



## OPERATING GUIDELINES

A full partnership of transportation professionals guiding the future of transportation and the use of federal transportation funds in Northeast Minnesota, including Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Pine, and Saint Louis counties

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## I. Name and Purpose

The name of this group is the **Northeast Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership (NEMNATP)**, or **Area Transportation Partnership One (ATP-1)**.

It is one of eight Area Transportation Partnerships that provide guidance to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). The original purpose of the ATPs across the State of Minnesota is to provide a collaborative decision-making process that involves a broad range of stakeholders in the selection of transportation projects to receive federal funds. In addition, the NEMNATP provides management guidance for federal program administration throughout the year, recommends federal program policy, provides input to MnDOT District One processes, serves as the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission’s Transportation Advisory Committee, and acts as a forum to address transportation topics on the regional level.

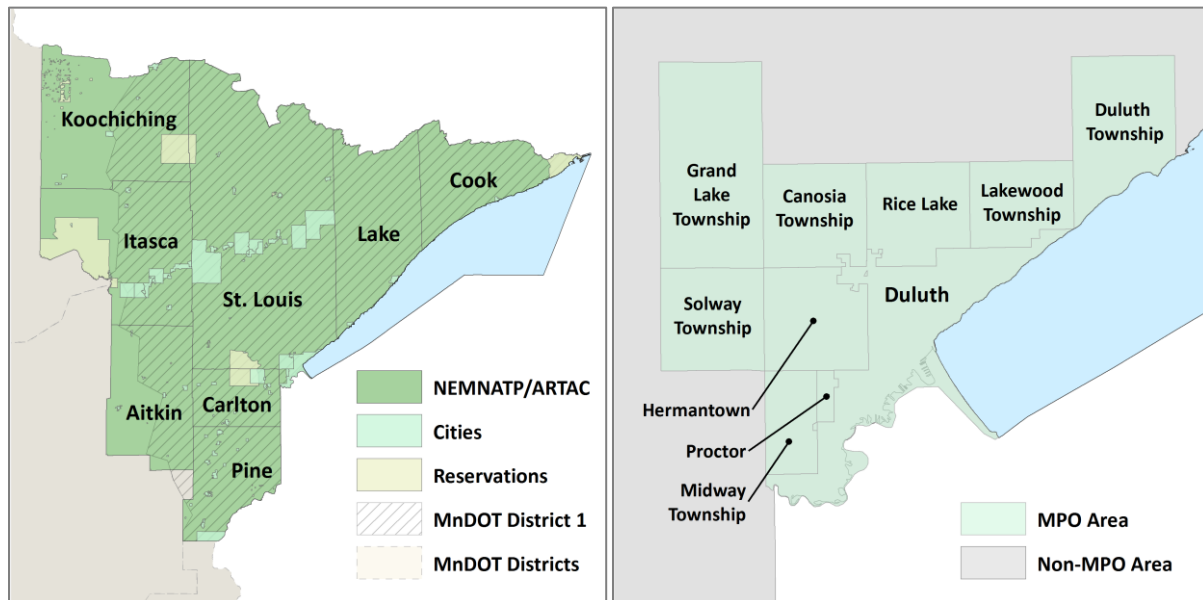




## II. Area Served

The NEMNATP serves Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Pine, and St. Louis counties in Northeast Minnesota. This area includes nearly all of MnDOT District 1; areas of District 2 in Koochiching and Itasca counties; and areas of District 3 in Itasca, Aitkin, and Pine counties. Tribal governments with land located in this area include the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, and the Red Lake Band of Chippewa. The metropolitan area located in this area is the “Minnesota half” of the Duluth-Superior metropolitan area, which includes the cities of Duluth, Hermantown, Proctor, and Rice Lake and the townships of Canosia, Duluth, Grand Lake, Lakewood, Midway, and Solway.

ATP boundaries are based on units of county government while MnDOT district boundaries were originally based on the location of MnDOT road maintenance facilities, which explains the difference in geographic areas served between the NEMNATP and MnDOT D-1.



Left: Map of the NEMNATP area. Right: Map of the “Minnesota half” of the Duluth-Superior metropolitan planning area.



### III. Responsibilities

#### a. Area Transportation Improvement Program (ATIP) Development

A majority of federal transportation funding received by the State of Minnesota each year is distributed by formula to and programmed by the eight ATPs in Minnesota leading transportation development in their respective regions. An overview of state allocation of federal transportation funding is available at <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/program/stipfunding.html>.

