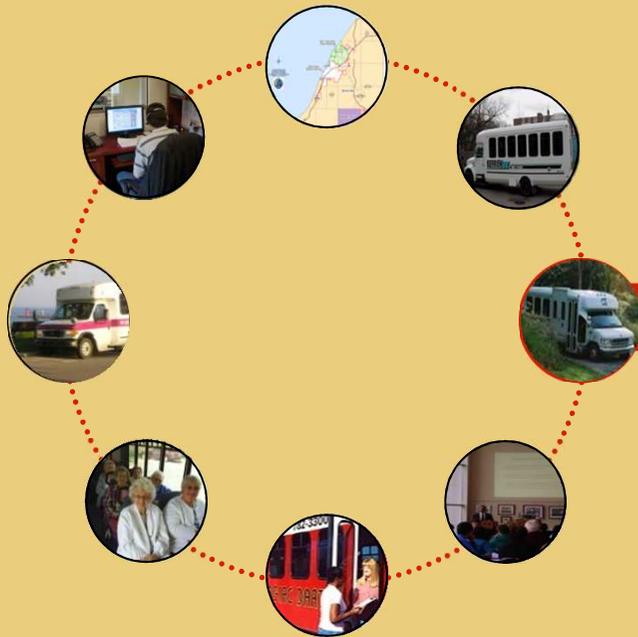


# ***Moving Forward: A Plan For Public Transit in Berrien County***

**Berrien County  
Board of Commissioners  
July 24, 2014**



## HOW DID WE GET HERE?



In 2009 SWMPC drafted the Berrien County Coordinated Plan

*“How can we integrate four transit systems in Berrien County through a coordination process?”*

Strategies were created and several projects were implemented.

# 2009 Coordinated Planning Strategies



1. Establish a structure to build and sustain coordination efforts.
2. Expand outreach to customers, human service agency staff, employers and others and provide simplified access to information regarding existing transportation options.
3. Expand fixed route public transportation services.
4. Use current demand-response services more efficiently to expand capacity of current services offered to individuals who need human service and specialized transportation.
5. **Improve integration between countywide rural service, small dial-a-ride services, and fixed routes.**

## Progress on Strategies

### ***Mobility Management Program*** — *Established 2010*



**Expand outreach to customers, human service agency staff, employers and others and provide simplified access to information regarding existing transportation options.**

# 2009 Coordinated Planning Strategies



## *MyWayThere.org Website – Launched in 2012*

Select Language | Increase (Decrease) Font Size | Print

Google™ Custom Search Search x

Find a Ride Public Transit Mobility Resources Advocacy Contact Us Editor Login

**Bicycle**

**Public Transit**

**Carpool and Rideshare**

**Non-Emergency Medical**

**Powered Wheels**

**Reduced or Free Rides**

**Taxi and Car**

**Travel In or Out of County**

**Walking**

Make this web site talk  
get **textHELP**  
**BrowseAloud**

Like Share You, Kris Martin and 15 others like this.

**My Way There**  
...is a tool that helps people consider many different ways to get around Southwest Michigan, overcome transportation barriers and get to the places they need to go.

**FIND A RIDE NOW**

Let **My Way There** help you get there. Use our [Ride Search](#) to find a ride.

