

THE OXCART

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Saint Cloud APO Associate Transportation Planner Alex McKenzie (left) walking a community members through the public engagement activity at the City of Sartell's National Night Out event on Aug. 4.

Imagine 2055: Keep the Conversation Going

It has been a busy summer for **Imagine 2055**.

Over the past several months, APO staff have been out in the community talking with residents about how they get around the region today, and what they would like transportation to look like in the future.

We've heard about roadway congestion, intersection delays, pedestrian safety, missing sidewalk and trail connections, transit service, winter maintenance, and more. We've also heard about transportation improvements and services that are already working well and that residents would like to see continued or expanded.

All of this feedback is helping shape **Imagine 2055**, the region's long-range transportation plan. The plan will guide transportation priorities and investments through 2055 for people who drive, walk, bike, roll, and use public transit.

Stop by and See Us in St. Joseph

APO staff will be at the **Saint Joseph Farmers' Market** from 3-6 p.m. on **Friday, Sept. 25.** Stop by the Imagine 2055 booth while you shop the market, learn more about the plan, and share your transportation ideas with us.



APO staff will be at the St. Joseph Farmers' Market on Friday, Sept. 25. Stop by and tell us your transportation stories!

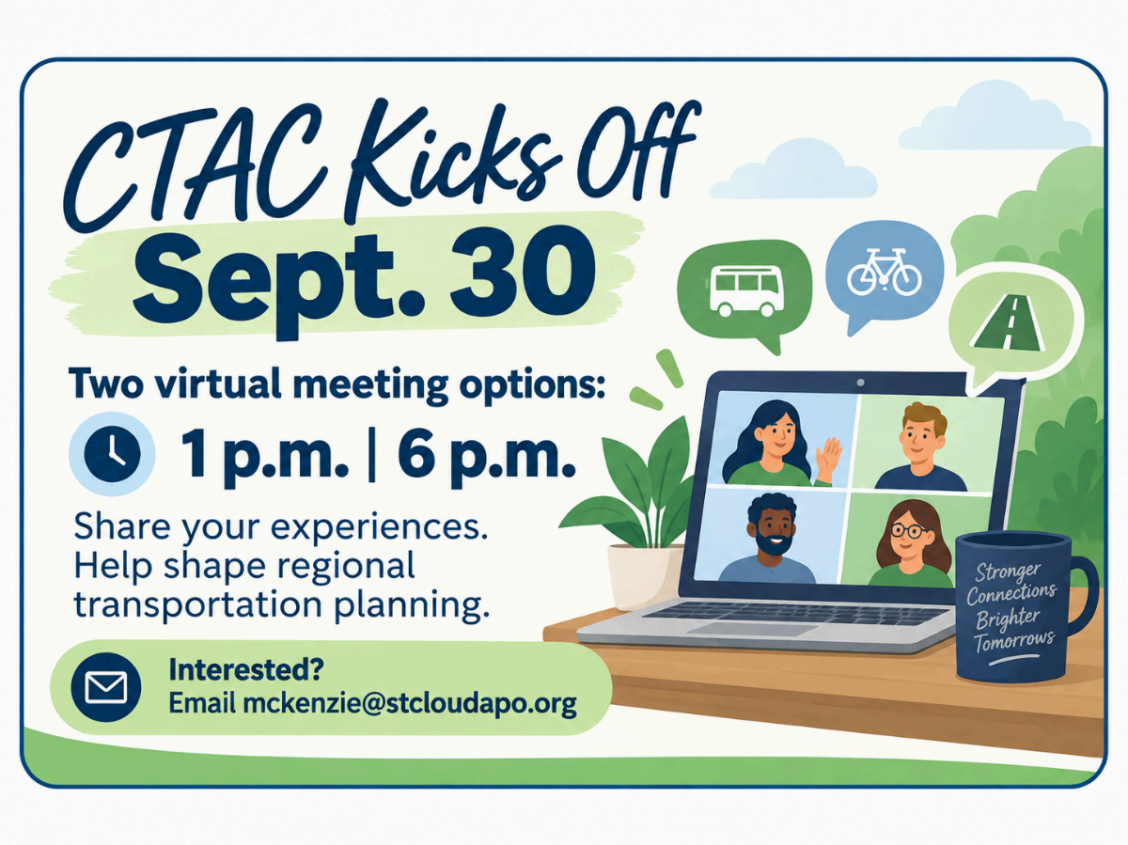
Can't make it to the market? You can still participate online at Imagine2055.com, where you can take the survey and add comments to the interactive map.

There is still time to make your voice part of the region's transportation future.

A New Way to Get Involved: Meet the CTAC

The Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization is launching a new Citizens' Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) to bring more community voices into regional transportation planning.

CTAC will give residents an opportunity to share their experiences and perspectives on topics such as roads, walking and biking, public transit, safety, and accessibility. The committee will help APO staff and decision-makers better understand how transportation works for the people who use the system every day.



The APO's newest community-driven committee, the Citizens' Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) will hold its first meeting on Sept. 30.

The first CTAC meeting will be held virtually on Wednesday, Sept. 30, with two meeting times available, 1 ***OR*** 6 p.m.

The same information will be presented at both sessions, so participants only need to attend one.

The first meeting will introduce the APO and CTAC, explain how the committee will work, and begin identifying transportation topics members would like to explore in future meetings.

Interested in participating or learning more? Email mckenzie@stcloudapo.org.

