



A Vehicle for Change:

Demonstrating the impact lack of transit has on a
community without a public transportation system
in Eastern Ottawa County, MI

Phase 2: Community Messaging Survey
April & May 2009

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Executive Summary

In April 2009, 1,000 phone surveys were conducted with residents in Eastern Ottawa County to determine which messages are most effective in increasing support for public transit, credibility among different potential transit sponsors, and the effect that unmet transportation needs have on the Eastern Ottawa County community. Respondents resided in either Allendale Township (154), Blendon Township (69), Georgetown/Jenison Township (603), City of Hudsonville (105) or Jamestown Township (69). Response rates were based on population estimates for each unit of government, which accounts for the differential sample sizes.

Most respondents were females (66%) with an annual household income between \$26,000 and \$50,000 (25%). Respondents were nearly equally distributed with regard to age; 30% were between 30 and 49 years old, 32% were between 50 and 65 years old, and 31% were over 65 years old. Half of respondents (50%) had used public transportation. Only 7% of respondents had an unmet transportation need in the past year, but 32% know someone who might use public transit if it was available and 33% have provided a ride to someone who could have used public transit if it had been available at the time.

Respondents rated educational organizations positively, with Grand Valley State University receiving the highest scores. Transportation providers were rated favorably also. The Rapid was the most well known area transit provider and received the highest ratings for service quality. Overwhelmingly, respondents believe transit services are important to the community.

Overall, the findings suggest respondents are supportive of public transportation and are willing to provide financial support through a millage for increased public transportation services in Eastern Ottawa County. Two-thirds (75%) of respondents indicated they were either very or somewhat supportive of public transportation services in Eastern Ottawa County. Also, when asked about supporting a millage for public transportation, 62% of respondents indicated being very or somewhat supportive.

Messages that were most effective in garnering respondent support were those that combined information about medical and employment needs. Of particular importance to respondents were messages that focused on the needs of seniors and people with disabilities. Also, respondents were more likely to support a public transportation millage of \$40 per year when the cost was framed as one candy bar per week.

A transit messaging survey was also conducted with 26 local organizations via email. Stakeholders felt messages using anecdotal evidence were most persuasive, as was framing a millage cost as equivalent to one candy bar per week. Stakeholders also felt that transit messages should describe personal relevance or benefit to the message recipient.

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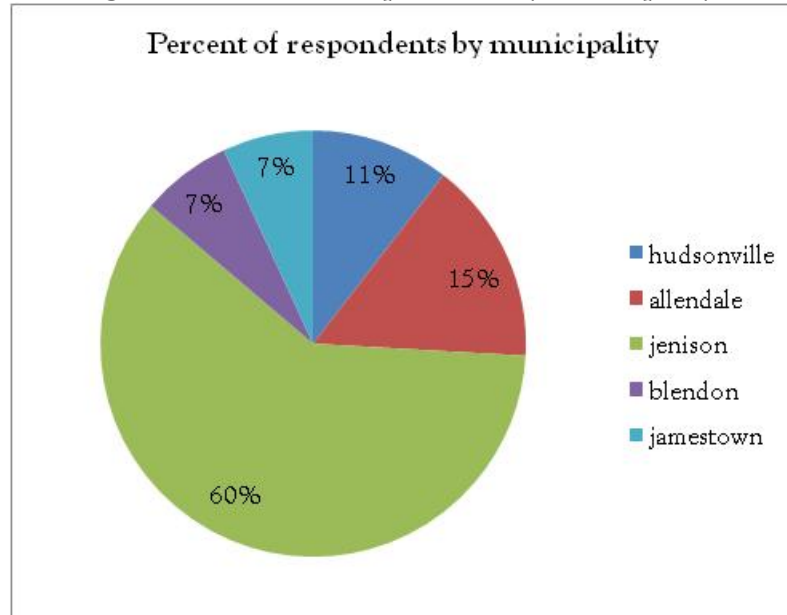
Part One: Community Messaging Survey

I. Residence

Question 1. Do you live in Hudsonville City, Allendale Township, Georgetown Township (Jenison), Blendon Township or Jamestown Township?

Of the 1,000 total survey respondents, 603 were residents of Georgetown/Jenison Township, 154 were residents of Allendale Township, 105 were residents of City of Hudsonville, 69 were residents of Blendon Township, and 69 were residents of Jamestown Township. The differential samples per unit of government are based on population percentages so that the communities with the largest populations have the most respondents and the communities with the fewest residents have the fewest respondents.

Figure 1. Percent of respondents by municipality



II. Message Types and Support for Public Transportation

Question 2. "Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: I am supportive of expanded public transportation in Eastern Ottawa County."

Respondents were randomly assigned to a medical statistical, medical anecdotal, employment statistical, employment anecdotal or neutral message about transportation in Eastern Ottawa County (Appendix B). After the message was read the respondent was asked: "Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the

following statement: I am supportive of expanded public transportation in Eastern Ottawa County.” (Strongly agree = 1, Strongly disagree = 4) Lower mean scores indicate more support.

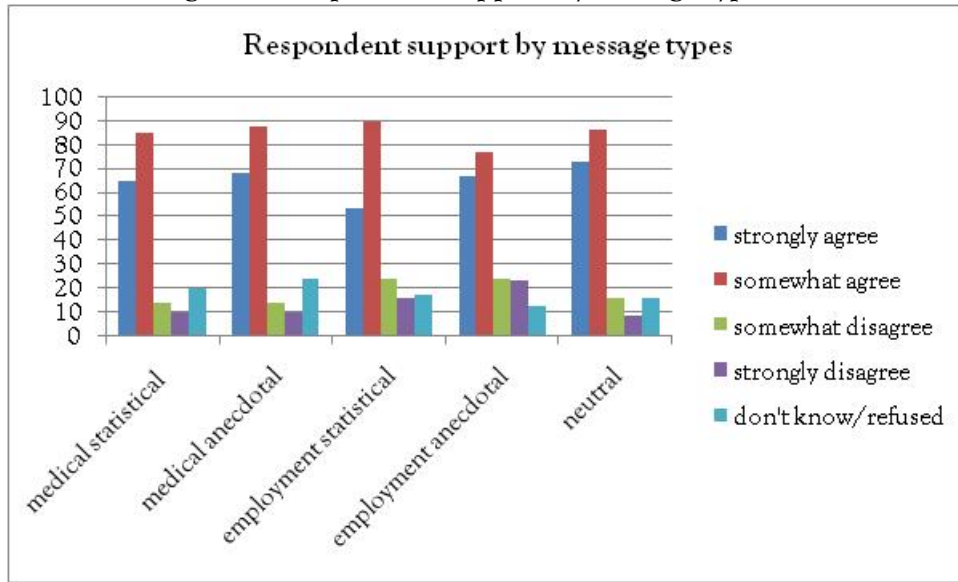
A neutral message resulted in the greatest support for expanded transportation services (Mean = 1.79). Both medical messages were equally persuasive and resulted in the second greatest support for public transportation (Mean medical anecdotal = 1.81; Mean medical statistical = 1.82). Both employment messages were equally persuasive and resulted in the third greatest support for public transportation (Mean employment anecdotal and statistical = 2.02). The neutral message may have resulted in greater support for transportation services because it combined two argument topics – employment and medical – even though it did not provide any statistical evidence.

It is important to note that all messages were statistically very similar and resulted in a large majority of support for public transportation services. These findings suggest that 75% of people support expanded public transportation services in Eastern Ottawa County, 16% do not, and 9% are undecided.

Table 1. Message type by support for expanded public transportation services

Message type	Strongly agree (1)	Somewhat agree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Strongly disagree (4)	Don't know (5)	Total	Mean ratings
Medical Statistical	34% (65)	44% (85)	7% (14)	5% (10)	10% (20)	194	1.82
Medical Anecdotal	33% (68)	43% (87)	7% (14)	5% (10)	12% (24)	203	1.81
Employment Statistical	27% (53)	45% (89)	12% (24)	8% (16)	9% (17)	199	2.02
Employment Anecdotal	33% (67)	38% (77)	12% (24)	11% (23)	6% (13)	204	2.02
Neutral	37% (73)	43% (86)	8% (16)	5% (9)	8% (16)	200	1.79
Total Count	33% (326)	42% (424)	9% (92)	7% (68)	9% (90)	100% (1,000)	

Figure 2. Respondent support by message types

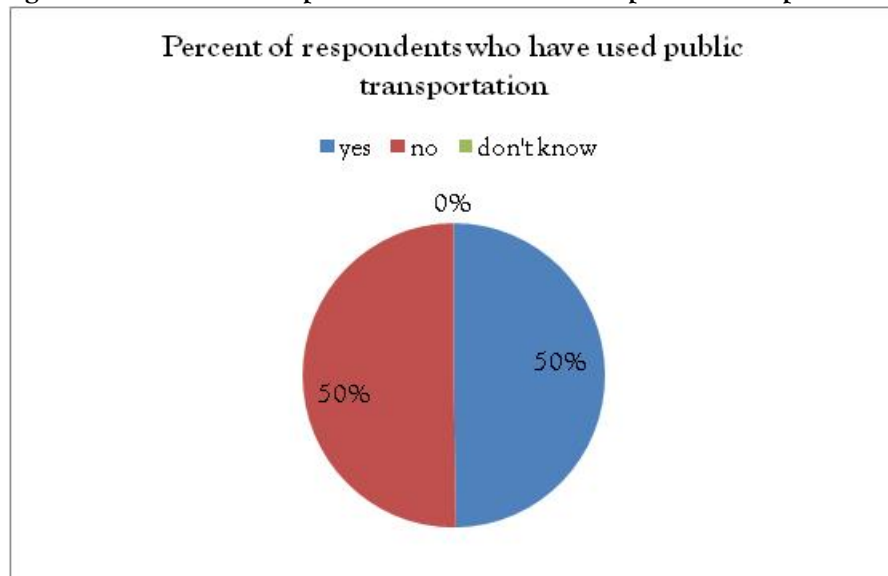


III. Public Transportation Use

Question 3. Have you ever used public transportation?

Respondents were nearly evenly split when asked whether they have ever used public transportation: 498 (50%) of respondents said “yes” they had used public transportation, while 502 (50%) said no, they had not ever used public transportation. No respondents indicated they did not know whether they had ever used public transportation.

