

SAINT CLOUD AREA PLANNING ORGANIZATION POLICY BOARD

Thursday, April 11, 2024 – 4:30 PM

A regular meeting of the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization Policy Board was held on Thursday, April 11, 2024, at 4:30 PM APO Chair Raeanne Danielowski presided with the following members:

Jake Anderson	City of Saint Cloud
Jeff Goerger	City of Saint Cloud
Mike Conway	City of Saint Cloud (Alternate for Mayor Kleis)
Nick Sauer	City of Sauk Rapids (Alternate for Dottie Seamans)
Frank Theisen	City of Waite Park
Jeff Westerlund	LeSauk Township
Mike Kedrowski	Metro Bus (Alternate for Ryan Daniel)
Steve Heinen	Benton County (Alternate for Jared Gapinski)
Joe Perske	Stearns County

Also in attendance were:

Brian Gibson	Saint Cloud APO
Vicki Johnson	Saint Cloud APO
Alex McKenzie	Saint Cloud APO
Trina Ness	Saint Cloud APO
Janel Bitzan	Bergan KDV
Anne Buckvold	Citizen

Absent:

Tim Elness	City of Sartell
Rick Schultz	City of St. Joseph

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Mr. Heinen motioned to approve the amended agenda. Mr. Goerger seconded the motion. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: No members of the public came forth.

CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

- a. Approve Minutes of March 14, 2024, Policy Board Meeting
- b. Approve Bills Lists
- c. Receive 2024 Q1 Financial Report
- d. Approve Publication of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan Annual Report

- e. Approve Amendments and Administrative Modifications to the 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- f. Receive Staff Report on Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

Mr. Goerger motioned to approve the consent agenda items. Mr. Sauer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

6. RECEIVE 2023 FINANCIAL AUDIT REPORT

Ms. Bitzan, with Bergan KDV, presented information on the 2023 Financial Audit.

Following the presentation Mr. Goerger asked if it was a state statute that the auditors have to do a presentation. Mr. Gibson responded stating there's no legal reason for the presentation. Ms. Danielowski stated that sometimes people may have questions for the auditor, so it may be helpful.

7. CONSIDER APPROVAL FOR 2025 CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAM (CRP) FUNDS

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 was March 12, 2024, with applications being due by 3 p.m. on May 10, 2024. We need 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.

2026 Solicitation awards will be released April 4, 2024. Ms. Johnson encouraged everyone to apply for CRP funding. She gave an example of a shared use path and the options it could utilize in the Carbon Reduction Tool such as using a bike/pedestrian component and if using recycled pavement for the project that could also be included.

In addition, due to the immediate need to conduct this solicitation and program projects into the 2025-2028 TIP, APO staff have launched the CRP solicitation utilizing the funding guidance and scoring rubric developed by MnDOT's Office of Sustainability and Public Health. Once this solicitation concludes, APO staff will be working with TAC representatives over the summer to identify regional priorities for CRP funding from the list of eligible funding opportunities identified by MnDOT. This revised solicitation program will ideally be completed in time for the second CRP solicitation to be launched this fall for FY 2027 and FY 2028 funds. It is anticipated the APO will have \$270,000 in federal CRP funding to allocate in both 2027 and 2028.

At the regularly scheduled meeting, TAC representatives discussed the FY 2025-2026 CRP solicitation and recommended Policy Board approval to award the APO's 2025 CRP funding of \$440,000 to Benton County's CSAH 29/CSAH 1 roundabout project. This would mean the APO would only be accepting CRP applications for the FY 2026 solicitation.

Mr. Goerger asked if the same project could use both years' funds. Ms. Johnson stated it is possible but would not be practical.

Mr. Anderson asked if in the future we could plan to use two years' worth of funding for a project if everything aligned correctly. Ms. Johnson stated that it is possible.

Mr. Perske asked if the \$440,000 would complete the project. Mr. Heinen responded, no, there is still one million that Benton County will need to utilize of its own money.

Joe Perske asked if, regarding future funding, could the Beaver Island Trail be a candidate to complete the gap in St. Cloud.

Ms. Johnson responded yes, the Beaver Island Trail could be considered an eligible project.

Ms. Danielowski suggested members get back to their city or county engineers and ask them where they could use \$440,000 in 2026.

Mr. Sauer motioned to award the APO's 2025 CRP funding of \$440,000 to Benton County's CSAH 29/CSAH 1 roundabout project. Mr. Theisen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

8. CONSIDER PUBLICATION OF THE ANNUAL TRANSPORTATION PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT (TPMR)

Mr. Stapfer presented the Annual Transportation Performance Monitoring Report. This report includes a set of performance measures that will track the region's progress towards achievement of transportation goals. Performance measures are designed to serve as a benchmark to evaluate and quantify progress. This performance-based approach is meant to improve accountability of Federal transportation investments, assess risks related to different performance levels, and increase transparency. The report serves as an annual snapshot of the region to help the APO and its planning partners better understand the current and anticipated performance of the transportation system and how well it is moving towards achieving the goals stated in the MTP.

Mr. Anderson stated that he would think that the weight of today's vehicles, along with having better vehicle safety features must affect crashes and their statistics.

Mr. Anderson expressed concern that MnDOT is finishing a large project at Hwy 10 and Hwy 23, but it doesn't include the intersection of Hwy 10 and East St. Germain.

Mr. Gibson stated MnDOT is looking for money to fund a study for Highway 10 starting at East St. Germain going to Royalton, which would include that intersection.

9. OTHER BUSINESS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Ms. Danielowski stated the 2024 MN Transportation Annual Publication is available to you.
- Ms. Danielowski announced that Ms. Johnson has been elected Vice Chair of the ATP-3 Committee.
- Mr. Anderson stated that the City Council in St. Cloud recently approved a new development off 322nd street to the west, and there is another development pending in the south. Most of the residents that testified could care less about the development, they care about the corridor.
- Mr. Perske stated he gets so many calls on 322nd street, and it is not in our jurisdiction. Also, there was a bad accident on 322nd last night as well.
- Mr. Westerland stated that 322nd, is owned by the City of St. Cloud, St. Wendel, and LeSauk Townships. He thought that they were working with St. Cloud to get it repaved. Mr. Anderson responded that the road is too narrow, that it is a hazardous road, and needs to be rebuilt.
- Mr. Gibson stated that the APO is doing a regional review of roadway functional classification. 322nd Street is classified as a local street, which makes it ineligible for federal funds. However, if it is being used as a major collector, we could apply to change the classification. MnDOT must approve the decision to increase the classification.

11. ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Goerger motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Theisen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM.