

# TWIN CITIES AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Advisory Committee

## Minutes

August 18, 2014

9:00 A.M.

Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

<b>TAC MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission Joanne Johnson, Disability Network Southwest Michigan Erin Jolivette, MDOT - Coloma TSC Andrea Dewey, Federal Highway Administration (ex officio) John Olson, Village of Shoreham Kenton McAndrew, City of Benton Harbor Lee Scherwitz, Southwest Michigan Regional Airport Debra Panozzo, Mobility Consultant
<b>TAC MEMBERS ABSENT:</b>	Bill Purvis, Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority Thad Rieder, Cornerstone Alliance John Lanum, MDOT Statewide Planning Tim Zebell, City of St. Joseph 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 John Gruchot, Berrien County Community Development 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 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 Dick Stauffer, Lincoln Charter Township Kris Welch, MDOT Statewide Planning
<b>SWMPC STAFF PRESENT:</b>	Kim Gallagher Gautam Mani Kris Martin

### 1. CALL TO ORDER:

Scherwitz called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and led the group in introductions.

## 2. MINUTES:

- A motion was made by John Gruchot with support by John Olson to approve the minutes of the July 21 TAC 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**  
Gallagher spoke on behalf of TCATA describing where projects are in the process (see handouts at bottom of minutes).

**6. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

**7. LAND USE AND ZONING UPDATES**

Johnson mentioned low impact development discussions she attended at the City of St. Joseph planning meeting this month on resiliency. Low impact development relates directly to the recent funding in Detroit. Johnson talked about the large amounts of rainfall and how people were trapped in their vehicles. Some roads were covered in 5 to 6 feet of water. She said we should prepare and improve our region so our infrastructure is resilient and this sort of issue does not occur.

**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 <b>July 2013:</b>	July 2013		

				<b>On hold</b>			
		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	<b>January 2014:</b>	January 2014		

			WB over Hickory Creek	Construction in July 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 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	<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	Pipestone St at Britain Avenue				

		Harbor	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			

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. Mani asked committee members what MPO staff could do better to ensure that federal funds do not get lost. Olson said that a lot of the blame fell on him as an engineer for not navigating through project delays more quickly.

Gallagher suggested that project applicants discuss potential design issues when a project enters the TIP. Scherwitz suggested that MPO members might want to consider a timeline that allows them to bid projects in January, when contractors are likely to put in low bids.

Dewey said that this MPO was in a good place because it required local resolutions of support at the start of the fiscal year. Dewey cautioned committee members that the biggest concern now should be inactive projects, and ensuring that there are billable construction expenses on every project within 12 months of the obligation date.

Jolivette said that the M-63 Bridge Project over Hickory Creek came in over bid and is on hold.

**9. OLD BUSINESS:**

▪ **Nominating Committee Report**

McAndrew delivered the nominating committee’s report. Brian Berndt, Berrien County Road Commission received the nomination for the Chair of the TwinCATS TAC and Tim Zebell, City of St. Joseph received the nomination for the Vice Chair. Both accepted the nominations.

A motion by McAndrew with support by Olson to name Berndt TAC Chair and Zebell TAC Vice Chair for FYs 2015 and 2016. **Motion passed.** The new terms will begin in October.

▪ **Mobility Challenge 2014 Report Back**

Jolivette and Gruchot discussed their attempts at the mobility challenge, arranging rides for education and medical travel, respectively. In both cases, the rides were prohibitively expensive and difficult to arrange.

See attached handouts for descriptions of the different 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.

## **10. NEW BUSINESS**

### **▪ Resolutions of Support Reminder**

Mani said that committee members that have projects in the TIP for FY 2015 need to obtain resolutions of support stating that your community will supply local match in fiscal year 2015. Those resolutions need to be in to Mani by October of 2014. The template for the resolution of support is online right now if communities need assistance with writing it, and Mani is happy to email it out to individuals who need.

### **▪ 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** –No updates

## **11. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:**

None.

## **12. ADJOURNMENT at 10:03 AM**

- Next meeting is September 25, 2014 at 10:00 AM at Berrien RESA in Berrien Springs.

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