

Sustainable Transportation Advisory Council, Meeting #7

Date: Thursday, March 18
Time: 11:00 am – 12:30 pm
Location: MS Teams

Meeting goals:

- Discuss the MnDOT response to recommendations
- Identify opportunities for communicating report/responses
- Begin conversation about next steps for the STAC

Agenda

10:30 Optional – MnDOT staff will be available for technical support before the official meeting starts at 11 am

10:55 Technology Introduction and Announcements – Tim Sexton and Emily Houser

11:00 Co-Chairs' Welcome – Margaret Anderson Kelliher, MnDOT Commissioner, and Christopher Clark, President of Xcel Energy MN, SD, ND

11:05 Member Introductions – Tim Sexton

- Name, role, organization
- Please keep to 30 seconds

11:10 Review MnDOT response to STAC recommendations – Siri Simons, Nissa Tupper, Tim Sexton

- Overview of MnDOT review and response process – Tim
- Fueling & Powering Transportation responses – Siri
- VMT and Transportation Options – Nissa and Tim

The MnDOT team will review responses and provide time for discussion/reaction from STAC members.

11:55 Communicating recommendations and response – Jake Loesch (MnDOT Communications Director)

- Describe MnDOT ideas and get STAC ideas

12:05 STAC v2.0: what is next and how to move forward – Ben Lowndes and Commissioner Anderson Kelliher

12:15 Public Comment Period – Ben Lowndes

12:30 Adjourn

Sustainable Transportation Advisory Council Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, March 18, 2021

Time: 11:00am -12:30pm

Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Action Items:

1. MnDOT will follow up with the workgroup co-chairs to collaborate on the Op-ed within the week (March 25).
2. MnDOT will send meeting notes 1 week from today (March 25).

Attendees

Council Members Present

- 1) Margaret Anderson Kelliher (Co-chair)
- 2) Chris Clark (Co-chair)
- 3) Katie Frye
- 4) Dorian Grilley
- 5) Greg Ilkka
- 6) Katie Jones
- 7) Ashwat Narayanan
- 8) Michael Noble
- 9) Rolf Nordstrom
- 10) Daniel Schellhammer
- 11) Patrick Seeb
- 12) LaShella Sims
- 13) Russ Stark
- 14) Emma Struss
- 15) Vishnu Laalitha Surapaneni
- 16) Nick Thompson
- 17) Lisa Thurstin
- 18) Peter Wagenius
- 19) Tara Wetzel

Council Members Absent

- 1) Katie Bell
- 2) Sen. Scott Dibble
- 3) Rep. Frank Hornstein
- 4) Sen. Scott Newman

MnDOT Staff Present

Emily Houser, MnDOT
Jake Loesch, MnDOT (communications)
Ben Lowndes, MnDOT (facilitator)
Tim Sexton, MnDOT
Siri Simons, MnDOT
Nissa Tupper, MnDOT
Jeffrey Meek, MnDOT

Public Comment

Michele Molstead, St. Paul resident

Meeting Notes

Technology Introductions and Announcements

Tim Sexton introduced the technology platform for the meeting with best practices.

Co-Chairs' Welcome

Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) Commissioner Margaret Anderson Kelliher and co-chair Chris Clark, Xcel Energy, welcomed council members and attendees.

Commissioner Anderson Kelliher thanked the STAC for their efforts and acknowledged that MnDOT responses included coordination with many MnDOT offices as well as other state agencies. The partnership with the STAC plays an important role and MnDOT is appreciative of the ongoing commitment by the STAC members.

Chris thanked the STAC members for their work over the past year, noting that it's created a solid foundation for moving forward.

Member Introductions

Council members introduced themselves and the organizations they represent.

Review MnDOT Response to STAC Recommendations

Siri Simons described the MnDOT response to the Fueling and Powering Transportation recommendations.

Fueling and Powering Transportation Workgroup

Recommendation #1: Develop a clean fuels policy—Support

The state has a clear role in supporting clean fuels to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the MnDOT role is defined in statute. MnDOT leads the interagency Transportation Action Team for the Governor's Climate Change Subcabinet that identified a Clean Fuels Policy as a strategy for the state to reduce carbon pollution from transportation. Also, the Governor's Council on Biofuels identified a Clean Fuels Policy as a recommended strategy to reduce carbon pollution from transportation and support the agricultural economy in Minnesota.

