

**Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization Policy Board
Thursday, April 9, 2026
4:30 p.m.**

A regular meeting of the Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization Policy Board was held on Thursday, April 9, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. Chair Jared Gapinski presided with the following members present:

Raeanne Danielowski	Sherburne County
Joe Perske	Stearns County
Jake Anderson	City of Saint Cloud
Mike Conway	City of Saint Cloud
Scott Brodeen	City of Saint Cloud
Frank Theisen	City of Waite Park
Adam Scepaniak	City of Saint Joseph
Jeff Westerlund	Le Sauk Township
Michael Kedrowski	Metro Bus (alternate)

Also, in attendance were:

Brian Gibson	Saint Cloud APO
Vicki Johnson	Saint Cloud APO
Alex McKenzie	Saint Cloud APO
James Stapfer	Saint Cloud APO
Randy Espring	Resident
Megan Knight	Larkin Hoffman Public Affairs

Policy Board members who were absent:

Tim Elness	City of Sartell
Dottie Seamans	City of Sauk Rapids

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. INTRODUCTIONS

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Theisen motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Scepaniak seconded the motion. Motion carried.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No one spoke during the public comment period.

5. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

The following items were listed as part of the Consent Agenda:

- a. Approve minutes of Feb. 12, 2026, Policy Board meeting.
- b. Approve February and March bills lists
- c. Approve FY 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments.
- d. Approve FY 2026-2030 Regional Infrastructure Investment Plan (RIIP).
- e. Receive 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Performance Report.
- f. Receive report on Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting.

Mr. Anderson motioned to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Theisen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

6. CONSIDER ONE YEAR PILOT OF THE CITIZENS' TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CTAC)

APO Associate Transportation Planner Alex McKenzie provided an overview of the proposed Citizens' Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC). This included a brief history of the existing Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) subcommittee – the Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC). Mr. McKenzie stated the role the ATAC has played when it comes to advising the TAC on bicycle and pedestrian issues, especially during the development of the Regional Active Transportation Plan. However, outside of that work, the committee has remained rather dormant. The proposed CTAC will not only encompass bicycle and pedestrian issues, but will focus on a broader range of transportation issues facing the region.

Mr. McKenzie outlined the proposed role the CTAC would play in the APO's organizational structure – serving as an advisory body, an outlet to strengthen public engagement and outreach, a means to elevate lived experience and community perspectives, and a forum to discuss regional transportation issues. Mr. McKenzie discussed the proposed membership structure (12 members with appointments confirmed by the Policy Board) and meeting structure (quarterly meetings with APO staff facilitated discussion).

Mr. McKenzie stated that if the TAC and Policy Board agree to continue the CTAC, the ATAC would be formally dissolved. Mr. McKenzie asked Policy Board members to approve a one-year pilot of the CTAC to begin in May 2026.

Mr. Anderson stated he liked the concept of the CTAC and would support a one-year pilot. Mr. Conway and Mr. Gapinski cautioned Mr. McKenzie about membership – both expressing concerns about who would and who would not be able to serve on the CTAC. Mr. Gibson spoke up regarding a similar effort he had when working at the Oahu MPO in Honolulu where participants of a CTAC became like “ambassadors” on regional transportation issues.

Mr. Anderson motioned to approve a one-year pilot Citizens' Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) to replace the existing Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC). Mr. Conway seconded the motion. Motion carried.

7. CONSIDER PUBLICATION OF THE 2024 TRANSPORTATION PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT (TPMR)

APO Transportation Planning Technician James Stapfer discussed the purpose of the TPMR document as a means in which the APO can track federal and local performance measures. By tracking these measures, the APO can work to better prioritize projects and funding to best serve the needs of the region.

As part of the recap of the TPMR, Mr. Stapfer highlighted key datasets from the report. This included the following:

- Safety
 - There was a 63% increase in serious injury crashes (five-year rolling average) between 2015 and 2024.
 - Four corridors in the Saint Cloud area listed on the region's High Injury Network include 33rd Avenue, Ninth Avenue, MN 15, and Division Street.
- Infrastructure
 - Over the past three years, bridges in good condition for both the National Highway System (NHS) and all bridges have dropped. However, most of these decreases in condition are bridges moving from "good" to "fair" as opposed to "fair" to "poor." No bridges on the NHS are in poor condition. One bridge in Sherburne County is in poor condition but slated to be replaced in 2027.
 - Roughly 80% of I-94 pavement condition in the APO's planning area is in good condition. Only 0.3% is in poor condition.
 - For non-Interstate NHS pavement condition, 58.8% is in good condition with 0.4% in poor condition. MnDOT has several projects programmed in the near future to help improve some of the fair and poor non-Interstate NHS pavement.
- System Reliability
 - The region's Interstate mileage is considered reliable. There are some minimal non-Interstate NHS sections that have reliability issues including at the MN 23/CSAH 75/MN 15 intersections. The MN 23/US 10 interchange was also flagged as being unreliable, however, the data was collected prior to the full completion of this project. It is anticipated that this section will be improved in the 2025 TPMR.
- Transit
 - Overall fixed route transit is slowly growing, but remains well below pre-COVID numbers.
 - Dial-a-Ride transit service has grown – nearly reaching pre-COVID numbers.

