

= M @-@ 46 (Michigan highway) =

M @-@ 46 is an east ? west state trunkline highway in the US state of Michigan between Muskegon and Port Sanilac , terminating near Lake Michigan and Lake Huron on each end . Except for the north ? south segment that corresponds with the US Highway 131 (US 131) freeway between Cedar Springs and Howard City , M @-@ 46 is practically a due east ? west surface highway . The road runs through rural sections of the Lower Peninsula connecting several freeways including US 31 , US 131 , US 127 and I @-@ 75 .

The highway was formed by July 1 , 1919 along two discontinuous sections of its current corridor . The gap was filled in by 1927 , but a second break in the routing was created in the 1930s . This second interruption in the corridor was eliminated within a year . The various paths that M @-@ 46 has followed have been straightened over the intervening years , producing the modern corridor by the 1970s . Other changes have been made to the location of the western terminus in Muskegon , but it has remained fixed in its current location since 1984 .

= = Route description = =

M @-@ 46 is one of three trans @-@ peninsular highways in the Lower Peninsula , starting blocks away from Lake Michigan in Muskegon and running almost to Lake Huron in Port Sanilac . The other two highways that do this are M @-@ 55 (Manistee ? Tawas City) and M @-@ 72 (Empire ? Harrisville) . The highway is maintained by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) like all other state trunkline highways in the state . The department tracks the traffic volumes along all state highway highways as a part of its maintenance responsibilities using a metric called average annual daily traffic (AADT) . This measurement is a calculation of the traffic level along a segment of roadway for any average day of the year . In 2009 , MDOT figured that lowest traffic levels were the 1 @,@ 855 vehicles used the highway daily near the eastern terminus . The peak traffic volumes were the 30 @,@ 505 vehicles AADT along the section of M @-@ 46 immediately east of the US 31 freeway near Muskegon . The trunkline has been listed on the National Highway System (NHS) between the western terminus and US 31 , and between Cedar Springs and the M @-@ 53 junction in Sanilac County . The NHS is a network of roadways important to the nation 's economy , defense , and mobility .

= = = Muskegon to Saginaw = = =

M @-@ 46 starts at an intersection between Muskegon and Apple avenues near the downtown Muskegon business district . The highway follows Apple Avenue eastward through the edge of the district and through a residential area in Muskegon to an interchange with the US 31 freeway . On the other side of the freeway , Apple Avenue runs farther east , leaving the Muskegon area and passing through the rural woodlands of Muskegon County . Along the way , the road passes the Hall Drain , an artificial reservoir . At Casnovia , M @-@ 37 merges in from the north at a roundabout intersection , and the two highways run concurrently across the county line into Kent County , turning to the southeast . A few miles later in Kent City , M @-@ 46 turns due east again and leaves M @-@ 37 to run independently along 17 Mile Road . The highway runs through more mixed agricultural land to Cedar Springs , where M @-@ 46 turns north along the US 131 freeway .

US 131 / M @-@ 46 runs northwards through the northern Kent and western Montcalm counties for about 16 miles (26 km) near Sand Lake and Pierson . Near Howard City . M @-@ 46 leaves the freeway and turns eastward independently along Howard City ? Edmore Road . The highway runs through the north side of Montcalm County connecting the communities of Lakeview and Edmore . Between Six Lakes and Edmore , M @-@ 66 runs along M @-@ 46 , a distance of around 3 @.@ 5 miles (5 @.@ 6 km) . The trunkline passes several small lakes and crosses the Maple River near Vestaburg before crossing into Gratiot County . The highway , now called Monroe Road crosses more farm fields as it approaches Alma . North of downtown , M @-@ 46 intersects the north ? south leg of the Alma business loop before meeting the US 127 freeway . East of this freeway

interchange , M @-@ 46 picks up the east ? west leg of the US 127 business loop for St. Louis . Although similar , the separate business loop follows M @-@ 46 along Monroe Road over the Pine River to Main Street , where it turns south through downtown . M @-@ 46 continues eastward from town through farm fields to Breckenridge . At Meridian Road , the highway follows Gratiot Road into Saginaw County east through Merrill and Hemlock to the Saginaw area . East of Hemlock , M @-@ 46 meets the northern terminus of M @-@ 52 and then the southern terminus of M @-@ 47 in Saginaw Charter Township near its crossing of the Tittabawassee River .