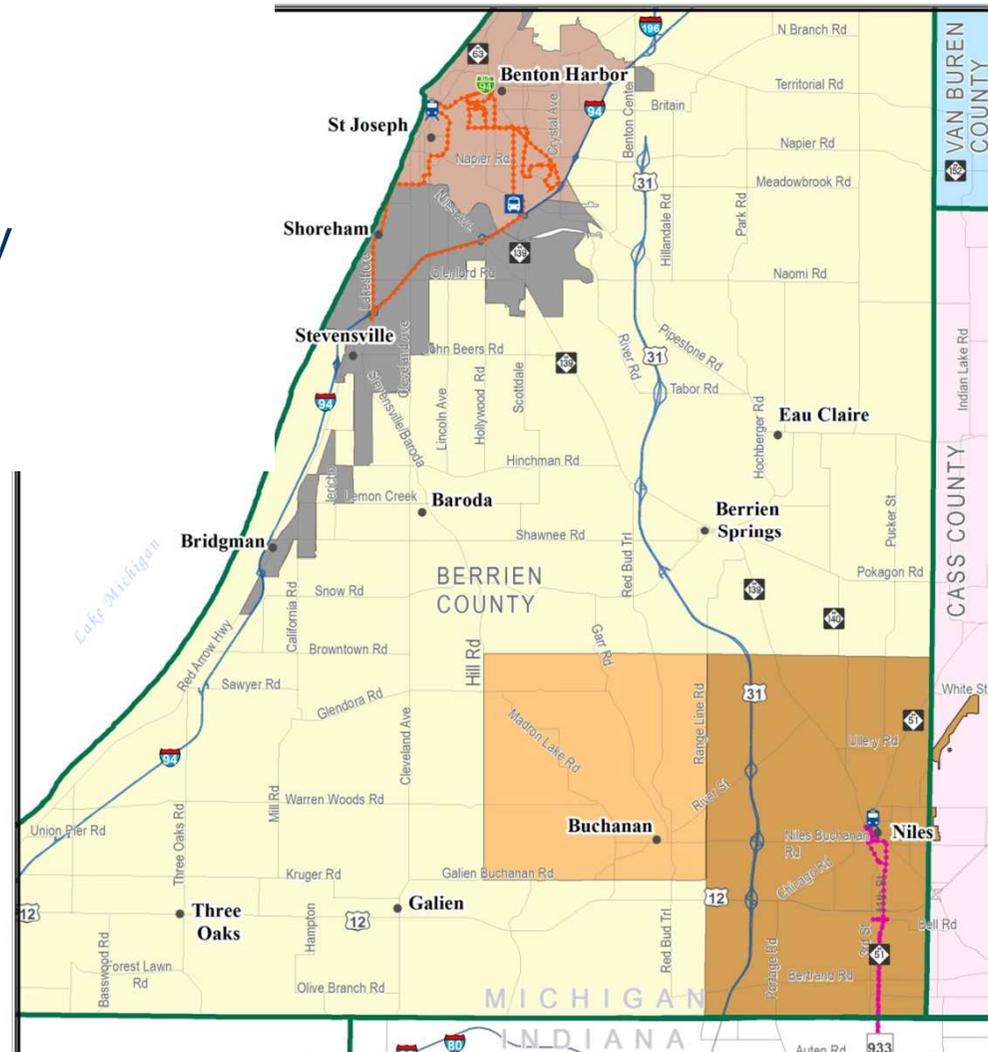
TCATA NEWS

# What do we have now in Berrien County?



## Public Transit Agencies

- Berrien Bus
- Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority
- Buchanan Dial a Ride
- Niles Dial a Ride



## Trips Provided



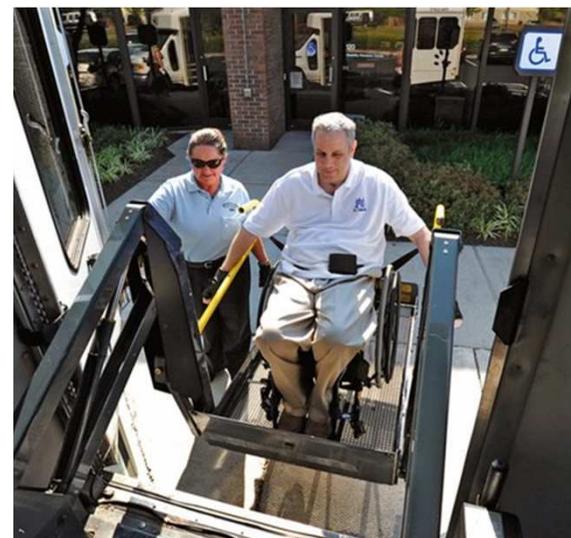
***In 2013 the four systems combined provided 320,824 trips travelling 1,176,569 miles.***



# Capital Resources



## Vehicles



***59 lift-equipped vehicles***



# Capital Resources



## Facilities:

*Three separate facilities serving four transit systems*

- ❖ *Garage*
- ❖ *Bus Storage*
- ❖ *Passenger Waiting Area*
- ❖ *Administrative Offices*
- ❖ *Dispatch*

# Combined Transit Systems Staffing



<b>Drivers</b>	<b>Administration</b>	<b>Maintenance</b>	<b>Dispatch</b>	<b>Managers</b>
55	8	10	12	6

**No dedicated staff in the following positions:**

- Safety & Training
- Marketing & Outreach
- Service Planning

# Operating Expenses



**Overall operating expenses for the four systems  
in FY2013:**

**\$ 4,074,626**

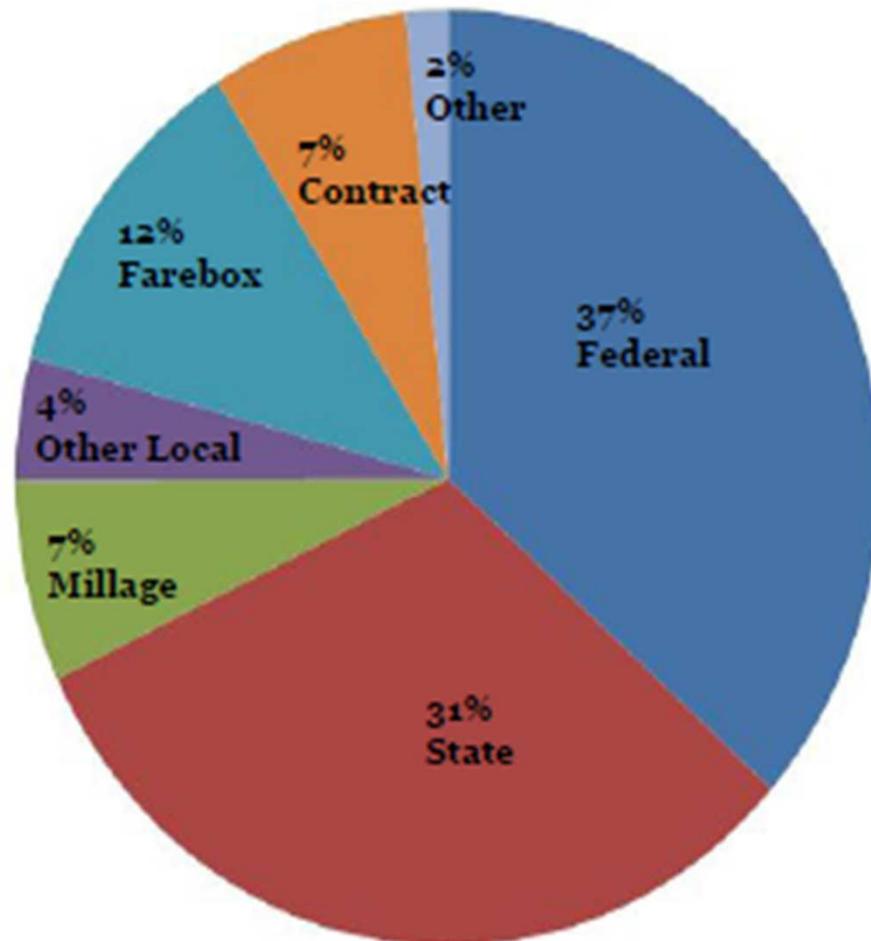
*Major expenses are for vehicle operator salaries and wages,  
vehicle maintenance, and fuel.*

# Revenues



Combined revenues are a mix of federal, state and local funding.

