



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
Transportation Advisory Committee
MEETING SUMMARY
Tuesday, May 19, 2009, 1:30 PM

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

1. Introductions and Agenda Review

Vice-Chair Dena Young called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. and meeting attendees introduced themselves. Ron Chicka announced that Andrea Grygo would soon be leaving the MIC to work as a GIS Specialist for the St. Louis County planning department. He thanked her for her contributions to the MIC for the past 3-1/2 years, noting that she brought some new capabilities to the job, including online interactive GIS applications and visualization techniques for plans.

Chair Young called for changes to the agenda. Ron Chicka requested that two informational items be added as the first two agenda items, pertaining to MN HPP Projects and City of Superior projects proposed for ARRA funding.

Motion and Discussion Jeff Goetzman/Dave Salo moved to approve these additions to the meeting agenda. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

2. Meeting Summary of April 14, 2009

Chair Young asked for any changes or corrections to the previous meeting summary. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to approve.

Motion and Discussion Denny Johnson/Cari Pederson moved to approve the meeting summary from the April 14, 2009 TAC meeting. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

3. Project Updates

UWS Class Research Presentation: Twin Ports Passenger Rail Terminal Location Analysis

Ron Chicka reported that on May 5th, eight students from the UWS Urban Planning and Transportation Systems class gave a repeat presentation of their class research project, a critical review of the TEMS feasibility study of passenger rail service between the Twin Cities and Twin Ports and an assessment of terminal locations. The study provides a critique of each location, including an analysis of capital requirements, asset utilization and travel times for each local endpoint. Their research calls out the challenges that will be faced for a station, whether ultimately located in Duluth or Superior. A 30-minute videotape version of the presentation would be shown at the end of tomorrow night's MIC meeting and TAC members were invited to attend.

Superior and Douglas County ARRA Projects

Ron reported that there will be one stimulus (ARRA-funded) project for the City of Superior, likely the City's first-priority project (also ranked as number one of 10 proposed projects by the MIC at last month's meeting), a mill and overlay of East 5th Street from 6th to 20th Avenues East. The \$330,000 in ARRA funds will not cover the total cost of the project; the City will contribute the balance of approximately \$100,000.

He added that the Moccasin Mike road trail project was submitted separately, as an Enhancements Project, and we have not yet heard about the status of that project application.

HPP Project Submittals for the Duluth Area

Ron Chicka reported that an announcement had recently been sent out from Congressman Oberstar's office, soliciting High Priority Project (HPP) proposals from jurisdictions in his districts. MIC staff coordinated the applications for 13 proposals submitted by various jurisdictions within the MIC area.

Five area projects were recently announced as having made the first cut for funding: two submitted by the City of Duluth, the West Fifth Street/Multi-Modal Connectivity Project (\$12.9

million) and the Joshua Avenue Extension (\$3.9 million); one submitted by the City of Proctor for a Spur Trail Connection (\$2.4 million); one submitted by the DTA to acquire new hybrid buses (\$2 million); and another project that wasn't on the MIC's radar screen, submitted by Fit City Duluth, to develop a "best practices" toolkit to encourage active living choices in transportation (\$1.8 million).

He noted that the DTA's Multi-Modal Transit Terminal project will be submitted and considered separately in conjunction with the Northern Lights Express and the Port Authority's Intermodal Freight Facility project might be eligible for Maritime administration funding for port projects across the country.

Walter Leu commented that the Fit City Duluth project only broadly meets eligibility requirements for federally-funded transportation projects, and it might be a bit of a challenge to fit it into Title 23 project considerations and processes. For example, deliverables must go through a competitive bid process with an RFP – not what the group had planned for hiring a project coordinator.

Ron added that he had heard, but couldn't confirm as yet, that the Bong Bridge Deck overlay project, jointly submitted by MnDOT and WisDOT, may have been funded on the Wisconsin side but not in Minnesota, which would certainly pose problems for the project overall.

Superior Pedestrian Safety Task Force

James Gittemeier reported that the City of Superior brought in Wisconsin Walks, Inc. to facilitate a Walking Workshop for the City's Pedestrian Safety Task Force. The Police Department received a grant to host this two-day workshop. MIC staff attended along with other invitees including City, County and State DOT staff plus school district and health officials. The main outcome of this workshop was a clear realization of the issues pedestrians and bicyclists face in Superior. It included a presentation on common pedestrian issues, a "walkabout" field exercise, a solution identification activity, and a look into what's next, and more importantly, determining where Superior should begin in order to address the pedestrian and bicycle needs. The workshop concluded with a plan to hold a meeting with the key stakeholders and implement some of the low cost, simple solutions, while at the same time putting together a ped/bike committee to analyze not only the short term, quick fixes, but also the long term solutions as well.

