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TECHNICAL ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: August 5, 2009
TIME: 9:30 a.m.
PLACE: Scio Township Hall, 827 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Members Present: University of Michigan –Dave Miller, Chair
City of Ann Arbor Planning – Eli Cooper, 2nd Vice-Chair
AATA – Chris White
City of Ann Arbor Engineering – Homayoon Pirooz
Village of Dexter – Rhett Gronevelt
MDOT Planning – Ola Williams
Washtenaw County Strategic Planning – Brett Lenart
Washtenaw County Road Commission Engineering – Roy Townsend
City of Ypsilanti DPW – Stan Kirton
MDOT – Kari Martin
City of Chelsea - Christine Linfield
Pittsfield Township – Paul Montagno
Eastern Michigan University – Dieter Otto
City of Saline – Jeff Fordice (for Gary Roubal)

Members Absent: Ypsilanti Township – Joe Lawson

Others Present: FHWA – Chris Dingman
MDOT – Paul Lott, Jeff Reid
WC Health – Lily Guzman
WATS – Terri Blackmore, Nick Sapkiewicz, Eric Bombery, Ryan Buck

1. Call to Order

Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 9:30 am and asked those present to introduce themselves.

POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- CITY OF ANN ARBOR • ANN ARBOR TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY • ANN ARBOR TOWNSHIP • CITY OF CHELSEA • VILLAGE OF DEXTER •
- DEXTER TOWNSHIP • EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY • MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION • NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP • PITTSFIELD TOWNSHIP •
- CITY OF SALINE • SCIO TOWNSHIP • SOUTHWEST WASHTENAW COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS • SUPERIOR TOWNSHIP • UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN •
- WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS • WASHTENAW COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION • CITY OF YPSILANTI • YPSILANTI TOWNSHIP •
- EX OFFICIO: FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION • SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS •

2. Public Participation

Chair Miller asked if anyone from the public would like to address the Committee.

Ms. Guzman stated that she was concerned about the crashes on Michigan Avenue between Ford and Rawsonville in Ypsilanti Township. For the past couple years there has been at least one death per year where a pedestrian or cyclist has died. Ms. Guzman stated she received information from MDOT that there would be a safety project at the Michigan/Wiard intersection in 2011 but there are crashes along the whole corridor. Most pedestrian crashes and fatalities happen at night since there is no lighting in the area. With schools along this stretch, it should be a priority of MDOT to fix.

Ms. Martin stated that MDOT met with the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office to discuss the problem. Lighting would have to be provided by the township, as it is the policy of MDOT to only provide lighting on freeways.

Chair Miller closed the public participation.

3. Approval of the May 6, 2009 Minutes

Mr. White made a correction to the minutes adding the word "Plan" after "Transit" on Page three under WATS activities.

Ms. Linfield made a motion to approve the May 6, 2009 Technical Committee minutes as amended. Mr. Pirooz supported the motion and the minutes were approved as amended.

4. Communications and Announcements

Ms. Blackmore reported that the deadline for MDOT to submit FTA flex funded jobs is Tuesday, August 25, 2009 and the deadline to obligate federal surface transportation funds this year is Tuesday, September 15, 2009.

Ms. Blackmore reported that the federal and state obligation system will shut down on September 25th and will not be available for obligation until Tuesday, October 6, 2009 to begin FY 2010. Therefore, please make sure that all projects utilizing regular federal aid are submitted to MDOT as soon as possible.

Ms. Blackmore reported that the obligation deadline for all ARRA funded projects is March 2, 2010, but local projects are required to be submitted to Local Agency Programs with complete Grade Inspections packages by no later than December 30, 2009. Therefore, if some projects don't obligate by next month there is still time. Ms. Blackmore requested agencies keep in mind all ARRA funded projects must be in the TIP, have met the 30-day public comment review time, and be certified and posted to recovery.gov before they can be obligated.

Ms. Blackmore reported that MDOT will be completing a second travel survey this fall. MDOT will be resurveying those who responded three years ago for the MI Travel Counts. The sample will be

smaller than previously used, as they are determining why Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) is down. The surveys will examine whether trips are being reduced or completed using other modes.

