
**DULUTH-SUPERIOR
METROPOLITAN INTERSTATE COUNCIL**

**MEETING SUMMARY
Wednesday, July 19, 2006**

City-County Government Center, Room 204
1316 North 14th Street, Superior, WI

Voting Members Present:

Broc Allen
Nick Baker, *Wisconsin Co-Chair*
David Bilden
David Conley
Esther Dalbec
Earl Elde, *Secretary*
Richard Kieren
Garry Krause
Kay McKenzie
Dean Miller
Nick Milroy
Andy Peterson
Isobel Rapaich

Representing:

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

Voting Members Absent:

Ed Anderson*
Keith MacDonald
Cindy Moe*
Russ Stover, *Minnesota Co-Chair**
Peg Sweeney*

* = Excused

Representing:

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

Others Present:

Holly Butcher
Ron Chicka
James Gittemeier
Rondi Watson

Representing:

ARDC / MIC Staff
ARDC / MIC Director
ARDC / MIC Staff
ARDC / MIC Staff

1. Introductions/Agenda Review

Wisconsin Co-chair Nick Baker called the meeting to order at 6:58 p.m. and all meeting attendees introduced themselves. Ron Chicka introduced Chuck Froseth, Senior Planner for the City of Duluth, who would be speaking tonight about the Duluth Comprehensive

Plan.

2. Committee Business

Meeting summary of June 21, 2006

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

Andy Peterson/Esther Dalbec moved to approve the meeting summary from the June 21, 2006 meeting with no corrections or changes. There was no further discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

3. Duluth Comprehensive Plan-Transportation Component

Chuck Froseth reported that Duluth's new Comprehensive Plan had been approved on June 26th, and noted that the last Plan dated back to 1958. He gave credit to Mayor Bergson, Planning Department Director Bob Bruce and the 28-member Comprehensive Planning Committee for keeping the process on track and delivering a final product that genuinely represented the interests and input of the community at large.

Ron Chicka gave an overview of the Transportation section, describing it as very sound and thorough. He added that it includes elements and recommendations from many of the MIC's past studies and plans, and that almost all of the potential long range projects put forward in the Comprehensive Plan are also included in the MIC's Long Range Plan. He featured several specific past and proposed planning efforts to demonstrate how they are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's transportation strategies that emphasize local and regional connectivity, multimodal access and the infrastructure to support that connectivity.

On a broader policy level, the Comprehensive Plan addresses policy issues including traffic calming, parking management, encouraging bike and pedestrian travel, supporting transit, developing trail networks and maintaining economic connectivity and freight movement via water, rail and trucks, all of which have been addressed in recent MIC studies. Taken collectively, the policies reflect proper growth management initiatives that can curtail sprawl and encourage travel by all modes of transportation.

Dick Kieren noted that the City of Proctor's Comprehensive Plan was successful in large measure because it reflected a community standard with a high level of public involvement in its development. He added that a key component of a successful Comprehensive Planning process was to continually update the plan, as Proctor has done every five years, and urged the City of Duluth to do the same.

4. Rice Lake Road Corridor and Traffic Impact Study - Final

Holly Butcher reviewed the process and content of the final Rice Lake Road Corridor and Traffic Impact Study. She noted that in June, the Steering Committee had asked URS to remodel the intersection of Hickory/Chinook and Rice Lake Road to ensure that the net

impacts of development were fully considered for this intersection. This modeling information was included in the final report, as well as the responses to public comments received. She noted that copies of the plan would be available in hard copy and CD format, as well as viewable on the web.

Andy Peterson/Earl Elde moved to approve the final Rice Lake Road Corridor and Traffic Impact Study. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

5. 2007-2010 Duluth Metro TIP - Final

James Gittemeier reviewed the final version of the FY 2007-2010 Duluth Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He also described the projects slated for federal transportation funding in the Duluth metropolitan area on a year-by-year basis. These projects include seven of the eight that received High Priority Project (HPP) funding in the recent SAFETEA-LU transportation bill. He noted that the Draft Duluth area TIP had released for 30-day public comment period from May 18 – June 16 and that a public meeting was held on projects contained in the TIP on June 21 at the Hampton Inn in Canal Park. He stated that he had been working intensively with our contacts from FHWA and MPCA to complete the necessary air quality conformity reviews. He added that the plan would be made available online at www.ardc.org/mic/, the Duluth Public Library, or by request.

Earl Elde/Broc Allen moved to approve the final 2007-2010 Minnesota TIP. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

6. Duluth Safe Routes to School Plan - Final

Holly Butcher reviewed the goals, process and content of the final Duluth Safe Routes to School Plan. Key policy recommendations from the plan, which will be up to the City and the School District to implement, include updating the school district bike policy to allow biking to school; providing adult crossing guard supervision; implementing school zone crossing improvements; promoting bike and pedestrian safety in the schools; and establishing school walking groups.

She noted that she had developed six grant applications to MnDOT for federal Safe Routes to School funding in time to meet the July 6th deadline. Applications were submitted for Stowe, MacArthur, Lincoln Park, Grant, Congdon, and Lester Park schools based on the recommendations for safety improvements as put forth in the final SRTS plan. City of Duluth Engineering and the Duluth School District all signed off on the applications submitted and letters of support were obtained from the Duluth Mayor, Duluth Police Department, and MacArthur School Principal. She noted that the combined requests for Duluth schools totaled \$614,000, which amounted to a large share of that the \$2 million to be distributed by the state, but expressed optimism that they would receive at least some share when the funds are awarded in September.

She added that this fall Andy McDonald will be presenting this plan in her stead, along

with the Superior Safe Routes to School Plan, to the Transportation Research Board's Tools of the Trade Conference Transportation Planning for Small and Medium Sized Communities, which will be held in Nashville, TN.

Kay McKenzie/Broc Allen moved to approve the final Duluth Safe Routes to School Plan. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

7. Duluth Heights Traffic Impact Study – Final Recommendations

Ron Chicka reviewed the final recommendations and implementation schedule from the Duluth Heights Traffic Impact Study, adding that they had incorporated the public input from the June 20th public meeting. He noted that this study had received some prominent media attention, with a front-page article and featured editorial in a recent edition of the Duluth News-Tribune. He commented that the suggestion in the editorial, to rely on the goodwill of drivers to refrain from using the neighborhood cut-through to the mall, was overly optimistic as well as unenforceable. He added that the study's primary recommendation, to construct a Joshua Avenue connector roadway, was not simply to appease a few local residents but to remedy a pronounced gap in the transportation network (an arterial roadway that should have been constructed when the mall was built), consistent with the new Comprehensive Plan goal of enhancing local and regional connectivity. He added that the final plan would be distributed and put forward for approval at the August TAC and MIC meetings.

Earl Elde/Isobel Rapaich moved to approve the final recommendations from the Duluth Heights Traffic Impact Study. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

8. Project Updates

Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan – Holly Butcher reported that she would be working with ARDC's Regional Planning team to jointly devise a Steering Committee for this plan. Staff hopes to pull the Steering Committee together during the month of July to review the human services transportation survey and to identify all stakeholders to be invited to an August workshop.

Phase 2 On-street Bike Route Project – James Gittemeier reported that he would be running the BCI model this month and meeting with stakeholders to discuss the model results and make decisions on the final route system. In addition, staff will begin putting together the signage plan, by examining type, number, and location of signage.

9. Adjournment

With no further agenda items or announcements, Chair Baker adjourned the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rondi Watson, MIC Division Secretary