

With development of the Township, the road system that was originally designed to serve an agricultural community now must serve a different function, providing access to developing commercial areas and residential subdivisions. As development trends shifted toward non-agricultural uses, so too did the primary function of the Township's road network.

Traffic Volumes

Traffic counts, or volumes, are an important measure to use in analyzing transportation trends (see Table 7-1 and Map 10). The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments ("SEMCOG") compiles transportation data, and is the source of data found within this chapter unless otherwise noted.² The highest traffic volumes were recorded on Pontiac Trail in South Lyon and on the roads providing access to it. Over 21,000 trips per day were recorded in 2008 on Pontiac Trail south of Ten Mile (a decline of roughly 18% since 2004). Milford Road north of I-96 carried almost 29,000 vehicles per day in 2008 (a decline of roughly 6% since 2004). Pontiac Trail carries through traffic between Ann Arbor and Pontiac, and serves as the primary commuter route providing access to I-96.

Ten Mile Road serves as the primary east-west thoroughfare serving South Lyon and the south part of the Township. The highest volumes on Ten Mile Road are recorded in the segments closest to Milford Road. These segments (east of Milford and west of Chubb and east of Griswold) increased over 5% since 2004. Ten Mile and Milford Roads are used as an alternate route to I-96.

Milford Road continues to be one of the most travelled roads in the Township, with between 8,688 and 10,167 vehicles per day in the segment between Ten Mile Road and Grand River Avenue. The largest increase in traffic volumes along Milford Road since 2004 was north of Grand River, with over a 108% increase in volume. As noted above, a substantial amount of the traffic can be attributed to traffic seeking access to I-96 and the commercial developments located in the area of I-96 and Pontiac Trail. While overall traffic volumes along the entire stretch of Milford Road increased since 2004, several segments experienced decreases in traffic volume. These segments include: north of Travis to Grand River; and I-96 to Pontiac Trail. These decreases in traffic volumes may be a result of the decrease in residential development activity in the Township.

Grand River Avenue's highest traffic volumes, between 11,600 and 13,300 vehicles per day, occur east of Milford Road. The traffic on Grand River Avenue is attributed to commercial and industrial development on Grand River Avenue and in New Hudson. Grand River Avenue also carries the spillover from I-96 when the interstate is congested. This is illustrated by the increase in volumes east of Milford Road and west of Old Plank. Grand River Avenue as a whole has seen a decrease in overall traffic volume of 2.59% since 2004. The reduced volumes have been experienced in those road segments west of Milford Road and east of Old Plank.

² Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, accessed online at <http://www.semco.org/Data/bycommunity.cfm>

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*.