

**SAINT CLOUD AREA PLANNING ORGANIZATION POLICY BOARD
Thursday, October 9, 2025 – 4:30 PM**

A regular meeting of the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization Policy Board was held on Thursday, October 9, 2025, at 4:30 p.m. Vice Chair Jake Anderson presided with the following members present:

Scott Brodeen	City of Saint Cloud
Mike Conway	City of Saint Cloud
Dottie Seamans	City of Sauk Rapids
Adam Scepaniak	City of Saint Joseph
Frank Theisen	City of Waite Park
Scott Johnson	Benton County
Joe Perske	Stearns County
Raeanne Danielowski	Sherburne County
Jeff Westerlund	Le Sauk Township
Michael Kedrowski	Metro Bus [Alternate for Ryan Daniel]

Also in attendance were:

Brian Gibson	Saint Cloud APO
Vicki Johnson	Saint Cloud APO
Alex McKenzie	Saint Cloud APO
Trina Ness	Saint Cloud APO
Bill Towle	Sky Central Airport Director

Absent:

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. INTRODUCTIONS

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

4. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

No members of the public were present.

5. CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

- a. Approve Minutes of September 4, 2025, Policy Board Meeting
- b. Approve October Bills List
- c. Receive Cost-Sharing Agreement Progress Report
- d. Receive Staff Reports from August 28, 2025, and September 25, 2025, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meetings
- e. Receive 2026 Transportation Priorities Briefing Booklet

Ms. Seamans motioned to approve the consent agenda items. Mr. Scepaniak seconded the motion. Motion carried.

6. HEAR PRESENTATION ON AIRPORT NEEDS

Mr. Towle with the Sky Central Airport presented airport history, facts, current airlines it hosts, projects that are underway, and projects that they hope to accomplish in the future. The biggest changes at the airport are they have a new aviation maintenance technician school hosted by the St. Cloud Technical and Community College. Currently the class is hosted at the college, but they are hoping that next year it will be onsite at the airport. They are pursuing new runway lighting with the help of the state, and hoping for a larger onsite fueling center.

Mr. Towle would like the APO and members traveling to Washington D.C. to advocate for the need to increase the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC), currently \$4.50, which has been the set rate since 1994. An increase in the Federal Airport Improvement Program (AIP), which hasn't changed since 2000. Consider adding the airport to the Essential Air Service (EAS) program.

7. CONSIDER CHANGES TO THE CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAM (CRP) CO-BENEFITS EVALUATION CRITERIA

Ms. Johnson stated that CRP was developed under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) which expires in FY 2026. Due to the changes at the national level, it is unclear if/how specific activities will be eligible for funding at the federal level and the language that would be allowable to describe it. Therefore, MnDOT's Office of Chief Counsel reviewed the CRP solicitation forms and provided legal guidance on the application. The proposed APO response would be to adjust specific words within the application. Therefore, MnDOT recommends funding for travel options and low carbon infrastructure and system management. To be eligible for CRP formula dollars, proposed projects must align with the state's Carbon Reduction Strategy (CRS).

Ms. Johnson stated an additional ATP-3 recommendation is to remove the Letter of Intent process. This is because it was very labor intensive and redundant of the information within the application. She went on to present the Saint Cloud APO CRP Funding Targets for FY 2027-2030 stating that FY 2030 is currently not fully committed.

Mr. Scepaniak motioned to Approve the Recommended Changes to the CRP Co-Benefits Evaluation Criteria. Mr. Theisen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

8. CONSIDER STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN (SEP) UPDATE

Ms. Johnson gave an overview of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). She stated the SEP ensures the public is given ample opportunity to access, review, and comment on APO plans, studies, and other documents as they are being developed. The SEP also helps members of the public and community organizations understand how to participate effectively in the APO's planning process and satisfies federal requirements for MPOs.

Ms. Johnson went on to explain that the SEP is updated every three years to ensure the data meets APO, state, and federal guidelines, laws, executive orders, and updated demographics. She went on to review the efforts made to solicit public input for this SEP update:

- 45-day public input from Aug. 11 – Sept. 24, 2025
- Advertisements in St. Cloud Live, the APO’s website, social media, and emailed to interested stakeholders.
- An in-person open house was held on Aug. 26 at the Great River Regional Library

No public comments were received on the draft SEP.

Ms. Danielowski motioned to Approve the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) Update. Mr. Theisen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

9. CONSIDER REGIONAL EVALUATION OF COUNTS FOR ACTIVE PLANNING (RECAP) REPORT

Ms. Johnson reviewed the purpose of the RECAP. She discussed the permanent counter location and data, trends and COVID-19 impacts, pedestrian versus bicyclist stats, and portable counter locations and data. Regionally, active transportation trends follow the weather and seasons. Ms. Johnson noted the data indicates active transportation activities have fallen since 2021. That said, in 2021 we were in the midst of COVID-19, and many people were working from home, gyms were closed, and utilizing these trails was a way to get outdoors and exercise. She discussed the need for APO staff to continue monitoring active transportation trends long-term to gain a better understanding of usage patterns.

Ms. Johnson went on to explain how the data can be utilized:

- to support funding applications
- to use when designing for safer crossings, and to fill trail gaps
- to guide maintenance, school planning, park access, comprehensive plans, and transit connections

Mr. Scepianiak motioned to Accept the Regional Evaluation of Counts for Active Planning (RECAP) Report and Approve Publication. Ms. Seamans seconded the motion. Motion carried.

10. OTHER BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Mr. Perske stated that the Hwy-23 Coalition had its annual meeting on October 3, 2025, the Coalition reaffirmed its 2025 Priority Projects:
 - 4-Lane Extension SW of Willmar (Hwy 71 to Kandiyohi Co. Rd. 5)
 - Preferred Route Study: Foley to I-35
- Mr. Perske went on to discuss Wetland Replacement; he stated he’s working with National Association of Counties (NACo) and the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) attempting to change the wetland replacement from 2:1 to 1:1 regarding acreage replacement fees, which started in 1986.

- Mr. Conway stated that the definition of wetland needs to go back to what was known as “historical wetlands records,” not the man-made ditches that have cattails growing in them and now are considered wetlands.
- Mr. Perske reminded everyone that the Washington DC trip is coming up, which he is attending, NACo will also be out there at that time, and he will be meeting with them as well.
- Mr. Perske stated that Stearns County held a Townline Road Open House and are in the process of purchasing Right-of-Way, and hoping to receive Congressional Directed Spending, that might push the Townline Road project up to 2026.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Conway motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Theisen seconded the motion. Motion carried. Mr. Gapinski adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.