

TWIN CITIES AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND POLICY COMMITTEE COMBINED MINUTES

March 15, 2021 via Zoom

TWINCATS MEMBER	MEMBERS (2019)	TAC	POL	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Benton Charter Township	Richard Royal	x	x	P		P									
Berrien Co. Board of	Ray Bell		x	A		P									
Berrien Co. Community Dev. Dept.	Evan Smith	x		A											
Berrien Co. Planning Commission	Eric Lester, M.D.		x	P		P									
Berrien Co. Road Dept.	(vacant)		x												
Berrien Co. Road Dept.	Kevin Stack	x		P		P									
City of Benton Harbor	Ellis Mitchel		x	A		A									
City of Benton Harbor	Chris Cook (Pol. V. Ch.)	x	Alt	P		P									
City of Bridgman	Juan Ganum	Alt	x	A		A									
City of Bridgman	Tim Kading	x	Alt	P		P									
City of St. Joseph	John Hodgson		x	P		P									
City of St. Joseph	Tim Zebell (TAC V. Ch.)	x		P		P									
	Tom McDonald	Alt		A		A									
Cornerstone Alliance	Sue Wyman	x	x	A		A									
Disability Network of SW Mich.	Cindy gray	x		P		A									
Hagar Township	(vacant)	x	x	A											
Kinexus	(vacant)	x		A											
Lake Charter Township	Gloria Payne	x	x	A		A									
Lincoln Charter Township	Dick Stauffer (Pol. Ch.)		x	P		P									
Lincoln Charter Township	Terrie Smith	x		P		P									
MDOT – Bureau of Trans. Planning	Jim Sturdevant	x	x	P		P									
MDOT – Southwest Region	Amy Lipset	x	x	P		P									
MDOT – Southwest Region	Brian Sanada	Alt	Alt	A		A									
MDOT – Trans. Service Center	Jonathon Smith	x	x	P		P									
Royalton Township	Steve Tilly	x	x	A		A									
Sodus Township	David Chandler	x	x	A		A									
Southwest Mich. Regional Airport	Vince Desjardins	x	x	A		A									
St. Joseph Charter Township	Denise Cook		x	P		P									
	Roger Seeley	x		A		A									
	Ron Griffin	Alt		A		A									
St. Joseph Charter Township	Jonathan Fisk	Alt		P		P									
	Paul Gillespie	x	x	P		P									
Twin Cities Area Trans. Authority															
Village of Grand Beach	(vacant)	x	x	A											
Village of Shoreham	John Schnable	x	x	A		P									
Village of Stevensville	(vacant)		x	A											
Village of Stevensville	Chris Cook (Pol. V. Ch.)	x	Alt	P		A									
Federal Highway Administration	Andy Pickard	x	x	A		A									
Federal Transit Administration	Angelica Salgado	x	x	A		A									
MDOT - Modeling	Katie Beck	x		A		A									
MDOT - Passenger Division	Fred Featherly	x		A		A									
Northwestern Ind. Reg. Plan.	Scott Weber	x	x	A		A									
Southwest Michigan Planning	Kim Gallagher	x	x	P		P									
Southwest Michigan Planning	Brandon Kovnat			P		P									

Pol. Ch.- Policy Chair; TAC Ch. - TAC Chair; Alt – Alternate; P - Present; A- Absent; A blank spot means the position is

Others Present: Tim Drews – Abonmarche, substitute for Chris Cook.

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**

Policy Committee Chair, Dick Stauffer, Called the meeting to order at 9:30 am. Kim Gallagher took roll call. Gallagher welcomed two new members. Ray Bell will be replacing Bill Chikering as the representative for the Berrien County Board of Commissioners. John Schnable has replaced Stephane Clarke as the representative for the Village of Stevensville

2. **Changes to the Agenda**

Kovnat said that the MDOT amendment was added in error and does not require a Committee vote

3. **Public Comment**

None.

4. **Approval of January 11, 2020 TwinCATS Meeting Minutes**

Motion to approve the minutes from the January 11, 2020 combined Technical Advisory and Policy Committee meeting. Made by Tim Kading Fisk and seconded by Jonathon Fisk. **Motion approved.**

5. **SWMPC Staff Report**

FY 2022 Unified Work Program: Gallagher mentioned that SWMPC had met with a wide range of MDOT, FHWA, and FTA staff to discuss TwinCATS FY 2022 work program. she said that the main focus for the next year would be the developing the 2023-2026 transportation Improvement program (TIP). The FY 2022 Unified Work Program will be presented for approval at the May TwinCATS meeting.

Alternate Energy Corridor: Kovnat discussed an application from MDOT to FHWA to designate I-196 from Benton Harbor to Muskegon as an Alternate Energy Corridor for electric vehicles. The designation is a tool to help raise awareness that there are sufficient charging stations along the corridor for drivers to take distance trips. There was a discussion about upcoming charging stations in the works for New Buffalo and South Haven which will further improve electric vehicle reliability for the region.

