

3. PROGRAM PROCESS

Program Process

Mn/DOT has established eight (8) Area Transportation Partnerships (ATPs) throughout the State to manage the programming of federal transportation projects. Each of these ATPs are responsible for developing a financially constrained Area Transportation Improvement Program (ATIP) that is submitted for funding approval and incorporation into a financially constrained State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the St. Cloud Area, the APO must develop its own Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that is incorporated into the Central Minnesota ATIP and the STIP.

Projects originate from three main areas: 1) TSM, 2) currently held valid long range Transportation Plan, and 3) implementing agencies who submit projects. These projects are then presented to the APO Policy Board and the public for initial review and comment. Projects not meeting the minimum qualifying criteria are eliminated from consideration. The remaining projects are grouped into six categories:

1. Roadway and Bridge Projects
2. Railroad and Safety Projects
3. Enhancement Projects
4. Transit Projects
5. Right-Of-Way Acquisition Projects
6. Roadway Corridor Studies

Projects meeting the minimum qualifying criteria are then prioritized by the APO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) into one intermodal project list. Prioritization considerations include the following: 1) technical engineering criteria developed by the ATP; 2) APO non-technical considerations including public involvement, project deliverability, regional benefit, funding equity and non-vehicular accommodations; 3) miscellaneous factors and 4) APO sub-targeted local federal funding available. This prioritized list is then forwarded to the APO's Executive Board and APO Policy Board for approval or modification. Appendix C outlines the process and criteria for prioritizing APO TIP projects in greater detail.

Projects identified within the APO's local federal sub-target, as well as State and other regionally significant projects, are incorporated in the APO TIP. Projects in the TIP are subject to U.S. Department of Transportation approval of the STIP. Appendix D illustrates details of the entire Central Minnesota ATP process.

Projects programmed from the Central Minnesota ATP process, including bike and pedestrian related projects and estimated costs, are identified under tab 5: 2008-2011 TIP Project Lists & Map. Tab 4: 2007-2011 TIP Project Updates has been included as a management tool for monitoring the progress of programmed projects and contains a status report of projects from the previous 2007-2011 TIP.