



## RTAC MEETING SUMMARY

June 18, 2015

Carlton Transportation Building  
Carlton, MN

Attendees:

Bryan Anderson	MnDOT
John McDonald	MnDOT
Mark LeBrun	Pine County
John Welle	Aitkin County
Kelly Chandler	Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching Community Health Board
Jim Rohweder	Metropolitan Interstate Council
Jim Foldesi	St. Louis County
Mike Tardy	Carlton County
Karin Grandia	Itasca County
Krysten Foster	Lake County
Jack Larson	Arrowhead Transit
Cindy Voigt	City of Duluth
John Minor	D1 State Aid
Gary Johnson	Blackberry Township
Rick Goutermont	Lake County
Bob Manzoline	St. Louis & Lake-Regional Rail Authority
Michelle Pierson	ARDC
Andy Hubley	ARDC
Jarrett Valdez	ARDC
*Others may have been present but did not sign in	

### 1) Welcome and Introductions

- a) Call to order by Cindy Voigt, Chair at 10:00am
- b) Introductions

### 2) Committee Business

- a) Call for approval of agenda
- b) Call for approval of meeting summary from February 26, 2015. Motion to approve by Jim Foldesi/Karin Grandia; passed unanimously

### 3) Area Transportation Improvement Plan (ATIP) Update

Bryan Anderson, MnDOT, noted that an update was shared at the April ATP meeting. The legislature passed the bonding bill, providing \$140,000,000 for Highway 53. There was also a small cost of living increase for MnDOT staff. At the federal level, a bill was extended to July 31<sup>st</sup> so federal funding will come



in. While the transportation funding is at \$50 billion per year, the gas tax is bringing in \$34 billion. Some program updates:

- a) Scenic Byway Solicitation- Due on August 7<sup>th</sup>. \$1.5 million available statewide. Local byways encouraged to apply.
- b) Bike Plan is nearly complete and will be posted on the website. The plan will focus our \$1.2 million/year that is available for bicycle infrastructure.
- c) Statewide Pedestrian Plan kicking off now—only the second state to have a statewide plan.
- d) ATP Operating Guidelines- since the inception, our ATP hasn't had any bylaws/formal structure. Anderson asked if the committee members would be interested in defining bylaws/operating guidelines. It was noted that when the ATP was started in the early 1990's, there was a manual. Bryan Anderson noted he'd be happy to put a draft together, using past protocols and like organizations' bylaws (using the MIC's operating document was mentioned). A procedures guideline could offer additional opportunities for public input. It could intentionally mention a process for electronic voting, which could assist emergency voting/conference call voting.
- e) Transportation Alternative Program Caps: A lengthy discussion was held regarding lowering the TAP dollar figure caps to potentially provide opportunities to fund more projects. Currently project applicants can apply for a maximum of \$600,000 and a minimum of \$100,000 with a total budget around \$900,000. Cindy Voigt noted that there has been trouble getting projects out. Projects are more likely to come to fruition if there are fewer projects. Cavour Johnson noted that by lowering the cap, we can ensure that we have enough funds to fund at least two projects. Mark LeBrun noted that if a community/entity applies for \$600,000 that the committee could award less. It was noted that if an applicant applies for the \$600,000 but is awarded less, will this affect the nature of the project? Cavour Johnson noted that perhaps could an item could be added to the solicitation application that would have the applicant apply for a minimum/maximum award. Andy Hubley noted we don't want to exclude small towns—maybe as an ATP, we could help deliver resources that would assist smaller entities to successful apply and deliver projects. Bryan Anderson noted that if these types of projects are bike related and in MnDOT 1, the regional MnDOT funds could be looked at. It was noted that connecting communities interested in applying for a project with the county/implementation organization for direction, advice, a list of responsibilities. As the implementation organization needs to accept the funds, it can be instructive to the applicant entity to know what all is involved in this process. It was decided that a vote was unnecessary, that the current structure is a good structure, as the committee has the latitude to fund a lower dollar figure, and it was recommended that the applicants are asked if they could still deliver the project if a lower dollar figure was awarded.
- f) John McDonald, MnDOT, distributed and discussed a handout entitled 2015 Local Projects.

#### **4) Functional Classification**

Support the approval of our District 1 review for the Arrowhead Region action item will be coming.



Jarrett Valdez presented information about the statewide review of roads based on FWHA's 2013 guidelines. The counties and ARDC reviewed MnDOT's initial draft functional class recommendations. ARDC submitted county comments/rebuttals to MnDOT for review until agreements were made. The next steps involve the approval process.

Motion to approve the maps that were mailed out by Welle/Grandia. Valdez will request written confirmation from each county via email. Passed unanimously.

#### **5) Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Outreach**

a) Jarrett Valdez provided a summary of last year's process—eight applications came in, two were selected. He noted the TAP solicitation will be developed this fall for 2020 funding. Scenic Byways, Safe Routes to School, paved trails, streetscapes, and other projects will be eligible. Applicants will be committing to 20% of construction costs and 100% of engineering costs. When the solicitation is open, please encourage applications.

