



**Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
Policy Board**

Wednesday, June 18, 2025, at 6:00 pm

MEETING NOTICE

This meeting will be conducted as a hybrid meeting - join us in person at the location listed below OR participate virtually via Microsoft Teams (login info, below).

Meeting materials can be viewed on the [meeting web page](#) as well as on the attached pages.

Items for Approval

- Meeting Summary of 5.21.25
- Policy Board Appointment to the HTAC
- 2025-2028 Duluth Area TIP Amendments #7
- Draft 2026-2029 Duluth Area TIP – Release for 30 Day Public Comment Period
- Duluth Superior Title VI Plan and Language Access Plan 2025

Items for Presentation and Discussion

- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) 101
- MIC Area Safety Action Plan
- Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC) Update

Project Updates

- Safe Routes to School – Duluth Public Schools

In-Person Meeting Location:

Northwood Technical College
Conference Center Rm 108F
600 N 21st Street
Superior, WI 54880

OR

OR

Join virtually via TEAMS below:

[Click here to join teams meeting](#)

Join by Phone (audio only)

1 218-210-0525

Conference ID: 305 434 612#

Attendance / Meeting Quorum

If you are NOT able to attend, or expect to arrive late to the meeting, please notify Tari Aanonsen at taanonsen@ardc.org or 218-529-7541 to ensure a quorum will be present for voting items on the agenda.

The Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Complaint instructions and forms can be found in the Title VI Non-Discrimination Program and Limited-English Proficiency Plan online at dsmic.org/titlevi-policy. We are committed to accessibility. If you have an accommodation request that will allow you to participate more fully, please contact the MIC office at least three days prior to the meeting, and we will do our best, within the resources available to us, to accommodate your request.

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

Duluth and Superior Urban Area Communities Cooperating in Planning and Development through a Joint Venture of the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission and the Northwest Regional Planning Commission

221 West First Street · Duluth, MN 55802 · 218/529-7541 · www.dsmic.org

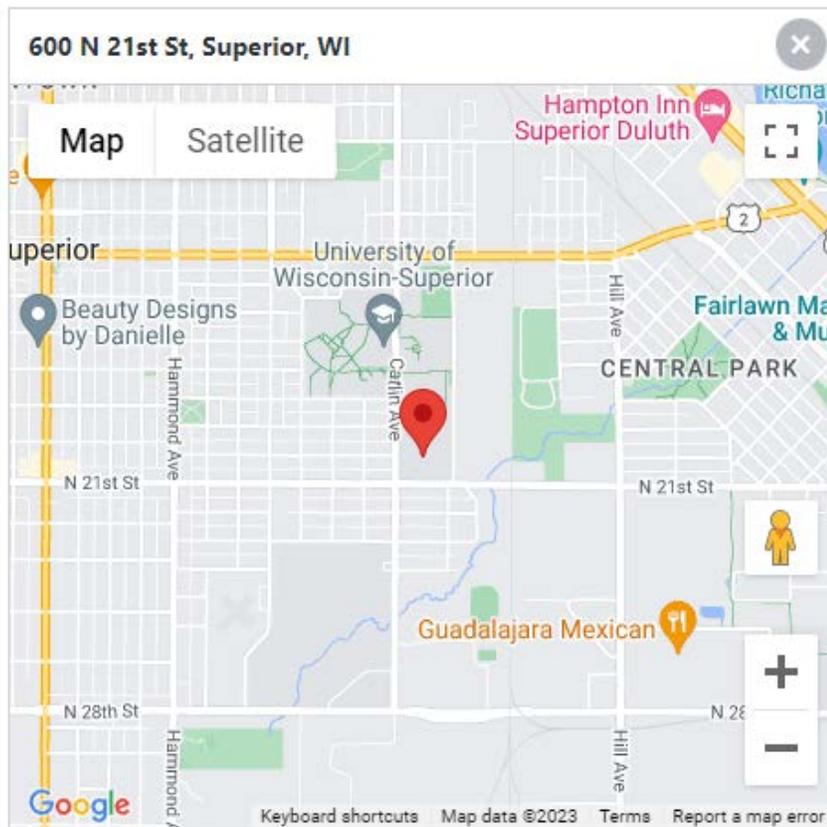
Northwoods Technical College

600 N 21st Street

Superior, WI 54880



Parking and entrance for the Conference Center is located at #3 on the Campus map above.



