

TWIN CITIES AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND POLICY COMMITTEE
Monday, July 15, 2024 Meeting Attendance

TWINCATS MEMBER	MEMBERS	TAC	POL	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Benton Charter Township	Richard Royal	x	x	V		V	V	A		V					
Berrien Co. Board of Commissioners	Ray Bell		x	V		A	A	A		A					
Berrien Co. Community Dev. Dept.	Paul Gillespie	x		A		P	P	P		P					
Berrien Co. Planning Commission	(Vacant)		x	A											
Berrien Co. Road Dept.	Mark Heyliger		x	A						P					
Berrien Co. Road Dept.	Kevin Stack	x		P		A	A	P		P					
City of Benton Harbor	(Vacant)		x	A		A	A								
City of Benton Harbor	Tim Drews	x	Alt	P		P	P	P		P					
City of Bridgman	Juan Ganum	Alt	x	V		A	V	V		V					
City of Bridgman	(Vacant)	x	Alt												
City of St. Joseph	John Hodgson		x	A		V	A	A		A					
City of St. Joseph	Tim Zebell (TAC V. Ch.)	x		V		P	P	A		V					
Cornerstone Alliance	Vacant	x	x												
Disability Network of SW Mich.	Cindy Gray	x		A		P	P	P		P					
Hagar Township	(Vacant)	x	x												
Lake Charter Township	(Vacant)	x	x												
Lincoln Charter Township	Dick Stauffer (Pol. Ch.)		x	P		P	A	P		P					
Lincoln Charter Township	Terrie Smith	x		V		P	P	V		V					
MDOT – Bureau of Trans. Planning	Jim Sturdevant	x	x	V		V	P	P		P					
MDOT – Bureau of Trans. Planning	Richard Bayus	Alt	Alt	A		A	A	A		A					
MDOT – Southwest Region	Adrian Stroupe	x	x			P	P	P		P					
MDOT – Southwest Region	Josh Grab	Alt	Alt	V		P	A	A		A					
MDOT – Trans. Service Center	Jonathon Smith	x	x	V		V	V	A		V					
Royalton Township	Steve Tilly	x	x	V		A	A	A		A					
Sodus Township	David Chandler	x	x	A		A	A	A		A					
Southwest Mich. Regional Airport	Vince Desjardins	x	x	A		A	V	V		A					
St. Joseph Charter Township	Denise Cook		x	P		P	P	P		P					
St. Joseph Charter Township	Roger Seeley	x		P		P	P	P		P					
	Jonathan Fisk	Alt		P		V	A	P		P					
Twin Cities Area Trans. Authority	Rufas Adams	x	x	P		A	P	P		A					
Village of Grand Beach	(Vacant)	x	x												
Village of Shoreham	Mike Allard	x	x	V		V	V	V		A					
Village of Stevensville	Kacey Dominguez		x	V		P	P	P		A					
Village of Stevensville	Tim Drews	x	Alt	P		P	P	P		P					
Federal Highway Administration	Andrew Sibold	x	x	A		A	A	A		A					
Federal Transit Administration	Kathleen Russel	x	x	V		A	A	A		A					
MDOT - Modeling	Katie Beck	x		A		A	A	A		A					
MDOT - Passenger Division	Fred Featherly	x		V		V	V	A		V					
Northwestern Ind. Reg. Plan. Comm.	Scott Weber	x	x	P		A	A	A		A					
Southwest Michigan Planning Comm.	Kim Gallagher	x	x	P		P	P	P		P					
Southwest Michigan Planning Comm.	Brandon Kovnat			P		P	P	P		P					

Pol. Ch. - Policy Chair; TAC Ch. - TAC Chair; Alt – Alternate; P – Present in person; V – Participating remotely; A – Absent; A blank spot means the position is vacant.

Others Present: Alan Smaka, St. Joseph Township; Alex Austin, City of St. Joseph; terry Martin, Carrier & Gable Inc.

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TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND POLICY COMMITTEE
Monday, May 20, 2024, Meeting Minutes

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**

Policy Committee Chair, Dick Stauffer, called the meeting to order at 9:30 am and Kim Gallagher conducted roll call.

2. **Changes to the Agenda**

None.

3. **Public Comment**

None.

4. **Approval of The May 20, 2024, Meeting Minutes**

Motion to approve the minutes from the April 15th, 2024, TwinCATS combined Policy and Technical Advisory Committee meeting as included in the meeting packet. Made by Jim Sturdevant and seconded by Roger Seeley.

Motion approved.

