

WMSRDC
WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MEETING NOTICE

There will be a Transportation Policy Committee meeting held on:

DATE: Wednesday, September 18, 2019

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: *WMSRDC Offices- 3rd Floor of Terrace Plaza*
316 Morris Avenue, Suite 340
Muskegon, Michigan 49443
<http://www.wmsrdc.org>

If you are unable to attend, please call Syndi Copeland at 231.722.7878 x10

316 Morris Avenue - Suite 340 - Muskegon, MI 49443-0387
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WESTPLAN TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE

AGENDA

SEPTEMBER 18, 2019

- I. CALL TO ORDER- ROLL CALL
 - APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES (AUGUST 21, 2019) **(ATTACHMENT I) (ACTION)**
- II. PUBLIC COMMENT
- III. TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
 - A. FY2017-2020 TIP **(INFORMATION)**
 - B. FY2020-2023 TIP **(INFORMATION)**
- IV. 2045 WESTPLAN LONG RANGE PLAN
 - A. IMPROVE & EXPAND PROJECT LIST (DRAFT) **(ATTACHMENT II) (ACTION)**
 - B. CHAPTER 1- INTRODUCTION- **(ATTACHMENT III) (ACTION)**
 - C. CHAPTER 2- REGIONAL OVERVIEW- **(ATTACHMENT IV) (ACTION)**
- V. MDOT STATEWIDE LONG RANGE PLAN & TRAVEL DEMAND MODEL UPDATE **(INFORMATION)**
- VI. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. US-31- GRAND HAVEN STUDY/IMPROVEMENTS (MDOT MUSKEGON TSC)
 - B. BR-31- WHITEHALL ROAD DIET STUDY (MDOT MUSKEGON TSC)
 - C. BR-31- WHITEHALL FLOODING ISSUE (MDOT MUSKEGON TSC)
- VII. NEW BUSINESS/ MPO ROUNDTABLE
- VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT
- IX. ADJOURNMENT

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ATTACHMENT I

WEST MICHIGAN METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROGRAM (WESTPLAN) POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

MEETING MINUTES

August 21, 2019

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Roger Bergman called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. Mr. Mulnix took attendance and it was determined that there was a quorum.

ATTENDANCE

A. Members Present

Roger Bergman, Ottawa County
Kim Arter, Laketon Township
Kay Beecham, City of Norton Shores
Betty Gajewski, Ottawa County Road Commission
Elmer Hoyle, Ravenna Township
Jack Kennedy, Muskegon County Road Commission
Melissa Klos, City of Roosevelt Park
Bonnie McGlothin, City of Muskegon Heights
Patrick Twa, Ferrysburg
Wally Delamater, Village of Spring Lake
Byron Turnquist, City of Muskegon
Dennis Scott, City of Grand Haven
Steven Salter, City of Whitehall
Tom Lohman, City of Montague

B. Members Not Present

Bob Scolnick, MATS
Andrea Dewey, FHWA (Non-Voting)
Bill Mogren, City of North Muskegon
Robert Monetza, Harbor Transit (excused)
Leon Stille, Crockery Township
Roger Vanderstelt, Village of Fruitport
Rillastine Wilkins, Muskegon County Commissioner

C. Others Present

Laird Schaefer, Citizen
Tyler Kent, MDOT
Darma Cantor, Citizen
Brian Dian, Citizen
Ryan Gladding, MDOT

D. Staff Present

Brian Mulnix, WMSRDC
Amy Haack, WMSRDC
Joel Fitzpatrick, WMSRDC

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES (JUNE 19, 2019) –A motion was made to approve the minutes from the June 19, 2019 meeting as submitted. Motion approved. **m/s Klos/Salter**

III. PUBLIC COMMENT- No members of the public spoke during the Public Comment agenda item.

IV. TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM –

- **FY2017-2020 TIP-**

Mr. Mulnix presented the FY2017-2020 TIP Amendment R. Which is presented on the following page. A motion was made to approve. Motion carried. **m/s Kennedy/Klos**

- **FY2020-FY2023 TIP –**

Mr. Mulnix informed the committee that the new TIP has been forwarded on to FHWA.

