



Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

Tuesday, February 16th, 2021 1:30 pm

Virtual MS Teams Meeting

Meeting Summary

Note Taker(s)	Barb Peterson	
Members Present		
Committee Vice-Chair	Chris Belden	Duluth Transit Authority
	Chris Carlson	City of Superior-Public Works
Committee Chair	Kate Ferguson	Duluth Seaway Port Authority
	Jim Foldesi	St Louis Cnty
	Krysten Saatela Foster	MnDOT – Dist 1
	Todd Janigo	City of Superior – Public Works
	Chris Lee	City of Duluth Planning
	Kris Liljeblad	City of Duluth Planning
<i>alternate</i>	John Mulder	City of Hermantown
	Cari Pedersen	City of Duluth
	Jess Rich	City of Proctor
	Dena Ryan	WisDOT NW Region
	Karl Schuettler	Northspan Group
	Cindy Voigt	City of Duluth Engineering
	Maren Webb	MnDOT Dist 1
	Tom Werner	Duluth Airport Authority
Members Absent		* Excused Absence
	David Bolf	City of Hermantown
<i>alternate</i>	Todd Campbell	MnDOT Dist 1
	Jason Jackman*	Douglas County
<i>alternate</i>	Rod Fournier	Duluth Transit Authority
	vacant	Mobility Challenged Community
	vacant	Active Transportation/Zeitgeist Arts
Others Present		
	Mike Casey	Friends of Western Duluth Parks & Trails
	Ron Chicka	MIC Director
	Andrea Crouse	ZietgiestArts
	Bruce Fehringer	Smithville Resident
	James Gittemeier	MIC Principal Planner
	Duane Hill	MnDOT Dist 1
	Barb Peterson	MIC Admin Asst
	Anna Pierce	MnDOT Central Office
	Bobbi Retzlaff	FHWA Community Planner
	Jake Rueter	MnDOT Pedestrian & Bicycle Planner
	Ricky Sarran	MIC-GIS Specialist
	Rondi Watson	MIC Communications Coordinator
	Mike Wenholz	MIC Senior Planner



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1. INTRODUCTIONS / AGENDA REVIEW

Chair Kate Ferguson called the meeting to order at 1:31 pm. All meeting attendees introduced themselves

2. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- **Meeting Summary of 1.19.21 (for Approval)**

Motion Discussion and Vote	Kris Liljeblad/Jim Foldesi moved to approve the 1.19.21 meeting summary. There was no discussion; the motion was approved unanimously.
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- **MIC Director's Report**

Ron Chicka briefly shared that he is involved on the steering committee for the DTA's Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA). The DTA had hired a consultant who provided a report documenting many items pertaining to service pros and cons in the entire service area. Key parts of the city were identified for both high and low ridership.

Ron has also been asked to serve on the steering committee for the City of Superior's update of their Comprehensive Plan. The committee is working with a consultant hired by the city. A survey will be a part of data collection and should be out in the next month or so.

Ron also gave an update on Federal Legislation happenings which include a \$1.9 trillion recovery plan, titled the American Rescue Plan put forth by the new Administration for consideration by Congress. We are also watching for a new Transportation Bill due to sunset at the end of September.

For more details see the meeting materials.

***** Opportunity for Public Comment*****

Mike Casey representing Friends of Western Duluth Parks & Trails spoke up questioning the role of the BPAC as an advisory board; advising who? Advising on what? He also commented that he thought that they should meet monthly. Mike also commented that the TIP/STIP processed seemed to be lacking as to public commenting on the projects. He stated he would be sending a letter.

3. 2021-2024 SUPERIOR AREA TIP AMENDMENTS #5-9

Sheldon Johnson described the 4 – 5310 projects funding the North Country Independent Living voucher program, funding a mobility manager, and Minivan replacements for Challenge Center, Inc and Senior Connections Inc.

Motion Discussion and Vote	Chris Belden/Dena Ryan moved to approve Amendments #5-9 to the 2021-2024 Superior Area TIP. There was no discussion; the motion was approved unanimously.
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Details can be found after the end of this summary or in the meeting materials.



