

TWIN CITIES AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Advisory Committee

Minutes

June 16, 2014

9:00 A.M.

Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

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

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Scherwitz called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. and led the group in introductions.

2. MINUTES:

- A motion was made by Gruchot with support by Zebell to approve the minutes of the May 19 TAC meeting. **Motion passed.**

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

4. STAFF REPORT

▪ **SWMPC Staff Changes**

Mani said that SWMPC had chosen to fill Suzann Flowers' position internally. Kim Gallagher, SWMPC's Senior Planner, will be taking over most of Suzann's transportation duties. Kim has been involved in transportation work for SWMPC for over a decade, including with the MPO, and Mani said that the MPO would benefit greatly from having Gallagher's experience and knowledge at meetings on a more consistent basis.

Mani also said that Kris Martin, formerly SWMPC's program assistant, had been promoted to Associate Planner. Kris would be taking over management of Kim's US-12 and Rideshare programs, and SWMPC is excited that he will be working on community master plans.

▪ **MTPA Update**

Mani said that there was only one item of relevance from the May MTPA meeting for the MPO committees, and that was that MTPA voted to remain on three-year TIP cycles rather than switching to two. A two-year TIP cycle would have meant that SWMPC had to produce a new TIP in FY 2015, which would have meant far less time available to work on other projects.

▪ **CTAA Conference Update**

Gallagher said that she and Panozzo attended the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) Conference. This conference was mostly attended by smaller or rural transportation systems. Among the issues discussed were providing public transit in an era of performance-based planning, and how to deal with similar issues with service boundaries and funding that we see in Southwest Michigan as the population continues to spread out.

Panozzo added that she had attended a pre-conference meeting of mobility managers, and that there had been an increased focus on non-emergency medical transportation.

▪ **Transit Consolidation Study Presentation**

Gallagher presented on the recently concluded transit consolidation study for Berrien County. Gallagher presented the multiple ways that transit in Berrien County could be more efficient, both in terms of use of taxpayer dollars and in terms of being able to get passengers to their destinations in a timely manner. Gallagher showed newspaper clippings from the 1970s showing residents and community leaders organizing for transit, and in particular, financial support of transit. To improve the transit system would take a change from high-rate local millages to a lower-rate countywide millage.

Gallagher used the example of road infrastructure, and asked committee members to imagine if a road just suddenly stopped before a person got to their destination, with no detour and no way to

go forward. This is exactly what many transit users in Berrien County currently experience when navigating transit boundaries.

Johnson challenged each member of the group to consider how they would get to their destinations for a week without a car and without help from friends or family. Committee members should expect to report back at the July meeting.

Welch said that the transit study aligned well with the Governor’s initiative on statewide transit connectivity, particularly for the aging populations. Gallagher agreed, also saying that Michigan’s Great Southwest Leadership Council had formed a subcommittee to deal specifically with public transit. This is a huge step in getting transit into the beginning of the conversation rather than as an afterthought. Schuh cautioned that it was important that the subcommittee bring others into the discussion once the plan is completed, or even as it is being developed. Often with subcommittees like this, individuals who do not have experience with transit formulate a plan of their own and proceed with work in a counterproductive way to plans that have been created in the public arena.

Gallagher’s complete presentation is available at:
http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/twincats_presentation_transit_plan_2014.pdf

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Walk and Roll**
None.
- **Regional Inclusive Community Coalition (RICC)**
None.
- **Mobility Management/Transit Consolidation Update**
None.
- **Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority (TCATA) Operations Update**
Purvis said that TCATA had received its grant for a dispatching system, and were now creating a schedule for contract work.

6. LAND USE AND ZONING UPDATES

None.