5. **SWMPC Staff Report**

Gallagher gave an update on the 2026-2029 TIP development process. The Call for projects was emailed to all TwinCATS members the last week of June. Applications are due on Friday September 27th. The CMAQ and Carbon Reduction call for projects will be sent out at the end of July or early August. MDOT should have funding estimates for all programs by the end of August, but they expect the funding to be similar to previous years.

6. **Local Road Agency Updates**

All 2023 projects have been constructed. The Berrien County Road Department is scheduling construction dates for their 2024 projects.

Drews gave an update on the City of Benton Harbor's projects:

Colfax Avenue Reconstruction: The project is being held up by the MDOT archeologist who has classified the area as archeologically and tribally sensitive. They require a fulltime archeologist present during construction which will cost the city approximately \$80,000, which the city does not have.

Empire and Colfax Signal: Construction will start in the fall. Delivery times for mast arms is 6 months, so construction should be completed next spring.

Jefferson Street Rehabilitation: Construction will begin shortly

7. **Transit Updates**

Gallagher gave an update for TCATA. Rufus Adams, the director of TCATA, has resigned. Todd Schurn, a Howard University professor who had worked on the University of Michigan plan for TCATA, will serve as interim director for 6 weeks. Leadership after this is uncertain. The FTA triennial audit will occur in September, and the state has offered to assist TCATA with this.

Gallagher presented ridership and financial trends for TCATA's Dial A Ride service from 2019-2023, highlighting the impacts of COVID-19 and subsequent recovery efforts. She emphasized that the system has not yet regained its pre-pandemic ridership levels. Service hours have fallen by 25% while total ridership dropped by 52%, leading to a 124% increase in the cost per passenger.

Gillespie commented again that this further supports the need for a single countywide transit system. He highlighted that there is now 22% of the county which is in an urban area without transit service.

8. **TCATA Amendment Request**

See meeting packet page 6 for amendment details

Gallagher briefly explained the amendment, explaining that by switching a project from 2023 to 2024, it increases the cost in 2024 by over 25%.

9. **MDOT Project Updates**

See meeting packet page 7 and 8 for MDOT project updates.

M-139 Project Update: Jon Smith reported that the base plans for the M-139 project were completed and sent to stakeholders. MDOT is seeking a grant for this project. If the grant is awarded, the entire project from I-94 to I-94BL/Main Street will be constructed in 2026. If the grant is not received, only the section from Napier to I-94BL/Main Street will be constructed in 2026, with the southern portion planned for 2030 or 2031.

Main Street/M-63 project in St. Joseph: Smith reported that the EPE phase for the project is wrapping up and the plans were sent to the city for approval.

10. **MDOT Project Amendments**

See meeting packet page 9 for amendment details

Gallagher noted that the hydraulics for the Bicentennial Bridge, which carries I-94BL/Main Street over the St. Joseph River, require urgent repairs. This is why approving the project now is critical. Smith added that plans would be turned in in about 2 weeks, with letting occurring in October.

11. **Non-motorized Project Amendments**

See meeting packet page 9 and 10 for amendment details

Roosevelt Path: Dick Stauffer explained that the project began in 2017, with designs completed and bids in 2019. But costs came in too high and the project didn't move forward. Congressman Tim Walberg was looking for shovel ready projects to award earmark funds, and Stauffer presented this project. The high cost is due to the design standards required for the bridge over Hickory creek. Stack added that the existing plans and permits from 2019 have not expired, and MDOT approval should be simple.

Lakeshore Trail: Gallagher mentioned that there was a cost increase for the project, with statewide TAP funding increasing proportionally, to remain at 80% of the total.

12. **Amendment Approvals**

Motion for the Technical Advisory Committee to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the amendments to the TwinCATS 2023-2026 transportation Improvement Program as contained in the meeting packet. Made by Kevin Stack and seconded by Tim Drews. **Motion approved.**

Motion for the Policy Committee to approve the recommendation from the Technical Advisory committee. Made by Jim Sturdevant and seconded by Denise Cook. **Motion approved.**

13. **Privilege of the Floor or Public Comment**

Stack mentioned that he had given a tour of Red Arrow Highway to MDOT TAP staff. The Road Department will be applying for TAP funding for the next phase of the Red Arrow Path, and will work with Bridgman and Stevensville. Getting a connection through the City of St. Joseph will be the next hurdle.

14. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 AM. The next TwinCATS meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 19, 2024, at 9:30 AM.

Minutes Compiled by Brandon Kovnat, SWMPC Associate Planner