

**Minutes**  
*Twin Cities Area Transportation Study*  
*TAC Meeting*  
 May 17, 2010  
 9:30 A.M.  
 Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission Chris Cook, City of Benton Harbor Ray Lenze, Michigan Department of Transportation, Statewide Planning Kenton McAndrew, City of Benton Harbor Katie Montoya, Berrien County Community Development Derek Perry, City of St. Joseph / Village of Stevensville Bill Purvis, Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority Thad Rieder, Cornerstone Alliance Mark Seaman, Village of Shoreham Lee Scherwitz, Southwest Michigan Regional Airport Donald Schlipp, Village of Stevensville Terrie Smith, Lincoln Charter Township Jim Soteriou, Royalton Township Paul South, Michigan Department of Transportation- Coloma TSC Sarah Woolcock, Michigan Department of Transportation - Coloma TSC Tim Zebell, City of St. Joseph
<b>MEMBERS ABSENT:</b>	Aaron Anthony, City of Bridgman Mickey Bennett, Sodus Township Bill Brown, Northern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (ex officio) Fred Featherly, MDOT - Multi-Modal Services (ex officio) Nora Jefferson, Benton Charter Township Jason Latham, Michigan Department of Transportation, Southwest Region Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration (ex officio) Larry Merritt, St. Joseph Charter Township Gloria Payne, Lake Charter Township Robert Rusch, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (ex officio) Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning (ex officio) Sarah Van Buren, Federal Highway Administration (ex officio)
<b>SWMPC STAFF PRESENT:</b>	Suzann Flowers Anna Rahtz
<b>OTHERS PRESENT:</b>	Joanne Johnson, Disability Network Michele McGowen, Disability Network

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

- Chairman Scherwitz called the meeting to order at 9:31 A.M.

**2. MINUTES:**

- *A motion was made by Cook, seconded by Woolcock, to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2010 TAC meeting. Motion approved.*

**3. STAFF REPORT:**

• **Training Wheels Workshop**

- Rahtz reported that the Training Wheels workshop held by MDOT and hosted by SWMPC on May 13, 2010 had gone well but with low attendance. She explained that the instructor had been John LaPlante from T.Y. Lin International, who authored the AASHTO Bike Guide and Ped Guide and is on the national MUTCD committee. He presented on new non-motorized design standards that have not yet been published. He complimented the non-motorized facility design that has been

done in the City of Benton Harbor, including the new roundabouts on Main Street. The workshop included a short bike ride around Benton Harbor, during which the participants who came from Chicago and other parts of Michigan learned about designing different types of non-motorized facilities.

- **TwinCATS Member Participation Status Report**

- Rahtz announced that she had been doing a regular membership update of every committee, so that all representatives know who all the other representatives are and can encourage each other to attend.
- It was clarified that Don Schlipp is the official TAC representative for the Village of Stevensville, while Derek Perry will also be attending regularly. Schlipp agreed to fill the Policy slot for the Village, which had been vacant.
- Rahtz stated that the St. Joseph River Harbor Authority slot that had been filled by Bob Burkholz is now vacant for both the TAC and Policy committees. Scherwitz stated that he sits on that authority and will check on who the representative should be.
- Lenze suggested that SWMPC send out reminders about participation to no-show TwinCATS representatives at the same time that it sends out the notice of local dues.

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

- **2009 Projects:**

- MDOT
  - I-94 bridge replacement under Britain Avenue, Benton Harbor (JN 104002, PE phase) – completed
  - I-94 BL at Broad Street traffic operations (JN 105743) – obligated
  - M-139 at Fairplain traffic operations (JN 105744) – obligated
  - I-94 median cable barrier installation (JN 100292) – active
  - I-94 EB Red Arrow Highway resurfacing (JN 90362, ROW phase) – design starting

- **2010 Projects:**

- Berrien County Road Commission
  - Britain Avenue – signed contract
  - Cleveland Avenue - obligated; June 18 letting
  - Date Road Bridge – being removed from TIP at this meeting
  - Hilltop Road –CMAQ reapplication approved for separate 6' wide paths, has to be obligated by September 30<sup>th</sup>; changing description in TIP at this meeting
  - Hollywood Road – obligated; June 18 letting
  - Pipestone Rd ACC – received money
  - Pipestone Rd/Nickerson Ave/Sodus Parkway/Red Arrow Highway – Construction August 1st
- City of Benton Harbor
  - Highland Avenue – final plans being submitted this week
- City of Bridgman
  - Church Street ACC – no update
  - Lake Street – no update
- City of St. Joseph
  - Broad Street – under construction
- MDOT
  - I-94 bridge replacement under Britain Avenue, Benton Harbor (JN 104002, CON phase) – submitted for letting
  - I-94 resurfacing (JN 79871, ROW phase) – Design phase in process
  - I-94 BL Rideshare Lot Expansion (JN 103292) –closed 4/26 to 5/26 for construction
  - M-139 resurfacing (JN 103173) – let, starting construction
  - I-94 bridges repair (JN 107161) – September letting; have OEC coming up
  - M-63 resurfacing (JN 110135) – let, pre-construction this week; construction early June to late July
- Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority

- Installed bike racks on buses that run the three scheduled bus routes.

