



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
Transportation Advisory Committee
MEETING SUMMARY
Tuesday, October 19, 2010, 1:30 PM

Meeting Location	WITC Conference Center, Superior, WI	
Meeting Chair	Jim Foldesi	
Note Taker(s)	Rondi Watson	
Members Present	Drew Digby	Mn DEED
	Jim Foldesi	St. Louis County Engineering
	Dennis Jensen	Duluth Transit Authority
	Denny Johnson	Mn/DOT District 1
	Cari Pedersen	City of Duluth Engineering
	Jim Rohweder	City of Proctor
	Brian Ryks	Duluth Airport Authority
	Jason Serck	City of Superior
Members Absent	Brian Boder	St. Louis County Engineering
	Chuck Froseth	City of Duluth Community Development Dept
	Jeff Goetzman	City of Superior
	Paul Halverson	Douglas County
	Bryn Jacobson	Bike/Pedestrian Rep
	Walter Leu	Mn/DOT District 1
	Cindy Petkac*	City of Duluth Planning Dept
	David Salo	City of Hermantown
	Jim Sharrow	Duluth Seaway Port Authority
	Cindy Voigt	City of Duluth Engineering
	Dena Young	WisDOT NW Region
Others Present	Robert Herling	ARDC / MIC Planner
	Sheldon Johnson	NWRPC / MIC Deputy Director
	Andy McDonald	ARDC / MIC Principal Planner
	Kody Thurnau	ARDC / MIC GIS Specialist
	Rondi Watson	ARDC / MIC Planning Assistant

1. Introductions and Agenda Review

TAC Chair Jim Foldesi called the meeting to order at 1:26 p.m. All meeting attendees introduced themselves. He asked if there were any proposed changes to the agenda. None were requested.

2. Committee Business

Meeting Summary of September 14, 2010

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 Denny Johnson/Brian Ryks moved to approve the 9/14/10 meeting summary as
Discussion presented. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.
and Vote

3. DIA Airport

Guest Speaker Brian Ryks, Executive Director of the Duluth International Airport Authority, reported on the second-phase of a \$65 million-dollar replacement passenger terminal project. The expansion project is utilizing using state and federal funding along with Airport revenues to fund the project. He noted that the expansion was necessitated, in part, by post-911 security requirements, and the three-year construction schedule is largely driven by FAA funding cycles.

The 100,000-square-foot terminal replacement will include a new customs and international arrivals area that is can also be utilized to accommodate additional airline and passenger demand. The new terminal will include four gates, each with an enclosed passenger loading bridge, a large post-security passenger holding room, new check-in and baggage claim areas, restaurant, restrooms and shopping area. The second floor of the building will house TSA screening, passenger waiting areas and a concessions area, which is currently lacking in the secure area and hurting their revenues. The Airport Authority will have offices on the third floor along with TSA administrative offices. The project will incorporate numerous “green” LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)-certified components.

He also reported on air service at the Airport, noting that it connects to numerous hubs both nationally and internationally. A broad region is served by the airport, from northern Minnesota to the UP and Canada. They were very fortunate to get new United and Allegiant Air service, bucking the trend of economy, and by the end of 2010 they should be back up to their 2008 ridership numbers. With the addition of service by United Airlines, Duluth airfares have dropped significantly, an average of \$50 each way; Chicago alone shows about a \$200 drop in round-trip fares. Competition is the key; Northwest used to fiercely control the market, which drove people down to the cities. Now that they have merged with Delta and are based in Atlanta, they are not so fiercely competing with United.

The real draw with United is they offer two daily flights to Chicago, with the possible addition of a third. We may also get a nonstop flight to Denver in the next couple of years which would really be a boon. United will have been here a year in December, adding that fall and winter are the most challenging months for this area. He closed by noting that the support and commitment from area businesses will enable this additional air service to succeed long term in this market.

4. Central Entrance Corridor Study – Scope of Work

Andy McDonald presented the scope of work for this new MIC study, which will build upon the City of Duluth’s small area plan which defined a new vision for the Central Entrance corridor and business district. Duluth Heights residents and businesses envision a more walkable “main street” type of place with safer auto access to businesses. The MIC’s corridor study will provide a more detailed look at how the anticipated future land use changes would

impact and complement the surrounding transportation network.

Study tasks as set forth in the scope of work will include data collection and analysis, public input to include public meetings, MIC website updates, project blogging, online surveys, and also an educational component about access management.

