

TWIN CITIES AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Policy Committee

Minutes

May 19, 2014

10:30 A.M.

Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

<p>POLICY MEMBERS PRESENT:</p>	<p>Mickey Bennett, Sodus Township Andrea Dewey, Federal Highway Administration (ex officio) Tim Fenderbosch, St. Joseph Charter Township Carolyn Fowler, Benton Charter Township William Hodge, Berrien County Planning Commission Erin Jolivette, MDOT Coloma TSC Joanne Johnson, Disability Network Southwest Michigan Richard Lewis, City of St. Joseph Paul Lott, MDOT Statewide Planning Tim Lynch, Berrien County Road Commission Debra Panozzo, Berrien County Board of Commissioners Bill Purvis, TCATA Lee Scherwitz, SW Michigan Regional Airport Dick Stauffer, Lincoln Charter Township Kris Welch, MDOT-Statewide Planning</p>
<p>POLICY MEMBERS ABSENT:</p>	<p>Aaron Anthony, City of Bridgman Bill Brown, Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission (ex officio) John Egelhaaf, SWMPC John Gast, Lake Charter Township Ron Griffin, St. Joseph Charter Township John Gruchot/Catherine Montoya, Berrien County Planning Department Jae Guetschow, Village of Stevensville Darrell Harden, MDOT Southwest Region Nora Jefferson, Benton Charter Township John Lanum, MDOT Statewide Planning Jason Latham, MDOT Regional Planning Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration (ex officio) John Olson, Village of Shoreham Roger Seely, St. Joseph Charter Township Brad Sharlow, MDOT (ex officio) Terrie Smith, Lincoln Charter Township Jim Soteriou, Royalton Township Darwin Watson, City of Benton Harbor Sarah Woolcock, MDOT Coloma TSC Representative, Cornerstone Alliance</p>
<p>SWMPC STAFF PRESENT:</p>	<p>Gautam Mani Ryan Soucy</p>
<p>OTHERS PRESENT:</p>	<p>Matt Kodis, Kinexus</p>

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Scherwitz called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m. and led the group in introductions.

2. MINUTES:

- A motion was made by Fenderbosch with support by Purvis to approve the minutes of the March 17 Policy Committee meeting and April 30 Joint MPO meeting. **Motion passed.**

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Kodis said that Kinexus had released a new report highlighting the impacts of tourism on Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties. The report can be found at kinexus.org. Kodis also said to expect a new cost of living index once media coverage was available following the Senior PGA championship.

4. STAFF REPORT

▪ **Asset Management Conference**

Mani said that he had attended the statewide asset management conference last week. The conference highlighted some of the emerging methodologies of asset management, and key sessions from the conference included:

- A presentation on a pilot project undertaken by MDOT and Michigan Tech on the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (“drones”) in creating an inventory of the location and condition of unpaved roads in the state. The drones take high-resolution images of roadways from 500 feet in the air that can be used for modeling.
- A presentation on the use of smartphone applications to rate the roughness of the roads, and a comparison of these ratings to those conducted by traditional rating methods.
- A presentation on “green, sustainable streets,” which emphasized the need to coordinate road treatments with sewer and water infrastructure.

▪ **Status of New Planner Hire**

Mani said that Suzann Flowers’ position had been posted, and that resumes were starting to trickle in. Mani said it would likely be the July TwinCATS meeting when committee members would meet a new planner.

▪ **PASER Ratings and Traffic Counts**

Scherwitz said that he had received his PASER ratings on his airport surfaces. Mani said that SWMPC staff would start rating federal-aid and local roads beginning in June, and that it was never too early to get traffic count requests in at <http://www.swmpc.org/trafficcountform.asp>.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

▪ **Walk and Roll**

Mani reminded committee members to pick up a handout regarding Complete Streets and to keep the two-pager in their binders. Mani said that the two-pager attempts to answer anticipated questions from private citizens and local boards on the benefits of complete streets and why TwinCATS is concerned with them at all.

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

None.

- **Mobility Management/Transit Consolidation Update**

Panozzo said that she had attended the senior mobility expo last week in Detroit, and had learned about several transportation innovations designed to improve mobility and access for the “baby boomer” generation that is about to retire in the next few years. Panozzo noted that she had seen cars with redesigned dashboards to aid individuals who had deteriorating peripheral vision, and also heard about a mentoring program for older adults enacted by the Rapid in Grand Rapids.

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

Purvis said that he had received his state grant for 2015, and that propane buses were on the way. In addition, he plans to retrofit six buses to run on propane. Purvis also noted that he had completed his triennial review.

6. LAND USE AND ZONING UPDATES

City of St. Joseph- Beginning revisions on master plan.

Lincoln Township- Master plan revised in 2013 with extensive public input.

St. Joseph Township- The township has been working on its master plan and has held public input meetings.

Countywide- Berrien County master plan revised with a key focus on the transit consolidation study.

