

A Citizen's Guide to Transportation Planning in Northwest Lower Michigan



Transportation Planning in Antrim, Benzie,
Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska,
Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford Counties

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PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

Effective transportation planning is vital to the strength of Northwest Lower Michigan. We are dependent on transportation networks for the shipment of goods and services throughout the region, state, nation, and the world. Additionally, because there is such a large tourism base in the region, there is an increased need for reliable and efficient transportation systems for residents and tourists alike.

This guide explains the transportation planning process and transportation issues in our region. Transportation involves many things that affect everyone's quality of life, including:

- Roads/Highways
- Non-motorized trails
- Air travel
- Schools
- Land use
- Economic development
- Harbors
- Sidewalks
- Public transit
- Businesses
- Rail
- Neighborhoods



An important component of the transportation planning process is informed and productive citizen participation. We at the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments wish to encourage the message:

The earlier citizens are involved with the process, the more likely the results they desire will be achieved.

We have done our best to present this guide in plain English, but transportation planning appears to have its own language. If you have any questions about any of the terms or acronyms used, there is a glossary located at the back of the guide for your reference. If you are still unclear about a particular term or subject area, contact your local planning agency or road commission. All contact information can be found at the end of this guide on page 25.

WHAT IS THE NORTHWEST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (NWMCOG)?

Founded in 1973, the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments facilitates and manages several programs for the ten county region. Its service area includes Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford Counties.

NWMCOG's services include Northwest Michigan Works!, Northwest Michigan Small Business & Technical Development Center, Networks Northwest, the Procurement & Exporting Technical Assistance Center, the Regional Planning & Community Development Department and the Regional Repository for U.S. Census data. Some of our services directly support the counties. Others are independent services provided to the public and businesses at large. Many of NWMCOG's services can be viewed at www.nwm.org.

The NWMCOG Regional Planning & Community Development Department coordinates and supports planning activities across the ten counties by:

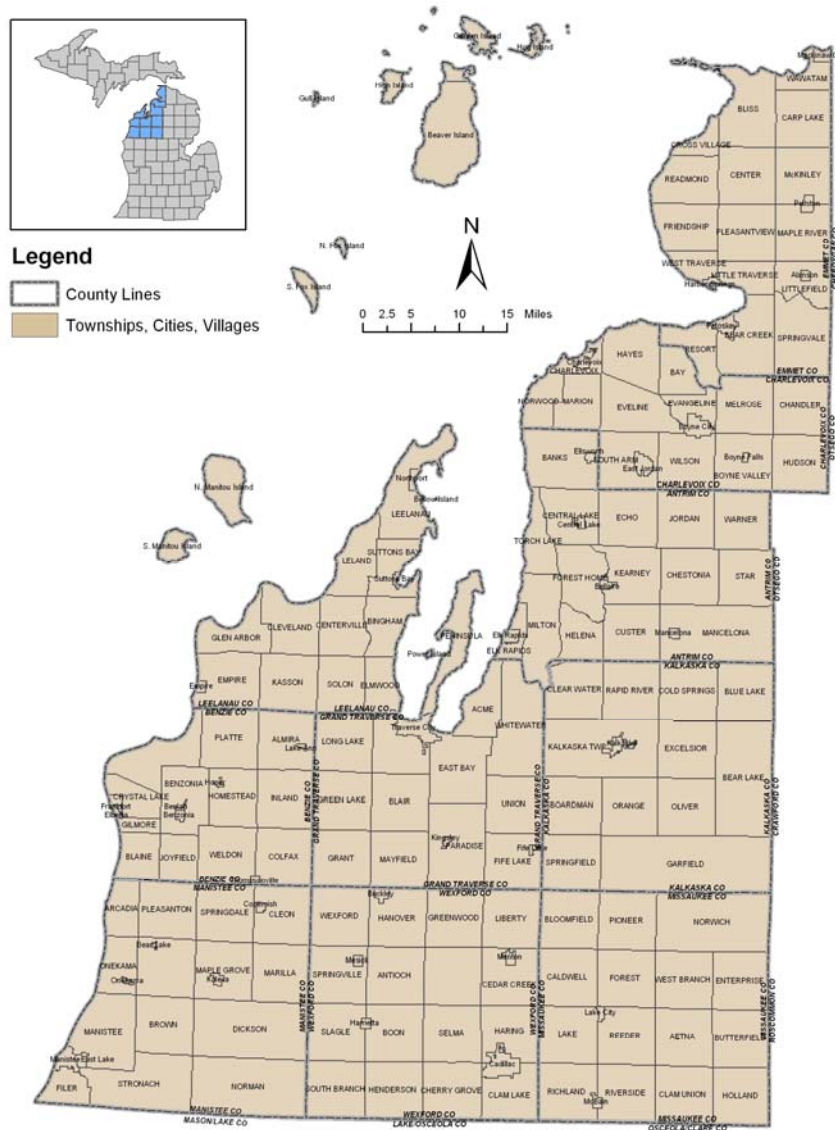
- Operating as the regional census repository.
- Providing relevant data and public perception information for a variety of topic areas related to regional quality of life and community development.
- Providing computer mapping for a variety of public and private uses.
- Offering technical assistance for state and local land use and transportation activities.
- Providing a forum for local government officials to explore common concerns and address them in a coordinated manner.
- Developing and implementing regional and sub-regional projects that meet community needs and that foster community and economic development.
- Organizing and facilitating education seminars and in-service trainings on topics of local interest, and creating and managing projects and programs.

Let Our Resources Work For You



WHAT AREA DOES NWMCOG SERVE?

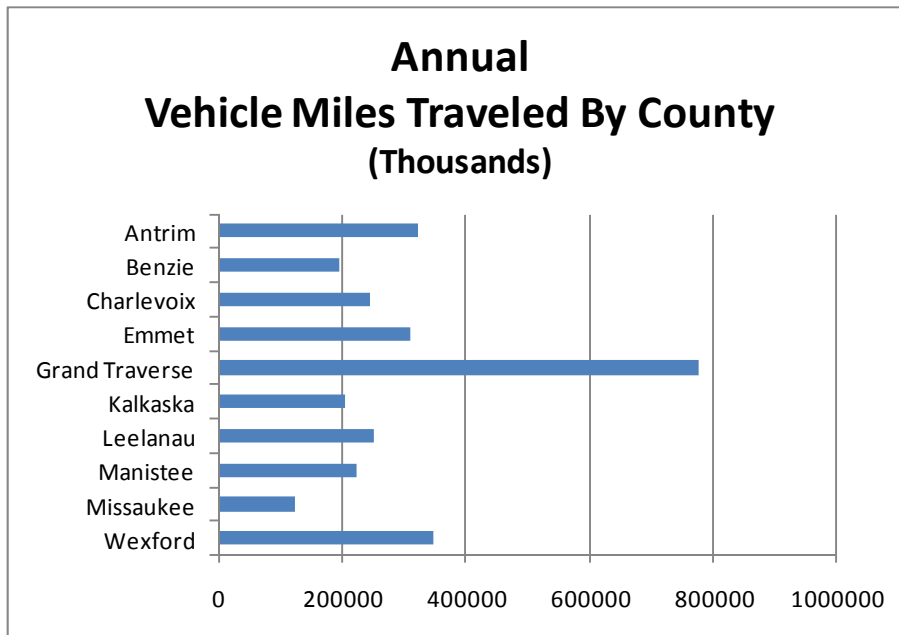
Northwest Lower Michigan Local Government Units



There are approximately 189 local units of government in the Northwest Lower Michigan Area, as well as various state and federal agencies, that have influence on the Region's transportation planning.