Policy Board Members

Minnesota Members

City of Duluth

Janet Kennedy

Mike Mayou

City of Duluth

Citizen Rep

Yauhen Karatai

City of Hermantown

Wayne Boucher (Co-Chair)

City of Proctor

Chad Ward

City of Rice Lake

Bob Quade

Duluth Transit Authority Board

Adam McGill

St. Louis County

Annie Harala

St. Louis County

Suburban Townships

Scott Welsh

Wisconsin Members

City of Superior

Nick Ledin

Mark Johnson

Tylor Elm

City of Superior

Citizen Rep

Jenny VanSickle

Douglas County

Nick Baker (Co-Chair)

Randy Skowlund

John Lohse

Vacant

Douglas County

Suburban Townships

Broc Allen



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

Policy Board

Wednesday, June 18, 2025 @ 6:00 pm

MEETING AGENDA

<p>1. Introductions/Agenda Review</p> <p>2. Committee Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting Summary of 5.21.25 (for Approval) Appointment of a Policy Board representative to the Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC) Director's Report Legislative Priorities for Surface Transportation Reauthorization <p style="text-align: center;">"Open Public Comment Period"</p>	15 min
<p>3. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) 101 – Things to Consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation & Discussion, Mike Wenzholz and Richard Sarran 	15 min
<p>4. 2025-2028 Duluth Area TIP Amendment #7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend for Approval, Richard Sarran 	10 min
<p>5. Draft 2026-2029 Duluth Area TIP – Discussion & Release for 30 Day Public Comment Period on July 14, 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend for Approval, Mike Wenzholz 	15 min
<p>6. Duluth Superior Title VI Plan and Language Access Plan 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend for Approval, Rondi Watson 	10 min
<p>7. MIC Area Safety Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation & Discussion, Rondi Watson 	10 min
<p>8. Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC) Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation & Discussion, Mike Wenzholz 	20 min
<p>9. Round Table</p>	5 min
<p>10. Project Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe Routes to School – Duluth Public Schools 	5 min
<p>11. Adjourn</p>	

Next Meeting
 Wednesday, August 20, 2025
 Proctor City Hall
 6:00 pm



Agenda Item Descriptions

* = Presented for Approval or Adoption

1. Introductions / Agenda Review

2. Committee Business

- Meeting Summary of 5.21.25*
- Appointment of a Policy Board representative to the Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC)*
- MIC Director's Report

Twin Ports Interchange Update – At a recent DOT briefing, it was announced that the Interchange (Lincoln Park area) is to be completely finished by the end of the construction season – roughly the first week in November.

MnDOT Corridors of Commerce Readiness Program – Recently the MIC, working with the DOT office locally, submitted a request (\$6M) for funding toward this State funding program directed toward I-35 and reconstruction/extension of the truck climbing lane along Thompson Hill. This follows along with recommendations from the study the MIC recently completed for the corridor. Currently, we are collecting support letters for the project from the City, County and the Chamber of Commerce. Funding granted would allow the DOT to initiate scoping for this project.

Additionally, a support letter is being provided for this same program aimed at attaining funds for improvements to the (long problematic) low clearance rail bridge along USH 2 just to the west of the juncture of Hwy 2 and State 194. This letter is on behalf of the Port Authority. The project might either replace the existing bridge or lower the roadway at this location.

Other Letters of Support:

- **University of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies**– FY25 SS4A Grant application for the project, *Safe Streets for Minnesota Communities – Statewide Convening and an Innovation and Technology Roadmap*. If the application is selected, and if it includes a demonstration project in the MIC planning area, the MIC will provide in-kind time in collaboration with the University. This would offer an opportunity to compare safety approaches and results with other jurisdictions in our state.
- **Legislative Priorities for Surface Transportation Reauthorization**

3. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) 101 – Things to Consider

In an effort to minimize confusion and avoid problems in future TIP amendments and administrative modifications brought before the Policy Board MIC staff will be summarizing the TIP process and some key things to consider. Staff will walk through where we currently are in the TIP cycle and summarize the TIP amendment and administrative modification process. Staff will also highlight where a given project is within the TIP cycle and note the importance of understanding some primary possible outcomes of basic Board actions at different stages of the TIP cycle. Based on our discussion staff will suggest a new approach in our TIP amendment presentations to the Policy Board.