VI. MDOT STATEWIDE LONG RANGE PLAN AND TRAVEL DEMAND MODEL UPDATE

Mr. Ryan Gladding from MDOT presented the Future SE data for the Long Range Transportation Plan. A motion was made to approve. Motion carried. **m/s Salter/Lohman**

VII. OLD BUSINESS – No old business was discussed.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS/ROUNDTABLE– Agencies around the table discussed current events and activities around the community.

- Mr. Salter asked about the road diet plan which was completed for the City of Whitehall.
- Dennis Scott inquired about work on the boulevard through Grand Haven.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT – Darma Canter spoke and asked the committee to make transit a priority. Her written comments are included below.

I am asking you as county leaders and transportation committee members to articulate the value of public transportation in futures planning. I hope you will add a vision statement, publish a ‘white paper’ or a statement of purpose describing the community benefit of expanding public bus services in metropolitan centers and as region-wide system connecting urban and suburban municipalities.

I spent some time reading plans of this committee and I came away thinking there is no connection of in the material to the people served; what motivates the government and this organization? If you’re going to plan the transportation for Muskegon’s future, is the plan based on the needs of residents and growing opportunities for community improvement? Because what is there now suggests taxpayers build /maintain a road for the sake of the road itself; or maybe plan just for the grant objective unrelated to the impact on citizens.

We can and should do better. The legislation or policy that guides your planning is a minimum and not intended to drive the region’s decision-making process. While the grants and contracts require the entities receiving MDOT dollars must comply with federal civil rights laws prohibiting disparity and assuring equal participation, the Title VI policies that I’ve read suggests there aren’t any minority communities with transportation related issues. I’d like to challenge that practice.

I’m here because of the County of Muskegon’s proposal to eliminate some fixed bus routes that serve seniors, the disabled and low-income families. This cannot fit in anyone’s vision of a better community. I’m here to ask you as elected representatives or delegates to reimagine your role in building democratic communities that lead to more economic and environmental justice.

X. ADJOURNMENT –Meeting was adjourned at 2:14 p.m.

FY2017-2020 TIP AMENDMENT R



ALL PROJECT SEARCH - STANDARD REPORT

Fiscal Year(s) : 2019

Date: 08/14/2019

Page: 1 of 1

Fiscal Year	Job Type	Job #	MPO	County	Responsible Agency	Project Name	Limits	Length	Primary Work Type	Project Description	AC/ACC	ACC Year(s)	Phase Status	Phase Cycle	S/TIP	Fed Estimated Amount	State Estimated Amount	Local Estimated Amount	Total Estimated Amount	Fund Source	Total Job Cost	Action Type	Action Approval Date	Local Fed Approval Date	FHWA Approval Date	FTA Approval Date	Schedule Obligation Date	Actual Obligation Date	Schedule Let Date	Actual Let Date	Federal Amendment Type	Comments	S/TIP Status			
S/TIP Line Items																																				
2019	Trunkline	208617	West Michigan Metropolitan Transportation Planning Program (WESTPLAN)	Muskegon	MDOT	US-31 & US-31 & US-31 BR	6.820	Planning, Research & Design	Study Strategies for Port Expansion			EPE	Programmed	17-20		\$41,338	\$10,334	\$0	\$51,672	EMRP	\$51,672					N/A	09/03/2019							Pending		
GPA Type Subtotals:																																				
S/TIP Line Items																\$41,338	\$10,334	\$0	\$51,672																	
Grand Total:																\$41,338	\$10,334	\$0	\$51,672																	

Total Job Phases Reported: 1

Preferences:

- Report Format: Standard
- FISCAL Year(s): 2019
- MPO/Non-MPO: West Michigan Metropolitan Transportation Planning Program (Muskegon)
- County: Muskegon
- Prosperity Region: ALL
- MDOT Region: ALL
- STIP Cycle: Fiscal Year 2017 - Fiscal Year 2020
- STIP Status: Pending
(A - Approved, P - Pending)
- Job Type: Trunkline
- Phase Type: ALL
- Phase Status: ALL
(AP - Programmed, AC - Active, CP - Completed)
(Active - Obligated)
- Amendment Type: ALL
- Template: Trunkline - ALL
- Finance System: Trunkline - ALL
- RTF: ALL
- Include S/TIP Exempt: No

