



# Memo

To: Acme Township Planning Commission  
From: Sharon E. Vreeland, Township Manager  
Date: 09/21/10  
Re: VGT-Phase I SUP #2009-1P Status Update

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On September 16 there was a meeting to discuss technical aspects of the Village at Grand Traverse (VGT) Traffic Impact Study (TIS). Attendees represented the township, Road Commission, MDOT, BATA and applicant. Everyone I have spoken to since the meeting felt it was productive. My notes are attached.

It appears that the applicant's new traffic consultant, Progressive AE, is using the traffic counts taken in May 2010 by former traffic consultant URS but is otherwise going back to the proverbial drawing board to develop a new TIS. They expect to have some interim data developed within the next three weeks and hope to provide the completed TIS by mid-October. My current understanding is that other elements needed for the Phase I resubmittal, such as an amended Meijer site plan, are already complete or nearing completion. Assuming receipt of a complete Phase I resubmittal package on or about Friday, October 15 the current **potential shortest conceivable** processing timeline is as follows:

- **October 15:** township receives revised application materials and distributes to MDOT, County Road Commission, legal staff and Beckett & Raeder
- **October 15-November 30:** Consultant & Agency reviews MDOT needs at least 1 month for internal review both in Traverse City and by their Lansing signalization unit. We are hearing that state review and processing times on other projects around the state are running longer. As this step now falls in the firearm deer season/Thanksgiving area I'm projecting at least 45 calendar days needed.
- **December 1 - 10:** Township staff reviews and assesses consultant and agency submissions and submits compiled response to applicant.
- **December 10 - 31:** Applicant reviews township response internally and (optional) in joint meeting with all parties. I'm assuming here that the Christmas holidays may create some challenges.
- **January 3 - 14, 2011:** (Optional) applicant adjusts and resubmits application materials.
- **January 17-24, 2011:** Planning Commission receives final materials no less than two weeks prior to preliminary hearing to provide adequate review/preparation time.
- **February 21, 2011:** earliest potential preliminary hearing date.
- **March 28, 2011:** earliest potential public hearing date.
- **April 4, 2011:** earliest potential Board consideration date.
- I feel I can't say it enough: this is a **tentative, best-case scenario timeline only**. It should not be regarded in any way as firm at this time. I am keeping consultants and road agencies updated frequently so that workflows can be planned for optimal efficiency.



**Village at Grand Traverse – Phase I SUP Review Working Session**  
**Thursday, September 16, 2010 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.**  
**Grand Traverse Road Commission Office**  
**1881 LaFranier Road, Traverse City MI 49686**

**INVITED ATTENDEES (those not attending in strikethrough)**

**Acme Township:**

Sharon E. Vreeland, Township Manager (Process Facilitator)  
Wayne J. Kladder, Township Supervisor  
Jay Zollinger, Planning Commission Chairman  
Jeff Jocks, Olson, Bzdok & Howard – Legal Counsel  
~~John R. Iacoangeli, Beckett & Raeder – Consultant~~  
Steve Dearing, OHM – Traffic Sub-Consultant (Discussion Leader)

**Village at Grand Traverse:**

Steve Schooler, Anderson Real Estate  
Pete LaMourie, Progressive AE  
Terry Boyd, Gourdie Fraser Associates

**MDOT:**

Risë Rasch, MDOT North Region TSC Manager  
David Langhorst, MDOT Region Planner  
Gary Niemi, MDOT Development Engineer  
Mary Lajko, MDOT North Region

**Grand Traverse County Road Commission:**

~~Mary Gillis, Manager~~  
~~Heather Jamison, Engineer~~  
John Rogers, Traffic Services Supervisor

**NW MI COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS/TC-TALUS**

~~Matt Skeels, TC-TALUS Director~~

**Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA)**

Tom Menzel, Executive Director



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**AGENDA**

**CONVENED 1:05 P.M.**

- 1. Introductions and approval of agenda**
- 2. Discussion of Traffic Impact Study (TIS)-related issues:**

