



## Intermodal Link

### Guide for Lawmakers on Regional Transportation Priorities

The Transportation Coalition in northwest Ohio has built and produced the 2008-2009 Transportation Legislative Agenda. The agenda is a guide to state and federal lawmakers, with special emphasis directed

to the federal lawmakers who will be enacting the next federal transportation bill over the next two years. The introduction of the document explains that the transportation system is at a major turning point:

Fifty years ago our national vision was to build the pre-eminent interstate highways system in the world. That vision has been realized. **We must now expand our surface transportation investment to integrate all modes of transportation—highway, freight and passenger rail, public transit, air, and sea—to meet the future demands created by an increasing population, expanding economy and global movement of goods.**

In northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan, we have embraced this vision of the future. An important feature of the 2008-2009 Transportation Legislative Agenda is a description of a five-part Lake Erie West Global Logistics Hub.

- **A Trans-continent Inland Port**  
Direct rail access to uncongested ports at both the Atlantic and Pacific seaports of North America
- **Toledo Seaport**  
Now the largest land-mass seaport on the Great Lakes, with direct access to the St. Lawrence Seaway
- **Toledo Express Air Commerce Park**  
Air cargo, rail accessibility, and direct Ohio Turnpike access for triple-trailers
- **Southern Great Lakes Distribution Corridor**  
Rail accessibility and access to strategic north-south and east-west interstate highways serving all of eastern North America
- **CSX National Gateway Intermodal Terminal**  
Direct rail access to east coast seaports, with plans for greatly increasing freight capacity

Each element of this hub is important and all should be promoted in order to realize the full economic potential of the region. The coalition that produced the 2008-2009 Transportation Legislative Agenda includes representatives of transportation businesses, government agencies, elected officials, economic development organizations, and others. TMACOG is coordinating development of the agenda. To review the agenda, see the link on the Transportation Department home page of [www.tmacog.org](http://www.tmacog.org).

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### Toledo/Northwest Ohio Transportation Coalition



### Transportation Legislative Agenda

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# Focal Points ...

## COMMUTER SERVICES

### Northwest Ohio CommuterLINK Update

As of May 1, 2008

Daily Adult Riders	26
Children Transported	24
Number of Daycares Used	13
Employers	22
Employer Locations	22
TARTA routes affected	4

NOTE: CommuterLINK serves people who cannot use public transportation due to their work schedule, child care location(s), or need to access areas outside the public transit area.

## Northwest Ohio CommuterLINK

----- Connecting people to jobs -----

A PROGRAM OF TMACOG

## Ozone Action Is a Season – Not Just a Day

TMACOG and the City of Toledo Division of Environmental Services have changed the way they announce ozone action warnings. In years past, an “Ozone Action Day” would be called when it was anticipated that weather conditions would produce unhealthy levels of ozone. In the new program, forecasts will be made during the entire Ozone Action Season (May through September). Forecasts of ozone levels will be made available at least twice each week and information will be provided to promote public awareness of ozone health issues. More frequent updates may occur during periods of unusual weather conditions.

One reason for this change in public announcement is the change in the ozone standards as determined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Acceptable standards for ozone have been made more stringent after recent studies showing the effects of ozone on people and agriculture.

Breathing ozone can worsen bronchitis, emphysema, and asthma. Ground-level ozone also can reduce lung function and inflame the linings of the lungs. Repeated exposure may permanently scar lung tissue. Healthy people also experience difficulty breathing when exposed to ozone pollution. Ozone can trigger a variety of health problems including chest pain, coughing, and congestion. Anyone who spends time outdoors in the summer may be affected, particularly children, outdoor workers, and people exercising. Children are especially vulnerable because of their developing lungs.

Anyone can ask to receive the ozone forecast by e-mail. Please contact [env.information@toledo.oh.gov](mailto:env.information@toledo.oh.gov).

### Northwest Ohio Car Buy Update

#### Car Buy Program

January 1, 2001 - June 1, 2008

Cars Delivered	473
Cars Paid Off	367

#### Fiscal Year 2008

(June 30, 2007 - June 1, 2008)

Applicants Approved	36
Cars Delivered	24
Currently Making Payments	44





## Oak Harbor and Eastwood Students Recognized for Work in Portage River Basin

At the 13th annual Portage River Student Congress held May 8 at Bowling Green State University, Oak Harbor High School students and Eastwood Middle School students were recognized for excellent work in their research projects evaluating water quality in the Portage River basin.

The Oak Harbor class taught by Mark Starkey received the award for Best Display. Their tabletop display included results of water quality testing comparing 2008 results with several years of testing at the school. The Eastwood Middle School class taught by Diane Swartz received the award for Best Presentation.

