



TAC Agenda Topics and Project Updates

February 20, 2024 Meeting

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council Meeting Summary

* = Approval Item

Note Taker(s)	Tari Aanonsen, MIC Administrative & Finance Assistant	
Members Present		
	Chris Beldon	Duluth Transit Authority
	David Bolf	City of Hermantown
	Chris Carlson	City of Superior – Public Works
	Derek Fredrickson	MnDOT District 1
	Matt Hemmila	St. Louis County
	Todd Janigo	City of Superior – Public Works
	Cari Pedersen	City of Duluth
	Jess Rich	City of Proctor
	Dena Ryan	WisDOT
	Karl Schuettler	Northspan Group
	Cindy Voigt	City of Duluth Engineering
	Tom Werner	Duluth Airport Authority
Members Absent		* Excused Absence
	Kate Ferguson*	Duluth Seaway Port Authority
	Jim Foldesi	St Louis County
	James Gittemeier	City of Duluth
	Jason Jackman*	Douglas County
	Chris Lee*	City of Duluth
	Maren Webb*	MnDOT Dist 1
	Skip Williams*	Active Transportation
	Vacant	Mobility Challenged Community
Others Present		
	Ron Chicka	MIC Director
	Trish Crego	City of Hermantown
	Miles Hanson	City of Duluth, Americorps Vista
	Duane Hill	MnDOT/FHWA
	Sheldon Johnson	NWRPC
	Jim Meyer	AECOM (presenter)
	Jason Nordberg	FHWA
	Erika Shepard	MnDOT
	Mike Sullivan	Marad
	Rondi Watson	MIC Senior Planner/Communications Specialist
	Mike Wenzholz	MIC Senior Planner



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1. Introductions / Agenda Review

Ron Chicka, MIC Director, called the meeting to order at 1:32 pm. A "roll call" attendance was taken. When completed, Ron asked if there were any questions or changes to the agenda. There were none.

2. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- Meeting Summaries of 12.12.23 and 1.16.24*

Ron then asked if there were any questions or changes to the December or January meeting summaries.

Table with 2 columns: Motion Discussion and Vote, and content: David Bolf / Tom Warner moved to approve the 12.12.23 and 1.16.23 meeting summaries. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Director Chicka reported on several items of interest that were highlighted in the Director's Report in the agenda packet as well as some items listed below:

- Safety Action Plan Update 2024 - AECOM and the area jurisdictional partners continue to meet as now, with our recently added funds in the Work Program, we have enough of a budget to finish the detailed data analysis phase. We will have a list of projects throughout the MIC area with strategies identified to mitigate them. Separately, we'll continue to meet with FHWA in Minnesota as we prepare to launch the larger federal grant, most likely not until the end of the year or early next year.
Duluth - 40th AW / Piedmont Ave & 24th AW - The City and the County are meeting with area stakeholders to discuss components of these two projects: one, a corridor and one, an intersection. First, 40th AW from the freeway to the railroad crossing just below the large hill climb. This is to be a reconstruction project for 2026. The objective here is to design a new multimodal roadway layout including the future intersection control at Grand. Second, at Piedmont and 24th AW, determine if the temporary signal at this location should remain in place once the Twin Ports Interchange work concludes, plus determine the best signal control for the long term.
Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) Washington DC Spring Meetings - Next month, I'll be participating in a series of meetings with my colleagues across the country as work on maintaining existing and developing new policy initiatives within the federal transportation bill. Meetings are set up with many partners including: Federal Highway and Transit, House and Senate leaders tasked with the bill, and other like entities in DC such as the National Leagues of Cities and the National Association of Development Organizations. One key new initiative that is quickly gaining ground is for the MPOs to directly receive our planning funds right to our host agency (as opposed to the funds first going through the states). This will be interesting as it plays out. Many MPOs - due to their host setup - already receive several federal grants directly. Unnecessary oversight and related expenses could be avoided. ARDC, in our case, has handled federal grants in the past and can certainly do so again.
St Louis Co. Highway Safety Improvement Awards - Based on the solicitation from last year out of this state operated program, the County received three federal grants totaling approximately \$1.3M. Included are the following:



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- 1) Edgeline painting (6") of county roads in the MPO area.
 - 2) Midway Rd and Becks/Halie (just south of I-35) – added turn lanes and lighting.
 - 3) Midway Rd and Rose Rd (south of 194) – added turn lanes and lighting.
- The MIC’s Work Program Amendment #1 is moving through the approval process. The main purpose of the amendment is to carryover unused funds from FY23 to FY24, for the purpose of carrying out the tasks of the Safety Action Plan. The consultant will be working on this for most of the year, working through a large amount of date.
 - The Central Entrance is moving along, possibly at the review stage. The MIC will be looking for an update on the project. One item that may or may not impact the project is the development located at the old Central High School. Possibly anticipating potential impacts to the roadway in and around the surrounding area. David Bolf mentioned that as part of the AUAR process, a study is being conducted on the impact of the new development and will be in the Public Comment phase next month, then implemented in mid-May. The findings will be shared with the consultants working with MnDOT and the City of Duluth.