#### **6) FY 2015 RTAC Planning Project Updates (\*= Proposed FY 2016 Planning)**

- a) **Safe Routes to School Planning \*** - New plans in Hermantown, Marshall School in Duluth, Proctor Elementary have been designated. Update plans for Laura MacArthur Elementary and Piedmont Elementary in Duluth, and regional plan updates in Moose Lake and Esko have also been identified for SRTS planning assistance in the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years.
- b) **Hat Trick Avenue Access Assessment \*** - A survey has been generated seeking public input regarding Hat Trick Avenue's access to and from Highway 53 in Eveleth. Results will be compiled and submitted to MnDOT. ARDC will resume work on this project in FY 2016.
- c) **Healthy Northland's Active Living Component \*** - This webtool includes many features for users to find healthy resources in the Arrowhead Region. Proposed activities for FY 2016 include continued oversight of website and determination of public launch.
- d) **Cook County Active Living & Highway 61 Design Project-** ARDC completed a sidewalk inventory in 2015. Concept design plan reviews were held for Highway 61. ARDC assisted Grand Marais in securing TAP funds for construction of a paved trail along Highway 61. A parking space inventory is currently being developed.
- e) **North Shore Scenic Drive Council(NSSDC) Planning \*** - ARDC assisted the NSSDC with completion of the Corridor Management Plan(CMP) update. Funds for construction of the Caribou Falls State Wayside Design project in 2016 were secured. A facebook page was developed for the Council, implementing strategies to promote viewership, visitorship and connections to the Byway. Coordination of a four-wayside design project has also been kicked off. In 2016, proposed work includes continued assistance to the Council for meeting facilitation, documentation and grant writing, completion of the four-wayside design project, continued development of social media and technology strategies in promoting byway activities, an evaluation of future design projects, and monitoring opportunities for implementing completed designs.



- f) **Superior National Forest Scenic Byway Council Planning \*** - In 2015, ARDC assisted the Council with completion of the CMP Update, completion of the FY 2016 Work Plan, and coordination of the Council's signage project. Proposed FY 2016 Activities include continued assistance with meetings, project assistance and grant writing, implementation of FY 2016 Work plan projects, and assisting the Council with obtaining a local match for the TAP awarded Skibo Vista Project.
- g) **Regional Sidewalks Inventory**- ARDC has collected and digitized GIS sidewalk data from over 19 cities in the Arrowhead Region. The data collected includes sidewalk condition ratings, sidewalk widths, boulevard widths, and surface types according to MnDOT standards. Data from an additional 23 communities will be gathered this summer. Regional Sidewalk Inventory Story Map can be found at: <http://www.arrowheadplanning.org/storymaps>.
- h) **Scanlon Community Corridor \***- FY 2015 accomplishments include the completion of the Northeast Carlton County Bicycle Route Plan. Funding was secured from a Minnesota Lake Superior Coastal Program STAR grant enabling design work for the St. Louis River trail extension, improvements to the Scanlon River Park and a connection to Tall Pine Lane. In FY 2016, proposed activities include facilitation coordination for the St. Louis River Trail Extension through Scanlon and into Cloquet. Coordination meetings with the project designer will occur, public input will be included in the process and funding sources will be examined.
- i) **Gitchi-Gami State Trail Technical Assistance \*** - In FY2015, the Gitchi-Gami Interactive Map Tour was developed and launched at the Gitchi-Gami Trail Association's (GGTA) annual meeting. The tour can be accessed at <http://ggta.org> . Posters promoting mobile use of the app will be added to the Trail's kiosks in summer 2015. Additionally, ARDC has administered the GGTA Facebook page, promoting the trail through posts which have reached over 100,000 users. In FY 2016, ARDC undertakes a trail user count implementation process in collaboration with MnDNR, MnDOT and Sawtooth Mountain Clinic in Grand Marais. ARDC has contracted with the GGTA to conduct a scoping project along the unconstructed portions of the trail and to provide staff assistance to the Association.
- j) **Helmet Hero Bicycle Education \***- This program teaches bicycle safety and correct helmet use to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students around the region with a goal to reduce the number of bicycle injuries , promotion of safety, and promoting bicycling as an active lifestyle choice. Federal funds end for this project after FY 2016.

## 7) Other Proposed FY 2016 RTAC Planning Projects

- a) **MnDOT 10-Year Work Plan Engagement**- ARDC will review MnDOT's 10-Year Work Plan and will examine future projects that will have the opportunity to incorporate bike/ped enhancements. ARDC will also reach out to local communities and form a committee to address bike/ped concerns and opportunities, will hold 2-3 meetings and create a bike/ped plan component to be included within the larger scope project.
- b) **Cook County Trails Plan**- An idea to form this plan came from a Cook County Moving Matters Active Living Plan process. The Plan will strongly consider connections to federal, state and local trails, and other destinations. ARDC is currently collecting data and formulating a list of potential oversight committee members.



**8) Other Business**

- a) November Area Transportation Partnership Meeting- this meeting date/time will be set at the October 2015 RTAC meeting.
- b) October RTAC Meeting Location/Agenda Topics—Set for October 1, 2015, meeting location to be determined.

**9) Adjourn**

- a) Motion to adjourn at 11:15am by Cavour Johnson/Jim Foldesi.