



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
Transportation Advisory Committee
MEETING SUMMARY
Tuesday, May 17, 2011 at 1:30 p.m.

Meeting Location	WITC Conference Center – Superior, WI	
Meeting Chair	Jason Serck	
Note Taker(s)	Laurel Davis	
Members Present	Brian Boder	St. Louis County Public Works
	Chuck Froseth	City of Duluth Community Development Dept
	Bryn Jacobson	Bike/Pedestrian Rep
	Dennis Jensen	Duluth Transit Authority
	Allison Johnson	Duluth Airport Authority (Alternate)
	Denny Johnson	Mn/DOT District 1
	Heather Rand	Mn DEED
	David Salo	City of Hermantown
	Jason Serck	City of Superior
	Jim Sharrow	Duluth Seaway Port Authority
	Cindy Voight	City of Duluth Engineering
	Dena Young	WisDOT NW Region
Members Absent	Jim Foldesi	St. Louis County Engineering
	*Jeff Goetzman	City of Superior
	Paul Halverson	Douglas County
	Walter Leu	Mn/DOT District 1
	*Cari Pedersen	City of Duluth Engineering
	*Cindy Petkac	City of Duluth Planning Dept
	*Jim Rohweder	City of Proctor
	Brian Ryks	Duluth Airport Authority
		*Excused
Others Present	Ellen Pillsbury	ARDC
	Jim Skoog	St. Louis County SHIP
	Ron Chicka	ARDC/MIC Director
	Laurel Davis	ARDC/MIC Administrative Assistant
	James Gittemeier	ARDC/MIC Senior Planner
	Robert Herling	ARDC / MIC Planner
	Rondi Watson	ARDC / MIC Planning Assistant

1. Introductions and Agenda Review

Chair Jason Serck called the meeting to order at 1:33. 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 4/19/11

Chair Serck 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/Dennis Jensen moved to approve the 4/19/11 meeting summary as
Discussion presented. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.
and Vote

3. Guest Speaker: Dennis Jensen, DTA

DTA Update: Multimodal Terminal and Challenges Facing Service to Mall Area

Dennis Jensen presented a status report on the DTA's effort to bring a multimodal transit terminal to Downtown Duluth and reported on service challenges arising from Walmart expansion plans in Hermantown.

He began with a description of the old bus route and explained how the route would change as the expansion plans continue. The DTA will no longer be allowed in the Walmart parking lot, and will have to do pick-ups and drop-offs at the road, on one side. This will require riders going to Walmart to ride up to the airport, turn around and come back to be dropped off at the appropriate side. He estimates this adds about five minutes to the trip.

James Gittemeier asked if there was a shelter and pedestrian path planned at the Walmart drop off zone. Jensen said there was a shelter planned, and he anticipates that Walmart will provide the pedestrian path. Gittemeier also asked if the DTA knew the ridership numbers to Walmart and if this proposal would discourage some of them from shopping at Walmart. Jensen replied that approximately 300-400 riders a week use the Walmart route and he believed that this will impact some segments of those riders.

David Salo added that there is a sidewalk planned adjacent to the roadway and that Walmart knows they are responsible for keeping it and the shelter area clear and usable.

Dennis Jensen also pointed out that many Walmarts across the country don't allow bus access, and that they are hoping to create some kind of Mall Area hub in the future.

Jensen then presented a status report on plans for a Duluth Multimodal Terminal downtown. He said it will be a two tier parking ramp with bus service coming from 4th Avenue, including 570 parking spaces, for a total budget of \$40 million dollars.

Cindy Voight asked if they would wait to begin the project until they had the full budget amount and if there was a time limit, which Jensen said they would and that three years was the current time limit.

Ron Chicka commented that potential skywalk components are key to this project.

4. Guest Speaker: Jim Skoog, St. Louis County SHIP

Sixth Avenue East Health Impact Assessment

This health impact assessment examines the potential health effects of 6th Avenue East as it currently exists as a four-lane roadway, as well as the effects from the proposed re-design into a 3-lane roadway with boulevards. The outcome of this assessment is to provide recommendations to

increase positive health outcomes and minimize adverse health impacts on all the users of the roadway facility as well as on the surrounding neighborhood.