**\$4,046,623**



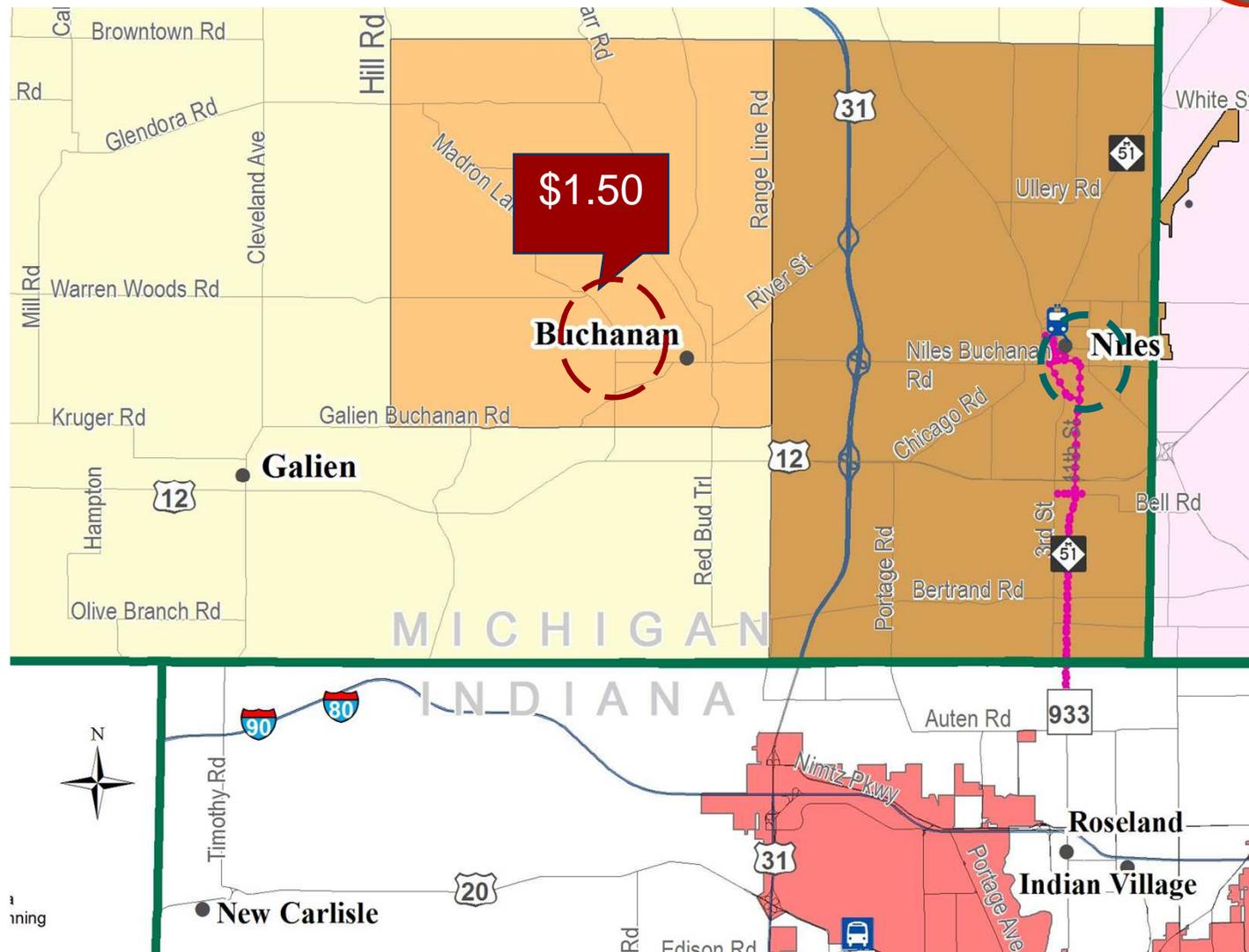
# Patchwork System



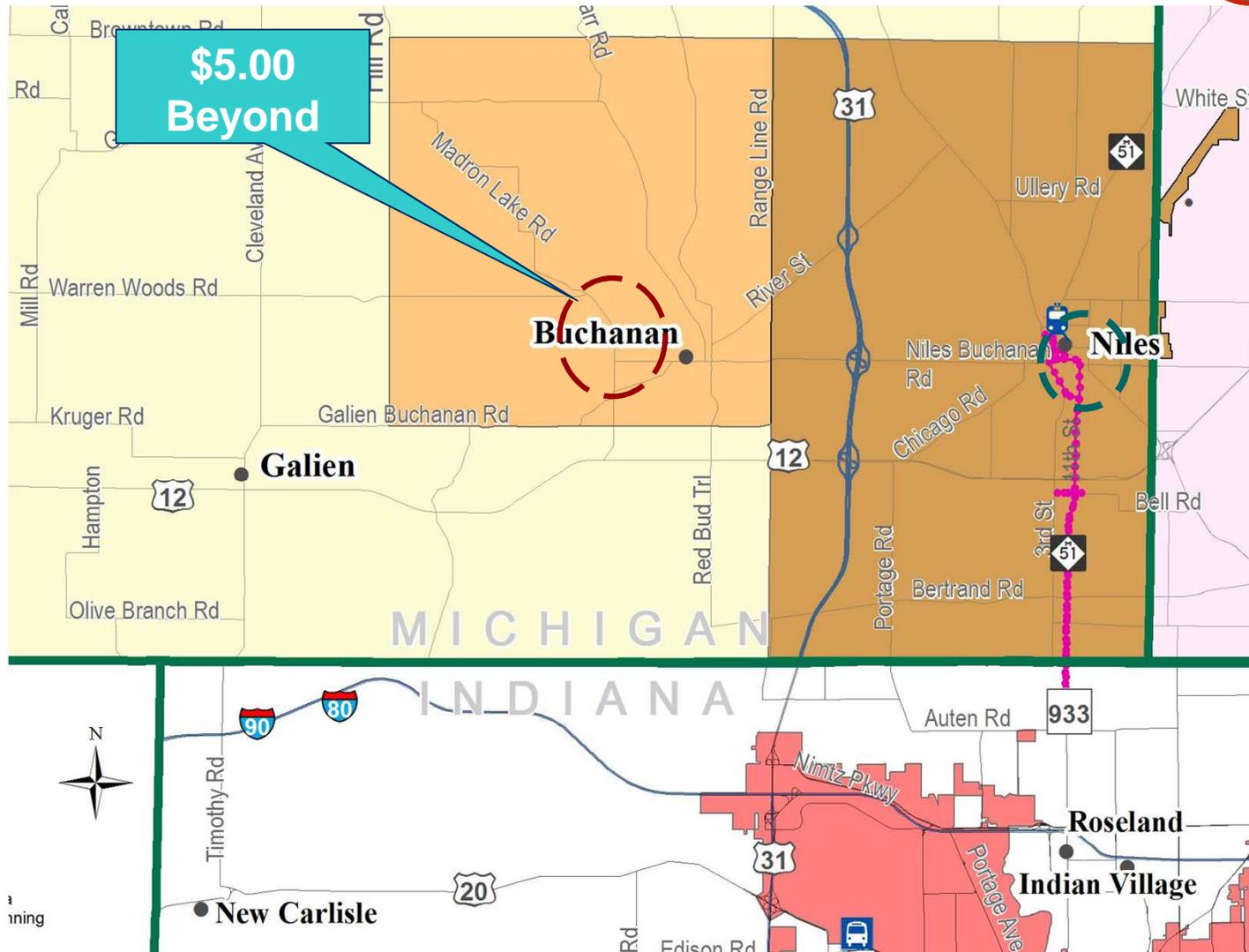
**With all of this we still have a patchwork system trying to move people throughout the County.**

- Different fares
- Different service hours
- Different service areas with very little or no connectivity.
- Each system is regulated by the state and federal government on where they can operate based on their funding source and local policy decisions.