ATTACHMENT II

WestPlan 2045 Long Range Plan- Improve and Expand Project List

Project Name	To/From	Description	Jurisdiction	Cost	Est. Year of Const.	Project Length
168 th Avenue	Hayes Street to North of Comstock	Reconstruct- Expand from 2 to 3 lanes	Ottawa County Road Commission	\$1,400,000	2040	.8 Miles
Henry Street	Seminole to Hile	Reconstruct from 2 to 3 lanes	Norton Shores	\$1,600,000	2040	1.25 miles
Sternberg Road	Quarterline Road to Airline Road	Add center left turn lane – 1 mile	MCRC	\$800,000	2030	1 mile
Witham Road	Bear Creek Bridge to Moulton Road	Reconstruct and add left turn lane and storm sewer – 2000 feet	North Muskegon	\$670,000	2040	2,000 feet
Sternberg Road	Martin Road to Lake Harbor Road	New two lane road – 2 miles	Norton Shores	\$2,200,000	2030	2 miles
Pontaluna Road	Grand Haven Road to Harvey	Reconstruct from 2 to 3 lanes - .75 miles, with bike lanes	Norton Shores	\$1,600,000	2030	.75 miles
Grand Haven Road	Hile to 100 ft south of Seaway	Reconstruct from 2 to 3 Lanes.	Norton Shores	\$1,100,000	2030	.75 miles
Hile Road	Harvey Street to Grand Haven Road (excludes US-31 bridge)	Reconstruct from 2 to 3 lanes with bike lanes	Norton Shores	\$1,600,000	2030	.75 miles
174 th Avenue	Van Wagoner Road to Wilson Street	Reconstruct from 2 to 3 lanes	Ottawa County Road Commission	\$1,800,000	2040	1.5 miles
West Spring Lake Road Bridge	Lake Road to 168 th Avenue	Reconstruct bridge structure	City of Ferrysburg	\$13,000,000	2025	447 ft.

Public transit is an important transportation mode in our community. The public transit agencies in the MPO operate services within the financial constraints presented and, like the road agencies are continually seeking opportunities to improve and to secure additional resources where available. Current and future transit studies will help to identify specific projects.

ATTACHMENT III

WestPlan 2045 Long Range Plan

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Overview of Plan

On December 4, 2015, President Obama signed into law Public Law 114-94, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act). The FAST Act funds surface transportation programs—including, but not limited to, Federal-aid highways—at over \$305 billion for fiscal years (FY) 2016 through 2020. It is the first long-term surface transportation authorization enacted in a decade that provides long-term funding certainty for surface transportation. This summary reviews the policies and programs of the FAST Act administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), enacted in 2012, included provisions to make the Federal surface transportation more streamlined, performance-based, and multimodal, and to address challenges facing the U.S. transportation system, including improving safety, maintaining infrastructure condition, reducing traffic congestion, improving efficiency of the system and freight movement, protecting the environment, and reducing delays in project delivery. The FAST Act builds on the changes made by MAP-21.

MAP-21, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (P.L. 112-141), was signed into law on July 6, 2012. Funding surface transportation programs at over \$105 billion for fiscal years (FY) 2013 and 2014, MAP-21 was the first long-term highway authorization enacted since 2005. By transforming the policy and programmatic framework for investments to guide the system's growth and development, MAP-21 created a streamlined and performance-based surface transportation program and builds on many of the highway, transit, bike, and pedestrian programs and policies established in 1991.

The Clean Air Act of 1970 (CAA) and its Amendments require that the federal government review all transportation plans to assure improved air quality. These conformity requirements, first introduced in the 1977 CAA Amendments, prohibited federal approvals of actions that did not concur with state government's State Implementation Plan (SIP) for air quality improvements. These requirements were further expanded in the 1990 Amendments to require that transportation plans conform to the SIP's expressed purpose of eliminating or reducing the severity and number of violations of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and achieving expeditious attainment of such standards.

A portion of Muskegon County and the State of Michigan are operating under the State Implementation Plan (SIP). This plan identifies how air quality will be protected and improved in the State. The processes for reviewing and approving Long Range Transportation Plans and projects are outlined in the SIP and are being followed in the development of transportation plans statewide.