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4. 2025-2028 Duluth Area TIP Amendment #7*

Richard Saran will give an overview of the Duluth Area TIP Amendments, as listed below:

TIP AMENDMENT #7

Re-allocation of Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) Funds from the City of Duluth’s FY2025 West Superior Street Reconstruction Project to the City of Duluth’s FY2025 Railroad Street Rehabilitation Project

State Project ID #118-109-021CRP (FY2025), #118-118-005 (FY2025), and #118-118-005CRP (FY2025)

Due to uncertainties in state funding for the City of Duluth’s 2025 West Superior Street Reconstruction Project, the City has requested that the MIC’s 2025 CRP funds in the amount of \$370,000 be re-allocated to the City’s 2025 Railroad Street project, reducing the amount of the City’s contribution to that project. **There will be no change to the scope of work or the total funding amount of \$2,500,000 for the project.**

CRP funds are intended to be used for projects that reduce transportation emissions, specifically carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from on-road highway sources. MnDOT guidance indicates that these funds are eligible to be applied to the Railroad Street project. The \$370,000 to be replaced by the CRP funds will be used to replace traffic signals, sidewalks, ADA improvements and streetlights.

Approval of this Amendment also signifies TAC and MIC approval of the re-allocation of CRP funds in the amount of \$370,000 from the City of Duluth’s FY2025 West Superior Street Reconstruction Project to the City of Duluth’s FY2025 Railroad Street Rehabilitation Project.

All changes as described are noted in red in the tables below:

6/18/2025	State Project ID	Agency	Roadway Name	Project Description	Type of Funds	Fed \$ (Non-AC)	Other \$	Project Total \$	Year
Original	118-109-021CRP	Duluth	W Superior St	**CRP**: IN DULUTH, MSAS 109 (W SUPERIOR ST) FROM MSAS 194 (CARLTON ST) TO MSAS 194 (W MICHIGAN ST) RECONSTRUCTION, STREETScape AND EV CHARGING STATIONS	CRP	\$ 370,000	\$ 92,500	\$ 462,500	2025
Amendment 7	118-109-021CRP	Duluth	W Superior St	**CRP**: IN DULUTH, MSAS 109 (W SUPERIOR ST) FROM MSAS 194 (CARLTON ST) TO MSAS 194 (W MICHIGAN ST) RECONSTRUCTION, STREETScape AND EV CHARGING STATIONS	CRP	\$ 370,000	\$ 92,500	\$ 462,500	2025
Original	118-118-005	Duluth	Railroad St (MSAS 118)	RAILROAD ST (MSAS 118) IN DULUTH FROM 5TH AVE W TO CANAL PARK DRIVE BITUMINOUS RESURFACING, CURB AND GUTTER, SIDEWALK ADA UPGRADES, TRAFFIC SIGNAL AND STREET LIGHT REPLACEMENT	STBGP	\$1,480,000	\$ 1,020,000	\$ 2,500,000	2025
Amendment 7	118-118-005	Duluth	Railroad St (MSAS 118)	RAILROAD ST (MSAS 118) IN DULUTH FROM 5TH AVE W TO CANAL PARK DRIVE BITUMINOUS RESURFACING, CURB AND GUTTER, SIDEWALK ADA UPGRADES, TRAFFIC SIGNAL AND STREET LIGHT REPLACEMENT	STBGP	\$1,480,000	\$ 557,500	\$ 2,037,500	2025
New Project Amendment 7	118-118-005CRP	Duluth	Railroad St (MSAS 118)	**CRP**: RAILROAD STREET (MSAS 118) IN DULUTH FROM 5TH AVE W TO CANAL PARK DRIVE BITUMINOUS RESURFACING, CURB AND GUTTER, SIDEWALK, ADA UPGRADES, TRAFFIC SIGNAL AND STREET LIGHT REPLACEMENT	CRP	\$ 370,000	\$ 92,500	\$ 462,500	2025

Questions regarding this project should be directed to Mike Wenzholz at 218-529-7573 or by email at mwenzholz@ardc.org or Richard Saran at 218-529-7502 or by email at rsaran@ardc.org.



