

ST. CLOUD AREA PLANNING ORGANIZATION

A regular meeting of the St. Cloud Area Planning Organization was held Thursday, August 27, 2009, 7:00 p.m. at the Waite Park City Hall. Chair Pullis presided, with the following members present:

John Libert	City of St. Cloud
George Hontos	
Sheila DeVine	
Mayor Al Rassier	City of St. Joseph
Renee Symanietz	
Mayor Tim O'Driscoll	City of Sartell
Brad Gunderson	City of Sauk Rapids
Dave Saunders	
Mayor Rick Miller	City of Waite Park
Mike Linguist	
Mayor Bob Kroll	City of St. Augusta
Donna Schulzetenberg	
Penny Weihrauch	Town of Haven
Jeff Schlingman	
Kevin Pullis	Town of LeSauk
Ron Naber	
Mark Bromenschenkel	
Matt Symalla	Town of St. Joseph
Jeff Janssen	
Jerome Salzer	
Jim McMahon	County of Benton
Spencer Buerkle	
Ewald Peterson	County of Sherburne
John Riebel	
Felix Schmiesing	
Vince Schaefer	County of Stearns

Absent Members:

Mayor Dave Mayor Kleis (Excused)	City of St. Cloud
Bob Johnson (Excused)	
Carolyn Garven	
John Pederson	
Dave Masters	
Mike Landy (Excused)	
Dick Andzenge	
Bob Loso	City of St. Joseph
Steve Hennes (Excused)	City of Sartell
Joe Perske (Excused)	
Marv Neubert	City of Sauk Rapids
Chuck Schneider (Excused)	City of Waite Park
Mike Zenzen	City of St. Augusta
Randy Linn	Town of Haven
Mark Sakry	County of Stearns
Leigh Lenzmeier	

Also Present:

Senator Tarryl Clark	MN Legislature
Deb Steiskal	Congresswoman Bachmann Staff
Scott Mareck	St. Cloud APO
Michele Cottrell	
Cathryn Hanson	

Dave Demars
Glen Lauer
Charlotte Stephens
Lowell Olson
Dennis Dumphy
Dean Loidolt
Cindy Robertson
Bruce Thornton
Mintesnot Woldeamanuel

St. Joseph News leader
City of St. Joseph Resident
City of St. Cloud Resident
City of St. Cloud Resident
City of St. Cloud Resident
City of St. Joseph Resident
City of Waite Park Resident
City of St. Cloud Resident
St. Cloud State University

APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR AUGUST 27, 2009:

Ms. Weihrauch moved, Mr. Janssen seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF APO BOARD MINUTES OF MAY 28, 2009:

Mr. Libert moved, Mr. Peterson seconded to approve the minutes with one typographical correction. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF APO EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES OF JUNE 11, 2009:

Mr. Schlingman moved, Mr. Libert seconded to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF APO EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES OF JULY 9, 2009:

Mayor Rassier moved, Mr. Libert seconded to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF APO EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES OF AUGUST 13, 2009:

Mayor Kroll moved, Mayor Miller seconded to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF BILLS RECEIVED SINCE AUGUST 13, 2008 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING:

Mr. Schmiesing moved, Mayor Rassier seconded to approve the bills as presented. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR MAY, JUNE, AND JULY 2009 & YEAR-TO-DATE BUDGET STATEMENTS:

Ms. Symanietz moved, Mr. Bromenshenkel seconded to approve the financial statements as presented. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF 2035 FINANCIALLY CONSTRAINED ROADWAY PLAN 50% SCENARIO:

Mr. Mareck reminded the Board that in May, APO staff introduced a 2035 Roadway Plan to the APO Policy Board. Per federal requirements, the 2035 Plan is financially constrained to "reasonably expected to be available" local, state-aid, State and federal revenue forecasts through the year 2035.

The local jurisdiction forecast for the APO Area totals approximately \$157 million. Approximately \$110 million of this forecast has been allocated by the APO TAC to roadway/bridge capacity expansion projects. In addition to financial constraint considerations, roadway and bridge capacity expansion projects were recommended based on:

- Status of federal project development work (Corridor Study, EA, EIS)
- Regional significance (traffic volumes, facility type, system continuity, etc.)
- Considering how certain projects may perform well together from an overall system perspective
- Project priorities of APO member jurisdictions
- APO member jurisdiction equity

The remaining \$47 million of the local forecast is recommended by the TAC to be invested in future roadway/bridge maintenance (reconstruction/overlays), roadway safety/operations, transit capital and bicycle/pedestrian projects.

