



Benzie Bus Millage Frequently Asked Questions

1. When is the election?

The election will be held on Tuesday, August 6, 2024. Absentee ballots will be available beginning June 27 from your Township Clerk. Early voting will take place from Saturday, July 27 to Sunday, August 4.

2. What is on the ballot?

Registered Benzie County voters will vote on a 5-year millage proposal of up to 1.0 mills annually. The ballot language reads as follows:

Benzie Transportation Authority

Millage Proposal

Shall the Benzie Transportation Authority, County of Benzie, Michigan, be authorized to levy annually a new additional millage in an amount not to exceed 1.0 mill (\$1.00 for each \$1,000 of taxable value) against all taxable property within the Benzie Transportation Authority limits (the jurisdictional limits of Benzie County) for a period of five (5) years, 2026 to 2030, inclusive, for the purpose of providing funds for all public transportation authority purposes permitted by law, including all capital and operating expenses and providing transportation services to seniors and persons with disabilities? The estimate of the revenue the Benzie Transportation Authority will collect if the millage is approved and levied by the Benzie Transportation Authority in the first year (2026) is approximately \$1,707,000.

Yes

No

3. Isn't there already a millage in place for Benzie Bus? Is this millage in *addition* to the current Benzie Bus Millage?

The current millage will **expire** in December of 2025. Benzie Bus is asking for a *new* millage of 1.0 mills, which would go into effect in January of 2026.



4. What is the primary purpose of the millage?

If approved by voters, the Benzie Bus Millage will provide Benzie Bus with sustainable funding to provide much needed transportation services for everyone in our community, particularly our most vulnerable populations.

5. What if the millage doesn't pass?

While Benzie Bus has been fiscally responsible within the current millage, it is not possible to meet the growing demand for our services within the constraints of the current millage and without your support. Should the millage fail, Benzie Bus will be required to reduce service hours.

6. How will the revenue from the Benzie Bus Millage Election be used?

In the first 5 years, revenue from the millage will result in:

- Additional weekday routes to keep up with current demand
- Additional service hours, allowing Benzie Bus to better serve the needs of businesses and workers
- The addition of service on Sunday, a long-requested service by our passengers
- Increased non-emergency medical transportation services so our most vulnerable community members would never have to miss an appointment due to lack of reliable transportation
- The ability to “age in place” by taking advantage of Benzie Bus services so one can continue to live at home without relying on others for transportation

7. How much will it cost me?

If approved by voters, a Benzie County homeowner with a home with a Market value of \$271,824 would pay approximately \$2.61 per week (or \$136 per year).

To calculate your exact cost, multiply the taxable value of your home by 0.001. The taxable value of your home is a maximum of one-half its market value. For example, if you live in a home with a \$300,000 market value, the taxable value would be no more than \$150,000. Multiply \$150,000 by 0.001 to get your annual cost of \$150 per year.



8. What services does Benzie Bus provide?

Benzie Bus provides curb to curb, demand response service for all residents and visitors of Benzie County. We serve all of Benzie County, with regular connections to Manistee and Grand Traverse counties.

Nearly 15% (2,500) of the Benzie County population utilizes public transportation. We provided over 100,000 trips last year, and the demand continues to grow. Over 50% of our passengers are over the age of 60 or are disabled. **The top 5 trip purposes in 2023 were:**

- Work (28%)
- School, including School of Choice and After-school programs (28%)
- Local businesses (Shopping, banking, post office, etc) (18%)
- The Gathering Place and Drop-in Center (15%)
- Medical Appointments (10%)

9. Where can I get information about voting (such as how to register, where to vote, absentee ballots, and early voting)?

Go to the Michigan Voter Information website (www.michigan.gov/vote) or call the Benzie County Clerk's office at 231-882-9671 ext. 2

10. How do I cast my vote?

As with every election, Benzie Bus provides free rides to cast your absentee ballot or to vote in person.