



CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Consultation

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

As the planning for the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan began in January of 2022, the 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 (January 2023). While we continued to publish public notices and advertisements in the local newspapers, we also used social media sites such as Facebook and Nextdoor 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 encouraged 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 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 June and July of 2023, in-person meetings were set up with freight providers to discuss inbound and outbound freight movements in West Michigan. Understanding freight movement in West Michigan and identifying freight routes is a helpful step in determining 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.



Meeting with Teddy's Transport - June 15, 2023

- They have around 90 employees and 50-60 trucks.
- They mainly haul goods for Gentex, Magna, and JR Automation.
- They offer daily less-than-truckload services to Chicago.

Meeting with Tyson Foods - June 19, 2023

- They employ almost 1,200 people in Olive Township. They have a tough time finding employees due to transportation.
- Almost 30 employees use Wheels to Work.
- Their facility handles 30-40 trucks daily, carrying raw meat, packaging supplies, and finished goods components.

Meeting with Inontime - June 20, 2023

- They have around 180 trucks and 300-400 employees.
- They primarily transport furniture, automotive components, retail goods, and foodstuffs.

Meeting with Haworth - June 21, 2023

- They have several plants and their national distribution center in Holland.
- They average around 200 inbound trucks and 300 outbound trucks per week.
- They made note of the congested nature of the I-196 and M-40 interchange.

Meeting with Herman Miller - June 22, 2023

- Midwest Distribution and the Greenhouse Seating Plant ship out around 100 trailers per day on average. They also have approximately 120 trailers per day going to/from their operations in Zeeland, Spring Lake, and Holland.
- Getting out of the Distribution Center can be a headache with the increased traffic on Adams Street. It is easier to get out on 104th Avenue, but that entrance is closed during the evening and early morning.

Meeting with Padnos - June 22, 2023

- Padnos' national distribution center and several plants are located in Holland.
- They ship freight by rail, ship, and road from Holland to the U.S., Canadian, and world markets.

Meeting with JR Automation - June 23, 2023

- They average 10 inbound trucks and 4-5 outbound trucks per day.
 - They have over 1,000 employees in the area.
 - While some view non-motorized paths as leisure, JR Automation believes the paths are safe and viable transportation options for their employees.
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Meeting with Art Mulder and Sons Trucking (AMST) - June 23, 2023

- Parking for semi-trucks was noted as being of major concern. Many truckers resort to parking on highway ramps, which is a safety concern.
- It was noted that it was hard to get additional truck stops approved.
- There is an aging workforce in the trucking industry, being replaced with recent immigrants.
- The lack of affordable housing is hurting the local trucking industry.

Meeting with Perrigo - June 28, 2023

- Perrigo has four sites in the greater Holland area. They have over 1.2 million square feet of warehouse space near the I-196 and M-40 interchange. They may be looking at expanding their Interchange
- M-40 is their main artery. They noted the light at Interchange Drive and M-40 is not sufficient for them and leads to semi-trucks backing up, especially the left turn from Interchange to go north.
- They handle approximately 80-100 loads per day on average at their Holland-area warehouses.
- They noted some of their employees use public transportation to get to/from work.

CYCLING ADVOCATES CONSULTATION

On August 3, 2023, local citizens, cycling advocates, and bike shop owners 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

Attendance: Brad White (Velo City Cycles), Laura Harris (Cross Country Cycle), Meika Weiss (Pedal Holland), Mark Kornelis (City of Holland Resident), and Josh Wall (Zeeland Charter Township Resident).

General Comments:

- More dedicated, on-street bicycle lanes are needed throughout the region.
- Crossing Interstate 196 around the Byron Road interchange is a challenge, and can be very dangerous. They expressed a desire for a safe east/west connector between Zeeland and Zeeland Charter Township.
- Getting kids to/from school safely on bicycles is a common concern.
- The increasing usage of e-bikes is resulting in more miles and faster speeds on shared-use paths.