TRANSPORTATION STATISTICS IN NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN

Northwest Lower Michigan's transportation network consists of approximately 9,900 miles of roads. Every mile of road the Region has to offer presents opportunity for travel by residents and tourists alike. Every year there are millions of miles traveled in the region.



Source: Michigan Department of Transportation, 2010

In 2010, the Census Bureau counted 297,912 people living in the region. This number grew from 281,468 in 2000 which represents a 5.8% **increase** over the ten year period. In contrast, the state of Michigan as a whole lost 55,138 residents representing a 0.6% **decrease** in population over the same period.

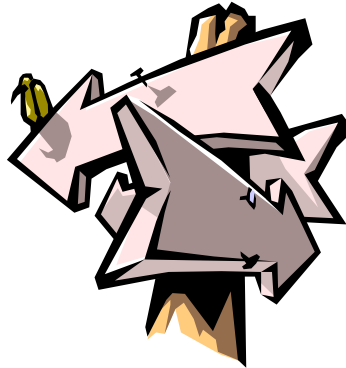
Not including the many miles of non-motorized trails Northwest Lower Michigan has to offer, the thousands of miles of roads and corresponding vehicle miles traveled by an ever-growing population will present a variety of transportation-related challenges and opportunities in the future.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

From a state and federal perspective, all of northern Michigan constitutes a “rural” transportation area. In the early years of transportation planning, rural highways were designed based the concept that the automobile was a pleasure vehicle. Most roadways not in urban areas were designed to connect town centers to the countryside. As a result, most rural transportation systems were fragmented and lacked consistent quality.

Federal Highway Act of 1921

Eventually, the automobile grew in importance and there was a desire to create a highway network. The Federal Highway Act of 1921 recognized the concept of a national highway system and marked the beginning of a formal highway system. The Federal Highway Act of 1921 matched state transportation funding 50/50. This era marked a boom in highway construction, with over \$10 billion invested in roads nationwide. Unfortunately, highways from this period lacked the width and grade to serve a growing industrialized nation.



Federal Highway Act of 1956

By the late 1930s, the desire for the construction of an interconnecting, national highway system was growing. The Federal Highway Act of 1956 acted as the catalyst for the biggest public works project in American history. \$25 billion was authorized for fiscal years 1957 through 1969 to expand the interstate system to 41,000 miles. This federal commitment to automobile transportation changed the pattern of development in America forever.

“Together, the united forces of our communication and transportation systems are dynamic elements in the very name we bear– United States. Without them we would be a mere alliance of many separate parts.”

-President Dwight D. Eisenhower

Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) was formed to create an economically efficient, environmentally sound national transportation system in order to compete in a new global economy. ISTEA provided for statewide planning processes that required the involvement of local officials to better understand the transportation needs of non-metropolitan (rural) areas. Involvement was to include:

- Planning of transportation systems;
- Funding of specific transportation projects;
- Activities to maintain and improve transportation systems.

However, ISTEA did not include any national standards for the transportation planning process in rural areas. Individual states adopted varying techniques in their rural transportation planning process.

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century

ISTEA has since been reauthorized twice, once as the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st century (TEA-21) in 1998 and again as the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) in 2005 . During the reauthorization of ISTEA in 1998 rural officials across the U.S. expressed concern in regard to funding equity. TEA-21 and SAFETEA-LU continued the principles of ISTEA with additional requirements for rural participation in transportation planning as well as greater emphasis on multi-modal transportation and non-transportation impact of highways.

Public involvement is one of TEA-21's fundamental requirements. TEA-21 states that state departments of transportation "*shall provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, other affected employee representatives, private providers of transportation, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunity to comment*" on transportation programs.

SAFETEA-LU legislation expired at the end of fiscal year 2009 but has been continually funded through a series of continuing resolutions. The next transportation reauthorization act is currently being discussed in Washington, there is no timeline for completion of this act.



MICHIGAN'S RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS

State Transportation Planning

SAFETEA-LU requires the development of a the State Long Range Plan (SLRP) and a State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), with the public in mind. Each plan describes an array of methods and activities for implementing transportation planning strategies.



State and local officials ensure that preparation of the SLRP and the STIP include sufficient opportunity for public involvement.

The planning process for project selection in Michigan's transportation systems involves the County Road Commissions, Cities and Villages, Rural Task Forces, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Regional Planning Agencies, Indian Tribal Governments, Public Transit Agencies and other stakeholders.

This includes, but is not limited to, open meetings where project selection and programming decisions are publicly considered, and public notices in local newspapers throughout the state request public comment on proposed projects.

Developing the State Long Range Plan

The SLRP identifies areas in need of improvement and establishes policies and actions necessary to achieve transportation goals for a 25-year period. This is a broad policy-oriented document that is dependent on developing consensus on investment priorities for the state. With the participation of a diverse population, the state is able to represent a broad spectrum of

transportation users and providers to be included within the SLRP. When under development, the plan is subject to numerous public comment sessions throughout the state. The SLRP is created and publicly reviewed every three to five years.

The most current SLRP can be viewed at www.michigan.gov/mdot (Search: SLRP).

Developing the State Transportation Improvement Program

The STIP lists all the transportation projects scheduled for construction and identifies available funds needed to implement projects throughout a 3-year period. It is a list of state trunkline, local road, bridge and transit projects in rural areas of the state, as well as information about the planning process used to develop programs and projects. Like the SLRP, the STIP requires broad-based participation to be implemented. It is created and publicly reviewed every year.

While the SLRP and STIP contain transportation strategies for the entire state, the STIP also includes specific strategies for each of MDOT's regions. The most current STIP for MDOT's North Region can be viewed at www.michigan.gov/mdot (Search: STIP).

Anyone can comment on the SLRP or STIP by:

- Attending a public review meeting in your area.
- Visiting www.michigan.gov/mdot and sending an e-mail to the public input address provided for any MDOT document.
- Contacting the appropriate MDOT Region Office and/or the MDOT Transportation Service Center (**pg. 25**).
- Contacting MDOT's central office (**pg. 25**).

MICHIGAN'S RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS CONT.

Developing Local Road Plans

Local roads are subject to the planning process of the county, tribe, city, or village that will own the project. Examples of local plans include: corridor plans, airport master plans, trail plans, transit plans, county comprehensive plans, non-motorized, and rail plans. Every unit of government that will ultimately be responsible for the project will have a public participation opportunity built into the process, whether it be proactive or consultative public review.

