

NE MN ATP Meeting Summary
April 7, 2016
Carlton County Transportation Building

Present

Members Present

Bryan Anderson
John McDonald
Donald Niemi
Earl Elde
Ron Chika
Duane Hill
Jim Foldesi
Jarrett Valdez
Russell Habermann
Chris Beldon
Nancy Sannes
Scott Johnson
John Welle
Jesse Story
Jamie Adams
Krysten Foster
Rick Goutermont
Bob Manzoline
Jim Sharrow
David Betts
Kevin Adee
Curt Rossow
Mark LeBrun
Cindy Voigt
Jack Larson
Don Mohawk
Ginny Storlie
Gary E. Peterson
Wade Pavleck
Peter Makowski
John Minor
Mark Privratsky
Serge Phillips
Gary Johnson
Martin Torgerson
Rex Bordson
Sara Dunlap
Amber Dallman

Representing

MnDOT
MnDOT
Aitkin County Representatives
Midway Township
Duluth-Superior MIC
MnDOT
St. Louis County
ARDC
ARDC
Duluth-Superior MIC
MnDOT
MnDOT
Aitkin County
City of Hibbing
Fond du Lac Band
Lake County
Lake County
St. Louis & Lake Regional Rail Authority
Duluth Seaway Port Authority
Cook County
Koochiching County
Pine County
Pine County
City of Duluth
Arrowhead Transit/Rural Transit
MnDOT
Cook County
Carlton County
Koochiching County
Senator Franken's Office
MnDOT
Rep. Nolan's Office
MnDOT
Blackberry Township (Itasca County)
MnDNR-Parks & Trails
MnDOT State-Aid
MnDOT Transit
MnDOT Transit/Bike/Ped

Krysten Foster called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Committee Business

Mark Lebrun/Don Mohawk motioned to approve of the November 2nd meeting summary. The motion carried.

2016 Local Projects

John McDonald provided an update of the 2016 Local Projects. He highlighted that there a couple of projects in Lake County that are ready to go such as Safe Routes to School projects in Two Harbors and Silver Bay and the Garden Lake Preservation Bridge project along CSAH 18. John also mentioned that

NE MN ATP Meeting Summary
April 7, 2016
Carlton County Transportation Building

there are a number of projects that are happening in St. Louis County which include installation of ground in wet reflective edge line at various locations district and county-wide. The project will be let in the coming weeks. It was noted that TAP funds one St. Louis County project were transferred to another project in within the County (069-604-073). As a result, the project will be funded locally instead of federally. The ATP was informed that CSAH 23 received a great bid, so the scope will be changed slightly from a mill and overlay to a reclaim and overlay for the majority of the project. Another project highlighted was that MnDOT will build a section of the Gitchi Gami Trail from MNTH 61 and CSAH 4 junction to Township West Rd. It was stated that a portion of the money was moved to Grand Rapids as way to use the money elsewhere within the District. The Cross City Trail will be moved to 2017 as well.

2016 MnDOT Projects

Nancy Sannes reviewed a spreadsheet of FY 2016 MnDOT Projects. She informed the meeting participants that projects shaded in green have been let. She highlighted that most of the projects have been let including many projects on I-35, U.S. 53 and other trunk highways. It was noted that a US Highway 169 project near CSAH 15 is expected to be let sometime in early June, as plans have been reviewed. She informed the ATP that a Highway 1 project, which is scheduled for FY 2017 near Eagle's Nest is planned to be let in August. Also a mill and overlay project on TH 33 through Cloquet is scheduled for an April letting, resulting in work beginning slightly earlier than expected. Nancy concluded that CPR work on the Blatnik Bridge will have an expected let date sometime in June. Work on the project will begin sometime this summer.

