

# Minutes

## Twin Cities Area Transportation Study Technical Advisory Committee

January 28, 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 Jason Latham, MDOT, Southwest Region Ray Lenze, MDOT, Statewide Planning Catherine Montoya, Berrien Co. Planning Dept Lee Scherwitz, SW Michigan Regional Airport Terrie Smith, Lincoln Charter Township Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning Gary Soper, Benton Charter Township, TAC Chairman Tim Zebell, City of St. Joseph Bill Brown, NIRPC (ex officio) Dennis Schuh (Berrien County Public Transportation) Aaron Anthony, City of Bridgman Charles Kormanik, Village of Shoreham Larry Merritt, St. Joseph Charter Township
<b>TECHNICAL MEMBERS ABSENT:</b>	Fred Featherly, MDOT - Multi-Modal Services Todd Gardner, Village of Stevensville John Gast, Lake Charter Township Sarah Koepke, Federal Highway Admin (ex officio) Steward McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration Robert Rusch, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Donna Wittl, MDOT Planning Sarah Woolcock, MDOT – Coloma TSC Representative, Cornerstone Alliance Bill Boyd, Royalton Township Bill Purvis, Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority Paul South, MDOT/TSC, Coloma
<b>SWMPC STAFF PRESENT:</b>	Nickolas Musson, SWMPC Kim Gallagher, SWMPC Suzann Flowers, SWMPC
<b>OTHERS PRESENT:</b>	

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Soper called the meeting to order at 9:32 A.M.

**2. MINUTES OF December 17, 2007:**

- *Motion by Berndt, seconded by Cook, to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2007 TAC meeting. Motion approved.*

**3. STAFF REPORT:**

• **New Transportation Planner – Nick Musson**

Hello, my name is Nickolas Musson and I am excited to be your new transportation planner. I am from central Wisconsin where I was born and raised. I recently graduated from the University Wisconsin Stevens Point with majors in Geography, Public Administration and Philosophy. I have minors in Geographic Information Systems and

Environmental Studies. I am a member of Association of American Geographers (AAG) and the Wisconsin Land Information Association (WLIA). It is truly an honor to start my career here and to be of service to you

- **Asset Management Training Session**

Investment Reporting Tool Training Session

The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission is hosting an investment reporting tool training session on Tuesday March 4 in Lawrence at 9:30 am to noon. This training session is open to all participants in the investment reporting process, such as road agencies, MPOs, regional planning agencies, and contractors for the jurisdiction. This training session will focus on version 2.0 of the online investment reporting tool to be released this month. There will be a live demo where participants can input their feed back and suggest any improvements and ask questions.

*Musson stated that if the location does not work he will give you another prior to the March 4<sup>th</sup> date.*

- **TIP/STIP**

The TIP has been submitted, but needs to be approved. This is because MDOT is trying to solve internal TIP problems. This means that nothing is official until the TIP is approved. It is likely that in February we will be working to integrate all the amendments we have into the approved TIP. Musson will be attending TIP training at the end of this month. The TIP should be approved by January 31, 2008.

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

- **Berrien County Road Commission** – *Berndt stated that the Pipestone project is in advanced construct and repayment. Berndt also reported that a grade inspection is scheduled for Washington. The Hollywood Road project funds should be used for another project because of the storm sewer project. Bridgman, St. Joseph, and Benton Harbor are going to converse and bring back possible projects for the Hollywood road project funds.*
- **City of St. Joseph** – *Zebell reported that Lake Blvd is completed, and State and Ship St. is in advanced construct for 08 – 09 will be completed in the spring.*
- **East of I-196 to west of M-140** - *payment reconstruct (no update)*

#### 5. **OLD BUSINESS:**

- **SE data approval** – The TwinCATS socioeconomic data has been updated and reviewed by Brad Sharlow and waits approval.

