

BATTLE CREEK AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Technical Committee

Minutes of December 4, 2024 Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Voting: Mallory Avis, Max Gierman, Brian Kernstock, Steve Skalski, Adrian Stroupe (for Josh Grab), Travis Sullivan and Chaz Wilkey
Non-voting: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: Voting: None
Non-voting: Jenny Staroska and Southcentral Michigan Planning Council (SMPC)

OTHERS PRESENT: Jeff Franklin

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

ROLL CALL

Kernstock 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 Skalski, supported by Avis, to approve the agenda. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
24-22**

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Avis, supported by Sullivan, to approve the minutes of the October 9, 2024 meeting. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
24-23**

COMMUNICATIONS

Franklin shared the following communications:

- After the November elections, new members from Emmett Township and Bedford Township have been invited to join the Policy Committee, and informed about the BCATS Technical and Policy Committees.
- After a successful millage initiative for the Transportation Authority of Calhoun County, Ride Calhoun, an invitation has been drafted to have TACC join both the Technical and Policy Committee. BCATS Committees will have to update their Bylaws to add the TACC/Ride Calhoun membership and assignment of votes. TACC would also be proposed to be a financially participating member.
- Calhoun County Road Department was successful in the FY2027 Local Bridge Program call for projects. Two projects were selected within the BCATS area: bridge preventative maintenance work on both the Custer Drive bridge over the Kalamazoo River, and the Raymond Road bridge over the Kalamazoo River.
- MDOT has awarded two Shared Streets and Spaces grants to the BCATS area: one to Battle Creek Transit for solar-powered bus stops (\$195,500), and one to City of Springfield for the Springfield Public Space Connector Project (\$160,850). The highly competitive Shared Streets and Spaces Grant awards support quick-build projects led by incorporated cities and transit agencies, aiming to improve plazas, sidewalks, curbs, streets, bus stops, parking areas, and other public spaces in support of public health, safe mobility, and strengthened commerce.
- MDOT is receiving a \$551,000 ATTAIN (Advanced Transportation Technology and Innovation) program grant from FHWA to improve public transit vehicle safety. Specifically, the grant will fund the installation of thermal imaging cameras on public transit vehicles with Community Action Agency of South Central Michigan as one of four MDOT selected pilot participants. Research shows that thermal imaging cameras on public transit vehicles can help prevent pedestrian/vehicle conflicts and save lives, as well as potentially prevent deer/vehicle conflicts, and save on vehicle repairs.
- MDOT has received a Pollinate Program grant, from a public/private partnership sponsored by University of Illinois at Chicago and Stantec (an environmental consulting company). This grant will specifically allow MDOT staff to purchase wildflower seed mix for the prairie restoration at the Turkeyville Rest Area just outside of the BCATS area. The project aims to restore 14 acres of former farmland to tallgrass prairie with a diverse mix of grasses and flowering plants, to serve as a safe refuge and connector habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinating insects.
- The FY2024 Obligated Projects Report, an annual federal requirement list of projects authorized for funding within FY2024, has been completed and posted to the BCATS website.

- The BCATS TIP Subcommittee met on November 6th to prioritize projects for funding within the forthcoming FY2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (due for completion before May 2025).
- Franklin participated in a Highway Program Management System training, offered by MDOT HPMS staff. Franklin is in review of sample HPMS data items provided by MDOT in an annual effort to provide quality data towards HPMS federal requirements.
- Franklin attended a Base Plans review meeting hosted by MDOT for the forthcoming M-89 bridge and pavement job (from Dickman Road north to Michigan Avenue, including both the bridge over the railroad/Kalamazoo River, and the bridge over the Battle Creek River).
- Franklin has received the results of the 2024 BCATS Traffic Count Program from both City of Battle Creek (with City of Springfield included) and Calhoun County Road Department, for submittal to HPMS/Non-Trunkline Traffic Count staff at MDOT.
- MDOT staff has provided initial GIS files for the Travel Demand Forecast Model update ahead of the forthcoming 2050 long range plan (due adopted by BCATS in February 2027). Franklin is reviewing the proposed changes regarding the model components – updated Travel Analysis Zones, one-way street segments, and minimal street closure changes since the prior update (E Fountain St; State St behind City Hall; portions of W Jackson St). MDOT staff plans a presentation on the model update to BCATS Technical Committee (looking at February or March) including review of socio-economic data.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

A. BCATS Joint Committee Meeting Schedule for 2025

Franklin reviewed the draft BCATS Committee meeting schedule proposed for Calendar Year 2025. Franklin highlighted the Technical Committee meetings are the second Wednesdays of the month, and the Policy Committee meetings are the fourth Wednesdays of the month, with exceptions in July, November, and December due to holidays or staff availability.

