

Area Transportation Partnership 7 (ATP 7)

Draft Minutes of March 12, 2021 Meeting – MnDOT, Mankato (via Teams)

Members Present: Jack Kolars, Troy Nemmers, Ronda Allis, Seth Greenwood, Greg Ous, Ryan Thilges, Nick Klisch, Peter Harff, Jeff Johnson, Mike Kuhle, Patrick La Course, Robert Goblirsch, Richard Peterson, Lisa Bigham

Members Absent: Don Wachal, Craig Rempp

Others Present: Sam Parker, Angie Piltaver, Angelica Tejada, Debra Yates, Paul Vogel, Charles Androsky, Rosemary Bruce-White, Shawn Schloesser, Joel Hanif, Dan Sarff, Chuck Ackerman (for Sen. Amy Klobuchar), Jeff Domras, Joseph Stadheim, Scott Roemhildt, Stephen Schneider, Tim Becker, Michael McCarty

Welcome, introductions, and opening business (Jack Kolars)

- The December 11, 2020 minutes were approved (handout)
- Jack Kolars welcomed new SWRDC member Richard Peterson.

STIP amendments (Deb Yates/handout)

Deb provided a handout and described the amendments to the 2021-2024 STIP. These included scope changes, cost changes, adding new projects and removing elements of projects.

Jack Kolars asked about the locations of items 1, 2, 5, 10, 11. Ronda and Peter provided locations for each project.

2021 Construction program (Peter Harff/handouts)

Peter described the projects on the 2021 construction map. Projects include several on I-90, including roundabout modifications in Worthington at Oxford and CR35; 169 from Winnebago to Vernon Center; Hwy 13 in Waseca; Hwy 60 safety improvements between 14 and 13, and a reconstruction in Madison Lake; Hwy 14 ramp improvements at CR57 and Riverfront Drive; Hwy 19 reconstruct and roundabouts in New Prague; Hwy 99 resurfacing and bridge and culvert work between Nicollet and St. Peter; Hwy 14 in New Ulm signal replacements, restoration of the historic spring site and parking area, and a city-led turn lane project; Hwy 60 resurfacing, drainage, approach grading and snow fence between 15 and Lake Crystal. Peter stated more of our projects include grading around accesses to make roadsides more forgiving since most crashes involve cars departing the road. Finally, we will perform more seal coating and chip sealing this summer to preserve ride quality on our roads.

Draft ATIP (Ronda Allis/handouts)

Ronda reminded members that while we are still updating the 2021-24 STIP, we are also working on our draft 2022-25 ATIP.

1. 2025 ATP-7 subcommittee recommendations:
 - a. STP-Small Urban (Mike Kuhle) – Cities with over 5,000 population.
Mike Kuhle presented the subcommittee recommendations. Two projects were awarded, including a roundabout project in St. Peter and a reconstruct of 2nd Avenue in Waseca.
 - b. STP-Rural (Nick Klisch) – all counties
Nick Klisch presented the subcommittee recommendations. Two projects were awarded, which included one on CSAH 17 in Faribault County and one on CSAH 8 in Sibley County.
 - c. Transportation Alternatives
Sam Parker presented the TA subcommittee recommendations. Three total applications seeking a total of \$1.2 million were submitted, with only \$700,000 to distribute. The City of Jackson ranked highest and will receive its full request for the Sunrise Estates Trail, and Watonwan County will receive the remainder of the funds for the Watline Trail Stage II project.
 - d. TA Amendment: Trimont 046-090-001 (FY 2022)
With known additional federal capacity of \$52,796, it was recommended that the remainder of \$29,592 for FY 2022 would be awarded to the City of Trimont, the top-ranking FY 2022 project. A change to the scope of the Trimont project was also recommended; the recommendation is to change the northern terminus from Beech Street to Birch Street as a result of discussions with MnDOT regarding which proposed components, many in the state right-of-way, are better suited as locally-led or delivered in conjunction with the upcoming Highway 4 resurfacing project.
2. Central Office recommendations
Deb Yates reviewed the BROS, HSIP, Rail Crossings and Transit award recommendations.
 - a. BROS: Waseca will receive funds for replacement of Bridge 1148 over the Le Sueur River in 2025.
 - b. HSIP: Cottonwood Co, New Ulm, Jackson, Sibley were awarded funds for safety improvements.
 - c. Rail crossings: Nobles, Waseca, Brown, Blue Earth and Watonwan counties all awarded funds for rail crossing improvements.
 - d. Transit: Mankato – will receive funds for 11 bus purchases between 2022 and 2025.