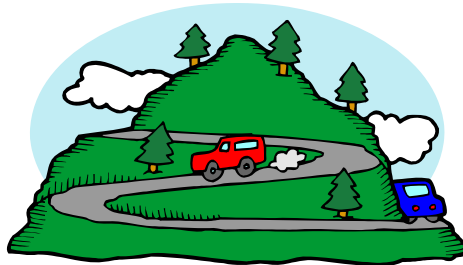
Proactive planning is an ongoing dialogue between officials and residents that gives a constant opportunity for public involvement. Consultative public review, usually a more formal process, is a transportation planning technique involving public comment on specific transportation plans or documents during the planning process.

Opportunities for Early Involvement

Transportation planning occurs continuously at the local, regional, tribal, and state levels. There are numerous venues for public participation throughout the process. It is important to remember:

Every transportation agency in Michigan is a public contact point for influencing investment priorities for transportation dollars.

The connection to the transportation planning process is first made by contacting the city, township, tribal, county, planning agency, MDOT Transportation Service Center, and/or MDOT Regional Office responsible for transportation planning in your area. All contact information can be found at the end of this guide on page 25.

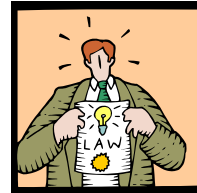


ASSET MANAGEMENT

History

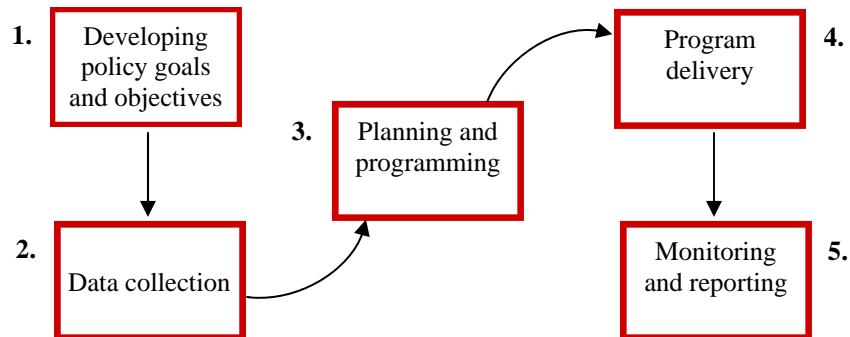
In the early 1980s, governments and their constituents began realizing our transportation infrastructure was crumbling. For years, governments failed to adequately invest in highway maintenance to ensure a stable and reliable network.

- 1991, ISTEA - addressed asset management for the first time and required state departments of transportation to develop management systems for bridge, congestion, intermodal, pavement, public transportation and safety assets.
- 1994, Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) - stated that a governmental entity should establish and communicate clear, relevant goals and objectives; set measurable targets for accomplishment; and develop and report indicators that measure progress in achieving those goals.
- 1995, Highway System Designation Act - State of Michigan requires analysis on any project of \$1 million or more.



Process

Asset management is an emerging concept in the transportation industry. It provides a solid foundation to allow transportation professionals to monitor the transportation system. Further, it helps professionals plan to best optimize the preservation, upgrading and timely replacement of assets through cost-effective management, programming and resource allocation decisions. The MDOT asset management process includes:

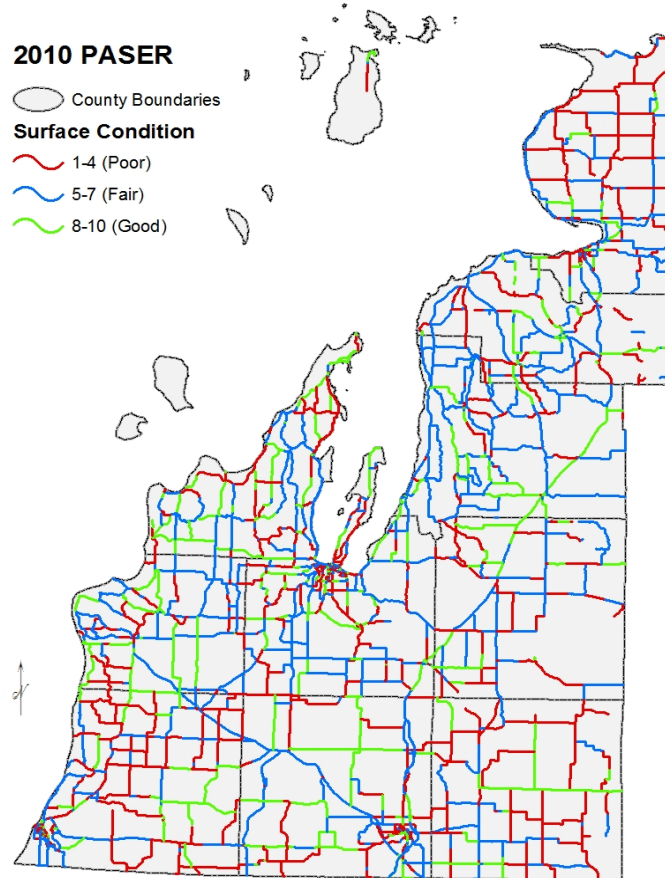


ASSET MANAGEMENT

NWMOG's Efforts

We work with the state's Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC) to incorporate asset management principles for maintaining the region's infrastructure. NWMOG works with MDOT, counties, and local agencies using the asset management approach:

- **Pavement Surface Evaluation Ratings (PASER)** - each year, NWMOG works with MDOT, road commissions, and municipalities to survey the condition of all arterial and collector roads in the region, that are eligible for federal aid dollars.



COMPLETE STREETS

Universal

Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed & operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, & public transportation users of all ages & abilities are able to safely move along & across a complete street. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, & bicycle to work.

Creating complete streets means transportation agencies change their approach to community roads. By adopting a Complete Streets policy, communities direct their transportation planners & engineers to routinely design & operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. This means that every transportation project will make the street network safer for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, & bicyclists – making your town a more desirable place to live.



Characteristics of a Complete Street

There is no singular design prescription for Complete Streets; each one is unique & responds to its community context. A complete street may include:

- Sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders)
- Special bus lanes, comfortable & accessible public transportation stops
- Frequent & safe crossing opportunities which involves median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, & more.



COMPLETE STREETS (CONT.)

Incomplete streets – those designed with only cars in mind – limit transportation choices by making walking, bicycling, & taking public transportation inconvenient, unattractive, & too often, dangerous. Changing policy so that our transportation system routinely includes the needs of people on foot, public transportation, & bicycles means that walking, riding bikes, & riding buses will be safer & easier.



Complete Streets improve the efficiency & capacity of existing roads too, by moving people in the same amount of space. Getting more productivity out of the existing road & public transportation systems is vital to reducing congestion.

Complete Streets are particularly prudent when communities are tightening their budgets & looking to ensure long-term benefits from investments.

