



Northeast Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership Meeting

February 12, 2025 @ 10:00 am*

MnDOT District 1 Office (Lake Superior Conference Room)
1123 Mesaba Ave, Duluth, MN 55811

Meeting Summary

Members in attendance: Chris Belden, Taylour Blakeman, Sarah Ciochetto, Sandra Davey, Jason DiPiazza, Kate Ferguson, Jim Foldesi, Derek Fredrickson, Rahya Geisler, Karin Grandia, Stehpen Hallan, Duane Hill, Jason Hollinday, Kristi Kane, Mark LeBrun, Pat McGraw, JinYeene Neumann, Trent Nicholson, Matt Wegwerth, John Welle

Guests in attendance: Beth Croteau-Kallestad, Jason Fisher, Garry Gamble, Paige Holte, Travis Houle, Jim Johnson, Scott Johnson, Scott Kyrola, Jeff Madill, Anna Pierce, Michelle Pierson, Elinor Roseberg, Erika Shepard, Beverly Sidlo-Tolliver, Mike Wenholz

1. Call to Order – Attendance

Travis Houle welcomed attendees and reviewed meeting protocols. Michelle Pierson reviewed attendance procedures. Chair Trent Nicholson called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees at 10:03am.

2. Committee Business

Chair Nicholson invited NEMNATP members to review the meeting summary from 10-09-2024. **A motion to approve the October 9, 2024 NEMNATP Meeting summary was made by John Welle/Jim Foldesi. Motion carried.**

3. Comments from Citizens Present

No comments were brought forward.

4. Approval of Bois Forte ATP Member

Travis Houle introduced Brian Whiteman and provided background on Whiteman's career. **A motion to approve adding Brian Whiteman to the NEMNATP representing Bois Fort Surface Transportation was made by Sarah Ciochetto/Jason DiPiazza. Motion Carried.** Brian Whiteman was welcomed to the NEMNATP.

5. Presentation: Minnesota Greenhouse Gas Reduction Legislation Target Setting

Anna Pierce, from MnDOT's Office of Sustainability and Public Health reviewed the process MnDOT is currently undergoing to help meet performance targets. She noted that reducing emissions encourages healthy and thriving communities for people. And notes that transportation is the largest

contributor to Greenhouse Gasses (GHGs) in Minnesota. Pierce reviewed the Minnesota Statute 174.01 Subd. 3 that requires performance targets to reduce GHGs. Pierce showcased current models showcasing predictions and provided examples of ways to reduce GHGs. Slides from the presentation were sent to members as Attachment 3. Pierce was asked what the consequences if targets for net zero by 2050 are not met? No official consequence at current time. Pierce invited those in attendance to reach out with any further questions to anna.m.pierce@state.mn.us.

6. Presentation: EV Infrastructure Needs Assessment

Beth Croteau-Kallestad presented about the electric vehicle infrastructure needs assessment. Croteau-Kallestad reviewed some of the NEVI Formula Funds updates which showcase suspension of state annual plans, FHWA guidance being rescinded, updated draft guidance for public comment will occur in the spring. Noted that obligated projects may continue, and MnDOT is planning to go ahead with Round 1 and 2 with locations to still be determined. Croteau-Kallestad showcased the market trends and predictions for electric vehicle use over the next 15 years, and how those projections can guide how to look at charging scenarios and charging needs/types of charging stations. It is predicted that 20% of vehicles in Minnesota will be EVs by 2030. The outcomes of this process will result in a report showcasing existing conditions, level of service guidance, long-distance charging locations, community charging locations, and an online mapping tool/dashboard. Copies of Croteau-Kallestad's slides were sent out to members as Attachment 2. Beth noted that through February 28, 2025 there is a public input process occurring inviting folks to submit information about EV charging needs at www.mnevina.com. Questions may be sent to elizabeth.croteau.kallestad@state.mn.us.

7. Approval of FY29 Federal Aid Candidate Projects

Erika Shepard, MnDOT D1, introduced herself as new to working in D1 as the Corridor Planner after formerly working for MnDOT statewide as the MPO coordinator. Shepard reviewed the FY2029 funding targets. Travis Houle did make one note about the slide 2 in the deck which showed an incorrect figure for the TA Program, noting the TA Program has \$1.4million programmed for FY2029. Shepard asked a representative of each the 2029 Federal Aid Candidate Projects to review the projects, showcase the project on a map and invite questions. These projects were distributed as Attachment 4. A review of each project and discussion occurred. **A motion to approve adding the Carlton Co. Cloquet MSAS 102; Itasca Co CSAH 52; Lake County CSAH 15; St. Louis County CSAH 21 to the draft ATIP was made by JinYeene Neumann/John Welle. Motion passes.**

Scott Johnson, MnDOT requested that those with projects get their STIP numbers prepared and coordinate with Jeff Madill, Paige Holte, and Derek Fredrickson so that these projects could be added to the draft ATIP.

Erika Shepard also showed new guidance. 2028 is a district 3, 169 from Mississippi River to Hill City. Reduction in 2029, MnDOT can only program. Additional flex projects will be developed. FLEX developed for projects that may be developed to be ready to go.

