

Social Media Policy

*Prepared by the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization
Oct. 9, 2025*

A Component of the APO's Stakeholder Engagement Plan



Disclaimer

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Public Notice of Rights Under Title VI

The Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization (APO) hereby gives public notice that it is the policy of the APO to fully comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. Title VI assures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the APO receives Federal financial assistance. Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice by the APO has a right to file a formal complaint with the APO, MnDOT or the U.S. DOT. Any such complaint must be in writing and filed with the APO's Title VI Compliance Manager within one hundred eighty (180) days following the date of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. For more information, or to obtain a Title VI Discrimination Complaint Form, please see the Saint Cloud APO website (www.stcloudapo.org) or you can view a copy at our offices at 1040 County Road 4, Saint Cloud, MN 56303.

A complaint may also be submitted to Minnesota Department of Transportation Office of Civil Rights by submitting an online complaint form (<https://www.dot.state.mn.us/civilrights/nondiscrimination-complaint-form.html>) or by calling 651-366-3071.

Ciwaanka VI Ee Xaqiijinta

Ururka Qorsheynta Deegaanka ee Cloud Cloud (APO) wuxuu halkan ku siinayaa ogeysiis dadweyne in ay tahay sharciga APO in ay si buuxda u hoggaansanto Cinwaanka VI ee Xuquuqda Madaniga ee 1964 iyo Sharciga Soo-celinta Xuquuqda Madaniga ee 1987, Iyo

qaynuunada iyo qawaaniinta la xiriira barnaamijyada iyo nashaadaadka. Cinwaanka VI wuxuu xaqiijinayaa in qofna, sabab asal, midab, ama asal qaran ah, laga reebi doonin kaqeybgalka, loo diidi doonin faa'iidooyinka, ama haddii kale lagula takoorin barnaamij kasta ama waxqabad ee APO ay ku hesho kaalmada maaliyadeed ee Federaalka . Qof kasta oo aaminsan inuu ka xanaaqay fal sharci darro ah oo takoor ay ku sameysay APO wuxuu xaq u leeyahay inuu dacwad rasmi ah u gudbiyo APO, MnDOT ama US DOT. Cabasho kasta oo kale waa inay ahaataa mid qoraal ah lagana xaraystaa maareeyaha u hoggaansamida cinwaankeeda ee 'APO' VI VI waa boqol iyo siddeetan (180) maalmood gudahood taarikhda dhacday markii la sheegay in ay dhacday midabtakoor. Macluumaad dheeri ah, ama si aad u hesho Foomka Cabashada Kala-Takoorida Cinwaan ee 'VI kalasooc Foom', fadlan ka eeg bogga internetka ee 'Cloud Cloud APO' (www.stcloudapo.org) ama waxaad ka arki kartaa nuqul xafiiskayaga 1040 County Road 4, Saint Cloud, MN 56303.

Cabashada ayaa sidoo kale waxaa loo soo gudbin karaa Waaxda Gaadiidka ee Minnesota Xafiiska Xuquuqda Madaniga ah iyadoo la soo dirayo foom cabashada ee khadka internetka (<https://www.dot.state.mn.us/civilrights/nondiscrimination-complaint-form.html>) ama iyada oo la soo wacayo 651 -366-3071.

Garantía Del Título VI

La Organización de Planificación del Área de Saint Cloud (APO en inglés) da un aviso público con la presente de que es política de la APO el cumplir plenamente con el Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964 y de la Ley de Restauración de Derechos Civiles de 1987, y los estatutos y reglamentos relacionados en todos los programas y actividades. El Título VI asegura que ninguna persona, por motivos de raza, color o nacionalidad, podrá

quedar excluida de la participación en, se le podrán negar los beneficios de, o de algún modo podrá ser objeto de discriminación en virtud de cualquier programa o actividad por la cual la APO recibe asistencia financiera Federal. Cualquier persona que cree que ha sido perjudicada por una práctica discriminatoria ilegal por la APO tiene el derecho de presentar un reclamo formal con la APO MnDOT o U.S. DOT. Cualquiera de estos reclamos debe ser por escrito y debe ser presentado ante el Gerente de Cumplimiento del Título VI de la APO dentro de los ciento ochenta (180) días naturales siguientes a la fecha en que la presunta ocurrencia discriminatoria. Para obtener más información, o para obtener un Formulario de Reclamo por Discriminación del Título VI, por favor, dirígete al Sitio web de la APO de Saint Cloud (www.stcloudapo.org) o puedes ver una copia en nuestra oficina en 1040 County Road 4, Saint Cloud, MN 56303.

También se puede presentar una queja a la Oficina de Derechos Civiles del Departamento de Transporte de Minnesota enviando un formulario de queja en línea (<https://www.dot.state.mn.us/civilrights/nondiscrimination-complaint-form.html>) o llamando al 651-366-3071.

Title II Assurance

The Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization (APO) hereby gives public notice that it is the policy of the APO to fully comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act) and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires all state and local government agencies to take appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants, and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. Any person who believes they have been

aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice by the APO has a right to file a formal complaint with the APO, MnDOT, or the U.S. DOT. Any such complaint should be in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination such as name, address, phone number of complainant, and location, date, and description of the problem. Alternative means of filing complaints, such as personal interviews or a tape recording of the complaint, will be made available as a reasonable modification for persons with disabilities upon request. Complaints should be submitted by the complainant and/or his/her/their designee as soon as possible but no later than sixty (60) calendar days after the alleged discriminatory occurrence and should be filed with the APO's Executive Director. For more information, or to obtain a Discrimination Complaint Form, please see the Saint Cloud APO website (www.stcloudapo.org) or you can view a copy at our offices at 1040 County Road 4, Saint Cloud, MN 56303.

Ciwaanka II Ee Zaqiijinta

Hay'adda Qorsheynta ee Saint Cloud Area Organisation (APO) waxay siisaa ogeysiis dadweyne inay tahay siyaasada APO inay si buuxda ugu hoggaansanto Sharciga Naafada Mareykanka ee 1990 (ADA) iyo Sharciga Baxnaaninta 1973 (Sharciga Baxnaaninta) iyo qawaaniinta iyo qawaaniinta la xiriiira Dhammaan barnaamijyada iyo nashaadaadka. Qodobka II ee Sharciga Naafada Mareykanka (ADA) wuxuu u baahan yahay dhammaan hay'adaha gobolka iyo kuwa maxalliga ah inay qaadaan tillaabooyinka ku habboon si loo hubiyo in xiriirka lala yeesho codsadaaasha, ka qeybgalayaasha, iyo xubnaha bulshada naafada ah ay u la mid yihiin sida xiriirka lala yeesho kuwa kale. Qof kasta oo aaminsan inuu ka xanaaqay fal sharci darro ah oo takooris ah oo ay sameysay APO wuxuu xaq u leeyahay inuu dacwad rasmi ah u gudbiyo APO, MnDOT, ama US DOT. Cabasho kasta oo noocan oo kale ahi waa inay ahaataa mid qoraal ah oo ay kujirto

macluumaad ku saabsan takoorida la soo sheegay sida magaca, cinwaanka, taleefan lambarka cabashada, iyo goobta, taariikhda, iyo faahfaahinta dhibaataada. Hab kale oo lagu xareeyo cabashada, sida wareysiyada shaqsiyeed ama cajalad duuban cabashada, ayaa loo heli doonaa sidii wax looga badali karo macquul ahaan dadka naafada ah markii la codsado. Ashtakooyinka waa in ay soo gudbiyaan cabashada iyo / ama wakiilkiisa / wakiilkiisa sida ugu dhakhsaha badan ee suurtogalka ah laakiin aan ka dambayn lixdan (60) maalmood taariikhi ah ka dib dhacdada la xiriirta midab kala sooca waana in lagu fayl gareeyaa Agaasimaha Fulinta APO. Macluumaad dheeri ah, ama si aad u hesho Foomka Cabashada Kala-Takoorida, fadlan eeg bogga internetka ee 'Cloud Cloud APO' (www.stcloudapo.org) ama waxaad ka arki kartaa nuqul xafiiskayaga 1040 County Road 4, Saint Cloud, MN 56303.

