In a difficult economic environment, TMACOG members are focusing on the workforce, counting on an educated population to be a critical resource for regional development. At the annual assembly of TMACOG members in January, workshops and a keynote panel will address regional educational resources and training workers for business.

The annual business meeting and general assembly of TMACOG members will be held Thursday, January 29, at the Holiday Inn French Quarter in Perrysburg. Registration begins at 1:30 p.m. and the program concludes by 8 p.m. All governmental and non-governmental members are invited and encouraged to attend and participate in elections and caucus sessions. The January meeting is the only annual meeting of the entire TMACOG membership. Interested business and community leaders are also welcome. In addition to voting on leadership and selecting representatives to councils and committees, members will attend workshops and a keynote dinner presentation. Two workshops are planned:

1. **“Adapting the New Workforce for the Global Economy”**
   
   In 2007, Schindler Elevator International was considering consolidating some facilities, and possibly closing or moving the research and manufacturing facility in Springfield Township. Economic development groups and local elected officials were able to provide a package of economic incentives and the University of Toledo worked with the firm to develop a program to train needed engineers and interns. As a result, Schindler Elevator preserved its facility and has added jobs in the region.

2. **“Back to School – Educational Resources for Regional Initiatives”**

   Colleges and universities certainly create educated students for the workforce, but the staff and administration at these institutions are also a resource for your community or business. You can tap into the expertise of staff at higher learning establishments for direction in researching, applying for grants, and helping drive projects that benefit business, industry, and the regional economy.

The keynote panel which follows dinner will include Dr. David E. Nixon, president Monroe County Community College; and Jeff Durham, division vice president, Whirlpool Corporation, Clyde Division. They will represent both sides of the business/education partnership in a presentation titled: “Building Business and Building Communities through Educational Partnerships.”

Registration for the 2009 General Assembly is online at www.tmacog.org. Click on the What’s Hot button. Cost for members is $50, non-members $90, and students may attend for $30. Please register by Friday, January 23. No refunds for cancellations made after January 23. Members will receive invitations with details about the program and agenda. For more information, contact Greg Gettum at 419.241.9155 ext. 132 or gettum@tmacog.org.
Fuel Saving Tips for Winter Driving

Winter weather can increase your gasoline consumption because engines run less efficiently in the cold but there are steps you can take to conserve fuel.

Before you drive:
- Newer cars don’t need long warm ups. A minute or two warm up and most car engines are ready to run efficiently.
- Air contracts in colder weather. Check the air pressure in your tires and keep your tires inflated to the recommended pressure.
- Use the lowest weight oil recommended for your vehicle, your engine will have less resistance.
- Change the air filter at least once a year and keep the car tuned up.
- Check the gas cap and make sure it seals tightly.
- Remove luggage racks that catch wind and remove extra weight (but keep your spare tire, tool kit, and emergency supplies).

While you drive:
- Moderation is the key to best mileage. Don’t accelerate quickly or brake heavily.
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Local Agencies Qualify to Apply for Federal Transportation Funds

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The Opportunities Presented by Change

TMACOG is foremost a planning group and careful planning is never needed more than when we are experiencing the kind of change that is going on in our region, our country, and in the entire world. One might think that plans get thrown out the window when circumstances change. This is a misconception. Our plans for roads, for sewers, and for other infrastructure are based on what the people need and where the investment would be most valuable and these things won’t change.

Elected officials and those of us working in transportation and environmental planning have been hearing indications about a major economic stimulus package that will be coming with the new U.S. president. Nothing has been confirmed but various state and federal contacts tell us that we should be ready now with a list of major infrastructure projects that are ready to go. These projects should be completely evaluated, permitted, and ready to put people to work before July 1, 2009. All elected officials in our region should be seeing this time as an opportunity to move needed, planned projects to a fast track.

“There is a tide in the affairs of men which taken at the flood leads on to fortune.” Brutus was talking to Julius Caesar about knowing when to put plans into action. It seems to us that even a low tide is full of potential energy. If this stimulus money comes, TMACOG members will need to show that northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan are prepared to put it directly to work.

TMACOG is ready to help. We have our long term and short term transportation plans already standing and endorsed at the state level. We have a coordinated sewerage plan in the 208 Plan that clearly describes the needs and costs. TMACOG is ready to help members responding to problems and prepared to seize opportunities.

