



RTAC MEETING SUMMARY  
April 4, 2013  
Hermantown Government Services Building  
Hermantown, MN

Attendees:

Alan Goodman	Area County Engineers
Bill Bennett	Chambers
Brian Boder	St. Louis County
Bruce Martinson	Cook County
Bryan Anderson	Mn/DOT
Cavour Johnson	Pedestrian/Bicycles
Cindy Voigt	City of Duluth
Dave Christy	Itasca County
Don Mohawk	Mn/DOT
Jack Larson	Arrowhead Transit/Rural Transit
Jesse Story	Hibbing
John Welle	Aitkin County
Julie Myhre	Carlton-Cook-Lake-St. Louis CHB
Mark LeBrun	Pine County
Mike Forsman	St. Louis County
Mike Tardy	Carlton County
Steve Kniefel	SLC Townships
Sue Erzar	Itasca County Public Health
Walter Leu	Mn/DOT State Aid
Will Hoyt	Koochiching County
Andy Hubley	ARDC
Ellen Pillsbury	ARDC
Jon Mason	ARDC
Liz Sarabia	ARDC

1. Welcome and Introductions

Call to order by John Welle, Chair at 12:10 PM. Introductions followed.

## 2. Committee Business

Call for approval of the agenda. Motion by Jack Larson/Bill Bennett, no changes; passed unanimously.

Call for approval of the January 10, 2013, Meeting Summary. Motion by Jack Larson/Bryan Anderson, no changes or discussion; passed unanimously.

Call for approval of the February 25, 2013, ATP Steering Committee Meeting Summary. Motion by Walter Leu/Dave Christy, no changes or discussion; passed unanimously.

## 3. ATP Steering Committee and RTAC Merger

Jon Mason reported that directives under the MAP-21 federal transportation bill and from MnDOT have led to a change in the role of the ATP and funding. The ATP approved the merger of the RTAC and the ATP Steering Committee. This change brings a larger RTAC membership, meetings will now be four times per year, and members will be providing input on changes to the Area Transportation Improvement Plan and ATP as needed. The responsibilities of the RTAC will continue. A list of the members was included in the meeting packets, but lacked the changes made at the ATP meeting just prior to this meeting.

## 4. Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Task Force

After being introduced to TAP at the January, 2013, meeting of the RTAC, Jon Mason related the most recent activity. A new task force was created to develop recommendations for the FY 2017 and FY 2018 TAP solicitation process (see Process Recommendation Chart). They met on 3/25/2013 to develop these recommendations. Jon proceeded to review the process recommendations. Walter Leu provided an overview for new members on RTAC that may not be familiar with the ATP.

## 5. ATIP Update

Updates and action items for the Area Transportation Improvement Program (ATIP) will now be the responsibility of the RTAC.

## 6. RTAC Project Updates

A review of the current RTAC projects was provided by Jon Mason and Ellen Pillsbury. They are Waters of the Dancing Sky Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan, the Economic Benefits of Transportation Projects, County Transit Service Planning and Active Living.

Jon reviewed the steps that have taken place to date for the Waters of the Dancing Sky SB CMP. Several meetings have taken place where the intrinsic values and vision for the byway have been identified and developed. There are still public meetings to be held for review of the draft plan. The plan for the byway will be completed by June, 2013.

For the project, Economic Benefits of Transportation Projects, staff has been researching opportunities to evaluate the economic benefits. This research has led ARDC include a special section in comprehensive plans and more detailed section in transportation plans. Staff will be looking at programs such as the DNR Local Trails Connections, etc. for data relating to land and development potential, long term maintenance needs, and other points for their benefits.

After the completion of the 2011 Local Human Services Transit Coordination Plan, ARDC was contacted by county human services partners. The result was the County Transit Service Planning project. After meeting with various stakeholders and transit services, the project has become focused on veterans' needs. The impact of the MAP-21 changes to transit funding is also being taken into consideration. Discussion followed regarding veteran transportation, policies, etc.

Ellen Pillsbury provided the update on Active Living. She gave a recap of the Community Transformation Grant which supports active living efforts in the region. Staff has been applying for planning dollars for several communities. The Gitchi Gami trail which was recently been funded is an example of those efforts.

