



MIC Policy Board Meeting Summary

February 17th, 2021

Virtual MS Teams Meeting

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

Note Taker	Barb Peterson	
	Members Present	
WI Co-Chair	Nick Baker	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
MN Co-Chair	Wayne Boucher	City of Hermantown
	Pete Clark	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Earl Elde	St. Louis County Suburban Townships
	Zack Filipovich	Duluth City Council
	Adam Fulton	City of Duluth
	Ashley Grimm	St Louis County
	Janet Kennedy	Duluth City Council
	Rosemary Lear	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Sam Pomush	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Bob Quade	City of Rice Lake
	Tom Szukis	DTA
	Jenny VanSickle	Superior City Council
	Chad Ward	City of Proctor
	Members Absent	* Excused Absence
	Broc Allen	Douglas County Suburban Townships
	Ed Anderson	City of Superior – Citizen Rep
	Warren Bender	Superior Common Council
	Nick Ledin	Superior City Council
Others Present		Others Present
	Mike Casey	Friends of Western Duluth Parks & Trails
	Ron Chicka	MIC Director
	Andrea Crouse	Zietgiest Arts
	Bruce Dehringer	Friends of Western Duluth Parks & Trails
	James Gittemeier	MIC Principal Planner
	Dick Hainey	Friends of Western Duluth Parks & Trails
	Duane Hill	MnDOT Dist 1
	Ron Niemi	Friends of Western Duluth Parks & Trails
	Barb Peterson	MIC Admin Asst
	Jake Router	MnDOT Pedestrian & Bicycle Planner
	Ricky Sarran	MIC/GIS Specialist
	Mike Wenholz	MIC Sr Planner



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1. INTRODUCTIONS / AGENDA REVIEW

Co-Chair Wayne Boucher called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm. A roll call of attendees was done with attendees confirming their presence and the entity they represent.

2. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- **Meeting Summary of 1.20.21 (for Approval)**

Motion Discussion and Vote	Sam Pomush/Chad Ward moved to approve the 1.20.21 meeting summary. There was no discussion; the motion was approved unanimously.
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- **MIC Director's Report** (For more details see the meeting materials.)

Ron Chicka briefly shared that he is involved on the steering committee for the DTA's Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA). The DTA had hired a consultant who provided a report documenting many items pertaining to service pros and cons in the entire service area. Key parts of the city were identified for both high and low ridership.

Ron has also been asked to serve on the steering committee for the City of Superior's update of their Comprehensive Plan. The committee is working with a consultant hired by the city. A survey will be a part of data collection and should be out in the next month or so.

Ron also gave an update on Federal Legislation happenings which include a \$1.9 trillion recovery plan, titled the American Rescue Plan put forth by the new Administration for consideration by Congress. We are also watching for a new Transportation Bill due to sunset at the end of September.

For more details see the meeting materials.

- **Opportunity for Public Comment**

Mike Casey, Ron Niemi, Dick Hainey and Bruce Fehringer all representing Friends of Western Duluth Parks and Trails addressed the Board all stating that they are fighting for the lower route of the Cross City Trail. Mike Casey noted that this route is in the Mini-Master Plan for the area and Bruce Fehringer stated that they have all be looking forward to the time when the trail connects to Canal Park, the Lakewalk and Downtown. Bruce's statement is included in the "Attachments" section at the end of this summary.



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3. 2021-2024 SUPERIOR AREA TIP AMENDMENTS #5-9

Sheldon Johnson described that these amendments cover a Voucher Program and Mobility Manager for North Country Independent Living;; and mini-van replacements for the Challenge Center, Inc and Senior Connections, Inc. Amendment #9 actually deletes a duplicate project.

Duluth City Councilor Janet Kennedy asked if there was a program such as this on the Duluth Side.

Duane Hill stated that these same 5310 funds are awarded to the small transit providers such as Arrowhead Transt who are all out of the MPO area so are not included in MPO TIP.

Motion Discussion and Vote	Nick Baker/Sam Pomush moved to approve Amendments #5-9 to the 2021-2024 Superior Area TIP. There was no discussion; a roll call vote was called and the motion passed unanimously. (Copy of the vote is attached at the end of this summary.)
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4. GUEST SPEAKER: JAKE RUETER, MNDOT PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE PLANNER MNDOT PEDESTIRAN PLAN

Jake provided an overview of the Statewide Pedestrian System Plan. He reviewed the process beginning in Feb 2019. Through the use sidewalk clings they gathered survey information from across the state and found that 3 out of 4 respondents supported improvements for walking, improving winter maintenance and improving accessibility were some of the outcomes. They participated in 42 various events looking for input.