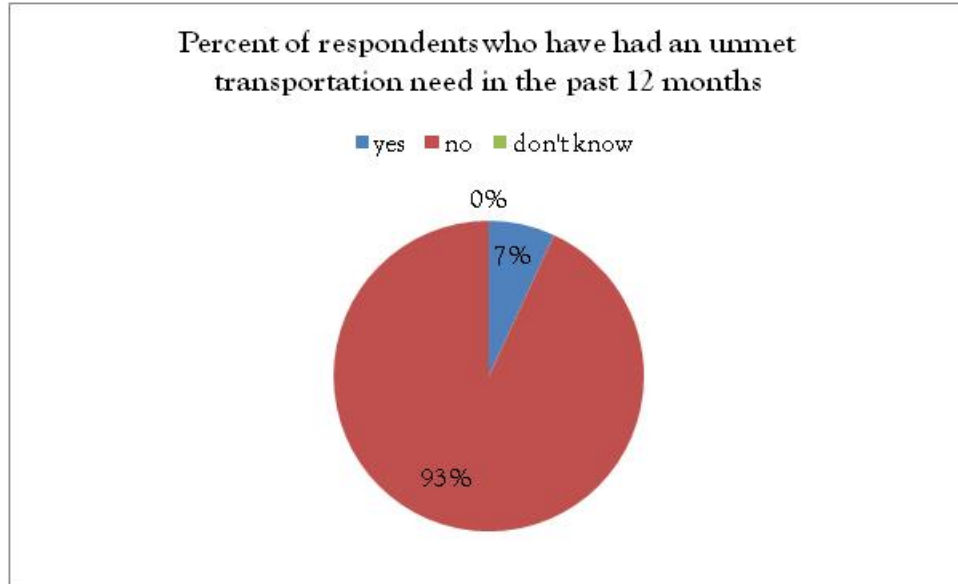
Figure 3. Percent of respondents who have used public transportation



Question 4. Have you had an unmet transportation need in the past twelve months?

The majority of respondents (931, 93%) have not had an unmet transportation need in the past 12 months, while 69 respondents (7%) indicated that they have experienced an unmet transportation need in the past year. No respondents were unsure of whether they have had an unmet transportation need in the past 12 months.

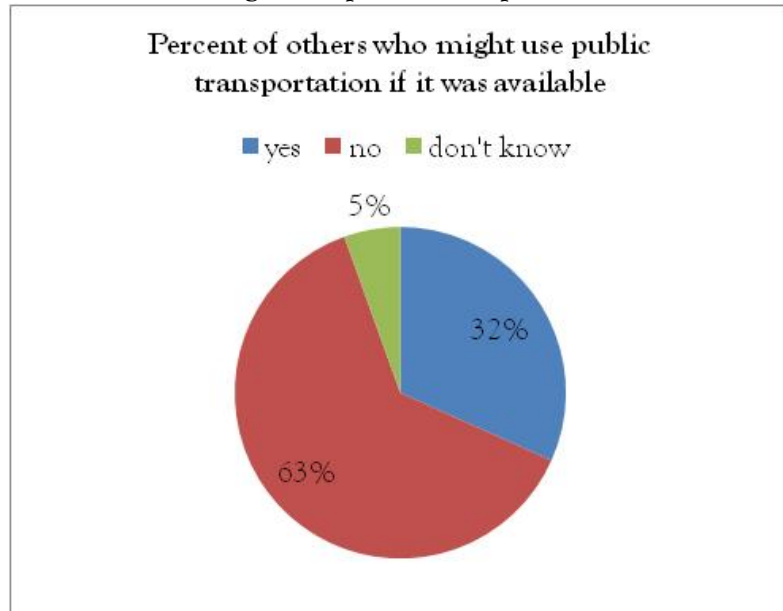
Figure 4. Percent of respondents who have had an unmet transportation need in the past 12 months



Question 5. Do you have a friend, family member or neighbor who lives in Eastern Ottawa County who might use public transportation if it was available?

Although most respondents did not have unmet transportation needs themselves, about one-third (317, 32%) know someone who might use public transportation if it was available. The majority of respondents (628, 63%) do not know anyone who might use public transportation, and a few respondents were unsure whether they know anyone who might use public transportation if it was available (55, 5%).

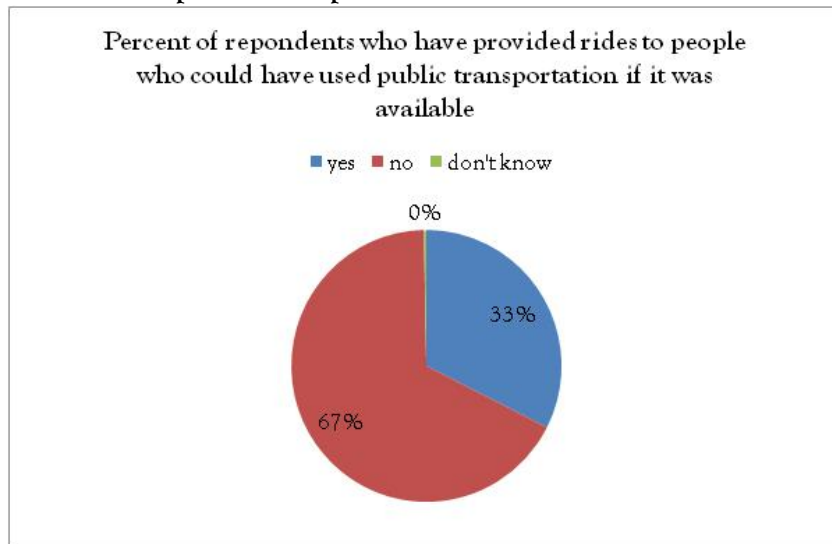
Figure 5. Percent of others who might use public transportation if it was available



Question 6. In the past 12 months, have you provided any rides to friends, family members or neighbors who could have used public transit to reach their destination if it was available?

In the past 12 months, approximately one-third of respondents (325, 33%) have provided rides to friends, family members or neighbors who could have used public transit to reach their destination if it was available. Nearly two-thirds of respondents (672, 67%) have not provided these types of rides for others. Only three people indicated they were unsure whether they had provided these types of rides in the past 12 months.

Figure 6. Percent of respondents who have provided rides to people who could have used public transportation if it was available



IV. Transportation Providers

Respondents were randomly assigned to answer questions about one of the three transportation providers.

Georgetown Seniors

Question 7. What do you associate with the name “Georgetown Seniors Transportation”?

Out of the 334 respondents who were asked what they associate with the name “Georgetown Seniors Transportation,” 58% were able to correctly recognize the name, while 40% could not and 2% refused to answer this question.

Question 8. All things considered, in your opinion, would you rate the job Georgetown Seniors Transportation does in providing the community with bus service as very good, good, fair, poor or very poor?

Respondents rated Georgetown Seniors Transportation service as very good (11%), good (20%), fair (4%), poor (1%), and very poor (1%). A large majority of respondents (63%) did not know or refused to answer this question.

Question 9. Do you feel the transportation services offered by Georgetown Seniors Transportation are very important to the community, somewhat important to the community or not important to the community?

A majority of respondents (56%) said the transportation services offered by Georgetown Seniors Transportation are very important to the community, 31% said they were somewhat important to the community, and 2% said they were not important to the community. There were 10% of respondents who were either undecided or refused to answer the question.

The Rapid

Question 10. What do you associate with the name “The Rapid”?

Out of the 331 respondents who were asked what they associate with the name “The Rapid,” 89% were able to correctly recognize the name, while 11% could not. No one refused to answer this question.

Question 11. All things considered, in your opinion, would you rate the job The Rapid does in providing the community with bus service as very good, good, fair, poor or very poor?

Respondents rated The Rapid's service as very good (18%), good (35%), fair (6%), poor (1%), and very poor (2%). Over one-third of respondents (39%) did not know the organization or refused to answer this question.

Question 12. Do you feel the transportation services offered by The Rapid are very important to the community, somewhat important to the community or not important to the community?

A majority of respondents (62%) said the transportation services offered by The Rapid are very important to the community, 29% said they were somewhat important to the community, and 2% said they were not important to the community. There were 7% of respondents who were either undecided or refused to answer the question.

Macatawa Area Express

Question 13. What do you associate with the name "Macatawa Area Express"?

Out of the 335 respondents who were asked what they associate with the name "Macatawa Area Express," 36% were able to correctly recognize the name, while 63% could not. About 1% of respondents refused to answer this question.

Question 14. All things considered, in your opinion, would you rate the job the Macatawa Area Express does in providing the community with bus service as very good, good, fair, poor or very poor?

Respondents rated the service of the Macatawa Area Express as very good (3%), good (13%), fair (5%), poor (1%), and very poor (1%). Over two-third of respondents (77%) did not know or refused to answer this question.

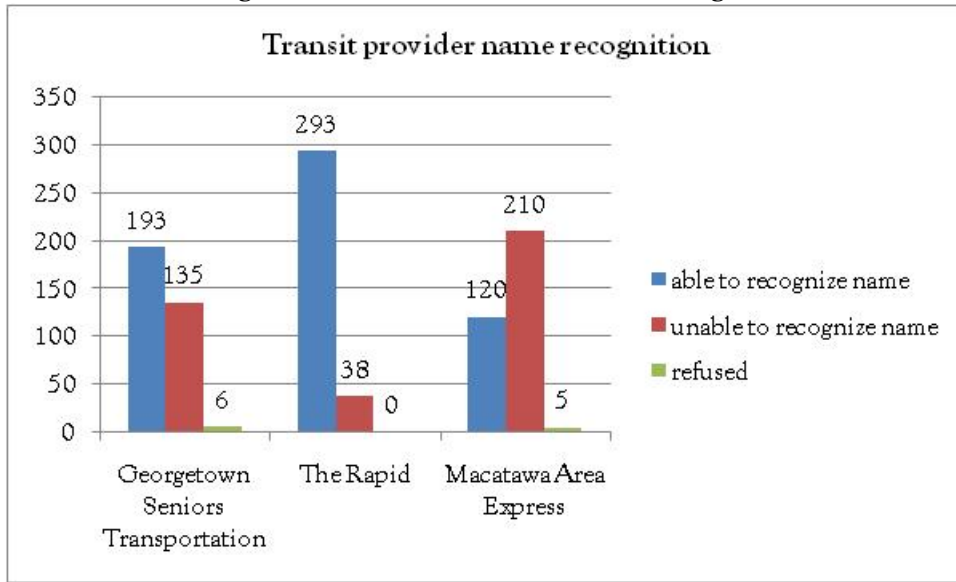
Question 15. Do you feel the transportation services offered by the Macatawa Area Express are very important to the community, somewhat important to the community or not important to the community?

A majority of respondents (38%) said the transportation services offered by the Macatawa Area Express are very important to the community, 35% said they were somewhat important to the community, and 6% said they were not important to the community. Nearly one-quarter (22%) of respondents were either undecided or refused to answer the question.

