

Planning and Zoning

Emmet County Planning & Zoning Office
3434 M-119 Suite E
Harbor Springs, MI 49740
(231) 348-1731

Readmond Township

6008 Wormwood Lane, Harbor Springs, MI
49740
(231) 526-9601

Cross Village Township

5954 Wadsworth Ave., Cross Village, MI
(231) 242-0182

Friendship Township

3018 Beacon Hill Rd., Harbor Springs, MI
49740
(231) 526-8955

Driveway Permits & Access

Michigan Department of Transportation

1680 Hartwick Pines Rd., Grayling, MI 49738
(989) 344-1802
<http://www.michigan.gov/mdot>

Emmet County Road Commission

2265 East Hathaway Rd, Harbor Springs, MI
49740
(231) 347-8142

Wetlands Permits

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

P.O. Box 667, Gaylord, MI 49735
(989) 705-3450

U.S Army Corp. of Engineers (If connected to Great Lakes and Waterways)

(906) 635-3461

Additional Contact Information

Emmet County Controller

(231) 348-1704

Emmet County Parks and Recreation Department

(231) 348-1702

Emmet County Lakeshore Association

PO Box 277, Harbor Springs, MI 49740

Harbor Springs Area Historical Society

(231) 526-9771

Harbor Springs Chamber of Commerce

(231) 526-7999

Harbor Area Regional Board of Resources, Inc.

(231) 526-5060

Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians

(231) 242-0347

Little Traverse Conservancy

(231) 347-0991

Little Traverse Historical Society

(231) 347-2620

MDOT Heritage Route Program

(Lansing)(517) 335-2934

Northwest Michigan Council of Governments

(231) 929-5000

Petoskey Regional Chamber of Commerce

(231) 347-4150

Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council

(231) 347-1181



M-119 Tunnel of Trees GUIDEBOOK

A Community Resource

Maintaining Views
Landscaping & Vegetation
Driveways & Access
Shoreline, Slope & Wetland Protection
Signage
Lighting
Roadway Safety & Etiquette
Michigan Department of Transportation Requirements
Contact Information

Prepared by
the M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route
Implementation Committee

2005

The Purpose of this Guidebook

People move to and visit the M-119 corridor because of its natural beauty. The extraordinary scenic views of Lake Michigan and the unbroken line of the “tunnel of trees” along the corridor are what makes it so special.

The purpose of this Guidebook is to offer suggested practices to residents and developers that will preserve the special sense of place that exists along the M-119 corridor.

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Photos courtesy of Keith Lamkin, 2003. Devil's Elbow photo courtesy of NWMCOG, 2004.

Goals of the M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route Committee

The M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route Committee is dedicated to preserving and enhancing the scenic, cultural, natural, and historic characteristics of the M-119 corridor through Friendship, Readmond, and Cross Village Townships.

The Committee is made up of representatives from the three townships and the Emmet County Lakeshore Association. The Emmet County Planning and Zoning Office and the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians are active partners in the Committee's activities. The activities of the Committee are directed by the M-119 Management Plan which was developed by the

Michigan Department of Transportation Requirements

Michigan state laws require permission from the governmental unit having jurisdiction of the street or highway to construct inside the right of way line. Businesses or private parties and utility companies wishing to use the highway right of way for operations other than normal vehicular use of pedestrian travel are required to obtain a permit from MDOT for construction, outdoor advertising, and transport. The “Individual Application and Permit” (Form 2205) is used for all routine requests for construction and/or occupying state trunkline highways by individuals or corporations.

The requests that need permitting include:

- Residential and commercial driveways
- Tree trimming
- Drainage
- Landscaping
- Grading
- Utilities
- Other similar uses

In most instances, there is a fee for each permit. The application forms are available from the Grayling Transportation Service Center, Michigan Department of Transportation, 1680 Hartwick Pines Road, Grayling, MI 49739. Phone: (989) 344-1802. On the web at <http://www.michigan.gov/mdot>.

Contact Information

General Information

M-119 Heritage Route Committee

Chairperson: Richard Cobb—(231) 526-9201
Staff: Megan Olds, Northwest Michigan Council of Governments
P.O. Box 506
Traverse City, MI 49685-0506
(231) 929-5034

Soil Erosion, Critical Dunes & Stormwater Permits

3434 Harbor Petoskey Road, Harbor Springs, MI 49740
(231) 439-8996

When planning lighting, use these guidelines:

- Light the ground, not the sky. Security lights should have a cap or shield to reduce glare, eliminate upward-directing light, and eliminate the “trespass” of light out of the area where it is really needed.
- Place fixtures only where they are really needed.
- Use bulbs of appropriate wattage.
- Use time controls to automatically turn off lights when not needed.
- Use heat, sound, and movement triggered lights around the side and near the rear of buildings instead of lights that are left on all night.
- Use lights on the side of buildings that point down to light behind landscaping.

