



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, April 21, 2010, 7:00 PM

Meeting Location	WITC Conference Center, Superior, WI	
Meeting Chair(s)	Steve O'Neil, MN Co-chair	
Note Taker	Rondi Watson	
Members Present	Broc Allen	Douglas County Suburban Townships
	Nick Baker	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Warren Bender	Superior Common Council
	Shawn McGovern	City of Proctor
	Kerry Gauthier	Duluth City Council
	Kay McKenzie	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Melanie Hendrickson	Duluth Transit Authority
	David Montgomery	City of Duluth – Citizen Rep
	Kevin Norbie	City of Superior – Citizen Rep
	Steve O'Neil	St. Louis County Board
	Jim Paine	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Kathy Schulties	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
Members Absent	Wayne Boucher*	City of Hermantown
	Tony Cuneo*	Duluth City Council
	Earl Elde*	St. Louis County Suburban Townships
	Cindy Moe*	St. Louis County Suburban Townships
	Dan Olson*	Superior Common Council
	(vacant)	Superior Common Council
	* Excused	
Others Present	Ron Chicka	ARDC / MIC Director
	James Gittemeier	ARDC / MIC Planner
	Robert Herling	ARDC / MIC Planner
	Tim Hohn	ARDC / MIC Intern
	Andy McDonald	ARDC / MIC Principal Planner
	Kimberly Sannes	City of Duluth Engineering Dept
	Rondi Watson	ARDC / MIC Planning Assistant

1. Introductions and Agenda Review

Wisconsin Co-chair Nick Baker called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. All meeting attendees introduced themselves. Ron Chicka introduced new Douglas County Commissioner Kathy Schulties, appointed as proxy for Mike Coyle for this meeting.

Chair O'Neil asked if there were any changes to the agenda. None were put forward.

2. Committee Business

3/17/10 Meeting Summary

Chair Baker asked if there were any changes to the summary from the last meeting of the MIC Policy Board. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve.

Motion Nick Baker/Warren Bender moved to approve the 3/17/10 meeting summary as
Discussion presented. There was no discussion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.
& Vote

3. Cross-City (Munger to Lakewalk) Trail Update

Kimberly Sannes, Project Engineer for the City of Duluth, presented information about the Cross City Trail project, which, when completed, will connect the end of the Munger Trail in west Duluth to the beginning of the Lakewalk in Canal Park. She described this as the long-awaited "missing link" in the paved trail system that stretches from Hinckley to Brighton Beach and beyond.

She commented that the name "Cross-City" is a good descriptor for this section of trail, which will traverse some of the most industrialized sections of Duluth, with a distinctive character and sense of place. It is planned as a 10-foot wide, paved, non-motorized trail, separated from roadways, with a minimal number of intersecting points.

She noted that the planning for the Cross-City trail goes back many years. In 1992, DEDA started acquiring land, so some alignments are already owned by the city. The area right around 27th Avenue West in Lincoln Park, however, is a big choke point – it has been very difficult to come up with the necessary 20 feet of right-of-way due to the current land uses which include the I-35 alignment and multiple rail lines. She suggested that this section of the trail alignment may need to be integrated into the rest of the community's uses (i.e., shared with the existing roadway).

She added that other cities are solving this issue by converting existing paved roadways for non-motorized uses. Duluth has a very large street inventory – an open question might be, could some of our existing paved infrastructure, in selected areas, be converted to non-motorized uses as part of a larger trail system plan?

Funding is in place to hire a consultant to conduct the preliminary engineering and environmental documentation and to construct the first two-plus miles from the end of the Munger Trail to the Bong Bridge. She added that the MIC's "Munger Trail to Lakewalk Connector Plan" from 2007 was very instrumental in getting the funding lined up. \$500,000 of funding has been committed to design work, alignment analysis and selection, and the City has applied for another \$850,000 in state DNR funding. The engineering has been underway for the past two months and there's been a lot of community involvement so far.

