



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
Transportation Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary
May 20, 2008

Meeting Location	WITC Conference Center, Superior, WI	
Meeting Chair	Denny Johnson	
Note Taker	Rondi Watson	
Members Present	Jeff Goetzman	City of Superior
	Chuck Froseth	City of Duluth
	Jim Heilig	Duluth Transit Authority
	Denny Johnson	Mn/DOT District 1
	Walter Leu	Mn/DOT District 1
	Cari Pedersen	City of Duluth
	Dena Ryan	WisDOT NW Region
	David Salo	City of Hermantown
	Jason Serck	City of Superior
	Susan Thompson	Duluth Airport Authority
	Cindy Voigt*	City of Duluth
Members Absent	Jim Benning	City of Duluth
	Jim Foldesi	St. Louis County
	Paul Halverson	Douglas County
	Bryn Jacobson	Bike/Pedestrian Rep
	Heather Rand	Mn DEED
	Jim Sharrow	Duluth Seaway Port Authority
Others Present	Holly Butcher	ARDC / MIC Senior Planner
	Ron Chicka	ARDC / MIC Director
	Andrea Grygo Diamond	ARDC / MIC GIS Specialist
	James Gittemeier	ARDC / MIC Associate Planner
	Lora Skarman	ARDC / MIC Intern
	Rondi Watson	ARDC / MIC Secretary
	* Alternate	

1. Introductions and Agenda Review

TAC Chair Denny Johnson called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m. and meeting attendees introduced themselves. No changes to the agenda were put forward.

2. Committee Business – Meeting Summary of April 16, 2008

Motion and Discussion Chuck Froseth/Jim Heilig moved to approve the meeting summary from the April 16, 2008 meeting. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

3. Amendment #9 to the 2008-2011 Duluth Area Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

James Gittemeier reported that St. Louis County had applied for and received a grant for federal transportation planning funds administered by the MN Historical Society. The grant will fund a study of adaptive reuse of the Duluth Depot in conjunction with new passenger rail service. Potential uses include office, retail, possibly even residential. The funding includes \$140,000 from Federal Highway, with a local match by St. Louis County of \$45,000 for total project cost of \$185,000, which needs to be amended into the current Duluth Area TIP for 2009 funding. Walter Leu clarified that although this project was awarded outside the regular TIP project process, it still needs to be included in the TIP because it will be using federal funds.

Motion and Discussion Jason Serck/Chuck Froseth moved to approve the amendment to the 2008-2011 Duluth Area Transportation Improvement Program as presented. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

4. 2009-2012 Duluth Area Transportation Improvement Program - DRAFT

James Gittemeier presented the draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for FY 2009-2012 projects in the Duluth urbanized area. He reported that the format for this TIP was being overhauled with the goal of making it more user-friendly and more understandable by the general public. After the draft is released for the mandatory 30-day comment period, he will begin the air quality conformity consultation with FHWA, MPCA and MnDOT Central Office.

He noted that the funding level is significantly higher in FY 2009 and 2010, reflecting the additional projects funded by SAFETEA-LU.

The final TIP is scheduled to be completed in July.

Motion and Discussion Chuck Froseth/Jason Serck moved to recommend to the MIC that the 2009-2012 Duluth Area Transportation Improvement Program be released for the mandated 30-day comment period. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

5. Overview of ArcGIS Server

Andrea Grygo Diamond, the MIC's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Specialist, reported that ARDC had recently purchased new server hardware and ArcGIS Server software to make maps available online. The current maps on the website are static (users can basically just view and print them), but by using ArcGIS Server the MIC's maps will be dynamic and available through a web browser, allowing the user to view a customized map.

6. Proctor Comprehensive Plan

Holly Butcher reported that she and James had facilitated a Community Visioning session on May 13th. She explained that this session was intended to involve the community in the update of Proctor's Comprehensive Plan. They conducted a group process to identify the City's assets and opportunities and to develop a vision statement to guide the overall planning

process. Themes that emerged from this discussion included: Proctor's prominent location on top of the hill, recreation, safety, schools & life long learning, and "green" approaches to new development. The update of the Plan is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

7. UMD-CSS Transportation Study

Andy McDonald reported that he had recently conducted two public meetings, structured as "issues identification" sessions where participants broke out to tables with large aerial photos of the study area to write or draw their concerns about transportation issues in the study area. Many comments were received relating to pedestrian, bike and transit issues as well as roadway concerns.

An online survey of all faculty, staff and students from each campus was also administered and got a good level of response. Comments in the open-ended question section mostly focused on parking problems on campus. Survey results will be analyzed to determine distances traveled and modes used, and to identify differences in the travel patterns of faculty/staff and students. GIS analysis will be used to compare student residence locations with routes taken.

