

**TWIN CITIES AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY**

Policy Committee

**Minutes**

August 18th, 2014

10:30 A.M.

Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

<p><b>POLICY MEMBERS PRESENT:</b></p>	<p>Andrea Dewey, Federal Highway Administration (ex officio)                  Tim Fenderbosch, St. Joseph Charter Township                  Carolyn Fowler, Benton Charter Township                  Erin Jolivet, MDOT Coloma TSC                  Richard Lewis, City of St. Joseph                  Tim Lynch, Berrien County Road Commission                  John Olson, Village of Shoreham                  Debra Panozzo, Berrien County Board of Commissioners                  Bill Purvis, TCATA                  Lee Scherwitz, SW Michigan Regional Airport                  Dick Stauffer, Lincoln Charter Township</p>
<p><b>POLICY MEMBERS ABSENT:</b></p>	<p>John Gast, Lake Charter Township                  John Lanum, MDOT Statewide Planning                  Deb Kavanaugh, Hagar Township                  William Hodge, Berrien County Planning Commission                  Kris Welch, MDOT-Statewide Planning                  Aaron Anthony, City of Bridgman                  Mickey Bennett, Sodus Township                  Bill Brown, Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission (ex officio)                  John Egelhaaf, SWMPC                  Ron Griffin, St. Joseph Charter Township                  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                  Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration (ex officio)                  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><b>SWMPC STAFF PRESENT:</b></p>	<p>Kim Gallagher                  Gautam Mani                  Kris Martin</p>

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Scherwitz called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m. and led the group in introductions.

**2. MINUTES:**

A motion was made by Fenderbosch with support by Panozzo to approve the minutes of the July 21 Policy Committee meeting. **Motion passed.**

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**4. STAFF REPORT**

▪ **MTPA Updates**

Mani and Gallagher had a good MTPA annual conference in Port Huron. There was a lot of focus on security and protecting vulnerable transportation assets and the importance of having hazard mitigation plans. There was also great session on visualization and communication. MPO staff are coming back with a lot of ideas of how we can better get information to you in a way that is not difficult to navigate. Darrell Harden, MDOT Region Planner for Southwest Region received the junior planner of the year award, He doesn't make it to TwinCATS very often, but he has still been instrumental in delivering local projects to the area. When you see him, congratulate him! Mani also noted that he was elected MTPA Secretary. Our local MPOs had a strong voice on a statewide level when Suzann Flowers was chair of MTPA, and it will continue to have a strong voice.

Gallagher stated that she learned at the conference that transit agencies can get grants for back up generation power systems with 15% local match. This would be really important during a prolonged power outage.

▪ **Other Items**

Mani talked about the Local Safety Initiative (LSI) from MDOT. This is a service where a team from MDOT will examine your community's road segments and determine the most unsafe segments and intersections in terms of crashes. This is primarily for vehicular conflicts. They will propose engineering solutions as well, which Mani noted was beyond the capacity of SWMPC staff. Mani said that many of the solutions proposed would be low cost, and that project funding would potentially be available to implement recommended treatments. Mani also noted that the LSI is completely free for local communities. The request has to come from cities, villages, and townships themselves, however.

**5. PUBLIC TRANSIT**

▪ **Transit Consolidation Study Updates**

Gallagher said there is not much to update. She said the media coverage has been helpful in getting word to communities about the consolidated transportation study.

▪ **Mobility Management**

Panozzo said that she is continuing to receive calls from individuals who need assistance getting to life-sustaining services, especially medical appointments. Transit service cannot get them there.

▪ **TCATA Updates**

Purvis talked about the additional grant funding he obtained through JARC, which he had not expected. Scherwitz suggested that TCATA should have shovel ready projects for the other

proposed routes if future funding arrives. Gallagher asked about bike racks. There are currently four racks on buses, and thirteen more are on order. Each bike rack can hold two bikes. Purvis said that the red route is popular for people biking to the fixed route locations.

## 6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Walk and Roll**  
None.
  
- **Regional Inclusive Community Coalition (RICC)**  
None.

## 7. LAND USE AND ZONING UPDATES

Gallagher noted that Kinexus was moving locations to the old M-TEC building. This location would no longer be on a fixed route and would pose an issue to many of the clients that they serve.

## 8. PROJECT UPDATES

Fiscal Year	Job Number	Agency	Project Name	Update Information	Date of last update	Cost Changes	Projected Letting and obligation date
<b>2012</b>							
	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 <b>July 2013: On hold</b>	July 2013		
		Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority	New expanded hours	<b>July 2012:</b> Continued through 2013 (2014 funding seems less certain); <b>September 2012:</b> Continued Service; 11/2012 after 2013 the state will match buses but nothing else; <b>December 2012-</b> already been awarded; <b>November 2013:</b> not funded	November 2013		

		Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority	New line haul route	<b>July 2012:</b> Continued through 2013 (2014 funding seems less certain); ; 11/2012 after 2013 the state will match buses but nothing else <b>July 2013:</b> JARC funding cut in half, project will proceed.	July 2013		
		Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority	Transit vehicle replacement (3 total)	<b>July 2014:</b> Buses on the way, with propane conversions	July 2014		
<b>2013</b>	89085	Benton Harbor	Klock Rd (from North Shore to Paw Paw)-	<b>July 2014:</b> Project unlikely to go through--- Harbor Shores still in lawsuit <b>August 2014 delete from TIP</b>	July 2014		
	112091	Berrien County	Hollywood Road	<b>July 2014:</b> Under Construction <b>Completed August 29<sup>th</sup></b>	August 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	<b>January 2014:</b> Construction in July 2014.	January 2014		
		TCATA	Replacement 3 buses CMAQ project	2013 applications are due to the state in December; <b>July 2013:</b> 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	January 2013		

				to get 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	<b>August 2014:</b> They will be sometime after Labor Day	August 2014		
	121011	Benton Harbor	Pipestone at Empire Traffic Signal Upgrade	<b>August 2014:</b> Under Construction	August 2014		
		Berrien County	Date Road Bridge Replacement	<b>August 2014:</b> Under construction	August 2014		
	121002	Berrien County	Roosevelt Road Non-Motorized Extension	<b>July 2014:</b> \$43,000 overbid, contract awarded. Trying to get start date construction soon. Pre-construction August 22nd	August 2014		
		Berrien County	Brown School Road Resurfacing	<b>August 2014:</b> Construction complete	August 2014		
		Village of Shoreham	Brown School Road Resurfacing	<b>July 2014:</b> GI package approved	July 2014		
2015		Berrien County	Marquette Woods Road Restore and Rehab/Sidewalks	<b>August 2014:</b> They received at \$25,000 in a local match from Meijer.	August 2014		
		Berrien County	Napier Avenue at Pipestone St Traffic Signal				
		City of Benton Harbor	Pipestone St at Britain Avenue Traffic Signal				
		City of St. Joseph	Botham Avenue	<b>August 2014</b> Abonmarche received the contract			
		City of St. Joseph	Park St. Bridge	<b>August 2014:</b> Getting final permissions from CSX railroad			

### Other Updates

Mani noted to committee members that the state had run out of obligation authority, meaning that the state could not attach any more FY 2014 funding to transportation projects. Mani said that obligation authority had run out in early August, which is later than had been expected. Mani said that redistribution would occur from the federal level to the states based on each state's need. Mani noted

that one project within the MPO was currently in limbo: Brown School Road in the Village of Shoreham, but the MPO will wait to see whether the project is funded once redistribution occurs.

Stauffer gave an update on the Construction meeting for the Lincoln Charter Township Roosevelt Road project on August 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9 am. Stauffer stated that Meijer awarded Lincoln Twp a \$25,000 dollar grant for their road project. Stauffer said that Meijer was in support for the improvement of the road surface and extending the sidewalks. This story was in the local paper recently. Stauffer mentioned that traffic camera can really help improve safety and traffic flow he recommends communities with problematic intersections look into using them.

Mani also requested that any agencies with FY 2015 projects requiring local match submit resolutions of support from their local boards or councils to Mani by October 1. The resolutions are available on the web and need to specify that the community will provide local match in the fiscal year of the project.

## 9. OLD BUSINESS:

- **Officer Nominating Committee Report**

Panozzo, chair of the nominating committee, nominated Stauffer for Chair and Lynch for Vice Chair for FY 2015 and 2016.

A motion by Panozzo with support by Fenderbosch to elect Stauffer and Lynch as the officers for FY 2015 and 2016. **Motion passed.**

- **Mobility Challenge 2014 Report Back**

Stauffer and Jolivette discussed the results of their attempts at the mobility challenge. Their scenarios included individuals who lived outside of transit service areas or needed to access education at hours when transit would not operate, respectively. Currently the County system is inadequate and service hours not long enough for either user, creating prohibitively expensive travel conditions.

See attached handouts for information on the remaining scenarios.

A question was asked on what we can do next. Gallagher said that the MPO members can individually reach out to our county commissioners to ask them to support this consolidation study. These examples of the stories from the Mobility Challenge really help commissioners and others relate to the struggles of people without access to a car in this County.

Mani said that the MPO could create a resolution of support supporting the consolidation study. Mani said that he would draft a resolution of support or letter and bring it before the committees for their approval.

A motion by Lynch with support by Fowler to have MPO staff draft a resolution of support or letter stating the MPO's support of the transit consolidation study. **Motion passed.**

## 10. NEW BUSINESS

- **September Presentation on Transportation Funding by Bill Hamilton**

Mani said that the regular TwinCATS meetings for September are CANCELLED. Instead, we will be having a joint MPO meeting where Bill Hamilton from the House Fiscal Agency (state

legislature) will present on Transportation Funding—the current state of it and how we can better leverage it.

The joint MPO meeting will take place on Thursday September 25<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM at Berrien RESA in Berrien Springs (711 St. Joseph Avenue). Bill will give his presentation and then we will handle any MPO business afterwards. Rural agencies and small urban agencies will also be invited for Bill's presentation.

▪ **Legislative Updates-Federal and State**

- **Federal** – Dewey reported that the President had signed into a law a bill to keep the highway trust fund solvent until May 31, 2015. This places 2015 construction projects in a precarious position, as Congress might wait till the last minute to reauthorize again. The highway trust fund remaining solvent effectively places 2015 funding at MAP-21 funding levels.
- **State** – None.

**11. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:**

Stauffer asked about MDOT's mowing cycle on highway exits and the impacts that these would have on beautification efforts that have taken place specifically around exit 23. Stauffer wanted to make sure that MDOT did not mow over the flowers and other landscaping elements that Lincoln Township had worked on. Jolivette said that she would look into the mowing schedules and get back in touch directly with Stauffer.

**12. ADJOURNMENT at 11:30 AM**

Next meeting is September 25, 2014 at 10:00 AM at Berrien RESA

*Compiled by: Gautam Mani & Kris Martin, Associate Planners, 2014*