

*"Our mission is to upgrade and maintain
a safe and efficient road system"*

TO: News Media
FROM: Grand Traverse County Road Commission
DATE: February 1, 2019
RE: **ROAD COMMISSION INVITES PUBLIC TO REVIEW AND
SHARE IDEAS REGARDING COUNTY-WIDE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS**
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

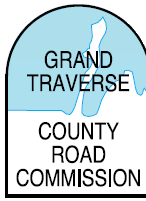
Traverse City. The Grand Traverse County Road Commission invites community members to participate in a public meeting on Monday, February 18 from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. at East Middle School, 1776 N Three Mile Rd, Traverse City. The purpose of the meeting is to share and get community members' feedback on potential solutions to address county-wide transportation needs.

The public meeting will have an open house format. Maps and summary information about each potential solution will be available for review. Community members can come and spend as much time as they like between 5:00 – 8:00 reviewing maps and information and providing feedback and completing comment forms. Team members working on the project will be present to share information, listen and answer questions. Individuals who are not able to attend the meeting may access information and maps on the Road Commission's website, along with a link to an online comment form. Public comments on the potential solutions will be accepted until March 1 via the website. Maps and information will also be available for review from February 18 – March 1 at Road Commission's office.

In December, a study team hired by the Road Commission and led by OHM Advisors presented an initial round of nine conceptual solutions to representatives from local government agencies and stakeholder groups. At this meeting, participants suggested that some concepts be combined into four or five corridor-based solutions. The engineering team combined some solutions and also changed some design features based on additional data gathered about safety and environmental considerations. The combined "Practical Solutions" are being evaluated for their potential impacts to traffic volumes, congestion and safety. Maps of each of these Practical Solutions will be shared with the public at the February 18 meeting.

Wayne Schoonover, County Road Commission Engineer helping to guide the study process said, "The purpose of this study process is to identify a range of solutions to address mobility needs. There may be 50 small solutions, or five big projects or a combination. We want actionable solutions to come out of this study, including projects we can implement as early as next year, as well as longer-term projects. We do not yet know what those solutions will be. We are going into this process with an open mind and while listening to stakeholder and public feedback. We will be referencing all available information from past studies, including past corridor and regional studies. We want to hear people's impressions, comments and questions about the potential solutions that will be presented for review at the public meeting."

More information about the study process and project can be found on the Road Commission's website at www.gtrc.org.



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STEPS IN THE STUDY PROCESS

- February 18: Public Meeting at East Middle School, 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- February 18 – March 1: Public can review maps and information regarding “Practical Solutions” and share comments on the County Road Commission’s website – www.gtcrc.org
- March 1: Final day for public comments on Practical Solutions
- Early March: Planning and engineering team led by OHM Advisors refines Practical Solutions based on public feedback and conducts traffic modeling for each solution. Draft Preferred Solutions will then be the outcome of this process.
- Mid-March: Preferred Solutions and outcomes of traffic modeling presented to local agency groups, stakeholders groups, and public for review and feedback. Public meeting late March/early April. Maps and information and comment forms will also be available at the Road Commission office and on their website.
- Early April: Further refinements to potential solutions based on feedback from local agency groups, stakeholders, and the public. Planning and engineering team prepares final report.
- Late April: Planning and engineering team presents final study report to the Grand Traverse County Road Commission at a public meeting.

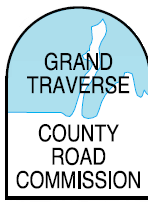
ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Transportation Study is to recommend alternatives and actions that address safety, improve mobility and efficiency, improve transportation mode options and improve connectivity with a focus on east-west travel for all users of the Road Commission’s network in the study area. The alternatives and actions should consider the natural environment and enhance positive benefits for adjoining properties, neighborhoods, parks and businesses.

The need is demonstrated by the high levels of congestion and excessive delay for motorists traveling east and west along the five key road corridors during peak and non-peak seasonal hours within the study area which extends from Grandview Parkway south to Beitner Road and from US-31 east to 4-Mile Road. There are limited east-west routes in the Traverse City area due to the natural geography of the city, bay and river. Within the study area there are intersections that have higher than average crashes. Due to lack of infrastructure, non-motorized mobility is also limited within the urbanized study area.

The outcomes of the study are intended to:

- Support the Road Commission’s mission: “To upgrade and maintain a safe and efficient road system.”
- Reflect the participation and input from local agencies, stakeholders and the public.
- Identify improvements to safety and efficiency for all modes of travel within the County road system.
- Create a plan that responds, to the extent possible, to the needs of various interests for enhancements and accessibility benefits. These interests include commuters, businesses, neighborhoods, parks, goods movement, tourists, transit, pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Provide solutions that consider the character and context of the study area.
- Improve system resiliency for peak seasonal events or incident management.
- Provide solutions that consider the potential implications of existing and future land use patterns related to alternatives.
- Improve accessibility, routing and connectivity for modes of travel.
- Evaluate and incorporate natural and cultural resource conservation best practices into designs and solutions.
- Maintain or improve air quality.
- Evaluate a package of solutions that can be adopted based on agency budgets and planned or projected financial resources.



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Although the study area was limited to the scope defined above, other areas and routes that influence transportation and traffic patterns in the study area will also be evaluated. The study process will include information about transportation assets under the City and MDOT's jurisdiction. However, due to the scope of the Road Commission's authority, the potential solutions presented by OHM Advisors will be limited to areas outside the City limits and will not include recommendations for City streets or City bike or pedestrian infrastructure or MDOT roads.

The study process is being led by the Grand Traverse County Road Commission. The Road Commission wants to engage effectively with other agencies and stakeholders as it focuses on its mission, while recognizing that its own implementation of the study's preferred alternatives may be constrained by the availability of funding, the width of existing right-of ways, and/or other factors. The Road Commission is committed to continuing to communicate and jointly plan with other agencies and entities as it implements future projects.

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