Comparison of Transportation Providers

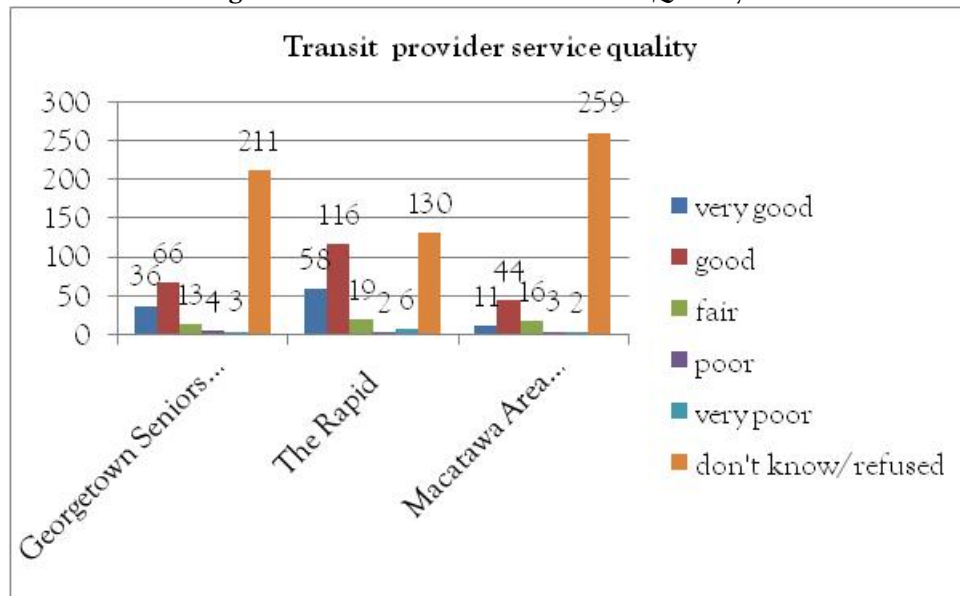
A comparison of the three transportation providers reveals that The Rapid has the greatest name recognition in Eastern Ottawa County followed by Georgetown Seniors Transportation, and then the Macatawa Area Express.

Figure 7. Transit Provider Name Recognition



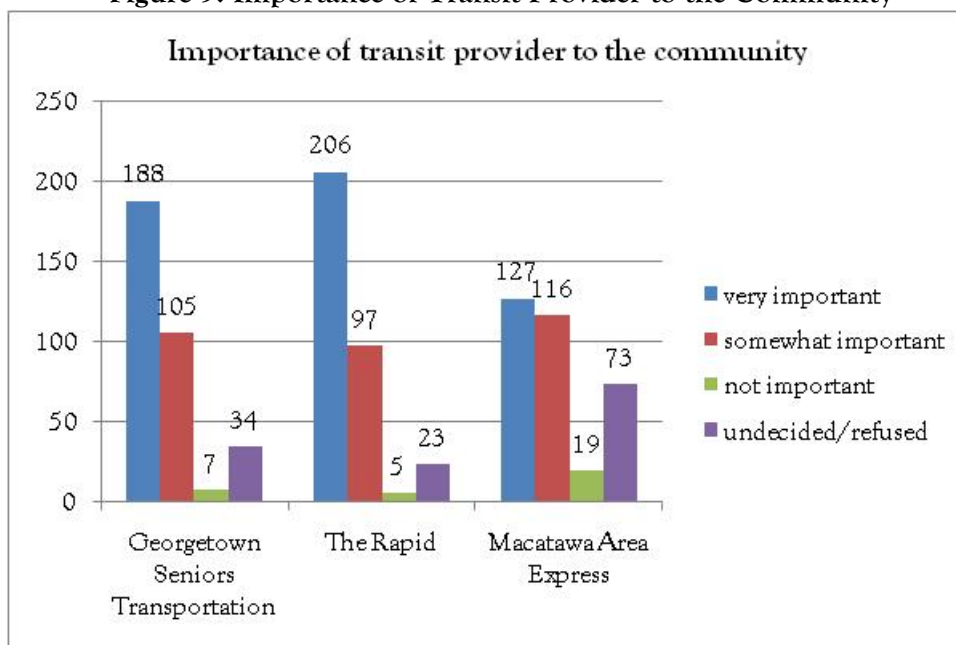
When respondents rated the job each transportation provider was doing in providing the community with bus service, again, The Rapid received the highest ratings for service quality (53% of respondents said very good or good). Georgetown Seniors Transportation received the second highest ratings for service quality (30% of respondents said very good or good). The Macatawa Area Express received the third highest ratings for service quality (16% of respondents said very good or good); however, it is important to note that these ratings are likely low due to the lack of respondent's familiarity with the Macatawa Area Express service. Less than one quarter of respondents commented on this question, and 63% of respondents could not accurately associate the MAX name with some form of bus service.

Figure 8. Transit Provider Service Quality



Respondents indicated that The Rapid provided the most important services to the community (92% of respondents said The Rapid’s services were very or somewhat important). Georgetown Seniors Transportation provided the second most important services to the community (88% of respondents said Georgetown Seniors Transportation services were very or somewhat important). Respondents indicated that the Macatawa Area Express provided the third most important services to the community (73% of respondents said MAX’s services were very or somewhat important). Regardless of the provider, overall, all transportation services were viewed as important to the community.

Figure 9. Importance of Transit Provider to the Community

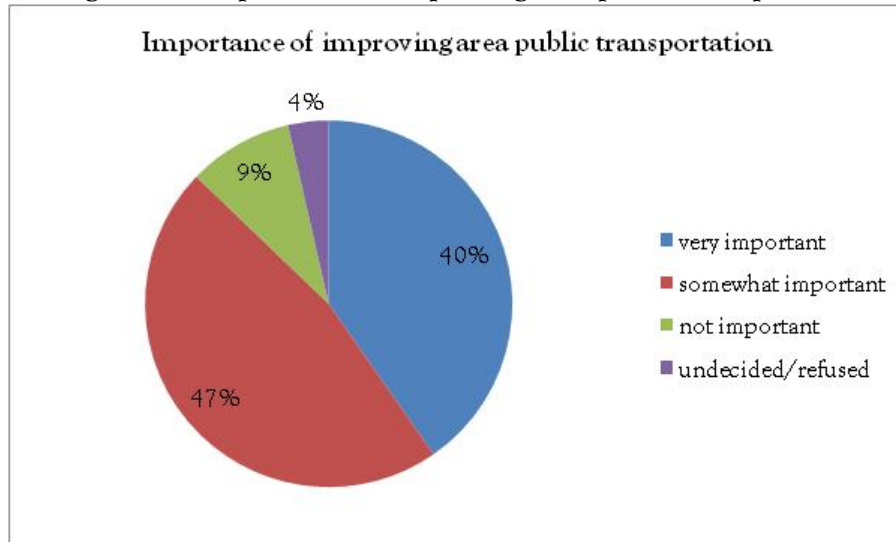


V. *Improving Public Transportation and Traffic Congestion*

Question 16. Do you feel improving area public transportation is very important, somewhat important or not important?

A large majority (87%) of respondents said that improving area public transportation was either very important (40%) or somewhat important (47%), while only 9% indicated that it was not important. Four percent of respondents were either undecided or refused to answer this question.

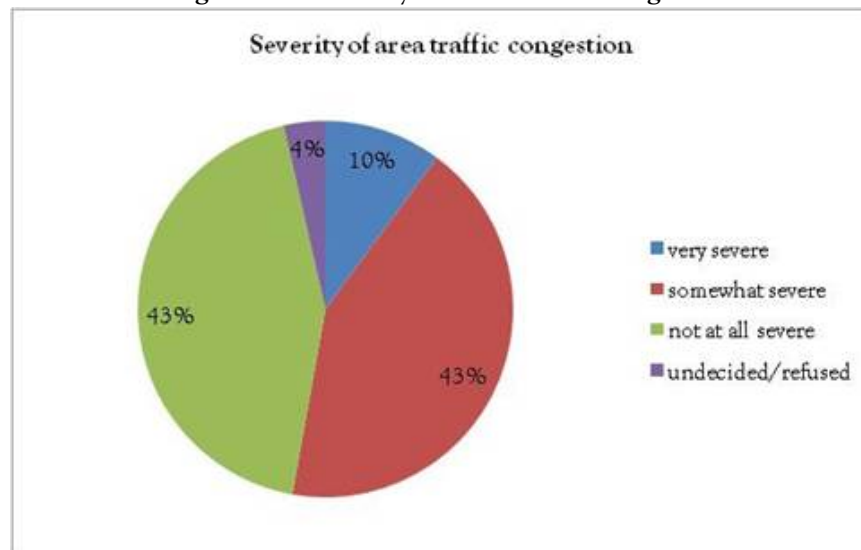
Figure 10. Importance of improving area public transportation



Question 17. Would you judge the traffic congestion problem in the area as very severe, somewhat severe or not at all severe?

Slightly more than half of the respondents judged the traffic congestion problem in Eastern Ottawa County to be either very severe (10%) or somewhat severe (43%). Almost half of the respondents indicated traffic congestion in the area was not at all severe (43%). Four percent of respondents were either undecided or did not answer the question.

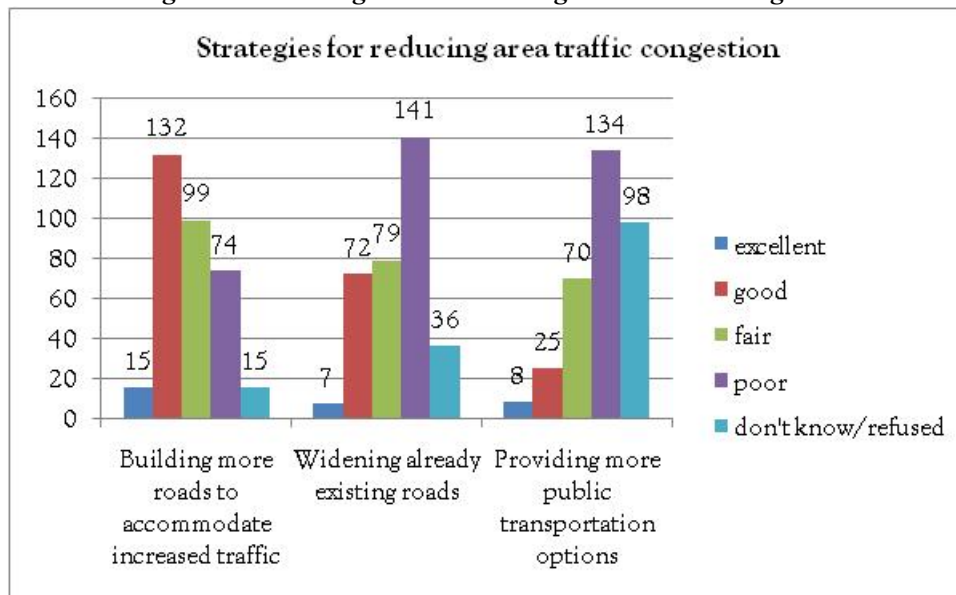
Figure 11. Severity of area traffic congestion



Question 18. Please indicate whether you think each of the following ideas are an excellent, good, fair or poor means of reducing traffic congestion in the area.

