



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
 TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY
Tuesday, June 17, 2008, 1:30 PM

Meeting Location	Public Safety Building Training Center, Hermantown, MN	
Meeting Chair	Denny Johnson	
Note Taker	Rondi Watson	
Members Present	Jim Foldesi	St. Louis County
	Chuck Froseth	City of Duluth
	Dennis Jensen	Duluth Transit Authority
	Denny Johnson	Mn/DOT District 1
	Cari Pedersen	City of Duluth
	Heather Rand	Mn DEED
	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
	Jeff Goetzman	City of Superior
	Paul Halverson	Douglas County
	Bryn Jacobson	Bike/Pedestrian Rep
	Walter Leu	Mn/DOT District 1
	Jim Sharrow	Duluth Seaway Port Authority
Others Present	Holly Butcher	ARDC / MIC Senior Planner
	Ron Chicka	ARDC / MIC Director
	Robert Herling	ARDC / MIC Associate Planner
	James Gittemeier	ARDC / MIC Planner
	Jim Rohweder	City of Proctor
	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 1:40 p.m. and meeting attendees introduced themselves. No changes to the agenda were put forward.

2. Committee Business – Meeting Summary of May 20, 2008

Motion and Discussion Chuck Froseth/Jason Serck moved to approve the meeting summary from the May 20, 2008 meeting. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Committee Business - Announcements

August and September Meetings Rescheduled for September 3, 2008

Ron Chicka announced that the MIC meetings on August 20 and September 17th were being cancelled due to staff unavailability both months, and rescheduled for a single meeting on Wednesday, September 3rd. This will be the annual joint MIC and TAC meeting, held at the Proctor Community Center at 7:00 pm, preceded by a catered picnic supper at 5:30 pm.

MN MPO Summer Workshop – Invitation to Attend 8/12/08 Open Session

Ron announced that the MIC is hosting the annual Minnesota MPO Summer Workshop for Directors and Planners, an annual three-day forum for MPO and MnDOT planning staff from across the state. This year, MIC Board and TAC members are invited to attend the sessions on Tuesday, August 12 at no charge. The topic for the morning session is Community Sustainability, featuring a keynote address by Hennepin County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin, who will speak to the importance as well as the process of regional planning and investment for transit. Congressman Jim Oberstar has been invited to participate as part of the afternoon session covering the upcoming federal transportation bill. He added that Rondi Watson would be contacting MIC and TAC members by email with registration information.

3. Amendment #5 to 2008-2011 Superior Area TIP

James Gittemeier reported on an amendment, requested by WisDOT, to add a project for inclusion in the 2008-2011 Superior Urbanized Area TIP. Amendment #5 adds a project to begin in CY 2008, the design phase for a pavement replacement project on the approach section of USH 2 from the St. Louis River to Belknap Street. The project will include bridge deck overlay, modular joint replacement, spot repair on parapet, and replace the outside foot of sidewalk. Some cable work and light replacements will also be done. He added that the construction phase of this project is planned to be included in the 2014 TIP.

Motion and Discussion Jason Serck/Dena Ryan moved to approve Amendment #5 to the 2008-2011 Superior Area TIP as presented. No discussion, motion approved unanimously.

4. Long Range Plan 2035 Update Scope of Work

Robert Herling reported that the MIC's current Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), *Access and Mobility for People and Freight 2030*, is scheduled to be updated by 2009. Due to new guidance from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), the updated plan will be produced as a web-based document. The main benefit of moving towards a web-based plan is to make it more accessible to a greater audience and make it easier for a user to navigate through when in search of specific information. This plan will exist as a website separate from the existing dsmic.org website.

He presented the Scope of Work for the project, including a table summarizing the conceptual outline of the website and a timeline of work activities up to the project due date of September 2009. He noted that he planned to present related information at most of the upcoming monthly meetings to gain input from TAC and MIC members, in lieu of convening a separate LRTP advisory committee. Technical topics might require a meeting our two outside the usual

TAC and MIC meeting dates. He closed by requesting approval of the Scope of Work.

Motion and Discussion Chuck Froseth/Jim Foldesi moved to approve the Scope of Work for the LRTP Update as presented. No discussion, motion approved by unanimous vote.

5. Hermantown Section 13 Traffic Impact Study

James Gittemeier reported that the City of Hermantown had requested the MIC to revisit the Hermantown-Section 13 Circulation Analysis Report due to a plan for a large expansion of multiple family housing units along Westberg Road. The MIC teamed up with URS Corporation to conduct this traffic circulation analysis in April, with major work activities concluded by the first week of June.

