



Meeting Summary

** = Approval Item*

1Note Taker(s)	Tari Aanonsen, MIC Administrative/Finance Assistant	
Members Present		
	Members Present	
	Broc Allen	Douglas County Suburban Townships
WI Co-Chair	Nick Baker	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
MN Co-Chair	Wayne Boucher	City of Hermantown
	Annie Harala	St. Louis County
	Mark Johnson	City of Superior
	Yauhen Karatai	City of Duluth – Citizen Representative
	John Lohse	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Nick Ledin	Superior City Council
	Mike Mayou	Duluth City Council
	Sam Pomush	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Bob Quade	City of Rice Lake
	Randy Skowlund	Douglas County Board of Supervisors
	Terese Tomanek	Duluth City Council
	Jenny Van Sickle	Superior City Council
	Chad Ward	City of Proctor
	Scott Welsh	Solway Township
Members Absent		* Excused Absence
	Ed Anderson*	City of Superior – Citizen Rep
	Tom Szukis	DTA
Others Present		
	Ron Chicka	MIC Director
	Prescott Morrill	MIC Planner
	Nicole Samuelson	MIC Intern
	Richard Sarran	MIC Senior GIS Specialist
	Mike Wenholz	MIC Principal Planner



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1. Introductions / Agenda Review

MIC Co-Chair, Nick Baker, called the meeting to order at 6:01pm. A “roll Call” attendance was taken. When completed, Chair Baker moved on to item# 2 on the agenda.

2. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- Meeting Summary of 5.15.24*

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

Motion Discussion and Vote	Sam Pomush / Annie Harala moved to approve the 5.15.24 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 as well as some items as listed below:

MIC Board - Douglas County – We have a Certificate of Appreciation to present at the Board meeting in June to Rosemary Lear. A change was made in the latest appointments to committees, and I was informed of this last month. Rosemary has been with the MIC for 12 years and we greatly appreciate her time and contributions over the time span. Thank you on behalf of the MIC staff and committees. Also, the MIC welcomes John Lohse from Douglas County to the Policy Board as her successor.

Bridge Modeling – Following on prior work examining different options for closure of the Blatnik Bridge (direction, lanes) and resulting issues with freight traffic, we’ll again look at what our model states as to impacts to the network of full closure that would occur in three years’ time. This is not to look at possible remedies, though possibly still an option. It needs to be conducted as simply a task of the designated MPO and being the responsible entity overseeing the transportation network of Duluth - Superior. At a minimum, we’d have results of what the model would forecast as to impacts – where and to what degree. Depending on our budget, this might occur with our consultant later this year, or early in 2025. It’s possible this could complement the detailed mitigation work currently being undertaken by the two DOTs.

Rice Lake Road Corridor - St. Louis County received a \$25M grant for the improvement to the Rice Lake Road Corridor. You may recall the presentation given by Vic Lund from the county earlier this year at the Policy Board meeting. These multi-modal improvements include the extension of West Calvary, turn lanes, converting some intersections to roundabouts, new construction of over five miles of paved trails to name a few.

Federal Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Grant – To receive the required match funds for the recent \$250K grant the MIC received, we’ve submitted a request to the Minnesota DOT for the full \$62,500 so that we may utilize the full federal amount and be prepared to issue the RFP, likely early next year. The MIC learned two days prior to this meeting that we have been awarded the state funds and will thus be able to produce the required match of \$62,500.

Wisconsin Carbon Reduction Program Funding – After continued deliberations at the State level, MPOs (and others) were notified last month of these federal funds, once more, being made available to member jurisdictions. Project eligibility has been expanded to more categories – more in the spirit of the federal



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program – including construction and planning of on/off road facilities for bikes and pedestrians. Since a year was missed in the cycle, we’ve got approximately \$150K to use within the MPO area in Wisconsin. There is a local match requirement. We are discussing project options with eligible applicants currently. Applications are due by the end of June.

New Interim Director of Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) – Kristi Kane, ARDC’s Director of Aging, has been named as the interim Executive Director of ARDC, filling the vacated roll by Andy Hubley, who resigned in June 2024, after 27 years of service.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

Chair Baker then allowed for an opportunity for Public Comment.

A question was asked regarding the plan for a permanent replacement for both the executive director roll and the director of Regional Planning. Ron replied that the agency is currently reviewing the options and will hope to have a plan in the next few months. Time and care will be taken in this process.

A question was asked about the Blatnik Bridge and plans for construction in relation to mass transit and encouraging the population to consider this as an alternative during high volume traffic while having use of only one bridge. Director Chika said that this, among other items, have been brought to the attention of the DOT. It is assured that the topic will be evaluated as an option.

Chair Baker continued to item #3 on the agenda.

3. DRAFT 2025-2028 DULUTH AREA TIP – RELEASE FOR 30 DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ON JULY 1, 2024*

Prescott Morrill discussed the current steps leading up to the release for public comment for the Draft 2025-2028 Duluth Area TIP. The MIC is currently consulting with constituent jurisdictions for input and completing the draft document for review. Three public meetings are planned for July 17th to give the public the opportunity to learn more about the TIP and provide any feedback regarding the Draft document.

The MIC is requesting approval for the release of the Draft 2025-2028 Duluth Area TIP for the 30-Day Public Comment Period on July 1, 2024.