To respond to this letter, email perspectives@tmacog.org.
Northwood Local Schools

Northwood is a suburban community in northern Wood County, adjacent to the City of Oregon. The Northwood School District, home of the Northwood Rangers, is composed of Northwood Middle School, Northwood High School, Lark Elementary, and Olney Elementary together serving about 1,000 students. The Ohio Department of Education awarded Northwood Local School District an Excellent rating on the state’s 2007-2008 report card. Gregory A. Clark, superintendent, Northwood Local Schools finds value in his district’s membership in TMA COG. He says, “The information we receive from TMA COG on a wide variety of topics – from education to transportation – as well as the opportunity to meet and discuss issues with professionals from diverse fields allows us to continually evaluate and improve services for the children of our community and our community as a whole. The interaction among TMA COG members creates an environment for every member organization to grow which makes our entire region a better place to live, work and raise families.”

The Northwood system has an engaged parent and citizen group. The Citizens for Northwood Schools meets periodically with Superintendent Clark to discuss the school district and maintain communication with the community regarding the schools. Any interested resident is invited to become part of the Citizens for Northwood Schools and engage in an ongoing discussion regarding the school district.

News Files...

Thank You to OakHarbor

The Ottawa County Village of Oak Harbor was the first TMA COG member to renew membership for 2009. Thank you for your support and participation as we work to fulfill our mission: TMA COG will be the governmental partner of choice to coordinate regional assets, opportunities, and challenges.

Looking for Your Member Success Stories

TMA COG wants to hear your good news. We are asking both governmental and non-governmental members to let us know about your economic development success stories. If you have been awarded a grant for rehabilitating an old building, or added staff, or opened a new water treatment plant, please let us know. If a new business is opening in your village, if a branch college opens in your township, we want details, and photos! As we find space, we will share your good news with other TMA COG members in upcoming issues of the Big Picture. Send your good news stories to public.info@tmacog.org or contact Greg Gettum at 419.241.9155 ext. 152 or gettum@tmacog.org.

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Even if the plan does not receive the full endorsement required to receive incentives, the working process has been useful and productive. Leslie Kohli, administrator, Springfield Township said, “During planning meetings, we began to see that not all land is created equal. Some land should be conserved, and some is more suited to development. Also, we looked at the region rather than jurisdictional boundaries. You realize how development in one area affects your neighbors.” She noted that the planning process will help decision-making. “It’s good to be proactive rather than simply react to a developer who has an idea. Now we have a better idea of the unique land resources we have and we will plan ahead.” Matt Horvat, TMA COG’s Maumee River coordinator and manager for the Swan Creek project, agrees that the project has already been a success. “We have jurisdictions talking to each other about environmental goals and re-examining their priorities. Working together, they have built a foundation for thoughtful planning.” When finalized, the report will be posted on the Environment pages of www.tmacog.org.

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TMACOG Helps Promote Pavement Management Program

Keeping roads in good repair is an increasing challenge for local counties, cities, and townships as the cost of materials is soaring and income to jurisdictions is stagnant or sinking. A system of evaluating streets and keeping records can help roadway engineers allocate their resources more efficiently.

ODOT has developed a pavement management system that provides a measurable and repeatable evaluation of the condition of the roads and has trained TMACOG personnel in the use of the system. In the first application of the training, TMACOG staff is beginning to work with the Village of Waterville on their inspection and rating of the village’s streets and development of an ongoing database of information similar to the methods used by ODOT. As that project is completed, TMACOG expects to be able to offer assistance to more area communities that would like to set up and take advantage of the benefits of a functional pavement management system.

The system works by assigning specific values to the condition of roads. Inspectors visit each street and select a segment that is representative of the condition of the entire street. Looking at that portion, the inspector does an inventory of the types and severities of the pavement distresses. These problems are assigned a point value. Based on the rating and the type of distress found, a course of action is suggested to rehabilitate the roadway. With a good inventory of data, governing bodies are able to make informed decisions about how best to allocate their maintenance efforts and resources. For more information contact Kent Gardam at 419.241.9155 ext. 116, or gardam@tmacog.org.

ODOT Announces New Criteria for Selecting Transportation Projects

The Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) is the division of ODOT that evaluates and prioritizes major transportation projects that the state will fund and build. In 2009, TRAC will begin applying new criteria in its scoring system. The change is part of ODOT’s efforts to promote multimodal integration, economic development and environmental stewardship, innovative finance, and fiscal responsibility.