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5. Draft 2026-2029 Duluth Area TIP – Discussion & Release for 30 Day Public Comment Period on July 14, 2025*

The TAC had an opportunity to review the 2026-2029 Duluth Area Preliminary Draft TIP and discuss any revisions deemed necessary prior to releasing a draft for the 30-day public comment period. They recommend the release of the 2026-2029 Duluth Area Draft TIP before the Policy Board for 30-day public comment period. Staff will provide a short overview of key issues and then will ask for any questions or comments Policy Board members may have regarding the Preliminary Draft TIP. Finally, staff will ask the MIC Policy Board to release the 2026-2029 Duluth Area Draft TIP for a 30-day public comment period starting July 14, 2025.

6. Duluth-Superior Title VI Plan and Language Access Plan 2025*

The 2025 update of the MIC's Title VI Plan and Language Access Plan will be presented for Board approval.

The Title VI plan is the framework for the MIC's efforts to ensure compliance with federal statutes regarding nondiscrimination, to assure that no person or group of persons shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in activities administered by the MIC. In addition, with its Language Access Plan, the MIC will provide meaningful access to services for persons with limited English language proficiency.

It is required that the updated Title VI plan be approved by the governing entity responsible for the policy decisions. Changes from the previous (2021) to the 2025 version are minimal and will be reviewed at the meeting.

7. MIC Area Safety Action Plan

Rondi Watson will give an update about the MIC's Safety Action Plan, including the consultant selection process that is currently underway, and details about the Safe Streets for All (SS4A)-funded work that will be occurring in 2025 and 2026.

8. Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC) Update

The HTAC met on June 4 with a full agenda covering a variety of topics, including a thank you to Deb DeLuca for her partnership with HTAC, updates from both the Dredging and Navigation & Safety Subcommittees, a status update of the Duluth Ship Canal Work Group, status updates on St Louis River Estuary AOC work, upcoming events honoring the memory of the Edmund Fitzgerald – Fifty Years Later, treaty rights in the St Louis River Estuary, and funding opportunities and updates from the Maritime Administration (MARAD). Jeff Udd (Duluth Seaway Port Authority) was introduced as the new HTAC Chair, and Jason Serck (City of Superior) was introduced as the new HTAC Vice Chair.



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9. Round Table Discussion

10. Project Updates

- **Safe Routes to School – Duluth Public Schools**

Starting on July 1st, 2025, ARDC Regional Planning Division will begin work on a Duluth School district-wide Safe Routes to Schools planning process. This will look at improving bicycle and pedestrian access for the 13 public school sites in the Duluth area. The contract is for 18 months and will conclude January 1st, 2027.

11. Adjourn



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

Guiding the Future of Transportation for the Twin Ports Area

June 3, 2025

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary of Transportation
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Letter of Support for Center for Transportation Studies’ FY25 SS4A Grant Application

Dear Secretary Duffy,

We are pleased to submit this letter of support for the University of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies’ application to the Safe Streets and Roads for All FY25 for supplemental planning and demonstration projects. The project, *Safe Streets for Minnesota Communities – Statewide Convening and an Innovation and Technology Roadmap* – will help us deepen our safety action plan and bring advanced safety technology to our communities through evidence-based, rigorously tested demonstration.

As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Duluth, MN-Superior, WI area, we are interested in participating in this multi-jurisdictional proposal. We are currently participating in the SS4A through a FY23 Planning and Demonstration Grant to complete a comprehensive Safety Action Plan for the MIC area communities in our bi-state region.

We are excited to participate in the collaborative exchange with other SS4A communities in Minnesota. This peer learning opportunity will allow us to compare safety approaches and results with other jurisdictions in our state. By creating and sharing solutions through this network, this effort will allow the most effective safety countermeasures and technologies to be implemented throughout Minnesota.