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4. GUEST SPEAKER: JAKE RUETER, MNDOT PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE PLANNER

MNDOT PEDESTRIAN PLAN

Jake provided an overview of the Statewide Pedestrian System Plan. He reviewed the process beginning in Feb 2019. Through the use sidewalk clings they gathered survey information from across the state and found that 3 out of 4 respondents supported improvements for walking, improving winter maintenance and improving accessibility were some of the outcomes. They participated in 42 various events looking for input.

Jake reviewed the goals of the plan and the possible uses. He shared the reasons for investing in walking and how to plan for these investments. Adding to that he discussed the people walking are the most vulnerable users of the transportation system.

He finished up by sharing that comments are still being reviewed and responded to while making edits to the plan. MnDOT is looking to adopt the plan in May 2021.

Kris Liljeblad said he appreciated the acknowledgement of snow removal issues. He also asked if MnDOT could help small towns like Proctor develop ADA Plans.

Jake said he would pass that info along to the ADA group.

Maren Webb stated that there had been no demonstration project in Dist 1 but that they are still working on one.

PRIORITY AREA FOR WALKING STUDY (PAWS) MAP

THE PAWS WEB APP

5. DULUTH-SUPERIOR METRO AREA PEDESTRIAN PLAN-DRAFT OVERVIEW

James Gittemeier began his presentation discussing the essential role walking plays in the urban transportation system. This updated pedestrian plan:

- Aspires to a Vision
- Sets goals & priorities
- Measures progress

James continued sharing the Federal rules and guidance and then shared the issues with walking. He shared the recent crash data involving pedestrians and strategies to decrease those crashes. James also addressed the problem of keeping the sidewalks and paths cleared of snow and obstructions.

- Next came the recommendations included in the plan which include:
- Maintain walkways – highest priority areas
- Close key gaps (identified by jurisdiction)
- Improve pedestrian crossings
- Add pedestrian-oriented amenities

He concluded with what future studies might address:

- Up/down Hill Mobility – Duluth
- Connections/spur to Multi-use Paths - MIC wide
- Railroad Crossings – Superior
- Skyline Parkway
- Skywalk System (ADA & Ped-friendly) – Duluth
- Incorporating green infrastructure



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Lastly, James addressed how to measure progress and shared some of the comments that have been received.

6. FY 2025 DULUTH AREA TIP PROJECTS OVERVIEW

James now addressed that there are currently 3 projects that have been submitted, however, there are rumblings that the London Rd project may be pulled. James stated he would be working with the jurisdictions. Virtual public comment meeting will be held in March.

Cindy Voigt asked to be included when public comment meetings will be held so that they can participate.

Jim Foldesi asked the same and stated that Woodland Ave project may be moved up.

7. BIKE & PED ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC) UPDATE

James Gittemeier briefly shared that the BPAC had their meeting on February 4th where they discussed the quarterly meeting structure and the need at times to meet in between those quarterly meetings. Also discussed were the upcoming Morris Thomas Rd project recommendations and the Cross City Trail project alignment for Phase 3.

8. ROUND TABLE/PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jim Foldesi stated that there are going to be several projects coming up such as SRTS, HSIP and few others.

Ron Chicka added that he is working with Central Office concerning schedules for the TIP.

James Gittemeier shared that he will be working closely with the jurisdictions.

Krysten Foster stated that HSIP projects just came in and that SRTS projects are not out yet.

Cindy Voigt said that the "forms" ask for a spreadsheet last fall and they are awaiting approval from Central Office for the detour through Lincoln Park.

Mike Casey thanked Cindy for the detour during the construction. He also added that the Friends of Western Duluth Parks & Trails will continue to push for the lower route of the CCT instead of the upper route.

Bruce Fehring also shares the passion for the lower route of the CCT. His comments are attached.

Kris Liljebblad stated that the city has received the 2 page letter from the group and they are working to find a compromise.

9. PROJECT UPDATES (DETAILS CAN BE FOUND IN THE MEETING MATERIALS)

- Superior Area TIP Administrative Modification #1, Sheldon Johnson
- Duluth Area TIP Administrative Modification #9-13, James Gittemeier
- Central Entrance Project Update, Rondi Watson

Rondi Watson shared that 9 proposals have been received and hope to announce the chosen consultant soon.

10. Adjourn: With no further agenda items, discussions or announcements, Chair Ferguson adjourned the meeting at 3:00 pm.



