



**Arrowhead Regional Development Commission  
Regional Transportation Advisory Committee  
January 4, 2007 – 10 a.m.**

**Carlton County Transportation Building**

**Meeting Summary**

<u>Meeting Attendees</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Meeting Attendees</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Tom Peterson	Mn/DNR	Dave Christy	Itasca County
Bob Manzoline	Reg. Rail Authority	Steve Kniefel	Townships
Wayne Olson	Carlton County	Kara Kent	ARDC Staff
Jack Larson	Arrowhead Transit	Ellen Pillsbury	ARDC Staff
Denny Johnson	Mn/DOT	Bryan Anderson	ARDC Staff
Don Mohawk	Mn/DOT	Andy Hubley	ARDC Staff
Doug Grindall	Koochiching County	Ron Johnson	Port of Duluth
Catherine McLynn	Itasca County	Walter Leu	Mn/DOT
Rick Goutermont	Lake County	Marcus Hall	St. Louis County
Paul Paine	Bicycle Pedestrian	Joe Alberio	Mn/DNR
Joe Russell	Mn/DNR	John Welle	Aitkin County
John Ongaro	St. Louis County	Bruce Martinson	Cook County
Bill Whiteman	Bois Forte	Al Goodman	Lake County
Chuck Schmit	Cook County	Bill Parish	Cook County
Mike Forsman	St. Louis County		

**1. Welcome/Introductions**

Steve Kniefel called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. Chair Kniefel asked for introductions.

**2. Committee Business**

*Kniefel noted that meeting summaries needed approval from April 6, 2006, June 22, 2006, and October 5, 2006.*

*Catherine McLynn motioned to approve the April 6 2006 meeting summary. The motion was seconded by Denny Johnson. The motion carried.*

*Ron Johnson motioned to approve the June 22, 2006 meeting summary. The motion was seconded by Bob Manzoline. The motion carried.*

*Denny Johnson motioned to approve the October 5, 2006 meeting summary. The motion was seconded by Catherine McLynn. The motion carried.*

**3. Northeast Minnesota Rail Initiatives**

Bob Manzoline introduced the Tinklenberg Group who was hired to assess the rail potential for rail service between Duluth and the Twin Cities.

The Tinklenberg Group gave a powerpoint overview of the project and the many benefits of having rail connection between Duluth and the Twin Cities. According to data developed by AAA the average cost per mile to travel by car is \$0.55 per mile and the average cost to travel by rail is \$0.40 per mile. Some of the community benefits associated with this rail project include less energy consumption, less air pollution, development possibilities, and the use of existing infrastructure. The Tinklenberg Group noted that plans are already underway to get this plan moving. Expansion plans and improvements at the depot in Duluth are underway and have been appropriated in the state bonding bill. The start up time for this project once funded will be one to four years.

Ken Buhler gave an overview of the history of the existing rail line between Duluth and the Twin Cities and the Duluth Depot. Buhler mentioned that improvements are being made to turn the Depot into a working facility. The state bonding bill allocated \$1.3 million to make this investment in rail service. The capacity of the rail line that this passenger service would follow is 40-45 trains per day. Currently the line carries 12-15 trains and adding passenger service to Duluth would add four trains.

According to Tinklenberg the new MVST amendment would probably not be a source of funding to supplement the cost of this service.

### **3. Functional Classification**

Kara Kent gave an overview of the functional classification project. See meeting handouts for Kent's overview.

*Al Goodman motioned to approve the functional classification changes for minor collectors and above pending edits by county engineers. The motion was seconded by Wayne Olson. The motion carried.*

### **4. Regional Bike Connection Overview**

Ellen Pillsbury gave an overview of the Regional Bike Connection project. She noted that the purpose of the project is to guide the long-range transportation investments in the Arrowhead Region by recommending bicycling and pedestrian connections from communities and tourist facilities to the three major trails-the Willard Munger State Trail, the Gitchi-Gami State Trail, and the Mesabi Trail. Phase one included an inventory of the facilities and communities within a reasonable distance of the three major trails and the existing community connections to the respective trails. The final stage of phase one involved prioritizing community connections based on need, future usage, ease of implementation, and cost. This stage has begun and will continue through June 30, 2007.

### **5. Project Updates**

Bryan Anderson gave an update on several ARDC projects. Anderson is working with the International Falls, Hibbing and Esko School Districts on submitting Safe Routes to

School grant applications for the completion of safe routes to school plans. Grant applications are due January 31<sup>st</sup>. If funded, the planning would begin in September 2008.

Anderson also noted that 11 Enhancement applications have been received this year and the Enhancement Task Force will meet February 9<sup>th</sup> to review the projects and will make their recommendations to the ATP Steering Committee on March 5<sup>th</sup>.

Anderson mentioned that the Grand Lake Township Roads Plan has begun and a more detailed report will be given at the April RTAC meeting.

**6. Next meeting date**

The next RTAC meeting is scheduled for April 5<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM at the Hermantown Public Safety Building. The meeting will be held in conjunction with the ATP meeting.

Bruce Martinson motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Catherine McLynn. The motion carried.