

**THE ROLE OF TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS IN GATEWAY
COMMUNITIES**

An analysis of transportation corridors within Michigan Gateway Communities

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To my Parents, Friends, and Professors,
Thank you for always being my motivation through college.

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ABSTRACT

This project analyses transportation corridors within gateway communities. Gateway communities are small towns with a year around population of less than 15,000 residents that sit in a rural setting with close proximity to public lands and typically have a lack of economic diversification. The public lands can be public waters, forests, or parks.

Because of the proximity to public lands, these communities have been prescribed to adopt tourism as a primary method of local revenue generation. However, because tourism is the primary method of local revenue, there potentially is a high frequency of traffic entering, leaving and traveling within the community on a regular basis. Because of the high frequency in traffic within these small communities, many transportation problems arise. Gateway communities are all too familiar with problems related to transportation. Some of these common problems are unfriendly pedestrian walkways, lack of public transportation and traffic congestion. Another problem that often occurs is the short comings of transportation corridors linking gateways to the outside world.

The focus of the project will be in the field of inter-city transportation corridors (freeways), examining the transportation corridors that connect the Michigan gateway communities it will show not only different methods of inter-city

solving transportation problems, but also investigate what types of inter-city transportation systems gateway communities are generally using.

The Role of Transportation Corridors in Gateway Communities

INTRODUCTION

Transportation is a very broad field today. Transportation systems encompass not only the transport of people, but the transport of goods around the world. (Ford, 1991) Effective transportation planning can mean the difference between a successful and a failed transportation system. The countries need to build larger and faster transportation systems to grow steadily each year. (Eisner, 1986) Studies done by the United States Department of Transportation show this.

While the demand for larger and faster transportation systems have grown steadily each year, the funds earmarked for transportation systems have not increased. (Morrison, 1996) This trend has been bucked with the most recent Transportation funding from the federal government. Compared to other countries, transportation systems in the United States receive minimal funding. (Morrison, 1996) The funding given to transportation systems in Britain during 2005 was a 25% larger sum per capita than the US. (United States Department of Transportation, 1997) This extra funding allows for Great Britain to have more expansive mass transit systems and alternative transportation sources (I.E. Bike Paths, Pedestrian Friendly Sidewalks). However here in the United States we are unable to have expansive mass transit systems and alternative transportation

sources because of not only the lower transportation funding rates but also because the U.S. earmarks most of their transportation funding into roads and airport expansion, not mass transit or alternative transportation sources. (United States Department of Transportation, 1997) Gateway communities are no different, and within most gateway communities their main mode of transportation access is either by road or air. (Appendix A)

During the FY 2007 in Michigan, the “Job’s Today” initiative for the trunk line system was into it’s second year. Within this initiative, \$180 million has been earmarked for preserving roads and improving capacity. (Michigan Department of Transportation, 2006) In combination with the “Job’s Today” initiative, SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users) authorized federal funding for surface transportation programs. Of the \$286 billion SAFETEA-LU spending, \$233.9 was to be spent on highway programs and projects. (United States Department of Transportation, 1997)

When examining, “Job’s Today” and SAFETEA-LU within the State of Michigan, you will see that the evidence is clear and that a majority of public transportation funding continues to be spent in preserving and improving roads and highways, not in mass transit or alternative transportation modes (I.E. Bike Paths) One variable that has changed since the last federal transportation appropriation was the amount of earmarked projects within the authorization.

Within Michigan 11% of the federal transportation funding is locked up into specific projects compared with 6% in TEA-21 (Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century). This is breaking trends with the current move in federalism to allow states to have more control in discretion over projects, rather than less.

Because of this new trend in “devolution”, the states have examined their individual interests, rather than how their piece of the puzzle plays into the great U.S.D.O.T. vision. The State’s have begun to form their transportation visions around their primary economic drivers. Because federal land management policies, “shifting from a dependence on commodity extraction to tourism and recreation” (Salka, 2006), attention is begin given to how to get citizens to their gateway community destinations in a more efficient manner.

In Michigan, the travel demand had continued to rise from the mid-1970’s to 1994, which forced the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to create a new system to a PC based, GIS and CAD software based model. From this model, new regional and zonal forecasts & travel demand models were predicted. These predictions also included the current highway capacities to predicted highway capacities along with an Urban-Rural highway capacity.

From this update in forecasts and models at MDOT, the Michigan Governor’s Administration began to create a 20 year vision for the State of

Michigan that included building new limited access highways to connect major metropolitan areas with gateway communities.

The projects that would have an economic impact on gateway communities were the, “US-23 Highway Extension” (Standish, MI to Alpena, MI – Thoroughfare would pass through the Huron National Forest), “US-131 Bypass” (13 Mile extension around Cadillac, MI to Mason, MI – Borders Manistee National Forest), “US-31 Bypass” (8 Mile bypass around Petoskey, MI), and the “US-131 Extension” (50 mile extension from Mason, MI to Interstate 75 near Grayling, MI).

Governor John Engler followed through with this transportation vision, and preliminary site plans were created for all of the projects in Michigan. The projects were marketed by the administration as for the “better good” of the Michigan economy; however, history will tell that the local community leaders felt that some of these projects benefits did not outweigh the costs.

Because many of these gateway communities rely solely on the guests who visit bordering federal lands for their economic prosperity, it is therefore the goal for gateway communities is to increase their economic development by making transportation modes for visiting tourists efficient. It is important to examine each of the highway projects that were proposed in northern Michigan. This study will examine both the benefits and costs of these proposed limited

access highways to be built in northern Michigan during the late 1990s. For discussion purposes the discussion will be kept mainly to the US-23 extension, US-31 bypass around Petoskey, MI and US-131 bypass around Cadillac, MI.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Vast transportation projects take place because of the many touted benefits to its citizens; however economic development is frequently cited as a primary goal for transportation investment projects. According to the Michigan Department of Transportation, "Transportation plays a fundamental role in growing Michigan's economy and protecting quality of life in our communities. A safe, well maintained and efficient transportation system provides that backbone for all economic activity within the state of Michigan. Without a comprehensive transportation system, Michigan's economy would be at a great competitive disadvantage and the quality of life within our communities would greatly deteriorate." (Michigan Economic Development Corporation, 2008)

What is included in a "comprehensive" transportation system? According to Professor Robert Krol, a "comprehensive" transportation system means, "All transportation modes must be efficient, robust, and safe." These investment projects range in improving public infrastructure, public transportation or alternative transportation methods. (Ford, 1996)

Transportation modes vary by internal and external means. An internal mean is defined as "any corridor which connects two specific places within a border or boundary" (Michigan Department of Transportation, 2004); for the means of this study, this will be the border or boundary of the gateway

community. An external mean is defined as “any corridor that connects two specific places that have self-defined economies” (Michigan Department of Transportation, 2004).

What Business Wants

Fortune magazine releases an annual survey to the CEO’s for America’s top 500 companies. One question that is posed to the CEO’s is what they look for when they decide to open up a new operation somewhere. Every year since 2002, viable transportation corridors are consistently ranked in the top 3. (Fortune Magazine, 2004) This works for the 500 largest companies in America, but does it suffice for the small businesses which are the economic drivers within gateway communities?

This does play into the growth for small businesses within small communities also. A survey given to small business owners in North Carolina in 2001 also shows significance. When asked what factors influence their business profits most, Transportation Factors (Interstate) was listed #2.

Impacts on Gateways

The vision to build limited access highways is driven by the economic prosperity that follows the construction. However, with the benefits come the many costs, ranging from negative environmental impacts to the lowering of quality of life factor.

For gateway communities more robust transportation corridors may be a two-edged sword. For example, negative environmental impacts could range from the destruction of prime dairy and crop farms to the degradation of wetlands and trout streams. (Michigan Land Use Institute, 1997) Fouled air, dirty water, ceaseless noise, and loss of prime farm land and forests could also lead to a larger negative environmental impact. The quality of life factor could decline for residents living within the gateway city for one of two reasons. Current property values could go down to a point where people leave the city, and a current level of city services is not provided. Property values could also skyrocket, and current property owners will benefit fiscally from this. However, in the future, people who work and play in the city might need to live somewhere else, because they cannot afford to live within the city.

A four-lane, limited access freeway will drain the local economy and reduce the quality of life factor from the cities and spur development near the freeway in turn. The constant is the cities will become less attractive to tourists and seasonal residents. (Michigan Land Use Institute, 1997) New highway

construction is also more likely to pass through a neighboring township rather than a city, because of the trend for cities to not annex in new lands to the city proper. This inverse effect allows for current infrastructure within the city to remain, but the tax base to erode. These, “sprawling external development patterns could soon begin to push up property taxes.” (Burcat, 2007) Cities need to maintain their current infrastructure, and if their tax base begins to erode, then they must raise taxes on the residents and businesses that remain to maintain that current infrastructure level.

