



**Michigan**  
**State Transportation Innovation Council**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**May 21, 2021, 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.**  
**Teams Virtual Meeting**

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**Attendance**

**Present:** Monica Ackerson-Ware (MRPA), Carol Aldrich (MDOT), Gregg Brunner (MDOT), Ryan Buck (WATS), Glenn Bukoski (FHWA), Ted Burch (FHWA), Eric Chappell (MI House), Tim Colling (LTAP), Daniel DeGraaf (MCA), Andrea Dewey (FHWA), Wayne Harrall (CRA), Mary Hoffmeyer (MDOT), Tony Kratofil (MDOT), Laura Mester (MDOT), Chuck Mills (APAM), Doug Needham (MAA), Andy Pickard (FHWA), Steve Puuri (CRA), Jean Ruestman (MDOT), Christine Simon (MI Senate), Brett Stanton (APAM), Brad Wieferich (MDOT)

**Absent:** Paul Ajegba (MDOT), Tom Barrett (MI Senate), Lisa Branch (MDOT), Ron Brenke (ACEC), Matt Chynoweth (MDOT), Denise Donahue (CRA), Russell Jorgenson (FHWA), Bob Lindbeck (CRA), Jack O'Malley (MI Senate), Wayne Schoonover (NACE), Todd White (MDOT)

**Guests:** Gilbert Abu (MDOT), Margaret Barondess (MDOT), Ruth Hepfer (FHWA), Val Napier (MDOT), Kim Zimmer (MDOT)

1) Opening Remarks – Tony Kratofil

2) Virtual Public Involvement (VPI) Update – Kim Zimmer, Margaret Barondess

- What is VPI? VPI is the use of digital technologies to engage individuals or to visualize projects and plans. Benefits of VPI include expanding reach to larger target audience; increasing participation, convenience, transparency, and access; decreasing costs resulting from staff time and project delays; and providing project managers with an additional tool to attract more public involvement.
- MDOT had taken the initiative to employ VPI tools with Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) pilot projects in Alger, Kent, Washtenaw, and Wayne counties; two local agency pilot projects in the city of Ann Arbor; and selecting projects with a diverse set of characteristics, demographics, and site conditions. VPI tools are also being incorporated into the MDOT State Long Range Plan.

- Accomplishments:
  - The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) STIC grant awarded to MDOT for the purpose of capturing best practices/lessons learned, developing VPI marketing materials, and moving to institutionalize VPI in the state of Michigan.
  - A consultant (HNTB) was selected to perform the grant work.
  - Continuing VPI initiatives with Every Day Counts (EDC)-6.
  - Deployment of marketing materials to stakeholders.
  - National recognition of this effort has been received by MDOT from the Volpe Center, the American Association of Highway and Transportation Officials, the Mid America Association of State Transportation Officials, and the FHWA.
- What is next in the future of VPI? Activities during the pandemic response have proven that VPI is a dynamic, valuable set of tools that are here to stay. Regarding how to manage and coordinate increased public engagement in the future, we need new tools and technology moving forward so we can effectively manage all the success we are experiencing from VPI efforts. An all-in-one online platform is being explored (like the Iowa DOT's Public Involvement Management Application) and has been requested through MDOT's internal 2022 IT Call for Projects. Additionally, we are continuing and building on discussions around roles and responsibilities within the organization.

3) Updates – Ted Burch, Carol Aldrich

- a. STIC Excellence Award nominations due July 1<sup>st</sup>. We have had many great accomplishments over the past year so send any input to Carol or Ted.
- b. FY21 STIC Incentive Funding proposals are due to FHWA headquarters by August 7<sup>th</sup>. Please send in your proposals to Carol as soon as possible.
- c. EDC-5 Final Report found at:  
[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/innovation/everydaycounts/reports/edc5\\_finalreport.pdf](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/innovation/everydaycounts/reports/edc5_finalreport.pdf)  
 Ted walked through the report and Michigan continues to be at the leading edge with many innovations.
- d. National STIC Network Meeting June/July 2021 (date to be determined).
- e. The FHWA is seeking EDC news for weekly newsletter promoting all EDC initiatives and to discuss a recent excerpt from a Washington D.C. article stating transportation is “one of the least innovative bureaucracies in the capital.” Articles about any innovations, small or large, are needed and we need to keep telling our stories about innovation. Please share any ideas you may have so we can change this through in Washington.

4) Status of STIC Incentive Projects – Carol Aldrich

*Topic tabled due to time constraints.*

5) Open Discussion/Other

None