



ATP-7
Operating Procedures

September 9, 2022

ATP-7 Operating Procedures

Reviewed and updated September 9, 2022.

Section I: Name, Purpose, and Area Served

A. Name

The name of the Area Transportation Partnership to be used for all official activities and communications is ATP-7.

B. Purpose

ATP-7 was established to bring together the transportation improvement recommendations of the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), regional development commissions (RDCs), Mankato-North Mankato Area Planning Organization (MAPO), cities, and counties into an integrated list of transportation investments in the form of the Area Transportation Improvement Program (ATIP). The ATP-7 also:

- Review and comment on the draft STIP.
- Establish criteria for project selection.
- Partner with the MAPO to incorporate projects from the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- Participate with MnDOT District 7 in the development and review of policies and procedures for managing the program.
- Develop and review priority lists for programs that are not included in the target.

C. Area Served

13 counties within MnDOT District 7 State Aid Area compose the ATP-7 area: Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Nobles, Rock, Sibley, Waseca, and Watonwan.

Section II: Membership and Responsibilities

A. ATP-7 membership

The following constituent groups have membership in ATP-7:

1. MnDOT representatives

- a. The MnDOT District Engineer appoints MnDOT representatives to ATP-7.
- b. Typically, these positions include the Transportation District Engineer, Assistant District Engineer-Program Delivery, Assistant District Engineer-State Aid, and the Transportation Planning Director.

2. Regional development commissions

- a. Southwest Regional Development Commission and the Region Nine Development Commission each appoint one commission member to ATP-7.
 1. Appointments are annual terms; There are no term limits.
 2. The RDC Transportation Planner is appointed as the alternate representative to ATP-7.

3. Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization

- a. The Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization (MAPO) appoints one (1) member to ATP-7.
 1. Appointments are annual terms; There are no term limits.

4. County engineers

- a. Two (2) county engineers are appointed to ATP-7 by the District County Engineers Association.
- b. Terms are four (4) years and are staggered so a new appointment occurs every two (2) years.

5. City engineers

- a. Two (2) city engineers for cities with populations greater than 5,000 are appointed to ATP-7 by the city engineers of each ATP-7 city with a population greater than 5,000.
- b. Appointments are annual terms; There are no term limits.

6. Public transit

- a. Two (2) public transit providers will be appointed to ATP-7:
 1. One provider from a rural transit agency
 2. One provider from an urbanized agency, as defined by Federal Transit Administration formula apportionments.
- b. Appointments are annual terms; There are no term limits.

7. Elected officials

- a. Two (2) county commissioners will be appointed from member ATP counties by AMC-7 and AMC-8.
 1. Appointments are annual terms; There are no term limits.
- b. One (1) mayor or councilperson from a city with a population greater than 5,000 will be appointed by the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC).
 1. Appointments are annual terms; There are no term limits.
- c. Elected official representatives may continue to serve on ATP-7 until they choose to remove themselves from ATP-7 or no longer hold an elected seat in the same governmental body.
 1. In either case, MnDOT District 7 contacts the respective organization, AMC-7, AMC-8, or LMC and the organization solicits for a new member.

B. Member responsibilities

1. Representation

Members shall provide an area-wide, jurisdiction-blind perspective on the candidate projects.

2. Membership changes and reaffirmation

Each appointing body shall annually select or re-affirm their representative to ATP-7. Notification of membership changes should be submitted to MnDOT District 7 by August 1. New terms will begin on September 1 of each year.

3. New member orientation

New members are provided orientation to help familiarize themselves with ATP business.

4. Information sharing

Members shall pass information about ATP-7 activities on to their constituent group.

5. Committees

Members shall serve on committees, as defined in these *Operating Procedures*, or task forces as appointed by the chair.

6. Alternates

Members may select an alternate from the same constituent group to stand in for the member as necessary.

7. Constituent changes

Membership is reviewed by the ATP-7 on an annual basis; The size and composition of the membership may change with agreement from ATP membership.