As gateways become more accessible, the average cost for property can rise between 150 and 200% over a 10 year period. (Michigan Land Use Institute, 2000) The effect, is local people are unable to live in the area, and must drive to where they can either afford to rent or buy. “This turns impoverished people from living further and further out, and when you have issues like gas prices spiking, it’s a real crisis”. (McNally, 2008)

Other Potential Impacts

Economic movements of existing businesses within a State can also take place from highways being constructed; instead of new businesses opening within a State. The creation of highways, “Will cause the economies within each city to grow, but there is no definitive proof whether it will cause the State to have

growth within its economy”. (Michigan Economic Development Corporation, 2008)

Decisions to provide expanded highway access to gateways may also depend on seasonal factors. These factors can also play into the traffic counts done during the exploratory period of a proposed highway. As shown in Figures 3,4, and 5, the traffic that passed through a majority of these gateway communities is seasonal traffic (Appendix A) The Michigan Department of Transportation only saw traffic counts rise in many of these cities during “peak travel seasons”, outside of the travel seasons, all traffic movements were internal. (Michigan Land Use Institute, 2000) Are the high costs of construction worth given the seasonality of traffic? For example, the last cost of building a four-lane limited access freeway is the cost to taxpayer. The estimated cost to build the 100 miles of four-lane limited access freeway along the northeast coast of Michigan was \$1.5 billion, and the 35 mile connector from north of Cadillac to I-75 was \$500 million. (Michigan Department of Transportation, 1995)

This is also shown through two major indicators that took place within Michigan in the 90’s. The two major indicators were the planned expansion of US-131 from Cadillac, MI to Traverse City, MI and US-23 from Standish, MI to Alpena, MI. “This will bring economic relief to a struggling part of the state.” [Speaking about the US-23 extension] (Michigan Department of Transportation,

1995) Most of these municipalities that needed economic relief share many of the same characteristics that a gateway community. However, many communities fight these expansions with the fears that it will divert traffic away from their downtown economic centers. These fears are often only fallacies as a majority of business does return (if not increase) within 24 months of a by-pass limited access highway opening. (Michigan Department of Transportation, 1995) There are also fears from many agencies that this will have a negative impact on the environment through promoting more sprawl. "Citizens for years maintained that the proposal would damage the environment, and promote urban sprawl." (Michigan Land Use Institute, 2000)

In the end both of these projects were rejected by the federal government in their original form for grant monies. The US-131 project was only granted monies for a by-pass around Cadillac, MI and the US-23 project was completely denied and told to make minor improvements to the 2 lane highway. "The region will need more than just minor fixes to substantially improve the transportation infrastructure," MDOT Director. The director was citing this as the MEDC (Michigan Economic Development Corporation) cited to Governor John Engler just six years earlier, that Michigan was lacking viable transportation corridors in the northern regions of Michigan that were inhibiting a economic growth plateau. (Michigan Department of Transportation, 1999) Michigan will not be able to become a viable competitor in the tourism industry unless the transportation

corridors were more time efficient for travelers to invest in Northern Michigan.

(Kellogg, 2008)

A gateway community benefits from the tourists that spend time at the bordering federal lands. These federal lands work very closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife play a huge part into being the stewards of these federal lands. In the US-23 expansion, the U.S.F.W. stated that, this expansion would contribute to the “largest single wetlands loss within Michigan.” (Michigan Land Use Institute, 2000) So, would trading off the beauty and tranquility of the wetlands outweigh the economic benefit of making it more efficient for people to travel to these federal lands?

METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes a case study method. A case study “is a study that is appropriate in some depth persons, decisions, programs, or other entities that have a unique characteristic of interest”. (O’Sullivan, 2004) For the most part, case studies are the preferred research strategy if one wants to learn the details about how something happened and why it may have happened. The case must be contemporary and the investigator must have direct access to the people involved. One of the hall marks of a case study is the combination of several sources of information. These sources may vary from documents, interviews, participant observation.

The inclusion of information from multiple sources is a major strength of case studies. Each data-collection strategy affects the types of questions a researcher can answer. The investigator can corroborate information gained from one source with information gathered from another source. Case studies are usually conducted on a single case or on a set of similar cases. In a case an investigator may look at: why it was developed, how it was initially organized, what changes it has made, and why those changes were made? Most administrative case studies seem to focus on case components. Usually key words like, “effective”, “successful”, “efficient”, or “unsuccessful” must be looked at.

Case studies provide for greater insight into how to approach or solving a problem. The strength of a case study comes from, “bringing together diverse pieces of information to explain why and how things happened”. (O’Sullivan, 2004) The case also allowed administrators to fill in “missing information” with their own knowledge and informal discussions. This will allow for “new information, insight, and organizational bias (where applicable)”. (O’Sullivan, 2004)

Although case studies tend to be qualitative, a researcher should formulate a research question, objective, identify the case to be studied, plan the data collection, collect the data, and analyze the data and write the report. To separate a case study from a “good story”, it is best to create a high quality research design before starting research.

For the research in this report, using a case study was best because of the stated fact that it is an examination of policies to link “Gateway Communities” to metropolitan areas more efficiently throughout Michigan. The discussion is examining how and why this type of policy was considered. Also this study uses multiple sources of data and information to examine the outcomes by these policies being considered. A case study was also appropriate for this type of research because there were multiple projects undertaken by the Michigan Department of Transportation to make transportation in northern Michigan more

efficient for interstate travel. The case study initially examines the successful US-131 and M-6 bypass projects around Cadillac and Grand Rapids, but also examines the failed US-131, US-31, and US-23 bypass projects.

This study also examines different problems that had arisen in each of the communities that were to be affected by the “proposed bypasses”, and the explanations of why or how the bypass was either passed or failed. Through the various resources used in this report, a solid case study has been prepared.

The researcher has prepared and mailed a 57 question survey to community leaders within gateway communities around the United States. The gateway community administrators were asked to finish a 57 question survey about their transportation corridors. This survey asks questions about the roads, airports, maritime ports, and railroads that connect cities and also inquires about streets, parking, public transit and alternative modes at the community level. The questions are means to gather data about what gateway communities use to help benefit the local economy.

The survey showed that a majority of gateway communities were served internally by 2 lane highways, and connected to other communities by 2 lane highways. However, only 10% of gateway communities were connected to other communities by a 4 lane limited access freeway. (Appendix A)

Interviews were also completed with various civic leaders around Michigan. Community selection for these interviews were not random, but rather selected because they met criteria of a gateway community. These towns were small towns with a year around population of less than 15,000 residents and sit in a rural setting with close proximity to public lands and have a lack of economic diversification.

Data has been gathered from various newspapers, local & state governmental reports, real estate property values, academic journals, and metropolitan reports. Finally, input through e-mail & telephone communications with practitioners and administrators has allowed for a more robust study to be completed.

DISCUSSION

Gateway communities in northern Michigan have been more or less affected by either the prosperity or economic turmoil within the three major American automobile industries (Chrysler, Ford, and General Motors). This has come from the fact that much of the workforce in the industrialized centers of Michigan work for a company that provide services and / or products to the automobile industry. Gateway communities often rely on these urban “transients” from Lower Michigan to travel “up-north” and spend an extended time in their communities. Some of these might be the true definition of a “tourist”, where a person is traveling to one destination as a “get-a-way” for the weekend. However, a majority of your “transients” in northern Michigan are visiting their summer home or cottage for multiple weekends throughout the year.

These transients provide an economic base for many of these communities, as there is little to no manufacturing base in most of these communities. These communities provide services and goods to their primary customer, the northern Michigan tourist. However, a few communities like Cadillac, Michigan are of the exception, as they have a well rounded economic base. With a combination of manufacturing and services, Cadillac residents have the chance for year around employment. A community like Tawas, Michigan must rely on the summer tourist season for their economic prosperity, because the lack such a manufacturing base. There are some communities that

are deemed “four season” communities to tourists, because they offer amenities that are conducive to tourists throughout the summer and winter. An example of this would be Petoskey, Michigan. Petoskey is near Boyne Highlands and Boyne Mountain ski resorts; plus is home to one of Michigan’s numerous Native American Casinos.

Accessing Michigan Gateway Communities

In this era of speed & efficiency, Americans continue to want many amenities in their life to move faster. We see this in many products, from cell phones to our personal computers. However, we see this on the highways also, as speed limits have risen since the mid-1980s from 55 mph to 65mph (United States Department of Transportation, 1997), and in some states like Michigan to 70 mph (Michigan Department of Transportation, 2006). Even though through various anonymous discussions with public safety officers, the average speed on I-75 in northern Michigan is 83 mph.

In northern Michigan a majority of the roads with the exception of I-75 in the early 90’s were 2 lane highways. As the speed limit on the limited access highways began to rise to 65 and eventually to 70, the speed limit on these two lane highways remained at 55 mph. This frustrated many individuals, (including my father, who would be used to driving 70 mph on the divided highway and then

need to drive an additional 2 hours at 55 mph to reach their final destination). This would cause automobiles to pass more frequently on these two lanes roads, which raises the risk of head-on accidents in northern Michigan (Michigan Department of Transportation, 2004).

Because of this safety issue on northern Michigan roads, the Michigan Department of Transportation came up with a way to create an efficient solution to the problem. The solution was to build a “passing lane” every 10-15 miles on heavily traveled northern Michigan highways. However, at the same time, the current Michigan Governor wanted to improve the Michigan infrastructure, and this was to be done through the expansion of the limited access highway system. The “passing lanes” in northern Michigan began to quickly eliminate the safety problem, but the efficiency of reaching far northern destinations on the east and west coast, were still an overlying issue.

In 1992 MDOT, began to institute a new system that used CAD (Computer Aided Design) and GIS (Geographic Information Systems), to plot out the need for expanded infrastructure within the State of Michigan. Before, this system, MDOT’s model for infrastructure improvement was based on actual observation for need, and not projected need. This new system was able to predict the need for future infrastructure. (Michigan Department of Transportation, 2004)

The executive administration was about to use these predictions to their advantage and work with these projections to push their agenda of a more expanded infrastructure throughout Michigan. This expanded infrastructure did not only include the improvements upon current highways, but the creation of new highway systems around the State of Michigan. These expansions included a new limited access highway to run 15 miles from Lansing to the north, a by-pass around the south-side of Grand Rapids, a new interstate highway from Jackson, MI to Toledo, OH, a new limited access highway to span from Standish, MI along the east coast of Michigan to Alpena, MI, a by-pass around the city of Cadillac, MI with a 13 mile extension of limited access highway to the north, a by-pass around the city of Grand Haven, MI, a by-pass around the city of Traverse City, MI, and finally a by-pass around the city of Petoskey, MI.

All of the potential highway by-pass, extensions, and creations were from the projections made by this new MDOT system. However, much of the underlying political assumptions come from the fact that the Governor was a republican, these highway projects were to be built in primarily conservative areas, and he was pandering to his political base with these projects. In reality these proposed projects were to be built because of the need to create “safe & efficient roads”. But, as the literature review shows, a majority of transportation projects are built to help assist with economic prosperity.

In northern Michigan, a majority of economic prosperity comes from the “tourist” base. If you are able to get a larger percentage of the “tourist” base through the creation of a limited access highway which allows “tourists” to reach your destination faster, then as a business interest you would be in full support of this limited access highway. However, if you are a “tourist” and want to get away from the big city, and the big box stores, and the “Starbucks” coffee shops, will you receive this from the intrusion of limited access highways into these northern excluded areas?

This discussion will examine both the benefits and costs of these proposed limited access highways to be built in northern Michigan during the late 1990s. For discussion purposes the discussion will be kept mainly to the US-23 extension, US-31 bypass around (a gateway city) Petoskey, MI and US-131 bypass around (another gateway city) Cadillac, MI.

US-23

US-23 was originally debuted to the public in 1926, which starts at the southern border of Michigan near Toledo, OH, and extends 364 miles to the north and ends at the Straits of Mackinac. (Michigan Highways, 2008) For the purpose of this study, we will be concentrating on the “non-freeway” portion from Standish to Mackinaw City, MI.

Since the inception of US-23, it has always been a 2 lane highway along the northeast side of the State of Michigan. There has always been discussion with local policymakers about creating a 4 lane limited access freeway along the sunny side part of the State. US-23 was proposed as part of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1968, which would have updated the road to a 4 lane limited access highway with an Interstate designation. (Michigan Highways, 2008) However, this was never approved by the federal government.

In the late 80's after another round of military base closings, Wurtsmith Air Force Base located in Oscoda, MI was slated to close in 1992. The northeast region was also experiencing additional economic distress, which resulted in discussions of a regional freeway to help create the type of transportation access and service needed to support existing and new businesses and industries. (Michigan Department of Transportation, 1999)

In 1994, Governor Engler announces that part of his transportation budget, a new US-23 freeway would run from the north end of the current freeway at M-13 south of Standish to M-55 west of Tawas City, then northeasterly to the Oscoda area. (Michigan Highways, 2008) The proposed freeway served to polarize various segments of the population in the region: many believe the freeway is necessary to bring some economic relief this struggling part of the state. Former State Representative Dale Sheltroun was an

individual who was in full support of this highway. He believed that, "This would have been a selling point for individuals from southeast Michigan to visit northeast Michigan. Governor (Engler) thought that this would help further develop a highly impoverished area of the state." Representative Sheltroun also believe that the economic benefit came from the fact that, "The current US-23 corridor in northeast Michigan is overburdened with local, commercial and tourist traffic". A new freeway would alleviate much of this traffic congestion, and not act as a deterrent for "transients" to travel to northeast Michigan destinations.

The cost for the first phase extending from Standish to East Tawas would cost \$300 million to build. (Michigan Highways, 2008) There were no alternatives given to this project such as possibilities, "including adding passing lanes and traffic signals, minor road widening, and improving intersections". (Steele, 2008) There was much resistance to this idea of no alternatives to the US-23 freeway proposal. It upset people to the point that an advocacy group was organized by Paul Bruce, activist and resident of Alpena, Michigan. The group, "People for US-23 Freeway Alternatives" (PFA) argued that the costs (environmental damage, cost to taxpayers), outweighed the benefits of allowing users of the highway to make it to their final destination more efficiently.

MDOT and the FHSA argued back to the group that the previous study done in 1992 "raised concerns about the high number of residential displacement

needed for improvements along existing US-23.” This meant that if the alternative was to widen the current US-23 to either a 5 lane highway, or a 4 lane boulevard, many houses would need to be either moved or torn down to allow for the alternative expansion.

The agencies also stated that the extension, “best meets the stated objectives for the purpose, will resolve the transportation needs in northeast Michigan, and is consistent with the long range plan for a statewide system of expressways.” (Michigan Department of Transportation, 1999) Freeways are the safest and most efficient means to provide regional transportation service, and will be a key element to support opportunities for economic development in the region. (Michigan Department of Transportation, 1999)

Mr. Sheltroun stated that when the US-23 freeway was announced in 1994, “The surrounding towns were for the bypass, because of the increase in the amount of people (tourists) visiting northeast Michigan.” However, because the environmental impact process took 5 years from start to finish, allowed the “PFA” to advocate for an alternative policy “most of the business owners within these towns began to side with the citizens opposed to the freeway”. (Sheltroun, 2008)

After the proposed route was announced, and it was shown to bypass the City of Au Gres, many businesses within the city began to also become opposed to the freeway. The rationale was that the cities primary economic drivers were the tourists who passed through Au Gres on their way to another destination along Lake Huron. Even after economic research was conducted by the MEDC, none of the cities were expected to lose any business; Au Gres was predicted to show a 2-5% increase in business, even though they were six miles away from the closed exit ramp to the proposed freeway. (Sheltrown, 2008)

The proposed route to the US-23 freeway was to span 32.6 miles, displace 64 residences, destroy 462 acres of wetlands, and 400 acres of farmland. The Detroit Free Press in an article said, "The proposed freeway route looks as if it was drawn up by trucking firms to shave every possible minute off delivery times, regardless of how many Michigan fields, trees, and swamps would disappear."

After the proposed route was announced by MDOT and the environmental impact study was released, the Michigan Land Use Institute created a coalition with the PFA, and local business owners & residents opposed to the highway. According to Mr. Sheltrown, "property owners were against the acquisition of lands that ran through their property." A majority of these property owners were farmers in central Arenac county that were outraged that the proposed freeway

route would divide their farmland into two parcels, rather than following property lines, and keeping their farmland as one parcel.

Environmentalists were against the expansion because of destruction to wetlands, and unneeded highways. (Sheltrown, 2008) The hundreds of acres to be destroyed by a freeway was one of the largest percentages of wetlands destroyed to miles of highway build. (Michigan Land Use Institute, 2000) The proposed freeway after the initial phase 1 expansion was to travel directly through the center of the Huron National Forest. This had caused the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to withdraw their support after finishing our that this freeway would have caused the “largest single wetlands loss in Michigan.” (Michigan Land Use Institute, 2000) This was also a point brought up in a brochure by the PFA.

The persistent band of residents within the northeast Michigan region, along with various small business owners and environmentalists had a victory against MDOT in early 2000, as the federal government agreed with the US-23 freeway opposition and directed MDOT to, “upgrade the existing US-23 two-lane highway or study building a less damaging boulevard.” (Michigan Land Use Institute, 2000) The federal government cited that improvements to US-23 could include passing lanes, traffic signal upgrades, and turn lanes.

PHA agreed with the 2000 ruling and also felt that, “We need to look for ways of fixing the transportation corridors without tearing through the countryside and remaking communities all over again”. (Bruce, 2008) The FHA agreed with the PHA and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife, “The highway was to spur economic development and it was and still is hard to justify the environmental and financial costs”. (Kirschensteiner, 2008)

Both the PHA and MDOT began to work together rather than against each other in future years. Paul Bruce from PHA believed that, “Michigan has agreed that we should upgrade what we have and add in passing and turn lanes, or decide to convert a hybrid highway / four-lane boulevard.” After this defeat with the federal government, the state began to change their policy for US-23. Mr. Kirschensteiner stated, “MDOT is currently working on a proposal to resubmit for coming years, however US-23 is not a high priority with the State anymore.”

