



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

A ROAD WELL TRAVELED:

History of the Blue Bus

"I retired in 2002, but every time I see a Blue Bus I get a warm feeling knowing a rider who depends on public transportation is being served with care."

- Bill Richards (2007)

1984

Bill Richards founded Community Resource Volunteers (CRV). Also known as the "Blue Bus," CRV's system of volunteers provided transportation to elderly and disabled community members.

2001

CRV became Clinton Transit under the Public Transportation Authority Act 196 of 1986.

2017

Moved into the new Scott Road facility.

2010

Expanded routes into Lansing.

2009

Purchased Scott Road property.

2006

Extended service to include all Clinton County residents.

2005

Clinton County residents approved the agency's first local millage.

2020

Clinton County residents voted "Yes" to increase the local millage.

2021

Added Saturday service and expanded weekday service hours; launched a new mobile app for scheduling convenience; added tablets on buses.

2023

Completed renovations at the Scott Road administration facility, including construction of the Watkins Conference Center; engaged in Transportation Development Plan.

CLINTON TRANSIT

MISSION

Keeping people connected.

VISION

Providing mobility as a service.

CORE VALUES

Service Orientation

We value, above all, compassion for others; going the distance for our staff and the community we serve.

Communication

We value open, honest, and frequent communications with our staff and our community partners. Our internal and external communications will continue to be open, constructive, and empowering.

Adaptability

We are committed to the mindset of remaining willing when able and able when unwilling.

Accountability

We are committed to delivering results that make a difference in Clinton County and being accountable for those results.

Clinton Transit serves all Clinton County residents with scheduled curb-to-curb transportation services.

TRANSPORTATION HOURS

Monday-Friday: 6 a.m.-9 p.m.

Saturday: 8 a.m.-6 p.m.

Walk-on service Monday-Friday: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Ready to ride? Need more information?

Call our Dispatch Office or visit mybluebus.com —ask about the Clinton Transit mobile app now available in the App Store or Google Play.

DISPATCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday: 7 a.m.-6 p.m.

Saturday: 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

215 North Scott Road, St. Johns, MI 48879
mybluebus.com • 989-224-8127

DEAR CLINTON COUNTY RESIDENTS,

I am pleased to present the 2023 Clinton Transit Annual Report to the Community!

Our team at Clinton Transit sincerely values your ongoing support, connection and collaboration. Our staff has a heart for service and it is truly our pleasure to keep Clinton County residents connected with a safe, reliable mobility option.

One of our main priorities last year was planning for the future of transit in Clinton County by completing a comprehensive Transit Development Plan (TDP). The yearlong project allowed us to identify Clinton County’s unmet and emerging transportation needs and assess how we can adapt to meet them.

We are especially excited because we know our plan is shaped by information and feedback from throughout Clinton County. Our team sends a genuine “thank you!” to each of you who stopped by one of our “meetings on the bus,” completed a survey, attended our focus groups, meetings, and workshops, or chatted in line with me at the grocery store. Your input is valuable and is woven throughout our plan for a transit transformation in Clinton County!

Though the TDP took center stage in 2023, the year began with trailblazing regional collaborations alongside the Capital Area Transit Authority (CATA) and Eaton County Transit (EATRAN). By placing residents first, we’re working together to improve public transit and expand mobility throughout the region.

After spending a year in temporary offices in the Southpoint Mall, we returned to our beautifully renovated administration facility on Scott Road this spring. In addition to providing space for our growing team, updates include a new amenity: the Watkins Conference Center. Perfect for meetings, training sessions and more, we and other community groups love this comfortable, flexible space—complete with technology to make presentations a breeze!

Through our Community Connections Program, we continued to reduce transportation barriers by going above and beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Supported by federal funding, this program helps us better meet the transportation needs of veterans, senior adults (age 60+) and persons with disabilities by providing specialized services and additional door to door assistance.

We’ll continue to share updates at MyBlueBus.com and facebook.com/ClintonTransit. Again, thank you for trusting our Blue Buses and friendly, compassionate drivers to provide safe, accessible transportation. Please reach out if you have questions or would like to discuss your mobility needs.

We look forward to seeing you around town!



MaLissa Schutt
Executive Director



2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



You've likely seen our iconic Blue Buses around town, but did you know Clinton Transit's diversified fleet includes 36 buses and passenger vans? Our friendly drivers are ready to assist with ramps, wheelchair lifts, securement systems and other amenities to ensure a safe, comfortable journey.