	<b>Corresponds to Applicant Question</b>
<b>1. Scope of Study: Look at a broad area due to initial assessment that scope of project will have a significant impact beyond very local areas.</b>	
a. Study area: M-72, US 31N, Lautner Road, Bunker Hill Rd, Mt. Hope Road. Also need to look at broader area due to initial assessment that scope of project will have a significant impact.	
i. External Intersections: Lautner/Bunker Hill, M-72/US 31, Mt. Hope/M-72, Mt. Hope/US 31, Lautner/M-72, Bunker Hill/US 31	
ii. Internal Intersection(s): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Concern about effective function of internal semi-roundabout proposed at intersection of main N/S and E/W internal roadways and potential backing of traffic to external roadways. Applicant may consider designing as full roundabout if to remain as design features</li> <li>2. Can trip generation/distribution be effectively assessed for other internal intersections? Twp. Mainly concerned with internal roundabout.</li> </ol>	
b. Data	
i. Availability: traffic count data were developed during May 2010. Additional counts may or may not be required as the traffic study progresses	
ii. Seasonal Adjustments: applicant has proposed seasonal multiplier to May data for July of 1.3 based on current data indicating that July is busier in this environment than August. MDOT has the same table and proposed multiplier figure.	Q1
iii. Background growth rate: MDOT has a 0.7 annual background growth factor for 2007 - 2035	Q2
c. Surrounding developments to include in analysis: potentially Grand Traverse Resort & Spa, LochenHeath, and Acme Village. All have attained a certain level of entitlement, while other proposed projects are more speculative. Information has also been obtained/provided about a potential traffic study for Turtle Creek.  Normally special event information is not included in a traffic study, but the annual horse show at Flintfields on North Bates Road about	Q3

half a mile north of M-72 East lasts for about 6 weeks and generates significant traffic volumes. Volumes are higher during the weekend when public spectators are invited, but there are additional daily traffic volumes related to riders, support teams, vendors, sponsors, etc. Vreeland can provide contact information for event organizer Alex Rheinheimer to applicant if desired. This type of use is not covered in the ITE trip generation manuals.	
d. Forecast year(s): see below	Q4
e. Basis of projection: see below	
<b>2. Site Development Issues:</b>	
a. Location of site access points: <b>specific</b> locations at half-mile spacings from existing crossroads along M-72 desired by MDOT and Road Commission for any potentially desired signalized intersections. Spacings near but not precisely at half-mile intervals are highly undesirable to the road agencies, as it inhibits effective signal timing.	
b. Proposed cross access to adjacent lands: Conceptual SUP requires applicant to demonstrate access easements linking the VGT property to Acme Village, the property to the south, the Andres property on the SW corner of M-72 E and Lautner, TART connections and provision for mass transit connections.	Q8
c. Land use codes & trip rates: applicant should specify land use codes used as TIS basis in report to aid in cross-checking.	
d. Trip reduction / diversion / internal capture: for items 2d, 2e & 2f, consideration should be given to the effects of project phasing, and the fact that impacts are not always merely additive but sometimes compounding.	
e. Trip distribution	Q7 & Q8
i. New trips: may not follow same patterns as pass-bys. Twp would prefer to see separate modeling for each.	
ii. Diverted trips	Q5 & Q6
f. Phasing: URS analysis broke development phasing into 3 phases, but the Conceptual SUP breaks the development in to as many as 5 phases. TIS phasing should be presented so that it is easy to match traffic phasing to Conceptual SUP development phasing.	
<b>3. Analysis Issues:</b>	
a. Software type & version: Applicant planning to use Synchro 7. Road Commission and MDOT request full simulation copies.	
b. Operational Adequacy (Minimum LOS): Area has some rural characteristics, but between existing approvals and this proposed project, it seems the urban boundary will extend into this area. MDOT and the Road Commission are suggesting that a minimum LOS D is appropriate, particularly at major intersections discussed above. LOS should be assessed on a by-movement basis. If LOS D is not achievable for all movements, assumptions should favor and maintain reasonable functionality on the public roads over the internal roads.	
c. Evaluation Scenarios: Background traffic today is known, and can be adjusted by assumptions to opening year of Phase I. Developing reasonable assumptions about pace of construction in projects with approvals but unbuilt capacity is difficult at best. Township and road agencies have discussed the following potential set of scenarios for applicant to consider. One potential benefit would be that it will enable all parties to perhaps understand how much of the cumulative	

