



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
Transportation Advisory Committee
MEETING SUMMARY
Tuesday, June 14, 2011 at 1:30 p.m.

Meeting Location	Hampton Inn – Duluth, MN	
Meeting Chair	Jason Serck	
Note Taker(s)	Laurel Davis	
Members Present	Chuck Froseth	City of Duluth Community Development Dept.
	Jim Heilig	DTA (Alternate)
	Alison Johnson	Duluth Airport Authority (Alternate)
	Denny Johnson	Mn/DOT District 1
	Cindy Petkac	City of Duluth Planning Dept
	Heather Rand	Mn DEED
	Jim Rohweder	City of Proctor
	David Salo	City of Hermantown
	Jason Serck	City of Superior
	Jim Sharrow	Duluth Seaway Port Authority
	Dena Young	WisDOT NW Region
Members Absent	Brian Boder	St. Louis County Public Works
	Jim Foldesi*	St. Louis County Engineering
	Jeff Goetzman	City of Superior
	Paul Halverson*	Douglas County
	Bryn Jacobson	Bike/Pedestrian Rep
	Dennis Jensen	Duluth Transit Authority
	Walter Leu	Mn/DOT District 1
	Cari Pedersen	City of Duluth Engineering
	Brian Ryks	Duluth Airport Authority
	Cindy Voight	City of Duluth Engineering
		*Excused
Others Present	Laurel Davis	MIC Administrative Assistant
	James Gittemeier	MIC Senior Planner
	Robert Herling	MIC Planner
	Sheldon Johnson	MIC Deputy Director
	Morrie Luke	WisDOT
	Vic Lund	St. Louis County
	Andy McDonald	MIC Principal Planner
	Kody Thurnau	MIC GIS Specialist
	Rondi Watson	ARDC / MIC Planning Assistant

1. Introductions and Agenda Review

Chair Jason Serck called the meeting to order at 1:34. 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 5/17/11

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
Discussion
and Vote Chuck Froseth/David Salo moved to approve the 5/17/11 meeting summary as presented. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

3. MIC Work Program Amendment

We will propose an amendment to the Work Program and Budget to the total of \$190,000 in federal funds with match coming exclusively from the submitting entities: St. Louis County (Intersection Control Evaluation), Duluth Airport Authority (Air Service and Air Cargo Analysis), and the Duluth Seaway Port Authority (Cruise Ship Facility Study). In addition, I have been able to work with our modeling consultant that will conduct the work for Duluth's 6th AE study concerning new (potential) access measures and will be able to wrap this project into the current budget. I will still take advantage of the City's proposal to aid in cost-sharing (20%) for this project. A resolution amending the UPWP is up for approval. I will alter the actual document upon approval of this amendment from federal and state agencies. Request for Proposals (RFPs) could not be sent out until the federal and state representatives fully approve the amendment.

Rondi Watson presented an overview of the proposed amendment to the MIC Work Program and outlined the various projects as described above, making note of the special allocation of CPG funds and pointing out the 20% matching grant from the City.

Motion
Discussion
& Vote Denny Johnson/Alison Johnson moved to approve the MIC Work Program Amendment. There was minimal discussion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

4. Amendment #11 to the 2011-2014 Superior Area TIP *

This amendment for approval is to make geometric changes and install signals at the juncture of the I-535/STH 53 eastbound off-ramp (from the Blatnik bridge) and N 4th Street. Engineering is set for this year with construction in 2012. Overall project cost is \$280,000.

Dena Young pointed out that the \$280,000 is for the engineering, and does not include construction. She said the total cost of the project was less than \$2 million.

Motion
Discussion
& Vote Dena Young/Jim Rohweder moved to approve the Superior Area TIP Amendment. There was minimal discussion and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

5. Harbor Planning Update

The Harbor Technical Advisory Committee met on Wednesday June 1 at the Inn on Lake Superior in Duluth. We heard presentations on Detroit District Activities in the Duluth-Superior Harbor by the Army Corps, Floating Treatment Wetlands, Follow Up from Letter to MPCA and MnDOT Commissioners, and Section 10 Regulations Enforcement. I will provide a brief summary of these topics at our upcoming meetings.

Andy McDonald gave a presentation on the topics discussed at the June 1st HTAC meeting, starting with a description of the presentation by Lt. Col. Mike Derosier on dredging in the Duluth-Superior area and the status of the Erie Pier facility. Erie Pier is expected to be full by 2015, and measures being considered include raising the dikes, and using Erie Pier as a processing facility.

Next he gave information on the floating wetlands presentation from Bluewing Environmental. These are manufactured island bases that get planted with live material and anchored out in polluted water to help clean it.

