# RPA-18 Policy and Technical Committees
# MINUTES

Wednesday, May 24, 2023
Metropolitan Area Planning Agency
2222 Cuming Street, Omaha, NE 68102
402-444-6866

**In attendance:**

Policy Board Voting Members
- **Charles Parkhurst** - Shelby County, Policy Board Chair
- **Richard Crouch** - Mills County
- **Gene Gettys Jr.** - City of Harlan
- **Ron Kohn** - Glenwood
- **Susan Miller** - Pottawattamie County
- **Steven Struble** - Harrison County

Technical Board Voting Members
- **John Rasmussen** - Pottawattamie County, Technical Committee Chair
- **Brandon Burmeister-** Shelby County
- **Jacob Ferro** - Mills County
- **Gene Gettys Jr.** - City of Harlan
- **John Rasmussen** - Potawattamie County
- **Steven Struble** - Harrison County

Non-Voting/MAPA Staff
- **Travis Halm -** MAPA
- **Lindsey Button** - MAPA
- **Scott Suhr** - Iowa DOT

Parkhurst called the meeting to order at 11:00am.

## Action Items

1. **Approval of the Agenda**

   Correction to the agenda. FY24 amendment to the TPWP, is meant to say just the Final approval, not an amendment. Parkhurst called for approval of the agenda. Halm noted a correction to the agenda. Agenda item 5 is to approve the final FY24 TPWP, not an amendment.

   **Technical Committee: Burmeister motioned to accept the agenda as corrected.**
   **Motion was seconded by Rasmussen.**
   **Motion passed unanimously.**

   **Policy Board: Kohn motioned to approve the recommendation from the Technical Committee.**
   **Motion was seconded by Gettys.**
   **Motion passed unanimously**

2. **Approval of the Minutes from the April 12, 2023 meeting.**

   There were edits or corrections made to the April 12 minutes.

   **Technical Committee: Rasmissen motioned to approve the minutes from the April 12, 2023 meeting.**
   **Motion was seconded by Struble.**
   **Motion passed unanimously.**

   **Policy Board: Gettys motioned to approve the recommendation from the Technical Committee.**
   **Motion was seconded by Miller.**
   **Motion passed unanimously.**

3. **Committee Elections**

   Halm presented the process for election of Technical Committee chairperson. This role serves a one year term and is elected on an annual basis. Historically no vice chairperson has been elected since meetings are held concurrently with the RPA-18 Policy Board. The current Technical Committee chairperson is John Rasmussen. Morales noted that the majority of the work involved in this role is running the RPA-18 meetings and working with MAPA staff to set meeting agendas.

   Struble nominated John Rasmussen to continue as Technical Committee chairperson. Rasmussen accepted the nomination. No other nominations were put forward.

   **Technical Committee: Burmeister made a motion to elect John Rasmussen as chairperson of the Technical Committee.**
   **Motion was seconded by Ferro.**
   **Motion passed unanimously.**

   **Policy Board: Gettys motioned to approve the elected Technical Committee chairperson.**
   **Motion was seconded by Miller.**
   **Motion passed unanimously.**

   Halm presented the process for election of the Policy Committee. This role serves a one year term and is elected on an annual basis. Historically no vice chairperson has been elected since meetings are held concurrently with the RPA-18 Technical Committee. The current Policy Board chairperson is Charles Parkhurst.

   Kohn nominated Charles Parkhurst to continue as Policy Board chairperson. Parkhurst accepted the nomination. No other nominations were put forward.

   **Policy Board: Crouch motioned to elect Charles Parkhurst as the Policy Board chairperson.**
   **Motion was seconded by Gettys.**
   **Motion passed unanimously.**

4. **FY2023 Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP) Amendment:**

Morales presented FY2023 TPWP Amendment 1. This amendment pertains to the annual reconciliation of MAPA's FY2023 TPWP with actual costs, balancing staff work effort based on actual expenditures and adjusting work activities and effort anticipated through June 30, 2023.