CLINTON TRANSIT

- Early in the year, Clinton Transit staff returned to a freshly renovated administration facility at North Scott Road.
- The Clinton County Township Officers Association held its April meeting at the newly constructed Watkins Conference Center. The facility was host to a variety of community meetings and training events throughout the year.
- Beginning in April, Clinton Transit adjusted its fare structure to provide 25-cent rides on weekdays during promotional hours.
- Access to seamless transportation and "one-seat-rides" expanded throughout the tri-county region, made possible by groundbreaking collaborations among Clinton Transit, CATA and EATRAN.
- The agency again offered election workers and voters a safe, convenient way to get to the polls and back on Election Day.
- The Clinton County Board of Commissioners continues to honor our nation's heroes by funding Clinton Transit's free rides for veterans program.
- The agency continued to play a critical role in emergency response, using specialized communications equipment to back up Emergency Operations Center dispatch.
- The Clinton Transit Board of Directors' goal of improving employee and customer engagement is being addressed via an annual survey. The leadership team will be regularly riding the Blue Bus to engage with customers, learn how we are doing, and find ways to improve.
- Clinton Transit engaged in yearlong transit development planning. The resulting Transportation Development Plan (TDP) is the agency's roadmap for the future of mobility in Clinton County.

KEY STATISTICS

957,150
total miles
(21% increase
over 2022)

41%
of riders were
new in 2023

80%
of Saturday
rides were
employment
related

15%
of rides were
education related

8%
of rides were
to shop and
run errands

RIDER SURVEYS

52%
of riders use Clinton
Transit services at least
two times per week

72,901
total passengers
(21% increase
over 2022)

43%
of all rides were
employment
related

24%
of rides were
to access
medical care

10%
of rides were
to participate
in recreational
and community
events

26%
of riders would not be
able to make these
trips without public
transportation

CLINTON COUNTY'S TRANSIT TRANSFORMATION

“Clinton Transit’s goal, to serve the community, is definitely evident and appreciated.”

- Employee Survey

Throughout 2023, Clinton Transit participated in transportation development planning. We reviewed current services, performed a detailed analysis of area demographics and land use, and listened to community feedback. Our vision is to use the TDP as a roadmap to address Clinton County’s mobility needs over the next five years.

THE LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

We actively sought local perspectives through stakeholder interviews, focus groups, open houses, “meetings on the bus,” and “Planning Ahead: A Community Workshop for Improving Public Transit Services” hosted at the Watkins Conference Center. We also collected responses from residents, business owners and current riders via three separate surveys.

“What we learned from these outreach activities has been vital. The plan recommends alternatives in direct response to community input,” explains Schutt.

SERVICE EXPANSION

The potential service expansions identified in the TDP require further analysis and detailed service planning, and are contingent on obtaining necessary funding.

WEEKEND SERVICE

The TDP recommends that Saturday service hours more closely reflect Clinton Transit’s weekday availability. Currently running Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., the plan suggests that operating hours between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. would improve access to employment and more.

Another top request under consideration is the addition of Sunday service. Residents want and need transportation to attend church and religious activities, shopping and employment.



SCHEDULED SERVICES

Clinton Transit will continue its “demand-response” system for reservations, but is also studying the viability of a connector route between St. Johns and DeWitt. With fixed days and times, the route’s suggested stops include the DeWitt Meijer, Woodlands and downtown area, and the St. Johns Walmart, Clinton Area Retirement Community, Sparrow Hospital and downtown area.

ON-DEMAND TECHNOLOGIES

Clinton Transit is working with Ecolane and the Michigan Department of Transportation to proactively address technology needs and upgrades. On-demand and microtransit technologies are among future considerations as we explore the potential for seamless mobility coordination among multiple modes of public transportation.

A LIFELINE FOR MANY

For many, the Blue Bus is more than just a ride—it's a lifeline. St. Johns resident Nelly Krems is grateful for the freedom and independence Clinton Transit has helped her achieve. "I would like you to know how much I value your service," she shares in a letter. "I am legally blind. Because of you, I don't always have to rely on family and can go places when I want." Krems says Clinton Transit's staff is "courteous and friendly," and "working hard to help people get to where they need or want to go."

