



**Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
Meeting Summary**

** = Approval Item*

| | | |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Note Taker(s) | Tari Aanonsen, MIC Administrative & Finance Assistant | |
| Members Present | | |
| | Chris Belden | Duluth Transit Authority |
| | David Bolf | City of Hermantown |
| | Chris Carlson | City of Superior – Public Works |
| | Trish Crego | City of Hermantown - Alternate |
| | Kate Ferguson | Duluth Seaway Port Authority |
| | Jim Foldesi | St Louis County |
| | Derek Fredrickson | MnDOT District 1 |
| | James Gittemeier | City of Duluth |
| | Todd Janigo | City of Superior – Public Works |
| | Jess Rich | City of Proctor |
| | Mae Sommerfeld | WisDOT NW Region |
| | Cindy Voigt | City of Duluth Engineering |
| | Maren Webb | MnDOT District 1 |
| | Tom Werner | Duluth Airport Authority |
| | Skip Williams | Active Transportation |
| Members Absent | | * Excused Absence |
| | Jason Jackman | Douglas County |
| | Chris Lee* | City of Duluth |
| | Cari Pedersen | City of Duluth |
| | Vacant | Economic Development |
| | Vacant | Mobility Challenged Community |
| Others Present | | |
| | Ron Chicka | MIC Director |
| | Trish Crego | City of Hermantown |
| | Amanda Crosby | The Arc Northland and BMN Chair |
| | Andrea Crouse | Zeitgeist Active Transportation and BPAC Chair |
| | Sheldon Johnson | MIC Deputy Director, NWRPC |
| | Bryan McCoy | MnDOT District 1 |
| | Jason Nordberg | FHWA |
| | Elinor Rosenberg | City of Duluth - AmeriCorps |
| | Dena Ryan | FHWA - MN |
| | Erika Shepard | MnDOT Central Office |
| | Robert Sullivan | MARAD |
| | Rondi Watson | MIC Senior Planner/Communications Specialist |
| | Mike Wenzholz | MIC Principal Planner |



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1. Introductions / Agenda Review

Ron Chicka, MIC Director, called the meeting to order at 1:03 pm. A "roll call" attendance was taken. When completed, Ron asked if there were any questions or other changes to the agenda. There were none.

2. Committee Business

- Meeting Summaries of 9.17.24*

Ron then asked if there were any questions or changes to the September meeting summary.

Table with 2 columns: Motion Discussion and Vote, and content: Skip Williams / Jim Foldesi moved to approve the 9.17.24 meeting summary. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously.

- Director's Report:

Director Chicka recently attended the AMPO national conference and gave a brief update:

Association of Metropolitan Planning Organization (AMPO) National Policy Update – At the recent national conference, a series of meetings were held that has outlined the policy points that AMPO (on behalf of all MPOs) will put forward in upcoming meetings with Congress and Administrative (White House) staff. These meetings are being held over the coming 12 to 18 months as all parties work on the next federal reauthorization bill – due to expire in Sept 2026. The makeup of the next Congress and the Presidency will certainly have a big impact on where our policies head. AMPO, working with the national Board of Director's, is very well positioned to promote our platform.

Key legislative priorities are the following:

- 1) Increase Planning Funds to meet increased Federal Planning Requirements
2) Shift Certain Discretionary Funding to Formula Funding
3) Reducing Local Match for Federal Transportation Programs
4) Allowing for Carryover of Federal Funds
5) MPOs Becoming Direct Recipients for Certain Federal Funds

3. Be MinneSNOWta Nice

Amanda Crosby, (The Arc Northland) and Andrea Crouse, (BPAC Chair and Zeitgeist Active Transportation), joined us for an informative presentation about this community led group that works to communicate the importance of an accessible sidewalk network for all who rely upon it. With winter approaching and the reality that not all Duluth residents have the means or capacity to clear the snow from sidewalks, this campaign calls upon community members to make a pledge to help someone with limited snow removal capacity after snow events.

Clear, accessible sidewalks allow all community members to safely go about their daily activities, meaning safer commutes to work, school and play. Equitable access also has positive impacts on our local economy, public safety and general health and well-being for all ages. To make a pledge to help a neighbor, or to find out more, please visit: https://beminnesnowtanice.com/



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4. 2024-2027 Superior Area TIP Amendments #17-18*

Sheldon Johnson presented the following amendments to the 2024-2027 Superior Area TIP for recommendation to the MIC Policy Board:

TIP AMENDMENT #17

A TIP amendment has been requested by WisDOT for construction scheduled to begin in 2026 for work associated with signals and gates at two Union Pacific rail crossings in the vicinity of the Blatnik Bridge future replacement site.

