

**Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study
Citizens Involvement Committee
Thursday, January 18, 2024 – 6:30 p.m.**

Meeting Summary

Attendees:

Tenora Corley
Amore Hill

Dave Mangold
Austen Rau

Gert Wilms

Staff:

Curtis Baker, Director
Seth Bush, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Coordinator
Jeff Gardner, Transportation Planner
Matt Mullen, Transportation Planner
Wali Rahim, Planning Aide
Matt Stewart, Planning Administrator

I. Welcome

Matt Stewart welcomed the AMATS Citizens Involvement Committee (CIC) meeting attendees.

II. Discussion Items

A. Mr. Stewart presented Attachment 5A – *Traffic Crashes and Safety Performance Measures*.

Austen Rau asked whether the location of the Towpath Trail at the Riverview Road and Ira Road intersection contributed to the intersection’s ranking as second in Table 2 – High Crash Intersections. The attendees discussed the intersection’s ranking and other possible contributing factors at the four-way intersection such as the location of other pedestrian and at-grade rail crossings.

Dave Mangold asked if the report considered at-grade crossing accidents and the impact of roundabouts. **Mr. Stewart** said that the AMATS Staff is preparing a separate roundabout study. **Mr. Stewart** said that the agency has not conducted a comprehensive safety analysis of at-grade crossings, but noted that the agency has the capability to consider site-specific issues, such as at the Riverview and Ira road intersections.

Mr. Mangold stated that two at-grade rail crossings in Hudson now have whistle restrictions in which locomotive engineers may not blast their horns except during emergencies and when maintenance workers are present. **Mr. Mangold** said that the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) recently provided the local matching funding for the construction of the Hines Hill Road Overpass in Hudson.

Mr. Mangold asked if there were any rail-related crash fatalities within the Greater Akron area in 2023. **Curtis Baker** said that there were no rail-related fatalities.

- B. Mr. Stewart** presented Attachment 6A – Resolution 2024-01 – Approving Projects to be Funded under the Carbon Reduction program (CRP); Resolution 2024-02 – Approving Projects to be Funded under the Resurfacing program; Resolution 2024-03 – Approving Projects to be Funded under the Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TASA) program; and Resolution 2024-04 – Approving Transportation Alternative Set Aside Supplemental Project List for Possible Future Funding.

Mr. Rau praised the funding of three TASA projects. **Mr. Rau** asked if the \$1.1 million in TASA funding for the Rubber City Heritage Trail Phase 3 in Akron was correct. **Mr. Rau** asked if \$1 million in TASA funding was the maximum amount permitted for projects. **Mr. Baker** explained that Mr. Rau was correct about the maximum amount of TASA funds being limited to \$1 million, but noted that the total listed included funding from the AMATS Project Delivery Incentive Program (PDIP).

- C. Matt Mullen** presented Attachment 5B – *Active Transportation Plan* Update.

Mr. Rau asked if the *Active Transportation Plan* update would include a public comment period. **Mr. Stewart** said that a draft Shared-Use Map would be available for public review and comment in a web-based app. The agency is first preparing a web portal for communities to share their comments and insights on the map. The public will be asked to react to these map additions and also provide their own. This should occur in March. **Mr. Stewart** said that AMATS will include received map comments into the draft *Active Transportation Plan* to be presented to the AMATS Policy Committee in May.

- D. Mr. Mangold** cautioned the Greater Akron area and its municipalities to not permanently give away or formally abandon any rail corridors that are not currently formally abandoned. **Mr. Mangold** stated that removing the possibility of rail service would be detrimental to the region’s future economic competitiveness. **Mr. Mangold** expressed his support for the future of rail freight and possibly electrified commuter rail corridors. **Mr. Mangold** noted that he is not opposed to recreational trails within rail corridors, but that he does advocate for rails *with* trails. **Mr. Mangold** noted that there are several examples of this across the nation. **Mr. Mangold** requested that his comments be submitted to the AMATS Policy Committee. **Mr. Stewart** said that he would do so.

- E. Mr. Rau** asked if TASA funding would be held by AMATS for two Veterans Trail projects. **Mr. Baker** said that the TASA funding is secure. The attendees discussed funding scenarios for the trail projects.

III. Adjournment

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting of the CIC is scheduled for **6:30 p.m.** on **Thursday, March 21, 2024.**