



Legislation Text

File #: 21-0861, **Version:** 2

Resolution to Request the Michigan Department of Transportation to Address the Frequency of Commercial Truck Crashes on the Eastbound M-14 Bridge over the Huron River

Since June 2019, there have been three serious crashes involving commercial trucks on eastbound M-14 over the Huron River, which have released diesel fuel into the Huron River. One of these crashes resulted in the fatality of the truck driver. There have been significantly more motor vehicle crashes at this location. The bridge itself is in the Charter Township of Ann Arbor. However, the Huron River immediately south of the bridge is in the City of Ann Arbor.

Within a 48-hour period starting the afternoon of April 15, 2021, there were three, separate commercial truck crashes. All three crashes occurred during heavy rain events. One of these three crashes caused a diesel release with the other two involving a rollover of the truck and trailer.

Eastbound M-14 over the Huron River is presenting a danger to public safety and environmental health. There has been one fatality and repeated environmental harm. City Council is asking the Michigan Department of Transportation to take deliberate measures to either reduce speeds, re-engineer the road to increase traction and prevent hydroplaning, or implement other means to reduce or eliminate this hazard.

Budget/Fiscal Impact: None

Prepared by: Mike Kennedy, Fire Chief

Reviewed by: John Fournier, Assistant City Administrator

Approved by: Tom Crawford, City Administrator

Whereas, The City is concerned about the safety of motorists using the limited access roadway system that circles the City;

Whereas, The Huron River is a key natural resource for both the City and region and all efforts should be made to reduce or eliminate the release of hazardous materials into the Huron River or Huron River watershed;

Whereas, There is a consistent pattern of commercial truck crashes on eastbound M-14 over the Huron River during rain events;

Whereas, Within the last two years, three of these commercial truck crashes have resulted in one fatality and three instances of the release of diesel fuel into the Huron River, requiring the services of the Washtenaw County Hazardous Materials Response Team, City of Ann Arbor Fire Department, and City of Ann Arbor Public Works Unit. The bridge itself is in the Charter Township of Ann Arbor. However, the Huron River immediately south of the bridge is in the City of Ann Arbor;

Whereas, Within a 48-hour period starting the afternoon of April 15, 2021, there were three, separate commercial truck crashes. All three crashes occurred during heavy rain events. One of these three crashes caused a diesel release with the other two involving a rollover of the truck and trailer.

Whereas, The City wants to ensure the safety of motorists and the protection of the Huron River;

Whereas, Previous requests that we have made to the Michigan Department of Transportation for attention to this important transit corridor have gone unaddressed; and

Whereas, The Michigan Department of Transportation has indicated that they are only willing to install smart signage on the freeway, and that any study they undertake related to speed may result in a recommendation for an increase in the speed limit rather than a decrease regardless of any safety concerns;

RESOLVED, That City Council is requesting that the Michigan Department of Transportation take deliberate measures to either reduce speeds, re-engineer the road to increase traction and prevent hydroplaning, or implement other means to reduce or eliminate this hazard;

RESOLVED, Should MDOT decide closing the Barton interchange is a preferred option, the City is willing to participate in its public engagement process;

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution is sent to our local state legislative delegation and Governor Whitmer; and

RESOLVED, That the City Administrator be authorized to take any other necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Briggs, Disch, Hayner, Griswold and Ramlawi

As Amended and Approved by Ann Arbor City Council on May 3, 2021