

Agenda Topics and Project Updates

January 15, 2008 Meeting



Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

* = Approval Item

1. INTRODUCTIONS / AGENDA REVIEW

2. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 2008 TAC Officer Elections
- Meeting Summary of December 11, 2007 *

3. PROCTOR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN — SCOPE OF WORK*

MIC staff will be assisting the City of Proctor in the 5-year update of their Comprehensive Plan. As with the 1997 and 2002 versions of the Comp Plan, staff will again be working with the Proctor Comp Plan Group in this effort. Tasks for staff will involve compiling the citizen survey, creating a Proctor Comp Plan webpage, reviewing the previous Comp Plan, updating land use and other geographic information, identifying recent trends and focus areas for this plan and identifying a public involvement strategy. One focus area of this plan will be identifying the future land uses of property along the Kirkus Street corridor, which is a new road scheduled for construction in 2009. The plan is scheduled to be completed in October 2008. If you have any comments or questions, please contact James Gittemeier at jgittemeier@ardc.org or (218) 529-7556.

4. UMD-CSS TRANSPORTATION ASSESSMENT — SCOPE OF WORK *

MIC staff recently met with UMD and CSS staff to discuss details of the proposed study. We have incorporated this information into the scope of work and will be presenting it for approval at the upcoming TAC and MIC meetings. If you have any comments or questions, please contact Andy McDonald at amcdonald@ardc.org or (218) 529-7514.

5. ENDION LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The Endion Steering Committee held a final meeting on November 19th that centered on devising report recommendations. I'll review those recommendations at the January meetings. On December 20th, MIC staff facilitated a walking tour discussion of the St. Luke's Medical Campus along 1st Street that addressed current barriers for a two-way street design and considerations to accommodate medical facility needs in the future if the street orientation is to change. Staff from St. Luke's, SEH Inc., City of Duluth Engineering, and MIC staff participated.

Additionally, URS, our traffic modeling consultant for this project, examined key transportation corridors and made a series of recommendations to the Steering Committee for consideration on November 19th regarding future street conversions to two-way direction, narrowing roadways and traffic signal modifications. We plan to release a final Plan document in February 2008 which will list these improvements and will include other recommendations. The document will be brought before the MIC Policy Board on February 20th.

If you have any comments or questions, please contact Holly Butcher at holly.butcher@ardc.org or (218) 529-7548.

6. NORTHWEST SUPERIOR TRAFFIC STUDY

The study initiated in November of 2006 to investigate the effects that increased industrial development in northwest Superior might have on traffic patterns is now nearing completion. The study was meant to help answer whether or not an off-ramp connection between the Bong Bridge (US Hwy. 2) and Susquehanna Ave. would be needed to maintain good levels of service (LOS) under future travel demands. To determine this, the MIC employed the modeling services of URS Corporation. Results from that modeling effort indicate such a connection would not be needed based on LOS alone. The results do, however, indicate that improvements at other locations throughout the area will be needed. The MIC plans to release a final document in February 2008 which will list those improvements and include a number of additional recommendations. The document will be brought before the MIC Policy Board on February 20th.

If you have you comments or questions, please contact Robert Herling at rherling@ardc.org or (218) 529-7573.

7. DULUTH HEIGHTS SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the half closure survey have been compiled and added to the MIC's website. Residents completed and returned about 32% of the mailed surveys. They were evenly split on whether they supported the half closure. MIC staff will meet with City of Duluth staff to review the results in detail and discuss the next steps in this process.

If you have any comments or questions, please contact Andy McDonald at amcdonald@ardc.org or (218) 529-7514.

8. 2009-2012 DULUTH URBANIZED AREA TIP PROJECT APPLICATIONS

There were 2 project applications submitted for the 2012 federal funding:

Agency	Project Description	Federal \$	State \$	Local \$	Total \$
DTA	Bus Purchase: 10 regular route buses, 5 will be hybrid buses.	\$3,694,544	\$0	\$923,636	\$4,618,180
MnDOT	Blatnik Bridge Preservation: work includes painting bridge steel and deck sealing. Project is split 50/50 with WISDOT.	\$2,790,000	\$310,000	\$0	\$3,100,000
	TOTALS	\$6,484,544	\$310,000	\$923,636	\$7,718,180

In the next month, a couple public involvement meetings will be held to review these projects. At the February MIC and TAC meetings the projects and any public comments received will be reviewed. Please note, since there are only 2 projects, a roadway one and a transit one, there will NOT be project scoring this year. Hence, each project will be the top prioritized project for each category (roadway and transit).

If you have any comments or questions about these projects or the TIP project selection process, please contact James Gittemeier at jgittemeier@ardc.org or (218) 529-7556.

9. PROJECT UPDATES

Sky Harbor Airport Technical Committee *Andy McDonald*

MIC staff will be participating on this committee which will examine the issue of the old growth forest that is located in the approach path of the runway at the Sky Harbor Airport on Park Point. The first committee meeting is Tuesday January 8th.

Blueprint to End Poverty *Holly Butcher; Robert Herling*

Duluth's Blueprint to End Poverty is an initiative to end poverty in Duluth and has a guiding coalition comprised of community leaders from business, faith, government, education and healthcare sectors, as well as interested citizens. Community Action Duluth is facilitating "action teams" to implement their Blueprint to End Poverty plan. One of these teams is the "Transportation Action Team" which is comprised of representatives from organizations who are concerned with improving transportation. The MIC has been asked to participate on this team as an agency with community knowledge to help plan for transportation needs of low-income and working poor in

the Duluth-Superior area. The Transportation Action Team will meet again on Wednesday January 9th and MIC staff can provide an update at the January meetings.

Twin Cities – Twin Ports Passenger Rail Initiative *Ron Chicka*

Last month, the lead consultants for the Twin Ports-Twin Cities Passenger Rail Initiative addressed the MIC on findings to date of the study. The best scenario for the train resulting in a positive cost/benefit analysis indicates the train running at 100 mph with up to 8 trains daily operating somewhere along the line. Total cost would be \$362 million with the majority of the amount anticipated via a federal grant within the next round of the transportation bill due in 2009. An average fare from Duluth to the Twin Cities was estimated at \$36 (one-way). Of interest locally is the concept of having a stop in Superior as well as Duluth. This would allow the City of Superior to potentially take advantage of site redevelopment for a station. The study is set to be finalized within the month, at which time the next phase (preliminary Environmental Impact Statement) is slated to begin.

MnDOT Statewide Transportation Plan *Ron Chicka*

The MNDOT Statewide Transportation Plan Steering Committee is set to meet again this month to discuss and set policies for their 20-year plan. The committee had taken time off due to the DOT having to focus resource efforts on the I-35 bridge collapse. I am representing the MPO voice on the committee and am also working with the other MN MPOs toward aligning our key issues for the upcoming DOT plan. This committee is set to meet throughout the rest of 2008 with a goal of finalizing a document by late fall. The plan is to be a performance-based one focusing on ten points from preservation of the existing system to protection of the environment. We will be discussing all funding sources as well that can meet the goals of the plan. With certain limitations on increased funding, it is likely that a major result of the plan will focus on “smaller” fixes to congestion relief in contrast to added capacity.