In general, transportation projects will be evaluated in a more balanced manner, with three major categories: road, public transit and intercity passenger rail, and water port and rail. Criteria will also consider community economic growth and development factors, and local and private investment factors. ODOT Deputy Director of District Two, David Dysard, made a presentation to the TMACOG Transportation Council on December 3, asking for feedback on the changes. For more information on the new system, watch www.dot.state.oh.us/TRAC, or contact Warren Henry at 419.241.9155 ext. 129 or henry@tmacog.org.

Forum on Public Transit to Review TARTA Report

The Forum on Public Transit is an on-going series of meetings called by suburban mayors and facilitated by TMACOG to address issues involving public transit. At the November meeting, a representative from PB Consult discussed the TARTA Comprehensive Operational Analysis of transit services that it was beginning. At a meeting Wednesday, February 3, 4:30-7 p.m., at TMACOG offices, the results of the analysis will be presented for discussion. The analysis is looking at service configuration (for example, alternatives to the downtown hub system), and at various funding issues. In the event of bad weather, the meeting will be moved to Thursday, February 26.

Elected officials, agency and business leaders, and others concerned with public transportation are invited to attend. Meetings of the transit forum have been very well attended with representatives from area counties, cities, villages, and townships as well as economic development organizations, representatives of people with disabilities and the elderly who rely on public transit. For more information contact Diane Reamer-Evans at 419.241.9155, ext. 117 or evans@tmacog.org.

Transportation Coalition is in Development, Seeking Members

“Transportation Matters” is a relatively new organization that is working to establish itself as an influential, non-ODOT, voice for transportation policy and decision-making in Ohio. The group has already assembled transportation industry experts from regional organizations including several councils of government. TMACOG is participating through its membership in the Ohio Association of Regional Councils (OARC). Goals of Transportation Matters include: to help guide the industry to a new funding mechanism that ensures Ohio has a well funded transportation system for all modes, to increase funding for transportation by moving from gas tax to miles traveled fee system, and to pass a federal highway bill with new funding sources that are sustainable. The transportation policy and decision-making in Ohio. The group has already assembled transportation industry experts from regional organizations including several councils of government. TMACOG is participating through its membership in the Ohio Association of Regional Councils (OARC). Goals of Transportation Matters include: to help guide the industry to a new funding mechanism that ensures Ohio has a well funded transportation system for all modes, to increase funding for transportation by moving from gas tax to miles traveled fee system, and to pass a federal highway bill with new funding sources that are sustainable.

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Workshop for Traffic Data Handlers

People working with traffic data are invited to attend a midwest workshop about data collection and analysis. The TRB Midwest Traffic Monitoring Workshop: Successful Strategies in Collection and Analysis, will be held March 24-25, 2009 at ODOT’s Columbus office, 1890 W. Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio, 43215. Early bird registration ends on January 23, 2009. Register at www.TRB.org/conferences/2009/TrafficMidwest.

The program is oriented to sharing experiences, approaches, and challenges among the public agencies, especially those using traffic data as a fundamental input to corridor management plans. The workshop objectives are to:

• Serve as a regional forum for traffic data producers and users interested in better traffic data availability to exchange knowledge about successful approaches in the collection and analysis of traffic data
• Bring examples of good practices and new technologies within the region and nationally for regional audiences who don’t often travel to national conferences
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Revised 02/26/09

Ewart Howard, Managing Editor 419.241.9155 ext 108
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Winning Display Boards

| Best Overall | Whittier HS |
| Most Informative | Scott HS |
| Most Creative | Central Catholic HS |

Winning Presentations

| Best Overall | Start HS |
| Most Informative | University of Toledo, “Fish Tales” |
| Most Creative | Bowsher HS, “Storm Pipe”|

Northwest Ohio CommuterLINK Update

As of December 1, 2008

Daily Adult Riders 5
Children Transported Daily 1
Number of Daycares Used 1
Employers 5
TARTA routes affected 4

NOTE: CommuterLINK serves people who cannot use public transportation due to their work schedule, child care location(s), or need to access areas outside the public transit area.

Northwest Ohio CommuterLINK
Connecting people to jobs
A PROGRAM OF TMACOG

Winning Display Boards

Whittier High School was recognized for Best Overall Display.

