

SAINT CLOUD AREA PLANNING ORGANIZATION POLICY BOARD
Thursday, June 9, 2022 – 4:30 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization Policy Board was held on Thursday, June 9 at 4:30 p.m. APO Chair Joe Perske presided with the following members:

Raeanne Danielowski	Sherburne County
Dottie Seamans	City of Sauk Rapids
Ryan Daniel	Metro Bus
Mike Conway	City of Saint Cloud
Jared Gapinski	Benton County
Paul Brandmire	City of Saint Cloud
Tim Elness	City of Sartell

Also in attendance were:

Brian Gibson	Saint Cloud APO
Vicki Johnson	Saint Cloud APO
James Stapfer	Saint Cloud APO
Alex McKenzie	Saint Cloud APO
Amber Blattner	Saint Cloud APO
Dave Green	Metro Bus
Sunny Husse	Metro Bus

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Ms. Seamans motioned to approve the agenda, and Mr. Westerlund seconded the motion. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: No members of the public were in attendance. Mr. Gapinski noted that he and commissioner Heinen will be meeting June 17 to discuss the Benton County’s portion of the beltline. Mr. Perske would be interested in attending that meeting. Mr. Perske noted they don’t have a transportation planner and he plans to contact local legislatures regarding that issue. The transportation funding bill did not pass. Ms. Danielowski suggested something be sent from the APO focusing on the transportation issue to get more funding. Without the 20% match 80% of federal funding is left on the table. Mr. Gibson said staff could draft a letter and Mr. Perske could sign it. Regarding public comment, Ms. Johnson read an email she received stating concerns about heavy traffic on 322nd street and that APO should take a closer look at the roadway. Ms. Johnson did reply to the email letting them know that the project is part of the long-range transportation plan. Mr. Westerlund said LeSauk township owns the North part of 322nd street, the South part is owned by St. Cloud, and it is a heavily traveled roadway that needs work. The road striping will be repainted this summer, but the road needs a lot more improvements. Mr. Gibson said he has a meeting next week with the judge Kundrant to discuss his concerns regarding 322nd street.

CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

- a. Approve Minutes of April 14, 2022 Policy Board Meeting (Attachment A)
- b. Approve Bills Lists for May and June (Attachments B1 & B2)
- c. Approve FY 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program Modifications (Attachments C)
- d. Receive Staff Report of May 26th Meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (Attachment D)

Mr. Gapinski motioned to approve the consent agenda items replacing April minutes with May minutes, and Mr. Brandmire seconded the motion. Motion carried. Mr. Brandmire noted a change to the April minutes changing 'hwy 23 collision' to 'hwy 23 coalition'

MetroBus Presentation

Mr. Daniel provided a summary of Metro Bus reviewing their mission and history. Metro Bus has roughly 150 employees and 80 buses, 75% powered by clean burning compressed natural gas. Metro Bus participates in community engagement to encourage people to ride the bus. Mr. Green summarized the Metro Bus services including 16 year-round routes, seven days a week, 359 days a year. Dial-A-Ride service is available within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of all fixed Routes. Connex service is a trial on demand service available only in Sartell. Ms. Danielowski asked if the \$2.50 is for one way and Mr. Green confirmed that it is. Mr. Gibson asked if it is still a pilot project. Mr. Green said Metro Bus still considers it a pilot project. Ms. Danielowski asked how this is different than TriCAP. Mr. Green said TriCAP covers areas outside of the city in which Metro Bus does not operate. Mr. Green summarized the Northstar link service. Ms. Danielowski asked if gas prices affect bringing back full service for Northstar. Mr. Green said MetroBus is feeling the staff shortages. Mr. Gibson asked if the train goes away would MetroBus consider driving Northstar link buses to the Twin Cities. Mr. Green said they have discussed the possibility. Mr. Green noted three large buses and eight small buses are on order. Mr. Brandmire asked what obstacles there are getting buses. Mr. Green said buses are having trouble getting chips. Sunny summarized staffing statistics. Fixed route operator vacancies have been in double digits since the pandemic began. Regular service will not resume soon. Sunny summarized Metro Bus recruitment initiatives. Mr. Brandmire asked if the age was 18 plus. Sunny said drivers are required to have three years driving experience, so age is typically 19 years old.

Consider Public Release of FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Review and Comment

Ms. Johnson summarized the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP spans four fiscal years, is updated on an annual basis, and lists all the projects receiving funding. APO staff are now in the final stages of preparing the FY 2023-2026 for final approval and incorporation into the Minnesota State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Final approval of the document is anticipated in September 2022. Mr. Brandmire asked if County Road 74 is in the TIP. Ms. Johnson said it is not but it is in the long-range transportation plan. Ms. Johnson said if CSAH 74 is a project priority it can be submitted for project funding in the Fall. If the City of Saint Cloud wanted to start a project, they could begin and get

reimbursed later. Solicitation opens in September. Ms. Johnson is meeting tomorrow to discuss grant projects with the City of St. Cloud.

Mr. Brandmire motioned to approve releasing the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program for public comment. Mr. Conway seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Consider Public Release of Draft Active Transportation Plan for Review and Comment

Mr. McKenzie summarized the Regional Active Transportation Plan (ATP). It aims to provide a long-range planning framework to support non-motorized forms of transportation in the Saint Cloud Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). Mr. Gibson said because APO looks at the entire region the intent for the plan is to identify priority areas for investment at a high level, and not to identify every possible project. Mr. Brandmire asked if the APO has done this plan before. Mr. McKenzie said this is the first time the APO has looked at this. Mr. Brandmire noted they have had a lot of negative feedback about sidewalks being put in St. Cloud because people don't want to maintain them. Mr. McKenzie said the public comment will run from June 15, 2022 to July 15, 2022.

Mr. Gapinski motioned to approve releasing the Active Transportation Plan for public comment and Mr. Brandmire seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Consider Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Prioritization Criteria

Ms. Johnson summarized the HSIP program prioritization process. MnDOT's Office of Traffic Engineering (OTE) altered the HSIP solicitation process to involve MPOs in project solicitation. This involvement asked MPOs to rank/prioritize projects. Ms. Johnson summarized the OTE scoring process. TAC recommended to separate the proactive/data driven projects from the reactive projects. Projects would have equal ranking and there would be a discussion-based ranking on equal projects. Mr. Brandmire asked if regarding the funding you get a certain amount of funding to distribute or if it is on a per project basis. Ms. Johnson said projects are done on a district level and funding is on a per project basis. It is unclear on how much weight the APOs prioritization process will hold during the scoring process conducted by Office of Traffic Engineering. Ms. Johnson request approval of the HSIP Prioritization process.

Mr. Brandmire motioned to approve the HSIP prioritization methodology. Mr Gapinski seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Presentation on FY 2020 Transportation Performance Monitor Report

Mr. Stapfer summarized the 2020 Transportation Performance Monitoring Report (TPMR). The report serves as an annual snapshot of the region to help the APO and its planning partners better understand current and anticipated performance of the transportation system and how well it is moving towards achieving the goals stated in the MTP. Mr. Gibson noted that there was less driving in 2020 but more crashes/deaths.

OTHER BUSINESS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Gibson said there are no items on the agenda for July and there will probably not be a meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:18 p.m.