



West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission

April/May 2017

Infrastructure Asset Management Pilot

In early 2016, Governor Rick Snyder created the 21st Century Infrastructure Commission through an executive order. The 27-member Infrastructure Commission was tasked with developing a plan to address the state's infrastructure, how it can be fixed, and identify a vision of how it should look fifty years into the future. The final report was released in November 2016 and included 110 comprehensive recommendations.

One of the recommendations of the Infrastructure Commission was for the state to identify a strategic way to manage infrastructure that allows for a more systematic approach to decision making. Infrastructure in Michigan currently exists in silos. There are 700 separate road and drain agencies, 79 transit agencies, 1,390 drinking water systems, 1,080 wastewater systems, 116 electric utilities, 10 natural gas utilities, and 43 broadband providers. Therefore, the Infrastructure Commission suggested the state create a Michigan Infrastructure Council to oversee an integrated asset management system, coordination, strategy, and investments.

Governor Snyder's first step to accomplishing this recommendation is to create a Regional Infrastructure Asset Management Pilot where these outcomes can be identified and tested at the regional level and then operationalized statewide. In April 2017, Governor Snyder identified two Asset Management Pilot Regions: Regional Prosperity Initiative (RPI) Region 10 consisting of three counties in southeast Michigan; and RPI Region 4 which consists of 13 counties in West Michigan including the WMSRDC five county region.

The project will be lead by a stakeholder team made up of staff from the Governor's office, numerous state departments, leaders from each RPI region, technical experts, and a project manager. There will also be an advisory team that will provide input throughout the process. Each region will also have their own committees working at the grassroots level to gather data, assist in the process and begin to coordinate asset management and planning across infrastructure sectors.

Over the next year, leaders from these pilot regions will work closely with the state to identify data needs and standards that are representative of the assets statewide, a regional structure for future implementation of data collection

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WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION



SPOTLIGHT PROJECT:

West Michigan Watershed Collaborative

The West Michigan Watersheds Collaborative (WMWC) will convene this summer to assess a set of sustainable funding mechanisms developed by Public Sector Consultants in 2016. With 2017 support from the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance, the region's watershed groups will develop new funding strategies to implement existing watershed management plans.

WMSRDC, Grand Valley Metro Council, and Macatawa Area Coordinating Council will host sub-regional workshops to assess the funding mechanisms and develop recommendations for new funding strategies. Public Sector Consultants is providing technical assistance for the development of the strategies.

The watershed collaborative's overall goal is to advance implementation of watershed plans that are already approved by the US Environmental Protection Agency and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. The purpose of the regional initiative is to establish funding opportunities beyond what is available through the DEQ and other competitive grant programs. Doing so will ensure that existing water quality management plans don't become outdated and that implementation is timely, cost-effective and sustainable.

In addition to the regional watershed

partnership, WMSRDC is working to improve the health of forests and urban tree canopy within the Lake Michigan coastal zone. In partnership with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Mason-Lake Conservation District, WMSRDC submitted a grant proposal to the US Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. If funded, the project will implement reforestation at Ludington, Charles Mears, Silver Lake and Muskegon state parks and other publicly-owned properties within Muskegon, Oceana and Mason counties. Partners include conservation districts, watershed groups and local communities.



NOAA Projects Update

Major construction of the Muskegon River Veterans Memorial Park habitat restoration project will begin soon after Memorial Day and wrap up before Veterans Day, 2017.

The project will restore native fish and wildlife habitat in and around the ponds, improve fish passage with the Muskegon River, control non-native invasive plants, and restore the park's historic landscape with a variety of native trees and shrubs.

The native landscape design is based on the original 1928 landscape that was designed by Willard Gebhardt. WMSRDC, Muskegon County Veterans Advisory Council and the Northside Lions will host an information meeting to review project details on May 24 at Muskegon Community College. Please contact Kathy Evans at (231) 722-7878 x 17 if you would like to attend.

EPA Shoreline Cities Green Infrastructure

Construction of the U.S. EPA Great Lakes Shoreline Cities green infrastructure project began in April. The project will reduce several acres of impervious surface by removing concrete, asphalt and foundry fill.

The property is being prepared for the construction of a native plant, biofiltration rain garden to intercept stormwater runoff. The project will improve water quality and beautify a gateway view of the City of Muskegon along the shoreline of Muskegon Lake. The City of Muskegon, WMSRDC, Muskegon Rotary and Muskegon County collaborated on the \$110,000 grant proposal. The property is owned by Muskegon County.