Garantia Del Título II

La Organización de Planificación del Área de Saint Cloud (APO en inglés) da un aviso público con la presente de que es política de la APO el cumplir plenamente con la Ley sobre los Estadounidenses con Discapacidad de 1990 (ADA en inglés) y con la Ley de Rehabilitación de 1973 (Ley de Rehabilitación) y con los estatutos y reglamentos en todos los programas y actividades. El Título II de la Ley sobre los Estadounidenses con Discapacidad de 1990 (ADA en inglés) requiere que todas las agencias de gobierno estatales y locales tomen las medidas adecuadas para asegurar que la comunicación con los aplicantes, participantes y miembros del público con discapacidades sea tan efectiva como la comunicación con otros. Cualquier persona que cree que Cualquier persona que cree que ha sido perjudicada por una práctica discriminatoria ilegal por la APO tiene el derecho de presentar un reclamo formal con la APO MnDOT o U.S. DOT. Cualquiera de estos reclamos debe

ser por escrito y debe contener información sobre la presunta discriminación tales como el nombre, la dirección, el número de teléfono del denunciante, y la ubicación, la fecha y la descripción del problema. Los medios alternativos de presentar un reclamo, tales como una entrevista personal o una grabación de audio del reclamo, estarán disponibles como una modificación razonable para las personas con discapacidades a petición. Los reclamos deben ser presentados por el denunciante y/o su persona designada tan pronto como sea posible pero no más tarde de sesenta (60) días naturales después de la presunta ocurrencia discriminatoria y deben ser presentados ante el Director Ejecutivo de la APO. Para obtener más información, o para obtener un Formulario de Reclamo por Discriminación, por favor, dirígete Sitio web de la APO de Saint Cloud (www.stcloudapo.org) o puedes ver una copia en nuestra oficina e 1040 County Road 4, Saint Cloud, MN 56303.

Resolution 2025-10

Adoption of the 2025 Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

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1040 County Road 4, Saint Cloud, MN 56303-0643

T. 320.252.7568 F. 320.252.6557

SAINT CLOUD AREA PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Adoption of the 2025 Stakeholder Engagement Plan
RESOLUTION 2025-10

WHEREAS, the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization is the body responsible for making transportation policy decisions and for directing the transportation planning and funding programming within the Saint Cloud urbanized area; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Transportation requires each Metropolitan Planning Organization such as the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization to carry out metropolitan transportation planning in their given urbanized area to prepare and maintain a 20-year transportation plan for that area; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization, a Metropolitan Planning Organization, is a sub-recipient of Federal Highway Administration funds through the Minnesota Department of Transportation; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization is committed to compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in which discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin is prohibited in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization will provide meaningful access to services for persons with limited English proficiency; and

WHEREAS, all recipients and sub-recipients of Federal Highway Administration funds including Metropolitan Planning Organizations such as the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization are required to have a Title VI program documenting compliance with Title VI regulations and in accordance with Title 49 CFR Section 21.9(b); and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization shall provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the transportation plan and all activities during the planning process; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan was opened to public and agency comment for a 45-day comment period, and comments have been transmitted to the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization Policy Board and incorporated into the document as appropriate;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization Policy Board approves the Stakeholder Engagement Plan for submission to the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution is a true and correct copy of the Resolution presented to and adopted by the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization at a duly authorized meeting thereof, held on the 9th day of October 2025, as shown by the minutes of said meeting in my possession.

ATTEST:



Jared Gapinski, Chair

JAYE ANDERSON Vice Chair
10/9/25

Date



Brian Gibson, Executive Director

October 10, 2025

Date

Summary of the SEP

In the 1950s and 60s, the U.S. was building out the Interstate Highway System. At the time, decisions about where new highways would go were often made without asking local leaders and certainly without talking to the people who lived in those affected neighborhoods. That changed in 1962, when President John F. Kennedy signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act. The law required cities and states to work together as well as involve the public when making long-term transportation decisions.

This law also created Metropolitan Planning Organizations, or MPOs, in urban areas with more than 50,000 people. In the Saint Cloud region, that MPO is the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization (APO).

