



Meeting Summary

* = Approval Item

1Note Taker(s)	Tari Aanonsen, MIC Administrative/Finance Assistant	
Members Present		
	Members Present	
	Ed Anderson	City of Superior – Citizen Rep
WI Co-Chair	Nick Baker	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
MN Co-Chair	Wayne Boucher	City of Hermantown
	Mark Johnson	City of Superior
	Rosemary Lear	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Nick Ledin	Superior City Council
	Mike Mayou	Duluth City Council
	Sam Pomush	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Bob Quade	City of Rice Lake
	Randy Skowlund	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Tom Szukis	DTA
	Chad Ward	City of Proctor
	Scott Welsh	Solway Township
Members Absent		* Excused Absence
	Broc Allen	Douglas County Suburban Townships
	Annie Harala*	St. Louis County
	Jenny Van Sickle	Superior City Council
	Vacant	City of Duluth – Citizen Representative
Others Present		
	Ron Chicka	MIC Director
	Andrea Crouse	Zeitgeist
	James Gittemeier	City of Duluth
	Miles Hanson	City of Duluth, AmeriCorps
	Sheldon Johnson	NWRPC
	Prescott Morrill	MIC Planner
	Alex Popp	City of Duluth
	Ricky Sarran	MIC GIS Specialist
	Rondi Watson	MIC Communications Co-ord./Planning Asst.



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1. Introductions / Agenda Review

MIC Co-Chair, Wayne Boucher, called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm. A “roll call” attendance was taken. When completed, Chair Boucher asked if there were any questions or changes to the agenda. Hearing no changes, Chair Boucher continued to Item# 2.

2. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- Meeting Summary of 12.13.23

Chair Boucher then asked if there were any questions or changes to the December meeting summary.

Motion Discussion and Vote	Nick Baker/Sam Pomush moved to approve the 12.13.23 meeting summary. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously.
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DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

Ron Chicka reported on several items of interest that were highlighted in the Director’s Report in the agenda packet and as listed below:

- o Safety Action Plan Update 2024 – AECOM and the area jurisdictional partners will continue to work throughout the year due to the Work Program amendment (using one-time 2023 carryover funding) proposed for formal action this month. The tasks outlined in consultation with our consultant will take the plan to its conclusion and provide a roadmap for addressing the highest priority locations/corridors regarding multimodal safety needs in the MIC area.
- o I-35 Plan Update – The final plan is on our website. Also, presentations of the work to the Fond du Lac Tribe in Cloquet plus the Duluth – Superior Maritime Club to gain input and feedback. A further technical study concerning the possibility of applying variable speed limits along the corridor will be underway soon; addressed as a follow-up task in the plan.
- o Superior – Tower Avenue Plan – Meetings continue with City and Wisconsin DOT staff as we review the traffic operations study recently completed by AECOM. Once again, this study involves the feasibility of lane reduction along Tower between Belknap and 28th Street. The plan was a first step toward this potential change; purely technical and without public or private sector input. When ready for a broader level presentation to the TAC and MIC, we will try to line up a presentation.
- o Letters of Support – MIC staff has had multiple requests from area jurisdictions toward projects proposed for the metro area. These include:



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- 1) St Louis County – Rice Lake Road Corridor – Following on the County’s presentation last month, we’ve submitted a letter of support toward their request for federal funds to carry out their preliminary planning efforts. The MIC Board took an official action approving the letter.
- 2) NWRPC – Our Wisconsin host agency has asked for a letter toward a climate resilience project for continued flood plain management work – in particular a road/stream crossing evaluation in the Nemadji River watershed – via National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). A key aspect of the MICs Long Range Plan and within our planning area.
- 3) City of Duluth – Signature toward a grant for lighting of the improved bike-pedestrian crossing of I-35 near the Mesaba Avenue interchange.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

Chair Boucher then allowed for an opportunity for Public Comment. Hearing none, he continued to item #3 on the agenda.

3. 6TH AVENUE EAST RESTRIPING PROJECT

As a segway into the presentation, the MIC showed a three-minute video created by Zeitgeist on behalf of the St. Louis County Public Health Department, that draws attention to the needs of the 6th Avenue East Corridor, from a community perspective.

Alex Popp from the City of Duluth Office of Planning & Economic Development, presented on the 6th Ave. E. Restriping Project. This project is for an overlay from E 2nd Street to Mesabe Avenue. It includes 80 improvements, including ADA improvements, modification of intersections and the making of a 4-way to a 3-way roadway.

