



# MACOG Gazette

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

## Google Transit

The Interurban Trolley and the Cities of Elkhart and Goshen have joined more than 470 cities across the world using Google Transit to help their citizens plan public transit trips. Google Transit is a free public transportation route planner, integrated with Google Maps, which has many rider benefits.

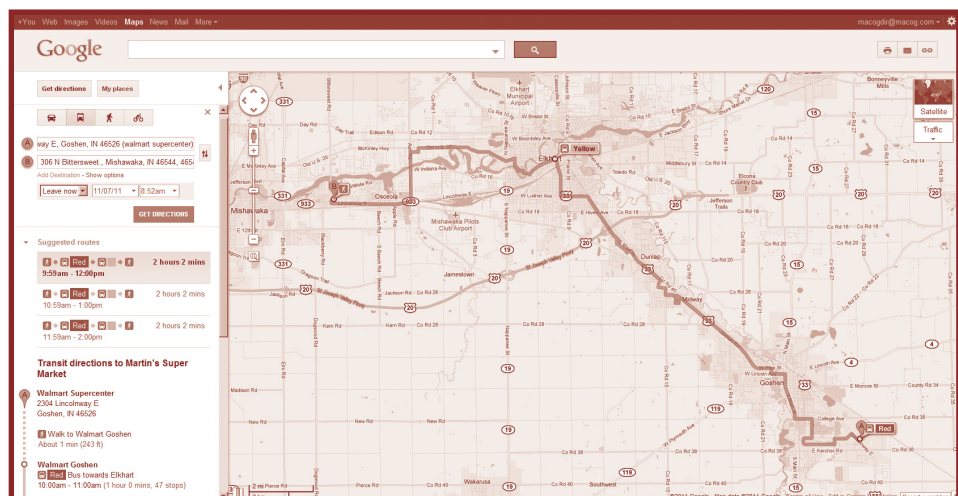
You can easily search for your destination and arrival time and create your own customized route. Even if you do not know the address of your destination, you can search by business name or the nearest intersection, and Google Transit will generate a route for you. For example, if you wish to travel to the Concord Mall but do not know the address, entering "Concord Mall" in the destination box will pull up several routes from which you can choose. If your route involves transfers, they are automatically displayed for you with the route results, including the stop, transfer time, and connecting route. Google Transit also provides walking directions, so you can find out how to get to the nearest transit stop or your destination once you disembark from the trolley.

If you have an internet-enabled mobile phone (such as an iPhone, Blackberry, Windows Mobile, or Android), you can access Google Transit from any location. Simply use the Google Maps app and search for directions just as you would on your home computer, using the instructions above. In order to access Google Transit, go to [www.google.com/maps](http://www.google.com/maps), [www.google.com/transit](http://www.google.com/transit), or [www.interurbantrolley.com](http://www.interurbantrolley.com), then click "Get Transit Directions." Enter your start and destination locations and your preferred time of departure or arrival. Google Transit will generate a list of suggested routes from which you can choose the one that works best with your schedule.

Go online and explore new routes for getting to work, school, or shopping today. If you have any questions, please contact MACOG at (574) 674-8894.

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# Traffic Count Data Available Online

MACOG has conducted traffic counts throughout Michigan for approximately 35 years. Currently, MACOG counts traffic in over 3,500 locations in all four of our counties: Elkhart, Kosciusko, Marshall, and St. Joseph, as well as in the surrounding region of Fulton, La Porte, and Starke Counties. Just recently, MACOG added Cass and Pulaski Counties. Our local and state engineers and planners regularly use the data from these counts to design and plan projects. Such projects include road rehabilitation and reconstruction, traffic modeling, and land and economic development. MACOG has provided public access to this data on its website for several years. However, recent updates have improved usability.

You can view this information two ways: first, by going to [www.macog.com](http://www.macog.com) and clicking on "Traffic Counting Program" on the left-hand side, followed by the link "Traffic Count Map" on the next page. You can also go to [www.macogis.com](http://www.macogis.com), and click "Regional Traffic Counts" on the left-hand side.

