



*Michigan Association of Planning
A Chapter of the American Planning Association*

Surface Transportation Policy

Adopted on April 27, 2012

Introduction

The transportation system plays an integral role in Michigan communities. We depend on it to get to jobs and school, to move freight, and for recreation. The transportation system directly impacts the economic vitality of the State and the quality of life of Michigan residents. This transportation policy is broken down by topic into succinct, themed segments. These segments can be considered as stand-alone policy documents or reviewed together as an entire transportation policy for the Michigan Association of Planning (MAP).

A Transportation Policy that considers the entire transportation system, from freight to pedestrian facilities, is necessarily complex. The Policies listed here address several facets of the transportation system, but are by no means exhaustive. MAP will continue to work with its members, transportation planning and policy experts, and other land use stakeholders to update and add to this Policy in response to evolving transportation issues.

Background

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Background

The unique situation of Michigan and its communities

Historically, transportation policies in the State of Michigan have focused on the efficient movement of freight for manufactured goods and the swift movement of automobile traffic. While these considerations continue to impact the health of Michigan's economy, our transportation infrastructure must diversify along with our economy. Specifically, Michigan is shifting from an industry based on large volumes of manufactured goods to include more low-volume specialty and technology-related items and services. Transportation systems must be able to meet these changing needs and provide the necessary framework for place-making and economic development.

In addition, there is a new emphasis on the health and equity issues associated with a transportation system that provides access and infrastructure for all users of all abilities, including walkers, bicyclists, seniors, and disabled individuals. In 2010, the Michigan Legislature adopted Complete Streets legislation. Multi-modal transportation systems that provide active transportation such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities can help improve community health and be a part of the solution to Michigan's rising problems with obesity and chronic health issues.

Michigan faces many challenges in maintaining the existing transportation infrastructure; however, making the necessary investment to transition the transportation system for this state to be competitive in the 21st Century is a monumental task. With limited resources, Michigan must critically evaluate how to prioritize and distribute funding for diverse projects in all regions. Decisions for the effective dispersion of resources will need to equitably consider the condition of existing assets, as well as the need for investment in new infrastructure that meets the changing needs of our communities.

Importance of transportation infrastructure in attracting a talented workforce to compete in the Global Economy

Efficiency, not speed is the new key to transportation policy. In past years, transportation planning often focused on developing the quickest way to move cars or freight through a place. In contrast, transportation policy must now focus on providing efficient access to destinations. This requires an approach that considers the unique characteristics of places and the needs of individual communities. Such a system requires multiple transportation options, which also makes communities more attractive to a wide range of people. A person's mobility and quality of life are substantially impacted by the transportation options available to them. Put simply, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motor vehicle users of all ages and abilities require equal access to a safe and convenient transportation network.¹

Recognizing that Michigan's economic future depends on successfully competing in a global economy that is increasingly reliant on human capital, Michigan must be able to attract and retain people of all ages. A transportation system that effectively serves individuals as they transition through life stages is therefore a necessity, which also calls for a development pattern where employment, entertainment, services, and housing options are in reasonable proximity to one-another with adequate multi-modal access between destinations.²

¹ (see Complete Streets Policy).

² (see Transportation and Land Use).

It is also understood that companies seeking a talented workforce locate in areas that are attractive to a wide range of people. Providing a range of transportation options will improve economic development opportunities and encourage additional investment in Michigan's communities. Many people, particularly young professionals, empty-nesters, and retirees, want to live in areas with multiple transportation options. Quality public transportation service and non-motorized transportation facilities are a major draw for young, talented individuals planning to move into and help revitalize cities. Furthermore, in addition to a growth in "choice-riders" of public transportation, an additional, one-third of Michigan residents are older, too young, or physically or financially unable to drive an automobile. Adequate transit options and non-motorized facilities will ensure that those individuals who choose not to or cannot own or operate an automobile enjoy the same quality of life as automobile users. Planning for effective connections between all modes of transportation will be absolutely critical to future transportation planning efforts. Therefore, providing transportation choices is not just about economic growth, it is also about equity and fairness, social justice, and providing citizens with access to employment and essential services necessary to live healthy and productive lives.

In addition to existing needs, the population of citizens 65 and older will double between 2010 and 2035, while the population of those over 85 will triple. These age groups are much more dependent on alternatives to the private automobile for travel than others. Adequate transit options and non-motorized facilities will ensure that those individuals who cannot operate an automobile enjoy the same quality of life as automobile users. Planning for effective connections between all modes of transportation will be absolutely critical to future transportation planning efforts.