Dale Sheltroun agrees with Mr. Kirschensteiner, and does not believe that the US-23 freeway will ever be built. “There is no support for the Freeway to be built. However, many people are working with MDOT currently to have US-23 expanded to a 4 lane non-divided freeway between towns and into a 5 lane non-divided freeway when passing through towns.” (Sheltroun, 2008) Mr. Sheltroun thought that this possible highway will make environmentalists, property owners, and business owners in Au Gres happy.

However, former state representative Sheltroun doubts that a highway expansion takes place due to the declining economic base of Michigan. He also stated that a high amount of homes within northeast Michigan were “flooding the market”, due to the increasing amount of manufacturing facility shut downs in southeast Michigan. He hinted that the lack of a freeway in northeast Michigan might have contributed to continuing eroding of the economy along Lake Huron.

The loss of this highway project to northeast Michigan has a large implication of possibly damaging the future of the fragile economy within these cities. Even though these towns did not shrink, they did not grow either. As a majority of the growth within Michigan continues on the west side of Michigan, and the east side of Michigan continues to shrink, the lack of an efficient route to these communities from the “high growth” side of the Michigan could have contributed to this stagnate level of economic growth.

US-131

Debuted in 1926, US-131 is a major north-south route running from Indiana through western Michigan to the northern Lake Michigan coast. The road goes through Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids, and ends in Petoskey, MI. This highway has remained a primary access route to the relatively unspoiled regions of the northwest lower Michigan. These areas are prime recreation and

vacation areas, which attract residents from Chicago, Kalamazoo, and Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Up until 1990, US-131 had been a four-lane limited access freeway extending from the southern edge of Michigan to the southern end of Cadillac, MI. However, in the early 90's the decision had been made to allow for a US-131 bypass to be constructed around Cadillac, MI and extend 13 miles north to Manton, MI. US-131 had always been planned as a four-lane limited access freeway along its entire length since the 1950s. (Green Scissors Report, 1997)

Unlike the northeast side of the state, the northwest side of the state has seen unremarkable growth over the past 25 years. For the benefit of this research, much of the economic data gathered is of the Traverse City "Region" which encompasses "many of the region's outlying communities". (Orfield, 2003) The outlying communities are six counties that are all directly served by US-131. However, traffic that passes through Cadillac to northern destinations are traveling to destinations that end on US-131, since this is the only highway that connects Grand Rapids (Michigan's 2nd largest city) to the Traverse City "Region".

Within the Traverse City "Region", the population had increased by 23.5% from 1990 to 2000. The increase in population led to increased business growth,

but along with this growth, came increased traffic from “downstate” to reach their northern destinations. Before the Cadillac Bypass was opened to the public in late 2001, all of this traffic bound for the Traverse City “Region” would pass directly through downtown Cadillac, MI.

When the US-131 bypass was announced at a price tag of \$86.5 million, mixed concerns were had by all members of the Cadillac community. (Green Scissors Report, 1997) Some of the local businesses and residents feared that a four-lane, limited access freeway will drain the local economy and reduce the quality of life by making the area less attractive to tourist and seasonal residents. The local communities were also unwelcoming of the “unknown” effects as a result of the expansion, and called in public hearings for “improvements to the existing roadbed instead of new construction.” (Michigan Department of Transportation, 1995) These concerns were echoed throughout Cadillac as residents thought, “This is going to kill the town”, or “We are going to be a ghost town”. (Garland, 2008)

The project also had environmental concerns, as the proposed freeway would affect, “acres of wetlands, bisect large tracts of underdeveloped state forest land, traverse a blue ribbon trout stream, degrade state and federally designated natural and wild and scenic rivers, and divide important agricultural

lands. (Michigan United Conservation Clubs, 1994) The MUCC, amongst many other groups were in favor of “less expensive alternatives that have significantly fewer detrimental effects.” (Green Scissors Report, 1997)

In this context, there was a comparison in complaints and fears among the environmental, residential and business interests with the US-131 and US-23 freeways. However, the difference between these two projects is the US-131 bypass around Cadillac, MI was completed in 2001, and evidence shows that the highway did not prove all of the inherent evils that were communicated in the mid-90s.

After the initial opening of the US-131 bypass in 2001, the last 13 miles between Cadillac and Manton, MI were being completed, while initial “Environmental Impact Statements”, were being completed on a connector of US-131 to Interstate 75 to the east. Within the year of the project completed, the next traffic count done showed that the traffic had dropped from 20K vehicles per day on Mitchell Street (Old US-131), to 14K vehicles per day. (Garland, 2008)

The city did see negative results from the business side also, however it was not from the local small businesses that everyone thought would be effected. The “impulse” businesses, such as gas stations and convenience stores located on Mitchell Street saw a decline in profits. The Assistant City Manager of

Cadillac, MI, Precia Garland attributes this to the “non-destination” traffic continuing past Cadillac on the US-131 bypass. However, many of these “impulse” businesses located on Mitchell Street began to work with the City of Cadillac and local townships, and created “significant resistance of growth near the interchanges”. (Garland, 2008) This was to force tourists off of the bypass and travel down Mitchell Street to these “impulse” businesses.

This new bypass also had many positive results to present. The elimination of semi traffic downtown allowed for a more pedestrian friendly business district. The decline of non-destination traffic, allowed for preserved capacity of local traffic, and reduced the wear and tear of local downtown streets. (Garland, 2008)

These positive and negative results allowed for Cadillac to change their business outlook for the downtown area. Because of the non-destination traffic didn't drive through Cadillac anymore, the City began to market them as a destination city. You would be able to see these “Cadillac” markers all over the state highways as your approach the city itself.

The decline in traffic numbers on Mitchell Street has allowed the city to work at creating a robust downtown shopping district. This business district enhancement is to create a more user friendly downtown, which will include

gateway improvements to the downtown area, sidewalk bump outs at intersections, and pedestrian friendly walkways. The current project will run from 1.4 miles through the downtown area, and be finishing in 2009. (Garland, 2008)

The downtown has benefited from the bypass as traffic volumes have rebounded to levels that are significant to the number of vehicles that passed through Cadillac before the bypass was built. Surprisingly, businesses from downtown have not moved to the outskirts of the town because of the bypass. Also, the streetscape project that was completed in 1989 now assists with a walkable downtown, as the sidewalks were widened by 6 feet throughout the business district. This new "robust" downtown movement has allowed for new future investment to present itself in the form of a "local group which wants to reestablish a "players" theater downtown, and the main movie theater (Cadillac 5) is looking to expand their current facility downtown. (Garland, 2008)

As an epilogue and examining the past concerns made by residents of the US-131 bypass to be constructed, the realities were, the bypass has about 7K vehicles per day, however Mitchell Street now has almost three times more traffic. Also, the north end of Cadillac became the big box store haven during the late 90's, and the bypass eliminated all of the truck traffic that was traveling to these businesses.

As the downtown business district “reinvents” itself, they continue to preach a “new urbanist” environment for downtown. With mixed loft style housing, along with many local owned businesses on the first floor of buildings. To assist with this policy, the City continues to expand its signage projects that direct people from the Bypass to downtown Cadillac. Also, the City has created a “loan” program that allows for businesses to improve the façade and put on new entrance that improves the aesthetics of the downtown area. (Garland, 2008)

Finally, as Cadillac works to market them as a “destination” city, they have constructed a bike path system. This system has an 8 mile route around Lake Cadillac that connects to a nature path to the north of Cadillac, and to a rail train to the south of Cadillac. Most recently they completed the final phase of the “Clam River Greenway” project which has virtually connected all of these pathways together for a continuous network which is connected to the downtown Cadillac business district.

A future extension of US-131 as a divided freeway to Interstate 75 is no longer considered as an option at this time. The traffic counts are well below the state average, as are accident and death rates on the current 2 lane US-131 highway north of Manton. (Green Scissors Report, 1997) The US-131 extension would have represented another consumption of state monies between \$55 -60

million, and the minimal congestion did not merit the federal government funding 80% of the \$500 million project. (Smith, 2008) After the decision to stop the US-131 extension, “citizens continued to speak out about the need for existing roads to be upgraded for more traffic to be handled efficiently and acceptably”, between Cadillac and Petoskey. (Michigan Land Use Institute, 2000)

US-31

U.S. highway 31 runs from the Indiana – Michigan border to the Straits of Mackinac along the west coast of Michigan. Connecting the cities of St. Joseph to Holland to Traverse City to Petoskey, the road has become the lifeline of connecting the various tourist communities to one another. For many of the years, the road remained a 2 lane highway, however, over the past 30 years segments have been completed along US-31 that has gradually converted it into a limited access expressway. By 2012, all of US-31 from Indiana to Ludington, MI will be a limited access expressway. (Michigan Highways, 2008)

However, from Ludington, MI to the Straits of Mackinac, the road remained a 2 lane highway. This highway ran through predominantly rural areas until it entered the Traverse City “region”. The US-31 route went through five of the six counties which made up the “region”. In every township that US-31 passed through the growth of the area had increased at least 20% or more, with

60% of the townships showing over 30% of growth. (Orfield, 2003) This growth contributed to many problems around the area, included the cost to live within the area.

