

## Public and Stakeholder Involvement

As the planning for the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan began in January of 2019, MACC staff looked at ways to improve public outreach and education. A database of local officials and transportation stakeholders was reviewed and updated. We also expanded the consultation list of individuals, employers, and community organizations to invite a larger audience to participate in the transportation planning process.

Recognizing the importance of social media and online news sources, the MACC Public Participation Plan was updated (August 2018). While we continued to publish public notices and advertisements in the local newspapers, we also used social media sites such as Facebook to reach new audiences. An online transportation survey was developed to encourage people to share their views. The MACC sponsored Green Commute Week program also helped to educate people about the planning process and encourage them to offer public input.

MACC staff then began a series of meetings to hear from specific groups such as freight shippers/providers of freight transportation services and cycling advocacy groups. These meetings provided the opportunity to communicate regional planning goals and receive feedback on community priorities.

In addition to these efforts to increase public and stakeholder involvement, we emphasized reaching individuals and groups who were unaware of the MACC or who did not recognize how they could be involved in the planning process. Public input surveys and notices were published in Spanish and were also distributed throughout the community. More information on public involvement can be found in chapter 13.



### Freight Consultation

In October and November of 2019, in-person meetings were set up with freight providers to discuss in-bound and out-bound freight movements in West Michigan. Understanding freight movement in West Michigan and identifying freight routes is a helpful step to determine future investments that may be needed to support regional economic development. Concerns expressed by local freight carriers have been shared with road agencies and local units of government. Many of the comments revolved around issues of congestion and safety.

#### Concerns Expressed by Local Freight Carriers

##### October 17, 2019 Meeting

- ▽ Riley Street is used frequently to travel between Chicago Drive and US-31. There were suggestions to widen Riley Street in the Zeeland area to a four-lane road or at least add wider paved shoulders. It was expressed that it would be especially beneficial if Riley Street had a center turn lane east of 88<sup>th</sup> Avenue. It was also

mentioned that the lights don't seem to be well-timed during peak hour traffic along the Riley corridor.

- ▽ There was a similar desire to see Quincy widened as it is also used as a connection between Chicago Drive and US-31. There was concern that if a truck had a malfunction, it would be difficult to find an area to pull off and that a truck would likely end up taking up part of the travel lane leading to delayed traffic or safety issues.
- ▽ It was noted that trucks frequently drive 196BL to US-31 and that congestion during peak hours can drastically affect their timing.
- ▽ A suggestion for additional signage on 196BL directing vehicles to 121/Chicago Drive was made. There is currently a sign near Homestead Drive, but they felt it's posted a bit too late if a truck is unfamiliar with the area.
- ▽ It was mentioned that there should be more advanced warning for no-truck roads. It was pointed out that often there is one sign set back too far past an intersection and that drivers end up seeing them late and run into a situation where they can no longer turn the truck around. It seems to be a problem for out-of-area drivers or new truck drivers still learning the routes.
- ▽ It was noted that drivers are still getting used to the four-way stop at 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Quincy Street. Their truck sensors tend to pick up "hard braking" at that intersection.
- ▽ There was favorable interest in the construction of a southern bypass of M-231 in the Zeeland area.

### **November 14, 2019 Meeting**

- ▽ It was noted that, on occasion, trucks enter Interchange Drive and miss the driveways they are intending to enter. This leads trucks to turn around at Teddy's Transport, sometimes drive in reverse on Interchange, or have to go around the block (52<sup>nd</sup> Street to 146<sup>th</sup> Avenue). They are worried that this could lead to collisions and suggested larger signage from the other businesses.
- ▽ Advanced warning for no-truck roads was mentioned, agreeing with the statements that were made during the October meeting.
- ▽ It was suggested that it could be beneficial to have an advanced warning sign on M-40 heading south that the two lanes drop to one through lane and one right turn only lane after crossing over I-196. It's been catching drivers by surprise and could lead to a crash.

