



RTAC MEETING SUMMARY

February 26, 2015

Cloquet Forestry Center Building: Stine Conference Room
Cloquet, MN

Attendees:

Bryan Anderson	MnDOT
Jason Holliday	Fon du Lac
Mark LeBrun	Pine County
John Welle	Aitkin County
Rex Bordson	State Aid
David Betts	Cook County
Jim Foldesi	St. Louis County
Mike Tardy	Carlton County
Karin Grandia	Itasca County
Krysten Foster	Lake County
Joe Sento	Arrowhead Transit
Cindy Voigt	City of Duluth
Nancy Sannes	MnDOT
John Minor	D1 State Aid
Tom Gottfried	MnDOT Office of Transit
Kelly Christenson	MnDOT Office of Transit
Scott Johnson	MnDOT D1
Bob Manzoline	St. Louis & Lake-Regional Rail Authority
Dennis Jensen	Duluth Transit Authority
Jim Heilig	DTA
Robert Herling	ARDC-MIC
Don Mohawk	MnDOT
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 10:05am
- b) Introductions

2) Committee Business

- a) Call for approval of agenda
- b) Call for approval of meeting summary from February 27, 2014. Motion to approve by John Welle/Mike Tardy; passed unanimously



3) 2015 Program Status

- a) John Minor presented the 2015 local projects. See handout 2015 LOCAL PROJECTS. John presented down the matrix, item by item, highlighting several projects:
 - i) Project 016-070-009, a Chevron PRJ was declined by County Board. It was noted by Karin Grandia that the district wide fund could absorb some of the dollars for this project. Jim Foldesi mentions the Rumble Strip project in St. Louis County could be converted into Cook Co. chevron project as it is also in the safety plan. Grandia and Foldesi will look into these opportunities more closely with the option to recommend dropping the Rumble Strip project and shifting these funds to the 2015 Cook County project at the ATP meeting on April 9, 2015.
 - ii) Project 038-591-001—a SRTS infrastructure project in Lake County. Discussion was had about dropping this project from the STIP. Krysten Foster informed everyone that the Lake County would not use the funds towards preliminary engineering costs. Bryan Anderson noted that the funds would be returned to the state level, ATP 1 does not have the authority to swap the funds. ATP members discussed including a potential reallocation statement to the State upon dropping the project.
 - (1) Bryan Anderson made a motion to make an Amendment to drop Project 038-591-001 from the STIP. Karin Grandia seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.
 - iii) Project 069-090-029 and 069-090-030 pertaining to new segments of the Mesabi Trail require a fund swap to 069-690-013 due a change in reconstruction of Hwy 169/1 between Tower and Bear Head Lake. Bob Manzoline distributed two maps showing portions of proposed trail with correlating STIP numbers. He answered member questions about funding, explaining that this is TE and Legacy Fund grant funded.
 - (1) Mike Tardy made a motion to amend the STIP to swap 069-090-029 and 069-090-030 funds to 069-690-013. Karin Grandia seconded. Passed unanimously.
 - iv) Project 118-090-019, City of Duluth’s Cross-City Trail discussion indicated that this change was approved by the ATP but hasn’t been processed yet.
- b) Nancy Sannes presented MnDOT FY 2015 Projects. See handout MnDOT FY 2015 Projects - 02/17/2015. Nancy presented down the matrix, item by item discussing dates projects have been let. Other projects that Nancy mentioned will be added include Jay Cooke Slope, the Ash River slide near Orr, NCIP Falls to Falls corridor north of Cook, catch basins on Mesaba Avenue in Duluth. A question from John Welle regarding project 5811-12 on MN 70 was fielded by Sannes.

4) Federal Aid Candidate Project FY 2019

- a) Bryan Anderson presented 2019 Targets. During his presentation, Anderson noted that there is an unanticipated over-projection of funds in the 2019 Targets for rural projects. This is due, in part, to Arrowhead Transit not requesting as much as projected.