Relationship between land use and transportation policy

Land use and transportation infrastructure are intrinsically related in that both dictate the way the other functions. Transportation infrastructure shapes the form of land use, while land use changes drive the need for transportation infrastructure. This interaction is measured by accessibility, or the attractiveness of a location as both an origin and a destination. For example, when a new roadway is built, land along the roadway becomes more accessible, thus more valuable and attractive to developers. As land along the roadway is developed, traffic volumes and the number of access points increase. This results in more congestion and a deterioration of the road's capacity to efficiently move people and goods. The reduced efficiency of the roadway eventually requires improvements that will attract additional development, and therefore, new transportation needs.

Michigan transportation planners have historically been concerned with moving people and goods *through or to* a place, while land use planners are usually focused on the interaction of goods and people *within* a place. Evaluating the impacts of land use on the transportation system is a necessary component of the planning process. Decisions made regarding future transportation infrastructure need to consider the demands of the local population and our economy. Of particular importance for Michigan cities is the consideration of this interplay in the context of "down-" or "right-sizing" communities. To the extent that communities make strategic decisions to reduce the scope, area of service, or adjust current levels of infrastructure, transportation investment is a primary component of such decisions.

Land use plans are largely formulated at the local level, while most transportation plans are formulated at the regional (Metropolitan Planning Organization) and state level.³ Regional land use plans are not required to conform with local

³ A Metropolitan Planning Organization is regional entity receiving transportation funding that must be located within a population center of at least 50,000 persons. MPOs must adhere to federally established rules and regulations regarding the use of transportation funding.

land use plans, which can often lead to conflict between levels of planning. As federal earmarks are replaced with discretionary grants, federal transportation investments are becoming increasingly competitive, with priority given to areas that demonstrate coordinated regional land use and transportation policies. Improved coordination between regional land use and transportation planning will not only direct limited resources to their best use, but will make Michigan more competitive in the pursuit of limited federal assistance for transportation projects. A multi-disciplinary approach to land use planning that involves land use planners, transportation planners, transit operators, traffic/highway engineers, community health professionals, and others will provide communities with the best design.

One additional aspect of the land use and transportation connection is access management. Access management considers the number, placement, and design of access points (intersecting streets and commercial driveways) in the context of the overall roadway, not just on each individual site. Access management preserves capacity on roadways by reducing congestion. Access management can also improve travel for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users since fewer driveways mean fewer conflict points for them as well. The Michigan Department of Transportation has a successful access management program that promotes local government partnerships.

Multi-jurisdictional nature of transportation planning

Several agencies and levels of government share jurisdiction over roads in Michigan. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has jurisdiction over State Highways, U.S. Routes, and Interstates, which constitute 8 percent of the route miles of roads in Michigan but account for about 51 percent of all vehicle miles traveled. County road commissions have jurisdiction over all other public roads, except state trunklines, in all townships in the state, accounting for almost 75 percent of all route miles but only about 31 percent of all vehicle miles traveled. Cities and villages have jurisdiction over about 18 percent of route miles, which also accounts for about 18 percent of vehicle miles traveled. Because roads transect municipal boundaries, decisions that impact a single road are made by multiple local governments and agencies. This makes coordination imperative in order to ensure effective maintenance, modal connectivity, and seamless transitions in the transportation system across jurisdictional lines.

A variety of agencies have important roles and responsibilities that impact transportation planning and investment decisions in Michigan. MDOT is also responsible for identifying current and emerging needs for all modes of transportation within the state and prioritizing investments to meet those needs. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and associated sub-regional transportation study groups establish regional priorities that guide the expenditure of federal and state transportation funds across multiple transportation modes. However, the MPO established process of regional coordination only applies to urbanized areas with a population greater than 50,000. This means that the non-MPO and rural areas in Michigan rely primarily on the county road commission, regional planning agencies, and the Rural Task Force process for transportation funding allocation decisions. Small cities and villages often rely on internal procedures for transportation planning within their boundaries.

Finally, in addition to the agencies already mentioned, several local transit providers and non-profits are involved in multi modal transportation planning. Statewide there are at least 79 different local public transit authorities and 40 more that provide specialized services. A variety of local organizations are involved with non-motorized planning using either facilities in the road right-of-way, designated multi-use paths, sidewalks, or abandoned railroad corridors. Often, the variety of players results in a lack of coordination across and between transportation systems.