The APO develops several key transportation plans for the region. These include:

- ❖ The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), which looks 20+ years into the future, and
- ❖ The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which focuses on near-term projects.

Public input plays an important role in shaping these plans. To guide this engagement, the APO has created the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP).

The SEP explains how the APO involves the community in transportation planning. It also helps the APO meet federal rules related to public involvement, Civil Rights, and language access. The SEP combines three federally required plans into one:

- ❖ The Public Participation Plan (PPP).
- ❖ The Title VI Plan.
- ❖ The Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan.

The APO believes that planning only works when everyone has a fair chance to participate, no matter

their background, age, ability, or the language they speak.

The SEP is built around three main goals:

- ❖ **Opportunities for Involvement** – Create early, accessible, and ongoing chances to participate.
- ❖ **Access to Information** – Share planning documents in clear, easy-to-understand formats.
- ❖ **Review of Materials** – Provide enough time for people to read and comment before decisions are made.

The Introduction chapter (Chapter 1) explains why the SEP exists and how it fits into the APO’s broader mission. It defines what the APO is, what we do, and outlines the federal requirements that make the SEP necessary. It introduces the three core public engagement goals that guide the document.

Chapter 2 highlights the SEP’s role as a tool for creating inclusive, accessible public involvement in transportation planning. It explains the legal background for public engagement, including Title VI and Title II protections, and the APO’s responsibility to provide equitable access to the planning process.

Chapter 3 reviews the three goals the APO has for public involvement as well as providing various strategies the APO and its staff can use to ensure public participation. Examples of these strategies include outreach through media, accessible meeting notices, and maintaining a stakeholder database.

Chapter 4 describes the different methods APO staff use to engage the public. These include open houses, surveys, online meetings, traditional media, and social media. It emphasizes making materials accessible and easy to understand. The chapter also introduces virtual engagement tools and new approaches to improve outreach.

Chapter 5 explains how the SEP is used during different APO planning efforts. It walks through how

public engagement is integrated into the development of the MTP, TIP, and other plans. Chapter 5 also provides guidance on when and how the public should be included and encouraged to participate in the planning process during plan development.

Chapter 6 explores how the APO identifies and engages communities that have historically had less access to planning processes. It includes data on groups that may face barriers to participation, including BIPOC populations, including but not limited to (Black or African American, Asian or Asian American, Hispanic or Latino, etc.) residents, people with disabilities, households with low income, older adults, youth, and those with limited English skills. The chapter explains how demographic data from the Census and American Community Survey helps the APO tailor outreach to make sure no group is left out of the conversation.

Chapter 7 describes how the APO complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It includes the policy that prohibits discrimination and explains how individuals can file a complaint if they feel they’ve been excluded or treated unfairly based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

Chapter 8 focuses on outreach to people who don’t speak English well. It includes strategies for providing interpreters, translated materials, and visual tools. The goal is to make sure language isn’t a barrier to participating in transportation planning.

The appendices provide additional tools and resources to support the strategies in the SEP. These include sample notices, policy documents, and complaint procedures. Together, they offer more detail on how the APO puts the plan into action and ensures compliance with federal requirements.

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Glossary of Terms

Accessible Formats: Formats that are alternative to standard print or online materials that are accessible to people with disabilities. This may include large print, recorded audio and other electronic formats, and Braille.

Active Transportation: Any human-powered mode of transportation including bicycling, walking, and other means of self-propelled mobility.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Civil Rights legislation passed in 1990 and effective July 1992 that sets design guidelines for accessibility to public facilities and public meetings for individuals with disabilities.

Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC): The Active Transportation Advisory Committee consists of citizen volunteers from within the APO planning area who have a special interest in bicycle and pedestrian issues. The ATAC reviews transportation studies, plans, and projects from a citizen's perspective.

Active Transportation Plan (ATP): The regional ATP aims to provide a long-range planning framework to support non-motorized forms of transportation in the Saint Cloud Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). This plan identifies needs, resources, and strategies to enhance the safe and convenient use of non-motorized modes of transportation and the facilities necessary to accommodate them.

Black, Indigenous and People-of-Color (BIPOC): A group of historically underrepresented people.