From this increase in population, it has caused people not to be able to live close to their jobs, because property costs within the cities had risen. (Burcat, 2007) The median price of homes has risen from \$66K to \$177K in Grand Traverse County, and from \$73K to \$223K in Leelanau County. The income has only risen from \$28K to \$45K in Grand Traverse County, and \$28K to \$52 in Leelanau County. (United States Census, 2000) Land costs have also increased from \$1.6K per acre to \$3.5K in Grand Traverse County. (Michigan State University Extension, 2008)

The Traverse City “region” has also become part of Goodwill Industries of Northern Michigan “at-risk” regions. The average wage is about 20% lower than that of Michigan’s average, but the average rent is about 25% higher than the rest of the State. (McNally, 2008) The increases in population and the cost of living within the region created a need for a more efficient mode of transportation along the main highway corridors.

In 1987, the U.S. Congress approved for a \$28 million appropriation for a 9.5 mile, four lane freeway that would bypass the city of Petoskey. The bypass

would leave the U.S. 31 highway south of the city, and connect back to U.S. 31 on the north side of the city. (Green Scissors Report, 1997) This was to allow for non-destination traffic to continue onto its final destination and relieve the city center streets for traffic traveling within Petoskey. (Kellogg, 2008) The largest problem has consistently been growth from the outlying areas around the city. This has been creating more traffic within the city and less room for passer by traffic on the roads.

There were also many arguments against this bypass, as many local residents were for the preservation of rural valleys, farms, and scenic views. The critics were fearful that this bypass would destroy these attributes and accelerate sprawl. Others were also against this because they were afraid of business moving from downtown to the bypass, and that Petoskey would no longer become a stopping destination, but a pass through community for people on their way to Harbor Springs or the Upper Peninsula. (Kellogg, 2008) Many farmers were also opposed because the proposed bypass route would go through a historic agriculture district which produced \$10 million in farm products every year. (Green Scissors Report, 2008)

The environmental concerns were also mounting, as the primary loss of prime farmland, and open space, along with the degradation of wetlands and trout streams became a problem. (MLUI, 2000) Along with the primary loss of

prime farmland from the construction of the highway, the bypass was thought to accelerate the sprawling patterns of growth south of the city, and increase air and water pollution. (Green Scissors Report, 2008)

These continued concerns made by the local community, went to Washington and Congressman Bart Stupak (D-MI), passed legislation to require MDOT to review transportation alternatives to the bypass project. The main reason that this legislation needed to be passed, was because the Michigan Department of Transportation had interpreted the 1987 Congressional approval as prohibiting the study of alternative options, and spent at least \$2 million strictly on bypass planning. (Green Scissors Report, 2008)

This legislation was a huge set back for MDOT, and the whole project was no longer a high priority for the department. Acquisitions of property had become highly controversial, and two area townships had hired lawyers and consultants to further scuttle the bypass proposal. The funding was continually denied for the US-31 bypass, and the controversy by local property and business owners had continued. (Kellogg, 2008)

In 2000, an alternative was presented which “conserved tax dollars and the countryside”. (Michigan Land Use Institute, 2000) The alternative uses the current right of ways, is less than 1/3 as wide as the bypass, ruins less wetlands,

and the estimated cost is $\frac{1}{4}$ of that of the proposed bypass. The alternative also explored modernizing the current US-31, creating a new truck route around the city, and developing a summer shuttle bus service to reduce tourist traffic.

(Michigan Land Use Institute, 2000)

The bypass is expected to be built, and the state and local government continue to work together for an acceptable alternative. (Kellogg, 2008) The primary alternative being discussed is using the current roadways around the outskirts of town. The roadways will be converted into 5 lane roads. This alternative would allow a bypass for US-31 around town, but also will not require the acquisition of more land from property owners. The only concern raised by local residents to this alternative, was about the unknown increase of traffic levels on the roads which are being discussed as part of the updated bypass. The local business owners in Petoskey are satisfied with the latest development in the US-31 bypass. Even though the City of Petoskey was in support of the original bypass, they are happy with this new alternative.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The US-23 and US-131 projects have not been reexamined because of multiple factors. A sizable portion of Michigan core program funds has been replaced with funding earmarked for specific projects and new programs. As a

result, the federally available revenue has become significantly less flexible. This reduction in flexibility makes it more difficult to address needs that have been or will be identified through objective research, complicates the planning process, and also poses new challenges to attaining previously announced infrastructure goals. (Michigan Department of Transportation, 2006)

Other recent factors have contributed to revenue shortfalls and expenditure overruns. These include reduced fuel revenues due to reduced fuel consumption because of increasing fuel costs and more fuel efficient vehicles, as well as higher natural gas and oil prices that have driven up the cost of asphalt. The increased cost of other raw materials is another contributing factor. (Michigan Department of Transportation, 2006)

The advocates argue that grassroots organizations were the reason behind the denial or examination of alternatives to all of these projects. The organizations needed to be organized, vocal, and persistent in their fight against unneeded new highways. (Oreskovich, 2008) The Michigan Land Use Institute (2000) would agree with this, as “the current denial of proposals in Northern Michigan (US-23 / US-131) has now shifted the train of thought to examining local road alternatives in Grand Haven, Petoskey, and southeast Michigan”. (Appendix E)

According to the Michigan statewide demand model, the recent statewide model planning applications no longer show the US-23 Freeway – Standish to Alpena, or the US-131 Freeway – Cadillac to I-75 as high priority projects for the future. The majority of the demand for the next 15 years will be in the fields of “Transit Service Strategy”, and the “Michigan Aviation System Plan”. (Michigan Department of Transportation, 2004)

On August 10, 2005, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Act : A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) was signed into law. This was the successor to the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Even though Michigan is still only receiving 92 cents back for every dollar sent to Washington, SAFETEA-LU, has a primary purpose of safety and highway repair. (Michigan Department of Transportation, 2006)

Along with SAFETEA-LU, the State of Michigan has created the “Jobs Today” initiative, which will invest a combined \$6.6 billion into the Michigan highway system. However, between 2007 and 2011, \$4.8 billion will be invested into repairing and rebuilding current infrastructure, while only \$585 million will be invested for capacity improvement or new roads. In 1997, the state was only investing approximately, \$176 million per year on road repair. (Michigan Department of Transportation, 2006)

Upon closer examination of the State of Michigan 5-year road improvement plan, there is language like, “resurfacing”, “restoration”, “rehabilitation”, “replacement”, and “preservation”. However, language like, “exploration”, “expansion”, or “extension”, are not in these latest reports. Much of this change comes from the fact, that the road and bridge conditions in Michigan were forecast to go from “good” to “poor” between 2006-2014, if action was not taken to alleviate this problem. (Michigan Department of Transportation, 2006)

As Americans enter the 21st century and the price for a gallon of gasoline continues to rise, the change from the automobile to the bus or train is beginning to take place. Even in the automotive capital of the world, Detroit, there is a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization called, “Transportation Riders United”. Made up of a board of directors from individuals that live in Grosse Pointe Park, Bloomfield Hills, Livonia, Ann Arbor, and Detroit, their mission is create a voice and a vision for area policy makers. Their vision is for a multi-mode mass transportation system in the Detroit Metropolitan Area. This need is well over due in Detroit Metro, as only \$21 per capita is spent on mass transit, compared to \$139 in San Francisco. Plus over \$41 billion is needed for road improvements over the next 25 years in Southeast Michigan with only an estimated \$24 billion in tax revenue expected.

With these multiple problems erupting in the Southeast Michigan areas because of the urban sprawl created by the endless number of freeways, will Northern Michigan face the same problem? Due to the efforts of local farmers, residents, business owners and environmentalists, they will not need to blame the freeways for their problems. However, will this stop urban sprawl from entering the large green spaces in Northern Michigan in which tourists come to visit? No, according to the “Old Mission Peninsula”, which is near Traverse City, MI, they have had this problem, and there is no freeway or highway located near the peninsula.

For gateway communities that would like patrons to reach their doorsteps in a more efficient manner, they must ask themselves the simple question before endorsing a freeway project. Are you willing to accept the sprawl that could encroach on the lands that tourists come to visit? If business owners in northern Michigan were not happy with the policies dealing with highway development, they could always turn to other alternative transportation policies. One specific possibility would be the implementation of passenger railroad service from southern Michigan to northern Michigan.

Currently there are many different railroad lines that travel through these gateway communities. The cost to upgrade these rail lines for passenger service

would be nominal when comparing the cost of constructing new highways. The passenger service would be strictly seasonal, and travel only on the weekends. However, it would allow tourists to drive on the highways to a Mid-Michigan area, then transfer to a passenger train and ride to their final destination in northern Michigan. When acknowledging the cost of gasoline also, the idea might not be as far fetched as others would like to believe. (Appendix F)

The road ahead for Michigan Gateway Communities will continue to be robust as long as citizens continue to travel to these destinations to venture into our vast public lands. However, during hard economic times, these small towns will need to begin examining alternative methods in attracting people to their cities. If an examination of alternative methods does not take place, then economic blight might set in on many of these small Michigan hamlets.