He also asked for input about what attribute information should we record. TAC members suggested:

- Turning movements coming out of the driveways- both busy and quiet ones
- Accident hotspots or particular trouble areas
- Opportunities for businesses to utilize additional access points or consolidate them
- Rights of way
- Transit stops and shelters
- Illumination/lighting data – especially as it pertains to walkability and livability
- Frontage/backage roads
- Possible cut-through issues, e.g., on Willow and Blackman Avenues

During the discussion, Cindy Voigt suggested that we refer to city sidewalk standards as the baseline for assessment. Denny Johnson pointed out that a lot of detailed information and recommendations should be available in the original small area study by SEH. As for ADA requirements, pretty strict standards will need to be adhered to. He stressed that because funding is not likely to become available to implement all of our recommendations for the corridor, MnDOT would be interested in seeing some options for short-term, low-cost improvements that are consistent with the long term vision in the SAMP.

Motion Jim Rohweder/Dennis Jensen moved to approve the scope of work as presented.
Discussion There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.
and Vote

5. Final 2011-2014 Superior Area Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Sheldon Johnson presented the final 2011-2014 Superior Area TIP for approval, noting that he had reviewed the projects in detail when the draft was presented in August. He reviewed the (minor) changes that had been made to the project lists since then:

- Originally listed in the draft TIP, project number 113-08-04 has been removed and has been reintroduced as number 113-11-002.
- Rail project locations for three projects scheduled for 2012 have changes: 113-10-013 has been changed from Catlin Avenue to 9th Street (Winter St), 113-10-014 has been changed from Ogden Avenue to USH 2 (Belknap St), and 113-10-015 has been changed from Grand Avenue to 12 Street.
- A rail project addition has been recommended: 113-11-009 Safety OCR Project, Stinson Avenue (24th Avenue E) at \$131,300 federal and \$70,700 state totaling \$202,000.

No further comments have been given to the MIC as part of the public participation

component.

Motion Jason Serck/Dena Young moved to approve the final tip as presented. There was
Discussion no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.
and Vote

6. Draft 2011 – 2012 MIC Work Program

Rondi Watson reviewed the draft 2011 – 2012 MIC work program, with an emphasis on planned projects. She added that the final version, to be presented in December, would include the budget section. Any questions or comments should be directed to MIC Director Ron Chicka.

7. Transportation Performance Measures for Duluth-Superior

Robert Herling summarized the discussions that have taken place to date about potential performance measures related to the MIC's Preservation and Safety goals. What now needs to be decided is what and how to measure it and then begin to collect data. Based on feedback received from members both during and after the September meetings, it was determined that:

- Once measures are decided upon, performance targets should be set no longer than 10 years out; possibly even as soon as 5 years out (2015/2016?).
- The data should be assessed annually (where possible), so that we can assess how well we're tracking towards the targets.

Also from the discussion, proposed targets include

Preservation

- Pavement Quality Ratings – This data is being regularly gathered already for many of the jurisdictions; but an issue is consistency between jurisdictions
- Bridge Ratings – This data is already collected regularly and is reported consistently (Pontis)
- Sidewalk Quality Ratings – Data is not regularly gathered, open to subjective variance, and is likely labor intensive to collect for the entire network. We will likely need to limit the number of characteristics to just one or two (e.g., amount of identified gaps; ADA compliance at intersections).

Safety

- Number of severe crashes annually (non-capacitating injury, incapacitating injury, fatality)
- Number of annual crashes with bikes
- Number of annual crashes with peds

Denny Johnson commented that MnDOT finds it useful to focus on the 'poor' ratings rather than the 'good,' with a goal of keeping a reasonable percent above 'poor.'

Jim Foldesi commented that it's important to look for data that jurisdictions already collect instead of developing brand new data collection burdens.

Dave Salo raised questions about how the performance ratings would or could potentially be

used by local jurisdictions in putting forward projects for federal funding—for example, would only roads with “poor” ratings be eligible? Jim Foldesi pointed out that essentially local road conditions won’t matter if this is mainly to channel federal funding, this will only apply to functionally classified roads. Cindy Voigt commented that the feds want to know that their money is put to good use; from the perspective of trying to identify future financial needs, performance-based measures are the most helpful to demonstrate needs over time. Denny Johnson added that the public sometimes has a hard time understanding that performance-based planning means that popular expansion projects just can’t happen, since the focus on infrastructure preservation.

