

**MICHIANA AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
POLICY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
April 9, 2025**

The April meeting of the Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG) Policy Board was held on the second floor of the Mishawaka City Hall, on April 9, 2025. 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. David Wood, Chair of the Policy Board, called the meeting to order. It was noted there was a quorum present.

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Wood, Mayor, City of Mishawaka
Carl Baxmeyer, St. Joseph County Commissioner
Dwight Fish, Elkhart Common Council
Douglas Graham, Elkhart County Council
Cary Groninger, Kosciusko County Commissioner
Kathy Groninger, Kosciusko County Council
Jason Kaiser, Interim Deputy Commissioner, INDOT Fort Wayne
Gina Leichty, Mayor, City of Goshen
Bryan Tanner, St. Joseph County Council
Suzanne Weirick, Elkhart County Commissioner

MEMBERS VIRTUAL: Jesse Bohannon, Marshall County Commissioner
Robert Listenburger, Mayor, City of Plymouth

MEMBERS ABSENT: Matt Deitchley, Deputy Commissioner, INDOT La Porte
Jeff Grose, City of Warsaw
Tim Harman, Marshall County Council
Phil Jenkins, Mayor, City of Nappanee
Canneth Lee, South Bend Common Council
James Mueller, Mayor, City of South Bend
Rod Roberson, Mayor, City of Elkhart
Tony Violi, Mishawaka Common Council

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 12, 2025, MEETING

The minutes of the March 12, 2025, meeting were distributed for review prior to the meeting. David Wood 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 SUZANNE WEIRICK AND SECONDED
BY CARL BAXMEYER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 2025.
ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chair had no report.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

February 2025 Financial Reports

Molly Chenoweth presented the MACOG Financial Reports for the month of February 2025. Chenoweth reviewed the year-to-date total expenses, reported the cash balance at the end of the month, and the total amount of disbursements. She then asked for any questions. Dwight Fish enquired about the two large disbursements to Kaser Fleet, LLC. Chenoweth responded that Kaser Fleet bills twice a month for the operation of the Interurban Trolley fixed-route and ADA paratransit services.

Hearing no additional questions, the following action was taken.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY CARY GRONINGER AND SECONDED BY
SUZANNE WEIRICK TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 2025 FINANCIAL
REPORTS. ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Kathy Groninger reported that MACOG staff made Administrative Modifications to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) during the month of March. 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

Other Actions

Resolution 11-25

Endorsement of the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Caitlin Stevens presented Resolution 11-25. She stated MACOG amends and modifies the TIP document monthly, then a larger update is done every two years to outline transportation and transit projects that will receive federal funds over the next four to five years; this transitions the SFY 2024-2028 TIP to the SFY 2026-2030 TIP.

Stevens stated there was a 30-day public comment period related to the TIP and two public open houses were held; one in Elkhart and one in South Bend. The Plan was also available to review and comment online, in the MACOG office, and at public libraries throughout the region.

Upon the Policy Board's endorsement of the SFY 2026-2030 TIP, Stevens requested the Board give staff the authority to make any changes, clarifying edits, typographical changes, and the ability to respond to any comments provided by MACOG's Federal partners.

Hearing no concerns, Stevens requested the Policy Board's endorsement of this Resolution.

DOUGLAS GRAHAM MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 11-25 WITH
THE AUTHORITY FOR STAFF TO MAKE ANY CHANGES AS DISCUSSED.
DWIGHT FISH SECONDED. ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.

Resolution 12-25

Endorsement of an update to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment and Administrative Modification Process

Stevens discussed a proposed update to the TIP Amendment and Administrative Modification process to bring MACOG more in line with the definitions used by INDOT to determine if an item should be processed as an Amendment or a Modification. She explained the change largely relates to funding; currently MACOG utilizes a blanket threshold of 30%. If the increase or decrease is above 30% of the total project cost, the item is processed as an Amendment and presented as a Resolution to the Policy Board for approval, and anything at or below 30% is processed by staff as an Administrative Modification.