4. Draft 2010-2013 Duluth Metro Transportation Improvement Program

James Gittemeier presented the draft 2010-2013 Duluth Metro TIP. He emphasized that the key part of this (and any) TIP is the table of funded transportation projects, including those newly proposed to be included for 2013, including:

2010: Kirkus Street construction in Proctor, SRTS improvements at Stowe Elementary and Munger Trail preliminary engineering

2011: Construction of Munger trail extension-phase 1 and Anderson Road reconstruction

2012: Construction of Lakewalk Trail extension-phases 4 & 5 and Blatnik Bridge repair

2013: Construction of Munger trail-phase 2 and 10th Avenue East reconstruction

He also pointed out the very large difference in project funding for FY 2009 and 2010 – these two years include stimulus-funded projects as well as the multi-jurisdictional Miller Hill reconstruction project which is currently underway, and the I-35 reconditioning project scheduled as an A/C project in 2010 (payback in 2011 and 2012). The funding totals of \$65 million and \$40 million will fall back to normal levels of under \$10 million in federal funds for 2011, 2012 and 2013.

He closed by requesting approval to release the draft TIP for the mandated 30-day public comment period, which will run from May 21 to June 19. A public meeting will be held on Wed, June 17 at 5:00 p.m. An air quality conformity review process will be conducted and the public comments received will be incorporated. The final version will be presented for approval at the July TAC and MIC meetings.

Motion and Discussion Jim Heilig/Brian Boder moved to release the draft 2010-2013 Duluth Metro TIP for the mandated 30-day public comment period. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

5. Long Range Transportation Plan 2035 – Strategy Statements

Robert Herling explained the current status of the LRTP update. MIC staff has met with all jurisdictions to talk about what transportation projects should be included in the short-, mid- and long-range project lists.

The results of complex traffic modeling, recently completed by our consultant, will assist in moving ahead with some key sections. Meanwhile, language is being drafted to reflect the transportation objectives and strategies the MIC will employ in pursuit of those objectives. These statements will be published in the LRTP as guidance for the policies and activities of the MIC in the coming years. He asked all committee members to provide input on these draft statements.

He also reviewed the format of the website that is being developed, which will replace the previous printed documents.

He closed by noting that next month he will begin reviewing the projects and financial statements.

6. UMD-CSS Transportation Assessment

Andy McDonald reported that the study committee's draft recommendations, intended to improve walking, biking, transit, traffic flow and safety in the campus areas, were presented at two public meetings. On May 5th at UMD and on May 7th at CSS, public comments were taken and discussed. Comments included a desire to see improved sidewalk snow removal enforcement; ways to encourage a more bike-friendly culture, with education drivers in particular, and one objection to the proposed Lyons Street closure. One person showed up to express concerns over the proposed Walgreens development at Kenwood and Arrowhead – which this study does not specifically address (it's not a land use or development plan).

At College Street, one long term recommendation is to address the high crash and high

severity of crash rates at junction of 19th Avenue East by installing a roundabout, which would fit very nicely into current alignment and available area. Question: can fire trucks and semi trucks handle a roundabout configuration – yes-design consideration, these concerns have been addressed in other areas.

General recommendations include improved snow removal enforcement and/or “snow angels” program; develop new transit routes; promote online rideshare programs; provide more bike facilities on each campus; completing the sidewalk network in the campus area; reconfiguring traffic lanes and creating bike lanes; implementing access management techniques; making adjustments to transit routes; and creating bike and foot trails between high-volume residential areas and campus destinations.

Andy closed by noting that he would be taking the draft recommendations forward to the study committee, and that the final plan should be ready for final approval this summer.

7. 2009 Bike to Work Day

James Gittemeier presented information about this year’s Bike to Work Day activities. Bike to Work Week this year took place May 11 - 15, with Friday, May 15 designated as National Bike to Work Day by the League of American Bicyclists. An expanded number of activities were held this year, including a bike to school event at UMD, a week-long series of bike-related events at the Fitger’s shopping complex and a morning bicycle commuter stop at Minnesota Power Plaza on Friday morning. The morning commuter event was set up to encourage bicyclists to ride their bikes to work instead of driving their cars, and included morning refreshments, bike safety checks, a bus bike rack demonstration and information commuting routes and rules of the road for bicyclists.

He also showed improvements in downtown Duluth bike infrastructure – artist-designed racks, sponsored in a competition by the Twin Ports pathways group, are just now being installed. In addition, the City has begun to install bike rack facilities as part of new parking meters (in conjunction with new DTA bus shelters).

He added that there is some real momentum happening locally to promote biking; He and Drew Digby of Fit City Duluth appeared on Almanac North to talk about improving bike infrastructure in Duluth. He also announced that we will be creating a separate Bicycle Advisory Committee (similar to our TAC and HTAC).

Ron mentioned that for next year, he would be interested in developing Bike to Work day events in Superior as well as Duluth.

8. Roundtable Discussion – Local Projects

No announcements.

9. Adjournment

With no further agenda items or announcements, Chair Young adjourned the meeting at 2:47 pm.