



SOUTHWEST MN AREA TRANSPORTATION PARTNERSHIP (ATP) Meeting Minutes

Date: March 5, 2021

Minutes prepared by: Megan M. DeSchepper, AICP, Senior Planner

Location: Teams Virtual Meeting

Attendance

ATP Board Members: Bob Byrnes, Rollie Nissen, Gary Johnson, Mic VanDeVere, Sam Muntean, Doug Krueger, Bill Pauling, Lindsey Bruer, Joe Wilson, Jeff Marlowe, Tiffany Collins, Susann Karnowski, Jon Huseby, Mark Larson, and Todd Broadwell.

ATP Guests: Randy Groves, Chad Kingstrom, Jason Anderson, John Brunkhorst, Mikayla Holm, Chuck DeWolf, Aaron Backman, Ted Nelson, Phil Schmalz, Kent Exner, Eric Day, Kyle Ten Napel, Dan Coughlin, Dave Smiglewski, Justin Black, Thomas Cherveney, Jeremy Gilb, Mandi Schmidt, Tony Pfau, Mel Odens, Nick Bergman, John Groothius, Ron Mortensen, Jeff Filipek, Megan DeSchepper, Sean Christensen, Rosemary Bruce-White, Paul Torkelson, Bill Knofczynski and Sandra Schlagel.

Welcome & Introductions (Bob Byrnes)

- Introductions were conducted.

Teams Overview (Megan DeSchepper)

- Megan explained the nuances of the Teams platform for users such as muting the speaker, using the camera, and if there are any questions to place them in the chat box or use the raise hand feature etc.

Please Note: All handouts can be found at the ATP 8 website under the March 5, 2021 meeting:
<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/d8/atp/meetings.html>

Approval of December Minutes (Bob Byrnes)

- A motion was made by Mr. Nissen, seconded by Mr. Krueger, to approve the minutes from the December meeting as presented. The motion carried. (see minutes online)

MnDOT Program & Project Updates (Susann Karnowski)

- Susann presented project changes from fiscal year (FY) 2022 through FY 2025 MnDOT Project. The comparison of projects was done on the final FY 2021 to FY 2024 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) versus the draft FY 2022 to FY 2025 MnDOT project list (as of 3/5/2021). (see handout online)

Presentation of FY 2025 Project Recommendations

- Susann presented the 2025 Area Transportation Improvement Program (ATIP) project list and map. (see handout online).
- Todd Broadwell spoke about the 2025 Local Road and Bridge projects. (see handout online)
- Ron Mortensen talked about the Local Partnership Program Project for FY 2025. (see handout online).
- Lindsey Bruer presented the 2025 Transportation Alternatives recommended Projects. The Local Rail Projects, and the Local and MnDOT HSIP Projects (see handout and maps online).
 - Bob Byrnes asked if the crossing upgrades are due to increased RR use from the Willmar Wye? Lindsey reached out to the rail office and scoring of the rail projects is not based just on train volume, but skew, train speed, sight lines amongst other safety factors. All of which combined caused the projects to score well.
 - Bill Pauling inquired about how the cost is split between the State and RR with the RR crossing improvements. Lindsey explained the split is usually 80/20 with MnDOT's Rail Office paying 80% and the local government paying 20% of the rail crossing improvements. Occasionally the railroad contributes to the project as well.
- Rosemary Bruce-White announced the Southwest Regional Development Commission (SRDC) Annual ATIP Public Meeting will be held on April 1, 2021 from 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm virtually.
- Kyle Ten Napel with the Mid-Minnesota Regional Development Commission (MMDC) updated the ATP that a date hasn't been set yet, but that it will be late March or early April and will also be done virtually. They will use social media such as Facebook to help with outreach as well.
- Chad Kingstrom from the Upper Minnesota River Valley Regional Development Commission (UMVRDC) said they too have yet to set their meeting but will do so and host it virtually as well. They plan using social media outreach efforts too.

Legislative Update (Paul Torkelson)

- Representative Paul Torkelson joined the meeting for a quick legislative update.
- He is no longer the lead on Transportation Committee, he is focusing on redistricting this year.
- He is working on a self-selected project of evaluating the Corridors of Commerce Program. He feels the program is valuable but needs the legislative involvement, regional balance, and selection process to be looked at.

- The Governors Transportation Bill was slim, Rep. Torkelson would like to see more sales tax revenue go for Transportation (to the Highway Users Tax Distribution Fund, HUTDF).
- He updated the ATP on some policy issues with Transit, they received more money due to issues with COVID and reduced ridership.
- He would like to see more infrastructure dollars set for Highways through a federal transportation bill or COVID relief bill.

Transit Update (Tiffany Collins)

- Tiffany presented an update on the various Transit providers, funding, and replacement schedule for District 8. (see handout online)

District Engineer Update (Jon Huseby)

- Jon welcomed Bill Pauling to the ATP, Bill is the new Chippewa County Commissioner, and representing the UMRVDC on the ATP.
- The February forecast update for the trunk highway fund, which comes from highway users tax distribution fund (which includes- gas tax, car sales tax, tab fees, & auto parts tax). Was down about \$2.49 Million from 2020 but is coming back now (minimal .1% down). Expect slower revenue growth (lower inflation).
- The Trunk Highway Fund, which is the user tax and Federal funds, is keeping projects on track. There is some bonding capacity but are nearing the bonding limits.
- Some special Federal Funding through the CARES Act \$2.2 Billion, none of which went to roads and bridges, but \$1.58M to Airport, \$312 M to Transit (\$58M to Greater MN Transit).
- CRRSA Act brought \$164M to Mn for roads and bridges which includes state and local roads as well as airports and transit.
- The Legislature is looking for ways to put money towards Transportation.
- D8 is still working in partnership with Yellow Medicine County to reroute the TH 67 slope failure area. Looking to reroute to TH 274 to County Rd. 2 to TH 67 where it would be usable again. MnDOT appreciates working with the County on the project. For more information about this project, see the project website.

Round Robin & Legislature Q & A

- Gary Johnson thanked the State and the work put in on TH 67 project, with ultimately minimal cost to the County. He asked for updates on the TH 23 Gap projects, TH 23 and TH 7 Intersection Study, and the shoulder widening study.
 - Susann shared that the North Gap will be constructed starting in 2022 (with a two-year construction period). And the South Gap will be started in 2023 (also with a two-year construction period). They are on schedule to be let this November.

- Lindsey talked about the TH 23/7 Intersection Control Study, which is about halfway through the process. A survey was recently given out to the public to provide input about the intersection and MnDOT had a good response rate of 636 respondents.
- Lindsey spoke about the shoulder widening study which will help prioritize shoulder widening for shoulders that are under 6' in width. The study will be completed this summer, there are no widening projects in the STIP or the CHIP as D8 is waiting for the study recommendations. Considerations for priorities include safety, multimodal uses, constructability, cost/benefit, and connectivity.
- Bob updated the group about the MN Transportation Alliance Summits to the Legislature which was done in 4 parts this year virtually. It included a presentation about TH 212 passing lanes and progress on the Gaps in Carver County, Highway 23 Coalition, Transit Presentation, and D8 Freight Study.
- Doug Krueger thanked MnDOT for the funding that has gone into projects in McLeod County they are thankful for the additional monies being put toward the TH 212 roundabouts etc.
- Joe Wilson thanked MnDOT for moving up the TH 271 project as he just had a Lincoln County Commission inquire about that project.

Next meeting will be April 9, 2021. A calendar appointment has been sent and the meeting will again be held via the Microsoft TEAMS Platform.

Adjourned at 10:33 a.m.