Forty-four percent of respondents indicated that building more roads to accommodate increased traffic was either an excellent or good means of reducing traffic congestion in the area, while 52% said it was a fair or poor means. Twenty-four percent of respondents indicated that widening already existing roads was either an excellent or good means of reducing traffic congestion in the area, while 66% said it was a fair or poor means. Finally, 10% of respondents said that providing more public transportation options was either an excellent or good means of reducing traffic congestion in the area, while 61% said it was a fair or poor means.

Figure 12. Strategies for reducing area traffic congestion



VI. Public Transportation Considerations

Question 19. Would you say the following considerations about public transportation are very important, somewhat important or are unimportant?

Respondents thought that some of the most important considerations about public transportation were that it helps people with disabilities get to their jobs (Mean = 3.64), it increases the ability to get employment and training opportunities for the unemployed and underemployed (Mean = 3.52), and it helps people transition from welfare to work (Mean = 3.38). (Very important = 4, Unimportant = 2) Higher mean scores indicate greater importance.

Table 2. Public transportation considerations (general)

	Very important (4)	Somewhat important (3)	Unimportant (2)	D/K, Ref. (1)	Total Count	Mean
Public transportation services help people with disabilities get to their jobs	72% (241)	22% (72)	4% (13)	2% (7)	333	3.64
Public transportation increases the ability to get employment and training opportunities for the unemployed and underemployed	62% (205)	30% (99)	7% (22)	2% (6)	332	3.52
Public transportation helps people transition from welfare to work	56% (188)	31% (105)	7% (23)	6% (19)	335	3.38
In these difficult economic times, public transportation grows businesses by transporting their customers and employees	46% (156)	42% (140)	9% (30)	3% (10)	336	3.32
Public transportation helps reduce traffic congestion	43% (143)	41% (138)	14% (46)	2% (7)	334	3.25
Public transportation creates a hub for economic development	36% (118)	48% (159)	13% (44)	3% (11)	332	3.16
Areas with public transportation options attract new residents	26% (88)	49% (163)	21% (70)	4% (14)	335	2.97
Public transportation supports the conservation of land	33% (107)	35% (113)	26% (85)	7% (22)	327	2.93
Public transportation increases property values	18% (59)	40% (133)	31% (103)	12% (41)	336	2.63

Question 20. Would you say the following considerations about public transportation are very important, somewhat important or are unimportant?

Additional considerations that respondents said were important about public transportation were related to seniors. Respondents said that the fact 155 seniors have unmet transportation needs (Mean = 3.44) and 36% of people with unmet transportation needs are seniors (Mean = 3.43) are important considerations. Also, respondents thought that the greatest unmet transportation need being to medical appointments was an important

consideration (Mean = 3.42). (Very important = 4, Unimportant = 2) Higher mean scores indicate greater importance.

Table 3. Public transportation considerations (statistics)

	Very important (4)	Somewhat important (3)	Unimportant (2)	D/K, Ref. (1)	Total Count	Mean
In the past 9 months, 155 seniors living in Eastern Ottawa County have contacted a community organization with an unmet transportation need	55% (183)	37% (122)	5% (17)	3% (10)	332	3.44
Thirty six percent of people with unmet transportation needs at seniors (age 60 and older)	54% (179)	38% (127)	4% (13)	4% (12)	331	3.43
The greatest unmet transportation need in Eastern Ottawa County is to medical appointments	60% (202)	28% (95)	5% (16)	7% (22)	335	3.42
Studies have found that for every \$1 invested in public transportation, \$6 are returned to the community in the form of economic opportunities, decreased congestion and saved parking costs	52% (173)	35% (117)	10% (32)	4% (12)	334	3.35
The second greatest unmet transportation need in Eastern Ottawa County is to places of employment	50% (168)	37% (123)	9% (29)	4% (13)	333	3.34
Ridership on The Rapid exceeded 9 million rides in fiscal year 2008	55% (184)	31% (105)	6% (19)	1% (27)	335	3.33
In the past 9 months, 81 people living in Eastern Ottawa County have indicated that lack of transportation has prevented them from looking for, getting or keeping a job	53% (176)	31% (104)	12% (40)	4% (15)	335	3.32
Over 400 people in Eastern Ottawa County have contacted a local community organization about their unmet transportation needs in the past 9 months	48% (160)	39% (130)	7% (24)	6% (20)	334	3.29
Thirty eight percent of people with unmet transportation needs are of working age (between the ages of 18-59)	45% (150)	40% (134)	6% (20)	8% (27)	331	3.23

VII. Source Credibility

Question 21. I'm going to read you the names of several groups and people in society, and I'd like you to rate your feelings toward each one as either very positive, somewhat positive, neutral, somewhat negative, or very negative. If you have not heard of the organization or person, just say so.

Educational organizations were rated most favorably and were most well known by respondents. Respondents felt either very (58%) or somewhat (23%) positively about Grand Valley State University, and only 5% of respondents either refused to respond or had not heard of the organization. Jenison Public Schools ranked second, with 73% of respondents rating their feelings toward the school system as very or somewhat positive. The organizations that received the lowest ratings also tended to be the least well known. Thus, their low ratings are not necessarily due to respondents having negative feelings toward these organizations, but respondents being unfamiliar with them. (*Very positive = 6, Very negative = 2*) Higher mean scores indicate more positive feelings toward the organization.

Table 4. Source credibility

	Very positive (6)	Somewhat positive (5)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat negative (3)	Very negative (2)	D/K Org. (1)	Total Count	Mean
Grand Valley State University	58% (292)	23% (116)	11% (57)	2% (11)	1% (3)	5% (24)	503	5.21
Jenison Public Schools	52% (261)	21% (106)	18% (89)	1% (4)	0.2% (1)	8% (38)	499	5.02
Love In The Name of Christ	69% (276)	10% (42)	5% (22)	1% (2)	0% (0)	15% (60)	402	5.02
Hudsonville Public Schools	50% (251)	22% (109)	17% (86)	0% (0)	0.2% (1)	11% (54)	501	4.89
Fair Haven Ministries	46% (153)	22% (73)	18% (61)	2% (5)	0% (0)	12% (38)	330	4.79
The Rapid	39% (128)	27% (89)	19% (63)	2% (5)	0% (0)	14% (47)	332	4.60
Georgetown Seniors	46% (158)	17% (57)	12% (42)	1% (3)	0% (0)	24% (80)	340	4.38
Allendale Public Schools	34% (168)	21% (104)	24% (120)	1% (7)	0.4% (2)	19% (96)	497	4.28
Resurrection Life Church	31% (103)	25% (83)	22% (74)	1% (4)	2% (6)	19% (62)	332	4.26
Mars Hill Bible Church	27% (91)	22% (74)	24% (80)	4% (12)	2% (6)	22% (75)	338	4.02
United Way 211	20% (78)	22% (88)	16% (65)	4% (14)	3% (10)	36% (142)	397	3.46
Nu-Wool	18%	17%	18%	0.5%	0.5%	46%	404	3.14

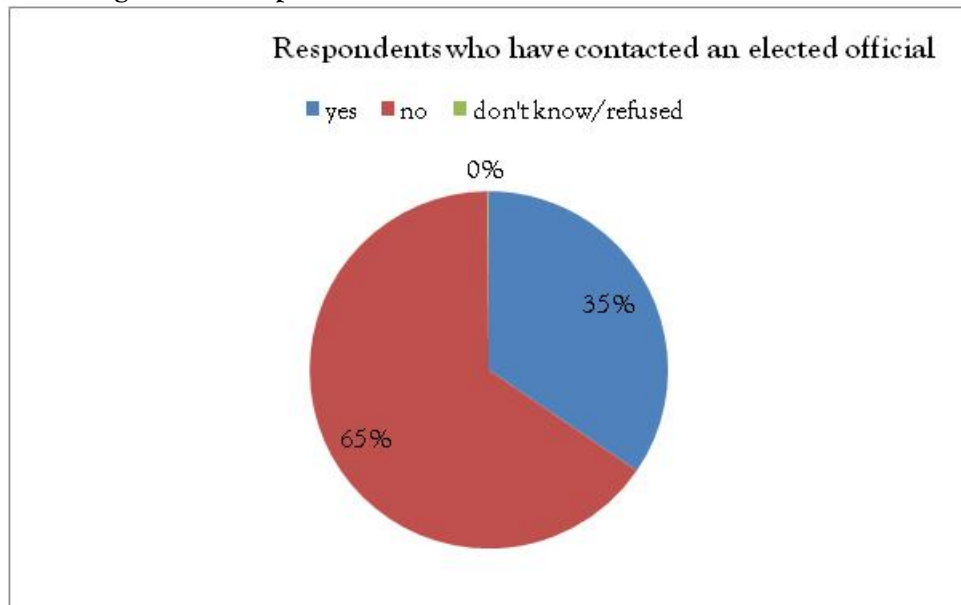
Company	(72)	(69)	(74)	(2)	(2)	(185)		
Macatawa Area Express	9% (31)	13% (41)	18% (58)	0.3% (1)	0% (0)	60% (197)	328	2.51
Grand Valley Metro Council	7% (28)	8% (31)	15% (58)	1% (2)	0% (0)	70% (280)	399	2.11
Disability Network/Lakeshore	7% (28)	7% (28)	4% (17)	0.5% (2)	0.3% (1)	81% (322)	398	1.77

VIII. Political Participation

Question 22. Have you contacted or visited a public official - at any level of government - to ask for assistance or to express your opinion?

A majority of respondents (65%) have never contacted or visited a public official – at any level of government – to ask for assistance or to express an opinion. A little over one-third (35%) have contacted an elected official.