- ▽ It was brought up that winter snowdrifts on the west side of the road around M-40 and 138<sup>th</sup> Avenue and between 138<sup>th</sup> and 142<sup>nd</sup> Avenue on M-40 have been hazardous for their drivers during heavy snow events. A suggestion was to install a vegetated windbreak that could be benefit safety.
- ▽ It was noted that many cars still take a left turn out of the Pilot station along M-40 even though it is not permitted and that it could be a safety issue.
- ▽ Waverly Road was noted as a main access road to US-31 and that many local deliveries are to business along Waverly, Riley Street, and the various industrial parks around the Holland/Zeeland area.

## **Cycling Advocates Consultation**

On September 4, 2019, local citizens, cycling advocates, and bike shops met at the MACC office to discuss issues around the connectivity and safety of our area's non-motorized infrastructure.

### **Concerns Expressed by Cycling Advocates**

#### **September 4, 2019 Meeting**

Attendance: Dr. Russ Dykstra (Pedal Holland), Laura Harris (Cross Country Cycles), Martin Harris (Public), Dave VanDoorne (Pedal Holland), Meika Weiss (Pedal Holland), Jenny White (Velo City Cycles)

#### **General Comments**

- ▽ Would like to see spaces separated for users (Car lane - Bike Lane - Pedestrian Lane)
- ▽ Mark only established bike lanes, if it's someplace that seems unsafe for cyclists, don't mark it as someplace to ride (those from outside of the area might not realize that there are safer options elsewhere). For instance, there are many paved shoulders that aren't wide enough or are on roads with heavy and/or fast traffic that shouldn't encourage cycling. Find roads that would be safer and create designated and marked lanes there.
- ▽ Indicate bike lanes with green paint, even if it is only at intersections to alert drivers that cyclists may be traveling there (especially when turning right).
- ▽ It was discussed that there should be a clearer way to get into downtown Holland or Zeeland from the SE section of the MACC (Fillmore and Zeeland Charter Townships). 24<sup>th</sup> Street seems to be the preferred method of getting into Holland but navigating over US-31 is difficult and then once to the west of the highway,

when the road drops to one lane, there could be issues merging with traffic. Note, this is the case for cyclists that are riding too fast to be on the sidewalk/path that are using on-street bicycles.

### City of Holland

- ▽ Pine Avenue: Gates along the pathway are very dangerous, supposedly a person recently broke their wrist after hitting one. It's been noted multiple times that many cyclists end up going around them to avoid the danger of weaving through them whenever possible which negates their original purpose since cyclists end up in the driveways/parking lots where a truck may be present. One person said they feel like they are less likely to notice a truck exiting a driveway because they are so focused on trying to safely go around gates. Another person mentioned that in the winter months, ice accumulates around the gates which adds an extra danger.
- ▽ Pine Avenue & 7<sup>th</sup> Street: Cyclist noted that he has almost been hit multiple times crossing to/from the pathway when cars are turning right since they are often looking left to see if they can turn right on red when 7<sup>th</sup> Street traffic has cleared. Railroad (owned by CSX) has also been noted as a danger since it's in poor condition.
- ▽ Van Raalte Avenue & 10<sup>th</sup> Street: Intersection could benefit from a flashing beacon to alert drivers to pedestrians crossing to and from Kollen Park. There are currently Ped Crossing signs to signal that people cross there but it seems that cars do not yield. Maybe there should be a "Yield to Ped" sign instead or added flashers.
- ▽ 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Lincoln Avenue: Seems to be a conflict zone because of the road shift and railroad
- ▽ 10<sup>th</sup> Street: The group said they would like to see the protected cycle track on 10<sup>th</sup> Street as it was shown in conceptual drawings for the Downtown Holland Traffic Study. Starting at Kollen Park and then connecting to 8<sup>th</sup> street/ Chicago Drive.
- ▽ 8<sup>th</sup> Street: It was also the desire of the group to see 8<sup>th</sup> street East of Chicago Drive converted into three lanes (middle turn lane) and have on-street bike lanes in addition to updated sidewalk infrastructure that is currently in disrepair in sections. Also possibly consolidating driveways as some businesses seem to have multiple which can create conflict zones with pedestrians.
- ▽ 7<sup>th</sup> Street: It was mentioned that downtown Holland could use more cycling infrastructure to connect with the existing network of 9<sup>th</sup>, central, and pine. The group thought that a two way street on 7<sup>th</sup> with bike lanes could work.