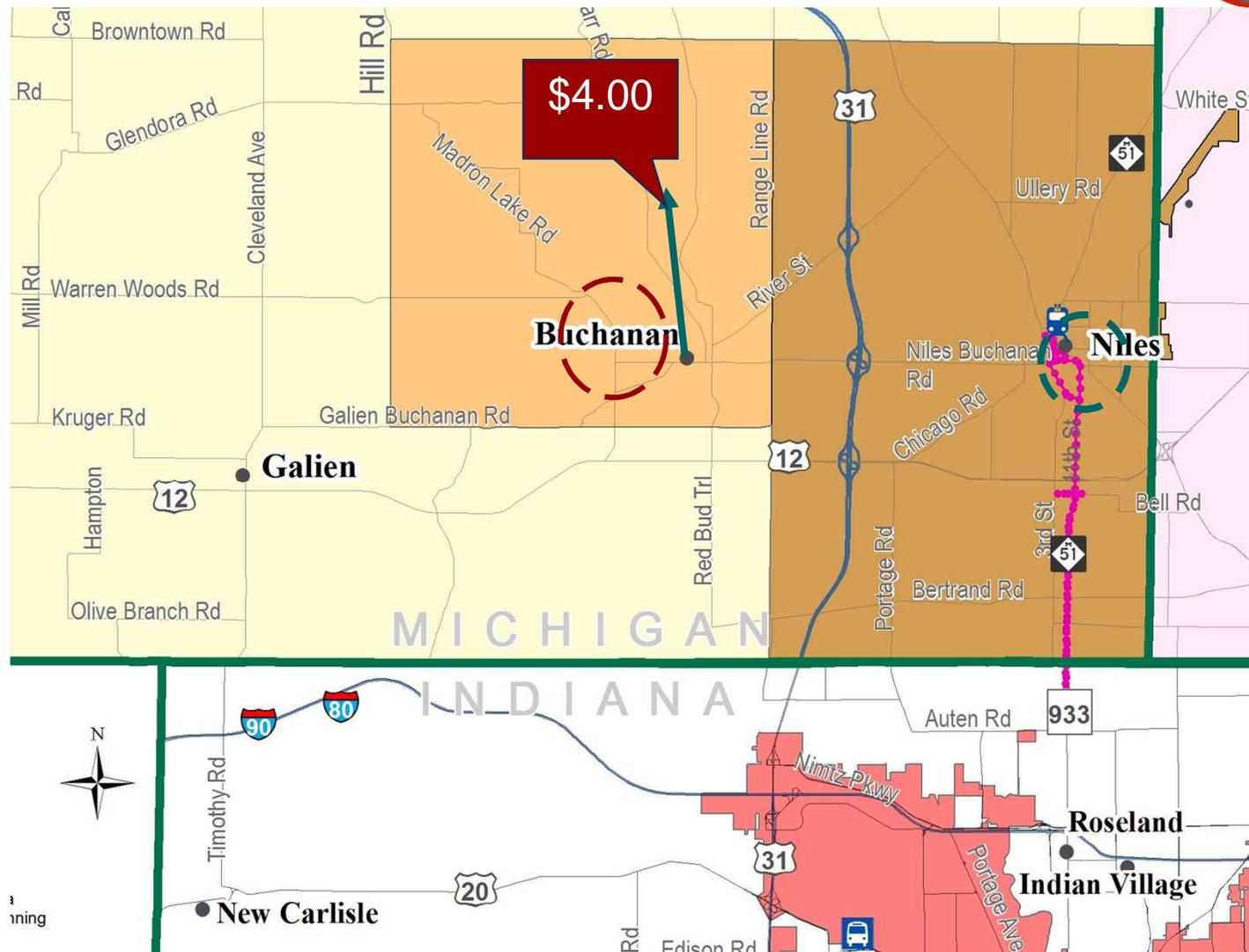
# Traveling By Bus In Berrien County



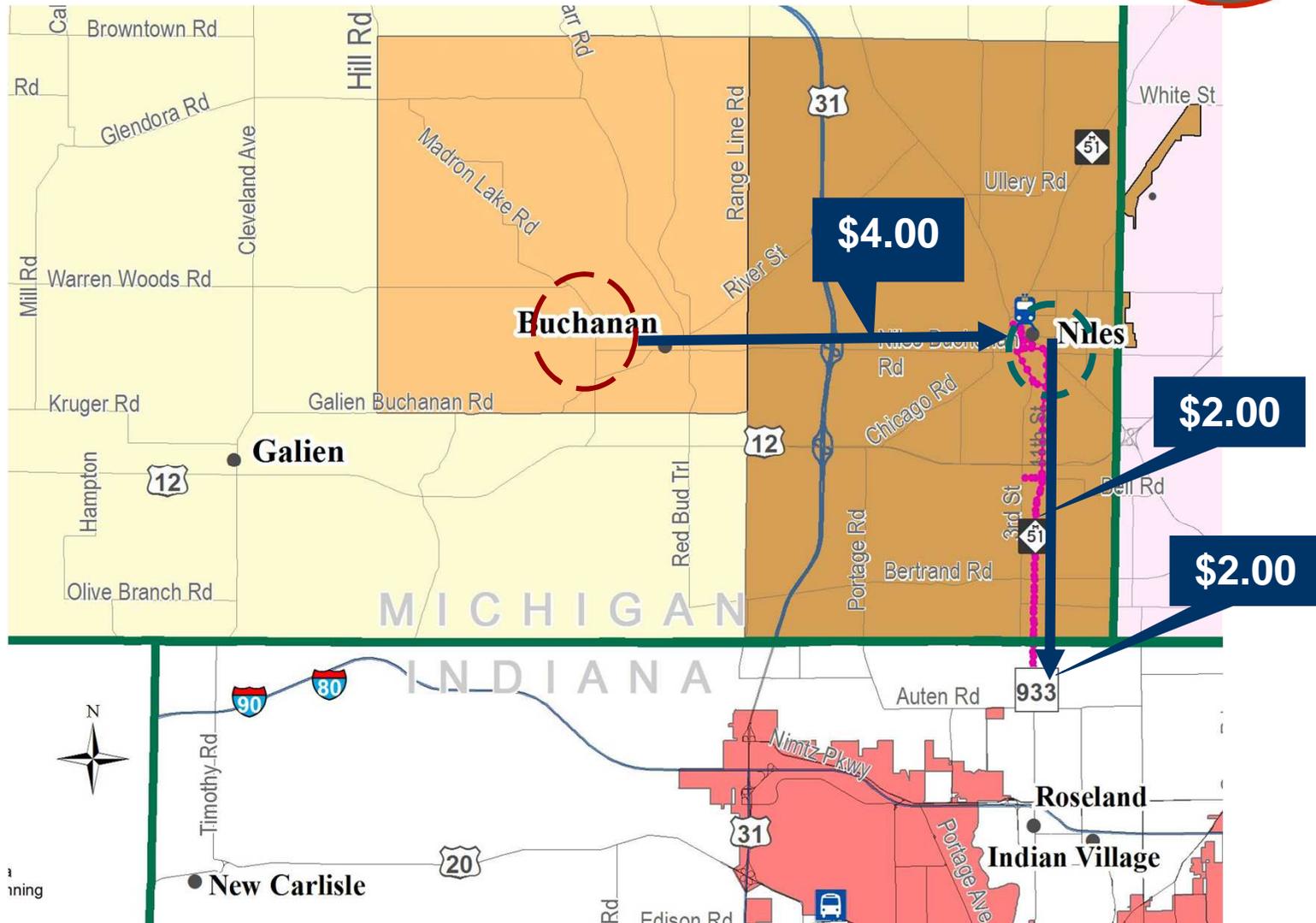