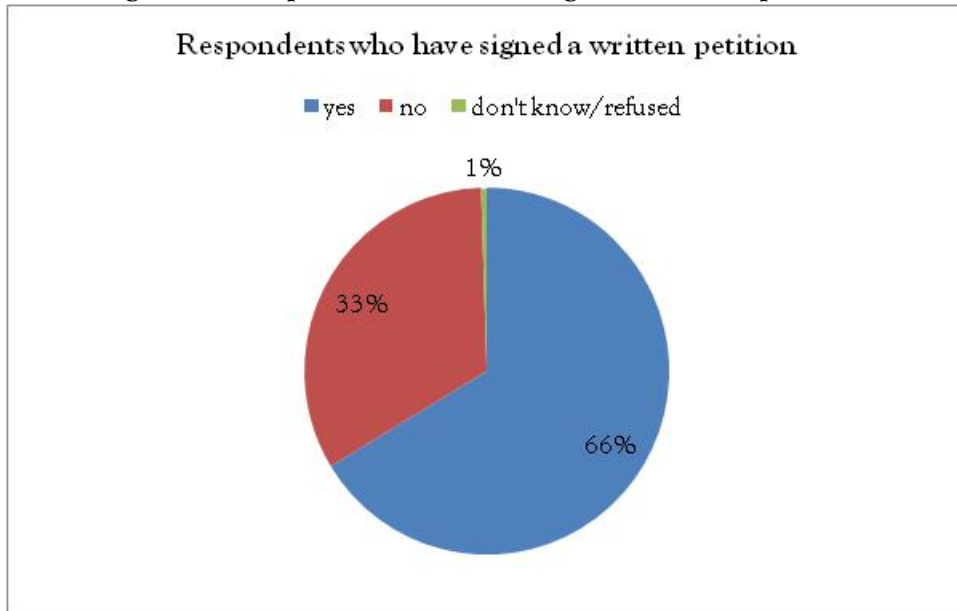
Figure 13. Respondents who have contacted an elected official



Question 23. Have you signed a written petition about a political or social issue?

However, a majority of respondents (66%) have signed a written petition about a political or social issue, while only 33% have not. One percent were unsure whether they have taken this action.

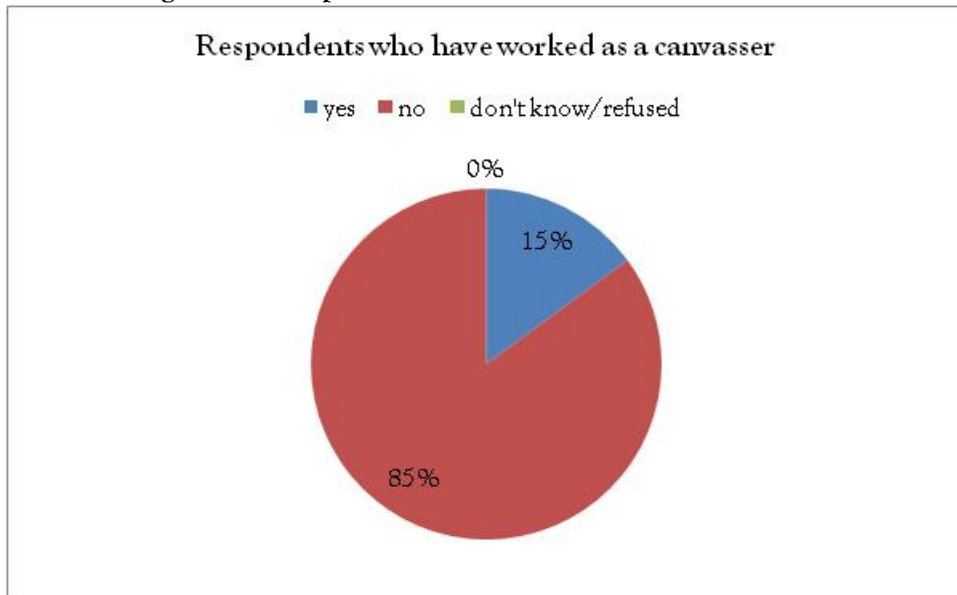
Figure 14. Respondents who have signed a written petition



Question 24. Have you worked as a canvasser - having gone door to door for a political or social group or candidate.

A large majority of respondents (85%) have never worked as a canvasser – having gone door to door for a political or social group or candidate, while 15% have worked as a canvasser at some point.

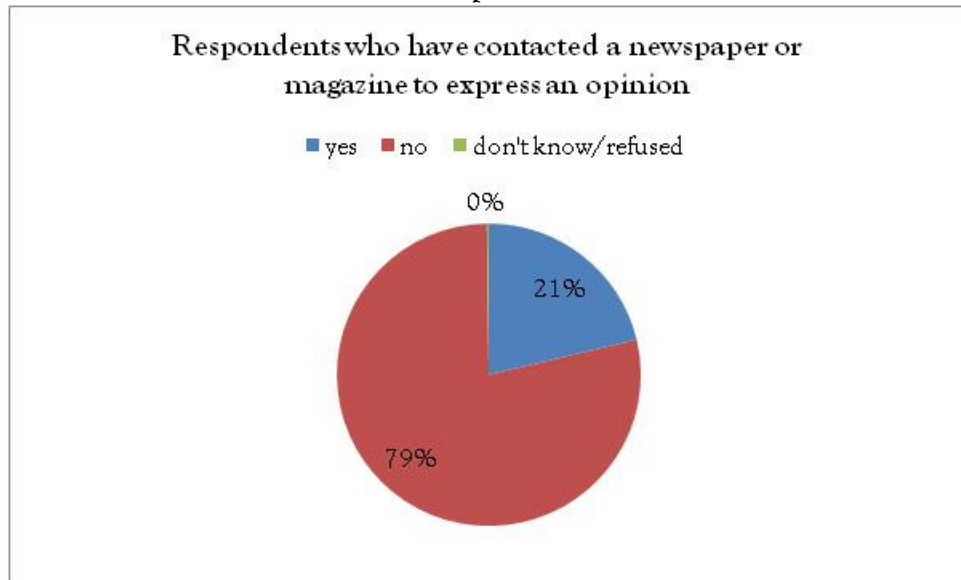
Figure 15. Respondents who have worked as a canvasser



Question 25. Have you contacted a newspaper or magazine to express your opinion on an issue?

Also, most respondents (79%) have never contacted a newspaper or magazine to express an opinion on an issue. One-fifth (21%) of respondents have taken this action at some point.

Figure 16. Respondents who have contacted a newspaper or magazine to express an opinion



IX. Financial and Public Support for Public Transportation

The 1,000 respondents surveyed were randomly assigned to one of four message frames about the cost of a public transportation millage, then they were asked about their support.

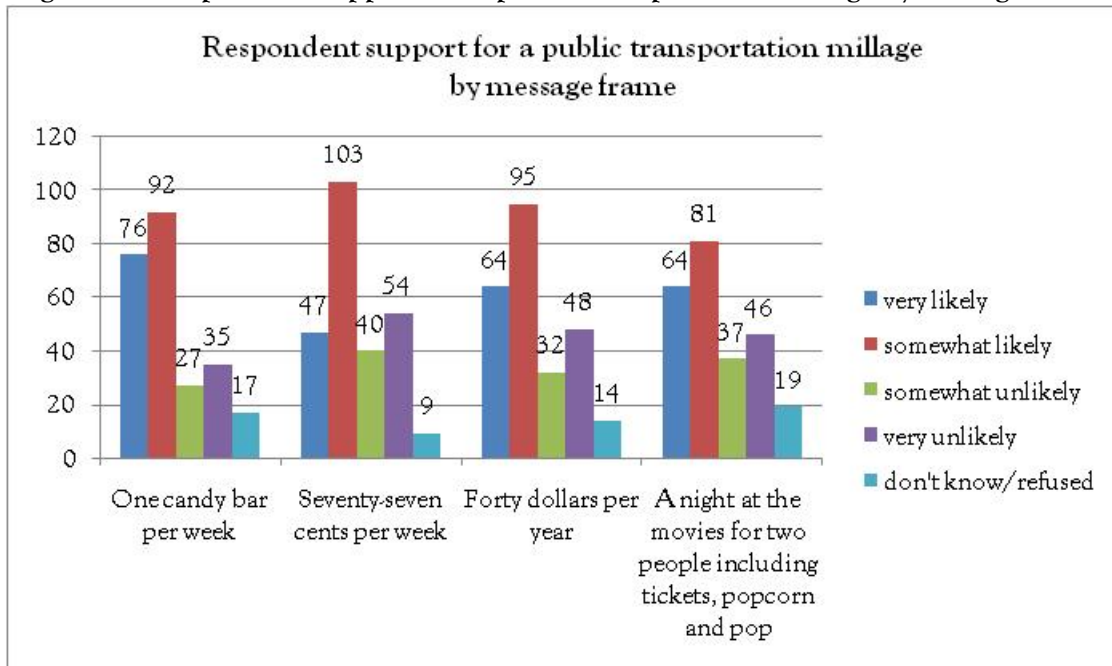
Question 26. Would you be very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely to support a millage for public transportation services in Eastern Ottawa County if it cost your household:

Overall, the majority of respondents were supportive of a millage for public transportation services in Eastern Ottawa County, regardless of the message frame used. However, the most effective frame was comparing the millage cost to one candy bar per week. When this frame was used, 68% of respondents were either very or somewhat likely to support a public transportation millage compared to 60% using the 77 cents per week frame, 63% using the \$40 per year frame, or 59% using the night at the movies frame.

Table 5. Millage Message Frames

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely	Don't know Refused	Total
One candy bar per week	31% (76)	37% (92)	11% (27)	14% (35)	7% (17)	247
Seventy-seven cents per week	19% (47)	41% (103)	16% (40)	21% (54)	4% (9)	253
Forty dollars per year	25% (64)	38% (95)	13% (32)	19% (48)	6% (14)	253
A night at the movies for two people including tickets, popcorn and pop	26% (64)	33% (81)	15% (37)	19% (46)	8% (19)	247
Total	25% (251)	37% (371)	14% (136)	18% (183)	6% (59)	(1000)

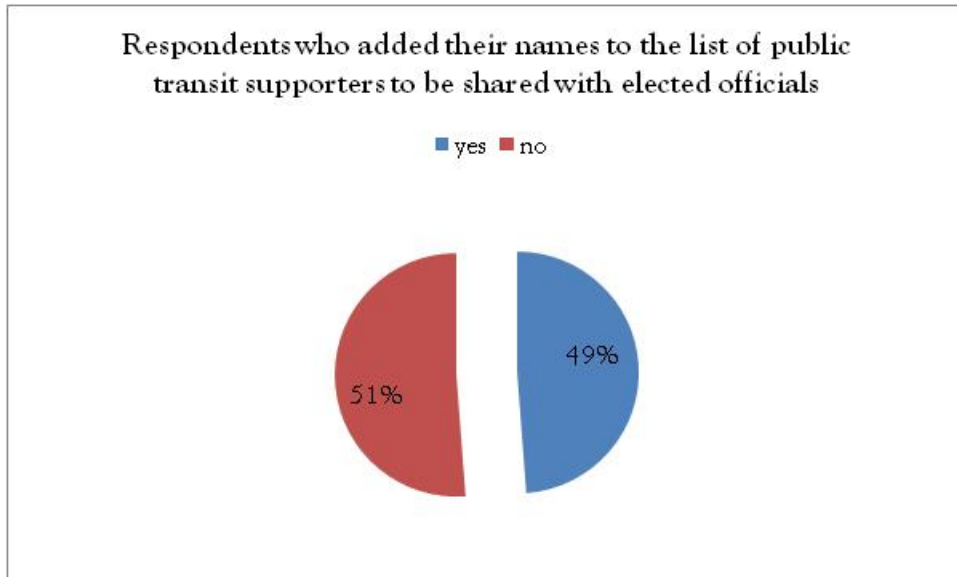
Figure 17. Respondent support for a public transportation millage by message frame



Question 27. We are collecting names of people who support public transportation to share with elected officials in your community. Your name will not be connected to your survey responses in any way. May I add your name to the list of public transit supporters?