2021 PASER Ratings: Gallagher discussed the PASER ratings for the upcoming summer. No ratings were conducted in 2020. In previous years the Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC) required 50% of the federal aid eligible road to be rated each year by a team of at least three trained raters (SWMPC, County Road Agency, and MDOT). In 2021, TAMC wants 100% of the federal aid roads to be rated. In addition, due to COVID, MDOT will not be participating in the PASER ratings, and the rating team can consist of two raters. Gallagher also let members know that SWMPC can do local (non-federal aid) PASER ratings on request. She said because of the 100% requirement for federal aid roads she cannot guarantee how many local roads can be rated this year.

Safety Grant: Kovnat reminded the committee members about the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) grant. He also gave a demonstration of the crash map on SWMPC's website.

TEDF Category B: Kovnat mentioned that MDOT's had released a call for project for the transportation Economic Development Fund Category B grant. This grant is for cities or villages with a population less than 10,000 and it can be used on any public road; not limited to federal aid eligible roads. Kovnat highlighted that the TEDF category B was targeted towards funding projects that do not typically qualify for federal grants.

Highway Infrastructure Program (HIP): Gallagher announced that congress had authorized \$12 Billion in HIP funds in the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, of which Michigan was apportioned \$311 to Michigan. This funding is split between the normal HIP fund which requires a 81.85/18.15 split and a special

authorization for COVID Relief [because it was authorized in the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, FHWA is referring to this as HIP-CRRSA] that does not require any local match. TwinCATS will receive \$472,593 from both HIP funds, which can be used like the Surface Transportation (STP) funds on federal aid eligible roads, and must be obligated in FY 2022.

Gallagher discussed the illustrative list, which are the projects that were submitted for the 2020-2023 TIP but not selected. She said the 14 projects on the list were eligible for HIP funding. The illustrative list is a way to demonstrate unmet needs to FHWA/Congress, showing that the additional funding has projects waiting to be funded. There was a brief discussion of several potential projects on the illustrative list. Gallagher said she wanted to schedule a project review subcommittee meeting to discuss the next steps on selecting a project.

6. Agency & Project Updates

a) **Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority:** They had their triennial review with FTA and working to address the findings. Gallagher said that she and TCATA were using a new route planning tool which was coordinated with University of Michigan SMART project. She said that outcomes of the study would be presented in mid-summer.

b) **Local Agencies**

Berrien County Road Department: Stack said the Napier Bridge Work was just obligated and begin in mid-summer. Stack said he would maintain two-way traffic during construction. Zebell added that this work might line up with where Langley was being constructed and there would have to be coordination.

City of St. Joseph: Zebell said the Langley Avenue work began today. He said the work began at Pearl Street and working south toward Napier. He said they were working in small sections due to the number of people living along the road but he advised others to avoid Langley.

c) **MDOT:** Smith did not have anything to add beyond what was in the packet.

Lipset gave an update on the current progress of US-31. The beams for the Britain Avenue Bridge were sent last week. Excavation and culvert work would begin soon. The I-94 BL would be closed beginning March 20 until the end of the construction season to begin rerouting it toward the new intersection location. More closures would begin in April as full construction of US-31 and the I-94 Interchange begin.

7. New Business

a) **TCATA Amendments:** Kovnat presented the five amendments for TCATA as included in the meeting packet. Kovnat clarified that the saving in the transit projects can be carried over to future years unlike federal road funding; therefore there is no need to reprogram the funds.

b) **MDOT Signal Amendment:** Kovnat explained that this was added to the agenda in error. The Cost change is less than 25% of the total cost therefore it was approved administratively. The location change will only be to signals in Kalamazoo and not change the project for the TwinCATS Area.

Motion for the Technical Advisory Committee to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the amendments to the 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program as presented. Made by Tim Zebell and seconded by Tim Kading. **Motion approved.**

Motion for the Policy Committee to approve the recommendation from the Technical Advisory Committee. Made by Eric Lester and seconded by John Hodgson. **Motion Approved.**

8. **Privilege of the Floor or public Comment**

There was a discussion about the end of the statewide state of emergency meaning meeting would need to be held in person. Bell said that the Berrien County Commission voted to support a senate bill that would amend the Open Meetings Act to allow virtual meeting until June without needing to declare a state of emergency. Hodgson said that the City of St. Joseph would vote to declare a state of emergency solely to allow virtual meetings. He noted that they couldn't find a space that would work while following current occupancy/gathering guidelines. Bell said he would bring a request to the County Commission to declare a countywide state of emergency.

9. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 AM. The next meeting is scheduled for April 19, 2021 at 9:30 AM.

Minutes compiled by Brandon Kovnat, SWMPC Associate Transportation planner

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