

Comings and Goings in the TMACOG Transportation Department

Dave Dysard, at TMACOG for more than 20 years and vice president of transportation planning since 2000, resigned his position in March. However, he is not going far. Dysard has accepted an offer from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and will be the Deputy Director of ODOT District 2 at their office in Bowling Green.

You could say that Dysard's career has been bridged by TMACOG and ODOT. Two years after he joined TMACOG, planning began for the Maumee River crossing that became the Veterans' Glass City Skyway. And he will join the ODOT team in time for the grand opening of the signature bridge. "Talk about a career project," says Dave Dysard.

In his 20 years at TMACOG, Dysard became an expert in all modes of transportation and planning, from rail to bikeways to highways. In past years Dysard bicycled to work and more recently used the Segway to travel to meetings in downtown Toledo. He understands and navigates expertly in the complex world of federal and state regulation, planning, and funding.

TMACOG President Tony Reams says, "The TMACOG region has been lucky to have such an enthusiastic and expert transportation champion working for it. We look forward to an expanded relationship between Dave and TMACOG in his new role."

While TMACOG searches for a permanent replacement, Steve Herwat will be the interim vice president. Herwat is recently retired from the City of Toledo where he was the director of the Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions.

Also new on the staff is Kent Gardam who replaces Transportation Project Manager Phil Brooks. Gardam will manage TMACOG's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the new safety planning program.

TMACOG Speakers Bureau

Rotary Clubs, trucking interests, and bird watchers are some of the special interest groups that have invited TMACOG staff and members to share expertise at their meetings. Now TMACOG has formalized a speakers bureau, lining up experts who are available to present information on a variety of topics.

TMACOG speakers can explain transportation plans for our region, describe our region's efforts to remediate the Ottawa River, or speak on a wide variety of other topics related to transportation, the environment, and commuter services.

To request a speaker or for further information, contact Greg Gettum at 419.241.9155 ext. 132.

Specialized Transportation Grants Announced

Each year, TMACOG helps local agencies that serve the elderly or disabled populations apply for grants to pay for transportation equipment. In 2006, the application procedure was changed and there was no guarantee that any of the Ohio funds would be granted locally. However, two regional agencies that serve senior citizens have learned that they will receive grants. The East Toledo Family Center and Neighborhood Health Association/Mayores Senior Center in south Toledo are the successful agencies. Both will use the funds to help pay the cost of new lift vans.

Hull & Associates Selected for Wetlands Design Project

After review of proposals, the firm of Hull & Associates has been selected to design a wetlands restoration plan at the Maumee Bay State Park. A wetlands plan is one strategy for managing problems with bacteria contamination of the beaches at the state park. Wetlands will capture waters from the Berger Ditch and other known sources of bacteria and filter the water before it is released to Lake Erie. Public meetings will be held after a plan is designed.

On the Move Draft Plan Considered at Transportation Council

A draft version of "On the Move: 2007-2035 Transportation Plan," which has been in development since 2005, will come before TMACOG's Transportation Council at its monthly meeting, Wednesday, April 4. This meeting is open to the public. If the plan is approved, it will be submitted for federal approval and voted on by the TMACOG Board of Trustees in June.

Development of On the Move has involved public input, research, evaluation against constraints, and environmental considerations. The plan will be a blueprint for the region, describing specific transportation-related projects and initiatives that are priorities for the people in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan. To see the draft plan, see the On the Move logo on the homepage of www.tmacog.org. A final public comment period will extend until June 20, 2007.

Ottawa River Habitat Team Reviews Proposals

Nine companies responded to a Request for Proposals to survey the Ottawa River for a habitat study. At a March meeting, the Ottawa River Habitat project management team will review the proposals. When the project is underway, the company selected will inventory potential habitat restoration sites along the Ottawa River. The inventory will provide the basis for restoration and mitigation projects.



Transportation Improvement Program – Public Review Period April 2-13

Public review and comments are invited on the 2008 - 2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Transportation Air Quality Conformity Report for the TMACOG region. The TIP lists area highway, transit, and bikeway projects proposed for federal funding by TARTA, ODOT, Lucas and Wood County Engineers, City of Toledo, and other local agencies. Draft documents are available for review at two public meetings, on www.tmacog.org, and also at TMACOG offices, the Service Director's office in the cities of Bowling Green, Maumee, Northwood, Oregon, Perrysburg, Rossford, Sylvania, Toledo, and Fostoria; the Monroe County Road Commission; and the County Engineer's Offices in Lucas and Wood counties.

Comments on the proposed TIP may be forwarded to TMACOG, PO Box 9508 Toledo, Ohio 43697-9508; or publicinfo@tmacog.org. Written comments on the TIP must be received before 5 p.m. Friday, April 13, 2007. Open house meetings will be held in Toledo and in Bowling Green:

Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 4-7 p.m.
TMACOG offices, 300 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr., Toledo, OH

Thursday, April 5, 2007, 4-7 p.m.
ODOT District 2 Offices, 317 East Poe Rd., Bowling Green, OH

Swan Creek Pilot Team Drafts Preliminary Maps

Members of the Swan Creek Pilot Project Committee have been crafting the criteria that they will use to determine the region's priority conservation areas and priority development areas. They produced their first draft models in March and hope to incorporate more data by the April and May meetings.

The team, representing 23 jurisdictions in the Swan Creek watershed, has been considering how best to determine optimal future land use. They have charted and weighed the relative values of an area's access to a sewer line, distance from existing commercial development, presence of wetlands, and distance from existing streams, among many other factors. After this analysis, committee members generated GIS maps to show initial findings. Very preliminary results indicate that most priority development areas will fall near existing roads and water supply. A cluster of priority conservation areas is in the Oak Openings Region, a distinct ecosystem that covers 130 square miles in northwest Ohio. The committee notes that the draft GIS maps do not include results of their analysis of agricultural areas and the maps will change.

All meetings are open to the public. The next meetings are scheduled for 9 a.m. April 5 and May 10 at the Toledo Express Airport. Funding for the Swan Creek Pilot program is provided by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission and the Ohio Water Development Authority.

Mark Your Calendar

Thursday, April 26, 2007, 5-7 p.m.
Sandusky County Member Reception
Terra Community College in Fremont

TMACOG members from Sandusky County are invited to meet with TMACOG staff and fellow members and listen to short remarks from Michael Jay, economic development director from the City of Fremont. Mr. Jay will talk about development of the ethanol industry in Sandusky County.

Tuesday, May 22
Bike to Work Day

On Bike to Work Day, you are invited to leave the car at home and use a bicycle for the daily commute. Give it a try once and discover how easy, fun, and healthy it is to ride a bike to work. Save money, stay healthy, protect the environment – ride your bike to work!