She commented that people in Duluth are very supportive and excited about this project, and that it's notable that there hasn't been a single negative expressed about this project. It's her observation that there is a pent-up demand for this trail, as well as other opportunities to

accommodate non-motorized modes of travel. She has also noticed that community blogs on this topic (for example, Perfect Duluth Day), are quite animated and offer detailed comments on preferred routes.

She noted that a strong theme has emerged from the public meetings: people want an integrated bikeway system, with connections between home, work and other destinations. A strong preference is being expressed by the neighborhoods that they would prefer the trail alignment be as close as possible to the residential area. This is a big switch, in her experience, from the “not in my backyard” attitude.

She explained that the primary goal for constructing the Cross-City Trail extension is to connect a number of destinations and attractions via a trail that is as direct as possible. A main “trunk” facility will be established first to establish a straight thoroughfare from west to east, and then connector trails out into the neighborhoods and business districts can be developed as funding becomes available.

She then reviewed the maps displaying the several alternatives that are currently options for the final alignment. The first segment to be constructed will take extend the trail to the area right around the Bong Bridge. East of that point, many easements (but not all that are needed), have been acquired from the Soo railroad. Construction is expected to begin in one year, and the entire trail alignment should be set by then as well. They are still waiting until Burlington Northern can come to the table. A face to face meeting really needs to happen with them—the company is not super supportive, but she feels they can work through it.

All the options are on the table, an upcoming public meeting will review the options that are under consideration. She added that she’s available for questions and that she is also developing an email list as a way to stay in touch.

Kevin Norbie asked about two apparently open segments—Kimberly clarified that those segments are unavailable due to the presence of active rail lines.

Shawn McGovern commented that there is an underpass in the vicinity of 27th to 29th Avenues West that could be utilized for the south of I-35 alignment, thereby bypassing the hassles with the BN property.

4. Amendments #7 and 8 to the 2010-2013 Duluth Area TIP

Since the Amendment #7 pertains to SRTS funding for the 2010 and 2011 project years, Kimberly Sannes began by reviewing the work that is currently underway in Duluth.

Congdon Park Elementary SRTS Infrastructure Project: \$137,600. Because the SRTS applications were submitted before the district’s Red Plan was completed, some of the funds budgeted for site work will now be funded by the developer and the additional SRTS funds can be used for constructing sidewalks – a big deal because federal funding is paying for it 100%—normally paid for by property owners. Polypreform (highly reflectorized) crosswalks are also planned in two locations.

Stowe Elementary SRTS Infrastructure Project: \$142, 860 – work underway to construct

Metropolitan Interstate Council
 April 21, 2010 Meeting Summary

pedestrian peninsulas (crossing refuge areas), polypreform crosswalks, sidewalks & LED signs. She added that this project was greatly aided by one community advocate– a police officer who works in that area who is passionate about getting this project right.

Lester Park Elementary: \$155,870 – this SRTS has been shifted from the 2010 to 2011 Project List to accurately depict when the project will actually be constructed, during the summer of calendar year 2010, which is within the State of Minnesota Fiscal Year 2011. Several blocks of new sidewalks and two four-way stop intersections will be constructed.

James Gittemeier presented the two amendments for approval, as follows:

Amendment #7

Amendment #7 to the 2010-2013 Duluth Urbanized Area Transportation Improvement Program to include the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) projects as described above (and below):

Agency	Project	Federal	Local	Total
Proctor	SRTS -Bicycle and pedestrian safety education program	\$25,000	\$0	\$25,000
Duluth	Stowe Elementary SRTS Infrastructure Project – polypreform crosswalks, sidewalks & LED signs	\$142, 860	\$0	\$142,860
Duluth	Congdon Elementary SRTS Infrastructure Project – polypreform crosswalks, sidewalks & LED signs	\$137,600	\$0	\$137,600

Amendment #8

Amendment #8 to the 2010-2013 Duluth Urbanized Area Transportation Improvement Program for the purchase of a Class 500 bus for UDAC. This grant was approved after the 2010-2013 TIP was adopted.

He added that the FTA Section 5310 fund is a special program for private nonprofit organizations and UDAC is providing the entire amount of the local match.

