



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

PAUL C. AJEGBA  
DIRECTOR

**Commission for Logistics & Supply Chain Collaboration**

**Meeting Minutes  
February 4, 2021**

LSC Members Present

Peter Anastor for *Paul Ajegba*  
Jamie Zmitko-Somers for *Gary McDowell*  
Les Brand  
Beth Colosimo for *Mark Burton*  
Dr. David Closs  
Roger Huff  
Dr. Pasi Lautala  
Fred Schlemmer  
Janice Walsh

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

Laura Mester, Chief Administrative Officer, Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), welcomed members of the Commission for Logistics & Supply Chain Collaboration (LSC), MDOT support staff and the public. Ms. Mester also welcomed Peter Anastor as the new Office of Rail Director and indicated Peter will continue to serve on the LSC Commission in his new capacity. Jamie Zmitko-Somers will be the designee for the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD).

A quorum was established. Motion to approve draft minutes from November 5, 2020 was brought forth by Fred Schlemmer, seconded by Dr. David Closs, and approved by all present members of LSC.

**State Legislative Update**

Mark Polsdofer, Deputy State Transportation Commission and Policy Adviser for MDOT, presented an update on the Governor's timeline for the FY 2022 Budget and discussed the new

makeup of the Transportation Policy and Appropriations Committees in the State House, which just started meeting earlier in the week.

### **Federal Policy Update**

Zach Rable, AICP, Federal Transportation Policy Specialist, MDOT-Asset Management and Policy Division, provided an update on H.R. 133 – Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 that was signed into law on December 27, 2020 and provides \$2.3 trillion in total funding to pandemic relief and FY 2021 spending. State DOTs were happy to receive an extremely flexible \$9.8 billion in relief funding. Michigan received approximately \$261.3 million, some of which will be suballocated to MPOs. State DOTs also received FY 2021 funding in line with the one-year FAST Act extension (roughly \$1.02 billion in FY 2021 obligation limitation for MDOT). The FAST Act extension expires at the end of this fiscal year. With Democrats now in control of the Presidency, the House, and the Senate, it is much likelier that a climate-orientated infrastructure package similar to the Moving Forward Act that passed the House last summer will eventually be introduced and passed. President Biden has been in talks with House Transportation and Infrastructure Chair, Peter DeFazio, and they would like to introduce this legislation no later than 100 days into Biden's presidency. INFRA and BUILD grant criteria are being reviewed by the Biden Administration before officially posting this fiscal year (they had been briefly posted but have since been pulled down). Pete Buttigieg was confirmed as Transportation Secretary. Democrats in the Senate and the House have started the Budget Reconciliation process to pass President Biden's proposed \$1.9 trillion pandemic relief package, which is likely to include funding for public transportation and state and local governments. The Senate has a marathon session tonight (February 4<sup>th</sup>) to continue this process and the House will likely have to do the same tomorrow. They are eying a mid-March passage of the package. The details of President Biden's second pandemic related package – the "recovery" portion – are expected to be released this month. Transportation and infrastructure are expected to play a prominent part in the package.

### **Labor & Economic Opportunity Update**

Deb Lyzenga, Sector Strategies Manager, Workforce Development, Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Opportunity (LEO), shared some of the initiatives LEO is working on. She also mentioned a few of the free services available to employers such as the Fidelity Bonding Program (assists high risk job seekers in obtaining employment and insures employers against

dishonesty, theft, or loss of property), Pure Michigan Talent Connect (a collaborative effort launched by the Workforce Development Agency, Talent Investment Agency and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation [MEDC] that provides an online portal connecting Michigan's job seekers and employers, linking all public and private stakeholders who support Michigan's workforce), and Talent Connect and Talent development liaison (develop, retain, attract, and match talent to career opportunities in Michigan).

### **MM2045 Update**

Joe Bryan, WSP, Service Area Manager, Freight and Logistics, provided an update on Michigan Mobility 2045 as it relates to the freight and rail components and current conditions throughout Michigan.

### **Gordie Howe International Bridge**

Mohammed Alghurabi P.E., MDOT's Senior Project Manager for the Gordie Howe International Bridge Project, provided an update on how construction is proceeding. The presentation included details on all components of the project, including the main bridge, U.S. and Canadian ports of entries, the interchange with Michigan's I-75, and associated long-term road closures.

### **Blue Water Bridge Plaza**

Jon Loree, MDOT Project Manager for the Blue Water Bridge (BWB) Plaza Expansion, reported the BWB received an INFRA grant based on a reduced plaza footprint. The fully funded project will proceed with an additional study with Customs and Border Protection and environmental re-evaluation this year. Construction, utilizing a design/build contract, is anticipated to begin in 2023 and be substantially completed by the end of 2025.