District One 2018 Targets

- MnDOT: \$75,500,000
- Local program: \$8,000,000
 - Rural/SM Urban Transit: \$1,100,000
 - TA: \$900,000
 - HSIP: \$1,300,000
 - Small Urban/Rural: \$4,700,000

Cities/Counties Funding Target

The diagram illustrates the funding targets for two categories:

- Rural & Small Urban (\$5.8 M):** This target is broken down into a \$2.36 million MPO target, which is further divided into STP (\$2.11 M) and Transit (\$0.25 M). Below this are listed: Duluth, Hermantown, St. Louis Co., DTA, Hibbing, and Fond du lac.
- NE MN ATP (\$3.44 million):** This target is broken down into STP (\$2.59 M) and Transit (\$0.85 M). Below this are listed: Cities > 10K, Counties, and Arrowhead Transit.

Federal Aid Candidate Projects

- St. Louis County CSAH 100 \$1,500,000
- Aitkin County State Aid No. 6 \$500,000
- Arrowhead Transit \$595,000
- Cook County CSAH 12 \$400,000
- DTA \$420,000
- City of Duluth MSAS 134 \$450,000
- St. Louis County Maple Grove Rd \$1,600,000



With an additional \$445,000, another project could almost be funded. This would lead to opening up a solicitation process. A question was asked if this money could also be used by tribal transit. Anderson affirmed and noted that Bois Forte was contacted about these funds. Another question was asked about what these funds could cover. Anderson noted that it was an ATP decision that funds could pay for buses, but not facilities. Also, 2020 projections look like they will be spiking back up. All of the projects could use additional funds; none of them are approaching the 80/20% ceiling. It was recommended that the RTAC make a motion to distribute the \$445,000 evenly amongst the FY 2019 Rural Federal Aid Projects candidates. Mike Tardy made the motion/Krysten Foster. Motion carried unanimously.

- b) Next, Anderson directed the conversation to the Small Urban segment of the 2019 Targets. He mentioned that there will be an additional \$160,000 in this budget because the federal obligation rate was increased. The ATP Workgroup recommended holding tight to the \$250,000 transit level for the MPO, but the RTAC could designate the additional \$160,000 to transit if desired. The ATP Workgroup recommended, instead, of designating these funds to the City of Duluth project and the St. Louis County project. The Duluth project could absorb all of these dollars without bumping up against the 80/20% funding levels. Before proceeding with a motion, there was mention that the Transit discussion may shed light on this decision and it was decided to table this project and return to it following the Transit Office presentation.

5) **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Task Force Update**

- a) Jarrett Valdez distributed a handout which included the findings of the TAP Task Force following their February 10, 2015 meeting. The Task Force prioritization recommends the **Highway 61 Redesign in Cook County/Grand Marias** and the **St. Louis River Trail Project Phase II in Carlton County/Scanlon** projects for FY 2019 TAP funds. Valdez presented a summary of Task Force findings and TAP timelines. Grant recipients will be announced on April 15, 2015.

6) **Transit Discussion**

Tom Gottfried, from the Office of Transit (OT), conducted a discussion about state level proposals to change funding structures to Transit. Gottfried's directive is to maximize public transportation in greater Minnesota. As far as ATPs go, ATP 1 has been a leader in their support of transit—the only ATP who has ever funded 100%. Gottfried distributed a handout and went over Greater MN Transit funding. There was some discussion about motor vehicle sales tax and motor vehicle lease tax component to the funding budget.

Gottfried presented Office of Transit's intentions to assume responsibility, effective in 2019, for Small Urban transit funding including para-transit vehicles. A question was posed where this money will come from. Gottfried responded that it is all Invest funds. There was a discussion about how those invest funds are divided, and the history of the split. (In 2008) Noted that 60% of the Invest funds go to MnDOT to fund roads and bridges, became another fund source for regular transportation projects. 40% goes to transit. Of the 40%, 36% goes to the metro area.