We intend to devote substantial in-kind staff time to this effort. If the MIC planning area is identified as the location of a potential demonstration site, we anticipate spending approximately 20-40 hours during the collaborative period of the project (*Year 1, 2026 or 2027*) and additional hours TBD, depending on the scope of the project, during year 2 (*2027 or 2028*).

Thank you for considering the University of Minnesota’s application to the SS4A program. We are hopeful that this project will be funded and that we can work with other communities across our state to improve road safety through advanced technologies.

Sincerely,


Ron Chicka, AICP
MIC Director


Wayne Boucher
MN Board Co-Chair


Nick Baker
WI Board Co-Chair

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Commission
and the
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Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

Guiding the Future of Transportation for the Twin Ports Area

May 28, 2025

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Legislative Priorities for Surface Transportation Reauthorization

At the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC), we plan for the future of transportation across two states, two counties and five cities, serving more than 148,000 residents. We oversee approximately \$22.2 million annually in federal transportation funding, working to improve safety, reduce congestion, and support economic development. Guided by a board of local elected officials and supported by a professional planning staff, we ensure federal dollars are invested strategically to deliver transformative projects to the greater Duluth, Minnesota-Superior, Wisconsin area.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are federally required regional policy-making bodies responsible for developing the long-range transportation blueprints that guide critical infrastructure investments. We must conduct transportation planning in a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive manner. MPO's play a critical role working with our partners to deliver important and impactful transportation investments in the communities we serve. This ensures that federal investments are cost-effective, locally informed, and nationally aligned.

As Congress begins development of the next Surface Transportation reauthorization, the following are the Duluth-Superior MIC's priorities:

Increased Funding for Important Transportation Initiatives

We support and encourage the exploration and implementation of new funding mechanisms that could generate revenue necessary to accelerate much-needed transportation projects to address the growing needs of our region, the state and the nation.

Current funding mechanisms are severely inadequate to address our region's growing transportation challenges and needs. As required by federal law, the MIC recently adopted our 2025 long-range transportation plan, Sustainable Choices 2050. This plan, which must be fiscally constrained and is updated every five years, revealed that we cannot afford to build and maintain the transportation infrastructure our community requires for the next 25 years. Our financial analysis demonstrates that there is over \$100 million needed for operations and maintenance costs, in addition to more than \$301 million in unfunded needs.

These needs include, but are not limited to bridge and highway reconstruction projects; public transportation; bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure; waterborne and airborne transportation of people and goods; port infrastructure and maintenance; airport infrastructure and maintenance, as well as the pavement and roadway needs of the local functionally classified roads (residential streets).

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Commission
and the
Northwest Regional
Planning Commission*

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Blatnik Bridge Reconstruction

We strongly encourage continued support for this key infrastructure project. The Blatnik Bridge, which provides an important freight and commercial connection between the Twin Ports and upper Midwest region, is in poor condition and nearing the end of its service life.

The five-year reconstruction project, to begin in 2027, will replace the aging structure and improve traffic operations. The project has received substantial federal funding through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and funding must continue via the upcoming reauthorization bill to see this project through to its completion in 2032. Both Minnesota and Wisconsin DOT's have also committed significant state funds.

Maritime Commerce/Shipping Channel Maintenance

We support and encourage ongoing maintenance of the deep-draft federal shipping channel within the Duluth-Superior commercial harbor. Federal funding for the annual dredging operations conducted by the US Army Corps of Engineers, as well as navigational channel marking, icebreaking operations, and various safety measures conducted by the US Coast Guard, are critical to the ongoing maritime commerce operations in our area.

The Duluth-Superior port is a diversified multimodal shipping hub, offering global cargo transport through the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway System and connections to major highways and Class I rail service. Its location at the western-most point of Lake Superior make it a natural transshipment point for commodities including iron ore, coal, limestone, cement, salt, and grain to transfer from rail and truck to ships. It is also a critical port for breakbulk cargoes and trans-Atlantic liner service. Finally, passenger service via Great Lakes cruise ships make regular returns to this port.

Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Implementation Grants

We support and encourage the long-term continuation of funding of SS4A Implementation grants, which are currently set to expire in 2026.

Federal SS4A Implementation grants provide funds to implement key safety improvement projects to address the highest-risk, highest-priority roadway safety issues throughout the MIC area, as identified in our comprehensive Safety Action Plan. The grant program supports the U.S. DOT's National Roadway Safety Strategy, and uses the Safe System Approach as a guiding principle to advance roadway safety and the Department's goal of zero deaths and serious traffic related injuries for all users.

AMPO Legislative Priorities

As the designated MPO for the greater Duluth, Minnesota-Superior, Wisconsin area, we support the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations' (AMPO) legislative priorities for the upcoming surface transportation reauthorization. These priorities reflect the shared needs of MPOs nationwide and will strengthen our ability to deliver future-ready, resilient, and reliable transportation systems:

Increase Planning Funds to Meet Federal Planning Requirements— Coordinated planning is the foundation of effective project delivery. Despite expanding responsibilities, PL funds remain below 1% of total formula dollars. At the Duluth-Superior MIC, we are responsible for transportation planning initiatives to increase safety, support economic development, and improve the efficiency and reliability of the movement of people and goods to their destinations. These activities require sophisticated modeling, public engagement, and interagency coordination. We advocate for an increase in the total amount of metropolitan planning funds and an increase in the federal share to adequately meet the needs of the evolving role of MPOs. These funds empower MPOs to plan for transportation systems that are responsive to the needs of our communities, fostering economic growth, safety, and mobility.

MPOs Becoming Direct Recipients for Certain Federal Funds—As the organization charged with federally required transportation planning, the Duluth-Superior MIC supports greater flexibility in granting direct recipient status to MPOs for certain federal funds. This will streamline the funding process, eliminate bureaucratic hurdles, and empower MPOs to make decisions that directly benefit their respective communities, while reaching national goals.

Reducing Local Match for Federal Transportation Programs— The Duluth-Superior MIC is tasked with developing federally required transportation blueprints that guide billions in public investment and are central to meeting national performance goals. Yet, we must secure local funds just to access the planning resources needed to carry out these obligations. This requirement poses a recurring challenge for the organizations (ARDC and NWRPC) that provide our match amount, given that they serve multiple smaller communities and have constrained local budgets. By reducing local match requirements for federal transportation funds, we aim to give MPOs the flexibility to address critical infrastructure needs.

Allowing for Carryover of Federal Funds—Many of the MIC’s projects require extensive coordination and span multiple fiscal years, and often these critical efforts do not align neatly with the federal fiscal calendar. Allowing the carryover of federal funds would ensure uninterrupted progress on essential long-term projects, and promote consistent infrastructure improvements that enhance safety, mobility, and economic vitality for residents. With respect to the MIC’s main source of federal planning funds, the state DOT has administrative authority over these and does not permit carrying these funds over from one fiscal year to the next.

Shifting Certain Discretionary Funding to Formula Funding— While competitive federal grants like RAISE, SS4A, SMART, etc., are valuable, the MIC often lacks the staffing and financial resources needed for extensive grant applications. A shift to formula-based funding for certain federal programs ensures a more predictable and equitable distribution of resources, allowing MPOs to strategically plan for the long-term growth of our communities.

MPOs are essential to translating federal investments into locally tailored, results-driven infrastructure. The recommendations outlined above would empower the Duluth-Superior MIC to meet growing federal responsibilities, improve the efficiency of project delivery, and ensure the communities we serve receive the full benefits of national transportation policy.

We appreciate your leadership and consideration of these proposals and would welcome the opportunity to share additional information or discuss them further.

Sincerely,



Ron Chicka, AICP
MIC Director



Wayne Boucher
MN Board Co-Chair



Nick Baker
WI Board Co-Chair

Cc: Wayne Boucher, MIC Policy Board Co-chair (MN)
Nick Baker, MIC Policy Board Co-chair (WI)
Sheldon Johnson, NWRPC Exec Dir.; MIC Deputy Dir.

