

**MICHIANA AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
POLICY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
June 10, 2026**

The June meeting of the Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG) Policy Board was held on the second floor of the Mishawaka City Hall, on June 10, 2026. Members of the public were invited to attend in person or watch a live stream of the meeting on YouTube. Public comments and questions were accepted in advance of the meeting by email sent to macogdir@macog.com, in person, as well as by utilizing YouTube's live chat feature. Phil Jenkins, Chair of the Policy Board, called the meeting to order. It was noted there was a quorum present.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Phil Jenkins, Mayor, City of Nappanee
Carl Baxmeyer, St. Joseph County Commissioner
Jesse Bohannon, Marshall County Commissioner
Dwight Fish, Elkhart Common Council
Cary Groninger, Kosciusko County Commissioner
Kathy Groninger, Kosciusko County Council
Tim Harman, Marshall County Council
Jason Kaiser, District Deputy Commissioner, INDOT Fort Wayne
Canneth Lee, South Bend Common Council
Gina Leichty, Mayor, City of Goshen
Tony Violi, Mishawaka Common Council
Suzanne Weirick, Elkhart County Commissioner
David Wood, Mayor, City of Mishawaka

MEMBERS VIRTUAL: Robert Listenberger, Mayor, City of Plymouth
Rod Roberson, Mayor, City of Elkhart

MEMBERS ABSENT: Matt Deitchley, Deputy Commissioner, INDOT La Porte
Douglas Graham, Elkhart County Council
Jeff Grose, City of Warsaw
James Mueller, Mayor, City of South Bend
Bryan Tanner, St. Joseph County Council

MINUTES OF THE MAY 13, 2026, MEETING

The minutes of the May 13, 2026, meeting were distributed for review prior to the meeting. Phil Jenkins asked the Policy Board members if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes. There being none, he called for the Policy Board's approval.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY GINA LEICHTY AND SECONDED BY
CARL BAXMEYER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 2026.
ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chair had no report.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

April 2026 Financial Reports

Debbie Gardner presented the MACOG Financial Reports for the month of April 2026. She reviewed the year-to-date total expenses and noted that Travel & Mileage is approaching its budget limit and may require a budget revision. Gardner reported the cash balance at the end of the month, and the total amount of disbursements.

Gardner asked for any questions. Dwight Fish commented that Audit expenses were 92% spent and asked if any adjustment would need to be made. Gardner confirmed there will be no additional audit expenses for the fiscal year. Hearing no additional questions, she requested the Policy Board's endorsement of the April 2026 financial reports.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY SUZANNE WEIRICK AND SECONDED BY
JESSE BOHANNON TO APPROVE THE APRIL 2026 FINANCIAL REPORTS.
ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Jesse Bohannon reported that MACOG staff made Administrative Modifications to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) during the months of May. No action is required. A list of modifications was provided to the members, and the information is available on the MACOG website.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Amendments to the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Transportation Resolution 16-26

INDOT Initiated

A. INDOT	<u>Amendment</u>	Exempt Project in St. Joseph County
Resolution 16-26		
Des#: 2600793, 2002289	Add Slide Correction Project to Contract; Increase CN Funding by \$1,200,000, Move letting date	
Contract#: B-43352	Heston Ditch 1.20 miles West of SR 931 and 2.32 West of US 31	
	Small Structure Replacement	
Phase: CN	Total: \$2,724,912	Federal: \$2,299,930 (NHS) State: \$424,982 SFY 2027
Estimated Cost to Complete = \$3,325,712	Miles: 0	

B. INDOT	<u>Amendment</u>	Exempt Project in Various Counties
Resolution 16-26		
Des#: 2500968	Add Project	

Contract#: T-46353 **Various Locations Within the Fort Wayne District - High Friction Surface Treatment**
Other Type Project
Phase: CN Total: \$1,100,000 Federal: \$880,000 (NHS) State: \$220,000 SFY 2030
Estimated Cost to Complete = \$1,100,000 Miles: 0

C. INDOT Amendment Exempt Project in Various Counties

Resolution 16-26

Des#: 2401564 Add Project

Contract#: R-45827 **Various Locations Within the Fort Wayne District – Slotted Lefts**
Other Intersection Improvement

Phase: CN Total: \$2,300,000 Federal: \$1,840,000 (NHS) State: \$460,000 SFY 2029
Estimated Cost to Complete = \$2,300,000 Miles: 0

D. INDOT Amendment Exempt Project in St. Joseph County

Resolution 16-26

Des#: 2500925, 2500924 Add CN Phase

Contract#: R-46476 **US 20 at Smilax Rd, 5.8 mi W US 31; US 20 at Tulip Rd, 5.06 mi W of US 3**
Other Intersection Improvement

