



Meeting Summary

* = Approval Item

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| 1Note Taker(s) | Tari Aanonsen, MIC Administrative/Finance Assistant | |
| Members Present | | |
| | Members Present | |
| | Ed Anderson | City of Superior – Citizen Rep |
| WI Co-Chair | Nick Baker | Douglas County Board of Supervisors |
| MN Co-Chair | Wayne Boucher | City of Hermantown |
| | Mark Johnson | City of Superior |
| | Yauhen Karatai | City of Duluth – Citizen Representative |
| | Rosemary Lear | Douglas County Board of Supervisors |
| | Nick Ledin | Superior City Council |
| | Mike Mayou | Duluth City Council |
| | Sam Pomush | Douglas County Board of Supervisors |
| | Randy Skowlund | Douglas County Board of Supervisors |
| | Tom Szukis | DTA |
| | Jenny Van Sickle | Superior City Council |
| | Chad Ward | City of Proctor |
| | Scott Welsh | Solway Township |
| Members Absent | | * Excused Absence |
| | Broc Allen | Douglas County Suburban Townships |
| | Annie Harala* | St. Louis County |
| | Bob Quade | City of Rice Lake |
| | | |
| Others Present | | |
| | Ron Chicka | MIC Director |
| | Duane Hill | MnDOT |
| | Sheldon Johnson | NWRPC |
| | Ricky Sarran | MIC GIS Specialist |
| | Rondi Watson | MIC Communications Co-ord./Planning Asst. |
| | Mike Wenholz | MIC Senior Planner |



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1. Introductions / Agenda Review

MIC Co-Chair, Nick Baker, called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm. Chair Baker announced there was one change to the agenda: item #5 needed to be changed to an approval item. Chair Baker asked for a motion to approve the change.

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| Motion Discussion and Vote | Sam Pomush/Mike Mayou moved to approve the change to the 2.21.24 MIC Policy Board agenda. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously. |
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A “roll call” attendance was then taken. When completed, Director Chicka introduced our newest board members, Councilor, Therese Tomanek, representing the City of Duluth and Yauhen Karatai, citizen representative for the City of Duluth. After, Chair Baker moved on to item# 2 on the agenda.

2. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- Meeting Summary of 1.17.24

Chair Baker then asked if there were any questions or changes to the January meeting summary.

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| Motion Discussion and Vote | Sam Pomush/Ed Anderson moved to approve the 1.17.24 meeting summary. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously. |
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DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

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

- o 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.
- o 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.
- o 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



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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:
 - 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 was asked for a letter of support for the City of Superior and BNSF to begin a study on a potential viaduct at 28th Street. This would be an improvement for safety and bike and pedestrian safety.
- The MIC has a vacancy on the ARDC Board. This would be a person from the MIC Policy Board (Minnesota side) representing the MIC on the ARDC Board. Please reach out to Ron Chicka is you are interested in serving in this capacity.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

Chair Baker then allowed for an opportunity for Public Comment. Hearing none, he continued to item #3 on the agenda.

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 |



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No Public Comments recorded.

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| Motion Discussion and Vote | Rosmary Lear / Scott Welsh moved to approve the 2024 MnDOT Safety Performance Measure (PM1) Targets for adoption. Members discussed the option of MPO's creating their own targets vs. adopting the State's, along with the importance of individual driver responsibility playing a role in meeting the targets. Mike Wenholz stated that the MIC would not be equipped to develop our own targets. He also stated that through the delivery of the Safety Action Plan and the Long-Range Plan, the MIC will show how we are making progress towards these goals as an MPO. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote. |
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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.

Member Anderson asked if there would be consideration to move this project up on the calendar so to not coincide with the planned Blatnik reconstruction project. Duane Hill of MnDOT was able to share that the Blatnik project is not expected to have traffic impacts in the year 2026. There should not be a conflict with the painting project of the Bong Bridge.

No other Public Comments were recorded.

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| Motion Discussion and Vote | Sam Pomush / Rosemary Lear moved to approve the 2024-2027 Superior Area Tip Amendment #9 for adoption. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote. |
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5. FY 2028 DULUTH AREA TIP STBGP PROJECTS & TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES (TA) PROJECTS

OVERVIEW

Rondi Watson 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.

Rondi also 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).

No Public Comments were recorded.

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| Motion Discussion and Vote | Randy Skowlund / Wayne Boucher moved to approve the 2028 STBGP funded projects to the 2028 Duluth Area TIP for adoption. Members discussed the importance of continuing the vision of a community centered roadway for the Central Entrance corridor when that project comes to fruition. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote. |
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6. 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.

7. BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC) UPDATE

Ron Chicka gave an update on the recent meeting of the BPAC that took place on February 1, 2024.

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 Wenholz 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.



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- Grant funding opportunities: St. Louis County is pursuing funding for Rice Lake Rd Project, Cit of Duluth submitted the Transportation Alternatives application for DTA sidewalk connections and Zeitgeist Arts has received some small grants for 6th Avenue East.

8. ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

- Member Ed Anderson discussed the Blatnik Bridge project in respect to the port and how important the shipping industry is to the area. Ed stated that shipping should be a consideration for the planning of the bridge.
- Member Mike Mayou asked what specifically the Federal funding is covering for the Blatnik Bridge Project. Duane Hill of MnDot stated that the funding is for bridge replacement with a shared use path.

9. 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.

- **ADJOURN:** With no further agenda items, discussions or announcements, Chair Baker adjourned the meeting at 7:22 pm.