



MACOG Gazette

Elkhart, Kosciusko, Marshall, and St. Joseph Counties, IN

MPO Basics: How the TIP Works

The Transportation Improvement Program, otherwise known as the TIP, is the regionally agreed upon list of priority transportation projects, as required by federal law (SAFETEA-LU). The TIP is a planning document that lists all transportation projects in the region that are planned to be built in the next four years using federal funds, along with all non-federally funded projects that are regionally significant. The projects are multi-modal; that is, they include bicycle, pedestrian, intelligent transportation systems, and freight related projects, as well as the more traditional highway and public transit projects. The TIP also denotes whether the project is sponsored by the Indiana Department of Transportation or a local community. If a transportation project is not listed in the TIP, it is not eligible for federal funding. The current MACOG TIP is for State Fiscal Year (July 1st to June 30th) 2012 through 2015.

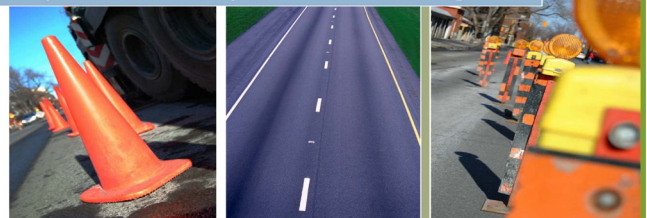
The TIP must include a certification by the Metropolitan Planning Organization that the program is being carried out in conformance with various applicable Federal regulations. Certification ensures the region's continued eligibility to receive Federal funds for highway and transit projects. For example, the MACOG 2012-2015 TIP and the 2035 Transportation Plan (TP) must conform to the air quality standards established under the Clean Air Act of 1990. MACOG is required to demonstrate that the highway and other non-exempt projects listed in its plans, such as added travel lanes, will not worsen the air quality. The region also has an emissions budget prepared in consultation with FHWA, FTA, IDEM, USEPA, and others. The emissions projections must include all capacity-adding projects like new roads, and must be under federal emissions budget thresholds. For more information on the TIP or the TP, please visit www.macog.com and click the links under Transportation Planning on the left side of the page.

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FY 2012 – 2015 Transportation Improvement Program



227 W. Jefferson Blvd.
1120 County City Building
South Bend, IN 46601
www.macog.com

Revised Interurban Trolley Service

MACOG would like to remind passengers in Elkhart and Goshen that revised Interurban Trolley routes began on Monday, April 2, 2012. The Interurban Trolley proposed changes affecting the frequency and routing of the service in early February 2012, and the routes were implemented as proposed after approval by the MACOG Policy Board in March. Color-coded names were introduced on the routes to aid Interurban Trolley passengers in identifying the correct route.

The revisions are as follows:

- The Blue Line North Pointe route now includes Riverside Apartments, previously on the Concord route, and maintains service to the Salvation Army. The route time remains at 60 minutes.
- The new Green Line West route will continue to serve all apartment complexes, Lincoln Center, and Sears/Kroger like the Concord route. The Green Line West route also preserves service to the prior “West Loop” of the Elkhart East/West route. In addition, the Green Line West route serves Faith Mission and several residential areas on 6th Street, Oakland Avenue, and Prairie Street, which were not previously served. The route time has been reduced from 80 to 60 minutes.
- The new Orange Line East route serves Concord Mall every hour and has increased service to Ivy Tech from three trips per day to once an hour. This route maintains service to Waterfall Apartments and Martin’s on Jackson from the prior Concord route as well as to Middlebury Road and the Industrial Park from the Elkhart East/West “East Loop” route. In addition, Roosevelt Apartments on Indiana and residential areas on both Indiana and Prairie, which were not previously on trolley routes, are now served.
- The Orange Line East route also adds a transfer point at Sears/Kroger to the new Green Line West route and a transfer point at Concord Mall, which continues on to Ivy Tech and the Industrial Park. The route time remains at 60 minutes.
- The Red Line Elkhart/Goshen and the Yellow Line Bittersweet routes are unchanged with the exception of adding color-coded names for convenience.

Detour Note:

Due to road construction on State Road 19 (Nappanee Street) between Indiana Avenue and Bypass Road, the Interurban Trolley introduced the following detour on Monday, June 11th. The detour will continue until Nappanee Street is no longer under construction. Please visit the detour page of our website at <http://www.interurbantrolley.com/Detours.htm> for more information.