Phase: CN Total: \$4,583,305 Federal: \$4,124,974 (HSIP) State: \$458,331 SFY 2028
Estimated Cost to Complete = \$5,586,338 Miles: 0.5

E. INDOT Amendment Exempt Project in St. Joseph County

Resolution 16-26

Des#: 2500921 Add RW and CN Phases

Contract#: R-46413 **SR 2 at Tulip Rd, 8.00 miles E of US 20**
Other Intersection Improvement

Phase: RW Total: \$90,000 Federal: \$72,000 (HSIP) State: \$18,000 SFY 2027
Phase: CN Total: \$3,000,000 Federal: \$2,700,000 (HSIP) State: \$300,000 SFY 2029
Estimated Cost to Complete = \$5,072,587 Miles: 0

F. INDOT Amendment Exempt Project in St. Joseph County

Resolution 16-26

Des#: 2500920 Add RW Phase

Contract#: R-46412 **SR 2 at Timothy Rd, 4.25 miles east of US 20**
Other Intersection Improvement

Phase: RW Total: \$75,000 Federal: \$67,500 (HSIP) State: \$7,500 SFY 2028
Estimated Cost to Complete = \$3,561,755 Miles: 0

Kelsey Triebold presented Resolution 16-26.

Kathy Groninger asked for clarification on what a “slotted left” is, as referenced in Item C. Jason Kaiser responded slotted left turn lanes are used for dedicated left turn lanes that are 12 feet plus wide to improve driver visibility and reduce the risk of collisions with oncoming traffic. The lanes are narrowed down sometimes by installing a raised median or removing a median to slide traffic over. Additionally, pavement markings can sometimes be used to guide drivers into a location where they have a better view around other vehicles.

Jesse Bohannon wanted to know if the funds in Item B included construction for high friction surface treatments outside of the MACOG region as well as the two projects discussed within the region. Jason Kaiser confirmed it includes projects outside the region as well. It was confirmed that Items D through F were related to the industrial area in St. Joseph County.

The Chair called for a motion to approve the resolution.

CARL BAXMEYER MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 16-26. JESSE BOHANNON SECONDED. ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.

Other Actions

Appointment to the MACOG Regional LandBank Board

Zach Dripps reported the structure is in place for the Regional Landbank and staff is seeking to appoint a MACOG representative to the landbank's governing board.

Lisa Slomka explained the Regional Landbank is currently in its initial formation phase with an initial focus on St. Joseph County. The landbank will be governed by a seven-member board responsible for approving the acquisition and disposition of vacant or abandoned properties. The board composition includes two St. Joseph County Commissioner appointees, one St. Joseph County redevelopment appointee, two South Bend mayoral appointees, one South Bend redevelopment appointee, and one Michiana Area Council of Governments appointee.

Dwight Fish asked about the funding for the landbank. Slomka responded that the Regional Housing Collaborative is funded by a \$20 million grant from the Lilly Foundation, with \$1 million allocated specifically for the landbank's startup and operations. Additionally, the City of South Bend is contributing \$500,000 in the first year, with an additional \$300,000 per year committed over the next four years for a total five-year funding term. James Turnwald noted that \$3 million of the Lily Foundation funds have been placed in an endowment to generate interest. The funds will not be accessed for five years and are estimated to generate approximately \$225,000 annually to help sustain operations.

It was clarified that the landbank board has final authority over the acquisition and disposition of properties and is supported by an acquisition and disposition committee that provides recommendations to the board after reviewing staff assessments. The ultimate goal of the landbank is to take vacant/abandoned, non-taxpaying properties and return them to positive, taxable reuse, with a focus on residential development.

Turnwald explained that the landbank will not directly perform development but will facilitate sales to individuals, nonprofits, or for-profit entities. The landbank will utilize development agreements to ensure projects proceed, with the ability to reclaim properties if the purchaser fails to meet obligations. The process aims to streamline the existing, complex procedures for addressing vacant and abandoned properties.

Rod Roberson questioned how the landbank would handle expansion into Elkhart and Marshall Counties. James Turnwald explained that they are currently analyzing properties in Elkhart County to assess the need and set the stage for future expansion. While the initial focus is on properties ready for development in St. Joseph County, the long-term goal is to balance the deployment of services and projects across the entire three-county region.

James Turnwald requested the Policy Board appoint him to the Landbank Board as the Michiana Area Council of Governments representative for the inaugural year. This was proposed as a transition strategy to allow for future board modifications as other counties join. While some members expressed concerns about the current St. Joseph County-heavy board composition, it was noted that the board structure can be altered as new counties are added.

Suzanne Weirick and Rod Roberson emphasized the importance of county balance in the long term. James Turnwald assured the Policy Board that the aim is to serve all communities in the region, noting that while some years might see more activity in one area due to project readiness, they are committed to a balanced distribution of impact over time.