Ms. Blackmore reported that MDOT also estimates that it appears that the July redistribution of the ARRA funds will only result in an additional \$120,000 in funding. There also may be additional funding from the ARRA projects that have come in under bid. The most recent bid openings were an average of 16% underbid.

Ms. Blackmore reported that the FHWA and MDOT approved the City of Milan changes to the National Functional Classification system to add roads for eligibility for federal funding.

Handouts at place:

1. Upcoming meetings
2. WATS TIP Schedule
3. TIP Admin/Full Amendment Criteria

5. WATS Activities

Ms. Blackmore reported there was no new information on the Ann Arbor to Detroit rail since the June update.

Ms. Blackmore reported there is no meeting scheduled for WALLY at this time.

Ms. Blackmore reported that WATS hosted a meeting of all communities interested in taking part in the group purchase of traffic counters. The City of Ann Arbor and the Road Commission are jointly working on the RFP. This group purchase will require the transportation agencies to provide the local match for the counters.

Ms. Blackmore reported that WATS received a letter of intent to amend the Webster Township Master Plan and will provided comments on or before September 15.

Ms. Blackmore reported on the 2035 Long Range Plan. Staff completed the public comment meetings and 75 attended providing 17 written comments and 25 verbal comments. Because of the public meetings, the number of unfunded improvements increased by 50 project adding \$215 million in funding needs. Funded improvements total \$2.9 billion and unfunded improvements total \$1.6 billion.

Ms. Blackmore reported that the Transit Plan will be presented at the Chelsea City Council meeting on August 25. The Ypsilanti Depot Town DDA endorsed the WATS Transit Plan on March 26.

Ms. Blackmore reported as part of the implementation of the transit plan, WATS is managing the Transit Team for the AA Regional Success. The group has established two subcommittees – one for communications and one for governance. WATS continues working with the County Board chair to meet with County leaders members to advance the countywide transit plan.

Ms. Blackmore reported the Mobility Management office is open and taking calls for transit needs and connecting the callers with providers. Signs and key chains are available from the office.

6. Old Business

There was no old business.

7. New Business

A. Federal Funding Task Force

Ms. Blackmore presented the policies as prepared by the task force. Mr. White asked to make it clear that these policies are for federal aid roads or transit. Mr. Townsend stated that participating cost is the total project cost. Mr. Lenart expressed concern over the possibility of 40% of federal funds going to soft projects. Ms. Blackmore explained that Oakland County stopped funding EA and PE if the backlog of projects not built grew too large, Washtenaw would do the same.

After open discussion, Ms. Blackmore reread the policies as amended:

**Funding Policy regarding the Use of Federal Funds
(Draft 2009 unless otherwise noted)**

The WATS allocated federal funds may be used for the following uses:

1. Construction or capital purchase for a transportation improvement that is federal aid eligible
2. EPE/EIS/EA. Record of decision (ROD) for an Environmental Impact Statement or a finding of no significant impact for an Environmental Assessment is valid for only three years and if local transportation agencies do not make progress towards construction within the three-year period, the local agency must update the environmental work. If an agency has received federal funding for previous EPE/EIS/EA for the same project, the project will not be eligible for additional federal funding for the EPE/EIS/EA update(s).
3. Preliminary Engineering (PE) not to exceed 10 percent of the total preliminary participating construction cost estimate. (MDOT standard practice 7- 10%)
4. Purchase of Right of Way (ROW) not to exceed 15 percent of the preliminary participating construction contract cost estimate.
5. A reasonable construction engineering (practice is up to 15% of participating construction cost) is allowed as an eligible expense (December 2006)
6. Non-motorized improvements such as sidewalks and lighting are eligible for federal funding at the WATS Policy Committee's discretion. (June 2006)
7. Funding for EPE/EIS/EA, PE or ROW must be paid back to the federal government and will be lost to the State and WATS if these projects do not move on to construction. Federally funded projects are expected to be under construction within three years of granting the federal fund. This is a federal policy.

WATS Executive Director or any WATS Policy member may request a review of this policy annually.