General Comments Continued:

- Many paths around our region are outdated, overcapacity, and need to be widened, as well as have routine maintenance conducted.
- Bike path surface pavement should take precedence over driveway pavement (fewer bumps if consistent pavement).
- One eastbound bike lane on 17th Street and one westbound bike lane on 16th Street would be a preferred route for bike lanes, instead of both directions on 17th Street.
- It was suggested that the MACC count bicycles to determine where people are using the system most.
- We need to address bicycle parking in our Non-Motorized Plan (2024)—many bike racks are obsolete. Many tires are taller and wider and will not fit in outdated bike racks.
- There are more children on shared use paths—they need to be involved in the process.
- A better crossing was needed at 96th Avenue and Woodbridge Street for kids to get to school safely.



ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Emails were sent out to 119 individuals and community stakeholder organizations to request feedback on projects proposed for the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Stakeholders were given the opportunity to respond by mail, email, phone, or attend an open house on January 17, 2024 and offer comments at that time. The consultation packet that was emailed 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
Allegan County Sheriff's Department
Black River Public School
Calvary Schools of Holland
Charter House Innovations
City of Holland
City of Zeeland
City on a Hill Ministries
Community Action House
Community Foundation of Holland/Zeeland
Corewell Health
Cross Country Cycle
Disability Network – Lakeshore
Dutch Village
Evergreen Commons
Federal Highway Administration – Michigan Division
Fillmore Township
Freedom Village
Grand Rapids Community College
Grand Valley State University
Hamilton Public Schools
Holland Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
Holland Board of Public Works
Holland Charter Township
Holland Civic Center Place
Holland Civic Theater
Holland Christian Schools
Holland Farmers Market
Holland Hospital
Holland Historical Trust
Holland Museum
Holland Police Department
Holland Public Schools
Holland Rescue Mission
Home Builders Association - Lakeshore
Hope College
Intercare Community Health Care

List of Stakeholders Continued:

K-Line Industries
Lakeshore Advantage
Laketown Township
Land Conservancy of West Michigan
Latin Americans United for Progress
League of Michigan Bicyclists
League of Women Voters
Macatawa Area Express
Macatawa River Greenway
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 District 43 – Rachelle Smit
Michigan House of Representatives District 85 – Bradley Slagh
Michigan House of Representatives District 86 – Nancy DeBoer
Michigan House of Representatives District 88 – Greg VanWoerkum
Michigan Senate – Senator Roger Victory
Michigan State Historic Preservation
Michigan State Housing Development
Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce
NAACP – Grand Rapids Office
National Heritage Academies
Olive Township
Ottawa County Board of Commissioners
Ottawa County Department of Planning and Performance Improvement
Ottawa County Parks and Recreation
Ottawa County Road Commission
Ottawa County Sheriff’s Department
Ottawa County Water Resources Commissioner
Outdoor Discovery Center Network
Out On The Lakeshore
Padnos
Park Township
Park Theater
Pedal Holland
Perrigo
Plascore

List of Stakeholders Continued:

Port Sheldon Township
Prein & Newhof
Reckitt Benkheiser
Request Foods
Resthaven
Rock 'n' Road Cycle
Stow Company
Teddy's Transport
Tennant
Thermotron
Tiara Yachts
Tommy's Carwash Systems
Trendway Corporation
Tulip Time Festival Inc.
Tyson Foods
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 – 9th District
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. House of Representatives: Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
Velo City Cycles
Verplank Dock Co.
Volta Power Systems
West Michigan Bike & Fitness
West Michigan Regional Airport Authority
West Michigan Uniform
West Ottawa Public Schools
Zeeland Board of Public Works
Zeeland Charter Township
Zeeland Christian Schools
Zeeland Farm Services
Zeeland Lumber and Supply
Zeeland Police Department
Zeeland Public Schools

119 Organizations

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 2050 LRTP.