He presented six traffic modeling scenarios which demonstrated the projected impacts on the internal circulation movements within Section 13 from alternative ingress/egress routes to the housing development. Final analysis showed that all scenarios ranked OK, with either no or low effects on the Level of Service coming in and going out on Westberg Road. The preferred option would be the Mall Drive extension, which would add a second access point to the area.

During the discussion it was noted that the model assumes the planned intersection improvements (Haines Road traffic lights as well as a new road near Sam's club) had been implemented. Ron noted that although there were no significant impacts on the Westberg Road area, there were other intersections in the wider area that did show potential impacts (Haines Road/Arrowhead, and Stebner Road/Arrowhead), that will need to be discussed with the County.

He added that he would be presenting these modeling results and recommendations to the Hermantown Planning Commission tonight.

6. Downtown Modal Connections Study

Holly Butcher reported on this study that is newly underway. The idea is to connect the "three islands" that exist in Duluth – downtown central business district, Canal Park and the DECC. The Downtown Council, which initiated this study request, wants to look at all three areas as a total system with the goal of connecting them and making sure that visitors to Canal Park can find their way into the downtown area, with the aid of wayfinding signage, shuttles, etc.

The work of the study will begin by identifying specific barriers (Highway I-35 is the main obstacle), as well as opportunities to connect all transportation modes to achieve greater connectivity. Field research planned for this summer will include pedestrian, traffic and tube counts during several upcoming events at the DECC in July and a possible visitor survey. They are interested in finding whether there is a difference between peak vehicle and peak pedestrian times of day.

7. East Second Street Study

Robert Herling reported that work has begun anew on this study, with a focus on access management. After assessing much of the corridor from the perspective of land use densities access points, and crash rates, it was determined that the study area should be extended further south approximately 4.5 miles to 53rd Avenue.

Next steps will be to form a study committee; he also expects a lot of additional data-gathering activities for the summer, as well as conducting public involvement and a survey of business in the study area.

8. Roundtable Discussion

Dennis Jensen reported that first quarter 2008 DTA ridership figures showed a 12.4% increase (about 85,000 rides) over the first quarter of 2007.

He added that in WI, the possibility of creating regional transportation authorities is being discussed as a way to meet transit needs in rural areas, looking at bonding authority.

Susan Thompson reported that the Duluth Air Show is scheduled for July 19th and 20th. Dave Salo added that those are the same dates as Hermantown's Summerfest...creating the likelihood of traffic issues in some areas.

Dena Ryan reported that the Blatnik Bridge was closed from Duluth to Superior for work to reinforce the gusset plates, estimated to last a couple of weeks in both directions.

Cindy Voigt reported that work on Airport Road was still underway and cautioned people to take the signed detour route.

Denny Johnson announced that MnDOT hopes to re-let the Miller Hill project on June 27, hopefully it will be underway by July/August. Susan Thompson noted that airport project bids have generally been coming in under the project estimates, perhaps bodes well for this project as well.

He also noted that MnDOT recently made a presentation to the Senate Transportation Committee about how to spend recent increase in funds...bulk to go to bonding for bridge and pavement improvement projects. He added that northeast Minnesota will be seeing a significant funding increase for the next four years, based on performance-based needs, particularly in pavement improvements (budgets back to normal about \$60 million in 2013).

Denny closed with the announcement that the State Plan Coordinating Committee will be holding a public outreach meeting next Thursday, June 26 from 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at Country Inns & Suites Duluth North, 4257 Haines Road, in Hermantown. Members of the public, transportation stakeholders, local government officials and others are invited to discuss the updated state's long-range transportation plan.

9. Project Updates

Scope of Work – Regional Freight Study

Ron Chicka announced that a Scope of Work for a regional freight study will be presented at next month's meetings. He added that recent meetings with MnDOT have expanded the study area to include District 2 (northern Minnesota) in addition to District 1 (northeast Minnesota). Project management will be jointly coordinated between the MIC and Mn/DOT central office personnel. The new Mn/DOT Freight Planning Manager brings a great deal of experience in projects such as this and will play a large role in the project from start to finish. He added that although funding from MnDOT is solid (\$200,000 from Mn/DOT Central Office and \$50,000

over two years from the MIC to hire a consultant), funding from WisDOT is unexpectedly now uncertain. Meetings will continue with their Central Office.

Draft 2009-2012 Duluth Metro TIP,

James Gittemeier announced that he had held a public information session at the Holiday Center on Wednesday, June 4, 2008 from 11:30am to 1:30pm. He also reminded TAC members that comments on the draft tip are due by this Friday. He added that he will be working with the area jurisdictions as they update their project lists and financial capacity information. The format of the document continues to be updated and the major changes to the document will be reviewed in detail at the July MIC & TAC meetings, when it will be presented for approval.

10. Adjournment

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