APPENDIX A

Figure 1: Types of roads that connect to a Gateway Community

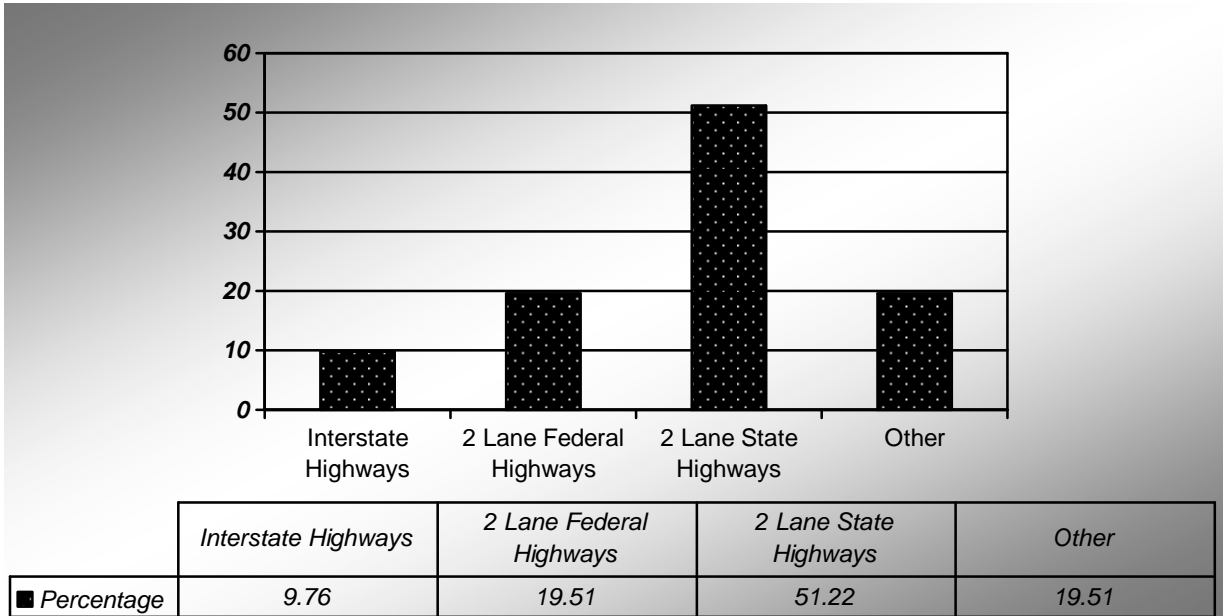


Figure 2: Daily Traffic Flows that Provide Traffic to a Gateway Community

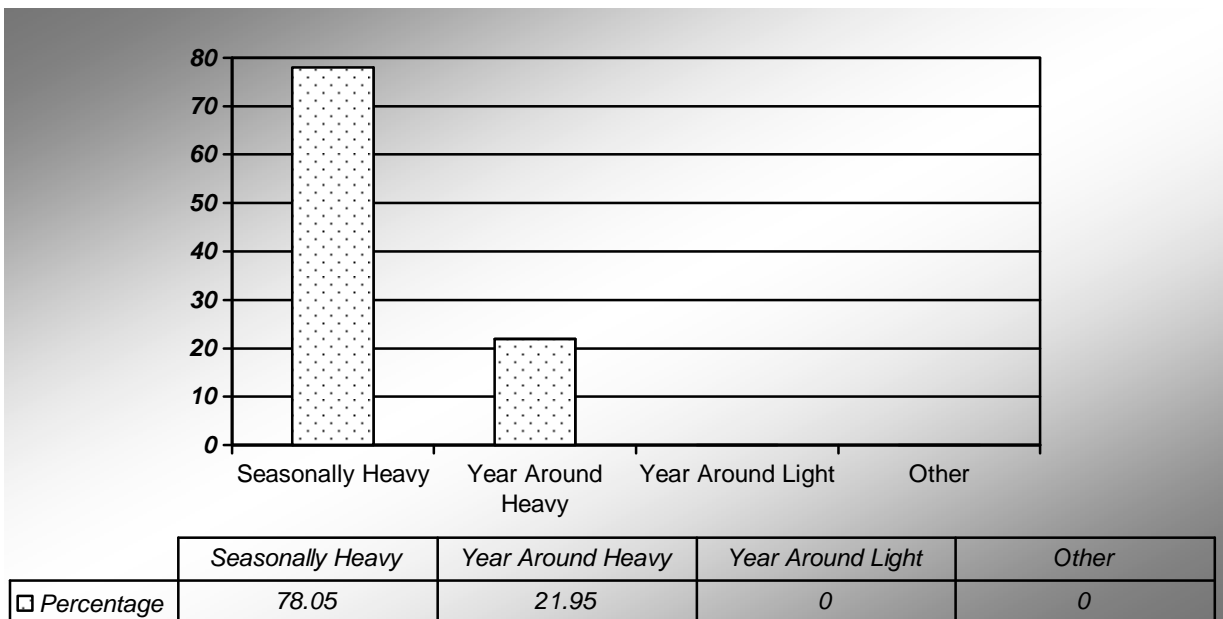


Figure 3: Street & Road Traffic within Gateway Communities

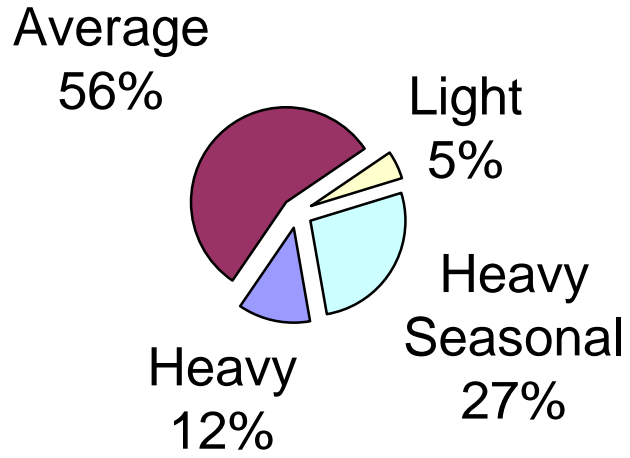


Figure 4: Roads that receive the most traffic within Gateway Communities

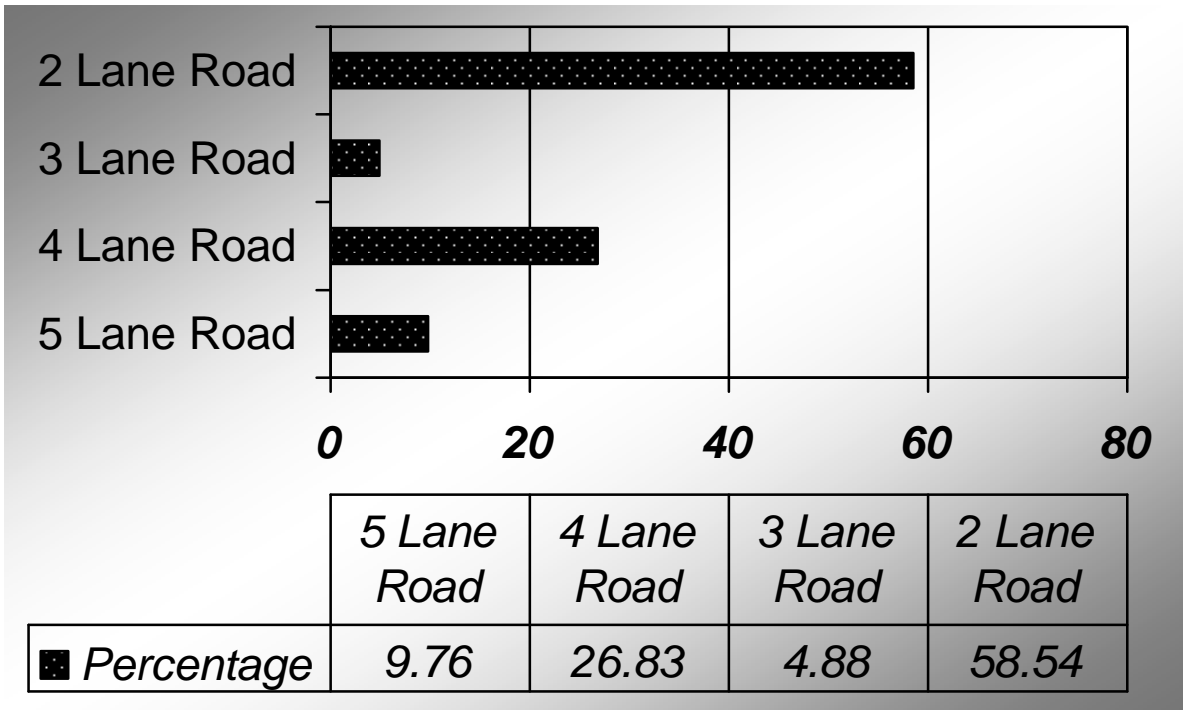


Figure 5: Level of commercial truck traffic within Gateway Communities

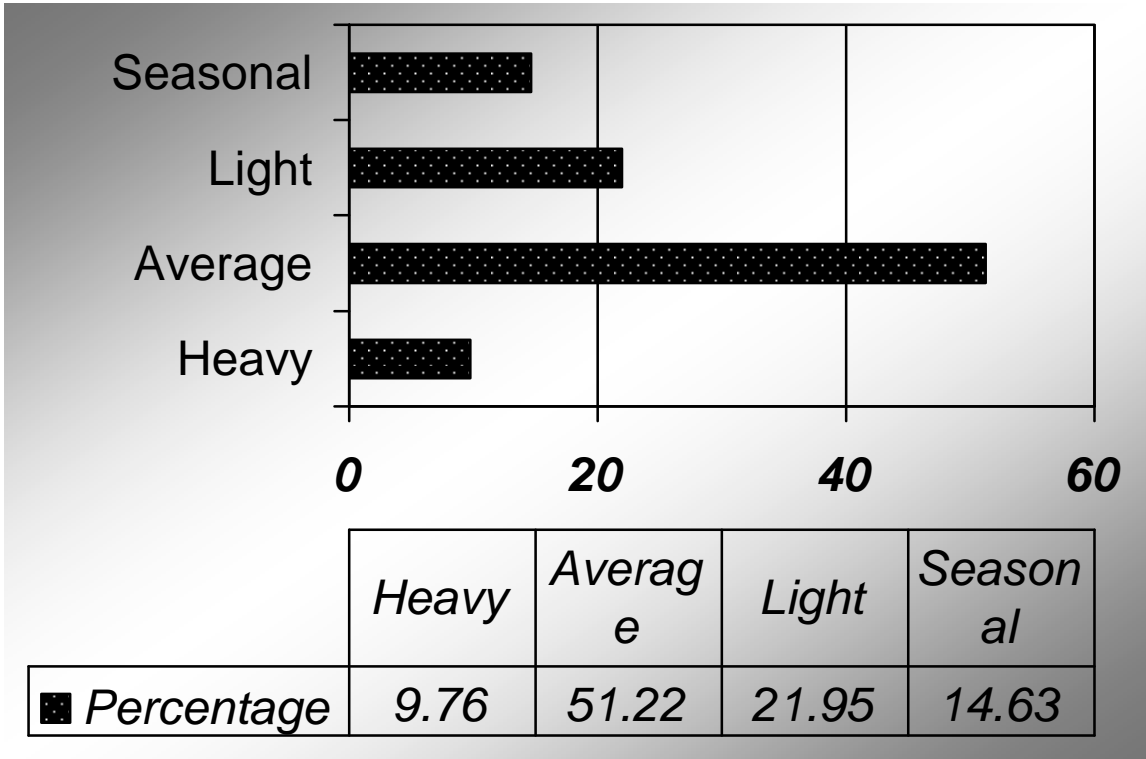
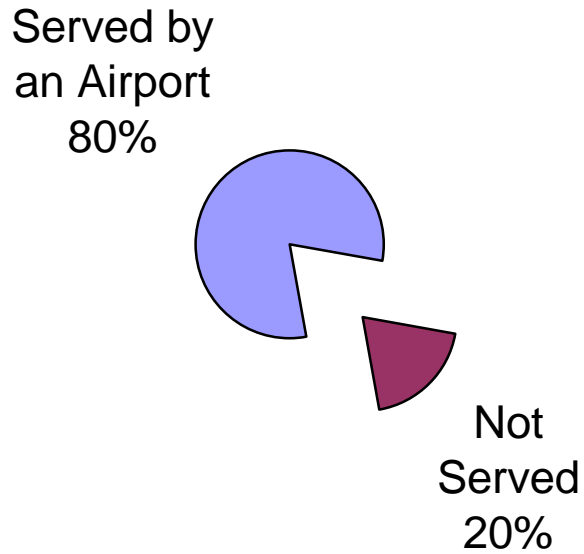


Figure 6: Gateway Communities served by an Airport



APPENDIX B

Letter sent to City Administrators

December 5, 2005

Address

Dear City Manager:

My name is John Kaczynski and I am a Graduate Student at Central Michigan University working towards my master's degree in Public Administration. As part of my final project, I am conducting a study concerning transportation corridors and their effect on economic development within Gateway Communities.

Since you are a participant of the Gateway Community study, I am requesting your participation in this project by voluntarily filling out the enclosed questionnaire. Your answers will be kept completely confidential and your identity will not be revealed or cited in the final paper.

I truly appreciate your consideration for participation and hope that the results of the study will help us all gain more understanding and insight into transportation corridors and their effect on economic development within Gateway Communities.

Sincerely,

John L. Kaczynski
3700 E. Deerfield Rd.
Apt. P-1
Mount Pleasant, MI 48858
(989)-714-3801
Kaczy1jl@cmich.edu

Attn: Informed Consent Form

APPENDIX C

Informed consent agreed upon by the City Administrators.

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Project: "The Role of Transportation Corridors in Gateway Communities"

Principal Investigator: John Kaczynski, Master of Public Administration Candidate, 3700 E. Deerfield Road, Apartment P-1, Mount Pleasant, MI 48858. Phone #: (989)-714-3801; E-Mail: Kaczy1jl@cmich.edu.

Principal Investigators Advisor: Dr. Rick S. Kurtz, Ph.D., Central Michigan University, Department of Political Science, Anspach 247, Mount Pleasant, MI 48859. Phone #: (989)-774-3436; E-Mail: Rick.S.Kurtz@cmich.edu.

An integral part of this study is gathering information from City Managers of Gateway Communities. Your voluntary participation in this study involves completing a 57-question survey designed to determine the benefits and impediments on the local economic base. The 57-question survey should take 60 minutes to complete. All information gathered from this project will be made available to interested participants, as well as copies of the finished report.

APPENDIX D

Survey answered by City Administrators

Questionnaire for THE ROLE OF TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS IN GATEWAY COMMUNITIES

I. Connecting Transportation Corridors

A. Streets & Road Corridors

1. What type of roads connect to your community?
 - A. Interstate Highway
 - B. 2 Lane Federal Highway
 - C. 2 Lane State Highway
 - D. Other _____

