

# ***JACTS***

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## Operational and Management Strategies

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**Introduction**

MAP-21 legislation continues to emphasize the inclusion of operational and management strategies to improve the performance of existing transportation facilities in order to relieve vehicular congestion and to maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods.

The purpose of identifying and utilizing operational and management strategies is not only to improve the overall performance of the system but also to reduce the number of costly widening (capacity) projects and the frequency of total roadway reconstruction projects on the area's roadway network. To this end, JACTS participates in and promotes a wide variety of transportation strategies that work towards reducing congestion, prolonging the life of the existing facilities, and maximizing the safety and mobility of people and goods. These strategies, discussed below, also support the JACTS 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan goals of addressing operations and maintenance as well as preservation and accessibility.

**Asset Management**

Asset management is defined as an on-going process of maintaining, upgrading and operating physical assets cost-effectively, based on a continuous, physical inventory and condition assessment.

JACTS is actively involved in the asset management process for federal-aid roads in Jackson County. One of the goals of the statewide asset management program, overseen by MDOT, is to maximize pavement life by applying the correct "fix" at the right time. Half of all federal-aid eligible roads are inventoried each year by a trained team of field surveyors to determine deterioration levels. This team consists of representatives from MDOT, the Jackson County Road Commission, the City of Jackson, and JACTS staff. Each of the local agencies has access to the PASER rating system and the RoadSoft software to utilize the results of the field data. Both the City of Jackson and the Jackson County Road Commission have also chosen to survey all local roads and use this information within their own pavement management and forecasting process. Each road agency is responsible for its own pavement management system. Currently, data for the federal-aid eligible road system has been inventoried annually since 2003.

JACTS supports this activity with its involvement in training personnel, field surveying, equipment maintenance, assistance to the local agencies, and reporting the data to MDOT.

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**Capital Preventative Maintenance (CPM)**

This strategy is one of the implementation steps that can result from the asset management activity. JACTS promotes the timely resurfacing, repaving, repainting, re-decking, signal upgrading, and other preventative maintenance activities that extend the life of the existing transportation system infrastructure. Many of these projects can be small in scope, while others are not significant enough to be listed within the context of the Long Range Transportation Plan. MDOT identifies a General Program Account (GPA) in each year of the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for CPM activities. The local road agencies conduct these activities primarily as maintenance work utilizing state and local funding.

JACTS supports these activities through the annual asset management program and the inclusion of MDOT CPM funding in the TIP.

**General Maintenance**

By maintaining existing facilities in the best possible condition, the transportation system is sustained and functions more safely for users. Activities considered to be general maintenance include minor resurfacing, crack and chip sealing applications, ice and snow removal, traffic signal maintenance, pot hole filling, sign and pavement marking replacement and upkeep, street cleaning and debris removal, and landscaping activities including mowing, tree trimming, and general roadside maintenance.

JACTS supports these activities through the funding of sign upgrade projects, enhancement projects, and through participation in the asset management program.

**Safety Management**

Although many of the activities in the CPM and maintenance categories result in improved safety, safety is a secondary benefit from these activities. Activities that are directly related to improving the safety and operation of the transportation system include the development of projects to address high crash locations and intersections, adding specific safety features to existing roadways and bridges, improving geometrics or design, and promoting public safety programs.

Jackson County has also developed a Hazard Mitigation Plan in accordance with state and federal government guidelines. The purpose of the plan is to create an on-going document to protect the health, safety and economic interests of residents and businesses by reducing the impacts of natural and technological hazards through hazard mitigation planning, awareness, and implementation. Ten jurisdictions as well as the County of Jackson have adopted this plan.

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JACTS supports the integration and funding of safety activities through the administration in the Jackson Traffic Safety Program (JTSP); in the selection and funding of projects under the MDOT Federal Local Safety program; and, through continued support of the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning activities. JACTS will continue to work with Jackson County and other local jurisdictions to assist in the mitigation of transportation-related safety issues and concerns.

**Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)**

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) activities involve the addition of facilities, services, and/or technological enhancements designed to improve mobility and safety. Such activities can include computerized signal controls, automated transit fare collection systems, and transit vehicle locator systems. Future activities that could possibly occur include real-time motorist/trucker information with changeable message signs and a centralized traffic monitoring station. At the current time, neither the city nor JCDOT have plans for ITS technology.

JACTS supports ITS activities through its participation in the development of a Regional ITS Architecture and Deployment Plan by the MDOT Southwest Region Office for Jackson County.

**Access Management**

Access management involves establishing policies and implementing projects that will reduce or eliminate driveways, roadway access points, median openings, and street connections with the intention of improving safety, reducing congestion, and enhancing traffic mobility by reducing conflict points. Application of the best practices of access management has benefits for motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, transit, government agencies and communities by helping to maintain the capacity of the road system.

Success with access management requires that several players be involved in the process including, but not limited to, MDOT, local road agencies, property owners, developers, and local planning commissions. MDOT is actively involved in access management studies in order to preserve access along its numerous state highway corridors. This process involves bringing together all of the stakeholders to develop an access control plan, along with associated land use and zoning changes. Other access management activities include driveway consolidation and shared use, use of medians and/or turning restrictions, construction of frontage roads and the development of educational materials for the general public, planning commissions and developers.

JACTS supports access management procedures through its participation on MDOT steering committees for access management studies within the Jackson area.

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**Congestion Management**

MAP-21 requires that problem areas identified by the congestion management system be considered in developing metropolitan and statewide transportation plans and improvement programs. MDOT's Congestion Management System (CSM) includes the identification of alternative strategies to alleviate congestion while enhancing the mobility of persons and goods. Under these CSM regulations, general purpose road widening can only be considered after careful evaluation of the congestion reduction impacts of low-cost improvements such as traffic signal projects, local traffic engineering projects, and transit/ridesharing improvements.

A congestion management system will require a continuous program of data collection and system monitoring. The extent of this program will be determined by MDOT in consultation with MPO's, local officials, transit operators, and other transportation officials.

JACTS will continue to support the development of a congestion management system strategy with uniform performance measures across modes and jurisdictions for the use and analysis of traffic volume and congestion data among local road agencies, MPO's, and MDOT.

**Pedestrian and Non-Motorized Management**

Effective accommodation of pedestrians and users of the wide variety of non-motorized transport devices available today is important for the safe and efficient operation of the entire transportation system. In the JACTS study area, this includes active involvement on the Walkable Communities Task Force, an advisory committee to the Jackson City Council and the Jackson County Planning Commission. The task force is currently directing an effort for developing county-wide Non-Motorized Plan. This plan will identify shared-use paths and trails, striped bike lanes on roadways and sidewalks.

The local agencies are actively involved in the planning, designing, and implementation of these types of projects. MDOT will be producing a non-motorized map for the University Region's eleven-county planning area that will be completed in 2014.

An important element will be to establish an inter-connected, non-motorized system within the County, and to eventually pursue connections with trails in the surrounding areas. JACTS will continue to facilitate this effort in cooperation with the appropriate Act 51 agencies and the area's park and recreation departments.

Although specific projects are not identified and included in the Plan, significant investment in the development of non-motorized facilities can be expected over the next several years. As community awareness and involvement increases, it will become increasingly important to establish and maintain an objective process for recommending projects for funding.

JACTS supports these activities through participation on the Walkable Community Task Force, and by providing assistance and coordination with area communities in the development of non-motorized and recreational trail plans and projects.

JACTS will also continue participation in the Safe Routes to School Program and offer assistance to area jurisdictions in funding non-motorized transportation projects.

**Public Transit Management**

The Jackson Area Transportation Authority (JATA) currently utilizes MDOT's Public Transit Management System (PTMS) to maintain current capital equipment and operational data and to determine future needs. JACTS will continue to provide assistance to JATA in maintaining and updating its databases as required.

JACTS will continue to advocate and encourage connectivity between transit and other modes of transportation including non-motorized and pedestrian travel.

JACTS also supports the eventual funding and development of an inter-modal facility at the present Jackson AMTRAK Station.

JACTS will continue to promote public transit through its funding of capital equipment including buses, vans, and shelters.