Both will open a Google Maps window displaying traffic count locations. You can zoom to the area you are interested in (please be patient as the file is quite large and may process slowly), and click on a traffic count location, shown as a blue circle. This will

## Jargon Jumble

**AADT** – Adjusted Average Daily Traffic

**ADA** – Americans with Disabilities Act

**AQI** – Air Quality Index

**CTPP** – Census Transportation Planning Products

**DOT** – Department of Transportation

**EPA** – Environmental Protection Agency

**FHWA** – Federal Highway Administration

**IDEM** – Indiana Department of Environmental Management

**LARE** – Lake and River Enhancement

**LPA** – Local Public Agency

**MPO** – Metropolitan Planning Organization

**MUTCD** – Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

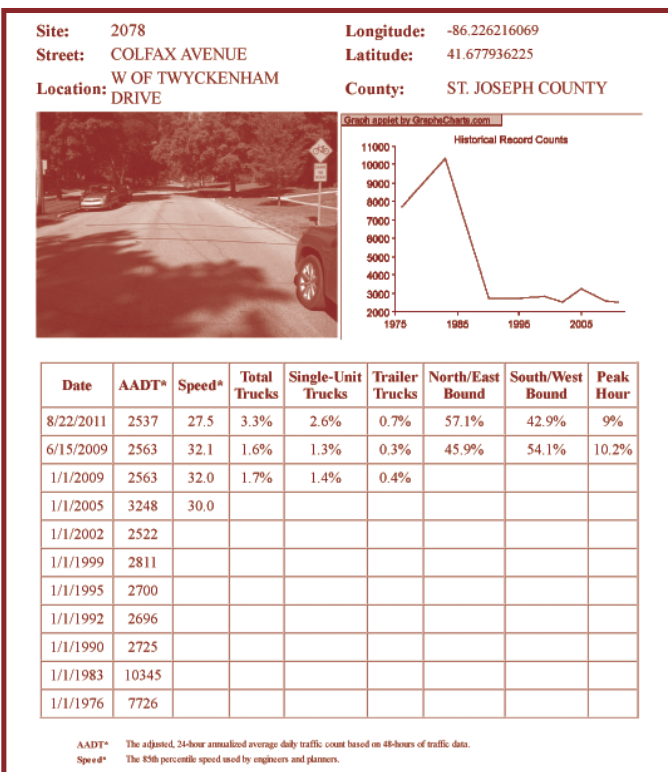
**PPB** – Parts per Billion

**SAFETEA-LU** – Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users

**TAD** – Traffic Analysis District

**TAZ** – Traffic Analysis Zone

**TIP** – Transportation Improvement Program



display a pop-up with a description of the traffic count location. Clicking the link next to "Details" will open a new window showing a historical data table for this location, including the date of the traffic count, Adjusted Average Daily Traffic (AADT), speed, percent of truck traffic, percent of single-unit truck traffic, percent of trailer truck traffic, percent of traffic going north or eastbound, percent of traffic going south or westbound, and percent of traffic traveling during the morning and evening peak hours. You will also see an image of the traffic count location and a graph showing changes in historical traffic volumes.

This feature is available for all of the counties MACOG counts and will be updated regularly to provide the most current information. If you have any questions or issues accessing this information, please contact MACOG at (574) 674-8894.

# Air Quality Action Days

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) declared Air Quality Action Days this summer when ground-level ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) were predicted to reach unhealthy levels. Local area news stations and Clean Air Partners were alerted to the air quality forecasts and information was disseminated to the public. The Interurban Trolley offered free transit rides, and Heart City Rider and Goshen Transit Service offered free rides to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) riders on these days. A summary of the forecasted and actual air quality levels is below.

Date	Location	Forecasted Air Quality	Actual Air Quality
July 17th	Elkhart-Goshen	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Moderate
	South Bend	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Moderate
July 20th	Elkhart-Goshen	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Good
	South Bend	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Moderate
July 21st	Elkhart-Goshen	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups
	South Bend	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups
September 1st	Elkhart-Goshen	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Moderate
	South Bend	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Moderate
September 2nd	Elkhart-Goshen	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Moderate
	South Bend	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups

On Air Quality Action Days, Clean Air Partners were encouraged to:

- Use public transportation;
- Carpool, walk, or bike to work and on errands;
- Delay mowing yards until evening;
- Walk or carpool to lunch; or bring lunch to work;
- Turn off cars while waiting for trains;
- Refuel cars in the early morning or evening;
- Run errands on the way to or from work; and
- Park in the shade to limit gasoline evaporation.

