

# MEETING NOTICE



## TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

*Tuesday, April 14, 2009 at 1:30 p.m.*

Hermantown Training Center  
5111 Maple Grove Road  
Hermantown, MN

### Approval / Voting Items:

- Amendment #4 to 2009-2012 Duluth Metro Area TIP
- Final Proctor Comprehensive Plan Update

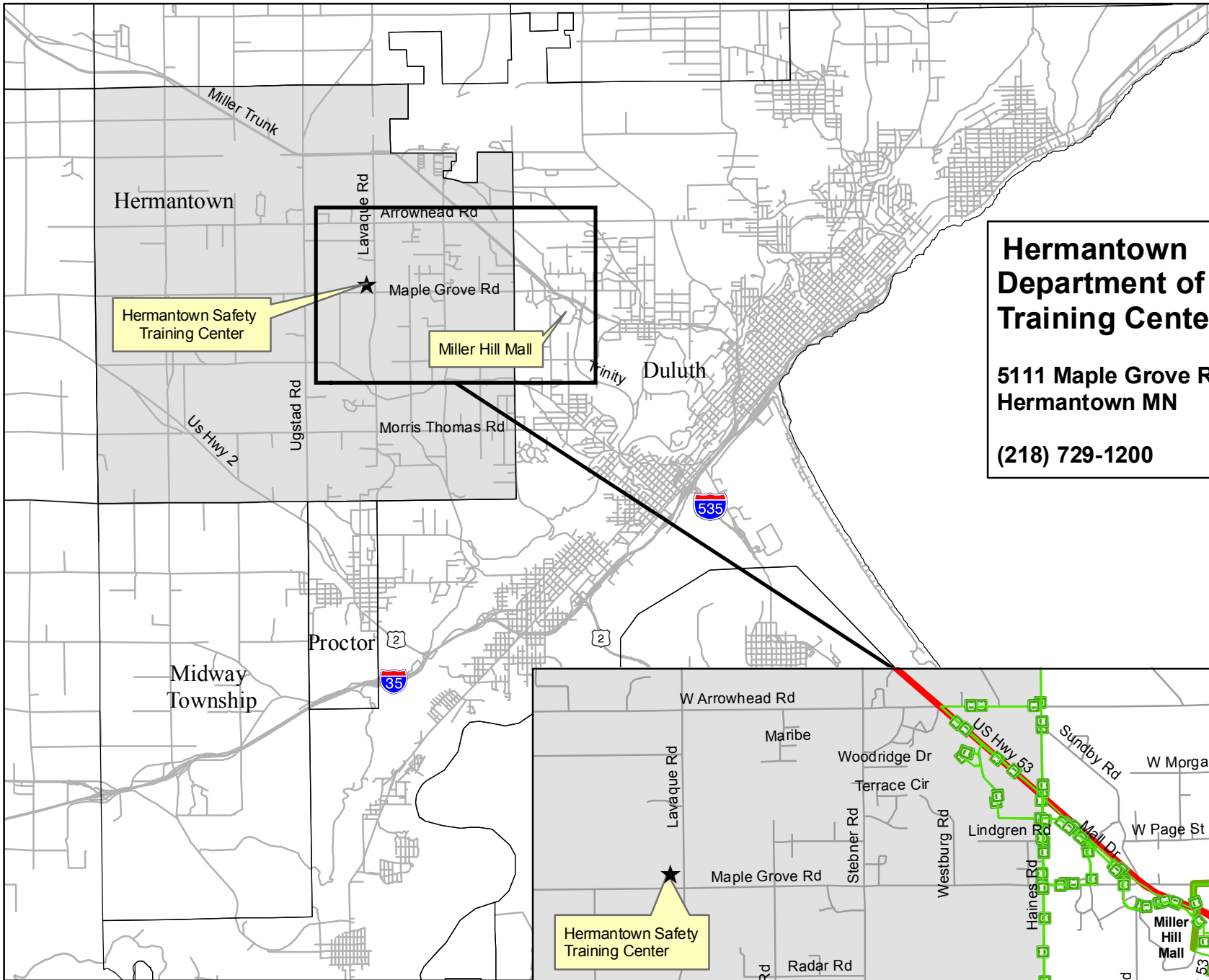
### Discussion / Informational Items:

- DTA Downtown Intermodal Facility (Jim Heilig, guest presenter)
- Long Range Transportation Plan – Needs & Constraints
- 2009 Bike to Work Week & Day

