- **Expansion of GO!Bus ADA service** to parallel the fixed route expanded area for seniors and disabled persons who live in the six-city area.

## Route Extensions/New Routes and Commuter Express



<b>Go!Bus /Countywide Demand Response</b>	<b>Population Served (in Study Area)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>246,777</b>
<b>New Bus Routes/Route Extensions</b>	<b>Population Served (in Study Area)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>99,744</b>
<b>Commuter Express to Downtown Grand Rapids</b>	<b>Population Served (in Study Area)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58,831</b>

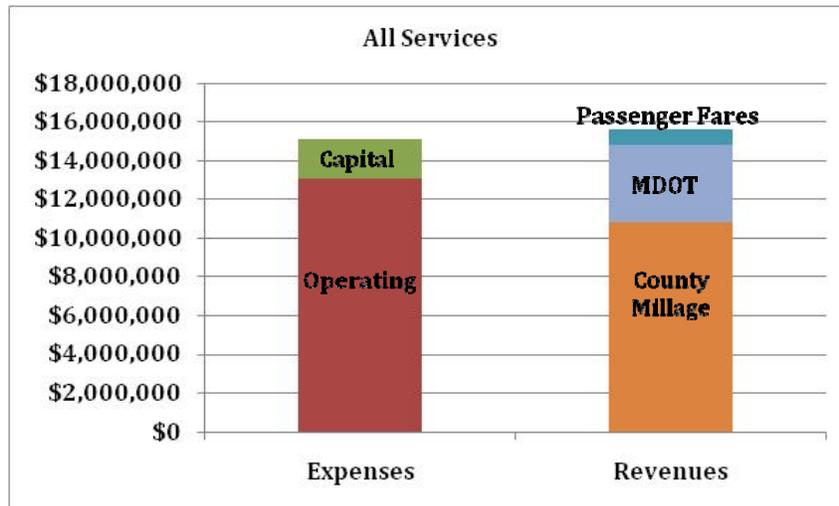
## How This System Works

- Qualified seniors and disabled residents of Kent County either living inside or outside the “six cities” area can travel anywhere in the County.
- Other members of the general public can use the County Demand Response service but may have to transfer to or from an existing ITP/The Rapid bus route to complete their trip.
- Users of Commuter Express service must drive or be dropped off at park and ride lots or one of many stops in Downtown Grand Rapids.
- Fares: \$3—Disabled person; \$7—Seniors; \$7-8—General Public; \$1.50—Rapid Fixed Route Service.

# Financial Plan

## Priority One - All Services

Annual operating and capital costs in 2013 dollars for all service types are shown below. All capital costs are locally funded and do not assume any state or federal funding. With projected passenger fares and Michigan Department of Transportation operating assistance, a countywide millage of 0.000485 is needed to fund all recommended transit services.



## Priority Two - Countywide Demand Response

Annual operating and capital costs to expand GO!Bus and to provide County Demand Response service are depicted below. In order to finance these services, an estimated 0.00025 County Millage will be needed along with passenger fares and funding from the Michigan Department of Transportation.

## Priority Three - Fixed Route Expansion/Commuter Express/Go!Bus ADA

Annual operating and capital costs to expand ITP/The Rapid fixed route service and to provide Commuter Express are also depicted below. This includes expansion of the Go!Bus ADA paratransit service. In order to finance these, an estimated 0.000235 County Millage will be needed along with passenger fares and funding from the Michigan Department of Transportation.