8. Transportation District Engineer

The Transportation District Engineer shall be ultimately accountable to see that the intent of the Federal Transportation Law and statewide investment goals are implemented, including:

- a. Ensuring a fair, equitable and open process for project solicitation, evaluation, and ranking.
- b. Ensuring that the ATP-7 membership reflects the interests of the transportation partners.
- c. Ensuring that the ATIP is completed in a timely manner.
- d. Ensuring that adequate resources are available to staff and manage the activities of ATP-7.
- e. Guaranteeing opportunities for public participation in the ATP process and ensuring that minutes and meeting notifications are sent to interested parties and that the ATP-7 ATIP is made available to the media, area legislators, and the congressional delegation.
- f. Deciding which projects to include in the ATIP.
- g. Managing changes to the STIP while meeting budget constraints, including amendments and modifications.

Section III: ATP-7 Business

A. Meetings

1. Chair and Vice Chair

a. Selection

ATP-7 shall select a chair and vice-chair from their membership at the first meeting of the year, after September 1.

b. Chairperson responsibilities

- i. Set agenda, date, and time of the meetings.
- ii. Conduct the meetings in an open, fair manner respecting the rights of all ATP-7 members to be fairly heard.
- iii. Serve as official signature for all ATP-7 documents.

c. Vice-chair responsibilities

- i. The Vice-chair assumes the duties of the chair when the chair is absent.

2. Meeting times and locations

a. Calendar

The calendar cycle of ATP-7 begins each September 1. ATP-7 will meet as needed to complete the business of the ATP. In addition to ATIP development, the following items are annually scheduled:

- i. The annual legislative forum will be held in December or January, as part of the ATP meeting schedule.
- ii. The *Operating Procedures* shall be reviewed during the summer meeting, as part of the ATP meeting schedule.

b. Location

The meeting locations may vary throughout the district to accommodate local tours and outreach requests.

B. ATP-managed programs

ATP-7 shall follow Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding guidance when integrating priority projects in the four-year ATIP. Selection processes vary by program. Programs solicited by ATP-7 are made available in the federal Surface Transportation Block Grant Program.

1. Programs

Funding for the following programs is allocated through STIP funding guidance. Program Committees are tasked with: Establish a ranking process, define eligibility requirements, and add members as they deem necessary—all of which require ATP-7 concurrence.

a. Transportation Alternatives

Committee members (10 members):

- i. ATP-7 elected city and county officials
- ii. ATP-7 RDC representatives
- iii. ATP-7 MAPO representative
- iv. ATP-7 county engineers
- v. MnDOT District State Aid Engineer
- vi. DNR Regional Administrator

b. STP-Small Urban

Committee members (6 members):

- i. City engineers serving on ATP-7
- ii. Two additional city engineers, rotating annually, from the other cities over 5,000
- iii. MnDOT District State Aid Engineer
- iv. ATP-7 elected city official

c. STP-Rural

Committee members (16):

- i. County engineer representing each county in the ATP boundaries.
- ii. MnDOT District State Aid Engineer
- iii. ATP-7 elected county officials

d. Centrally-solicited programs

Programs that are evaluated at MnDOT's Central Office and provided to ATP-7 for review, input, and inclusion in the ATIP:

- i. Highway/Rail Grade Crossings
- ii. Off-System Bridges (BROS)
- iii. Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- iv. Transit
- v. National Highway Freight Program

e. MnDOT trunk highway projects

i. National Highway System (NHS)

Projects on the NHS are part of the Statewide Performance Program and districts have a role in selecting projects. Selected projects are provided to the ATP for inclusion into the ATIP.

ii. Non-NHS

Trunk highway projects that are not part of the NHS are managed through the District Risk Management Program and selected by District 7. Selected projects are provided to the ATP for inclusion in the ATIP.