David Smalldon often uses the bus to run his errands. Early one May morning he decided he'd instead enjoy a walk to the grocery store. On his way home and laden with groceries, he shares, "I rested for a bit wondering if I'd made a mistake and what choices I had. I honestly don't know what I would have done." He decided to leave a message for Clinton Transit's dispatch team explaining his situation. "I got a call back before they were even open, I was never so glad to see a Blue Bus in my life!"

A RIDE TO INDEPENDENCE

Access to employment, talent and economic opportunity helps communities thrive. For DeWitt resident and small business owner LeeAnn Buckingham, that access saved her business.

When the owner of Framer's Edge began to lose her eyesight two years after opening her shop, potential transportation options turned into dead ends. She credits the Blue Bus with keeping her in business and allowing her to pursue her career. "I wouldn't be able to run my business without Clinton Transit. It's a lifesaver," she explains.

GAME-CHANGING COLLABORATION

There was a time when Barbara Kozoil couldn't use the Blue Bus because her destination was across county lines. Now, a game-changing collaboration between Clinton Transit, CATA and EATRAN is working to align the agencies' networks and improve mobility throughout the region—especially the expansion of "one-seat rides."

Now, Kozoil can get to where she needs to go, and "being able to have transportation is very helpful," she explains. Her letter of gratitude includes a donation "to help those that are unable or have a difficult time paying the fee," because "it has been a great help and I want others to be able to use this service."

The first-of-its-kind arrangement has drawn the attention of State Senator Sam Singh and State Representatives Emily Divendorf and Penelope Tserniglou. Each visited Clinton Transit to discuss the importance of mobility in our rural county and the progress the tri-county initiative has made toward improving one-seat-ride availability. "The work we're doing, both independently and collectively, is exciting, and communities are already seeing the benefits," Schutt says.

"The effect we have on the community is why I come to work each day."

- Employee Survey



A BIG HEART FOR SERVICE

*"At all levels of the organization, Clinton Transit truly cares about the passengers and what we give them besides a ride—like independence."
- Employee Survey*

Clinton Transit's staff, dispatchers and drivers have a big heart for service and go the extra mile to serve riders every day. They're also out-and-about in the community, contributing to and participating in local events. Some might even say that the agency has a bit of a celebrity on its hands. The Blue Bus helps usher in Santa each year at local parades and a haunted bus thrills at community trick-or-treat events.

Staff held a friendly Food Fight to benefit the Beacon of Hope food bank at First Baptist Church. A frequent destination for Blue Bus riders, the bank served 234 local households last year. To help stock the pantry, staff donated items which doubled as "votes" for their favorite college football team. The winner for this year's fun rivalry week? The Clinton County community, of course!

Clinton Transit also works alongside the Voice for Clinton County's Children. During the holidays, staff loved the opportunity to provide a local family with a 23-pound turkey and the groceries they'd need for Thanksgiving Day. In December, parents rode the Blue Bus to visit Santa's remote workshop for the Toys for Tots initiative. Staff and board members partnered to collect monetary and gift donations for a local family of seven to enjoy an especially magical Christmas.



LOCAL JOBS

Clinton Transit itself is a local business that generates dozens of jobs for transit operators, drivers, dispatch office personnel, maintenance technicians, operations and administrative staff, and others. In an anonymous staff survey, the Clinton Transit family shares about the agency's culture. "They take care of us, supplying us with the tools we need to do our jobs comfortably, and it feels like a family here," says one; another says, "Supervisors allow us to do our jobs and trust us to make adjustments as needed," and "we truly, honestly care about each other."



"We are a family, and leadership continually strives to improve the workplace and the services we provide to the community."

- Clinton Transit Staff Survey

A FACILITY FOR THE FUTURE

Facility upgrades have positioned Clinton Transit to meet increasing demand and future growth. Particularly vital to rural communities, the Blue Bus expands access to healthcare, employment, education, shopping, social services and much more.

Schutt explains, "Curb-to-curb ridership has risen sharply in recent years, particularly for our seniors, persons with disabilities and veterans."

In 2022, Clinton Transit more than doubled its 2,500 sq. ft. administration building, adding 3,300 sq. ft. and six new dispatch workstations. The facility is now 5,800 sq. ft. and has workstations for 10 dispatch personnel.

The newly built Watkins Conference Center provides a comfortable, versatile space where Clinton Transit and others host a variety of professional events. Well-appointed with technology, the space is ideal for presentations, meetings, training and more.



KEEPING PEOPLE CONNECTED



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