Historically, 20% of deaths due to car accidents in Duluth occurred on 6th Avenue East. This project will include many safety benefits, including the calming of traffic, reduced weaving, a reduction of left-hand turn conflicts, and a reduction in crashes, by an estimated 19 to 47%. In reviewing the crash history along this corridor, 20% would likely have been prevented had the improvements been in place. This project is slated for summer 2024.

Q: Member Mayou asked if there would be adequate cueing for the convergence of 2 lanes down to 1 at the top of Mesabe Avenue, with concerns of congestion.

A: Popp stated that folks will have 500 ft to complete the merge down to one lane.

Q: Will bike lanes be protected?

A: Popp said that bike lanes will be 7 ½ feet wide, buffered with painted lines on lower 6th Ave E and 4 ½ feet wide at Mesabe.

Q: Member Boucher asked if the signal timing had been recently adjusted at E 9th Street. He commented that the wait time during overnight hours is too long, though understandable at other times of the day.



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A: Popp responded that the city would be looking at retiming all the signals along the 6th Avenue East corridor.

For questions relating to the 6th Avenue East Restriping Project, please contact James Gittemeier: jgittemeier@duluthmn.gov

4. 2024-2027 SUPERIOR AREA TIP AMENDMENT #1-8

Sheldon presented the following amendments to the 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP:

TIP AMENDMENT #1

This project enables IndiGO (North Country Independent Living Center) the ability to continue their transportation voucher and volunteer driver 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, 2024 - December 31, 2024.

2024 Transportation Improvements Projects (Section 5310)

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
IndiGO - North Country Independent Living Center 113-24-012 Amended to TIP in January 2024	Funding of a Voucher Program for individuals with disabilities and others experiencing transportation barriers in 8 NW Counties.	Voucher Program	130,815		130,815	261,630
		TOTAL	130,815		130,815	261,630

TIP AMENDMENT #2

This project enables IndiGO (North Country Independent Living Center) 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, 2024 - December 31, 2024.



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2024 Transportation Improvements Projects (Section 5310)

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
IndiGO - North Country Independent Living Center 113-24-013 Amended to TIP in January 2024	Funding a mobility manager within NCIL	Mobility Manager	22,725		5,681	28,406
		TOTAL	22,725		5,681	28,406

TIP AMENDMENT #3

This project enables the Center for Independent Living to provide a transportation voucher and volunteer driver program to eligible clients throughout a 42-county area (including Douglas County). 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, 2024 - December 31, 2024

2024 Transportation Improvements Projects (Section 5310)

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
Center for Independent Living 113-24-014 Amended to TIP in January 2024	Funding of a Voucher Program for individuals with disabilities and others experiencing transportation barriers in 42 Central and NW Wisconsin Counties.	Voucher Program	410,280		410,280	820,560
		TOTAL	410,280		410,280	820,560

TIP AMENDMENT #4

This project enables the Center for Independent Living to operate a mobility management program funding staff members who coordinate rides for a 42-county area (including Douglas County) for a population of 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



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5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) Program administered by WisDOT. The project will span January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024.

2024 Transportation Improvements Projects (Section 5310)

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
Center for Independent Living 113-24-015 Amended to TIP in January 2024	Funding a mobility manager within the Center for Independent Living	Mobility Manager	126,658		31,665	158,323
		TOTAL	126,658		31,665	158,323

TIP AMENDMENT #5

This project enables Senior Connections to replace a current vehicle with a new Minivan, Side-Entry 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.

2022 Transportation Improvements Projects (Section 5310)

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
Senior Connections, Inc. 113-24-016 Amended to TIP in January 2024	1 - Minivan Replacement Vehicle Purchase Side-Entry Equipped	Vehicle Purchase	55,271		23,688	78,959
		TOTAL	55,271		23,688	78,959

TIP AMENDMENT #6

A TIP amendment has been requested for preliminary engineering for work associated with painting the Bong Bridge (B161-0038-0001 to 0013) in partnership with MnDOT. Preliminary engineering work is scheduled for 2024.



