

TWIN CITIES AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Policy Committee

Minutes

July 21, 2014

10:30 A.M.

Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

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| POLICY MEMBERS PRESENT: | Tim Fenderbosch, St. Joseph Charter Township Carolyn Fowler, Benton Charter Township William Hodge, Berrien County Planning Commission Erin Jolivette, MDOT Coloma TSC Deb Kavanaugh, Hagar Township John Lanum, MDOT Statewide Planning Richard Lewis, City of St. Joseph 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 |
| POLICY MEMBERS ABSENT: | Aaron Anthony, City of Bridgman Mickey Bennett, Sodus Township Bill Brown, Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission (ex officio) Andrea Dewey, Federal Highway Administration (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 Jason Latham, MDOT Regional Planning 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 |
| SWMPC STAFF PRESENT: | Kim Gallagher Gautam Mani |
| OTHERS PRESENT: | Matt Kodis, Kinexus |

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Scherwitz called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. and led the group in introductions.

2. MINUTES:

- A motion was made by Fenderbosch with support by Stauffer to approve the minutes of the June 16 Policy meeting. **Motion passed.**

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Kodis announced that he was leaving Kinexus in the next two weeks, and that this would be his last TwinCATS meeting. Kodis is taking a position as product planner for Whirlpool, and would be remaining in the area. He said that he would be advising Gallagher and Mani of possible replacements. Committee members thanked him for his contributions to the committees.

4. STAFF REPORT

▪ MTPA Update- Conference in August

Mani stated that MTPA had a short meeting in June and no meeting in July, and that therefore there was no information to share with committee members from MTPA. The annual conference will be in Port Huron August 5-8. Mani and Gallagher will both be attending and will bring back relevant information. Any committee members who are interested in attending can go to <http://www.mtpa-mi.org> to register.

▪ MACOG Livable Communities Update

Mani said that he had attended the Michiana Area Council of Governments' annual Livable Communities Workshop, and that the topic was strategies for economic development. Mani said that two Ball State professors had found in their research that communities that spend more on infrastructure, schools, and public health do better in terms of job creation than those communities that rely on business incentives such as tax breaks. Copies of the white paper by the two professors were available at the meeting, and also online at <http://projects.cberdata.org/reports/EconDevPolicy2013.pdf>.

▪ Transit Consolidation Study Update

Gallagher said that she had given two additional presentations regarding the transit consolidation study: one at NATS, and one to the SWMPC board. Gallagher noted that one question she had received consistently was whether a countywide millage would be enough without the new countywide authority. Gallagher pointed out that service boundaries tied to federal funds would still create a disconnected system, even with the new millage. With a countywide authority, it would be possible to dissolve those service boundaries and have connected service throughout Berrien County. Gallagher said that she would be presenting to the county commissioners on Thursday, and that she would be willing to come present to local boards upon request. Gallagher said that she would require 10-15 minutes minimum to give an effective presentation to a local board or other agency.

▪ Commuter Bike Program

Gallagher said that she had met with MDOT Passenger Division, and that Sharon Edgar, the director of the division, had prioritized provision of the "last mile of service," to get people from transit stops to employment and education services. Individuals in the PATH program through Michigan Works have to be at locations at very specific times. Gallagher said there was an opportunity to partner with Cycle Re-Cycle, a local non-profit that assists individuals in need with obtaining a bicycle and learning the skills to maintain it. Another ongoing step is TCATA's continued installation of bike racks on buses, which assists individuals with getting the last mile home. Gallagher said there was a major opportunity to help

with the prisoner re-entry program. Other communities have done a “creative commuter program,” and have used FTA funding to provide this last mile of service.

Kodis asked whether this idea might evolve into a bikeshare program as seen in Washington DC or Portland, Oregon. Gallagher said that was possible, but a credit-card based deposit system for renting a bike might pose challenges for some residents. Still, it remains a possibility for the region.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

▪ **Walk and Roll**

None.

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

None.

▪ **Mobility Management/Transit Consolidation Update**

Panozzo said that she was working with 211, the non-emergency assistance line, to improve the listing of bus services in Berrien County. The service is run by United Way of Southwest Michigan. Currently, searching the database is extremely confusing, and leads people to private bus services as well as business listings. The work is ongoing to change the taxonomy on the website.

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

Purvis said that TCATA had obtained \$200,000 in additional JARC funding from the state that was previously cut. Gallagher and Purvis presented TCATA ridership data for FY 2014 in comparison to past years. Purvis walked committee members through interpreting the ridership tables. Ridership is down from FY 2013 because TCATA lost days due to snow. However, Purvis noted that ridership on fixed routes has been rising again during the summer months.

6. LAND USE AND ZONING UPDATES

Lewis said that the CVS proposal in the City of St. Joseph would seek PUD status, which would possibly lead to an extension of Napier Avenue. If the proposal is not granted, then there would be no reason to designate a PUD. The City Commission is meeting again on Monday to discuss the proposal.