MnDOT Funding Targets		
New guidance: 2026-2029	Last year: 2025-2028	Difference:
<u>2026: \$81,340,000</u>	\$79,440,000	+\$1,900,000
<u>2027: \$82,560,000</u>	\$83,060,000	-\$500,000
<u>2028: \$128,090,000</u>	\$75,370,000	+\$52,720,000
<u>2029: \$82,020,000</u>	\$128,810,000(CHIP target)	-\$46,800,000

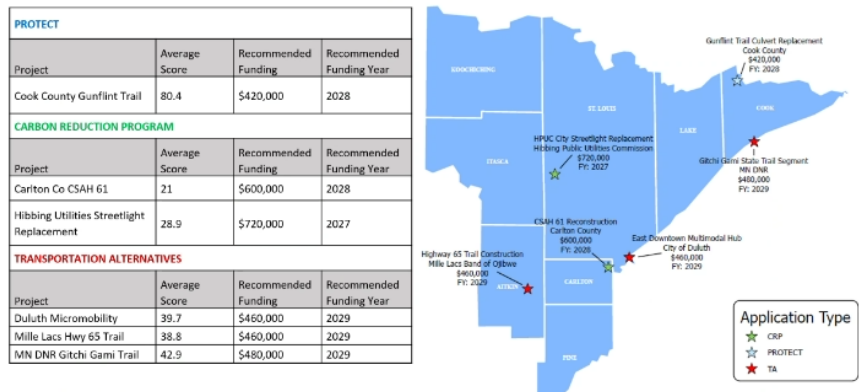
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8. Approval of CRP, PROTECT, TA Project Prioritization

Travis Houle of ARDC reviewed the three federal programs under which applications for this year's NEMNATP Task Force was asked to review. A breakdown of applications and recommendations from the Task Force was distributed to members as Attachment 5. Houle showcased that the Task Force recommended one project for the PROTECT program, 2 projects for the CRP program, and 3 projects for the TA Program.

After review and discussion, a motion was made by Jim Foldesi/ Jason DiPiazza to add the Cook Co. Gunflint Trail PROTECT project; the Carlton Co CSAH 61 and Hibbing Utilities Streetlight Replacement CRP projects; and the MnDNR Gitchi-Gami State Trail Lutsen Phase 3 project, the Duluth East Downtown Multimodal Hub, and the Mille Lacs Hwy 65 Trail project to the Draft ATIP. Motion carries.

Taskforce Recommendation Summary



Following this motion, Travis Houle noted that recommendations for FY2026 and FY2027 under the PROTECT program have remaining unprogrammed funds. A discussion about next steps lead ATP members to inquire if there is a list of projects that have components that are PROTECT eligible that could absorb the funds. NEMNATP members note that in order to deliver a project in FY26 and FY27, it would be preferred to identify projects eligible at this meeting to ensure projects can get all necessary permitting completed and deliver on time. With that guidance, Houle showcased several projects that were assembled following communications between county and city engineers and Derek Fredrickson. A list of eligible projects and fiscal year to deliver the projects was showcased to the meeting attendees. Projects that may be eligible included a project in the City of Duluth, a project in Carlton County, a project in Lake County, and two projects in St. Louis County. Some of these projects are already federalized, while others people felt confident that they could be. There was also discussion about the viability of these funds due to recent federal transportation guidance. Discussion also recognized that projects selected could go through the process of completing the PROTECT application. **A motion was made to add award up to \$600,000 FY2026 PROTECT funds to the CSAH 84 project in St. Louis County, noting any remaining funds could be awarded to the Lake County bridge redecking project for FY2026. The motion also awarded \$500,000 in FY2027 PROTECT funds to the City of Duluth for the Norton Road bridge and culvert projects. The motion was made to add these projects to the draft ATIP for final approval at the April 9, 2025 meeting of the NEMNATP.**

9. MIC Project Status Update (Ron Chicka or Mike Wenholtz)

Mike Wenholtz from the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) reviewed recent projects that have been reviewed and evaluated to be consistent with the MIC's current long-range transportation plan, Sustainable Choices 2050. Three projects were presented that have been recommended for the 2029 STGBGP program including a St. Louis County project on CSAH34, a City of Duluth project along a portion of 4th Street between Mesaba Avenue and 6th Avenue East. These two projects will be presented for MIC Board approval next week. A third project through the City of Duluth's application for CRP funds is for a micromobility parking project. Any questions may be posed to Mike Wenholtz at mwenholtz@ardc.org

10: Local Program Updates

Jeff Madill referred to Attachment 6, asked engineers to review their projects and reminded people that completed federal plans must be in by April 1st.

11. MnDOT Program Updates

Anna Pierce was no longer able to be on the call. Travis Houle noted he would check in with Pierce and send notes out to NEMNATP members and meeting attendees following the meeting.

12. ARDC Program Updates:

Travis Houle and Michelle Pierson reviewed slides covering the federal Transportation Task Force process, updates regarding the Carlton Transportation Planning process, updates with support for the Gitchi-Gami State Trail, updates regarding work with Scenic Byway organizations, updates in active transportation including recent news that Two Harbors was recently awarded Bronze status as a Bicycle-Friendly Community, and reviewed ARDC's work with bicycle and pedestrian planning.

13. Member Concerns

Chair Nicholson asked if there were any concerns or future agenda item ideas from members? None discussed at meeting, but Nicholson invited attendees to reach out to Travis Houle at thoule@ardc.org with any ideas they may have following the meeting.

14. Round Table Discussion

Kristi Kane updated attendees regarding the new Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant. More info here: www.ardcplanning.org/eecebq. This grant opportunity centers around government buildings and is for communities with a population under 15,000 people.

Duane Hill noted that there would be a Toward Zero Death Tribal Traffic Safety Summit in Granit Falls March 25-26, 2025 (<https://www.minnesotatzd.org/events/2025/tribal-summit>), and a regional conference in Virginia, MN on May 8th, 2025 (<https://www.minnesotatzd.org/events/workshop/northeast/2025>)

15. Meeting adjournment

A Motion to adjourn was made at 12:02pm by Jason DiPiazza/Jim Foldesi. Motion carries.

The next meeting of the NEMNATP will be on Wednesday, April 9th at 10am in a hybrid fashion. Join the in-person meeting at the Carlton Transportation Building located at 1630 Co Rd 61, Carlton, MN 55718.

Items in bold denote an action item.