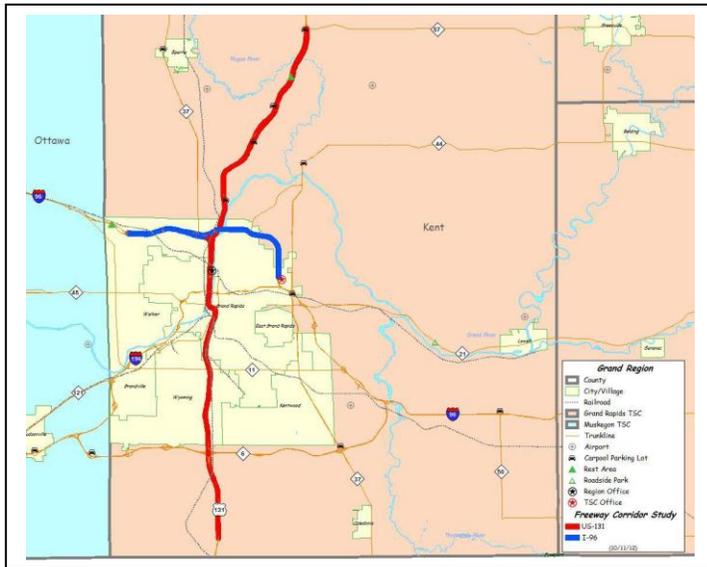


The US-131/I-96 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study Overview – Kent County



Study Limits: US-131: 100th Street to M-57 (14 Mile Road)
I-96: Fruit Ridge Avenue to Leonard Street

Project Description:

The US-131 and I-96 freeways were constructed in the 1960's and 1970's. There have been some major improvement projects since that time, such as the S-Curve reconstruction in 2000, the M-6/US-131 interchange in 2004, and several minor operational enhancements. Over the next decade, rehabilitation and reconstruction of various roadway segments and bridges on both freeways will be needed.

Over the past 50 years, US-131 has become the busiest freeway outside of southeast Michigan, with some segments in downtown Grand Rapids carrying over 100,000 vehicles per day. It serves as the primary north-south corridor for access into Grand Rapids, as well for regional travel to northern Michigan. In addition to the system preservation needs, operational improvements will also be needed to accommodate the economic activity in the Grand Rapids metro area. Most of these improvements are currently unfunded.

To address the long term preservation and operational needs of these freeway corridors, MDOT is undertaking a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study, in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration. The PEL study process allows MDOT to identify issues and evaluate options and impacts, as required by federal regulations, without defined funding commitments. This will provide MDOT the opportunity to complete the federal environmental assessment process for specific projects on a more expedited schedule, and be ready for construction when funding is available. The PEL process will take about 18-24 months to complete and will include input from area stakeholders and the public.