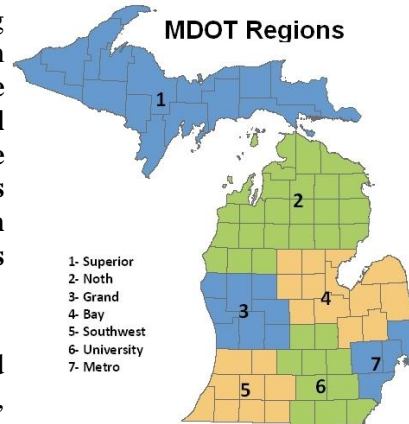


Benefits

- Improves safety - A FHWA safety review found that streets designed with sidewalks, raised medians, better bus stop placement, traffic-calming measures, & treatments for disabled travelers improve pedestrian safety.
- Encourages walking & bicycling for health - A CDC study found that 43% of people with safe places to walk within 10 minutes of home met recommended activity levels.
- The ability to lower transportation costs for families - When residents have the opportunity to walk, bike, or take transit, they have more control over their expenses by replacing car trips with these inexpensive options. Taking public transportation, for example, saves individuals \$9,581 each year.
- Fosters strong communities - A recent study found that people who live in walkable communities are more likely to be socially engaged & trusting than residents of less walkable neighborhoods. Additionally, they reported being in better health & happier more often.

NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN'S RURAL TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATIONS

The majority of transportation planning dollars received in the region come from MDOT. **Along with their central office in Lansing, MDOT has 7 regional offices, each with one or more Transportation Service Centers (TSCs). MDOT's North Region Office, located in Gaylord, serves Northwest Lower Michigan.**



Many of Michigan's economic and community development activities, including transportation planning, are coordinated by **14 regional planning and development commissions or Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs)**. NWMCOG is one of these agencies. Each commission provides a forum for addressing transportation issues and concerns as they relate to state and local governments, data collection, corridor studies, public transit coordination, and public involvement.

Rural Task Forces (RTFs) were created by MDOT to address ISTEA requirements to broaden the participation of rural areas in the transportation decision making process. RTF meetings review each county's transportation priorities, gather project data, and ensure that RTF allocations are budgeted sufficiently. Each RTF then submits an area project list and submits the list to MDOT for inclusion in the STIP. RTF members include:

- County road commissions;
- Rural transit operators;
- Cities and Villages (with populations under 5,000);
- MDOT.

County road commissions operate in each county within Northwest Lower Michigan. County road commissions are responsible for most locally owned roads and work concurrently with MDOT activities. According to County Road Association of Michigan, county road commissions activities include:

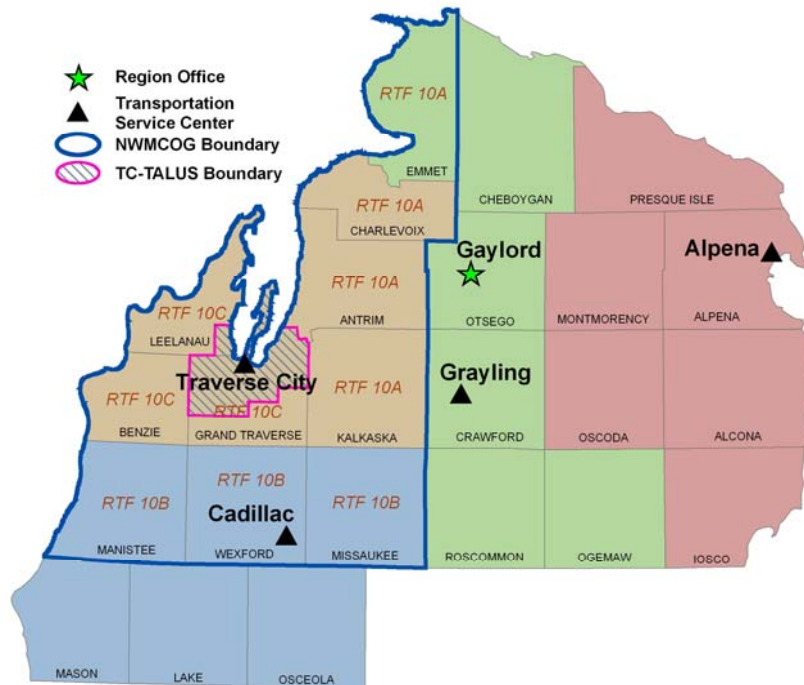
- Road, bridge, and signage construction, repair and maintenance;
- Snow removal, salting and sanding;
- Controlling roadside vegetation, mowing and brush cutting;
- Gravel road grading, Roadside ditch and drain maintenance.

NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN'S RURAL TRANSPORTATION ORGANZATIONS CONT.

Small urban areas also have the ability to access federal transportation dollars if the city population is 5,000 to 50,000 people. However, the boundaries of an urban area do not necessarily follow the political boundaries of a municipality. **In the 10 county region, there are four small urban areas recognized by MDOT: Cadillac, Manistee, Traverse City, and Petoskey.** Unlike MDOT, RTFs, and county road commissions, small urban areas do not automatically receive federal target allocation dollars.

Traverse City Area Transportation and Land Use Study (TC-TALUS) is the metropolitan transportation planning study area operating in the Traverse City urbanized area. While not considered a metropolitan planning organization (MPO) because it does not meet the 50,000 population density threshold, TC-TALUS was formed in 1990 by interested local government agencies and MDOT to perform the transportation and

Northwest Lower Michigan Transportation Organizations



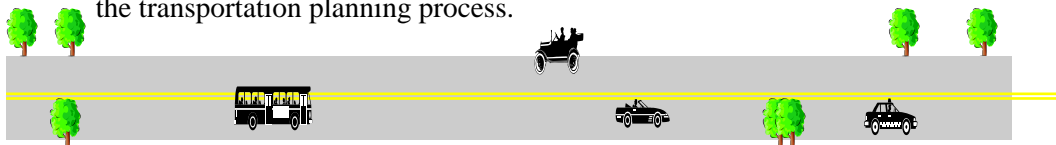
GETTING INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS

Citizens play an important role in identifying local and regional needs and solutions. Early public involvement in the transportation planning process can help reduce expensive and time-consuming rework, and contributes to more efficient project development.



Planning in the public realm takes time. Decisions built on consensus are often discussed for months before action is taken. If you would like to get involved with transportation planning at any level, please do the following:

- **M**onitor local road conditions for potential safety and planning issues.
- **I**nvoke transportation officials to attend community meetings to explain the transportation planning process.

