

**Northeast Minnesota ATP
Steering Committee Meeting
Hampton Inn, Duluth, MN
January 26, 2009**

Members Present

David Salo
Jesse Story
Doug Grindall
Cindy Voigt
Jim Foldesi
Wayne Olson
John Welle
Shae Kosmalski
Dave Christy
Walter Leu
Mark LeBrun
Dennis Jensen
Jim Roweder
Al Goodman

Others Present

Rondi Watson
Bryan Anderson
Ben VanTassel
Denny Johnson
Rex Bordson
John Minor
Gus Peterson

Call to Order

Chairman David Salo called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and introductions were made.

Minutes of the October 8, 2009 Meeting

Motion by Walter Leu, second by Cindy Voigt to approve the minutes. Motion passed.

Representing

Cities > 5000
Cities > 5000
Koochiching County
City of Duluth
St. Louis County
Carlton County
Aitkin County
Cook County
Itasca County
Mn/DOT
Pine County
Transit
MIC
Lake County

Representing

MIC
ARDC
ARDC
Mn/DOT
Mn/DOT
Mn/DOT
Mn/DOT

2009 Program

Walter Leu reviewed the status of the 2009 local program. He indicated that approximately \$42 million worth of local projects are expected to be let in 2009. For the most part, the local projects are on schedule and should make the April 15th federal authorization deadline. Walt said that HSIP funded projects do not have to meet the deadline, but must be authorized before the end of the state fiscal year.

Gus Peterson then reviewed the status of the 2009 Mn/DOT program. He said that a number of adjustments had to be made to accommodate substantial cost increases that are anticipated on a number of projects. Gus reviewed the Mn/DOT projects remaining to be let in fiscal year 2009, and also discussed scope changes and a project deferral.

2010 – 2013 ATIP

Denny Johnson discussed a number of items relating to the 2010 – 2013 ATIP.

- ***ATIP Schedule*** – The schedule for developing the new ATIP is similar to the ones used previously. County Team Meetings (if necessary) will occur during February, County Board Meetings in March, and an ATP approved Draft 2010 – 2013 ATIP submitted to St. Paul by April 15, 2009. The Mn/DOT Office of Investment Management will submit a Draft STIP back to the district in May and any comments are due back by the end of June.
- ***STIP Funding Guidance/Investment Guidelines*** – The 2010 – 2013 STIP funding guidance was reviewed. A total of \$392 million per year of federal formula funds will be distributed back to the ATP's. A total of \$282 million in State funds will also be distributed. Our share of this distribution is 10.7% (\$41.9 million) of the federal funds and 10.1% (\$28.5 million) of the state funds. These are levels very close to those used to develop the 2009 – 2012 STIP and do account for Bond Accelerated Program Reductions/Redistributions.

The Investment Guidelines are also similar to those used in the past with Mn/DOT receiving approximately 67% of the federal funds, local road projects 23%, and enhancements, rail crossings, transit, and safety sharing the remaining 10%. There is a large amount of Special Funding (HPP, Forest Highways, CBIP, Bond) available to both Mn/DOT and the locals. This results in Mn/DOT's program averaging nearly \$110 million for the four years compared to the usual \$65 million.

- ***2010 20% Project Contingency List*** – Each ATP is required to declare 20% of their federal projects as contingencies in the event there is a shortfall in the federal highway trust fund. It is expected that Congress will pass legislation to prevent this from happening. This list will be prepared later in the Draft ATIP process.

- **2013 Federal Aid Candidate Projects** – The 2013 federal aid project candidate list was reviewed. It is slightly over programmed on both the Mn/DOT and local sides. This is due largely to the uncertainty of how many dollars will be received to advance projects through the Economic Recovery Program. The Investment Guidelines will be used in determining which projects are recommended for funding. The solicitation for 2011 – 2012 HSIP funded projects concludes on February 13th.

Enhancements/Regional Trail Projects

Bryan Anderson said that six enhancement project applications were received for 2013 funding. Five of the projects were for trails and one was for a trailhead improvement. The Enhancements Task Force meets on February 2nd and will make funding recommendations to the Steering Committee at their March meeting.

Ben VanTassel handed out a map showing the enhancement trail projects that had either been funded and built or are planned for future construction by the ATP. This had been requested by the Steering Committee at a previous meeting.

There was a discussion involving maintenance issues on the previously constructed trail segments. Walter Leu pointed out that normal maintenance operations are not eligible for federal aid. A more substantial fix that would involve widening a trail to meet current design standards likely would be eligible.

Bryan Anderson said that a proposal to request high priority funding for trails on an ATP wide basis in the next federal reauthorization bill is being considered. It would allow greater flexibility to fully fund projects in the early years that are ready to let. It is not known whether the new reauthorization bill will contain the 20% per year distribution of funds provision similar to SAFETEA – LU.

County Team/County Board Meetings

Based on the 2013 federal aid candidate projects submitted, it was determined by the county engineers that county team meetings are not necessary this year to prioritize the projects. The Duluth – Superior MPO will do their customary project review and prioritization process.

Bryan Anderson will be contacting the county engineers to set up the County Board meeting dates in March.

Other Business

A discussion was held regarding the Economic Recovery Program – Highway Infrastructure. Denny Johnson said that Mn/DOT is planning on approximately \$500 million coming to Minnesota, with that being split 70% Mn/DOT and 30% Local. The goal is to get the majority of the recovery money committed to projects within 90 – 120 days of the bill’s enactment. The SALT office is conducting a solicitation for local projects and the closing date for nominations is January 30, 2009. Fiscal year 2009 projects are not eligible to receive recovery funding.

Gus Peterson reminded everyone to review the project update requests that were sent out recently. He said it is a long standing ATP policy to give already programmed projects a high priority when putting together a new ATIP, even if cost estimate increases result in fewer new projects being added.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Steering Committee is tentatively scheduled for March 2, 2009 at a site to be determined.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m.