

TWIN CITIES AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Advisory Committee

Minutes

March 17, 2014

9:00 A.M.

Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

TAC MEMBERS PRESENT:	Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission John Gruchot, Berrien County Community Development Joanne Johnson, Disability Network Southwest Michigan Erin Jolivette, MDOT - Coloma TSC Paul Lott, MDOT - Statewide Planning Kenton McAndrew, City of Benton Harbor Bill Purvis, Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority Lee Scherwitz, Southwest Michigan Regional Airport Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning (ex officio) Terrie Smith, Lincoln Charter Township Kris Welch, MDOT Statewide Planning Tim Zebell, City of St. Joseph
TAC MEMBERS ABSENT:	Aaron Anthony, City of Bridgman Thomas Baldwin, Benton Charter Township Mickey Bennett, Sodus Township Bill Brown, Northern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (ex officio) Chris Cook, City of Benton Harbor Andrea Dewey, Federal Highway Administration (ex officio) Fred Featherly, MDOT - Multi-Modal Services (ex officio) Ron Griffin, St. Joseph Charter Township Jae Guetschow, Village of Stevensville Nora Jefferson, Benton Charter Township Jason Latham, MDOT - Southwest Region Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration (ex officio) Catherine Montoya, Berrien County Planning Commission John Olson, Village of Shoreham Gloria Payne, Lake Charter Township Thad Rieder, Cornerstone Alliance Representative, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (ex officio) Alan Smaka, City of Bridgman Dick Stauffer, Lincoln Charter Township
SWMPC STAFF PRESENT:	Suzann Flowers Gautam Mani Debra Panozzo, Mobility Consultant
OTHERS PRESENT:	Merlin Bushert

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Scherwitz called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. and led the group in introductions.

2. MINUTES:

- A motion was made by Zebell with support by Purvis to approve the minutes of the February 24 TAC meeting. **Motion passed.**

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

4. STAFF REPORT

▪ **Joint MPO Meeting Reminder- April 30**

Mani reminded committee members that the 2nd NATS and TwinCATS joint MPO meeting would be taking place on Wednesday April 30, 2014 at Berrien RESA in Berrien Springs, MI. The regularly scheduled TwinCATS meeting on April 21 is cancelled.

Topics at the joint MPO meeting will include an update on activities by our partners in Indiana (Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission and Michiana Area Council of Governments), an update from executive director John Egelhaaf on the Regional Prosperity initiative, and an interactive activity where MPO members designate the most important centers of activity for Berrien and Cass Counties. RSVPs are appreciated.

▪ **Asset Management Conference – 5/14 Bay City**

Mani said that the Asset Management spring conference would be taking place May 14, 2014 in Bay City, Michigan. It is an opportunity to learn about the latest road maintenance techniques, and best practices in asset management planning. Mani also noted that MDOT director Kirk Steudle did attend last year's conference, where he presented and answered questions extensively. It is likely that he would attend at least part of this year's conference.

▪ **PASER Ratings and Traffic Counts**

Mani said that Zebell requested last month that MPO jurisdictions go into a rotating system, so that a few jurisdictions could have their local (non-federal aid eligible) roads each year, and all TwinCATS member jurisdictions would have their local roads rated every three years. Act 51 agencies are eligible to have their local roads rated every three years with reimbursement from the state. Zebell asked if staff would review local roads to see who had had their roads rated recently. Mani said it was likely that all jurisdictions in TwinCATS would be eligible right away, and that SWMPC staff were not always aware when local road ratings were done.

A motion by Gruchot with support by McAndrew to approve MPO staff to set up a rotating system whereby each MPO community had its roads rated at least once every three years.

Motion passed.

▪ **MACOG Update**

Mani said that as part of efforts to better collaborate on traffic counts and travel patterns data, staff from Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG), SWMPC's counterpart, had been attending meetings at NATS, and Mani had recently attended a MACOG TAC meeting. One

pertinent piece of information was that communities from Kokomo northwards were being instructed to prepare for full freeway status on US-31. Mani said that this would likely mean an increase in truck traffic in Michigan, and that we as an MPO, in coordination with MDOT, need to figure out how to prepare for it.

Scherwitz noted that it was not just Indiana that was making improvements to US-31, it was Kentucky as well. Scherwitz noted that from Indianapolis to Kokomo, travel times have been reduced by 45 minutes.

Lott said that it was not just US-31 that could potentially increase truck traffic into Michigan. The further building of I-69 in Indiana is also driving truck and other vehicle traffic increases. Scherwitz suggested finding out whether all of the property along the US-31 completion route had been purchased, or whether there were still holdouts.