Of the 1,000 respondents contacted, nearly half (488, 49%) agreed to have their names added to the list of public transit supporters to be shared with their local elected officials, while 51% of respondents (512) declined.

Figure 18. Respondents who added their names to the list of public transit supporters to be shared with elected officials

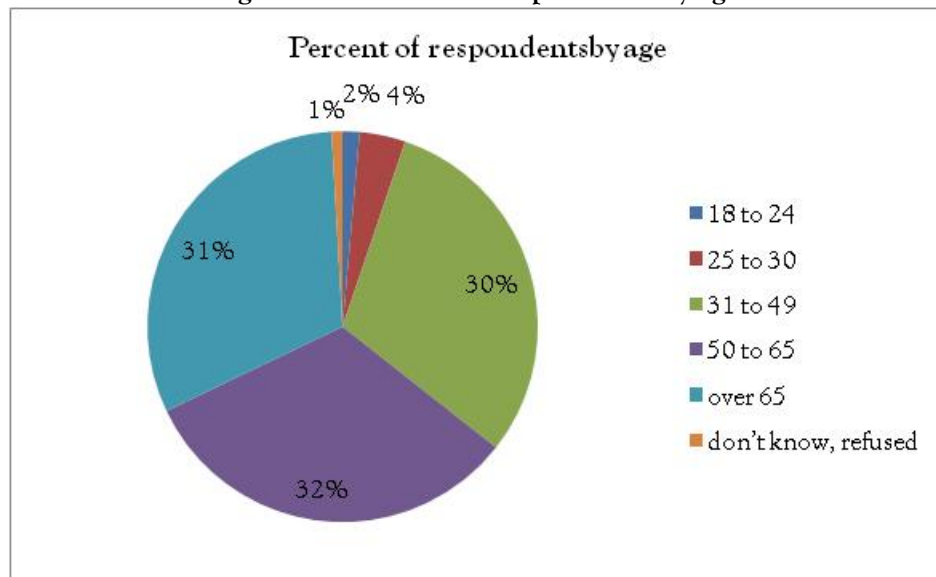


X. Respondent Demographics

Age

Most respondents were age 31 and older. About one third of respondents (30%) were between 31 and 49 years old, 32% were ages 50 and 65, and 31% were age 65 and older. Only 4% of respondents were between 25 and 30, 2% were between 18 and 24, and 1% refused to share their age.

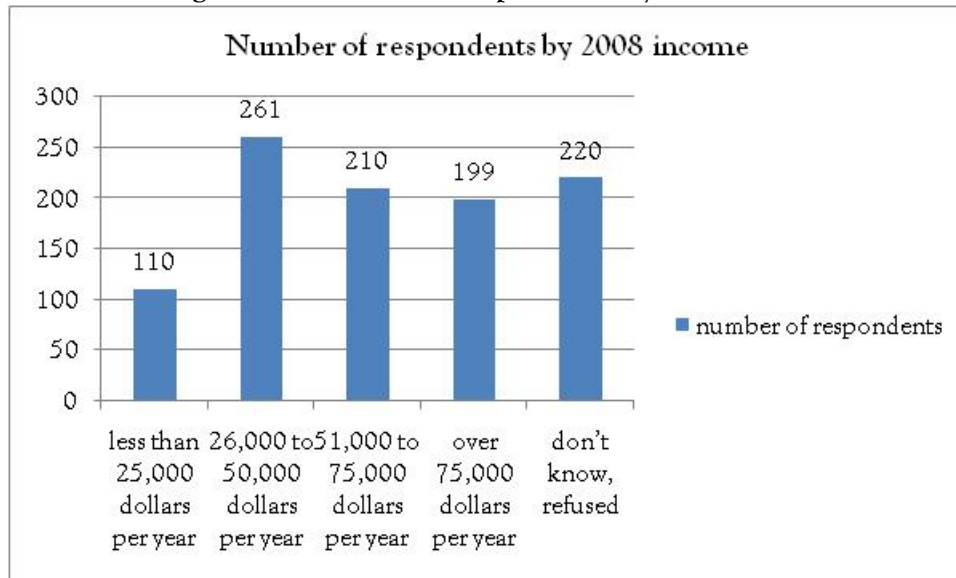
Figure 19. Percent of respondents by age



Income

Respondents were also diverse in terms of income. Eleven percent of respondents indicated an annual household income in 2008 of less than \$25,000 per year, 25% reported making between \$26,000 and \$50,000, 21% said they made between \$51,000 and \$75,000, and 20% said they made over \$75,000. About one-fifth (22%) of respondents did not know or declined to answer this question.

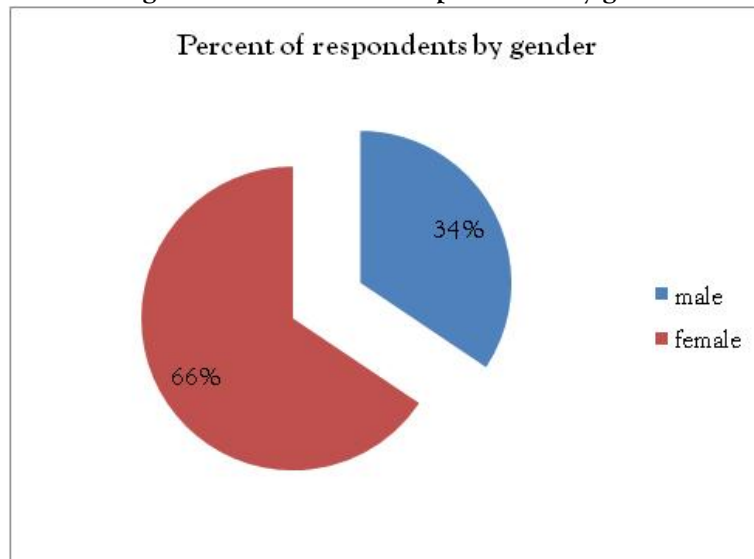
Figure 20. Number of respondents by 2008 income



Gender

Most respondents (66%) were female, while 34% were male. This unequal distribution is typical of phone surveys, as most females tend to answer the phone and agree to participate in surveys.

Figure 21. Percent of respondents by gender



Part Two: Stakeholder Messaging Survey

I. Summary

During April 2009, approximately 125 stakeholder organizations were contacted via email. They were asked to complete a brief online transportation messaging survey to assist in identifying and creating effective messages to market public transportation. Twenty-six stakeholders participated in the survey.

Results from the survey indicate stakeholders find anecdotal evidence most persuasive. Specifically, stakeholders found the anecdotal employment message most persuasive (77%) and the anecdotal medical message second most persuasive (73%).

Also, stakeholders found the one candy bar per week message most persuasive (77%) in framing the cost of a public transportation millage.

Fourteen stakeholders provided ideas for transportation marketing messages. Most of these ideas focused on making the message relevant and personal to the message receivers. Stakeholders discussed the need to determine how public transportation will personally benefit people, and craft a message according to those benefits.

II. Results

Question 1. Many people living in Eastern Ottawa County need transportation. Thirty six percent of people with unmet transportation needs are seniors, age sixty and older. Among seniors who need transportation, fifty one percent have indicated that their greatest unmet transportation need is to medical appointments. In the past year, over one hundred and fifty seniors in Eastern Ottawa County contacted a community organization with a transit need. Many of these needs have gone unmet because of lack of transportation resources in Eastern Ottawa County. How persuasive do you believe this message would be in Eastern Ottawa County to increase support for public transportation services?

Table 6. Stakeholder perceptions of medical statistical evidence

	Frequency	Percent
Very persuasive (1)	2	7.7%
(2)	4	15.4%
(3)	10	38.5%
(4)	4	15.4%
(5)	3	11.5%
(6)	0	0%
(7)	1	3.8%

(8)	2	7.7%
(9)	0	0%
Not very persuasive (10)	0	0%
Total responses	26	

Question 2. Many people living in Eastern Ottawa County need transportation. Eleanor is one senior, over the age of sixty, who has unmet transportation needs. In particular, Eleanor’s greatest transportation need is to get to her weekly kidney dialysis appointments. In the past year, she contacted several community organizations with her unmet transit need. Eleanor has not found a ride to her medical appointments because of a lack of transportation resources in Eastern Ottawa County. How persuasive do you believe this message would be in Eastern Ottawa County to increase support for public transportation services?

Table 7. Stakeholder perceptions of medical anecdotal evidence

	Frequency	Percent
Very persuasive (1)	8	30.8%
(2)	4	15.4%
(3)	7	26.9%
(4)	4	15.4%
(5)	1	3.8%
(6)	2	7.7%
(7)	0	0%
(8)	0	0%
(9)	0	0%
Not very persuasive (10)	0	0%
Total responses	26	

Question 3. Many people living in Eastern Ottawa County need transportation. Thirty eight percent of people with unmet transportation needs are of working age, between 18 and 59 years old. Among people of working age who need transportation, twenty one percent have indicated that lack of transportation has prevented them from looking for, getting or keeping a job in the past year. Forty percent of local community organizations say that the greatest unmet transportation need for their clients is to get to work. Many of these needs have gone unmet because of lack of transportation resources in Eastern Ottawa County. How persuasive do you believe this message would be in Eastern Ottawa County to increase support for public transportation services?