Jake reviewed the goals of the paln and the possible uses. He shared the reasons for investing in walking and how to plan for these investments. Adding to that he discussed the people walking are the most vulnerable users of the transportation system.

He finished up by sharing that cimments are still being reviewed and responded to while making edits to the plan. MnDOT is looking to adopt the plan in May 2021.

The questions was asked on how to get the clings to use for various times when public comments are needed.

Jake responded that he will track down the information and if anyone is interested where MnDOT got them to contact him at jacob.rueter@state.mn.us.

MINNESOTAWALKS.ORG is the website where you can find the plan.

Priority Area for Walking Study (PAWS) Map

[THE PAWS WEB APP](#)



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5. DULUTH-SUPERIOR METRO AREA PEDESTRIAN PLAN-DRAFT OVERVIEW

James Gittemeier began his presentation discussing the essential role walking plays in the urban transportation system. This updated pedestrian plan:

- Aspires to a Vision
- Sets goals & priorities
- Measures progress

James continued sharing the Federal rules and guidance and then shared the issues with walking. He shared the recent crash data involving pedestrians and strategies to decrease those crashes. James also addressed the problem of keeping the sidewalks and paths cleared of snow and obstructions.

- Next came the recommendations included in the plan which include:
- Maintain walkways – highest priority areas
- Close key gaps (identified by jurisdiction)
- Improve pedestrian crossings
- Add pedestrian-oriented amenities

He concluded with what future studies might address:

- Up/down Hill Mobility – Duluth
- Connections/spur to Multi-use Paths - MIC wide
- Railroad Crossings – Superior
- Skyline Parkway
- Skywalk System (ADA & Ped-friendly) – Duluth
- Incorporating green infrastructure

Lastly, James addressed how to measure progress and shared some of the comments that have been received.

Janet Kennedy asked about the “up/down” mobility issues particularly streets like 40th Ave W and 24th Ave W.

James stated that these issues are on the future items to be considered list

Zack Filipovich thanked James for the presentation and then asked if the area from Pecan is being conserved in the Central Entrance Plan as well as adding enhanced sidewalks in the scope of the project.

Rosemary Lears suggested that benches would be great for those that need to rest while they are walking in the area.

James took all these suggestions and comments and will get them to those who need to know.

6. FY 2025 DULUTH AREA TIP PROJECTS OVERVIEW

James now addressed that there are currently 3 projects that have been submitted, however, there are rumblings that the London Rd project may be pulled. James stated he would be working with the jurisdictions. Virtual public comment meeting will be held in March.

Zack Filipovich asked if Canal Park can be considered for some of these dollars to make pedestrian improvements in areas such as the alley way that runs the length of Canal Park

Adam Fulton asked how the roundabouts at 26th Ave E and 40th Ave E would be effective.

Duane Hill said that he will ask the project manager to reach out to answer your questions about the roundabouts



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and pedestrians.

Janet Kennedy asked when the comment period is for these projects and what yearis construction being considered. James stated now would be the time to contact him with any comments or questions.

7. BIKE & PED ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC) UPDATE

James Gittemeier briefly shared that the BPAC had their meeting on February 4th where they discussed the the quarterly meeting structure and the need at times to meet inbetween those quarterly meetings. Also discussed where the upcoming Morris Thomas Rd project recommendations and the Cross City Trail project alignment for Phase 3.

8. ROUND TABLE

PUBLIC COMMENT

Janet Kennedy asked to pause the conversation concerning the lower CCT in order to listen.

Ashley Grimm stated that she has heard from her constituents also aking for the lower CCT.

Someone asked about a transportation board within the city/region

Dick Haneywanted to make the point that the original vision of the CCT/Munger Trail was to connect one side of Duluth to the other. He thought that the trails were at about 90% completed with the Lake walk. The remaining approximately 10% remains to complete the connection. Dick continued stating that the proposed upper route does not meet the standards for mobility and is not satisfied with the upper trail. The lower trail is the one that needs to be pursued.