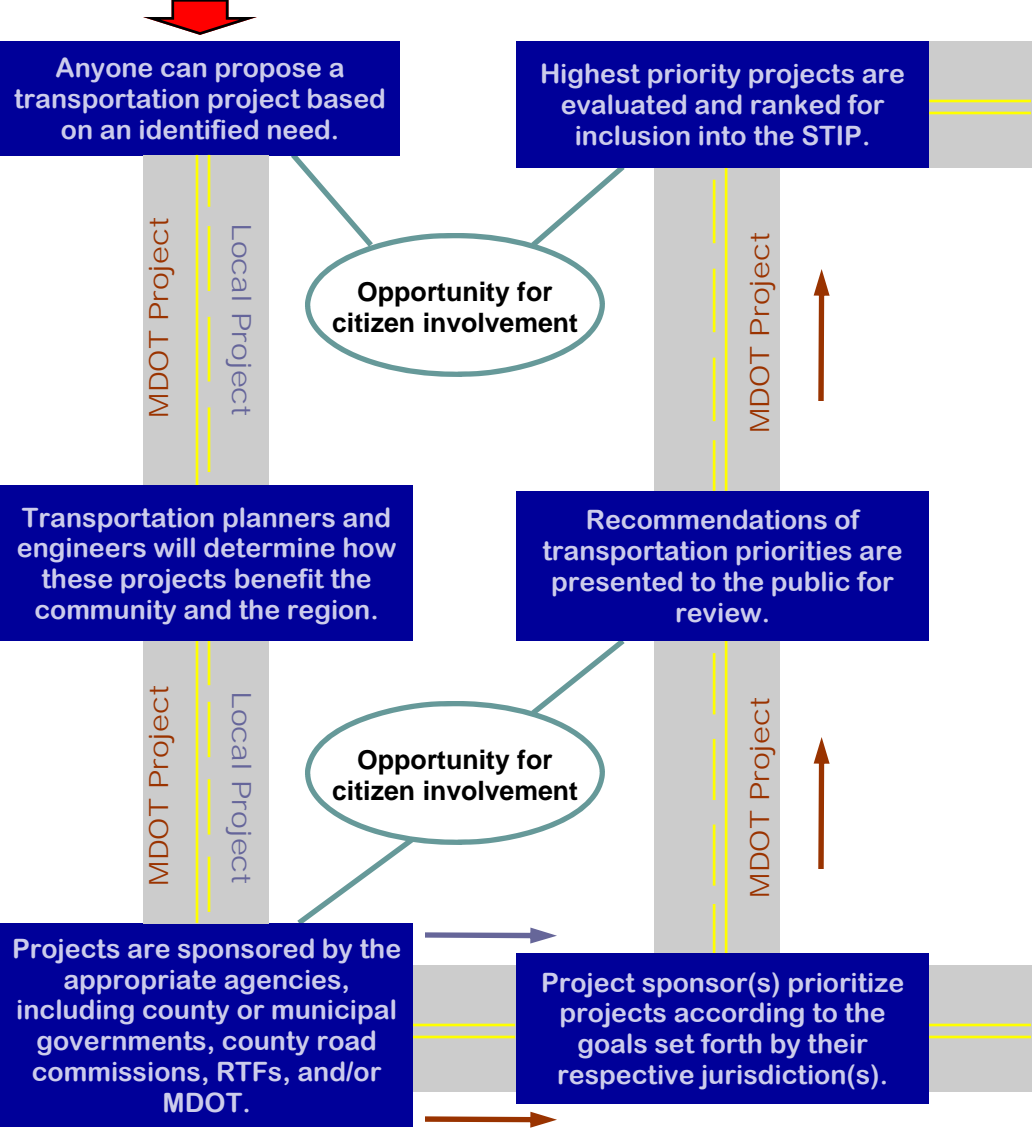


- **R**equst planning agencies and governmental units to keep you informed on public comment sessions relating to transportation planning.
- **O**bserve and educate yourself on sound transportation planning techniques that are applicable to projects in your community.
- **A**sk questions and contribute thoughtfully with the good of your community in mind.
- **D**isplay knowledge of which planning agencies and governmental units are involved with transportation planning in your community.
- **S**tay informed and involved throughout the transportation planning process.

*Michigan roads are your roads.
Think MI ROADS!*

HOW AN IDEA BECOMES A TRANSPORTATION PROJECT

The road to transportation project success STARTS HERE!



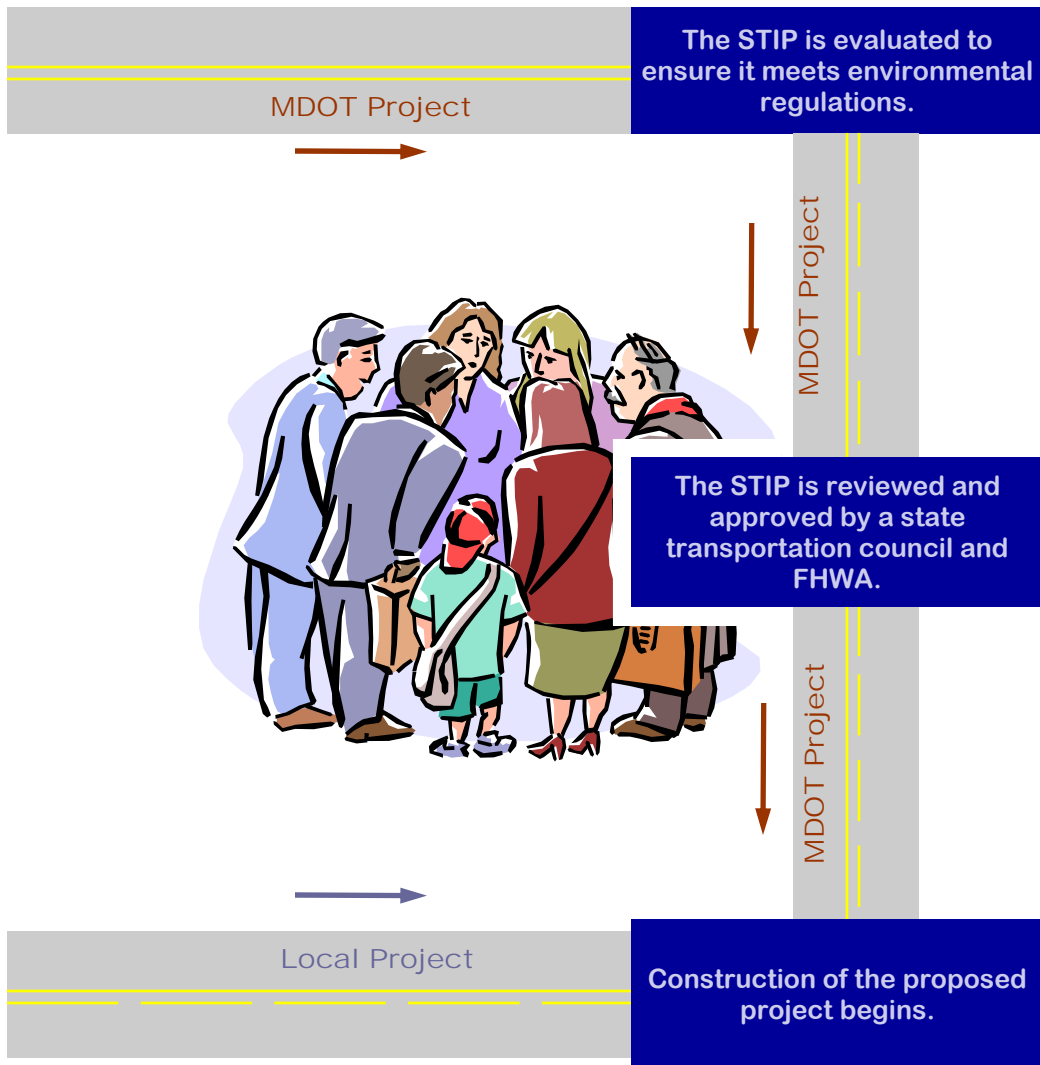
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Every proposed transportation project is unique and dependent on a variety of factors, including public buy-in, economic feasibility, environmental impact, and funding.