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2024 Transportation Improvements Projects (Roadway)

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Thousands			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
WisDOT 113-24-017	USH 2 - Bong Bridge Prelim Engineering - Zone Painting B16-0038-0001 to 0013 0.0 miles	PE ROW CONST		85	85	170
Amended to TIP in January 2024	\$85,000 WisDOT and \$85,000 MnDOT 8680-00-04	TOTAL		85	85	170

TIP AMENDMENT #7

A TIP amendment has been requested for preliminary engineering for an MMA (methyl methacrylate) overlay of the Susquehanna Bridge along USH 2 in the City of Superior. Preliminary engineering work is scheduled for 2024.

2024 Transportation Improvements Projects (Roadway)

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Thousands			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
WisDOT 113-24-018	USH 2 Susquehanna Ave Bridge B16-0049 Preliminary Eng 0.00 miles NHPP	PE ROW CONST	1.920	.600		2.400
Amended to TIP in January 2024	1570-00-12	TOTAL	1.920	.600		2.400

TIP AMENDMENT #8

A TIP amendment has been requested for preliminary engineering for a thin polymer overlay of the Pokegama River Bridge (B-16-0143) along STH 105. Preliminary engineering work is scheduled for 2024.



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2024 Transportation Improvements Projects (Roadway)

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Thousands			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
WisDOT	STH 105	PE	5.624	1.406		7.030
113-24-019	Pokegama River	ROW				
	Bridge B-16-0143	CONST				
	Thin Overlay					
Amended to TIP in January 2024	Preliminary Eng					
	0.0 miles NHPP	TOTAL	5.624	1.406		7.030
	8510-00-07					

Questions regarding this project should be directed to Sheldon Johnson at 715-635-2197 or by email at sjohnson@nwrpc.com.

No Public Comments recorded.

Motion Discussion and Vote	Rosemary Lear/Sam Pomush moved to approve the 2024-2027 Superior Area Tip Amendments #1-8 for adoption. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.
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5. 2024-2027 DULUTH AREA TIP AMENDMENTS #4-5

Prescott presented the following amendments to the 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP:

Amendment #4 – MnDOT is requesting the addition of a new project on MN 23 from W 5th St to 121st Ave W using STBGP funds (TIP Project ID # 6910-116). This project includes the removal and replacement of bituminous pavement.

- Total project cost = \$2,000,000
 - Federal funding = \$1,628,400
 - State funding = \$371,600

Amendment #5 – MnDOT is requesting the addition of a new project related to the Blatnik Bridge in 2024, using Bridge Formula Funding (TIP Project ID # 6981-26PLT). This project is for engineering consultation, bridge pile load testing and bridge footing location investigation.

- Total project cost = \$10,000,000
 - Federal Funding = \$4,500,000
 - State Funding = \$500,00
 - “Other” Funding (WisDOT) = \$5,000,000



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Public Comments Recorded:

Q: James Gittemeier asked for clarification of the road description in Amendment #4.

A: Rondi Watson responded that MN 23 is more commonly known as Grand Avenue.

Q: Member Mayou asked if there would be a reconfiguration with the restriping of Grand Avenue in Amendment #4

A: Prescott Morrill replied that there would be no change to the geometry of the striping but did add that bike lanes are brought into conversation often in regard to the Grand Avenue corridor.

There are no further Public Comments recorded.

Motion Discussion and Vote	Nick Baker/Chad Ward moved to approve the 2024-2027 Duluth Area Tip Amendments #3-5 for adoption. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.
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6. 2024 UPWP AMENDMENT #1

Ron Chicka presented on the following amendment to the 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP:

With year-end info coming in, we have roughly \$100k left over funds from 2023, due to a shortage in staffing. The amendment would carryover these funds, (roughly \$80,000 in Federal funds and \$20,000 in local ARDC match) to the MIC 2024 budget. These funds would be used to carry out the Safety Plan, using \$75,000 of the carryover and \$25,000 would be applied towards the Long Range Plan (LRP) in consultant work.

There were no Public Comments recorded.

Motion Discussion and Vote	Nick Baker/Sam Pomush moved to approve the 2024 UPWP Amendment #1 for adoption. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.
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7. MTP LONG RANGE PLAN 2050 – MIDWAY STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY

Rondi Watson reported on the midway point status of the MICs Stakeholder Involvement in the Long Range Plan 2050.

December was eventful with stakeholder involvement events taking place with specific focus groups. Three common themes arose from these meetings: pedestrian issues and needs, sustainability, and equity (underserved people and neighborhoods).

