

**SAINT CLOUD AREA PLANNING ORGANIZATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE (TAC) MEETING  
Thursday, Aug. 31 @ 10 a.m.**

A meeting of the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization's (APO's) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held at 10 a.m. Thursday, Aug. 31, 2023. Senior Transportation Planner Vicki Johnson presided with the following people in attendance:

Voting Members:

Zac Borgerding	City of Saint Cloud
Matt Glaesman	City of Saint Cloud
Michael Kedrowski	Saint Cloud Metro Bus
Jon Noerenberg	City of Waite Park
Chris Byrd	Benton County
Mike Decker	Stearns County (alternate)
Kari Theisen	City of Sartell
Steve Voss	MnDOT District 3
Randy Sabart	City of Saint Joseph

Non-Member Attendees:

Vicki Johnson	APO, Senior Planner
Alex McKenzie	APO, Associate Planner
James Stapfer	APO, Planning Technician
Trina Ness	APO, Administrative Assistant

Zoom Attendees:

Jeff Lenz	MnDOT District 3
Erika Shepard	MnDOT MPO Coordinator
Angie Tomovic	MnDOT DSA
Barbara Willard	Tri-CAP
Innocent Eyoh	MPCA
Brian Gibson	APO, Executive Director

Introductions were made.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

No members of the public were present.

**CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Approve minutes of the July 27, 2023, TAC meeting.
- b. Receive staff report of Aug. 10, 2023, Policy Board meeting.

***Mr. Glaesman made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items.  
Mr. Sabart seconded the motion. Motion carried.***

## **Consideration of the 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Ms. Johnson shared details of the public comment period for the 2024-2027 TIP which ran July 12, 2023, to Aug. 11, 2023. During this time, the APO advertised the public comment period through the following means: Legal notice in the St. Cloud Times; direct emails to interested individuals and organizations that work directly with traditionally underrepresented populations; developed 12 online surveys for all projects based on jurisdiction/agency; social media posts on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok; and hosted an in-person open house at the library as well as a virtual public engagement on Facebook Live.

We had one person that partook in the overall TIP survey. We had individual survey responses for Benton County, Sherburne County, City of St. Cloud, City of Sartell, MnDOT, WACOSA, and St. Cloud APO.

Ms. Johnson added the public comments into chapter 5 of the TIP document, as well as appendix C. There were some technical corrections as Mr. Lenz advised that the following be amended: 073-675-041AC to 073-675-041AC1, 073-675-041AC1 to AC2, 073-675-042AC to AC1, and 073-675-042AC1 to AC2.

***Mr. Byrd made a Motion to recommend Policy Board approval of the 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program. Ms. Theisen seconded the motion. Motion carried.***

## **Consideration of the draft Looking Ahead 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Existing Conditions**

Ms. Johnson began by explaining that one of the tasks the APO must accomplish is developing a long-range, multimodal, regional surface transportation plan. This is one of the reasons the APO exists. The MTP must be updated every five years and have a planning horizon of at least twenty years.

Ms. Johnson explained that we need to understand where we are as a region. She then presented the draft 'Looking Ahead 2050 Existing Conditions'. APO staff conducted a very detailed review of the MPO's current demographics, travel data, existing infrastructure – roadways, transit, active transportation, other transportation options, current freight corridors and, transportation and economic development.

She presented some of the highlights of the existing conditions section. This included the following information:

- The region's population grew 7.2% between the 2010 and 2020 Census.
- Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC) population in the area grew to 23.2% as of the 2020 Census.
- Somali is the primary non-English language in the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA)

- The number of households in the MPA has grown, but the percentage of people that own their own home is decreasing.
- About 13.2% of households in our region do not have access to the internet.
- There is a sizeable increase in people that are traveling a greater distance for work.
- Based on our base year model results, MN 15 and MN 23 throughout the MPA's core are either at/over or approaching capacity.
- Metro Bus's fixed route ridership has not bounced back from COVID.
- Local economic development experts stress the importance of the I-94 corridor in connecting workers to jobs and attracting new businesses to the region.

***Mr. Norenberg made a Motion to recommend Policy Board approval of the draft 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) - Existing Conditions. Mr. Kedrowski seconded the motion. Motion carried.***

### **Consideration of the draft Looking Ahead 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Environmental Section**

Mr. McKenzie presented on the environmental section of the Looking Ahead 2050 MTP.

During his presentation, Mr. McKenzie discussed the following topics:

- **Air Quality:** The air quality within the Saint Cloud area has been gradually improving since 2005.
- **Water Quality:** Transportation has a direct impact on water quality through runoff from streets, parking lots, and sidewalks which can lead to contamination entering the surface and groundwater systems.
- **Wildlife and Habitat:** Transportation has had adverse impacts on native habitats and ecosystems. This includes habitat fragmentation and reduced access to vital habitats.
- **Soil:** Transportation-related contaminants can also impact soil health. To prevent soil erosion as a result of transportation infrastructure, construction crews also utilize some sort of soil stabilization measures.
- **Cultural and Historic Properties:** A review of the local historic properties and historic districts within the planning area.

Mr. McKenzie also discussed the impacts of climate change and the possible negative impacts on the transportation infrastructure system. This included a discussion on the increase in temperatures and rainfall amounts anticipated to occur by the end of this planning horizon. The environmental section concluded with a look at state and federal plans that address climate change and resiliency.

Mr. McKenzie said the next steps would be for APO staff to overlay the MTP projects with the various environmental factors and meet with local environmental planners to discuss mitigation efforts.

Mr. Eyoh stated that the MPCA has received a \$3 million Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Grant and encouraged the MPO to apply.

Mr. Glaesman suggested that the APO should do a map of locally designated, locally sensitive environmental site areas.

***Mr. Glaesman made a Motion to recommend Policy Board approval of the draft 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Existing Conditions – Environmental Section, with the addition of the locally designated sensitive environmental sites. Mr. Noreberg seconded the Motion. Motion carried.***

#### **Consideration of the draft Saint Cloud APO Urbanized Area Boundary**

Mr. Stapfer presented the second draft of the Saint Cloud APO Urbanized Area (UZA) Boundary. Mr. Stapfer made changes to the first UZA draft based on conversations from last month's TAC meeting as well as individual feedback from TAC representatives to include additional areas for consideration.

***Ms. Theisen made a Motion to recommend Policy Board approval of the Urbanized Area Boundary. Mr. Byrd seconded the Motion. Motion carried.***

#### **Other Business and Announcements**

Ms. Johnson stated that HSIP solicitation should be opening around Labor Day.

Ms. Theisen asked, regarding the last Policy Board meeting, if the Policy Board is discussing the Beltline Corridor? Ms. Johnson stated, yes, the Policy Board is discussing the Beltline Corridor. Mr. Gibson stated that the Policy Board is looking at having an overall meeting of all members/entities sometime in January-February 2024 to discuss, "Is the Beltline still our regional priority?" As well as "If so, how do we want to pay for it?"

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:33 a.m.