- ∇ 16<sup>th</sup> Street: It would be nice to add another mid-block crossing near Stratford Way to better connect with Van Raalte Park. Currently, to get to the park, it would take about 10 minutes to walk from Stratford Way to the crosswalk at Country Club, and then back west on the south side of the street.

#### Holland Charter Township

- ∇ Ottawa Beach Road & 144<sup>th</sup> Avenue: Happy that a while back a pedestrian button was added so that pedestrians and cyclists could have a “protected” crossing phase in the light cycle.
- ∇ River Avenue & Douglas Ave: Intersection feels dangerous to cross even when a crossing phase is indicated. Many cars turning right curve around into the crosswalk before checking for pedestrians. It was suggested that stop lines may be beneficial and may cause cars to stop at those instead of up to the crosswalk line.
- ∇ Douglas Avenue: It was noted that many cyclists prefer to ride on Howard Ave since traffic tends to be lighter than around Douglas. But when wanting to head north, there are not many locations to safely cross Douglas (only at 144<sup>th</sup> and at River).
- ∇ Douglas Avenue S. of Lakewood Blvd: There is a pedestrian crossing signal south of the railroad near D&W that is not painted as a crossing. The signal has a ramp down into the road on the north side but if one were to cross to the east, they would be met with a curb.
- ∇ Douglas Avenue: It is desired to have a pathway connecting the D&W property with the pathway behind Firehouse Subs/other storefronts. Possibly crossing at Scotts Dr. and heading north and around to the bus stop, crossing the D&W store driveway at a setback so that drivers have time to see if someone is crossing, and then connect it up to the crosswalk (currently unmarked) south of the railroad.
- ∇ Lakewood Blvd & River Avenue: It was noted the section of path missing out front of Hog Wild could be a bit of a hazard.
- ∇ River Avenue: A section of path is missing at Northland Lanes, it appears that the business repaved and added parking spaces within the road right of way. Cyclist have had to cut in front of the building and reconnect to the path by way of Arthur if the parking lot is full.

## Zeeland Charter Township

- ▽ Bryon Road: It was mentioned that it would be nice if there could be a way to extend the pathway south of Byron to 84<sup>th</sup> Ave, recognizing that this could be difficult because of the highway ramps. Did say it was pretty neat being connected to the Upper Mac Natural Area which can lead to 88<sup>th</sup>, but it's pretty far south/ out of the way.
  
- ▽ Byron Road & new Chicago Drive format: One of the individuals lives in Zeeland Charter Township and commutes by bike. The most efficient way (there aren't too many ways to navigate around the highway) to get into the Zeeland area is by taking Byron. Once the pathway ends, they continue on Byron/ Chicago drive (which gets a bit intimidating) and then onto Main Ave. I wasn't able to ascertain the specifics, but something about the new configuration of the off-ramp has made cycling there even more difficult, I believe it had something to do with more lanes and travel directions coming off the highway.

## **Additional Stakeholder Consultation**

Letters were sent out to approximately 89 individuals and community stakeholder organizations to request feedback on projects proposed for the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Stakeholders were given the opportunity to respond by mail, email, phone, or attend an open house on January 16 and offer comments at that time. The consultation packet that was mailed can be found in the appendix of this plan.

### **List of Stakeholders**

42 North Bike Shop  
AECOM  
Allegan County Board of Commissioners  
Allegan County Drain Commission  
Allegan County Emergency Management  
Allegan County Road Commission  
Brewer's City Dock, Inc. (Freight)  
City of Holland  
City of Zeeland  
Cross Country Cycle  
Disability Network- Lakeshore  
Federal Aviation Administration – Michigan Section  
Federal Highway Administration - Michigan Section  
Fillmore Township  
Five Star Lakeshore Realty  
GDK Construction Co.  
GMB Architecture & Engineering