In addition to the EPA grant funds, an additional \$19,000 in contributions have been provided by the Community Foundation for Muskegon County, Pigeon Hill Alliance, and the Muskegon Lake Watershed Partnership.

Planting Trees for Water Quality

Work has begun on a \$200,000 grant to plant approximately 2,000 trees on 140 acres of West Michigan urban and rural lands. The trees will prevent more than 500,000 gallons of stormwater runoff from degrading public water resources and aquatic habitats within the Muskegon River watershed. The Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and the EPA awarded funds in 2016 to the Muskegon River Watershed Assembly. WMSRDC is managing the project in the Muskegon County area. Muskegon Conservation District and several public and private land owners will plant both large street trees and small saplings in several areas around the Muskegon Lake watershed.

Plantings will take place within Ryerson Creek watershed at Smith-Ryerson Park, behind Wesley School, within Fairchild Park, and along road medians within the City of Muskegon. The City of North Muskegon will also receive larger street trees within its road right of ways. Many smaller trees will be planted near Bear Creek as well.

The majority of the trees planted will be native trees, selected specifically for the habitat in which they will be placed. The majority of the plantings will take place this spring and fall.

Small Town & Rural Development Conference

WMSRDC staff attended the Small Town and Rural Development Conference on April 11 and 12 at the Crystal Mountain Resort in Thompsonville, Michigan.

The annual event, which is organized by the Michigan Rural Council, offers valuable networking opportunities and information about funding and technical assistance opportunities for rural communities. Breakout sessions featured presentations from local, state, and federal agencies on a breadth of topics, such as: talent attraction, community revitalization, development/redevelopment financing options, civic engagement, and rural business development.

Thank you to Consumers Energy for encouraging WMSRDC staff to attend, and for providing a small scholarship to cover the conference registration fee. As a result of attending the conference, WMSRDC is better equipped to serve rural communities throughout the five-county region.

CEDS Update

WMSRDC continues to make progress towards updating the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), building upon the results of the regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis which was conducted in the fall of 2016.

The conclusions drawn from the SWOT analysis are being used to help guide and focus the content of the revised CEDS, helping to ensure its utility and relevance to economic development in the WMSRDC region. WMSRDC staff will collaborate with the CEDS Strategy Committee and other stakeholders to identify relevant economic and demographic data this spring; identify potential economic development projects this summer; and then review and finalize a draft document this fall. The draft CEDS will be made available for public review and comment in October, and then it will be submitted to the WMSRDC Board for approval in November.

Deconstruction Study Complete

Structural abandonment and blight plagues many Midwest communities, places economic hardships on already distressed areas, and subjects residents to other significant health and safety hazards. Over the past year, WMSRDC collaborated with the Michigan State University Center for Community and Economic Development to complete the Deconstruction Cluster Feasibility Study, which sought to explore the concept of deconstruction as a solution to the problem of structural abandonment.

Muskegon County was selected as the case study for this seminal report for its abundance of blight, existing economic and transportation infrastructure, and demonstrated community support for seeking sustainable and innovative solutions. Deconstruction is a practice that shows potential to addresses economic, social, and environmental priorities in Muskegon County through increased utilization of the Port of Muskegon, job growth, blight elimination, and reduced landfill contributions. The Deconstruction Cluster Feasibility Study report can be found on the WMSRDC website at www.wmsrdc.org.

Safety Plan Update

On November 8, 2016, WMSRDC hosted a kickoff meeting for MDOT's Regional Safety Plan. This was the first of several interactive meetings allowing individuals from the community with an interest in traffic safety to provide input during the development of the plan. MDOT, in partnership with WMSRDC, is developing this safety plan for Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, and Oceana Counties.

After the kickoff meeting in November, OPUS International Consultants began the initial data collection and analysis as well as the initial identification of emphasis areas. These emphasis areas are based on the results of both the data analysis and discussions with regional stakeholders. These areas include such items as winter weather, age-related concerns (both younger and older drivers), and intersection concerns.

WMSRDC hosted steering committee meetings on February 14 and March 17. Committee members reviewed the emphasis areas and provided feedback to the consultants. OPUS is making changes to the draft plan based on feedback from committee members and will then distribute a final draft to the committee for review in early June.

Asset Management

WMSRDC recently began collecting data for the annual Asset Management program. Over the past few years, WMSRDC, along with MDOT and the county road commissions, collect data for approximately half of all the federal aid roads within the region. This year, rather than collect the 50% data which is required by MDOT, WMSRDC staff is planning on collecting 100% of the Federal Aid road data.