James Turnwald clarified that the landbank is formed under state statute, which imposes a hard cap of nine members for the governing board, regardless of the number of participating counties or cities. The current initial goal is to eventually have representation from each of the three counties and the six largest cities in the region.

Regarding the addition of Elkhart or Marshall Counties, Turnwald explained that the counties themselves would need to become signatories to the interlocal agreement, which would then require existing parties, currently St. Joseph County and the City of South Bend, to modify their agreements. The landbank will not operate in a county until that county is a formal party to the agreement.

It was confirmed that the MACOG board would continue to provide oversight for the landbank. Following the discussion, the following action was taken.

SUZANNE WEIRICK MOVED TO APPOINT JAMES TURNWALD TO
SERVE AS THE MACOG REPRESENTATIVE ON THE LANDBANK BOARD
FOR THE INITIAL YEAR (APRIL 2026 – MARCH 2027). GINA LEICHTY
SECONDED. ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.

Staff Update

New MACOG Staff

James Luk, Landbank Manager

James Luk greeted the members of the Policy Board and thanked them for their question and enthusiasm related to the previous discussion about the landbank. Luk mentioned he grew up in Hong Kong before moving to the U.S. to study political science at the University of Notre Dame, followed by earning a master's degree in political theory from the University of London.

Grants and Funding

FTA 5310 Call for Projects - South Bend Urbanized Area

Gauri Mhatre announced that the FTA Section 5310 Program Call for Projects in the South Bend Urbanized Area is open. Grant opportunities are available for non-profit and public agencies that provide transportation services for seniors and individuals with disabilities within the South Bend urbanized area. Funding applications will be accepted through July 10.

Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program (CRISI)

Caitlin Stevens said the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure Safety Improvements Program applications are due June 22. The focus of this funding is to improve safety and reliability around, passenger rail and freight, including at grade crossings.

IDEM Recycling Grant

Kelsey Triebold mentioned IDEM's Community Recycling Grant Program (CRGP). Projects that can be funded under this program include; education and promotion of recycling, source reduction, organics management, and household hazardous waste collection and disposal. Applications must be submitted by June 26 and require a 25% required cash match.

Plans and Programs

Quarterly Tracking and Review (QTR)

Triebold reported the next Quarterly Tracking and Review meeting will be held virtually on Thursday, July 9. QTR forms are due June 24.

Rail Corridor Study

Caitlin Stevens provided an update on the Rail Corridor Study. MACOG, in partnership with St. Joseph and Elkhart Counties, is evaluating potential safety improvements and alternatives for four at-grade crossings along the rail corridor that parallels Lincolnway through the Town of Osceola.

A public listening session was held on June 9 at Moran Elementary School in Osceola, and a second session will be held on June 10 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at the same location.

Michiana on the Move: 2055 Transportation Plan

Stevens reported that every four years, MACOG updates the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the region. The plan guides and prioritizes transportation investment and decision making over the next 20 years. It serves as the foundation for how federal, state, and local transportation dollars are prioritized and spent across our region. Stevens indicated the planning process will begin this summer, along with community engagement and needs assessment. To stay up to date and participate in the process go to <https://engage.macog.com/LRTP>.

ProPEL State Road 2 Corridor Study

Stevens announced that INDOT is kicking off a ProPEL study, similar to those conducted for US 30 and US 31, is commencing for the State Road 2 corridor. This project covers a 13-mile stretch from US 20 in LaPorte County to US 20 in South Bend. They stated that the process will kick off with a public information meeting on Tuesday, June 16 at New Prairie High School, with the objective of finalizing the study in early 2028.

Go574 Bike Month Challenge Review

Aidan McHugh gave an update on the Go574 Bike Month Challenge noting there were 85 participants who logged 2,400 trips totaling over 10,000 miles, which resulted in approximately \$7,500 in savings for the region. McHugh there may be an additional challenge in the fall through the Go574 platform. He encouraged participants to continue utilizing Go574 throughout the year to log their trips.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

There were no comments.

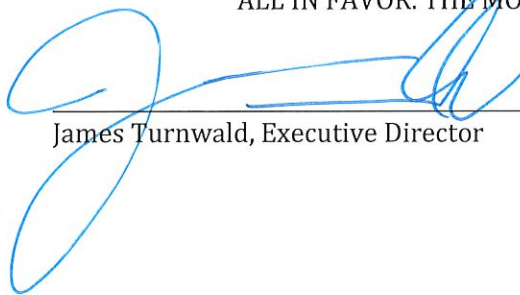
PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further comments or items of business, the Chair called for a motion to adjourn the Policy Board meeting.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY SUZANNE WEIRICK AND SECONDED
BY GINA LEICHTY TO ADJOURN THE POLICY BOARD MEETING.
ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.



James Turnwald, Executive Director

Phil Jenkins, Policy Board Chair