An analysis of sidewalk snow removal in the surrounding neighborhood had also been conducted, giving a good idea of what sidewalks never get cleared and reinforcing the common complaint that the snow removal ordinance is not being enforced.

Finally, he reported that staff had also conducted a cut-through traffic analysis, observing traffic movements through the adjacent neighborhood at peak morning and afternoon travel times. The highest rate of cut-through traffic was observed on Lawn Street, with 87% of vehicles cutting through, with an especially high volume of traffic in the afternoon.

8. Bike to Work Day and Bike Planning Update

James Gittemeier reported that Bike to Work Day was Friday, May 16, and ARDC, along with the YMCA, the DTA and the Greater Downtown Council, had sponsored a morning commute event for bicyclists at the Minnesota Plaza from 7am to 9am. He got a fair amount of media attention and participation was good.

He also reported that Phase 2 Bike Route signs (about 330 total) have been installed in Duluth, Proctor and St. Louis County. Final inspection of the installed signage should be completed by the end of the month.

He also reported that a new initiative by the DTA is underway to improve its transit stops, which will include a type of parking meter that will also incorporate bicycle parking.

9. Roundtable Discussion

Dena Ryan reported that all truss bridges in the state are required to be analyzed for load-bearing capacity and that the Blatnik Bridge inspection is being conducted in a joint cooperative effort between MnDOT and WisDOT. **Walter Leu** added that the gusset plates are in fine shape, they just need to be upgraded to meet new safety standards.

Susan Thompson reported that last-minute legislative action cut \$15 million from the State Airports Fund, to take effect in fiscal year 2009 which begins July 1. This funding cut will severely restrict the Duluth Airport's plans for redevelopment projects in support of Monaco Air, Cirrus Design, Lake Superior College and other prospective aviation businesses. Since the fund comes from mandated aircraft and aviation-related taxes and fees, and was created for the purpose of infrastructure and safety improvements and maintenance, it seems inappropriate for the state to cut it to fulfill other budgetary needs. She noted that airport and city officials will be lobbying the governor and the state legislature to restore the fund.

Jason Serck reported that the Moccasin Mike Trail enhancements project was not approved but instead was tabled by the MIC at last month's meeting. The project had been submitted anyway to meet the deadline, but a city staff person will attend this month's Policy Board meeting to answer questions and provide explanations, hopefully the MIC will recommend the project this time.

Cari Pedersen reported that Airport Road will be repaved between Rice Lake Road and Haines Road, requiring the detour of traffic near the Duluth Air National Guard base. The detour is expected to be in place through mid-July.

Denny Johnson reported that public meetings will be held in June to receive comment on the statewide Transportation Plan.

10. Project Updates

Long Range Transportation Plan 2035

Ron Chicka reported that the MIC is beginning the process of updating the Duluth-Superior Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Scope of Work to be presented at the June TAC and MIC meetings. It will be updated as a web-based document, providing as much information as possible in a visual format and cutting down on the amount of text, with the goal of making it easier to navigate and utilize. Revisions will be presented on a chapter-by-chapter basis to the TAC and MIC for comment and input.

East Second Street Study

Ron also reported that a number of initial tasks have been accomplished so far for this study, including the initial data gathering, access inventory, and crash analyses. An on-site assessment of the study area raised some considerations for extending the study further south along East 2nd Street, and MIC staff met with the City of Superior to revisit the objectives of the study and reassess the study boundaries. Also at this meeting, the make up of a steering committee was discussed, and a public involvement action plan was established.

WisDOT Safe Routes to School

Holly Butcher reported that she had been asked to participate on the WisDOT Safe Routes to School state-wide project selection committee. The MIC's early involvement in developing several SRTS studies prompted WisDOT's request that we be involved in helping to select quality projects submitted for the current grant cycle.

On May 9th, WisDOT hired a consultant to conduct a safe biking workshop as an

implementation activity of their non-infrastructure grant.

Also, she reported that only half of the Congdon project, as originally envisioned, will be implemented due to changes from the school district's Red Plan.

Endion Land Use and Transportation Plan

Holly reported that the final Endion Transportation and Land Use Plan, after its approval at the April TAC and MIC meeting, was presented to the planning district in April. A public forum and panel discussion will be held on May 22nd at 7:00 p.m. at First Lutheran Church. The final document can be viewed at www.dsmic.org/endion.

Freight Planning Study

Ron announced that MnDOT had hired a new manager of the Freight Office, and discussions have begun again about getting the long-planned freight study for NE MN/NW WI underway. Now, however, there appear to be problems with funding and staffing from WisDOT – funds available in 2008 may not be available in 2009. He commented that not having Wisconsin participation would compromise the final results somewhat.

11. Adjournment

With no further agenda items or announcements, Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting at 3:04 pm