Winning Presentations

University of Toledo’s presentation included filmed man-on-the-street interviews.
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- "Adapting the New Workforce for the Global Economy"

Colleges and universities certainly create educated students for the workforce, but the staff and administration at these institutions are also a resource for your community or business. You can tap into the expertise of staff at higher learning establishments for direction in researching, applying for grants, and helping drive projects that benefit business, industry, and the regional economy.

The keynote panel which follows dinner will include Dr. David E. Nixon, president Monroe County Community College; and Jeff Durham, division vice president, Whirlpool Corporation, Clyde Division. They will represent both sides of the business/education partnership in a presentation titled: "Building Business and Building Communities through Educational Partnerships."

Registration for the 2009 General Assembly is online at www.tmacog.org. Click on the What’s Hot button. Cost for members is $50, non-members $90, and students may attend for $30. Please register by Friday, January 23. No refunds for cancellations made after January 23. Members will receive invitations with details about the program and agenda. For more information, contact Greg Gettum at 419.241.9155 ext. 132 or gettum@tmacog.org.

"To the reader..."
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, January 7</td>
<td>Transportation Council</td>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Warren Henry, ext. 129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, January 8</td>
<td>System Performance and Monitoring Committee</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Lisa Householder, ext. 124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, January 9</td>
<td>Leadership Development</td>
<td>9 a.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Library</td>
<td>Tony Reams, ext. 107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, January 12</td>
<td>Car Buy Review Committee</td>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Library</td>
<td>Tiffany Banks, ext. 157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, January 13</td>
<td>Pedestrian &amp; Bikeways Committee</td>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Kent Gardam, ext. 116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, January 14</td>
<td>Stormwater Action Group</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Diane Reamer-Evans, 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, January 15</td>
<td>Portage River Basin Council</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Elaine Moebius, ext. 139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, January 21</td>
<td>Air Quality Committee</td>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>David Gedeon, ext. 132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, January 22</td>
<td>Swan Creek Pilot Project</td>
<td>9 a.m.</td>
<td>Toledo Express Airport</td>
<td>Matt Horvat, ext. 123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, January 26</td>
<td>Passenger Rail Committee</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Diane Reamer-Evans, 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, January 27</td>
<td>Freight Committee</td>
<td>11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Warren Henry, ext. 129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, January 29</td>
<td>Winter General Assembly</td>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Holiday Inn French Quarter, Perrysburg</td>
<td>Greg Gettum, ext. 132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, February 4</td>
<td>Transportation Council</td>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Warren Henry, ext. 129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, February 5</td>
<td>FEMA Floodplain Management Committee</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Kurt Erichsen, ext. 126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, February 6</td>
<td>Clean Ohio Fund - Proposals Due</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Offices</td>
<td>Kurt Erichsen, ext. 126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, February 9</td>
<td>Car Buy Review Committee</td>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Diane Reamer-Evans, 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, February 10</td>
<td>Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Committee</td>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Greg Gettum, ext. 132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, February 11</td>
<td>Stormwater Action Group</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Kurt Erichsen, ext. 126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, February 12</td>
<td>Air Quality Committee</td>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Library</td>
<td>David Gedeon, ext. 125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, February 13</td>
<td>Executive Committee</td>
<td>noon</td>
<td>Boys &amp; Girls Clubs office</td>
<td>Peggy Ricard, ext. 105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, February 16</td>
<td>Passenger Rail Committee</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Diane Reamer-Evans, 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, February 17</td>
<td>Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Committee</td>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Greg Gettum, ext. 132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, February 18</td>
<td>Stormwater Coalition</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Kurt Erichsen, ext. 126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, February 19</td>
<td>Transit Forum</td>
<td>4:30 – 7 p.m.</td>
<td>Grand Lobby of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Plaza</td>
<td>Diane Reamer-Evans, ext. 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, February 20</td>
<td>Freight Steering Committee</td>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Kent Gardam, ext. 116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, February 21</td>
<td>Stormwater Action Group</td>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Holiday Inn French Quarter, Perrysburg</td>
<td>Bill Best, ext. 108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, February 22</td>
<td>Air Quality Committee</td>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Library</td>
<td>David Gedeon, ext. 125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, February 23</td>
<td>Executive Committee</td>
<td>noon</td>
<td>Boys &amp; Girls Clubs office</td>
<td>Peggy Ricard, ext. 105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, February 24</td>
<td>Freight Steering Committee</td>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>TMACOG Boardroom</td>
<td>Warren Henry, ext. 129</td>
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