Grand Valley State University  
Haven Huis Apartments  
Haworth (Freight)  
Heinz USA  
Heritage Homes  
Holland Area Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Holland Charter Township  
Holland Community Hospital  
Holland Historical Trust  
Holland Inc. (Freight)  
Holland Police Department  
Holland Town Center  
Home Builders Association  
Hope College  
Inontime (Freight)  
Intercare Community Health Care  
Interfaceh2o  
Keystone Coaching & Counseling  
Lakeshore Advantage  
Lakeshore Cycling Coalition/League of Michigan Bicyclists  
Lakeshore Disability Network  
Laketown Township  
Land Conservancy of West Michigan  
Latin Americans United for Progress  
League of Women Voters  
Loose Spokes  
Macatawa Area Coordinating Council-Watershed Project  
Macatawa Area Express  
Macatawa Greenway Partnership  
Main Street Bicycle Company  
Michigan Department of Agriculture  
Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy: Transportation Division  
Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy: Water Division  
Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
Michigan Department of Transportation: Grand Region  
Michigan Department of Transportation: State Office  
Michigan House of Representatives: Commerce & Tourism Committee  
Michigan House of Representatives: Transportation Committee  
Michigan Senate  
Michigan State Historic Preservation  
Michigan State Housing Development  
Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce

Olive Township  
Ottawa County  
Ottawa County Department of Planning and Performance Improvement  
Ottawa County Farm Bureau  
Ottawa County Parks and Recreation  
Ottawa County Road Commission  
Ottawa County Water Resources Commissioner  
Outdoor Discovery Center Network  
Park Township  
Pedal Holland  
Port Sheldon Township  
Prein & Newhof  
Riverview Group  
Rock 'n' Road Cycle  
Teddy's Transport (Freight)  
Tulip Time Festival Inc.  
U. S. Army – Corps of Engineering, Detroit District  
U. S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resource of Conservation Service  
U. S. Department of Housing & Urban Development  
U. S. Department of the Interior-Fish and Wildlife Service  
U.S. Coast Guard – 9<sup>th</sup> District  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
U.S. House of Representatives: Transportation and Infrastructure Committee  
Velo City Cycles  
West Coast Chamber of Commerce  
West Michigan Bike & Fitness  
West Michigan Regional Airport Authority  
Westshore Mall  
Zeeland Charter Township  
Zeeland City Police Department  
Zeeland Public Schools

## **Solicitation and Response to Comments**

Community stakeholders were asked to provide feedback on proposed projects or communicate other transportation-related concerns to be addressed by the MACC 2045 LRTP.

### Responses Received and Treatment of Comments

The MACC received responses from the following organizations and individuals:

- ▽ USDA: Natural Resources Conservation Service
- ▽ Allegan County Drain Commission



- ▽ U.S. Department of Transportation: Federal Highway Administration
- ▽ Holland Hospital

A summary of comments is noted below along with the MACC's response. A copy of the comments received can be found in the appendix.

#### **USDA: Natural Resources Conservation Service – Garry Lee**

**Comments:** "The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) under Part 523 of the Farmland Protection Policy Act has reviewed the proposed 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan Projects. This review was conducted with respect to the effect(s) that the proposal may have on prime and/or unique farmland. Since the proposed projects are within the existing road right-of-ways, we have concluded that this proposal will have no negative impact on prime and/or unique farmland. Should the scope of the project change to where expansion will occur, please resubmit the proposal for our review."

**Response:** Comments forwarded to MACC Transportation Technical Advisory Committee and project sponsors.

#### **Allegan County Drain Commission – Joel Morgan**

**Comments:** "We received the 2045 Long Range Plan in the mail and have reviewed the proposed projects. Of the two projects in Allegan County, only Project #1 impacts a county drain (Vander Bie and Rotman Drain). We'd anticipate a copy of construction plans and hydraulic calcs to ensure that the culvert for that drain is sized appropriately."

**Response:** Comments forwarded to MACC Transportation Technical Advisory Committee and project sponsors.

#### **U.S. Department of Transportation: Federal Highway Administration – Aaron Dawson**

**Comments:** In your letter dated January 7, 2020, the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council (MACC) requested consultation on a list of proposed projects in the MACC 2045 LRTP. Thank you for submitting this for review. There are several environmental considerations to this project list that will require further analysis:

- Adverse, indirect, and cumulative land use impacts – consideration of planned future development and loss of agricultural, residential, and commercial use.
- Right-of-way acquisition – we anticipate the road right-of-way will need to be expanded for several of the listed projects. Consideration should be given to how many potential displacements of residential and business properties would occur.
- Economic impacts to the area - including loss of agricultural and commercial use.