The remaining 4% goes to Greater Minnesota. Additional funds are expected to be added to this 4% in the form of general funds that will be dispersed. For lease taxes, currently, the first \$32 million goes back to general fund, the remaining \$30-40 million is split in half to 5 metro counties for roads and bridges, the other half goes to greater MN transit—forecasting at about \$22 million. Gaining this fund stream for 2015, but it isn't cash flowed until July 1, 2015.

There's a proposal to not hold back that \$32million for the general fund and that would go in to the distribution right away - still 50/50 percent distribution. This is a chance for an additional infusion of dollars. This will have no impact on Targets. It is additional funding—there was a discussion of whether or not the additional funding to help/hinder Small Urban in this ATP.

Discussion was had on ridership/matching bus size. MnDOT has purchased vans in the past/capital replacement of Human Services (like UDAC), MnDOT's goal to get biggest bang for the buck. MnDOT is starting to look at vans in the 2017 solicitation process.

Office of Transit never expected that ATPs would fund Transit at 100%, nor did the OT expect 0%. Office of Transit is proposing to take over Small Urban funding from ATPs. It is the intention of the Office of Transit to cover para-transit vehicles and buses in 2019.

Office of Transit, Small Urban transit needs are off the table for ATPs, OT will take care of the Small Urbans, OT could invest office of transit funding sources, in order to help with statewide equity. Draft STIP due April 9th, prior to December, at the next solicitation, the Office of Transit will have a percentage declaration.

After voicing concerns about perception of removing ATP1 percentage set aside for Transit, a recommendation was that this ATP could make a statement of recognition on an annual basis. We recognize 10% for Transit on an annual basis, but we also recognize that there is another funding source available. Discussion continued about the benefits for keeping the Transit percentage whole for 2019 was had. The \$250,000 for Transit could, in theory, be \$0 but the DTA would still get their buses. If we keep the numbers in, could we lose out on this whole process? Discussion to other ATPs—it might be better to fund projects. Gottfried noted that the ATP can draft comments that will be included in a statewide ATP Transit Discussion Summary. Gottfried again noted that ATP1 has had an excellent track record of partnership in regard to funding transit.

At this point, Bryan Anderson indicates that a plan about what to do with these funds needs to happen now in order for projects to amend paperwork due April 15, 2015. He noted that the St. Louis County project is at the 80/20 ceiling.

Discussion continued on making a motion to transfer the \$160,000 additional funds and the \$250,000 Small Urban Transit dedicated funds to the City of Duluth Project. The City of Duluth project could absorb it—discussion on the Solicitation covering the DTA for the \$250,000 and feelings of not wanting to reverse this procedure.



An argument of leaving it as is until that money is guaranteed prior to transferring is that it can be difficult to redistribute the funds. If ATP 1 gives the DTA \$250,000, will OT still guarantee that they will receive the \$250,000 from the state office? This ATP doesn't want to donate money. Tom Gottfried guaranteed that State Office of Transit will be dedicating the \$250,000 to the DTA.

Motion to transfer the \$160,000 additional MPO funds and the \$250,000 Small Urban Transit (has to be spent in the MPO) dedicated funds to the City of Duluth Project contingent on the City's ability to absorb the funds by John Welle/second by Karin Grandia – approved unanimously.

7) Other Business

- a) ARDC will email RTAC update
- b) Please submit project ideas for 2016 RTAC Planning projects to Jarrett Valdez via email (jvaldez@ardc.org)
- c) County Team/Board Meetings are scheduled—need to schedule with St. Louis County and Koochiching
- d) ATP Meeting in Hermantown, from 10:00am-11:30am on April 9th
- e) Nancy Sannes reported on her 2019 project matrix—Blatnik repainting will be funded centrally, so MnDOT will be adding three more bridges: Deer Creek, CN Railroad bridge and bridge over 73 in Hibbing

8) Adjourn

- a) Motion to adjourn at 12:35pm by Jim Foldesi/Karin Grandia