

**WEST MICHIGAN METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROGRAM  
(WESTPLAN) POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MEETING MINUTES**

March 17, 2021

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

WestPlan MPO staff consulted with MDOT and FHWA staff to address concerns with recent COVID-19 restrictions pertaining to public meetings and gatherings. Governor Whitmer released Executive Directive 2020-2 on March 13, 2020, which gave agencies alternative options to public meetings to allow important time sensitive issues to move forward. WestPlan provided materials to all members and opened opportunities for discussion and comment by phone or email. These same materials were available to the public as well. The meeting was held via Zoom. Access information was sent out to the transportation stakeholder list.

Chairperson Arter called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. A quorum was present.

**ATTENDANCE (Roll call)**

**A. Members Present**

Bill Mogren, City of North Muskegon  
Kim Arter, Laketon Township, Chairperson  
Kay Beecham, City of Norton Shores  
Matt Fenske, Ottawa County  
Betty Gajewski, Ottawa County Road Commission  
Susie Hughes, MATS  
Jack Kennedy, Muskegon County Road Commission  
Missi Klos, City of Roosevelt Park  
Dennis Kent for Don Mayle, MDOT  
Bonnie McGlothin, City of Muskegon Heights  
Robert Monetza, Harbor Transit  
Wally Delamater, Village of Spring Lake  
Scott Blease, Ferrysburg  
Dennis Scott, City of Grand Haven  
Ryan Kelly Ottawa County- Township Rep  
Steven Salter, City of Whitehall  
Tom Lohman, City of Montague  
Roger Vanderstelt, Village of Fruitport  
Ken Johnson, City of Muskegon

**B. Members Not Present**

Andy Pickard, FHWA (Non-Voting)  
Rillastine Wilkins, Muskegon County Commissioner  
Elmer Hoyle, Ravenna Township

**C. Others Present**

Tina Hawley, Pioneer Resources  
Marc Fredrickson, MDOT Muskegon TSC  
Bob Lukens, Muskegon County  
Darma Canter, Public

**D. Staff Present**

Erin Kuhn, WMSRDC Executive Director  
Brian Mulnix, WMSRDC  
Amy Haack, WMSRDC  
Joel Fitzpatrick, WMSRDC

**II. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Kim Arter called the meeting to order at 1:32. Attendance was taken via roll call. A quorum was present.

**III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES (FEBRUARY 17, 2021) –A motion was made to approve the minutes from the February 17, 2021 meeting as submitted. Motion approved. m/s Hughes/Kennedy**

Bill Mogren, City of North Muskegon  
Kim Arter, Laketon Township, Chairperson  
Kay Beecham, City of Norton Shores  
Matt Fenske, Ottawa County  
Betty Gajewski, Ottawa County Road Commission  
Susie Hughes, MATS  
Jack Kennedy, Muskegon County Road Commission  
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Steven Salter, City of Whitehall  
Tom Lohman, City of Montague  
Roger Vanderstelt, Village of Fruitport  
Ken Johnson, City of Muskegon

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

The WestPlan Public Participation Plan procedure was followed to achieve public participation for this meeting. Ms. Darma Canter spoke regarding the transit governance study being undertaken by WMSRDC.

**V. FY2020-FY2023 TIP – Amendment 14:** Mr. Mulnix presented Amendment 14 for the FY 2020-2023 TIP.

**FY2021-** City of Muskegon TAP & Natural Resource Trust (NRT) Funding **Project Scope and Cost Change (Cost reduction of more than 25%)** Black Creek Road -Port City BLVD between Keating Avenue and Olthoff, Roadside facilities- Construct 10-foot wide HMA non-motorized trail. Federal: \$496,024, State: \$0, Local: \$69,157, Total: \$565,181.

**VI.** A motion was made and seconded to approve the corrected amendment. A roll call vote was conducted. Motion approved. **m/s Hughes/Kennedy**

Bill Mogren, City of North Muskegon  
 Kim Arter, Laketon Township, Chairperson  
 Kay Beecham, City of Norton Shores  
 Matt Fenske, Ottawa County  
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**VII. 2045 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN** – Mr. Joel Fitzpatrick stated there was no update at this time.

**VIII. FY2021 ADJUSTED NHS BRIDGE CONDITION**

Brian presented the adjusted bridge targets. A table summarizing the old and new targets and data is below.

<b>Performance Area</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Baseline Condition (2017 data)</b>	<b>2-year target (ended 10/1/2020)</b>	<b>4-year target</b>
Bridge	Percent of National Highway System Deck Area in Good Condition	32.7%	27.0%	<b>23.0%</b> (adjusted from the previous 4-year target of 26%)
Bridge	Percent of National Highway System Deck Area in Poor Condition	9.8%	7.0%	<b>8.0%</b> (adjusted from the previous 4-year target of 7%)

**IX.** A motion was made and seconded to approve the adjusted targets. A roll call vote was conducted. Motion approved. **m/s Hughes/Kennedy**

Bill Mogren, City of North Muskegon  
 Kim Arter, Laketon Township, Chairperson

Kay Beecham, City of Norton Shores  
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**X. HIP AND COVID RELIEF FUNDS**

- Mr. Brian Mulnix spoke about regular HIP funding as well as COVID relief funding. Staff will do more research and come up with options for allocating the funding. A work session may be scheduled.

