

Minutes
Twin Cities Area Transportation Study
Technical Advisory Committee

February 26, 2007
 9:30 A.M.

Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

TECHNICAL MEMBERS PRESENT:	Aaron Anthony, City of Bridgman Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission Ray Lenze, MDOT, Statewide Planning Larry Merritt, St. Joseph Charter Township Catherine McIlwee, Berrien Co. Planning Dept Bill Purvis, Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority Terrie Smith, Lincoln Charter Township Gary Soper, Benton Charter Township, TAC Chairman Sarah Woolcock, MDOT – Coloma TSC Tim Zebell, City of St. Joseph
TECHNICAL MEMBERS ABSENT:	Wilbert Brown, Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority Chris Cook, City of Benton Harbor Todd Gardner, Village of Stevensville John Gast, Lake Charter Township Jason Latham, MDOT, Southwest Region Sarah Koepke, Federal Highway Admin (ex officio) Charles Kormanik, Village of Shoreham Fred Featherly, MDOT - Multi-Modal Services Andy Minyo, Federal Transit Administration Robert Rusch, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Lee Scherwitz, SW Michigan Regional Airport Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning Paul South, MDOT/TSC, Coloma Donna Wittl, MDOT Planning Representative, Cornerstone Alliance
SWMPC STAFF PRESENT:	Kelly Getman-Dissette
PUBLIC:	

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**
 Chairman Gary Soper called the meeting to order at 9:30A.M.

2. **MINUTES OF JANUARY 22nd, 2006:**
 - Motion by Brian Berndt, seconded by Tim Zebell: “TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 22, 2006 TAC MEETING, as corrected.” Minutes were corrected to note that Tim Zebell was present. Motion approved.

3. **STAFF REPORT:**
 - **Cornerstone Chief Elected Officials (CEO) presentation** – On February 2nd, Tupica and Getman-Dissette attended the Cornerstone CEO meeting to ask local elected officials for their support in efforts to verify the accuracy of SE data. Data will be used for travel demand modeling for the LRP, but local units of government will also be able to utilize the information for other local planning efforts. Meeting attendees seemed willing to help, and provided contact information.
 - **Pre-UWP Meeting with MDOT and FHWA** – The pre-UWP meeting, February 12, 2007, was an opportunity to review the current UWP as well as plan for the next fiscal year. Tupica, Getman-Dissette, and John Egelhaaf

(SWMPC Director) were in attendance, as well as several representatives from MDOT and FHWA. Discussion included how the committees are staffed, whether each of the municipalities has representation, progress on the environmental mitigation and consultation plan, and the need to update committee bylaws. In addition, substantial discussion centered on transit, and the need for a coordinated plan that includes human service providers. This plan is necessary in order for transit agencies to receive certain types of FTA funding, such as JARC (5316), New Freedom (5317), and funds for the elderly and disabled (5310). SWMPC will be conducting a county-wide transit study for Berrien, and it is hoped that components of this plan will fulfill the coordinated plan requirement.

- **Post-processing 2006 traffic counts** – Tupica has been post-processing 2006 traffic counts, renaming the files and aggregating them so that they are in a useable format. Getman-Dissette reminded everyone to be sure to request traffic counts at sites where upcoming work is expected so that we have current information.
- **Visualization Techniques workshop** – SAFETEA-LU mandates that MPOs utilize visualization techniques as a part of their public participation processes. Therefore, Tupica and Getman-Dissette attended a workshop on January 31st to learn about available and commonly used techniques. Possibilities techniques such as enhanced digital photography, maps, animated demonstrations of traffic features like roundabouts, and even virtual reality. Cost, time, and expertise are all major factors when deciding on the type of visual aids to use.
- **CMAQ Project Selection** – FY 2007 CMAQ projects were submitted to Pete Porciello at MDOT. After Porciello performs a cursory review, he will submit the projects to FHWA. Once FHWA makes a decision on the projects, they will notify MDOT, and MDOT will notify us of the decision. FY 2008-2009 projects will be selected at a meeting in July. Lenze advised those who submitted projects to begin preliminary work so that construction can begin when projects are approved.
- **Safe Routes to School** – A subcommittee of the Benton Harbor Cities of Promise effort is working on a Safe Routes to School project in the City of Benton Harbor. A meeting is scheduled for 3pm on February 26th to present the program to Paula Downing, Superintendent of Schools, and to determine her interest and suggestions for successfully completing the program at one or more of the City's elementary schools. Smith also indicated that Lakeshore schools have registered for the Safe Routes program.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

