

TWIN CITIES AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Policy Committee

Minutes

June 16, 2014

10:30 A.M.

Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

<p>POLICY MEMBERS PRESENT:</p>	<p>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 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 Mickey Bennett, Sodus Township 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 Donald Schlipp, Village of Stevensville Darrell Harden, MDOT Southwest Region Nora Jefferson, Benton Charter Township Joanne Johnson, Disability Network Southwest Michigan John Lanum, MDOT Statewide Planning Jason Latham, MDOT Regional Planning Richard Lewis, City of St. Joseph Paul Lott, MDOT Statewide Planning Tim Lynch, Berrien County Road Commission 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 Representative, Cornerstone Alliance</p>
<p>SWMPC STAFF PRESENT:</p>	<p>Kim Gallagher Gautam Mani</p>
<p>OTHERS PRESENT:</p>	<p>Matt Kodis, Kinexus</p>

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Scherwitz called the meeting to order at 10:37 a.m. and led the group in introductions.

2. **MINUTES:**

- A motion was made by Fenderbosch with support by Hodge to approve the minutes of the May 19 Policy Committee meeting. **Motion passed.**

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Kodis said that Kinexus' State of the Workforce Report would be available immediately following the meeting, and any organizations that wanted copies of all five sections could ask, or go online to kinexus.org

4. **STAFF REPORT**

- **SWMPC Staff Changes**

Mani said that SWMPC had chosen to fill Suzann Flowers' position internally. Kim Gallagher, SWMPC's Senior Planner, will be taking over most of Suzann's transportation duties. Kim has been involved in transportation work for SWMPC for over a decade, including with the MPO, and Mani said that the MPO would benefit greatly from having Gallagher's experience and knowledge at meetings on a more consistent basis.

Mani also said that Kris Martin, formerly SWMPC's program assistant, had been promoted to Associate Planner. Kris would be taking over management of Kim's US-12 and Rideshare programs, and SWMPC is excited that he will be working on community master plans.

- **MTPA Update**

Mani said that there was only one item of relevance from the May MTPA meeting for the MPO committees, and that was that MTPA voted to remain on three-year TIP cycles rather than switching to two. A two-year TIP cycle would have meant that SWMPC had to produce a new TIP in FY 2015, which would have meant far less time available to work on other projects.

- **CTAA Conference Update**

Gallagher said that she and Panozzo attended the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) Conference. This conference was mostly attended by smaller or rural transportation systems. Among the issues discussed were providing public transit in an era of performance-based planning, and how to deal with similar issues with service boundaries and funding that we see in Southwest Michigan as the population continues to spread out.

Panozzo added that she had attended a pre-conference meeting of mobility managers, and that there had been an increased focus on non-emergency medical transportation.

- **Transit Consolidation Study Presentation**

Gallagher presented on the recently concluded transit consolidation study for Berrien County. Gallagher presented the multiple ways that transit in Berrien County could be more efficient, both in terms of use of taxpayer dollars and in terms of being able to get passengers to their destinations in a timely manner. Gallagher showed newspaper clippings from the 1970s showing residents and community leaders organizing for transit, and in particular, financial support of transit. To improve the transit system would take a change from high-rate local millages to a lower-rate countywide millage.

Gallagher used the example of road infrastructure, and asked committee members to imagine if a road just suddenly stopped before a person got to their destination, with no detour and no way to go forward. This is exactly what many transit users in Berrien County currently experience when navigating transit boundaries.

Fowler said that wheelchair transportation was still an issue, as senior centers in the County were often not equipped to transport passengers in wheelchairs, or multiple passengers in wheelchairs.

Purvis said that a major transportation crisis was coming, as in 5-10 years, much of the population will be in an age group where driving becomes more dangerous and where many individuals may no longer be able to operate a motor vehicle

Scherwitz noted that in the prior meeting, Johnson had challenged each member of the group to consider how they would get to their destinations for a week without a car and without help from friends or family. Committee members should expect to report back at the July meeting.

