

**SAINT CLOUD AREA PLANNING ORGANIZATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY
COMMITTEE (TAC) MEETING
Thursday, July 25 @ 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, July 25, 2024. Senior Transportation Planner Vicki Johnson presided with the following people in attendance:

Voting Members:

Matt Glaesman	City of Saint Cloud
Luke Langer	City of Saint Cloud (Alternate for Zac Borgerding)
Michael Kedrowski	Saint Cloud Metro Bus
Jodi Teich	Stearns County
David Roedel	Sherburne County
Todd Schultz	City of Sauk Rapids
Randy Sabart	City of Saint Joseph
Kari Haakonson	City of Sartell
Steve Voss	MnDOT District 3

Non-Member Attendees:

Brian Gibson	APO, Executive Director
Vicki Johnson	APO, Senior Planner
Trina Ness	APO, Administrative Specialist
James Stapfer	APO, Planning Technician
Alex McKenzie	APO, Associate Planner
Angie Stenson	Bolton & Menk
Robin Kaufman	Bolton & Menk
Andrew Babb	Bolton & Menk
Ian Jacobson	Bolton & Menk
Angie Tomovic	MnDOT District 3 State Aid

Online Attendees:

Zac Borgerding	City of Saint Cloud
Erika Shepard	MnDOT
Jeff Lenz	MnDOT District 3
Voni Vegar	MnDOT
Josh Pearson	FHWA

Introductions were made.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No members of the public were present.

CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approve minutes of the June 27, 2024, TAC meeting.
- b. Receive staff report of the June 20, 2024, Central Minnesota Area

Transportation Partnership (ATP-3) Meeting.

- c. Receive staff report of July 11, 2024, Policy Board meeting.
- d. Receive information on Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) modification.

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

FUTURE REGIONAL ARTERIALS AND COLLECTORS PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM (PMT) COORDINATION DISCUSSION.

Ms. Stenson presented a project update regarding the Future Regional Arterials and Collectors study. She spoke about Task 5.1 which is the Roadway Segment Existing Conditions Data Profiles and Analysis. This task consists of roadway data profiles, consideration of future conditions, and identification of corridors for analysis.

Data profiles include:

- AADT (existing and future)
- Speed limit
- Median condition (divided vs. undivided)
- Average trip length
- Access spacing (primary and secondary intersections)
- Urban area (existing and growth area)

Mr. Babb spoke about the screening methodology regarding the data profiles, existing conditions, trip length, access spacing and MnDOT standards.

There was good discussion regarding scoring, illustrative alignments, and potentially changing values. Mr. Gibson stated the goals would be to inform Bolton & Menk of any potential future changes in each jurisdictions' planning area.

Ms. Stenson presented the next steps, and the schedule:

- Aug. 8, 2024 – deadline to provide additional segments to be included in the analysis
- Aug. 29, 2024 – TAC meeting:
 - Confirm test future functional class for TDM run
 - Review and confirm analysis and evaluation framework
 - Review access management and right of way preservation best practices memos
- Sept. 26, 2024 – TAC meeting:
 - Present analysis and evaluation of corridors including the TDM outputs
 - Present draft future functional class
 - Discuss intersection improvement needs screening
- October – Agency meetings and focus groups
- Oct. 31, 2024 – TAC meeting:
 - Discuss future functional classification adjustments
 - Intersection improvement needs analysis

- Confirm materials for public meeting
- Early November – Public meeting
- Nov. 20, 2024, TAC meeting:
 - Present what we heard from the public
 - Review final TDM run outputs
 - Adjustments to study findings and final report

Ms. Stenson then spoke about Task 5.2 which is the Analysis of New Alignment Segments and Future Conditions. This task consists of identifying test future functional class, the evaluation framework, analysis, and draft results. Identification of future condition change ratings is based off draft values for major collectors in urban areas as well as principal arterials in rural areas. Future AADT, speed limit, median, primary access spacing, and secondary access spacing are reviewed for identification of future condition change ratings.

Ms. Stenson also reviewed the upcoming task regarding the project which is 5.3, to determine corridors for further analysis.

DISTRICT STATE AID PROJECT COORDINATION DISCUSSION

Ms. Tomovic discussed proposed changes to the ATP-Managed funding programs (Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP), Transportation Alternatives (TA), Carbon Reduction Program (CRP), and Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT)) to require a letter of support from MnDOT District Engineer for any proposed improvements within trunk highway Right-of Way. If approved by the ATP, the letter of support would be required to accompany any application for these programs for projects within MnDOT ROW. Ms. Tomovic stated the requirement would allow MnDOT to vet projects and address any “red flags” prior to projects being awarded federal funding. She encouraged any jurisdiction interested in completing work within a trunk highway ROW to contact her office and coordinate with either Jeff Lenz or Vicki Johnson.

Ms. Tomovic also advised TAC representatives that if they are considering major traffic enhancements on local roads, outside MnDOT trunk highway Right-of-Way, but within 500 ft from the intersection to coordinate early with MnDOT staff.

