

Minutes
Twin Cities Area Transportation Study
Joint TAC/Policy Committee Meeting
 October 19, 2009
 10:00 A.M.
 Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Aaron Anthony, City of Bridgman Mickey Bennett, Sodus Township Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission Bob Burkholz, Berrien County Road Commission Chris Cook, City of Benton Harbor Tim Fenderbosch, St. Joseph Charter Township Robert Judd, City of St. Joseph Ray Lenze, MDOT, Statewide Planning Larry Merritt, St. Joseph Charter Township Katie Montoya, Berrien County Community Development Debra Panozzo, Berrien County Commission Bill Purvis, Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority Thad Rieder, Cornerstone Alliance Lee Scherwitz, SW Michigan Regional Airport Donald Schlipp, Village of Stevensville Terrie Smith, Lincoln Charter Township Paul South, MDOT- Coloma TSC Dick Stauffer, Lincoln Charter Township Darwin Watson, City of Benton Harbor Sarah Woolcock, MDOT - Coloma TSC Kevin Wordelman, Berrien County Commission Tim Zebell, City of St. Joseph
MEMBERS ABSENT:	Bill Boyd, Royalton Township Bill Brown, NIRPC (ex officio) Fred Featherly, MDOT - Multi-Modal Services (ex officio) Ron Ferguson, Benton Charter Township John Gast, Lake Charter Township Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration (ex officio) Jason Latham, MDOT, Southwest Region Gloria Payne, Lake Charter Township Robert Rusch, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (ex officio) Mark Seaman, Village of Shoreham Roger Seely, St. Joseph Charter Township Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning (ex officio) Jim Soteriou, Royalton Township Sarah Van Buren, Federal Highway Admin (ex officio)
SWMPC STAFF PRESENT:	Nickolas Musson Anna Rahtz
OTHERS PRESENT:	Scott Aiken, Herald Palladium Kathy Ellis, Community Connections Sarah Murray, MSHDA/LISC, City of Benton Harbor Marcus Robinson, Consortium for Community Development

1. CALL TO ORDER:

- Policy Committee Chairman Judd called the meeting to order at 10:01 A.M.

2. **MINUTES:**

- *A motion was made by Scherwitz, seconded by South, to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2009 Joint TAC and Policy meeting. Motion approved.*

3. **STAFF REPORT:**

• **Public Transit in Berrien County**

- Musson announced that SWMPC Associate Planner Kim Gallagher was on the agenda to give a presentation about public transit during Privilege of the Floor, but needed to present earlier in the meeting due to a scheduling conflict.
- Kim passed out handouts describing the new transit projects on which SWMPC is collaborating with TCATA (Twin Cities Area Transit Authority): a new fixed bus route, extended bus hours, and a mobility manager. She gave a PowerPoint presentation explaining the new projects and the background of public transportation in the county.
- Discussion was brought up about what the next steps should be for public transit in Berrien County, including: studying how the services provided by the four transit operators in the county could be seamlessly integrated; making a presentation to Berrien County Commissioners proposing a countywide millage for transit; studying the demand for public transit service in communities throughout the county; and promoting a policy to limit curbside transit service to the disabled.
- There was also discussion on the obstacles to implementing fixed-route bus service, such as businesses and housing complexes not wanting transit riders waiting in front of their doors for the bus; and the lack of sidewalks available for riders to walk to or wait for the bus in some communities.

• **Planning Michigan Conference**

- Musson and Rahtz talked about the highlights of what they learned at the conference, including: sustainable business districts; zoning issues; community marketing strategies; and social equity and diversity in the planning process.

4. **PROJECT UPDATES:**

2009 Projects

- **MDOT**
 - I-94, Traffic Operations - Obligated
- **City of Bridgman**
 - Lake Street – December letting
- **Berrien County Road Commission**
 - Linco Rd – Completed Thanksgiving
 - Linco Rd, Bridge Replacement - Completed Thanksgiving

2010 Projects

- **Berrien County Road Commission**
 - Hollywood Road – Looking for match
 - Pipestone Rd/Nickerson Ave/Sodus Parkway/Red Arrow Highway – December 4th letting
- **City of Benton Harbor**
 - Highland Ave – On track
- **City of St. Joseph**
 - Broad Street – In design
- **MDOT**
 - I-94, Bridge Replacement (JN 104002) – Let next summer
 - I-94 BL, Expansion of Parking Lot – Advertised
 - I-94, ROW – Has not been obligated yet
 - I-94, Bridge Replacement (JN107176) – August 2010 letting