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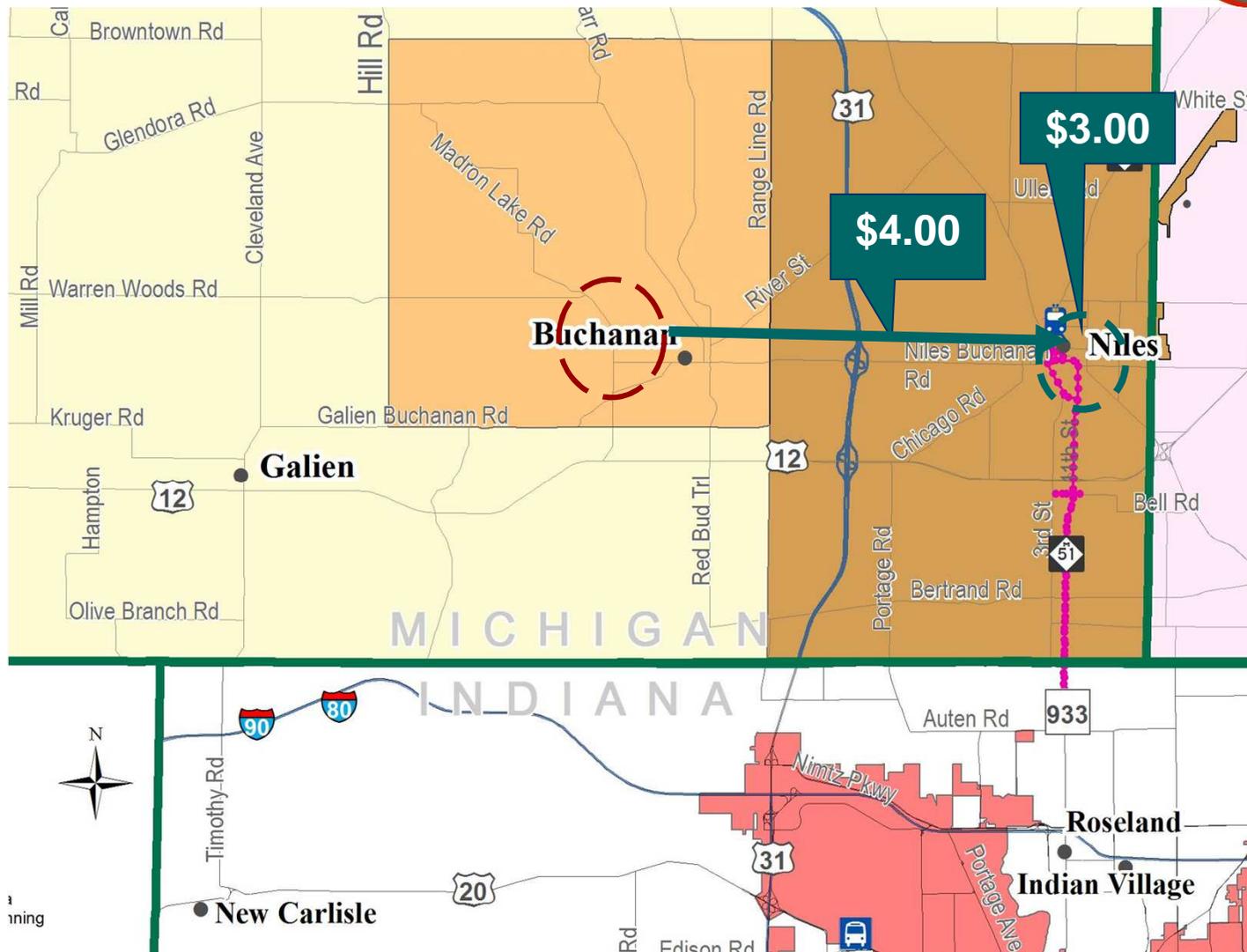
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