

TWIN CITIES AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND POLICY COMMITTEE
Monday, May 20, 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							
Berrien Co. Board of Commissioners	Ray Bell		x	V		A	A	A							
Berrien Co. Community Dev. Dept.	Paul Gillespie	x		A		P	P	P							
Berrien Co. Planning Commission	(Vacant)		x	A											
Berrien Co. Road Dept.	(Vacant)		x	A											
Berrien Co. Road Dept.	Kevin Stack	x		P		A	A	P							
City of Benton Harbor	(Vacant)		x	A		A	A								
City of Benton Harbor	Tim Drews	x	Alt	P		P	P	P							
City of Bridgman	Juan Ganum	Alt	x	V		A	V	V							
City of Bridgman	(Vacant)	x	Alt												
City of St. Joseph	John Hodgson		x	A		V	A	A							
City of St. Joseph	Tim Zebell (TAC V. Ch.)	x		V		P	P	A							
Cornerstone Alliance	Vacant	x	x												
Disability Network of SW Mich.	Cindy Gray	x		A		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							
Lincoln Charter Township	Terrie Smith	x		V		P	P	V							
MDOT – Bureau of Trans. Planning	Jim Sturdevant	x	x	V		V	P	P							
MDOT – Bureau of Trans. Planning	Richard Bayus	Alt	Alt	A		A	A	A							
MDOT – Southwest Region	Adrian Stroupe	x	x			P	P	P							
MDOT – Southwest Region	Josh Grab	Alt	Alt	V		P	A	A							
MDOT – Trans. Service Center	Jonathon Smith	x	x	V		V	V	A							
Royalton Township	Steve Tilly	x	x	V		A	A	A							
Sodus Township	David Chandler	x	x	A		A	A	A							
Southwest Mich. Regional Airport	Vince Desjardins	x	x	A		A	V	V							
St. Joseph Charter Township	Denise Cook		x	P		P	P	P							
St. Joseph Charter Township	Roger Seeley	x		P		P	P	P							
	Jonathan Fisk	Alt		P		V	A	P							
Twin Cities Area Trans. Authority	Rufas Adams	x	x	P		A	P	P							
Village of Grand Beach	(Vacant)	x	x												
Village of Shoreham	Mike Allard	x	x	V		V	V	V							
Village of Stevensville	Kacey Dominguez		x	V		P	P	P							
Village of Stevensville	Tim Drews	x	Alt	P		P	P	P							
Federal Highway Administration	Andrew Sibold	x	x	A		A	A	A							
Federal Transit Administration	Kathleen Russel	x	x	V		A	A	A							
MDOT - Modeling	Katie Beck	x		A		A	A	A							
MDOT - Passenger Division	Fred Featherly	x		V		V	V	A							
Northwestern Ind. Reg. Plan. Comm.	Scott Weber	x	x	P		A	A	A							
Southwest Michigan Planning Comm.	Kim Gallagher	x	x	P		P	P	P							
Southwest Michigan Planning Comm.	Brandon Kovnat			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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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**

Gallagher suggested that due to the numerous items requiring approval, the committees could vote on all business items with a single motion, if there was no dissent.

3. **Public Comment**

None.

4. **Approval of The April 15, 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 Denise Cook. **Motion approved.**

5. **SWMPC Staff Report**

Gallagher gave a presentation on the Michigan Infrastructure Office (MIO), Technical Assistance Center (TAC). The TAC offers support for grant identification, grant writing, and match assistance. She highlighted the Safet Streets for All grant, a federal program aimed at reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries. To be awarded funding for safety improvement under this program, agencies need a safety action plan, which the grant can also fund.

6. **Local Road Agency Updates**

All FY 2024 projects, except the Colfax Ave. reconstruction in Benton Harbor, have been obligated. Details on construction timelines will be presented when available.

Tim Drews reported that the Colfax Ave. Reconstruction still requires SHPPO approval, which he expects to occur in about a month.

7. **Transit Updates and Amendments**

Gallagher presented the latest Berrien County transit service map, highlighting that 22% of the county falls within an urban area without transit service. Paul Gillespie stressed the seriousness of this issue, noting that he must deny service to many potential riders.

Rufas Adamas presented three amendments for TCATA (*See Meeting Packet page 5 for amendment details*).

8. **MDOT Project Updates and Amendments**

See Meeting Packet page 7 for details on MDOT projects.

Stroupe gave an update about the M-63/I-94BL/Main Street Rebuilding Project in St. Joseph. The most recent public meeting, held last Thursday, had 27 attendees. The plan includes converting Port and Ship Streets from one-way to two-way traffic and eliminating street parking on Main Street. For bicycle accommodation, Main Street will have Sharrows, not a dedicated bike lane. However, there was support for bike lanes to be added along Church Street, which runs parallel to Main Street a block east. The next public meeting for the project will be late this year or early next year. Construction is expected to occur in 2027.

Stroupe provided a brief update on the I-94 Reconstruction project, stating that bridge beams were laid at Exit 23. Details about road closures and detours will be emailed to the committee.

9. **Update to the TwinCATS Policy Committee and Technical Advisory Committee Bylaws**

Gallagher presented the proposed bylaw changes. The TwinCATS Planning area was expanded to cover the entire 2020 Adjusted Census Urban Area, resulting in the addition of three new member communities. She then explained the reasoning for the removal of three non-voting members. The Berrien County Coordinated Transportation Coalition has been inactive for several years, although she hopes to start a similar group again. Disability Network fulfills the role of the Regional Interagency Consumers Committee. The TCATA Local Agency Committee is being removed because it is uncommon for a LAC to be a member of an MPO committee.

Gallagher further explained that the quorum clause is being revised for clarity. Although the bylaws do not explicitly state whether members must be present in person, the Open Meetings Act states that only members attending in person are counted for voting.

10. **2026-2029 Project Prioritization Criteria**

Kovnat discussed the major changes between the 2023-2026 Project Prioritization Criteria and the proposed 2026-2029 Project Prioritization Criteria. The biggest change is to the safety section, which will now prioritize addressing fatal and serious injury crashes, instead of scoring based on the total number of crashes.

Gallagher added that the prioritization criteria is a valuable in the selection process, but other factors can also be considered.

11. **TwinCATS FY 2025 Unified Work Program**

Gallagher discussed the Unified Work Program, stating that much of the content is required language with similar tasks each year. A new task for 2025 will be the review of functional classifications for roads, which could change some local roads to federal aid eligible. Classification changes will need to be supported by the MPO committees.

12. **Approval of New Business**

Motion for the Technical Advisory Committee to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the following:

- The Amendments to the TwinCATS 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program as included in the meeting packet
- The Draft TwinCATS Technical Advisory Committee Bylaws as posted online
- The Draft TwinCATS Policy Committee Bylaws as posted online
- The 2026-2029 Project Prioritization Criteria as posted online
- The TwinCATS FY 2025 Unified Work Program, as posted online, with any minor changes requested by MDOT.

The motion was made by Kevin Stack and seconded by Roger Seeley. **Motion approved.**

Motion for the Policy Committee to approve the recommendation for the Technical Advisory Committee. Made by Jim Sturtevant and seconded by Juan Ganum. Motion Approved.

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

Stack mentioned that he had given a tour of the non-motorized projects on Red Arrow Highway to MDOT TAP coordinators. He explained that they had a TAP project this year, and were not doing a non-motorized project in 2025 but were going to apply for a large TAP grant for 2026.

There was a question about whether the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) would be available for the 2027-2029 Cal for Projects. Kovnat explained that the CRP was part of the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). Like all transportation bills, it has a 5-year time frame, and the IIJA will expire at the end of FY 2026. This means that officially, the CRP funding is not authorized beyond FY 2026, but it is possible for the next transportation law to include CRP, and historically it has also been common for transportation laws to be extended beyond 5 years.

14. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:44 AM. The next TwinCATS meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 17, 2024, at 9:30 AM.

Minutes Compiled by Brandon Kovnat, SWMPC Associate Planner

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