The NEMNATP is responsible for developing and approving the Area Transportation Improvement Program (ATIP), a regional listing of federally-funded projects, for Northeast Minnesota. The ATIP is included in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), approved by the Commissioner of Transportation, and then approved by the Federal Highway Administration. The STIP is a rolling four-year plan incorporating all ATIPs from across the state.

Generally, the ATIP currently includes five categories, two of which are managed by the ATP:

1. **Statewide Performance Program:** A MnDOT-administered program for improvements to Principal Arterial roadways and bridges in the State trunk highway system with funding from the Federal National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) and State Trunk Highway matching funds. Eligible applicants are MnDOT district offices.
2. **District Risk Management Program:** A MnDOT-administered program for improvements (i.e. bridges and pavement, roadside infrastructure, other safety, district regional and community improvement priorities [RCIP], and project support activities [i.e. right-of-way, consultant design]) to Principal and Non-Principal Arterial roadways in the State trunk highway system with funding from the Federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) and State Trunk Highway matching funds. Eligible applicants are MnDOT district offices.
3. **Highway Safety Improvement Projects (HSIP):** A MnDOT-administered program for safety improvements to any federal aid eligible route in State trunk highway or local systems that are consistent with MnDOT or local safety plans, respectively, with funding from the federal HSIP program and matching funds from state and local sources. Eligible applicants are MnDOT district offices, counties, cities with populations of 5,000 or more, and tribal governments.
4. **ATP Managed Program:** An ATP-administered program for improvements to local road systems with funding from multiple sources. Subsets of this program include:
  - a. **MPO Projects:** A MPO-administered program for transportation improvements on county and city federal aid routes or public transit system inside MPO areas with funding from the Federal Surface Transportation Program (STP). The Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council oversees the solicitation and project selection for these projects, and eligible applicants are cities with populations of 5,000 or more, counties, tribal governments, and public transit providers. For more





- information, visit <http://dsmic.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/MIC-Public-Involvement-Plan-2015-Update.pdf>.
- b. Non-MPO Projects: An ATP-administered program for transportation improvements on county and city federal aid routes outside MPO areas with funding from the Federal Surface Transportation Program (STP). Eligible applicants are counties and cities. In the NEMNATP, the counties follow a formula-based process to equitably distribute funds to each county through equally splitting annual funding into three equal segments and rotating project eligibility from year-to-year based on their State Aid allocation (based on a combination of equity, lane mileage, population, vehicle registration, and 25-year construction needs). The CSAH Distribution Books showing the State Aid allocation for each county can be found at <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/stateaid/csa-h-janbooks.html>; the formula should be shared with county engineers annually to communicate where each county stands. The MnDOT district State-Aid engineer maintains historical records of past projects and funding allocation per county, and the MnDOT district planning director notes eligibility when sending out applications to all counties.
  - c. Local Transit Capital: An ATP-administered program for bus replacements with funding from either Surface Transportation Program (STP) Small Urban or Surface Transportation Program (STP) Rural program. Eligible applicants are public transit systems. For more information, visit [www.dot.state.mn.us/transit/](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/transit/).
5. Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program: An ATP-administered program for improvements to eligible alternative transportation facilities, safe routes to school infrastructure, scenic byway infrastructure, and more with funding from federal TA program funding. TA is a competitive grant opportunity with a process facilitated by ARDC, which publishes the application, holds workshops, provides technical assistance to applicants, and organizes the TA Task Force meeting. Eligible applicants are cities with populations of 5,000 or more, cities with populations less than 5,000 (with county sponsorship), counties, tribal governments, and select non-profits. For more information, visit [www.nemnatp.org](http://www.nemnatp.org).