- Green Line West, Northwest Loop: The trolley will leave downtown on Franklin Street, turn right on 6th Street, right on Vistula, and left on Lexington Avenue. The route will continue right on West Boulevard and left on Beardsley to Nappanee Street then return to following the regular route back to downtown Elkhart.
- Green Line West, Southwest Loop: The trolley will follow the regular route to Oakland Avenue, then turn right on Indiana Avenue, left on Waurika Street, right on Illinois Street, and right on Laramie Street to Indiana Avenue. The trolley will continue on Indiana Avenue back to Oakland Avenue, then return following the regular route back to downtown Elkhart.



Jargon Jumble

FHWA - Federal Highway Administration

FTA - Federal Transit Administration

GDP - Gross Domestic Product

IDEM - Indiana Department of Environmental Management

USEPA - United States Environmental Protection Agency

Check out MACOG’s Top 10 Planning Acronyms for more acronyms from this issue!

MACOG's Top 10 Planning Acronyms

Planners and engineers often use acronyms to refer to commonly used but lengthy terms in written reports and everyday conversation. In fact, MACOG itself is an acronym for the Michiana Area Council of Governments. Some acronyms concern the names of transportation programs, while others are used in the analysis of various transportation topics.

Here are some of the most common acronyms MACOG uses in its transportation planning activities. For more acronyms, visit the MACOG website at www.macog.com and select "MACOG Acronyms" from the options on the left side of the screen.

1. **SAFETEA-LU** (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users) – The current federal bill that guarantees funding for highways, highway safety, and public transportation. Its purpose is to:

- Reduce highway fatalities;
- Ensure that each state's return on its contributions to federal highway funding is over 90%;
- Make it easier and more attractive for the private sector to participate in highway infrastructure projects;
- Reduce congestion;
- Improve interregional and international transportation;
- Make highways and bridges last longer;
- Increase funding for environmental programs; and
- Incorporate changes aimed at improving and streamlining the environmental analysis process for transportation projects.

2. **MPO** (Metropolitan Planning Organization) – A regional planning body responsible for carrying out the metropolitan planning requirements of federal highway and transit legislation in cooperation with the state and other transportation planning partners.

3. **INDOT** (Indiana Department of Transportation) – The state department that provides planning, building, maintenance, and operational services to create an efficient, safe, and mobile statewide transportation system, thereby enhancing economic growth and viability.

4. **LPA** (Local Public Agency) – A county, municipal corporation, state or local authority, board, commission, agency, department or political subdivision created under the authority of the state.

5. **STP** (Surface Transportation Program) – The federal transportation funding category that provides flexible funding to be used by states and localities for projects on Federal-aid highways, including the National Highway System, bridges, transit capital, and intracity and intercity bus terminals and facilities.

6. **TIP** (The Transportation Improvement Program) – The prioritized, multi-year program for the implementation of transportation projects. It serves as a management tool to ensure the most effective use of funding for transportation projects. The TIP is a requirement of the transportation planning process set forth in SAFETEA-LU. In Michiana, a transportation project is not eligible for federal funding unless it is listed in the MACOG TIP.

7. **LRTP** (Long Range Transportation Plan) – The comprehensive and coordinated plan that identifies and prioritizes long term transportation projects in a given metropolitan or rural area or state. The most extensive plan in our region spans 20 years and focuses on surface transportation projects in St. Joseph and Elkhart Counties through 2035.

8. **ADA** (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) – The federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, state and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications. Recent initiatives include creating transition plans for Local Public Agencies to identify service barriers in the public right-of-way.

9. **AADT** (Average Annual Daily Traffic) – The average daily volume of vehicles traveling on a roadway over the course of a year. AADT can be useful in many transportation planning tools, including congestion management, air quality analysis, and level of service.

10. **VMT** (Vehicle Miles Traveled) – The number of miles traveled by vehicles on a road segment for one year. It is calculated by multiplying the average annual daily traffic (AADT) by the distance of the road segment.

Regional Recognition

Several agencies and individuals throughout the MACOG Region have received awards and recognition in the past year for their efforts in engineering and making their communities more livable.