MnDOT supports this recommendation. In January, Governor Walz released the Administration's budget proposal that includes funding for MnDOT to lead a stakeholder process to develop a Clean Fuels Policy for the state. The process would build on existing work facilitated by GPI and include goals consistent with those proposed by the STAC and the Governor's Council on Biofuels. The goal would be to outline the framework for a Clean Fuels Policy that meets the specific needs identified by Minnesota communities, farmers, and business.

Recommendation #2: Establish EV rebates—Explore Further

The State of Minnesota does not currently provide rebates to purchase EVs or e-bikes. However, in 2019, MnDOT began a first in the nation three-year pilot project to give a one-time MnPass account credit to eligible EV drivers to use MnPASS managed lanes. Also, several utilities in Minnesota offer utility-specific programs to promote EVs and several Minnesota utilities also offer rebates for purchasing Level 2 EV chargers.

MnDOT will explore this recommendation in 2021. MnDOT supports efforts, however the agency does not have legislative or funding authority to provide direct rebates for EVs. The decision to create state incentives for EV and e-bikes is made by the Governor and the state legislature. MnDOT will continue to evaluate the MnPASS EV pilot and consider expansion beyond the current 3-year period.

Recommendation #3: Increase investment in charging infrastructure—Support

The State of Minnesota is currently investing in EV charging infrastructure beyond the VW settlement grants distributed by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Minnesota state agencies are investing in EV chargers at state-owned facilities, the Minnesota State Legislature passed a bonding bill in 2020 that included \$2 million for EV charging infrastructure on state-owned property, and MnDOT also worked closely with the STAC to develop the Clean Transportation Pilot program.

MnDOT supports this recommendation. The 2021 Governor's budget proposal includes funding for MnDOT to install EV chargers and more strategic opportunities for EV chargers will be identified in the Minnesota 2021 EV Strategic Plan.

Second Tier Recommendations

- **Minnesota becomes a signatory on a multi-state EV charging corridor MOU with other Midwestern states:** MnDOT is re-engaging states to about the potential for signing the MOU.
- **Examine value of NextGen highways, update Minnesota's utility accommodation plan, initiate multi-stakeholder process, including opportunities to integrate other infrastructure:** MnDOT is participating in an external steering committee to clarify opportunities/challenges to co-locate broadband and electricity transmission in highway right-of-way.
- **Develop a state-level plan to support medium/heavy duty electric vehicles:** MnDOT began the Minnesota EV Strategic Plan process in February 2021. STAC representatives are invited to join the Technical Advisory Committee for the plan.
- **Policy incentives to support increased manufacturing of EVs and EV supply chain:** MnDOT is exploring opportunities related to this recommendation. The Minnesota EV Strategic Plan may include opportunities for the state to support increased EV manufacturing and EV supply chain jobs.
- **Minnesota becomes a signatory on a Zero Emissions Vehicle truck and bus MOU:** MnDOT is re-engaging states about the potential for signing the MOU.

Discussion

- *Role of MnDOT on external committee for Next Generation Highways?* MnDOT invited to participate.
- *Will the Metropolitan's Council decision to not purchase electric buses impact electrification goals?* The ultimate goal remains to electrify the fleet, but the Council determined electric buses may not be the best option for this purchase.
- *Consideration of electrification or biofuels for the railroad system?* This can be focus area for 2021.

Reduce VMT and Improve Transportation Options

Tim Sexton and Nissa Tupper provided an update about the MnDOT response to the Reduce VMT and Improve Transportation Options recommendations.

Recommendation #1: Adopt a statewide VMT goal—Support

MnDOT recognizes that Minnesota will not be able to achieve our state greenhouse gas emission reduction goals without reducing VMT. MnDOT’s previous engagement efforts, including through the Pathways to Decarbonizing Transportation, did suggest that Minnesotans are supportive of setting a VMT reduction goal, but that work didn’t introduce a specific goal to the public and stakeholders.

MnDOT supports a preliminary statewide and per capita goal that will be finalized after engagement as part of the Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan (SMTP) process. There are different opportunities in urban and rural communities for VMT reduction and related goals must acknowledge those differences. MnDOT will explore creating a new intergovernmental climate change council to coordinate this and related efforts with partner agencies, cities, and counties.

Recommendation #2: Stop expanding highway capacity to reduce congestion—Explore Further

Reducing congestion requires multiple strategies and extensive partner collaboration. Highway capacity will remain a low priority for MnDOT given our current capital investment direction and tiered approach to mobility investment. The Minnesota State Highway Transportation Plan (MnSHIP), currently dedicates 70% of funds to maintaining the existing system. This reflects stakeholder feedback for us to prioritize maintenance and operations over expansion. The tiered mobility investment approach lists strategic expansion as the lowest priority only if other lower-cost, higher-benefit strategies aren’t able to meet the needs. There are other influences on expansion to consider, such as the Corridors of Commerce program, the Transportation Economic Development program, and projects partially funded locally, which can fund expansion projects on the state highway system.

