

**SAINT CLOUD AREA PLANNING ORGANIZATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY
COMMITTEE (TAC) MEETING
Thursday, March 28 @ 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, March 28, 2024. Senior Transportation Planner Vicki Johnson presided with the following people in attendance:

Voting Members:

Matt Glaesman	City of Saint Cloud
Zac Borgerding	City of Saint Cloud
Michael Kedrowski	Saint Cloud Metro Bus
Jodi Teich	Stearns County
Andrew Witter	Sherburne County
Kari Theisen	City of Sartell
Randy Sabart	City of Saint Joseph
Steve Voss	MnDOT District 3
David Blommel	City of Waite Park

Non-Member Attendees:

Brian Gibson	APO, Executive Director
Vicki Johnson	APO, Senior Planner
Alex McKenzie	APO, Associate Planner
Trina Ness	APO, Administrative Assistant

Online Attendees:

Erika Shepard	MnDOT MPO Coordinator
Jeff Lenz	MnDOT District 3
Chris Byrd	Benton County
James Stapfer	APO, Planning Technician

Introductions were made.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No members of the public were present.

CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approve minutes of the Feb. 29, 2024, TAC meeting.
- b. Receive staff report of the March 14, 2024, Policy Board meeting.

Ms. Teich made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items. Ms. Theisen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF 2024 – 2027 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATIONS

Ms. Johnson presented the 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendments and administrative modifications. She shared that public comment was open from Feb. 14, 2024, to March 15, 2024. There were 11 online survey participants. A virtual open house was held on Feb. 23, 2024, with no response. There was an in-person open house on Feb. 27, 2024, with one person in attendance.

Ms. Johnson also stated that due to the immediacy regarding the Sauk Rapids administrative modification, MnDOT asked if the APO's Policy Board could approve the administrative modification at the March 14, 2024, meeting. Given the anticipated non-controversial issue of eliminating the AC payback, APO staff worked with MnDOT to allow this exception.

Mr. Voss made a Motion to recommend the Policy Board approval of the 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendments and administrative modifications. Ms. Teich seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF THE FY 2025-2026 CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAM (CRP) SOLICITATION

Ms. Johnson presented the FY 2025-2026 Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) Solicitation. The Carbon Reduction Program was created under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). It is a federal program designed to fund projects that reduce carbon emissions from surface transportation. To utilize CRP funding, MnDOT was required to develop a Carbon Reduction Strategy, which is a plan that outlines priorities to advance transportation investments in carbon emissions reduction. Projects in Minnesota using CRP funding must align with the policy and investment direction outlined in the CRS.

Kick off for the FY 2025-2026 APO solicitation is March 12, 2024, with applications being due by 3 p.m. on May 10, 2024. The APO needs to allocate the FY 2025 funding as soon as possible, or risk losing it. Funds for FY 2025 must be obligated no later than June 30, 2025.

Ms. Johnson presented an option for the TAC to consider regarding spending the FY 2025 dollars. That option would be to distribute the funding the Benton County's CSAH 1/CSAH 29 roundabout. This is the only project within the TIP programmed for FY 2025 that meets the CRP funding criteria as well as being underfunded with federal dollars.

The latest round of Transportation Alternatives (TA) awards will be released on April 4, 2024. Ms. Johnson encouraged those TA applicants who are unsuccessful in TA funding to apply for CRP funding stating these would be eligible.

Mr. Voss stated about the Benton County roundabout that was previously discussed, there are ways to include/utilize the CRP's Carbon Emissions Tool as the

outside portion has the bike/pedestrian element and the inside portion would meet the mobility category.

Anna Pierce, MnDOT's Carbon Reduction Program coordinator, has a video regarding the application process online and applicants can work directly with her regarding specific projects.

Ms. Teich made a Motion to recommend that the Policy Board award the APO's 2025 CRP funding of \$440,000 to Benton County's CSAH 29/CSAH 1 roundabout project. Mr. Witter seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Saint Cloud APO decided rather than setting up a project management team for the future regional arterials and collectors study, that the Technical Advisory Committee will be the project management team for Bolton & Menk. There will be six meetings between now and December with Bolton & Menk making presentations seeking guidance and requests for the project.
- Mr. Voss spoke regarding MnDOT's release of new Funding Guidance targets for funds that are provided to the Area Transportation Partnerships. MnDOT had been using the 2010 census data to set targets. They've now updated the targets using the 2020 census data.

For 2028 they want to apply the new data to the targets regarding the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) dollars, which are the funds distributed to the ATPs. These targets are based on 50% population and 50% state aid needs. This resulted in the reduction in the ATP's target, by \$500,000 for the Central Minnesota ATP. The ATP's STBGP allocation went from \$12.2 million to \$11.7. This resulted in the Saint Cloud APO receiving a \$102,650 reduction regarding the 2028 target.

MnDOT also used the same formula for Transportation Alternatives (TA) program which saw a \$100,000 cut in funding dropping the target from \$2.5 million to \$2.4 million.

The funding formula the Central Minnesota ATP uses to distribute the STBGP funds to each region was based on a formula from 1999. There was much discussion regarding updating the formula for the ATP. The TAC also discussed adding a hold harmless clause so other planning regions don't lose funding. Ultimately, the ATP would need to take action to approve this change. The TAC felt that the formula needs to be updated, but no formal action was taken regarding this today.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:43 a.m.