Welch said that the transit study aligned well with the Governor’s initiative on statewide transit connectivity, particularly for the aging populations. Gallagher agreed, also saying that Michigan’s Great Southwest Leadership Council had formed a subcommittee to deal specifically with public transit. This is a huge step in getting transit into the beginning of the conversation rather than as an afterthought. Schuh cautioned that it was important that the subcommittee bring others into the discussion once the plan is completed, or even as it is being developed. Often with subcommittees like this, individuals who do not have experience with transit formulate a plan of their own and proceed with work in a counterproductive way to plans that have been created in the public arena.

Gallagher’s complete presentation is available at:
http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/twincats_presentation_transit_plan_2014.pdf

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Walk and Roll**
None
- **Regional Inclusive Community Coalition (RICC)**
None.
- **Mobility Management/Transit Consolidation Update**
None.
- **Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority (TCATA) Operations Update**
Purvis said that TCATA had received its grant for a dispatching system, and were now creating a schedule for contract work.

6. LAND USE AND ZONING UPDATES

None.

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 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	November 2013		
		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	June 2014: Under Construction	June 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	Mill existing and place 2 HMA	December 2012		

			Arrow Highway for 3.0 miles to Livingston Road)	overlay-ROW phase; no change			
	110779	MDOT	I-94 EW and WB over Hickory Creek	January 2014: Construction in July 2014.	January 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	June 2014: Going for bid in July	June 2014		
	121011	Benton Harbor	Pipestone at Empire Traffic Signal Upgrade	June 2014: waiting on progress schedule	June 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	June 2014: \$43,000 overbid, waiting to see if there additional funds	June 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

Jolivette said that the Coloma TSC was able to obtain funding to do joint repairs on I-94 between mile markers 10 and 35. Those repairs would be done at night between August and October, so traffic disruptions will be minimal.

Mani reminded group members that local resolutions of support for FY 2015 projects were due in to him, either via email or in hard copy, by October 1, 2014.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

None.

8. NEW BUSINESS

▪ TIP Amendments

Mani said that TwinCATS was taking the unusual step of approving TIP amendments in consecutive months because of a request from MDOT to urgently approve changes to a bridge project.

Other key highlights of this month's TIP amendments include the addition of 5339-funded bike racks, facility painting, and a bus replacement and SWMPC's rideshare program for the next three fiscal years.

A motion by Fenderbosch with support by Stauffer to approve the TIP Amendments.

▪ Legislative Updates-Federal and State

- **Federal** – Dewey noted that there were no updates regarding the Grow AMERICA Act. However, there was a public comment period in effect for the proposed rulemakings, which would be based on changes to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs). The rulemakings had to do with metropolitan and non-metropolitan transportation planning, and the possibility of designating Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) to handle non-metropolitan needs. The proposed rulemakings can be found at regulations.gov. Public comments can only be submitted via the docket.

Kodis urged committee members strongly to comment on proposed changes to the American Community Survey (ACS), which would include striking key questions on commute time/time leaving for work, income, and disability. Kodis said that this was vital data for transportation planners, and that if the questions were gone, the only way to have access to such data would be through expensive, private sources. It would make the work that SWMPC and MDOT do much more difficult. Kodis said that comments could be made at https://www.census.gov/acs/www/about_the_survey/content_review_feedback/.

- **State** – Welch said that a statewide training on performance measures would be taking place sometime after the MTPA Conference in August. In MDOT's estimation, a new statewide transportation revenue package would likely be delayed until after the elections this November, but an appropriations bill for FY 2015 had passed.

Welch estimated that the second round of Roads, Risk and Reserve fund projects wouldn't go through, but would be distributed via the Act 51 formula, with a delay in the required date at which those funds needed to be spent.

9. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Jolivette announced the Bill Meeks is no longer with MDOT, and that Pete Pfeiffer had taken over as interim Coloma-TSC Manager.

Scherwitz reminded the group that Lest We Forget was taking place this weekend (June 21-22) at the Airport and at Tiscornia Beach. Scherwitz encouraged people to get to Tiscornia Beach to see the beach landings in commemoration of Normandy, as beach landings likely would not take place in future years due to funding issues. Scherwitz said that World War II veterans may not be mobile in five years, so this would be one of the last opportunities to truly honor them.

10. ADJOURNMENT at 11:30 a.m.

- Next meeting is **July 21, 2014, 10:30 AM**

Compiled by: Gautam Mani, Transportation Planner, 2014

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