Mike Casey began by thanking the city efforts of the detour through Lincoln Park during the upcoming construction. He concluded by asking why the City has not opened up a public forum for comments and questions.

Janet Kennedy thanked the citizens for their thoughts and comments and will look into a transportation board.

9. PROJECT UPDATES (details can be found in the meeting materials)

- Superior Area TIP Administrative Modification #1, Sheldon Johnson
- Duluth Area TIP Administrative Modification #9-13, James Gittemeier
- Central Entrance Project Update, Rondi Watson

10. Adjourn: With no further agenda items, discussions or announcements, Chair Boucher adjourned the meeting at 5:45 pm.



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2021-2024 SUPERIOR AREA TIP AMENDMENTS #5-9

TIP AMENDMENT #5

This project enables North Country Independent Living Center (NCIL) the ability to continue their transportation vouchers program to eligible clients throughout (eight county area including; Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Price, Sawyer, and Washburn) northern Wisconsin. The project provides individuals with disabilities and residents aged 55 and over who are experiencing a transportation barrier a means of traveling to work, school, shopping, and other events. The vouchers are used to reimburse friends, neighbors and other volunteers who use their own vehicle for transporting disabled individuals. Federal funds for this project are made available through the Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) Program administered by WisDOT. The project will span January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021.

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
North Country Independent Living	Funding of a Voucher Program for individuals with disabilities and others experiencing transportation barriers in 8 NW Counties.	Voucher Program	99,750		99,750	199,500
113-21-014		TOTAL	99,750		99,750	199,500
Amended to TIP in February 2021						

TIP AMENDMENT #6

This project enables North Country Independent Living Center (NCIL) the ability to operate a mobility management program funding staff members who coordinate rides for the region's population seniors and individuals with disabilities, and also work to expand their service, provide outreach and information of transportation options to residents, and work to coordinate rides with other providers. Federal funds for this project are made available through the Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) Program administered by WisDOT. The project will span January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021.



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Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
North Country Independent Living	Funding a mobility manager within NCIL	Mobility Manager	22,173		5,543	27,716
113-21-015 Amended to TIP in February 2021		TOTAL	22,173		5,543	27,716

TIP AMENDMENT #7

This project enables the Challenge Center to replace a current vehicle with a new Minivan, Rear-load equipped. Federal funds for this project are made available through the Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) Program administered by WisDOT.

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
Challenge Center, Inc.	1 - Minivan Replacement Vehicle Purchase Rear-Load Accessible	Vehicle Purchase	32,800		8,200	41,000
113-21-016 Amended to TIP in February 2021		TOTAL	32,800		8,200	41,000

TIP AMENDMENT #8

This project enables Senior Connections to replace a current vehicle with a new Minivan, Side-load equipped. Federal funds for this project are made available through the Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) Program administered by WisDOT.

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
Senior Connections, Inc.	1 - Minivan Replacement Vehicle Purchase Side-Load Accessible	Vehicle Purchase	32,800		8,200	41,000
113-21-017 Amended to TIP in February 2021		TOTAL	32,800		8,200	41,000



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TIP AMENDMENT #9

WisDOT has requested 113-17-004 be deleted from the current 2021-2024 TIP, due to a change in project length. While 113-17-004 is recommended for deletion, project number 113-20-001 is the same project currently listed in the 2021-2024 TIP that has the same project objectives with the correct beginning and ending project length.

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources Thousands			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
WisDOT 113-17-004	USH 2 (USH 53 Interchange) 53 rd Ave E – USH 2/53 Interchange	PE ROW CONST		\$225		\$225
Deleted from TIP in February 2021	Interchange Mainline/Ramp Joint Repairs 1180-00-31	TOTAL		\$225		\$225

If you have any questions regarding this project, please contact me at 715-635-2197 or by email at sjohnson@nwrpc.com.

2021-2024 SUPERIOR AREA TIP ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATION #1

WisDOT has requested an administrative modification to the 2021-2024 TIP, due to a change in year for a project deliverable. TIP project ID 113-16-006, IH 535, Superior to Duluth, St. Louis River Bridge (construction, paint, misc. maintenance 1199-00-74) is currently listed as a 2022 project. WisDOT has requested the project be moved to 2021.

Administrative Modification:

WisDOT 113-16-006 - Change project work efforts from 2022 to 2021.

