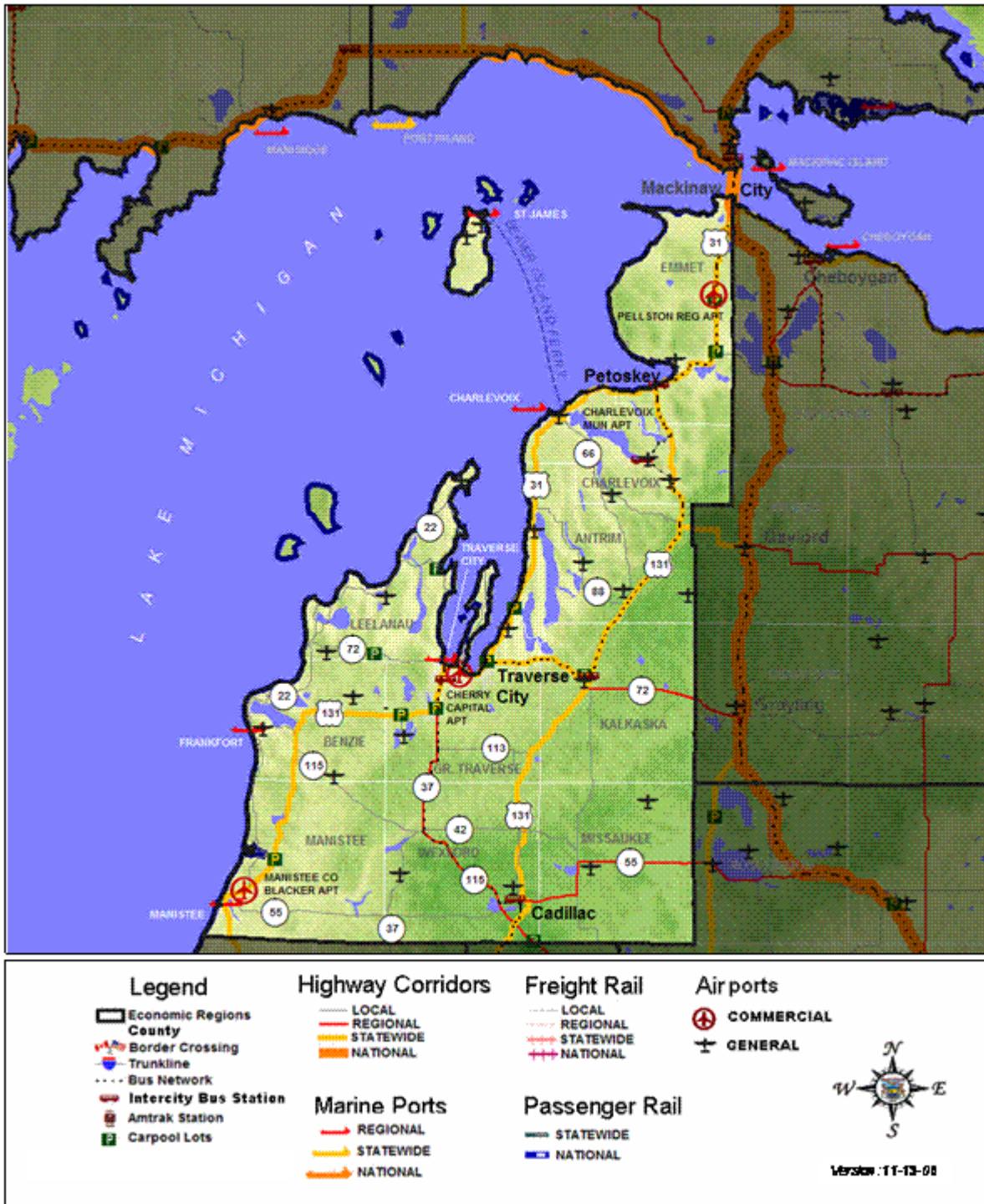


# 10 Northwest Michigan Economic Region Corridor Summary



## Regional Economic and Travel Profile

### Key Economic Activities in the region

The Lower Northwest Michigan region is primarily rural.

- Tourism, agriculture, retail trade and service provide the region's primary economic base.
- 2030 growth expected in health care services and mining.
- Per capita income varies by county with average or above average incomes in the Traverse City area to lower incomes in the rural, southeastern portion of the region. From highest to lowest, per capita incomes in Emmet and Leelanau Counties is \$30-35,000; Charlevoix, Antrim, and Grand Traverse is \$25-30,000; Benzie, Manistee, Wexford \$20-25,000; and Kalkaska and Missaukee \$16- 20,000. (Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis - Michigan's 2003 average annual per capita income is approximately \$31,600).
- Ten state parks, one national park, and numerous roadside facilities attract over close to 14 million visitor days of travel to the region.
- Four hospitals and other medical facilities serve the area, including a major hospital with a staff of approximately 4,000 in Traverse City, a 1,500 staff facility in Petoskey, and a 540 staff facility in Cadillac.
- The region has post secondary institutions with a combined enrollment of approximately 9,000.

