

St. Cloud Area Planning Organization
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
February 2, 2017

A regular meeting of the St. Cloud Area Planning Organization's (APO) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on Thursday, February 2, 2017 at 10:00AM at Stearns County Public Works. Mr. Joseph Mueller, Senior Transportation Planner presided with the following members present:

Chris Byrd	Benton County
Jon Halter	SEH/Sartell
Bobbi Retzlaff	MnDOT
Jodi Teich	Stearns County
Andrew Witter	Sherburne County
Kirk Abraham	Sauk Rapids
Scott Zlotnick	St. Cloud
Matt Glaesman	St. Cloud
Steve Foss	St. Cloud
Steve Voss	MnDOT, Dist #3
Brian Gibson	St. Cloud APO
Joseph Mueller	St. Cloud APO
Dorothy Sweet	St. Cloud APO

Jon Halter, SEH/Sartell, was introduced and said that he will now be representing Sartell City at the TAC meetings.

CONSIDERATION MINUTES OF JANUARY 4, 2017:

Mr. Byrd motioned and Ms. Teich seconded to approve the January 4, 2017 TAC meeting minutes. Motion carried.

ATP FEDERAL FUNDING METHODOLOGY:

Mr. Voss announced that the federal funds for 2021 have increased due to changes in the FAST Act. Kelvin Howieson is working on the adjustments and creating various options. Mr. Voss reviewed the past funding methodology used for distributing funds to the area. The increase for 2021 was increased from \$8.2 million to \$9.6 million for the whole Dist. #3 area, and from \$1.68 million to \$1.97 million for the APO area. Mr. Voss reviewed how the old target number of 20.53%, which has been used since 2003, came about. When MAP-21 was in effect and money distributed solely on population, District #3 did very well, but five areas did not fare as well. When that formula was adjusted to use population for 50% and county/municipal for 50%, District #3 lost some funding, but overall we are still better. TAP money is now separate and is distributed by population and highway safety money, which is based on fatal/serious crashes, has worked in our favor. The increased funding allows our current target to increase from 53.53% to 57.08%, but the same problems exist with dividing up the funding. The ATP has tabled the final decision on splitting the funds to allow for the collection of 7W Metro split information. The ATP will be the final decision maker on the funding. Comments and feedback to Mr. Mueller, APO, were encouraged. Mr. Gibson noted that the regional priorities list of 2015 included District 3 funding inequity, but acknowledged that with the increase in funding and separation of

TAP funds, the APO may do better than before the formula and funding methodology changed.

CONSIDERATION OF AMENDMENT TO THE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP).

Mr. Mueller announced that four amendments are requested to the TIP document that was approved on July 14, 2016. The requested amendments are:

1. Metro Bus is requesting the movement of several line items from FY 2016 to FY 2017. This change is necessary because of a delay that prevented the funds from being granted in FY 2016.
2. Wacosa has been awarded Section 5310 funds for the purchase of a bus in FY 2017.
3. MnDOT has an extended the length of a Fiber Optic cable laying project by 1.7 miles. Cost remains unchanged.
4. Extra funds from FAST Act.

Mr. Mueller commented that per Federal requirements, the APO has confirmed that fiscal constraint is maintained. MetroBus was already preapproved for the money, but was told to shift the projects to 2017 from 2016. Wacosa demonstrated financial capability within its application for the 5310 funds. MnDOT continues to be fiscally sound regarding its projects; and there is no cost change for their project. The funds are coming from the FTA (MetroBus, Wacosa) and from MnDOT. Ms. Teich motioned to approve and recommend approval of the TIP Amendments to the Executive Board and Mr. Byrd seconded the motion. Motion carried.

TA PROJECT RANKING:

Mr. Mueller reviewed three applications in the APO area for the TA program, formerly known as TAP. He requested the TAC rank the projects with project #1 receiving 10 bonus points and project #2 receiving 5 bonus points.

Jurisdiction	Description:	End-Points:	TA \$ Amount Applying For:	Total Project Cost:
St. Cloud	New bike/ped trail along 33 rd St S connecting New-Tech HS site to Neenah Creek Regional Park.	CR 74 to CR 136	\$475,000	\$685,000
Sauk Rapids	Install lighting along existing MRT segment.	Ped-Helix to River Ave. S. trail intersection	\$295,782.18	\$369,727.72
Sartell	Extend bike/ped trail along Pinecone Rd N to new Sartell HS.	15 th St N to 35 th St N	\$496,097.80	\$620,122.20