Under the CAA, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has classified a portion of Muskegon County as nonattainment and Ottawa County as an attainment maintenance area for the ground-level ozone pollutant. Muskegon is classified as its own area while Ottawa and Kent Counties are classified as a two-county combined area.

The WestPlan 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan provides for a multi-jurisdictional, multi-year look at the Muskegon/Northern Ottawa area's future transportation system. Transportation needs and resources were evaluated for the period 2020 to 2045, and appropriate plans were made for meeting long-term needs, in the best manner possible with constrained finances. The plan also includes the use of local, state, and federal transportation goals and objectives to guide transportation plans and projects. This plan covers transportation for all of the WestPlan area and, as such, is heavily flavored with input from local elected officials, municipal and road agency staff, and the citizens of the Muskegon/Northern Ottawa area.

Description of the MPO

WestPlan consists of a Policy Committee and a Technical Committee. The Technical Committee reports directly to the Policy Committee. The Policy Committee is responsible for all final decisions regarding transportation. All meetings, with the exception of special meetings, are held during normal business hours. The following local communities and/or transportation agencies and providers are members of WestPlan:

- Federal Highway Administration
- City of Grand Haven
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- Muskegon Area Transit System
- City of Muskegon Heights
- City of Norton Shores
- City of Roosevelt Park
- Village of Spring Lake
- Village of Fruitport
- Ottawa County urban twp. rep.
- Ottawa County rural twp. rep.
- Ottawa County
- City of Ferrysburg
- Harbor Transit
- City of Muskegon
- Muskegon County Road Commission
- City of North Muskegon
- Ottawa County Road Commission
- City of Whitehall
- City of Montague
- Muskegon County urban twp. rep.
- Muskegon County rural twp. rep.
- Muskegon County

The Technical Committee usually meets every other month, and is made up mostly of staff members of various member agencies. Members are typically engineers, city managers, or DPW staff. The Technical Committee acts as an advisory committee to work on issues which are primarily technical. The Technical Committee then makes recommendations to the Policy Committee.

The Policy Committee also usually meets every other month. It is comprised almost entirely of local elected officials who have been appointed to the committee by their jurisdictions. The Policy Committee is responsible for all final decisions regarding transportation within the MPO.

Summary of the Planning Process

The development and management of a community's transportation system requires various levels and degrees of planning. At one level, individual communities may develop implementation plans for a single construction season or capital improvement plans to meet needs for the next five to six years. At another level, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) develop both Short and Long-Range Transportation Plans that cross municipal boundaries and provide a transportation vision for an entire metropolitan area.

Eight Federal Planning Factors

The continual development of this document is a cooperative effort of the local communities, transportation stakeholders, the public, and the metropolitan planning organization (MPOs). The process, explained below, includes the development of numerous elements. The development of the Long Range Transportation Plan is driven, in part, by eight Federal planning factors which have been identified by FHWA. These factors are outlined below.

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency.
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight.
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.
7. Promote efficient system management and operation.
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

One of the first steps in the process involves scoping. During this scoping process, MPO committees reviewed the existing vision, goals, and objectives. A number of changes were made in anticipation of performance based planning measures. These decisions were informed by the eight federal planning factors as well as other considerations.

The collection and analysis of data is one of the first steps of the planning process. For this effort, demographic information on the Muskegon and northern Ottawa County area was collected at a detailed "traffic analysis zone" ("TAZ") level. This included socio-economic data items such as population, housing units, vehicles available, retail and non-retail employment, and other data. Information that was also gathered includes traffic count levels, land use patterns, zoning ordinances, comprehensive development plans, environmental factors, and recent local developments.

In addition to the collection of current data, projections must be made for future years of the plan. Using population and employment projections, environmental and other development constraints, land use patterns, local knowledge, and many other factors, socio-economic estimates were made for the year 2045. These projections provide an estimate of how the Muskegon/Northern Ottawa MPO area may develop in the coming years.

As the socio-economic data was being compiled and projections were being made, a computer model of the WestPlan transportation network was also being further refined. The computer model, used for long-range planning and for air quality modeling, includes a complex network of simulated roadways in the WestPlan area. Each roadway in the model carries a simulated level of traffic based on the surrounding land uses, population, traffic counts, roadway types, and other socio-economic factors.

