

Annual Report of the Bay City Area Transportation Study (BCATS) 2004



BCATS 3 YEAR TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

On October 15, 2003, BCATS adopted a new Transportation Improvement Program for fiscal years 2004/05/06. A total of approximately \$46 million in transportation projects were identified in the 3 year program. The program includes a variety of street, highway, bridge, pedestrian, and transit projects that will upgrade the safety and efficiency of the transportation system.

Projects that were completed in 2004 included: The Michigan Department of Transportation reconstructed M-13 (Broadway) from Cass Avenue to Lafayette in Bay City, the city of Bay City reconstructed North Union Street from Warner to North Henry, and the Bay County Road Commission completed the bridge replacement project on State Park Drive over the Kawkawlin River.

A few of the projects to be completed in 2005/2006 are listed below:

The Michigan Department of Transportation will restore the M-13 Connector from I-75 to Grove Street in Kawkawlin, and mill and resurface M-13 (Euclid) from Fisher to Wilder in Bay City and Bangor Township.

The city of Bay City will reconstruct North Henry Street from North Union to Vermont Street.

The city of Essexville will reconstruct with minor widening the Woodside/Borton Avenue intersection.

The Bay County Road Commission will resurface Wilder Road from Euclid to the M-13 Connector in Bangor and Monitor Townships.

The completion of the three (3) mile Bangor Township Railtrail section, from the Wilder Rd/Patterson Rd intersection to the Bay City State Recreation Area, will provide an extension of the existing 9.5 miles of Riverwalk and Railtrail system.

The full and complete historical restoration of the Pere Marquette Railroad Depot.

Bus, van and trolley replacements as well as maintenance upgrades by the Bay Metro Transit Authority.



BCATS COMPLETES THE SECOND ASSET MANAGEMENT REVIEW OF ROADWAY CONDITIONS

The Michigan Asset Management Council was created by Public Act 499 of 2002. To meet the requirements of the Act, the second year of a statewide review of all federal-aid roadways was conducted using resources of the Michigan Department of Transportation and other local agencies. In Bay County, BCATS teamed with the city of Bay City and the Bay County Road Commission to inventory the surface condition of 560 miles of streets and highways using the RoadSoft computer program. The second year of data indicates that 75 % of the federal-aid roadways in Bay County were rated good to excellent.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

In 1998, when Congress passed the Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), they deemed it to be in the national interest to encourage and promote the development of transportation systems. These systems are to embrace all modes of transportation in a manner which will efficiently maximize the mobility of people and goods within and through the Bay City urbanized area.

The Bay City Area Transportation Study (BCATS) was designated to carry out the transportation planning process required by TEA-21. Establishment of this process enables BCATS and other transportation agencies within the BCATS area to receive federal funding for a variety of transportation projects including reconstruction and resurfacing of roads and bridges, purchase of transit vehicles, highway and transit safety improvements and pedestrian and non-motorized projects.

Currently, the BCATS area includes all of the city of Bay City, the city of Essexville as well as all of Bangor, Kawkawlin, Monitor, Frankenlust, Portsmouth, Hampton and Fraser Townships. This is known as the urban transportation planning area.

BCATS COMMITTEES

The Bay City Area Transportation Study (BCATS) is composed of two committees: the Policy Committee and the Technical Committee. The Policy Committee is made up of mostly elected officials from township, city, and county government. The Technical Committee is comprised of transportation planning and engineering professionals from the community. Both committees also have representatives from the Michigan and U.S. Departments of Transportation. The Technical Committee provides valuable expert advice to the Policy Committee on various matters which it must address. The Policy Committee must give final local approval to all plans and projects in the Bay City area which use federal funding.

The Policy Committee usually meets on the third Wednesday of every month at the Bay County Building, 515 Center Avenue, Bay City, Michigan.

