

BATTLE CREEK AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Committee

Minutes of December 2, 2020 Meeting

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

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Brian Kernstock (CCRD), Daniela Khavajian (MDOT), 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 under the Michigan Open Meetings Act Amendment. However, in the interests of making sure BCATS is in compliance, the Amendment's requirements are being adhered to for the Technical Committee meetings at this time.

Members participating remotely and location: Avis (City of Battle Creek MI), Blaniar (City of Springfield, MI), Fedders (Marshall Township, MI), Franklin (Drummond Island Township, MI), Parsons (Richland Township, MI), Sanada (Mattawan, 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.
20-25**

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 November 4, 2020 meeting, as presented. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Res.
20-26

COMMUNICATIONS

Karr shared the following communications:

- The FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #9 was approved federally on November 30, 2020.
- MDOT has announced the selection of local safety projects for FY 2022 and the Calhoun County Road Department was successful with eight of its project applications. Some projects are in the BCATS area and some are not. The projects in the BCATS area will be added to the current TIP with the January 2021 amendment.
- Brian Sanada, Technical Committee representative from the MDOT Southwest Region office, presented information about the update of the Southwest Michigan Non-Motorized Plan including a review of the on-line option for reviewing the document. He indicated that there are also hard-copy of the maps that will distributed when the current pandemic situation allows. There was discussion about non-motorized projects in conjunction with MDOT projects and the issue of connecting the current non-motorized facility along M-96 (W. Dickman Road) with the non-motorized facilities of the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail organization that currently terminate in Augusta.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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

NEW BUSINESS

A. Meeting Schedule for 2021

Karr reviewed the proposed meeting schedule for the Technical Committee that was provided to the members in the advance materials. The meetings will be held on the second Wednesdays of each month, unless otherwise noted on the schedule.

Karr stated that it is hoped that the state legislation about Open Meetings will continue to allow virtual meetings of public boards, as the current pandemic situation is certainly still not conducive to in-person meetings going into the new calendar year.

It was moved by Blaniar, supported by Parsons, to approve the Technical Committee portion of the joint meeting schedule for 2021, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
20-27**

B. Performance Measures - Safety Targets for 2021

Karr discussed the annual review of MDOT's established safety targets and the options the Metropolitan Planning Organizations have in addressing the targets. She noted that for the last several years BCATS has supported the state's targets and it recommended by staff that the same decision be made for 2021.

It was moved by Parsons, supported by Avis, to recommend adoption by the BCATS Policy Committee of the resolution for safety targets for 2021, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
20-28**

C. Performance Measures - Battle Creek Transit State of Good Repair Targets for 2021

Karr reviewed the 2021 State of Good Repair Targets established by Battle Creek Transit and provided to BCATS. As with the safety targets, this is an annual designation that occurs for these targets. It is recommended that BCATS support Battle Creek Transit's State of Good Repair Targets, as noted in the draft resolution.

It was moved by Parsons, supported by Blaniar, to recommend adoption by the BCATS Policy Committee of the resolution supporting Battle Creek Transit's State of Good Repair 2021 targets, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
20-29**

D. Report from Nominating Committee and Election of 2021 Technical Committee Officers

Chair Fedders indicated that the report from the Nominating Committee is for Parsons to be Chair and for himself to be Vice-Chair for the Technical Committee for 2021. There were no other recommendations for officers.

It was moved by Avis, supported by Blaniar, to accept the recommendation of the Nominating Committee and elect Parsons as Chair and Fedders as Vice-Chair for the BCATS Technical Committee for 2021. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
20-30**

E. 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan - Status Report

Tilma discussed the current work on the update to the BCATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and asked for any additional comments or input regarding the future socio-economic data for the travel demand model which he is working on in conjunction with Daniela Khavajian at MDOT. It was noted that based on the completion date of the prior Plan, the deadline for completing the new Plan is November 2021.

