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**DULUTH-SUPERIOR  
METROPOLITAN INTERSTATE COUNCIL**

**MEETING SUMMARY  
Wednesday, January 19, 2005**

WITC Conference Center  
600 N. First Street, Superior, Wisconsin

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***Voting Members Present:***

Broc Allen  
Keith MacDonald  
Ed Anderson  
Nick Baker, *Wisconsin Co-Chair*  
David Bilden  
David Conley  
Bill Eckman  
Earl Elde, *Secretary*  
Bob Finsland  
Richard Kieren  
Kay McKenzie  
Isobel Rapaich  
Jackie Stenberg  
Rob Stenberg, *Minnesota Co-Chair*  
Peg Sweeney

***Representing:***

Douglas County Suburban Townships  
City of Hermantown  
Douglas County  
Douglas County  
City of Superior Citizen Rep  
Douglas County  
Douglas County  
St. Louis County Suburban Townships  
City of Superior  
City of Proctor  
Douglas County  
Duluth Transit Authority  
City of Superior  
City of Duluth  
St. Louis County

***Voting Members Absent:***

Wayne Jordahl\*  
Jim Stauber\*  
Russ Stover\*

***Representing:***

St. Louis County Suburban Townships  
City of Duluth  
City of Duluth

\* = Excused

***Others Present:***

Sherry Berhow  
Holly Butcher  
Ron Chicka  
James Gittemeier  
Chris Hamilton  
Sheldon Johnson  
Andy McDonald  
Rondi Watson

***Representing:***

ARDC / MIC Intern  
ARDC / MIC Staff  
ARDC / MIC Director  
ARDC / MIC Staff  
Duluth News Tribune  
NWRPC / MIC Deputy Director  
ARDC / MIC Staff  
ARDC / MIC Staff

**1. Introductions/Agenda Review**

Wisconsin Co-chair Nick Baker called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and all meeting attendees introduced themselves. Mayor Keith MacDonald was welcomed as the new City of Hermantown

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representative to the MIC policy board, replacing outgoing mayor David Allen.

## 2. Committee Business

### Meeting summary of December 8, 2004

Chair Baker called for amendments or corrections to the previous month's meeting summary. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve.

*Bob Finsland/Rob Stenberg moved to approve the meeting summary from the December 8, 2004 meeting with no corrections or changes. There was no further discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.*

## 3. 2005-2007 Wisconsin TIP Amendment #1

Sheldon Johnson introduced a resolution to amend the 2005-2007 Superior Urbanized Area Transportation Improvement Program to include a new project in the 2005 project list. He explained that the proposed project is to install an anti icing pavement overlay system to the northbound lane onto the Blatnik Bridge. This overlay system consists of an aggregate covered in epoxy which automatically releases anti icing agent as needed keeping the pavement free of frost, slush, and ice. He added that this type of anti icing pavement has been used elsewhere in the state of Wisconsin and has proven beneficial. He explained that it is necessary to include the project in the calendar year 2005 project list, as it will utilize federal transportation funds.

*Ed Anderson/Bill Eckman moved to amend the 2005-2007 Superior Urbanized Area Transportation Improvement Program to include the Blatnik Bridge anti-icing pavement project as proposed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Broc Allen noted that this technology worked best when temperatures were 20 degrees or higher and questioned whether it would be useful in our climate when temperatures are sometimes below zero. Rob Stenberg noted that this type of technology had been researched at UMD and other government agencies in cold-weather climates and questioned whether other (local) companies or research organizations had been afforded the opportunity to bid on the contract. Sheldon responded that this project had been coordinated by the WisDOT central office in Madison in a non-bid process. Rob then asked whether there was enough time to forward this suggestion to Madison to open up the contract to possible local vendors. Sheldon responded that there was not enough time to do that in order to get the project in the summer 2005 project list. Rob stated that in his opinion it was a waste of money to spend federal tax dollars on a demonstration project for a proven technology. There was no further discussion and the motion was passed by a vote of 13 to 2, with Rob Stenberg and Kay McKenzie casting opposing votes.*

## 4. Safe Routes to School in Superior--Final

Holly Butcher presented the final version of the Safe Routes to School in Superior plan. She reviewed the planning process, gave a brief review of the chapters, and highlighted the 15 general recommendations put forward in the plan. She emphasized that there are two components of any SR2S plan, the study of issues and determination of safe routes as conducted by the MIC, and the

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implementation of the recommendations by the city and the individual schools. She added that the school district had indicated an interest in conducting an SR2S campaign in the spring, and noted that there would likely be funds allocated in the upcoming federal transportation bill to assist the city and local school board in implementing some of the SR2S recommendations. She added that she hoped to present information about the plan to implementing jurisdictions such as the school board and city council. She closed by requesting approval of the plan.