**PARTNERS FOR**



**CLEAN AIR**

You can access air quality information for your area by visiting Indiana's Smog Watch Page at [www.in.gov/apps/idem/smog](http://www.in.gov/apps/idem/smog) or the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) AIRNOW website at [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov). MACOG also provides daily air quality forecasts to Clean Air Partners and participating television news stations during the Air Quality Season.

The Clean Air Program for Ozone runs from May 1st through September 30th. Monitoring runs throughout the year for particulate matter. For more information on the Clean Air Partners Program and Air Quality Action Days, contact MACOG at (574) 674-8894.

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# Census Update

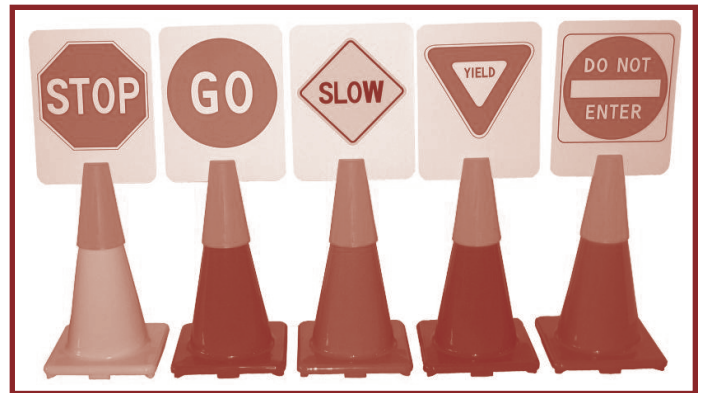


MACOG recently submitted new Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) and Traffic Analysis Districts (TAD) for the region to the US Department of Transportation and the US Census Bureau. TAZs are designed to fit local planning needs and are based on population and worker counts within a geographic area. Each TAZ represents a land use and commuter travel area with a minimum of either 600 residents or workers. TADs are aggregates of the TAZs and must have a minimum estimated population of at least 20,000 residents. Compiling TAZs and TADs enables planning agencies to supplement existing information provided by Census Transportation Planning Products (CTPP) between updates, which happen every three years. These counts help transportation planners to forecast changes in commuting patterns, numbers of trips, modes of travel, and to develop plans for meeting the changing demand for transportation facilities.

## Traffic Sign Inventory and Management System

Imagine having to count every street sign in Elkhart, Kosciusko, Marshall and St. Joseph Counties by hand. MACOG posted a proposal for the procurement of a Traffic Sign Inventory and Management System for the region in September. The selected firm will inventory all signs, their conditions, type of sign, and locations. The overall goal of the project is to assist Local Public Agencies (LPAs) with meeting the requirements of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) regarding sign inventory and maintenance standards. An accurate sign inventory will benefit the region by increasing each agency's knowledge of existing signs, which allows for better maintenance and management.

MACOG received five bid packages, and after the selection committee individually scored the submissions, a recommendation was made. MACOG staff anticipates an announcement of the selected firm to complete the Sign Inventory and Management System by the end of November.



## Fiscal Year 2013-2016 Transportation Improvement Program

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) was passed by the United States Congress in 2005. The legislation provides funding for public transit and highway construction activities nationwide. In order for urban areas to receive the benefits of federal aid for roads, bridges and transit, they are required to have plans in place, which are comprehensive and coordinated through cooperation between jurisdictions. This includes the requirement to have a Transportation Improvement Program and a 20-year Transportation Plan.

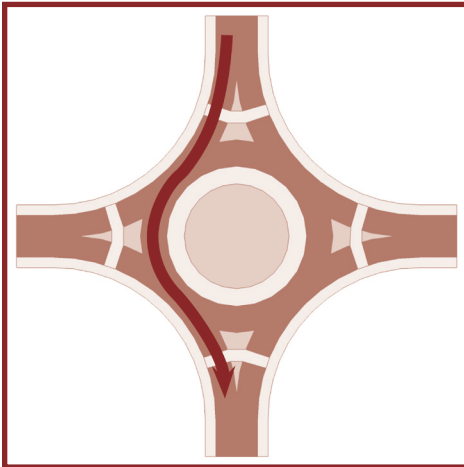
Annually, the Michiana Area Council of Governments updates its four- to five-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP identifies the major projects in the region, which are scheduled to be constructed in the next four to five years. It also identifies the amount and type of anticipated funding whether federal, state, or local. This year's TIP public review and comment period will begin in late Winter or early Spring 2012. The public will also have the opportunity to attend an Open House at MACOG to review the plan and have one-on-one time to ask questions. The Policy Board will meet in April or May 2012 to review and consider the Fiscal Year 2013-2016 Transportation Improvement Program.