- Metro Bus assets (i.e., buses) have been struggling to stay in a state of good repair – primarily due to the shortages and delays experienced during and post-COVID.

Mr. Conway expressed concerns about the proposed J-turns MnDOT is planning for MN 23 at Bel Clare Drive (Waite Park) and Stearns CSAH 8 (Rockville). He and others indicated the existing J-turn near Rollie's in Benton County is not working well. Board members expressed the need for better solutions instead of J-turns.

Mr. Scepaniak motioned to approve the 2024 Transportation Performance Monitoring Report. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

8. CONSIDER 2025 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN ANNUAL REPORT (SEPAR)

Mr. McKenzie outlined the purpose of the SEPAR – providing an annual report of APO engagement activities. He stated the document serves as a review of outreach efforts and helps APO staff identify strengths and opportunities for improvement when it comes to public participation.

The SEPAR contains four main components.

- Outreach Activities: Documentation of public meetings and events.
- Communication Tools: Metrics related to the APO's social media accounts.
- Participation Tracking: Review of demographic insights and participation levels in various outreach events.
- Evaluation and Improvements.

Some of the highlights Mr. McKenzie discussed were the continued growth in digital engagement with Nextdoor, Facebook, and Instagram all experiencing about a 10% increase in followers in 2025. Online engagement tends to be the primary generator of public input. Youth, immigrants, people of color, lower income households, and people with disabilities are underrepresented when it comes to participation in APO public engagement events.

Mr. McKenzie is proposing APO staff explore the following as a means to boost/improve public engagement going forward.

- Incorporate community impact profiles into TIP outreach.
- Implement platform-specific outreach strategies to improve digital engagement.
- Transition from the Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) to a Citizens' Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC).
- Strengthen regional message amplification through member jurisdiction coordination.

Mr. Anderson motioned to approve the 2025 Stakeholder Engagement Plan Annual Report. Mr. Theisen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

9. CONSIDER MESSAGING FOR WASHINGTON, D.C. TRIP

APO Executive Director Brian Gibson stated with the Washington, D.C. trip happening next week (April 13-16), he was wanting to make sure to prepare messaging and provide it to the APO's lobbyist. Mr. Gibson provided a sample message to Congress based on what was discussed during the last APO D.C. trip in October.

Mr. Gibson also drew attention to a handout provided to Policy Board members regarding a summary of the Bridges and Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act. This document, while not legislation, serves as a good starting point for discussions surrounding the federal transportation authorization bill. Mr. Gibson pointed out several interesting points outlined in the one-page summary including changing the ratio of bridge funding from 85% state/15% local to 75% state/25% local. Additionally, the BASICS one-pager outlines support for increasing budgets for MPOs and eliminating the local match component required.

Mr. Gibson stated the BASICS Act is supported by several national organizations including the National Association of Counties (NACo), National League of Cities (NLC), and the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO).

Consensus among Policy Board members indicated support for the BASICS Act, especially with the proposed change to the bridge funding ratio.

Mr. Perske floated the possibility of having a meeting with NACo Associate Legislative Director for Transportation Ben Gilsdorf on Tuesday, April 14. He also stated he would be supportive of advocating for improvements to MN 23 as proposed by the Highway 23 coalition. This would include four lanes from Foley to Milaca and work on the corridor between Foley and I-35.

Megan Knight, Director of Federal Affairs with Larkin Hoffman Public Affairs, was phoned into the meeting at this time.

Ms. Knight outlined the itinerary for the D.C. Trip which would include a strategy meeting on Tuesday evening. Wednesday, April 15, would include meetings with Rep. Emmer, Sen. Smith, and Sen. Klobuchar. Thursday, April 16 would include a breakfast/coffee meeting with Sen. Smith and Sen. Klobuchar.

Mr. Anderson stated the importance of addressing continued support for revolving loan funds for municipalities. Mr. Gapinski stated Benton County's CSAH 1 project was chosen for consideration for earmark funding. Continued support of this project was also requested.

Mr. Anderson had posed a question to Mr. Theisen regarding the beltline connection phase from 33rd Street S to MN 23 through Waite Park and if it would be appropriate to place this on the radar. Caution was expressed about not wanting to overwhelm congressional delegates with too much.

Mr. Gibson will firm up the congressional messaging and provide to Ms. Knight by Friday morning (April 10).

10. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Perske stated Stearns County is seeking to apply for the Central Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership (ATP-3's) Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) to connect the Beaver Islands Trail from County Road 143 to Warner Lake Park.

Mr. Perske also stated there has been discussion at the state level about postponing the greenhouse gas emissions (GhG) mitigation planning for capacity expansion projects from taking effect in 2027 to first starting in 2028.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Anderson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Gapinski adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.