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October 18, 2011

James Bruckbauer  
Michigan Land Use Institute  
154 East Front Street, Suite 301  
Traverse City, MI 49684

Acme Township Planning Commission  
6042 Acme Road  
Williamsburg, MI 49690

Re. Support for including transit and non-motorized facilities

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing on behalf of the Transit Subcommittee of the Grand Vision. We are a group of stakeholders from across the Grand Traverse region interested in improving transit service. Our group includes representatives from: Traverse City Area Public Schools, Benzie Bus, Bay Area Transportation Authority, Antrim County Transportation, Traverse Area Association of Realtors, Cherry Capital Cab, and the Grand Traverse County Planning Commission, the Northwest Michigan Disability Network and the Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce.

We would like to offer support to the Acme Township Planning Commission as you review the first phase of development at the Village of Grand Traverse and urge you to include walkable and accessible bus and non-motorized transfer facilities.

Through the Grand Vision process, a random sample survey verified that a large majority of residents, including those in Grand Traverse, Antrim and Kalkaska counties, share a vision of improved transit connecting the region's cities and villages.

Members of the Transit Subcommittee believe that a bus transfer center in Acme Township would have tremendous benefits to the region as a vital link between the east and west side of the region. Specifically it could link the transit services of Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA), Acme County Transportation, and Kalkaska Public Transit Authority, and serve as a hub for establishing reliable fixed-schedule bus service for residents of Antrim, Kalkaska, Emmet, and Grand Traverse counties. Ideally this facility would also serve as a park-and-ride to allow residents who live near Acme an opportunity to drive to the facility and ride a bus to their job, school, or other activity.

In fact, both BATA and Antrim County Transportation have agreed to provide reliable fixed-schedule bus service to and from the facility to destinations within their respective counties.

Fixed-schedule service could dramatically reduce the amount of traffic congestion along U.S. 31/72 between Acme and Traverse City. It will offer commuters an alternative to driving, and provide mobility to those who are financially or physically unable to drive. And, it makes Acme more accessible to residents across the region.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue. We appreciate your dedicated service to your community and to this region.

Sincerely,

James Bruckbauer  
Transportation Policy Specialist, Michigan Land Use Institute  
Chair, Grand Vision Transit Subcommittee