

TWIN CITIES AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Advisory Committee

Minutes

December 16, 2013

9:30 A.M.

Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

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

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Scherwitz called the meeting to order at 9:38 a.m. and led the group in introductions.

2. MINUTES:

- A motion was made by Zebell with support by Cook to approve the minutes of the November 18 TAC meeting. **Motion passed.**

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Kodis noted that Kinexus would be conducting new cost of living assessments in the area, and a new

4. STAFF REPORT:

▪ **CMAQ Call for Projects 2015-2019**

Mani said that a new Call for Projects for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) had been issued by MDOT for 2015-2019. In Berrien County, funds would have to be programmed for 2018-2019, so Mani encouraged committee members to develop projects. Mani also said that the purpose of the meetings was to review funding for 2014-2017. Mani said that the funding targets would be around \$598,000 for 2018 and 2019, and that a project selection meeting would be held on **January 23 at 2 PM at the Berrien County Road Commission** in conjunction with the rural task force (RTF) meeting. Mani said that every community would be receiving a packet in the mail.

Zebell also noted that the City of St. Joseph would be freeing up funds in 2015, as they do not require CMAQ funds for signal timing upgrades as originally programmed. Zebell said that the amount available was close to \$70,000.

▪ **Hagar Township Update**

Mani said that the Adjusted Census Urban Boundaries (ACUBs) had been approved, and that Hagar Township therefore legally is entitled to one voting representative each on TAC and Policy. Mani asked for a motion approving one voting representative on TAC for Hagar Township.

A motion by Berndt with support by Cook to approve one voting representative from Hagar Township on the TwinCATS Technical Advisory Committee. **Motion passed.**

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

▪ **Walk and Roll**

Mani said that staff had assessed the TIP projects for compatibility with the Complete Streets Policy. Mani said that the subcommittee had instructed staff to do a re-draft of the Complete Streets Policy to clarify language regarding exemptions, and to make clear what types of projects the Policy can be applied to. Mani said that a redraft would be available for consideration by the Committees for consideration in January.

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

None.

▪ **Berrien County Coordinated Transportation Coalition (BCCTC)**

None.

- **Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority (TCATA)**
None.

6. PROJECT UPDATES

Important note: Berndt noted that the Hollywood Road project will not be using any 2014 STP dollars from the Advance Construct conversion. Therefore, there would be \$286,444 available for use on other projects. Mani said that SWMPC would be in touch with communities regarding use of these funds on other 2014 projects.

Fiscal Year	Job Number	Agency	Project Name	Update Information	Date of last update	Cost Changes	Projected Letting and obligation date
	NA	Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority	Bus shelters	March 2013, still in limbo—bus shelters will be outside Michigan Works and Chemical Bank; May 2013- Proposal for city-operated cameras in shelters still needs to go before TCATA board, locations at Main at 12 th St and Triangle Park; July 2013: Under Construction, done by the end of September; October 2013: Pads poured, should be in place shortly; December 2013: Completed.	December 2013		x
2012							
	113585	MDOT	I-94 Red Arrow Highway to Livingston Rd	PE Phase-design; no change	December 2012		x
	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		x
	110779	MDOT	I-94 EB and WB over Hickory Creek (bridge)	design phase; July 2012: Meeting in Kalamazoo (July) to discuss project design; the bridge	December 2013		x

				was made longer to accommodate a walking path, April 2013 let, and bridge will be replaced in 2014; no change; March 2013: Air Quality Plans 99% complete; submitted for letting; June 2013: Design phase completed. October 2013: Will be constructed in 2014 December 2013- work completed for 2013, will pick back up during the spring			
		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		x
		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		x
		Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority	Transit vehicle replacement (3 total)	; 11/2012 after 2013 the state will match buses but nothing else	November 2012		x
2013	89085	Benton Harbor	Klock Rd (from North Shore to Paw Paw)-	1/2013- continues to be in limbo due to negotiations with Harbor Shores; no plans yet; 5/2013- Needs to use up EDA funds this year, ultimately Harbor Shores' choice as to whether project moves forward. July 2013:	November 2013		