**Driving Directions & Parking Information:** *See map on next page*

### Attendance for Meetings:

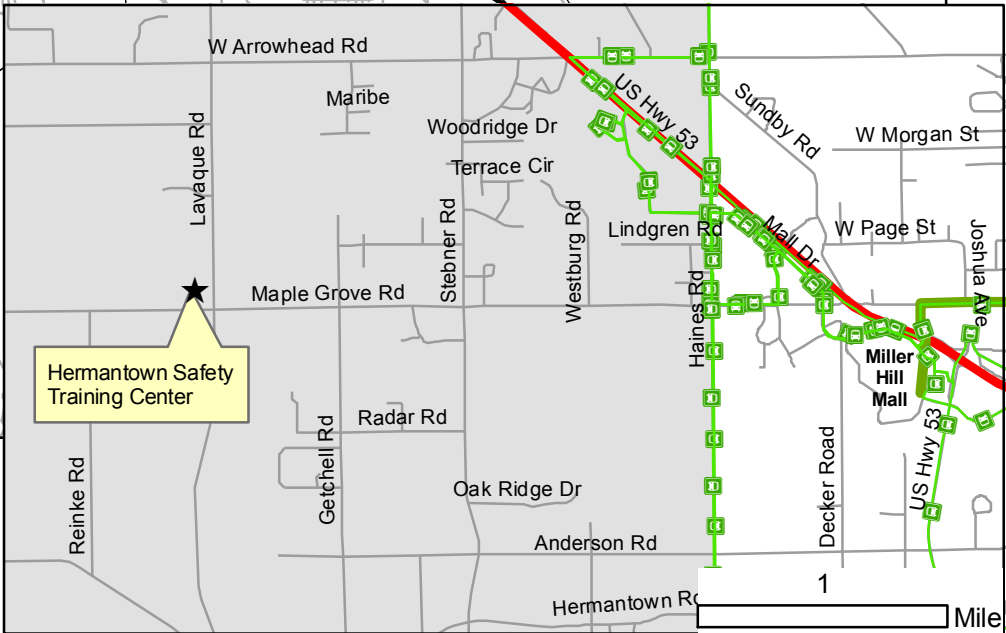
If you are NOT able to attend, or expect to arrive late to the meeting, **please contact Rondi Watson at [rwatson@ardc.org](mailto:rwatson@ardc.org) or 529-7541** to ensure a quorum will be present for voting items on the agenda.



**Hermantown  
Department of Public Safety  
Training Center**

**5111 Maple Grove Rd  
Hermantown MN**

**(218) 729-1200**



**Legend**

DTA Bus Route

**Bike Routes**

Primary On-Street Unsigned Route

Bicycling Prohibited or Not Recommended



**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE (TAC)  
MEMBERS**

**Airport (1 rep)**

Brian Ryks  
Alison Johnson (alternate)

**Bikes / Pedestrians (1 rep)**

Bryn Jacobson

**City of Duluth (4 reps)**

Chuck Froseth  
Cari Pedersen  
Cindy Petkac  
Cindy Voigt

**City of Hermantown (1 rep)**

David Salo  
Lynn Lander (alternate)

**City of Proctor (1 rep)**

Jim Rohweder

**City of Superior (2 reps)**

Jason Serck  
Jeff Goetzman

**Douglas County (1 rep)**

Paul Halverson

**Duluth Transit Authority  
(1 rep)**

Dennis Jensen  
Jim Heilig (alternate)

**MN DEED Office (1 rep)**

Heather Rand

**MnDOT (2 reps)**

Denny Johnson  
Walter Leu

**Port/Harbor (1 rep)**

Jim Sharrow

**St. Louis County (1 rep)**

Jim Foldesi, *Vice-chair*  
Brian Boder (alternate)

**WisDOT NW Region (1 rep)**

Dena Young, *Chair*

DULUTH-SUPERIOR  
METROPOLITAN INTERSTATE COUNCIL

**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

***Tuesday, April 14, 2009 at 1:30 p.m.***

Hermantown Training Center  
5111 Maple Grove Road, Hermantown, MN

**AGENDA**

<b>1. Introductions / Agenda Review</b>	5 min
<b>2. Committee Business – for approval</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TAC Meeting Summaries of February 26 and March 17, 2009</li> </ul>	
<b>3. 2009 – 2012 Duluth Metro TIP Amendment # 4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review for Approval, <i>James Gittemeier</i></li> </ul>	5 min
<b>4. DTA Downtown Intermodal Facility Project Update</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation and Discussion, <i>Jim Heilig</i></li> </ul>	10 min
<b>5. Proctor Comprehensive Plan - Final</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review for Approval, <i>James Gittemeier</i></li> </ul>	10 min
<b>6. Long Range Transportation Plan –Needs and Constraints</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation and Discussion, <i>Robert Herling</i></li> </ul>	20 min
<b>7. 2009 Bike to Work Week</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation and Discussion, <i>James Gittemeier</i></li> </ul>	10 min
<b>8. Roundtable Discussion– Local Projects</b>	5 min
<b>9. Project Updates And Informational Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2010-2013 Duluth Area TIP, <i>James Gittemeier</i></li> <li>UMD-CSS Transportation Assessment, <i>Andy McDonald</i></li> <li>Mississippi Valley Freight Coalition Workshop, <i>Andy McDonald</i></li> <li>Superior and Douglas County ARRA Projects, <i>Ron Chicka</i></li> <li>Superior Pedestrian Safety Task Force, <i>Ron Chicka</i></li> </ul>	5 min