The ATP, which is provided funding amounts and STIP funding guidance from the MnDOT Central Office of Planning and Programming, is responsible for the process of soliciting, selecting, and approving the projects for the fourth fiscal year of the regional program. This process includes:

1. The ATP Work Group holding a solicitation for ATP and TA project applications usually starting in September and ending in January each year;
2. The DSMIC reviewing MPO ATP projects, the ATP Work Group reviewing and recommending non-MPO ATP projects, and the TA Task Force reviewing and recommending TA projects;
3. The DSMICTAC recommending MPO ATP projects to the DSMIC Policy Board;
4. The DSMIC Policy Board recommending MPO ATP projects to the ATP Board, and the ARTAC recommending non-MPO projects and TA projects to the ATP Board;
5. The ATP Work Group combining recommended projects into a draft ATIP, presenting it to County Boards and Tribal Councils in the ATP, and making it available for public review;
6. The ATP Work Group presents the draft ATIP to the ATP Board for review and approval;





7. Upon approval by the ATP Board, the ATP Work Group submits the ATIP to be included in the statewide STIP for review and approval by the State Department of Transportation by April 15; and
8. The State Department of Transportation submits the approved STIP to the Federal Highway Administration for review and approval.

**b. Area Transportation Improvement Program (ATIP) Management**

1. Small project changes requiring STIP modifications (i.e. technical corrections, change in project year, insignificant change in total project cost, etc.) are handled internally by the ATP Work Group.
2. Large project changes requiring STIP Amendments (i.e. addition in phase of work, change of project scope, change in project limits [generally more than 0.3 miles in either direction of current project termini], etc.):
  - a. In the MPO area are approved by the DSMIC Transportation Advisory Committee (DSMICTAC) and forwarded to the ATP Board.
  - b. In the non-MPO area are initiated by the ATP Work Group and approved by the ATP Board.

**c. Program Policy Recommendation**

The ATP develops and/or recommends area program policy as needed.

**d. Regional Transportation Planning Oversight**

Synonymous with the Arrowhead Region Transportation Advisory Committee (ARTAC), the NEMNATP oversees the regional transportation planning program for the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC). The Minnesota Department of Transportation contracts with the ARDC each year to provide regional transportation planning to Northeast Minnesota. With oversight from the NEMNATP, ARDC and the MnDOT D-1 planning director develop a work plan addressing the next state fiscal year's projects at the start of each calendar year. The NEMNATP, serving as the ARTAC, adopts the final workplan before it is sent to the MnDOT Central Office of Planning and Programming, where it is reviewed and approved.





## IV. Organization

### a. Board Members

Board membership of the NEMNATP includes representatives from:

- Area governments (elected officials);
- Transportation infrastructure professionals (air, rail, sea, surface [including transportation professionals from state, counties, cities with population of 5,000, and tribal governments], and transit); and
- Regional organizations (community health boards, regional development organizations, and other transportation stakeholders).

The NEMNATP consists of the following 47 members (40 voting, 7 advisory).

#### Elected Officials (Voting Members)

Agency	Appointer	Notes
Elected Officials [8]	County boards in the eight-county region	Includes the counties of Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Pine, and St. Louis; usually a county commissioner, but may be a city or township elected official
Tribal Elected Official [1]	Regional solicitation (Bois Forte Band, Fond du Lac Band, Grand Portage Band, Mille Lacs Band)	Terms may be filled on a rotating schedule among tribes.

#### Transportation Infrastructure Professionals (Voting Members)

Area of Interest	Appointer	Notes
Air [1]	Northern Aero Alliance	
Rail [1]	Lake and St. Louis Counties Rail Authority (Itasca County Rail Authority as alternate agency)	Will also bring perspective for rail to trail conversions
Sea [1]	Duluth Seaway Port Authority	
Surface, State [3]	MnDOT District One Administration	Usually the District Engineer, District 1 Planning Director, and District 1 State Aid Engineer
Surface, Counties [8]	County boards in each of the eight-county region	Currently includes Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Pine, and St. Louis counties; usually the county engineer







Surface, Local [8]	City councils with populations over 5,000 in the eight-county region	Currently includes the cities of Chisholm, Cloquet, Duluth, Grand Rapids, Hermantown, Hibbing, International Falls, and Virginia; usually the city engineer or city administrator
Surface, Tribal [4]	Tribal Nations with a majority of the primary sector in the eight-county region	Currently includes Bois Forte, Fond du Lac, Grand Portage, and Mille Lacs; usually the tribal engineer or planning director
Surface, Forest Service [1]	Superior National USDA Forest Service Office	Usually the engineering program manager
Trails/Waterways [1]	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Forestry Northeast Region Office	
Transit (Urban) [1]	Duluth Transit Authority	Usually a transit director or planner
Transit (Rural)* [1]	Rural transit providers in the ATP	Usually a transit director or planner
Metropolitan Area Transportation [1]	Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council	Usually the DSMIC director

