



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
Policy Board

February 15th, 2023 Meeting

Meeting Summary

* = Approval Item

Note Taker(s)	Barb Peterson	
Members Present		
	Members Present	
WI Co-Chair	Nick Baker	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
MN Co-Chair	Wayne Boucher	City of Hermantown
	Broc Allen	Douglas County Suburban Townships
	Ed Anderson	City of Superior – Citizen Rep
	Bill Fennessey	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Annie Harala	St. Louis County
	Rosemary Lear	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Nick Ledin	Superior City Council
	Mike Mayou	Duluth City Council
	Bob Quade	City of Rice Lake
	Tom Szukis	DTA
	Jenny Van Sickle	Superior City Council
	Chad Ward	City of Proctor
Members Absent		* Excused Absence
	Hannah Alstead*	Duluth City Council
	Nick Ledin*	Superior City Council
	Sam Pomush*	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Jason Reid*	City of Duluth - Citizen Representative
Others Present		
	Chris Belden	DTA
	Ron Chicka	MIC Director
	Kris Liljeblad	MIC Sr Planner
	Prescott Morrill	MIC Planner
	Barb Peterson	MIC Admin Asst
	Ricky Sarran	MIC GIS Specialist



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1. Introductions / Agenda Review

Chair Nick Baker called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. A “roll call” attendance was taken. When complete, Chair Boucher asked if there were any questions or changes to the agenda.

Nick then asked for a moment of silence for the loss of Earl Elde, long time member of the MIC Policy Board as well as the ARDC Board.

2. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- **Meeting Summary of 1.15.23**

Chair Baker then asked if there were any questions or changes to the January meeting summary. Hearing none he asked for a motion.

Motion Discussion and Vote	Ed Anderson/Wayne Boucher moved to approve the 1.15.23 meeting summary. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously.
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- **Approval of Revised TAC Bylaws**

Chris Belden addressed the changes the TAC members have approved. The changes include adding virtual meeting attendance, length of the meetings and the biggest change is that the MIC Director or a designated staff member will be leading the meetings instead of having a chair/vice-chair.

After a few questions Chris asked for a motion to approve.

Motion Discussion and Vote	Annie Harala/Broc Allen moved to approve the Revised TAC Bylaws. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously.
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DIRECTORS REPORT:

- Sheldon Johnson’s visit to the White House to attend a “Communities in Action: Building a Better Wisconsin” is part of a White Houser series that will feature local elected officials and community leaders working on behalf of their communities to create opportunities and improve people’s everyday lives.
- Duluth Central Entrance at UMD – The MICs plan will get some further “airtime” on Feb 27th at the School of Engineering. I have been asked to present our plan to students and faculty at a school function focusing on novel/interesting projects currently under study in the area. James Gittemeier, City Planning, is going to assist. This presentation will provide another opportunity to promote the key aspects of this plan; that of potentially building a more multimodal corridor for all users. Construction is still about 3 to 4 years out. The DOT is currently conducting feasibility analysis of our plan along with preliminary design.
- Ron touched on the attached Blatnik Bridge material from MnDOT addressing various alignments.
- He also shared that MIC staff is assisting the County on Feb 6th with an in-person public input event as part of early planning for possible future improvements to Howard Gnesen Road between West Arrowhead Road in Duluth and Martin Road in Rice Lake. Three public workshop sessions were held at Homecroft Elementary School.



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Howard Gnesen Road is an important transportation corridor that currently does not offer safe or comfortable options for walking and bicycling. St. Louis County received a grant from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to help prepare an Active Transportation Plan for the roadway; that includes biking, walking or using mobility devices like scooters and wheelchairs. The goal right now is to gather input from people who live, work, go to school or travel along the road. This input will help the County to understand the needs and preferences of the community before they begin the preliminary design process.

3. 2023-2026 DULUTH AREA TIP AMENDMENTS #7-9

Amendment #7: The DTA is requesting a project increase for capital improvement funds for garage heaters. TRF-1600-23K project increase: \$25,000 → \$120,000 in FY 2023

Amendment #8: The DTA is requesting the re-allocation of funds to purchase nine Class 700 buses for the DTA fleet. This change will include the use of FTA funds, in addition to STBGP funds to make this purchase. These changes include:

- TRS-1600-23TA, purchase from nine (9) to seven (7) Class 700 buses. Project change: \$5,166,000 → \$4,821,600, in FY 2023
- The addition of project ID TRF-1600-23M for the additional two (2) Class 700 buses. Project total: \$1,377,600, in FY 2023

Amendment #9: The DTA is requesting the addition of project ID TRF-1600-23L for the replacement purchase of one (1) Class 400 bus. Project total: \$263,000, in FY 2023

Prescott Morrill reviewed the changes creating the amendments and with no questions asked for a motion.

Motion Discussion and Vote	Chad Ward/Wayne Boucher moved to approve the 2023-2026 Duluth Area TIP Amendments #7-9. There was no discussion; the motion was approved unanimously.
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4. PROJECT UPDATE

• 2023-2026 Duluth Area TIP Administrative Modification #7-9

Admin Mod #7: St. Louis County is requesting Project ID 069-070-048 no longer “TIED TO” Project ID 069-700-020. This has been approved by MIC staff.

Admin Mod #8: The Duluth Transit Authority (DTA) is removing three project line items from the Duluth 23-26 TIP in FY 2023. These projects were all non-vehicle capital improvement projects. They are: TRF-0016-23E, TRF-1600-23H, and TRF-1600-23I. This has been approved by MIC staff.

Admin Mod #9: The DTA is adjusting funding for three project line items. None of these changes rise to the level of need for an Amendment to the 23-26 TIP per MnDOT guidance. These project items and totals are as follows (these have been approved by MIC staff):



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- TRF-1600-23, Route Operating Assistance. Project change: \$20,721,390 → \$19,820,400, in FY2023
- TRF-1600-23A, Dial-a-Ride Operating Assistance. Project change: \$1,158,050 → \$1,107,700 in FY 2023
- TRF-1600-23B, Capital improvement for Bus Barn floor rehab. Project change: \$400,000 → \$480,000, in FY 2023

5. ROUND TABLE

A discussion came up questioning the lack of bike and pedestrian accommodations in the current concepts for a new Blatnik Bridge and it appears that the DOTs are not supporting these accommodations either. Ron Chicka and Prescott Morrill addressed this issue stating that this project is currently in the “NEPA” process and that there are 5 concepts being considered; 2 with bike and ped accommodations, 2 without and 1 that does nothing at all to the current bridge. Prescott said that the BPAC is keeping a very close eye on the progression of this project. What is unfortunate is that the NEPA process requires a “stripped” down, needs only concept for their process.

Several members started to ask for a Resolution to address these issues, however, Ron shared that the Policy Board has already presented one to the DOTs back in 2021. We will provide a copy by the next meeting.

Nick Baker noted that he found an email from 1933 that addressed the option of a tunnel between Duluth and Superior.

6. ADJOURN: WITH NO FURTHER AGENDA ITEMS, DISCUSSIONS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS, CHAIR BAKER ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 6:50 PM.