*Bob Finsland/Ed Anderson moved to approve the final Safe Routes to School in Superior Plan. During the discussion, support was expressed for some of the specific recommendations such as staggering starting and ending times for the high school, middle school and elementary schools, and for having schools be destinations for some of the biking trails. Ron Chicka noted that this was an entirely new type of planning effort for the MIC, and in the forefront generally for MPOs. Chair Baker commended Holly for her work on the plan. There was no further discussion and the motion was passed by unanimous vote.*

## 5. 2005 MIC Work Program Revisions

Ron Chicka discussed possible changes to the 2005 MIC work program. He noted that at the previous MIC meeting he had requested a hold on approving a scope of work because the MIC had recently been asked to conduct a couple of different corridor plans in the Duluth Heights area, and possibly might have a role in re-examining the East Duluth Arterial study as well as the transportation component of the Duluth Comprehensive Plan. He stated that in his view, the proposed additions to the 2005 work program were quite timely and worthy of staff study, but in order for the staff to undertake these studies, the TAC and MIC would need to re-prioritize the projects slated for 2005 and approve a revised budget that reallocates committed resources accordingly.

He then reviewed the specific discretionary projects that could potentially be delayed until a later budget year (Safe Routes to School-Duluth; Grand Avenue Corridor Plan-Duluth; East 2nd Street-Superior; London Road Corridor Study-Duluth; and Traffic Impact Reports-MIC area). He outlined a work program scenario that would postpone the three currently programmed corridor projects in favor of the three proposed corridor studies within Duluth, plus work on the comprehensive plan. He noted that during the discussion at the previous day's TAC meeting, committee members expressed that the timing and support for the Grand Avenue and London Road corridor studies is at best unclear and that the MIC might be wiser to put its resources into those corridors that need a plan today. They noted that the proposed new studies had been requested by their respective jurisdictions for corridors experiencing current development pressures, in particular for the Miller Hill Mall area transportation network. Ron added that the MIC is already familiar with the issues behind all of the potential corridor plans and we possess a great deal of data that would make them easy to start up. Additionally, if requested by the City of Duluth, work on the comprehensive plan would certainly be worthwhile since its recommendations would aid many future plans conducted by the MIC.

During the discussion, Ed Anderson and others expressed support for retaining the East 2nd Street project due to its volume of truck traffic and potential development along the corridor, as well as the need to conduct a growth impact study for areas outlying the City of Superior. Ron stated that

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he would look into the options for perhaps reducing the scope of work for the former study and programming the latter in 2006. He added that after he received the particulars about the proposed 2005 projects, he would bring forward a revised work program and budget for approval in either February or March.

## **6. FY 2008 Duluth Metropolitan TIP Applications**

James Gittemeier presented information about the process of developing the Duluth Metropolitan FY 2006-2008 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He noted that the MIC annually solicits projects from eligible jurisdictions (counties, cities with population over 5,000, and state agencies) and prioritizes them at the February TAC meeting, according to the process and criteria approved by the MIC in 2002. All voting TAC members, along with any MIC members who choose to participate, will be scoring projects using the evaluation criteria and 100 point scoring system. The results of this prioritization meeting advance to the MIC meeting on February 16<sup>th</sup> for discussion and final approval and then move forward for funding consideration in the Northeast Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership process (ATP).

He noted that two project applications had been received and were included in this month's meeting mailing. He requested that all committee members review the applications and come prepared to score them at the February 15<sup>th</sup> prioritization session.

## **7. 2030 Long Range Plan Update**

Andy McDonald presented the draft of the modal chapter from the 2030 Long Range Plan and requested committee input. He explained that based on FHWA freight training received by MIC staff earlier this year, the chapter will be divided into sections that separately discuss the movement of people the movement of freight.

Holly Butcher briefly reviewed the project lists submitted by each metropolitan jurisdiction, showing their planned short-, mid-, and long-range intermodal transportation project priorities. She noted that some of the identified projects have been designated for future federal funding, some projects will use state aid and local funds, while others are illustrative and have no cost or designated funding associated with them. She added that once the TRANPLAN travel demand model is run, additional projects may be added to address short-, mid-, and long-range safety or capacity needs. She added that public meetings would be held in accordance with federal guidelines in March or April to seek public input into the final plan.

## **8. WisDOT Reorganization**

Sheldon Johnson announced that the Wisconsin Department of Transportation had proposed a reorganization that would reduce the number of its district offices from eight to five. The Eau Claire district office would, under this configuration, serve as the WisDOT headquarters for the Superior area. The new district boundaries would include a total of 20 counties in the west and northwest part of the state, up from the current 9, extending physically down to LaCrosse. He noted that the Superior office would essentially function as a field office, making it difficult, among other functional losses, to coordinate MIC planning activities for the Superior urban area. He

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added that the Douglas County Board as well as the Northwest Regional Planning Commission Board had passed resolutions opposing the reorganization due to the loss of services and its economic impact on this region.

*Kay McKenzie/Bob Finsland moved to ask staff to draft a letter on behalf of the MIC Policy Board expressing concern, as the region's MPO, about the impact the proposed reorganization would have on the District 8 office and the Superior area. During the discussion, it was noted that there would be a disproportionately high impact on the Superior office, with 33% or 29 staff positions lost, compared to the loss of 4 jobs from the Eau Claire office. There was no further discussion and the motion was passed unanimously.*

## 9. Project Updates

### **DTA Terminal Study**

Holly Butcher announced that the DTA Board met on December 29<sup>th</sup> to discuss the status of the study recommendations, but that no consensus has been reached for an off-street terminal. The option for a terminal located below Michigan and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue West was pretty much off the table at this point, due to opposition from tenants and property owners in that area. Another option under consideration within DTA staff is the installation of additional, small, heated bus shelters along Superior Street. This option adds sidewalk and parking in selective locations that may be more palatable to all stakeholders. The DTA Board will be holding a special meeting in January to discuss project direction.

### **Hermantown Section 13 Analysis**

James Gittemeier explained that MIC staff recently prepared trip generation projections as a result of new developments proposed in Section 13 in consultation with Hermantown staff and URS, the consultant for the project. URS has taken these results and is conducting small area modeling to determine trip distribution. Those involved in the project will use these results to determine if future roadways are warranted and/or the reconfiguration of existing roadways. A full scope of work with budget is under negotiation.

### **On-Street Bike Routes - Phase 2**

James Gittemeier announced that MIC staff is continuing to work on the implementation of the On-Street Bike Route project for Duluth, Proctor, and suburban St. Louis County (Phase 2). The on-street bike route project will be a completely signed system tied into the existing Duluth and Hermantown system (Phase 1). Staff has identified preliminary routes for the Phase 2 project. These routes are being verified utilizing the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Bicycle Compatibility Index (BCI) Model and by gathering input from local bicyclists. In addition, a Transportation Enhancement grant was awarded to implement Phase 2 in 2006. Regarding the TE 2006 grant, Duluth, Proctor, and St. Louis County have agreed to undertake this project in the spring of 2006. However, this winter the final details of the project regarding the routes, number of signs and location, and costs will have to be determined.

### **Duluth Urbanized Area Growth Impact Study Outreach**

Andy McDonald announced that MIC staff is currently in the process of conducting public outreach presentations for the partner jurisdictions and agencies that participated in the growth

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impact study. Staff has presented the study results to the Duluth Area Townships, Proctor City Council, and Duluth Planning Commission. We have also been in contact with WLSSD, Hermantown and St. Louis County to discuss public outreach. The study results were generally well received and most questions centered on how to accomplish the recommendations. There was consensus that regional cooperation is fundamental to resolving issues surrounding water and sewer service and that communication between jurisdictions and agencies is important. The next step after the public outreach is to organize a meeting of the Lake Superior Regional Water Committee. The purpose of this meeting will be to present the results of the study to a larger regional audience and identify the next steps in improving water and sewer services.

#### **10. Adjournment**

With no further agenda items or announcements, Chair Baker adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rondi Watson  
MIC Division Secretary