Stevens indicated the updated process would change the threshold to more of a sliding threshold based on total project cost. She expounded on the proposed total project cost increase/decrease thresholds as follows:

<u>Total Project Cost</u>	<u>Amendment</u>	<u>Modification</u>
Up to \$2 million	Greater than 75%	Less than 75%
\$2 million to \$15 million	Greater than or equal to 50%	Less than 50%
\$15 million to \$75 million	Greater than or equal to 40%	Less than 40%
\$75 million and above	Greater than or equal to 30%	Less than 30%

Stevens continued another change staff would like to include is updating project cost estimates (within the original scope and intent) that do not impact fiscal constraint. She noted it is due to a new required process that updates estimated costs based on Stage 3 designs of projects. If there is no impact on fiscal constraint, staff would like to process the change as an Administrative Modification to ensure projects are continuing in a timely manner.

Following some discussion to clarify the updated process and hearing no objections, the Chair called for a motion.

SUZANNE WEIRICK MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 12-25.

BRYAN TANNER SECONDED. ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.

Resolution 13-25

Endorsement of the 2025 – 2029 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Donny Ritsema presented Resolution 13-25. Ritsema explained MACOG is designated as an Economic Development District (EDD) by the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) and as an EDD, MACOG is required to submit an updated CEDs to the EDA every five years.

Ritsema indicated a Steering Committee was organized to guide development of the document. The Committee was made up of local economic development organizations, local government officials, the South Bend-Elkhart Regional Partnership, community foundations, educational institutions, private sector business owners, transportation representatives, and others.

Ritsema noted the CEDS serves as a roadmap to guide the region’s economic development initiatives for the next five years, supports regional initiatives and strengthens partnerships, and allows local governments in the MACOG region to apply for EDA funding opportunities. The document provides a summary of economic conditions, and evaluates the region’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Ritsema discussed the plan of action outlined in the CEDS to move the region towards its vision, “Northern Indiana is a growing and interconnected region that serves and provides access to a

robust and dynamic economy” and provides performance measures that allow for benchmarking the progress towards the CEDS vision and goals.

Ritsema stated there was a 30-day public comment period related to the CEDS and two public open houses were held; one in Elkhart and one in South Bend. The document was also available for review and comment online, in the MACOG office, and at public libraries throughout the region. He stated that upon Policy Board approval the CEDS will be submitted to the EDA.

Following member discussion related to various components in the document including childcare and broadband the Chair called for a motion.

SUZANNE WEIRICK MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 13-25.
BRYAN TANNER SECONDED. ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.

Resolution 14-25

Endorsement of an agreement between MACOG and Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) for the exchange of transit funds

Zach Dripps presented Resolution 14-25. He explained the agreement is for MACOG to exchange \$750,000 of its Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5307 funding with NICTD for \$375,000 in local funds. Dripps stated this is the first time MACOG has traded funds with NICTD but this type of exchange has happened multiple times over the past 16 years with CityBus in Lafayette. The exchange allows MACOG additional local funds that can be used to leverage State and Federal funding for operations of the Interurban Trolley public transit services. Dripps noted MACOG does not have sufficient local match to fully utilize the federal funds within the required amount of time but with additional local matching funds from NICTD, MACOG can more effectively access and use funding.

Carl Baxmeyer commented that he serves on the NICTD Board and noted the Board unanimously supports the funds exchange.

Douglas Graham asked if the exchange would be subject to any type of federal audit. Dripps responded the process is clearly documented and MACOG has never had any issues related to Federal Transit Administration Triennial Reviews or any financial audits.

The Chair of the Policy Board called for a motion on this Resolution.

CARL BAXMEYER MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 14-25.
GINA LEICHTY SECONDED. ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.