### **Commissioner Updates**

**Roger Huff**, member of the Transportation Research Board's (TRB's) Executive Committee, provided an update on TRB's 2021 Annual Meeting held virtually in Washington, D.C., conducted over a series of dates in January with over 200,000 participants. This year's meeting featured dozens of sessions on COVID-19, with a special focus on equity issues as it relates to transportation and how professionals and researchers are responding.

**Dr. David Closs**, Michigan State University, provided an update on maritime movements, data collection/data analysis on the Great Lakes, particularly on crystalline and taconite. Work is being done now out of Port Antwerp to control maritime movement on the Great Lakes for cargo.

**Dr. Pasi Lautala**, Michigan Technological University Assistant Professor and Director of the Rail Transportation, inquired about having a presentation by the Michigan Office of Future Mobility and Electrification in an upcoming LSC meeting. Below is a brief summary of topics discussed:

- Freight, rail, and supply chain related topics of interest from the recent TRB Annual Meeting.
- Presentations on how the “new supply chains” look and what is needed from freight and rail (100 percent of shippers prefer trucks, but they recognize a single mode is not really possible and would be risky; Home Depot is increasing major warehouses to be able to provide next day deliveries, and the main issue for rail is reliability - even more so than speed).
- PSR and PTC expected to improve both capacity utilization and service reliability.
- New corporation created by several railroad and technology players to start instrumenting rail cars (real-time visibility).
- New energy sources begin entering the “rail power” - BNSF working on fully electrical locomotive (used in between diesel-electrics), also development on hydrogen locomotives.

**Fred Schlemmer**, Chief Financial Officer of SteelPro, presented three charts on critical issues in the trucking industry from a paper prepared by the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) presented to the American Trucking Association in October of 2020. The paper presented the top 10 issues facing the transportation industry from both the perspective of the driver, the person behind the wheel, as well as the transportation owner. Mr. Schlemmer discussed, in brief detail, the various issues listed for both drivers and owners. A new issue identified by owners, in this paper, was the high cost of insurance, a point that Mr. Schlemmer has made at the two previous commission meetings. Mr. Schlemmer stated the cost of insurance had not made the top 10 list in the previous 10 years that ATRI has presented the survey.

**Janice Walsh**, Director, Supply Chain Management Finance, Trinity Health, provided an update on Trinity Health's distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and logistic challenges serving communities across the country with 92 hospitals in 22 states. Trinity Health is following the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as local and state health officials.

**Jamie Zmitko-Somers**, MDARD Agriculture Development Division Director, indicated MDARD released the Ag Housing Taskforce Report

([https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdard/Michigan\\_Food\\_and\\_Ag\\_Housing\\_Taskforce\\_Report\\_012021\\_714318\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdard/Michigan_Food_and_Ag_Housing_Taskforce_Report_012021_714318_7.pdf)) with five key recommendations involving dedicated funding, legislation, determining agriculture workforce housing needs, local planning, and agriculture labor housing. Workgroups are currently being formed to focus on the recommendations and work on next steps.

**Beth Colosimo**, Senior Project Manager, Business Operations and Customer Support, MEDC, provided an update on MEDC's goals for 2021 as follows: attract, retain, and support businesses - especially focusing on distressed communities; foster high-wage skills growth and support talent expansion; catalyze entrepreneurship, and develop attractive places and market the state (note: Pure Michigan marketing funding in the current year again). Since March 2020, MEDC has launched 21 pandemic response programs, primarily focused on small businesses - 18,500 plus companies supported; all 83 counties have received awards, and 147,000 plus jobs retained.

**Laura Mester**, MDOT Chief Administrative Officer, provided the following MDOT update: On January 29, the Government of Canada announced new travel restrictions related with COVID-19. Most of the restrictions are directed at passenger travel, with freight impacts as well. All flights to/from Mexico and the Caribbean are suspended until April 30. In addition, all other international passenger flights are restricted to travel through four airports only – Montreal, Toronto, Calgary, and Vancouver. All travelers are subject to COVID-19 tests and quarantines. Cargo-only flights remain exempt. In addition, Canada will soon require a 72-hour pre-arrival test for any land-border crossing travelers. There will be exceptions for commercial truckers. Canada's Ontario province has also released similar rules, with even more aggressive timelines.

However, there are no details yet on what exceptions will be for commercial truckers, so will keep you informed.

MDOT participated on a panel discussion as part of a virtual peer exchange with California DOT (Caltrans) in December to discuss best practices in implementing a State Freight Plan. MDOT's approach to developing a fully integrated long-range plan generated a lot of interest and praise from participants. MDOT reworked the FY 2021 update to its five-year plan to better reflect the impact of the pandemic on the revenues that fund MDOT's programs. The plan was approved by the State Transportation Commission on January 21.

No Public Comment.

The next Virtual LSC Meeting will be held on May 6.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.