

**SAINT CLOUD AREA PLANNING ORGANIZATION POLICY BOARD
Thursday, August 10th, 2023 – 4:30 PM**

A regular meeting of the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization Policy Board was held on Thursday, August 10, 2023, at 4:30 PM APO Chair Raeanne Danielowski presided with the following members:

Raeanne Danielowski	County of Sherburne
Tim Elness	City of Sartell
Jared Gapinski	County of Benton
Joe Perske	Stearns County
Rick Schultz	City of St. Joseph
Rick Miller	City of Waite Park
Ryan Daniel	Metro Bus
Jake Anderson	City of Saint Cloud
Dottie Seamans	City of Sauk Rapids

Also in attendance were:

Brian Gibson	Saint Cloud APO
Vicki Johnson	Saint Cloud APO
Alex McKenzie	Saint Cloud APO
Trina Ness	Saint Cloud APO

Absent:

Jeff Westerlund	Town of LeSauk
Mayor Dave Kleis	City of St. Cloud
Jeff Goerger	City of St. Cloud

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Mayor Schultz motioned to approve the agenda and Mayor Miller seconded the motion. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: No members of the public were in attendance, however, Mr. Gibson brought forth a comment he received regarding making sure to be mindful of people with mobility issues when planning for future transportation improvements. Chairperson Danielowski stated it's a good reminder and duly noted.

CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

- a. Approve Minutes of June 8, 2023 Policy Board Meeting
- b. Approve Bills Lists
- c. Receive Report on June 15th Area Transportation Partnership Meeting
- d. Receive Staff report on July 27th meeting of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee

Mayor Schultz motioned to approve the consent agenda items and Mayor Miller seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Consider Draft 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work (UPWP)

After Mr. Gibson's presentation of the draft UPWP, there was much discussion regarding the increased assessment amount. The following are some bullet points from the discussion:

- Take a year to dig a little deeper. River crossings are important, without them everything is going to somewhat stagnate.
- This is a big picture thing obviously and it's a big number. Maybe we just need to look at it in a way to have everybody be a part of it in a way that they can accept the funding.
- At some point there's going to be some federal funding for the bridge, but we will not achieve that without the study.
- Perhaps a cost and benefit analysis of what the functionality of this beltline is would be useful.
- In the future, APO staff need to bring budgeting to the Board in the spring so jurisdictions can budget for it.
- APO members need to make sure this is a policy that stays steadfast all the way through.
- APO members need to figure out, is the beltline still a priority? Are they going to cost share on that? Is it just the planning that they're going to cost share on, or are they going to cost share on the construction too? The APO members need to take a year and have that discussion before we go forward.
- Ms. Danielowski summarized, "For clarification we're not going to give the money back. We're going to keep moving forward. A bridge should be accomplished, we just need to figure out how sharing the cost will be done."
- It will establish some level of precedence as we move forward. The goal is regional cooperation, not to establish a bad precedent.

Mayor Miller suggested that there be a meeting of all involved jurisdictions in January-February 2024 to discuss the Mississippi Bridge Environmental Study and funding for it.

Mr. Gapinski motioned to approve the 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program Budget (UPWP), with the exception of the Mississippi River Bridge Environmental Study, Ms. Seamans seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Consider Regional Transportation Vision for 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

A regional transportation visioning question was asked as part of the 2021 Household Travel Survey. APO staff received 2,000 public comments. Comments were reviewed and sorted into 6 primary themes:

- System and Environmental Stewardship
 - Protect and preserve our current environment
 - Fix the roads
- Multimodal Connections
 - Affordability
 - Safe biking and walking infrastructure
- Congestion Management
 - Fix signal timing
- Transportation Safety (Toward Zero Deaths)
 - Reduce fatalities & serious injuries
- Interregional Connections
 - NorthStar
 - U.S. Highway 10
 - Interstate 94
- Technological Advancements
 - Electric vehicles are here
 - Automated vehicles are on their way

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) recommended Policy Board approval at their July 27, 2023 meeting.

Mr. Gapinski asked, "Were there any themes in the surveys that were more common or obvious?"

Ms. Johnson responded, "Fix the roads and also bike paths. Congestion was number three."

Mayor Schultz motioned to approve the regional transportation vision for 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Mayor Miller seconded. Motion carried.

