

The MACC Region

Within the planning area of the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council (MACC), it is expected, based on the most recent estimates (2017 & 2018), that approximately 125,964 people live within the nine local units of government (refer to chapter 1, Figure 1). Settled by Dutch immigrants in the 1840s, the area today is home to people of many ethnic backgrounds. The economic base is also diverse with automotive, office furniture, food processing and agricultural sectors having a significant presence. Its location adjacent to Lake Michigan and access to many area parks makes it a popular summer tourist destination which adds greatly to the local economy.

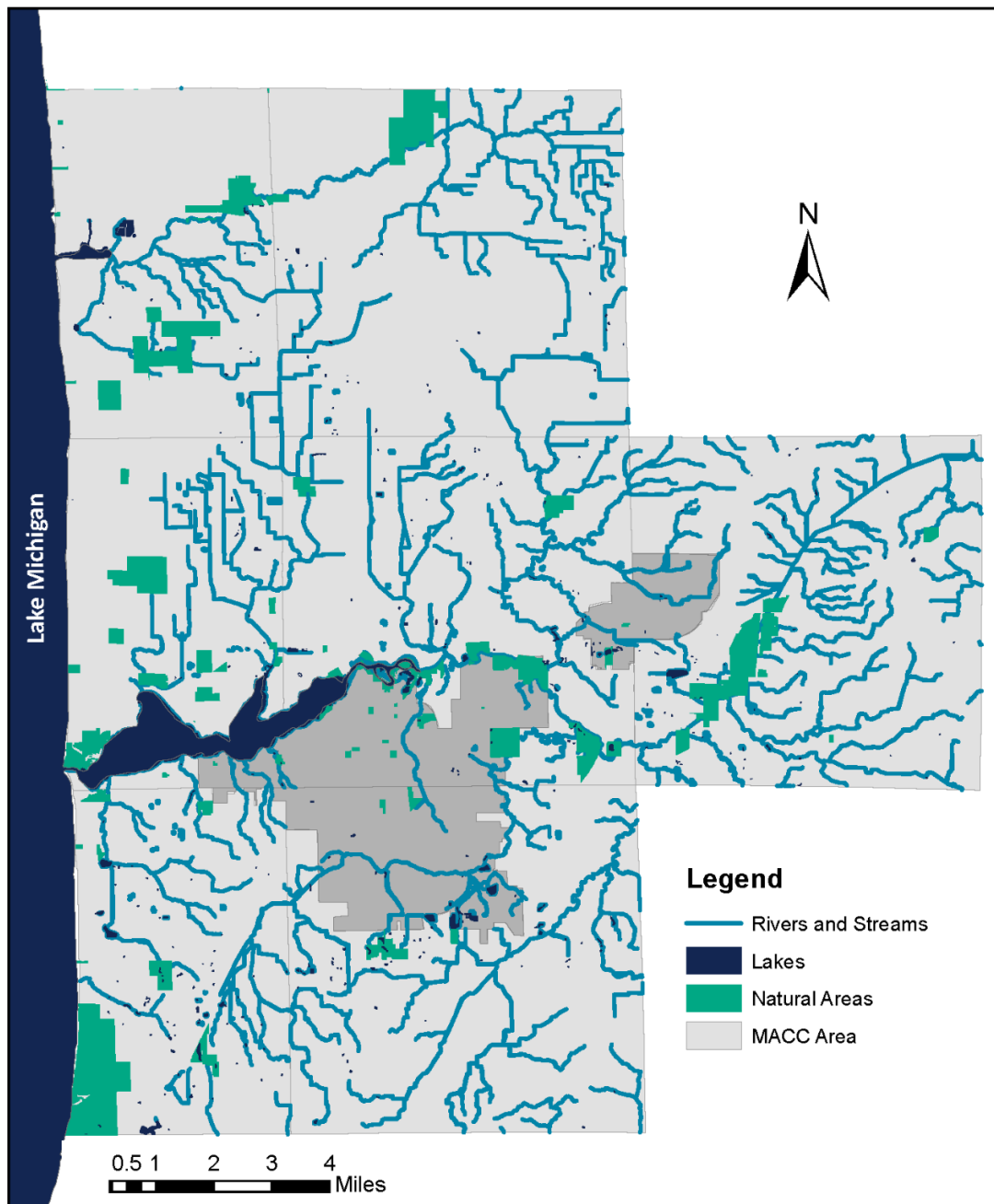


Figure 2: The MACC area natural features (rivers, lakes and natural areas)

Transportation History

The early settlers dug a channel suitable for commercial purposes from the Holland Harbor to Lake Michigan that allowed for the transport of timber and other materials to the Chicago area. By 1871, two railroad companies had extended lines to Holland that greatly expanded intra- and interstate travel. US-31 would later serve that purpose as automobile travel became more popular. The completion of Interstate 196 in the 1970s connected the MACC area to the national roadway network. Passenger rail service, provided by Amtrak's *Pere Marquette*, was initiated in 1984 and a publicly-owned general aviation airport was established by the City of Holland in 1996. An extensive non-motorized network, beyond traditional city sidewalks, began in the late 1970s which has helped the region become more multimodal along with the establishment of the Macatawa Area Express transit system in the year 2000.