MAP Policy Statements

1. The Michigan Association of Planning supports the vision of a well-integrated multimodal transportation system that serves individual, local, regional, state, national, and global needs and achieves goals of choice, mobility, access, sustainable development, and efficiency.
2. The Michigan Association of Planning supports corridor planning and other initiatives that provide opportunities for local governments and agencies to coordinate beyond jurisdictional lines.
3. The Michigan Association of Planning urges that transportation plans and programs be developed and implemented through processes where responsibility and authority for planning and decision-making is shared among all affected stakeholders, not just those with statutory authority.
4. The Michigan Association of Planning recommends that transportation plans and projects reflect the diversity of concerns and needs in a community, the region, and the state, and that this is best accomplished through adoption of policies mandating active implementation of broadly inclusive and on-going public involvement programs.
5. The Michigan Association of Planning advocates the pursuit of mechanisms to facilitate greater coordination among regional planning agencies, county road commissions, transit agencies, the Rural Task Force, and MDOT in non-MPO and rural regions in order to integrate planning across all transportation modes regionally.

6. The Michigan Association of Planning encourages collaboration among MDOT, regions, MPOs, county road commissions, cities, townships, and villages to ensure the compatibility of local, regional, and state transportation investment priorities.
7. The Michigan Association of Planning encourages agencies to consider the impacts of their transportation investments beyond their own borders. MAP also supports the use of traffic simulation, scenarios, and other models to evaluate such investments comprehensively.
8. The Michigan Association of Planning supports providing public and/or private funds for research, technology development, data collection, training, technology transfer, and the integration of research results into the planning process at the local, regional, and state level.
9. The Michigan Association of Planning supports continued consideration of new design approaches to our transportation problems so that Michigan will be seen as a leader in transportation innovation (similar to our leadership in transportation improvements like Intelligent Transportation Systems).
10. The Michigan Association of Planning believes that cross agency and multimodal cooperation are imperative in order to build and maintain an effective, balanced transportation system that serves diverse needs.
11. The Michigan Association of Planning supports transportation investments that positively affect environmental quality, growth management, land use, housing affordability, social equity, historic preservation, urban design, the movement of freight to support the economy, and economic investment.

Aging infrastructure

Michigan's Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC)⁴ was established by Michigan Public Act 499 of 2002 to guide Michigan's Transportation Commission on a statewide asset management strategy. Since 2002 the TAMC has worked with the Michigan Department of Transportation, Michigan's regional planning organizations and metropolitan planning organizations, county road commissions, cities, villages, and others to annually rate the condition of federal aid eligible roads.

According to the TAMC's report titled *Michigan's Roads and Bridges 2010 Annual Report* "...Michigan's roads are deteriorating faster than they can be maintained." The report goes on to state that "In 2004, 13.6 percent of lane miles were identified as needing structural improvement. By 2010, that number had more than doubled to 34.8 percent. In 2004, nearly 88 percent of the federal aid system was considered to be in good or fair shape. By 2010, that figure fell to 65.2 percent." The rating results for 2010 are shown below:

Good Condition – 18 percent

Fair Condition – 47 percent

Poor Condition – 35 percent

In 2004 the TAMC projected it would require \$3.7 billion to bring all poor and fair federal aid eligible roads up to a good rating. In 2010 the TAMC projected it would take \$8.5 billion.

The TAMC also tracks the condition of bridges. The 2010 report states, "An analysis of bridge conditions in Michigan shows that state and local bridge owners and decision makers are "holding their own" despite rising costs and revenue challenges...progress has been made in reducing the number of structurally deficient bridges under state jurisdiction, and more local agencies are implementing preventive maintenance "mix of fixes" on local bridges."

Clearly, the condition of roads and bridges will continue to deteriorate if additional resources are not dedicated to maintaining and improving these valuable assets.

MAP Policy Statement

12. The Michigan Association of Planning encourages communities to work with the Asset Management Council to develop local asset management plans.

⁴ Michigan Transportation Asset Management Council: http://tamc.mcgi.state.mi.us/mitrp/Council/Default_Council.aspx

Inadequate funding sources

Funding concerns can be distilled into two main issues: the amount of money available and the way the money is allocated. Michigan's transportation infrastructure is seriously under-funded. Since 1984, the state's gas tax has only been raised once (in 1997). At 19 cents per gallon, Michigan ranks 31st out of 50 states; the diesel tax of 15 cents per gallon ranks 42nd.

Road funding is declining because the state-collected gas tax and vehicle-registration fees -- the two main sources of road funding in Michigan -- are generating less revenue each year as people are driving less and buying fewer new vehicles. Michigan's gas tax revenue dedicated to roads and bridges decreased \$200 million in the past six years. The impact of alternative fuel usage along with increased vehicle fuel efficiency further challenge traditional transportation funding sources by reducing the amount of fuel used, and thus fuel taxes paid. At the same time, road related expenses like asphalt, salt, gas, and diesel fuel have been increasing.