3. 2024 MNDOT SAFETY PERFORMANCE MEASURE (PM1) TARGETS*

Mike Wenholz reported on the 2024 MnDOT Safety Performance Measure Targets. MPO’s are required to either adopt the state’s PM1 Targets or adopt their own. There are five federally required targets in PM1 and MPO’s must make significant progress towards meeting the adopted targets each year. Progress is made through projects that are listed in the long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan or funded in the Duluth and Superior TIPs. Additional work completed through the 2024 Safety Action Plan will also see the implementation of these targets. The MIC is asking to adopt the 2024 MnDOT PM1 Targets, as listed in the table below:

Table 1: 2024 Statewide Safety Performance Measure Targets

Performance Measure	Baseline (2018-2022 average)	2024 Target
Number of fatalities	414.2	352.4
Fatality rate (per 100M vehicle miles traveled)	0.725	0.582
Number of serious injuries	1,676.2	1,463.4
Serious injury rate (per 100M vehicle miles traveled)	2.930	2.470
Number of non-motorist fatalities & serious injuries	282.4	258.4

Motion Discussion and Vote	Cindy Voigt / Tom Werner moved to recommend the 2024 MnDOT Safety Performance Measure (Pm1) Targets to the Policy Board for approval. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously.
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4. 2024-2027 SUPERIOR AREA TIP AMENDMENT #9*

Sheldon presented the following amendment to the 2024-2027 Superior Area TIP:

TIP AMENDMENT #9

A TIP amendment has been requested for painting work associated with painting the Bong Bridge (B161-0038-0013) in partnership with MnDOT. Construction work is scheduled for 2026.

2026 Transportation Improvements Projects (Roadway)

Jurisdiction and Project Number	Project Description		Estimated Costs & Funding Sources			
			Thousands			
			Federal	State	Local	Total
WisDOT 113-24-020	USH 2 - Bong Bridge Zone Painting B16-0038-0013 0.0 miles	PE ROW CONST		333.5	333.5	667
Amended to TIP in February 2024	\$333,500 WisDOT and \$333,500 MnDOT (local) 8680-00-74	TOTAL		333.5	333.5	667

Questions regarding this project should be directed to Sheldon Johnson at 715-635-2197 or by email at sjohnson@nwrpc.com.

Motion Discussion and Vote	Todd Janigo / Dena Ryan moved to recommend the 2024-2027 Superior Area Tip Amendment #9 to the Policy Board for approval. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously.
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5. LONG RANGE MTP 2050 – PROJECT SCORING METRICS

Jim Meyer of AECOM presented the framework of the MIC’s project evaluation process for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) 2050 Project. As an MPO, the MIC is required to have performance-based planning, in which this scoring process is a starting point. It is intended to enhance and support the vision and goals of the MTP, is data-driven, but is one tool that helps to inform the selection of regionally significant projects. Jim explained the four steps of the scoring process: 1) MTP Project Scoring Metrics, 2) Post Scoring Reality Check, 3) MTP Project Final Review Questions and 4) Fiscal Constraint Analysis. Step 3 may ask for jurisdictional input by answering a series of yes/no questions regarding the projects that have advanced forward after the initial scoring of steps 1 and 2. This will help to further identify projects that should be included in the fiscally constrained MTP. It should be noted that unfunded projects that are regionally significant can be added to an illustrative project list and so can still be included in the MTP. Next steps will include a memo to jurisdictions next week, summarizing the scoring process. The scoring process will be wrapped up by July in order to hold the Public Comment period and have the plan finalized for approval in October. The MIC will communicate the results in order to keep the scoring process transparent.



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Some questions that arose were:

Q. How much effort will this process require of jurisdictions?

A. Most of the scoring process is completed by the MPO and the consultant, AECOM. The jurisdictions are first asked for their lists of projects and then the scoring process begins. The MIC will likely be asking some follow up questions of the jurisdictions regarding the projects that make it to Step 3, but other than that, the work should be minimal.

Q: How many projects will be included in Step 3?

A. It has yet to be determined, but 25 has been mentioned. It may easily be determined by a clear line being drawn after the outcome of Step 1 scoring. We want to have narrowed down to a reasonable number.

Q: How often does this process occur?

A: Every five years.

Q: What is the benefit of keeping the project list limited?

A: The projects included should best meet the goals of the MTP.

6. **FY2028 DULUTH AREA TIP STBGP PROJECTS & TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES (TA) PROJECTS OVERVIEW**

Rondi Watson presented the proposed 2028 Duluth Area TIP projects, funded by STBGP funds. The MPO has \$1,943,500.00 in STBGP funding in 2028. Proposed projects include:

- Central Entrance Reconstruction (safety, intersection, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements by the City of Duluth, in conjunction with the MnDOT project. \$971,750 in STBGP funds).
- Hermantown Road Reconstruction (update from a rural to an urban road section and other enhancements, by the City of Hermantown, in conjunction with MnDOT. \$950,000 in STBGP funds).

Rondi also presented information on the proposed TA Program funding projects stemming from the ATP1, of which four projects are within the MPO area and so are included in the Duluth Area TIP:

- City of Duluth transit amenities, citywide: requested \$462,420.76, requires \$250,000 minimum.
- City of Hermantown Community Connector Trail (Segments 1&2): requested \$600,000, requires \$450,000 minimum.
- St. Louis County 40th Ave W (CSAH 91) Bike & Ped: requested \$304,000, requires \$200,000 minimum.
- St. Louis County Rice Lake Road (CSAH 4) Trail: Requested \$600,000, requires \$400,000.

7. **2025 MINNESOTA CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAM (CRP) FUNDS PROJECT ANNOUNCEMENT**

Ron Chicka reported that the MIC is currently soliciting CRP projects for FY2025 and FY2026. Funds available are \$370k for each year. We will be soliciting for projects for FY 2027 & FY2028 next fall, in which the amount is reduced to \$225k/year. For FY2025, funds will be applied to the City of Duluth's Active Transportation Corridor for the West Superior Street reconstruction project. A Teams meeting with the jurisdictions will be held in the next few weeks to select an existing project for FY2026 funds. Look for approval to occur at the March meetings.



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8. BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC) UPDATE

Ron Chicka gave an update on the recent meeting of the BPAC that took place on February 1st, 2024. Some highlights from that meeting include:

- BeMinnSNOWta Nice campaign: pledge to shovel events to be held Feb 6th and 7th. This is part of the Sidewalk Snow Removal Task Force, working to coordinate a city wide effort to remove snow from area foot and bike pathways.
- St. Louis County presentation on Safe Systems Approach, which has been recommended to be considered for incorporation into the MIC's long-range plan and Bike/Ped plans.
- Mike Wenzholz discussed the process of the MIC's Long Range Transportation Plan with the BPAC. The group identified several priorities to be included in the plan.
- Several project updates: Blatnik Bridge Project, 40th Ave W Corridor Project, and the London Rd project.
- Grant funding opportunities: St. Louis County is pursuing funding for Rice Lake Rd Project, City of Duluth submitted the Transportation Alternatives application for DTA sidewalk connections and Zeitgeist Arts has received some small grants for 6th Avenue East.

9. ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

- Ron Chicka mentioned that the design and engineering of the Bong Bridge improvements mentioned in the Superior Area TIP Amendment would occur in 2024, and the repainting would occur in 2026. The slide as presented by Sheldon was labelled correctly.

10. PROJECT UPDATES

- **Administrative Modification #6 to the 2024-2027 Duluth Area TIP**

MN 23 in Duluth, W 5th St to 121st Ave W

This modification, approved by MIC staff, is a reduction in total project costs due to updated cost estimates. The total project cost has been reduced by \$400,000, \$325,680 of which is from federal funds, and the project remains fiscally constrained, with no change to the project scope.

- **Amendment #1 to the MIC's 2024-2025 Work Program and Budget**

As described in the January meeting materials, the MIC had a \$100,000 balance left over from our 2023 budget, due to being short-staffed after the departure of our Senior Planner early last year. We proposed to carry that amount over to the 2024 budget by amending our approved 2024-2025 UPWP (\$75,000 to complete Phase 3 of the MIC-area Safety Action Plan and \$25,000 to complete the 2050 update of the MIC's long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan).

The Policy Board approved this amendment at the January meeting, and we subsequently received the required state and federal approvals. We are now working to amend our contract with AECOM, the consultant currently conducting the technical work for the MIC-area Safety Action Plan and assisting MIC staff with the 2050 MTP update, to update the scopes of work and budgets for those projects.

11. ADJOURN: With no further agenda items, discussions or announcements, Director Ron Chicka adjourned the meeting at 3:18 pm.