

TWIN CITIES AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Advisory Committee

Minutes

October 20, 2014

9:00 A.M.

Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

TAC MEMBERS PRESENT:	Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission Andrea Dewey, Federal Highway Administration (ex officio) Matt Galbraith, MDOT Statewide Planning John Gruchot, Berrien County Community Development Erin Jolivette, MDOT - Coloma TSC Paul Lott, MDOT Statewide Planning Kenton McAndrew, City of Benton Harbor John Olson, Village of Shoreham and Village of Stevensville Lee Scherwitz, Southwest Michigan Regional Airport Dick Stauffer, Lincoln Charter Township Kris Welch, MDOT Statewide Planning Tim Zebell, City of St. Joseph
TAC MEMBERS ABSENT:	Bill Purvis, Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority Thad Rieder, Cornerstone Alliance John Lanum, MDOT Statewide Planning Aaron Anthony, City of Bridgman Thomas Baldwin, Benton Charter Township Mickey Bennett, Sodus Township Bill Brown, Northern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (ex officio) Chris Cook, City of Benton Harbor Fred Featherly, MDOT - Multi-Modal Services (ex officio) Ron Griffin, St. Joseph Charter Township Nora Jefferson, Benton Charter Township Joanne Johnson, Disability Network Southwest Michigan Jason Latham, MDOT - Southwest Region Paul Lott, MDOT - Statewide Planning Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration (ex officio) Catherine Montoya, Berrien County Planning Commission Gloria Payne, Lake Charter Township Donald Schlipp, Village of Stevensville Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning (ex officio) Representative, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (ex officio) Alan Smaka, City of Bridgman Terrie Smith, Lincoln Charter Township Kris Welch, MDOT Statewide Planning
SWMPC STAFF PRESENT:	Kim Gallagher Gautam Mani Debra Panozzo, Mobility Consultant

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Berndt called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. and led the group in introductions. Welch introduced Matt Galbraith, who is an MDOT planner in a rotation around the different divisions and currently within Statewide Planning.

2. MINUTES:

- A motion was made by Scherwitz with support by Zebell to approve the minutes of the August TAC meeting. **Motion passed.**
- A motion by McAndrew with support by Zebell to approve the minutes of the September Joint MPO meeting. **Motion passed.**

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

4. STAFF REPORT

▪ **Feedback from Funding Workshop**

Mani noted that he had received positive feedback from committee members and others about the Transportation Funding Workshop in September. Copies of the slides from Bill Hamilton's presentation were available for individuals who were unable to attend the presentation. SWMPC welcomes further comments and suggestions for future learning topics related to transportation funding.

▪ **National Functional Classification Review Coming Up**

Mani noted that the statewide National Functional Classification (NFC) Review was coming up. Mani said that the focus of the review will be on seeing whether there are roads classified as urban other principal arterials that need to be downgraded to minor arterials, and rural major collectors that need to be downgraded to rural minor collectors,. The idea behind this review is to meet statewide targets for each NFC category. A regionwide meeting will take place sometime between now and April to discuss changes. Within Berrien County, we are close to meeting these targets, so any changes in the statewide review should be very minor.

After the statewide review, communities will have the opportunities to submit other NFC change requests, including moving a road up in classification. These requests must be based on current traffic counts, not desires for future developments.

▪ **Local Safety Initiative and Safety Projects**

Mani reminded committee members that they were eligible to have safety audits done by MDOT free of charge, as part of the Local Safety Initiative. MDOT engineers will take a look at crash data and unsafe intersections, and propose solutions. Many of the solutions proposed will be low cost. Doing this safety audit will make communities eligible for certain pools of funding, including a higher priority in obtaining highway safety program funds.

▪ **Statewide Transportation Alternatives Funds**

Mani said that Matt Wiitala from MDOT Office of Economic Development would be attending next month's MPO meetings and discussing the Statewide Transportation Alternatives grant system. This is a competitive grant process that communities can apply for to complete pedestrian and bicycle improvements. Wiitala will go over how to make applications competitive and what activities are eligible.

5. PUBLIC TRANSIT

▪ Transit Consolidation Study Updates

Gallagher said that she was working with the Michigan Great Southwest Strategic Leadership Council (MGSSLC), a collection of business leaders, to educate them on the consolidation study and understand their perspective when it comes to transportation. Gallagher was finding that these leaders were primarily concerned with the mobility of their workforces.