3. MnDOT Trunk Highway projects

Ronda Allis reviewed the maps with 2022-2024 ATIP, 2025 candidates and flex projects.

a. 2022 Projects: (\$98M total program excluding grant/loans for US14 4-lane project)

Projects include 86 in Lakefield, which was able to get additional funding from other sources to address utilities; Hwy 4 in Trimont; Hwy 263, which will be turned back to Martin County when complete; Hwy 169 from north of Elmore to Blue Earth, which now excludes in-town section of Elmore; Hwy 15/60 between Madelia and TH60; Hwy 14 from New Ulm to Nicollet; Hwy 14 RCUT project between CSAH 86 and 17 in Eagle Lake; and Hwy 19 work between Henderson and the RR bridge in the Minnesota River Valley to adjust the vertical profile in preparation for the grade raise project on 93.

b. 2023 Projects: (\$62.8M total program)

Projects include the Worthington Weigh station project on I-90; Hwy 4 projects; Hwy 169 in St Peter dual left turn lanes at TH22/169, an RCUT at 169/99, and an urban reconstruct between Chestnut and Union St.; Hwy 93 flood mitigation; Hwy 13 in Montgomery roundabout at CSAH 28 and urban reconstruct in town.

c. 2024 (\$62.13M total program)

Projects include Hwy 4 from Sherburn area to Hwy 60; Hwy 14 in New Ulm; Hwy 22/Augusta Drive roundabout; Hwy 22 from CSAH 26 – CR57 full depth reclaim and from CR57 (Riverfront) to MN River Bridge in St. Peter reconstruct, safety improvements, lighting, and bridge rehabs.

Peter Harff gave an overview of the Hwy 22 project to the ATP. Cost increased from \$15 million to nearly \$27 million. He stated that Hwy 22 has become a very high traffic roadway, exceeding daily traffic on US169 and US14 since after the grade raise on 169. The highway will be three lanes with a continuous center left turn lane. The project will also include grading improvements, right turn lanes, a roundabout at CR 21, and a continuous T intersection at CR 57. There will also be a northbound and southbound passing lane, and trail along the route. The project cost does not currently include the trail, but the DNR is seeking bond money to fund the trail. The project should improve safety and mobility for 20+ years into the future.

d. 2025 (\$63.36M total program) – we lost about \$13 million in funding from last year's targets and the current target

Projects include Hwy 75 thru Luverne, which will either be a reconstruct or a pavement preservation project depending on timing and needs for city utility replacements; nine bridges on I-90; Hwy 60 Watonwan rest area replacement (Central Office funds); Hwy 60 in Lake Crystal, which underwent a small corridor

study to work through community needs; two bridges on 169, including the Veterans Bridge, of which the City of Mankato owns 44 percent, and will need to provide their share of the costs; Hwy 22 project from 2024 will repay \$7 million in 2025 (and \$8.5 million in 2026); Hwy 4 will repay \$3 million; Hwy 22 the rural piece from CSAH20 in St. Peter to 111 will get a mill and overlay with ADA. The City of St. Peter would like to do a small corridor study between 169 and CSAH20 to determine needs in the urban section.

Ronda also indicated some projects were pulled out of 2025 due to funding changes; these included a segment on Hwy 60, I-90 from 169 to 22, and the urban section of Hwy 22 in St. Peter between 169 and Hwy 111, which will likely be a reconstruction.

Jack Kolars asked about bridge funding and Ronda Allis explained how this funding works. Bridge money is limited, but to supplement, the District can choose to use pavement funds to address bridges. Unfortunately, this reduces money available for pavement projects.

Jack Kolars reminded the ATP that our interstate highways were built under the Eisenhower Administration as part of our national defense system and are deteriorating, so he hopes to see infrastructure being addressed.

Ronda indicated that ATIP next steps include returning the draft ATIP to the ATP in June for another review before final submittal of the draft ATIP to Central Office in July.

CHIP Update (Ronda Allis)

Ronda showed an update to the CHIP funding targets and provided an update on the CHIP. Our targets were updated, and they were lower than last year's update. We are now bringing 2031 into the CHIP. Ronda showed a chart and explained that our funding guidance from MnSHIP determines the categories we make investments in and at what levels.