## 5. OLD BUSINESS:

### • Walk and Roll work plan

- Cook gave a summary of what the Walk and Roll subcommittee has worked on. He said that the subcommittee wants to encourage non-motorized consideration in all roadway design but is not sure of the political will for that right now. He explained that the subcommittee would like to focus on implementing a couple of the most feasible projects in order to get other TwinCATS agencies on board. These implementable projects would include the trail along Ox Creek from Benton Harbor to Sodus and the trail from Clementine's in St. Joseph to Browntown Road in St. Joseph Township.
- Cook added that the subcommittee is focusing within the TwinCATS boundaries right now with the recognition that it would like to connect to projects in other regions. He explained that the subcommittee has looked at the US 35 bicycle route project and the nine-county non-motorized plan that SWMPC is working on.
- South reminded the committee that the urban area boundaries could change with the next Census, and so areas that could merge into the TwinCATS urban area, like New Buffalo, may need to be included in Walk and Roll. He mentioned that the Harbor Country Hike & Bike Plan that was completed in the Harbor Country area was passed off to the Friends of the Harbor Country Trails group for implementation, and does not have a structured government organization like TwinCATS in place to implement the plan.
- It was mentioned that TwinCATS may be the most appropriate vehicle for implementation of the Walk & Roll plan because of the key players who are at the table – elected officials and engineers from each municipality in the region. Cook added that there is grassroots representation on the Walk and Roll subcommittee from the owner of Cycle & Fitness.
- Zebell mentioned that the St. Joseph to St. Joseph Township trail will be difficult to implement because not all property owners are willing to donate the easements. He stated that any kind of takings to acquire the easements would not be politically feasible and some property owners are unwilling to sell, and it so it could take years to acquire the property. He added that if the project was written as a priority in the TwinCATS Long Range Plan, then it would encourage the City to acquire one piece of the right-of-way at a time.
- The maps that had been completed by the Walk and Roll subcommittee were shown to the committee members. Rahtz explained the bicycle and pedestrian crash data on the map and stated that the police reports (UD-10s) were available on the Walk and Roll web page. Woolcock stated that her office was reviewing them.
- Rahtz stated that she had attended a community meeting for Cycle-re-Cycle, a nonprofit advocacy organization that John Egelhaaf is helping to form, which is going to recycle bicycles and promote bicycling in the Benton Harbor – St. Joseph area. She had surveyed the bicycle enthusiasts in attendance at the meeting about where they would like to see on-road and off-road bicycling facilities. She shared the survey results, which found that more respondents answered about on-road facilities than off-road. Of particular interest were Red Arrow Highway, Niles Avenue, and Napier Avenue.
- South asked if the survey could be used to help prioritize projects. He said something like that could be used to justify projects, which would help with funding applications, etc. Rahtz suggested that she could more broadly administer the survey if needed.
- Woolcock suggested that, with the maps, the subcommittee is now ready to go public.
- Lenze suggested that the map of priorities be fleshed out into something detailed that can be amended into the current TwinCATS Long Range Plan. He also suggested looking outside TwinCATS for other funding for the detailed planning work. He added that another agency, such as Berrien County, may be willing to take on the more detailed planning work, such as identifying types of non-motorized facilities and potential costs.
- South suggested that for now, TwinCATS should focus on writing a summary of the priorities to amend into the Long Range Plan for the urbanized area. He said that once that is accomplished, the larger goal would be a countywide document.
- *Motion by Woolcock, seconded by Berndt, to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the Walk*

and Roll work plan as such: seek public input on the network of non-motorized priority projects, and write a summary of the facility type, cost, implementation strategies, etc. to be amended into the TwinCATS Long Range Plan. Motion approved.

- **Benton Harbor Local Match Update**

- Rahtz stated that there had been no action on the local match issue since the April meeting.
- Scherwitz added that the City of Benton Harbor's Emergency Financial Manager is still trying to sort out the City's budget for next year, with a focus on payroll.

- **Brown School Road Nation Functional Classification Change**

- Rahtz stated that, following the April meeting, the full Southwest Michigan Planning Commission approved the resolution supporting the Village of Shoreham's application to change the NFC of Brown School Road from a local road to an urban collector. The application has been submitted to MDOT and is being reviewed.