				Lawsuit between Harbor Shores and New Products- 1 year left to use funds. August 2013- lawsuit ongoing- probably means that project will not go through. November 2013- no change			
	112091	Berrien County	Hollywood Road	1/2013: Pre-engineering complete- need 1.3 million. Depending on availability of STP funds, project will get funding in 2013 and 2014. 2/2013- Project will be a go in 2014, pending project selection process, and will be using STP funds in that year; GI package being submitted by May 1; May: GI package ready to submit June 2013: GI meeting has taken place, GI package will be submitted, and there may be possible bid savings. July 2013: Waiting on MDOT approval of administrative modification. October 2013: December 6 letting December 2013: Additional \$286,444 available in 2014, because this project will not use it.	December 2013		
	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	Bridge Replacement-CON phase-AC project; 11/2012 starting in 2013 bridge replacement will be in 2014; no change; CON August –end of September crossover and temporary widening June 2013: Construction will begin in July, end in October—2 lanes will be closed. August 2013 Construction beginning today.	August 2013		
	119786	MDOT	M-63over St. Joseph River in St. Joseph	Bridge Repair			
		Berrien County	Napier and Union	Traffic Signal; July 2013: GI comments, August 23 rd deadline for ROW. October 2013: November 1 letting; November 2013: pre-construction meeting next week; December 2013: work will begin when weather allows	December 2013		
		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	Broadway	Final plans ready;	December		

		Harbor	Avenue Resurfacing	still need the city's commitment. November 2013: Resolution approved. December 2013: trying to get GI meeting scheduled	2013		
	121011	Benton Harbor	Pipestone at Empire Traffic Signal Upgrade	November 2013: Resolution approved	November 2013		
		Berrien County	Date Road Bridge Replacement	GI plans have been submitted	December 2013		
	121002	Berrien County	Roosevelt Road Non-Motorized Extension	Plans will be ready over next few months; survey work will take place in spring	December 2013		
		Berrien County	Brown School Road Resurfacing	Plans in Progress; GI submittal in January	December 2013		
		Village of Shoreham	Brown School Road Resurfacing	Construct in June of 2014	October 2013		

7. OLD BUSINESS:

▪ Bylaw Review

Mani said that staff wanted committee members to continue to review the bylaws, and that the best way to move forward with the review was to have a working group to look at the TAC bylaws first, examining who needs to be at the table and what function TAC should have. Panozzo raised the issue of whether the meetings could be combined. Lott and Flowers said that by statute, the two groups needed to be separate and have separate missions. Mani said that staff had heard the complaint that the meeting agendas were entirely similar, but noted that they do not have to be; the two groups can bring in different speakers and discuss entirely different issues should they so desire. This is one reason to review the bylaws.

Dewey said that several other MPOs in Michigan have language in the bylaws regarding voting by email or by phone. Flowers and Mani said they would look into the possibility.

8. NEW BUSINESS

▪ Meeting Time Change

Mani reminded committee members that at the previous meeting, they had discussed moving meeting times to avoid overlap between TAC and Policy, as agendas have gotten and will continue to become more intensive. Mani said that after consideration of several options, staff recommended that TAC be moved forward by a half-hour to 9:00 AM to allow for an on-time start to the Policy Committee meetings.

Zebell and Cook suggested the idea of separate days for Policy and TAC, but Berndt argued that it creates greater inconvenience for individuals coming from MDOT-Statewide Planning and FHWA. Panozzo again asked whether the agenda could be restructured to allow for those items important to both committees to be towards the end of the TAC agenda. Flowers said that the

agenda retooling approach created a logistical challenge because staff would have to determine what is important to each committee.

Dewey said that it might be helpful to have a call-in option, particularly for people coming in from long distances, as making it in by 9 AM may be tricky in bad weather conditions. Scherwitz said that the airport had the capacity to do conference calls, and that he had success with GoTo Meeting software. Cook said that the call-in option should be available, but under circumstances where people have to drive long distances---those working locally should make the meeting. Mani and Flowers said that they would look into the call-in option as a possibility. Welch added that a call-in option would be great, but does not need to be done purely to accommodate committee members coming from Lansing; driving to MPO meetings is part of their job.

