

**Northeast Minnesota ATP
Steering Committee Meeting
Monday, March 2, 2009
Lake Superior Conference Room
Mn/DOT Duluth District Office**

Members Present

John Welle
Cindy Voigt
Jim Foldesi
Wayne Olson
Jesse Story
Shae Kosmalski
Al Goodman
Tom Peterson
Mark LeBrun
Dave Christy
Doug Grindall
Walter Leu

Representing

Aitkin County
City of Duluth
St. Louis County
Carlton County
City of Hibbing
Cook County
Lake County
DNR/Environmental
Pine County
Itasca County
Koochiching County
Mn/DOT

Others Present

Bryan Anderson
James Gittemeier
Ben VanTassel
Don Mohawk
Denny Johnson
Gus Peterson
Lorraine Kramer

Representing

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

Call to Order

John Welle, Acting Chairman in the absence of Chairman David Salo, called the meeting to order at 10:05 am. Introductions were made.

Minutes of the January 26, 2009 Meeting

Motion by Al Goodman, seconded by Dave Christy, to approve the minutes. Motion passed.

2009 Program Status

Walter Leu reviewed the 2009 local program (handout) to determine each project's current status, including the economic stimulus projects. The Aitkin County intersection lighting safety project may not make the plan turn in deadline and would have to re-apply for HSIP funds. A few other projects were moved to 2010. County and City Engineers were asked to notify Walt with any additional projects being moved to 2010.

Gus Peterson reviewed the Mn/DOT 2009 program (handout), reviewing all projects. TH 61, from the Onion River to CR 34, was let last Friday for a cost of \$12.2 million. Gus advised that all bids were reasonable with KGM being the low bidder.

Let projects on the handout are highlighted in green. The I-35 (Phase 1) project in Duluth will be let on 3/27/09. TH 210, from McGregor to Cromwell, is now tied to the TH 73 project south of Cromwell and will be let on 5-15-09.

Gus commented on the City of Grand Rapids' local economic stimulus funded project, which shows the importance of getting a placeholder for projects into the next STIP for potential special federal funding opportunities (re-authorization bill). The federal aid programmed must be at least 30% of the total cost of the project.

Economic Recovery Projects

Two (2) lists of economic stimulus projects were reviewed.

Denny Johnson reviewed the Mn/DOT statewide list (handout). The NE MN ATP has over \$40 million of Mn/DOT projects funded. If additional funding becomes available for redistribution from other states, Mn/DOT has also developed a Tier 2 list of additional candidate projects.

Walter Leu reviewed the local project listing (handout). Walt prioritized the local submitted projects. In Greater Minnesota (outside of the Metro Area) there was \$40 million available for local roads and \$30 million for local bridges. It was disappointing that only a small number of local projects were funded. Approximately \$13 million of local projects were funded in the NE MN ATP.

2013 Project Recommendations

Denny reviewed the project listing (handout) and indicated that all local projects could be funded with the exception of the high cost Joshua Avenue project in the City of Duluth, even though it was the highest priority MIC Area project. There also will have to be some adjustments on the Mn/DOT side, as we are over-programmed by approximately \$11 million. Gus suggested that the TH 1 project in Itasca County and the Joshua Avenue project in Duluth should be dropped from the list.

ACTION ITEM:

A motion was made by Jim Foldesi and seconded by Al Goodman to recommend the 2013 program candidates as submitted with the following changes:

Remove the Highway 1 project in Itasca County and

Remove the Joshua Avenue project and submit it as an “Illustrative Project”. Illustrative Projects are priority projects that do not have specific federal funding assigned and are not “officially “ in the STIP.

Bryan Anderson reviewed the Enhancement Task Force Recommendations for 2013 (handout)

The Enhancement Task Force met in early February with a federal funding target of \$1.5 million. The task force recommends that the following four projects be funded in 2013:

1. Fond du Lac – Cloquet Trail Connection
2. Finland Community and Trail Center
3. Munger Trail Connection Phase II
4. Two Harbors Trail System – Railroad Underpass

ACTION ITEM:

Motion made by Wayne Olson and seconded by Tom Peterson to accept the recommendation of the 2013 enhancement projects.

Draft 2010-2013 ATIP

Gus advised that the 2010-13 program is still a work in progress due to the preliminary economic recovery program and the resulting ATIP program adjustments.

County Board Meetings

Bryan Anderson advised that all county board meetings are scheduled except for St. Louis County.

Other Business

- **Transit Funding**

Don Mohawk reviewed the Office of Transit's economic stimulus candidate project list (handout) and indicated that \$19 million is available statewide for Greater Minnesota and that the DTA may receive a direct appropriation of approximately \$1.5 million. The final decisions will be made on these projects this week. Projects funded would free up funding for other Mn/DOT or local projects in the ATP.

Don distributed a statewide spreadsheet showing the total transit funding by ATP for the years 2004-2012 and the statewide ATP federal target funding formula of which transit is 5% (handout). The spreadsheet shows that the NE MN ATP has been funding transit needs at an average of \$2.3 million/year, which is \$1.0 million/year over our \$1.3 million federal target. Some ATP's have been funding transit needs well under their federal target.

Don said that the Office of Transit also has a \$1 million/year statewide competitive funding program for transit needs that are not funded by the ATP's. Denny said that this is a statewide equity issue and that all ATP's should be eligible to receive these funds and not be penalized for funding transit needs. Some northeast Minnesota county and city representatives have expressed an equity concern that the NE MN ATP has been funding 100% of transit needs, while local and Mn/DOT road and bridge needs must compete for the limited federal funds.

Don said that other transit funding opportunities include federal discretionary (5309) direct and/or statewide congressional awards. DTA staff have indicated that they will be seeking congressionally earmarked funds more aggressively in the future. Denny advised that the DTA now requests funding for 10 vehicles every other year. An option that has been discussed is possibly funding transit needs closer to the \$1.3 million/year target and funding fewer DTA large buses every other year.

There was a lengthy discussion on making a recommendation to the ATP for FY 2014 and beyond to move toward a federal aid target goal of 5 percent for transit. It was the consensus of the Steering Committee to move in this direction and to discuss this further at the full ATP meeting on April 2nd.

- **Enhancement Project Advancement**

Gus mentioned that the Clair Nelson Intermodal Center 2013 enhancement has been requested to be amended into FY 2010 (for construction in 2009) and AC'd to 2013. This will be brought up at the full ATP meeting scheduled for April 2, 2009.

- **Complete Streets Workshop**

James Gittemeier advised that a full day Workshop entitled "Laying the Foundation for Complete Streets" will be held on Thursday, March 12, 2009 at the Hermantown Public Safety building (handout).

Shae Kosmalski advised that she has a PowerPoint presentation on this subject that she presented to Cook County commissioners. If you are interested in receiving a copy of the presentation, contact Shae.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the ATP Steering Committee is scheduled for Monday, June 22, 2009.

The next full ATP meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 2, 2009 at the Hermantown Public Safety building.

Adjourn

Acting Chairman John Welle adjourned the meeting at 12:05 PM.