APO Approves $230 Million Transportation Improvement Program

Nearly 60 federally funded transportation projects within the Saint Cloud area are one step closer to construction thanks to action taken at a recent APO Policy Board meeting.

On Sept. 10, the APO's Policy Board took action to approve the fiscal years 2027-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This federally required document contains a list of all projects within the APO's planning area that will be completed using federal transportation funding over the next four years.

Projects listed in this latest version of the TIP include:

- The purchase of 23 replacement fixed route vehicles for Saint Cloud Metro Bus.
- The extension of CSAH 29 in Benton County.
- The reconstruction of Ninth Avenue S in the City of Saint Cloud.
- The mill and overlay of MN 23 in both Waite Park and Saint Cloud.



Cover photo of the APO's draft FY 2027-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

In total, the 2027-2030 TIP documents a regional transportation investment of just over $230 million.

Approval of the 2027-2030 TIP comes after community members were given the opportunity to weigh in on how they felt about the proposed slate of projects between July 15 and Aug. 14. Approximately 70 individuals participated in the public engagement process led by APO staff.

The APO’s TIP will now be incorporated into the larger State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) – the Minnesota Department of Transportation’s (MnDOT’s) document detailing all federally funded and/or state funded transportation projects in Minnesota. This will then be reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for compliance. Anticipated approval of the MnDOT STIP – which will allow for the expenditure of federal dollars – is anticipated to be completed by no later than December 2026.

The 2027-2030 TIP can be found on the **APO's website**.



The City of Saint Cloud's 22nd Street S reconstruction project between County Road 136/Oak Grove Road SW and Cooper Avenue S was slated to begin in 2026. However, this project has been delayed to the 2027 construction season.

A Year in Review: 2026 Federal Transportation Infrastructure Roundup

As the leaves begin to change color, we are reminded that the road construction season is preparing to wind down for the year. During the 2026 construction season, the APO had programmed around $53 million in federal and/or state funded transportation projects. These included projects related to transit fixed route and Dial-a-Ride operations as well as traffic signal replacements along Stearns CSAH 75 and a state-funded corridor study of MN 15.

Here is a quick look at some of the notable projects that were planned for this construction season.



The corner of Sundial Drive and Second Avenue S in Waite Park has been bustling with construction activity as Saint Cloud Metro Bus works to construct its **Western Transit Center**. Construction on this project will continue over the next several months with an anticipated completion in late 2027 -- conditions and construction permitting.



Top: Photo of the Western Transit Center location in April 2026 prior to the start of construction. Bottom: Photo of the Western Transit Center construction site in September 2026.

The City of Saint Cloud has had to push the pause button on its **22nd Street S** reconstruction project scheduled for 2026. Delays in securing the watermain materials needed as part of the project have resulted in this project being moved to the 2027 construction season.

Second Avenue S in Sauk Rapids caused quite a bit of detours in the region, especially around the Benton County Fair in early August. This $4.35 million project should be pretty close to wrapping up for the season. Some additional work to finalize the project is anticipated to happen next summer.



Construction on the **Benton CSAH 1/CSAH 29** roundabout near the Sauk Rapids-Rice High School had suffered a setback in mid-August when the concrete poured for the curbs and roundabout circle was noted to have cracking and inadequate curing. This resulted in the need to redo the concrete. However, as of late September, this project has been open to traffic and is nearing completion.

Sneak Peek at the Anticipated 2027 Federal Transportation Projects

With the 2027 construction season right around the corner, the Saint Cloud region is anticipating work to begin on approximately $72 million in federally-funded (or state funded) transportation improvements in the area. Here’s a small teaser of what is expected to come next year.



The intersection of Second Street S (CSAH 133) and Fourth Avenue S in the City of Sartell. This intersection will become a roundabout in 2027 thanks in part of federal funding.

With construction on the new Niron Magnetics facility in Sartell, both the City and Stearns County are preparing several roads for the increase in traffic – particularly truck traffic. This, in part, is why Stearns County is preparing to construct a federally funded roundabout at the intersection of Second Street S (**Stearns CSAH 133) and Fourth Avenue S**.

The City of Sartell will begin the acquisition process for the future **15th Street N** corridor. This is one of the early stages in the plans to construct a future roadway connection between Pinecone Road N and 19th Avenue N in the city.

MnDOT is planning to complete two safety-related projects on **MN 23**. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2027 for J-turns at both **Stearns CSAH 8** in Rockville as well as **Bel Clare Drive** in Waite Park.



Photos of the intersection of MN 23 and Bel Clare Drive near Waite Park. MnDOT intends to install a J-turn at this intersection as well as the intersection of MN 23 and Stearns CSAH 8 in Rockville.



Townline Road is getting a massive facelift thanks to funding from the Minnesota State General Fund as well as Congressionally Directed Spending. This roadway will be fully reconstructed from CSAH 4 near Sartell to the southern city limits of Saint Stephen. Stearns County is taking the lead on this $10 million project.

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Saint Cloud Metro Bus fixed route buses arriving and departing the bus shelter at the CentraCare Plaza in Saint Cloud.

Saint Cloud Metro Bus will be starting the process of replacing **23 fixed route buses** that are at the end of their useful life. Thanks in part to receiving a $14.3 million Federal Transit Administration (FTA) discretionary grant, Metro Bus will begin the process of ordering 13 vehicles in 2027. The remaining 10 buses will be ordered in 2028.

For a more detailed look at upcoming federal and/or state funded transportation improvements occurring in the region, check out the 2027-2030 TIP on the APO's website.



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