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## Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

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### TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL CARTS/COMMISSION WORK SESSION

DATE: November 29, 2007 (Thursday)  
TIME: 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
PLACE: **DELTA TOWNSHIP HALL**  
7710 W. Saginaw Highway  
Lansing, Michigan 48917

#### OFFICERS

**CHAIRPERSON**  
Phil Chisholm

**VICE-CHAIRPERSON**  
Carol Wood

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Susan McGillicuddy

**SECRETARY**  
Larry Martin

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Larry Martin

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Jon W. Coleman

#### Work Session Summary

##### I. Welcome and Introductions

Larry Martin, TCRPC Chairperson, introduced himself and welcomed everyone in attendance. Those present introduced themselves. Ch/Martin said the Commission requested that staff host a joint meeting for local elected officials and technical staff, with MDOT present, to review the processes of moving transportation projects forward.

Ch/Martin called the Work Session to order at approximately 2:34 p.m.

Ch/Martin turned the meeting over to Gonzalo Puente, Project Development Engineer, MDOT Local Agency Programs (LAP).

##### II. Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Local Agency Programs Presentation

Gonzalo Puente introduced his staff from the Local Agency Programs (LAP). Chris Youngs, Urban Program Manager, provided an overview on capturing federal dollars for transportation related projects through a PowerPoint presentation (attached). Youngs' presentation provided information on the Local Agency Programs (LAP) process during the design phases of projects. Listed below are highlighted points to remember when planning, designing and/or submitting projects. Please visit MDOT's website for further details on Local Agency Programs.

- Once a project is let it goes into construction which is handled through the Transportation Service Center (TSC).
- Main funding source is STP, though there are other funding sources available.
- Federal or State aid funded projects go through LAP.

- Projects must be listed in the TIP. LAP's first step is to make sure projects are in the TIP.
- Local Jobs Today – advance construct means you fund the project with your own money (projects still have to follow federal requirements) and later convert it to a federally funded project. Advanced construct projects must be in the TIP and a letter must be submitted to LAP who will forward the letter to FHWA.
- Projects need to be submitted as soon as possible to secure funding – before obligational authority runs out.
- Changes in funding or projects limits must have MPO approval and must be revised in the TIP.
- STP funds sunset each fiscal year (obligational authority can run out before the end of the fiscal year). Tom Maleck, MSU, asked about Economic Development funds. Gonzolo said federal or state funded projects go through the same process through LAP.
- Obligation comes after final (post-GI-ready to advertise) plans & estimates (not programmed dollars). They will use figures closest to the estimate.
- Federal aid dollars pay for the surface of the road. Sidewalks are eligible for federal aid dollars. Information concerning parking areas should be visited on the website.
- Anything associated with engineering and construction phases – it is at the MPO's discretion what phases would be eligible for federal aid. Ten MPO's in the state participate only in the construction phase of projects.
- CMAQ funds – only construction is eligible for federal aid – “lump sum” projects.
- Funding can not be changed after the CMAQ project is funded. An adjustment can be made prior to the project being awarded.
- Project life cycle was explained.
- Each federal aid project is screened through an environmental evaluation. If roads are being widened from 2 to 4 lanes – an environmental assessment would be made. Reviews can take 12-18 months for an environmental review – must go through public hearing process. MDEQ will wait until the public hearing before issuing a permit.
- Projects being bid need to be cleared.
- Grade inspection review for GI. (see attached presentation).
- There is a letting schedule on the website. Majority of projects requiring right of way did not get 100% complete.
- Final plans should be reviewed and completed – any permits required should be obtained. LAP is working on an electronic email bidding process – this occurs nine weeks before the bid letting.

- Jobs should be advertised for five weeks. Calls should be directed to the name listed on the proposal.
- Projects let usually on the first Friday of each month.
- Low or high bids over or under 10% - there would have to be a significant change to the plan to reject all bids.
- Projects are awarded 4-6 weeks after bid lettings.
- ADA issues – federal aid projects need to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Alternate pipe materials must be used under SAFETEA-LU (a statewide policy is being developed).
- Work zone safety & mobility – CRAM and MML are working on a policy to apply at the local level – this policy will be in place before the end of 2008.
- LAP is currently in the middle of a nationwide review by FHWA on the state's local agencies programs.
- Tom Maleck, MSU, asked if Michigan Institutional Roads (MIR) state funds come from LAP. These funds come through the Lansing Transportation Service Center (TSC).

Gonzalo Puente summarized the Local Agency Programs (LAP) presentation. He said LAP is not involved in the planning phase of the process. LAP reviews plans and specs of projects and follows projects until they are awarded. The Lansing Transportation Service Center (TSC) takes over once the projects are at the construction phase of the process. The TSC will approve payment of projects which then goes through the finance division. LAP offered to meet with individual agencies to explain the process in more detail.

C/McGillicuddy asked at what point is it appropriate for local communities to get involved in the process (to allow for bike lanes, pathways, etc.) Youngs suggested asking the local agency for public notice on projects. Project scoping occurs 2-3 years before a project is programmed in the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) or Long Range Plan (LRP).