Responses Received and Treatment of Comments

The MACC received responses from the following organizations and individuals:

- Adventure Cycling Association
- City of Holland Department of Community and Neighborhood Services
- West Michigan Express

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.

ADVENTURE CYCLING ASSOCIATION: KERRY IRONS

Comments: "I have completed the survey. Regards comments on the LRTP, there really is not a lot of bicycle content, and essentially it is all a discussion of current facilities and data rather than plans for future improvements/expansions. I didn't find anything in the traffic modeling that suggested actions relating to bicycling. It seems like with the net-zero 2050 efforts and the rapid increase in eBike sales, that would factor in more obviously."

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

CITY OF HOLLAND DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES: STEVE PETERSON

Comments:

- In regards to the first paragraph on page 6: "The document did not include any reference to complete streets. Is there a place to endorse/promote Safe Route to Schools?"

Comments:

- In regards to intercity bus service connection to Allegan on page 40: “Perhaps a need to elaborate that a sizable number of residents living in the Allegan County portion of the City of Holland must travel to Allegan (either downtown or to the Allegan County Services Center on Dumont Road) for many basic human services (mental health services, health department services, food assistance, Medicaid, court services, etc.), and that many of the users of such services are substantially income-constrained.”
- In regards to the last paragraph on page 42: “Perhaps a mention of the importance of bicycle parking; 2) with increased use of electric bikes, perhaps need for a comment on the need for more paved shoulders or bike lanes to safely separate electric bikes from other non-motorized users on side paths; 3) perhaps mention of the growing need for bike charging stations at workplaces, commercial centers, parks, etc.”
- In regards to the second paragraph on page 45: “Although outside of the MACC area the Ford Airport is located 30 miles to the east and is the second busiest airport in Michigan. It provides passenger air services to several cities as well as connections to international locations. Providing a connection to the Ford Airport should be a priority for the MACC.”
- In regards to the fourth paragraph on page 48: “Special consideration should be given to providing transit services on this corridor to connect the residential land uses in the north with the industrial jobs in the south that will provide timely service to serve the employment in the area.”
- In regards to the fourth paragraph on page 49: “While at the same time, it will be important to provide safe pedestrian crossings and improvements into any new improvements.”
- In regards to the second paragraph on page 50: “This may also require evaluation of a traffic signal at US-31/Chicago Drive to make connections to Chicago Drive safe.”
- In regards to the fourth paragraph on page 50: “Not exactly clear where US31/BL196 between 196 at the south end to the intersection at Chicago Drive is addressed. It seems like it warrants comments regarding pedestrian safety at most crossings if not other things.”
- In regards to the last paragraph on page 56: “Comment could be included to show that MACC will use the local plans as guidance for improvements.”
- In regards to the first paragraph on page 75: “Is there additional data to explain/is this Jenison people commuting into GR. This also provides some justification for providing cross-county transit.”
- In regards to the first paragraph on page 79: “Does the model provide connection to outside of the MACC? What about Ford Airport?”

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

WEST MICHIGAN EXPRESS: GREG HOLCOMBE

Comments: The words we would recommend to add to your LRTP, page 102, to describe the WMX Pilot are as follows: “In early 2024, a WMX Pilot plan is being considered which would use 1 or 2 coaches to serve the Holland-Zeeland-Hudsonville-Grand Rapids route with at least 5 daily round trips.”

Personal Note: Beyond WMX, and thinking about the current MAX study, I do wonder if a “larger aspirational” statement in your LRP would be worthwhile. And you might already have such a statement in the draft report..

Perhaps something like “In all of our work together, we encourage transportation/transit planners to seek to coordinate and integrate the various modes we are supporting. So that, for example, as MAX services are possibly revised, they would be coordinated with new (private?) micro-transit services, key non-motorized nodes (such as the Macatawa River Greenway), and West Michigan Express stations (if the WMX pilot is initiated) ... This integration would provide more frictionless connections across the MACC area and between communities.”

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