Agency	Project	Federal	Local	Total
UDAC	FTA Section 5310 fund	\$88,000	\$23,000	\$111,000

Motion

**Discussion
& Vote**

Nick Baker/Broc Allen moved to approve two tip amendments as presented. There was no discussion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

5. Amendment #3 to the 2010-2013 Superior Area TIP

Sheldon Johnson explained that he was seeking approval of an amendment to add the following project to the approved projects list in the 2010-2013 Superior Urbanized Area TIP.

This project enables the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to authorize expenditure of federal funds to various railroad crossings in the City of Superior. The project(s) will occur in calendar year 2011, as outlined below:

2011 Transportation Improvements Projects (Rail Projects)

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
WisDOT 113-10-22 8998-22-00 Amended to TIP in April 2010	Upgrade to railroad crossings at various, to be determined, locations in the City of Superior	PE ROW CONST	122,348			122,348
TOTAL		122,348			122,348	

He explained that the main reason to amend this project in, at this point in time, is to enable the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to authorize expenditure of federal funds to various railroad crossings in the City of Superior. He added that the state rail engineers are continuing to look at exact locations and the project(s) will occur in calendar year 2011.

Motion Nick Baker/Warren Bender moved to approve Amendment #3 to the Superior TIP
Discussion as presented. There was no further discussion and the motion was approved
& Vote unanimously.

6. Proposed Changes to the TAC and MIC Bylaws

Ron Chicka presented some proposed changes to the current language in the TAC Bylaws, following up on the discussion on this topic at last month's meeting.

He added that the basic idea was to identify the process by which significant changes to core elements (related to the TIP, Long Range Plan and annual Work Program), are to be handled for committee member consideration and public notification. Specifically, these items must be included on the agenda that is distributed one week in advance and may not be amended in as voting items after that date. He added that this could mean that if a time-sensitive amendment is needed between meetings, a special meeting may need to be called on short notice.

To enable MIC staff to meet these distribution deadlines, the revised language also specifies that agenda topics need to be communicated to MIC staff at least eleven (11) days before the date of the next regularly scheduled meeting, and at least five (5) days before the date of a

special meeting.

He added that motions may still be put forward to modify meeting agendas—except to add approval (voting) items pertaining to the TIP, LRTP or annual work program—and assuming that a majority of those present agree to consider such business.

Motion and Discussion Nick Baker/Broc Allen moved to approve the revised language for the TAC Bylaws as presented. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

7. Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Update

James Gittemeier presented information about the following two initiatives that are currently underway:

BPAC – Proposed Membership and Bylaws

He began by reviewing the proposed membership and bylaws for the BPAC, adding that they needed the MIC's approval in order to formally convene as an official sub-committee.

He noted that TAC members had asked at their meeting the previous day, if, given the low quorum and the late-afternoon meeting times, major decisions could end up being made by a vocal minority of citizen reps and bike commuters without the input of engineers and other technical representatives. James replied that the citizen members will represent a variety of perspectives (youth, disabled and/or elderly population, etc.) and would not consist of bicycle commuters only. He added that one of the ground rules would be to build consensus whenever possible, so hopefully there would be no "us vs. them" decisions made by this committee. In the case where an issue was contested, the bylaws also specify that MIC staff will present a minority report to the Policy Board.

Bike to Work Day

James also reported that MIC staff is coordinating Bike to Work Day events for 2010. A number of options have been preliminarily discussed including possibly pushing back the day events take place to June. As details come together, staff will update members and the community through e-mail as well as on the MIC website.

He closed by adding that Fit City Duluth is leading a series of six public meetings to determine user's input into the development of a long-term bicycle network would look like, and will address other planning involved related to bike racks, route signage and scenic bike routes.

Motion and Discussion Nick Baker/Kevin Norbie moved to approve the revised language for the TAC Bylaws as presented.

During the discussion, David Montgomery asked how the BPAC would interface with other similar initiatives-how to avoid duplication of effort. He added that many of these initiatives need community buy-in but ultimately may need a single voice. James noted that the BPAC's primary role was distinct from the other local initiatives, to advise the MIC on bike and pedestrian issues and policies. MIC staff would be coordinating with

local initiatives from the perspective of our role as transportation planners. Kevin Norbie asked who, exactly, would be defined as the “youth” member? James replied that he wasn’t completely sure at this point, maybe UMD students or someone affiliated with the Boys and Girls Club. Kerry Gauthier commented that based on Duluth’s positive experience with youth involvement in designing the city skate park, it would be helpful to define the age range and recruit an actual young person, not someone just representing that demographic.

There was no further discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

8. 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan Update

Robert Herling reported that most of the “Participation” chapter of the 2035 update of the Duluth-Superior Long Range Transportation (Directions 2035) has been completed, along with a number of sections of the “Performance” chapter. These items will be distributed to members of the TAC and MIC Boards for review, as well as to representatives of MnDOT, WisDOT, FHWA and FTA, to review and comment on in advance of a draft release scheduled for May 19th.

He added that he had received quite a bit of feedback on the materials released in March, those revisions have been incorporated and the revised versions of the “Trends” and “Projects & Funding” chapters will be put up on the website for public comment.

9. Project Updates

2010-2013 Duluth Area TIP — Administrative Modification to Rice Lake Road Project

Ron Chicka reported that an approved MIC area TIP project (at the intersection of Rice Lake Road & Arrowhead Road) will be taken out of the 2010-2013 TIP because its funding source is being shifted from federal TIP funds to state and local (a combination of municipal and county state aid) funds. The funding source is all that is being changed about this project -- it will still be completed as planned. Because there are no changes in scope or amount of funding to the MIC area project, no formal action (i.e., TIP amendment) is required to make the necessary changes to the 2010-2013 TIP. A brief description of the proposed change is summarized below. The federal dollars will be used to fund two new TIP projects in the northern part of St. Louis County (i.e., outside the MPO area).

	Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description	Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
Current	St. Louis County/ City of Duluth (69-604-65)	Rice Lake Rd (CSAH 4) & Arrowhead Rd: Modifications to traffic signals & turn lanes at both intersections	1,464,000		366,000	1,830,000

Proposed	<i>Project to be removed from 2010 – 2013 Duluth Area TIP and state STIP due to change in funding source. SP 69-604-65 will be completed using 100% State Aid funds during the 2011 construction season as planned.</i>			1,830,000	1,830,000
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2010-2013 Duluth Area TIP – Administrative Modification to Seven Bridges Road and Lakewalk Phase 4 & 5 Projects

James Gittemeier reported that an approved MIC area TIP project, Seven Bridges Road, will be taken out of the 2010-2013 TIP because its funding source is being shifted from federal TIP funds to local (municipal state aid) funds. The funding source is all that is being changed about this project -- it will still be completed as planned. Because there are no changes in scope or amount of funding to the MIC area project, no formal action (i.e., TIP amendment) is required to make the necessary changes to the 2010-2013 TIP. The federal dollars will be used to fund two other City of Duluth projects (Lakewalk Phases 4 and 5) that are programmed in the TIP for 2012. The federal dollars are split between these 2 projects. The changes are summarized in the table below:

Project		Year	Federal \$	Local \$	Total	Change
Seven Bridges Rd Resurface and replace pavement.	Current	2010	\$256,342	\$64,086	\$320,428	<i>Removed federal funding from project.</i>
	Modification	2010	\$0	\$320,428	\$320,428	
Project		Year	Federal \$	Local \$	Total	Change
Lakewalk Phase 4 – 60 th Ave East to Hwy 61	Current	2012	\$420,000	\$105,000	\$525,000	<i>Added \$106,342 of Seven Bridges Rd federal \$ to project.</i>
	Modification	2012	\$526,342	\$131,586	\$657,928	
Lakewalk Phase 5 – Hwy 61 to Brighton Beach	Current	2012	\$500,000	\$200,000	\$700,000	<i>Added \$150,000 of Seven Bridges Rd federal \$ to project.</i>
	Modification	2012	\$650,000	\$162,500	\$812,500	