It was moved by Skalski, supported by Avis, to recommend approval of the BCATS Committee Meeting Schedule for 2025 by the BCATS Policy Committee, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
24-24**

B. Performance Measures – 2025 Safety Targets

Franklin discussed the annual Transportation Performance Measures Safety prediction setting and coordination that occurred between MDOT and statewide MPOs, including BCATS. Safety predictions

in five categories are set annually by the State in response to federal requirement. The State, in line with their Strategic Highway Safety Plan, has set declining targets for 2025, with the request that BCATS plan and program projects locally that support achievement of the predictions/targets. BCATS has supported the State safety targets locally for all previous iterations of Performance Measure target setting, and Franklin requested this approach continue.

It was moved by Wilkey, supported by Avis, to recommend support of the State's Performance Measures – 2025 Safety Targets by the BCATS Policy Committee, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
24-25**

C. Performance Measures – 2025 Adjusted Pavement & Bridge Targets

Franklin discussed the mid-performance period for the Transportation Performance Measures Pavement Condition, Bridge Condition, and System Performance prediction setting and coordination that occurred between MDOT and statewide MPOs, including BCATS. Predictions/targets in the categories of Pavement Condition, Bridge Condition, and System Performance are set every four years, with both a two-year and four-year prediction federal requirement. Halfway through the four-year performance period, the State can adjust the prior four-year prediction should the State not have met the prior two-year prediction sufficiently, or if the methodology changed at all during the performance period. MDOT advised on three adjusted targets this mid-performance period, affecting Interstate Good Pavement; Non-Interstate Good Pavement, and Bridge Poor Condition by deck area. BCATS has supported the State pavement and bridge targets for all previous iterations of Performance Measure target setting, and Franklin requested this approach continue for the adjusted targets.

It was moved by Wilkey, supported by Skalski, to recommend support of the State's Performance Measures – 2025 Adjusted Pavement and Bridge Targets by the BCATS Policy Committee, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
24-26**

D. FY2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #13

Franklin discussed the proposed Amendment #13 to the BCATS' current FY2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and answered questions.

It was moved by Avis, supported by Wilkey, to recommend approval of the FY2023-2026 TIP Amendment #13 by the BCATS Policy Committee, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
24-27**

E. FY2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Draft Project Prioritization List

Franklin highlighted the work outcome of the BCATS TIP Subcommittee from early November. The group met and produced a fiscally constrained list of local road and transit projects for the forthcoming TIP, due to be adopted in May 2025.

It was moved by Skalski, supported by Avis, to recommend approval of the FY2026-2029 TIP Draft Project Prioritization List by the BCATS Policy Committee, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
24-28**

F. Election of 2025 Officers for Technical Committee

Chair Kernstock presented a proposed slate of officers for the 2025 term, with Kernstock continuing as Chair, and Wilkey as Vice Chair.

It was moved by Avis, supported by Skalski, to reelect Brian Kernstock as Chair, and elect Chaz Wilkey as Vice Chair of the BCATS Technical Committee, as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Res.
24-29**

COMMENTS**A. Next Meeting**

Chair Kernstock announced the next meeting of the BCATS Technical Committee is scheduled for January 8, 2025 at 1:30 p.m.

B. Committee Member Comments

Avis reported that the winter tax bills within the four City members (Albion, Battle Creek, Marshall, Springfield) of the Transportation Authority of Calhoun County (TACC) had been sent out, which has prompted public feedback on the TACC plans and future operations. The TACC (Ride Calhoun) website is a great resource for information about the TACC, and how to participate with the TACC. The TACC board meets every second and fourth Tuesday, at Marshall City Hall, 9am, and the public is welcome.

Skalski reported that City of Battle Creek DPW is in winter maintenance mode. The completed 2024 construction season went smoothly.

Wilkey, and Kernstock, echoed the comments of Skalski for their respective City of Springfield, and Calhoun County Road Department.

Stroupe reported that the MDOT Southwest Region non-motorized committee meetings would be starting up again at the Region office in Kalamazoo. These meetings had been quarterly and discontinued during the pandemic. MDOT Southwest Region has applied for a Transportation Alternatives grant for a pilot to sign Kalamazoo area bike trails. Should the grant and pilot prove successful, MDOT intends to further apply for a grant to sign Calhoun area bike trails as well. Stroupe reported that the Marshall area Michigan Ave road diet public meeting is being held on January 16th, 2025. MDOT will be presenting several viable alternatives for Michigan Ave in Marshall for public feedback.

Franklin reported on participation in the Statewide Air Quality Interagency Work Group, where determining air quality impacts on the proposed diverging diamond interchanges at M-96/Michigan Ave and I-69 (in Marshall) and at M-311/11 Mile Road/I-94 in the BCATS area. Franklin opined that diverging diamond interchanges at both locations would be improvements to existing interchange operations. Franklin also complimented MDOT on being proactively informative with BCATS Committees on the project work stemming from the Marshall Modernization projects.

C. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:04 p.m.