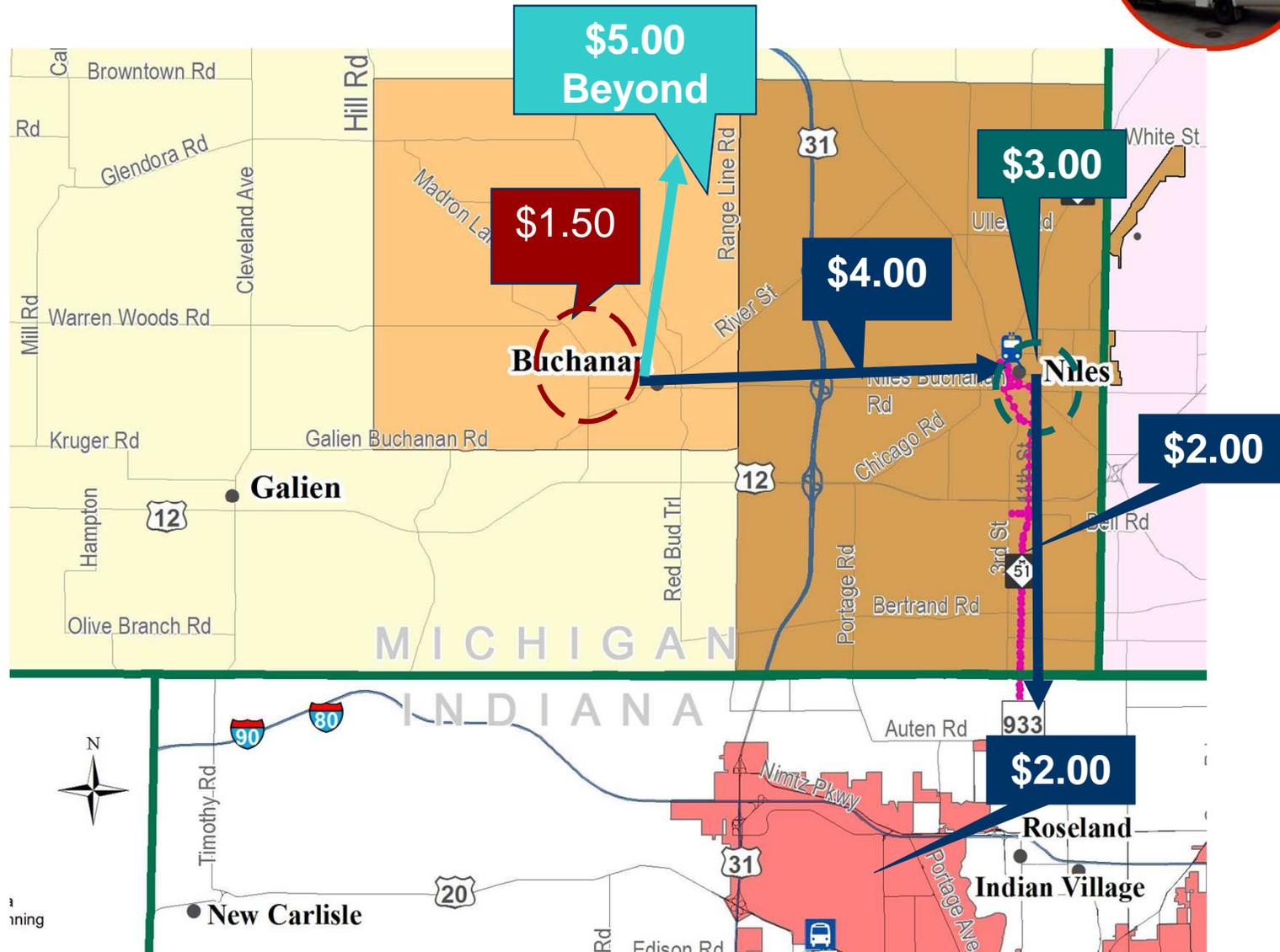
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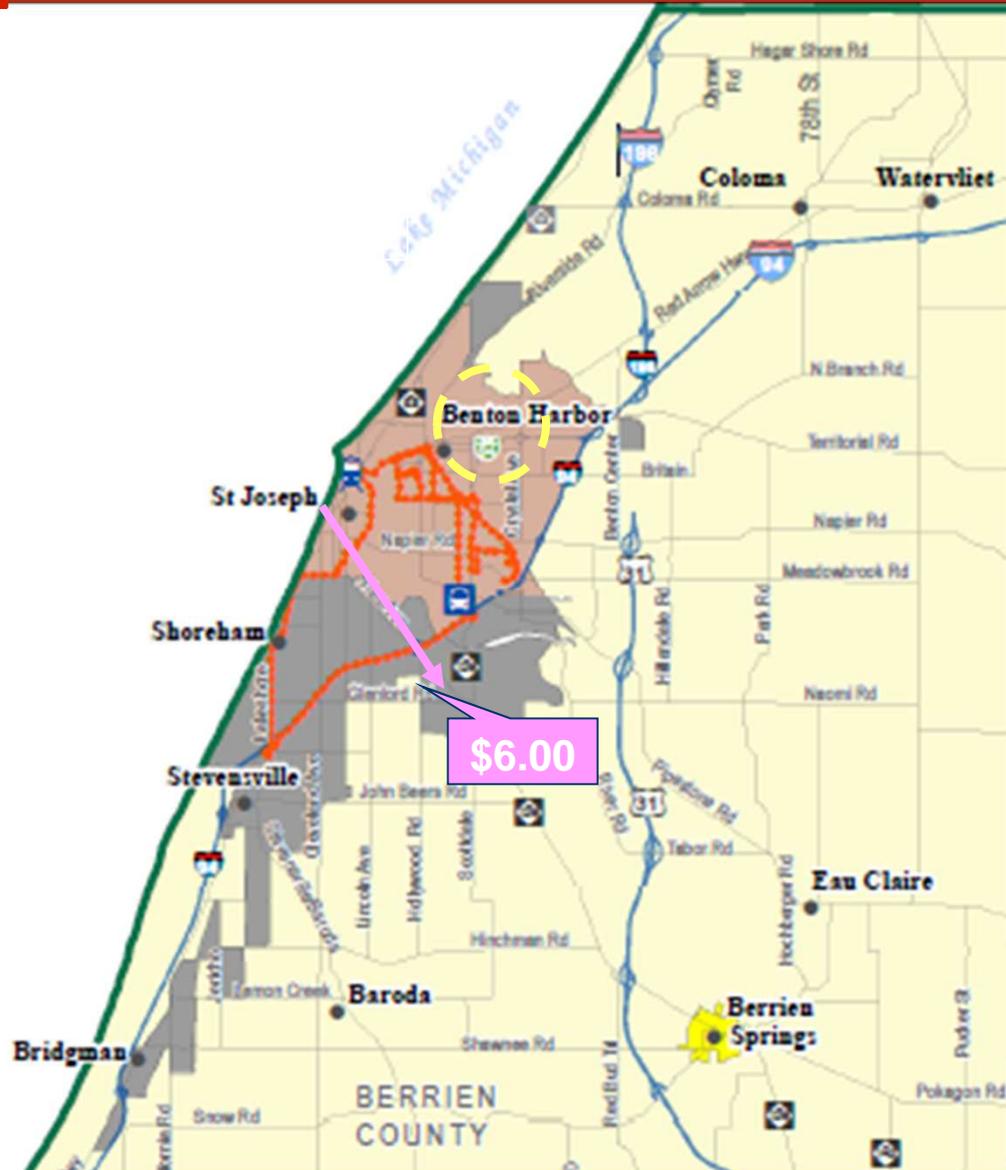
