

Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) Meeting
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
Jan. 25, 2021

Attendees

- Fred Sandal, Chairperson.
- Vicki Johnson.
- Alex McKenzie.
- Brian Gibson.
- Anna Gruber.
- Jason Bernick.
- Sarah Weed.
- Kurt Franke.
- Chelle Benson.
- Tim Edgeton.
- Jenny Lezer.
- Dave Broxmeyer.

Meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. Chairperson Fred Sandal presided. Introductions were made.

FY 2025 Transportation Alternatives (TA) Prioritization

Ms. Johnson provided background information on the Transportation Alternatives (TA) solicitation. She began with a presentation of how the projects get selected for the APO's long range transportation plan (the Metropolitan Transportation Plan or MTP) and how those projects ultimately get programmed to be completed in the short term through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Ms. Johnson explained how projects can receive funding through various Federal grant programs including the Transportation Alternatives (TA) program. She explained that TA funding is the primary bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure grant program.

Ms. Johnson walked through how TA funding is allocated in Minnesota including to the Central Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership (ATP-3) – which includes the APO. She said there is approximately \$1.6 million available in fiscal year 2025 for TA projects across the ATP-3 region. Sixteen applicants from across the ATP-3 applied for fiscal year 2025 funding. Ms. Johnson explained that each planning region within the ATP-3 (Region 5, Region 7E, Region 7W, and the APO) can assign regional priority points to their top two ranking projects to assist in boosting technical scoring of their projects in the hopes of receiving funding.

Of the 16 applicants from across the district, one applicant (the City of Sartell) was from the APO.

Sartell City Administrator Anna Gruber presented on the city's TA application to complete two trail gaps and two sidewalk gaps within the city. Ms. Gruber said the two trail gaps would be to extend existing facilities on both 7th Street N and 12th Street N to the proposed shared use path to be constructed along Stearns CSAH 1/Riverside Avenue N. Ms. Gruber also discussed the two sidewalk gaps in west Sartell – one along 13th Avenue N to Grizzly Lane and the other along 3rd Street N from Ash Circle to 19th Avenue N. Ms. Gruber explained the importance each of these four completed gaps would have on the residents of Sartell including the assurance of a safer network for bicycle and pedestrian users. The City of Sartell is requesting \$367,040 in Federal funding for a total estimated project cost of \$458,800.

Questions were asked about if the City of Sartell has a policy in place that requires some sort of active transportation facility to be constructed in new subdivisions and if the city knows which side of Riverside Avenue N Stearns County is proposing to construct the

shared use path (east or west side). Ms. Gruber said the city does have a policy in place for new subdivisions to construct active transportation infrastructure – most developers are opting for shared use paths over sidewalks. She also said the county is still determining the final location of the shared use path on Riverside Avenue N between 7th Street N and 12th Street N. If this would require nonmotorized users to cross Riverside to use the facility, she said the city is committed to working on finding ways to ensure a safe crossing.

Another question was raised about the commitment the city has to maintain the constructed facilities year-round. Ms. Gruber said the sidewalks would be the responsibility of the property owner to maintain. She said the shared use paths since they are constructed to be 10-foot wide will be maintained by public works.

Ms. Benson made a motion to make a recommendation to the APO's Technical Advisory Committee to assign the 10 regional priority points to the City of Sartell's Transportation Alternatives project. Mr. Franke seconded the motion.

Motion carried. Benson – YES; Bernick – YES; Weed – YES; Lezer – YES; Franke – YES; Broxmeyer – YES.

Active Transportation Plan (ATP) Status

Mr. Sandal provided an update to ATAC members on the status of the Active Transportation Plan. He said staff have been working to refine Chapter 4 of the plan which includes the goals, objectives, and needs assessment. Mr. Sandal outlined the vision statement of the plan.

Mr. Sandal outlined the needs assessment process for the plan. Phase One included an identification of needs by each city based upon four of the five goals (safety and comfort; local connectivity; facility condition; equity). Phase Two included a look at regional needs across the entire planning area (goal five).

Mr. Sandal said work is continuing on the preparation of the jurisdictional profiles and needs assessments. He also said staff is looking at developing a best practice for active transportation policy guidance as part of the ATP.

Mr. Sandal said the next steps include addressing the APO's TAC and Policy Board to receive approval of the ATP's vision, goals, and objectives. He plans on continuing with the development of the profiles and working with staff and elected officials from each of the cities to ensure that the needs are being identified. Mr. Sandal said he plans on bringing the ATP back to the ATAC once staff are a bit further along.

Inquiries into Unified Local Speed Limits

Ms. Johnson explained the progress some members of the APO's TAC have been making when it comes to addressing the ability cities have to lower speed limits. She provided background information on the 2019 Minnesota Statute which allows cities to establish speed limits on locally owned roadways – not on county or state-owned roadways. She explained the process of how speed limits are currently set using the 85th Percentile and how many cities across the country are choosing to use a Safe Systems approach to setting speed limits – looking at speed limits that in the event a nonmotorized user was struck they would escape serious or fatal injuries.

Ms. Johnson said the group has had discussions with Minneapolis and Saint Paul to discuss their approach to tackling this issue jointly. The TAC working group has also recently met

with the City of Rochester to discuss how that city worked on lowering speed limits. She said the group plans on meeting again in February and will talk about next steps including meeting with elected leaders and members of law enforcement.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Vicki Johnson.