Continuing, Comprehensive, and Cooperative (3-C): A federal mandate in accordance with the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 that requires transportation projects in urbanized areas of 50,000 or more in population be based on a continuing, comprehensive urban transportation planning process undertaken cooperatively by the states and local governments.

Federal Fiscal Year: The federal fiscal year is the fiscal year running from Oct. 1 through Sept. 30. For example, federal fiscal year 2020 would run from Oct. 1, 2019, through Sept. 30, 2020.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA): A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that administers the Federal-Aid Highway Program, providing financial assistance to states to construct and improve highways, urban and rural roads, and bridges.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA): A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that provides financial and technical assistance to local public transit systems and oversees safety measures for those systems.

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA): The IIJA transportation bill replaces the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. This five-year legislation is currently the largest long-term investment in the nation's infrastructure and economy, providing \$550 billion between 2022 and 2026 in new federal investment in infrastructure, including roads, bridges, mass transit, water infrastructure, resilience, and broadband.

Jurisdictions: The member units of government which are within the APO's planning area. The member jurisdictions of the APO include the following: Benton County, Sherburne County, Stearns County, City of Saint Cloud, City of Saint Joseph, City of Sartell, City of Sauk Rapids, City of Waite Park, and LeSauk Township.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP): A person who does not speak English as their primary language and has limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English.

Low-Income Household: A household whose median income is at or below the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) poverty guidelines.

Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA): The geographic area over which a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) exercises planning authority and which must include the Census-defined Urban Area, plus other urban and urbanizing areas as agreed to by the MPO's Board.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO): An MPO is the policy board of an organization created and designated to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process. MPOs are required to represent localities in all urbanized areas with populations over 50,000 as determined by the U.S. Census. The Saint Cloud APO is the MPO for the Saint Cloud urban area.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP): The regional transportation plan with at least a 20-year planning horizon, developed cooperatively between the units of government and relevant agencies which are members of any Metropolitan Planning Organization, including the Saint Cloud APO.

Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT): The State department the APO coordinates with on transportation issues and which has oversight responsibilities for ensuring the APO complies with applicable Federal and State requirements.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA): NEPA was signed into law on Jan. 1, 1970, by President Nixon. The Act is designed to encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between humans and their environment; promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of humankind; to enrich the understanding of the ecological systems and natural resources important to the Nation; and to establish a Council on Environmental Quality.

Older Americans Act (OAA): OAA was signed into law on July 14, 1965, by President Johnson. The Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance.

Orderly Annexation Agreement: An Orderly Annexation Agreement provides a means for the advance planning and negotiation that is intended to result in a more logical development of property without burdening existing citizens with undue costs. In Minnesota, one or more townships and one or more municipalities, by joint resolution, may designate an unincorporated area as in need of orderly annexation. An OAA can provide for a means in which a municipality can annex an unincorporated property due to the likelihood the proposed property is now or is about to become urban or suburban in character and the annexing municipality is capable of providing the services required by the area within a reasonable time; the existing township form of government is not adequate to protect the public health, safety, and welfare; or on finding that annexation would be in the best interests of the subject area.

Policy Board: The Policy Board of the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization is the decision-making body of the

APO. The Board is made up of elected officials from member jurisdictions as well as a senior-level management position from Metro Bus. The Policy Board is responsible for adopting regional transportation plans, projects, and policies as well as directing APO staff.

Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization (APO): The organization designated by agreement between the Governor, member units of local government, and relevant agencies as being responsible for carrying out the terms of 23 USC Sec. 134. The APO is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Saint Cloud urban area.

Saint Cloud Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC): MTC, more commonly known as Saint Cloud Metro Bus (or simply "Metro Bus"), is the urban transit provider within the Saint Cloud Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). Founded in 1969, Metro Bus provides fixed route, paratransit (Dial-a-Ride), and commuter bus services – via the Northstar Commuter Link to access the Northstar Commuter Rail train in the City of Big Lake – for the cities of Saint Cloud, Sartell, Sauk Rapids, and Waite Park.