Jim Skoog introduced the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) currently in progress for Sixth Ave East, and started by giving a definition and overview of what an HIA entails. An HIA seeks to examine a project's impact on health in a community using a framework that starts with screening to determine what projects would benefit from an HIA, then identifies what specific health aspects to consider, assesses who may be affected and how, develops a set of recommendations to promote health and mitigate negative effects, and evaluates what impact the HIA had on the project.

Skoog said that a public meeting was held on March 3, 2011 at Gloria Dey Church, with twenty-five community members to get their input on what health concerns or interests they had. After a great deal of discussion they distilled the comments down to three major areas of consideration – Accessibility and Safety, Livability, and Physical Activity.

Ellen Pillsbury of ARDC then got up and explained how they used these areas to guide them in a process of research and data collection, including field studies, a walkability audit, crash data mapping, plotting street lighting, and more community input.

They then presented some drawings of proposed ideas for improvements to the plans for Sixth Ave East which included bike lanes, moving the sidewalks away from the street, creating a greenway, adding a traffic signal to the 7th street crossing, and putting in more transit stops.

Robert Herling asked how they would go about continuing to monitor health impact in regards to the final evaluation step, and Pillsbury replied that this was something they still had to hash out. Skoog added that this project has had a steep learning curve for them and their primary focus has been to get the initial report out first, then they can start to plan the next steps.

Denny Johnson expressed concerns from a transportation point of view, and thought that some things hadn't been taken into account in terms of traffic movement. He wanted to know if these elements were considered when doing the health assessment. Skoog stated that the recommendations of the HIA aren't meant to be the final word, they are just one part of the decision making process.

Ron Chicka said that modeling could be done to examine traffic patterns and address some of these issues, and that funding was available for that service.

Cindy Voight asked where the health impact data was in the HIA Summary they provided, and suggested that they try to tie the impact to the recommendations in a more cause and effect kind of way.

Bryn Jacobson wanted to know how snow removal would be planned for. Skoog said that the boulevards should allow for snow to be dropped on the grass, not on the sidewalks, and that part of their recommendation was to acquire land to create a greenway that would provide more access for pedestrians.

5. Draft of the 2012-2015 Duluth Area TIP

James Gittemeier presented a draft of the 2012-2015 Duluth Area TIP outlining projects for the coming years.

2012 TIP Projects

I-35 Project
Haines Road
Trail Projects – Lakewalk and Cross City Trail

2013 TIP Projects

Roadway Preservation at Martin Road and 10th Avenue East
Cross City Trail

2014 TIP Projects

Major Highway work including I-35 from Boundary Avenue to Carlton County
Bong Bridge repairs
Cross City Trail

2015 TIP Projects

Roadway Preservation at Martin Road and W. 1st Street
Cross City Trail

Robert Herling went through financial information regarding the TIP, stating that there was plenty of discretionary funds to cover match. He also said there would be a Draft TIP Informational Meeting held June 16th from 4-6pm at ARDC seeking public involvement. He further stated that they expected to be seeking approval for the final TIP in late July or August.

Jason Serck asked for questions and hearing none, asked for a motion to approve the Draft TIP to be released for public comment

Motion Heather Rand/Allison Johnson moved to release the Draft TIP for public comment.
Discussion There was no discussion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.
& Vote

6. Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Update

James Gittemeier presented an update on the Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee meeting.

The BPAC met in May and discussed minor changes to the Bylaws, discussed the use of social media, particularly Facebook, as a discussion and communication tool for the committee as well as current bike and pedestrian projects, including Bike to Work Day, Sidewalk Study, Duluth Trail and Bikeways Plan and the soon to be released new Bike Map.. Additional items discussed was the 6th Avenue East and London Road projects. Regarding the London Road project, the BPAC voted on a resolution of support for the redesign of London Road.

Gittemeier also announced that 4000 new bike maps had been ordered by the MIC and would be available for Bike To Work Day, and that one consideration for future maps that had been discussed was the inclusion of disability information on the maps, such as Wheels on Trails, etc.

Then Gittemeier presented some ideas for the restriping of London Road and stated that the BPAC had voted on a resolution in support of a London Road redesign.

