



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
Transportation Advisory Committee
MEETING SUMMARY
Tuesday, October 18, 2011, 1:30 p.m.

Meeting Location	WisDOT Lake Superior Room, Superior, Wisconsin	
Meeting Chair	Cari Pedersen	
Note Taker(s)	Laurel Davis	
Members Present	Bryan Anderson	Mn/DOT District 1
	Matt Decur	City of Duluth Engineering
	Jim Foldesi	St. Louis County Engineering
	Chuck Froseth	City of Duluth Community Development Dept
	Alison Johnson	Duluth Airport Authority
	Walter Leu	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
	David Salo	City of Hermantown
	Cindy Voigt	City of Duluth Engineering
Members Absent	Jeff Goetzman*	City of Superior
	Paul Halverson*	Douglas County
	Bryn Jacobson	Bike/Pedestrian Rep
	Dennis Jensen	Duluth Transit Authority
	Brian Ryks	Duluth Airport Authority
	Jason Serck*	City of Superior
	Jim Sharrow	Duluth Seaway Port Authority
	Dena Young	WisDOT NW Region
		*Excused
Others Present	Ron Chicka	ARDC/MIC Director
	Laurel Davis	ARDC/MIC Administrative Assistant
	James Gittemeier	ARDC/MIC Senior Planner
	Robert Herling	ARDC/MIC Planner
	Sheldon Johnson	NWRPC
	Andy McDonald	ARDC/MIC Principal Planner
	Kody Thurnau	ARDC/MIC GIS Specialist
	Rondi Watson	ARDC/MIC Planning Assistant

1. Introductions and Agenda Review

Chair Cari Pedersen called the meeting to order at 1:33. All meeting attendees introduced themselves. She asked if there were any proposed changes to the agenda.

Ron Chicka asked that Item #3 on the Agenda, Draft Work Program 2012-2013, be removed, and he would have the draft to members before the December meeting.

2. Committee Business

Meeting Summary of 09-20-11

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

Motion Jim Foldesi/David Salo moved to approve the 09-20-11 meeting summary as
Discussion presented. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.
and Vote

3. Final 2012-2015 Superior Area TIP

The FINAL Superior Urbanized Area 2012-2015 TIP will be considered for approval at the upcoming October meetings. After having the document available for public comment at the Superior Public Library and the MIC webpage since August 26 and a public information session on September 20 at the Government Center located in Superior, no formal comments have been provided. The only change to the plan document since its public release on August 17 is the inclusion of project number 113-12-013 Belknap Avenue rehabilitation from Banks Avenue to Hill Avenue. This project is scheduled for preliminary engineering in 2012. Construction related to this project is not included in the 2012-2015 TIP as the construction phase is currently programmed for calendar year 2018.

Motion Walter Leu/Jim Rohweder moved to approve the TIP as presented. There was no
Discussion discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.
and Vote

4. Central Entrance Study

We have currently finished our collection of turning movement data and are working with URS, our modeling consultant, on development of a small area model. This model will show us how future proposed land use changes will impact traffic flow in the corridor. We have received some input on our access management section and we will review that at our upcoming meetings. We will also be bringing forward draft sections relating to pedestrian, bike and transit issues. We conducted a post card mailing to area residents directing them to a survey about Central Entrance and we will review preliminary results.

Andy McDonald began by outlining a few changes that have been made to the recommendations based on input they have received. The alley above Palm Street cannot be vacated because too many land parcels would no longer have access. Clearwood Drive will not be connected with Central High Drive due to slope and other difficulties and would instead be realigned with Palm Street. It's been suggested that rather than closing Robin Avenue off, it be made into a right in/right out access.

Chuck Froseth stated that he recalled some issues with wetlands around Home Depot that may cause issues with the proposed route there. Cindy Petkac responded that there is one buildable parcel there, and Froseth said he hoped that would be made clear to the public.

McDonald then presented results of the Central Entrance study, stating that eighty-five responses were received and that the survey would be left open a while longer. He also mentioned a previous survey, conducted by phone ten years ago, which covered a larger corridor, but which can provide a basis for some comparison of public views then and now.

More than half the respondents make at least six to ten trips using Central Entrance each week, and the overwhelming majority of all respondents rated Central Entrance “Bad” or “Very Bad” in terms of things such as safety, traffic congestion, speeding traffic, making turns and accessing local businesses. Eighty-one percent said they have avoided using Central Entrance for these reasons, and of those, eighty-nine percent gave traffic congestion as their primary reason.

McDonald also presented some bike and pedestrian considerations that should be taken into account when redesigning Central Entrance and showed slides of several proposed bike paths, sidewalks, transit centers, and crossings. He explained that several of these recommendations have been in pieces in various other plans.

Cindy Petkac said she believed there was supposed to be a sidewalk along Home Depot according to the building plan.

McDonald concluded by stating that he would be sending this draft around and welcomed comments and input on these recommendations.