2026 Transportation Improvements Projects (Rail)

| Jurisdiction and Project Number | Project Description | | Estimated Costs & Funding Sources Thousands | | | |
|--|---|--------------------|--|-------|-------|-------|
| | | | Federal | State | Local | Total |
| WisDOT 113-24-028 Amended to TIP in October 2024 | IH 535 UP RR-Xing 186166U &186165M | PE ROW CONST | | 250 | | 250 |
| | Signals RR Signals Interconnect 0.0 Miles NHS 1199-00-50 | TOTAL | | 250 | | 250 |

TIP AMENDMENT #18

A TIP amendment has been requested by WisDOT for construction scheduled to begin in 2026 for work associated with signals and gates at one Union Pacific rail crossing in the vicinity of the Blatnik Bridge future replacement site.

2026 Transportation Improvements Projects (Rail)

| Jurisdiction and Project Number | Project Description | | Estimated Costs & Funding Sources Thousands | | | |
|--|--|--------------------|--|-------|-------|-------|
| | | | Federal | State | Local | Total |
| WisDOT 113-24-029 Amended to TIP in October 2024 | IH 535 UP RR-Xing 186169P | PE ROW CONST | | 250 | | 250 |
| | Signals RR Signals Interconnect 0.0Miles NHS 1199-00-51 | TOTAL | | 250 | | 250 |



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Questions regarding either of these projects should be directed to Sheldon Johnson at 715-635-2197 or by email at sjohnson@nwrpc.com.

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| Motion Discussion and Vote | Todd Janigo / Cindy Voigt moved to recommend the 2024-2027 Superior Area TIP Amendments #17-18 to the Policy Board for approval. There was no further discussion; the motion was approved unanimously. |
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5. WisDOT 2025 Safety Performance Measure (PM1) Targets*

Sheldon Johnson presented the PM1 Targets as established by WisDOT:

Pursuant to the regulations promulgated by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) has established statewide targets for the federal performance measures intended to assess performance of the National Performance Management Measures: Highway Safety Improvement Program; 23 CFR Part 490. The 2025 targets (five-year rolling averages) for the five safety performance measures are identified below in Exhibit A.

Exhibit A

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

| Performance Measure | 2019-2023 Baseline Averages | 2025 Safety Targets (2% Reduction) |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| Number of Fatalities | 591.6 | 579.8 |
| Rate of Fatalities per 100 million VMT | 0.922 | 0.904 |
| Number of Serious Injuries | 3,145.0 | 3,082.1 |
| Rate of Serious Injury per 100 million VMT | 4.906 | 4.808 |
| Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries | 388.6 | 380.8 |

Discussion took place that this is a vision toward zero deaths. As MPO, we may develop our own targets, but we do not have the capacity to develop and measure our own, so we adopt the state's.

Questions regarding the WisDOT 2025 Performance Measure (PM1) Targets should be directed to Sheldon Johnson at 715-520-3886 or by email at sjohnson@nwrpc.com.

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| Motion Discussion and Vote | Skip Williams / Chris Belden moved to recommend the WisDOT 2025 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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6. Final 2025-2028 Superior Area Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*

Sheldon Johnson presented the 2025-2028 Superior Area TIP for recommendation by the TAC to the Policy Board. This TIP includes the two amendments (17 & 18), as well as the PM1 Targets as discussed earlier in the meeting. He went on to say that New Project Solicitation began June 2024, and the Draft TIP was approved for public release by the MIC Policy Board on August 21, 2024. No public comments were received. Hearing no questions or discussion, Sheldon recommended the approval of the 2025-2028 Superior Area TIP.

Table with 2 columns: Motion Discussion and Vote, and text describing the motion and its approval.

7. Final 2025-2026 MIC Work Program*

Ron Chicka summarized the planning projects included in the 2025-26 MIC Work Plan. Some new items include consultant-led modeling in relation to the Blatnik Bridge reconstruction project, along with the MIC’s participation in the DTA’s steering committee for their consultant-led Bus Rapid Transit Facility Study. Also included in the 2025-2026 UPWP will be the production of a comprehensive Safety Action Plan for the entire MIC planning area. This will be mostly consultant-led but with some assistance from MIC staff. It is funded by an SS4A grant in the amount of \$250,000 that the MIC was awarded, as well as a local match for \$62,500. MIC Staff recommended the 2025-2026 MIC Work Program for approval.

Table with 2 columns: Motion Discussion and Vote, and text describing the motion and its approval.

8. Final Long Range MTP 2050*

Principal Planner, Mike Wenzholz reviewed the 15-month process by which the Long Range MTP 2050 was completed. This process was guided by the overall vision of the plan, which is to “develop a community-supported multimodal transportation system that not only supports the diverse needs of people and commerce, but is also fiscally, socially, and environmentally sustainable over time.” Public and stakeholder engagement occurred through a survey, six focus groups, eleven jurisdictional consultations, twelve presentations and discussions, as well as two public open houses.

The draft MTP was released on 8/01/24 for 30-day Public Comment, in which the MIC received 121 individual comments. The MIC responded to all comments, as well as documented all comments and responses in Appendix D of the document.

Sustainable Choices 2050 was finalized October 8th- 9th, 2024 and sent to TAC and MIC Board Members for review. At this meeting of the TAC, MIC staff requested a recommendation to the Policy Board to adopt Sustainable Choices 2050.

Cindy Voigt commented that the project list lacks the Scenic Byways which need to be included in the MTP to be eligible for CRP or Protect funds. This wasn’t previously noted in their review by the city.

Jim Foldesi questioned whether the selected project for CRP funding needs to be included in the MTP, which selection does not occur until December.



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Table with 2 columns: Motion Discussion and Vote, and text describing a motion by Skip Williams / Cindy Voigt regarding the Long Range MTP 2050.

9. Duluth Area TIP Application Process Update

Mike Wenzholz presented information regarding the application process for the 2026-2029 Duluth Area TIP. Based upon our regulatory requirements of the CFR 450.326, the MIC will be asking jurisdictions to provide plain-language descriptions, visualizations and any connections to state, regional, or local plans.

Included in the visualization materials should be basic maps that encompass the extent of the project, as well as any renderings or sample imagery, as available. Descriptions should be the "plain language" or in other words, provide the "why".

A pre-application meeting will be held sometime in November and a request for project solicitation will be circulated in December 2024. Application will be due in January 2025 and project selections and responses will be returned to jurisdictions in February 2025.

Any questions regarding the 2026-2029 Duluth Area TIP Application process, please contact Ron Chicka at (218) 349-8625 or by email at rchicka@ardc.org

10. Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Bicycle Plan, Project Prioritization Model

Ron Chicka presented for discussion a current project prioritization model for the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Bicycle Plan, which is in the process of being updated in 2024. This model includes proximity to Short Trip Generator Areas (MTP), Low Car Ownership Areas (MTP), and Future BRT/GO Routes (DTA).

The MIC is looking for feedback from our jurisdictions on the following:

- Are these sufficient for jurisdictions to optimally pursue funding for future projects?
• Are there additional factors for the MIC to consider for optimizing grant applications?

Principal Planner, Mike Wenzholz, will be guiding this process in the coming months and will be working with jurisdictions to include their feedback.

11. Round Table

- Carbon Reduction Plan (CRP) funds project solicitation and application process: Jim Foldesi asked if the MIC was planning to match the same timeline for this process with that of the ATP.
• Blatnik Bridge: A public meeting for the Blatnik Bridge is scheduled for tonight (10/15/24) at 5:15 at the Superior Public Library.



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12. Project Updates

- **MIC Area Safety Action Plan**

AECOM's work to complete two components of the MIC Area Safety Action Plan (Safety Analysis and Strategy and Project Selection) will be finished in the coming weeks. Their final report will be presented to the TAC and MIC in December, posted online, and incorporated into the final Plan.

The SS4A-funded planning work to complete the remaining six components (Leadership and Goal Setting, Planning Structure; Engagement and Collaboration, Equity, Policy and Process Changes, and Progress Reporting and Transparency) will be undertaken in CY2025-2026. It will build on, and modify, AECOM's work to produce the final, comprehensive MIC Area Safety Action Plan.

Administrative work is currently underway to finalize the agreements with FHWA for the \$250,000 SS4A grant and with MnDOT for the \$62,500 IJJA Discretionary Match program grant. The Request for Proposal for consultant assistance to prepare the final plan is in its early stages of development; we anticipate that the RFP will be posted in early January and that a consultant will be on board by next March to kick off the planning process.

13. Adjourn: With no further agenda items, discussions or announcements, Director Ron Chicka adjourned the meeting at 3:07 pm.