2010-2013 Duluth Area TIP – Administrative Modification to Lester Park Elementary Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Project

James Gittemeier reported that the Lester Park SRTS Project has been shifted back from the 2010 to 2011 Project List to accurately depict when the project will actually be constructed, which will be during the summer of calendar year 2010, which is in the State of Minnesota Fiscal Year 2011:

	Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description	Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
Current FY 2010	City of Duluth	Lester Park Elementary SRTS: Infrastructure work including sidewalks and signage.	155,870			155,870
Proposed FY 2011	<i>Project moves back one year from State Fiscal Year 2010 to State Fiscal Year 2011. Work is set to begin the summer of 2010.</i>		<i>No change in funding</i>			

Public Involvement/Strategic Communications Consultant

Rondi Watson reported that MIC staff is looking to expand their use of web-based media techniques to make our plans and programs more accessible to a wider audience. A significant part of the MIC’s mandate is to develop a planning process that is inclusive and responsive to public input and there is a new emphasis on utilizing electronic formats in public participation efforts. In addition to our website (www.dsmic.org), interactive online resources now exist (e.g., social networking tools such as blogs, Facebook, and Twitter) that appear to have the potential to complement our traditional public participation efforts (e.g., print ads, press releases, and in-person public meetings).

However, before launching any new initiatives, we want to better understand what the full range of communications options might be, and how to effectively shape and target our messages to improve the number and the quality of the responses we receive. Therefore, we are seeking to hire a marketing/public relations consultant to assist us in developing an overall strategic communications plan to enhance our existing public participation efforts. MIC staff has begun sending out RFQs to local agencies and will keep the TAC and MIC posted on further developments as this process moves forward.

Kirkus Street Land Use Plan

James Gittemeier reported that the Kirkus Street task force has been formed and begun meeting. Their first step is to get up to speed on the plans of the adjacent and nearby property owners as well as the commercial market study underway by the Proctor Economic Development Authority. The task force will examine the residential market, with the assistance of local real estate agents. Also, discussed at the first meeting were land use and zoning options for this area.

TRB— National Cooperative Freight Research Program

Ron Chicka reported that he had been nominated by staff at UMD and the Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute (GLMRI) to be a panel member for a project sponsored by the

National Cooperative Freight Research Program via the Transportation Research Board. The project is entitled "Great Lakes Region Impacts on the Intermodal Freight System." A panel has been selected with backgrounds in multimodal transportation to oversee this \$300,000 effort, funded out of the research arm of the federal transportation bill. It is a 12-18 month process. The full scope of the proposed research is to be determined; however it will describe the current state of freight movements in the Upper Midwest and identify needs and solutions toward raising the profile of freight performance in the region. For the MIC and our member agencies, he hopes to use this opportunity to disseminate information about the many initiatives that we have outlined in our plans over the years that would benefit all modes of the transportation network in Duluth and Superior.

Duluth's Green Jobs Initiative

Ron Chicka reported that the five subcommittees of the Green Jobs Initiative concluded their work with a meeting last month where each submitted a series of action plans for the City of Duluth to receive and follow. These areas are 1) Built Environment, 2) Energy Production, 3) Food Systems, 4) Resource Protection and 5) Transportation System. Andy McDonald served on the resource protection group while I served on the transportation team. With respect to the transportation group, the two action plans we developed revolved around increased public transportation for 3rd shift workers and continuing to "set the stage" from a transportation infrastructure perspective toward the development of the former US Steel site. The series of action plans across all of the work groups will now be evaluated by the Green Jobs Steering Committee toward next steps and implementation measures. In the next month or two, I will try to have the Committee Chairs attend the TAC and MIC to detail this planning effort.

Ron announced that we may possibly be meeting next month at the Depot in May, if we can coordinate with the consultants who will be giving a public presentation of the final land use plan for the historic Depot facility and surrounding land uses.

10. Adjournment

With no further agenda items or announcements, Chair Baker adjourned the meeting at 8:19 pm.