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ATTACHMENTS:

2021-2024 SUPERIOR AREA TIP AMENDMENTS 5-9

TIP AMENDMENT #5

This project enables North Country Independent Living Center (NCIL) the ability to continue their transportation vouchers program to eligible clients throughout (eight county area including; Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Price, Sawyer, and Washburn) northern Wisconsin. The project provides individuals with disabilities and residents aged 55 and over who are experiencing a transportation barrier a means of traveling to work, school, shopping, and other events. The vouchers are used to reimburse friends, neighbors and other volunteers who use their own vehicle for transporting disabled individuals. Federal funds for this project are made available through the Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) Program administered by WisDOT. The project will span January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021.

2021 Transportation Improvements Projects (Section 5310)

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
North Country Independent Living	Funding of a Voucher Program for individuals with disabilities and others experiencing transportation barriers in 8 NW Counties.	Voucher Program	99,750		99,750	199,500
113-21-014		TOTAL	99,750		99,750	199,500
Amended to TIP in February 2021						

TIP AMENDMENT #6

This project enables North Country Independent Living Center (NCIL) the ability to operate a mobility management program funding staff members who coordinate rides for the region's population seniors and individuals with disabilities, and also work to expand their service, provide outreach and information of transportation options to residents, and work to coordinate rides with other providers. Federal funds for this project are made available through the Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) Program administered by WisDOT. The project will span January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021.



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2021 Transportation Improvements Projects (Section 5310)

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
North Country Independent Living 113-21-015 Amended to TIP in February 2021	Funding a mobility manager within NCIL	Mobility Manager	22,173		5,543	27,716
		TOTAL	22,173		5,543	27,716

TIP AMENDMENT #7

This project enables the Challenge Center to replace a current vehicle with a new Minivan, Rear-load equipped. Federal funds for this project are made available through the Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) Program administered by WisDOT.

2021 Transportation Improvements Projects (Section 5310)

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
Challenge Center, Inc. 113-21-016 Amended to TIP in February 2021	1 - Minivan Replacement Vehicle Purchase Rear-Load Accessible	Vehicle Purchase	32,800		8,200	41,000
		TOTAL	32,800		8,200	41,000

TIP AMENDMENT #8

This project enables Senior Connections to replace a current vehicle with a new Minivan, Side-load equipped. Federal funds for this project are made available through the Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) Program administered by WisDOT.



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2021 Transportation Improvements Projects (Section 5310)

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
Senior Connections, Inc.	1 - Minivan Replacement Vehicle Purchase Side-Load Accessible	Vehicle Purchase	32,800		8,200	41,000
113-21-017 Amended to TIP in February 2021		TOTAL	32,800		8,200	41,000

TIP AMENDMENT #9

WisDOT has requested 113-17-004 be deleted from the current 2021-2024 TIP, due to a change in project length. While 113-17-004 is recommended for deletion, project number 113-20-001 is the same project currently listed in the 2021-2024 TIP that has the same project objectives with the correct beginning and ending project length.

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources Thousands			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
WisDOT	USH 2 (USH 53 Interchange)	PE		\$225		\$225
113-17-004	53 rd Ave E – USH 2/53 Interchange	ROW				
Deleted from TIP in February 2021	Interchange Mainline/Ramp Joint Repairs 1180-00-31	CONST				
		TOTAL		\$225		\$225

If you have any questions regarding this project, please contact me at 715-635-2197 or by email at sjohnson@nwrpc.com.

2021-2024 SUPERIOR AREA TIP ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATION #1

WisDOT has requested an administrative modification to the 2021-2024 TIP, due to a change in year for a project deliverable. TIP project ID 113-16-006, IH 535, Superior to Duluth, St. Louis River Bridge (construction, paint, misc. maintenance 1199-00-74) is currently listed as a 2022 project. WisDOT has requested the project be moved to 2021.

Administrative Modification:

WisDOT 113-16-006 - Change project work efforts from 2022 to 2021.