The current socio-economic data and traffic information was used as input to the model, and the model was calibrated so that the simulated traffic closely matched actual traffic patterns and data. Once the calibration process was complete, the socio-economic data estimates for the year 2045 were included in the model in order to determine if the current transportation system would be able to accommodate the

growing or shifting demographics of the area. The purpose of the model is to identify roadways that are currently deficient or will be in the future.

In addition to modeled capacity deficiencies, other transportation concerns are addressed in the plan. This is accomplished through the identification of a “local concerns” list and through the development of goals and objectives. The local communities compiled the local concerns in order to address transportation needs such as safety, operational, or economic concerns that may not be shown by the capacity deficiency model. The concerns and desires of the WestPlan area are also included in the goals and objectives for this plan. These goals and objectives will guide transportation efforts into the future.

As the goals and objectives were being developed, financial resources were also being analyzed. As the plan must be financially constrained, an estimate of transportation revenues to the area must be calculated before plans for the transportation system and implementing projects can be selected. Recent funding sources and levels were used by MDOT to project future revenues, and the total amount of transportation funds that could be expected through the year 2045. This list of projects includes only those projects that significantly change the transportation network, and does not need to include resurfacing projects and other routine preservation projects. Although residential roads are important in the WestPlan area, the list of projects focuses on the broader transportation network and the more significant streets, roads, and highways.

Brief Description of Public and Stakeholder Involvement

Public and stakeholder involvement throughout the LRTP planning process was ensured through a number of mechanisms:

- Press and information releases
- Facebook notifications
- Direct mailings of the “Commission Communications” newsletter
- Internet web page
- Annual report
- Meetings of the WestPlan Technical and Policy Committees
- Special meetings
- Workshops
- Public meetings

MAP-21 also requires that WestPlan consult with federal, state and local entities that are responsible for:

- Economic growth and development
- Environmental protection
- Airport operations

- Freight movement
- Land use management
- Natural resources
- Conservation
- Historic preservation

A list of these transportation stakeholder agencies is located in the appendices. The goal of this process is to eliminate or minimize conflicts with other agencies' plans that impact transportation. WestPlan staff began the consultation process by reviewing its current stakeholder list to expand and ensure that the correct types of organizations noted above were receiving information regarding the LRP. With the assistance of Federal Highway Administration, Michigan Department of Transportation, and other MPOs, additional entities are constantly being identified therefore expanding the transportation stakeholder list. Agencies on the Consultation list were contacted when a draft list of projects was adopted by the Technical and Policy Committees.

ATTACHMENT IV

WestPlan 2045 Long Range Plan

CHAPTER 2: REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Brief History of the Region

Muskegon County

The earliest recorded history of the Muskegon area reflects that it was inhabited by the Ottawa and Pottawatomi tribes. The name “Muskegon” is derived from the Ottawa Indian term “Masquigon” meaning “marshy river” or “swamp.” The “Masquigon” river is identified on French maps as early as the 17th century, suggesting that French explorers had reached Western Michigan by that time (Yakes).

The first known Frenchmen in the area were Father Jacques Marquette, who traveled through the area in 1675 on his way to St. Ignace and a party of French soldiers under LaSalle’s lieutenant, Henry de Tonty, who passed through in 1679 (Yakes).

The earliest known resident of the county was a fur trader and trapper named Edward Fitzgerald, who settled in the area in 1748. Settlement of the area began in 1837 with the organization of Muskegon County from portions of Ottawa and Oceana Counties. At the time of its incorporation in 1859, Muskegon County had six townships (Muskegon, Norton, Ravenna, White River, Dalton, and Oceana) (Yakes).

The lumbering era put Muskegon County on the map, in economic terms. Ravenna was settled in 1844 when E.B. Bostwick built a sawmill. The city and township were named after Ravenna, Ohio, the hometown of the surveyor who platted the land. Norton Shores was settled by Colonel S. Norton in 1846. Casnovia was founded in 1850 by a tavern keeper named Lot Fulkerson. Montague was first settled in 1855 by Nat Sargent. Whitehall was platted in 1859 by Charles Mears and Giles B. Slocum. The town was originally named after Mears. In 1864 the Muskegon Log Booming Company was formed to sort logs and raft them to the mills. In 1868, Fruitport, originally Crawville, was founded by Edward Craw. It was renamed a year later when the Pere Marquette Railroad built a station in the town that was a fertile fruit growing area and a port. In 1872 North Muskegon was recorded as Reedsville, named for the first settler, Archibald Reed. It was renamed in 1881 when it was incorporated as a village. North Muskegon was later incorporated as a city in 1891 (Multi-Mag Michigan).