Gallagher also directed committee members towards the Regional Mobility initiative being undertaken by the Governor's office to improve county-to-county travel. Gallagher noted that Southwest Michigan was still struggling with figuring out intra-county travel currently, so it is difficult to move on to talking about trips between counties.

Scherwitz asked if SWMPC had ever considered a commercial (private) operator to help provide service in the area. Scherwitz suggested that a commercial operator might be able to deliver services across boundaries and at different hours because they are not bound by federal regulations. This is particularly important in the context of the Michigan-Indiana state line, where many people are going across the border for life-sustaining services.

Gallagher said that SWMPC was looking at these possibilities, particularly when it comes to non-emergency medical transportation.

▪ Mobility Management

Panozzo said that SWMPC and the Disability Network were hosting a workshop on Friday October 24 from 1:30-3:00 PM at Michigan Works! (Kinexus), 499 W Main St, Benton Harbor. The purpose of this meeting is to make sure transit riders are aware of ways that they can advocate for a better transit system, and the appropriate channels for filing complaints and concerns so that the transit agency actually takes action.

▪ TCATA Updates

Gallagher said that TCATA had received submittals for its RFP on its scheduling and routing software, and would be making a decision on the contractor soon. Charles Yarbrough of Benton Harbor and Anthony Andrews, a transit rider, were newly appointed to the TCATA board.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

▪ Walk and Roll

None.

▪ Regional Inclusive Community Coalition (RICC)

None.

7. LAND USE AND ZONING UPDATES

Zebell noted that the City of St. Joseph was working on its master plan with assistance from the Land Information Access Association (LIAA).

8. 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	Transit vehicle replacement (3 total)	July 2014: Buses on the way, with propane	July 2014		

		Authority		conversions			
2013	112091	Berrien County	Hollywood Road	July 2014: Under Construction Completed	September 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 state funds in 2014	January 2013		
		TCATA	Bus operations	Not submit yet			
	116924	SWMPC	Berrien County-Rideshare	In progress			
	112087	Benton Harbor	Broadway Avenue/Colfax Avenue Resurfacing	September 2014: Broadway Avenue resurfacing will take place next week; Colfax in June	September 2014		
2014	121011	Benton Harbor	Pipestone at Empire Traffic Signal Upgrade	September 2014: Underway; waiting for delivery of masthead.	September 2014		
		Berrien County	Date Road Bridge Replacement	September 2014: Completed	September 2014		
	121002	Berrien County	Roosevelt Road Non-Motorized Extension	September 2014: Construction Underway; will be completed in two weeks.	August 2014		

		Village of Shoreham	Brown School Road Resurfacing	July 2014: GI package approved	July 2014		
		Berrien County	Marquette Woods Road Restore and Rehab/Sidewalks	September 2014: Design work underway, program application will be sent to LAP in about two months	September 2014		
2015		Berrien County	Napier Avenue at Pipestone St Traffic Signal	September 2014: Design work underway; program application will be sent to LAP in about a month.	September 2014		
		City of Benton Harbor	Pipestone St at Britain Avenue Traffic Signal	September 2014: Design work underway; program application will go in about a month	September 2014		
		City of St. Joseph	Botham Avenue	September 2014: Grade Inspection meeting has taken place; obligation by the end of this week.	September 2014		
		City of St. Joseph	Park St. Bridge	September 2014: Project obligated, Let in December	September 2014		

Jolivette added that the I-94 bridge repairs over the St. Joseph River would continue into next construction season, as there was an issue with the soil below the bridge. Two projects funded through the RRR process will also be done in 2015 due to a lack of funding in 2014. The M-63 project from M-139 to I-94, which is a mill and fill, will take place in 2015. In addition, the M-63 bridge over Hickory Creek project will be next year and will be a partial detour.

9. OLD BUSINESS:

- **Local Agency Programs Process and Stumbling Blocks**

Mani gave an overview of the Local Agency Programs process. He stated that federal funds were not guaranteed when a project enters the TIP; that was merely a pledge of federal funds. When a project gains a guarantee of funds, that is known as "obligation." When the funds are released after a bid is made, that is known as "letting."

