



## Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

### MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, February 18, 7:00 PM

Meeting Location	Proctor Community Center	
Meeting Chair	Nick Baker, Wisconsin Co-Chair	
Note Taker	Rondi Watson	
MIC Members Present	Ed Anderson	City of Superior
	Nick Baker	Douglas County
	Warren Bender	City of Superior
	Wayne Boucher	City of Hermantown
	Earl Elde	St. Louis County Townships
	Jay Fosle	City of Duluth
	Troy Foucault	City of Proctor
	Garry Krause	City of Duluth
	Kay McKenzie	Douglas County
	Cindy Moe	St. Louis County Townships
	Dan Olson	City of Superior
	Steve O'Neil	St. Louis County
MIC Members Absent	Broc Allen	Douglas County Suburban Townships
	Steve Baker	Douglas County
	Mike Coyle	Douglas County
	Melanie Hendrickson*	DTA Board
	Kevin Norbie*	City of Superior Citizen Rep
	Andy Peterson*	City of Duluth Citizen Rep
Others Present	Ron Chicka	ARDC / MIC Senior Planner
	Jody Doty	Citizen
	James Gittemeier	ARDC / MIC Director
	Pat Henderson	ARDC Executive Director
	Robert Herling	ARDC / MIC Planner
	Denny Johnson	MnDOT District One Planning Director
	Sheldon Johnson	ARDC Executive Director
	Shawn McGovern (alternate)	City of Proctor
	Justin Trush	Citizen
	Rondi Watson	ARDC / MIC Secretary
	* Excused	

### 1. Introductions and Agenda Review

MIC Co-Chair Nick Baker called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and meeting attendees introduced themselves. Ron Chicka welcomed new City of Proctor representative and alternate, City Councilors Troy Foucault and Shawn McGovern, and new City of Hermantown representative, Mayor Wayne Boucher.

Nick Baker announced that he was recommending that item #6 on the agenda, the discussion of potential MIC-area stimulus projects, be moved up the agenda to the first order of business.

## **2. Proposed FHWA and FTA “Stimulus Package” Projects for the MIC Area**

James Gittemeier presented details about the potential projects proposed for funding through the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment plan for the MIC area, submitted by MnDOT, the City of Duluth and St. Louis County. (note, complete details and project map shown on last pages of meeting summary). He noted that each proposed project had to be ready to go, or “shovel-ready,” in that all engineering, environmental assessment and other prep work had been completed. All local projects need to be let by May 1st. He noted that this stipulation alone had limited the number of projects that were eligible for consideration. He added that other categories of stimulus-funded projects might be awarded to the Duluth-Superior area, however, the MIC is addressing only those projects involving highway, bridge, transit, rail and enhancements funding, which must be amended into the area’s TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) and the state’s STIP.

He explained that each of the eight MnDOT districts put together lists similar to ours, and final decisions will be made in St. Paul office. All proposed local projects will be prioritized according to the criteria set forth by the MnDOT State Aid office, and projects that are (1) included in the current 4-year STIP and (2) bridge projects will receive top priority. All others will be considered according to the amount of funds that remain. To put the Duluth-area project requests in perspective, total funding for all local projects throughout the eight counties that comprise District One is estimated (at this point) to be in the range of \$13 million, and with \$46 million in local projects put forward for the MIC area alone, we will be fortunate to have just a few of those awarded. He added that an estimated \$35 million would likely be awarded for Mn/DOT trunk highway projects in this district, which could include projects in the MIC area.

Ron Chicka then described the approval process that is needed to move these projects along, after the funds are allocated state-wide and we know which ones were awarded for the MIC area. Since the final budget numbers and projects are not yet known, the required TIP amendment could not be presented for approval at tonight’s meeting. However, since the approval must occur before next month’s meeting on March 18, it necessitates that a special meeting be convened to accomplish this. He requested that committee members plan to call in to the MIC office at 4:00 pm on Thursday, February 26th, to vote on the final resolution 2009-2012 Duluth Area TIP to include whatever local stimulus projects make the cut. He added that Rondi Watson would be distributing meeting notices per normal procedure.

Garry Krause inquired, relative to the Central Entrance mill and overlay project proposed by MnDOT, if the same road hadn’t had this work done awhile ago. Denny Johnson, District One Planning Director, responded that it had been completed about 10 years ago, but this is a normal maintenance requirement for such a high volume road. He added that the ATP was also in the process of reallocating the funding for any STIP projects that are advanced by stimulus funding, which may fund other new projects or could be used to cover cost increases for local projects.

In regard to possible Superior-area projects, Ron noted that Douglas County does not have any projects ready to go within the required 120 day timeframe, and none of WisDOT’s proposed

projects are within the MIC area (although there may be some in the wider northwest region). The City of Superior did have two that were forwarded for consideration (listed at end of meeting summary) – but it was uncertain that either would be included. He added that there’s also a possibility that WisDOT has indicated it may have a second round of funding, at which point the Superior projects might have a better chance to be included in the funding stream. However, in the event that a Superior-area project is included in the first round, we will follow the normal Wisconsin TIP process which stipulates a 30-day public notice for all new projects. This would require that a separate special MIC meeting be held, again by conference call, on Monday, March 16 at 4:00 pm. Staff will keep committee members apprised of the Wisconsin projects and the TIP amendment process.

**3. Committee Business – Meeting Summary of January 21, 2009**

Chair Baker returned to the first order of business on the agenda and called for changes or corrections to the meeting summary from the previous month’s meeting. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve.

**Motion and Discussion** Earl Elde /Warren Bender moved to approve the meeting summary from the January 21, 2009 meeting as presented. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

**4. 2009-2012 Superior Area TIP Amendments #1 & 2**

Sheldon Johnson presented two projects for which the state had allocated federal funding for CY 2009, requiring amendments to the 2009-2012 Superior Area Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Details of those projects are as follows:

**Amendment #1:** This project enables North Country Independent Living Center to continue its existing Mobility Manager position to coordinate transportation services, and provides transportation vouchers to eligible clients throughout (eight county area including; Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Price, Sawyer and Washburn counties in) northern Wisconsin. The project will begin in 2009 and run through December 31, 2009.

**2009 Transit Projects (NEW FREEDOM-5317)**

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
North Country Independent Living 113-09-012  Amended to TIP in February 2009	Funding for a position of Mobility Manager and availability of a Voucher Program.	Mobility Manager	85,493		21,373	106,866
		Voucher Program	71,644		71,644	143,288
		TOTAL	157,137		93,017	250,154

**Amendment #2:** This project enables Northwest Wisconsin Community Services Agency to provide childcare transportation and vanpool to clients of Douglas County and vehicle loan and repair to clients in the counties of Douglas, Bayfield and Ashland. While the program covers a three county area, some of the services provided will be provided in the MPO area.

**2009 Transit Projects (JARC)**

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description	Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
		Federal	State	Local	Total
Northwest Wisconsin Community Services Agency, Inc.  113-09-013  Amended to TIP in February 2009	Funding for childcare transportation, vanpool, and vehicle loan & repair.	100,738		100,738	201,476

**Motion and Discussion** Dan Olson/Kay McKenzie moved to approve Amendments 1 and 2 to the 2009-2012 Superior Area Transportation Improvement Program as presented. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

**5. Long Range Transportation Plan –Goals & Objectives Session**

Robert Herling explained that staff hopes to use input from the TAC and MIC members to help ensure that the transportation objectives listed in the MIC’s plan remain relevant and address current priorities. He hoped to be able to engage the members of each board in an exercise to refine these objectives and to develop specific strategies to aid in accomplishing them over the next 20 years. He added that the original intent for tonight’s session had been to break into small discussion groups to brainstorm ideas, but due to time constraints from the last-minute agenda items (stimulus projects), he would instead be asking members to complete a questionnaire to rate how aggressively we should pursue these objectives.

He also reviewed some of the considerations for the MIC area in developing its policies and priorities, including population growth, employment, environmental and travel projections for the next 20 years.

He gathered the completed questionnaires and closed by explaining that he planned to utilize the input of committee members at the March TAC and MIC meetings to help guide the process of determining specific strategies and action steps.

**6. 2013 Duluth Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project Prioritization**

James Gittemeier presented details about each of the five projects submitted for federal TIP funding for FY 2013. He noted that in January, project application packets were distributed to the MIC and TAC for their review. The public was given an opportunity to comment on the

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projects at a public meeting held at the Holiday Center on Thursday, Feb.12 from 11am to 1pm. At the TAC meeting on Tuesday, February 17, the formal project prioritization session had been conducted, in which TAC members (and MIC member Earl Elde, who was present to participate in the session) scored the projects, using the evaluation criteria and 100-point scoring system adopted by the MIC in June 2002. The scores were then averaged (with the highest and lowest scores deleted), resulting in a priority ranking as follows:

Rank	Roadway Projects	TAC Score (out of 100)
1	<b>Duluth Heights Connector</b> – New roadway constructed between Maple Grove and Arrowhead Road (1.0 mile)	91.5
2	<b>I-35 Preservation</b> – Resurface pavement and replace culverts as needed from approx. Boundary Avenue to St. Louis-Carlton County line (4 miles)	91.3
3	<b>10<sup>th</sup> Avenue East Reconstruction</b> – Reconstruct 10 <sup>th</sup> Avenue East in Duluth from East 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street to East 9 <sup>th</sup> Street	84.3
4	<b>Martin Road Rehabilitation</b> – Restore pavement and drainage systems from Arnold Road to Jean Duluth Road (2.1 miles)	81.9
Rank	Transit Project	TAC Score
1 (of 1)	<b>Bus Replacement</b> – DTA to purchase 6 STRIDE Buses	n/a

He noted that the TAC recommended that the MIC adopt this prioritized list for submittal to the Northeast Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership (NE MN ATP) for funding consideration. Ron added that the MIC’s project scoring criteria does not take cost into consideration—and the Duluth Heights Connector is a very expensive project, one that would take up most of the funds for the entire 8-county ATP area—therefore unlikely to be selected for funding in that process. However, this project does have extensive planning support (by the MIC as well as inclusion in the Duluth Comprehensive Plan) as well as strong neighborhood support, and would complete a missing link in the roadway network that had regional significance.

**Motion and Discussion** Warren Bender/ Garry Krause moved to adopt the 2013 TIP project ranking from the 2/17/09 scoring session as presented. *During the discussion, Ed Anderson noted that a larger view of the Duluth Heights Connector project area would reveal that it would not only alleviate cut-through traffic in the neighborhood, but could serve as a more direct route between the airport and the mall. Steve O’Neil emphasized the merits of the 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue East reconstruction project, noting that the street is in lousy shape. Kay McKenzie noted that it also serves a high-density urban population, and would likely impact more people on a daily basis than in the Duluth Heights area.*

Steve O’Neil/ Kay McKenzie moved to amend the original motion to change the ranking of the 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue East Reconstruction project from #3 to # 2, thereby changing the overall project ranking to:

#1 Duluth Heights Connector

- #2 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue East Reconstruction
- #3 I-35 Preservation
- #4 Martin Road Rehabilitation

*During the discussion, it was noted that the MnDOT project was likely to be funded, despite the MIC's third-place ranking, due to the way funds are allocated within the ATP and MnDOT's emphasis on preservation of existing infrastructure. The motion to amend the TAC project ranking passed on a vote of 8 to 4, with Baker, Moe, Elde and Olson dissenting.*

Ed Anderson/Warren Bender moved to approve the amended ranking to the ATP scoring process. There was no further discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

## 7. Project Updates

### **Freight Forum**

Andy McDonald announced that as part of the stakeholder input process for the Northern Minnesota/Northwest Wisconsin Freight Plan, the planning partners are hosting a Freight Forum on Wednesday February 25 from 8am to noon at the MnDOT District Office in Duluth. Topics include an overview of the freight plan, explanation of the area freight movement system components, description of commodity flows, markets and trends, and breakout discussion groups for highway, rail, port and air freight issues.

### **East 2nd Street Access Management Plan**

Robert Herling reported that a meeting of the East 2nd Street study's steering committee was held on February 10th to review the work and analyses done to date, and to begin deciding on recommendations for the final plan. Maps are being created and text is being prepared for an initial draft of the plan, which is tentatively scheduled for completion by April of 2009.

### **Proctor Comprehensive Plan**

James Gittemeier reported that the City of Proctor had approved the updated Comp Plan. The draft plan was presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission in January and then the City Council in February. There were a few minor changes requested, and they will be incorporated into the final plan document. The final plan will be presented to the TAC and MIC at the March meetings for approval.

### **Complete Streets Statewide Study Group**

James Gittemeier reported that Mn/DOT has been given the task by the state legislature to undertake a feasibility study regarding the implementation of a Complete Streets policy for the state of Minnesota. The Complete Streets Study is a year-long process that will conclude next December and report back to the state legislature. The study will focus on the benefits, cost and feasibility of adopting a statewide Complete Streets policy. I am participating as a member of the Advisory Committee. The study also includes a Technical Advisory Panel and a consultant (SRF Consulting Group).

### **Complete Streets Local Training Workshop**

James Gittemeier reported that Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Minnesota will be sponsoring two national-level speakers on the topic of Complete Streets for the Duluth-Superior and Arrowhead region. Elected officials, policy makers, planners, engineers and city administrators are encouraged to attend this 1-day interactive workshop, which will present the Complete Streets approach and demonstrate how local governments can implement Complete Streets principles. The workshop will be held on Thursday, March 12, at 8:00 a.m. at the Hermantown Public Safety Training Facility. Watch for more information and registration materials.

### **GIS Projects Update**

MIC GIS staff will be participating on a committee of the Minnesota Governor's Council on Geographic Information, an organization that coordinates the development of geographic information technologies statewide. The MN GIS/LIS Consortium 2009 and 2010 annual conferences will be held in Duluth; MIC staff is coordinating the Sessions Committee for the 2009 conference. MIC and Regional GIS staff is serving on the Geography Program Advisory Committee for Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College. Andrea Grygo, the MIC's GIS Specialist, will be guest-lecturing as part of the "GIS in Urban Analysis" class at UMD.

### **MnDOT Rail Forum**

Ron Chicka reported that he had attended a passenger rail forum group on January 26<sup>th</sup> in St Paul that was charged with oversight into prioritization of rail investment initiatives in the state of Minnesota. All MPOs in the state have been asked to assist with this committee in an advisory capacity and report localized activities regarding this subject. Of key importance was the report from the Federal Rail Administration, that such a body of statewide representation needs to exist in order to receive federal rail funds that would go to the various endeavors being discussed throughout the state. The group is also being represented via a St Louis County Board member and individuals from the Northern Lights Express working committee.

## **8. Adjournment**

With no further agenda items or announcements, Chair Baker adjourned the meeting at 8:53 pm.

Duluth Metro Proposed Project List - 2009 Economic Recovery Act									
Project #	Agency	Location	Route	Segment	Description	Length	Cost	09-12 TIP	Amdmt Needed
NA	DTA	Duluth	NA	NA	Transit Capital - Facility Improvements (Sect. 5307)	NA	\$540,000	No	Formal Amdmt
NA	DTA	Duluth	NA	NA	Transit Capital - ITS (Sect. 5307)	NA	\$290,000	No	Formal Amdmt
NA	DTA	Duluth	NA	NA	Transit Capital - Shop Equipment (Sect. 5307)	NA	\$100,000	No	Formal Amdmt
69-613-32	St. Louis Co.	Hermantown	Midway Road (CSAH 13)	US Hwy 2 to MN Hwy 194	Mill and overlay	4.3 mi	\$3,150,000	No	Formal Amdmt
69-604-66	St. Louis Co.	City of Duluth & Rice Lake Twp	Rice Lake Road (CSAH 4)	Arrowhead Rd (CSAH 32) to Martin Rd (CSAH 9)	Pavement Reclamation	3.6 mi	\$2,600,000	Yes 2011	Formal Amdmt
69-661-15	St. Louis Co.	Duluth	N. Shore Scenic Dr. (CSAH 61)	Buchanan Town Site Wayside Rest Area (south of Knife River)	Historic Preservation	0.0 mi	\$450,000	No	Formal Amdmt
6916-102 6917-137	MN/DOT	Grand Lake Twp	US Hwy 53	1.1mi N of Hwy 194 to 1.5mi N of Hwy 33 NB 1mi Industrial Rd (CSAH 7) to 2.6mi N of Industrial Rd (CSAH 7) SB 0.3mi N of Hwy 8 (CSAH 8) to 0.4mi S of Hwy 33	Reconstruction, thin unbonded concrete overlay	18 mi	\$18,000,000	No	Formal Amdmt
6933-88	MN/DOT	City of Duluth	Central Entrance (MN Hwy 194)	Anderson Rd to Mesaba Rd	Mill and overlay, drainage repairs	1.8 mi	\$1,016,000	No	Formal Amdmt
6982-295	MN/DOT	City of Duluth	I-35 & US Hwy 2	Thompson Hill Rest Area	Building and site preservation	0.0 mi	\$487,000	No	Formal Amdmt
6982-6546	MN/DOT	Midway Twp	I-35	Midway Rd	Bridge Repairs, BR #'s 6546, 69891, 69892 & 69894	0.0 mi	\$1,900,000	Yes 2011	Formal Amdmt
6910-86	MN/DOT Duluth	Fond du Lac Gary	MN Hwy 23	Fond du Lac to Gary	Mill and overlay, drainage & lighting	4.9 mi	\$4,560,000	No	Formal Amdmt
69-604-67	St. Louis Co.	Duluth	Rice Lake Road (CSAH 4)	Pecan Ave to Arrowhead Rd	Mill and overlay	1.4 mi	\$1,600,000	Yes 2011	Admin Mod
118-090-15	Duluth	Lakeside	Lakewalk Phase 3	47th Ave East to 60th Ave East	Construct bike trail	1.5 mi	\$700,000	Yes 2010	Admin Mod
69-00185	MN/DOT	Solway Twp	Munger Shaw Road (CR 223)	Railroad crossing near US Hwy 2	Install crossing gates	0.0 mi	\$225,000	Yes 2011	Admin Mod
TRF-0016-10C	DTA	Duluth	NA	NA	Transit Capital (Sec. 5307)	0.0 mi	\$600,756	Yes 2010	Admin Mod
TRF-0016-10	DTA	Duluth	NA	NA	Bus Purchase - 10 Class 700 regular route buses	0.0 mi	\$3,400,000	Yes 2010	Admin Mod
<b>Duluth Metro Total</b>							<b>\$39,618,756</b>		

**NOTES:**

**Formal Amdmt** = formal amendment to the TIP, presented to and approved by both TAC and MIC Policy Board

**Admin Mod** = Administrative Modification, presented to TAC and MIC Policy Board, but no requirement for approval

**09-12 TIP** = FY 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program

## Superior Metro Proposed Project List - 2009 Economic Recovery Act

Agency	Location	Route	Segment	Description	Length	Cost	09-12 TIP	Amdmt Needed
Superior	City of Superior	E. 5th St	6th Ave East to 20th Ave East	Mill and overlay	NA	\$351,400	no	Formal Amdmt
Superior	City of Superior	Tower Ave	Belknap St to N. 64th St	Crack sealing	NA	\$1,000,000	no	Formal Amdmt

**Superior Metro Total: \$1,351,400**

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**09-12 TIP** = FY 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program