Recipient	Award	Sponsor
Scott Tilden, Kosciusko County Highway Department	Master Builder Status	Indiana Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP)
Elkhart County's Six Span Bridge	Indiana Partnership for Transportation Bridge Quality Award	US Department of Transportation – Federal Highway Administration
Marshall County's Pioneer Road	Indiana Partnership for Transportation Quality	US Department of Transportation – Federal Highway Administration
City of Goshen's Maple City Phase V Bike Path	Indiana Partnership for Transportation Quality	US Department of Transportation – Federal Highway Administration
Michiana Area Council of Governments: Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan Initiative	Transportation Planning Excellence Award	US Department of Transportation – Federal Highway Administration
City of Goshen	Bicycle Friendly Community, Bronze Status	League of American Bicyclists
Friends of the Pumpkinvine	Quality of Life Award	Town of Shipshewana, IN
Marshall County Commissioner Kevin Overmyer	2011 Commissioner's Legislative Service Award	Indiana Association of County Commissioners

Rural Long Range Plan Update

Ever wonder how communities in the region decide which transportation projects need to be built and when? MACOG uses population and vehicle traffic volume projections and local knowledge from the region's elected officials, planners, engineers, and developers to develop its Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP provides direction on future growth, looking at least 20 years into the future, and helps to explain how the region will address its transportation needs, how projects will be prioritized, and how local and federal dollars will be spent to develop highway, mass transit, airport, bike, and pedestrian projects. The content of the Plan is influenced by eight planning factors: supporting the metropolitan area's economic vitality; increasing the safety of the transportation system; improving the security of the transportation system; providing better accessibility and mobility options for people and freight; protecting the environment and advancing quality of life; enhancing the integration and connectivity of the transportation system; promoting efficient system management and operation; and emphasizing the preservation of the existing transportation system.



This year, MACOG will be updating its Rural Long Range Transportation Plan for Marshall and Kosciusko Counties. MACOG staff have met with representatives from the two counties to receive comments on the Plan Update and will soon make the document available to the public for comment on the MACOG website (www.macog.com), local libraries, and the MACOG office. For more information, please contact MACOG at (574) 674-8894.

Gas Tax Made Simple*

When you stop to fill up at the pump have you ever wondered where all that money is going or how much is used on the roads you drive? When you buy a gallon of gasoline, the price per gallon includes both federal and state gas taxes. The federal gas tax is 18.4¢ per gallon, and in Indiana the state gas tax is an additional 18¢ per gallon. These taxes are fixed and do not fluctuate based on the price of gasoline. On average, Indiana drivers pay \$110 in federal gas tax and \$108 in state gas tax annually. The State of Indiana also collects 7¢ per dollar in sales tax on gasoline purchases, which on average totals \$126 per driver per year.

After you have paid for that gallon of gasoline, the Federal gas tax collected goes into the Highway Trust Fund. The Highway Trust Fund consists of three funding pools: the Highway Account (15.44¢), the Mass Transit Account (2.86¢), and the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Account (0.10¢). Revenue in the Highway Account is then applied to building roads across the United States.

The way the state gas tax is spent varies, depending on the state in which it is collected. In the State of Indiana, most of the tax is used to fund road and bridge projects. However, every year \$144 million of the state gas tax collected is diverted from roads and bridges to other agencies, including the Indiana State Police and the Bureau of Motor Vehicles. When it comes to the 7¢ per dollar sales tax, none of the revenue from gasoline purchases is used to fund transportation projects. Instead, it is used to fund general government operations.



You might be wondering how the United States compares to other countries in terms of transportation infrastructure expenditures.

European Union countries spend about 5% of their GDP, China spends 9% of its GDP, whereas the United States currently spends 2.4% of its GDP on transportation infrastructure. This is particularly noteworthy, because the United States has 4 million miles of roads, while the European countries combined only have 2.6 million miles and China only 2.2 million miles.