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 | | |

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|--|--------|---|--|--|---------------|--|--|
| | 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 | Transit vehicle | July 2014: | July 2014 | | |

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|------|--------|-------------------------------|---|--|---------------|--|--|
| | | Area Transportation Authority | replacement (3 total) | Buses on the way, with propane conversions | | | |
| 2013 | 89085 | Benton Harbor | Klock Rd (from North Shore to Paw Paw)- | July 2014: Project unlikely to go through--- Harbor Shores still in lawsuit | July 2014 | | |
| | 112091 | Berrien County | Hollywood Road | July 2014: Under Construction | July 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 | | |
| | | 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 | January 2013 | | |

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|------|--------|---------------------|--|---|-----------|--|--|
| | | | | state funds in 2014 | | | |
| | | TCATA | Bus operations | Not submit yet | | | |
| | 116924 | SWMPC | Berrien County- Rideshare | In progress | | | |
| 2014 | 112087 | Benton Harbor | Broadway Avenue/Colfax Avenue Resurfacing | July 2014: August letting | July 2014 | | |
| | 121011 | Benton Harbor | Pipestone at Empire Traffic Signal Upgrade | July 2014: No contract yet | July 2014 | | |
| | | Berrien County | Date Road Bridge Replacement | July 2014: Under construction | July 2014 | | |
| | 121002 | Berrien County | Roosevelt Road Non-Motorized Extension | July 2014: \$43,000 overbid, contract awarded | July 2014 | | |
| | | Berrien County | Brown School Road Resurfacing | July 2014: July Construction | July 2014 | | |
| | | Village of Shoreham | Brown School Road Resurfacing | July 2014: GI package approved | July 2014 | | |

Other Updates

Jolivette announced that MDOT's Priority Roads Investment Program (PRIP) projects had been selected. This was another pot of statewide funds, for which projects were selected by the legislature without consultation with locals. A PRIP project that is within the MPO is a resurfacing of M-63 between M-139 and I-94.

Jolivette also said that the I-94 joint repair project using state funds came in with a high bid, but was let this month and will be proceeding as scheduled.

8. OLD BUSINESS:

None.

9. NEW BUSINESS

▪ TIP Amendments

None.

▪ Revised Bylaws

Mani said that TAC had approved new the changes from the previous month's draft of the new bylaws were semantic issues and typographic errors. Mani reminded committee members of the major changes from the previous set of TAC bylaws:

- Kinexus and Disability Network having voting membership
- A cancellation and rescheduling policy
- A clear conflicts of interest policy

-A clear application process for adding new members to the MPO.

Mani said that he was now seeking nominees to be on the bylaw review committee for Policy. Stauffer and Lewis volunteered.

▪ **Resolution of Support 2015 Reminder**

Mani said that for any projects scheduled for FY 2015 that need local match dollars, a resolution of support from the local governing board or council would be required by October 1, 2014. The resolution only needs to specify that the local government is committed to providing the local match for the project in FY 2015. Mani said that he would be happy to send a template of the resolution, and post it to the web as well.

▪ **Mobility Challenge 2014**

Gallagher said that at the June TwinCATS meeting, Joanne Johnson had presented an opportunity for committee members to imagine what daily life in Southwest Michigan is like for someone who is unable to afford a car or cannot drive. SWMPC staff devised an exercise where each committee member will receive a different scenario and attempt to plan rides as requested by the individuals in the scenario. Gallagher supplied each committee member with resources that might help them figure out the rides. Gallagher requested that committee members treat this as a “Secret Shopper” exercise, and actually test out how well dispatching services and the My Way There website work. Mani said that the committee would look for report back from participating members at next month’s meeting.

▪ **Officer Nominations**

Scherwitz said that since he would be retiring in 2015, it was time to elect new officers.

Mani noted that the chair could be as active as they wanted, and he encouraged any potential chairs to feel free to approach staff with agenda items and emerging issues for which the TwinCATS committees needed to pass a resolution.

Panozzo volunteered to be on a nominating committee for new officers. The committees will vote on a new chair and vice chair at the August meeting.

▪ **Legislative Updates-Federal and State**

- **Federal** – Lanum said that the House voted to approve an \$11 billion extension to the highway trust fund, which would keep the trust fund solvent until May 2015. The Senate still needs to pass the extension.

Kodis said that Congress had recently passed a re-authorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, which helps fund Kinexus. There were no significant changes for Kinexus’ funding outlined in the bill, and the President is expected to sign it.

- **State** – Lanum said that it is possible the state might pass a revenue package during the lame duck session beginning in November, but that it is unlikely.

Purvis said that TCATA was expecting to lose about 6% of its state funding, which amounts to about \$100,000 that it uses to match federal-aid projects. This reduction has arisen because of a formula that rewards transit systems that spend more, and systems on the east side are getting more in the way of local millage funds.

Lanum shared that MDOT was re-aligning its regions to better coordinate with the Regional Prosperity initiative. The Southwest Region for MDOT will now be seven counties: Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, and Van Buren. Allegan County and Barry County would be swallowed into the MDOT Grand Region. The Coloma TSC and SWMPC's boundaries would remain unaffected for transportation purposes.

10. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Mani alerted committee members to the fact that this September would be the 30th Anniversary of the Pere Marquette Amtrak route, and that a commemorative ceremony would be taking place when the train pulls into the station on September 15. All TwinCATS committee members were invited to attend, and Mani said that staff would be looking for a possible venue near the train station to hold a joint TwinCATS TAC and Policy Committee meeting.

11. ADJOURNMENT at 11:28 AM

- Next meeting is August 18, 2014 at 10:30 AM

Compiled by: Gautam Mani, Transportation Planner, 2014

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