2. What is the daily traffic flow on the main roads that provide transportation links to your community?
 - A. Seasonally Heavy
 - B. Year Around Heavy
 - C. Year Around Light
 - D. Other _____

3. What is the quality of roads providing links to your community?
 - A. Excellent
 - B. Good
 - C. Average
 - D. Poor
 - E. Other _____

4. How would you rate the quality of traffic safety on the main roads that provide transportation to your community?
 - A. Excellent
 - B. Good
 - C. Average
 - D. Poor
 - E. Other _____

5. How would you rate commercial tractor trailer traffic on the main roads that provide transportation to your community?
 - A. Heavy
 - B. Average
 - C. Light
 - D. Seasonally Heavy
 - E. Other _____

B. Airports, Maritime Ports & Railroads

1. Is your community served by a local airport?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No (Skip Questions 2-6)
2. Does your local airport have commercial passenger flights land at the airport?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No (Skip Question 3 &4)
3. Passengers on the commercial flights are?
 - A. Mainly Tourists
 - B. Mainly Business
 - C. A Balanced Mix of User Groups
 - D. Other_____
4. Do the commercial passenger flights that land at your airport experience significant seasonal fluctuations?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
5. How would you rate the level of private passenger flights that land at your airport?
 - A. Heavy
 - B. Average
 - C. Light
 - D. Other_____
6. Does your local airport accept air freight?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
7. If you answered no to question 1 or 2, How far is it to the closest airport that accepts commercial passenger flights?
 - A. Over 100 Miles
 - B. 99-75 Miles
 - C. 74-50 Miles
 - D. 49-25 Miles
 - E. Other_____
8. Does your community have a maritime port?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No (Skip Questions 9 - 12)
9. Does your community maritime port handle commercial freight?
 - A. Yes (Skip Question 12)
 - B. No

10. Does the port serve commercial passenger vessels?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
11. Does the port serve private recreational vessels?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
12. The port traffic is best described as?
- A. Predominantly Commercial Freight
 - B. Predominantly Recreational Passenger
 - C. Fairly Balanced Mix
 - D. Other_____
13. Does a railroad serve your community?
- A. Yes
 - B. No (Skip Questions 13 -15)
14. How would you rate the frequency of the railroad usage?
- A. Heavy
 - B. Average
 - C. Light
 - D. Seasonal
 - E. Other_____
15. Does passenger rail service your community?
- A. Yes
 - B. No (Skip Question 15)
16. How often does the passenger rail service your community?
- A. Daily
 - B. Weekly
 - C. Daily Seasonal
 - D. Weekly Seasonal
 - E. Other_____

II. Local Internal Transportation Systems

A. Local Streets / Roads

1. How would you rate the street & road traffic flow within your city?
- A. Heavy
 - B. Average
 - C. Light
 - D. Heavy Seasonal
 - E. Other_____

2. What type of road receives the most traffic within your community?
 - A. 5 Lane Road
 - B. 4 Lane Road
 - C. 3 Lane Road
 - D. 2 Lane Road
 - E. Other _____