Representatives spoke in favor of their project. Mr. Foss and Mr. Zlotnick, of St. Cloud, felt that the St. Cloud project should be ranked #1 because it is more regional in nature, is in close proximity to parks and trails, is in close proximity to several businesses, its connection to the Beaver Island Trail and that the Bicycle Report created by the APO included the importance of and justification for their project. Mr. Halter described the Sartell project and that construction of the new high school is planned for 2018. Mr. Abrahams, representative from Sauk Rapids, voiced his support for additional lighting along the existing MRT segment in Sauk Rapids, especially with the new apartment complex being built and because the promenade deck on the Ped-Helix is being used more often for several wedding pictures. Mr. Halter raised the possibility of sending out information to the TAC members on the three projects. Mr. Mueller responded that upon his review, St. Cloud scored a higher technical score because they included more detailed engineering plans whereas Sartell had more general information. It was noted that we would not

receive equity points because we have done well in receiving funding for projects in the past. Mr. Gibson noted that it may be possible that none of our projects get funded. It was generally agreed that the two school projects held greater importance than the lighting projects, since there is currently lighting on the Mississippi River Trail. Mr. Glaesman motioned to rank St. Cloud #1, Sartell #2, and Sauk Rapids #3. Mr. Foss seconded the motion. Motion carried with no opposition voiced. Mr. Voss abstained from voting.

Mr. Voss requested TAC representation at the next ATP meeting on March 1 at 9:00 a.m. in the St. Cloud MnDOT office. Mr. Chris Byrd volunteered.

PROJECTS OF REGIONAL IMPORTANCE FOR 2017:

Mr. Gibson reviewed the feedback received at last month's TAC meeting regarding regional priorities. The priorities list will be used by the APO staff and board members for their Washington DC and St. Paul trips requesting transportation funds for our area. Due to the low attendance at the January TAC meeting, the Executive Board members requested that the TAC again review the priorities with greater participation from the engineers on the TAC committee. The ideas and projects discussed at the January Executive Board included:

- Expanding I-94 to six lanes from Saint Michael to Saint Cloud appears to be the top priority.
- Addressing the funding equity issue for Central Minnesota and restoring funds "lost" when the distribution formula was rewritten is also important.
- Connecting the Northstar Rail corridor to Saint Cloud has support.
- Positioning the Saint Cloud airport as a regional air hub should stay on the list because we do not know from which funding source we may get funding, so the Board felt it was worthwhile to have an "air" project in case FAA funds are available.
- They asked if there is a current or expected need for another I-94 Interchange.
- There was a suggestion for expanding rail freight (i.e., BNSF) service to the region.
- They asked APO staff to approach Metro Bus for any suggestions.
 - Executive Director Gibson met with Metro Bus Director Daniel, but Metro Bus does not have any regional needs this year.
- They agreed that continuing the Lake Wobegon Trail through the metro area is important, but felt that it could be eventually funded through available funding sources.
- They discussed electronic parking meters, but felt that it was not really a regional need since Saint Cloud is the only city with parking meters.
- They discussed another Mississippi River bridge crossing, but felt that need was too far in the future to be of use this year.

Several of the ideas/projects discussed by the Executive Board members were reviewed. While the TAC felt an airport project should not be included, the Executive Board members felt that because they don't know where funding lies that having an air project might be good. The Board also floated the question that if an additional interchange for I-94 will be needed, that it should be on list.

Stacy Morse, representative from Tom Emmer's office, stressed the importance of having one or two top priorities available. Mr. Gibson suggested changing the approach from last booklet and instead identify a vision with the next steps included such as a planning document. The TAC

members discussed I-94, the next planning phases, funding programmed, concerns about preservation projects, bridges in Albertville due for rehab, traffic control and road surface from Clearwater to Monticello, upgrading interchanges and studies needed to do so, and whether the APO would be better served by listing the top projects or listing projects in several areas. It was acknowledged that funding could come in from different areas. Ms. Teich stated that Mr. Emmer has stated that he would be willing to bring back earmarks under a different name. Additional discussion items included upgrading/expanding 75 interchange/Clearwater Road, giving MnDOT money to expand interchanges, Heatherwood Road-I-94 to McStop, current studies are too old to use, and ribbon cutting ceremonies to increase visibility of projects. It was agreed that each jurisdiction would send the APO a list of what the APO/region needs and what their jurisdiction needs no later than Thursday morning, February 16. The feedback should also include how the individual project ties into regional and costs associated with the local project.

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE AND TASKS:

Mr. Gibson reviewed the Draft project schedule for the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). An Open House is scheduled for March 16 at the St. Cloud Library from 10 a.m. – 7 p.m. Advertising in city newsletters with a link to an on-line survey will be done. The current 2040 LRTP is on the APO website.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Mr. Mueller announced that the Regional Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan is being updated. A series of public input meetings will be included.

The APO is currently evaluating proposals for assistance to identify important non-NHS freight corridors, distribute 2045 population projects to the TAZ level, and develop annual performance measure report. Mr. Glaesman asked that there be more coordination between jurisdictions this time since there was not the last time.

Mr. Gibson announced that the Minnesota Transportation Conference will be held on March 1 and 2 at the St. Paul RiverCentre.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned 11:42 a.m.