Figures 3 & 4: Historic photos of 8th Street in Holland, MI. Credit: Holland Museum

Current Transportation in the Region

The MACC area transportation system encompasses all modes of transportation with a general aviation airport, two Class A rail lines, a public transit system (11 fixed routes and demand response service), an extensive non-motorized pathway network and commercial harbor serving business and recreational users. Figure 5 illustrates the roadway network in the MACC, which includes segments of interstate (I-196), US routes (US-31) and numerous other state trunklines (M-121, M-40, BL-196). The Pere Marquette passenger rail line, as well as freight railroad lines, are also shown.

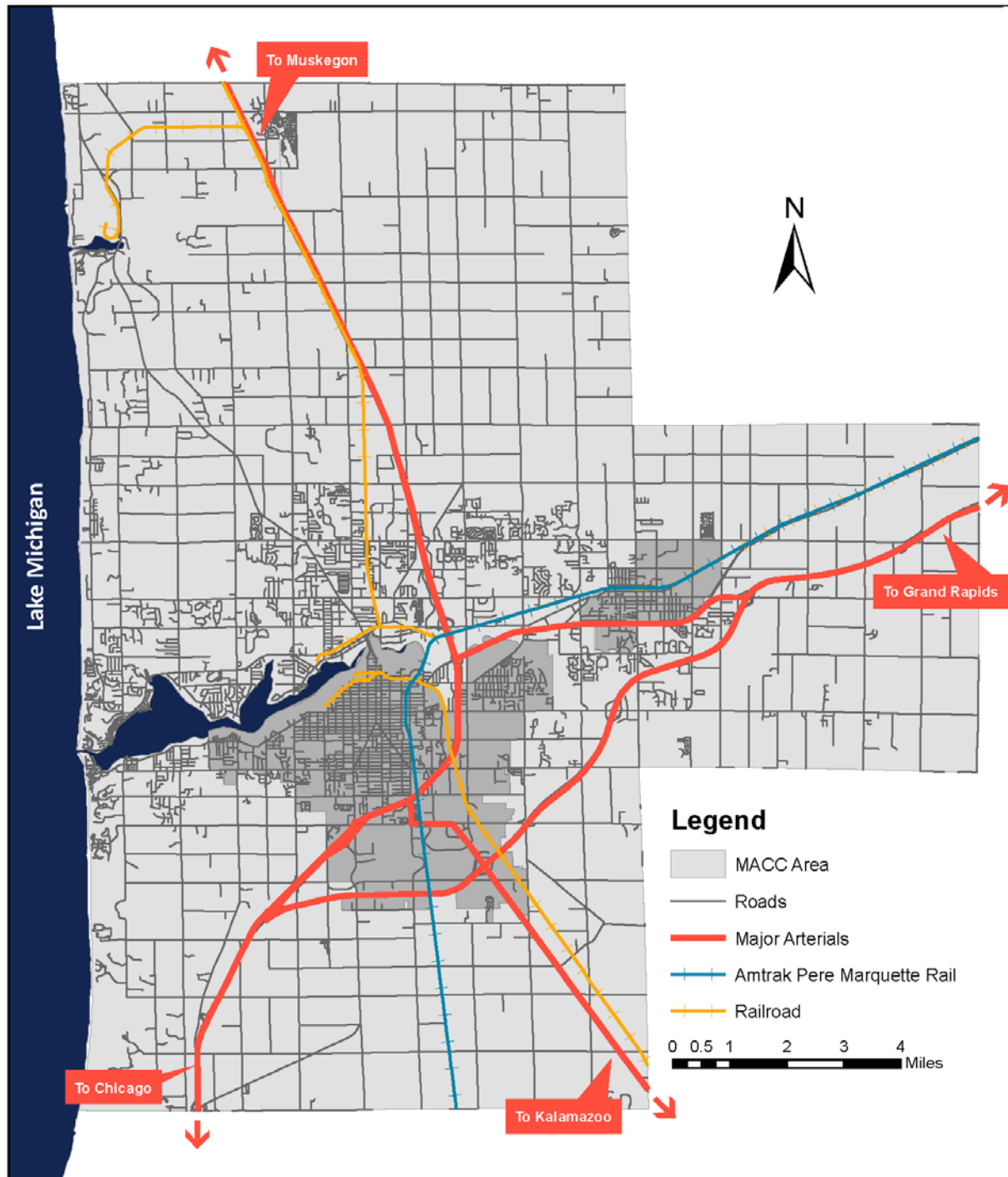


Figure 5: The MACC road and rail network