Be patient with the transportation project process. The planning and eventual construction of a specific project can involve a significant amount of time varying from months to years.

Continued from Page 13



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TRANSPORTATION ISSUES IN NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN

Seven key issues related to transportation planning in Northwest Lower Michigan are outlined on the following pages. Please check our website (<http://www.nwm.org/trans.asp>) for links to other sites that may offer additional information on these important transportation planning issues.

Alternative Means of Travel

Challenge:

Environmental, health, traffic, and general quality of life concerns have increased the need for alternative means of travel.

Opportunity:



Public transportation is becoming a central figure in all transportation planning. Public transportation is valuable to the Region because it provides choice and opportunity for many who may not have access to a personal vehicle. Public transportation is a vital link to services for the disabled, elderly, and children.

Additionally, public transportation eases the strain on the environment and offers cost effective travel options for many who travel alone in personal vehicles. Effective public transportation planning can enhance development and prosperity for the Region.

Non-motorized trails in Northwest Lower Michigan encompass activities for all the seasons. An effective trail system allows residents and tourists alike to enjoy the scenic landscape and a healthier lifestyle. A non-motorized trail system can be part of an efficient multi-modal transportation system.



Effective Land Use

Challenge:

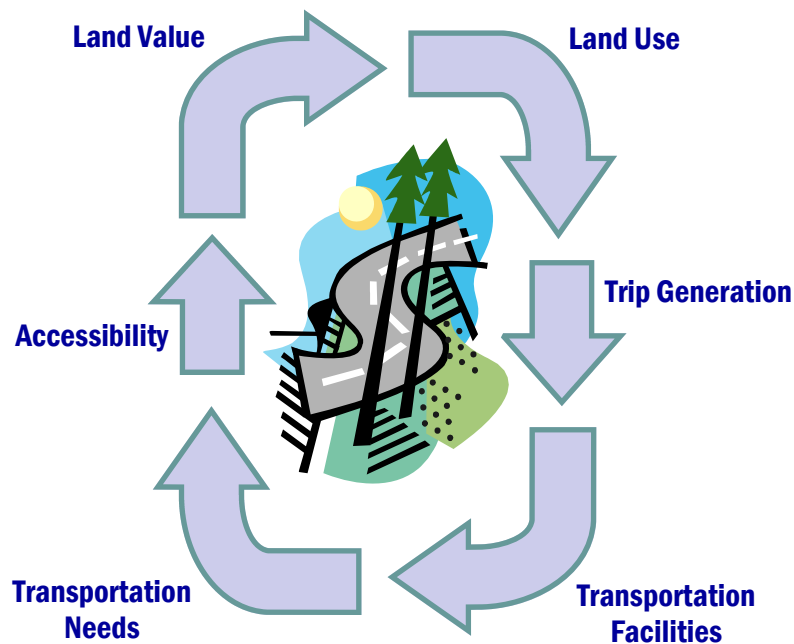
Transportation and land use are intrinsically connected. As the Region continues to grow, land use and transportation planning needs to be coordinated.

Opportunity:

State law requires MDOT to provide reasonable access to property adjoining to a state roadway. If land is developed without regard for cumulative transportation impacts, access points can create conflict points and congestion on roads. As a result, transportation improvements or changes must be made again to improve the accessibility to the land.

If decisions such as shared driveways or access roads are planned and implemented ahead of time, land use design and development will improve. It is crucial that we all recognize the connected nature of transportation and land use, and effectively coordinate transportation planning amongst citizens, businesses, communities, and planning agencies.

The Transportation / Land Use Cycle



Source: MDOT. Access Management. 2004.

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES IN NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN CONT.

Fair, Equitable Decision-Making

Challenge:

We must ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities, including underserved populations, in the transportation decision-making process.

Opportunity:

The practice of environmental justice is based on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Executive Order 12898 of 1994. Two fundamental principles of environmental justice include, but are not limited to the following:

- Avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations.
- Prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

Low income and minority populations are identified using 2000 census data. Any area that exceeds the statewide average for low income and minority populations is considered an environmental justice zone. Such areas are identified and mapped to show any overlay between environmental justice zones and transportation projects. Environmental justice zones can be viewed within the current STIP document. If a disproportionate effect is identified or anticipated, MDOT has specific mitigation procedures in place.



Maintaining Community Character

Challenge:

Every community in Northwest Lower Michigan has a distinctive character. This character can be threatened by planning techniques that are not cohesive to locally-defined scenic, aesthetic, historic, environmental, and community values.



Opportunity:

The Governor's Executive Direction defines Context Sensitive Design (CSD) as *"a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach involving stakeholders for the development of a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility."*

CSD promotes design solutions based on six key principles:

- Balance safety, mobility, community, and environmental goals in all projects.
- Involve the public and affected agencies early and continuously.
- Use an interdisciplinary team tailored to project needs.
- Address all modes of travel.
- Apply flexibility inherent in design standards.
- Incorporate aesthetics as an integral part of good design.

CSD is a process that is being developed in which transportation officials will work with local citizens and stakeholders to create transportation plans and projects that are compatible with the character and history of an area.

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES IN NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN CONT.

Safety

Challenge:

During 2009, there were 11,306 automobile accidents in Northwest Lower Michigan, resulting in about 1,587 injuries. Transportation safety for users, passengers, and pedestrians must always be on the forefront of transportation planning.

Key safety issues facing transportation planning in Northwest Lower Michigan are:

- Intersection/ Road departure safety;
- Young/Elder driving groups;
- Altering negative driver behavior;
- Highway work zones;
- Snowmobile crashes;
- Seatbelt usage;
- Deer accidents.



Transportation safety is an ongoing effort that targets offenders while recognizing possible social norms that may contribute to a specific safety concern.

Opportunity:

The opportunity for improving transportation safety will always exist. However, things such as rumble strips, luminescent paints, the ability to view signs more easily, continuous safety education, and improving crash data to identify areas of needed improvement are current efforts to minimize transportation related accidents.

Michigan transportation planning organizations including; County Road Commissions, Cities and Villages, Rural Task Forces, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Regional Planning Agencies, Indian Tribal Governments, and Public Transit Agencies are continuously improving their transportation safety practices.