**Advisory Members (Non-Voting Members)**

Agency	Appointer	Notes
Community Health Boards [3]	Community health boards in the eight-county region	Usually a CHB director or planner; currently includes the Carlton-Cook-Lake-St. Louis CHB, the Aitkin-Itasca-Koochiching CHB, and the Pine CHB
Economic Development Authority* [1]	Iron Range Economic Alliance, Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce, and APEX	
Regional Development Commission [2]	Arrowhead Regional Development Commission and East Central Regional Development Commission	Usually the ARDC director and the ECRDC transportation planner
Toward Zero Deaths Program [1]	MnDOT District One Administration	Usually the Regional TZD Coordinator

**b. Terms**

Elected officials will be appointed by their respective agencies at the beginning of each calendar year, and members denoted with a (\*) will serve two-year terms. Members in good standing (as determined by the NEMNATP staff and based on meeting attendance) and serving in an ex-





officio capacity will be exempt from term limits but may be asked to resign if they miss more than three consecutive meetings. A list of members will be reviewed annually at the beginning of the calendar year.

### c. Substitutes and Alternates

Substitutes are welcome to attend meetings if a member must be absent. A substitute may vote on behalf of the absent member at any given meeting only if a written notice of substitution from the member is submitted to NEMNATP staff prior to the meeting. Agencies may select an alternate on an annual basis who may vote on behalf of the absent member at any given meeting.

### d. Resignations

Members and representatives are encouraged to submit written notice of intent to resign as soon as possible, but at least one month before the termination date.

### e. Officers

1. The ATP Board will contain two officers, the Chair and the Vice Chair.
2. Only voting members of the NEMNATP are eligible to serve as an officer of the ATP Board.
3. The Vice Chair is elected at the final meeting of the calendar year. The Vice Chair automatically becomes Chair after one year of service, or if the Chair resigns. If the Chair resigns during his/her term, the Vice Chair will fill the Chair's remaining term and serve their own one-year term. If the Vice Chair becomes the Chair or resigns, the Board will elect a Vice Chair at its next scheduled meeting.
4. The Chair shall serve in the following capacities:
  - a. preside at all meetings of the ATP Board and shall be eligible to vote on all matters;
  - b. be responsible for the effective, efficient and timely conduct of meetings;
  - c. work closely and coordinate with Staff on developing annual objectives of the NEMNATP to be communicated to and approved by the ATP Board;
  - d. grant Staff permission to solicit and appoint subcommittee members;
  - e. serve as a non-voting member of all subcommittees created by the ATP Board;
  - f. ensure all subcommittees are accomplishing their objectives;
  - g. perform such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the ATP Board or requested by the Staff assigned to the ATP Board;
  - h. serve on the ARDC Commission; and
  - i. attend ARDC Board meetings when requested by the ARDC Board Chair.
5. In the absence of the Chair or in the event of his/her inability to act or if the office is vacant, the Vice Chair will perform all duties of the Chair, and when so acting, will have all powers and be subject to all restrictions of the Chair.





**f. Staff**

The NEMNATP is staffed by the MnDOT District 1 Planning Director and Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) staff to schedule meetings, take minutes, record votes, and publish information. Under contract, ARDC will maintain the list of members, their terms, and attendance; this may include initiating membership changes and requesting nominations.





## V. Meetings and Voting

### a. Meetings

1. Meetings are open to the public.
2. The ATP Board meets four times each year, usually in February, April, July, and October. The meetings usually take place on a Monday or Wednesday to mitigate conflict with county board meetings on Tuesdays and ARDC Board meetings on Thursdays. The location of meetings varies throughout the area served.
3. Notifications are sent out at least two months prior to the meeting date, and agendas are sent out at least a week prior to the meeting date. Items to be voted upon must be on this distributed agenda.
4. Agendas and minutes are published online at [www.nemnatp.org](http://www.nemnatp.org).
5. Voting members are encouraged to attend all meetings. If a voting member is not in attendance for three consecutive meetings, they may be asked to resign and have another representative appointed to take their place.

