

**SAINT CLOUD AREA PLANNING ORGANIZATION POLICY BOARD**  
**Thursday, October 10, 2024 – 4:30 PM**

A regular meeting of the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization Policy Board was held on Thursday, October 10, 2024, at 4:30 p.m. APO Chair Raeanne Danielowski presided with the following members:

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

Also in attendance were:

Brian Gibson	Saint Cloud APO
Vicki Johnson	Saint Cloud APO
Alex McKenzie	Saint Cloud APO
James Stapfer	Saint Cloud APO
Trina Ness	Saint Cloud APO

Absent:

Rick Schultz	City of Saint Joseph
Tim Elness	City of Sartell

- 1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 2. INTRODUCTIONS**
- 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

*Mr. Goerger motioned to approve the agenda. Mr. Theisen seconded the motion. Motion carried.*

- 4. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:** There were no members of the public present.
- 5. CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:**
  - Approve Minutes of September 12, 2024, Policy Board Meeting
  - Approve Updated Bill's List for September
  - Receive Staff Reports on Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

*Ms. Seamans motioned to approve the agenda. Mr. Goerger seconded the motion. Motion carried.*

## **6. CONSIDER FINAL 2050 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN (MTP)**

Ms. Johnson gave a brief overview of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), which is the region's long-range, multimodal, surface transportation plan. The MTP establishes a vision for transportation in the region, along with establishing goals, objectives, and performance measures and must be updated every five years. The MTP also documents the significant transportation projects which are eligible for future federal funding assistance by virtue of being included in the MTP.

Ms. Johnson explained the public engagement process and results, as well as the steps that have gone into developing the MTP. She also provided links and short definitions for each of the ten chapters and appendices of the completed MTP.

*Mr. Gapinski motioned to approve the Final 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) as recommended by the TAC. Mr. Goerger seconded the motion. Motion carried.*

## **7. CONSIDER TRANSPORTATION PERFORMANCE TARGETS**

Mr. Stapfer presented the background regarding the federally Performance Measures. The Performance Measures are included in our Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and our Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). MnDOT calculates and establishes targets for PM1, PM2, and PM3 annually. The targets must be maintained or show improvement. If the targets are not met by MnDOT they must transfer funds to address the areas that are failing. The St. Cloud APO is not penalized if our targets are not met. The St. Cloud APO must adopt performance measure targets in 2025. Performance Measure 1 must be adopted by February 28, 2025. Performance Measures 2 and 3 must be adopted by March 20, 2025.

Performance Measure 1 is Transportation Safety. It applies to all public roads, it's part of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP).

Performance Measure 2 is Infrastructure (Pavement Condition, Bridge Condition). It is part of the National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) and applies to the National Highway System (NHS).

Performance Measure 3 is System Performance. It tracks travel time reliability and truck travel time reliability.

Mr. Stapfer reviewed the performance measures from 2023 for each category along with the proposed targets for MnDOT and the APO for 2025. Overall, the targets established by MnDOT have been determined to be of limited value to our APO, especially when compared with the existing conditions and priorities of the APO. Therefore, by adopting targets that are different from the state's the APO can focus on localized issues within its region and target funding that will work toward the goals of the APO as established within the MTP.

The Policy Board discussed several possibilities for reducing intersection crashes.

MnDOT and the APO have not met their safety or pavement and bridge targets. MnDOT will have to redirect funds toward safety and do additional reporting on road and bridge issues. The APO has no repercussions for not meeting targets.

*Mr. Gapinski motioned to approve the Transportation Performance Targets as recommended by the TAC. Mr. Goerger seconded the motion. Motion carried.*

## **8. CONSIDER CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAM (CRP) REGIONAL PRIORITIES**

Mr. McKenzie reviewed the history and purpose of the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP). To utilize CRP funding, MnDOT was required to develop a Carbon Reduction Strategy (CRS) which outlines priorities to advance transportation investments in carbon emissions reductions. He stated that there are three categories that projects eligible for CRP funding are broken into: Electrification, Travel Options, and Low Carbon Infrastructure and System Management. The projects need to align with the policy and investment direction outlined in the (CRS).

The APO receives directly allocated federal CRP funding. This funding can only be spent within the urbanized area of the MPO. Areas that fall within the APO's planning area, but outside of the urbanized area, are eligible to apply for CRP funding through the Central Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership (ATP-3).

