

Minutes
Twin Cities Area Transportation Study
Technical Advisory Committee

November 17, 2008

9:30 A.M.

Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

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

1. CALL TO ORDER:

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

2. MINUTES:

- *A motion was made by Berndt, seconded by Scherwitz, to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2008 TAC meeting. Motion approved.*

3. STAFF REPORT:

- **MAP Conference** - Getman-Dissette and Musson attended the annual Michigan Association of Planning Conference (MAP) in Kalamazoo in October. There were many helpful sessions, some of which were related to transportation planning and its connection to land use planning.
- **Travel Demand Modeling Workshop** - Getman-Dissette and Musson attended a Travel Demand Workshop on October 6th in Lansing. The workshop dealt with deficiency analysis, alternative testing, and project impact analysis. The US-31 connection to I-94 was used as an example of impact analysis.

- **November Trail Workshop** – Musson attended a trail workshop on November 13, at the First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall in Middleville. The focus of the workshop was trail planning and development in different community settings as well as trail funding. There were speakers from the Village of Middleville, Kalamazoo County Parks, Laketown Township, MDOT, and the MDNR. Musson distributed handouts about the Transportation Enhancement program, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, and the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

4. PROJECT UPDATES:

- **Empire Ave** – Plans were submitted. The project is scheduled to be let in February or March.
- **Linco Rd** – The Road Commission is currently seeking assistance with local match from both Lincoln and Lake Townships for this project.
- **Linco Rd Bridge** – Received DEQ permit last week. Plans will be finished next month.
- **Fair to River** – Scheduled for February letting.
- **Business loop over I-94** – The bridge repairs are complete, and the route should reopen Friday, 11/21/08.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

- **Non-motorized updates** – Getman-Dissette reminded committee members that local non-motorized updates are needed for the long range plan. Getman-Dissette will email the request form again.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

- **TIP amendments** – Three elementary schools in the TwinCATS area received FY 2009 Safe Routes to School grants: Calvin Britain (\$480,449) and Seelye McCord (\$440,948) in Benton Harbor and Roosevelt (\$306,708) in Lincoln Township. Projects include both infrastructure and non-infrastructure activities. Work will include repairing sidewalks, creating new bus turnaround areas, creating an educational traffic safety area in a playground, and developing/participating in health and nutrition programs. *A motion was made by Berndt, supported by Smith, to recommend that the Policy Committee amend the FY2008-2011 TIP to add three Safe Routes to School projects to FY 2009:*
 - *Calvin Britain Elementary in Benton Harbor for \$480,449,*
 - *Seelye McCord Elementary in Benton Harbor for \$440,948, and*
 - *Roosevelt Elementary in Lincoln Township for \$306,708.*

Motion Approved.
- **TCATA administrative amendments** – TCATA requested two administrative changes to FY 2009 of the TIP: one to reduce federal CMAQ dollars and another to increase 5307 operating funds. The changes, as described below, will be submitted to MDOT along with the Safe Routes amendments.
 - Originally, TCATA planned to purchase 5 buses using \$232,000 FY 2009 CMAQ funds. The agency will now purchase 4 buses, which will decrease the federal cost to \$200,000. The total cost for the project will be \$258,000.
 - Due, in part, to the increase in gas prices, TCATA has requested additional 5307 operating funds. The federal portion will change from \$537,000 to \$620,000 and the local cost from \$375,000 to \$481,000. The total cost will be \$1,664,000.
- **Gast Road NFC discussion** – Anthony announced that Gast Rd. in the City of Bridgman is in need of reconstruction. The road has been capped, but this is a temporary fix, and there are other issues, such as drainage, that need to be addressed. In preparation of this project, the City would like TwinCATS to consider upgrading the National Functional Class (NFC) of Gast. The route is currently a local street (not eligible for federal funds), but the City believes it is functioning as a collector. Several recent residential developments and the nearby commercial center have increased traffic along the route, and the high school remains another major source of traffic. In addition, the City has applied for a streetscaping Transportation Enhancement grant, which would encourage walkability on Lake St. The City feels that the improvements could encourage more traffic to use Gast instead of Church St. Because MDOT is unlikely to approve of changing the NFC of Gast only within the City limits, the City would cooperate with the County Road Commission to request the change from Lemon Creek to Snow. Berndt expressed support for seeking the change. Discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of the change, as well as the procedure to formally request the change. The City should work with Susan Berquist at MDOT to ensure that all of the requirements are met. The City has requested that traffic counts be taken during the spring of 2009. However, the City wanted to be sure that the TAC supported proceeding with the NFC change request prior to investing any

more time or dollars into the effort. *A motion was made by Berndt, supported by Zebell, to support the investigation of changing the NFC Gast Road to collector, which would add Gast to the federal aid system. Motion approved.*

In addition to changing the NFC of Gast, Benton Harbor may want to consider the classification of Whitman/Riverview Dr. In a phone conversation with Getman-Dissette, Berquist explained that NFC can be changed in anticipation of a major development (such as Harbor Shores). Cook will contact SWMPC to explore this option. Lenze noted that MDOT would be reviewing all of the state's roads in the coming years, and he suggested that each community review the classification of its streets in preparation for the statewide review.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None

8. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

- Scherwitz announced that he would be speaking with Upton in the near future to discuss funding opportunities to finish US-31. Lenze suggested that Scherwitz take care in requesting funds. Any funding earmarked for US-31 should be separate from the general statewide allocation so that funding is not taken away from other important projects.

9. ADJOURNMENT: 10:36 a.m.

- Next meeting is December 15, 2008 at 9:30 a.m.

10. Hollywood Corridor Presentation: TAC and Policy members convened for a presentation on the Hollywood Corridor Study by Dan Fette.

Compiled by: Nickolas Musson/Kelly Getman-Dissette, Transportation Planners, 11/18/08