The Portage River Student Congress is organized by TMACOG's Portage River Basin Council with major support provided by the Wood County Commissioners, Wood and Ottawa County Soil & Water Conservation Districts, the Ottawa County Farm Bureau, Bowling Green State University Center for Environmental Programs, Back to the Wild; and corporate partners Elmore Manufacturing Co. and Brush Wellman, Inc.



Wood County Commissioners congratulate Oak Harbor students for their research in the Portage River. Commissioners are in front from left: Tim Brown, and holding the check, Alvie Perkins and Jim Carter.

## Swan Creek by Canoe

Recently, a group of people concerned with water quality in the region toured Swan Creek by canoe from a point near Reynolds Rd. and Airport Hwy. to where the creek empties into the Maumee River at the Middlegrounds in downtown Toledo. Those taking the trip were comparing the condition of the creek to what was seen on a similar excursion made 30 years ago. Matt Horvat, TMACOG's Maumee River Coordinator was part of the group. He said that the condition of the creek was better than he anticipated. The biggest concern that he noted is stormwater management – the volume and velocity of inflows, and controlling



June 6 on Swan Creek.

contaminants that come with stormwater. As the river enters downtown Toledo, Horvat notes that the city's back is to the river, with walls and industry blocking access and views.

## Environmental Resolutions Approved by TMACOG Leadership

The TMACOG leadership reviewed resolutions at their June 11 meeting in support of environmental initiatives. A resolution in support of the Clean Ohio Fund was approved by the Executive Committee. If renewal is approved by voters in November, at least \$400 million will be available in Ohio to preserve natural areas and farmland, protect streams, create outdoor recreation opportunities, and rehabilitate brownfields. Between 2000 and 2006, the Clean Ohio fund returned more than \$5 million to Lucas County for the protection of open spaces and wetlands. The Board of Trustees approved resolutions in support of a Portage River log jam removal project consistent with the health of habitat, and to endorse the update to the Areawide Water Quality Management Plan (the 208 Plan). The 208 Plan is an ongoing program between jurisdictions in northwest Ohio and southern Michigan which documents consensus on sewer and sewerage plans for the region.

### Intermodal Link

## *“Transportation for Tomorrow” Survey – Fill Out Online*

The Ohio 21st Century Transportation Priorities Task Force wants as much public input as possible as it works on a tight schedule to prepare its report this fall. Interested people are asked to go to <http://transportationfortomorrow.ohio.gov> (don't type www.) and fill out a survey which asks you to weigh the important decisions that need to be made about transportation expenditures.

The task force has been convened by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to involve all Ohioans in transportation issues facing the state. The goal of the task force is to prioritize how the state:

- Balances the movement of people and freight
- Promotes safety and reduces congestion
- Creates jobs
- Encourages responsible growth
- Helps to build sustainable communities
- Links all modes of transportation - connecting highways to rail, aviation, water ports, and transit

The 63-member task force includes four members from northwest Ohio: Anthony Reams, president of TMACOG, chairs the sub-committee charged with promoting a multimodal transportation system. James Hartung, president of the Toledo-

Lucas County Port Authority; and Mark Vonderembse, professor of Information Operations & Technology Management at the University of Toledo, are also on that sub-committee. Carty Finkbeiner, mayor of the City of Toledo, is a member of the economic development sub-committee.



*The 21st Century Task Force held a public meeting at Nitschke Hall at the University of Toledo, June 10.*

## *Applications Available for TIP and Transportation Enhancement Projects*

The Transportation Improvement Program (the TIP) is a schedule of federally funded projects and other major transportation projects in the region. It is a four-year prioritized list that is updated every second year. In 2008, TMACOG staff and committees will be preparing the 2010-2013 TIP. All transportation projects that use federal funds must be evaluated, prioritized, and listed in the TIP. Funding applications for new projects to be included in the TIP will be available in July and must be submitted to TMACOG by September 12, 2008, at 5 p.m.

The Transportation Enhancements (TE) program is a part of the TIP with a separate application, also due by September 12. Eligible TE projects must be related to surface transportation and can include pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and safety programs, scenic and historic highway programs, street landscaping and scenic beautification, historic preservation, and environmental mitigation. Examples of TE projects in the TMACOG region include the bike and pedestrian bridge over U.S. 24 at the Fallen Timbers Battlefield, streetscapes on Monroe Street in downtown Toledo, and bike paths in the City of Oregon.

Applications for TIP projects and for TE projects will be mailed to jurisdictions and can also be downloaded from [www.tmacog.org](http://www.tmacog.org). Contact Kent Gardam at 419.241.9155 ext. 116 or [gardam@tmacog.org](mailto:gardam@tmacog.org) for TIP projects and Diane Reamer-Evans for TE projects: ext. 117, or [evans@tmacog.org](mailto:evans@tmacog.org).

