

TO: SLATS Policy and Technical Committees

FROM: T.J. Nee, MPO Coordinator

DATE: July 13, 2015

SUBJECT: Summary of Agenda Items, July 20, 2015 SLATS Joint Policy/Technical Meeting

The following is a summary of the items to be reviewed at the July 20, 2015 SLATS Joint Policy and Technical Advisory Committee meeting. If you have any questions, please contact me at neet@beloitwi.gov or 608-364-6702.

Agenda Item 4

Representatives from Nelson Nygaard (the consulting firm contracted to complete the Transit Development Plan for BTS) were scheduled to present the final TDP to SLATS and answer any questions at our July 20 meeting. MPO staff has reviewed and provided extensive feedback on the April and June final drafts. It's our understanding BTS review is ongoing. Once BTS is satisfied with the final plan recommendations and schedules it for Council review/action, MPO staff will work to reschedule the presentation to SLATS as well, potentially at our next meeting.

Agenda Item 5

The current SLATS Public Involvement Plan (PIP) was adopted in 2012 and calls for periodic review at least once every 5 years in advance of the Long-Range Transportation Plan update. The primary purpose of the review is to evaluate the PIP's past effectiveness particularly related to public outreach, and where improvements can be made, updated the PIP accordingly. In addition to general updates, formatting and clarification, the updated PIP includes a number of recommendations to potentially improve outreach and participation based on evaluation of the 2012 PIP. Those improvements are related to:

- Continue website updates, accessibility improvements and public feedback opportunity
- Expand translation/interpreter services through community partnerships to foster public involvement
- Broaden use of surveys to gather public input
- Provide continual public updates (e.g. through press releases, "current news" section on the MPO webpage and local agency reports/websites)
- Post "traditional" paper notices in strategic, high foot traffic locations, including those frequented by persons with limited or no access to an automobile
- Ongoing updates to the mailing and distribution list including identified minority and low-income groups

As part of the update, the MPO will also be contacting a number of community and public service organizations to gain additional insights on how the MPO can improve outreach efforts to those interested in participating in the transportation planning process. Once completed, that information will be incorporated into a Final PIP for review and approval by the Policy Board.

Agenda Item 6

The current SLATS bylaws were approved in 2004 with an update in 2008 to add SMTD to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). In addition to provisions typical of bylaws, the 2004 version contains a large section on the *Transportation Planning Process*. This update removes that section since these processes are addressed in other SLATS plans such as the TIP, Long-Range Transportation Plan and PIP, and not specifically needed in the organization's bylaws.

More importantly, a few items were either missing, unclear or in need of updating specifically related to the organization's structure and procedures including:

- Official appointments to the Policy Board when different than the local agency's Chief Elected Official or designated WisDOT and IDOT representatives
- Official alternate appointments (and changes to appointments) to the Policy Board
- Whether an alternate to the Policy Board should also be an elected official or could be another local public official (e.g. City Manager, Village or Town Administrator) or if it can be a TAC member/other individual
- County Board representation on Policy Board (if not the County Chair as designated, whether the representative should reside within or represent a portion of the SLATS MPA)
- Vacancies/absences
- Official appointments to the TAC, official alternate appointments (and changes to appointments) to TAC and makeup of the TAC (e.g. number, additions, titles) and vacancies/absences
- Evaluation of non-voting members
- Policy Board officers and elections

Once these items (and any others) are addressed, a final update will be brought back for Board review and action.

Agenda Item 7

STP-U funds are those federal funds allocated to the MPO through WisDOT and IDOT for eligible, locally determined transportation projects. Funds through WisDOT can only be used north of the Stateline and funds through IDOT can only be used south of the Stateline. SLATS receives about \$380,000 per year through WisDOT and about \$155,000 per year through IDOT. WisDOT has specific funding cycles in which funds need to be programmed and spent. It is our understanding that IDOT allows the funds to accumulate year after year without being capped or spent within a particular cycle.

There have been some recent changes to the local program on the Wisconsin side, and as a result a number of MPOs have been negatively impacted. SLATS is actually the only MPO that will receive its entire allocation this next funding cycle (2015-2020). SLATS is projected to have \$1.9 million available for

a project to be completed within that cycle, with funds expected to be available July 2018. To stay on track and maximize funds that cycle, the project must be let by early 2019 and WisDOT will need to know the project before this October.

Although project design is still an eligible expense, in order to maximize MPO funding allocations on an approved cycle basis requires that project sponsors locally fund their design projects 100% (to DOT standards) in order to be ready when funding becomes available. Basically, if the design is not done ahead of time with 100% local funds, fewer construction projects can be completed from cycle to cycle as funding and time is spent in the design phase. Also, a greater risk of not maximizing funding within the cycle exists if projects do not move to construction. Current projects prioritized for STP-U funding include Shopiere Road in the City of Beloit followed by Park Avenue in the Town of Beloit. These can change, but the next project needs to be determined before October 2015.

For Illinois, the current fund balance is about \$132,000 and again is estimated to increase by roughly \$155,000 each year. The last project completed was Hononegah Road in 2011 for 1.3 million and prior to that Prairie Hill Road for \$279,000 in 2010, both through Winnebago County. In the past, IDOT would obligate funds to the MPO above the existing balance to complete projects (several years of funding allocations). That requires a catch-up, and as such the SLATS fund balance was in the red until this fiscal year. IDOT has indicated that moving forward, going a few years into the red is not an issue, but ideally only accumulated funds would be used.

Although any local project on the Illinois side is likely a few years out, the only one in the current TIP that has been discussed with regard to STP-U funding is the Old River Road/Roscoe Road project estimated at \$3 million (currently an illustrative project). With \$403,000 in TARP funds set aside for that project, the balance would be about \$2.6 million. To use STP-U funds, a minimum of 50% of the project cost or \$1.5 million would be required. Depending what percentage of STP-U funds were used for the project, with a SLATS fund balance of \$132,000, it would be another 9 to 15 years before SLATS can fund 50-80% of the project (less if the balance goes into the red a few years). It's should be noted that if SLATS participates in funding the Roscoe Road portion of the project, so to should RMAP since Roscoe Road straddles the MPO planning boundaries. The Board will need to determine if it wants to allocate 9 to 15 years of funding to this 3 million dollar project, or prioritize a number of smaller projects with the same amount of funding in that same timeframe.

Agenda Item 8

There have been four (4) Administrative Modifications to the TIP since we last met. Although they do not trigger a minor or major amendment requiring Board action, the MPO is required to inform the Board of these changes. The amendments are summarized separately and attached to this report.