**Next TAC Meeting:**

Tuesday, May 19, 2009, 1:30 pm  
WITC Conference Center, Superior, WI

# TAC Agenda Topics and Project Updates

April 14, 2009 Meeting



## Transportation Advisory Committee

\* = Approval Item

### 1. INTRODUCTIONS / AGENDA REVIEW

### 2. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- Meeting Summaries of February 26 and March 17, 2009 (attached, pp. 7-10 & 11-16) \*

### 3. AMENDMENT #4 TO THE 2009-2012 DULUTH METRO TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM \*

St. Louis County has requested that the 2009-2012 Duluth Metro TIP be amended to include significant additional funding for the Haines Road Reconditioning Project. This project is programmed for 2009 and will include mill and overlay as well as drainage work from Airport Road to Morris Thomas Road (4 miles). The amendment is necessary as the total cost of the project has significantly increased from \$2.3 million to \$3.5 million. The cost increase will be covered by local funds. No additional federal funds were allocated for this project. For comments or questions, please contact James Gittemeier at [jgittemeier@ardc.org](mailto:jgittemeier@ardc.org) or (218) 529-7556.

### 4. DTA DOWNTOWN INTERMODAL FACILITY PROJECT UPDATE

Jim Heilig from the DTA will provide a brief overview of the application for funding and design probabilities for the DTA Intermodal Terminal project that the DTA Board recently approved. More information on project specifics, including cost figures, has been determined since the prior briefing to the TAC and MIC in February.

### 5. FINAL PROCTOR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN\*

Proctor begins the process of updating their Comprehensive Plan every 5 years. The plan, last updated in 2002, has 4 major driving forces behind this time, which are:

1. New construction of Kirkus Street and the opening up of land for potential development;
2. Health issues, particularly as they relate to obesity and physical inactivity;
3. Trends of an aging population and their impacts;
4. Sustainability and steps the city can take to be more sustainable.

The Plan has moved through the City of Proctor process and now is ready for final presentation and approval by the MIC. The Plan's Goals, Strategies and Action Steps will be reviewed at this meeting. For comments or questions, please contact James Gittemeier at [jgittemeier@ardc.org](mailto:jgittemeier@ardc.org) or (218) 529-7556.

### 6. LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2035 – TRANSPORTATION NEEDS & CONSTRAINTS

The MIC is currently meeting with jurisdictions individually to talk about transportation projects to be included in the project list for the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The MIC is asking jurisdictions to identify long range projects beyond those that may already be identified in their 10-year capital improvement plans. Once all the projects are identified, the estimated costs of those projects will be projected out according to their timeframes and will be compared to the

**TAC Agenda Topics and Project Updates, continued**  
**Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting**

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April 14, 2009

revenue estimated to be available to the MIC area in those timeframes. Once this is done, the MIC will work with the jurisdictions to adjust the final project list within the constraints of expected revenues. If you have you comments or questions, please contact Robert Herling at [rherling@ardc.org](mailto:rherling@ardc.org) or (218) 529-7573.

**7. 2009 BIKE TO WORK WEEK**

MIC staff is helping to coordinate this year's Bike to Work Week and Day activities. Bike to Work Week this year takes place May 11 - 15, with Friday, May 15 designated as National Bike to Work Day by the League of American Bicyclists. A number of activities are being planned, including a bike to school event at UMD and a week-long series of bike-related events at the Fitger's shopping complex. For comments or questions, please contact James Gittemeier at [jgittemeier@ardc.org](mailto:jgittemeier@ardc.org) or (218) 529-7556.

**8. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION – LOCAL PROJECTS**

**9. PROJECT UPDATES**

**2013 Duluth TIP Projects/ATP Update, James Gittemeier**

On April 2, the full ATP committee voted to approve three of the five projects submitted within the MPO area for FY 2013 federal transportation funding. Due to funding constraints, it was not possible to fund all 5 projects. Here are the 3 projects which were approved for 2013 funding:

1. 10<sup>th</sup> Ave East Reconstruction
2. Martin Road Rehabilitation
3. DTA Bus Purchase – 6 STRIDE buses

This list now moves on to the Minnesota Department of Transportation central office for their approval and inclusion in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (or STIP). In April, MIC staff will be compiling the draft FY 2010-2013 Duluth Metro TIP. In May, the TIP will be released for public review and comment.

**UMD-CSS Transportation Assessment, Andy McDonald**

Our study committee met on April 6<sup>th</sup> to begin discussion of recommendations that will improve walking, biking, transit, traffic flow and safety in the campus areas. These recommendations may include completing the sidewalk network in the campus area; developing bike lanes; making adjustments to transit routes; reconfiguring traffic lanes; implementing access management techniques and devising cooperative agreements. We will be looking to schedule public meetings to present draft recommendations later this month or in early May.