#### Additional ARDC Transportation Projects

Included with the review of the RTAC projects, ARDC staff presented updates for project that are not funded through RTAC.

Hwy 210/Jay Cooke Plan came about due to the flooding in 2012. It is an investigation of alternate routes for the portion of 210 which is closed, whether 210 should be reopened, etc. Once the recommendations are complete, they will be presented to MnDOT for further action.

The Helmet Hero has some remaining funds and a few schools will receive helmets and bicycle education. It is possible that additional funds may become available. Some discussion followed regarding the value this project brings to SRTS plans and communities.

A project just getting underway is the Western Iron Range Transportation Impact Study which will identify the impacts of present and future development of major industry on the portion of Hwy 169 known as the Cross Range Expressway. A

meeting with the Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board is scheduled for April 11<sup>th</sup>.

Bruce Martinson has been key to moving the Gitchi Gami Trail forward which has been in development since the 1990's. Cook County received a STAR grant and match is being provided by Cook and Lake Counties and the Gitchi Gami Trail Association for this project. The outcome will be a plan that will present strategies and priorities for completing the trail, potential funding sources and will establish a new MOU for the participants.

## 7. FY 2014 RTAC Planning Grant

Jon Mason presented the FY 2014 proposed RTAC projects. These projects will be proposed to MnDOT then presented to the RTAC in June for approval to be included in the FY 2014 Work Plan. If anyone knows of additional projects that may benefit from RTAC Planning funds, they should contact Jon Mason or Andy Hubley to discuss the project.

Orr Downtown Improvement Design Project would be for the implementation of their design project which is currently underway and will be completed this spring. When Orr completed their comprehensive plan, so many places were closed in the City and there was a lot of economic hardship. However, they have working steadily at making changes and they have been great strides. Andy Hubley reported that they recently purchased their former school and they now have control so that it doesn't become a blighted property.

After submitting applications for SRTS early this year, ARDC received less funding than requested and proposes to use RTAC Planning funds to help off-set the remaining costs. There are five infrastructure applications still waiting to be determined. Once a SRTS plan is completed, communities start undertaking making more changes, some through Statewide Health Initiative Program. ARDC and the SHIP coordinators have developed a great partnership.

The International Falls Gateway Project Implementation is a continuing effort of the IF Area Gateway Corridor Task Force that was formed in 2006. Construction will begin in 2014; however, an additional effort is being put forth to develop a plan for the fire tower. RTAC funds would be used for the implementation steps and to explore development of the tower as a regional attraction.

ARDC has been assisting the North Shore Scenic Drive Council with staffing services and assistance on several projects such as the Beaver Bay Trailhead, the Temperance River Wayside, the NSSD ADA Plan, and the Caribou Falls State Wayside which is a pending project. The partnership between ARDC and the Council assure that there is consistency along the North Shore Scenic Drive. There have many projects and lots of community support to make the drive

recognizable and an enhanced experience for the traveler. RTAC funds would be used to facilitate meetings of the Council and assist with project development.

The Superior National Forest Scenic Byway Interpretive Plan was completed in July 2012. ARDC had provided assistance to the SNF SB Council with the development of the plan and now the Council would like to work toward its implementation. ARDC proposes to use RTAC funds to assist the Council to implement projects from the Interpretive Plan.

There are lots of formal and informal park & ride locations throughout the region. ARDC proposes to use GIS and an attribute table to identify and describe each location, especially the informal sites, and develop an inventory to be used by transit providers, MnDOT, etc.

The last project proposed would a Regional Sidewalk Inventory Plan Scoping which would determine the cost of a systemic process to inventory the sidewalks throughout the region and their condition. An inventory would expedite sidewalk repairs or connections in critical areas and would include ADA. Some inventories have been completed as part of the SRTS program. RTAC funds would be used for this scope, additional funding would be sought for the actual inventory.

#### 8. Other Business

The next meeting of the RTAC will be held out in the Region. It was suggested maybe in Grand Rapids or Virginia. The meeting will be held the last week in June.

Some discussion followed regarding having ARDC involved as resource for the CMIS and to reach out to the Economic Development Association.

#### 9. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 1:05 PM.

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