2. ATIP management

a. Project changes

Program Committees are charged with reviewing project scope changes, year changes, and cost adjustments and will make recommendation to the ATP for approval. Project changes, including added inflation costs, are to be managed within the current STIP funding guidance.

b. Funding protection

Once a project has been listed in the approved STIP, that project will continue to retain funding unless:

- i. The ATP determines that the scope of the project has changed substantially from the original submittal.
- ii. The sponsoring agency requests that the project be withdrawn.
- iii. The ATP experiences a significant decrease in funding target resulting in reprioritization of all projects in the affected years of the STIP.

c. STIP amendments and administrative modifications

The STIP, once approved by the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA), may be updated throughout the course of the year, and needs to be updated prior to a project's federal authorization and bid letting, if certain project changes have occurred.

i. Typical STIP amendments:

- a. A new project is being added to the STIP
- b. There is a change in overall project length of more than 0.3 miles
- c. Adding or removing phases of work which increases or decreases the total project cost
- d. Changing project scope
- e. When the project cost changes by a certain percentage based on the overall cost of the project.

ii. Typical STIP administrative modifications:

- a. The project cost changes by a certain percentage based on the overall cost of the project
 - b. Project identified that will use a set aside
 - c. Change the STIP year
 - d. Addition of a state-funded project to the STIP
 - e. Adding a locally-funded project to a federally-funded project
 - f. Technical corrections
 - g. Adding or removing advance construction
 - h. Removing a project
 - i. Splitting a project
- iii. Process
- a. MnDOT District 7, or its partners, will initiate the amendment or modification and the District, in consultation with its partners, will determine which document is appropriate and if and how financial constraint is maintained.
 - b. The needed document is drafted by MnDOT District 7 and send to MnDOT's Central Office for review and processing. Central Office compiles the requests statewide and submits a batch to FHWA (or Federal Transit Administration) for their approval.
 - c. If the project is located within the MAPO planning boundaries, the MAPO TIP will also need to be amended, following the process identified in the MAPO Public Participation Plan.
 - d. For STIP amendments, District 7 staff will briefly describe to the ATP the project changes during the STIP status updates at the ATP meeting.
 - e. The ATP will be informed of and MAPO TIP amendments.
 - f. Further detail is provided in April 15, 2015 *FHWA/FT and MnDOT STIP Amendment Guidance*.

d. Failure to deliver

Proposer will inform committee by March 1 if a project will not be deliverable by the established deadlines and based on the end of the state fiscal year on June 30.

e. Committee priorities honored

When the ATP selects projects from the priority lists of the committees, the order of projects on those lists will be honored.

f. Task force for August redistribution and target adjustments

The ATP will develop a task force to help determine how to distribute August redistribution funds and target adjustments as needed; The task force will consist of a county engineer, a city engineer, RDC representative, and elected official. A method for distributing funds to the eligible projects will be established, subject to concurrence by the ATP.

C. Public involvement and communications

1. Website

District 7 maintains an ATP-7 website, which hosts meeting notices, agendas, minutes, and supplementary documents. The site also includes ATP membership and information on upcoming solicitations.

2. Email lists

District 7 maintains email lists of ATP members, alternate members, committee members, and staff with on-going ATP responsibilities. Email is used to notify members of upcoming meetings. Members are also notified by email of any upcoming solicitations.

Direct mailings may be used if ATP members do not have email available.

3. News releases

District 7 distributes news releases whenever a solicitation is open for application. News releases are also used to notify the public about the availability of the draft STIP and final STIP.

4. Public meetings

All ATP meetings are open to the public.

5. ATIP outreach

MnDOT District 7 partners with the regional development commissions and MAPO to coordinate public meetings related to adoption of the ATIP. The RDCs coordinate the public meetings once the ATP has developed a draft for public review. Attendees at the public meeting are presented with an overview of the draft ATIP for review and comments.

6. Presentations

MnDOT will make presentations, upon request, to various entities, including: city councils, county commissions, chambers of commerce, service clubs, potential project applicants, businesses, other civic associations.

7. Workshops

District 7 may sponsor workshops relating to various program areas. Generally, workshops are intended to inform potential applicants of program criteria, funding availability, or project development.