In terms of federal funding, Michigan receives back only 92 percent of all federal transportation taxes. Federal funds typically require a 20 percent local match, which is becoming more challenging for the state and local units to provide. If the local match is unavailable in the future, these federal dollars will go to other states and communities who are able to match federal aid. Funding at the federal level is also very bleak.

In addition, the allocation of these funds between the state, county road commissions, and local units of government, as well as the distribution between roads and transit are sources of contention among road agencies. Act 51 of 1951 outlines how state funding is allocated between the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), counties, and local municipalities. State transportation revenues are split among a variety of transportation entities to maintain interstate freeways, county roads, city and village roads, public transit, economic development projects, and bridges. Constitutionally, ninety percent (90 percent) of the funds are allocated to roads while 10 percent goes towards transit. Of this 10%, 1.5% is diverted for cost of collection further reducing the amount of money available for transit. Transportation agencies are struggling to maintain existing infrastructure while increased demand for alternate modes of travel provide additional funding challenges.

If Michigan is to have a 21st Century transportation system that meets the needs of all residents, new funding sources must be found. The current funding structure and allocation for transportation is expected to yield significant and systemic deficits in the coming years. Creative solutions are needed to create a stable funding structure that accounts for inflation over time. Broad community conversations should be undertaken to evaluate continued reliance on funding structures that are based upon ever-increasing consumption, be it miles traveled or gallons consumed.

MAP Policy Statements

13. The Michigan Association of Planning supports the findings of the Transportation Funding Task Force⁵ that "Michigan must at least double its current investment in transportation if the state's transportation system is to continue to serve the state adequately." In the short term, a gas tax increase is needed. Longer term, new sources of revenue will be needed to maintain the state's investment in the existing infrastructure. New sources of revenue like Mileage based user fees, managed lanes/toll roads, or other types of user fees need to be seriously studied for consideration in Michigan.

⁵ Insert reference to TF2 report for further information.

14. The Michigan Association of Planning supports a public education campaign directed at public officials, planners, and Michigan residents to ensure that there is a thorough understanding of the current condition of the roads and bridges and the need for additional sources of funding to bring roads and bridges into fair or good condition.
15. The Michigan Association of Planning supports the concept of "Fix it First" where funding is spent on existing roads and bridges before allocating funds for road expansion.
16. The Michigan Association of Planning supports strategic investments in transportation infrastructure and services necessary to expand economic opportunity, improve regional economic competitiveness, and foster economic resiliency.
17. The Michigan Association of Planning supports re-evaluating Act 51 to ensure that funding is equitably distributed so that local, county and state needs can be met. Restructuring the ownership and funding of roads may be necessary because the burden for maintenance appears to be shifting to the local level.
18. The Michigan Association of Planning supports reviewing the 90/10 split of funding between roads and transit to ensure that adequate funding is available to meet the needs of the changing population demographic.
19. The Michigan Association of Planning supports revising the Michigan transit funding formula to allow for increased funding to transit operators without reducing or shifting funds statewide.
20. The Michigan Association of Planning supports the concept of a "transportation account" that allows more funding flexibility for state, regional, county, and local projects and that allows for funding flexibility between different modes of transportation.
21. The Michigan Association of Planning supports the adoption of enabling legislation that allows communities to choose local options for funding local transportation priorities and that provides incentives for public-private partnerships for transportation projects. Money raised through local option taxes or fees would be used to supplement existing funding and not replace existing allocations.
22. The Michigan Association of Planning supports transportation funding reforms that ensure that transportation funds are not diverted for non-transportation expenses.
23. The Michigan Association of Planning supports creative solutions to increase the existing capacity of our roadways. Corporate efforts to reduce the amount of traffic during traditional rush hours such as flex time and working from home should be encouraged as they leverage the existing investment in our infrastructure.
24. The Michigan Association of Planning supports increased funding for and use of intelligent transportation systems that use real-time traffic information to improve the flow, efficiency, and safety of transportation networks.

Expanding Transportation Options

This section includes subsections that describe the unique challenges associated with specific alternative modes of transportation and new ways of thinking about the system in a more holistic manner.

One major challenge for Michigan communities is to expand the transportation options available to citizens. For too long, communities in Michigan have primarily focused on the automobile as a mode of transportation, which is not surprising considering the state's history as a titan in the industry. As a result, alternatives to the automobile have dwindled over the years. We need to change our land use patterns, increase mixed use and compact development, and increase the availability of transit and non-motorized transportation facilities. We also must promote an understanding that the roads should be shared by all users and that streets should include amenities for all users of the local system.