C/Monsma inquired about combining more than one funding source. Youngs said funding sources can be packaged together as one project. MDOT said agencies have a schedule on the website that includes public input on upcoming projects.

C/Rodgers asked about MDOT requirements for public involvement at the planning process phase. She said the public generally isn't aware of projects until they are at the LAP level (80% into the process). Do local agencies have public requirements? Ray Lenze, MDOT, said there is a federal requirement that says there must be a public participation plan for the Long Range Plan (LRP) and the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). MDOT monitors this requirement. The question was asked on how to get local agencies to involve the public at the beginning of the process. The City of Lansing explained their process which includes submitting applications based on assumptions to the City Council, once projects are approved and awarded engineers are involved, and then the public is notified. C/McGillicuddy said it is more difficult for townships because they don't have jurisdiction over the roads. She said there needs to be a time where the public can comment at an earlier stage, especially for township governing bodies. Youngs said

there needs to be coordination between the township and implementing agency, which may require a policy decision.

Hamilton brought copies of the check list on how TCRPC evaluates their public participation program. Hamilton said each jurisdiction can use the check list at the local level. TCRPC staff asks about public participation when projects are submitted. Hamilton said as a matter of good practice, a public participation plan should be adopted through each local agency. Hamilton said staff can help with education on public participation techniques. Hamilton is doing a workshop on public participation and consensus building at the Designing Healthy Livable Communities Conference in May of 2008.

### III. MDOT – University Region Presentation

Jeff Reid, Associate Regional Engineer for Project Development, provided an overview on trunkline process of project selection through a PowerPoint presentation. Listed below are key points.

- They expect a decrease in revenues for highway funds.
- In 2006 there were approximately 1084 fatalities on the road. Their goal is to reduce this number to less than 1,000.
- They spend 1 billion dollars on preserving roads annually (revenues are decreasing).
- Half of capital improvement funds are used for rehabilitation of roads.
- The University Region is responsible for rehabilitation of the roads.
- Jeff Reid talked about the project selection process. They try to spread work over 10 counties while addressing as many needs at one time to minimize disruption of traffic.
- Bridge funding has been increased since the bridge collapse in Minnesota.
- There are specific pots of money for rehabilitation, safety, etc.
- ITS (Intelligent Transportation System) is being expanded to our region (new technology).
- The Transportation Service Center (TSC) proposes project limits after identifying needs of roads and submits them to the University Region.
- They select projects which must follow a strategy that gives the best cost/benefit performance.
- They like to reconstruct 1 ½ percent of freeways annually.
- He explained the call for projects.
- He talked about public input – they hold listening sessions to gain input from the public on the five year plan. The TSC holds countywide Traffic summits each year – projects are reported on at these summits. They hold project related stakeholder meetings. He said public input varies depending on the type of project.

- Tom Maleck, MSU, asked about Michigan truck weight standards being twice as heavy as the design weight (national standard), and are steps being taken to address this problem? Jeff Reid was uncertain.
- Bridge and pavement conditions were discussed.
- Approximately 100 million dollars are spent annually in the region.
- Tom Maleck asked if there are steps in place to increase available funding, i.e. gas tax. Maintenance will accelerate and repairs will be more costly due to lack of funding.

#### IV. MDOT – Lansing Transportation Service Center (TSC) Presentation

Paul Steinman, Manager, Lansing TSC, provided an overview of the Transportation Service Center (TSC) process during the construction phase of the process. Listed below are highlighted points to remember when projects are at the design phase.

- Their new facility is near the MSU campus on Technology Drive, just off of Collins Road.
- TSC is responsible for the project scope. They try to come up with a comprehensive package to fix what's needed.
- When the TSC prepares scoping packages, announcements are mailed to all elected officials for larger projects. The TSC would like public input at this time. Dollar amounts on projects are determined at this time. Project scopes are looked at six years in advance.
- Every pot of money has a different set of rules.
- The TSC sends notification on GI plans to those being effected – input is limited at this phase.
- Final set of plans is making sure proposals are correct.
- Public meetings are held for those that are affected along the corridor. He said most people come to public meetings at the design/construction phase. TSC will hold meetings for some larger projects on a state trunkline to show businesses what they're considering and how it's going to affect them.
- MDOT has letting deadlines and they are rated by the Transportation Commission on meeting deadline dates.
- Annual traffic summits are held in every county. They go through all projects in their five year plan. The five year plan is also available on the website.
- TSC offered to send appropriate staff out to explain programs and/or projects.
- Tom Maleck, MSU, asked if MDOT provides a list of all funding sources (pots of money) and what projects are eligible for. Hamilton said there is a summary of funding sources in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

#### V. Questions and Answers – Facilitated Discussion and Dialog

Moderator, Jon W. Coleman, TCRPC Executive Director, facilitated questions and answers.

Rey Severy, Meridian Township, asked about the scoping with MDOT on the M-43 project. He asked how you get public input on the project and is it up to the local jurisdiction or MDOT to get public notices out? Paul Steinman said this is a small project and public notices would not be given. The question was then asked - what is the appropriate level on this type of project to notify the public? C/McGillicuddy said Meridian Township has had plans for trails and bicycle paths on M-43 since approximately 1989. C/McGillicuddy said they would be more than happy to schedule proposed projects on their agendas for public input if MDOT notifies the local jurisdiction. Steve Shaughnessy, MDOT, said they've captured safety funds for M-100 due to concerns of Oneida Township. He said MDOT is involved with local communities to facilitate their concerns.