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		

	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 Authority	Transit vehicle replacement (3 total)	May 2014: Buses on the way, with propane conversions	May 2014		
2013	89085	Benton Harbor	Klock Rd (from North Shore to Paw Paw)-	August 2013- lawsuit ongoing-probably means that project will not go through. November 2013- no change	November 2013		
	112091	Berrien County	Hollywood Road	June 2014: Under Construction	June 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	Mill existing and place 2 HMA	December 2012		

			Arrow Highway for 3.0 miles to Livingston Road)	overlay-ROW phase; no change			
	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			
2014	112087	Benton Harbor	Broadway Avenue/Colfax Avenue Resurfacing	June 2014: Going for bid in July	June 2014		
	121011	Benton Harbor	Pipestone at Empire Traffic Signal Upgrade	June 2014: waiting on progress schedule	June 2014		
		Berrien County	Date Road Bridge Replacement	May 2014: Pre construction meetings have taken place	May 2014		
	121002	Berrien County	Roosevelt Road Non-Motorized Extension	June 2014: \$43,000 overbid, waiting to see if there additional funds	June 2014		
		Berrien County	Brown School Road Resurfacing	May 2014: July Construction	May 2014		
		Village of Shoreham	Brown School Road Resurfacing	GI Package under review	February 2014		

Other Updates

Jolivette said that the Coloma TSC was able to obtain funding to do joint repairs on I-94 between mile markers 10 and 35. Those repairs would be done at night between August and October, so traffic disruptions will be minimal.

Zebell reminded the group that design work should be beginning on FY 2015 projects. The City of St. Joseph was planning for a spring 2015 construction on Botham Avenue. Mani reminded group members that local resolutions of support for FY 2015 projects were due in to him, either via email or in hard copy, by October 1, 2014.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

None.

8. NEW BUSINESS

▪ TIP Amendments

Mani said that TwinCATS was taking the unusual step of approving TIP amendments in consecutive months because of a request from MDOT to urgently approve changes to a bridge project.

Other key highlights of this month's TIP amendments include the addition of 5339-funded bike racks, facility painting, and a bus replacement and SWMPC's rideshare program for the next three fiscal years.

A motion by McAndrew with support by Smith to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the TIP Amendments.

▪ Bylaw Updates

Mani noted that changes to the draft bylaws had been made in response to committee member suggestions. The biggest change was in the conflict of interest section. Mani urged committee members to read the latest version, and recommended that TAC vote on the revised bylaws next month.

▪ Legislative Updates-Federal and State

- **Federal** – Dewey noted that there were no updates regarding the Grow AMERICA Act. However, there was a public comment period in effect for the proposed rulemakings, which would be based on changes to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs). The rulemakings had to do with metropolitan and non-metropolitan transportation planning, and the possibility of designating Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) to handle non-metropolitan needs. The proposed rulemakings can be found at regulations.gov. Public comments can only be submitted via the docket.

Kodis urged committee members strongly to comment on proposed changes to the American Community Survey (ACS), which would include striking key questions on commute time/time leaving for work, income, and disability. Kodis said that this was vital data for transportation planners, and that if the questions were gone, the only way to have access to such data would be through expensive, private sources. It would make the work that SWMPC and MDOT do much more difficult. Kodis said that comments could be made at https://www.census.gov/acs/www/about_the_survey/content_review_feedback/.

- **State** – Welch said that a statewide training on performance measures would be taking place sometime after the MTPA Conference in August. In MDOT's estimation, a new

statewide transportation revenue package would likely be delayed until after the elections this November, but an appropriations bill for FY 2015 had passed.

Welch estimated that the second round of Roads, Risk and Reserve fund projects wouldn't go through, but would be distributed via the Act 51 formula, with a delay in the required date at which those funds needed to be spent.

9. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Jolivette announced the Bill Meeks is no longer with MDOT, and that Pete Pfeiffer had taken over as interim Coloma-TSC Manager.

Scherwitz reminded the group that Lest We Forget was taking place this weekend (June 21-22) at the Airport and at Tiscornia Beach. Scherwitz encouraged people to get to Tiscornia Beach to see the beach landings in commemoration of Normandy, as beach landings likely would not take place in future years due to funding issues. Scherwitz said that World War II veterans may not be mobile in five years, so this would be one of the last opportunities to truly honor them.

10. ADJOURNMENT at 10:26 AM

- Next meeting is July 21, 2014, 9:00 AM

Compiled by: Gautam Mani, Transportation Planner, 2014