

**BATTLE CREEK AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY**

**Technical Committee**

**Minutes of May 8, 2024 Meeting**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Voting: Mallory Avis, Jarret Geering, Max Gierman, Josh Grab, Brian Kernstock and Chaz Wilkey  
Non-voting: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: Voting: Travis Sullivan  
Non-voting: Jenny Staroska and Southcentral Michigan Planning Council (SMPC)

OTHERS PRESENT: Jeff Franklin and Andrew Tilma

Chair Geering called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. in the Springfield City Hall Council Chambers, 601 Avenue A, Springfield MI.

**ROLL CALL**

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

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**It was moved by Avis, supported by Wilkey, to approve the agenda. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Res.  
24-08**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**It was moved by Wilkey, supported by Kernstock, to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2024 meeting. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Res.  
24-09**

## COMMUNICATIONS

Franklin shared the following communications:

- Staff has assembled a BCATS spring newsletter for feedback and distribution. May 2024 marks fifty years of the Battle Creek Area Transportation Study. Please let BCATS staff know of any feedback. Policy Committee will be asked to approve newsletter distribution at their May meeting.
- A Technical Correction has occurred on the City's various road rehabilitation project to align the MDOT Local Agency Programs material with the BCATS TIP. FHWA has granted approval of this BCATS staff action, which clears the TIP for the City to seek obligation of this project.
- Franklin continues to participate in the Beckley Road Corridor Redevelopment Steering Committee. At the May meeting, the group focused on several key findings of the existing Lakeview Downtown Development Authority –
  - More Green Infrastructure is wanted yet limited park space exists. There are resilience concerns (flooding potential, stormwater management, and varying ownership of existing retention areas). There is an oversupply of surface parking.
  - Placemaking – infill development is needed; limited recreation/community space; residential and commercial use separated too much.
  - Car Dependence – overbuilt road network, maintenance of privately owned roads, signals not well timed, sidewalk system missing connections, uncomfortable for biking.
- MDOT informed all Michigan MPOs that the Greenhouse Gas Emissions reduction performance measure target setting has been put on hiatus. The US District Court, Northern Texas, opined that FHWA overstepped its authority with the Greenhouse Gas Emissions rules for target setting. The USDOT may elect to further pursue legal action upholding FHWA rulemaking, but that sounds unlikely given FHWA Lansing Division report. For the moment, Michigan MPOs are relieved of any requirement to report targets on Greenhouse Gas Emission reductions. MDOT continues to update its own Greenhouse Gas Emissions methodology based in the MI Climate Plan, should this situation change in the future.
- The MI Travel Counts survey opportunity is live. BCATS has been asked by MDOT to share that MI Travel Counts is a legitimate survey sponsored and funded by MDOT. The current survey timing is in response to Bipartisan Infrastructure Law speaking to overall effectiveness of travel demand forecast modelling. A survey of this type was last done statewide in 2015. The results of the survey on travel behavior are used to update the statewide travel demand forecast models, including our own BCATS area travel demand forecast model. BCATS will see a high invitation

rate during this earliest stage of the survey – 31,000 of our total 38,000 households (80%) are to receive an invitation to the survey between 4/12/24 and 5/17/24. MDOT hired RSG as the consultant for the survey. There is an incentive depending on household or individual participation, and mode of participation (website or app reporting), ranging from \$10 per household for simple web reporting of a single day of travel behavior, up to \$20 per adult in a household for app mode reporting of a week's worth of travel behavior, and possibly higher incentive amounts for MDOT interpreted "hard to reach populations".

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. FY2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UWP)**

Franklin provided a draft version of the FY25 UWP for review and feedback. Franklin discussed various changes seen in the FY25 UWP versus the current FY24 UWP. This draft version is also under review by MDOT partners.

**It was moved by Kernstock, supported by Wilkey, to recommend approval of the FY2025 UWP by the BCATS Policy Committee, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Res.  
24-10**

#### **B. FY23-26 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #10**

Tilma reviewed the list of projects being proposed for Amendment #10 to the FY 2023-2026 TIP. Tilma commented on the Technical Correction to the BCATS TIP that FHWA accepted, and that the description of the Technical Correction appeared in the newspaper advertisement for this TIP amendment although the advertisement ultimately wasn't necessary.

**It was moved by Grab, supported by Kernstock, to recommend approval of the FY2023-2026 TIP Amendment #10 by the BCATS Policy Committee, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Res.  
24-11**

## COMMENTS

### A. Next Meeting

Chair Geering announced the next meeting of the BCATS Technical Committee is scheduled for June 12, 2024 at 1:30 p.m.

### B. Committee Member Comments

Wilkey reported that the City of Springfield salt barn construction is underway with expected completion by August.

Geering reported that the City of Battle Creek salt burn bids came in high, and funding options are being considered. The City will be trying out a new traffic signal detection system at a couple intersections, and will report back to BCATS members on the results. The Beckley Road traffic signal study ought to commence soon.

Kernstock reported that the N Wattles Road project is wrapping up, with pavement markings expected in the coming week. The S Wattles Road project has commenced, and is expected to take the majority of the summer to complete, with coordination with MDOT on the I-94 underpass. Kernstock reported that the intersection of B Drive South and 6 Mile Road, on the border of Leroy and Newton townships, will be converted to an All Way Stop on May 21<sup>st</sup>.

Grab reported the I-94/I-69 interchange ramps will get a final course paving and markings in the coming months with various closures as needed. Grab reported the final outcome of the I-194 PEL is that both a boulevard and rebuild of in-kind freeway are feasible options, however neither option has funding identified. As funding becomes identified for I-194 work, MDOT will seek further feedback. MDOT will host a meeting in the coming month concerning the proposed I-94/I-69/M-96 Michigan Ave project(s). Grab introduced new Southwest Region planner Adrian Stroupe.

### C. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.