Dave reiterated that his interest is in knowing what the rules will be for project selection. Jim Foldesi suggested that right now, we can’t answer that question—exact performance targets will be able to be determined only after several years worth of data has been collected.

Robert then introduced a set of potential measures regarding Mobility, including:

- Miles of arterials below LOS “D” during peak hours
- Network speed & VMT
- Travel Times (by route)
- Transit frequency and % population within walking distance to transit routes
- Amount of intercity (Duluth/Superior) transit options
- Amount of sidewalk gaps and/or ADA compliance issues

He then went on to propose that instead of attempting to identify specific performance measures at the monthly TAC meetings—a lot to work these through in this setting with this short amount of time—it might be more effective to work with a smaller work group first, then to bring their ideas forward to the larger groups (TAC and MIC). Members agreed with this and Robert stated he would be following up with a meeting request to TAC members to participate in the first working group meeting.

8. HTAC/Harbor Planning Update

Andy McDonald reported on the September 1st meeting of the MIC’s Harbor Technical Advisory Committee. Agenda items included a report by Minnesota and Wisconsin Sea Grant on their Climate Variation Matrix project, the status of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding grants by the Environmental Protection Agency and a summary of the Great Lakes Ballast Water Collaborative.

He added that HTAC members and also a few MIC members also took part in a harbor tour aboard the LL Smith Jr research vessel on September 16th viewing Erie Pier, Stryker Bay and Tallus Island projects.

He commented that a current hot issue in the HTAC’s dredging subcommittee had to do with MnDOT’s explicit prohibition of the use of materials from Erie Pier in the nearby I-35 reconstruction project. The subcommittee is concerned because the restriction on the use of those materials is based on misinformation, and furthermore it is counterproductive and expensive to

truck in identical materials from long distances when there is a large volume of viable materials for use almost right at the construction site. Andy is in the process of organizing a meeting to get the right people in the room to be informed on the characteristics of that material, and hopefully to revise the contract language in time for the material to be utilized during the 2011 construction season.

9. Roundtable Discussion of Local Projects

Denny Johnson reported on the progress of the I-35 project, the weather so far has been very helpful for its progress. Both lanes should be re-opened by the end of this month for the winter. Construction and lane closures will resume next spring and summer.

He added that a possible District One 2015 District One TIP project submittal, to resurface Grand Avenue, is being driven by MnDOT's central office assessment of local pavement conditions. They are scoping it now and want the city to know this is on their radar. They have been meeting with local groups, as well, for their input. He commented that MnDOT had discouraged the MIC's proposed study of Grand Avenue a couple of years ago because at that time it seemed unlikely that any funding would become available.

Dennis Jensen reported on the "good news/bad news" situation that the DTA had recently been awarded a federal "state of good repair" grant for the development of their proposed downtown Duluth multimodal facility. The problem is that the \$16 million is less than half of what will be needed for the \$40 million project, it will allow preliminary work but that's about it. They are talking to their legislative contacts about prospects for other future funding sources.

10. Project Updates

I-35 Congestion Mitigation Ridership Study

Robert Herling reported that the MIC and the DTA have submitted a proposed scope of work to MnDOT's Office of Transit as part of an application for special funding dedicated to the study of transit mitigation efforts throughout the state. The scope of work is for a "phase 1" of the study, which would involve on-ride surveys of the riders currently utilizing the DTA's increased service along Grand Ave. Survey questions will be designed to identify consumers' motivations; how they are using the service; and what factors would influence whether they'd continue to use related services once construction on I-35 stops and the service is dialed back.

Transportation Action Team Update

Robert Herling reported that the "Blueprint to End Poverty's" Transportation Action Team met in August and identified a series of next steps for its new focus on non-motorized transportation needs in Duluth's Lincoln Park Neighborhood. These steps include researching and collating all current and recent plans and planned projects for the area; looking for previously identified needs and subsequent recommendations; identifying consistencies and inconsistencies among the plans; and highlighting potential opportunities to coordinate planned activities and projects. In turn, the team will be developing a set of media to present to Lincoln Park residents that summarize all these plans and ask for input. A survey will also

be developed to get updated information about current transportation issues or barriers for the Lincoln Park community, as perceived by the low-income residents.

Connecting Duluth-Bike Route Assessment

James Gittemeier reported that the report for the Connecting Duluth project, as reported by Codie Leseman at the August meetings, is completed. In October, the MIC will present this report, including the key findings and the intended use.

11. Adjournment

With no further agenda items or announcements, Chair Foldesi adjourned the meeting at 2:11 pm.