Funding Policy for Mode Split Targets (Approved October 2006)

WATS established new federal funding split targets to 80% for roads, 10% for non-motorized and 10% for transit to replace the previous policy of 84% for roads, 12% for public transit and 4% for bikes. (September 2006)

Funding Policy regarding the Use and Tracking of Federal Funds for the Mode Targets (Draft 2009)

WATS shall track the expenditure of federal funds over a three year period (to run concurrent with the TIP planning process) by mode and allocate funds spent on non-motorized and transit supportive improvements to understand and if necessary adjust the future selection of projects for the Mode Targets of 80% for roads and bridges, 10% for Transit, and 10% for non-motorized uses.

1. The percentages establish priorities and are not a set-aside.
2. WATS will count all non-motorized improvements meeting American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines providing a dedicated non-motorized facility towards the percentages with the following considerations:
 - a. WATS will allocate transit-sponsored improvements at public transit stops 100% to transit for mode target tracking.
 - b. WATS will track funds spent on non-motorized improvements that provide access to transit by splitting 50% of the cost of the non-motorized improvements towards the non-motorized percentage and 50% towards the transit percentage.
3. WATS will track the cost of construction or reconstruction of in-road non-motorized improvements such as bike lanes at a prorated share of the width of the road. WATS will allocate only the cost of striping if the conversion does not include any rehabilitation or reconstruction.

WATS staff will track the expenditure of federal funds for non-motorized and transit supportive improvements as part of the Annual List of Obligated Projects. WATS will complete a review of whether the Agency has met the mode percentages after the conclusion of each federal transportation reauthorization.

Mr. Townsend made a motion for approval of the federal funding policies as amended. Mr. Montagno supported the motion and the motion passed.

B. MDOT R & R Priorities

Mr. Reid presented a list of possible 2015 construction projects in Washtenaw County. He explained that the projects are in rank order as presented and asked for recommendations from the committee.

Mr. Cooper called for an MDOT working group to develop a plan for the I-94/State interchange to ensure multimodal options be provided when the State freeway ramp projects is undertaken.

Ms. Blackmore recommended moving the Ann Arbor-Saline project up before the State Street project, as preliminary non-motorized planning work on State Street needs to be completed.

Mr. Townsend made a motion for support of the MDOT R &R list as presented. Ms. Linfield supported the motion and the motion passed.

C. Asset Manager NT Presentation

Mr. Bombery gave a presentation of the evaluation of the 2035 LRP projects using Asset Manager NT. The presentation is attached to the filed packet in the WATS office.

D. 2035 Plan for Washtenaw County

Ms. Blackmore presented the 2035 LRP PowerPoint used at the public meetings. A copy of the presentation is attached to the filed packet in the WATS office.

Ms. Blackmore stated that there were a few copies of the draft plan on the table for members to take, otherwise the plan is available on the WATS website. All comments on the draft 2035 LRP are due to WATS by August 19th.

E. ARRA Redistribution

Ms. Blackmore presented the options for redistribution of remaining ARRA funds from low bids. Mr. Williams reported that any remaining funds would have to go to a new or uncertified project. Ms. Blackmore stated that there were possibly two projects, one from WCRC and one from Ann Arbor, that were not yet certified. Ms. Blackmore recommended that if any funds were remaining that the funds go to one of the two uncertified projects, which is option 1 on the list. Mr. Lenart supported option 1 and Ms. Blackmore will make that recommendation to SEMCOG.

F. Transportation Improvement Program Information

Mr. Bombery reported that at the committee member's seat is both the TIP amendment schedule as well as the difference between a full and administrative TIP amendment. Mr. Bombery reminded the committee members that the first call for FY 2010 amendments is due August 17. Mr. Bombery asked the committee members to call him with any questions about the two documents.

G. Election of 1st Vice-Chair

Ms. Blackmore reported that the committee was without a 1st Vice-Chair and need to elect someone to the position. Mr. Townsend made a motion for Eli Cooper to move to 1st vice-Chair from 2nd Vice-Chair. Mr. White supported the motion and the motion passed.

Mr. Montagno made a motion for Brett Lenart to be 2nd Vice-Chair. Mr. Miller supported the motion and the motion passed.

8. Agency Reports

AATA - Mr. White reported that Michael Ford is now acting CEO of AATA.

The committee agreed to postpone the remaining agency reports until the next meeting.

9. Adjournment

Mr. Townsend made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kirton seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 12:00.