Ronda explained CHIP steps – project selection, presentation of draft, submit draft, CHIP outreach, and submittal of the final draft to Central Office for approval.

Jack Kolars thanked MnDOT for their work.

Transportation Updates

- Project status: Highways 14, 93/19, 263 update (Peter Harff)
 - Hwy 14: New Ulm to Nicollet is moving along well. Plan review coming up next week. April 15 there is a municipal consent agreement public hearing with Courtland. Right-of-way acquisition process is moving along much quicker than anticipated, with consultants visiting property owners to discuss acquisitions. Letting planned for December. Tree clearing planned for the winter and then will start moving dirt in the spring.

- Hwy 19/93 – We received bond money for flood mitigation to raise grade on Hwy 93. Work being done on a section of Hwy 19 to prepare for the work on 93. Project on 93 will be done over a two-year period. RFP for design on 93 was put out, and we are identifying needs for right-of-way.
- Hwy 263 is a turnback. We are coordinating with the county and the city of Ceylon; the project will happen in 2022 and then turned over to the county.
- Kern Bridge (Michael McCarty)
 - Mike McCarty provided an update on the Kern Bridge progress. Putting together the preliminary work for the project; developing the architectural drawings for the bridge reassembly to comply with historic standards. Hoping to have it open in 2024 for bicycles/peds.
- Transit
 - Patrick LaCourse stated they are waiting on the application for 2020 bus ordering. Hopefully they will receive it soon.
 - Paul Vogel stated that transit operators were available for vaccinations; overall ridership still down due to the pandemic, but strong demand still for rides to essential services; meeting with N. Mankato who organized a community response team for the HyLife community, who need transportation options.
- MAPO
 - MSA Status: Paul Vogel reviewed that the OMB has proposed to redefine the population standards. The definitions of an urbanized area aren't proposed to be changed. Looking at how this impacts MAPO. It doesn't disqualify MAPO but might impact smaller community partners on grants and funding.
 - Jack Kolars stated we need to preserve our MSA status. Our GDP in this area has grown. Without the MSA our smaller communities would be disadvantaged. We need to bring our voices to our representatives about this.
 - Charles Androsky indicated that the 169 Corridor Study is still in progress; the US14 Ped Bridge study in North Mankato and an Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) for CSAH 16 and CSAH 60 in coordination with Blue Earth Co, N. Mankato and MSU are in the process of selecting consultants; a study of Lookout Drive and CSAH 13, and one of 2nd Street are being initiated. A public meeting for the TAC was held, and an informal Memorandum of Understanding between MnDOT and MAPO about how the two entities work together is being created.
- Regional Development Commissions
 - SWRDC: Rosemary Bruce White shared it has been a busy year for TA applications; made great progress with SRTS. They will do an SRTS project with the City of Adrian this year. Their TAC meeting is on April 1. Public comment period will start soon; Rosemary will send out invites. Rosemary got Rich Peterson on the phone so he could introduce himself. Jack Kolars welcomed him to the ATP.

- RNDC: Joel Hanif shared that a proposed development on Hwy 22 in Mapleton triggered the need for a potential partnership with the city to conduct a study of an area of Hwy 22 for future road network planning. The project fell through, but the city is now discussing with RNDC a Comprehensive Plan effort instead. City Council has committed funding to the planning effort, and city staff are excited about the upcoming partnership.

Legislative Updates

Chuck Ackerman, from Sen. Klobuchar office talked about the \$350 billion in funds in the new stimulus/COVID relief package. He quoted a Star-Tribune article that indicated of the \$4.88 billion given to Minnesota, \$2.6 billion goes to the state, \$1.2 billion goes to the counties, and \$1.1 billion to cities. He also stated that they are working on an infrastructure bill and are talking about the FAST Act, broadband and some version of earmarks. They have received a lot of calls asking how to get on the earmark “list,” but he indicated there is no list.

Adjournment

- Jack Kolars thanked Greg Ous for the work MnDOT does and asked Greg for a few words before closing.
- Greg indicated that we have worked on refining the meeting process so we can get the information to the ATP members in a way that everyone can understand the decisions that are being made, and thanked MnDOT staff for putting together the meetings to be efficient and informative.
- Jack Kolars called for any other comments, and then adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for June 11, 2021