The federal Highway Trust Fund is in trouble. In 2012, federal expenditures will total \$42 billion, but revenues only \$33 billion. Gas tax expenditures are outpacing revenues because of a decrease in the total miles driven by the public and increasingly fuel efficient vehicles. This is compounded by the static nature of the gas tax, which does not change when gas prices fluctuate or when inflation impacts the dollar's purchasing power. The federal gas tax was last increased in 1993, from 14.1¢ to 18.4¢. Since then, its buying power has decreased by 35 percent. The Indiana state gas tax was last increased in 2003 to 18¢. Its buying power has since diminished by 19 percent. Transportation infrastructure is vital to the US economy. In 2007, \$8.3 trillion of goods traveled on U.S. roadways - \$430 billion of that on Indiana roads. Under the current system, funding to maintain our roads and bridges is in serious shortfall. In order to keep the American economy moving, let's invest in infrastructure that literally keeps us moving! For more information, visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iccxGbHTftY>.

*Information presented in this article from Build Indiana Council

Meetings

MACOG holds two monthly meetings that are open to the public. Most meetings are held in the 11th Floor MACOG Conference Room of the County-City Building in South Bend.

Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC)

1st Wednesday of every month at 9 a.m.

Policy Board

2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 a.m.

Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Map

In March, MACOG distributed 16,875 maps to 4th and 5th graders in the four-county region. This is done every spring to encourage area youth to bike safely. The map is also made available on the MACOG website for printing and downloading and in hard copy to local bike shops, parks offices, and libraries. Included in the map are indicators of where bike lanes, multi-use trails, and signed and unsigned routes are located.

The map also includes safety tips for biking both on roads and trails and can be used on recreational trips as well as trips to work or shopping. For more information or to receive a copy of the map, please contact MACOG at (574) 674-8894.

Bike Safety Tips

When you take your bike out this spring, remember to Bike Right:

1. Always ride on the right side of traffic.
2. Wear the right safety gear.
3. Obey traffic laws.
4. Wear the right high-visibility clothing.
5. Share the right-of-way with other traffic.



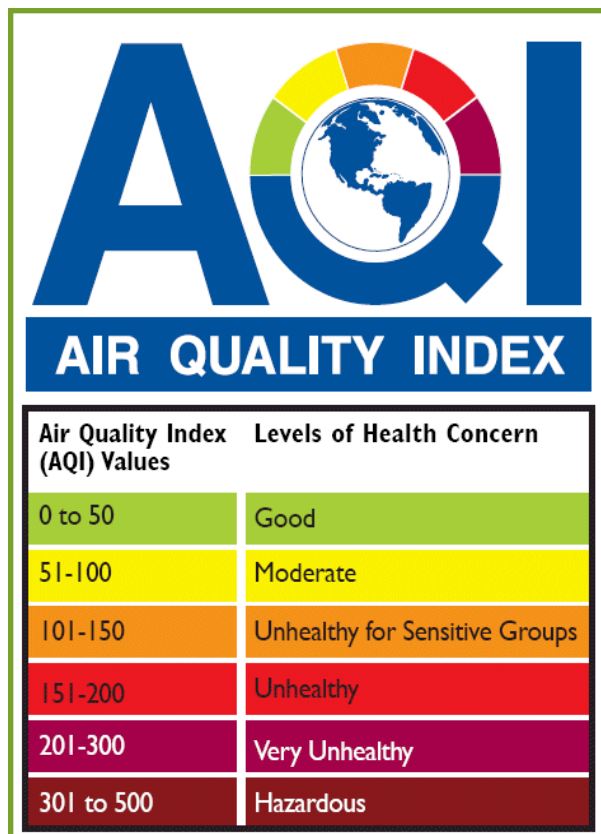
Air Quality Action Season Begins

Spring in Michiana signals warmer temperatures, and it also brings the start of the Air Quality Action Season for ozone. The season runs from April 1st until September 30th, during which time the United State Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) monitor ozone levels. Ozone is a component of smog, which forms when nitrogen oxides and organic compounds react with one another in the presence of sunlight and warm temperatures. The USEPA and IDEM also monitor particulate matter (particles of soot, dust, and unburned fuel suspended in the air) throughout the year, as it can aggravate lung ailments and is especially hazardous for the very young, the elderly, and pregnant women.