Roadway Safety & Etiquette

Some of the most treasured characteristics of the M-119 corridor are also the ones that create the most concern for safety among travelers. The curving and rolling nature of the roadway creates visual barriers. The narrow width requires sensitivity on the part of bikers, pedestrians, and motorists. With proper caution and consideration, safety hazards can be avoided, and different types of users can share the road in an effective way. M-119 is a quiet residential corridor. Noise from motor vehicles disturbs its serene quality. Those traveling along the corridor are asked to respect the nature of the place by minimizing loud vehicle noise. Roadway users are also asked to keep the area clean. Trash left along the corridor destroys the beauty of the place and pollutes the environment. Take care to stow wrappers, cans, bottles, paper, and other waste until it can be disposed of properly.



Committee in 2001 with public input and the participation of a broad range of community stakeholders including HARBOR Inc., the Little Traverse Conservancy, and Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council. The objectives of the heritage route plan include:

- Balancing growth and development with preservation and conservation
- Balancing roadside safety with aesthetics
- Maintaining steep slope integrity
- Preventing intrusions to scenic character
- Ensuring that the corridor is marketed responsibly and promoting the use of alternative routes in partnership with the Michigan Department of Transportation and the County Road Commission, where appropriate

In 2002, following the approval of the M-119 Heritage Route Management Plan by the three participating townships, Emmet County, and the Michigan Department of Transportation, the route was officially designated a Scenic Heritage Route by the State of Michigan.

Some of the Committee’s activities following the designation have included:

- The development of tree preservation guidelines for the corridor, which were mailed directly to property owners with their township tax bill.
- Coordination with MDOT to replace old shiny steel guardrails with brown matte finish guardrails that are more in keeping with the scenic character of the roadway.
- The construction and placement of heritage signs that mark sites of historic significance along the corridor, in partnership with the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians, the Little Traverse Historic Society, Harbor Springs Public Schools and the Michigan Department of Transportation, and a local architect, and with financial assistance from Cross Village, Friendship and Readmond Townships, the Emmet County Lakeshore Association, the Greater Good Hart Association, Cross Village Community Services, the Little Traverse Bay Band, and the Petoskey Harbor-Springs Area Community Foundation.

The Committee receives on-going technical and administrative assistance from the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments with financial support from the Michigan Department of Transportation.

Feedback about this Guidebook is welcome and appreciated. Please send your questions, comments, or suggestions to the M-119 Committee at P.O. 506, Traverse City, MI 49695-0506 or by email to Megan Olds at molds@nwm.cog.mi.us.

Corridor Features

One component of the heritage route management plan is an inventory of the unique features along the corridor. Water features, wetland areas, scenic views, historic and cultural resources, parks, churches, and other points of interest, as well as current land uses and zoning regulations are compiled in the plan. Maps and descriptions can be viewed at www.nwm.org/community/transportation. Follow the links to the M-119 Heritage Route Management Plan.



Noteworthy features along the route include stunning scenic views of Lake Michigan and the “tunnel of trees” that is the corridor’s namesake, and the hemlock forest and inland dune areas near Cross Village. Historic and cultural sites of interest include:

- Angell Farm
- St. Ignatius Church and Middle Village area
- Devils’ Elbow and Horseshoe Bend
- The Council Tree area
- Good Hart Village
- Readmond Township Beach
- Hulbert Preserve

The area’s steep slopes are a noteworthy feature. These slopes contribute to the dramatic views of Lake Michigan along the corridor and are a unique and vulnerable geologic characteristic.



should be included in project site plans as part of a natural stormwater system to lessen costs and flooding frequency while increasing open space and wildlife habitat.

Your property may also be impacted by the community’s Bluff Ordinance. The ordinance is a land use regulation that protects people and property from damage by defining appropriate, safe building and construction activities along the Lake Michigan shoreline bluff. Before you make changes to your property, check to see whether your parcel is affected by this ordinance by contacting the Emmet County Planning and Zoning Office.

Signage

Reducing the size and number of signs along a corridor helps retain scenic character. Small, simple, readable signs that use primarily subdued colors and materials and utilize no internal illumination are recommended. Sign materials should reflect the regional landscape, architectural character, and the historical perspective and styles. Signs that utilize the same materials that are used on the buildings on the same site are recommended.



Lighting

In Northern Michigan, the starry nights are breathtaking. The dark sky allows us to see and enjoy phenomena such as the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights), moonsets, moon shadows, constellations, sundogs, and other celestial events. Indiscriminate use of lighting diminishes this asset.

- Crabapple
- Flowering Dogwood
- Hawthorne
- Pussy willow*
- Rose Acacia*
- Serviceberry*
- Staghorn and Smooth Sumac
- Yew*

(Asterisk indicates salt tolerant)



Driveways & Access

Frontage roads, rear service drives, alleys, and shared driveways are examples of design alternatives that simplify the visual character, minimize conflicts and safety hazards, and increase road carrying capacity by reducing the number of cars turning from the main road and by reducing curb cuts. Placing parking areas behind buildings or maintaining vegetative buffers also increases visible green space. More information about driveway design can be obtained from the local Road Commission, MDOT, and the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments.

Shoreline, Slope & Wetland Protection

To protect the Little Traverse Bay and Lake Michigan, studies recommend that a minimum fifty-foot wide vegetation strip of native trees, shrubs, and/or plants should be planted to filter the sediment and pollution from the stormwater runoff of the highway. These plantings also decrease erosion along the steep slopes along M-119.