## ***Transportation Summit & Ohio Conference on Freight***

From September 15 through September 17, Toledo will be the site of two important transportation-related conferences. The Transportation Summit on September 15 focuses on the transportation issues directly affecting northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan. Workshops at the summit will address innovations in fuel efficiency and the relationships between transportation, economic development, and funding. The opening presentation will address emergency evacuation and the upcoming Toledo area freeway management system.

The Transportation Summit concludes with a dinner on September 15 that is also the kick off for the Ohio Conference on Freight. The conference, which continues September 16 and 17, addresses all modes of freight transportation, transportation logistics, and related workforce development in Ohio and the Great Lakes region.

The conference is presented by TMACOG in partnership with the National Association of Regional Councils. The Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority is the State Host Sponsor. For more information or to register for either or both conferences, go to [www.tmacog.org](http://www.tmacog.org) and click on the freight conference logo.

## ***Next Phase of “Fort to Port” Project Underway in Henry County***

In northwest Ohio, US 24 is a critical shipping route. ODOT states that trucks represent a third of the overall traffic on the highway. The mixture of trucks with residential commuter traffic has created long-standing safety concerns. The “Fort to Port” project is the complete renovation of US 24 connecting Fort Wayne, Indiana, with the Port of Toledo. A phase of construction now underway in Henry County will reconstruct US 24 as a four-lane highway from Township Road 10 to County Road 4A. The 5.11-mile section also includes the realignment of CR 4A, creating four bridges over streams or railroads and building an interchange at State Route 109. The renovation will reduce the number of access points as well as add lanes, and is expected to reduce accidents significantly. The entirely renovated highway between Napoleon and Waterville is scheduled to be complete in the fall of 2011.



## ***New Guide to Bicycle Facilities Available***

TMACOG's Pedestrian and Bikeways Committee has revised the regional bike facilities guide. The new edition will be published in July. Also in progress is a bicycle user's pocket guide which will be produced later in the summer. These two guides will provide information for both recreational and commuting cyclists.

The 2008-2009 *Bicycle Facilities Guide for Recreational Riding* provides a large map showing current bike trails, paths, lanes, and signed routes. Additional maps show details of paths in the Toledo area and its suburbs and plans for future development. The guide lists details of the region's many multi-use paths with information about trail surface and how different resources connect. The full-size 12-page guide will be available upon request at TMACOG, and a PDF will also be posted at [www.tmacog.org](http://www.tmacog.org).



Where the comprehensive facilities guide provides an overview of recreational facilities as well as street routes, the *Bicycle User's Pocket Guide* is being designed as a compact reference tool for bike commuters. It will help a cyclist design a route to match the rider's skill level with details of amount of traffic and traffic speed on different roadways. For more information see the bike and pedestrian section of the Transportation Department pages on [www.tmacog.org](http://www.tmacog.org).

## Lake Local Schools

Lake Local Schools, home of the Lake Flyers, serves students in northern Wood County including the villages of Walbridge and Millbury, and Lake Township. The school district includes Lake and Walbridge Elementary, Lake Middle School, and Lake High School. The four schools have an enrollment of about 1,700 students. Penta Career Center, which is also a member of TMACOG, serves high school students who choose a vocational or trade path.

Several other Wood County educational institutions are members of TMACOG: Bowling Green State University; Owens Community College; Eastwood, North Baltimore, and Northwood Local Schools; and Rossford Village Schools. These educational institutions forge bonds with business and government to provide greater opportunities for their students.

Jim Witt, superintendent of Lake Local School District points to the mission statement of his district: "The Mission of the Lake Local Schools, a dynamic, caring district, with a tradition for excellence, is to prepare, motivate, and challenge all students to achieve their full potential, eager to contribute to a diverse global society, by providing excellent opportunities and services in partnership with our rural/suburban community."

Superintendent Witt says, "Joining TMACOG has enabled our school district to have access to a network of partners that will make our organization stronger. We value those partnerships and look forward to a long and continuing relationship."



# News Files...

## New TMACOG Members

The Village of Cygnet in Wood County voted to rejoin TMACOG in May and Sunoco, Inc. became the newest non-governmental member.

## TMACOG Participates in Eco-friendly Frogtown Fair

TMACOG will be part of the City of Toledo's Frogtown Fair, an event to assist homeowners and families in adopting more environmentally friendly practices in everyday living. The fair will be Saturday, August 2, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Erie Street Market and is free and open to the public. In addition to viewing displays from local organizations and businesses—each championing a "doable" idea for greener living—participants will be able to pick up a rain barrel or exchange their mercury thermometer for a safer digital one. TMACOG will distribute information about Share A Ride and Ozone Action Season. People are asked to preorder rain barrels by calling 877.977.3135 or ordering online at [www.nerainbarrel.com](http://www.nerainbarrel.com).