MnDOT will work with partners to evaluate long-term agency actions that can reduce congestion by other means than highway capacity expansion. This includes adding a new, first tier for travel demand management to the mobility investment approach along with a new, transparent reporting process to share project decisions related to the tiered approach. MnDOT will also engage the STAC with its Complete Streets update and upcoming planning processes, including MnSHIP/SMTP updates and the proposed intergovernmental council.

Recommendation #3: Prioritize transit and HOVs on MnDOT-owned right of way—Support

In the Metro, MnDOT is already prioritizes transit and high occupancy vehicles through managing and expanding the MnPASS and bus-only shoulders system. MnDOT works with multiple transportation partners to coordinate on transit, for example through the Transit Advantages program and by supporting Light Rail Transit and Bus Rapid Transit projects that impact the state trunk highway system.

MnDOT will support this recommendation by building on current efforts. STAC will be engaged in upcoming planning processes, including the MnSHIP and SMTP updates, as well as the newly proposed intergovernmental council. MnDOT will also work with the STAC on a communications strategy to highlight and promote the benefits of transit and HOV through the lens of sustainability and public health.

Second Tier Recommendations

- **Conduct a spending audit across project categories to identify areas where there may be flexibility in spending with the goal of moving funds away from highway capacity expansion and into maintenance,**

public transit, biking, and walking: MnDOT will encourage the STAC to engage in the MnSHIP update process and will also provide a list of capacity expansion projects currently included in the 4-year State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

- **Support efforts by local governments to dedicate their right of way to low carbon and active transportation:** MnDOT currently supports this several programs and partnerships, including active transportation funding and technical assistance, Complete Streets, the Clean Transportation Pilot Funding Program, and the Metropolitan Council EV Planning study.
- **Discard auto-centric metrics like LOS, in favor of people-centered metrics like reducing VMT, providing choices for the maximum number of travelers, and accessibility and safety for all users:** MnDOT began a pilot in 2020 to test tools to measure accessibility and multimodal access to community destinations. MnDOT will continue the pilot in 2021 and evaluate potential to incorporate multimodal accessibility tools into agency project decisions, including calculating induced demand.

Discussion

- *Clarify reason for per capita focus of the VMT reduction goal?* The overall goal is a statewide VMT reduction goal but it's important to address the influence of population. Both measures important and need to be explored further by MnDOT. The baseline for VMT reduction would be from a recent year and not based on population forecasts.
- *Does MnDOT plan to do interim work before completion of MnSHIP/SMTP?* MnDOT wants to build on our asset management approach, where most funding is dedicated to preserving and maintaining the current system. The MnSHIP and SMTP process have robust public engagement that are important to formulate goals and increase understanding.
- *If the VMT reduction goal is directed to 2050, how can we infuse urgency through interim goals or working with communities who are ready to start earlier?* There is potential for interim goals and partners. MnDOT is committed to forming an intergovernmental group to address on greenhouse gas emissions reduction to reduce VMT with partners.

Communicating Recommendations and Response

Jake Loesch, Communications Director at MnDOT, provided an overview of MnDOT's communication plans related to the STAC 2020 recommendations and MnDOT's responses. Communication about the recommendations and responses will be ongoing for MnDOT moving forward. In the short-term MnDOT plans to communicate through agency social media channels and would like to collaborate with the STAC on an Op-ed in the future.

Public Comment Period

- Michele Molstead, St. Paul resident

Next Steps – Action Items

1. MnDOT will follow up with workgroup co-chairs to collaborate on the Op-ed.
2. MnDOT will send meeting notes to STAC and post online.

