

TWIN CITIES AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Advisory Committee

Minutes

March 19, 2012

9:30 A.M.

Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

TAC MEMBERS PRESENT:	<p>Chris Cook, City of Benton Harbor John Gruchot, Berrien County Community Development Erin Kercheval, MDOT - Coloma TSC Ray Lenze, MDOT - Statewide Planning Larry Merritt, Berrien County Road Commission Bill Purvis, Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority Lee Scherwitz, Southwest Michigan Regional Airport Brian Shutts, Village of Shoreham Dick Stauffer, Lincoln Charter Township Sarah Woolcock, MDOT – Coloma TSC Tim Zebell, City of St. Joseph</p>
TAC MEMBERS ABSENT:	<p>Aaron Anthony, City of Bridgman Mickey Bennett, Sodus Township Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission Bill Brown, Northern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (ex officio) Fred Featherly, MDOT - Multi-Modal Services (ex officio) Bill Hodge, Berrien County Planning Commission Nora Jefferson, Benton Charter Township Jason Latham, MDOT - Southwest Region Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration (ex officio) Catherine Montoya, Berrien County Planning Commission John Olson, Royalton Township Gloria Payne, Lake Charter Township Thad Rieder, Cornerstone Alliance Robert Rusch, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (ex officio) Brad Sharlow, MDOT Planning (ex officio) Alan Smaka, St. Joseph Charter Township and City of Bridgman Joe Sobieralski, Village of Stevensville Terrie Smith, Lincoln Charter Township Rachael Tupica, Federal Highway Administration (ex officio)</p>
SWMPC STAFF PRESENT:	<p>Suzann Flowers Trevor Thomas</p>
OTHERS PRESENT:	<p>Joanne Johnson, Disability Network of SWMI Jim Klett Ron Griffin Christina Pippen, Mobility Manager</p>

1. CALL TO ORDER:

- Zebell called the meeting to order at 9:35a.m.

2. MINUTES:

- A motion was made by Gruchot with support by Woolcock, to approve the minutes of the February 27, 2012 with the following change:
- Page 5-MDOT new project to TIP, bullet 1 change JN 114935 to 114962.

Motion passed.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

No comments were received.

4. STAFF REPORT:

▪ **Public Participation Plan**

Flowers reported that the official public comment period, which was 45 days, has officially ended and that the public comments are available on the website. She outlined some of the comments and what changes have been made to accommodate those comments from the public, such as:

- Arranging parts of the plan to be more user friendly
- Adding suggestions to the Performance Measure table
- And reading a specific comment suggesting holding Committee meetings in the evening

-Schervitz stated that there are representatives from all of the communities on the Committee and that they hold evening meetings for citizens to attend. He continued by stating that citizens should use their local community meetings to speak to their MPO members. He is not in favor of moving the meetings.

-Gruchot stated that maybe 1-2 meetings a year could be held to accommodate more citizen participation.

-Stauffer suggested that very few citizens would naturally make the connection from the MPO committee to community board meetings as a way to express their opinion about transportation issues.

-Zebell asked if these meetings would be Policy or TAC

-Flowers said that since both hold meetings on the same day that it would make more sense to keep them together

-Merritt stated that he felt it would be a burden for committee members to attend a night meeting when our public comment section does not yield any comments.

-Schervitz also stated that citizens have access to our meetings via the website and can also email, mail or call people to make a comment

-Staff was directed to make the connection for citizens on how they can reach out through their community to members on the MPO Committees.

-Thomas asked how people can voice their opinion at the municipal level, is that done during public comment or a specific portion of the meeting dedicated to transportation.

-Griffin stated that the Berrien County Commissioners have some night meetings and that they struggle to get a good deal of people to attend. He asked that we speak to Deb Panozzo regarding this at the Policy Committee meeting.

-Schervitz asked by a show of hands of how many people would like to keep the meetings the same and the majority of the attendees raised their hands.

-Pippen added that maybe a conference call option could be used to engage more people into the process.

- **Bylaw Change-April**

Flowers noted that at the March 2012 TAC and Policy Committee meetings that Joanne Johnson had stated that the Transportation Advocacy Group (TAG) would no longer be meeting. Scherwitz stated that the bylaws would need to be amended. Flowers stated that the bylaws require a 30 day notification period to the Committee members and that action will need to be taken at the April 2012 Committee meetings.

- **Westrain**

Flowers stated that the Westrain group, which is a group to increase ridership of the Pere Marquette line which runs from Chicago, IL to Grand Rapids, MI will begin holding regular meetings. Additionally the group will discuss topics such as the Tiger 4 grant application for New Buffalo and the proposed new train station concept in Fennville. The group is meeting on March 22, 2012 and Flowers will have more to report back at the April meeting.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Walk and Roll**

Thomas provided a recap of what staff were to achieve since the past month, come up with a top ten list of projects, review liability information, and look for complete streets policies that could be applied to the TwinCATS region. At the meeting today, staff will refine the segments generated, create a complete streets policy for TwinCATS Committee members to review and get the policy out to all TwinCATS members prior to the next meeting.

- **Regional Interagency Consumer Committee (RICC)**

RICC members called Representative Pscholka and Senator Proos and spoke with their staff about transit. The focus of the call revolved around the importance of transit in rural settings as essential tools for economic self-sufficiency and community involvement. Members also pointed out to both offices that rural systems act as connectors to larger urban systems (which are the focus of much legislative attention right now). Other advocates touched on the importance of transit for accessing mental health care and for being more energy efficient

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

There will be a full committee meeting on Tuesday April 10, 2012 from 9:00a.m. to noon. This meeting will be used to update the Coordination Plan, discuss achievements, and develop new goals and objectives in moving the committee forward.