Fred Meijer Berry Junction Trail Construction

One of the region's most crucial trail connections is finally being completed in FY2017. Officially, project planning for the Fred Meijer Berry Junction Trail dates back to the early 2000's. The effort to connect the City of Whitehall to the City of North Muskegon has faced plenty of hurdles along the way, but in 2011 the first phase was completed from Whitehall to McMillan Road in Dalton Township. This left a 4.6 mile gap to the final destination in North Muskegon. With momentum on their side, along with patience and financial donations, the Fred Meijer Berry Junction Trail Commission (FMBJTC) applied for, and was granted the necessary funding to complete the final phase of the project.

The Fred Meijer Foundation, the Michigan Department of Transportation, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources funded a majority of the project with several other contributions coming from agencies like the Community Foundation for Muskegon County. Resources from the West Michigan Trails and Greenways Coalition, WMSRDC, the FMBJTC, and the Muskegon and Kent County Road Commissions were also crucial to the success of the project. The portion under construction begins at McMillan Road and travels south through several private properties that are allowing easements for the trail. Eventually it will connect to the Lakeshore Trail in North Muskegon near the Rite Aide Pharmacy.

When completed, the FMBJT will be a link to over 114 miles of existing local trails and hundreds of other statewide trails. Direct connections include the Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park Trail (22 miles in length) to the Muskegon Lakeshore Trail (12 miles in length) in the City of Muskegon, the Musketawa Trail (26 miles in length) in Muskegon and Ottawa County, the North Bank Trail (18 miles in length) in Ottawa County, and the Laketon Trail (4 miles in length) in the City of Muskegon. Along with these existing trails, there are many miles of proposed future trails in the region.



Fiduciary Training

WMSRDC staff will be attending the Michigan State Police Homeland Security Fiduciary Training scheduled for May 8 in Grand Rapids at the Amway Grand Plaza. The annual day-long training event kicks off the week-long States Homeland Security Conference.

During the training event, staff will hear from representatives from both the Michigan State Police (MSP) and Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) regarding the Homeland Security Grant Program fiduciary responsibilities, as well as new grant initiatives and priorities. WMSRDC staff also provided a variety of suggestions for potential session topics to be covered during the training.

Region Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

As part of the FY16 Grant, the Region 6 Homeland Security Planning Board is required by the Michigan State Police to update the Region Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) document.

A THIRA is an all-hazards capability-based assessment tool suited for use by all jurisdictions. The THIRA allows a jurisdiction to understand its threats and hazards and how their impacts may vary according to time of occurrence, season, locations, and community factors. The Region 6 Board is working with the Regional Planner to accomplish this task.

Welcome Christia Seals

WMSRDC is proud to announce a new staff member. Christia Seals was hired in March to begin training as the new Finance Manager for WMSRDC. Christia brings an extensive knowledge base in finance management including experience gained from her most recent employer, the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District. Christia is being trained by Susan Stine-Johnson, who will soon be retiring from the Finance Manager position at WMSRDC.

Christia will be taking over the responsibility of the financial management of the WMSRDC's programs, preparation and maintenance of the budget, and administration of the benefits program. Christia will also be responsible for the management and administration of the homeland security program; and working with the Region 6 Homeland Security Planning Board and its committees.

2017 Project Workbook

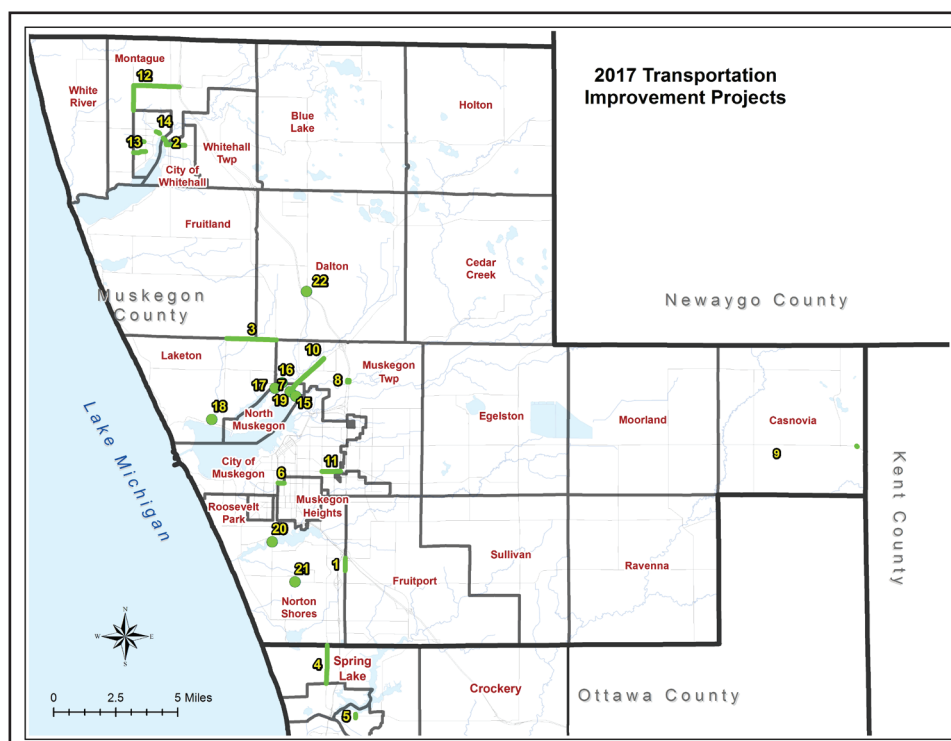
WMSRDC staff, working in partnership with the Region 6 Homeland Security Planning Board and the Region 6 Coordinator, are in the process of preparing the FY 2017 Project Workbook.