Ms. Tomovic reminded TAC reps with projects programmed in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to coordinate with her office to ensure timely communication with various regulatory agencies to help facilitate project deliverability.

Finally, Ms. Tomovic informed TAC reps to coordinate with Jeff Lenz and Vicki Johnson on any proposed changes to projects programmed in the STIP. She encouraged TAC reps to review their federal projects and work with MnDOT and the APO early to make changes to the STIP as appropriate. Ms. Tomovic said District State Aid would like to see plans and project memorandums for FY 2025 projects by Dec. 1, 2024, and full plans by April 2025.

CONSIDERATION OF THE 2024-2027 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATON

Ms. Johnson stated this is extremely late to be processing amendments. She proceeded to present the 2024-2027 TIP Amendments which are as follows:

- The City of Sartell has requested that the electric vehicle police cars be added to the 2024-2027 TIP in FY 2025.
- MnDOT and Sherburne County have requested that the County Road 61 realignment and westbound acceleration lane be added to the 2024-2027 TIP in FY 2025.
- MnDOT has requested a scope change for the 2025 ITS project along I-94.
- An administrative modification request by Stearns County to increase the project cost for the CSAH 133 expansion project from Stearns CSAH 75 to 15th Avenue in St. Joseph. This project would also include intersection improvements at Elm St., dual left turn lanes from EB CSAH 75 to NB CSAH 133 and associated local projects.

Public comment opened on July 3, 2024, and will close on August 2, 2024. So far, 11 completed online surveys were received. An open house was held at the library on July 15, 2024. No one attended. Ms. Johnson said she also did a Facebook Live event/social media post that have garnered no responses.

Ms. Teich motioned to recommend Policy Board approval of the 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments, including the Administrative Modification as presented. Ms. Haakonson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Ms. Johnson also stated a technical correction was processed to the 2024-2027 TIP regarding the NEVI EV charging station. The location selected was the AmericInn Hotel (4385 Clearwater Road). A slight decrease in the cost estimate was also made.

CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAM (CRP) REGIONAL PRIORITIES DISCUSSION

Mr. McKenzie presented the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP). The Carbon Reduction Program was created under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). It is designed to fund projects that reduce carbon emissions from surface transportation. To utilize CRP funding, MnDOT was required to develop a Carbon Reduction Strategy (CRS), 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. The TAC previously asked the APO staff to review the CRP scoring rubric and tailor it to the APO's priorities.

Eligible activities funded under the CRP are broken down into three categories: Electrification, Travel Options, and Low Carbon Infrastructure and System Management.

Funding provided to the APO can only be used within the **URBANIZED** area. Other portions of the APO's planning area that are not in the urbanized area would qualify to apply for the ATP's CRP funding solicitation.

The funding breakdown for the next solicitation is as follows:

Year	Central Minnesota ATP (Rural Funds)	Saint Cloud APO (Urban Funds)
FY 2027	\$1,380,000	\$270,000
FY 2028	\$1,300,000	\$270,000

Mr. McKenzie presented options to the TAC regarding possible changes to the APO's CRP solicitation process.

1. **Scoring Rubric Options regarding Project Eligibility:**
 - *Option:* Refine the list of eligible projects (smaller, not larger).
 - **Benefits:** Fund initiatives that do not have other eligible funding sources through the APO.
 - **Negatives:** Making specific projects ineligible might result in no eligible projects being proposed.
 - **Recommendation: Keep the current list of eligible projects.**
2. **Scoring Rubric Options regarding Cost-Effectiveness:**
 - *Option:* Refine the weight for cost-effectiveness. The minimum weight is 50%, with a maximum of 90%, and the current default weight is set at 50%.
 - **Benefits:** Prioritizing cost-effectiveness ensures projects achieve the highest carbon reduction per dollar spent, aligning with the CRP's primary goal. This approach optimizes the use of limited funds, potentially funding more projects or achieving greater carbon reductions within the available solicitation.
 - **Negatives:** Placing a heavy emphasis on cost-effectiveness may result in other important factors, such as equity, safety, access, and health, being undervalued. Projects that provide significant co-benefits but are slightly less cost-effective in terms of carbon reduction might be overlooked.
 - **Recommendations: Increase the cost-effectiveness percentage to 75% of the total project score. This adjustment aims to maximize carbon reduction benefits while still considering essential co-benefits.**
3. **Scoring Rubric Options regarding Co-Benefits:**
 - *Option:* There are four primary co-benefit categories: equity, safety, access, and health, each assessed on a five-point scale, with a maximum score of 20 points. The APO has the flexibility to adjust the weighting of these co-benefits or introduce new ones, with a limit of 50% of the project score.
 - **Benefits:** Given the diversity of project types, not all categories may be equally applicable. Introducing a new co-benefit enables the program to address specific community needs or emerging priorities that current criteria may not adequately cover.
 - **Negatives:** Adding additional co-benefits would reduce the weight given to existing co-benefits.
 - **Recommendations: Tailoring the descriptions of these co-benefits to better align with our organizational goals instead of adding additional co-benefits. In addition, the co-benefit score should be reduced to 25% of the total project score.**

There was group discussion regarding the scoring rubric and how they feel the co-benefits portion of the scoring rubric was a waste of their time and didn't carry much weight when the actual scoring was done.