Some perceptions of our current transportation system include light to moderate traffic congestion, average transit service, although few survey respondents were bus riders, pedestrian facilities are considered poor to average, and bicycle infrastructure is considered unsafe or not convenient. Some transportation issues and opportunities recorded were snow clearance and its effects on walking, spot traffic congestion, excess road capacity, limited funding, a need to accommodate oversized trucks as port activities grow, (including a truck bypass), a reliable, base system for walking, and



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the need for a continuous, safe east-west greenway or bike lane.

Overall, the most critical issues that need to be addressed are maintaining our infrastructure, improving the conditions for walking, biking and transit and transportation safety.

Rondi noted that input is still sought by certain individuals and organizations that support the following groups: aging population, disabled people, low-income people, minority or historically disadvantaged people, people who take the bus, businesses and the City of Superior. Next steps are to finalize the stakeholder contact information and reach out to the remaining groups as listed for their input.

8. ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

- Richard Sarran offered a clarification to the description for Duluth Area TIP Amendment #4.
- Andrea Crouse of Zeitgeist opened an invitation for a Transportation Trivia event to celebrate Transit Equity Day on Wednesday, January 31st at 7:00 pm at Zeitgeist. Free fares will be offered for the DTA on Monday, February 5th for this same celebration. Andrea also commented that it is through funding from St. Louis County that Zeitgeist is able to work on transportation equity issues.
- Bob Quade commented that it is good policy to get neighborhoods involved.
- Ron Chicka mentioned that the 2024 meeting calendar has now been finalized and is available to pick up tonight at the meeting resource table. Tari will also email the calendar to member groups.

9. PROJECT UPDATES

- **Administrative Modification #3 to the 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP**

This modification, approved by MIC staff, is a group of edits to the current TIP document (Duluth Area 2024-2027 TIP) to include updated safety performance measures to include the most recent data from MnDOT.

- **Administrative Modification #4 to the 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP**

This modification, approved by MIC staff, is related to an existing MnDOT project in the current 2024-2027 TIP to secure Early Procurement (EP) in 2024 of lighting equipment for the planned improvements along Hwy 61 (Project ID # 6926-57). EP will use \$50,000 of the project's existing budget and remain fiscally constrained.

- **Administrative Modification #5 to the 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP**

This modification, approved by MIC staff, is related to an existing MnDOT project in the current '24-'27 TIP to secure Early Procurement (EP) in 2024 of expansion joints for planned bridge improvements along the I-35 corridor from Lake Ave to 21st Ave E. EP will use \$90,000 of the project's existing budget and remain fiscally constrained.



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- **Long Range MTP 2050 – Jurisdictional Meetings Update**

Jurisdictional consultations are an important part of the development of a long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), such as the MIC's *Sustainable Choices 2050*. MIC staff recently facilitated two jurisdictional consultations, one in Minnesota and one in Wisconsin. Thirteen people participated in the Minnesota consultation representing MnDOT, St. Louis County, the City of Duluth, the City of Proctor, DTA, Duluth Airport Authority, St. Louis County Emergency Management, Duluth Seaway Port Authority, and the MIC. Seven people participated in the Wisconsin consultation representing WisDOT, the City of Superior, and the MIC. In a departure from past MTP development efforts these jurisdictional consultations were held as group meetings for the purpose of encouraging cooperative interactions to better understand and discuss the MIC area's multimodal transportation network. This purpose was achieved during both consultations.

Following introductions and a brief high-level overview presentation to provide context for the consultation the agenda items were for each jurisdiction to estimate the current condition and performance of its multimodal transportation network, identify projects within the past 5 years that highlight improvements in condition and performance, identify the most pressing needs to improve condition and performance, identify proposed federally-funded and/or regionally significant projects to be included in the MTP, and an estimate of costs versus expected revenue for their proposed list of projects. Jurisdictions were able to ask questions of each other or share information that was helpful for others and/or the entire MIC area multimodal transportation network.

- **Letter of Support for the Rice Lake Road Corridor Improvement Project**

We prepared a letter of support on behalf of the MIC for St. Louis County's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant for the Rice Lake Road Corridor Project. The program supports state and local jurisdictions to complete critical freight and passenger transportation infrastructure projects. Vic Lund presented information about the project at the December TAC and MIC meetings; you can read more about the project at <https://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/rice-lake-rd-corridor>.

- **ADJOURN:** With no further agenda items, discussions or announcements, Chair Boucher adjourned the meeting at 7:25 pm.