The MnDOT forecast of federal formula and Trunk Highway dollars for the APO Area totals approximately \$157 million through 2035. Per MnDOT guidance, this entire forecast has been allocated to maintenance and safety/operations.

Mr. Mareck noted that forecasted 2035 congestion is anticipated to be approximately 10 times current levels, even after implementing the recommended 2035 Transportation Plan roadway and bridge capacity expansion

projects. Over \$775 million of projects have been relegated to a conceptual status in the 2035 Plan, meaning that there is no funding reasonably expected to be available for these projects within the current 25 year planning horizon.

Due to this situation, the APO TAC is recommending that the APO diversify its future transportation investments by spending 50 percent of its \$2 million annual federal formula target on roadway capacity expansion, and 50 percent on road reconstruction, transit capital and bicycle/pedestrian investments.

Mr. Mareck suggested that given the significance of future congestion, communities should perhaps consider promoting mixed use developments and transit oriented developments whenever possible, and encouraging orderly growth from the urban core outward. If these types of land use patterns are encouraged as a region, over time, it will take some of the burden off of the major arterials and reduce overall roadway expansion costs.

Citizen Dennis Dumphy spoke against plans to expand the University Drive Corridor, and in favor of plans to construct a 33rd Street River Crossing and connection to Trunk Highway 10. Mr. Dumphy also spoke in favor of a future Trunk Highway 15 freeway through the St. Cloud Metro Area.

Mr. Schlingman stated that Haven Township is opposed to the 33rd Street Bridge being included in the APO's 2035+ Conceptual Plan, since it goes through the State designated Wild and Scenic River.

Mr. Riebel moved, Mr. Rassier seconded to provide preliminary approval of the draft of the 2035 Roadway Plan as presented. Motion carried with two opposed.

PRESENTATION ON 2035 NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION PLAN-PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING:

Ms. Hanson informed the Board that the St. Cloud Area Planning Organization established a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee comprised of staff representing state, regional, and local jurisdictions; business owners, professionals, commuters, recreational cyclists, avid walkers and other interested citizens. Over the last several months, staff and the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee have collaborated to develop and refine a set of goals, objectives, and policies that will complement the vision statement and provide a framework for future development of non-motorized transportation planning initiatives.

The 2035 Non-Motorized Transportation Plan elements include goals, policies, and objectives, accompanied by updated narrative covering existing and desired infrastructure, trip generators, trip barriers, crash data and recommended safety improvements. In addition to the narrative, mapping has been developed for each of these plan elements and will be incorporated in the Plan.

Mayor Kroll asked if information was available regarding the cause of the 600 bicycle/pedestrian accidents identified.

Ms. Hanson stated that limited information is readily available to the public. One of the limiting factors is that many of the incidents do not have citations; therefore, it is difficult to determine the cause in all cases. The committee needs to raise awareness as to safety and sharing the road with bicycles and pedestrians.

Citizen Lowell Olson complimented the APO for developing a transportation plan that invests in non auto based forms of transportation.

Citizen Dean Loidolt also complimented the APO for adopting a Plan with more of a multi-modal focus for investments.

Citizen Cindy Robertson commented that there are also benefits to motorists when bicycle and pedestrian facilities are constructed because it removes bicycle and pedestrian traffic from the motorized traffic lanes.

Mr. Pullis indicated that a small linkage is missing in the proposed trail system near the Sauk Rapids Bridge.

Ms. Hanson stated that APO staff have spoken to Stearns County Public Works about this issue and a resolution is being developed; the County is determining whether or not an additional turn lane is required from County Road 1 to southbound 9th Avenue at that location; if a turn lane is necessitated, they will move into the grassy area, and a sidewalk would be added at that time. If no expansion is needed, a sidewalk can be added as an independent project.

Mr. Schlingman moved, Mr. Libert seconded to provide preliminary approval of the 2035 Non-Motorized Transportation Plan as presented. Motion carried.

UPDATE ON STATE RAIL PLAN AND NORTHSTAR CORRIDOR:

Ms. Hanson presented an update on the Minnesota Statewide Comprehensive Freight & Passenger Rail Plan. Ms. Hanson is representing the St. Cloud area on the Passenger Rail Technical Advisory Committee. The State of Minnesota has initiated a comprehensive study to examine the following issues:

1. Existing and future demand for freight and passenger rail services;
2. Identification of infrastructure and other improvements needed to expand rail service;
3. Explore funding options;
4. Recommend policy guidelines for state investment and public/private partnerships.