5. Superior TSM

In September, MIC staff met with the traffic engineers from the City of Superior and Wisconsin DOT to discuss potential safety and operational issues at those locations identified in the MIC’s 2011 Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Assessment of Superior area intersections. From these discussions, a number of low-cost treatments were identified for recommendation. These recommendations are being added to the TSM assessment document that was drafted earlier in the year. Together, this information and is being brought before the MIC Policy Board as the *2011 TSM Assessment of Superior Intersections* for approval.

Robert Herling presented the Superior TSM, beginning with an explanation of how the intersections considered were chosen by entering crash data and various other information for the past several years and selecting those that fell within the lowest safety scores.

He then moved onto the recommended TSM actions for each intersection:

Hammond Ave & N. 5th Street: Recommended actions are a speed display for southbound

traffic, explore closing or modifying access closest to the intersection, create a pedestrian island, explore modifying the transit route. Herling said the proposed changes may cause complications with existing bus routes, and there may need to be a preemptive change to that route.

Tower & 21st Street: Investigate issues with location of loop detectors, conduct a signal study, investigate clearance intervals and pedestrian crossing times.

CTH E & CTH Z: Conduct a speed survey, and consider converting it to a four-way stop.

Hammond Ave & Winter Street: Paint centerline and edgelines, conduct a study of signal times and railway operation and consider moving or adding signals to Winter Street.

Herling pointed out that the TSM would be available to comment on until December, and urged members to take a look and contact him with their thoughts or concerns. The draft TSM can be found on the MIC website (www.dsmic.org) by clicking the "Transportation Systems Management (TSM)" link in the right hand column. He also stated that there would be a similar TSM for intersections in the Duluth area that he would be presenting at the December meeting.

6. Sidewalk Study Discussion

Our temp worker, Marc Mayer, has nearly completed the sidewalk inventory. This is the first phase of the study. The second phase of the study includes identifying priority segments of sidewalk. A tool we are considering utilizing is a pedestrian priority model used in San Diego (see attached pdf file). The model has three basic components – pedestrian generators, attractors and detractors. We would replicate this model but make adjustments to reflect the unique characteristics of our area.

Andy McDonald presented an update to the sidewalk study, introducing the second phase of the project and the pedestrian priority model used in San Diego that they will be using as a template. He explained that they'd be going through this as a draft and would then bring it before the committee to see if it makes sense.

He then went on to define the three basic components of the model:

- **Pedestrian Generators:** Includes things like people who walk to work, population density of groups such as seniors and youth, household income, and mixed use areas.
- **Pedestrian Attractors:** Includes schools, universities, transit stations, libraries, post offices, parks and retail shopping.
- **Pedestrian Detractors:** Includes safety, traffic, slope, street lighting, and railroads or freeways.

McDonald explained that all of these things are given a score based on a defined scale and weighted to account for varying conditions, with the end goal to be prioritizing the sidewalk

system for future planning.

Cindy Petkac asked what the time line was for the second phase of the study, because they would like to use the information in the Higher Education Small Area Plan and are hoping to be able to bring recommendations to the public in January. McDonald said they were hoping to have something by the end of the year.

Jim Foldesi asked how the detractors affect the model, and Kody Thurnau responded that they add to the priority of an area, making it more important to fix.

McDonald concluded by stating that he would be contacting those who worked on the San Diego project to get more information about how they used their model, and how to conduct a study using it.

7. Emerging Issues/Roundtable Discussion

24th Avenue W and Piedmont – The MIC was contacted by a person in this neighborhood (along Springvale east of Piedmont) concerning traffic concerns near this intersection. The concern is mainly a sight distance and reaction time issue concerning the flow on Piedmont; however, it might be worth looking into the level of service at 24th Avenue W especially during the peak as gaps on Piedmont are infrequent, causing atypical queuing and traffic backups on 24th Avenue W. The question is: should some data be collected to confirm the perception of a problem?

Ron Chicka introduced this topic, stating that he wasn't sure what could be done here and asking for input.

Cari Pedersen said they had recently gotten an email complaining of the problem. Their determination was that it was too close to the next intersection for signals and that the problem seemed to be during a fairly short duration of the day.

Walter Leu commented that the morning is not an issue, it's the evening traffic that is the problem.

Jim Foldesi agreed, stating he's seen the evening peak and added that limited sight distance complicates the matter. He also suggested taking the wait and see approach and watching what happens once the freeway project is finished.

Cindy Petkac asked if the issue was due to slope, or if it was a case of trees that could be trimmed or similar. Chicka explained it was the slope.

Cari Pedersen suggested limiting turns during the peak period to right turns only.

Matt Decur asked if there was another exit out of the Springvale neighborhood and several people said that there were a few of them.

Kenwood/Arrowhead intersection – As discussed at prior meetings, MIC staff would like to collect turn movement information at this intersection in conjunction with the City of Duluth's wishes to detail the traffic for a proposed development on the southwest corner. We will

propose for the TAC to comment on concerning our tasks to document the needed data for the City.

Ron Chicka stated that some turning counts were done for this intersection and of note was that eastbound traffic going to southbound traffic had more activity than they expected to see.

