

Area Transportation Partnership 7 (ATP 7)

Draft Minutes of June 14, 2019 Meeting – MnDOT, Mankato

Members Present: Ronda Allis, Steve Koehler, Jack Kolars, Mike Kuhle, Patrick La Course, Greg Ous, Craig Rempp, Annette Fiedler (alternate for Matt Widboom), Stefan Gantert (alternate for Ryan Thilges)

Members Absent: Terry Genelin, Seth Greenwood, Peter Harff, Lisa Bigham, Jeff Johnson, Tim Stahl, Ryan Thilges, Don Wachal, Matt Widboom

Others Present: Shawn Schloesser (R9), Sam Parker, Angie Piltaver, Charles Androsky, Dan Sarff, Paul Vogel, Debra Yates, Anne Wolff, Wes Brown, Vance Stuehrenberg

Legislative attendees: Derek Ringhaul for Representative Hagedorn

Welcome and Introductions

- Steve Koehler welcomed everyone. Introductions were made.
- The minutes from March 8, 2019 meeting were approved.

City of Blue Earth TA Scope Change

Wes Brown with the City of Blue Earth provided a handout and presented proposed changes to the sidewalk project previously awarded TA funds. The changes include upgrading the proposed 5 foot sidewalk on CSAH 16 from Holland Street to the Blue Ridge Apartments to a 10 foot wide shared use path and extending the path from the Blue Ridge Apartments to Grant Street so that it connects to the existing 10 foot shared use path west of Grant Street, upgrading the existing sidewalk and crossings along Galbraith from West 5th Street to E 2nd Street, but not converting it to a wider shared use path due to property constraints, and adding sidewalk along Fairview Street. The TA Subcommittee approved these changes. The ATP indicated approval of the changes.

2019 – 2022 STIP Amendments

Debra Yates provided a handout with a summary of the projects that were amended since the previous meeting. Amendments included an additional transit bus purchase for MRCl, a new rail project in Martin County, swapping of a 2019 project in Waseca County and a 2021 project in Sibley county, swapping of a 2019 project in the City of Rochester for a 2021 project in North Mankato, reductions in setasides for a safety project on TH60/169 and for a signage project, removal of an AC payback on a 2021 project on TH19 and use of 17NEW funds from a delayed 2021 project, a cost decrease on a 2021 project on US71, and combining two projects on TH30 to make them more cost effective. Additionally, Deb noted that the turnbacks on 253 and 254 in Faribault County have been approved to move forward.

Central Office Recommendations and Selections

Debra Yates provided a handout and presented the state HSIP projects that were selected by Central Office. These included a High Tension Cable Barrier (HTCB) project on TH60 from Lake Crystal to Mankato in 2020, and an approach slope grading project on TH60 from TH14 to 13 in 2021.

Sam Parker presented the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) award information for the current solicitation. Sam indicated that there was more of an emphasis on funding projects in smaller communities. The City of Blue Earth received a SRTS Infrastructure award, while Mankato and New Ulm schools received non-infrastructure SRTS awards. Mankato Area Public Schools was awarded funds to update its SRTS Plan, and New Ulm Public Schools was awarded funds for a SRTS Coordinator.

Transportation Economic Development (TED) program update

Sam Parker provided a handout and presented the Transportation Economic Development (TED) program update to the ATP. Sam explained that the TED/TEDI program is a statewide program that provides funds in two different categories. TED grants are funded by MnDOT from a total of \$20 million available for projects on the state trunk highway system. TEDI grants are funded by DEED, with a total of \$2.2 million available for projects off the state trunk highway system. The solicitation is open until September 6, and eligibility requirements can be found online. For funding requests less than \$1 million, the application is now less complex. Ronda Allis noted that the goal of the program is to fund projects in Greater Minnesota as well as the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

State Legislative Update

Greg Ous provided an update. The gas tax increase was not approved, so there is no new revenue source via this proposed tax increase. Issues and needs still present on the system, and there has been a lot of deterioration on the roads. Greg indicated that we are making between \$1 and \$1.5 million in emergency repairs as a result. Additionally, even 253 and 254 will need work before next year. Greg indicated that in the Omnibus bill, some additional funds were approved, including sales taxes related to vehicles, funding for new equipment, and inclusion of funding for the 253 and 254 turnbacks and reimbursement of Faribault County for a thin overlay.