**Mississippi Valley Freight Coalition Workshop, Andy McDonald**

MIC staff was invited to attend this workshop in Kansas City on April 14-16. The Mississippi Valley Freight Coalition is a regional organization that conducts planning in support of freight movement and infrastructure and represents ten states – Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky,

**TAC Agenda Topics and Project Updates, continued**  
**Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting**

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Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin. Topics to be presented at the workshop include freight data clearinghouse, shippers and carriers issues, waterways issues, federal authorization update and reports from the states on freight planning initiatives including a presentation on the Northern Minnesota / Northwest Wisconsin Freight Plan by Dave Christianson from MnDOT.

**Superior and Douglas County ARRA Projects, *Ron Chicka***

There are no projects being forwarded at this time, for potential letting by summer that would require the MIC to amend the Wisconsin TIP at this time. Those projects eligible for ARRA funding that are being considered by the jurisdictions can be submitted instead during the normal TIP project application process later this year for possible inclusion when the TIP is finalized this fall.

**Superior Pedestrian Safety Task Force, *Ron Chicka***

Later this month the City of Superior is facilitating a Pedestrian Safety Task Force – Walking Workshop to review policies and projects throughout the community. The Police Department received a grant to host this two-day workshop. This workshop will certainly aid in the various planning efforts conducted by the MIC toward this issue. MIC staff will be in attendance along with other invitees including City, County and State DOT staff plus school district officials.



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council  
**Transportation Advisory Committee**  
**MEETING SUMMARY**  
**Thursday, February 26, 2009, 3:00 PM**

Meeting Location	ARDC Conference Room, 221 West First Street, Duluth, MN	
Meeting Chair(s)	Dena Young	
Note Taker	Rondi Watson	
Members Present	Jim Foldesi	St. Louis County Engineering
	Chuck Froseth	City of Duluth Planning Dept
	Jeff Goetzman	City of Superior
	Dennis Jensen	Duluth Transit Authority
	Denny Johnson	Mn/DOT District 1
	Walter Leu	Mn/DOT District 1
	Cari Pedersen	City of Duluth Engineering
	Cindy Petkac	City of Duluth Planning Dept
	Jason Serck	City of Superior
	Dena Young	WisDOT NW Region
	Cindy Voigt	City of Duluth Engineering
Members Absent	Paul Halverson	Douglas County
	Bryn Jacobson	Bike/Pedestrian Rep
	Heather Rand	Mn DEED
	Jim Rohweder	City of Proctor
	Brian Ryks	Duluth Airport Authority
	David Salo	City of Hermantown
	Jim Sharrow	Duluth Seaway Port Authority
Others Present	Ron Chicka	ARDC / MIC Director
	James Gittemeier	ARDC / MIC Planner
	Rondi Watson	ARDC / MIC Planning Assistant

### 1. Introductions and Agenda Review

TAC members called in to the MIC office to participate in the meeting via conference call. Chair Dena Young called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. and meeting attendees introduced themselves. There were no changes put forward to the agenda.

### 2. 2009-2012 Duluth Area Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #2

Ron Chicka referred meeting participants to the list, sent out prior to today's meeting, of possible transportation projects within the Minnesota side of the MIC area to be funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. He noted that changes had been occurring to the final list of approved projects up until this afternoon.

James Gittemeier reviewed all approved projects (4 MnDOT, 2 local and 4 new transit projects) which, because they are utilizing federal funds and are located within the MIC planning area, must be amended into the 2009 TIP and STIP project lists for FY2009 (see attached project list

MIC Transportation Advisory Committee  
February 26, 2009 Meeting Summary

for details). He noted that 2 other DTA projects did not need to be formally amended into the TIP but were listed as Administrative Modifications because they are currently programmed in the 2009-2012 TIP and are being advanced to FY 2009 with no changes to project scope or cost.

**Motion and Discussion** Jim Foldesi/Chuck Froseth moved to approve Amendment #2 to the 2009-2012 Duluth Area Transportation Improvement Program as presented. There was no further discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

### 3. Announcements

Ron Chicka reported, in regard to possible Wisconsin-area projects, that the City of Superior had forwarded two for consideration (listed at end of meeting summary) – but it was uncertain at this point whether either would be included in the final list of approved projects. He added that WisDOT has indicated it intends to initiate a second round of funding, at which point the Superior projects might have a better chance to be included in the funding stream. However, in the event that a Superior-area project is included in this first round, we will follow the normal Wisconsin TIP process which stipulates a 30-day public notice for all new projects, which staff has already initiated. This would also require that a separate special TAC meeting be held, again by conference call, on Monday, March 16 at 3:00 pm. Staff will keep committee members apprised of the Wisconsin projects and the TIP amendment process and send out the appropriate meeting notices.

### 4. Adjournment

With no further agenda items or announcements, Chair Young thanked all callers for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 3:15 pm.

