

**Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
August 29, 2019**

A regular meeting of the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization's (APO) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 29, 2019 at Stearns County Public Works. Senior Planner Vicki Johnson presided with the following members present:

Matt Glaesman	Saint Cloud
John Noerenberg (alt)	Waite Park
Doug Diedrichsen	Metro Bus
Randy Sabart	Saint Joseph/SEH
Chris Byrd	Benton County
Jeff Lenz	MnDOT Dist #3
Jon Halter	Sartell
Vicki Johnson	Saint Cloud APO
Alex McKenzie	Saint Cloud APO

CONSIDER MINUTES OF JULY 31, 2019:

Mr. Glaesman motioned to approve the July 31, 2019 TAC meeting minutes, and Mr. Diedrichsen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: No members of the public were present.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (STBGP) SCORE SHEET AND SCORING RUBRIC:

Senior Planner Vicki Johnson spoke about the APO and TAC member's previous conversations about revamping the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) application score sheet. Ms. Johnson stated that the APO's score sheet used MnDOT 7W as a template to develop scoring criteria for STBGP funding. The scoring criteria in the revised application will match the APO's goals, objectives and priorities displayed in the MAPPING 2045 plan. Ms. Johnson reiterated previous comments made by Mr. Glaesman about splitting modal forms and including project readiness as a scoring criteria. Comments made by Mr. Byrd and Mr. Halter from previous meetings about weighting categories were taken into consideration. Ms. Johnson restated comments made by Mr. Voss about differences in scoring from a high, medium, low method to a point system.

Mr. Byrd had a question about what Environmental Justice (EJ) entails. Ms. Johnson replied that EJ areas include minority and low income populations, which could be found in attachments 3D and 3E on the maps. Ms. Johnson then stated reconstruction and expansion projects were separated in the evaluation considerations, to ensure expansion projects were heavily mitigated in EJ areas.

Ms. Johnson asked the TAC members if a numeric scoring methods was still the priority or if another method would be more favorable. Mr. Byrd confirmed he prefers numeric scoring methods because when he is doing a high, medium, low method, he still assigns numbers to those categories. He stated the technical advisory committee should be technical, so numbers should be used.

Mr. Halter agreed with Mr. Byrd's statement and added he was not in favor of only one person scoring the projects as they do in MnDOT 7W. He proposed the idea of all TAC members scoring projects which would equate to a weighted average. Ms. Johnson replied that traditionally the APO staff were the ones to score the projects, but changes can be made. Mr. Glaesman

mentioned that APO staff should remain the neutral party. He also was in favor of the idea of numeric scoring, averaging out scoring with applicants scoring their own projects, and APO staff can provide their recommendations verbally. Mr. Byrd asked if applicants would score their own project. Mr. Halter replied, yes the applicant would score their own or applicants could reframe from scoring own, he could go either way, but the weighted average would offset any bias. Mr. Glaesman agreed, that the TAC members would be fair and balanced. Mr. Sabart replied having the TAC members score each project gives the process transparency and objectivity. Mr. Lenz stated at MnDOT they do numeric scoring and can still pick and choose which project to fund, the justification of the project will be the ultimate deciding factor of project selection, it's the transparency that is important. Ms. Johnson asked the question who would be a charge of scoring the projects, just the voting members or the entire TAC membership. Mr. Glaesman stated that Saint Cloud has two voting members, so Mr. Glaesman and Mr. Foss should each have to chance to score projects for the sake of transparency and the weighted average would balance any bias. Mr. Halter suggested for the sake of transparency having a spreadsheet of the scores given to each project by applicant. Ms. Johnson stated the applications are due the first Friday of January, and by the last Thursday of January all projects must be scored.

Ms. Johnson turned her attention to the score sheet and explained the access and mobility section is worth 30 points. Mr. Halter asked what are the total points of the score sheet and Ms. Johnson relied with 200 points total. Mr. Halter pointed out that 20 of the 30 points in the access and mobility section are in EJ criteria. Mr. Glaesman asked if it is typical if access and mobility are in the same category. Ms. Johnson replied with yes, the score sheet reflects the categories of MnDOT 7W. Mr. Glaesman thinks the EJ criteria should be in a separate category with the EJ category being 15 points and other stuff 15 points. Mr. Byrd agreed that access and mobility should each be 15 points. Mr. Sabart asked who makes the maps and who maintains them, and Mr. McKenzie replied the APO uses the American Community Survey data from the U.S. Census that is updated each year.

Ms. Johnson moved on to explain system connectivity category and is weighted at 30 points. The committee had no comments. Ms. Johnson explained the multimodal category is weighted at 20 points. Mr. Sabart made the comment for the most part every project that is a collector or arterial has a multimodal component, and questioned if there is enough stratification or meaningful points. Ms. Johnson explained each component is worth five points, for example an on-road bike lane or sidewalk would each be five points apiece. Mr. Glaesman suggested one of the criteria to be the generators the multimodal components it connects, such as regional park school, or employment node. Mr. Halter suggested instead of connections between jurisdiction it should be connections between schools, parks, etc. Mr. Glaesman proposed getting rid of the on-road bicycle lanes, and adding the addition of trip generators. Mr. Halter advised rural shoulder can act as a multi-use trail. Ms. Johnson suggested combining on-road bicycle lanes and multi-use paths and make it five points. Mr. Glaesman and Mr. Halter agreed to that point.