2017-2020 ATIP

Investment Targets

Bryan Anderson provided an overview of the FY 2020 investment guidelines. He mentioned:

- MnDOT targets are at \$85 million for FY 2020
- Local program is set for \$7.9 million
- An additional \$1.1 million can be allocated to roads and bridges instead of transit, since MnDOT Central Office will begin to fund transit. However, each year that money will still be included in the target amount due to the uncertainty of when transit might have to revert to being funded by the ATP. It was expressed that transit funds should be discussed each year at the ATP meetings when the targets come out.
- TAP target will be \$900,000
- HSIP target will be \$1.3 million
- Roads and Bridges will be \$5.7 million
 - \$2.3 million for the MPO area
 - \$3.4 million for the rural counties

Transit Funding Overview

Bryan informed the ATP that Transit Office notified District 1, that transit revenue can be back filled between years 2017-2019. It is important to note that the following will be additional revenue to those projects, not the total project cost:

- In 2017 - \$1.2 million will be redistributed for some signal projects in Moose Lake and Mountain Iron; then splitting the difference for Lake and Itasca Counties.
- In 2018 – Approximately \$1 million will be redistributed to signals in Hinckley, Two Harbors, and for other projects in Aiktin, St. Louis, and Pine Counties.
- In 2019, there isn't as high of a transit need resulting in approximately \$475,000 programmed. That money will be split between St. Louis and Cook Counties.

NE MN ATP Meeting Summary
April 7, 2016
Carlton County Transportation Building

2020 Federal Aid Candidate Projects

Bryan allowed for each representative of their respective entities that applied for funds during the 2020 Federal Aid Project Solicitation give brief overview of their projects:

- Cook County CSAH 12 Gunflint Trail
 - Consists of 4-5 miles of surfacing improvements and culvert repair/replacement. The total cost of the project will be approximately \$2.2 million. The project will be located along the mid-upper portion of the Gunflint Trail which will continue towards Grand Marais from where the 2014 & 2015 projects left off.
- St. Louis County CSAH 101
 - This will be a standard preservation project which entails of bituminous reclamation in Eveleth from CSAH 7 to Kimberly Avenue.
- St. Louis County CSAH 56 Morris Thomas
 - Project will be in Hermantown from Midway Road to the signals at Loberg Road. It will consist of being a reclaim and overlay. A micro surface was done years ago and the County believes that by the time 2020 is here, it will need to be worked on. The County is also looking at some sort of intersection improvement which would be done with a separate project at Midway and Maple Grove. Improvement could entail installation of a signal or a round-a-bout.
- City of Duluth MSAH 126 Third Street
 - Consists of a preservation project that will be downtown. The City will look into potentially doing some sidewalk work as part of the project, if able to.

TAP Overview

Jarrett Valdez provided the ATP with an overview of the TAP solicitation and review process that recently concluded. He informed the group that nine full applications were submitted, requesting approximately \$2.9 million, resulting in a competitive selection process for FY 2020 funds. The TAP Task Force met in February and recommended three projects for funding, evenly splitting the \$900,000 three ways.

Sponsoring Agency (Location)	Project Name and Description	COSTS		
		Amount Requested	Amount Recommended for Award	Project Total
St. Louis & Lake Counties Regional Rail Authority (Northern St. Louis County)	Mesabi Trail - St. Louis County Road 88 to Ely: This project is seeking funds to construct a 3 mile long, bituminous surfaced bikeway located between St. Louis County Road 88 and the City of Ely as part of the larger Mesabi Trail regional network.	\$684,000	\$300,000	\$900,000
City of Duluth	Brighton Beach Shared Use Path: This project is seeking funds to construct a multi-use path through Brighton Beach Park to connect the Lakewalk with designated bicycle lanes on the North Shore Scenic Byway to create a continuous commuter trail the length of Duluth.	\$387,995	\$300,000	\$669,292
City of Grand Rapids	Grand Rapids Corridor Improvement Project: This project is seeking funds to improve non-motorized corridors into Grand Rapids in order to connect surrounding communities in the already existing non-motorized network.	\$331,067	\$300,000	\$504,100
Totals	<u>3 projects</u>	\$1,367,062	\$900,000	\$2,073,392

NE MN ATP Meeting Summary
April 7, 2016
Carlton County Transportation Building

Jarrett explained to the ATP that the TAP solicitation and review process for FY 2021 funds will stay the same as it has been in previous years until further notice is given. Future applicants can expect to be given notice to attend the TAP Workshop Webinar as well as completing the pre-application/Letter of Intent process. However, Bob Manzoline mentioned that during the project selection process, applicants may be called upon to speak about their project applications at next year's TAP Task Force meeting. A discussion ensued regarding project deliverability. It was expressed that in addition to the project applicant ensuring the TAP Task Force that there would be no issue of projects being delivered, that there needs to be better communication between the project applicant and sponsor to discuss if the project delivery is realistically achievable. Jim Foldesi expressed, that if needed, entities should work together more to consider swapping TAP funds towards other projects due to the fact that it is generally dealing with smaller amounts of money, eliminating many of the federal requirements associated.