Table 8. Stakeholder perceptions of employment statistical evidence

	Frequency	Percent
Very persuasive (1)	5	19.2%
(2)	6	23.1%
(3)	4	15.4%
(4)	3	11.5%
(5)	6	23.1%
(6)	2	7.7%
(7)	0	0%
(8)	0	0%
(9)	0	0%
Not very persuasive (10)	0	0%
Total responses	26	

Question 4. Many people living in Eastern Ottawa County need transportation. Susan is one person with unmet transportation needs who is of working age, between 18 and 59 years old. In the last year, Susan has lost two jobs because of a lack of transportation. She contacted several community organizations with her unmet transit need, and while one organization found a job for her, she couldn't work because she did not have a ride to get there. Susan is still not working because of a lack of transportation resources in Eastern Ottawa County. How persuasive do you believe this message would be in Eastern Ottawa County to increase support for public transportation services?

Table 9. Stakeholder perceptions of employment anecdotal evidence

	Frequency	Percent
Very persuasive (1)	8	30.8%
(2)	4	15.4%
(3)	8	30.8%
(4)	4	15.4%
(5)	0	0%
(6)	2	7.7%
(7)	0	0%
(8)	0	0%
(9)	0	0%
Not very persuasive (10)	0	0%
Total responses	26	

Question 5. Many people living in Eastern Ottawa County need transportation. People with unmet transportation needs include seniors and people of working age. People are not able to get to the places they need to go when they do not have transportation. When people do not have a ride, often, they contact community organizations about their transportation needs. Many of these needs have gone unmet because of lack of transportation resources in Eastern Ottawa County. How persuasive do you believe this message would be in Eastern Ottawa County to increase support for public transportation services?

Table 10. Stakeholder perceptions of neutral evidence

	Frequency	Percent
Very persuasive (1)	3	12.0%
(2)	2	8.0%
(3)	2	8.0%
(4)	4	16.0%
(5)	7	28.0%
(6)	4	16.0%
(7)	0	0%
(8)	2	8.0%
(9)	1	4.0%
Not very persuasive (10)	0	0%
Total responses	25	

Question 6. Increasing public transportation services in Eastern Ottawa County would cost your household one candy bar per week. How persuasive do you believe this message would be in Eastern Ottawa County to increase support for public transportation services?

Table 11. Stakeholder perceptions of candy bar frame

	Frequency	Percent
Very persuasive (1)	5	19.2%
(2)	7	26.9%
(3)	8	30.8%
(4)	4	15.4%
(5)	1	3.8%
(6)	1	3.8%
(7)	0	0%
(8)	0	0%
(9)	0	0%
Not very persuasive (10)	0	0%
Total responses	26	

Question 7. Increasing public transportation services in Eastern Ottawa County would cost your household seventy seven cents per week. How persuasive do you believe this message would be in Eastern Ottawa County to increase support for public transportation services?

Table 12. Stakeholder perceptions of 77 cents per week frame

	Frequency	Percent
Very persuasive (1)	4	15.4%
(2)	4	15.4%
(3)	8	30.8%
(4)	2	7.7%
(5)	4	11.5%
(6)	3	0%
(7)	0	0%
(8)	0	0%
(9)	1	3.8%
Not very persuasive (10)	0	0%
Total responses	26	

Question 8. Increasing public transportation services in Eastern Ottawa County would cost your household forty dollars per year. How persuasive do you believe this message would be in Eastern Ottawa County to increase support for public transportation services?

Table 13. Stakeholder perceptions of \$40 per year frame

	Frequency	Percent
Very persuasive (1)	1	3.8%
(2)	4	15.4%
(3)	2	7.7%
(4)	4	15.4%
(5)	6	23.1%
(6)	4	15.4%
(7)	3	11.5%
(8)	0	0%
(9)	2	7.7%
Not very persuasive (10)	0	0%
Total responses	26	

Question 9. Increasing public transportation services in Eastern Ottawa County would cost your household a night at the movies for two people including tickets, popcorn, and pop. How persuasive do you believe this message would be in Eastern Ottawa County to increase support for public transportation services?

Table 14. Stakeholder perceptions of night at the movies frame

	Frequency	Percent
Very persuasive (1)	1	3.8%
(2)	4	15.4%
(3)	6	23.1%
(4)	2	7.7%
(5)	1	3.8%
(6)	1	3.8%
(7)	7	26.9%
(8)	2	7.7%
(9)	1	3.8%
Not very persuasive (10)	1	3.8%
Total responses	26	

Question 10. If you were designing a message about the need for public transportation in Eastern Ottawa County, what message/s would you use? (This can be a message not provided in this survey.)

Table 15. Stakeholder message suggestions

Public transportation benefits everybody!!
Focus on jobs and health care (esp. for children and the elderly)
an example of the negative side effect of not being able to hold a job or find a way to a medical appointment may help in convincing the public of why this should matter for them, especially if they have no plans to utilize the services.
Think about your "to-do" list for today...could you get it done without the vehicle sitting in your garage? There are many people throughout EOC that do not have the luxury of transportation. Many of these people are seniors or persons with disabilities. By providing just \$40 per year you can help provide transportation to those who go without.
As we all know if you have a job you need to get there. Even in a depressed economy there are often entry level jobs that need to be filled. Most of the people who might fill these jobs are also without their own transportation. People also have appointments to meet and would like to have a social life. Because there is no affordable public transportation in Eastern Ottawa County many people are forced to rely on others and their schedules and have become isolated from the community. This is a desperate need for a large part (?? %) of the Ottawa Co. population which is noted for it's superior services.
"Working people" should focus on developmentally and physically challenged people.
Someday it may be YOU that needs transportation help!
do not know
I would use the messages stating statistics for either the elderly or working individuals. The anecdotal messages are powerful, maybe insert a general statistic for that category?
There is a public transportation crisis in Eastern Michigan that is affecting our communities. This lack of public transportation is hindering persons between the ages of 18 and 60 to go out and find work, to hold a job, to attend college, make health care visits to public health departments as well as private doctors.
While I don't have a message of my own, I think the more personalized messages would have a greater impact than the more abstract examples that use percentages.
Providing transportation in E. Ottawa County would save \$\$\$... welfare payments going to people who can't be self-supporting because of lack of transportation to get and keep a job.
Focus on those who are disabled and the young that need transp. for work.
Need a ride? From Coopersville to Hudsonville public transportation can make it happen. Please support eastern Ottawa county public transportation.

APPENDIX A: Community Messaging Survey Template

Introduction

Good afternoon/evening. My name is _____ and I am calling from We are conducting a survey about local transportation issues. Your answers will be extremely important in helping shape transportation solutions in your community. We would be very grateful for your time to talk about local transportation.

1. Do you live in Hudsonville City, Allendale Township, Georgetown Township (Jenison), Blendon Township or Jamestown Township?

1. Hudsonville City
2. Allendale Township
3. Georgetown Township (Jenison)
4. Blendon Township
5. Jamestown Township

(If respondent does not live in one of these areas, thank him/her and close the interview.)

RANDOMLY ASSIGN RESPONDENTS TO ONE OF THE FIVE MESSAGE FRAMES

*message frames are provided in the attached document

2. "Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: I am supportive of expanded public transportation in Eastern Ottawa County."

1. Strongly Agree
2. Somewhat Agree
3. Somewhat Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree
5. Undecided, Don't Know, Refused (Don't read this statement)

3. Have you ever used public transportation?

- 1 yes
- 2 no
- 3 DK/R

4. Have you had an unmet transportation need in the past twelve months?

- 1 yes
- 2 no
- 3 DK/R

5. Do you have a friend, family member or neighbor who lives in Eastern Ottawa County who might use public transportation if it was available?

- 1 yes
- 2 no
- 3 DK/R

6. In the past 12 months, have you provided any rides to friends, family members or neighbors who could have used public transit to reach their destination if it was available?

- 1 yes
- 2 no
- 3 DK/R

RANDOMLY ASSIGN RESPONDENTS TO ONE OF THE THREE TRASIT PROVIDERS (#7, 10 or 13).

7. What do you associate with the name “Georgetown Seniors Transportation”? (Do not read the answers below. Enter ONE number only.)

- 1. Any answer which relates “Georgetown Seniors Transportation” with the bus system. *(Please code responses as #1 if the respondent provides an answer that refers to rides, bus, bus system or Dial A Ride. This could include responses such as: the bus system, the name of the bus system, Dial-A-Ride, transportation for seniors, the senior bus, rides for people, rides for seniors, rides for people with disabilities.)*
- 2. Unable to recognize or associate “Georgetown Seniors Transportation” name with the bus system, rides, or Dial-A-Ride. Don’t know.
- 3. Refused. No answer

Read the following after completing Question7:

Georgetown Seniors Transportation is the name for the local bus system serving area seniors and people with disabilities.

8. All things considered, in your opinion, would you rate the job Georgetown Seniors Transportation does in providing the community with bus service as very good, good, fair, poor or very poor? (Read options 1-5. Enter ONE number only.)

- 1. Very good
- 2. Good
- 3. Fair
- 4. Poor
- 5. Very poor
- 6. Don’t Know, Refused

9. Do you feel the transportation services offered by Georgetown Seniors Transportation are..... (Read options 1-3. Enter ONE option only.)

- 1. Very important to the community
- 2. Somewhat important to the community or
- 3. Not important to the community

4. Undecided, Don't Know, Refused

.....

10. What do you associate with the name “The Rapid”? (Do not read the answers below. Enter ONE number only.)

1. Any answer which relates “The Rapid” with the bus system.

(Please code responses as #1 if the respondent provides an answer that refers to rides, bus, bus system, “ITP”, Interurban Transit Partnership, Fixed Routes, or Dial A Ride. This could include responses such as: the bus system, the name of the bus system, Dial-A-Ride, Fixed Routes, ITP, Interurban Transit Partnership, transportation for seniors, the senior bus, rides for people, rides for seniors, rides for people with disabilities, public transportation.)

2. Unable to recognize or associate “The Rapid” name with the bus system. Don't know.

3. Refused. No answer

Read the following after completing Question 10:

The Rapid is the name for the public transportation bus system serving citizens in the greater Grand Rapids area.

11. All things considered, in your opinion, would you rate the job The Rapid does in providing the community with bus service as very good, good, fair, poor or very poor? (Read options 1-5. Enter ONE number only.)

1. Very good

2. Good

3. Fair

4. Poor

5. Very poor

6. Don't Know, Refused

12. Do you feel the transportation services offered by The Rapid are..... (Read options 1-3. Enter ONE option only.)

1. Very important to the community

2. Somewhat important to the community or

3. Not important to the community

4. Undecided, Don't Know, Refused

.....

13. What do you associate with the name “The Macatawa Area Express”? (Do not read the answers below. Enter ONE number only.)