In addition, our roads must provide more connectivity to maximize all modes of travel. Disconnected subdivisions and commercial strips do not provide opportunities for different travel modes. Connectivity provides multiple benefits including more choices for pedestrians and bicyclists and a better distribution of traffic. Studies show that connected streets have fewer crashes, more overall capacity, more efficient maintenance, and faster emergency response times that may lead to the need for fewer fire stations, vehicles, and firemen per household.

Adequate transit and non-motorized transportation options are quickly becoming the cornerstone of successful cities, counties, and states throughout the country. Public transportation options include high-speed regional rail lines, intercity passenger trains and buses, regional commuter trains and buses, and local light rail. Non-motorized facilities include sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes. They can also include simple improvements to existing streets such as narrower vehicle lanes and improved road crossings. Both transit and non-motorized systems should be prioritized as they provide transportation to individuals at all stages of the human lifespan. As noted, connections between and among modes must be designed and constructed as well.

Studies continue to show that public funds spent on transit and non-motorized facilities have tremendous returns. Public funding spent to diversify transit has generated development and redevelopment around transit centers. Three great examples are Dallas, Texas; St. Louis, Missouri; and Portland, Oregon. In Dallas, over \$3.3 billion in new property development and redevelopment has occurred near the Dallas Area Rapid Transit light rail stations since 1999.¹ In St. Louis, development and redevelopment near the St. Louis MetroLink light rail has generated over \$1 billion.² In Portland, over seven million square feet of new development, valued at over \$900 million, has occurred adjacent to the light rail line.³ Examples such as these emphasize how successful planning for transit, with local communities at the table, can provide positive economic benefits for the residents and local municipality, with ripple effects evident across the state.

Complete Streets

Complete Streets policies and legislation seek to formalize the creation and investment in transportation networks that effectively provide for all modes of transportation. Complete Streets include the road itself along with bus stops, sidewalks, medians, shoulders, and bike lanes. Complete non-motorized systems provide safe and efficient facilities that enable users to access important destinations throughout their community. Ensuring that every mode provides access throughout a community allows opportunities to tailor land uses and streets to different configurations and efficiencies, while enabling a choice of travel options between logical origins and destinations throughout corridors. Network continuity, connectivity, and safety for all users are essential principles for making this policy effective. The development of complete non-motorized systems can be achieved through various approaches:

- For communities or neighborhoods that developed prior to the automobile, it is important to maintain the characteristics that make them walkable. In communities that generally feature more complex infrastructure systems, it is critical that non-motorized networks are strategically analyzed, maintained, and invested in.
- For communities or neighborhoods that developed with a greater emphasis on automobile transportation, it is critical to identify and take advantage of opportunities to improve non-motorized systems, with an emphasis on safely integrating all modes of transportation.
- New community or housing development should be designed to incorporate complete non-motorized facilities where appropriate. The location of new development relative to existing infrastructure systems is a key determinant of successful transportation system integration.

MAP Policy Statements

25. The Michigan Association of Planning supports planning and design policies that ensure that streets and roadways are designed and operated with all users in mind — including bicyclists, public transportation vehicles and riders, vehicular users, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities.
26. The Michigan Association of Planning supports transportation systems and facilities that are designed to provide accessibility to citizens of all abilities.
27. The Michigan Association of Planning supports a hierarchy of metropolitan mobility that begins with an emphasis on pedestrians (including elderly, young, and disabled pedestrians) as the foundational element of mobility and access.
28. The Michigan Association of Planning supports bicycling as a viable transportation mode that includes development of connected on-road and off-road facilities, as well as program elements that promote bicycle safety, encourage people of all ages to ride, provide education for better awareness of the rules of the road, foster partnerships with law enforcement, and evaluate implementation efforts.
29. The Michigan Association of Planning supports an increased emphasis on public transportation, including buses, passenger rail, and other modes as a principal way to meet the mobility and access needs of metropolitan regions.
30. The Michigan Association of Planning support a policy of complete networks or systems, ensuring that transportation corridors and the overall transportation network can accommodate all modes for people of all ages and abilities to provide access to destinations along the corridor.
31. The Michigan Association of Planning believes that it is important to create a complete multi-modal system of infrastructure that integrates non-motorized facilities and public transit systems with other transportation modes so that Michigan residents and visitors have access to transportation choices.

Aging in Place

We live in an aging society where the Baby Boom generation is now entering retirement. As previously noted, the population of citizens 65 and older will double between 2010 and 2035. The planning profession should work to address the impact of street design, transit service, and overall accessibility on the mobility needs of people as they age so they continue to have transportation options to live their lives to the fullest.