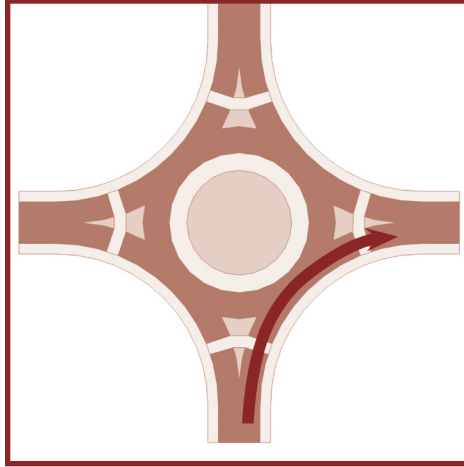
# Roundabout Safety

Many local governments have been installing modern roundabouts in the region as an effective means of controlling traffic at intersections. Roundabouts more effectively minimize delays and better prevent injuries and fatalities than stop-controlled intersections. For those not familiar with roundabouts, here are some tips to navigate them successfully.

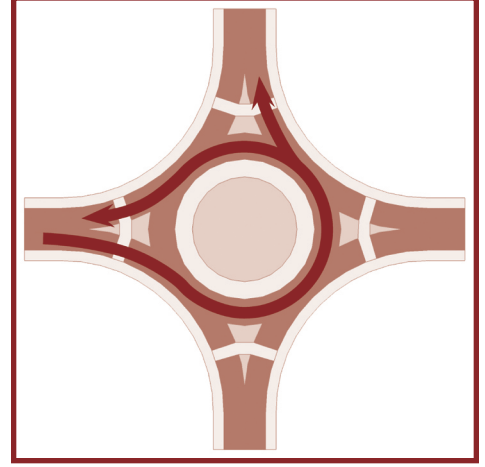
## Through



## Right



## Left



### Motorists:

1. Approach:
  - Slow down to the posted speed.
  - Pay attention to signage and choose the lane you will need to enter.
  - Yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk; they have the right-of-way.
2. Enter:
  - Yield to vehicles circulating from the left in the roundabout.
  - Wait for a gap in traffic, then merge in a counterclockwise direction.
  - You need not stop if the path is clear.
3. Proceed:
  - Continue through the roundabout until you reach your street.
  - Never stop in the roundabout.
  - Avoid changing lanes.
4. Exit:
  - Signal, then exit the roundabout to your right.
  - Yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk.

### Pedestrians:

1. At the pedestrian crosswalk, look left.
2. Cross to the raised or painted island. Look right.
3. Finish crossing to the opposite sidewalk.

### Cyclists:

1. Cyclists can walk their bicycles across the pedestrian crosswalk.
2. Experienced cyclists may navigate roundabouts like motorists.
3. Do not hug the curb. Ride in the middle of your lane to prevent vehicles from passing you.
4. Yield to pedestrians in the crosswalks.