Stakeholder: A stakeholder is any person or group that is affected by a transportation plan, program, or project, including those not aware they are affected. Stakeholders may also be any person or group that thinks they may be affected by a transportation plan, program, or project even if they are not actually affected. Examples of stakeholders include: non-governmental organizations, disadvantaged communities, residents of affected geographic areas,

commuters and tourists, transportation professionals, and government agencies.

Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP): The public participation plan of the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization. Public participation plans are required by 23 CFR §450.316. The SEP is intended to fulfill the Saint Cloud APO's requirement for such a plan. In addition, the SEP also includes the APO's Title VI and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plans – both of which are also federally required.

Stakeholder Engagement Plan Annual Report (SEPAR): This report serves as a comprehensive evaluation of the APO's public stakeholder engagement activities in a given year. It reviews strategies, platforms, and initiatives used to inform and involve the public in transportation planning efforts, analyzes engagement metrics and outcomes, and provides actionable recommendations for improvement.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC): The Technical Advisory Committee consists of voting representatives from each APO's member jurisdictions and representation from Saint Cloud Metro Bus and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). This committee – typically composed of planners and engineers – reviews plans and programs from a technical perspective and makes recommendations to the APO's decision-makers.

Title II: A portion of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 that prohibits the discrimination of a

qualified individual with a disability, on the basis of said disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any public entity.

Title VI: A portion of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP): A compilation of significant surface transportation improvements receiving federal funding and scheduled for implementation in the APO's planning area during the next four years.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP): A federally-required statement of work identifying the planning priorities and activities to be carried out by the staff of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). It is also the MPO's annual budget, and it identifies any special studies and consultant contracts for the fiscal year.

Vital Document: Paper or electronic, written material that contains information that is critical for accessing a component's programs, services, benefits, or activities; directly and substantially related to public safety; or required by law.

Appendix D

Saint Cloud APO Social Media Plan

The Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization (APO) is a comprehensive, intergovernmental transportation planning agency for the Saint Cloud metropolitan area. The organization is committed to coordinating long-range planning, in a fair and mutually beneficial manner, on selected issues transcending jurisdictional boundaries for the betterment of the entire Saint Cloud area. The APO provides technical assistance to members and facilitates problem solving through constant, cooperative, intergovernmental communication.

As part of its commitment to transparent and accessible public involvement and in compliance with federal requirements under 23 CFR 450.316 the APO uses social media to share information and gather input on transportation plans, projects, and programs. Social media allows the APO to provide updates in electronically accessible formats, helping to broaden public outreach and engagement.

The APO's social media platforms are used to share details about ongoing planning efforts, public meetings, surveys, events, and opportunities for input. These platforms complement existing outreach tools such as the [APO website](http://www.stcloudapo.org) (www.stcloudapo.org), printed materials, and in-person engagement. All content shared on social media is written in clear, easy-to-understand language to support wide accessibility.

Platforms currently used or that may be used in the future include Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Nextdoor.

Disclaimer

Comments shared on the Saint Cloud APO's social media sites do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the APO, its member jurisdictions, staff, or affiliated representatives. The APO reserves the right to remove or hide any comment that violates its established policies, without prior notice.

The APO does not endorse or guarantee the accuracy of any third-party content, viewpoints, products, or services linked or shared on its social media platforms. Users should not rely solely on this content for information or decision-making, and the APO is not liable for any loss or damages resulting from such reliance.

In addition to APO-generated content, social media platforms may include posts or comments from external individuals or organizations. These posts are provided for public convenience and do not represent APO approval or endorsement of the views expressed.

All communications with the APO—whether through social media, email, or traditional mail—are subject to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Minn. Stat. Chapter 13). The APO reviews and considers all public comments received. If content is removed from a social media platform due to a policy violation, it does not imply that the feedback was disregarded or not taken into account.

Internal Terms of Use

Purpose

This section outlines the internal social media policy for the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization (APO). As digital communication evolves, the APO uses social media to complement traditional outreach methods and expand its ability to reach residents across the metropolitan planning area (MPA). The organization

encourages the use of social media to support its mission, share timely and accurate information, and maintain open, respectful communication with the public.

