

Transportation

The capacity of the existing transportation system in a community must be examined in conjunction with changes in land use. Land use affects transportation systems by:

- the type of development (commercial, residential, etc.);
- intensity;
- location; and
- design and location of access to the use.

The transportation system in Brooks Township is part of a much larger network that operates regionally, statewide, and nationwide. It is principally made up of roads. For planning purposes, roads are classified by movement and access functions. (Refer to the map on following page)

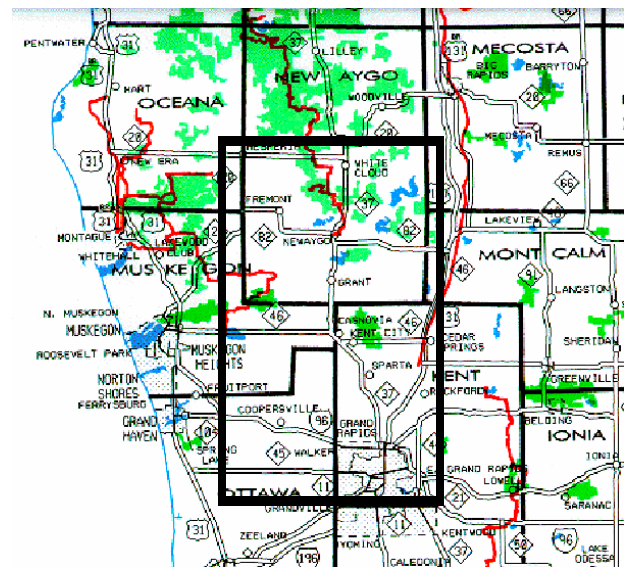
Roadway Classifications

A majority of the township's major roads are classified as arterial roadways. Arterial roads:

- Serve large volumes of through traffic (major arterials) or localized, shorter distance traffic (minor arterial).
- Access to abutting land use restricted, to maintain high-level traffic service.
- Act as boundaries of housing and community areas.
- Connect to collector streets.

Description Of Existing Roadway Infrastructure

The two major arteries in the township are M-82 and M-37. M-82 traverses Brooks east to west, intersecting M-37 in the City of Newaygo. It runs to the east of Brooks Township to Howard City, just beyond U.S. 131. M-37 continues north to Traverse City and south to Grand Rapids.



Regional Transportation Network

The other roads are paved county roads, unpaved county roads, graded local roads and unimproved local roads (on the Transportation Map as two track or seasonal roads). These roads fall under the jurisdiction of the Newaygo County Road Commission.

Roadway Character

A majority of the roads in the township are currently tree-lined, which contributes significantly to the rural character of the area. Pines and other deciduous tree species line M-82, which is yet *visibly* less developed than Croton Drive, a paved county east-west road that traverses the township to the north of the Muskegon River.

Existing Transportation Studies

M-37 Corridor Study (July 1998)

completed by *West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission and the M-37 Corridor Study Steering Committee*

The Study was completed to... *identify planning and development issues for a major transportation artery, undertake research and analysis, develop policy guidelines, and recommend various actions to the appropriate transportation planning bodies.*

Input from local businesses was taken into consideration in this study as recognition of the Corridor's economic importance. The following are issues and recommendations brought to light in the Study as related to Brooks Township:

- Traffic congestion and turning between 88th Street and M-82 should be addressed by 1) an MDOT traffic study to look at decreased speed limit along this stretch and/or 2) looking at the feasibility of adding a turning lane or simply widening this section of M-37.
- A standardized site plan review process [should] be adopted by all

jurisdictions along M-37 to provide for a cooperative, unified approach to development along the Corridor.

Roadway Improvements

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) does not currently have plans to improve the segments of M-82 and M-37 in Brooks Township (based on the *5 Year Road & Bridge Program published by MDOT 1999-2004*).

The improvements of other roads in the township are the responsibility of the County Road Commission. The Commission is responsible for construction of all roadway and bridge improvements. However, the township is normally called upon to fund a major part of any improvement. Discussion with the Newaygo County Road Commission staff, completed as part of the planning process, finds no significant planned improvements to the township's roadway system over the next several years.

Future Roadway Improvement Needs - Brooks Township Citizen Input

As part of the planning process, general input was sought from the residents of Brooks Township regrading select transportation issues. The input comes from a survey distributed at a Master Plan/Land Use Vision Public Information Meeting; one-on-one surveys conducted with various governmental, business, and agency leaders; and, ongoing dialogue with the Brooks Township Planning Commission and Township Board. Findings indicate the following.

Should a freeway be constructed to replace or supplement M-37?

Most people voiced opposition to a freeway system. It was generally concluded that improvements to M-37, such as strategically placed passing lanes or possible lane additions in select locations, could accommodate future traffic needs.

Should M-82 be widened to 4 lanes?

A majority of respondents did not want M-82 to be widened to 4 lanes, nor did respondents want parcels on M-82 to be zoned for commercial development.