Franklin indicated that the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study's next Plan update will also be due at the same time as BCATS' Plan. This will help with joint air quality analysis that will need to be done for the greater Kalamazoo/Battle Creek area.

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

F. FY 20-23 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - FY 21 Project Status, Reports & Funding Adjustments, Allocation of Additional HIP Funds, changes for Amendment #10

Tilma addressed each of the items covered under this item, starting with a table indicating the project status for the current fiscal year's projects for the Surface Transportation Urban Local (STUL) category of funding. BCATS was notified at the end of October that the STUL allocation to the BCATS area for FY 2021 has been reduced by \$10,854. Tilma's table showed that reduction spread proportionally over all of the FY 2021 projects utilizing this category of funding. The projects involved are under the jurisdiction of the City of Battle Creek and the Calhoun County Road Department. The County's projects are already "active" but have not been let yet, therefore changes can be made to any of the identified projects before contracts are awarded. Both the County and the City may want to absorb the reduction in one project rather than over all the projects. So, it was asked for Tilma to provide this table to the road agencies for them to determine the best way to make the reduction overall. Tilma will do this and then make the adjustments as needed.

The next topic was a review of all of the FY 2021-2023 projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), regardless of funding source. This included transit and MDOT projects as well. Avis indicated that once the federal register is published after the first of the year, transit would be in a position to update its total for federal operating assistance, Section 5307 funding. The county's other projects are all on track. There were no comments on the MDOT projects.

Tilma then addressed the Highway Improvement Program funds from FY 2020 that need to be obligated by the end of FY 2023. A total of \$91,151 in federal funding is available from this program. It is a source requiring the standard local share match. Tilma shared a screen showing all the project categories eligible to use this funding source. Parsons indicated that the 2021 Morgan Road project is in need of additional funding and Fedders indicated that the City is interested in a preemption project. In the one other time BCATS received this funding (from a 2018 allocation), the proceeds were used to augment existing projects. Parsons and Fedders will collaborate on this topic and provide input to Tilma.

The last item to be discussed was relative to the next amendment the current TIP. Changes to County projects in 2022 and 2023 are to be addressed, as well as the adjustments to STUL funding totals previously noted, and possibly some of the HIP funding. Tilma indicated that any and all changes for the January amendment are to be provided to BCATS by December 23, 2020.

This was an information/discussion item.

COMMENTS

A. Next Meeting

Chair Fedders announced that the next meeting of the BCATS Technical Committee is scheduled for January 13, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. (Due to the continuing impact of COVID-19, the format for the meeting will still be virtual if the Michigan Open Meetings Act, and any Amendments to the legislation, allow for that format to continue. It is crucial that a virtual format still be available for these meetings due to the severity of the health crisis currently facing the whole nation.)

B. Committee Member Comments

Parsons reported that the Emmett Township Phase 1 project wrapped up at the end of September.

Blaniar announced that at the end of January he will be retiring and it is hoped that his replacement will be named before that time.

Franklin congratulated Blaniar on his retirement. He also indicated that MDOT employees have been told to plan to work virtually until at least March 1, 2021.

Fedders said the City of Battle Creek may develop an economic development fund application for Watkins Roads for potential new development. The potential project would include an intersection across the county line and would involve the Road Commission for Kalamazoo County. Public Works is also working to set-up a full-scale model of the Emmett Street round-about at the Helmer Road Meijer parking lot so that fire trucks, snow plows, etc. can test their operation on such a facility. Fedders also congratulated Blaniar on his retirement and acknowledged his contributions to Springfield.

Tilma asked about the status of Armstrong Road and if it has been determined which road agency is responsible for this road segment. Apparently, the road has to be assigned to one of the county road agencies, not the City of Battle Creek. This was determined to still be an unresolved issue.

Avis added that there is currently a notice of proposed rulemaking for the NEPA requirements that is open for comments until December 23, 2020, if there is any interest in providing comments. She posted a link in the chat box for this.

C. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:41 p.m.