Finally Valdez proceeded to inform the ATP that there was still a vacant Local Government Representative position that needed to be filled. He mentioned that he spoke to Don Niemi to inquire any interest in filling the position, in which he agreed to fulfill.

Dave Betts/Mark Lebrun motioned to approve the nomination of Don Niemi as a member the TAP Task Force. The motion carried.

Draft ATIP

Nancy Sannes briefly reviewed the draft ATIP to the ATP. Nancy mentioned that the text in red on the spreadsheet is information that has changed from last year's ATIP. She informed everyone that each entity should look at their local projects carefully to make sure the descriptions and dollar amounts are correct. It was also noted that the information written in green text are new projects in which many are local. Again, she restated for everyone to review their projects to make sure all the information provided is correct, especially for FY 2017. If any information is not correct for 2017, amendments will be needed fix any errors, in which those amendments and modifications wouldn't be finalized until after December. Also, there are a few local projects in FY 2020 that do not have any project numbers assigned to them yet. She urged that if any entity notices that they don't have a project number associated with their project, MnDOT will need that soon. Additionally, a couple projects were taken out of the ATIP and pushed out to 2021, which include a mill and overlay in Winton and a project in Gilbert. Nancy is hopeful that these projects can make their way back on the ATIP because there is a chance that a 2020 project may get funded early.

Some other highlights Nancy mentioned were that MnDOT received DPS funds for work to be done at I-35 and MNTH 33 in Cloquet which will be completely federal funded. TAP funds for the Grand Marais project have been rolled over into the MnDOT Highway 61 project in 2019 in which the TAP work will be part of the overall reconstruction project. Also, regarding the redistribution of funds, federal funds were added to projects and more local match money was added if it was needed. As an example, Nancy advised Aitkin County to review their local match and let her know if they would like it to be decreased because she added the federal funds or leave it alone. The ATP was informed that the ATIP had to be submitted to MnDOT Central Office for its first review shortly after the ATP meeting. She stressed if there are any questions regarding the draft ATIP, contact her.

John Welle/Cindy Voigt motioned to approve the 2020 Federal Aid Candidate projects, TAP recommended projects, and Draft ATIP. The motion carried.

MnDOT TIGER Application

Duane provided the ATP with a handout and information for an upcoming project regarding the I-35/I-535/Highway 53 and Garfield Avenue Interchanges in Duluth. MnDOT will be submitting a Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-Term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE) Grant application to replace the I-35/I-535/Highway 53 Interchange and improve the I-

NE MN ATP Meeting Summary
April 7, 2016
Carlton County Transportation Building

535/Garfield Avenue interchange. The purpose of this project is to better accommodate freight movements through the interchanges adjacent to the Clure Public Terminal.

Project Scope

- Reconstruction of the I-35/I-535/Highway 53 Interchange
- Replace 3 bridges in the I-535/Garfield Avenue Interchange
- Replace total of 27 bridges: overweight permit restrictions (25), fracture critical (7), functionally obsolete (4), structurally deficient (1)
- Improve safety of the I-35/I-535/Highway 53 Interchange
 - Provide a new conventional design
 - Provide all exits and entrances on the right
 - Improve merging sight distance and eliminate merge conflicts
 - Eliminate weaving problems near the interchange
 - Provide lane continuity for through I-35 traffic

Project Freight Connection

- Interchange ADT 72,200; HCADT 3,450
- First mile to Clure Public Terminal
- Intermodal facility with highway, rail, and waterway freight connections
- 25,000 heavy commercial loads generated per year with significant increases projected
- Significant project cargo such as wind turbine components
- Project will provide direct access for overweight permitted loads