Connection Point

Something fun while you wait – feel free to enter responses in the chat box or share verbally

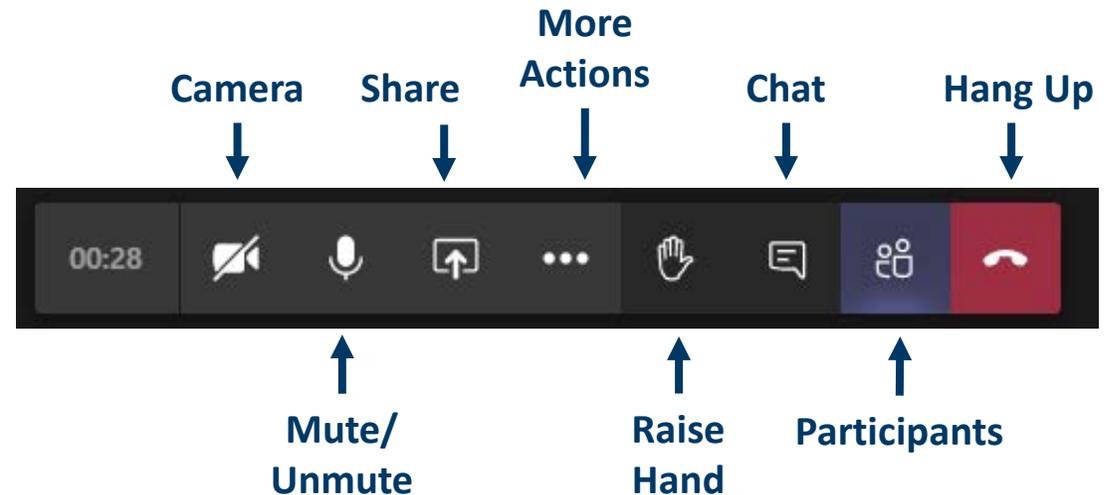
What is your favorite thing to plant in the spring?

OR

What are you most excited about for spring?

Technology Introduction

- Please mute your microphones unless speaking
- Click on the chat/participant icon to open the chat box/participants list
- For questions, use the raise hand button or comment in the chat
- MnDOT staff will call on members or read comments if there are audio issues
 - Please unmute your microphone and consider turning on your video if you are called on
- Discussion is for members only until the public comment period





Sustainable Transportation Advisory Council

Meeting #2

Thursday, March 18, 2021

- Technology Introduction and Announcements
- Co-Chairs' Welcome
- Member Introductions
- Review MnDOT response to STAC recommendations
- Communicating recommendations and response
- STAC v2.0: what is next and how to move forward
- Public Comment Period

Public Comment Period Instructions

- Discussion is for members only until the public comment period
- Public comment period at end of meeting at approximately 12:20 pm
- If you are a member of the public here to provide a comment, please send your name to Emily Houser in the chat before 12:00 pm

Co-Chairs Welcome



Chris Clark

President, Xcel Energy – Minnesota,
South Dakota, North Dakota



Margaret Anderson Kelliher

Commissioner, MnDOT

Member Introductions

- Name
- Role
- Organization

Please try keeping to 30 seconds

MnDOT response to STAC recommendations

MnDOT Review and Response Process

Powering and Fueling Transportation WG

Recommendation #1: Develop a clean fuels policy

MnDOT Related Activities

- Support clean fuels to reduce GHG emissions
- Governor's Climate Change Subcabinet and Governor's Council on Biofuels identified a Clean Fuels as a policy priority

MnDOT Proposed Action

Support:

The 2021 Governor's budget proposal includes funding for MnDOT to lead a stakeholder process to develop a Clean Fuels Policy for the state

Powering and Fueling Transportation WG

Recommendation #2: Establish rebates for public and private light-, medium-, and heavy duty- EVs, including dealership support and consumer rebates

MnDOT Related Activities

- In 2019, MnDOT began a three-year pilot to give a one-time MnPASS account credit to eligible EV drivers
- Several utilities in MN provide incentives for EV charging rates and Level 2 charger rebates

MnDOT Proposed Action

Explore Further:

Support efforts by Governor and legislature to promote EV use.

Powering and Fueling Transportation WG

Recommendation #3: Increase investment in EV charging infrastructure, beyond existing VW settlement investments

MnDOT Related Activities

- Current investment in EV chargers at State Facilities
- Bond funding for additional state agency EV chargers
- Clean Transportation Pilot Funding Program
- MPCA Small Grants for Fleets

MnDOT Proposed Action

Support:

The 2021 Governor's budget proposal includes funding for MnDOT to install EV chargers and more strategic opportunities for EV chargers will be identified in the Minnesota 2021 EV Strategic Plan

Powering and Fueling Transportation WG

Additional Fueling and Powering Transportation workgroup recommendations:

- **Minnesota signs a multi-state EV charging corridor Memorandum of Understanding:**
Re-engage states about the potential for signing the MOU.
- **Examine value of NextGen highways:**
External steering committee to clarify opportunities/challenges to co-locate broadband and electricity transmission in highway right-of-way.
- **Develop a state-level plan to support medium/heavy duty electric vehicles:**
EV Strategic Plan process began in February 2021. STAC representatives invited to join Technical Advisory Committee for the plan.
- **Incentives to support increased manufacturing of EVs:**
Explore opportunities and agency role to support EV manufacturing.
- **Minnesota signs on a Zero Emissions Vehicle truck and bus MOU:**
Re-engage states about the potential for signing the MOU.