Ms. Johnson presented on system condition, and took into consideration Mr. Halter's comment about this category being weighted higher. Ms. Johnson explained system preservation typically accounts on average of 80 percent of agencies transportation budgets, justifying the 50 points. The criteria are based off of bridge condition or pavement IRI. The APO will have a pavement study being completed relatively soon. Mr. McKenzie stated the pavement condition data should be completed by September. Mr. Halter asked about multi-use path condition being an additional 30 points or if a road project and trail project were combined, how the points would be counted. Ms. Johnson explained multi-use path pavement condition will only be considered for trail specific projects. Mr. Sabart commented that the trail category has three different categories (good, fair, poor), so should multi-use paths have three different ratings for points. Ms. Johnson explained that the APO is in the process of developing a rating system for trail pavement, and providing that data. Mr. Lenz asked a hypothetical question about what if a bridge condition was

rated fair and pavement condition was rated fair, would that be 60 points? Ms. Johnson confirmed that the category maxes out at 50 points. Mr. Halter asked if a project would fit in one bucket or another, so a project should be specified as either a bridge project or a road project. He then stated it is rare to have both a bridge and road project together, and if there was a situation where there was a road and a multi-use trail, the road project is the driving factor for doing the project. Mr. Halter added he doesn't like adding the components together, for example two goods would overrule a poor condition. Mr. Byrd likes the idea of the agency selecting if the project is either a bridge, pavement or trail project, and Mr. Halter agreed. Mr. Diedrichsen offered an example that if bridge is rated in fair condition, but a road is rated in poor condition, then you get the 50 points for the poor road condition, so if there a bridge and a road, the worst condition will get the points. Ms. Johnson commented that the rubric will clarify between bridge, road or trail project.

Ms. Johnson indicated the safety category is worth a maximum of 30 points, based on critical crash rate for 20 points and five points per safety measure applied. Mr. Halter suggested making safety worth 50 points. Mr. Glaesman advocated not having points for individual considerations, but instead let the engineers decide which will average out any bias. Ms. Johnson explained the categories are required based on 7W's scoring criteria, but not the subcategory scores which are optional. Ms. Johnson indicated the goal of the subcategories was to limit subjectivity. Mr. Halter supported Mr. Glaesman's opinion to get rid of subcategory scores. Mr. Glaesman explained the applicant of the project would have the responsibility to define the projects more thoroughly and have a better justification. Mr. Byrd had a question about a map, and how recent the data was for the critical crash rate index. Mr. McKenzie indicated the data was from 2011-2015 crash data from MnDOT. Ms. Johnson made a general comment about two members be in favor of getting rid of the subcategories and ask for feedback. Mr. Byrd agreed with Mr. Halter, and thinks points should be reallocated from some categories. Mr. Lenz proposed a scenario about rumble and mumble strips not being used in urban sections of roadway, and also median barrier systems, and how much are going to be used in projects. Mr. Halter agreed with Mr. Lenz and offered the suggestion of expanding the list to traffic calming, pedestrian crossings and more examples, and it will be a different safety approach for each project. Mr. Lenz pointed out it will be on the writer of the applicant to clearly state and define how a safety measure will be used to get the full 30 points. Mr. Sabart asked to pull more criteria from the HSIP for examples. Ms. Johnson explained the list was not all encompassing but meant to be a guideline and to get the applicant thinking.

Ms. Johnson explained the economic vitality category included the freight corridor identified by SRF in 2018. System connectivity, access and mobility, and multimodal categories already have certain elements of economic vitality within them. Mr. Lenz briefed the TAC members that MnDOT is doing a manufacturers survey, and going to 100 to 150 different businesses in District 3. MnDOT is asking what their needs are, and the data being collected from October to December. Anyone who would like the data should contact MnDOT. Ms. Johnson asked Mr. Lenz if he knew when the survey would be completed. Mr. Lenz replied with hopefully December, but it may take more time, and the outcome could help with identifying funding needs such as Transportation Economic Development (TED) grants. Mr. Glaesman shared what the 33rd Street South economic development criteria were; job retention, projected job growth, and property tax generation. Mr. Lenz suggested that economic vitality be worth more than five points. Mr. Glaesman agreed and suggested taking points from public engagement and plan identification and project readiness categories and adding them to economic vitality.