Project Funding Request and Timeline

- Cost: \$150-\$245 million
- FASTLANE request will be 60% (\$90-\$120 million)
- MnDOT will fund remaining 40%
- No local agency funding required
- Work will be within the existing right of way
- Will not add lanes
- NEPA will be a Categorical Exclusion and complete in 2017
- Contracting will be either design-build or construction manager general contractor alternative delivery
- If FASTLANE is provided, construction will begin in 2018
- Preliminary design and environmental field work will begin in 2016

Regarding the project, Duane is looking for letters of support from an elected official/s, county board, or a representative of an elected official that can be submitted with the application. He mentioned that even a letter of support from the ATP would be appreciated for submission of the application. Wade Pavleck invited Duane to the ARDC Commission Meeting to make a presentation to the group as it would be another way to make the region aware of the project and gain an additional letter of support. Duane mentioned that a project website will be developed shortly and future letters of support could be submitted onto the site. Ron Chika, mentioned that the MIC Board can also supply MnDOT a letter of support, due to the MIC's initial involvement with the project. Additionally, MnDOT will be submitting two other TIGER/FASTLANE applications, which include a rail crossing project in Moorhead and adding a MnPASS lane project on I-35W.

NE MN ATP Meeting Summary
April 7, 2016
Carlton County Transportation Building

The I-35/I-535/Highway 53 interchange may be designed as a split diamond interchange in which would include a signal controlling movements from Highway 53 to I-35. MnDOT still would retain the free movement connection between I-35 and I-535. However, many steps will need to be completed such as public involvement and municipal input before a design concept is finalized.

John Welle/Jim Foldesi motioned that the ATP would provide a letter of support for the MnDOT FASTLANE application. The motion carried.

State Bicycle Plan

MnDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, Amber Dallman provided the ATP with an update of the Statewide Bicycle System Plan. She shared the plan's vision which includes "bicycling is a safe, comfortable and convenient transportation option for all people". She mentioned this has been a similar finding with the Statewide Pedestrian System Plan. Four main goals of the plan include:

- Safety and comfort: Build and maintain safe and comfortable bicycling facilities for people of all ages and abilities.
- Local bikeway connections: Support regional and local bicycling needs.
- State bikeway network: Develop a connected network of state bikeways in partnership with national, state, regional and local stakeholders.
- Ridership: Increase the number of bicycle trips made by people who already bike and those who currently do not.

During the development of the plan three key findings were identified:

- State Bikeways Routes create opportunities for inter-community travel (i.e. The Mississippi River Trail is the first State Bicycle Route). MnDOT is in the process of developing their next State Bikeway: Route 41 as part of implementation of the plan. State Bikeway 41 will traverse from St. Paul to Grand Portage.
- The public value more opportunities for local and regional travel.
- People prefer riding on separated bicycling facilities.

Several performance measures will be taken in consideration too, such as: how well MnDOT is implementing the plan; the percentage of bicyclists that commute to work; percentage of people that ride their bike once per week between April and October; percentage increase of women that are riding which correlates with safety; and total amount of bicycle and motor vehicle crashes. Amber informed the ATP that permanent pedestrian and bicycle counting sites that have been identified within the region. MnDOT is additionally working to have counting equipment more readily available with ARDC housing such equipment. Interested entities or organizations will the opportunity to check-out the counting equipment for a period of time. More information regarding pedestrian and bicycling equipment is expected to be released during the spring. Another implementation activity that will happen is that MnDOT will be working to update the Bicycle Design Guide Manual.

Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan Update

Sara Dunlap from MnDOT Office of Transit shared an update of the Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan to the ATP. She informed the meeting participants the objective of the 2016 Plan Update will be to update transit investment priorities and expand transit access in Greater Minnesota. Some emphasis on the plan has been to reach out to stakeholder groups such as seniors, low-income population, veterans, new Americans, and individuals with disabilities. MnDOT has been working on the technical analysis component as well as developing investment priority strategies for the plan. Significant public outreach was conducted in forms of an on-board traveler survey, online survey, stakeholder and focus groups, as well as one-page survey for hard to reach populations.