## Duluth Metro Economic Recovery Projects - Mn/DOT

Amdmt #	Agency	Description	Length	Type of Funds	Fed \$	State \$	Other \$	Project Total \$	Air Quality Conformity	LRTP	Notes
2	MnDOT	<b>U.S. Hwy 53:</b> 1.1 mi N of Hwy 194 to 1.5 mi N of Hwy 33. NB 1 mi Industrial Rd to 2.6 mi N of Industrial Rd. SB 0.3 mi N of Hwy 8 to 0.4 mi S of Hwy 33. (6916-102, 6917-137)	18 mi	ARRA	18,000,000	0	0	<b>18,000,000</b>	Exempt Located outside City of Duluth	Long Range	New Project, not in prior TIP. Funded by American Recovery & Reinvestment Act.
2	MnDOT	<b>Central Entrance (MN Hwy 194):</b> Resurface Anderson Rd to Mesaba Ave (6933-88)	1.8 mi	ARRA	1,600,000	0	0	<b>1,600,000</b>	Exempt S-10	Mid Range	New Project, not in prior TIP. Funded by American Recovery & Reinvestment Act.
2	MnDOT	<b>Thompson Hill Rest Area:</b> At I-35 and U.S. Hwy 2 building and site preservation (6982-295)	0.0 mi	ARRA	487,000	0	0	<b>487,000</b>	Exempt O-9	Long Range	New Project, not in prior TIP. Funded by American Recovery & Reinvestment Act.
2	MnDOT Duluth	<b>MN Hwy 23:</b> Resurface between Fond du Lac and Gary (6910-86) & construct a portion of the SRTS project for Stowe Elementary School (118-591-05)	4.9 mi	ARRA	4,630,000	0	0	<b>4,630,000</b>	Exempt S-10	Mid & Long Range	New Project, not in prior TIP. Funded by American Recovery & Reinvestment Act.
<b>FY 2009 TOTAL</b>					<b>24,717,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$24,717,000</b>			

Note:

ARRA - American Recovery &amp; Reinvestment Act

*(continued, next page)*

## Duluth Metro Economic Recovery Projects - Local

Amdm t #	Agency	Description	Length	Type of Funds	Fed S	State T.H. \$	Other \$	Project Total \$	Air Quality Conformity	LRTP	Notes
2	Duluth	<b>Aerial Lift Bridge:</b> Bridge Painting & Rehab (118-140-100)	0.0 mi	ARRA	5,000,000	0	0	<b>5,000,000</b>	Exempt O-6	Mid Range	New Project, not in prior TIP. Funded by American Recovery & Reinvestment Act.
2	St. Louis County	<b>Rice Lake Rd:</b> Resurface from Arrowhead Rd to Mesaba Ave (69-604-67)	2.0 mi	ARRA	1,600,000	0	0	<b>1,600,000</b>	Exempt S-10	Mid Range	Project advanced from 2011 to 2009 with increase in cost more than 50%. Funded by American Recovery & Reinvestment Act.
<b>FY 2009 TOTAL</b>					<b>6,600,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$6,600,000</b>			

## Duluth Metro Economic Recovery Projects - Transit

Amdm t #	Agency	Description	Length	Type of Funds	Fed S	State T.H. \$	Other \$	Project Total \$	Air Quality Conformity	LRTP	Notes
2	DTA	<b>Transit Capital Sect. 5307:</b> Facility Improvements (TRF-0016-09A)	0.0 mi	ARRA	600,000	0	0	<b>600,000</b>	Exempt T-4	Short & Mid Range	New Project, not in prior TIP. Funded by American Recovery & Reinvestment Act.
2	DTA	<b>Transit Capital Sect. 5307:</b> ITS Infrastructure (TRF-0016-09B)	0.0 mi	ARRA	500,000	0	0	<b>500,000</b>	Exempt T-4	Short & Mid Range	New Project, not in prior TIP. Funded by American Recovery & Reinvestment Act.
2	DTA	<b>Transit Capital Sect. 5307:</b> Shop Equipment (TRF-0016-09C)	0.0 mi	ARRA	100,000	0	0	<b>100,000</b>	Exempt T-4	Short & Mid Range	New Project, not in prior TIP. Funded by American Recovery & Reinvestment Act.
2	DTA	<b>Transit Capital Sect. 5307:</b> Terminal Hub and passenger amenities (TRF-0016-09D)	0.0 mi	ARRA	500,000	0	0	<b>500,000</b>	Exempt T-8	Short Range	New Project, not in prior TIP. Funded by American Recovery & Reinvestment Act.
Admin Mod	DTA	<b>Bus Purchase:</b> 10 regular route buses, Class 700 (TRF-0016-10)	0.0 mi	ARRA	3,800,000	0	0	<b>3,800,000</b>	Exempt T-10	Short Range	Administrative Modification. Project advanced from 2010 to 2009, no cost change. Funded by American Recovery & Reinvestment Act.
Admin Mod	DTA	<b>Bus Purchase:</b> 3 STRIDE buses (TRF-0016-11)	0.0 mi	ARRA	210,000	0	0	<b>210,000</b>	Exempt T-10	Short Range	Administrative Modification. Project advanced from 2011 to 2009, no cost change. Funded by American Recovery & Reinvestment Act.
<b>FY 2009 TOTAL</b>					<b>5,710,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$5,710,000</b>			

Total, All Projects

\$37,027,000

\$37,027,000



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council  
**Transportation Advisory Committee**  
**MEETING SUMMARY**  
**Tuesday, March 17, 2009, 1:30 PM**

Meeting Location	WITC Conference Center, 600 N. 21 <sup>st</sup> Street, Superior, WI	
Meeting Chair(s)	Jim Foldesi	
Note Taker	Rondi Watson	
Members Present	Jim Foldesi	St. Louis County Engineering
	Chuck Froseth	City of Duluth Planning Dept
	Bryn Jacobson	Bike/Pedestrian Rep
	Dennis Jensen	Duluth Transit Authority
	Alison Johnson	Duluth Airport Authority
	Denny Johnson	Mn/DOT District 1
	Cari Pedersen	City of Duluth Engineering
	Cindy Petkac	City of Duluth Planning Dept
	Heather Rand	Mn DEED
	Jim Rohweder	City of Proctor
	Cindy Voigt	City of Duluth Engineering
Members Absent	Jeff Goetzman	City of Superior
	Paul Halverson	Douglas County
	Walter Leu	Mn/DOT District 1
	David Salo	City of Hermantown
	Jason Serck	City of Superior
	Jim Sharrow	Duluth Seaway Port Authority
	Dena Young	WisDOT NW Region
Others Present	Ron Chicka	ARDC / MIC Director
	James Gittemeier	ARDC / MIC Planner
	Robert Herling	ARDC / MIC Planner
	Heidi Jaros	Community Action Duluth
	Andy McDonald	ARDC / MIC Principal Planner
	Rondi Watson	ARDC / MIC Planning Assistant

## 1. Introductions and Agenda Review

Vice-Chair Jim Foldesi called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. and meeting attendees introduced themselves.

He then asked about any changes to the agenda. Rondi Watson noted that only the meeting summary from February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 would be presented for approval. James Gittemeier reported that MnDOT had recently forwarded a project to be amended into the 2009-2012 Duluth area TIP, and requested that a voting item be added as the second order of business.

MIC Transportation Advisory Committee  
March 17, 2009 Meeting Summary

## 2. Meeting Summary of February 17, 2009

Chair Foldesi asked for any changes or corrections to the previous month's meeting summary. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve.

**Motion and Discussion** Cari Pedersen/Chuck Froseth moved to approve the 2/17/09 meeting summary as presented. There was no further discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

## 3. 2009-2012 Duluth Area TIP Amendment #3

James Gittemeier reported that MnDOT had forwarded another federally-funded stimulus project to be amended into the Duluth area TIP for 2009 funding. This project is part of a statewide initiative to upgrade and landscape all state entry points. He explained that all state entrance points would be upgraded and landscaped. There are two entry points in the MIC area, on the Blatnik Bridge (I-535/ US Hwy 53) and on the Bong Bridge (US Hwy 2) from Superior. Total cost for the State Entry Signs Landscaping project is \$90,000 and is 100% federally funded.

He added that St. Louis County had an additional roadway project approved to receive stimulus funding (pavement reclamation on Rice Lake Road from Martin Road to Arrowhead Road). However, this project does not need to be formally amended into the TIP (it is listed instead as an Administrative Modification) because it is currently programmed in the 2009-2012 TIP and is being advanced to FY 2009 with no changes to project scope or cost.

Ron Chicka announced that the City of Superior will re-submit both projects for round 2 of WisDOT's stimulus funding applications, due April 1<sup>st</sup>, no action is required at this time by the TAC or MIC.

**Motion and Discussion** Denny Johnson/Jim Rohweder moved to approve Amendment #3 to the FY 2009-2012 Duluth Metro Transportation Improvement Program to include the State Entry Signs Landscaping Project funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 as presented. There was no further discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

## 4. Long Range Transportation Plan 2035 – Objectives and Strategies Session

Robert Herling reviewed the FHWA's Seven Planning Factors (Economic Vitality; Safety and Security; Accessibility and Mobility; Environmental Protection and Enhancement; Integration and Connectivity; Efficient Management and Operations; Preservation of Existing Infrastructure) which provide the basic foundations for the MIC's long range transportation plan. During the February TAC and MIC meetings, participants ranked the priority of transportation objectives related to each of these seven broad goals. The responses that were gathered were used as the basis for a follow-up exercise, in which meeting participants were asked to break into groups and assist the MIC staff in brainstorming appropriate strategies the MIC could employ to meet the highest-ranked objectives. He clarified that what he was seeking are desired outcomes (e.g., build, provide, prevent, ensure) as well as specific actions that can or should be undertaken by MIC staff,

MIC Transportation Advisory Committee  
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TAC members and/or Policy Board members (e.g., research, study, analyze, facilitate, coordinate, prioritize, recommend, promote, apply for) to meet the stated objective.