Mr. McKenzie proceeded to give a breakdown of each project category and possibilities that fall into those categories. He explained the funding breakdown (\$270,000/year) for the next three-year solicitations. He then went on to explain that the APO has used MnDOT's scoring criteria for the past two CRP solicitations but has the flexibility to adjust the scoring rubric to better reflect the APO's priorities. The guidelines state the maximum split is 90%/10% (cost-benefit/co-benefit), and the minimum is 50%/50%. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) recommended the following scoring:

### **Scoring Criteria for CRP Projects**

Projects are evaluated based on two main criteria:

- 1. Cost-Effectiveness:**

The cost-effectiveness tool calculates the estimated cumulative carbon emission benefits (in metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e) and cost-effectiveness (in dollars per metric ton of CO<sub>2</sub>e reduced) per project.

- 2. Co-Benefits:**

Projects are also scored based on four co-benefit categories: equity, safety, access, and health.

The TAC recommended using a 50% cost-effectiveness / 50% co-benefit split in the scoring criteria. Additionally, the TAC suggested aligning the co-benefit narratives with the goals of the

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The goal is to ensure that the narratives apply equally to all three project types: electrification, travel options, and low-carbon infrastructure and system management.

Mr. Perske asked if APO Staff could research if there are any areas within our planning area that are missing EV Charging stations, and if so, we could encourage those jurisdictions to apply for this funding.

***Mr. Goerger motioned to approve the Carbon Reduction Program Regional Priorities revisions as recommended by the TAC. Ms. Seamans seconded the motion. Motion carried.***

## **9. Consider Cost Sharing Agreement for Future Beltline Projects**

Mr. Gibson presented the TAC's recommendations regarding the future beltline roadway project cost-sharing agreement. He reminded the Policy Board that they had asked APO staff to solicit a recommendation from the TAC. The key questions were:

1. Which part of the project development process would be cost-shared regionally, and
2. How would the cost sharing be distributed among the APO members?

Mr. Gibson proceeded to explain the discussion and considerations held by the TAC at their August 28, 2024, meeting. They approved the following recommendations:

1. The cost of the planning phase of any beltline project should be cost-shared among the jurisdictions according to the normal APO cost distribution formula, as usual.
2. When Federal or State funds are being used for a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the local-match costs should be shared among the jurisdictions, with the implementing jurisdiction paying 50% of the local match, and the other 50% being distributed among the jurisdictions according to the normal APO cost distribution formula.
3. Tier 2 EISs and all other aspects of project development should be the sole responsibility of the implementing jurisdiction.

Mr. Gibson gave definitions for the TIER 1 and TIER 2 Environmental Impact Statements (EIS).

After much discussion the Policy Board agrees with the TAC's recommendations, however, they tabled the topic until November after they've presented it to their jurisdiction's Councils and Boards. APO Staff will be available to attend meetings to assist in explaining this effort.

## **10. OTHER BUSINESS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Ms. Johnson stated that solicitations are out for several projects. STBGP, Highway Safety Improvement Program, Carbon Reduction Program, Transportation Alternatives, PROTECT funds, state funded grants, and Safe Routes to School, your TAC members should have all the information. Everything is posted on the APO website. If you have projects, please let Ms. Johnson know. If you have ideas for projects, please let your TAC members know so we can start planning, budget, and get them approved.

- Mr. Westerlund stated he bicycled the Beaver Island Trail, and inquired as to when it will connect to Clearwater? Mr. Perske stated that they have the trail completed on the Stearns County side. We're missing the portion by Heatherwood. When Heatherwood is completed, the trail will be completed. Mr. Westerlund stated it's a beautiful trail.
- Mr. Perske gave accolades to Ms. Johnson regarding the ATP-3 funding formula conversation.
- Mr. Perske stated on Friday, October 11, 2024, there will be a ribbon cutting in New London ceremony officially opening Highway 23 as a 4-lane roadway from Willmar to Foley.
- Mr. Gapinski stated that Benton County applied for the RAISE Grant regarding the study done on Mayhew Lake Road from CR 29-Hwy 23 again this year. While they didn't receive the grant this year, they learned that they made it beyond the first phase and are hopeful that next year they will receive the grant. Once received Mayhew Lake Road will go to 4-lanes past the school.
- Ms. Johnson was reelected as Vice President and Ms. Danielowski was reelected as President of the ATP-3.

**11. ADJOURNMENT:**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.