

BATTLE CREEK AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Committee

Minutes of February 9, 2022 Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Voting: Mallory Avis, Susan Cronander, Carl Fedders, Nick Lillrose (for Kristine Parsons), Brian Sanada, and Luke Walters
Non-voting: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: Voting: Chaz Wilkey
Non-voting: Andrew Sibold (FHWA) and Southcentral Michigan Planning Council (SMPC)

OTHERS PRESENT: Charlie Barnett, Pat Karr, and Andrew Tilma

Chair Fedders called the meeting to order at 1:36 p.m. in the Springfield City Hall Council Chambers, 601 Avenue A, Springfield MI.

ROLL CALL

Fedders asked all in attendance to introduce themselves. It was determined that a quorum of the voting members were present.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Cronander, supported by Sanada, to approve the agenda. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
22-05**

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Avis, supported by Walters, to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2022 meeting. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
22-06**

COMMUNICATIONS

Karr shared the following communications:

- The final newsletter for the 2045 MTP was completed, printed and posted, and distributed last week. It has generated one comment so far.
- Amendment #14 to the current TIP, approved in January by the BCATS Committees, was federally approved yesterday, February 8, 2022.

- A public notice for the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the Transportation Conformity Report for air quality was prepared and published in the Battle Creek Enquirer. The notice was also posted to the BCATS website.
- Last Thursday, BCATS received final funding figures for the revenue estimates coming from the new federal IIJA bill and they are not a high for the BCATS area as initially reported. This has resulted in changes to the preliminary project lists for the new TIP for the local agencies. This will be discussed under item 7.C. later on the agenda.
- BCATS staff is working on a newsletter to go out shortly about the development of the new FY 2023-2026 TIP once the local project list is finalized.

Walters updated his previous reporting of the IIJA funding situation and explained that a doubling of the funding to the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) had an impact on other funding programs, including the STP funding levels to the MPOs. There was discussion about the TAP program and the discrepancy between the large MPOs that are Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) (areas over 200,000 population) that receive a direct allocation of TAP funding and the smaller MPO areas which are required to compete statewide for this funding category.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to come before the Committee at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

A. BCATS FY20-23 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #15

Tilma reviewed the listing of projects for Amendment #15 to the current TIP. Each of the projects listed was discussed. There are eleven (11) items currently included in this amendment. This is a special amendment opportunity outside of the normal every other month scheduling of amendments. There was additional discussion about the items on the amendment list.

Avis asked if there will be a regularly scheduled amendment opportunity in March. Tilma indicated that there will be if there are items needing to be addressed in an amendment. He also noted that with the development of the new TIP, the overlapping year 2023 projects will need to be the same in the current and new document. He asked the responsible agencies to check the 2023 projects for any changes needed to make sure the projects are exactly the same in both listings. At some point in May or June, the 2023 projects will be frozen, with no changes being able to take place to those projects until the new FY 2023-2026 TIP is federally approved. This is likely to be not until October 1, 2022. There was also discussion of 2022 projects and obligation authority issues.

It was moved by Cronander, supported by Avis, to recommend approval of Amendment #15 to the FY 2020-2023 by the BCATS Policy Committee, as presented by Tilma.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
22-07**

B. BCATS 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Karr indicated that the draft of the document is available for review on the BCATS website. As noted under Communications, the final newsletter for the 2045 MTP was completed, distributed and posted. A Request for Comments public notice was also published and posted. Karr noted the Executive Summary of the 2045 Plan which was provided to the members at the meeting. She stated that the full chapters for the Plan are available for review on the BCATS website. She welcomed comments from the members during this comment period for the Plan.

It was moved by Sanada, supported by Avis, to recommend that the BCATS 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan be approved pending the completion of chapters 13 and 18. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
22-08**

C. BCATS Draft FY 23-26 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Preliminary Project List

Tilma indicated that a preliminary project listing of transportation projects for the FY 2023-2026 TIP was distributed to the members. This is a compilation of projects for that time period drawn from the BCATS long range transportation plan. Some of the information for the local projects will be updated based on the new revenue estimates received from MDOT last Thursday. Projects on this list without reasonably expected funding will not be included in the final listing for the new TIP. Tilma added that only some of the transit projects on the list will be included within the new TIP based on the preferences and practices of the Office of Passenger Transportation at MDOT. There are no projects expected to be in the new TIP which would be considered to be non-exempt for air quality, such as new roads or a widening over one mile in length. Fedders noted a MDOT bridge project on Washington Avenue with preliminary engineering in 2024 that the City of Battle Creek would be interested in having input to during the early stages of the project.

Karr distributed a table showing only the funding related to local agency STUL and air quality funding for the years 2024, 2025 and 2026. This table was only able to be finalized today based on the continuing changes in funding levels for programs with IIJA federal funding. Projects proposed to utilize the Carbon Reduction Program and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funds were also discussed.

There was discussion about the project information needing to be finalized as all of the FY 2023-2026 projects are input into the JobNet database system within the next couple of weeks.

This was an information/discussion item not requiring action at this time.

COMMENTS

A. Next Meeting

Chair Fedders announced that the next meeting of the BCATS Technical Committee is scheduled for March 9, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.

B. Committee Member Comments

Cronander indicated that the City of Battle Creek Planning Department is looking to start work again on the update of the non-motorized plan.

Sanada indicated that he has already sent an e-mail to Corey Hackworth at the Marshall Transportation Service Center (TSC) relative to Fedders interest in the Washington Avenue bridge over the river future project. Fedders expressed his thanks for that effort.

Lillrose reported for the Calhoun County Road Department (CCRD) that work is being finished on the design of the FY 2023 BCATS area road projects. The CCRD also is expected to be the recipient of bridge funding for two bridges under MDOT's bridge bundling project. Tree trimming work is also ongoing.

Avis stated that BCT is awaiting the announcement of transit funding apportionments under the new federal bill.

Fedders reported that the City of Battle Creek's Washington Avenue road project is on target. NEPA work is being done by the City for the North Avenue and Clark Road projects. The Watkins Road drain project will be done with ARPA funds.

Karr added that there has been a call for FY 2024 local safety projects by MDOT and the local agencies should let BCATS know as soon as possible if they plan to submit any applications for that funding category.

C. Public Comments

Barnett asked if the list of projects was significantly aided by the new federal funding. Fedders stated that it added about 11% beyond previous funding. Karr indicated that there are several MDOT projects on the future list that are funded with 100% state funds as a result of a large state bonding effort.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:47 p.m.