

BATTLE CREEK AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Committee

Minutes of November 4, 2020 Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Voting: Mallory Avis, Carl Fedders, Jeff Franklin, Kristine Parsons and Brian Sanada
Non-voting: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: Voting: Terry Blaniar and Christine Zuzga
Non-voting: Andy Pickard and Southcentral Michigan Planning Council (SMPC)

OTHERS PRESENT: Brian Kernstock (CCRD), Daniela Khavajian (MDOT), Fred Featherly, Pat Karr and Andrew Tilma

Chair Fedders called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. via a Zoom virtual meeting format and a call-in for public participation.

ROLL CALL

A roll call was conducted of members and any guests. Members indicated their presence for the purpose of establishing a quorum. It was noted that all members are participating virtually and each member participating virtually identified their physical location, which is included in the minutes. It has not been determined if an advisory committee like the Technical Committee needs to follow the same guidelines as decision making bodies. However, for this meeting, the new Open Meetings Act Amendment requirements were adhered to for the Technical Committee meeting.

Members participating remotely and location: Avis (City of Battle Creek MI), Fedders (City of Portage, MI), Franklin (Drummond Island Township, MI), Parsons (Richland Township, MI), Sanada (Antwerp Township, MI)

It was determined that a quorum of the voting members were participating.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

**Res.
20-21**

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Parsons supported by Avis, to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2020 meeting, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
20-22**

COMMUNICATIONS

Karr shared the following communications:

- The FY 2021 Unified Work Program has been approved and copies printed. The document is also on the BCATS website.
- BCATS has received the state's highway safety targets for 2021 from MDOT. The targets need to be addressed by the metropolitan planning agencies before February 2021.
- TIP Amendment #8 was submitted to MDOT the day after the September Policy Committee meeting and approved by the federal funding sources the day after that. Therefore the changes with that amendment were approved before the end of the 2020 fiscal year.
- The public notice for the current amendment was published last Thursday in the Battle Creek Enquirer.
- Today MDOT announced the selected local safety projects for FY 2022. The Calhoun County Road Department was successful in having eight projects selected in two different categories of local safety funding.
- BCATS received the weekly report from the Toward Zero Deaths group today. So far this year, there are 49 more fatalities and 197 fewer serious injuries than this time last year.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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

NEW BUSINESS

A. **FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #9**

Tilma shared the screen with the public notice showing the change to add a transit project as the only item in this month's Transportation Improvement Program amendment. There was also discussion about a technical correction necessary to facilitate Specialized Services funding that is administered by MDOT.

Tilma noted that Amendment #10 will be addressed in January 2021 and all items to be considered for that amendment will need to be provided to BCATS by December 23, 2020.

Tilma also indicated that the small urban project funding has been reduced for the Battle Creek area by about \$11,000. There is also about \$91,000 of HIP funding that will need to be programmed by 2023. BCATS has also received a request to switch projects for the Calhoun County Road Department that are currently shown in 2022 and 2023. All of these issues may be addressed in January.

It was moved by Parsons, supported by Avis, to recommend that the BCATS Policy Committee approve Amendment #9 to the FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
20-23**

B. **"Total Project Cost" Calculation for Non-Trunkline TIP Projects and Entry/Update into JobNet**

Tilma referenced the memo regarding this topic that was provided to the members in the advance meeting materials. There is now a requirement from the Federal Highway Administration that a category termed Total Project Cost be represented in the JobNet database of TIP projects. Costs such as preliminary engineering and construction engineering need to be represented in this total cost figure, not just federal eligible costs for a project. The metropolitan planning agencies are being given the option of simply applying a default percentage to all projects for these types of costs. The alternative is to have the local agencies provide this information individually for each project or establish local default percentages for the BCATS area local projects.

Fedders and Parsons indicated that they can provide the costs for these types of costs and would prefer this to MDOT's default percentage. There is a desire on FHWA's part to add this information as soon as possible, but the planning agencies can wait until a change request for any particular project takes place. Fedders indicated that since the costs involved with this topic can vary widely between projects, that is the reason he would prefer to address this project by project. Tilma indicated that the number of projects in the BCATS area is small enough to address this in that manner, if so desired.

It was moved by Franklin, supported by Kernstock (participating temporarily for Parsons), to select the option of having BCATS solicit from the local agencies the costs for items such as preliminary engineering and construction engineering for their TIP projects in order to meet the federal requirements for having total project costs reflected in the JobNet database. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
20-24**

Tilma noted that there is also a provision for this total cost consideration for transit projects, but this occurs much less than on the highway side of the projects.

C. 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan - Base Year (2016) Calibrated Travel Demand Forecast Model, and Preliminary Forecast Socio-Economic Data

Daniela Khavajian, of MDOT's Statewide Urban Travel Analysis (SUTA) unit, made a presentation to the Committee about the current status of the BCATS travel demand computer model and the results of the calibration process in identifying areas of congestion on the road network in the BCATS area. The model is utilized in establishing base year conditions and projecting congestion into the future. She displayed her presentation on the screen for the members. This included volume maps of the BCATS area road system for morning peak, midday, and pm peak time periods. There are some areas along I-94 and along E. Michigan Avenue that are characterized as approaching capacity, but no segments in the area are shown as over capacity.

Khavajian described next steps in the travel demand model process, reviewed the projected socio-economic data tables that were provided and discussed the need to identify future year socio-economic conditions that may impact the growth rates that are shown for the individual units of government.

Fedders indicated that he would review the data and provide any input to BCATS staff.

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

D. Appointment of Nominating Committee for 2021 Technical Committee Officers

Chair Fedders appointed Parsons and himself as the nominating committee to prepare a slate of officers (Chair and Vice-Chair) for the Technical Committee for 2021. Karr indicated that a report from the nominating committee should be provided to her in advance of the December Technical Committee meeting.

COMMENTS

A. Next Meeting

Chair Fedders announced that the next meeting of the BCATS Technical Committee is scheduled for December 2, 2020 at 1:30 p.m. Due to the continuing impact of COVID-19, the format for the meeting will still be a virtual format.

B. Committee Member Comments

Avis posed a question about the handling of the Specialized Services project and the abandonment of the original project for the same project with a new job number assigned by MDOT. There was further discussion about this project and when it will be addressed within the TIP/Amendment process.

Franklin indicated that he had investigated the authorized purposes for the HIP funds and that only road projects were listed. Tilma added that he has a more extensive listing that was provided by MDOT several months ago.

Sanada stated that the SW regional non-motorized guide is completed and he provided a link to access the document. The document has existing and planned facilities shown. He also indicated that he would like to make a short presentation about the project at next month's Technical Committee meeting.

Kernstock offered that the first year of the Emmett Township local road project is finishing up.

Fedders reported that the City of Battle Creek is expecting award of bridge funding for 2023 for the Union Street bridge.

C. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:34 p.m.