Professional Use

All official communication through APO-managed social media platforms must reflect the organization's professional standards. This includes any use of social networking sites, Web 2.0 tools (interactive platforms that support user-generated content), or similar digital communication tools.

Employees must not use APO social media accounts for:

- ❖ Political or partisan purposes.
- ❖ Private business activity or commercial promotion.
- ❖ Personal commentary or opinions unrelated to APO work.

Inappropriate use of APO social media may result in corrective action. Only individuals specifically authorized by the Executive Director may publish content on APO social media platforms.

Oversight and Enforcement

Employees representing the APO through social media must maintain a high standard of professionalism. Content must:

- ❖ Be accurate, clear, and concise.
- ❖ Use correct grammar and spelling.
- ❖ Avoid jargon, unnecessary acronyms, or technical language that may confuse the public.

All posts are considered public and may be treated as official communications subject to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Minn. Stat. Chapter 13).

Social media accounts maintained by the APO are for official use only. They are not to be used by staff or the public for personal purposes.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The APO may use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to assist in content creation, analysis, and public engagement. Examples include generating social media post drafts, summarizing complex planning documents into plain language, creating visuals, or analyzing data metrics. All AI-generated content must be reviewed and approved by authorized APO staff before publication to ensure accuracy, professionalism, and compliance with organizational policy.

To promote transparency, any AI-generated image intended to resemble real-life photos or human-like scenes will be clearly labeled as AI-generated. This includes any visuals that may be mistaken for actual photographs, renderings of people, or lifelike environments.

Charts, graphs, infographics, and other data-driven or text-based visuals produced with AI tools do not require such labeling, as they reflect factual information and are subject to APO staff review for accuracy.

AI will not be used to make decisions on behalf of the APO or to replace human oversight in matters of public communication, planning judgment, or policy development. Submitting sensitive or private information (such as personal identifiers, images, or audio of participants or community members) to AI tools is prohibited. Use of AI must support the APO's goals of transparency, accuracy, and accessibility.

Prohibited Content

Employees and the public may not post the following on APO-managed social media sites:

- ❖ Confidential or sensitive information.

- ❖ Content that infringes on copyright.
- ❖ Profanity or discriminatory language (including racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory remarks).
- ❖ Partisan political statements.
- ❖ Commercial advertising or endorsements.
- ❖ Spam or repeated, irrelevant content.

External Terms of Use

Limited Public Forum

All APO social media platforms are designated as Limited Public Forums, meaning the public is welcome to engage in discussion within the scope of the APO's mission and responsibilities. By posting on APO-managed social media pages, users agree to follow the terms outlined in this policy.

Public Comments and Interactions

The APO encourages public comments on its social media content, especially those that provide input on transportation plans, projects, or programs. Comments should be relevant to the topic of the original post. Social media is not intended for unrelated personal opinions, general political commentary, or topics outside the APO's planning role.

Constructive feedback is welcome, and when possible, APO staff may respond to clarify information, address misunderstandings, or direct individuals to appropriate resources. However, the APO reserves the right to remove or moderate comments at its discretion to maintain a respectful and focused discussion environment.

Users are fully responsible for their own comments, including any attached media, links, or other materials.

Prohibited Content

The APO Executive Director reserves the right to remove comments or block users who engage in the following behaviors:

- ❖ Threats of violence or potentially criminal behavior.
- ❖ Hate speech or discriminatory language.
- ❖ Profanity, obscenity, or vulgar language.
- ❖ Nudity or sexually explicit content.
- ❖ Defamation or personal attacks.
- ❖ Repetitive, off-topic, or spam content.
- ❖ Commercial promotions or endorsements.
- ❖ Copyright infringement.

Posting and Response Schedule

The frequency of APO posts may vary depending on current events and planning activities. Responses to comments typically occur during business hours: Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CST/CDT, excluding holidays.

User Privacy

The APO does not collect or store personal information from social media users, except when required by law. Please note that third-party platforms may have their own privacy policies, which may differ from the APO's practices.

Policy Updates and Questions

This policy may be revised or updated at any time to reflect changes in legal requirements, agency practices, or platform functionality. Questions or concerns about the APO's use of social media should be directed to the APO Executive Director.