▪ **SWMPC 211 Listing Phone Calls**

Mani noted that due to the way SWMPC's phone system was routing calls, staff throughout the agency had been receiving calls intended for the mobility manager that came through the 211 human services directory. Individuals were struggling to reach life sustaining services such as doctor's appointments, often at short notice under the current transit system. Johnson stated that the Disability Network received similar calls and one was from a woman on dialysis who had to reach her appointment at 6 AM. She stated that if she could not get there by transit, she would stop going for dialysis. Mani asked Purvis if he had set up some sort of emergency fund whereby those who needed rides for life-sustaining services could ride the bus, even if they couldn't afford it. Purvis said that no one had been set up as yet, and Panozzo added that as an agency, tokens were being given out under those circumstances.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

▪ **Walk and Roll**

Mani said that the Walk and Roll subcommittee had met earlier in the morning to discuss the revised draft of the Complete Streets Policy. Mani said there were several major changes that helped to clarify the process of implementing Complete Streets within TwinCATS. These changes helped align the policy better with the statewide Complete Streets Policy, as well as emerging national standards from the Smart Growth Network. The changes also were designed to better assist someone who was joining TwinCATS newly, or a member of the public who wanted to know exactly what TwinCATS was doing to achieve Complete Streets. These changes were:

- A clear statement of vision, or why we are doing complete streets at all.
- Clear statement that policy applies to all projects in TIP
- Further flexibility in complete streets solutions
- A clear list of very specific exemptions
- Performance measures, to be ready for future requirements of the MPOs
- Helpful definitions and resources for committee members and members of the public.

The Walk and Roll subcommittee had recommended that TwinCATS TAC and Policy approve the revised draft of the Complete Streets Policy, with minor typographical and grammatical corrections.

Scherwitz complimented the MPO staff for their work on the Complete Streets Policy.

A motion by Gruchot with support by Zebell to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the revised TwinCATS Complete Streets Policy, with the changes discussed. **Motion passed.**

- **Regional Inclusive Community Coalition (RICC)**

None.

- **Mobility Management/Transit Consolidation Update**

Panozzo said that the consultant from KFH had a very productive meeting with county officials last week, and that a final report on transit consolidation would be delivered by the end of the month.

- **Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority (TCATA) Operations Update**

Purvis noted that he found out from the state that there were still Jobs Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) funds available from the state, and that he would incorporate these funds into operations on the Red Route to Stevensville. The amount would be close to \$189,000.

6. PROJECT UPDATES

Mani said that beginning next month, he would be adding Land Use Updates to the agenda, to give committee members who do not have active projects a chance to participate more. This will be an opportunity for each community to share updates on major developments, zoning code changes, parking ordinance changes, and other issues of relevance to the MPO.

Fiscal Year	Job Number	Agency	Project Name	Update Information	Date of last update	Cost Changes	Projected Letting and obligation date
2012							
	113585	MDOT	I-94 Red Arrow Highway to Livingston Rd	PE Phase-design; no change; base plan review February 3rd	January 2014		x
	103293	MDOT	I-94 at Nickerson Ave in Benton Township (roadside facility)	Scheduled for October letting; returned to region for funding to move forward; no change; March 2013 Moving Forward for January 2013 letting July 2013: On hold	July 2013		x
		Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority	New expanded hours	July 2012: Continued through 2013 (2014 funding seems less certain); September 2012: Continued Service; 11/2012 after 2013 the state will match buses but nothing	November 2013		x

				else; December 2012 -already been awarded; November 2013: not funded			
		Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority	New line haul route	July 2012: Continued through 2013 (2014 funding seems less certain); ; 11/2012 after 2013 the state will match buses but nothing else July 2013: JARC funding cut in half, project will proceed.	July 2013		x
		Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority	Transit vehicle replacement (3 total)	; 11/2012 after 2013 the state will match buses but nothing else	November 2012		x
2013	89085	Benton Harbor	Klock Rd (from North Shore to Paw Paw)-	August 2013- lawsuit ongoing-probably means that project will not go through. November 2013- no change	November 2013		
	112091	Berrien County	Hollywood Road	December 6 letting December 2013: Additional \$286,444 available in 2014, because this project will not use it. March 2014: April 1 construction.	March 2014		
	115751	MDOT	I-94 WB (from I-196 for 0.4 miles to start of 2008 concrete pavement)	2 course HMA over scratch course on existing concrete-PE phase, no change	December 2012		
	113585	MDOT	I-94 WB (On I-94 from Red Arrow Highway for 3.0 miles to Livingston Road)	Mill existing and place 2 HMA overlay-ROW phase; no change	December 2012		
	110779	MDOT	I-94 EW and WB over Hickory Creek	January 2014: Construction in July 2014.	January 2014		
	119786	MDOT	M-63over St. Joseph River in St. Joseph	Completed.	March 2014		
		Berrien County	Napier and Union	Traffic Signal; July 2013: GI comments, August 23 rd deadline for ROW. October 2013: November 1 letting; November 2013:	December 2013		