Consider Regional Transportation Priorities

Mr. Gibson reported that he had discussions with the TAC regarding what the regional transportation priorities should be when he and Chair Danielowski travel to Washington D.C. in October. The TAC's recommendations were:

- U.S. Highway 10 improvements
- Benton County extension for 29
- MN Highway 15 and 23

Mr. Perske suggested adding a thank you to Klobuchar and Smith for the congressionally directed funding for the improvements at the airport, and also for the bridge study.

Mr. Ellness noted that during the last capitol session, Blaine got \$165 million to redo Highway 65. They approached the state capitol and had their projects defined. He asked if APO staff have ever approached the state for funding. Should St. Cloud or Waite Park put in a bonding bill at the state level to request money for everything? We've done enough studies to justify the need.

Mr. Gibson noted that he typically does go to the state capitol with the St. Cloud Chamber of Commerce, meets with legislators, and presents the projects that are presented in Washington D.C.

Ms. Dottie Seamans motioned to approve 2024 Regional Transportation Priorities as recommended by the TAC. Mr. Jared Gapinski seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Review Draft Project List for 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Ms. Johnson presented the current draft list of projects being considered for inclusion in the 2050 MTP. She stated that the long-range transportation plan is important because it needs to identify future projects. The Board just approved our regional vision. Now we need to start doing our goals and objectives and strategies that will ultimately help us realize that vision. Once the projects are incorporated into the approved MTP, then they are eligible for federal funding.

To be eligible for inclusion in the MTP the roadway needs to be functionally classified, meaning it has to be an arterial or a collector. We can't put local roads into the MTP. The other key piece is that the MTP must be fiscally constrained. There needs to be a reasonable expectation that funding will be available for the projects.

Ms. Johnson explained that APO staff worked with jurisdictional staff to identify this draft list of projects. Staff also looked at previous MTP and what was still waiting to be done and verified if those projects were still needed. She also reviewed comprehensive plans, growth areas, and areas of potential need for a new alignment or looking at pavement quality for major reconstruction. She asked the Board members to review the list and let APO staff know if we're missing anything.

Ms. Johnson also worked on revenue forecasting with jurisdictional staff as well - what the jurisdiction can reasonably expect to for transportation funds between now and 2050.

Ms. Johnson explained that for purposes of the MTP, projects are divided into two types: 1) Capacity expansion Projects – building new roads or adding lanes to an existing roadway, and 2) Reconstruction/System Preservation Projects – which is a catchall for maintenance-type projects that would likely be considered for federal funding, such as reconstructions, reclamations, mill and overlays.

Ms. Johnson explained that the project list was submitted to our consultant in June so that they could do a model run. Initial model runs were presented to the TAC, and they wanted to tweak a few projects. She noted that some of the jurisdictions

have additional financial capacity in the fiscal constraint analysis for additional projects.

Ms. Johson noted that today's ask was, "Are the projects listed the priorities for your jurisdiction? Or did we miss something?" We need to be advised of what project you want. If we can get it fiscally constrained, we will add it to the list. No formal action was needed at this time, but we are asking that you take the project list back to your respective jurisdiction and confirm that we have the project list correct.

Consider Draft Saint Cloud Urban Area Boundary Adjustments

Mr. Gibson noted that this item is for informational purposes only and that the TAC is still wrestling with this. They have yet to make a recommendation.

The U.S. Census defines urban areas based largely on population density, but that method does not necessarily capture the true urban area. We have the opportunity to adjust the urban area to include growth areas, industrial parks, schools, airports, etc. and make them more realistic. He noted that the Board is not the final decision-maker on this. The Board will make a recommendation that will go to the state then the federal government and they will make the final determination as to the adjusted urban boundaries.

Mr. Gibson noted that in the Opportunity Drive industrial park, Anderson Trucking has a facility that is not in the APO Planning area – it is in Lynden Township. He noted that if we include part of Lynden Township in our urban area, we may also have to include Lynden Township in our planning area by default. He just wanted the Board to be aware of this at this time.

OTHER BUSINESS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Trina Ness was introduced as the new administrative assistant.

Mr. Joe Perske brought up a presentation by Chris Byrd and Jodi Teich about an additional layer of environmental study that will be needed if we have a new improvement to a roadway. He asked Board members if we want to try to repeal that. He said that if it's going to add 10% of the cost to every project this could be wasteful spending in the rural areas. He said that he would bring this back with more information, and that the jurisdictions should look at getting this repealed.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Miller motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mayor Schultz seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:56 PM.