

# Old M-21 Zeeland: Transportation Improvements



## Context

The city of Zeeland is located just east of Holland, near Lake Michigan. The city has a population of about 6,000 residents, with over 90,000 in the Holland metro area. Due to growth in the Holland metro area and space limitations at their current site in the city, it was necessary to move the Zeeland Community Hospital (ZCH) to a new site, on the east end of the city.

## Purpose and Description

The MDOT project started out with a previously planned CPM (Capital Preventative Maintenance) project on old M-21 (Chicago Drive) and permit work with the new ZCH adjacent to old M -21.

## Public Engagement

Negotiations with property owners and the development of a plan acceptable to Zeeland Community Hospital, Ottawa County Road Commission (OCRC), and MDOT were part of the public involvement process. Also involved were the city of Zeeland and Zeeland Charter Township, and the Holland MPO.

## Challenges

Project challenges included hospital and MDOT construction deadlines, schedule coordination, developing and reviewing improvement options, permits, funding and contracting issues.



## **Context Sensitive Solutions Approach**

MDOT adjusted their design to accommodate the existing bike path within the project area, and coordinate MDOT work with OCRC work and ZCH construction. Several meetings with MDOT region/TSC staff, ZCH project managers, consultants, OCRC staff, city and township officials were held to ensure the scope of work was understood, schedules were coordinated, funding agreements were in place, and permits were obtained for the projects. Additional improvements included the bike path extension, sewer/water line extensions under the trunkline, indirect left-turn/safety improvements along old M-21 at several intersections, county road realignments, and access management to help with EMS and patient access to the new hospital. In addition, work on this project was staged so that critical segments would be completed in time for the city of Zeeland to use the trunkline as a detour for their water main project.

## **Outcome**

Despite the tight time frames, successful partnerships were established and the state and local transportation system benefited from the improvements, as well as the ZCH, Zeeland Township, and the city. MDOT and OCRC were able to provide safe and efficient access to the new hospital, and as part of the highway project, traffic operations and safety were improved at several county road/MDOT highway intersections.

## **Funding**

The project was funded by CMAQ (federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds through the MPO), MDOT/Region CPM and R & R Program, Ottawa County Road Commission, and the ZCH.

## **Lesson Learned**

With constant and productive communication and the right players at meetings, a positive solution was obtained. However, the tight timeframes resulted from lack of communication between the MPO, the local community, the hospital and MDOT. The results of this CSS process were positive, but the late notification of the ZCH project required staff resources to be diverted from other MDOT/OCRC activities, could have resulted in delayed letting, and could have delayed construction of the hospital.

MDOT presented information about this CPM project to the MPO well before we were contacted by the community and/or the hospital. MDOT should evaluate how, when, and to whom our future project information is provided; the MPO needs to take a more proactive role to ensure that project coordination happens between its members; and communities need to make sure they review the information provided to them by MDOT, and notify MDOT of potential conflicts as well as coordination opportunities.

**Contacts: Art Green, Development Engineer, Grand Rapids TSC, 616-451-3091**  
**Steve Redmond, Region Planner, Grand Region, 616-451-3095**