Greg discussed the demand for increasing weight limits on the state trunk highway system and wanting to be responsive to business needs while balancing the issues we face with maintaining roads in the district.

Greg provided a brief overview of the new Hands Free Law that goes into effect August 1.

Greg also discussed the impact of flooding and indicated that there has been at least \$200,000 to \$250,000 worth of repairs needed for slides, as well as the impacts to the City of Henderson due to the 60+ days of closures on 19 and 93.

Jack Kolars asked about funding and maintaining the system. Greg indicated we are identifying ways to improve efficiency in our operations and maintain the system with existing funds. Greg discussed US 14 and the ongoing effort to fund the 4-lane expansion plan. District 7 was given approval to submit a full application for a BUILD grant to fund this project; however, the maximum award is \$25 million. Another \$45+ million is needed even if the BUILD grant is approved. The application is due July 11. Greg indicated that we will need either Letters of Support or formal Resolutions of Support from communities, counties and our partner organizations in District 7 for the application. Greg will get clarification on which format is needed and update members.

Annette Fiedler suggested to Steve Koehler that the ATP offer its support. Members indicated their support for District 7 application for the BUILD grant.

2020 – 2023 Draft ATIP

Ronda Allis provided a handout and an overview of projects programmed in the draft 2020 – 2023 ATIP as well as changes made since the last meeting. Some of these changes included maintenance repairs, thin overlays on 253 and 254 prior to turnback, and combination of two projects on TH30 among other changes detailed on the handout.

2024 – 2029 Draft CHIP

Ronda Allis provided a handout and an overview of the projects included in the 2024-2029 CHIP. Ronda explained that the CHIP is fluid and subject to change. She indicated that the new Project Selection Policy was implemented this year and scoring was a factor in the selection process. She also explained that no new projects on the non-NHS system were introduced in 2029, but rather previously selected projects moved into 2029. Greg Ous explained that because actual revenues fell behind projections, projects were primarily moved around; however, we will continue to monitor the situation and move projects up where possible.

Regional Transportation Updates

Craig Remppe provided a transit update. He indicated some new routes have been introduced, and there is a program for school kids to ride free in the summer. Statewide, public transit funds are about the same. He also indicated that the 2 year grant cycle aligns better with the City of Mankato, and he felt that OTAT was doing more to help Greater Minnesota.

Charles Androsky presented an update on the Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization (MAPO) activities. The LRTP update is getting underway and will take about 1.5 years total. Corridor studies are coming up, and Regional Transit Coordinating Council (RTCC) Planning funds have been awarded. MAPO will lead the planning process. The RTCC will overlay mostly with Region 9.

Annette Fiedler with SRDC (Southwest Regional Development Commission) provided an update for SRDC activities. Annette indicated that United Community Action Partnership was also awarded RTCC planning funds. Region 8 will assist the effort. SRTS for Luverne is wrapping up, and they are finishing a 5-county hazard mitigation plan. They are seeing a significant amount

of wind power, wind re-power and solar projects in Region 8, and at times developers have trouble interpreting our fiscal year versus construction year maps for coordination/timing of their projects. Annette also indicated that she will be attending the National Transportation Conference in Ohio.

Shawn Schloesser with Region 9 shared that the Waseca and St. Clair SRTS studies (2018/2019) are being completed, and the 2019/2020 studies are coming up. Shawn is attending the National Transportation Conference in Ohio.

Next meeting

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 13, 2019.