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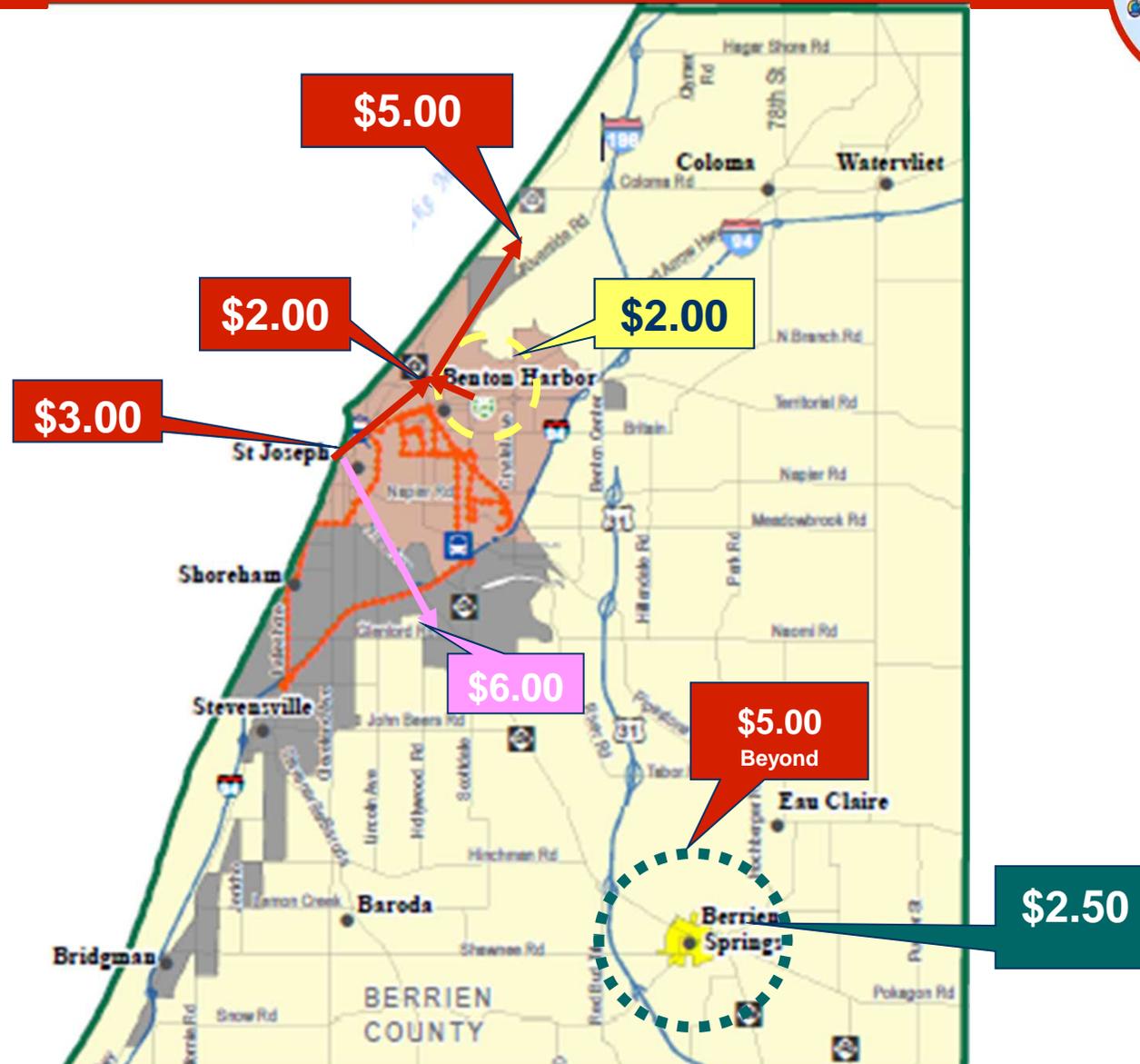
# Traveling By Bus In Berrien County