Interested persons are always welcome to attend the meetings or call one of the following Technical Committee members to discuss transportation issues of interest:

David Engelhardt, BCATS Director (989) 895-4110
Bay County Transportation Planning Division
engelhardtd@baycounty.net

Michael Stoner, General Manager (989) 894-2900
Bay Metro Transit
mstoner@baymetro.com

Bob Ranck (989) 671-1555
Michigan Department of Transportation
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The county of Bay will provide necessary and reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting/hearing upon ten (10) days notice to the county of Bay. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the County of Bay by writing or calling:

Michael Gray, Executive Assistant
Office of the Bay County Executive
515 Center Avenue - Suite 403
Bay City, MI 48708
(989) 895-4130
(989) 895-4049 TDD

BAY METRO TRANSIT

Bay Metro Transit has transported over 22 million passengers since 1974. In 2004, service was provided to 74,000 seniors and 270,000 disabled passengers with an overall ridership of 615,000. Bay Metro Transit operated over 1.6 million service miles during the past year.

Ridership for Dial-A-Ride (DART), demand-response service for seniors and disabled, increased from 49,000 in 2003 to 53,000 in 2004. Bay Metro Transit also subcontracted 20,000 additional rides to local, private carriers. Of all services provided by Bay Metro Transit, the DART service has continued to show the most significant trend in growth.

Each year, Bay Metro Transit has seen a reduction in financial support from state and federal sources. On November 2, 2004, Bay County residents voted in a millage renewal for BMTA, assuring a stable source of funds through 2010.

This fall, Bay Metro responded to a need to make better connections to Midland and Saginaw Counties. Surveying conducted by the Center for Independent Living, showed the level of interest of county residents to travels between the Tri-Counties to medical facilities, shopping centers, and colleges and universities. Bay Metro coordinated with Midland Dial-A-Ride, Midland County Connection, and STARS (Saginaw), to establish regular transfer locations to allow for residents to travel to and, in the case of Bay and Midland Counties, throughout each county. All four transit systems will continue to work together to improve this service.

M-13/EUCLID AVENUE ACCESS MANAGEMENT

Early in the 2005 construction season, MDOT will be milling off the asphalt surface and resurfacing M-13/Euclid Avenue with a high stress bituminous asphalt. This project will be from Fisher Road northerly to Wilder Road. As the project was being developed, MDOT - Bay City Transportation Service Center (TSC) traffic & design engineers and the driveway permit agent reviewed the traffic crash history along this two mile portion of Euclid Avenue. The findings from 1998 through 2002 were 709 traffic crashes with 333 of those crashes involving rear end crashes. A probable cause of rear end crashes are access movements from M-13/Euclid Avenue into businesses along the roadway.

An inventory of access openings (including street intersections) totaled 174 along this 2 mile portion of Euclid Avenue. These openings, combined with the daily traffic volume ranging from 21,000 to 25,000 vehicles per day, create numerous traffic conflicts created by turning movements off and onto M-13/Euclid Avenue. A field review was made and it was found that 61 driveways could be closed or redesigned/relocated which would reduce the level of conflicts on Euclid Avenue. As a result of this evaluation, MDOT was able to secure additional highway safety funding for the project.

The Bay City TSC then spoke to business owners along M-13/Euclid Avenue and sought voluntary agreements for the closure and/or relocation of commercial driveways along the route. All costs for the work are being paid by MDOT using the highway safety funds that were acquired. In the interest of customer safety and motorist convenience, numerous local businesses have accepted this offer. The net result will be changes to 33 driveways of which 17 will be closed. No business will be without access off M-13/Euclid Avenue.

The participating businesses should be congratulated for their commitment to their community and for considering the well being of their customers and friends. In addition, the reduction in curb openings will hopefully improve the appearance of the M-13/Euclid Avenue corridor.

TRAFFIC INTERSECTION SAFETY AUDITS

In October of 2003, the Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) sponsored a project to perform a review of the traffic conditions and crash characteristics of high crash locations within the BCATS area. Thirty five (35) intersections were studied to identify operational and driver behavior issues that may be affecting safety, and to develop potential mitigation measures to reduce potential crash risks at these selected locations. The study was conducted by the Wayne State University-Transportation Research Group (WSU-TRG).

A companion study, completed by the AAA Michigan Road Improvement Demonstration Program (RIDP), reviewed an additional eight (8) intersections: six (6) along the Wilder Road corridor, the intersection of State Park and Old Kawkawlin, and the intersection of Truman Parkway and Woodside Ave.

Agencies participating in these two programs include: Bay County Road Commission, Bay County Transportation Planning Department, city of Bay City, MDOT, AAA Michigan, and the OHSP. FY2006 Local Safety Program funding will be pursued to implement the recommended safety changes.