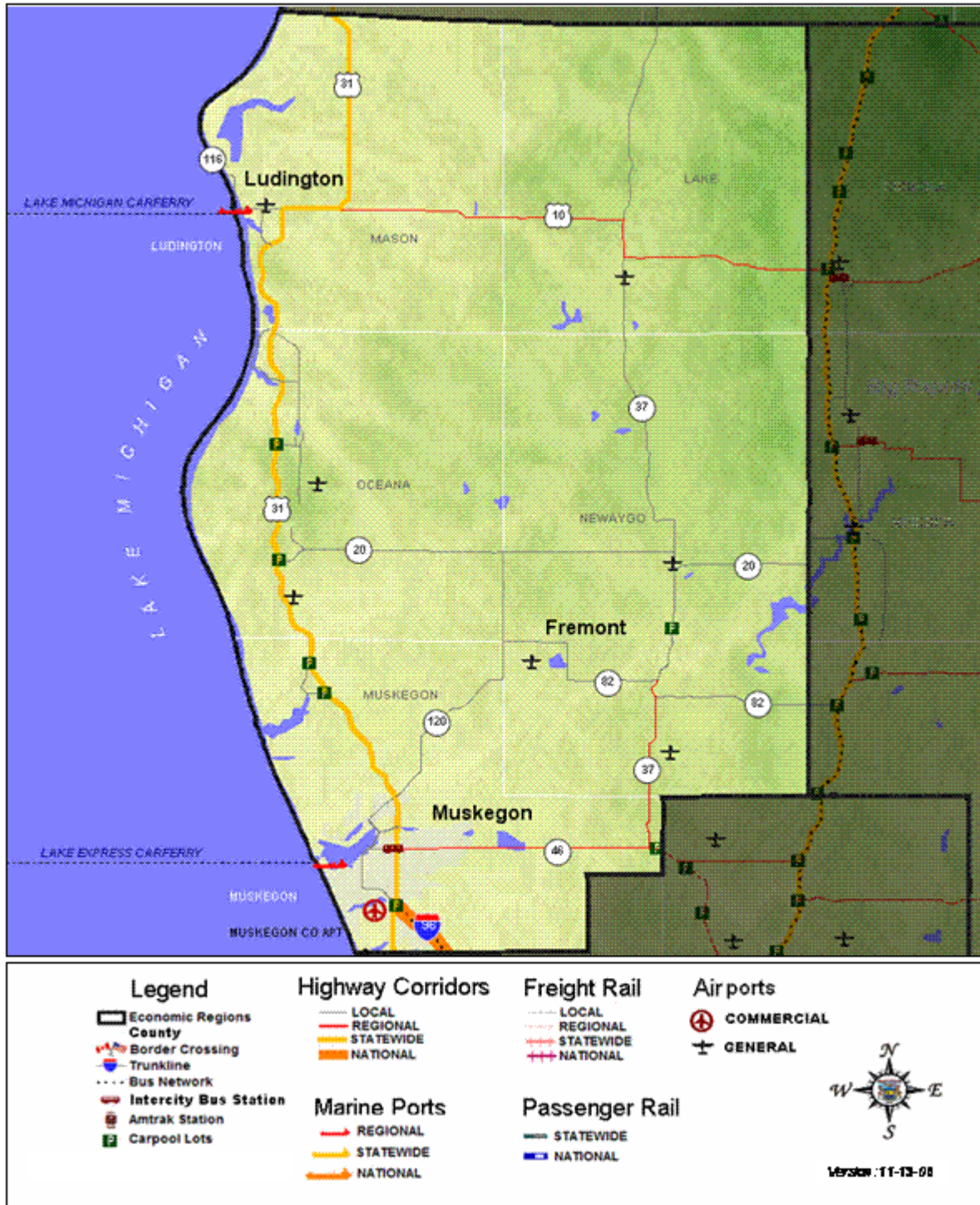


14 West Michigan Shoreline Economic Region Corridor Summary



Regional Economic and Travel Profile

Key Economic Activities in the region

The West Michigan Shoreline region is rural with numerous small inland lakes.

