

**Northeast Minnesota ATP
Steering Committee Meeting
January 28, 2008
Lake Superior Conference Room
Mn/DOT Duluth District Office**

Members Present

John Welle
Jim Foldesi
Wayne Olson
Mark LeBrun
Jesse Story
David Salo
Cindy Voigt
Shae Kosmalski
Walter Leu
Doug Grindall
Dennis Jensen
Dave Christy
John Foschi
Paul Bergman
Tom Peterson

Representing

Aitkin County
St. Louis County
Carlton County
Pine County
Hibbing
Hermantown
Duluth
Cook County
Mn/DOT
Koochiching County
Transit
Itasca County
MIC
Lake County
DNR/Environmental

Others Present

Al Goodman
Bryan Anderson
James Gittemeier
Denny Johnson
Gus Peterson
Rex Bordson
John Minor

Representing

Lake County
ARDC
MIC
Mn/DOT
Mn/DOT
Mn/DOT
Mn/DOT

Call to Order/Introductions

Chairman David Salo called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and introductions were made.

Minutes of the October 11, 2007, Meeting

Motion by Walter Leu, second by Jesse Story to approve the minutes. Motion passed.

2008 Program Status

Walter Leu briefly reviewed highlights of the 2008 local projects (handout). Walt said that the Tofte Lakewalk project has been moved out of the program and reminded project sponsors of the 4-15-08 deadline for the submittal of project reports, plans and ROW Certificates. The Mountain Iron Streetscape project appears to be the only local project that may not meet the deadline and would have to be deferred to 2009.

Gus Peterson said that the low bid for the joint Mn/DOT – St. Louis County – City of Duluth Kohl's project is \$21.7 million, which is close to the program estimate. The low bidder was KGM Contractors, Inc. Other Mn/DOT projects let in January 2008 that are not included in the FY 2008 Mn/DOT Project Letting Summary (handout) are a TH 11/TH 53 resurfacing project in International Falls and a TH 210 traffic signal at the Black Bear Casino. Gus said that the remaining 2008 Mn/DOT projects are within program estimates and include approximately \$13 million of AC Payback.

2009-2012 ATIP

- **ATIP Schedule/STIP Funding Guidance**

Denny Johnson briefly reviewed the Tentative 2009-2012 STIP Process/Schedule (handout) and STIP Funding Guidance (handout). Denny said that due to the uncertainty of FY 2009 federal funds, each ATP has been requested to identify 15% of their 2009 projects as contingent, should actual appropriations be less than estimated. This amounts to approximately \$6.6 million for the NE MN ATP. Mn/DOT District 1 staff has identified the TH 210 project from McGregor to Carlton as our contingent project.

Denny indicated that the federal targets do not include Statewide Corridor Funds (2011 I-35 project in Pine County) and the state targets do not include any adjustments for the Flexible Turnback funding. Walt said that all of the flexible turnback funding has been added to the Mn/DOT 2012 program.

Denny said that project inflation adjustments will be 5% per year for 2009-2012 and 4% per year for 2013-2018. Revenues are projected to be flat and inflation will significantly reduce the buying power of available funds.

- **Project Delivery/Cost Estimates**

Gus said that there have been significant cost increases on two St. Louis County projects which will result in the need for further project adjustments in the 2009-2012 draft ATIP. The St. Louis County CSAH 4 project may be deferred from 2011 to 2012 and back filled with other local projects. Jim Foldesi said that a project scope change is proposed for the joint St. Louis County/City of Duluth intersection improvements at Arrowhead Road and Rice Lake Road. The scope change is to add a westbound left turn lane on Arrowhead Road at the east Rice Lake Road intersection.

There was discussion related to the eligibility of 2009-2010 HSIP projects. Walt said that the primary focus for local HSIP projects in northeast Minnesota would be new bridge approach guardrail, 6 inch wide edge stripes and intersection lighting. HSIP funds are currently shown in the program as local and Mn/DOT set asides. Specific HSIP projects will be identified and prioritized prior to preparing the draft 2009-2012 ATIP. Walt said that rumble edge stripes are generally not supported by local engineers due to future maintenance problems and narrow shoulders for the construction equipment.

Walt said that even though a number of project costs have increased, it has been a priority to fund projects already in the program and that more time will be needed to make 2009-2011 program adjustments. The Steering Committee will approve necessary program adjustments at the March 2008 meeting.

- **2012 Federal Aid Candidate Projects**

Denny and local agency Steering Committee members reviewed the proposed 2012 Federal Aid Candidate Projects in each county. Denny pointed out that approximately \$6 million of 2012 local federal funds is already committed as a result of needed program adjustments related to cost increases on the Kohl's project. Additional program adjustments will be required as a result of cost increases on the two St. Louis County projects. Thus, there will only be approximately \$2 to \$3 million available for new local projects in 2012.

Mark LeBrun said that due to these budget issues that Pine County would withdraw their CSAH 9 candidate project and resubmit the project next year for 2013. Jim Foldesi said that due to St. Louis County project cost increases that they would withdraw their CSAH 102 and CSAH 7 candidate projects. Dave Christy asked for a clarification of the termini of the TH 169 project in Itasca and St. Louis Counties. Gus said that sometimes TH 169 is referred to as a north/south highway, but that he will change the termini to 3.3 miles east of Nashwauk to the West Jct. of TH 73.

Bryan Anderson said that there are nine trail projects and one streetscape project that have been submitted as candidate 2012 Enhancement projects. These projects total approximately \$4 million of federal funds. There is approximately \$1 million of federal funds available, which will only fund two or three projects.

Walt suggested that the ARDC staff prepare an estimated \$10 million regional trail funding request for the next federal reauthorization bill with a focus on primary trails and connector trails. Funding received could then be a pooled fund administered through Mn/DOT State Aid, ARDC and the MIC for funding priority trail projects at an 80/20 percent federal/local match for design and construction.

Al Goodman asked if Safe Routes to School (SRTS) projects would also be included. Walt said no, that the SRTS program is a separate federal program that is administered statewide by Mn/DOT. Bryan Anderson said that he would prepare a draft proposal for consideration following further discussion with local agency representatives.

Cindy Voigt said that there is also a need to fund trail maintenance, which is currently not eligible for federal funds. Walt said that major trail reconditioning and safety improvements would be eligible for federal funds. David Salo suggested that it would be helpful if an exhibit was prepared showing past and future enhancement trail project expenditures and future needs. Bryan said that he would prepare a summary/map of past and currently programmed enhancement trail projects and future trail needs. In response to a question, Gus Peterson said that the deferral and additional funding for the City of Duluth Lakewalk Phase 4 project will need to be approved at the February 4, 2008, Enhancement Task Force meeting.

County Team/County Board Meetings

Bryan said that due to the limited number of 2012 federal aid candidate projects, Carlton County will be the only county to have a County Team meeting this year. Bryan then reviewed the currently scheduled March County Board meeting presentations, but still needs to confirm meeting schedules for a few counties.

Other Business

- **TRLF Funding Solicitation**

Gus said that TRLF funding can be useful to advance local matching funds for federal High Priority Projects. He said that \$7.8 million is available for local projects and \$3.2 million is available for trunk highway projects. He reminded members that local street projects are not eligible, only collector and arterial roads are eligible.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Steering Committee will be scheduled for Monday, March 3, 2008.

Adjourn

Chair David Salo adjourned the meeting at 11:10 a.m.