Cindy Voigt suggested hiring a consultant and using both this data and that compiled by the city.

New Issues

David Salo announced that the Maple Grove/Stebner project was coming to a close and expected it to be fully signalized by mid-November.

Salo also commented that as the Loberg Road is being developed, a different mode of transportation has become apparent – four and six wheeled electric chairs. Since there is no sidewalk from Loberg up to Walmart, they are using the road, and it's multiple trips per day. There is talk about putting in sidewalks there, and getting some crosswalks put in. Jim Foldesi said we need to make cleaning up sidewalks in winter a higher priority, and Ron Chicka commented that whole next phase is electric vehicles themselves, and what roads can they really go on.

Salo then introduced an issue at the intersection of Mall Drive and HWY 53, by Walmart. He said this was a prescribed design that came to Walmart, and everything was inspected going in. The problem is that everyone that makes that right heading out makes a U-turn around the median. Who's responsibility to fix? Do we not care and let it go? Do we start ticketing it? He said you may have the best intension in design but the public may have a completely different idea and if they can get away with it they will.

Alison Johnson asked if maybe it was simply a learning curve?

Salo said he thought it's just going to become a habit and wondered if anything needed to be done if it wasn't causing accidents.

Cindy Petkac asked why it's there in the first place. Salo explained that it was worked out with Walmart and Mn/DOT. He was told that Mn/DOT said it was the way it was needed to be done, but he's not sure where that came from and would like to check it out.

Jim Foldesi wondered if we created a worse situation than previously existed.

Cari Pedersen commented that there are other places nearby where the intent IS to go around the median. Salo agreed, saying we've trained people to do it.

Alison Johnson announced that the Allegiant service to Phoenix would be starting October 21st and invited everyone to attend.

8. Project Updates

Minnesota GO Vision Draft, *Lynne Bly, Mn/DOT Central Office*

The Minnesota Department of Transportation launched the Minnesota GO visioning process to better align the transportation system with what Minnesotans expect for their quality of life, economy and natural environment.

The effort is based on an understanding that transportation is a means to other ends, not an end in itself. It also recognizes that infrastructure is only one of many elements necessary to achieving a high quality of life, a competitive economy and a healthy environment.

This 50-year vision for transportation will require consistency and collaboration across jurisdictions and sectors to be fully achieved. Although Mn/DOT initiated the effort to develop the vision, this is a vision for all forms of transportation, and ownership of the vision is a shared responsibility.

Lincoln Park Pedestrian Study, *James Gittemeier*

A public meeting on the draft Lincoln Park Study was held. A few minor changes were requested, but the major recommendations were accepted. Therefore, MIC staff will complete work on the Lincoln Park Pedestrian Corridor Plan.

James Gittemeier stated that they were just finishing up that plan.

Bike Share Forum, *James Gittemeier*

MIC hosted a discussion forum on the concept of bike sharing. Bike Sharing is a city wide rental bicycling system that is being implemented in cities across the country, including Minneapolis and St. Paul. The forum took place on October 14, and was led by a group who helped put together the 2nd phase of Twin Cities' system.

James Gittemeier said a very good discussion took place at the forum, and that the people who attended would like to bring back speaker Antonio Rosell, Director of Community Design Group, LLC. for an evening meeting. He also mentioned that on the blog www.perfectduluthday.com there was a great discussion of this.

Walk to School Day – Superior Northern Lights Elementary, *James Gittemeier*

The MIC, Healthier Douglas County and Northern Lights Elementary participated in National Walk to School Day on October 5th. The event had the assistance of the City of Superior Police Department, Superior School District, PTA, and other parents as well. The students at Northern Lights were encouraged to meet at 3 different locations (parks closest to their houses (Wade Bowl, Hammond Park & Heritage Park) and form into walking parades as they walked to school together that morning.

Duluth Charrette - Community Meeting on Connectivity, *James Gittemeier*

The MIC participated in the Duluth Charrette Update, organized by Duluth LISC and the City

of Duluth. The Duluth Charrette originally took place in 2005. The update was organized to recognize the successes and refocus on areas still in need of improvement. MIC staff participated in a Housing Meeting and a Connectivity Meeting on October 3rd, to discuss the latest news on these topics.

Minnesota State APA Conference, Rondi Watson

There is a great deal of interest in the MIC's new effort to incorporate social networking tools into our public participation strategies, as evidenced by several recent invitations to speak on this topic. Most recently I presented information about planning for and implementing the [OpenMIC blog](#) and the MIC's [Facebook page](#) at the statewide conference of the Minnesota chapter of the American Planning Association, held in St. Cloud on September 28 – 30.

Rondi Watson stated that there continues to be an interest in getting into this “new town square” and that right now a lot of people are looking at learning how to do it. She also said that platforms like www.perfectduluthday.com are excellent, especially in terms of being able to share information and discussions with other people simply by sending a link.

9. Adjournment

With no further agenda items or announcements, Chair Cari Pedersen asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:55.

Motion

**Discussion
and Vote**

Jim Foldesi/Alison Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.