- **Chair and Vice Chair nominations** – Chair and Vice-Chair were nominated in January. Gary Soper and Tim Zebell accepted the nominations.
- **Culvert Installation & Maintenance Workshop** – This training will occur in several locations during the month of March. The nearest to us will be on March 12th at the Grand Rapids Crowne Plaza. Those interested should contact LTAP at 906.487.210. The fee is \$70 per public agency (\$90 for private agencies).
- **Asset Management Training Opportunities** – There are two asset management training opportunities in March. The first, March 12th at the Lawrence ISD Technology center from 9:30-noon, will cover the internet based reporting tool that all Act 51 agencies must use. Register by contacting Tupica at tupicar@swmpc.org. The second, March 19th at the Kalamazoo County Road Commission all day, will train those who desire to be part of the team that will rate road surface condition. Register by contacting LTAP at 906.487.2102.
- **FY2008 FY2007 UWP Changes to include Green Infrastructure Plan** – At the January meeting, SWMPC staff discussed the Green Infrastructure project. With the assistance of the Michigan Natural Features Inventory, SWMPC will identify environmentally sensitive areas and prioritize the ones with greatest value for conservation. Also, we will receive an analysis tool for environmental impact assessment that will ensure our compliance with the environmental mitigation component of the SAFETEA-LU legislation. The ultimate product of this effort will be a regional plan that links together environmentally sensitive areas as well as other “green” spaces, such as public parks and other protected lands.

Getman-Dissette explained that this amendment would transfer \$6,000 from the Long Range Planning budget into the Database Management budget and add text to hire a consultant to collect the environmental data. *Lenze moved, supported by Woolcock, to recommend approval of an amendment to the TwinCATS FY 2007 UWP to include the addition of the Green Infrastructure work task under Database Management and associated budget adjustments. Motion approved.*

- **Projects for FY2008-2011 call for projects** – TIP applications were submitted to Getman-Dissette. The subcommittee will meet March 15th at 9:30 am to prioritize projects for the March regular meeting. The meeting on the 15th will be at St. Joseph City Hall.

- **Benton Harbor Arts District TIP Amendment** – Despite the October amendments to the FY 2007 TIP for the City of Benton Harbor, the program is not correct. Engineering consultants for the City of Benton Harbor contacted Getman-Dissette to explain that FY 2007 for the City should reflect a motion passed by the TwinCATS Policy committee in March of 2006. A selection from that motion states,
AND WHEREAS, the City of Benton Harbor has agreed to forego their planned 2007 Britain Avenue Project (\$189,958 Federal Funds), which is not required due to limited pavement disturbance on a recent sewer bypass project and their 2009 Eighth Street Project (\$327,400 Federal Funds), which is not necessary due to Harbor Town master plan revisions, to combine with the 2008 Territorial Road Project (\$165,000 Federal Funds), to improve the Arts District and Territorial Road up to the City Limits.

Berndt moved, supported by Woolcock to recommend approval of the following amendments to the FY 2006-2008 TIP:

- Remove from FY 2007 Surface Transportation Program – TwinCATS Local Projects in the City of Benton Harbor:
 - Eight Street Advance Construct – Total Cost \$400,000 with repayment in FY2009.
 - Territorial Road Advance Construct (Paw Paw Ave to Fair, JN 46083) – Total Cost \$201,600 with repayment in FY2009.
- Add to FY 2007 Surface Transportation Program – TwinCATS Local Projects in the City of Benton Harbor:
 - Historic Arts District (JN 88357) – Total Cost \$828,860 (Federal Cost \$181,808; Non-Federal Cost \$647,052; \$601,600 Advance Construct with repayment in 2009).

Motion approved.

- **2006 CMAQ** – There is concern over 2006 CMAQ funding for signal optimization on Pipestone and Napier. Woolcock explained that signal optimization projects are primarily engineering costs and involve very little construction costs. There is concern that local funds can only be used for construction, whereas MDOT funds can be used for engineering.

Berndt moved, supported by Zebell, to recommend approval of an amendment to the FY 2006 local CMAQ projects to move funds from projects 87670, 87671, and 87673 (\$120,000 federal funds) into the MDOT job number, 87787 in order to use CMAQ funds for signal optimization on Pipestone and Napier.

5. OLD BUSINESS

- **Federal Local Safety Program FY 2008 Call for Projects** – The safety application deadline is March 1st. While there were no prepared applications for the committee to support, Zebell expects to submit a project for the City of St. Joseph that will improve safety for those traveling to Lakeland Hospital. A right lane on Napier east of Langely would be made into a dedicated right turn lane. *Woolcock moved (seconded by McIlwee) to support this project in theory. Motion approved.*

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- None

7. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

- Lenze distributed the new MDOT road map. For additional copies, contact the Coloma TSC.
- Lee Scherwitz briefly attended the meeting only to announce concerns that bids to airports have been halted.
- Soper reminded members to sign-in when they arrive so that the minutes correctly reflect meeting attendance.

8. ADJOURNMENT: 10:30 am

- Next meeting is March 26, 2007 (NOT March 19th, due to Asset Management Training)

Compiled by
Kelly Getman-Dissette, Transportation Planner
3/02/2007