Cindy Petkac asked if they remove the islands at any point and McDonald said he believed they were fairly permanent. She also wanted to know if there any of the islands in Minnesota, Steve O'Neil said he thought there were a couple in Wisconsin but that mainly these were being done out in Maryland at the moment. McDonald commented that the HTAC felt it was something to consider for future projects and was good to know about.

McDonald then reported on the results of the letter to MPCA and MnDOT regarding the use of dredged material from Erie Pier in the I-35 construction project. He said they believe they got a positive response in that they were told the Erie Pier material doesn't constitute solid waste and that the permit they already have serves the same purpose as the requested BUD. MnDOT currently wants to review the information in the current permit.

Following that, McDonald outlined the concerns being raised about the enforcement of Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899. The main areas of conflict are a discrepancy between beliefs of what areas are actually covered under this act, and the confusion created by having two people in two states covering the same area independently. Two main solutions are currently being implemented. The first is an outline of the shoreline as it was in 1899 being created by the Army Corps GIS division in an attempt to accurately define the enforcement area. The second is a position being created by the Corps that will have one person overseeing both sides of the harbor.

Finally, McDonald briefly mentioned the May 23rd Propeller Club luncheon, and the May 24th christening of the Oberstar.

6. TSM Update

The MIC completed the 2011 TSM Assessment in February and identified a series of Duluth and Superior intersections as potential locations of concern. The MIC staff is preparing to meet with area jurisdictions during the summer of 2011 to discuss potential TSM mitigation strategies for a number of these intersections, which would be included as project

recommendations in a final TSM plan.

Robert Herling presented the results of the TSM Assessment and outlined the next steps to be taken. He said the first step is to meet with area jurisdictions to discuss potential solutions. He explained that they evaluated a group of intersections, looking specifically at safety and operations. They used a short scale so as not to actually rank intersections, but sort out ones that are facing the most issues. The result was that eight intersections have been identified as needing the most attention. He said that some of those intersections fall into upcoming projects and have been flagged so these issues can be addressed at that time.

He stated that their projected schedule was to contact jurisdictions and analyze crash histories by June 30, meet with jurisdictions to discuss possible improvements by July 30, and have a plan drafted by September.

Morrie Luke asked how the intersections were chosen. Herling said they were chosen based on crash rates, and then pulled in some of the intersections looked at in the last TSM update.

7. Safe Routes to School Update

The MIC will assist the City of Duluth, the Duluth School District, Fit City Duluth and the Proctor School District with putting together grant applications for 2011 Safe Routes to School funding for:

1. Bay View Elementary
2. Grant Elementary
3. Laura MacArthur Elementary

The grants applications have a quick timeframe, as they are due on June 15, 2011. The projects will be picked in July and awardees will be notified in August.

James Gittemeier presented the Safe Routes to School update, explaining that they will be submitting grant applications for the three schools listed above. He said that although Bay View Elementary is in Proctor, the City of Duluth will be the project sponsor.

Requests for Bay View include completing the sidewalks, improving a common trail currently in use so students can avoid Vineland Street, improving crosswalks, and installing yellow blinking LED lights to flash during school time.

Gittemeier said Grant school is being closed and added onto. Sidewalk improvement is the major request for Grant, focusing on the upper side of the street by the fields to tie them in. They will also be requesting new crossing signs, improved crosswalks, and LED blinking systems.

Next Gittemeier outlined the proposals for Laura MacArthur Elementary school. These include completing the sidewalk network, improvements to the key intersection of Elinor and Central Entrance, and an LED blinking system for the intersection at W. 6th Street. He also mentioned

that they would like to start some kind of assessment to find a better solution for that intersection.

Morrie Luke asked if we would be notifying the media about the purpose of the LED blinking systems, or creating some other kind of public education program. Gittemeier agreed that there should be community involvement, but said nothing specific has been planned at this point.

James Serck asked when we will be hearing about the results of these applications, and Gittemeier replied that the decisions should be made by the end of August.

Denny Johnson asked for rough cost estimates for each of the projects. Gittemeier said that Bay View was approximately \$100,000, Grant would be about \$150,000, and Laura MacArthur was \$63,000.

Cindy Petkac wanted to know if we have prioritized the three projects. Gittemeier explained that they haven't been because the grants are based on merit, but said that he would think MacArthur would take precedence because so much work has already been done, and Grant because it's closed and it would make sense to start on that one.

8. Central Entrance Study

MIC staff recently met with City of Duluth, St. Louis County and MnDOT regarding data collection efforts this summer related to different traffic studies in the Central Entrance area. The purpose of this meeting was to identify opportunities to work cooperatively to maximize resources as we collect information in support of the traffic studies and modeling efforts. We will be working with our modeling consultant URS to develop a small area model of the Central Entrance corridor. MIC staff will be out in the field collecting turning movement counts at various intersections in support of this effort. Our counts will be shared with MnDOT to support some of their traffic signal coordination efforts. The City and County will also be collecting data that will be useful to a numbers of studies.

Andy McDonald presented an update on the modeling being done for the Central Entrance Study. Data being collected for the modeling includes turning movement counts, signal timing, and timing run information. He stated that there would be a twelve hour count being done at the intersection of Arlington and Central Entrance on June 15.

McDonald also explained that the MIC staff had met with MnDot to discuss ways to maximize resources for the data collection effort. It was decided that the intersections would be split between organizations, with MnDOT doing Trinity, St. Louis County doing Arlington, and the MIC doing Pecan, Blackman, Basswood, Anderson and Mall Drive. This data will be used by URS to create traffic models for the Central Entrance Corridor.

9. Human Services Transit Plan Update

A regional workshop focused on improving coordinating and improving transportation services in the Arrowhead region (including the Duluth metro) was held on June 7th. Those who attended the workshop participated in activities designed to identify strengths and

weaknesses in transportation services throughout the region, as well as potential Human Services Transit related improvements. The MIC will provide a summary report of these potential improvement projects, which will potentially become part of a Coordinated Human Services Transit plan and be eligible to receive federal transit funding.

Robert Herling gave an update on the status of the Human Services Transit Plan, explaining the three phases of the project. He said the first phase was the survey which has been completed with a 20% return rate on 200 invitations sent out. The results of this survey were processed and brought to the steering committee in May. This was the second phase in which fourteen members of the committee examined the survey results, reviewed the 2007 plan and brainstormed who should be invited to the June 7th workshop. Herling said that the June 7th workshop was phase three of the project and turned out to be very successful. The forty workshop participants included transit organizations, human rights organizations and seniors programs. They identified what they felt were the top five strengths and weaknesses of the transit system as follows:

Strengths: Existing collaboration, accessibility, safe/efficient/economical, volunteers, reliability.

Weaknesses: Resource availability, limited rural services, awareness, lack of specialized services, cost of operations.

Herling also said they came up with strategies for solutions that include: resource directories, coordination between providers with regards to services and scheduling, and hubs for transportation.

Finally, Herling said the next step was another steering committee meeting on June 29th to review the workshop results and identify preferred strategies. Following that, a draft plan should be done by August 2011 and ready for review, with the final goal to adopt a plan in September 2011.

10. Sidewalk Study

MIC staff has gotten a good start in creating the sidewalk inventory and condition analysis with hard work from our recent intern Jessica Montgomery. We will be training in our new intern Brian Heaton to pick up where Jessica left off. I will provide an update on the progress of the inventory as well as some of the groups we have met with.

Andy McDonald presented an update on the sidewalk study. He said that the initial phase of the project, digitizing sidewalks from aerial photos, is complete and that the fieldwork portion of the project is still ongoing. This consists of doing a physical inventory and condition analysis aided by GPS.

He also said that he did a presentation to the Duluth Commission on Disabilities, outlining the inventory and condition analysis, and that as part of Phase 2 we will be wanting to know where disabled citizens are traveling by sidewalk because the conditions affect accessibility.

11. Project Updates

MIC Social Media and Public Involvement Update, Rondi Watson

We have launched some new social media initiatives in our effort to reach out to the public to educate them about the MIC's work and to gain their input into our planning initiatives. Our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/dsmic) garnered 57 'likes' (hopefully you are among them!) and over 3,000 page views during its first month. Our OpenMIC blog got off to a good start, as well, with 135 people visiting 2 to 3 of our posts. We put forward information about the federal gas tax and transportation infrastructure, the DTA's bike racks, Bike to Work Day and port-related topics. We encourage you to subscribe to receive the blog as posts are published at www.duluthsuperioropenmic.org. Look for the "Want this Blog via Email?" section and sign up.

Rondi Watson gave an update on the MIC's social media efforts outlining the above information. She explained that our goal is to simplify what we do in order to educate the public.

CTS Meeting, Robert Herling

MIC staff attended the Center for Transportation Studies (CTS) 2011 Transportation Research Conference on May 24th, in St. Paul, MN. This conference offered a series of panels reporting on a variety of current research being done in a variety of transportation-related areas.

Robert Herling gave a brief update on the Transportation Research Conference he attended, stating that there was a lot of good research being done. Topics he felt were of note included a freight study showing the lack of waysides for trucks, teen driving issues, and quality of life in the transportation system.

Duluth Area 2011-2014 TIP Administrative Change, James Gittemeier

A correction to the FTA amount of the DTA's Operating and Preventative Maintenance funding has been made for FY 2011. The federal funding was incorrectly listed as \$738,000, but should have been entered as \$1,300,000. Because there is no change in the project scope nor total project cost, MIC staff have administratively made the change.

12. Adjournment

With no further agenda items or announcements, Chair Serck asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:38.

**Motion
Discussion
and Vote**

David Salo/Jason Serck moved to adjourn the meeting. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.