				pre-construction meeting next week; December 2013: work will begin when weather allows;			
		TCATA	Replacement 3 buses CMAQ project	2013 applications are due to the state in December; July 2013: Waiting for contract approval	July 2013		
		TCATA	Expanded hours-JARC grant				
		TCATA	Mobility manager grant	11/2012 Purvis stated that this will be available for 2013 but not sure if funding will be there for 2012; SWMPC handling this	December 2012		
		TCATA	New line haul to Stevensville	Project is continuing; hoping to get state funds in 2014	January 2013		
		TCATA	Bus operations	Not submit yet			
	116924	SWMPC	Berrien County-Rideshare	In progress			
2014	112087	Benton Harbor	Broadway Avenue Resurfacing	Final plans ready; still need the city's commitment. November 2013: Resolution approved. December 2013: trying to get GI meeting scheduled March 2014: Final plans submitted.	March 2014		
	121011	Benton Harbor	Pipestone at Empire Traffic Signal Upgrade	November 2013: Resolution approved; March 2014: Final package will be submitted on March 28	March 2014		
		Berrien County	Date Road Bridge Replacement	GI plans have been submitted; February 2014: Final plans will be submitted	February 2014		
	121002	Berrien County	Roosevelt Road Non-Motorized Extension	Plans will be ready over next few months; survey work will take place in spring; February 2014: GI package submitted	February 2014		
		Berrien	Brown School	Plans in Progress;	January 2014		

		County	Road Resurfacing	GI submitted- came in under budget, transferring funds to the Village of Shoreham; February 2014: May 2 letting			
		Village of Shoreham	Brown School Road Resurfacing	GI Package under review	February 2014		

Flowers noted that MDOT was getting a directive from Federal Highway Administration to clear out inactive projects---projects that had been obligated, but had not been billed to at all within a year. Lott said that de-obligating a project might not mean that the funds are available to other projects within the MPO, or even the state. It is not a good idea to get to the point where projects need to be de-obligated.

Berndt noted that when a project goes out for obligation, it must be within 10% of the original estimate. If the project is bid at above 10%, they must rebid or pull the plug on the project.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

- **Administrative Modification and Amendments Policy**

Mani said that this document had been in the works for several months, but it is a statement of what actions MPO staff can take to expedite TIP amendment processing, and what actions require MPO approval. Flowers said that most actions require MPO approval, including when any federal funding amounts change, and when projects change in length by more than ½ mile.

A motion by McAndrew with support by Gruchot to approve the TwinCATS TIP Administrative Modification and Amendments Policy. **Motion passed.**

8. NEW BUSINESS

- **TIP Amendments**

Mani outlined this month's amendments:

- *TCATA is adding operations expenses and JARC funds that are now available for 2015, as well as the mobility manager grant for 2015.

- * TCATA is adding bus conversions to run on liquid propane as well as gasoline, and the necessary infrastructure to house both fuel types in 2014.

- * MDOT is adding the I-94 guardrail replacement project over the St. Joseph River, and the construction phase of the I-04 restoration project from exit 16 to approximately 7 miles north.

- * MDOT is adding a bridge repair project on M-63 in 2014, using only the states RRRF funds.

Purvis stated that larger liquid propane companies are not having as much of an issue with the recent price increase in propane, and having buses that can run on both liquid propane and gasoline will be very helpful in saving costs in the long term.

A motion by Berndt with support by Smith to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the March 2014 TIP Amendments. **Motion passed.**

- **Legislative Updates-Federal and State**

- **Federal** – None.

- **State** – Lott said that the legislature had passed a bill allocating the remaining Roads Risk and Reserve Fund monies for 2014. \$100 million will be distributed according to the Act 51 formula to local governments to take care of potholes and other effects of the harsh winter on the roads. The other \$115 million would go towards a second round of projects selected by the legislature.

9. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Mani reminded TAC bylaw subcommittee members to respond to the Doodle poll designating a time for the phone conference call regarding the bylaws. A reminder about the poll had been sent out to subcommittee members.

Scherwitz asked Brian about when road restrictions would be going into effect. Those restrictions went into effect on Wednesday March 12.

10. ADJOURNMENT at 10:13 a.m.

- Next meeting is **April 30, 2014, 1-5 PM**

Compiled by: Suzann Flowers and Gautam Mani, Transportation Planners, 2014