MAP Policy Statements

32. The Michigan Association of Planning supports transportation plans and programs that enable people to age with dignity and purpose and that enable disabled persons to participate fully by having transportation options that connect them to their destinations. For instance, housing and transportation options need to be linked to enable all persons to access community services and amenities.

Safe Routes to School

Public schools are often located on the fringe of communities, far away from residential areas because local or state siting standards require a minimum size facility. This results in auto-dependent travel patterns and schools that are disconnected from the communities where the students live. Schools are also typically unavailable for use by other community groups, which places pressure on local governments to acquire and maintain recreational facilities apart from public schools. These policies negatively affect public health and community livability. The Michigan Safe Routes to School policy relates directly to public health, improves learning about biking and walking, reduces traffic congestion, and helps educate young people on the values and practices of community design that support walking and cycling.

MAP Policy Statements

33. The Michigan Association of Planning supports comprehensive Safe Routes to Schools Programs that involve school districts, teachers, parents, staff, students, law enforcement, and implementing agencies in the development of facilities, programs, and policies that support walking and bicycling to school.
34. The Michigan Association of Planning supports co-location of public schools and other community facilities in areas that are close to where people live who will use those facilities, and where options exist to access the facilities by means other than the private automobile.
35. The Michigan Association of Planning recognizes the important role planners play in the Safe Routes to School program as facilitators and street and non-motorized network planners, coordinating capital infrastructure planning and improvements that support walking and bicycling to school.

Non-Motorized Transportation

Non-motorized facilities have economic benefits. Non-motorized trails are the number one amenity potential homeowners cite when asked what they would like to see in a new community, according to a survey by the National Association of Home Builders. These trails bring increased property values for the homes and businesses along the trail. When sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes are conveniently located, residents are more likely to get their daily recommended 30-minutes of physical activity, according to the Design Guidelines for Active Michigan Communities report.⁶ Several programs like Safe Routes to Schools, Transportation Enhancements, and Rails to Trails, as well as policies like Complete Streets at both the state and local levels, address the need for more coordinated planning of non-motorized systems. Complete non-motorized systems provide transportation options for people who need or choose them, reduce vehicle congestion, improve air quality, enhance economic vitality, and improve the physical health of users. In addition, non-motorized systems are critical to an effective public transit system as many transit riders become pedestrians once they get off the bus or train.

MAP Policy Statements

36. The Michigan Association of Planning support modes of active transportation such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities as high priority investments to connect people with their destinations, recreational opportunities, and other modes.
37. The Michigan Association of Planning supports an effort to investigate new and innovative ways to fund non-motorized improvements.

⁶ Link to Design Guidelines for Active Michigan Communities (as is done with other reports referenced).

Public Transit

As a state, Michigan's transportation system is heavily reliant on the private automobile. According to the 2009 American Community Survey, 83 percent of commuters in Michigan drive alone to work, while less than 2 percent use public transportation. While this is not surprising due to Michigan's history as home to the automobile industry, reliance on the private automobile for transportation hampers our metropolitan regions' ability to compete in the global economy as residents experience decreased quality of life because of congestion and a lack of transportation choices. As a consequence, it is vital to the success of the state's transportation system that a more balanced mix between all transportation modes be achieved (see Complete Streets Policy), with special emphasis on public transit infrastructure.

Public transit has substantial economic benefits due to the cost-savings it provides to users and decreased congestion and air pollution as a consequence of removing vehicles from the roadway. Additionally, public transit can serve as a catalyst for economic development and community revitalization. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) recently modeled the benefits of public transportation in Michigan with convincing results. According to MDOT's model, public transportation in Michigan provided over one billion dollars in economic output in 2008 (see table below).

Despite the strong benefits of the existing public transit system, substantial improvements to Michigan's system are needed in order to catch up with the rest of the country and the world, in terms of public transit infrastructure. One major short-coming of Michigan's current system is the absence of metropolitan and inter-city rapid transit systems (e.g. commuter rail, light rail, streetcar and bus rapid transit). Such systems provide substantial quality of life benefits for communities. Additionally, rapid transit is attractive to young professionals who desire an alternative to private automobile transportation and retirees considering aging in place. Major public transit projects underway in the cities of Ann Arbor, Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Lansing have the opportunity to enact reforms to encourage multi-modal transportation systems that may improve quality of life for residents while decreasing congestion and providing substantial economic development benefits. Future expansion of high-speed rail between Detroit and Chicago will also provide opportunities for improved access to public transit.