- Historic properties, archeological sites, and burial sites - Any impacts to historically significant resources would automatically require an Environmental Assessment document. Please note there are historical properties close to some of the identified projects.
- Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) sites - Impacts to parks or wildlife refuges would likely not be allowed, unless they are very minor (de minimus use). Generally, avoid, minimize, or mitigate these impacts.
- Rivers – Impact to any navigable waterways would require consultation with several other federal agencies. This impact would generally require an Environmental Assessment.
- Wetlands – Impacts to wetlands must be mitigated to no net loss, per Executive Order 11988.
- Threatened and endangered species – These impacts may require special mitigation or consultation and may require an environmental document. OFFICIAL
- Stormwater impacts – The Environment, Great Lakes & Energy (EGLE) Department of the State of Michigan may require permits to meet requirements of the Clean Water Act. New stormwater runoff would require retention. If runoff is not directed to a municipal treatment facility, impacts would need to be evaluated. More information at: [https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdot/Resource\\_Guide\\_-\\_Local\\_Agency\\_-\\_Water\\_640901\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdot/Resource_Guide_-_Local_Agency_-_Water_640901_7.pdf)

Please evaluate the individual projects during the development phase for the above potential impacts. If you need assistance with contacting appropriate agencies, or if you have any questions, please contact me at [aaron.dawson@dot.gov](mailto:aaron.dawson@dot.gov) or (517)702-1829.

**Response:** Comments forwarded to MACC Transportation Technical Advisory Committee and project sponsors.

### **Holland Hospital – Joe Bonello**

**Comments:** Thank you for requesting input on the MACC Long Range Transportation Plan. After review of the proposed projects and timeline, we do not have any concerns about impacts of the projects on hospital operations, patient transfers, or local EMS operations. Feel free to reach out if you have any specific questions about how these projects may affect Holland Hospital or EMS in Ottawa County.

**Response:** Comments forwarded to MACC Transportation Technical Advisory Committee.

## **League of Women Voters – Paula M. Lewison**

**Comments:** "Thank you for the opportunity to review the proposed 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan Proposed Projects.

We note that the MACC 25 year plan calls for 12.1 miles at an average cost of \$2,246,441.65 per mile with the primary purpose of expanding the road capacity from existing lanes to one (1) or (2) additional lanes for road segments where usage is near or at capacity.

While the League's expertise is not traffic engineering, we do have positions regarding transportation in general which include:

"LWVUS believes that energy-efficient and environmentally sound transportation systems should afford better access to housing and jobs and will continue to examine transportation policies in light of these goals."

The League considers transportation in general as a component of equal opportunity for employment and housing, particularly by reducing vehicular pollution and in the development of alternate transportation systems. The proposal is not in conflict with our transportation policies and has considered air quality and environmental sustainability for people who live and work in the region and the MACC Area."

**Response:** Comments forwarded to MACC Transportation Technical Advisory Committee and project sponsors.

## **Pedal Holland – Meika Weiss**

**Comments:** "The ability to traverse the community freely by whatever mode of transportation a person chooses or has available to them is critical to a functioning community and a building block of stable economic growth.

Pedal Holland appreciates the pressures of continuing development and increasing population in the greater Holland area, however, road widenings and other projects designed to increase vehicular throughput and efficiency frequently increase the rate of personal injury and death.

It's our position that future projects must include active transportation provisions from the earliest stages, and that this be reflected in proposed budget numbers. Especially in areas with higher residential and employment density, this is necessary to accurately reflect the transportation needs of the community. Safe active transportation infrastructure is a core component of our transportation system as a whole, not a last-minute, optional add-on.

Specifically, in light of the challenges of increasing population, it will be essential to:

- ensure that adequate right-of-way is preserved for active transportation infrastructure,

- provide safe, reasonably-spaced opportunities to allow people to cross our increasingly busy streets, and
- recognize that prioritizing the safety of active transportation users may affect the operational efficiency of certain intersections.

The safety and effective mobility of every member of our community needs to be a top priority of our region going forward."

**Response:** Comments forwarded to MACC Transportation Technical Advisory Committee and project sponsors.