1890 marked the end of the lumber boom in Muskegon County. Successful area industrialists formed the Muskegon Improvement Company to stimulate the economy as it lagged at the end of the lumber boom. The Muskegon Improvement Company purchased 1,000 acres and sold the lots in a lottery, using the proceeds to underwrite new businesses. The project was successful enough that a train station was located in the area (Muskegon Heights) in 1902 to serve the Chicago & West Michigan Railroad (Yakes).

Union Depot was opened in 1885 to serve the Chicago & West Michigan; Muskegon, Grand Rapids, & Indiana; and the Toledo, Saginaw & Muskegon railroads. It was designed by A.W. Rush & Son of Grand Rapids in the Richardsonian Romanesque style. The station was closed in 1971 until it was donated to the county in 1992, restored, and reopened as the visitor’s center and museum (Historical Markers). Lakewood Club was formed as a resort association in 1912 by the Mayo brothers. It was popular enough by 1914 that a seasonal post office was set up, which became permanent in the 1940s (Multi-Mag Michigan).

The oil boom in Muskegon County was a distinct period during the city’s industrial era. The oil was found by accident in 1869 when Gideon Truesdell was looking for salt. They had been drilling in various

Muskegon County locations for salt between 1869 and 1886 but the salt they found was contaminated with petroleum. In 1922, Stanley Daniloff found oil seepage in the swampland near his home, within five years he had amassed enough funds to have the site drilled and a “gusher” was located in Muskegon Township in 1927. The price of crude oil fell with the depression in 1929 and the oil boom ended (Parrish). During the world war period, Muskegon became an “Arsenal of Democracy.” In the post war housing boom, Roosevelt Park was formed as a residential suburb in 1949 and named after Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The 1950s and 60s brought rough economic times to Muskegon County. Many workers were laid off and several local companies closed. In the 1960s and 70s, consolidation and mergers with national corporations left few locally-owned businesses in the county. The local economy has been struggling to diversify since that time (Yakes).

Northern Ottawa County

As in Muskegon County, the Pottawattamie and Ottawa Indians lived in the Grand Haven area prior to the first white settlers. The Grand River served as a trade route for the Native American tribes. The first permanent white settler to the area was Rev. William Montague Ferry, a Presbyterian minister who moved to the area in 1834. Ferry founded the first area church as well as the town of Ferrysburg.

A plat for the City of Grand Haven was recorded in 1835. The settlement of the surrounding areas of Spring Lake and Ferrysburg followed soon after. Over the following six decades Grand Haven saw success as part of the lumbering industry due to its location as a port.

The railroad arrived in 1858 which assisted in the development of the area’s manufacturing and resort industries which took advantage of the port. In the past few decades northern Ottawa County has become a vibrant port, boating, fishing, and resort community.

Transportation History of the Region

The WestPlan MPO is located along the routes of U.S. 31 and Interstate 96, which are two major state transportation arteries linking the area to all major regional population and economic centers such as Chicago, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Lansing, Indianapolis, and Milwaukee. U.S. 31 runs north and south along the Lake Michigan shoreline from South Bend, Indiana to Mackinaw City, Michigan. However, the classification of U.S. 31 as an expressway terminates at Ludington, Michigan, where it becomes a state highway generally served by only two lanes. The course of Interstate 96 is an east-west direction from Muskegon to Detroit by way of Grand Rapids and Lansing. The Muskegon metropolitan area is provided with public transit opportunities through the Muskegon Area Transit System (MATS).

Northern Ottawa County’s transit needs are covered by Harbor Transit Multimodal Transportation System (Harbor Transit), which provides public transportation to the area through a demand-response system, as well as limited fixed routes which operate during the summer months.