Coleman said we've had several projects that have been awarded funds but could not move forward due to SHPO or other issues. By the time this happens it is too late to move any other projects in its place to avoid losing funds. It has been asked by the Commission - why would a community sit on a project until it's too late? Mike Nobach, CCRC, said this was a big issue with CARTS; they decided to have everyone bring status of projects to the table each month. Hamilton said going to a two year call may help. Pete Porciello, MDOT, said the funding mechanism, rules, and timing are the same for any funding source. CMAQ funds are tied to the exact work scope and time frame - so delaying the project causes you to lose money. If you know you're going to delay the project and can revert to the planning process to put another job in to use that money in the adequate time - funds can be saved for that year. He said to apply for funds in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year out when you know you can use the funds, so you're not reserving funds before you know you can spend it.

Debbie Alexander, CATA, said CMAQ is one of the only funds transit qualifies for. She said they are the first eligible project if someone else fails to obligate their project. She would like to see CARTS mandate an earlier deadline for finalizing obligation of CMAQ projects that would allow a transit agency to step in with their projects if an awarded project can not meet the deadline.

#### VIII. Adjourn

Coleman thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:30 p.m.

**TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**ATTENDANCE**  
**SPECIAL CARTS/COMMISSION WORK SESSION**  
**November 29, 2007**

Commissioners Present

- 1 Susan McGillicuddy, Meridian Charter Township
- 2 Larry Martin, Clinton County
- 3 Shirley Rodgers, City of Lansing At Large Member
- 4 Dave Pohl, Clinton County Board of Commissioners
- 5 Fred Marquardt, Eaton County Road Commission
- 6 Russel Bauerle, Clinton County Road Commission
- 7 Dianne Holman, Ingham County Board of Commissioners
- 8 Bill Hawes, Eaton County At Large Member
- 9 Phil Chisholm, Delta Charter Township
- 10 Ralph Monsma, CATA

Commissioners Absent

- 1 Art Luna, EATRAN
- 2 Glenn Freeman, III, Eaton County Board of Commissioners
- 3 Joseph Guenther, Ingham County Road Commission
- 4 Kevin Beard, City of East Lansing
- 5 Tina Weatherwax-Grant, Ingham County Board of Commissioners
- 6 Harold Leeman, City of Lansing
- 7 William Matt, City of Lansing
- 8 Carol Wood, City of Lansing
- 9 Marsha Small, MDOT

CARTS Members Present

- 1 Scott Poyer, City of Eaton Rapids
- 2 Claudine Hannold, Eaton County
- 3 Dan Armentrout, Clinton County Road Commission
- 4 Tom Maleck, MSU
- 5 Mike Nobach, Clinton County Road Commission
- 6 Bob Peterson, Ingham County Road Commission
- 7 Blair Ballou, Eaton County Road Commission
- 8 Jim Albertson, Village of Dimondale
- 9 Mathew Hannahs, Eaton County Road Commission
- 10 Todd Sneathen, City of East Lansing
- 11 Tim Schmitt, City of East Lansing
- 12 Peter Stoughton, Delhi Charter Township
- 13 Dennis Nimphie, Delta Charter Township
- 14 David Martin, EATRAN
- 15 Debbie Alexander, CATA
- 16 Nicole Wilson, CATA
- 17 Andy Kilpatrick, City of Lansing
- 18 Jane Dykema, City of Lansing
- 19 Dean Johnson, City of Lansing
- 20 Ray Severy, Meridian Charter Township

**ATTENDANCE (continued)**  
**SPECIAL CARTS/COMMISSION WORK SESSION**  
**November 29, 2007**

Guests Present

- 1 Gonzalo Puente, MDOT Local Agency Programs (LAP) - **Presenter**
- 2 Chris Youngs, MDOT LAP - **Presenter**
- 3 Jeff Reid, MDOT University Region - **Presenter**
- 4 Paul Steinman, MDOT Lansing TSC (also CARTS member) - **Presenter**
- 5 Steve Shaughnessy, MDOT Lansing TSC (also CARTS member)
- 6 Larry Doyle, MDOT Lansing TSC (also CARTS member)
- 7 George Masinda, MDOT LAP
- 8 Pete Porciello, MDOT
- 9 Ray Lenze, MDOT (also CARTS member)
- 10 Dal McBurrows (MDOT Representative on TCRPC's Transportation Review Committee)
- 11 Shaun Bates, MDOT
- 12 Tom Oliver, Village of Webberville
- 13 Amy Schoonover, City of Charlotte
- 14 Linda Keefe Lewis, Eaton County Board of Commissioners
- 15 Joe Manzella, CATA

TCRPC Staff Present

- 1 Jon Coleman, Executive Director
- 2 Maria Habba, Executive Assistant
- 3 Paul Hamilton, Chief Transportation Planner
- 4 Steve Skinker, Transportation Planner