He added that TAC and MIC members would have an additional opportunity to comment via a survey link he would be emailing later this week. He will report on the results of today's exercises at the April meetings. The topic for next month will be Transportation Needs and Constraints.

#### 5. Northern MN/Northwestern WI Regional Freight Study

Andy McDonald reported that as part of the stakeholder input process for the Northern Minnesota/Northwest Wisconsin Freight Plan, the plan partners hosted a Freight Forum on Wednesday, February 25 from 8 a.m. to noon at the MnDOT District Office in Duluth. They were pleased with the turnout, with 31 participants representing a broad range of industries. The goal of this forum was to hear directly from stakeholders from different sectors of the area's economy including agricultural, energy, timber, forest products and mining, to better understand the demands from freight on the regional transportation infrastructure and to identify projects, programs and policies that can accommodate those demands.

The plan consultants began the meeting with an overview of the freight plan and area freight movement system components, a description of commodity flows, and a quick look at markets and trends. The key component of the forum consisted of breakout discussion groups to address port and rail issues, road infrastructure, and truck operations and policy. Participants also identified their highest-priority issues (which included roadway design improvements; truck routes/10-ton network deficiencies; of particular interest to the wood products industry; commodity corridors; rail/port service improvements; regulatory consistency; intermodal facilities; and connectivity). He noted that the highest-ranked priorities involving new infrastructure were likely to be prohibitively expensive to be able to implement, however.

He added that the study is now more than halfway complete, next steps will be to further analyze regional economic and demographic, industry and transportation trends. Final goal is to develop recommendations for projects, program and/or policy changes to address this region's freight needs, including funding strategies and private sector partnerships.

He closed by noting that more information about the plan was available via the MnDOT website at: [www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/freightplan](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/freightplan).

#### 6. Complete Streets Workshop

James Gittemeier presented an overview of the Complete Streets workshop that was co-sponsored by the MIC and Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Minnesota. National speakers Michael Ronkin and Dom Nozzi presented an interactive workshop on the topic of Complete Streets policy and implementation for the Duluth-Superior and greater Arrowhead region. A good mix of approximately 30 elected officials, policy makers, planners, engineers and city administrators attended this 1-day interactive workshop on March 12 at the Hermantown Public Safety Building.

Generally, Complete Streets strives to expand the predominantly vehicle-oriented approach to

MIC Transportation Advisory Committee  
March 17, 2009 Meeting Summary

roadway design to provide a safe and accessible network of streets for all users of all abilities to move through and across them. A limited number of measures are generally applied to determine if a street is functioning properly (i.e., traffic efficiency and safety); the Complete Streets approach encourages a wider range of potential benefits (e.g., pedestrian and bike safety, increased perception of safety, improved aesthetics, increased property values, increased use by multiple modes, encouragement of a more active lifestyle).

An important feature of this approach is that there are not predetermined solutions for each and every street; features and solutions are necessarily context-sensitive (e.g., identifying who will be using it, key destinations and long-range goals and functions for any given roadway). Another important feature of the Complete Streets approach is re-allocating available resources (rights-of-way, funding) to incorporate these features.

Key to the development of Complete Streets is a 6-step process that focuses not just on the usual two steps (identifying deficiencies and specifying ways to address them); but includes an assessment of the land use and transportation contexts. Looking at roadways strictly in terms of their functional classification focuses on vehicular movements only; during the workshop participants were encouraged to reconsider the broader function of particular streets, for example workshop participants came up with new classifications such as Stop n' Shop roads, Buzz Through roads, Life Quality (i.e., residential) roads, and especially important in this area, Vista roads. Designing streets from this perspective necessarily calls out the features needed to support those users and desired functions.

Participants used the busy Central Entrance corridor as a local example to apply Complete Streets principles. Broader goals for this corridor were identified (safe for all users; crossable and accessible to the adjacent high school and senior residence; access to local businesses; a throughway connecting the central city to the Miller Hill Mall area; a community gateway route). Participants then redesigned the roadway (which ranged from 80 to 86 feet of available right-of-way) to accommodate wider sidewalks, green boulevards, bus pull-out lanes as well as center medians to restrict the number of left turns which could be made. These designs were then compared to the identified goals and further modifications were made (such as calling out the available off-street bike trail which runs adjacent to the corridor).

Ronkin emphasized that the policy level is where and how these changes need to be made; implementation will follow if a local Complete Streets policy applies to all phases of all projects. Other key features of a successful Complete Streets policy include using the latest and best design standards; allowing flexibility in balancing user needs; specifying exceptions; and importantly, phrasing the policy with the word "shall" instead of "shall consider."