Resolution 15-25

Endorsement of the State Fiscal (SFY) Year 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Zach Dripps presented the SFY 2026 UPWP and explained that each year MACOG receives planning (PL) funds from Federal Highway and Federal Transit Authority. He stated the UPWP outlines the work MACOG is planning to do over the next year and how the PL funds are allocated. Dripps explained the UPWP is technically a two-year document to fit with the two-year contract period with the State of Indiana, but it is updated and approved annually.

With the Policy Board’s endorsement of the SFY 2026-2030 TIP, Dripps requested the Board give staff the authority to make any non-substantive changes, clarifying edits, typographical changes, and the ability to respond to any comments requested by MACOG’s Federal partners.

Following some discussion regarding the value of the data acquired through the Pictometry portion of the UPWP and hearing no objections, Dripps requested the Policy Board's endorsement of this Resolution endorsing the SFY 2026 UPWP.

BRYAN TANNER MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 15-25.
CARL BAXMEYER SECONDED. ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.

Staff Update

Plans and Programs

Go574

Aidan McHugh announced the launch of a new regional mobility platform, Go574, that helps the public understand and explore their travel options in the MACOG Region. Go574 connects people with existing resources, it is a free trip planner and is available in the Google Play and Apple App stores and can be accessed online at www.go574.com.

McHugh noted to incentivize more sustainable transportation, platform users can create an account and log their trips to earn points that can be redeemed for coupons and gift cards to be used at local businesses.

Crossway Trails Bike Month Challenge

Dustin New stated that May is National Bike Month. He said the Go574 app is a great tool for tracking bike miles and alternative transportation trips while earning rewards and opportunities to win prizes during the Crossway Trails Bike Month Challenge. The Challenge will begin on May 12 and end on June 8.

Move Safe Michiana Update

Caitlin Stevens reported on the Move Safe Regional Safety Plan, a Regional Safety Action Plan funded by a federal Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant secured by MACOG in 2023. She indicated the Plan will be available for public comment in May and will be presented to the Policy Board in June for final approval. Once the plan is approved, local governments in the MACOG regional will be eligible to apply for implementation grants under the SS4A program.

2025 Crash Analysis

Stevens indicated MACOG staff has begun analyzing the fatal/serious injury crash data from 2019-2024. She said MACOG will work with LPAs to find crash prone locations outside of INDOT's jurisdiction and begin road safety audits to find ways to improve roads safety.

Transportation Data Dashboard and Story Maps Update

Raj Parikh provided an update on the Transportation Data Dashboard and Story Maps. He said the bike and pedestrian count data were updated to 2024. The historical dashboard was expanded to include the 2024 data (beginning with 2020). Parikh said the Trail Counters Story Map was also updated.

Quarterly Tracking and Review Meeting

Kelsey Triebold let the members know the next Quarterly Tracking and Review meeting will be held virtually on January 15. The Fort Wayne district will meet in the morning and the La Porte District will meet in the afternoon.

999Walkerton Policy Department Electric Vehicle Ribbon Cutting

Leah Thill announced there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony on April 15 in the Town of Walkerton to unveil the region's first electric police vehicle; a Chevy Blazer EV.

Partners for Clean Air Award Luncheon

Leah Thill said the Annual Partners for Clean Air Luncheon will be held on April 16 at the Matterhorn Conference Center in Elkhart. There will be presentations on various topics including MACOG's recently launched vanpool program and IDEM's regional air quality update. Thill noted the event recognizes special awardees who have made notable efforts to contribute to cleaner air in the region.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Dwight Fish shared he was recently treated for skin cancer and wanted to remind everyone to be proactive and take care of their health.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A member of the public shared a news article from the Elkhart Truth related to income taxes.

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 GINA LEICHTY AND SECONDED
BY BRYAN TANNER TO ADJOURN THE POLICY BOARD MEETING.
ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.

James Turnwald, Executive Director

David Wood, Policy Board Chair