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2021-2024 DULUTH AREA TIP ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATIONS #9-14

The MIC has approved the requested changes to the following Duluth Area TIP projects. None of these projects meet the thresholds required for a formal amendment. These changes have been administratively made to the TIP. The changes (in red) are detailed in the following table:

Topic:
Cross
City
Trail
Public

Admin Mod #	Project # Jurisdiction & Change	Description	Year	Federal \$	State TH or Bond \$	Local \$	Total \$
9	118-010-028 City of Duluth Year & Cost increase (less \$1m project)	TED: MN 23/West River Drive in Duluth, intersection signalization.	2019 2021	0	0	354,000 375,000	354,000 375,000 6% cost increase
10	6982-318 MnDOT Year & Cost decrease (less than 50% for \$1-3m projects).	SPP I-35, in Proctor & Duluth at Thompson Hill, from 0.51 S0. Boundary Ave to S. end Bridge No: 69879 over MN 23, NB & SB driving lanes excluding ramps, pavement overlay.	2022 2021	2,700,000 1,530,000 (NHPP)	300,000 170,000	0	3,000,000 1,700,000 43% cost decrease
11	6932-14 MnDOT Cost decrease (less than 35% for \$3-10m projects)	MN 194 construct roundabout at CSAH 13/Midway Rd. (Tied to 6916-113)	2022	2,400,000 1,280,000	600,000 320,000	550,000 1,100,000	3,550,000 2,700,000 23% cost decrease
12	6982-345 MnDOT New project	ITS I-35 Scanlon on from JCT MN 33 to Thompson Hill Visitor Center in Proctor. Extend fiber optic cable.	2021	0	600,000	0	600,000
13	8821-332 MnDOT Year change	ITS Districtwide signal communication & PTZ cameras.	2021 2022	324,000	81,000	0	405,000
14	118-147-019 Duluth Cost increase (less than 50% for \$1-3m projects)	E Superior St Recondition, from 45 th Ave E to 60 th Ave E.	2021	1,360,000	357,150 400,000 (MSA)	0 740,000	1,717,150 2,500,000 46% cost increase



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Cross City Trail Public Comment

Good afternoon. I'm Bruce Fehringer I've lived in the Smithville neighborhood of Duluth, across from Morgan Park, for 29 years. I'm here before you regarding the segment 3 trail project - supported by Transportation Alternatives funding approved by this Board.

One of the reasons we have lived in our neighborhood for so many years is the proximity to the wooded area of Spirit Mountain and the Munger trail that runs through it. We long for the day we can bike directly to the Canal Park/Lakewalk area where we can enjoy lunch or shopping.

Extending the trail by the most direct route from the trailhead at Munger Inn to close the gap will **allow** not only us, but so many others in the neighborhoods along the Highway 23/Grand Ave corridor to bike safely to Spirit Valley shopping area and downtown Duluth for pleasure and **work** as well.

When the 2012 flood caused the Munger trail to be closed until repairs were made, I told my middle school age boys to ignore the closure and continue to bike the Munger trail to their summer jobs because it was safer than biking Highway 23/Grand Ave, or any side streets. The Cross City Trail route below Highway 23/Grand Ave. is a TRANSPORTATION route that will be used by many. Anyone who wants to commute from the neighborhoods along Highway 23/Grand Ave. corridor **will not** use the segment 3 trail to go uphill and nearly a mile out of their way to get to Spirit Valley or downtown areas.

I attended the online public meeting last month offered by the City of Duluth where they requested public input for the segment 3 trail route options. As reported in the Duluth News Tribune, the City faced a frustrated group of over 40 participants. Almost all comments were related to the citizens' desire to redirect funds from the uphill loop segment 3 trail to the Cross City Trail segment 6, which would connect Irving Park via the safest, most level, most direct route on a trail that is ADA/UDC compliant for all ages and abilities. This would complete the Cross City Trail spine from Brighton Beach to Western Duluth.

City staff has said several times that the segment 3 trail project is an approved project and the funds are allocated for segment 3. I would like to remind you that segment 4a (from above the Zoo to Munger trail) was a funded project as well, (although only a technicality prevented the funding from being unallocated due to it being part of this same segment 3 uphill loop). In the end, the funding for the 4a project was re-allocated to the very welcomed, Cross City Trail segment 2 section which was completed last fall. My request to you, the MIC Policy Board, **is, to direct the City of Duluth** to use the Transportation Alternatives funding for the **lower** Cross City Trail route which is a **transportation** route, or risk losing the TA funding because the segment 3 uphill loop is not transportation.