For more information on the event, including registering as an exhibitor, purchasing a rain barrel or exchanging a thermometer, contact the Toledo Division of Environmental Services at 419.936.3015 or [env.information@toledo.oh.gov](mailto:env.information@toledo.oh.gov).

## Middlegrounds Metropark – Public Meeting to Review Designs

The Metroparks of the Toledo Area has been developing plans for 28 acres of land adjacent to the Maumee River near downtown Toledo's High Level Bridge and the Amtrak station. The public is invited to see designs that have been proposed for what is being called the Middlegrounds Metropark. The meeting is free and open to the public Tuesday, July 29, at the Grand Lobby of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Plaza. Tours of the property and displays of the proposals are available from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. with a presentation at 6 p.m. For more information, contact Diane Reamer-Evans at 419.241.9155 ext. 117, or [evans@tmacog.org](mailto:evans@tmacog.org).

## 40 Years of Regional Cooperation

Visitors to the TMACOG offices at 300 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive will see new displays celebrating TMACOG's service to the region since 1968. On the walls of the hallway are large panels showing TMACOG projects and programs - from the early studies for a new Maumee River crossing, to the Metropolitan Drug Unit. In the lobby area of the third floor is a new display featuring framed portraits of each of TMACOG's past chairs.



Tina Skeldon Wozniak

Intermodal transportation is a hot topic for our entire region, and this column is a chance for me to thank every community that is active in this important project. By expanding our transportation opportunities and connecting rail, air, sea, and land together, we can spur a new generation of economic investment in northwest Ohio.

Whether you represent Springfield Township, Wood County, or the City of Toledo, all of us recognize the extraordinary opportunities that intermodal transportation brings. We should be proud as a community to have such significant leaders to rely on, like Rich Martinko with the University of Toledo's Intermodal Transportation Institute or Jim Hartung and the staff of the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority. And of course, we can't forget to thank our own champion of this issue, Tony Reams of TMACOG!

Urban communities and rural communities together recognize the promise that intermodal transportation brings. Over the next weeks and months, we must take time to find the best ways to work together and say yes to meaningful opportunities.

I can assure you that Lucas County will be reaching out to partner with communities in and out of the county to take us to the next level with intermodal transportation. TMACOG will continue to be a resource for expertise and a forum for nonpartisan cooperation as we proceed. I hope that community leaders will continue to pay close attention to developments and participate in public hearings and input sessions. We need everyone's input and all good ideas brought to the table.

To respond to this letter, email [perspectives@tmacog.org](mailto:perspectives@tmacog.org)



## Commuting on Bike to Work Day 2008

People from at least 15 communities and businesses in the TMACOG region participated in Bike to Work Day on May 20. This annual event continues to grow, with support from elected officials and bike advocacy groups throughout the region.

In an upset, the Village of Holland won the Mayor's Challenge. The spirited challenge was issued by Oregon Mayor Marge Brown whose city employees are long-time, enthusiastic participants in Bike to Work Day. Mayor Brown challenged cities and villages in Lucas and Wood counties to see which jurisdiction could rally the greatest percentage of employees on Bike to Work Day. In Holland, four of the seven elected officials participated, and a total of seven of the 15 full-time employees took part. Oregon was well-represented with 27 riders and the City of Toledo rallied riders for three different routes. Members of the administration, several different departments, and a contingent of police officers from the Toledo Mountain Bike Division rode in from three city parks and converged at Government Center. The City of Bowling Green also organized a ride.

Bike to Work Day also garnered support from area businesses. WNWO Ch. 24 was a media partner, Owens Corning made a donation to pay for advertising, and the Maumee Valley Alternative Transportation Alliance partnered with the Bike Route to donate gift certificates for a drawing.



Walbridge Park was one of three gathering points for City of Toledo workers who participated in Bike to Work Day.

For more Bike to Work Day photos, click on the

**What's Hot** button at [www.tmacog.org](http://www.tmacog.org)



City of Oregon employees with Mayor Marge Brown (first row, second from left) on Bike to Work Day.





## Our Vision...

TMACOG will be the governmental partner of choice to coordinate regional assets, opportunities, and challenges.

### The Big Picture is published by TMACOG

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#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair

John Quinn, Mayor  
City of Bowling Green

#### President

Anthony L. Reams

#### TMACOG

300 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive  
P.O. Box 9508  
Toledo, Ohio 43697-9508

419.241.9155

FAX: 419.241.9116

#### E-mail:

[public.info@tmacog.org](mailto:public.info@tmacog.org)

[www.tmacog.org](http://www.tmacog.org)



300 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive  
P.O. Box 9508  
Toledo, Ohio 43697-9508

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