The purpose of the workbook is to identify Region 6 projects and priorities for the upcoming 2017 Planning Grant. The Project Workbook is due to the Michigan State Police in May 2017.

2017 Muskegon and Northern Ottawa County MPO Projects

2017 will be a busy year for members of the Muskegon and Northern Ottawa County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The following list of projects are slated to be completed or obligated in 2017:

Number	Agency	Project	Limits	Work
1	City of Norton Shores	Harvey St	Hile to Ellis	Reconstruct
2	Michigan Department of Transportation	US-31 BR (Colby)	Hall St to Division St	Resurface
3	Muskegon County Road Commission	River Rd	Whitehall to Horton to Buys	Resurface, Crush & Shape
4	Ottawa County Road Commission	174th Ave	Wilson to VanWagoner	Resurface
5	Village of Spring Lake	Buchanan St	Exchange to Liberty	Reconstruct
6	City of Muskegon Heights	Hackley Ave	Glade to Park St	Resurface
7	Michigan Department of Transportation	M-120	at Whitehall Rd	Extend turn lanes
8	Michigan Department of Transportation	US-31	Over Muskegon River	Restore and Rehab
9	Michigan Department of Transportation	Waterloo St	Roadside Facility	Mill/Resurface
10	Michigan Department of Transportation	M-120	Whitehall Rd East to Gest St PE	Restore & Rehab
11	City of Muskegon	Laketon	Getty to Creston	Reconstruct
12	Muskegon County Road Commission	Fruitvale Rd	US-31BR to Whitbeck & Eilers to Fruitvale	Reconstruct
13	City of Montague	Wilcox St/Industrial Park	Between Whitbeck and Cook	Resurface
14	City of Montague	Dowling St	Meade to Water	Reconstruct
15	Michigan Department of Transportation	M-120	At Whitehall Rd	Reconstruct
16	Muskegon County Road Commission	Whitehall Rd(Bridge)	Over Bear Creek	Bridge restore & rehab
17	Muskegon County Road Commission	Witham Rd (Bridge)	Over Bear Creek	Bridge restore & rehab
18	Muskegon County Road Commission	Memorial Dr (Bridge)	Over Green Creek	Bridge restore & rehab
19	Michigan Department of Transportation	US-31/Causeway (Bridge)	North Channel Muskegon River	GPA
20	City of Norton Shores	Henry St (Bridge)	Over Mona Lake	Bridge restore & rehab
21	City of Norton Shores	Sternberg/Martin	Sternberg/Martin/Porter	Traffic Ops/Safety
22	Michigan Department of Transportation	US-31 Roadside Facility	@ Russel Rd	Mill & Resurface





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and evaluation efforts, and potential tools that could be utilized for statewide deployment. The pilot will focus on four asset classes, including Public Works (wastewater, drinking water, and stormwater), Transportation, Broadband, and Energy. Technical experts from each of the asset classes within each region will be called upon to help establish the basis of an asset management system and recommend how the state can roll out a statewide comprehensive asset management database and system.

The project is expected to be complete by April 2018. Stay tuned for more information on this project.

The West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission is a federal and state designated regional planning and development agency serving 120 local governments in Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, and Oceana Counties. WMSRDC is also responsible for the management and administration of the homeland security program for the counties of Clare, Ionia, Isabella, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Ottawa. WMSRDC is also the planning agency for the metropolitan transportation planning (MPO) program for Muskegon and Northern Ottawa Counties.

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