## 6. NEW BUSINESS:

- **TIP Amendments**

- **MDOT**

- Amend in FY 2010, the general program account named Capital Preventive Maintenance (CPM) Capital Structural Maintenance (CSM) Bridge Trunkline GPA. Federal cost changed from \$16,337 to \$61,927, and State cost changed from \$1,185 to \$6,811.
- Amend in FY 2010, the general program account named Early Preliminary Engineering (EPE) / Preliminary Engineering (PE) / Right of Way (ROW) Trunkline GPA. Federal cost changed from \$5,990 to \$29,676, and State cost changed from \$665 to \$3,297.
- *Motion by Woolcock, seconded by Zebell, to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the above two amendments to the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program. Motion approved.*

- **Berrien County Road Commission**

- Delete in FY 2010, the project named Date Road Bridge for Replacement of Date Road Bridge over Keelo Creek. Federal cost (BRT) was \$320,000, State cost (M) was \$60,000, and county cost was \$20,000. Project is being postponed until 2015.
- Amend in FY 2010, the project named Hilltop Road for new route/structure (capacity increase) for .95 miles from Washington Avenue to Lakeshore Drive. The project description changed from "Construct a non-motorized path 10 feet wide along the south side of Hilltop Road from Washington to Cleveland then along the north side from Cleveland to Lakeshore Drive to provide access from the nearby residential areas to the commercial business areas located along the roadway" to "Construct a 6 foot wide pedestrian walkway along the south side of Hilltop Road from Washington Avenue to Cleveland Avenue then along the north side from Cleveland Avenue to Lakeshore Drive to provide access from nearby residential uses to the commercial business areas located along the roadway." The federal cost changed from \$358,400 to \$326,400 and the county/city cost changed from \$89,600 to \$81,600.
  - Rahtz stated that Lenze had said CMAQ projects may now be eligible to receive 100 percent federal funding. Lenze stated that MDOT had discovered that the federal energy bill allows a state to use 100 percent federal money on all local and state CMAQ projects. MDOT will make the decision of whether to take advantage of this opportunity within the next couple of weeks.
  - Zebell stated that the City of St. Joseph's share of the local match for the Hilltop non-motorized path had been contributed through in-house engineering, not construction costs. Lenze explained that this means that no more federal funding can be acquired for this project.
  - Lenze stated that agencies receiving CMAQ funds could choose to use the CMAQ money as 100 percent federal funding so that they would not have to provide a 20 percent local match. This would still come out of the same pot of money being provided for the county. Rahtz asked whether another CMAQ meeting would have to be held, and Lenze replied that she should ask the agencies receiving CMAQ money if they would be interested in doing this. It

would only apply to projects that have not yet been obligated. Rahtz was asked to communicate with agencies with CMAQ projects and bring back their recommendations at the next meeting.

- *Motion by Woolcock, seconded by Cook, to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the above two amendments to the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program. Motion approved.*

- **Draft TIP Projects List – MDOT Dual List**

- Rahtz explained that this item was being taken off of the agenda because both of MDOT's potential project lists had been shown at the April meeting. The project shown as "Illustrative" will be done if MDOT receives funding for its full program.

- **NATS By-law Change**

- Rahtz announced that the Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study had amended its by-laws to include Jason Auvil from the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians as a voting member. She explained that this was an opportunity for dialogue and potential partnerships on projects that both Pokagon and TwinCATS agencies may be interested in. She stated that John Egelhaaf had calculated the membership dues for Pokagon, which are based on population. Pokagon has 49 tribal members who reside within the TwinCATS boundaries.
- Montoya asked whether Pokagon would be able to double-dip in both the tribal TIP and the TwinCATS TIP. It was discussed that Pokagon could use its tribal TIP money as a match toward projects in the TwinCATS TIP.
- It was agreed that, for TwinCATS, the benefits of having Pokagon at the table would far outweigh the risks. The Pokagon Band would be able to put in project applications to use the surface transportation funding in the TwinCATS TIP, but the TwinCATS project selection committee has control over which projects are put into the TIP.
- *Motion by Montoya, seconded by Cook, to invite the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians to become a voting member of TwinCATS. Motion approved.*

- **Local Road Rating**

- Rahtz announced that the Transportation Asset Management Council offered the opportunity for local governments to have their roads rated by SWMPC during summer 2010. There is funding available for it.
- Zebell stated that the City of St. Joseph had encountered a rule about not being able to take advantage of local road rating two years in a row. While all municipalities may be interested in the opportunity, they need to know what the rules are.
- Woolcock asked what the dates are for the late PASER training, so that she could send her new intern. Rahtz stated that she would check on it.

- **Proposed S/TIP Amendment Schedule**

- Rahtz stated that Marsha Small at MDOT had been developing two draft schedules for MDOT processing of TIP amendments. The two scenarios were four times per year and six times per year. Depending upon what MDOT approves, this would affect how long it would take to get TIP amendments processed for the TwinCATS agencies.
- Lenze stated that MDOT had approved the six times per year schedule, to take effect October 1, 2010. He added that Rahtz would hear more about this at the MTPA meeting this week.

**7. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- None

**8. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:**

- None

**9. ADJOURNMENT:**

- *Meeting adjourned at 10:44 A.M.* Next meeting is June 21, 2010 at 10:00 A.M. (joint meeting for the Context Sensitive Solutions presentation).