### b. Voting

1. Voting is done by voice vote or show of hands. A roll-call or written ballot vote may be requested by any member.
2. Transaction of any official business must be held at a noticed meeting where at least eight voting members are present.
3. Transaction of any official business will be carried upon majority vote of members present at any given meeting. Meeting notes should identify which voting members are present at each meeting.
4. Given lack of a set quorum, it is expected that any meeting of the ATP Board where official business is transacted will be scheduled and held in good faith.
5. Email voting is allowed if it is necessary to vote on items between meetings. Transaction of any official business via email voting will be carried upon a majority vote of the full membership.





## VI. Committees

### a. NEMNATP Work Group

1. The role of the ATP Work Group is to share information, track the status of current projects, and prepare for full ATP Board meetings.
2. The ATP Work Group prepares the draft Area Transportation Improvement Program (ATIP) based on the projects submitted from the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (DSMIC), TA Task Force, and MnDOT D-1.
3. The ATP Work Group meets as needed before each ATP Board meeting.
4. Members of the ATP Work Group include:
  - a. Three MnDOT representatives, which typically includes the District 1 planning director, district engineer, and State Aid engineer.
  - b. Three DSMIC and ARDC representatives, which typically includes the DSMIC director, ARDC director, and appointed staff.

### b. Metropolitan Interstate Council Transportation Advisory Committee (DSMIC TAC)

1. The DSMIC TAC is a subcommittee of the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (DSMIC) and an advisory group of the NEMNATP.
2. The role of the DSMIC TAC is to guide the DSMIC's transportation program and provide MPO projects to the ATIP through the development of their Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is developed from projects in their Long Range Transportation Plan.
3. The DSMIC TAC usually meets monthly. Meetings are open to the public.
4. The DSMIC's planning processes are outlined in their Public Involvement Plan, available at [www.dsmic.org](http://www.dsmic.org).

### c. Transportation Alternatives Task Force

1. The role of the Transportation Alternatives Task Force is to score the TA program grant applications and recommend projects to be included in the draft ATIP.
2. The TA Task Force meets once a year, usually in early February.
3. The TA solicitation process is managed by ARDC.
4. TA Task Force membership is guided by the following:
  - a. Membership includes both members and non-members of the ATP Board with subject matter expertise in eligible programs;
  - b. Members are recommended by ARDC and approved by the ATP Board;





- c. There must be at least two ATP board members on the TA Task Force;
- d. Terms for the TA Task Force are three years (with scheduled rotation and renewal years outlined in the table below), but members may serve multiple terms; and
- e. For the most current TA Task Force membership, visit [www.nemnntp.org](http://www.nemnntp.org).

Year 1 (Expires/Renews 2018)	Year 2 (Expires/Renews 2019)	Year 3 (Expires/Renews 2020)
Local Government #1	Local Government #2	Local Government #3
Active Living #1	Active Living #2	Safe Routes to School
History	Scenic Byways	MN DNR
Paved Trails	Pedestrians and Bicycles	Duluth-Superior MIC
MnDOT		

5. Scoring and voting of TA projects is guided by the following:

- a. Scoring criteria is approved by the ATP Board prior to the TA application being published each year;
- b. TA Task Force members are provided the applications prior to the annual meeting and asked to score the projects in advance;
- c. Projects are discussed, and TA Task Force members finalize and submit their scores;
- d. TA Task Force members with conflict of interest to an applicant do not participate in discussion of that project; and
- e. Final rankings are tallied (with highest and lowest scores dropped to correct for outliers and all remaining scores averaged to correct for unequal number of votes for each applicant project) at the annual meeting.

**d. Other Committees**

- 1. When a need arises for a new committee, a written request which identifies the purpose, goals, membership, requirement for minutes, and term of the committee will be submitted to the NEMNATP for approval.





## VII. Public Involvement/Communications

1. ARDC holds a contract to support the NEMNATP. It maintains a website at [www.nemnatp.org](http://www.nemnatp.org), which hosts meeting announcements, meeting minutes, member lists, grant program solicitation information, project information, and more.
2. Each March, MnDOT and ARDC attend county board meetings in the ATP area to present the ATIP, discuss current projects, and answer questions. These meetings usually take place in March in preparation for the ATIP submission of April 15.
3. Presentations to other units of government or organizations are made upon request.





## VIII. Amendments to Guidelines

Amendments to these Operating Guidelines, including alterations to the list of representative members, may be adopted by a majority vote of the full membership at a meeting of the NEMNATP.