- Tourism, service industries, and health care industries provide the region's primary job base.
- 2030 employment growth is anticipated in the health industry within this region.
- Region includes part of the Great Lakes Circle tours; national forest areas; numerous state parks and roadside facilities; and attracts over 7.4 million visitor days of travel/year.
- Per capita income in the region is uniformly low. Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, and Oceana all have an annual average per capita income of \$20-25,000/year (Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis - Michigan's 2003 average annual per capita income is approximately \$31,600).
- Five major medical facilities serve the area.
- Six prisons are in the area.
- The region has several post secondary institutions with an enrollment of approximately 10,500.

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.
- Except for I-96 beginning in Muskegon, no interstates serve this region.
- A commercial airport in Muskegon provides 36,000 enplanements/year.

Corridors of Highest Significance

National/International: Muskegon/Grand Rapids/Lansing/Detroit (small portion of I-96 in the southern most portion of Muskegon County)

Statewide Significance: Mackinaw City-St. Ignace/Holland (US-31)

Counties: Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana

MI Transportation Plan Activity Centers: Fremont, Ludington, Muskegon

MDOT Region: North, Grand

MPO and RPA: WestPlan MPO (170,200 urban pop.; 526 Square Mile); West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (RPA).

Quick Facts:

- 2005 Estimated Population 296,249 (2.9% of MI);
- 2030 Projected Population 339,175 (3.0% of MI);
- 2005 Estimated Employment 132,403 (2.3% of MI) - Approximately 14 percent retail trade; 7 percent food service; 5 percent construction; 7 percent health services; and
- 2030 Projected Employment 146,992 (2.3% of MI) - Growth anticipated in health care industries.

Smart-Zone: Muskegon Lakeshore – Grand Valley State University
Tax free Renaissance Zones: Muskegon, Lake

- Two private passenger/automobile ferries provide services - one from Muskegon to Milwaukee and one from Ludington to Manitowoc, Wisconsin.
- Lake and Muskegon Counties have countywide transit service.
- Mason County has a community transit system.
- Newaygo and Oceana Counties have specialized transit services.
- The largest transit system is in Muskegon with 440,000 passengers annually.
- The Local Rideshare Office and MichiVan provide information on ridesharing opportunities as well as ridematching services to link potential car and vanpool participants.
- Intermodal passenger terminal in Muskegon.
- Intercity bus serves Muskegon County.
- There is no passenger rail service in this region.

Freight Travel Character (truck, rail, air, water, intermodal terminal)

- Two major water ports including the port handle approximately 3.8 million tons/year.
- Rail freight is provided on three regional/ short-lines in the region.
- No major intermodal terminals are located within this region.

Opportunities

- The number of vacation and retirement homes in the area is growing and continues to attract more.
- The tourism industry also provides economic opportunities.
- There is regional transportation to work transit services in Oceana, Lake and Mason Counties.
- The City of Ludington and Mason County are working toward countywide transit service.

Barriers, Gaps, Missing Links

- The cost of land is going up because of the number of vacation and summer homes being built.
- Integrating long-distance freight pass-through travel with local and tourism traffic.
- Speed differential passenger traffic with commercial.
- Hills and terrain.
- Senior population in Michigan is growing and will demand innovative public transportation options for local and intercity travel.

Corridor Value

- Corridors in the region serve passenger travel and a significant amount of tourism travel from both in-and out-of-state.
- Corridors also serve the agricultural industries in the region.

Existing and Future Conditions

- Corridors are in adequate condition and primarily need continuing maintenance and preservation.
- Freight service is adequate for the need of this region.

Linkages

- Roadway, statewide, and regional corridors within the region connect I-96 in the Muskegon area for longer-distance travel.
- Commercial air service is through connections with major airports hubs.
- Rail lines connect to CSX for longer hauls.

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.
- 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.