### Corridors of Highest Significance

**National/International:** None

**Statewide Significance:** Mackinaw City-St. Ignace/Holland (US-31); Petoskey/Grand Rapids/Indiana (US-131); Grayling/Traverse City (M-72)

**Counties:** Emmet, Charlevoix, Antrim, Manistee, Leelanau, Benzie, Grand Travers, Kalkaska, Wexford, Missaukee

**MI Transportation Plan Activity Centers:** Petoskey, Traverse City, Cadillac

**MDOT Region:** North

**MPO and RPA:** RPC: Northwest Michigan Council of Governments (NWMCOG) (Serving 10 counties and 189 local units of government).

### Quick Facts:

- 2005 Estimated Population 305, 564 (3.0% of MI);
- 2030 Projected Population 383, 025 (3.4% of MI);
- 2005 Estimated Employment 180,932 (3.2% of MI) - Approximately 13 percent retail trade; 8 percent construction; 6 percent food service; 4 percent professional/technical; and
- 2030 Projected Employment 225,139 (3.5% of MI) - Growth expected in health care services and mining.

**Smart-Zones:** None

**Tax-free Renaissance Zones:** Grand Traverse; Manistee

### Passenger Travel (personal vehicle, air, transit, bicycle and pedestrian)

- Local residents and (seasonal) tourist from inside and outside Michigan travel on state and US routes, no interstates nor passenger rail services are in this region.

- Commercial air services are provided at Pellston Airport and Traverse City (Cherry City Airport) that jointly enplane 266,000 passengers/year.
- All counties (except Benzie and Missaukee) have countywide transit services; Emmet County participates in a regional service linking them to two other counties to the east. Benzie County plans to begin providing countywide service in January of 2007.
- Emmet, Benzie and Missaukee Counties have specialized transit services.
- Intercity bus serves Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Charlevoix, Emmet and Wexford Counties.
- Intermodal passenger terminal in Wexford County and one in Grand Traverse County.
- There is no passenger rail service in this region.
- Public marine passenger services from Charlevoix to Beaver Island receive state operating and capital assistance.
- Numerous bicycle and pedestrian trails are in the area and are used for both work commutes and recreation.

### Opportunities

- The region offers potential for business and industry growth - it has two of the state's 24 tax-free zones that provide incentives for business development.
- Area contains affordable mid-sized cities with low housing costs, and low property taxes that are attractive to the growing number of vacation and retirement homes in the region.
- Tourism industry also provides economic opportunities.

### Barriers, Gaps, Missing Links

- Integrating long-distance travel with local traffic and tourist traffic.
- Intercity bus service is dependent on state subsidy.
- Senior population in Michigan is growing and will demand innovative public transportation options for local and intercity travel.

### Freight Travel Character (truck, rail, air, water, intermodal terminals)

- Rail freight service exists but is limited.
- Marine services are available at three water ports, which handle 2.7 million tons/year; including salt, coal, cement, and petroleum products.
- Two air cargo ports handle over 1,800 tons of air freight annually, Pellston in Petoskey 497 tons and Traverse City 1,260 tons.
- No major intermodal terminals are in this region.

## Corridor Value

- The corridors in the region serve passenger travel, tourism to the region and freight for the May agricultural products. The region is known as Michigan's (fruit-belt).
- There is limited manufacturing in the region.

## Existing and Future Conditions

- No major problems, primary needs are maintenance and preservation.

## Linkages

- Statewide and regional corridors within the region connect to north south corridors, such as I-75 at Gaylord, Grayling, and Houghton Lakes area for longer-distance travel.

## Regional Corridor Strategies

- MDOT will continue to strive to maintain good pavement conditions along all of its trunkline corridors within this region.
- Opportunities to integrate multi-modal transportation systems throughout this region will be sought including increased/improved carpool lot facilities, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities will be incorporated into future projects where feasible.
- Operational strategies such as increased incident management and maintenance of traffic practices during construction projects will be utilized.
- The department will continue to coordinate improvement and management practices with key local stakeholder groups along corridors with unique tourism or recreational features such as the several heritage routes, which run through this region.
- MDOT will work with local governments to implement Access Management on strategic sections of the regional and local roadways.
- MDOT will continue to coordinate improvements and management practices with key local stakeholder groups along corridors.
- Continue to provide financial and technical assistance to local agencies to help them preserve existing transit and specialized services.
- Develop strategies that can be implemented at the local level to innovate public transportation services to meet the unique needs/demands of the aging population.
- Support communication and coordination between local transit systems and between transit and intercity modes to improve connectivity.
- Encourage local transit agencies to evaluate the potential to expand to countywide service to increase service availability, increase opportunities for transfer to transit systems in neighboring counties for trips that need to cross county lines, and to increase opportunities to transfer to intercity bus and passenger rail.
- Support coordination of transportation services and funding between local human service agencies and local transit agencies.

- Continue to provide financial assistance to help preserve existing state subsidized intercity bus service.
- Encourage intercity passenger carriers to evaluate and implement improvements in the areas of service coordination and use of technology to provide better information for users and potential users.
- Continue to support the MichiVan program to provide commuter alternatives.