

# Minutes

## Twin Cities Area Transportation Study Technical Advisory Committee

September 15, 2008

9:30 A.M.

Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

<b>TECHNICAL MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission Chris Cook, City of Benton Harbor Ray Lenze, MDOT, Statewide Planning Lee Scherwitz, SW Michigan Regional Airport Bill Purvis, Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority Sarah Woolcock, MDOT - Coloma TSC Aaron Anthony, City of Bridgman Jason Latham, MDOT, Southwest Region Katie Montoya, Berrien County Community Development Dept. Gary Soper, Benton Charter Township Larry Merritt, St. Joseph Charter Township Tim Zebell, City of St. Joseph
<b>TECHNICAL MEMBERS ABSENT:</b>	Bill Brown, NIRPC (ex officio) Fred Featherly, MDOT - Multi-Modal Services Todd Gardner, Village of Stevensville Gloria Payne, Lake Charter Township Sarah Koepke, Federal Highway Admin (ex officio) Charles Kormanik, Village of Shoreham Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration Representative, Cornerstone Alliance Robert Rusch, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning Paul South, MDOT- Coloma TSC Donna Wittl, MDOT Planning Bill Boyd, Royalton Township Terrie Smith, Lincoln Charter Township
<b>SWMPC STAFF PRESENT:</b>	Kelly Getman-Dissette Nickolas Musson
<b>OTHERS PRESENT:</b>	

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

- Soper called the meeting to order at 9:34 A.M.

**2. MINUTES OF JULY 21, 2008:**

- *Motion by Berndt, seconded by Scherwitz, to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2008 TAC meeting. Motion approved.*

**3. STAFF REPORT:**

- **November 13 Trail Workshop** – SWMPC is organizing a half day trails workshop, to be held on November 13, 2008 from 1-4:00 PM at the Thornapple Township Emergency Services Building. Workshop topics include state/local funding sources, urban/rural trail development, promotion of trails, water trail development, trail maintenance and trail vision and planning.
- **MARP/MWHSRA (rail) meeting** – Musson attended the August 16, 2008 Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers (MARPP) meeting, where guest speaker Rich Harnish, Midwest High Speed Rail Association, presented

on high speed rail in the Midwest. Harnish used the high speed rail system in Europe as an example of what Berrien County's rail system could be. Harnish discussed barriers and opportunities to make high speed rail a reality in the TwinCATS area. Some things that TwinCATS could do to help the cause include:

- Include the coastal route (through St. Joseph) in the long range transportation plan. Currently a route through St. Joseph is not in the State plan.
- Advocate for a second train through St. Joseph to build frequency.
- Determine how the council can work with Rep. Upton to help secure funding and actions to improve the high speed corridor between Chicago and Porter, IN.
- Improve the St. Joseph station, and consider the resulting needs if the number of trains is increased.

#### 4. **PROJECT UPDATES:**

- **TCATA** – Purvis announced that TCATA will be increasing fares. Ridership has increased, but state funding for the year will be cut approximately \$30,000. The first public hearing regarding the fare increases will be held September 15 at 12:00 PM at the TCATA offices. The second hearing will be September 29 at 12:00 PM at the TCATA offices.
- **M-139 at Nickerson** – Contractor will begin work the week of September 15.

#### 5. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Hollywood Corridor Study announcement** - St. Joseph Township will present the results of the Hollywood Corridor Study at the October meeting. A public presentation of the study results will be given on September 25, 2008 at the St. Joseph/ Royalton Senior Center at 7:30 PM.
- **Network Deficiencies** – Getman-Dissette explained that a subcommittee met to review deficiencies (congested areas) that resulted from the travel demand model. Subcommittee members determined whether or not they agreed with the deficiency, what was the likely cause of the deficiency, and what, if anything, should be done to resolve the issue. In addition, members discussed whether or not there were deficient areas that were missed by the model. Findings of the subcommittee were distributed. Lenze explained that the deficiencies represent 24 hour traffic volume averages and they do not take into account peak hour congestion, which is something that we will likely do for the next model. In addition, the model does not consider problematic intersections. Intersections of interest should be identified and studied separately. Committee members reviewed and discussed the deficiencies, which will be included in the LRP. Concern was expressed over the lane reductions in the I-94 Business Loop project in Benton Harbor. Committee members also discussed pm peak traffic issues on the Cleveland overpass.
- **Non-motorized facilities for LRP** - Getman-Dissette distributed the local non-motorized information contained in the 2004 LRP as well as a non-motorized facility update survey. Committee members were asked to begin working on the survey. During the next month, SWMPC staff will follow up with each road agency/local unit of government to obtain updated information for the 2009 LRP. Anyone who would like to meet in person should contact Getman-Dissette.
- **2009 Meeting Dates** - The TAC typically meets the third Monday of the month at 9:30 a.m. at the Southwest Michigan Regional Airport. Due to holidays, January and February meetings will be moved to the fourth Monday. *A motion was made by Woolcock, supported by Montoya, to approve the remaining calendar year 2008 and calendar year 2009 meeting dates Motion approved.*
- **TIP Amendment** - As requested by MDOT, TIP was amended to include a project on Britain Ave over I-94. *A motion was made by Berndt, supported by Woolcock, to recommend that the Policy Committee approve an amendment to the FY 2008-2011 TIP to add the MDOT Britain Ave project (over I-94, JN 104002) to FY 2010. Each phase of the project shall be listed separately, as follows:*
  - *PE phase: federal cost of \$289,686, state M cost of \$32,187, and total cost of \$321,873;*
  - *Sub phase: federal cost of \$187,444, state M cost of \$20,827, and total cost of \$208,271; and*
  - *Construction phase: federal cost of \$4,990,109, state M cost of \$1,106,541, and total cost of \$6,096,650.**The total project cost is \$6,626,794 with a federal share of \$5,467,239 and a state share of \$1,159,555. Motion approved.*
- **MDOT Financial Presentation** - Lenze gave a presentation on the federal and state transportation financial difficulties. In addition to the federal insolvency, the state and federal governments are facing funding shortfalls. Even if federal funding levels are corrected, the state will be unable to match federal dollars beginning in 2010. A state Transportation Funding Taskforce was formed to identify solutions to the transportation funding shortfalls, and a report to the legislature is due October 31. In addition, it is important for locals to contact the state Transportation Commission, as well as their state representatives, to explain what transportation funding cuts mean to their communities. At the MPO level, it is important to identify local revenue gaps, identify local projects that are

coordinated with trunk line projects, and prioritize local projects. MPOs will be notified of their FY 2009 funding reductions in the coming weeks.

**6. OLD BUSINESS:**

- None

**7. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- None

**8. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:**

- None

**9. ADJOURNMENT: 10:47 a.m.**

- Next meeting is October 20, 2008 at 9:30 a.m.

Compiled by: Nickolas Musson/Kelly Getman-Dissette, Transportation Planners, 9/16/08