**XI. MPO ROUNDTABLE**

- Mr. Joel Fitzpatrick spoke on changes to the PASER road ratings for FY2021.
- Mr. Marc Fredrickson answered various questions regarding US-31 as well as the causeway between Whitehall and Montague.

**VI. OLD BUSINESS** – There was no old business to discuss.

**XII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The WestPlan Public Participation Plan procedure was followed to achieve public participation for this meeting. Ms. Darma Canter spoke regarding her objection to the changes to the MATS route system and other transit issues. Emails received by Ms. Canter are included at the end of the minutes.

**VII. NEW BUSINESS** – Staff relayed the information that there may be a special meeting on March 31 to amend the exiting bylaws.

**VIII. ADJOURN**- Meeting adjourned at 2:43 p.m.

**From:** [canter2000@aol.com](mailto:canter2000@aol.com)  
**To:** [Joel Fitzpatrick](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Transportation 3-17-21  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 17, 2021 3:37:19 PM  
**Attachments:** [3-17-21 WMSRDC comment 2.docx](#)  
[Public Comment for WMSRDC- 3-2021.docx](#)

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Hi, Joel

The public comment for today is attached as well as the comment I send last month. Please add both to the record.

Joel, the people who depend on publicly subsidized transportation deserve better service than Mr Lukens is planning. The current and future changes in bus service injure the people who are least able to adapt to change. The "micro-transit" idea works for people who drive their personal vehicle to work or school, because they are not planning for their own diverse needs. This decision is being assigned to people who don't have enough information to determine what Muskegon County access can do to transform lives.

We, you and I, can have a more equitable system for all if we design it that way. Please fight for the civil rights of seniors, the disabled, veterans, students and low-income families. The decisions made so far are evidence of disparate impact on minority communities. When your policies and practices lead to discrimination, you have to stop, find another way.

I sincerely hope WMSRDC will find a more intentional method for public participation.  
Darma

### **Public Comment for Public Access to Natural Resources Committee and WMSRDC March 2021**

I was glad to read your website and Facebook posts articulating the importance of public assets developed for the benefit of the whole community.

I wonder what your organization will do to reconnect seniors, the disabled, veterans and low-income households to public transportation providing access to Pere Marquette Park and other publicly owned natural resources? Changes to the Muskegon Area Transit System eliminated bus route services to lakeshore recreational environments. In addition, eliminating county-wide Go Bus service for disabled and senior residents has created a participation barrier and excluded literally thousands of people from accessing publicly owned natural resources.

I think federal funding is intended to benefit the entire community. Generally, contracts prohibit program changes that disproportionately impact minority neighborhoods. The MATS proposal /plan was implemented Sept 2020 and it isolated, segregated and disadvantaged a specific segment of the population.

Policies and practices that negatively affect an underrepresented population is described as systemic discrimination. People who drive a personal vehicle to town or the beach in winter and in summer should not make decisions for fellow citizens who depend on subsidized, public transportation. When municipal entities make bad choices, I hope when informed they will correct their missteps to promote Environmental Justice.

Having the right to do something is not the same as doing the right thing.

Please, let me know if you need more information or want to discuss the issues further.

Darma J Canter  
[canter2000@aol.com](mailto:canter2000@aol.com)  
1898 Orshal Rd  
Muskegon MI 49445

Facebook comment: We do not live-in silos disconnected from each other. Public spaces are connected to health, physical and mental, parks are connected to education on environmental issues, parks are connected to family recreation and parks are connected to the county infrastructure, including bus service.

How can MLWP discuss access to natural resources without a broader understanding of the role of public spaces, parks and the lakeshore in the community?

If you see a need to plan a road, boardwalk or dock to provide access, you'll consider access for residents who rely on public transportation also.

Please, let me know if you need more information or want to discuss the issues further.

Darma J Canter  
[canter2000@aol.com](mailto:canter2000@aol.com)  
1898 Orshal Rd  
Muskegon MI 49445

### **March 17, 2021**

#### **Transportation Policy Committee, WMSRDC**

The county commissioners authorized WMSRDC to hire a consultant and develop an alternative to the county's operation of the bus program.

The question for us now is 'who /what will provide the best service to the people who must depend on publicly subsidized transit?' The needs of the people who use the bus system haven't been at the center of county decision-making.

Is there an unidentified influencer who has an interest in our public dollars being transferred to private corporations? Is there a motive to provide service to more people or different people? The money issue the county claimed as their motive could have been resolved in a number of ways, and the administration refused to evaluate the public's position on bus services.

Although, the federal and state funding contracts require the county to consider the impact of changes on the minority and low-income areas, the county has been negligent in its responsibility to focus on social outcomes. In my opinion WMSRDC is even less likely to value consumer input because of their focus on municipality / community needs. Decisions of the local governments must lead to services that improve the lives of people, residents, voters, and citizens.

The solution is more democracy. Define the region's goal when spending taxpayer dollars for "public transportation." I believe the federal taxpayer investment is designed to facilitate self-help and the inclusion of minority communities in every aspect of social and economic well-being.

So, I am here to offer my expertise in recruiting members of the public served by the MATS programs. Public participation is a US DOT contract standard which is often overlooked and unmeasured; the benefit of public input is a plan that reflects the needs of the people served and assures a successful outcome consistent with financial resources.

I look forward to our next meeting,

Darma J Canter  
1898 Orshal Rd  
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