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES IN NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN CONT.

Traffic Congestion

Challenge:

Daily errand and commute trip times are increasing in the region. As the population and related traffic grow in the region, traffic congestion will continue to be a central issue in transportation planning.

There are two kinds of traffic congestion: recurring and non-recurring. Non-recurring congestion is caused from things such as an accident, construction, or inclement weather. Non-recurring traffic congestion, while a major contributor to traffic delays, is usually not a focus of transportation planning efforts.

Recurring traffic congestion is due to over capacity that causes predictable traffic delays. Most recurring traffic congestion occurs in urban areas, but as the Region continues its growth, predictable traffic congestion will be a major factor in effective transportation planning.



The current SLRP names three Northwest Lower Michigan road corridors as “highest significance” in regard to traffic congestion management: US-131

(Wexford, Kalkaska, Antrim, Charlevoix, and Emmet counties), M-72 (Antrim, Grand Traverse, and Kalkaska counties) and US-31 (Manistee, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Antrim, Charlevoix and Emmet counties).

Opportunity:

One solution to traffic congestion can be found with the tools offered through Access Management. Access Management uses a variety of proven traffic techniques designed to effectively control driveways and intersections to maintain safety at a roadway's full traffic carrying capacity.

Implementing an access management program will encourage smooth and safe traffic flow on community roadways and can help communities avoid some of the traffic problems caused by uncontrolled strip development.

KEYS TO TRANSPORTATION PLANNING SUCCESS

The Northwest Michigan Council of Governments is committed to effective, cross-jurisdictional transportation planning practices. NWMCOG is currently providing support to local governments, area transportation planning agencies, and/or MDOT in each of the afore mentioned key issue areas. Furthermore, NWMCOG remains on the forefront of emerging transportation issues that are affecting the Region.

NWMCOG believes that every transportation planning project presents unique challenges and opportunities to the region. However, as outlined by the Federal Highway Administration, there are some key success factors for any rural transportation plan:

- Set the overall transportation direction for the rural area and define the transportation future/vision to plan toward.
- Provide a decision-making structure, incorporating a participatory public involvement process, to plan and prioritize improvements to the rural transportation system.
- Build on existing knowledge, resources, and information to conduct technical analysis including evaluation of current and future conditions, forecasts, and trends.
- Balance multiple and competing stakeholder objectives and funding expectations.
- Identify and provide a long-range funding program.
- Provide a framework to prioritize expenditures based on policy goals and objectives.
- Provide accountability to customers on future direction and actions to get there.

Look for these success factors in your local planning process. If they do not exist, encourage local planning officials to adopt positive change to ensure transportation investment effectiveness and accountability.

TERM & ACRONYM DEFINITIONS

Access Management: The control of driveways and intersections to maintain safety at a roadway's full traffic carrying capacity.

Asset Management: An ongoing process of maintaining, upgrading and operating physical assets cost-effectively, based on a continuous physical inventory and condition assessment.

Capacity: The maximum number of vehicles that a road can reasonably expected to move at expected speeds, under normal conditions.

CDC: Center for disease control

Commute trip: Trips made traveling back and forth from home to work.

Complete Streets: Roadways designed and operated to enable safe, attractive, and comfortable access and travel for all users.

Context Sensitive Design: Context Sensitive Design integrates projects into a setting by careful planning, and consideration of different perspectives in order to tailor designs to particular environments.

Cross-jurisdictional: Describes services that are provided across political boundaries.

Drivers: All motor vehicle operators, bicyclists, pedestrians,

and train engineers.

Environmental Justice: A federal policy that protects minority and low-income populations from experiencing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environment effects of federal-funded policies or activities.

FHWA: Federal Highway Administration is the federal agency that oversees the distribution of federal funds for the activities pertaining to road systems in each state.

Intermodal: The movement of people or freight by two or more modes of transportation.

ISTEA: Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991

Local Road: A road owned and maintained by a county road commission, city or village.

MDEQ: Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

MDOT: Michigan Department of Transportation.

MPO: Metropolitan Planning Organization. An organization, designated by the state, that is responsible for transportation planning in a metropolitan area having a population density in excess of 50,000.

Multi-modal: Facilities serving more than one transportation mode or a transportation network comprised of a variety of modes.

NWMCOG: Northwest Michigan Council of Governments. NWMCOG is a regional planning partnership of the 10-County Region.

Region: An entire area comprised of governmental units; including counties, cities, townships, and villages. The Northwest Lower Michigan Region includes Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford Counties.

Road Commission: The agency overseeing county roads. Every county in Northwest Lower Michigan has a road commission.

RPO: Regional (or Rural) Planning Organization. NWMCOG is an RPO.

RTF: Rural Task Force groups consist of counties and associated cities, villages, and townships working cooperatively to set priorities and oversee transportation investments for a region of the state.

RTP: Regional Transportation Plan

SLRP: The State Long Range Plan is a document that identifies

statewide transportation needs, sets investment priorities for a period of at least 20 years and establishes goals and objectives for addressing transportation needs throughout the state.

STIP: The State Transportation Improvement Plan is a document that list specific transportation projects scheduled during a three-year period throughout the state. An STIP is also done for each of the MDOT Regions.

TC-TALUS: Traverse City Transportation and Land Use Study

TEA-21: Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century

TSC: Transportation Service Center. There are three TSCs serving the Northwest Lower Michigan Region: Cadillac, Grayling, and Traverse City.

Trunkline: A portion of the road system owned by the State of Michigan.

Underserved: Individuals who experience more difficulty getting to work, school, recreation activities, and shopping than the population at large.

USDOT: United States Department of Transportation.

NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING CONTACTS

Transportation Planning Agencies

**MDOT Statewide
Planning Division**
Phone: 517-335-2962

MDOT North Region Office
Phone: 989-731-5090;
Toll Free: 888-304-6368

-Traverse City TSC
Phone: 231-941-1986
Toll Free: 888-457-6368

-Grayling TSC
Phone: 989-344-1802
Toll Free: 888-811-6368

-Cadillac TSC
Phone: 231-775-3487
Toll Free: 800-943-6368

NWMCOG
Phone: 231-929-5000
Toll Free: 800-692-7774
www.nwm.org/

TC-TALUS
Phone: 231-929-5057
www.nwm.org/tctalus.asp



County Planning Offices

Antrim County
Phone: 231-533-6265
www.antrimcounty.org/planning.asp

Benzie County
Phone: 231-882-9674
www.benzieco.net/

Charlevoix County
Phone: 231-547-7234
www.charlevoixcounty.org/

Emmet County
Phone: 231-348-1735
www.emmetcounty.org/

Grand Traverse County
Phone: 231-922-4676
www.co.grand-traverse.mi.us/

Kalkaska County
Phone: 231-258-3367
www.kalkaskacounty.net/zoning.asp

Leelanau County
Phone: 231-256-9812
www.leelanau.cc/coplanning.asp

**County Planning
Offices Cont.**

Manistee County
Phone: 231-723-6041
www.manisteecountymi.gov/index

Missaukee County
Phone: 231-839-7988
www.missaukee.org/plandept.htm

Wexford County
Phone: 231-779-9465
www.wexfordcounty.org/Services/

Leelanau County
Phone: 231-271-3993

Manistee County
Phone: 231-889-0000

Missaukee County
Phone: 231-839-4361

Wexford County



**County Road
Commission Offices**

Antrim County
Phone: 231-587-8521

Benzie County
Phone: 231-325-3051

Charlevoix County
Phone: 231-582-7330

Emmet County
Phone: 231-347-8142

Grand Traverse County
Phone: 231-922-4848

Kalkaska County
Phone: 231-258-2242

Cities and Villages

Village of Alanson
Phone: 231-548-5431
www.villageofalanson.com/

Village of Bellaire
Phone: 231-533-8213
www.bellairemichigan.com/

Village of Bear Lake
Phone: 231-864-4300
www.bearlakemichigan.org/

Village of Benzonia
Phone: 231-882-9981

NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING CONTACTS

Cities and Villages Cont.

Village of Beulah

Phone: 231-882-4451

www.villageofbeulah.org/

Boyne City DPW

Phone: 231-582-0375

gov.boynecity.com/

Boyne City Planning

Phone: 231-582-0343

gov.boynecity.com/

City of Boyne Falls DPW

Phone: 231-549-2425

Village of Buckley

Phone: 231-269-3700

City of Cadillac

Phone: 231-775-0181

<http://www.cadillac-mi.net/>

-Planning, ext. 101

-DPW, ext. 104

Village of Central Lake

Phone: 231-544-6483

<http://www.centrallakemi.org/>

City of Charlevoix Planning,

Phone: 231-547-3265

www.cityofcharlevoix.org/city

City of Charlevoix Streets

Phone: 231-547-3275

City of Charlevoix Streets

Phone: 231-547-3275

www.cityofcharlevoix.org/

Village of Copemish

Phone: 231-378-4652

City of East Jordan DPW

Phone: 231-536-3381

www.eastjordancity.org/

Village of Elberta DPW

Phone: 231-352-4071

www.villageofelberta.org/

Village of Ellsworth

Phone: 231-588-7411

www.villageofellsworth.com/

Village of Elk Rapids

Phone: 231-264-9274

elkrapids.org/

Village of Empire DPW

Phone: 231-326-5353

www.leelanau.cc/empirevillage.asp

Village of Fife Lake

Phone: 231-879-4291

www.fifelake.com/

Cities and Villages Cont.

City of Frankfort

Phone: 231-352-7117
www.frankfortmich.com/

City of Harbor Springs DPW

Phone: 231-526-0604
www.cityofharborsprings.com/

Village of Honor

Phone: 231-325-8432
villageofhonor.org/

Village of Kaleva

Phone: 231-362-3366
www.kalevami.com/index.html

Village of Kalkaska Street Dept.

Phone: 231-258-9191
www.kalkaskavillage.com/

Village of Kingsley

Phone: 231-263-7778
www.villageofkingsley.com/

Lake City

Phone: 231-839-4561

Lake City DPW

Phone: 231-839-4469

Village of Mackinaw City

Phone: 231-436-5351
www.mackinawcity.org/

Village of Mancelona

Phone: 231-587-8331

City of Manistee DPW

Phone: 231-723-7132
www.ci.manistee.mi.us/CityParks.html

Village of Manton

Phone: 231-824-3572
www.mantonmichigan.org/government.html

City of McBain DPW

Phone: 231-825-2222
cityofmcbain.com/

Village of Mesick

Phone: 231-885-1082
villageofmesick.com/

Village of Northport DPW

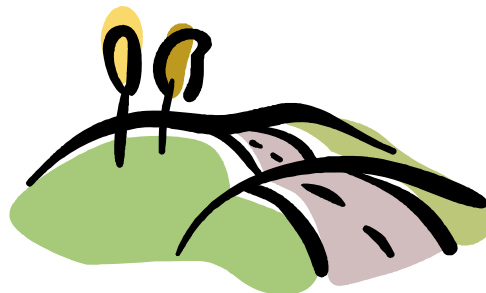
Phone: 231-386-5781
www.leelanau.cc/northport.asp

Village of Onekama

Phone: 231-889-3171
www.onekama.info/

Village of Pellston

Phone: 231-539-7355
www.pellstonmi.com/



NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING CONTACTS

Cities and Villages Cont.

City of Petoskey

Phone: 231-347-2500
www.petoskey.us/

Village of Suttons Bay

Phone: 231-271-3051
www.leelanau.cc/suttonsbayvill.asp

Village of Thompsonville

Phone: 231-378-2560

Traverse City Street Dept.

Phone: 231-922-4901
www.ci.traverse-city.mi.us/streets-department

Traverse City Planner

Phone: 231-922-4460
<http://www.ci.traverse-city.mi.us/city-planning>

Transit Contacts

Antrim County Transportation

Phone: 231-533-8644
www.antrimcounty.org/act.asp

Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA)

Phone: 231-941-2355
www.bata.net/

Cadillac/Wexford Transit Authority

Phone: 231-775-9411
www.cadillac-mi.com/CadillacBook/trans.html

Charlevoix County Transit System

Phone: 231-582-6900
www.charlevoixcounty.org/transit.asp

Kalkaska Public Transit

Phone: 231-258-6808
www.michigan.gov/mdot/

Manistee County Dial A Ride

Phone: 231-723-6561
www.michigan.gov/mdot/

Straits Area Regional Ride

Phone: 866-731-1204
www.michigan.gov/mdot/

Friendship Centers of Emmet County

Phone: 231-347-3211
www.emmetcoa.org/



Multi-modal Contacts

Top of Michigan Trails Council

Phone: 231-348-8280

www.trailscouncil.org/

Betsie Valley Trail Management Council

Phone: 231-882-5039

www.betsievalleytrail.org/index.html

Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trails (TART)

Phone: 231-941-4300

www.traversetrails.org/

Tribal Government Planning

Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians

Phone: 231-534-7750

www.gtbindians.org/

Little River Band of Ottawa Indians

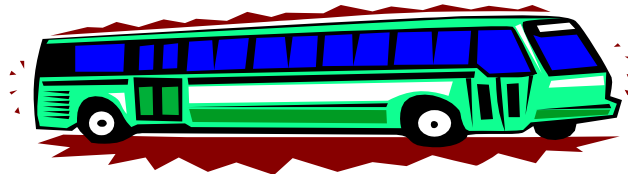
Phone: 231-723-8288

www.lrboi-nsn.gov/

Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians

Phone: 231-242-1400

www.ltbodawa-nsn.gov/





P.O. Box 506
Traverse City, MI 49684-0506

Phone: 231-929-5000 or 800-692-7774
Fax: 231-929-5012

Internet: www.nwm.org

This guide can also be viewed via the Internet at:
<http://www.nwm.org/trans.asp>