

Voters in Delta County will decide on August 4, 2026, whether to authorize a countywide transit millage.

What Is the Millage Request?

Voters will be asked whether to authorize a new additional countywide millage of up to 0.689 mill for eight years, 2026 through 2033, to fund Delta Area Transit Authority (DATA) services.

Is This a New Millage?

Yes. The proposal would authorize a new countywide millage of 0.689 mill. Today, DATA is funded through a patchwork of local millages: 0.6 mills in Escanaba and Gladstone, and 0.5 mills in seven participating townships (Bay de Noc, Bark River, Brampton, Ensign, Ford River, Masonville and Rapid River). Seven other townships (Wells, Garden, Nahma, Maple Ridge, Baldwin, Cornell and Fairbanks) currently have no DATA service, because no local transit millage funding is in place there.

If the countywide millage is authorized, it would replace the existing city and township transit millages with a single, shared rate that funds service for all of Delta County.

Who Can Vote?

All registered voters in Delta County may vote in the August 4, 2026 election.

What Would the Millage Fund?

If authorized by voters, the millage would:

- **Provide countywide coverage**, including service in the seven townships that currently have none.
- **Expand service hours**, including:
 - Monday through Thursday, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.
 - Friday, 6 a.m. to 2 a.m.
 - Saturday, 7 a.m. to 2 a.m.
- **Open eligibility for additional state and federal transit funding**, which requires a local match and will bring approximately \$1 in outside funding for every \$1 raised locally.

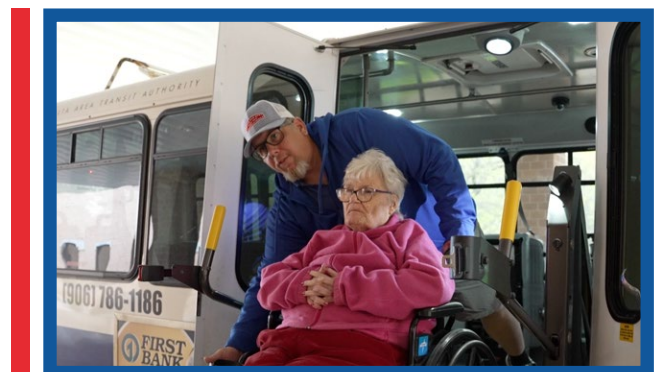
How Much Would the Millage Cost a Homeowner?

The cost of 0.689 mills for a home with a taxable value of \$100,000 is \$68.90 per year. The millage is applied to the home's taxable value, which is 50 percent of the market value. A mill is \$1 for every \$1,000 of taxable value.

How Does Public Transportation Serve Delta County?

Reliable transportation is tied to economic stability and quality of life. Delta Area Transit Authority has provided demand-response, door-to-door service to Delta County since 1989. DATA is a non-profit public transportation authority, audited annually, with executive leadership and staff shared with Schoolcraft County Transit Authority to keep administrative overhead low. In fiscal year 2025, DATA operated 265 service days and traveled 450,539 vehicle miles with a fleet of 18 vehicles and 29 full- and part-time employees.

More than half of DATA trips (54%) are working-age adults, often commuting to jobs at employers like the casino, Walmart, Elmer's and Meijer. The service also reaches seniors, veterans, students, individuals with disabilities and residents without vehicles, and provides emergency transportation for nursing homes, housing complexes and warming centers.



What Has Changed Since the Last Countywide Vote?

The last countywide transit millage in Delta County was on the ballot in 2002. Since then:

- Delta County's senior population has grown to 27.5%, compared to 18% statewide, and is projected to reach 32% by 2040. On average, people outlive their ability to drive safely by 7 to 10 years.
- The State of Michigan's share of rural transit operating costs has dropped from roughly 60% in prior decades to about 33% today, increasing the importance of local funding.
- Five other Upper Peninsula counties (Alger, Gogebic, Marquette, Ontonagon and Schoolcraft) have authorized countywide transit millages.

How is Public Transit Funded?

DATA is a non-profit public transportation authority funded through a combination of local millage revenue, state Local Bus Operating (LBO) funds, federal transit dollars and rider fares. Delta County residents already contribute to state transportation funding through vehicle registration fees and fuel taxes; a local match is what allows additional state and federal dollars to flow back to the county.

How Do I Access DATA's Services?

DATA provides door-to-door, shared-ride service that works like a taxi: a vehicle picks you up at your origin and drops you at your destination, with additional stops possible along the way. Rides should be scheduled at least one hour in advance and completed by 6:00 p.m.

Three ways to book a ride:

- Call Dispatch at 906-786-1186
- Text 906-786-1186 and reply START to enroll, then book, cancel, confirm rides or check your balance by text.
- Use the DATA Mobile App to book or cancel a ride, check your account balance and track your bus in real time. Call 906-786-1186 to enroll.

For full fare details, current service hours, the ADA half-fare form, online payment, and information on regional service between Escanaba and Manistique, visit databus.org.

