



Improvin' Movin' in the Arrowhead

Fall 2009

"Working to guide transportation decisions in Northeast Minnesota"

Inside this issue:

RTAC Funded In-Kind Grants	1
Cook County Enhancements Plan	1
Hwy 169 Completion Coalition	1
Mt. Iron Trails Plan	1
Big Falls Trails Plan	2
Transportation Enhancements	2
Transportation Coordination Planning Study	2

[Next RTAC Meeting](#)

The next RTAC meeting will be in January 2010. Time, location and agenda will be announced in December.



RTAC Funded In-Kind Grant Applications

The RTAC funded four In-kind Grand Projects for FY 2010. They are:

Cook County Enhancements Plan

ARDC will soon begin working on the Cook County Enhancements Plan. The purpose of this planning process is to provide education and guidance to agencies, groups, and the public within Cook County and assist the county with the development of a project priority list for non-motorized facilities on County State-Aid roadways. The plan will result in a list of priority projects and possible funding sources. This planning process is expected to begin in January 2010.

Highway 169 Completion Coalition

ARDC has been working with the Highway 169 Completion Coalition. The Highway 169 Completion Coalition is a grassroots organization seeking to have the Cross-Range Expressway (Highway 169 on Minnesota's Iron Range) be fully completed as a four-lane highway. Currently the section between Taconite and Pengilly in Itasca County is a two-lane highway. ARDC is working through a process to create a line of communication with Mn/DOT and other officials, including Congressman Oberstar, and to develop a list of critical actions that can be implemented in order to move the highway closer to completion.

Mt. Iron Trails Plan

ARDC is working with the City of Mt. Iron to develop a trails plan. Mt. Iron was also awarded \$12,000 to complete a SRTS Plan which will complement the trails plan. Currently there are few bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the City and TH 169 separates the City creating an obstacle for non-motorized uses. Bicyclists and pedestrians now must use the shoulders of the local highways to get around. This trail system will provide safer routes for bicyclists and pedestrians and ensure better safety for automobiles and nontraditional transportation users alike. ARDC has begun inventorying facilities in Mt. Iron and has set a date for the first trails plan meeting.

Big Falls Trails Plan

ARDC has begun working with the City of Big Falls to develop a trail system in and around the City that will connect popular destinations such as the downtown, campground, parks, and businesses. Big Falls is concerned about the increasing level of childhood and teen obesity, general lack of outdoor participation, and lack of walking areas for the senior population. The City feels that a more pedestrian friendly city would lead to improved health conditions. The objective of the Big Falls Trail Plan is to provide the city with ideas about how to best proceed with trail development and will suggest possible trail alignments.

Transportation Enhancements

The Northeast Minnesota Transportation Partnership is now soliciting projects for the Transportation Enhancements Program, a federally funded program that targets projects which are historic, scenic, or environmental in nature and/or focus on facilities for bicycles and pedestrians. Enhancement funds are to be expended exclusively on twelve activities which have been grouped into three categories: 1) Pedestrian and Bicycle, 2) Historic, 3) Scenic and Environmental. The Northeast Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership (NE MN ATP) typically prioritizes enhancement projects totaling \$1.5 million per year. Application information is available at www.nemnatp.org/enhancements. Pre-applications are due on November 2nd.

Transportation Coordination Planning Study

ARDC has been invited to participate with Mn/DOT's Transportation Coordination Planning Study. The objectives of this study are to:

- Prepare Mn/DOT for anticipated changes to the transportation planning framework and requirements that will result from reauthorization.
- Identify opportunities to enhance the partnership between Mn/DOT and local units of government in transportation and local land use and economic development planning.

Based on the interview findings and input from the focus groups, the study team will generate a report documenting current practices. This final report may also provide recommendations on how the link between transportation and local land use and economic development planning can be enhanced.



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