Commercial air service is available at the Muskegon County Airport with daily service to Chicago’s O’Hare Airport. The Major airline that operates out of Muskegon is United Airlines. Muskegon and Grand Haven presently serves as the major deep water ports in the area. In June 2004, Muskegon began receiving car ferry service to Milwaukee, Wisconsin by way of the Lake Express. This diesel-powered catamaran-style ferry travels at speeds of up to 40 miles per hour. Service is provided numerous times a day from late April through October.

One of the primary inter-city bicycle routes in the region is the Hart-Montague Trail State Park. The trail spans 22.5 miles from Hart in Oceana County to Whitehall in Muskegon County. Recent efforts resulted in the construction of the Fred Meijer Berry Junction Trail, which is a 10-mile stretch of trail between Whitehall and North Muskegon. This connects the Hart-Montague Trail to the City of Muskegon's Lakeshore Trail. This trail covers about 12 miles throughout Muskegon. Another path, the Musketawa Trail, extends 26 miles eastward from Muskegon to Marne in Ottawa County. From Marne, the trail becomes the Fred Meijer Pioneer Trail which extends to in Kent County. Additionally, efforts are underway in northern Ottawa County to complete a trail system which would connect local trails with regional trails. U.S Bicycle Route 35 also runs through both Ottawa and Muskegon Counties, partially on the aforementioned trails and partially on local roads.

The history of metropolitan transportation planning in this area dates back to 1973, when the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission organized the Muskegon Area Transportation Planning Program as the MPO Policy Committee. In 2003, when the U.S. Census Bureau expanded the Muskegon Urbanized Area to include northern Ottawa County, the WMSRDC realigned the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) of the MPO and organized the West Michigan Metropolitan Transportation Planning Program (WestPlan). The WMDRDC has administered and staffed the MPO since 1973. WestPlan undertakes a comprehensive transportation planning program to maintain the eligibility of local governments in the area to receive federal and state transportation funds for street and road improvements, as well as subsidies for mass transit.