\$5.00  
Beyond

\$2.50

# Traveling By Bus In Berrien County



# Change



**Why doesn't the current way of doing business work and why can't it be made to work with minor changes?**

## Changes during the last 30 years



- **Employment has shifted from factory to service jobs**
- **Suburban Expansion**
- **Regionalization of Services**
- **Aging Population**
- **Population Decrease**

# Key Transit Issues



- **Regulatory barriers**
- **Lack of transit connectivity throughout the county.**
- **Increasing unmet mobility needs due to an aging population.**
- **Increased operating costs**
- **Reduction in local, state and federal funding**

# Transit System Issues



- **Regulatory barriers**
- **Lack of transit connectivity throughout the county.**
- **Increasing unmet mobility needs due to an aging population.**
  
- **Reduction in local millage revenue**
- **Increase in operating costs**
- **Reduction in state and federal funding**

# Why Have Fewer Transit Systems In Berrien County?



- ❖ Financial – Reduce duplication in management, dispatching, maintenance, and facilities
- ❖ Planning – Improve countywide connectivity
- ❖ Operational – Streamline fare structures, coordinate marketing, eliminate duplicative services, improve productivity and lower costs
- ❖ People - Reduce the current regulatory service area impacts for the people who uses public transit in Berrien County

# How do we move towards fewer transit systems?



- **Board of Commissioners establish a new countywide independent authority.**
  - **The new authority will:**
    - Provide a new system with countywide representation to build upon.
    - No existing system is taking over the other systems.
    - Jurisdictions will have appropriate involvement in the decision making process of a seamless countywide system.
    - Become the foundation for coordinating and integrating transit in Berrien County.
    - Provide a mechanism for additional local funding to support public transit.

# Going Forward



**Complete study can be found at:**

**[MyWayThere.Org](http://MyWayThere.Org)**

**Request a Copy By Contacting:**

Kim Gallagher

[gallagherk@swmcp.org](mailto:gallagherk@swmcp.org)

**269-925-1137 x1518**

# The Case for Countywide Service



- ❖ Fragmented system hard for County residents and transit customers to understand or navigate
- ❖ Duplicative administrative and operations functions
- ❖ General lack of connectivity between systems
- ❖ Fare inequities



- ❖ Leadership, trust, and a good business arrangement must be in place or any consolidation effort will most likely fail.
- ❖ Institutional issues and turf protection must be addressed to allow for each jurisdiction to have appropriate involvement in the decision making process of a countywide system.
- ❖ Changing the way things have been done into one new culture
- ❖ Funding arrangements to ensure fiscal diversity, with particular focus on the various millages and rates