

Decreasing Volume

Traffic volume has decreased since 2004. In fact, traffic in southeast Michigan as a whole has decreased for six consecutive years. According to SEMCOG, declines in traffic counts are attributable to economic decline, joblessness, and an increase in gas prices.³ Sixty-five percent of the Township's 63 road segments for which traffic volume data was available in 2004 and 2008/2009 experienced a decline in traffic volume. Put simply, there are fewer automobiles on Township roads.

Some of the greatest percentage decreases in traffic since 2004 have occurred on the following road segments (see Table 7-1 for more detailed information):

- Chubb Road between Eight and Ten Mile Roads.
- Haas Road between Eleven Mile and Grand River.
- Napier Road between Eight and Twelve Mile Roads, except for a 2.27% increase in the segment between Nine and Ten Mile Roads.
- All segments of Twelve Mile Road within the Township.

While there has been an overall decline in traffic since 2004, there has still been volume increases along 35% of those road segments for which data was available; notable increases include:

- Griswold between Nine and Ten Mile Roads, which saw a 204% increase in traffic volume between 2004 and 2009, probably as a result of the construction of the school bus garage on Griswold Road.
- Twelve Mile Road between Pontiac Trail and Napier Road.
- Nine Mile Road between Pontiac Trail and Griswold, which experienced a 167% increase in traffic volume between 2004 and 2009, probably as a result of being recently paved.

Geographic Analysis of Traffic Volumes

- Southeast Quadrant

This area of the Township experienced high increases in traffic volume in the 1990's due to residential growth. During that period, Eight Mile and Ten Mile Roads began to be used as east-west alternatives to I-96. Since 1998, however, traffic volume in the southeast quadrant has stabilized and even decreased in certain portions. From 2004 to 2008, Napier Road traffic between Eight and Eleven Mile Roads decreased 27%.

- Southwest Quadrant/South Lyon Area

Traffic volumes continue to increase in this area of the Township. Roads that have experienced the greatest increase include Eight Mile (west of Pontiac Trail), Nine Mile,

³ Helms, M. (2010, April 1). Traffic in metro Detroit down for 6th year in a row. *Detroit Free Press*.

Griswold, and Dixboro. The increase in traffic on these road segments is a result of drivers using them to bypass South Lyon to access I-96.

- Northeast Quadrant

Significant increases in traffic took place in this portion of the Township in the 1990's as a result of two primary factors: industrial growth along Grand River Corridor and the increased development and use of Lyon Oaks County Park, which is located off of Pontiac Trail. As in other quadrants, though, this quadrant has seen little to no increase in traffic volumes and in some instances, even reductions in volume, with the exception of Grand River Avenue, west of South Hill Road, and Milford Road, north of Eleven Mile Road. Grand River and Milford continue to experience increases in traffic, due to the industrial and commercial establishments that have developed there.

- Northwest Quadrant

Traffic volumes have continued to increase in this area, with the number of trips more than doubling along Silver Lake Road, west of Kent Lake Road. The increase in traffic in this quadrant is the result of drivers bypassing South Lyon and utilizing the Kent Lake Road access ramp to I-96 in lieu of the Milford Road ramp to avoid congestion.

- Town Center/New Hudson

The I-96/Milford Road interchange handles some of the heaviest traffic volumes in the Township. The interchange is the primary means of expressway access for Township residents and industries. Traffic counts along Milford Road in New Hudson increased by 108% from 2004 to more than 26,000 vehicles a day. Traffic volumes along Milford Road are expected to continue to increase as residents travel the road to gain access to shopping opportunities at the Lyon Towne Center, and expressway access at the interchange.

Accident Rates

Intersection traffic accident (crash) data from SEMCOG for 2008 are shown on Map 11. The map provides total accidents as well as accident rates. On the more heavily traveled roads, the accident rate (number of accidents per 1,000 vehicles passing through an intersection) is a more meaningful indicator of potential public safety problems. (Accident rates may not identify problems on low volume roads where only one or two accidents occurred, such as Nine Mile Road. Under such circumstances, it is not possible to rule out the possibility the accidents were random occurrences. Police accident reports may help to identify specific or recurring problems on these roads.)