5. OLD BUSINESS:

• Freight Update

- Musson announced that he and Rahtz had met with Pat Moody and Wendy Dant-Chesser from Cornerstone Chamber of Commerce, John Gruchot from Berrien County Community Development / Harbor Authority, and Bob Judd, Mayor of St. Joseph to discuss the benefits of and need for freight planning. It was agreed that a staff-driven needs assessment should be conducted to find out the concerns of businesses in the area regarding freight movement, with the help of Cornerstone and other chambers / economic development organizations, and Berrien County.

• Non-Motorized Subcommittee Update

- Chris Cook announced that he had convened a meeting of the non-motorized subcommittee with three SWMPC staff members and representatives from St. Joseph, St. Joseph Township, and Lincoln Township. A list had been compiled of interested parties who should be involved in the non-motorized process, and it had been agreed that once the map of Berrien County's non-motorized facilities is completed in the next couple of months, a larger subcommittee meeting will be convened to identify gaps and strategies to connect those gaps.
- Cook also mentioned that the subcommittee would like to have representatives from MDOT (Michigan Department of Transportation) and BCRC (Berrien County Road Commission). Sarah Woolcock from MDOT volunteered to participate.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

- **TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) Amendments** – The following TIP amendments were discussed:

MDOT requested the following amendments to the TwinCATS FY 2008-11 Transportation Improvement Program:

- Add in FY 2010, the project named CPM Road Trunkline GPA, with a federal cost of \$595,000 and a state cost of \$132,000.
- Add in FY 2010, the project named Enhancements Local GPA, with a federal cost of \$555,000 and a local cost of \$299,000.

Motion by Berndt, seconded by South, to approve the above amendments to the FY 2008-11 Transportation Improvement Program.

The following administrative modifications to the TwinCATS FY 2008-11 Transportation Improvement Program were discussed:

- Move from FY 2011 to FY 2010, the Berrien County Road Commission project named Date Road Bridge.
- Move from FY 2009 to FY 2010, the City of Bridgman project named Lake Street.
- Delete in 2010 duplicate MDOT project named I-94 (JN 100292), to install median cable barrier from US-12 to I-94 BL.

- **FY 2011-2014 TIP Application and FY 2014 TIP Project Ranking System**

- Rahtz announced that some revisions had been made to the TIP Amendment Application and TIP Application, and asked TAC members to give questions or comments on them.

TAC - Motion by Zebell, seconded by South, to recommend that the Policy committee move to approve the application and amendment form.

Policy - Motion by Scherwitz, seconded by Panozzo, to approve the application and amendment form.

- Rahtz announced that a TwinCATS project selection committee meeting was held to discuss the project ranking system, and a NATS project selection committee meeting was held to discuss it as well. She went over two handouts that were developed incorporating the feedback of both committees for the simplest system possible: a survey to be filled out by the public and by TwinCATS

members about the importance of different factors of influence; and a handout showing the way that that survey results will be used to assign points to the projects.

- It was discussed that this ranking system will only be one mechanism for prioritizing the projects, in addition to the traditional methods of cost, PASER ratings, and traffic counts.

TAC - Motion by Berndt, seconded by Woolcock, to recommend that the Policy committee move to approve the input portion of the project ranking system.

Policy - Motion by Panozzo, seconded by Stauffer, to approve the input portion of the project ranking system.

- Rahtz also went over a handout of the public outreach schedule/plan for the TwinCATS TIP process, which had been developed upon the request of the subcommittee.

TAC - Motion by Woolcock, seconded by Zebell, to recommend that the Policy committee move to approve the public outreach schedule.

Policy - Motion by Panozzo, seconded by Stauffer, to approve the public outreach schedule.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None

8. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

- Rahtz announced that there are now regional rail pages on the SWMPC website, and asked for feedback on them. She also announced that she and Musson would be helping the City of Watervliet with figuring out the process for getting a new Amtrak stop in a community.

9. ADJOURNMENT: 11:35 a.m.

- Next meeting is November 16, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. (TAC) and 10:30 p.m. (Policy).

Compiled by: Nickolas Musson and Anna Rahtz, Transportation Planners, 11/9/09