*Discussion on boundary conflicts-*

*Kormanik stated that the numbers for Shoreham look to be too high.*

The problem lies in the boundary between St. Joseph and Shoreham. The boundary line is Lake Shore drive and the problem is deciding which business should go with St. Joseph's TAZ or Shoreham's TAZ. Sharlow and Kormanik will converse after the meeting to decide what's appropriate.

*Discussion on status of SE data-*

*Sharlow explained that there are some areas that did not respond and with those areas he used the growth information from the planning commission and spread the numbers out evenly. He also used census updates and with those numbers he distributed them evenly.*

*Cook stated that Benton harbor has a half of a dozen of zones that have growth and I will email them to you at the end of the day.*

*Sharlow restated that we are only interested in people who would use the transportation system, not those who live in senior corridors who don't use the transportation system.*

Musson will bring the results to the following meeting.

*A motion was made by Zebell, supported by Montoya to recommend approval of the socioeconomic data, contingent upon Benton Harbor and Shoreham updated numbers. Motion approved.*

*Meeting reminder--*

*Sharlow let the committee know that on February 12 there will be a presentation on state wide future data.*

*Lenze wants the committee to look at the current long range plan numbers to determine the accuracy. Sharlow explained that there are projects happening right now that should be kept in mind when checking the accuracy of the numbers.*

## 6. NEW BUSINESS:

- **Transit Presentation – Kim Gallagher**

Kim gave an overview of transit in Berrien County. There are 4 public transit systems in Berrien County providing 36,630 trips per month and over 439,568 trips annually. There is no typical public transit system in Berrien County. Two are small urban areas, while two are in rural areas of the county. They all range in sizes from 3 employees at Buchanan Dial A Ride to 31 employees at the Twin Cities Dial Ride in Benton Harbor. Niles Dial A Ride is considering putting in fixed routes with ¼ mile buffers for route deviation. New technology can make the process easier for the customers to understand and easier for the transit systems to manage their data. The use of technology to get to know your customers and their habits can increase efficiency. Coordination has its most substantial impact in communities where transportation efficiency can be improved. 6% of the sales tax on fuel does not go to transportation.

*Schuh stated that we don't have enough buses in the county for demand response. People need to call a head to find out when the buses will be in their area to schedule personal appointments. State will not let us spend rural money in urbanized areas*

- **Act 51 Legislative Action: Needs Study**

Transportation Funding Task Force-

A task force is being created in response to the public Act 221 of 2007 to “review the adequacy of surface transportation and aeronautics service provision and finance” in Michigan. This would apply to roads, transit, and aviation.

**Duties of task force**

Review adequacy of surface transportation and aeronautic service provision and finance in Michigan.

Review strategies for maximizing return on transportation investments

Evaluate potential alternative strategies to replace or supplement: State motor fuel taxes, existing and alternative user fees, and nonuser revenues to support economic activity and personal mobility in Michigan.

**The Big Issue Is FUNDING!**

We are encouraged to put forth our views on funding solutions. We should consider putting together some kind of formal action that identifies our needs, wants and where to get the funding. If any individual or you know of an individual that would like to make a contribution they can submit their name on the governor's website to be part of the citizen advisory committee. The committee is made up of 19 governor appointed citizens comprised of 18 organizations, agencies, associations in transportation, the construction sector and then one member of the general public. Musson will look into prior studies and try to put together discussion topics for the next meeting.

## 7. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- None

## 8. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

- *Scherwitz reports on Intelligence transportation systems ITS Architecture development plan <http://www.mdot-architecture-study.com/>*

*This plan involves putting out billboards and electronic capabilities on I-94 to inform people when there is an accident, big event, anything with a major amount of traffic. The Billboards would give alternative routes or necessary information relating to the event. It would also give abilities in 411 information where you can tune into the radio to provide assistance to the traveler.*

*Latham mentioned that the first project is in 2009, cameras I-69 and I-94.*

## 9. ADJOURNMENT: 10:36 am

- Next meeting is February 25, 2008