## 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.

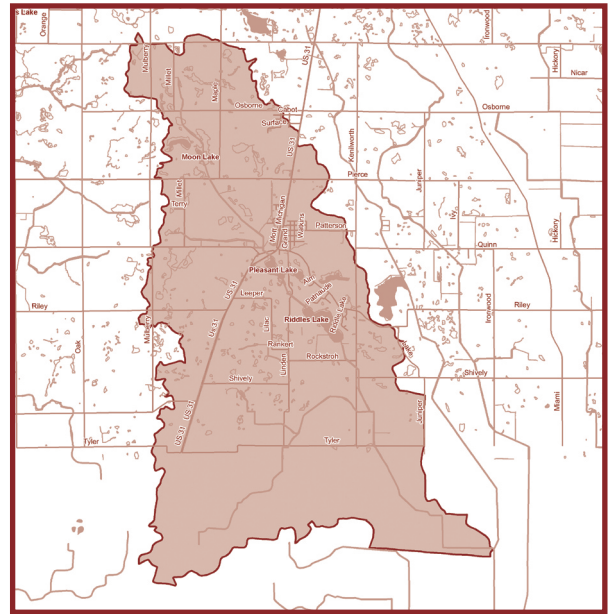
# Federal Transportation Policy Update

Recent discussions on the federal budget deficit in Washington have had significant impacts on transportation policy. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users, or SAFETEA-LU, is the federal government's highway and transit bill. It was set to expire on September 30th but was recently approved for a short-term extension until March 31, 2012. This means that federal funding will remain at its 2009 levels, the last year that SAFETEA-LU was in force before a series of short-term extensions were issued. In September, President Obama issued a call to action for both houses of Congress to extend surface transportation programs.

## Heston-Stock Ditch Headwaters

A watershed is like a funnel that drains everything from the surface and discharges it to the lowest point—usually a lake, river, or stream. We all live in watersheds, and everything we do to the land surface has an impact on the quality of the water resources. Since February 2010, MACOG has conducted reviews of land uses and activities in the Heston-Stock Ditch Headwaters Watershed located in southern St. Joseph and northern Marshall Counties. The Watershed includes several waterbodies including Pleasant and Riddles Lakes, and a number of tributaries, ditches and drainage laterals.

The ultimate goal of these reviews is the development of a watershed management plan, focused on reducing sediment transport and nutrient and bacterial loading. The latest draft of the Watershed Management Plan can be found on [www.macog.com](http://www.macog.com) by scrolling down to the “Heston-Stock Ditch Grant” under Environmental Planning. The Heston-Stock Ditch Headwaters Watershed activities will end in February 2012. Stakeholders and other interested parties are encouraged to check the website periodically for the final Watershed Management Plan draft, as well as other information and educational opportunities within the watershed.



## Assistance for River Activities Now Available



There is good news for aquatic vegetation control, sediment removal, and even river logjams! While aquatic vegetation is an essential part of a healthy and balanced river or stream, the dense vegetation common over the past few summers in the St. Joseph River is above suggested levels. The 2012 Indiana General Assembly passed House Bill 1343, which provides funding options, previously only available to lake property owners to control vegetation and remove logjams. This legislation now includes wording that allows the use of Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) funds in rivers as well as lakes. The LARE funding formula is 80/20, with the applicant matching 20 percent of the cost. A presentation about the new House Bill 1343 will be on the agenda for the December 6th meeting of the St. Joseph River Basin Commission. For more information, please e-mail [lare@dnr.in.gov](mailto:lare@dnr.in.gov).

# Indiana Interim Summer Study Committee on Infrastructure



This summer, the Indiana Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) Council was asked by State Representative Edmond Soliday to address the Summer Study Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and answer the questions “Where Are We At?” and “Where Should We Be?” with regard to the condition of Indiana’s transportation infrastructure. The Summer Study Committee met from August 23rd until September 20th to hear testimony on the questions posed for the years 2015 through 2035. The MPO Council’s testimony reviewed lifecycle returns for pavement maintenance, road reconstruction, bridge maintenance, and bridge reconstruction. Long range plan projects as well as congestion, travel delay, and freight, rail, and logistics obstacles were discussed. Minutes from the August 23rd meeting of the Summer Study Committee are available at <http://www.in.gov/legislative/interim/committee/minutes/TIASE8N.pdf>.

## Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plans

Previous editions of the MACOGazette have included articles introducing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Planning. MACOG has begun a region-wide study of all intersections to determine compliance under the ADA guidelines, and, as of November 23rd, a total 8,245 out of 22,455 intersections have been inventoried. The inventories will be incorporated into local governments’ Transition Plans with MACOG assistance. Along with the inventory and Transition Plan, local governments must also appoint an ADA Coordinator, adopt the ADA Design Guidelines, and establish a public grievance procedure. Nappanee, Plymouth, Bremen, and Warsaw have completed their inventories and are now working on Transition Plans. Other cities, counties, and towns in the region are also in the process of completing inventories now. All of these steps are helping our region become compliant with the ADA regulations and making communities more accessible.



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## Questions & Comments

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions regarding topics covered in this newsletter or anything at MACOG, please write them below and mail them to the address above. You can also call, fax, or email your questions, comments, or suggestions to the numbers above. Until next time, we hope all of your travels are good ones...

[illegible]

Name:

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