Questions regarding the Duluth Area TIP should be directed to Prescott Morrill at 218-529-7556 or by email at pmorrill@ardc.org.

Motion Discussion and Vote	Annie Harala / John Lohse moved to approve the Draft 2025-2028 Duluth Area Tip for 30-Day Public Comment Period on July 1, 2024. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously.
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4. DRAFT LONG RANGE MTP 2050 – RELEASE FOR 30 DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ON AUGUST 1, 2024*

Mike Wenzholz presented an update to the Long Range MTP 2050. Prior to our June 2024 TAC meeting, committee members were given several draft chapters to review and then given time at the meeting to offer feedback. Those chapters included:

- Socioeconomic Document (Update from AECOM)
- A Vision to Implement chapter
- Key Takeaways Chapter
- Action Steps to Implement Chapter topics
- MTP Priority Projects Map
- MTP Priority Projects List
- Financial Capacity of Planned Projects (25 Years) Table

Two chapters to note are the Key Takeaways and the Action Steps to Implement. These chapters essentially offer condensed highlights for the document as a whole and capture the key data throughout the MTP process. Mike also discussed the Priority Project List and the process that was used to select the most regionally significant projects. After analysis and scoring, 40 out of 254 projects rose to the top to make up the Priority Projects List. All projects will be included in the MTP 2050, however.

Mike went on to highlight the survey, stakeholder groups and jurisdictional input that was received in our process, as well as demographic data that was collected by our consultant, AECOM. This information is valuable in understanding the needs of our planning area and how future projects may be able to address these needs.

It was asked if the MIC has evaluated how well we have implemented our plans since the last MTP 2045 and how our visions were realized? Mike replied that this had been a key goal of the 2045 plan, however due to staff turnover, the implementation of that analysis did not come to fruition. In the short term, jurisdictions were asked to give the MIC a list of significant things that have happened since the 2045 plan. In the long term, the MIC plans to show how future projects tie back to the goals and objectives of the MTP when plans are presented for approval by the Policy Board. Jurisdictions that are bringing forth projects for approval will be asked to provide this information.

Questions relating to the Long Range MTP 2050 should be directed to Mike Wenzholz at 218-529-7573 or by email at mwenzholz@ardc.org.

No additional Public Comments were received.

Motion Discussion and Vote	Randy Skolund / Sam Pomush moved to approve the 2024-2027 Duluth Area Tip Amendments #6 and #7. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously.
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5. 2025-2026 MIC WORK PROGRAM DISCUSSION

Ron Chicka reviewed the ongoing work that is included in the MIC Work Program, along with past examples of short-term projects that the MIC has assisted with. Ron stated that jurisdictions might consider optional/discretionary projects that the MIC staff might help facilitate. These would be in addition to the ongoing work of the TIP, Long Range MTP and our modal elements (Bike/Ped, Harbor, Freight, Roadway and Transit). Please reach out to Ron in the next 6-8 weeks with any requests or suggestions. There may be a small amount of discretionary funds available to apply to something outside of our ongoing work.

Questions regarding the 2025-2026 UPWP should be directed to Ron Chicka at 218-529-7506 or by email at rchicka@ardc.org.

6. HARBOR TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HTAC) UPDATE

Mike Wenzholz gave an update on the most recent meeting of the HTAC that occurred in June. Reports were given from both the Dredging and the Navigation subcommittees. The MN Sea Grant initiative gave a presentation on Paddle Safe Twin Ports, which aims to raise awareness of the dangers in and around Lake Superior. USCG presented on the operations of the ice breaking vessel in the Duluth-Superior area. And lastly, WPLGA presented on its pilotage operations that supply a licensed pilot to direct the navigation of either a Great Lakes freighter or foreign trade vessel on the great lakes.

7. ROUND TABLE

- Randy Skowlund initiated a brief discussion regarding beach nourishment and who oversees that work in the Duluth Superior area, specifically the lakeside of Park Point.

8. PROJECT UPDATES

- **2024-2027 Superior Area TIP- Administrative Modification #1**

Project Description Change to Project 113-24-001

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation requested a change to the project description (FIPS Number) for an existing TIP project already listed in the 2024-2027 TIP. The project, USH 2 from 53rd Ave E to CTH C (TIP Project ID 113-24-001), will incorporate a change in the FIPS number from 1180-00-31 to 1180-00-60*. The project year, scope and cost are not affected.

- **Safe Routes to School (SRTS)**

In April of this year, ISD 709 was awarded a grant from MnDOT to fund a 3-year dedicated position for a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) coordinator. This person will be working with Duluth ISD 709 to implement existing SRTS plans and will be housed with Duluth's ISD 709.

- **2024 MIC Safety Action Plan**

MIC staff is continuing to work with AECOM to draft the MIC Safety Action Plan. At present, the project team is reviewing Safety Emphasis Areas that pertain to various streetscape contexts, and what types of implements may be used in the future to mitigate safety risks. Additionally, MIC staff, with the assistance



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of our AECOM consultants, are working towards an inventory of all applicable road sections and intersections where these safety measures may be implemented.

- **ADJOURN:** With no further agenda items, discussions or announcements, Chair Baker adjourned the meeting at 7:31 pm.