The current study and resulting Plan is intended to identify a vision for freight and passenger rail in Minnesota as part of the State's overall transportation network.

Technical Memo # 3 was released on July 17, 2009 and provides comprehensive detail on the passenger rail network. Analysis of projected 2030 Rail Demand to and from the Twin Cities under current service conditions indicates travel to St. Cloud to have the highest demand, followed by the route to Chicago, IL.

**Current service conditions: one (1) round-trip train per day, operating speed of 79 mph.*

Projected 2030 Rail Demand To/From Twin Cities under Current Service Conditions*

Location	Rail Ridership	Overall Travel Demand**	Rail Mode Share (%)
St. Cloud, MN	307,000	12,952,000	2.40
Chicago, IL	93,500	11,302,000	0.80
Fargo, ND	21,500	3,963,000	0.50
Red Wing, MN	14,500	1,113,000	1.30
La Crosse, WI	13,000	3,236,000	0.40
Winona, MN	11,500	789,000	1.40
Grand Forks, ND	7,000	2,446,500	0.30
Detroit Lakes, MN	7,000	796,000	0.90
Milwaukee, WI	4,000	4,663,500	0.10
Tomah, WI	2,500	1,155,500	0.20
Columbus, WI	500	481,000	0.10

**Adapted from Table 5.2, Technical Memo # 3*

***Overall Travel Demand accounts for trips by Air, Rail, Auto, and Bus*

The St. Cloud area continues to demonstrate strong ridership potential for both commuter and intercity passenger rail connections and this is well reflected in the State Rail Plan. Based on the forecasted data, expanding passenger rail service to St. Cloud and perhaps extension of an intercity passenger rail route to Fargo and/or Grand Forks and points west has the potential to serve as a valuable complement to the existing transportation network. This plan will provide the framework for guiding freight and passenger rail priorities throughout Minnesota; positioning this region well for increased multimodal and intermodal transportation choices in the future.

Mn/DOT will be hosting a series of open houses to solicit comments and feedback on the Statewide Freight & Passenger Rail Plan during October 5-12, 2009; an open house will be held in St. Cloud, however the date and time have not yet been confirmed. Following the public open houses and final review by the Advisory Committees and Mn/DOT the plan is on-schedule to be completed by the end of CY 2009.

Citizen Dennis Dumphy, questioned what the cost would be to take Northstar to Camp Ripley?

Ms. Hanson stated that the track needs to be upgraded for passenger rail service between Big Lake and Becker as part of Phase II, and additional improvements may be required north of St. Cloud. The scope of the current environmental studies did not include an extension north of St. Cloud to Camp Ripley. Additionally, any other extensions would require the consent of Burlington Northern who owns the existing track, their primary obligation is to ensure that current and future freight service is not negatively impacted by new passenger rail

service. There are significant operating costs associated with the train that would need to be examined relative to ridership to Camp Ripley to determine the feasibility of extending service to this area.

Citizen Cindy Robertson spoke in favor of the Northstar Corridor service being extended to the St. Cloud Area.

CONSIDERATION OF EXECUTIVE BOARD RECOMMENDATION REGARDING 2010/2011 BUDGET:

Mr. Mareck overviewed the Executive Board's recommended 2010/2011 budget. He noted that as in past years, staff salaries and related benefits comprise the vast majority of the 2010 budget. The Executive Board is recommending that all salaries be frozen for 2010 due to the current state of the economy and reduced state aid to local governments.

Mr. Mareck reported that the most significant change in the budget for 2010 is the APO's purchase of its currently leased office building from the City of St. Cloud. It is recommended that \$50,000 of APO cash reserves be set-a-side annually beginning in 2010 as a contingency for normal on-going building and property maintenance needs. These funds would be off-budget and would only be spent with prior Board approval. Overall expenses in the 2010 budget are proposed at a 0% increase compared to 2009.

Mr. Mareck noted that the Executive Board is recommending that the financial position of the Organization can withstand a temporary one year cut of ten percent in membership dues to assist jurisdictions with these economically challenging times. However, in order to maintain adequate operating reserves moving forward, it is recommended that the Board return to its \$1.01 per capita assessment rate for 2011.

Mr. Schlingman moved, Mr. Hontos seconded to approve the 2010/2011 Budget as presented. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no other business Mrs. Weihrauch moved, Mayor O'Driscoll seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:31 p.m. Motion carried.