A motion by Zebell with support by Cook to move the time of the TwinCATS TAC meeting to 9:00 AM until further notice. **Motion passed.**

▪ **Climate Change- Land Use Discussion**

Mani thanked committee members for a robust discussion of the public health and water section of the report from GLISA and MSU-Extension. Mani said that this month's topic was the land use section of the report. Mani said that this section primarily had strategies that would be useful to individual municipalities, but there were some tie-ins to the MPO.

Mani asked specifically if there were any issues that TAC members had recently related to culverts, as there had been a number of planning efforts done in Berrien County recently regarding culverts and dams. Zebell noted that the main issue was that culverts were rusting out, and that areas were struggling with the costs of replacing them.

Mani also said that another item of interest to the MPOs in this section of the report is intelligent transportation systems (ITS) and their reporting of real-time information to motorists and transit users regarding delays. Mani asked Lott whether MDOT was planning to display more types of information on existing ITS boards in light of increased precipitation events and other safety concerns. Lott said that no changes were on the way at the moment, but that these issues were also not ones that the people who operate the ITS systems had considered up until now.

Griffin raised the issue of the recent accident between Exits 27 and 28 on I-94, where a semi-truck spilled oil on the roadway and severely damaged the guardrail on the bridge over the St. Joseph River. Griffin also said that the bridge is in extremely poor condition. Griffin suggested that better use of ITS may have helped reroute traffic around the accident. Jolivette said that after the November TwinCATS meeting, she did ask her co-workers at the Coloma TSC about better use of ITS, and there are definitely ways to improve its use. Jolivette noted that MDOT relied on its engineers to determine when a bridge absolutely needs replacement. The engineers acknowledged that this bridge is in poor condition, but there are other bridges that absolutely must be replaced because they are in worse condition. Jolivette said that they would be replacing the guardrail as soon as possible however,

Panozzo raised the issue of whether ITS systems can connect to 911 dispatch services to help improve response times. Lott said that 911 systems are usually run by the county, so it would be up to county officials to look into whether it was possible to uplink their dispatch systems to ITS, and to weight the advantages of doing so.

Scherwitz added that it would be more useful to have travel times to destinations within Southwest Michigan, particularly for those entering from Indiana, or those going up I-196 towards South Haven and Grand Rapids. Currently, the sign near Hartford states travel time to Indiana. Scherwitz asked about who decided on sign placement. Lott said that he did not know exactly who met to discuss the signs, but MDOT did hold extensive meetings. Lott acknowledged that it would be helpful if these signs could reflect travel time changes due to weather conditions more accurately, instead of simply saying “rain and snow, go slow.”

- **Targeted Transportation Plan Ideas**

Mani said that SWMPC staff welcomed ideas for transportation topics on which committee members wanted to learn more. These topics could potentially form the basis for speakers at the next joint MPO meeting in April or sooner.

- **Implementing the LRP and TIP**

Mani said that SWMPC staff would be taking committee members’ suggestion of having working sessions at SWMPC offices on the Long Range Plan and TIP into account. Staff will be contacting individuals at various times when their consultation is needed on making these documents useful.

- **CMAQ Supplemental TIP Questionnaire**

SWMPC staff are proposing a list of supplementary questions for those projects that are within the MPO. Mani said that this set of supplemental questions would accomplish two goals: ensure that CMAQ projects are compatible with MPO Long Range Plan goals, and helps streamline the application process by ensuring that committee members do not have to fill out two separate whole applications to get their projects in the TIP. Mani said that this would be an action item in January.

- **Legislative Updates-Federal and State**

- **Federal** – Dewey said that the TIP E-Files approved. SWMPC staff will post to the web ASAP.
- **State** – None.

8. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT at 10:35 a.m.

- Next meeting is **January 27, 2013 at 9:00 a.m.**

Compiled by: Suzann Flowers and Gautam Mani, Transportation Planners, 2013