- **Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority (TCATA) Local Advisory Committee (LAC)**

No update was provided.

6. PROJECT UPDATES

*All MDOT region wide projects do not need to be listed under project updates

Thomas stated that at the April 2012 meeting that there will be a new way to report out on project updates, which he hopes, will ensure easier tracking of projects.

- **2010 Projects-All projects have been completed.**

- **2011 Projects:**

- Berrien County Road Commission

- John Beers Road CMAQ sidewalk-let and construction April 2012

- ~~Benton Center Rd. and Red Arrow Highway JN 113024 done~~

- ~~Lincoln Ave, Linco Rd to Maiden Ln JN 100086 done~~

- ~~Pipestone Rd and River Rd. JN 113023 done~~
 - Napier and Colfax CMAQ traffic signal-let, construction in April 2012
 - ~~California Rd City of Bridgman to Red Arrow Highway done~~
 - ~~Napier Ave. 200' section west of I-94 JN111247 done~~
 - MDOT
 - US-31 freeway signing upgrade (jn108921) – let, construction April-Aug 2012
 - I-94 under John Beers Rd bridge work (jn88086) – let, construction May-Oct 2012
 - I-94 at I-196 and M-140 culvert inspection and bridge work (jn112949) – scoping job/PE Phase
 - ~~I-94BL (Main Street) resurfacing from Fair to Urbandale done~~
 - M-63 from I-94 to Midway Ave –June-September construction 2012
 - ~~I-94 BL Glenlord Rd to Pearl St. JN 109704 done~~
 - ~~I-94 WB over Lake St, Galien River, I-196 NB and SB over I-94 JN 108174 CON Phase design phase, January let~~
 - ~~I-196 under Red Arrow Highway JN 109087 done~~
 - City of St. Joseph
 - ~~S State St and Kingsley Ave done and advanced construct repayment done~~
 - Village of Stevensville
 - ~~John Beers Rd reconstruction and sidewalk done~~
 - TCATA / Twin Cities Dial-A-Ride
 - Bus shelters will be located at MI Works and at the Triangle Park near the old Mercy Center-purchased, working with Abonmarche on where to set them-the City now wants cameras near the bus shelters and they would cost about \$10,000 a piece. Looking for other funding to purchase cameras.
 - Transit Vehicle Replacement (3 total)-need to move projects to 2012
- **2012 Projects:**
 - City of St. Joseph
 - Napier Avenue-from Langley to Niles Ave-JN 114537design phase- construction July 2012, advertised with April let
 - Lake St.-from Broad St. to Park St-JN 112088 CON Phase- advertised with April let; fall construction
 - ~~South State St. from Granada Ave to Wallace Ave JN 107686 advanced-construct reimbursement done~~
 - City of Benton Harbor
 - Klock Rd (from North Shore to Paw Paw)-MOVE TO 2013 PROJECT
 - Broadway Ave. (from Pipestone St. to Empire Ave)-resurface CON phase-designed spring letting-GI phase, July let
 - Berrien County
 - E. Britain Ave and Highland Ave.-projects combined (City of Benton Harbor to Crystal)-resurface CON phase JN 100087-design phase-May 4 let
 - MDOT
 - I-94 Red Arrow Highway to Livingston Rd-JN 113585 PE Phase-design
 - I-94 at Nickerson Ave in Benton Township (roadside facility) JN 103293 CON Phase- -all carpool lots are on hold due to funding issues
 - I-94 EB and WB over Hickory Creek (bridge) JN 110779 CON Phase-design
 - I-94 Empire Rd. over I-94, Rural Carmody Rd over I-94 (bridge) JN110931 CON Phase-design moved back to 2013-design

- I-94 under M-63 (bridge) JN 109093 CON Phase-design-construction May-July 2012, let in March
- TCATA/Niles Dial A Ride
 - New expanded hours
 - New line haul route
 - Transit vehicle replacement (3 total)

7. OLD BUSINESS:

Zebell mentioned a CMAQ project that needed to be added to the TIP for the City of St. Joseph.

8. NEW BUSINESS:

▪ Legislative Updates

○ Federal

Flowers stated that the Senate version of the transportation bill MAP-21 SB 1813 had passed and that the House bill (HR 7) has stalled out completely. Flowers continued that the federal transportation extension ends on March 31, 2012 and that both chambers will need to come together to pass another extension. That seems the most likely. For the Senate bill there are still provisions which discuss the MPO process and that small MPOs under 200,000 would be considered Tier II MPOs. Lenze added that these small MPOs would be grandfathered in but that we would need to justify to our Governor that we would be meeting all federal requirements and that we would need to be re-classified as a Tier II MPO.

○ State

Merritt provided information regarding HB 5304, which would effectively end the Act 51 funding system and that any current Act 51 agency receiving less than \$50,000 from the fund would have their road functions added to the County Road Commission their funding shifted to the Road Commission as well. Merritt suggested reviewing the House Fiscal agency reports and review who is testifying and reading the minutes of the House Transportation Committee minutes. Merritt referenced a letter from the City of the Village of Clarkston and how they were concerned about their level of service if this bill were to pass. Merritt suggested that people continue to inform their legislative officials of how this will impact the local communities.

9. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Lenze had three items to present to the members:

1. Lenze reminded people that the call for CMAQ projects for 2013-14 must be into MDOT by March 31, 2012.
2. Any agency that used ARRA funding for projects, the deadline to submit your billings to MDOT will be September 30, 2013 or you will not be reimbursed.
3. CMAQ 2012 projects that have been approved need to be put in to the MPO TIP program, except for the TCATA buses.

10. ADJOURNMENT at 10:30a.m.

Motion by Zebell with support by Woolcock to adjourn the meeting.

- Next meeting is **April 16, 2012 at 9:30am**