Mani advised committee members that we were already "halfway through" the Local Agency Programs FY 2015 calendar, assuming that projects scheduled for 2015 are still slated for construction during calendar year 2015. Mani advised committee members to submit their project applications 18-20 weeks (4-5 months) in advance of when they want the funds let. In addition, things can still go wrong after letting that take up time before construction. These include the project coming in over the engineer's estimate, delays in the contract being signed

and pre-construction meetings. Lott pointed out that applicants had 12 months from the date of obligation to have billable construction expenses on a project, and that delays in letting and contracting may push projects past the current construction season.

Welch said that MPOs should take into account inflationary factors. The economy has rebounded, and therefore contractors are no longer as hungry for work. Bids may not come in as low as they used to, and the cost of materials is increasing.

Mani's full presentation, which draws heavily from the Local Agency Programs MPO presentation last fall, can be seen here:

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

▪ **Reprogramming of Unobligated Brown School Road Project**

Mani passed out a set of scenarios that could be used to fund the Brown School Road project. Mani said that TwinCATS had approximately \$275,000 left over in FY 2016 because the Colfax Avenue project had been moved from 2016 to 2014.

The scenarios are as follows:

Scenario 1:

The Village of Shoreham chooses to advance construct entire project in 2015 (\$535,000 total, \$428,000 federal) utilizing the following two funding streams and amounts below:

Funding Source 1: 2016 STP Federal Fund Un-Programmed Balance: \$275,837

(This amount would be reimbursed to the Village of Shoreham in 2016 to cover a portion of the advance construct costs.)

Funding Source 2: Additional local funds to cover difference in funding of \$152,163 and original local match funds of \$ 107,000 to make up the total project cost of \$535,000

Total out of pocket cost to Shoreham in 2015: \$535,000

Total amount of STP Federal reimbursement to Village of Shoreham in 2016: \$275,837

Scenario 2:

If advance construct is not an option the Village could move the project to 2016 and receive \$275,837 federal but it still would be required to pay \$152,163 additional local funds plus the original local match of \$107,000, for a total out of pocket cost to the Village of Shoreham of \$259,163.

The only difference between this scenario and Scenario 1 is that the Village does not need to spend money up front before the partial reimbursement. Instead of spending an additional \$428,000 up front (above what they were planning to spend in local match), they spend \$152,163 in addition to the local match in FY 2016.

Scenario 3:

TwinCATS member community identifies a project from 2015 that may be a better fit in 2016 or move a project from any year to the illustrative list. This scenario is less clear financially for the Village of Shoreham because it would depend on the project year and cost that is being shifted. The Village would likely still not get the full \$428,000 original federal share it was allocated.

Zebell strongly advised that the first two scenarios were the most ideal, as moving projects was not fair to jurisdictions that were ready to go. Mani said that in any case, the Village would need to pay up more than its original local share.

Olson said he would need to talk to the Village about paying extra in local share and which scenario would work. Lott and Mani noted that next month would be a TIP Amendment submittal month and that the issue would need to be resolved by then.

▪ **Upcoming CMAQ Meeting on November 13th**

Mani said that there would be a Berrien County CMAQ meeting on November 13th at 1:00 PM \ at the Berrien County Road Commission to address the unobligated project for CMAQ in 2014. In addition, the 2016-2020 Call for Projects (CFP) had gone out and therefore any new CMAQ project ideas were welcome.

Jolivette said that MDOT was always soliciting CMAQ project ideas for state routes from local agencies.

10. NEW BUSINESS

▪ **General Program Accounts (GPA) Guidance from MDOT**

Lott said that the General Program Accounts guidance was now in effect now that it is a new fiscal year. Lott said that General Program Accounts help to combine projects so that changes do not need to be processed as a TIP amendment. Essentially, they speed processing. Lott said that Mark Kloha would be coming and providing guidance on how to list GPAs in a separate tab in the e-file.

▪ **Legislative Updates-Federal and State**

- **Federal** –None.
- **State** – None.

11. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Zebell noted that on certain sections of the SWMPC website, the meeting time for TwinCATS TAC was still noted as 9:30 AM instead of the correct 9:00 AM.

Zebell also noted that the City of St. Joseph had decided to use concrete pavement instead of asphalt on its Botham Avenue project, as the price differential was not great and the City of St. Joseph had success with concrete paving in the past.

12. ADJOURNMENT at 10:34 AM

- Next meeting is November 17, 2014 at 9:00 AM at the Airport.

Compiled by: Gautam Mani, Associate Planner, 2014