	impacts are attributable to VGT and how much to other developments.	
i.	2012 Existing Roads & Traffic: not including any entitled but unbuilt project capacity	
ii.	2012 Existing Roads + VGT Traffic Phase 1:	
iii.	2012 Existing Roads + VGT Traffic Full Buildout:	
iv.	2012 Suitable Improvements for VGT Traffic Full Buildout: What would it take in terms of road improvements to manage impacts created by the VGT project at full immediate buildout?	
v.	2022 VGT + Adjacent Developments on Improved Roadway Network: Take a quick look at VGT buildout plus buildout of all capacity at other entitled projects to see what impacts occur and what it would take to address them.  Question about choice of horizon years was discussed. Grand Vision is examining models out to 2035. Applicant proposed Meijer projected opening year plus 5 year increments. General agreement that a Meijer opening year plus one projected buildout year are sufficient time periods; no interim period scenarios required.	
d.	Alternatives for needed improvements – Signals vs. Roundabouts: the township and road agencies are open to traffic management opportunities that are creative, effective and possibly more aesthetically pleasing as gateway features. Rodel software should be used if modeling one or more roundabouts. In this section of M-72 management of plowing and blowing snow are challenging.	
e.	Timing of and responsibility for improvements: Road agencies would find it more desirable to perform improvements to VGT buildout all at once, rather than having to add on and revise work every several years in a patchwork manner.	

**3. Confirm mutual understanding of:**

- progress to date:
- next steps and responsibilities:
  - township and road agencies are open to fielding interim updates and questions as the TIS process progresses. For instance, a brief look at data before it is loaded into modeling software could be helpful.
  - Township to get contact information for horse show to applicant:  
**Alexandra (“Alex”) Rheinheimer, Vice President**  
**Horse Sports By the Bay, Inc.**  
**801 S. Garfield Avenue #317**  
**Traverse City MI 49686**  
[www.horseshowsbythebay.com](http://www.horseshowsbythebay.com)  
**(561) 723-6287**
- timeline:
  - Progressive might be able to provide some interim information within about 3 weeks, and has a current goal of providing the report by mid-October.

**ADJOURNED 3:19 p.m.**

## Village at Grand Traverse (VGT)

### Traffic Impact Study – Baseline Questions/Information Summary

9/09/10

Topic/Question	Suggested Solution/Answer	Solution/Answer
1. Seasonal traffic volume multiplier (adjust May 2010 counts to project typical August/peak volumes)	Use 1.30 multiplier as defined by most current MDOT Seasonal Analysis PTR data (using "Pattern 4")	
2. Annual background traffic growth factor (not including the 4 other approved/under construction projects)	Past accepted practice for previous report and expected growth (if any) indicate use of 1% factor is appropriate.	
3. Background projects – Part 1  Information regarding Grand Traverse Resort and Acme Village related to site location, size and type of land uses, portion of those already completed by May 2010. (data already provided by Twp for Turtle Creek & LochenHeath)		
4. Background Projects – Part 2  Due to phased analysis for VGT (3 phases), need to define assumed completion percentage of background project's components for VGT horizon years of 2012, 2017, and 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assume Turtle Creek retail complete by 2012?</li> <li>• Assume 20%/60%/100% phased completion for other 3 background projects?</li> </ul>	
5. VGT trip generation – Part 1  Pass-by trip reduction for applicable uses (as defined by ITE manual)	More conservative (lower) 20-25% pass-by trip rate reduction (30%+ used in original study)	
6. VGT trip generation – Part 2  Internally captured trips for applicable uses (as defined by ITE manual)	More conservative (lower) 5% reduction rate (8% used in original study)	
7. VGT trip distribution – Part 1  Distribution of project-generated traffic onto existing roadway network. Appears to be no issues with original distribution other than clarifying that a portion of expected trips to/from the southwest (on US-31) would use Lautner/Bunker Hill Rd route.	Use original distribution %'s recognizing 5-10% will use Lautner/Bunker Hill route	
8. VGT trip distribution – Part 2  Use of small internal roadway connector from southwest corner of site to Mt Hope Rd.	Assume that connector will not be used until Phases 2 and/or 3 given location of proposed Meijer store	
9. Planned roadway projects – any currently planned MDOT or GTCRC roadway improvement projects that we should take into account for future conditions analyses.		