Reduce VMT & Improve Transportation Options WG

Recommendation #1: Adopt a statewide goal of reducing VMT by 20% by 2050

MnDOT Related Activities

- Improve understanding of a VMT goal
- Understand ways to evaluate VMT in projects and plans
- Tracking and reporting VMT

MnDOT Proposed Action

Support:

Adopt a preliminary statewide and per capita goal that will be finalized after engagement as part of the SMTP process.

Reduce VMT & Improve Transportation Options WG

Recommendation #2: Stop expanding highway capacity to reduce congestion

MnDOT Related Activities	MnDOT Proposed Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alignment with Minnesota GO 50-year vision• 4-tier mobility investment strategy• Regional planning coordination	<p>Explore Further: Capacity expansion remains the lowest priority to address congestion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New, first tier for TDM to the mobility investment strategy and report mobility project decisions.• Engage STAC in upcoming planning processes (MnSHIP, SMTP, new proposed intergovernmental working group).

Reduce VMT & Improve Transportation Options WG

Recommendation #3: Prioritize transit and high occupancy vehicles on MnDOT owned right of way

MnDOT Related Activities

- Manage and expand MnPASS lanes and bus-only shoulders system
- Regional coordination (Transit Advantages program, MnDOT involvement with METC light rail transit and bus rapid transit projects)

MnDOT Proposed Action

Support:

- MnDOT will continue to support this recommendation and build on current efforts:
- Engage STAC in current policy and planning efforts: MnSHIP and SMTP
 - Engage STAC in regional coordination
 - Develop a communications strategy

Reduce VMT & Improve Transportation Options WG

Additional VMT and Transportation Options workgroup recommendations:

- **Conduct a spending audit across project categories:**
Encourage engagement in MnSHIP and provide a list of capacity expansion projects included in the STIP.
- **Support efforts by local governments to dedicate their right of way to low carbon and active transportation:**
Explore opportunities and MnDOT's role to engage in this area.
- **Discard auto-centric metrics like Level of Service (LOS), in favor of people-centered metrics like reducing VMT, providing choices for the maximum number of travelers, and accessibility and safety for all users:**
Advance the current pilot with SSTI to incorporate multimodal tools into project decisions, including calculating induced demand.

Communicating recommendations and response

MnDOT initial thinking:

- Op-ed
- Social media



How would STAC members like to be involved?

STAC in 2021 and Beyond

Resilience Workgroup Updates

- Key focus areas for 2021
 - Resilience opportunities within design build
 - Proactive asset management
 - Define and measure sustainability and resilience within the transportation system
- Progress to date
- Hennepin County has joined working group

Public Comment Period

www.dot.state.mn.us/sustainability/

Thank you!

2021 Draft Calendar

Activity	Deadline	Notes
MnDOT coordinates response to STAC 2020 recs.	March 2021	
STAC #1 meeting	February 18, 2021	Debrief on 2020 process, gather STAC feedback; MnDOT brings draft responses and questions to STAC
MnDOT formal response to STAC	March 18, 2021	
STAC #2 meeting	March 18, 2021	MnDOT presents final responses, discuss next steps with STAC
Form STAC Funding Transportation workgroup	May 2021	MnDOT solicits participation from STAC, organize first meeting
STAC #3 meeting	May 24, 2021	Workgroup updates (updated priorities based on MnDOT response & engagement)
STAC workgroup coordination	July 2021	MnDOT facilitates cross-workgroup coordination on draft 2021 recommendations
STAC #4 meeting	July 22, 2021	STAC outline of draft 2021 recommendations, Discuss workgroup co-chair roles for 2022
STAC workgroup coordination	September 2021	MnDOT facilitates cross-workgroup coordination on draft 2021 recommendations
STAC #5 meeting	September 22, 2021	STAC updated 2021 draft recommendations, discuss equity implications
STAC workgroup coordination	November 2021	MnDOT facilitates cross-workgroup coordination on final 2021 recommendations
STAC #6 meeting	November 16, 2021	STAC updated 2021 draft recommendations
STAC #7 meeting	December 15, 2021	STAC final 2021 recommendations due