7. PROJECT UPDATES

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	2016 construction; value engineering meetings held	May 2014		
	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		
		Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority	New expanded hours	July 2012: Continued through 2013 (2014 funding seems less	November 2013		

				certain); September 2012: Continued Service; 11/2012 after 2013 the state will match buses but nothing 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		
		Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority	Transit vehicle replacement (3 total)	May 2014: Buses on the way, with propane conversions	May 2014		
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	May 2014: June 10 Construction, August 29 completion	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	Completed.	May 2014		

		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/Colfax Avenue Resurfacing	May 2014 : Letting delayed until July due to City having to shuffle funds to make up for local match	May 2014		
	121011	Benton Harbor	Pipestone at Empire Traffic Signal Upgrade	May 2014 : June letting	May 2014		
		Berrien County	Date Road Bridge Replacement	May 2014 : Pre construction meetings have taken place	May 2014		
	121002	Berrien County	Roosevelt Road Non-Motorized Extension	May 2014 : June letting	May 2014		
		Berrien County	Brown School Road Resurfacing	May 2014 : July Construction	May 2014		
		Village of Shoreham	Brown School Road Resurfacing	GI Package under review	February 2014		

Other Updates

JN 112969- The Roads Risk and Reserve Fund project--M-63 bridge over Hickory Creek will go for a July letting. Construction will be from July 21 to August 29.

Longitudinal joint repairs from the state line to I-196 on I-94 are currently unfunded---going into statewide request for funding from Coloma TSC.

Freeway signing and median cable barrier on I-94 from the state line to Van Buren County will be ongoing until October.

The I-94 railing replacement between exits 27 and 28 (JN 118685) will have an August letting, with part of the construction happening this fall and another portion in the Spring.

Scherwitz pointed out that truck weight limits in Michigan were higher than any neighboring states, and that this might be contributing to road degradation.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

None.

8. NEW BUSINESS

▪ TIP Amendments

Mani said there were two TIP amendments this month, both for MDOT JN 113585, the I-94 westbound resurfacing. There was a minor change in limits and a minor change in total project cost.

A motion by Fenderbosch with support by Hodge to approve the May 2014 TIP Amendments.
Motion passed.

▪ Unified Planning Work Program (UWP)

Mani said that the FY 2015 UWP followed a similar format to the FY 2014 UWP, continuing many of the same initiatives. The UWP is an annual document detailing all of the activities that the MPO will undertake in a given fiscal year. Mani said that among the key items that the MPO will address that are different from previous years are:

- Roadway National Functional Class (NFC) Review
- Gathering of land use data for scenario planning
- Gathering freight data from existing sources
- Full integration of the transportation plan with the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- Public Outreach for the Transit Consolidation Plan in Berrien County

A motion by Purvis with support by Stauffer to approve the FY 2015 UWP.

▪ Economic Development Presentation by Ryan Soucy

Mani introduced Ryan Soucy, Economic Development Planner at SWMPC. Mani said that this was a good opportunity to follow up from the joint MPO meeting in April, after hearing presentations on placemaking and some of the excellent initiatives taking place in Indiana. Soucy introduced himself and discussed the topics of placemaking and the 2013 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS that he developed through an extensive stakeholder participation process. The CEDS outlines key data and goals of economic development stakeholders throughout the Southwest Michigan region. Soucy said that the creation and preservation of vibrant places was a key piece of the CEDS, and that SWMPC had assisted by facilitating placemaking trainings and doing mapping activities. Ryan showed a video that illustrated the need to distinguish vibrant streets from highly functional roads---both are needed in the landscape.

Soucy's full presentation can be found at

http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/swmpcs_economic_development_and_community_placemaking_functions.pdf

Scherwitz reiterated the need for sound access management practices and cooperation amongst landowners to ensure a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly environment. Lewis said that in planning for major events, it is important to interconnect parking lots to allow for good traffic management. Panozzo said that a new transit shuttle service in Paw Paw was having issues at Meijer and Wal-Mart where buses were having to take inefficient routes to move people among the various shopping destinations. Fowler said that the Home Depot private drive being closed was a serious issue. Scherwitz said that this was a prime example of poor coordination among landowners, and revenues that were below expected levels.

▪ **Legislative Updates-Federal and State**

○ **Federal –**

Dewey said that there were no updates to the GROW AMERICA Act since the April joint MPO meeting. The bill would provide \$199.2 Billion over 4 years, including grant programs for high performing MPOs. Dewey added that revenue would be raised by ending tax breaks for businesses. Alternate proposals are under consideration in the US House and Senate, and it is not clear which bill will be passed. It remains a possibility that we will have a continuing resolution on MAP-21.

○ **State –**

Lott said that there had been no movement on Speaker Bolger's proposal to fund roads using a 6% wholesale tax. More recent transportation proposals were related to transportation project warranties and weight limits.

Scherwitz encouraged committee members to call State Sen. John Proos and request that the current aviation funding bill be tied to the roads funding bill. The aviation fuel tax has been at three cents per gallon since 1928, and that it was well past time for an increase that would allow small airports to increase their revenue.

9. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

None.

10. ADJOURNMENT at 11:35 a.m.

- Next meeting is **June 16, 2014, 10:30 AM**

Compiled by: Gautam Mani, Transportation Planner, 2014