



# MICHIGAN GRAND RIVER AVENUE

TRANSPORTATION STUDY



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## Finding the Possible Transportation Mode for the Corridor

There are many public transportation options for a corridor like the busy Michigan/Grand River Corridor that runs through the heart of Greater Lansing. The Corridor Study Team began this phase of work with the broadest possible list of options – from different types of rail to bus rapid transit and the improved use of conventional buses. Our goal was to consider and compare many transit options and measure each one against a set of criteria. This work began during the winter of 2010. It followed criteria laid out by the Federal Transit Administration’s project evaluation process.

First, a wide variety of rail and bus options were evaluated based on ridership benefits, environmental impact, agency and public opposition, and how consistent they were with plans and policies of the municipalities involved (Lansing, Lansing Township, East Lansing, Meridian Township), as well as those of the tri-county region and the state.

Second, the team studied how each alternative would “fit” with other modes of transportation along the Corridor (walking, biking, existing buses, cars, etc.). Would the new transit alternative run along the curb or down the center lane? What kind of stations or stops would each alternative require?

Finally, each transit alternative was scored on all of these criteria. The Steering Committee, stakeholders, and participants at public open houses evaluated all of these options. In the end, it became clear that many options were not a good fit for our region.

These included Electric Trolley, Heavy Rail, Commuter Rail, Maglev, and Automated Guideway Transit. However, four alternatives passed the evaluation and moved on to the next phase of consideration.

### Transportation Alternatives for Further Study

The transit alternatives that met the criteria as possible fits for the Corridor included these:

#### Conventional Bus



The federal government requires that this option be included in all transit considerations. It is known as the baseline against which all other options are measured.

#### Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)



A higher-capacity form of bus transit, BRT improves the speed, reliability and passenger experience of conventional bus service through the use of dedicated bus lanes, but costs less to build and operate than rail-based systems. The vehicles have unique designs that differentiate them from regular buses and can be powered by alternative fuels.

#### Modern Streetcar



Streetcars are a kind of rail transit designed to serve higher-density areas with frequent stops. Streetcars are powered by overhead

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wires and typically travel on tracks embedded into travel lanes shared with other vehicles.

### **Light Rail Transit (LRT)**



This is a railway powered by overhead electrical wires in train lengths of one to three cars. It can be operated along dedicated rights-of-way or along a city street using tracks that are embedded into the pavement.

For the most part, any of the new alternatives – BRT, LRT or streetcars – would run along the center of the Corridor. However, the Study might determine that it would be better to run transit along the curb in some portions of the corridor. Bike lanes or bike paths would be incorporated in the Corridor or along parallel streets.

During the next step, the four transit alternatives will be evaluated on more detailed criteria that will include potential station or stop locations, frequency of service, connecting with regular bus service, ridership demand, travel time savings, cost estimates, facility design, potential environmental impacts, and economic development potential.

The Study is expected to end in fall 2010 after the Steering Committee selects a Locally Preferred Alternative.

### **Your Participation Matters**

In the coming years, the Michigan/Grand River Corridor can help our region grow and prosper or it can be a roadblock to success. The decisions we make now are important to everyone who lives and works in our region. For more information on the Study and to make your voice heard, visit the project website at [www.migrtrans.org](http://www.migrtrans.org).