Ms. Teich stated that if you're going to raise cost effectiveness let's get rid of the co-benefit section of the scoring process. The APO staff responded that that cannot be done.

Ms. Teich stated that if the goal is to reduce as much carbon per dollar of reduction dollars spent then adjusting the cost-effectiveness ratio makes sense.

TAC representatives were in agreement that the list of eligible projects should not be changed. However, several questions were asked regarding the other two items. TAC representatives asked APO staff to clarify the following information with MnDOT's Carbon Reduction Program Coordinator Anna Pierce:

- Could different cost-effectiveness/co-benefit ratios be developed for certain categories of projects? Such as fleet electrification would be have a ratio of 90/10 with the cost-effectiveness factor making up 90% of the scoring. Other projects could have a ratio of 75/25.
- Given the estimated project cost plays a major factor in the cost-effectiveness factor of the scoring, would applicants be able to populate this field with the requested CRP amount versus the entire project cost amount? For example, if a roundabout costs \$2 million but the applicant was only requesting \$270,000, could they plug in the requested amount versus the overall cost of the project?

APO staff stated they would work to tailor how descriptions are written regarding each of the co-benefits to align with the 2050 MTP visioning statements.

Ms. Johnson stated the ATIP development committee is of incorporating CRP and PROTECT solicitation information into the existing TA workshops. As a result, these workshops would be mandatory for the upcoming solicitation.

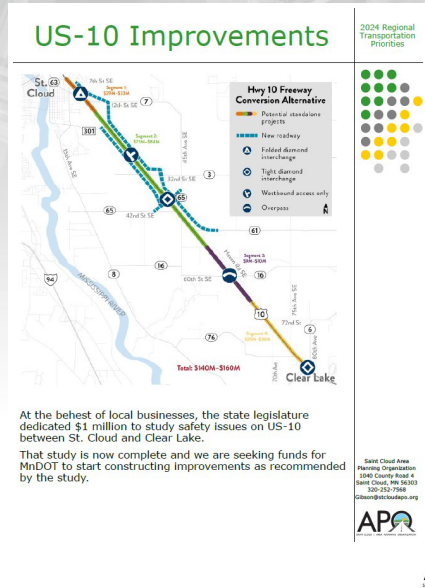
CONSIDERATION OF THE 2025 SAINT CLOUD APO REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES LIST

Mr. Gibson spoke regarding the upcoming Washington, D.C. trip that he and members of the Policy Board will make in November 2024. During this trip the APO representatives meet with available Minnesota members of Congress and Senate and advocate for projects within the APO's planning area. The Regional Transportation Priorities for 2025 that are being proposed are as follows:

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Regional Transportation Priorities for 2025

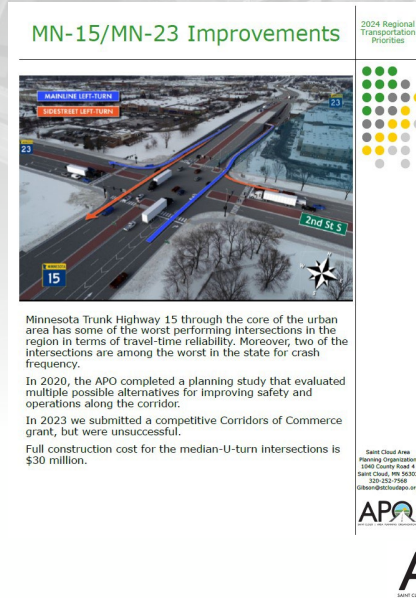
- Lobbying in DC
- 2024 Priorities
 - US-10 Improvements
 - Benton County CSAH 29 Extension (*funded*)
 - MN-15/MN-23 Improvements



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Regional Transportation Priorities for 2025

- Ideally:
 - Major, regional-level projects
 - Projects for which there is broad regional consensus
 - Projects which cannot be funded through "normal" means
 - 2-4 projects
 - The very highest priorities



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Ms. Teich motioned for the Policy Board to approve the recommended 2025 Regional Transportation Priorities excluding the Benton County CSAH 29 Extension be included in the Congressional Briefing Booklet. Ms. Teich provided the caveat that supporting the local priority projects in the Congressional Briefing Booklet would not commit APO jurisdictions/agencies to participate in the local share/match

required if projects identified in the briefing booklet received federal funding. Ms. Haakonson seconded the motion. Motion carried. Mr. Voss abstained.

OTHER BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Johnson requested to know as soon as possible the dates of any conferences in 2025. Ms. Teich stated she believes the County Engineers conference is Martin Luther King, Jr. week. Mr. Sabart stated he believes the City Engineers conference is the third week in January. They will inform Ms. Johnson as soon as they confirm the dates.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.