2021-2024 DULUTH AREA TIP ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATIONS #9-14

The MIC has approved the requested changes to the following Duluth Area TIP projects. None of these projects meet the thresholds required for a formal amendment. These changes have been administratively made to the TIP. The changes (in red) are detailed in the following table:



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Admin Mod #	Project # Jurisdiction & Change	Description	Year	Federal \$	State TH or Bond \$	Local \$	Total \$
9	118-010-028 City of Duluth	TED: MN 23/West River Drive in Duluth, intersection signalization.	2019 2021	0	0	354,000 375,000	354,000 375,000 6% cost increase
10	6982-318 MnDOT	SPP I-35, in Proctor & Duluth at Thompson Hill, from 0.51 SO. Boundary Ave to S. end Bridge No: 69879 over MN 23, NB & SB driving lanes excluding ramps, pavement overlay.	2022 2021	2,700,000 1,530,000 (NHPP)	300,000 170,000	0	3,000,000 1,700,000 43% cost decrease

Admin Mod #	Project # Jurisdiction & Change	Description	Year	Federal \$	State TH or Bond \$	Local \$	Total \$
11	6932-14 MnDOT	MN 194 construct roundabout at CSAH 13/Midway Rd. (Tied to 6916-113)	2022	2,400,000 1,280,000	600,000 320,000	550,000 1,100,000	3,550,000 2,700,000 23% cost decrease
12	6982-345 MnDOT	ITS I-35 Scanlon on from JCT MN 33 to Thompson Hill Visitor Center in Proctor. Extend fiber optic cable.	2021	0	600,000	0	600,000
13	8821-332 MnDOT	ITS Districtwide signal communication & PTZ cameras.	2021 2022	324,000	81,000	0	405,000
14	118-147-019 Duluth	E Superior St Recondition, from 45 th Ave E to 60 th Ave E.	2021	1,360,000	357,150 400,000 (MSA)	0 740,000	1,717,150 2,500,000 46% cost increase



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Cross City Trail Public Comment

Good afternoon. I'm Bruce Fehringer I've lived in the Smithville neighborhood of Duluth, across from Morgan Park, for 29 years. I'm here before you regarding the segment 3 trail project - supported by Transportation Alternatives funding approved by this Board.

One of the reasons we have lived in our neighborhood for so many years is the proximity to the wooded area of Spirit Mountain and the Munger trail that runs through it. We long for the day we can bike directly to the Canal Park/Lakewalk area where we can enjoy lunch or shopping.

Extending the trail by the most direct route from the trailhead at Munger Inn to close the gap will **allow** not only us, but so many others in the neighborhoods along the Highway 23/Grand Ave corridor to bike safely to Spirit Valley shopping area and downtown Duluth for pleasure and **work** as well.

When the 2012 flood caused the Munger trail to be closed until repairs were made, I told my middle school age boys to ignore the closure and continue to bike the Munger trail to their summer jobs because it was safer than biking Highway 23/Grand Ave, or any side streets. The Cross City Trail route below Highway 23/Grand Ave. is a TRANSPORTATION route that will be used by many. Anyone who wants to commute from the neighborhoods along Highway 23/Grand Ave. corridor **will not** use the segment 3 trail to go uphill and nearly a mile out of their way to get to Spirit Valley or downtown areas.

I attended the online public meeting last month offered by the City of Duluth where they requested public input for the segment 3 trail route options. As reported in the Duluth News Tribune, the City faced a frustrated group of over 40 participants. Almost all comments were related to the citizens' desire to redirect funds from the uphill loop segment 3 trail to the Cross City Trail segment 6, which would connect Irving Park via the safest, most level, most direct route on a trail that is ADA/UDC compliant for all ages and abilities. This would complete the Cross City Trail spine from Brighton Beach to Western Duluth.

City staff has said several times that the segment 3 trail project is an approved project and the funds are allocated for segment 3. I would like to remind you that segment 4a (from above the Zoo to Munger trail) was a funded project as well, (although only a technicality prevented the funding from being unallocated due to it being part of this same segment 3 uphill loop). In the end, the funding for the 4a project was re-allocated to the very welcomed, Cross City Trail segment 2 section which was completed last fall. My request to you, the MIC Policy Board, **is, to direct the City of Duluth** to use the Transportation Alternatives funding for the **lower** Cross City Trail route which is a **transportation** route, or risk losing the TA funding because the segment 3 uphill loop is not transportation.