1. Any answer which relates “The Macatawa Area Express” with the bus system.

(Please code responses as #1 if the respondent provides an answer that refers to rides, bus, bus system, “MAX”, Macatawa Area Transit Authority, Fixed Routes, or Dial A Ride. This could include

responses such as: *the bus system, the name of the bus system, Dial-A-Ride, Fixed Routes, MAX, Macatawa Area Transit Authority, transportation for seniors, the senior bus, rides for people, rides for seniors, rides for people with disabilities, public transportation.*)

2. Unable to recognize or associate “The Macatawa Area Express” name with the bus system. Don’t know.
3. Refused. No answer

Read the following after completing Question 13:

The Macatawa Area Express is the name for the public transportation bus system serving citizens in the greater Holland/Zeeland area.

14. All things considered, in your opinion, would you rate the job The Macatawa Area Express does in providing the community with bus service as very good, good, fair, poor or very poor?

(Read options 1-5. Enter ONE number only.)

1. Very good
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Poor
5. Very poor
6. Don’t Know, Refused

15. Do you feel the transportation services offered by The Macatawa Area Express are..... (Read options 1-3. Enter ONE option only.)

1. Very important to the community
2. Somewhat important to the community or
3. Not important to the community
4. Undecided, Don’t Know, Refused

16. Do you feel improving area public transportation is very important, somewhat important or not important? (Read options 1-3. Enter ONE option only.)

1. Very important
2. Somewhat important
3. Not important
4. Undecided, Don’t Know, Refused

17. Would you judge the traffic congestion problem in the area as very severe, somewhat severe or not at all severe? (Read options 1-3. Enter ONE option only.)

1. Very severe
2. Somewhat severe or
3. Not at all severe
4. Undecided, Don’t Know, Refused

18. Please indicate whether you think each of the following ideas are an excellent, good, fair or poor means of reducing traffic congestion in the area. (Read options 2-4 for each statement. Enter ONE option only for each statement.)

<u>Statements</u>	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	DK, R
A. Building more roads to accommodate increased traffic	5	4	3	2	1
B. Widening already existing roads	5	4	3	2	1
C. Providing more public transportation options	5	4	3	2	1

19. Would you say the following considerations about public transportation are very important, somewhat important or are unimportant? (Enter ONE option only for each consideration.)

ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF THESE CONSIDERTATIONS WILL BE RANDOMLY ASSIGNED TO EACH RESPONDENT

	Very important	Somewhat important	Unimportant	Und., D/K, Ref.
A. Public transportation services help people with disabilities get to their jobs	4	3	2	1
B. Public transportation helps people transition from welfare to work	4	3	2	1
C. In these difficult economic times, public transportation grows businesses by transporting their customers and employees	4	3	2	1
D. Public transportation increases the ability to get employment and training opportunities for the unemployed and underemployed	4	3	2	1
E. Public transportation supports the conservation of land	4	3	2	1
F. Public transportation helps reduce traffic congestion	4	3	2	1

G. Areas with public transportation options attract new residents.	4	3	2	1
H. Public transportation creates a hub for economic development.	4	3	2	1
I. Public transportation increases property values.	4	3	2	1

20. Would you say the following considerations about public transportation are very important, somewhat important or are unimportant? (Enter ONE option only for each statement.)

ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF THESE CONSIDERTATIONS WILL BE RANDOMLY ASSIGNED TO EACH RESPONDENT

	Very important	Somewhat important	Unimportant	Und., D/K, Ref.
A. Studies have found that for every \$1 invested in public transportation, \$6 are returned to the community in the form of economic opportunities, decreased congestion and saved parking costs	4	3	2	1
B. Ridership on The Rapid exceeded 9 million rides in fiscal year 2008	4	3	2	1
C. Over 400 people in Eastern Ottawa County have contacted a local community organization about their unmet transportation needs in the past 9 months	4	3	2	1
D. Thirty six percent of people with unmet transportation needs at seniors (age 60 and older).	4	3	2	1
E. Thirty eight percent of people with unmet transportation needs are of working age (between the ages of 18-59)	4	3	2	1
F. The greatest unmet transportation need in Eastern Ottawa County is to	4	3	2	1

medical appointments

G. The second greatest unmet transportation need in Eastern Ottawa County is to places of employment 4 3 2 1

H. In the past 9 months, 81 people living in Eastern Ottawa County have indicated that lack of transportation has prevented them from looking for, getting or keeping a job 4 3 2 1

I. In the past 9 months, 155 seniors living in Eastern Ottawa County have contacted a community organization with an unmet transportation need 4 3 2 1

21. I'm going to read you the names of several groups and people in society, and I'd like you to rate your feelings toward each one as either very positive, somewhat positive, neutral, somewhat negative, or very negative. If you have not heard of the organization or person, just say so.

ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF THESE GROUPS WILL BE RANDOMLY ASSIGNED TO EACH RESPONDENT

	Very Positive	Somewhat Positive	Neutral	Somewhat Negative	Very Negative	D/K Name, Not Sure
A. Love In The Name of Christ (a nonprofit coalition of churches and faith based organizations)	6	5	4	3	2	1
B. Disability Network/Lakeshore (a nonprofit disability advocacy organization)	6	5	4	3	2	1
C. Georgetown Seniors (a senior center and transportation provider in Eastern Ottawa County)	6	5	4	3	2	1

D. Grand Valley Metro Council (a metropolitan planning organization)	6	5	4	3	2	1
E. Macatawa Area Express (the public transportation provider in the greater Holland area)	6	5	4	3	2	1
F. Grand Valley State University (a 4-year public university located in Allendale)	6	5	4	3	2	1
G. Allendale Public Schools (the Allendale public school system)	6	5	4	3	2	1
H. Hudsonville Public Schools (the Hudsonville area public school system)	6	5	4	3	2	1
I. United Way 211 (an information and referral call center that directs people to local social services and programs)	6	5	4	3	2	1
J. The Rapid (the public transportation provider in the greater Grand Rapids area)	6	5	4	3	2	1
K. Jenison Public Schools (The Jenison area public school system)	6	5	4	3	2	1
L. Resurrection Life Church (an independent church located in Grandville)	6	5	4	3	2	1
M. Nu-Wool Company (an insulation manufacturer)	6	5	4	3	2	1

N. Mars Hill Bible Church (a church located in Grandville)	6	5	4	3	2	1
O. Fair Haven Ministries (a church located in Hudsonville)	6	5	4	3	2	1

Now I'm going to read you a quick list of things that some people have done to express their views. For each one I read, please just tell me whether you have ever done it or not.

22. Have you contacted or visited a public official - at any level of government - to ask for assistance or to express your opinion?

- 1 yes
- 2 no
- 3 DK/R

23. Have you signed a written petition about a political or social issue?

- 1 yes
- 2 no
- 3 DK/R

24. Have you worked as a canvasser - having gone door to door for a political or social group or candidate.

- 1 yes
- 2 no
- 3 DK/R

25. Have you contacted a newspaper or magazine to express your opinion on an issue?

- 1 yes
- 2 no
- 3 DK/R

26. Would you be very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely to support a millage for public transportation services in Eastern Ottawa County if it cost your household:

RANDOMLY ASSIGN SUBJECTS TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING FOUR MESSAGE FRAMES:

One candy bar per week

Seventy-seven cents per week

Forty dollars per year

A night at the movies for two people including tickets, popcorn and pop

- 1 Very likely
- 2 Somewhat likely
- 3 Somewhat unlikely
- 4 Very unlikely
- 5 Don't know/Refused

27. We are collecting names of people who support public transportation to share with elected officials in your community. Your name will not be connected to your survey responses in any way. May I add your name to the list of public transit supporters?

- 1 yes
- 2 no

If yes,

First name _____

Last name _____

For statistical purposes only, please answer the following questions.

28. Please indicate into which range your age falls. Are you..... (Read options 1-4. Enter ONE option only.)

- 1. 18 to 24
- 2. 25 to 30
- 3. 31 to 49
- 4. 50 to 65
- 5. Over 65
- 6. Undecided, Don't Know, Refused

29. Into which of the following ranges did your annual household income for 2008 fall? (Read options 1-4. Enter ONE option only.)

- 1. Less than 25,000 dollars per year
- 2. 26,000 to 50,000 dollars per year
- 3. 51,000 to 75,000 dollars per year
- 4. Over 75,000 dollars per year

5. Undecided, Don't Know, Refused

This concludes our survey. If you would like to view the survey results, they will be available online at www.dnlakeshore.org in about a month. Thank you very much for your time. Good-bye.

30. By observation, indicate the respondent's gender

1. Male
2. Female

APPENDIX B: Message Frames

Medical/Seniors

Statistical: Many people living in Eastern Ottawa County need transportation. Thirty six percent of people with unmet transportation needs are seniors, age sixty and older. Among seniors who need transportation, fifty one percent have indicated that their greatest unmet transportation need is to medical appointments. In the past year, over one hundred and fifty seniors in Eastern Ottawa County contacted a community organization with a transit need. Many of these needs have gone unmet because of lack of transportation resources in Eastern Ottawa County.

Anecdotal: Many people living in Eastern Ottawa County need transportation. Eleanor is one senior, over the age of sixty, who has unmet transportation needs. In particular, Eleanor's greatest transportation need is to get to her weekly kidney dialysis appointments. In the past year, she contacted several community organizations with her unmet transit need. Eleanor has not found a ride to her medical appointments because of a lack of transportation resources in Eastern Ottawa County.

Employment

Statistical: Many people living in Eastern Ottawa County need transportation. Thirty eight percent of people with unmet transportation needs are of working age, between 18 and 59 years old. Among people of working age who need transportation, twenty one percent have indicated that lack of transportation has prevented them from looking for, getting or keeping a job in the past year. Forty percent of local community organizations say that the greatest unmet transportation need for their clients is to get to work. Many of these needs have gone unmet because of lack of transportation resources in Eastern Ottawa County.

Anecdotal: Many people living in Eastern Ottawa County need transportation. Susan is one person with unmet transportation needs who is of working age, between 18 and 59 years old. In the last year, Susan has lost two jobs because of a lack of transportation. She contacted several community organizations with her unmet transit need, and while one organization found a job for her, she couldn't work because she did not have a ride to get there. Susan is still not working because of a lack of transportation resources in Eastern Ottawa County.

Neutral Message

Many people living in Eastern Ottawa County need transportation. People with unmet transportation needs include seniors and people of working age. People are not able to get to the places they need to go when they do not have transportation. When people do not have a ride, often, they contact community organizations about their transportation needs. Many of these needs have gone unmet because of lack of transportation resources in Eastern Ottawa County.



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