

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

Introduction

The road system is of vital importance for the overall wellbeing of the Township and its residents. At its most basic level, the road system provides the means of moving people and goods within and through the Township. The road system serves many other functions, however.

Roads and road rights-of-way provide locations for utilities, such as water, sewer, gas, electric, and telephone lines. Roads provide the means by which emergency and public services are delivered to residents. Roads provide access to parcels of land, thereby increasing the development potential of vacant and agricultural lands. Most important, the road system establishes the basic form of the Township.

Because of the many functions of the road system, transportation has a significant impact on the economy, environmental quality, energy consumption, land development, and the general character of the Township. Accordingly, it is prudent to identify and understand deficiencies in the road system and to identify alternatives to address those deficiencies. Many of the transportation related issues in Lyon Township are outside the realm of land use planning and more in the realm of maintenance. Nonetheless, these issues are important to the viability and efficiency of the Township's transportation network, and include:

- Traffic congestion in and around South Lyon
- Lack of paved north-south routes that traverse the entire Township
- Poor condition of gravel roads
- Design and condition of private roads
- Lack of funding
- Inflexible design standards – lack of local control over design standards
- Intermittent pedestrian/bicycle facility connections
- Poor access management in commercial districts

While there are many transportation challenges that the Township will need to address in the future, over the past five years, significant improvements, including the following, have been made:

- A ring road around New Hudson has been planned and portions constructed. This roadway plays a pivotal role in the overall Township economic development strategy by opening land for development and providing an alternate route around the 5-points intersection at Grand River, Pontiac Trail, and Milford Road.
- Several roads have been paved by developers of adjacent properties at no cost to the Township. These roads include Nine Mile Road, between Chubb Road and Napier Road; Martindale Road, south of Grand River Avenue, and Eleven Mile Road, between Martindale Road and Milford Road.

Existing Road System

Public roads in Lyon Township are under the jurisdiction of two agencies, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC). MDOT has jurisdiction over Interstate 96 (I-96). All other public roads are under the jurisdiction of the RCOC.

Between 2004 and December 31, 2008 (the most recent data available), approximately 13 miles of new roads were developed in the Township - from 96 miles to 109 miles of roads. Of the current 109 miles of roads, 96 miles are paved.¹

The existing road system can be described as an irregular grid network of roads that are located on section and quarter section lines. The exceptions to this pattern are Grand River Avenue and the portion of Pontiac Trail that runs diagonally through the northern part of the Township.

The north-south routes provide access to and from I-96 for the many daily commuters. Pontiac Trail, Milford Road, and Napier Road are the primary north-south routes. Pontiac Trail is the only continuous north-south route in the Township.

There are four continuous east-west routes in the Township. Besides I-96, Grand River Avenue, Ten Mile Road, and Eight Mile Road are paved roads that provide uninterrupted access across the Township; Nine Mile Road provides access across the Township, although it is unpaved between Griswold Road and Chubb Road.

Many of the unpaved roads in the Township are in fair to poor physical condition. Many roads are narrow, with soft or no shoulders. Funding for maintenance and upgrading has not kept pace with the increased wear caused by development. This lack of funding and maintenance of roads are directly related to one another. Roads will continue to deteriorate until such time as funding for their repair and maintenance becomes available.

¹ RCOC figures, gathered April 1, 2010, exclude I-96 or private road mileage information.