Cindy Voight pointed out that you'd need significant community involvement in the planning for a restriping of London Road, and Gittemeier agreed, including that he believed several of the businesses were

currently opposed to it.

Denny Johnson asked for more information on what the striping will include and how crossings and traffic patterns would be handled. Gittemeier pointed out that the BPAC was simply showing support for the restriping from their perspective, and not actually issuing specific recommendations at this time.

7. Safe Routes to School Update

James Gittemeier presented the safe routes to school and mentioned the meeting May 18th, and will report in June on what schools will be involved.

MIC staff is finalizing the recommendations and cost estimates for the first 2 school sites (Denfeld and Laura MacArthur). In addition, MIC staff just recently found out about another round of Safe Route to School funding available. MIC staff will lead an effort with the SRTS Steering Committee to put together funding applications for this funding.

He said the following projects were being considered:

Laura MacArthur School – sidewalks

Grant School – improvements along 9th and mentioned they should resubmit for the grant

Piedmont School – field observations only so far

Denfeld School – bike racks, bus shelter, DTA message board

New East High School – bus stop closer to doors, indoor waiting message boards for DTA

Cindy Voight said the City of Duluth was looking at making improvements along Chambersburg Avenue by East and that those should be discussed along with the Safe Routes to School program.

8. CPG Funds Distribution Update

Ron Chicka presented on the projects that have come forward from jurisdictions for extra funding from the MIC.

- 1) **City of Duluth – 6th AE Traffic Study (2nd St to Mesaba):** A comprehensive traffic analysis is proposed that would serve as the design element for the work completed to date by the City that resulted in a schematic of the corridor that used CDBG funding. The concept is to turn the corridor into one that is easier for non-auto modes to use. \$50,000 was requested.
- 2) **St Louis County – Intersection Control Evaluation Planning Study – Duluth Area:** This “first of its kind” study would analyze a series of intersections that are either under the authority of the City of Duluth or the County to ascertain the appropriate traffic operational control with a focus on modern roundabout feasibility. The application of roundabouts may provide an improvements in both traffic operations and traffic safety. \$80,000 was requested.
- 3) **Duluth Airport Authority – Air Service and Air Cargo Leakage and Expansion Analysis:** The primary goal of this study is to maintain and potentially expand air service opportunities at the Duluth International Airport. With origin and destination data pulled from the airport, future growth markets can be identified and financial analysis performed

to ascertain profitability of new markets. \$50,000 was requested.

4) **Duluth Seaway Port Authority – Duluth Cruise Ship Dock Facility Study:**

This study proposes the construction of a cruise ship terminal adjacent to the Convention Center area or the Great Lakes Aquarium and its resulting traffic impacts landside at these locations. The study is a more focused look at an area of development and its impacts that was first analyzed within the MIC's *Port Land Use Plan*, completed in 2006 as well as our *Downtown Modal Connections Study*, conducted in 2009. \$60,000 was requested

Chicka said that cash flow would prevent these projects all from taking place at the same time, stating that all projects are approved and the funding is there, but cash flow is such that staggering the projects would be more effective. He felt the St. Louis County project should go first, with the Airport and Seaway projects taking place later in the summer and fall.

Jason Serck asked if there were any questions and received none.

9. Project Updates

Travel Demand Model – Traffic Analysis Zone Update, Robert Herling

MIC staff is presently working on delineating Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) boundaries that will be compatible with future deliveries of the US Census Bureau's 3-year American Community Survey (ACS) data and 5-year Census Transportation Planning Products (CTPP) data. The MIC is responsible for defining these zones for all of St. Louis County, MN and Douglas County, WI.

Bike to Work Day – Friday May 20, 2011, James Gittemeier

The MIC is leading the sixth annual Bike to Work Day morning commuter events for the Twin Ports. The event will include 2 bike stations, one in Duluth at Lake Avenue and Superior Street and the other in Superior at Tower Avenue and Belknap Street. Both events will have refreshments, safety inspections, and bicycle commuter information. In addition, the DTA will be at the Duluth event for a bikes-on-bus rack demonstration. Both events will take place from 6:30am to 8:30am and are free and open to the public. No registration is needed.

10. Adjournment

With no further agenda items or announcements, Chair Serck asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:54.

Motion

**Discussion
and Vote**

Heather Rand/Denny Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.