= = = Saginaw to Port Sanilac = = =

As M @-@ 46 enters Saginaw proper , it follows Gratiot Avenue past the Saginaw Country Club . The area around the club is filled with residential subdivisions as the roadway approaches the Saginaw River . M @-@ 46 follows Stephens Street southeasterly and Rust Avenue eastward to cross the river . The highway continues along Rust Avenue to Warren Avenue where it turns north . The highway then follows Holland Avenue , which is the continuation of Gratiot Avenue on the east side of the river . M @-@ 46 passes through an interchange with I @-@ 75 / US 23 and leaves the Saginaw area . The highway continues eastward through rural Saginaw County into the region of the Lower Peninsula known as The Thumb . In Tuscola County , M @-@ 46 passes through the Vassar State Game Area and crosses the Cass River north of Vassar .

The area near the river east to the M @-@ 24 junction is forested . As M @-@ 46 approaches Kingston , farms dominate the landscape again . M @-@ 46 crosses into Sanilac County just west of the M @-@ 53 junction at Van Dyke Road . Between Elmer and Sandusky , M @-@ 19 follows M @-@ 46 for about 5 miles (8 @. 0 km) . The highway crosses the Black River near Carsonville . The eastern end of M @-@ 46 is in Port Sanilac , just blocks west of the city 's marina on Lake Huron at an intersection with M @-@ 25 .

= = History = =

M @-@ 46 was designated by July 1 , 1919 on a discontinuous route that ran between Howard City and Saginaw and between rural Tuscola County and Port Sanilac . The highway followed a different routing in place than it does today . The western terminus was in downtown Howard City , rather than north of town . The road ran farther south in Gratiot County so that it went into downtown Alma . By the end of 1927 , the Michigan State Highway Department (MSHD) filled in the gap between Saginaw and Tuscola County , and the department extended the western end to Muskegon . M @-@ 46 followed the contemporary US 131 between Cedar Springs and Howard City and the modern routing west to Muskegon ending at US 31 downtown . In the middle of the 1930s , the section north of Howard City was straightened , removing the angled route between Amble and Howard City in favor of a more direct connection to US 131 . The US 131 and M @-@ 37 concurrencies were removed , however , when the section between Kent City and Cedar Springs was removed from the highway system . That gap was eliminated in late 1936 when M @-@ 46 was routed down US 131 to Howard City and along M @-@ 82 to Newaygo . From there , it followed M @-@ 37 south to Casnovia . A new road was opened in early 1937 between Vestaburg and Alma , which was designated as part of M @-@ 46 by the end of the year . The western terminus was extended farther west through Muskegon to the outlet of Muskegon Lake on Lake Michigan as well . The M @-@ 82 concurrency was removed in 1938 , and a more direct routing between Six Lakes and Edmore opened at the same time .

By the end of the 1950s , the routing through Muskegon was altered . Instead of terminating in the park at the outlet of Muskegon Lake into Lake Michigan , M @-@ 46 was routed to follow US 16 to the car ferry docks . The last section of gravel highway was also paved in Newaygo County near the Montcalm County line . The routing of M @-@ 46 between Casnovia and Howard City was altered in 1973 when the US 131 freeway was opened north of Cedar Springs by then @-@ Congressman Gerald R. Ford . M @-@ 46 was restored to the Kent City ? Cedar Springs roadway it used in the 1930s and routed concurrently along US 131 again . In the process , M @-@ 47 replaced a section

of M @-@ 57 that had been designated along the 17 Mile Road in late 1948 or early 1949 . The last change to M @-@ 46 's routing was made in the early 1980s . The extension through Muskegon to the car ferry docks was reversed , truncating the highway to its current terminus at then @-@ Bus . US 31 in 1984 . The business loop was shifted away from this location in 2007 , leaving M @-@ 46 to terminate at a junction with a city street instead of another state highway .

= = Major intersections = =