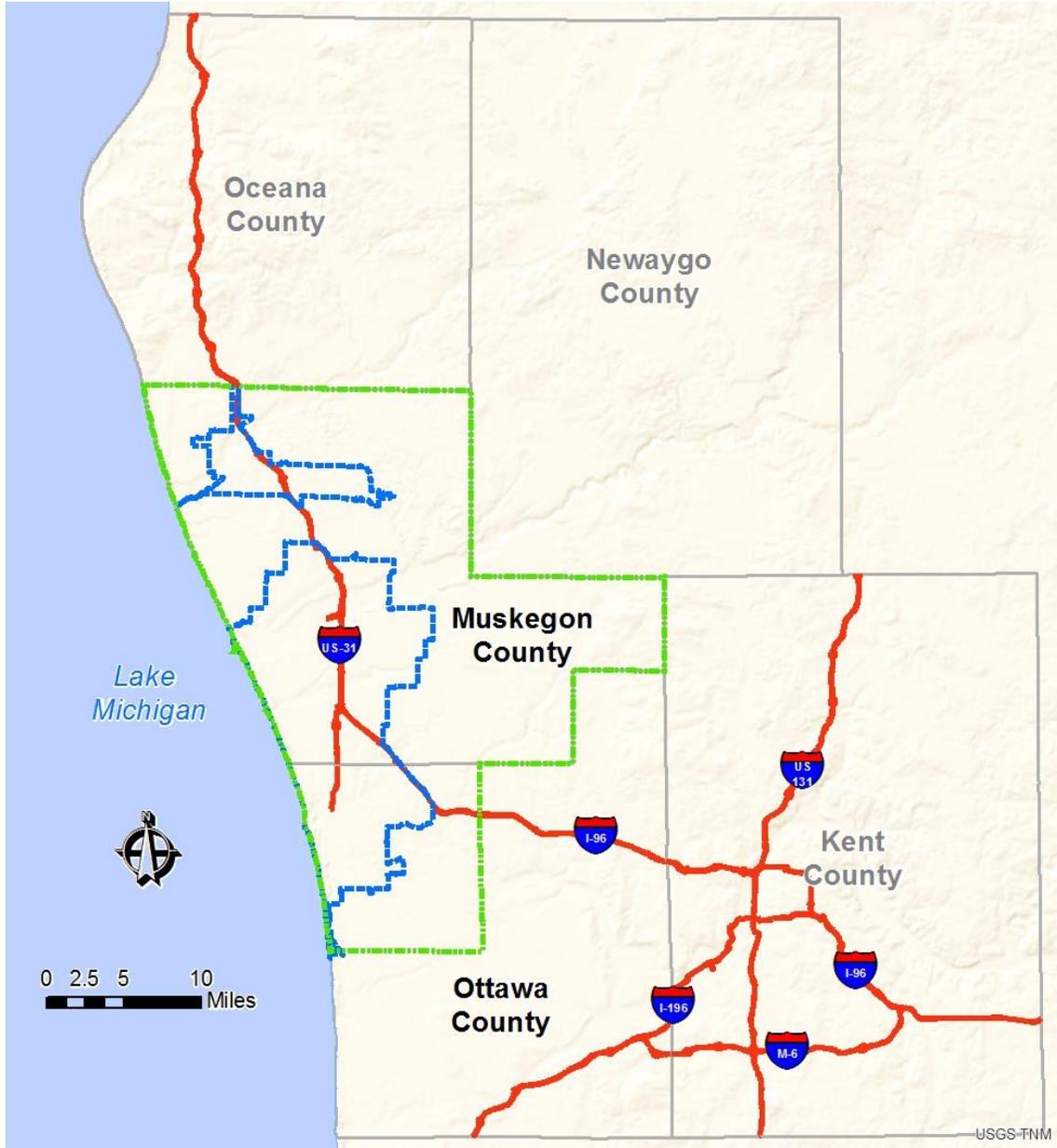
Metropolitan transportation planning in the Muskegon area is a long-standing process dating back to the 1970s. In 1974, a Long-Range Transportation Plan was developed for the Muskegon Urban area. This plan was updated in 1986 and then re-certified as a Policy Document by the Muskegon Area Transportation Planning Program (MATPP) in 1990. In 1991, the plan was reviewed in light of the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990 and was approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a conforming plan for air quality. In recent years, the effects of the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990 and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 have caused changes in the scope and scale of transportation plans. In 2002, the US Census Bureau expanded the urbanized boundary for the Muskegon MPO. This action expanded the urbanized area to include Northern Ottawa County. Four townships, two cities, and one village were added to the MPO. The change was based on population density, and it was determined that the area between the Muskegon urbanized area and the Grand Haven urbanized area, also known as the "tri-cities area", was now one contiguous urban area. This expanded MPO is now known as the West Michigan Metropolitan Transportation Planning program or WESTPLAN. After the 2010 Census the boundaries of the ACUB were changed yet again. With this expansion the urbanized boundary was extended south into Port Sheldon Township in Ottawa County.

Geography of the Region

The WestPlan MPO area is located on the western side of Michigan, midway up the state's Lower Peninsula, along the shoreline of Lake Michigan the geography of the area is characterized by coastal plains and immense lakeshore sand dunes, inland rolling hills, and high ridges. The area, heavily dependent on tourism revenues, is home to several popular state and county parks and other tourist activities. The area is known for its abundant natural features including productive fruit orchards, expansive forests, and many miles of Lake Michigan waterfront, inland lakes, and many rivers including the Grand River and the Muskegon River.

Map of MPO Planning Area

Muskegon/ Northern Ottawa MPO Planning Area



Legend

- Freeway
- Urbanized Boundary
- MPO Boundary
- Political Boundary

WMSDC
WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE
HERSHEL BUSH COMMISSION
Map Created March 24, 2014
Source: Michigan Geospatial Data Library V12

Map of Political Jurisdictions

Muskegon/ Northern Ottawa MPO Political Jurisdictions



Legend

- Interstate/ Trunkline
- MPO Boundary
- Political Boundary
- Urbanized Boundary

WMSADC
 WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE
 RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
 Map Created March 24, 2014
 Source: Michigan Geospatial Data Library V12

Map of Physical Features of the Region

Muskegon/ Northern Ottawa MPO Physical Features



Legend

- Interstate/ Trunkline
- MPO Boundary
- Wetland
- Political Boundary
- Urbanized Boundary
- Water Feature

WASDRC
 WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE
 H-34300-01-001-0000-0000-0000
 Map Created March 24, 2014
 Source: Michigan Geospatial Data Library V12