Wetlands are natural stormwater retention areas. Eliminating them increases reliance on costly infrastructure, destroys open space and wildlife habitat, and increases sediment degradation of surface waters. Wetlands

Maintaining Views

Most people live or travel along M-119 because they want to enjoy the unmatched scenic beauty of the corridor. There are some basic steps that community members can take to ensure that the character of the corridor is maintained while enjoying views from property.

The Lake Michigan Bluff

The bluff along Lake Michigan was formed by glacial deposits, and is characterized by layers of sand and clay. The sand layers can become unstable when saturated with water and “slump”, or slide off the clay layer and down the bluff. Trees provide stability to the bluff by both their root mat and the amount of water they use for normal growth. Removal of trees on the bluff is strongly discouraged. Even topping seriously damages a tree.



Along the corridor, the maintenance of “*filtered views*” is recommended. Filtered views are views where trees are selectively removed as opposed to clearing all vegetation from an area. No more than one-third of the trees are removed. A carefully established filtered view has distinct advantages:

- It helps the home look in harmony with its surroundings;
- It provides a natural windbreak from the westerly winds coming from the Lake;
- It maintains a tree canopy over the ground, thereby eliminating the brush growth that occurs with clearing.

Filtered views provide additional benefits including the preservation of the corridor’s unified “tunnel of trees” feeling, the preservation of habitat for animals, and shoreline and bluff protection.

Recommendations for Trimming for a Filtered View

Standing at the spot from which you would like to have a view, identify small trees (less than 3”) and brush to be removed. Remove these and reassess your view.

The next step involves “limbing” of trees. This is the removal of specific branches of trees. No more than one-third of the limbs of any tree should be removed, or the health of the tree will be impaired. Carefully assess your view before deciding to take trees down. Don’t take more than one-third of the trees in any area. For more information, contact the Emmet County Planning Department or MDOT. Contact information can be found in the last few pages of this booklet.

Summary for Responsible Trimming

- Maintain a natural corridor by leaving the setback 73’ from the centerline of the road in its natural state.
- Don’t remove more than one-third of the limbs on any one tree.
- Don’t remove more than one-third of the trees in any area.
- Don’t remove the tops of trees.
- Weigh very seriously any consideration of removing bluff trees.

During Construction

Identify trees that you want to enjoy after your home is built. Put temporary fencing, in a 20’ diameter, around these trees to be sure there will be no disturbance to the root system and to prevent damage to the tree during construction.

Maintaining Forested Land

There are things you can do to help insure the continuing health and beauty of the forest. Many of these things also help minimize the effects of a growing human population on the wildlife of the area.

- Leave the 73’ setback from the center of the road in its natural condition.
- Leave standing dead timber alone, unless it is endangering your home or the roadway. Dead trees are an important home for many birds and animals. The bugs that help decompose the tree are an important source of food for woodpeckers and other animals.
- When planting, use native species.
- Save Grand (mature) Trees. Grand Trees are especially old trees that may have value as cut timber, but have much more value as a majestic member of the old growth forest.

Allow your property to remain as much as possible in its natural state. Keep the rustic charms rather than “suburbanizing” this fragile area.

Landscaping & Vegetation

Protecting or planting native vegetation to create a buffer or screen can be utilized for a variety of purposes, such as windbreaks in large open spaces or along the sides of structures receiving winter winds; in strips along drainage areas and surface water bodies for protection; to screen parking lots; and to screen distinct land uses. Utilizing plantings with native species on areas visible from the road complements the natural environment. For more information about which plant species are appropriate for the corridor, visit the **Northern Michigan Native Plants** website at www.watershedcouncil.org/nativeplants.html.

Invasive Non-Native Species to Avoid

Autumn olive - *Eleagnus umbellata*

Barberry - *Berberis spp.*

Buckthorn - *Rhamnus cathartica, Rhamnus frangula*

Crown vetch - *Coronilla varia*

Honeysuckle - *Lonicera tatarica, L. morrowi, L. x-bella, other cultivars*

Maiden grass - *Miscanthus sinensis*

Multiflora rose - *Rosa multiflora*

Periwinkle (myrtle) - *Vinca minor*

Privet - *Ligustrum vulgare*

Purple loosestrife - *Lythrum salicaria*

Reed canary grass - *Phalaris arundinacea*

Russian olive - *Eleagnus angustifolia*

Siberian Elm - *Ulmus pumila*

Spotted knapweed - *Centaurea maculosa*

Yellow water iris - *Iris pseudacorus*

To prevent potentially dangerous situations, Consumers Energy, the local electric power provider, trims trees on a regular, rotating schedule to clear branches away from power lines and brush from rights-of-way. Consumers Energy advises its customers to “plant smart.” There are many trees and large shrubs that can be attractive additions to your yard that do not interfere with power lines. Some of these are:

- Alder buckthorn*
- Amur Maple*
- Arrowwood Viburnum*
- Bristlecone Pine
- Common Juniper