## 7. Harbor Planning / HTAC Update

Andy McDonald reported on the March 4th meeting of the Harbor Technical Advisory Committee at the EPA Lab Conference Center in Duluth. The agenda kicked off with the annual report from Commander Michael Lebsack of the US Coast Guard Duluth Marine Safety Unit (topics included the positive news that there was a very low number of environmental responses in 2008; a vintage vessel center of excellence will be newly established in this port;

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new national rules for medical screening, which means that it takes longer to renew mariner licenses).

Lisa Neitzel of the JPG Group gave an update of the St Louis River Interlake Duluth Tar Superfund Site cleanup. This very large and complex operation is moving forward according to schedule. She reviewed the construction and remediation work that was conducted in 2008, as well as the activities planned for the 2009 season. She also noted the extensive environmental monitoring for air and water quality as well as noise levels that has taken place throughout the process, along with live web reports for local residents. She added that more detailed information is available through the project website: [www.slriddt.com](http://www.slriddt.com).

Jim Sharrow from the Duluth Seaway Port Authority gave a report on the recent Marine Community Day in Cleveland, Ohio, organized by the Lake Carriers' Association, The Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Maritime Administration. About 250 people gathered in Cleveland for the event on February 25-26. Mr. Madhu Vuppuluri, CEO of Essar American Steel, which is developing the slab steel plant on the iron range, gave the keynote address at the Admiral's Dinner which stressed the importance of Great Lakes shipping to their operations and industry.

Dale Bergeron from the Minnesota Sea Grant reported on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Great Lakes Shipping Stakeholder's Forum held in conjunction with the Marine Community Day event. The forum solicited feedback on NOAA's products and services supporting navigation, maritime safety and Great Lakes commerce. Additionally, the Duluth Seaway Port Authority co-hosted a visit for NOAA officials introducing them to the people and issues associated with the Great Lakes shipping industry.

There was a final presentation about the new Tremie Diffuser technology, which has been utilized by Barr Engineering in the SLRIDT cleanup and also has the potential to remediate some of the "industrially influenced" areas of light contamination in shallow areas of the bay. The Tremie Diffuser is designed to evenly disperse a light slurry of fine-grained sediment on top of lightly contaminated material in stable backwater environments. A key benefit is that significant habitat improvements can be achieved by improving large areas with a small amount of cover. By enhancing the natural deposition of this material, the benthic community will mix and blend with little to no change in bathymetry. Jim Sharrow noted that another exciting prospect for this technology is that it could utilize large quantities of the fine materials from Erie Pier that have been the most problematic in terms of finding markets or other projects.

## 8. Roundtable Discussion – Local Projects

No announcements.

## 9. Project Updates

### DTA Inter-modal Facility

Ron Chicka announced that the DTA, together with the consulting firm, held an Open House

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last month taking comment on site options for the Multimodal Transportation Terminal. Seven initial sites have been narrowed to two, encompassing parcels along Michigan Street between 2nd Avenue West and 5th Avenue West, based on the ability of the surrounding road network to handle traffic into and out of a new passenger rail facility. After the Board has made the final site selection, they will be looking to put together a grant application. Ron commented that funding for this facility may come from the upcoming federal transportation reauthorization bill or possibly the Economic Stimulus bill, which allows more time for transit projects to be assembled.

**WLSSD Comprehensive Wastewater Services Master Plan Work Group**

Andy McDonald reported that WLSSD planning staff had asked him to participate on their Comprehensive Plan Work Group. On Thursday March 5th, they reviewed the history of comprehensive planning at WLSSD, the status of recommendations from the 2003 plan, comments from jurisdictions within WLSSD's boundaries and discussed the proposed revisions to the Urban Services Boundary. All Work Group members have been asked to come to the next meeting prepared to talk about goals to be included in this plan.

**2013 Duluth TIP Projects/ATP Update**

James Gittemeier reported that the five projects submitted for federal transportation funding for FY 2013 were prioritized at the February 17th TAC meeting. He noted that the MIC Policy Board changed the prioritized list of projects from the order recommended by the TAC, switching the 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue East reconstruction and the I-35 preservation project. The final order, as adopted by the MIC Policy Board was:

1. Duluth Heights Connector (Joshua Avenue)
2. 10<sup>th</sup> Ave East Reconstruction
3. I-35 Preservation
4. Martin Road Rehabilitation

He added that this project list has now been submitted to the Northeast Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership (NE MN ATP) for funding consideration. The ATP will consider this as they develop their list of projects to be funded for the region, based on the prioritized projects submitted by the other eight counties as well as funding constraints. This list will then move to the Minnesota Department of Transportation central office for their approval and inclusion in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (or STIP). We should know by early April what if any projects will be funded, adding that the Duluth Heights project is unlikely to be selected, due to its high cost.

**10. Adjournment**

With no further agenda items or announcements, Chair Foldesi adjourned the meeting at 3:20 pm.