3. What are the quality of the streets within your community?
 - A. Excellent
 - B. Good
 - C. Average
 - D. Poor
 - E. Other _____

4. How would you rate the public safety of the streets in your community?
 - A. Excellent
 - B. Good
 - C. Average
 - D. Poor
 - E. Other _____

5. What is the level of commercial truck traffic on the streets in your community?
 - A. Heavy
 - B. Average
 - C. Light
 - D. Seasonally Heavy
 - E. Other _____

B. Parking

1. How would you describe the current parking situation in your community?
 - A. Excellent
 - B. Good
 - C. Average
 - D. Poor
 - E. Other _____

2. Does your community have a visitor parking garage?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No

3. How many public parking spaces do you have in your downtown area?
 - A. 250+
 - B. 200-240
 - C. 150-190
 - D. 100-140
 - E. Other _____

4. Is there public parking along the streets in your downtown area?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No (Skip Question 5)
5. What type of public parking do you have along the streets?
 - A. Parallel
 - B. 90 Degree
 - C. 45 Degree
6. Is the public parking in your downtown area adequate?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Other_____
7. Do your public parking spaces fill up during peak seasonal months?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
8. Are there parking meters in your downtown?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
9. Do you issue public parking passes to regular patrons & business owners?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No (Skip Question 10)
10. Do you charge people for the public parking passes?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
11. Do you or does the visitor center / vendors issue complementary public parking passes to tourists?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No

C. Public Transportation

1. Is there a Public Transportation system within your community?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No (Skip all section C questions)
2. What type of Public Transportation system services your community?
 - A. Light Rail (Skip to Question 7)
 - B. Bus
 - C. Both Light Rail & Bus
 - D. Other_____

3. What type of bus system services your community?
 - A. Dial-A-Ride (Door-to-Door)
 - B. Regular Route Service (Days & Evenings)
 - C. Regular Route Service (Days Only)
 - D. Other _____

4. Does your public bus system go outside your community to pick up riders?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No (Skip to Question 6)

5. How far outside your community do public busses go to pick up passengers?
 - A. 25+ Miles
 - B. 15-24 Miles
 - C. 5-14 Miles
 - D. Other _____

6. Who does the public bus system serve?
 - A. Mostly Tourists
 - B. Mostly Local Residents
 - C. Mostly Seasonal Workers
 - D. A Balanced User Mix
 - E. Other _____

7. Does your Public Transportation only run during certain seasons?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No

8. What is the average yearly rider ship of the Public Transportation within your community?
 - A. Heavy
 - B. Average
 - C. Light
 - D. Other _____

D. Alternative Transportation Models

1. How would you rate pedestrian traffic safety in your community?
 - A. Excellent
 - B. Good
 - C. Poor
 - D. Other

2. What does your community provide to make crosswalks safe to cross? (Circle all that apply)
- A. Marked Intersections
 - B. Lights
 - C. Raised Crosswalks
 - D. Walkovers
 - E. Other _____
3. How wide are the sidewalks in your downtown areas?
- A. 20 Feet+
 - B. 15-19Feet
 - C. 10-14 Feet
 - D. 5-9 Feet
 - E. Other _____
4. Does your community have significant impediments for pedestrian access to main street vendors / service providers?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
5. What are these impediments?
- A. Large Numbers of Tourists
 - B. Skateboarders
 - C. Lack of Sidewalks
 - D. Other _____
6. In the past 5 years have there been any pedestrian-vehicle injuries within your downtown area?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
7. Does your community have a bike path system?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
8. If so, what type of bike path system does your community have? (Circle all that apply)
- A. Designated Bike Paths
 - B. Bike Trails
 - C. Other _____
9. Does your community have public bike racks located for patrons to use?
- A. Yes
 - B. No

10. What are the problems you have on sidewalks in your downtown area? (Circle all that apply)

A. Skate boaters

B. Rollerbladers

C. Loitering

D. Other _____

11. Does your community have a skate park?

A. Yes

B. No

12. If not, is your community planning to build at skate park?

A. Yes

B. No

Please feel free to add any additional comments below:

APPENDIX E

As only one out of the three highway projects examined was ultimately finished, there have been many other projects since the 1990's that have been approved and built. These other projects have ranged in length and location, however, they do serve a larger population density and traffic capacity. Out of the two projects which have been approved, one is complete, while the other is to begin construction in 2010.

The first freeway was the M-6, which was constructed along the southern edge of Grand Rapids. (Michigan Highways, 2008) This 20 mile southern bypass to the Grand Rapids metropolitan area was desperately needed due to the 20%+ growth that had taken place in the various suburbs and townships on the southern edge of Grand Rapids. (Orfield, M, 2003) This freeway began construction in 1997, and was completed in 2004. (Michigan Highways, 2008) Even though it has only been four years since the opening of this new freeway, expansive urban sprawl has taken place. Along both sides of the freeway, many big box stores, and endless numbers of subdivisions line the former agricultural landscape.

The second freeway that has been approved will be the future US-31 bypass around the city of Grand Haven. This 26 mile bypass will run through one of the fastest growing counties within the State of Michigan, Ottawa County. Between 1990 and 2000, the county grew by 24.6%. (U.S. Census, 2000)

However, this freeway will be built in a more unusual fashion. Instead of building the entire corridor from north to south, segment after segment, the state plans on constructing one of the proposed Grand River bridges, and build a two-lane, controlled access highway. (Controlled access, means that the state will not allow any structures to be built along the highway right-of-way, and all crossings will be controlled by a traffic light or overpass) The highway will be built on a four-lane freeway right-of-way to accommodate its eventual conversion to a fully limited-access facility in the future. (Michigan Highways, 2008) There is continued fear of urban sprawl and destruction of valuable farmland along the proposed corridor.

Because of the continuous fights over the destruction of prime farmland & wetlands, and the declining economy within Michigan, other alternatives were examined for the US-31 Grand Haven bypass. Thom Peterson, an urban sprawl proponent argued, "We worked with Lansing to raise the level of understanding about the connections between road-building and sprawl. The worst thing to do would be to assume that MDOT's plans are always a 'done deal'."

APPENDIX F

Summer Lines (Memorial Day-Labor Day):

Thunder Bay Line:

	Friday	Sunday
Bay City	Leaves: 5:00PM	Arrives: 6:00PM
Linwood	Arrives: 5:20PM	Leaves: 5:40PM
Pinconning	Arrives: 5:30PM	Leaves: 5:30PM
Standish	Arrives: 5:40PM	Leaves: 5:20PM
Tawas City	Arrives: 6:30PM	Leaves: 4:30PM
East Tawas	Arrives: 6:40PM	Leaves: 4:20PM
Oscoda	Arrives: 7:00PM	Leaves: 4:00PM
Harrisville	Arrives: 7:20PM	Leaves: 3:40PM
Alpena	Arrives: 8:00PM	Leaves: 3:00PM

Gaylord Line:

	Friday	Sunday
Bay City	Leaves: 6:00PM	Arrives: 7:00PM
Linwood	Arrives: 6:20PM	Leaves: 6:40PM
Pinconning	Arrives: 6:30PM	Leaves: 6:30PM
Standish	Arrives: 6:40PM	Leaves: 6:20PM
West Branch	Arrives: 7:10PM	Leaves: 5:50PM
St Jude	Arrives: 7:20PM	Leaves: 5:40PM
Grayling	Arrives: 7:40PM	Leaves: 5:20PM
Gaylord	Arrives: 8:00PM	Leaves: 5:00PM

Gas Light Line:

	Friday	Sunday
Howell	Leaves: 4:00PM	Arrives: 6:00PM
Owosso	Arrives: 4:45PM	Leaves: 5:15PM
Ithaca	Arrives: 5:15PM	Leaves: 4:45PM
Alma	Arrives: 5:30PM	Leaves: 4:30PM
Mt. Pleasant	Arrives: 5:45PM	Leaves: 4:15PM
Clare	Arrives: 6:00PM	Leaves: 4:00PM
Cadillac	Arrives: 6:45PM	Leaves: 3:15PM
Boyne Falls	Arrives: 7:45PM	Leaves: 2:15PM
Petoskey	Arrives: 8:15PM	Leaves: 1:45PM

Grand Traverse Line:

	Friday	Sunday
Howell	Leaves: 5:00PM	Arrives: 7:00PM
Owosso	Arrives: 5:45PM	Leaves: 6:15PM
Ithaca	Arrives: 6:15PM	Leaves: 5:45PM
Alma	Arrives: 6:30PM	Leaves: 5:30PM
Mt. Pleasant	Arrives: 6:45PM	Leaves: 5:15PM
Clare	Arrives: 7:00PM	Leaves: 5:00PM
Cadillac	Arrives: 7:45PM	Leaves: 4:15PM
Traverse City	Arrives: 8:15PM	Leaves: 3:45PM
Grand Traverse Resort	Arrives: 8:30PM	Leaves: 3:30PM

All of these cities are currently served by either a limited passenger rail service or freight rail service.

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