

TO: NEWS MEDIA

FROM: GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION

DATE: April 16, 2018

**SUBJECT: ROAD COMMISSION HOSTING APRIL 23RD PUBLIC MEETING
TO GATHER INPUT ON EAST-WEST CORRIDOR TRANSPORTATION STUDY**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Traverse City, Michigan – The Grand Traverse County Road Commission will host a public meeting on Monday, April 23 from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. at East Middle School, located at 1776 N Three Mile Rd, Traverse City, MI.

The purpose of the meeting is to gather information about the public’s transportation experiences and values. Information shared at the session will help inform the development of goals and criteria that will be used to evaluate potential transportation solutions. The meeting will begin with a formal presentation and project overview and will include an interactive exercise. There is no charge to attend.

The April 23rd meeting is the first public session associated with Phase 1 of an East-West Corridor Transportation Study commissioned by the Road Commission. The Road Commission has hired a consultant team led by OHM Advisors, a Michigan-based architecture, engineering and planning firm to lead the Phase 1 effort. Jim Cook, the Manager of the Grand Traverse Road Commission said, “The purpose of this Phase 1 process is to assess conditions and listen to our community, and identify a range of solutions to address transportation and 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, while referencing all available information from past studies.”

The geographic scope of the study includes Grandview Parkway south to Beitner Road and from US-31 east to 3-Mile Road. 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 of Traverse City’s and MDOT’s jurisdiction. However, due to the scope of the Road Commission’s authority, the alternatives presented by OHM Advisors will be limited to areas outside of the City limits and will not include recommendations for City streets or City bike or pedestrian infrastructure, or MDOT roads.

The consultant team is following the Federal Highway Administration’s Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) process which is designed to address social, ecological and economic considerations and constraints related to transportation and mobility. Public and stakeholder input will help to frame the criteria for the way projects will be selected and the way alternatives are evaluated. The study process includes several phases of engagement

with three general groups:

- Government agencies at the local, state, tribal and federal level with authority for transportation asset development and management and land-use decision-making. These agencies will provide insights about past land use, transportation plans, and regulations. Because local agencies are involved in making plans, and implementing projects and services that directly impact mobility, their perspectives, buy-in, and coordination is important to the planning and scenario development process. Local agencies will be involved through meetings throughout the study process.
- Stakeholders including public, private, and non-profit sector individuals and groups with special insight and perspectives related to the environment, land use, energy, safety, and the movement of people and goods. Stakeholders and their constituents will be involved through interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires or surveys.
- The public, those people who live, work, and play in the community will be involved through meetings, questionnaires or surveys.

Parallel Solutions LLC, a local company, is guiding and coordinating the community and stakeholder engagement as member of the team led by OHM Advisors.

The outcomes and deliverables of Phase 1 will include an assessment of travel demand, a map and report that depicts social, environmental, economic constraints and issues in the study area, publicly-informed goals (called a Purpose and Need statement) and criteria to evaluate projects, a range of alternatives that fit the criteria, and preferred alternatives.

At future meetings in 2018 and in early 2019, the public will have an opportunity to review the range of alternatives and inform the development of a final preferred alternatives map and suite of projects. It is anticipated this phase of work will be completed by early 2019. More information about the Phase 1 Study process is available on Grand Traverse County Road Commission's website: www.gtcr.org.

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