Economic Benefits of Public Transportation in Michigan, 2008

Effects of the Absence of Transit		
Forgone Work Trips	Additional Vehicle Miles Traveled	Lost Jobs
7,110,097	135,339,718	16,690
Benefits		
Benefits Per Trip	Annual Benefits per Passenger	Benefits per \$ Spent on Transit
\$9.23	\$4,476	\$1.46
Economic Impact		
Total Output	Employment	Tax Revenue
\$1,077,567,159	11,469	\$128,321,609

For community planners, it is critical that plans and ordinances provide increased opportunity for public transportation use, rather than hindering its use. A development pattern that is transit-friendly is very different from the prevailing development pattern in Michigan, which is generally automobile-centric. For example, commercial corridors can be much more transit-friendly if buildings border the street rather than parking. This can be achieved by

employing “build-to” lines instead of requiring building set-backs. Nationwide studies of public transit usage have consistently found that factors outside the influence of public transit systems (e.g. automobile ownership, parking availability, land use mix) have a greater influence on transit ridership than factors that public transit systems have control over, such as on-time performance.

Developments that are meant to enhance access to public transit are known as Transit-Oriented Developments (TOD). Typical TOD⁷s are higher density and mixed-use, with access to non-motorized transportation and public transit as well as private automobiles. Community plans and zoning ordinances can encourage TOD development by incentivizing this type of development and encouraging it to locate along existing transit routes or areas that can be easily served by transit.

MAP Policy Statements

38. The Michigan Association of Planning supports planning and implementation of high-speed and intercity passenger rail networks and intermodal passenger facilities to expand intercity commuting options.
39. The Michigan Association of Planning encourages federal transit funding programs to include support for urban areas with no or minimal rail and bus rapid transit systems.
40. The Michigan Association of Planning encourages federal transit funding programs to include support for rural areas with no or minimal bus systems to provide access and transportation options for rural areas and small cities.
41. The Michigan Association of Planning supports the creation of regional transit authorities through enabling legislation.
42. The Michigan Association of Planning encourages communities to recognize the long term benefits of transit investment and supports local partnerships and funding efforts to provide matching funding.

MAP COMPILED SURFACE TRANSPORTATION POLICY STATEMENTS

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2. The Michigan Association of Planning supports corridor planning and other initiatives that provide opportunities for local governments and agencies to coordinate beyond jurisdictional lines.
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6. The Michigan Association of Planning encourages collaboration among MDOT, regions, MPOs, county road commissions, cities, townships, and villages to ensure the compatibility of local, regional, and state transportation investment priorities.

⁷ For more information on TOD visit <http://reconnectingamerica.org/resource-center/>.

7. The Michigan Association of Planning encourages agencies to consider the impacts of their transportation investments beyond their own borders. MAP also supports the use of traffic simulation, scenarios, and other models to evaluate such investments comprehensively.
8. The Michigan Association of Planning supports providing public and/or private funds for research, technology development, data collection, training, technology transfer, and the integration of research results into the planning process at the local, regional, and state level.
9. The Michigan Association of Planning supports continued consideration of new design approaches to our transportation problems so that Michigan will be seen as a leader in transportation innovation (similar to our leadership in transportation improvements like Intelligent Transportation Systems).
10. The Michigan Association of Planning believes that cross agency and multimodal cooperation are imperative in order to build and maintain an effective, balanced transportation system that serves diverse needs.
11. The Michigan Association of Planning supports transportation investments that positively affect environmental quality, growth management, land use, housing affordability, social equity, historic preservation, urban design, the movement of freight to support the economy, and economic investment.
12. The Michigan Association of Planning encourages communities to work with the Asset Management Council to develop local asset management plans.
13. The Michigan Association of Planning supports the findings of the Transportation Funding Task Force⁸ that “Michigan must at least double its current investment in transportation if the state’s transportation system is to continue to serve the state adequately.” In the short term, a gas tax increase is needed. Longer term, new sources of revenue will be needed to maintain the state’s investment in the existing infrastructure. New sources of revenue like Mileage based user fees, managed lanes/toll roads, or other types of user fees need to be seriously studied for consideration in Michigan.
14. The Michigan Association of Planning supports a public education campaign directed at public officials, planners, and Michigan residents to ensure that there is a thorough understanding of the current condition of the roads and bridges and the need for additional sources of funding to bring roads and bridges into fair or good condition.
15. The Michigan Association of Planning supports the concept of “Fix it First” where funding is spent on existing roads and bridges before allocating funds for road expansion.
16. The Michigan Association of Planning supports strategic investments in transportation infrastructure and services necessary to expand economic opportunity, improve regional economic competitiveness, and foster economic resiliency.
17. The Michigan Association of Planning supports re-evaluating Act 51 to ensure that funding is equitably distributed so that local, county and state needs can be met. Restructuring the ownership and funding of roads may be necessary because the burden for maintenance appears to be shifting to the local level.
18. The Michigan Association of Planning supports reviewing the 90/10 split of funding between roads and transit to ensure that adequate funding is available to meet the needs of the changing population demographic.
19. The Michigan Association of Planning supports revising the Michigan transit funding formula to allow for increased funding to transit operators without reducing or shifting funds statewide.
20. The Michigan Association of Planning supports the concept of a “transportation account” that allows more funding flexibility for state, regional, county, and local projects and that allows for funding flexibility between different modes of transportation.
21. The Michigan Association of Planning supports the adoption of enabling legislation that allows communities to choose local options for funding local transportation priorities and that provides incentives for public-private