NE MN ATP Meeting Summary
April 7, 2016
Carlton County Transportation Building

Each transit provider distributed MnDOT's onboard traveler surveys to riders, collecting information on transit needs, improvements, priorities, and demographics. It's important to note that many urban surveys were translated to reach out to non-English speaking populations, primarily Somali, Spanish, and Hmong speaking populations. Some results highlighted were that there were 6,000 results, with approximately 60 percent of respondents as commuters in the urban areas. In rural areas, shopping visits, errands, and social visits were the most common reason for using transit. There were slightly more female respondents than men. The respondent income was generally under \$25,000 which is considered transit dependent populations. The surveys indicated that ridership in the urban systems is typically a younger population than individuals using the rural systems. Rural system users are typically ages 65 or older that do not have access to a motor vehicle or driver's license. More importantly, the survey asked riders their priorities regarding transit which include reliability, longer services hours in early morning and late evening, and better frequency between buses.

The online surveys received nearly 200 responses from Greater Minnesota. There were many demographic similarities in response between the online survey and the onboard survey. This survey additionally asked respondents why they don't use transit, with 23 percent explaining that it's not where they need it and another 23 percent expressing that it's not when they need it. Another answer was that it is too far to walk to access it. However, priorities that were identified from the survey included more service in outlying communities, more weekend service, better frequency between buses. Altogether, there were many common themes identified from both surveys in which MnDOT will be able to take in consideration for developing investment priorities and strategies for the next steps of the plan. In addition to the development of investment priorities and strategies for the plan, MnDOT will make recommendations of service hours needed meet the level of demand and calculate how much it would cost to provide those services. A draft plan will be completed sometime in July.

Funding Update

Serge Phillips from MnDOT's Government Affairs Office addressed the ATP with information regarding the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act and its impact on Minnesota. It was signed October 1, 2016, with the takeaway that the new bill will ensure stable funding for the next five years, although funding will not have a significant increase. When the bill was passed, MnDOT was in the middle its planning process, so there are still many things that are uncertain at this point. Funding levels for the MnDOT districts as well as the metro area should be relatively the same as, with no significant changes.

Some changes are that the TAP will no longer be a standalone program as it will set aside as part of the Surface Transportation Block Program. Program eligibilities and the amount will stay the same, despite a slightly different funding formula that will be used. Serge suggested having future TAP projects planned and programmed while the money is still available because it could be at risk of being lost when the five year bill life ends. A potential issue identified was that the current distribution of STP funds between urban and rural is exactly even, however, by the end of the bill it may shift to 55 percent urban to 45 percent rural. Serge stated that MnDOT is unsure if the formula of expenditure will be impacted by the split, but changes would most likely need to be made if it's at those distribution levels. This issue along with others will be discussed at future Programming Update Workgroup meetings.

Regarding freight provisions, a Freight Investment Plan will be required that is in development now. The State Freight Adviseement Committee will designate national-state freight networks and select freight projects. He identified that a few new freight programs have been developed such as the FASTLANE Grants Program and the National Highway State Freight Program. The State's freight network expanded from MAP-21 to the FAST Act; however I-35 is not part of the network. As a result, future work will ensue to include I-35 to the freight network.

NE MN ATP Meeting Summary
April 7, 2016
Carlton County Transportation Building

More federal money will also go to more technological projects such as vehicle-to-infrastructure and vehicle-to-vehicle. Now there is exclusive funding for vehicle-to-infrastructure projects and advanced transportation and congestion management technology for those projects such as autonomous vehicles and other technologies. Additionally, the USDOT will allow cities and other government entities to submit their own solutions for transportation ideas under the Smart Cities Initiative.

Some other funding notes are that transit will go up about \$800,000 compared to last year's MAP-21 total. The bill will be good for buses and bus facilities with a new grant program on top of the formula increase. Regarding rail, it is authorized for five years but will not come from the Highway Trust Fund, resulting in going through the appropriations process. He stated that NLX will have a good opportunity to compete for National Network Funding. Serge reiterated that funding levels for the District and ATP will be release soon but should not have any significant differences.

Other

Upcoming meetings

- Next RTAC meeting will be June 23, 2016
- Next ATP meeting is TENTATIVELY scheduled for November 3, 2016

Cindy Voigt/Jim Foldesi motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.