Five easy ways to clean the air are:

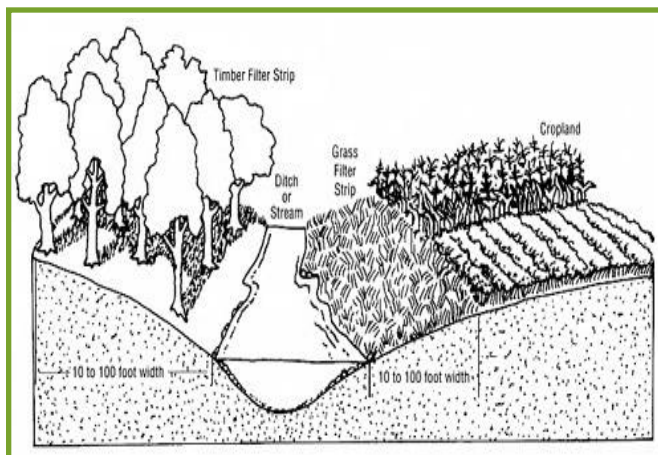
1. Bike, walk, carpool, or take the bus.
2. Conserve fuel by combining trips.
3. Refuel your car in the evening.
4. Reduce engine idling time.
5. Maintain your vehicle.

During the Air Quality Action Season, MACOG educates the public via radio and television commercials on simple actions to clean the air. Also during the summer, MACOG asks its Partners for Clean Air to make a commitment to actions that improve air quality throughout the region. Partners for Clean Air is a voluntary program for individuals and businesses, which sign up to receive daily air quality reports via e-mail or fax and are notified when Ozone Action Days and Health Alerts are declared. To become a Partner for Clean Air, please contact the MACOG at (574) 674-8894.



The Indiana Law Saves Cash and Environment

With over 20 years of history behind it, the Indiana Filter Strip Law continues to be a cost-effective way to improve the environment. The filter-strip concept is simple: plant a 20-foot wide swatch of deep rooted vegetation along a waterway, let it grow, and trim it once or twice a year to produce a healthy stand of plants, grasses, and woody vegetation. The benefits are huge: a living buffer that stabilizes the ground and banks along the waterway, filters out pollutants, provides shade, and produces a safe corridor and habitat for wildlife. Depending on the slope of land, parent soils, and vegetation planted, a 20-foot filter strip can reduce the amount of fertile topsoil transported to neighboring waterways by 70 percent. Between 50 and 75 percent of nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrates, the culprits associated with algae blooms in lakes and streams and the 'dead zone' in the Gulf of Mexico, can be filtered out as well. Unfortunately, few landowners in the state take advantage of this strategy, which also reduces property tax assessments to \$1.00 per acre on land classified as filter strips.



The practice is so environmentally valuable that agricultural producers have help in developing filter strips, through the Farm Bill's Natural Resources Conservation Service. However, there are still many miles of streams without protection. Keeping soils and pollutants out of waterways improves water quality, saves soils, and reduces the expenses associated with periodic dredging and ditch maintenance.

MACOG Freight Plan

It's no secret that Indiana is known as the "Crossroads of America." Approximately 75 percent of the US and Canadian population lives within a day's truck drive of Indiana. In the four-county MACOG region alone, 24 federal or state highways, three national rail carriers, and the South Bend Regional Airport serve transportation needs and ensure that Michiana's goods make it to market in the Midwest and beyond. MACOG conducted a Freight Transportation Study in 2003 and 2004, which analyzed the existing transportation network and identified key freight stakeholders, areas of growth, and issues affecting freight mobility in North Central Indiana. This year, MACOG will update the 2004 Plan and kicked off the Plan Update at the March MACOG Policy Board meeting with presentations from Keith Bucklew, director of Freight Mobility at INDOT, and David Holt, Vice President of Operations and Business Development at Conexus, Indiana's freight and logistics industry organization. MACOG will be working on updates to the plan with completion by the end of 2013.



MACOG Staff

Sandra Seanor	Executive Director	Karen Hamm	Transit Manager
James Turnwald	Principal Planner	Mary Beth McAdams	Transit Manager
John-Paul Hopman	GIS/Network Modeling Manager	Karen Mackowiak	Water Quality Manager
Russ Ragimbekov	GIS/Network Modeling Coordin.	Rosemary Barbara	Fiscal Accounting Manager
Zachery Dripps	Senior Planner	Debbie Gardner	Fiscal Accounting Manager
Jim Galvas	Senior Planner	Carla Keirnan	Office Manager
Erin Gullikson	Senior Planner	Shirley Czerna	Assistant Office Manager
Greg Slater	Senior Planner	Johnnie Woggon	Transit Adm. Program Specialist

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Email: