



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, January 20, 2010, 7:00 PM

Meeting Location	WITC Conference Center, Superior, WI	
Meeting Chair(s)	Nick Baker, WI Co-chair	
Note Taker	Rondi Watson	
Members Present	Broc Allen	Douglas County Suburban Townships
	Ed Anderson	Superior Common Council
	Nick Baker	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Warren Bender	Superior Common Council
	Wayne Boucher	City of Hermantown
	Mike Coyle	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Tony Cuneo	Duluth City Council
	Earl Elde	St. Louis County Suburban Townships
	Troy Foucault	City of Proctor
	Kerry Gauthier	Duluth City Council
	Melanie Hendrickson	Duluth Transit Authority
	Kay McKenzie	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Cindy Moe	St. Louis County Suburban Townships
	David Montgomery	City of Duluth – Citizen Rep
	Kevin Norbie	City of Superior – Citizen Rep
	Dan Olson	Superior Common Council
	Steve O’Neil	St. Louis County Board
Members Absent		
	Jim Paine*	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
		* Excused
Others Present	Ron Chicka	ARDC / MIC Director
	James Gittemeier	ARDC / MIC Planner
	Robert Herling	ARDC / MIC Planner
	Susan Koschak	Mn/DOT State Non-Motorized Transportation Advisory Committee (SNTC)
	Andy McDonald	ARDC / MIC Principal Planner
	Tim Mitchell	Mn/DOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Section Director
	Shelley Nelson	Duluth News-Tribune
	Rondi Watson	ARDC / MIC Planning Assistant

1. Introductions and Agenda Review

Wisconsin Co-chair Nick Baker called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and meeting attendees introduced themselves. Ron Chicka introduced new MIC members Dave Montgomery, replacing Andy Peterson as the citizen representative for the City of Duluth, and Duluth City Councilors Kerry Gauthier and Tony Cuneo, replacing Garry Krause and Jay Fosle.

2. Committee Business

A. December 9, 2009 Meeting Summary

No changes were suggested to the summary from the last meeting of the MIC Policy Board. Hearing none, Chair Baker asked for a motion to approve.

Motion Warren Bender/Kevin Norbie moved to approve the 12/9/09 meeting summary as
Discussion presented. There was no discussion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.
& Vote

B. 2010 MIC Officer Election

Ron Chicka noted that at the December meeting, Earl Elde had been elected to serve as MIC Secretary and also as the MIC's representative to the ARDC Board and Commission. The election of the 2010 MN and WI Co-chairs, however, was postponed until appointments were finalized for the several MIC members whose terms were up at the end of 2009. Since all representatives are now seated, the Board could move forward with the Chair elections.

Earl Elde reported that he had polled Minnesota-side members and their consensus was to nominate Steve O'Neil as the MN Co-Chair. Warren Bender reported that similarly, he had polled Wisconsin-side members and their consensus was to nominate Nick Baker to continue to serve as the WI Co-Chair.

Motion Kay McKenzie/Kevin Norbie moved to elect the slate of candidates for 2010 Co-
Discussion Chairs as presented. There was no discussion and the motion passed by
& Vote unanimous vote.

C. MIC and TAC Member Survey

Ron Chicka reviewed the results of the survey of TAC and MIC members evaluating the work of staff and meeting effectiveness. He responded specifically to a few points:

A couple of comments suggested that staff was perhaps too redundant in the agenda items presented. Ron explained that our practice is to err on the side of repeating information in order to keep all members up to speed. Furthermore, the Long Range Plan and the TIP, as the two primary products of this and every MPO, require ongoing updates and review by the Policy Board, so it is likely that these topics will show up regularly on meeting agendas.

In regard to comments about the degree of communication between the TAC and the Policy Board, he noted that staff will be making a point of soliciting TAC input for each topic presented, to bring forward to the MIC at its meeting the next day. He added that TAC members were also encouraged to attend MIC meetings if there is a particular point they'd like to make and explain directly to the Board.

He added that the TAC had also expressed interest in having their comments incorporated into draft plans and studies before they are presented for approval by the Board. To this

end, it was suggested as one option that the TAC meetings be scheduled a week or two ahead prior to the MIC meeting (instead of the day before), or perhaps the option of presenting draft reports to the TAC for input the month before they go before the Board.

D. Federal Transportation Bill/Policy Update

Ron Chicka reported that prior to adjourning for the holidays, Congress and the President passed the Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2009 that extended many different transportation programs to September 30, 2010. Jim Oberstar agreed to this extension in exchange for a "Jobs Bill – ARRA II" that passed the House and now moves to the Senate for final consideration. It is a \$150 billion jobs creation package that includes \$40 billion for infrastructure improvements. This may mean a whole new round of "shovel-ready" projects being put forth nationwide with the stipulation that they be let within 90 days, an unusually short turnaround time. MnDOT has alerted the MIC and the ATP (the 8-county Northeast MN Area Transportation Partnership) to be ready in short order to amend the Duluth area TIP and the statewide STIP should this legislation occur.

He noted that, depending on the timing of the legislation, we may need to call special phone-in MIC meetings on short notice to amend new ARRA-funded projects into the TIP, and asked that members please be on the lookout for emails to this effect during the coming months.

3. Integrating Bicycle & Pedestrian Initiatives in Statewide Planning

Tim Mitchell, Mn/DOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Section Director, presented an overview of current bike and pedestrian initiatives happening around the state. He began by noting that MnDOT's current Strategic Plan incorporates an awareness of all modes of transportation, which in turn has had a direct impact on the bike and ped planning efforts underway.

He noted that lots of influences are coming together right now which are reshaping MnDOT's plans and programs. Environmental and "green" approaches to transportation, as well as the call in the metro area to ease congestion and reduce commute times, were reflected in MnDOT's renewed emphasis on rail and waterborne transport, as well as non-motorized transportation.

He added that health concerns are putting transportation into the spotlight as never before. The Minnesota Dept of Health has convened an active living advisory group, and Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Minnesota is also a major player, with high visibility campaigns underway, with funding secured from the tobacco settlements. United Health has undertaken an innovative concept of "blue zones" to encourage active living, with an awareness of transportation policy and design.

Other significant influences, nationwide, include ADA compliance, context-sensitive solutions training and the Complete Streets movement. Within past month alone, two states (CA & PA) have had legal settlements upwards of \$2 billion related to ADA compliance.

Personal financial concerns are also driving a renewed interest in non-motorized options. On the community level, roadway designs that accommodate multiple modes and user needs are

having measurable beneficial economic impacts, in terms of tourism revenues, property values, and “quality of life” impacts.

Their office conducts a lot of education and outreach to raise public awareness about safety and the benefits of multimodal transportation options. Another important function is to build relationships within local communities and encourage public involvement in developing transportation solutions, and to this end, his staff participates in numerous Bike / Ped Advisory committees statewide. He stressed that BPACs are not a new concept—many of them have been around for many years, some since the 70s and 80s.

He noted that the MnDOT advisory committee began its life as the statewide bicycle advisory committee—but its mission and scope has now expanded to support and advocate for multiple populations who utilize non-motorized modes, such as the disabled, elderly, and children. He added that they are a leader recognized nationwide for their degree of coordination with stakeholder groups.

Susan Koschak, the District One representative and current chair of the Mn/DOT State Non-Motorized Transportation Advisory Committee (SNTC), presented additional information about the structure and role of the committee. She explained that the mission of the group is to promote, individually and collectively, non-motorized transportation. The SNTC was originally created by legislation and has evolved into a very diverse group with a statewide, (i.e., non-metro-centric) focus.

She noted that as a MnDOT committee, they are about transportation, for example, not about recreational trails. Its subcommittees intentionally augment areas of focus in MnDOT:

- Facilities and Wayshowing—Goal: bicyclists can navigate anywhere in Minnesota. She added that they also have an intentional focus on measuring, counting something that can be reported back, to measure that it has an impact, such as how many miles have been and are now mapped, or how many bike racks existed and now exist in particular areas.
- Safety and Education—Goal: fewer crashes and injuries for cyclists and pedestrians.
- All Users—Goal: transportation throughout the state is inclusive of all users.

She added that the selection process to participate on the SNTC has become pretty competitive. There has been lots of interest, and the membership process includes applications, interviews, recommendation and approval. Members have 3-year terms, maximum 2 consecutive terms. They meet 5 times/year.

Another important role for committee members is that they are educated on a number of topics— they have a guest speaker at almost meeting— and then go out into the community. The members report to all kinds of different groups in all kinds of places.

Tony Cuneo commented that there’s obviously value in the work of this committee—but the real-life obstacle to implementing Complete Streets often occurs at the level of policy and standards, for example, the State Aid guidelines are often out of alignment with the goals of accommodating multiple users and consideration of context in road design.

Tim agreed, and stated that it's evolving in the area of policy and guidelines—"there's a tremendous appetite," a groundswell of popular support happening right now to support new policy directions. The upcoming state Complete Streets report highlights a number of inconsistencies.

Andy McDonald commented that the MIC will approach its plans and studies a bit differently from now on. Instead of getting all the way to the end of the planning process before the design guidelines are introduced, they will be seeking this input up front.

Ed Anderson commented that he'd like to see a shift from design "commandments" to "guidelines" – which would require flexibility from community to community.

Tim agreed that context sensitive design gets exactly to this point and this need for flexibility.

Broc Allen asked what the mapping final product is going to look like, for example, will it include trails as well as paved roads?

Susan replied that the committee is working on figuring out what is needed and wanted from a user perspective. For one thing, they are discovering that wayshowing is way more than producing a single map; they are trying to anticipate new emerging technologies as well. She used the example of St. Louis County, where she works as a planner; they are developing multiple layers of GIS data so users can self-select the information they are looking for.

Tim added that the new natural resources legacy fund endowment mandates a comprehensive assessment of all park and trail resources into a single database; they are focusing on county state aid highway bikeability rankings, and hope and plan to bring all this information together into an integrated resource.

4. Establishment of a MIC Bike-Ped Advisory Committee

James Gittemeier reviewed the reasons why he is putting forward a recommendation that the MIC create a new advisory committee. The last (SAFETEA-LU) transportation bill specifically emphasizes a balance of transportation choices, due to issues related to health, the environment, energy, financial considerations and population demographics. On the basis of demographics alone, an auto-oriented, auto-dependent system excludes about one third of the population. He noted that the upcoming reauthorization is likely to continue this approach with a new emphasis on "livability"

On a local level, he noted that there have also been recent, high-profile issues that have brought these considerations to the fore, such as the cyclists who were ticketed while riding on 4th Street, and controversy about the design of Woodland and Kenwood Avenues in and around UMD.

He added that the BPAC would also complement the many local initiatives which are now underway, which include Duluth Complete Streets, Superior Bike Routes, Safe & Walkable Hillside (SHIP); Douglas County CHIP; and Fit City Duluth.

The BPAC's role would be to advise the MIC Policy Board and would consist of bicycle and pedestrian stakeholders who represent all facets of these modes. It is envisioned that this

committee will also serve as a community forum for discussing local bicycle and pedestrian issues that arise, as well as a proactive information gathering and solution identification body.

At this point, he is planning for the BPAC to meet quarterly, beginning in February 2010. February would be the kick-off meeting; in May, their task would be to define the mission and identify specific work tasks; in August they would establish priorities and in November the group would define its goals for the next year.

Potential tasks for the BPAC and its working groups would be Bike to Work Day; and update of the MIC Area Bike Plan and of the 2003 MIC Area Bike Map; data collection (bike and ped counts) relating to the need for bike and ped facilities in the MIC area; and Safe Routes to School implementation activities.

One issue that needs to be decided by the MIC Board is the way the new advisory committee will be structured. He presented three options, based on the models used by other MPOs, as well as feedback received at the previous MIC meeting. **Option A** would be to set it up as a third advisory committee to the MIC Policy Board, along with the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC). **Option B** would be to structure it as an advisory committee to the TAC, which would in turn consider the BPAC's recommendations before passing them along to the MIC. **Option C** would be a "hybrid" structure in which the BPAC and the TAC would work together to reach consensus on recommendations, which they would then jointly forward to the MIC.

James closed by noting that TAC comments at the previous day's meeting strongly favored Option B, with the BPAC reporting to the TAC for its input before their recommendations are forwarded to the MIC.

Motion Discussion & Vote **Kevin Norbie moved to adopt a variant of Option C, the "hybrid" committee structure.** He proposed that the BPAC would be shown diagrammatically as a committee that reports directly to the MIC, but would also include a line between the BPAC and the TAC – indicating that they would work together, if needed, on specific projects. Kay McKenzie seconded the motion.

Broc Allen asked about the proposed membership of the BPAC, and whether there will be engineering (TAC member) representation on the BPAC (James replied yes). If this is the case, then the issue of inter-committee communication and engineering input will be resolved.

Tony Cuneo commented that it seems reasonable to require that the two groups consult with each other.

Kerry Gauthier asked that if it's the MIC's job to set policy, then it should be the MIC who makes the final decision after hearing the perspectives of both advisory committees. He suggested that it would be okay if the two groups disagreed on some points, in fact, they might get a stronger final product.

Kay McKenzie asked what other MPOs in Minnesota and Wisconsin do, in terms of

structure. James replied that he wasn't certain if there was a clear trend among other MPOs, but St. Cloud, for one, has their BPAC report to the TAC. There was, however, some dissatisfaction and a lack of participation from BPAC members under this arrangement.

He also expressed the concern that innovative, i.e., unfamiliar, ideas from the BPAC might get shot down at the TAC level and would not be heard for consideration by the MIC. He added that the specifics about who would be voting members and how the BPAC would consult with the TAC could be specified in the bylaws. In addition, similar to what is done with the HTAC, MIC staff would present information from every BPAC meeting to both the TAC and the MIC for comment and input.

Ed Anderson commented that problems might arise if the line between the two committees meant that they needed to reach a consensus on all issues. He agreed with Kerry's assertion that it's the MIC Board's job to sort out the differences and set policy; therefore, there is no real reason for running everything from the BPAC through the TAC.

There was no further discussion and the motion failed on a vote of 15-2

(McKenzie, Norbie in favor / Allen, Anderson, Baker, Bender, Boucher, Coyle, Cuneo, Elde, Foucault, Gauthier, Hendrickson, Moe, Montgomery, Olson, O'Neil opposed).

Ed Anderson moved to create a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, as presented in option A, as a new advisory committee reporting directly to the MIC. Mike Coyle seconded the motion. **There was no further discussion and the motion carried unanimously.**

5. 2030 MIC-Area Long Range Transportation Plan Readoption

Chair Baker began by opening the public comment session at 7:27 p.m. on the proposed readoption of the 2030 MIC Long Range Plan.

Robert Herling announced that, as reported at last month's meetings of the TAC and MIC, staff is recommending Readoption of the current (2030) Long Range Transportation Plan.

He explained that doing so will ensure that an active plan remains in place as staff continues working to complete the updated (2035) LRTP. He noted that the 2035 update, originally slated for completion by December 2009, had been delayed by staff turnover and the extra time needed to refine the traffic model and revise our method of projecting expenditures and revenues. He added that although many pieces of the update are already in place, the entire draft document must be ready to present for public review and board approval.

He reported that after consulting with FHWA, MnDOT and WisDOT, it was determined that the main consideration, in readopting the 2030 plan, is to show that its assumptions and goals still apply to the MIC planning area. Their concern has to do with possible increased demand on our transportation system. He reviewed the Readoption materials prepared for those

agencies, which document that our most recent demographic and traffic modeling analysis shows just the opposite, that population (and associated traffic demands) is not significantly expanding in the Duluth-Superior area and therefore will not render the existing LRTP obsolete.

He added that notice of the required public comment period had been made, via the MIC website and the Duluth News Tribune, and tonight's meeting was listed as the venue for taking comments on the proposed Readoption.

Chair Baker requested public comment on the Readoption of the MIC's 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan. Hearing none, he repeated the request for comments on this action, and then closed the public comment session at 8:30 p.m.

Motion Broc Allen/Warren Bender moved to approve MIC Resolution 10-02 Readopting
Discussion the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan. There was no discussion and the
& Vote motion passed by unanimous vote.

6. Harbor Planning (HTAC) Update

Andy McDonald presented a recap of topics presented at the most recent Harbor Technical Advisory Committee meeting. The HTAC met on Wednesday December 2 at 9 am at the Superior Public Library.

Bayfront District Small Area Plan

Heidi Timm-Bijold (City of Duluth), Larry Killien (MnDNR), and Sandy Hoff (F.I. Salter Real Estate) presented information about the planning process currently underway for developing the area adjacent to the Bayfront Festival Park, which includes property owned by the Duluth Economic Development Authority (DEDA) as well as the LaFarge cement property that is currently for sale.

The purpose of the Bayfront District Small Area Plan is to determine the appropriate mix of land uses and to recommend zoning changes that would allow a transition to a mixed use for the site. This area, currently zoned waterfront industrial, was one of approximately ten areas called out in the 2006 Comprehensive Plan for further study. It has also been the focus of numerous planning efforts to date; she noted that the current planning process will utilize use the information and recommendations assembled in previous plans as the basis for this plan. The first public meeting was held on Wednesday, December 2nd at 6:30 pm in the Great Hall of the Depot. Final recommendations are expected to be put to the Planning and Zoning Committee and the Duluth City Council in February.

Factors Contributing to Corrosion of Steel Pilings in the Duluth-Superior Harbor

Brenda Little, Senior Scientist, Marine Molecular Processes, Naval Research Laboratory, Stennis Space Center, presented some highly-anticipated information from her recently-published study entitled "Factors Contributing to Corrosion of Steel Pilings in Duluth-Superior Harbor" (by R. Ray, J. Lee and B. Little). The peer-reviewed paper, published in CORROSION, The Journal of Science and Engineering, demonstrates a specific sequence of biological, chemical and physical events responsible for the accelerated corrosion of steel

structures in the Duluth-Superior harbor. Approximately fourteen miles of sheet piling, or 50,000 pounds of steel, is corroding away every year, and a well-coordinated effort to fund and guide this research effort has been underway for the past five years, after this problem was first noted.

She outlined the process by which specific iron-oxidizing bacteria attach to carbon steel, creating a nodule (or "tubercle") of biomass and corrosion byproducts. Conditions beneath those nodules cause the copper in the harbor water to precipitate and adhere to the iron. When ice scours the pilings each winter, the tubercles break, exposing the copper-covered iron to oxygen which, in turn, causes the steel in those pitted areas to corrode at a faster rate.

The next areas for research and implementation will be to determine measures, including protective coatings, to slow or eliminate the corrosion of underwater structures.

Seasnake – Innovative Ship Design

James Hartung, Executive Vice President of Seasnake LLC, presented information about the Seasnake, a new waterborne cargo module technology under development. The Seasnake vessel configuration is more characteristic of a train than a traditional ship. It includes a traction (pulling) unit, cargo module(s), and a caboose (pushing) unit, with articulated connectors allowing each module to move independently. It has been tested for stability, strength of linking mechanisms, and course-keeping ability. A 26-foot module is specifically designed for the Great Lakes.

One significant feature of its design is that it eliminates ballast, thereby curbing the introduction of invasive species, addressing a big issue for the Great Lakes. Additionally its propulsion/hull design improves air emissions and fuel economy.

They are enthusiastic about its potential to enhance Great Lakes container feeder services and short sea shipping as well as its environmental advantages. They will be presenting information about this new technology throughout the Twin Ports area.

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

Pat Carey, Watershed Unit Supervisor, MPCA-Duluth, presented information about the \$475 million Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), recently passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama as part of the FY2010 budget, to protect and clean up the Great Lakes by addressing the most significant problems including invasive aquatic species, non-point source pollution and critical habitat protection. It is intended to build on (but not take the place of) existing federal activities and partnerships with states, cities, tribes and nongovernmental entities.

The GLRI has five focus areas: Toxic Substances and Areas of Concern (\$147M), Invasive Species (\$60M); Nearshore Health and Nonpoint Pollution (\$98M); Habitat and Wildlife Protection and Restoration (\$105M); and Accountability-monitoring-Evaluation-Communication and Partnerships (\$65M). Many of these focus areas are relevant to the Duluth-Superior area, for example, the potential to re-use dredge materials in habitat restoration projects.

The Initiative is organized as a multi-agency effort led by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which will administer a competitive grant application process via an RFP for \$120 million in funds. Proposals for this RFP are due January 29, 2010. Information about this RFP is available online at <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/fund/2010rfp01/index.html>.

SS Meteor Rehabilitation

Jason Serck, Planning Director for the City of Superior, Susan Anderson, Director of Superior Public Museums, and project volunteers Roger Pellett and Jim Sharrow presented information about the current initiative to preserve, restore and upgrade the display of the Meteor, the last surviving non-submerged “whaleback” design ship, built by the American Steel Barge Company in Superior in 1896 and now owned by the City of Superior.

The plan aims at preventing further deterioration of the vessel by excavating and relocating it to an elevated dry berth about 50 feet north of its present location on Barkers Island. The idea is to remove the modifications that converted it to a tanker in 1943 and restore the vessel to her original 1925 appearance and historic significance as the “Frank Rockefeller.” The plan also includes an adjacent interpretive center to present the history of this type of vessel as well as the local shipyard industry.

7. 2014 MIC-Area TIP Project Applications

James Gittemeier presented information about the process for selecting projects for federal FY 2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding in the Duluth Urbanized Area.

He began by explaining that the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) identifies all area roadway projects chosen to receive federal funding for a four-year period (in this case, 2011-2014). The TIP is one of the three tasks mandated for every MPO such as the MIC. The other two tasks are to develop a 20-year Long Range Transportation Plan and an annual Work Program.

He added that the development of the Duluth area TIP is governed by MnDOT and follows a process and a timeline that is entirely separate from the development of the Superior TIP, which is overseen by WisDOT. The Duluth area TIP process begins when MIC staff sends out project applications to all eligible Duluth area jurisdictions (counties, cities with population over 5,000, and state agencies) in November. These applications are then reviewed in January and scored by TAC and MIC members, utilizing the project criteria and 100-point scoring system that was approved by the MIC in 2002. All voting TAC members, along with any MIC members who choose to participate, score the project applications at the February TAC meeting. The projects are then ranked, according to the final scores, from highest to lowest priority and are presented at the MIC meeting the following evening for discussion and final approval by the Policy Board.

The final prioritized project list is then submitted the Northeast Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership (NE MN ATP) for funding consideration. The NE MN ATP is a committee of elected officials, engineers and planners which selects projects for an area that

encompasses eight counties in northeast Minnesota as well as the MIC planning area.

He noted that the public is also given an opportunity to comment on the proposed projects. Transit projects are scored and prioritized separate from roadway projects.

This year, however, the usual scoring and prioritization process will not be conducted. He explained that there were just two applications submitted this year for roadway projects, both of which are led by Mn/DOT. Since Mn/DOT's top priority, the Bong Bridge repair project, is being closely coordinated with WisDOT, it was agreed that there is not a need to go through the formal scoring process that usually takes place at the TAC meeting in February. MIC staff will go over the details of the projects, as usual, at the February meetings and the TAC and MIC will be asked to approve the project list, as it is currently prioritized, to submit to the NE MN ATP process for funding consideration.

The three project applications are summarized below, in their suggested priority order. The complete applications are available to view on the MIC website, at www.dsmic.org/duluthtip.

Jurisdiction	Project Info	Federal \$	State/Local \$	Total \$
Mn/DOT	Hwy 2 Bong Bridge Repairs – painting, deck overly & joint repair.	\$10,700,000	\$2,700,000	\$13,400,000
Mn/DOT	I-35 Repavement – From Carlton/St. Louis County line to Boundary Ave.	\$5,300,000	\$700,000	\$6,000,000
DTA	Regular Route Bus Replacement – purchase 10 buses, five of which will be hybrids.	\$4,656,000	\$1,164,000	\$5,616,000

He added that there are only two MIC area TIP applications for 2014 because there were a number of ARRA-funded projects in the MIC-area, and because the ATP is seeking equity among all the jurisdictions in the NE MN area, it was less likely that MIC area projects would be favorably received for 2014 TIP funding.

8. Project Updates

Duluth's Complete Streets Task Force

The Duluth Complete Streets Task Force will be hosting an all-day workshop focused on Complete Streets on Tuesday, January 26, starting at 8:30. Session one is more policy oriented, the second session, beginning at 1:00 pm, has a more hands-on focus. The workshop will be facilitated by John LaPlante, whose experience includes 30 years in transportation engineering for the City of Chicago, and will consist of a morning (general overview) and afternoon session

(technical discussion). MIC and TAC members will receive registration information from the City of Duluth and are invited and encouraged to attend this free and informative opportunity.

Blatnik Bridge Base Study

WisDOT staff and URS transportation model consultants, together with MIC staff, recently met to get this project back underway. For most of 2009, it was delayed as the DOT worked to secure funding for modeling work to examine the network deficiencies of such a closure and identify road and intersection problem spots that may need mitigation while the Bong Bridge is closed completely during the 2014 construction season for a major re-decking project. Further, our modeling will examine possible modifications to the Blatnik base in Superior for the long term. These would include new ramps, feasibility of a roundabout or some combination of altered accesses that would provide a safer driving situation for all. With the results of this work (completion set for June of 2010) the MIC will then continue on with the land use plan for the Blatnik bridge area.

East Second Street Study

Work has resumed on the East 2nd Street study in Superior. Some of the existing data have been updated, and information related to pedestrian crossings has been added. Staff will be developing a set of draft recommendations and presenting them to the study committee in the coming months.

Duluth's Green Jobs Initiative

MIC staff has been participating in this effort along with many other community leaders. Green jobs are defined as "jobs relating to, or involving actions for protecting the natural environment that have career growth potential and a living wage." In addition to a Steering Committee, there are 5 work groups organized – built environment, energy production, food system, resource protection, and transportation. Ron is participating on the transportation work group and Andy is a member of the resource protection group. The project mission is "to bring together community sectors to develop a strategic framework consisting of individual green job development action plans." There have been two meetings held so far for each work group and are in the process of developing action plans. Staff will follow up with more information as this effort continues.

9. Adjournment

With no further agenda items or announcements, Chair Baker adjourned the meeting at 8:51 pm.