⁸ Insert reference to TF2 report for further information.

- partnerships for transportation projects. Money raised through local option taxes or fees would be used to supplement existing funding and not replace existing allocations.
22. The Michigan Association of Planning supports transportation funding reforms that ensure that transportation funds are not diverted for non-transportation expenses.
 23. The Michigan Association of Planning supports creative solutions to increase the existing capacity of our roadways. Corporate efforts to reduce the amount of traffic during traditional rush hours such as flex time and working from home should be encouraged as they leverage the existing investment in our infrastructure.
 24. The Michigan Association of Planning supports increased funding for and use of intelligent transportation systems that use real-time traffic information to improve the flow, efficiency, and safety of transportation networks.
 25. The Michigan Association of Planning supports planning and design policies that ensure that streets and roadways are designed and operated with all users in mind — including bicyclists, public transportation vehicles and riders, vehicular users, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities.
 26. The Michigan Association of Planning supports transportation systems and facilities that are designed to provide accessibility to citizens of all abilities.
 27. The Michigan Association of Planning supports a hierarchy of metropolitan mobility that begins with an emphasis on pedestrians (including elderly, young, and disabled pedestrians) as the foundational element of mobility and access.
 28. The Michigan Association of Planning supports bicycling as a viable transportation mode that includes development of connected on-road and off-road facilities, as well as program elements that promote bicycle safety, encourage people of all ages to ride, provide education for better awareness of the rules of the road, foster partnerships with law enforcement, and evaluate implementation efforts.
 29. The Michigan Association of Planning supports an increased emphasis on public transportation, including buses, passenger rail, and other modes as a principal way to meet the mobility and access needs of metropolitan regions.
 30. The Michigan Association of Planning support a policy of complete networks or systems, ensuring that transportation corridors and the overall transportation network can accommodate all modes for people of all ages and abilities to provide access to destinations along the corridor.
 31. The Michigan Association of Planning believes that it is important to create a complete multi-modal system of infrastructure that integrates non-motorized facilities and public transit systems with other transportation modes so that Michigan residents and visitors have access to transportation choices.
 32. The Michigan Association of Planning supports transportation plans and programs that enable people to age with dignity and purpose and that enable disabled persons to participate fully by having transportation options that connect them to their destinations. For instance, housing and transportation options need to be linked to enable all persons to access community services and amenities.
 33. The Michigan Association of Planning supports comprehensive Safe Routes to Schools Programs that involve school districts, teachers, parents, staff, students, law enforcement, and implementing agencies in the development of facilities, programs, and policies that support walking and bicycling to school.
 34. The Michigan Association of Planning supports co-location of public schools and other community facilities in areas that are close to where people live who will use those facilities, and where options exist to access the facilities by means other than the private automobile.
 35. The Michigan Association of Planning recognizes the important role planners play in the Safe Routes to School program as facilitators and street and non-motorized network planners, coordinating capital infrastructure planning and improvements that support walking and bicycling to school.

36. The Michigan Association of Planning support modes of active transportation such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities as high priority investments to connect people with their destinations, recreational opportunities, and other modes.
37. The Michigan Association of Planning supports an effort to investigate new and innovative ways to fund non-motorized improvements.
38. The Michigan Association of Planning supports planning and implementation of high-speed and intercity passenger rail networks and intermodal passenger facilities to expand intercity commuting options.
39. The Michigan Association of Planning encourages federal transit funding programs to include support for urban areas with no or minimal rail and bus rapid transit systems.
40. The Michigan Association of Planning encourages federal transit funding programs to include support for rural areas with no or minimal bus systems to provide access and transportation options for rural areas and small cities.
41. The Michigan Association of Planning supports the creation of regional transit authorities through enabling legislation.
42. The Michigan Association of Planning encourages communities to recognize the long term benefits of transit investment and supports local partnerships and funding efforts to provide matching funding.