

BATTLE CREEK AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Policy Committee

Minutes of May 28, 2025, Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Voting: Mallory Avis, Kristine Parsons, Erick Stewart, Richard Bayus, Annjanette Kremer, Steve Skalski, Tracy Myers, Kevin Leiter, Aaron Edlefson (for Harry Burdett)
Non-voting: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: Voting: Derek King, Terrie Godde, Laveta Hardish
Non-voting: Jenny Staroska and Southcentral Michigan Planning Council (SMPC)

OTHERS PRESENT: Jeff Franklin, Brandy Standler and Jarret Geering (OHM Advisors)

Vice-Chair Avis called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m. in the Council Room of the Susan L. Anderson Municipal Building (Springfield City Hall), 601 Avenue A, Springfield MI 49037.

ROLL CALL

Avis asked all members and staff 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 Parsons, supported by Stewart, to approve the agenda. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
25-24**

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Parsons, supported by Stewart, to approve the minutes of the April 25, 2025 meeting. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
25-25**

COMMUNICATIONS

Franklin shared the following communications:

- USDOT sent a letter to all States and MPOs regarding the Equal Protection principles of the US Constitution as it relates to the receipt of federal aid under “the Department’s existing interpretation of Federal law.” “MPOs are prohibited from engaging in discriminatory actions in their policies, programs, and activities.” “Whether or not described in neutral terms, any policy, program, or activity that is premised on a prohibited classification, including discriminatory policies or practices designed to achieve so-called ‘diversity, equity, and inclusion’ goals, presumptively violates Federal law.” MPOs must ensure all decisions are merit-based and all policies, programs, and activities are not based on prohibited categories in order to continue to receive Federal aid. MPOs must also cooperate with US Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) when requested.
- Franklin met with Calhoun County Administrator/Controller Kelli Scott, and Grants Coordinator Nicole Stevens, concerning the Calhoun County Consolidated Dispatch Authority proposed project regarding vehicle preemption and rerouting technology at railroad crossings. The majority of the railroad crossings of interest are within the BCATS planning area. CCCDA is interested in a “predictive rail crossing technology solution” from “TRAINFO” that performs traffic management at rail crossings through adaptive signal communication technology, real-time blockage information, and proposed rerouting, that advertises to reduce vehicle delays, as well as improve congestion and emissions. Franklin offered advice on the current “Safe Streets For All” federal grant opportunity, as well as information about the BCATS long-range plan, a similar transit project for the TACC in the forthcoming Transportation Improvement Program, and access to other BCATS federal funding opportunities (through possible coordination with Calhoun County Road Department, TACC, and/or BCATS). While CCCDA is looking for an emergency vehicle rail crossing solution, the TRAINFO technology can apply to all vehicle types (transit and personal automobile).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

A. BCATS’ Public Participation Plan Draft

Franklin commented that the public participation plan, which was made available in April, has been updated including removal of references to the FAST Act and updating information pertaining to the Authorization of the Bipartisan Infrastructure law. Furthermore, language pertaining to outdated

COVID policies was removed. Emphasis was given to electronic communications, including the BCATS website. References to antiquated forms of communication such as fax were also removed. The Signal Newsletter will still be used as a form of communication. The plan was available for longer than 45 days as required.

Kremer inquired about public documents following ADA compliance. Discussion took place. Franklin will follow-up with MDOT concerning ADA compliance for metropolitan transportation organizations.

It was moved by Skalski, supported by Parsons, to approve the BCATS' Public Participation Plan, with follow-up to occur related to ADA compliance for metropolitan transportation organizations. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
25-26**

B. FY2026 Unified Work Program Draft

Franklin commented that the UWP is the work that BCATS staff performs on behalf of the Policy Committee. The UWP covers the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2025. The Transportation Authority of Calhoun County has been added to the bylaws as a financially participating member which will match the FTA portion of funds. Local share funding per agency has decreased from last year.

It was moved by Parsons, supported by Skalski, to approve the FY2026 Unified Work Program. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
25-27**

C. FY2026 Local Share Resolution

Franklin noted that this is specific to the 2026 UWP. It includes language regarding the financially participating members.

It was moved by Skalski, supported by Stewart, to approve the FY2026 Local Share Resolution and authorize the Executive Director to distributed the resolutions and request for local match to the BCATS financially participating members. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
25-28**

D. FY 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program Draft

Franklin discussed that this is a four-year listing of projects that have been selected.

1.) Resolution of Approval of FY2026-2029 TIP

Franklin commented the TIP is a four-year outline of the 2026 – 2029 projects that include federal funds as determined by the Technical and Policy Committee.

It was moved by Parsons, supported by Stewart, to approve the FY 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program Draft as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
25-29**

2.) Resolution to Accept the Air Quality Conformity Report

Franklin commented that the BCATS area air quality was deemed at a detriment by the EPA according to a 2008 ozone quality standard. Although the BCATS area air quality has been meeting regulations as found in the 2012 and 2015 reports, it remains within a limited orphaned maintenance area until 2028. An air quality conformity report is required along with an updated long-range plan or a new Transportation Improvement Program.

It was moved by Parsons, supported by Kremer, to approve the Resolution to Accept the Air Quality Conformity Report. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
25-30**

3.) Resolution of MPO Self Certification

Franklin commented that BCATS is classified as a small MPO, thus able to self-certify that it is following all federal laws.

It was moved by Stewart, supported by Parsons, to approve the Resolution of MPO Self Certification. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
25-31**

E. Staff Attendance at Annual Michigan Transportation Planning Association Conference

Standler discussed that the Annual Michigan Transportation Planning Association Conference is scheduled for July 22 - 25, 2025 in Holland, Michigan. Expenses for the conference include registration, hotel, any non-included meals, and mileage costs. Anticipated total cost for attendance

by both BCATS staff is expected to be, at a maximum, \$2,800.

The requested action was for the Policy Committee to approve BCATS staff attendance at this conference and to approve registration and other conference and travel expenditures not to exceed \$2,800 in association with attendance.

It was moved by Leiter, supported by Kremer, to approve Staff Attendance at the Annual Michigan Transportation Planning Association Conference. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
25-32**

F. FY2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #17

Franklin commented that amendment #17 includes an MDOT phase right of way addition regarding the replacement of the culvert of the Sperry drain over M-89. \$76,000 in right of way acquisition cost was added.

It was moved by Parsons, supported by Bayus, to approve the FY2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #17, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
25-33**

COMMENTS

A. Next Meeting

Vice Chair Avis announced that the next meeting of the BCATS Policy Committee is scheduled for June 25, 2025, at 1:30 p.m.

B. Committee Member Comments

Skalski mentioned that a preventative maintenance bridge project has been moved up.

Avis inquired about the unspent CMAQ funds.

Parsons mentioned that the Calhoun County chip seal program begins on June 2nd. Public notifications will be made. Parsons asked members to share Facebook notifications.

Kremer discussed staff changes at MDOT that are taking place.

Bayus noted the Marshall Modernization project being approved by the EPA for air quality. He discussed delays with FTA.

C. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Avis adjourned the meeting at 2:25 p.m.