Ms. Johnson explained the energy and environmental conservation category and is identified as a goal in the APO's long range plan. The reason for including it as a category is to facilitate conservations between engineers/planners and environmental planners to mitigate any potential impacts. Mr. Glaesman would like to add the steps for local environmental review process for

environmental sensitive areas (ESA's). Ms. Johnson pointed out the public engagement and plan identification category comes from the TA, and the APO's goal is to make sure the public and council/board members from the different agencies have seen the projects, and that it is identified in a plan. Project readiness will help deter projects from slipping through the cracks. Mr. Sabart had the comment that project readiness from a small community standpoint, that small communities are hesitant to make any investments up front, and it is a barrier. Mr. Glaesman suggested combining public engagement and project readiness category, because without public input the project isn't going to be ready. The combined category should be worth 15 points and the remaining points can be allocated to different categories. Mr. Halter added he had the same idea about access and mobility and system connectivity, are very similar, and asked if they have to be two categories. Ms. Johnson referred to Mr. Lenz, since she thinks it is required. Mr. Halter suggested if it is required to lower the points in each category, since they are similar.

Ms. Johnson asked the members how the points should be weighed for each category. Mr. Halter suggested access and mobility and system connectivity should be 50 points all together, system condition is appropriate at 50 points, and safety should be bumped up to 50 points. Mr. Sabart mentioned access and mobility and system connectivity categories would impact new roadways more than expansion and reconstruction. Mr. Lenz suggested changing the verbiage of the access and mobility category to read, explain how the project effects the accessibility and mobility options for people and freight. Ms. Johnson pointed out expansion projects can impact the volume to capacity ratio of nearby or parallel routes which would offset expansion or reconstruction project. Mr. Halter added a new roadway or expansion project will score extremely poorly in the system condition category, and a new roadway should be considered or have a different scoring. Mr. Sabart asked if there are any goals or targets regarding expansion verses system preservation projects. Ms. Johnson stated in the 2040 long range plan there are goals of 65 percent maintenance and 35 percent expansion, but not in the current plan.

Ms. Johnson brought up the subject of equity as a requirement, and in past solicitation years, equity was regarded as who received STBGP funding previously. This time the APO broke out the funding each agency received over the last seven solicitations, and divided the funding by the number of eligible lane miles. It is not a technical score but a reference and assigned score based on previous funding and tacked on at the end, and used as a tie breaker. Mr. Byrd asked if the TAC needed to score it at the technical level, because equity is political and not technical. Ms. Johnson stated the policy board is the ultimate decider on which projects are funded. Mr. Glaesman asked who requires equity and at which point in the process. Ms. Johnson replied, it is a factor that needs to be included for STBGP funds. Mr. Glaesman then asked if it needs to be at the technical level or the policy level. Mr. Glaesman then stated the TAC should pass on equity scoring and Mr. Halter agreed, because it is not technical. Ms. Johnson asked the TAC if there was an equity factor they would like the policy board to consider. Mr. Sabart added it's not just when the last time a project was done, but how much and what type of project. Mr. Halter added, having a larger window of funding such as 10 years would be helpful since some jurisdictions don't receive funding very often. Mr. Sabart commented bridges are skewing the lane miles. Mr. McKenzie explained there aren't many lane miles of bridges in the MPA. Mr. Glaesman thinks this is a valuable exercise, and should be provided as an attachment to a packet. Ms. Johnson asked if there were any more questions and hearing none, agenda item number 3 ended.

MTP PROJECT REVIEW AND DISCUSSION:

Ms. Johnson explained at the last policy board meeting concerns were raised that engineers and the policy makers were not communicating priorities effectively or being involved in decision making and why the project were selected. There has been a request to alter Stearns County and Benton County projects. By September 6th to have any project changes told to APO, to go

back out to public comment for one month. September 19th Policy Board meeting, all changes will be included, so another 30-day public comment period can begin. It is imperative that the plan be approved by October 31st, or Federal funding can't be requested or received by any jurisdiction. Ms. Johnson added to apply for STBGP funding a resolution must be passed from the governing body to avoid this confusion. Stearns County has opted to remove the CSAH 136 interchange project, and add three additional projects. The first project is a four-lane undivided arterial on CSAH 1, from Heritage Drive to CSAH 78. The second project is a four-lane divided arterial on CR 134 from the Sauk River bridge to Pinecone Road. The third project is a six-lane divided arterial from Anderson Avenue to Minnesota Highway 15 on CSAH 4. Mr. Byrd clarified Benton County added a new two-lane arterial on County Road 29. Mr. McKenzie added they deleted BEN-3 project. Mr. Sabart informed the group that Saint Joseph has a special council meeting on September 5th to discuss projects and added a project(s) to the list. Mr. Glaesman asked if the CSAH 136 interchange was a Stearns County Project and Mr. McKenzie replied yes. Mr. Glaesman affirmed the interchange is still a priority for Saint Cloud in the future. Mr. Glaesman also asked if a resolution approving a capital improvement program meet the requirement, or does it need to be a separate resolution. Ms. Johnson stated it shouldn't be a problem, but she will confirm with the APO's executive director. Ms. Johnson informed the TAC that the next TAC meeting will be moved to September 19th at 10:00 a.m., and it is requested that if you can make it to the Policy Board Meeting, on September 19th at 5:00 p.m., to answer questions, at Waite Park City Hall.

OTHER BUSINESS/OPEN FLOOR:

There were no announcements or other business

ADJOURNMENT:

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