Morales presented a table of the original budget across work activities, with the amended budget, and the requested change. The main change was to activities 220 and 230, with the amended budget for 220 being $19,833 less than the original budget, and the amended budget for 230 being $38,162 more than the original budget. This was due to the RPA-18/13 Passenger Transportation Plan, which was originally to be billed towards activity 220, but was instead billed towards activity 230. There is no change in the total budget as summed across all categories between the original and amended budgets.

**Technical Committee: Struble made a motion to recommend the Policy Board approve FY2023 TPWP Amendment 1.**
**Motion was seconded by Rasmussen.**
**Motion passed unanimously.**

**Policy Board: Parkhurst motioned to approve the technical committee recommendation.**
**Motion was seconded by Gettys.**
**Motion passed unanimously.**

5. **FY2024 Final Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP) Amendment**

Morales presented the FY2024 Final TPWP. This work plan constitutes the planned activities for MAPA staff in supporting RPA-18 for FY2024. Work focus areas include the RPA-18 Long Range Transportation Plan, "Block Talks" coordination with local communities, Safe Streets for All, Trail Development, and seeking discretionary funding.

Morales presented the TPWP Final Budget table. The draft table was presented at the previous meeting in April, and this final table was slightly amended from that draft to align with work conducted in and continuing from FY23.

Upon approval of the final TPWP it will be submitted to Iowa DOT June 1st.

Struble asked if MAPA has an idea of what they're going to do to get funds to locals under IIJA. Morales stated that MAPA is investigating SS4A funding as a way to get local communities geared up for additional funding for systemic safety work. This item was further discussed later in the meeting under agenda item 7.

**Technical Committee: Rasmussen made a motion to recommend the Policy Board to approve the FY2024 TPWP as presented.**
**Motion was seconded by Ferro.**
**Motion passed unanimously.**

**Policy Board: Parkhurst motioned to approve the technical committee recommendation.**
**Motion was seconded by Kohn.**
**Motion passed with one abstention due to absence.**

6. **FY2024 Draft Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)**

Halm presented the Draft TIP. Upon completion of the County 5 year plans, MAPA receives the TPMS project list, which is populated in the presented Draft TIP. Projects are then included in the TIP. The TIP is largely a project list of all federally funded transportation projects within the 5 county region. It accounts not only for STBG and TAP, which are coordinated by this committee, but also the farm to market, city and county operations, highway safety improvement program, highway bridge program, etc. There is narrative in the TIP pertaining to how revisions and public participation are done. This year there have been some formatting updates from the previous years TIP. On pg 12-17 there is a list of FY 2024-27 TIP projects. Page 18 contains a list of projects FY2023 and provides project updates. In particular, there are three TAP projects (East Sharp Trail in Glenwood, Glenwood City Trail, and Pottawattamie county Trail) that are likely to move to FY2024. This revision has been accounted for in the FY24 TIP.

Since the previous RPA-18 meeting, Harrison County removed one project for $145,000, and Mills County moved one project from FY25 to FY26. These changes do not affect the totals as they are omissions rather than additions, and one project is moved back in funding year. These are the only changes made since the draft. Morales noted that the RPA-18 TIP tables still show fiscal constraint. There is $1,244,739 of STBG programmed in FY2024, and $385,000 of TAP programmed in FY2024.

This year we are also doing a 30 day public comment period. This is not required by Iowa DOT, but MAPA is requesting a public comment from May 25 to June 23 as best practice. The Draft TIP is due June 16th, which is a bit early to accommodate the full public comment period. Comments will be incorporated into the Final TIP, which is due to Iowa DOT July 15th. Suhr noted that he still has to provide some project updates from Iowa DOT, and Halm noted that project updates are not officially due until the Final TIP in July, so there is still time.

Rasmussen requested that projects tables be organized by year. Halm noted that tables are currently organized by funding source but otherwise pulled directly from TPMS, however, there can be some formatting changes if desired.

**Technical Committee: Struble made a motion to recommend the Policy Board to approve the FY2024 Draft TIP and open for a 30-day public comment period from May 25 - June 24.**
**Motion was seconded by Burmeister.**
**Motion passed unanimously.**

**Policy Board: Parkhurst motioned to approve the technical committee recommendation.**
**Motion was seconded by Gettys.**
**Motion passed unanimously.**

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# Discussion Items

7. **Safe Streets for All (SS4A)**

    Safe Streets and Roads for All is a federal funding opportunity that exists in two phases. The first is an action planning grant to develop a safety action plan. Once communities have this plan, they are eligible to apply for implementation funds, which can be applied to both demonstration (temporary) and full implementation projects. Morales presented on internal discussions at MAPA regarding a potential Safe Streets and Roads for All action planning grant application for communities in both the RPA-18 and RPA-13 regions as a way to access federal funds for safety improvements. Right now there is a need for safety projects, notably sidewalk improvements, within small communities, but there is a disconnect between these communities being able to go after federal funding due to inability to make local match, and administrative burden required to apply for and fulfill requirements of federal grants. There could be potential in combining multiple smaller groups to collectively share some of that burden and access federal dollars.

    Struble noted that at the county level you are unable to group projects this way, and that for SS4A there cannot be overlap with existing projects [referencing the Iowa 97 county application that was submitted and approved last funding cycle]. Morales stated that the 97 county application did not include individual cities, just the counties and the county roads. Struble believed the Counties were required to include small towns under 2500 people. These applications did include federal aid roads. Morales clarified that communities over 2500 were not included in the map for the County application; this includes Harlan, Missouri Valley, and Glenwood. The communities continue to say there is a need for additional sidewalks and they need funding assistance. Struble stated that SS4A is not the way to get that funding due to the additional hoops and expense the town would need to jump through to acquire funding.

    Struble stated that the Counties had a long range safety plan that was put together with consultant help in the last 8 years or so and implemented in phases. The last 4-5 years of that process / last phase met the criteria for this new SS4A safety plan. However, not all the plans met this criteria. They all therefore had to be rebuilt, so all 97 counties went together for an application to bring these plans up to date. There were only 2 Counties that didn't need to update their plans, so did not sign on to the 97 county application. Morales asked which roadways and networks were focused on in those safety plans. Stubble said they had to be federal major collectors. Morales pointed out that one interesting distinction in this federal funding source is that part of the safety action plan is really concentrated on local roads, which is what piqued MAPA's interest. There is not a lot of funding available at this level and SS4A provides an opportunity for funding. Once the plan is approved and completed, applicants are able to access implementation grant funds directly from USDOT, does not go through Iowa DOT.

There will be hurdles along the way as federal requirements and regulations must be met by the applicants. Demonstration projects (bollard / temporary material) are eligible. There is also funding for multi million dollar construction projects. Eight hundred communities applied last year to develop safety action plans. This year FHWA anticipates more communities applying. The application threshold for doing a plan is not high. MAPA is currently looking at where safety concerns are, where crashes are located, equity, and per capita based FARS data, which are all requirements of the application. MAPA staff are also trying to work with RPA-13 to see if we can capture communities over 2,500 who may not have been included in the Iowa counties application last year.

MAPA is still discussing if this is the best approach. MAPA has investigated the crash data, and a lot of these fatal crashes are happening in the transition area between rural county roads and the city boundary. Some of the larger cities and communities are seeing suspected serious injury crashes, particularly in Page County. Suhr noted that 259, just outside of Shennendoah, is the big issue down there, and it was of particular concern during the 2019 floods as traffic was diverted through this route. Iowa DOT is planning a safety study of that area.

Morales presented some preliminary crash data and a proposed study area map.

Rasmussen asked about the map for this application, particularly noting the absence of Crescent and McClelland. Morales noted that these two communities were included in MAPA's MPO application, which was approved in the previous funding cycle.

Ferro noted that Mills county has had more crashes than are currently shown in the data presented. Morales clarified that only the cities and towns are included in this data.

Morales noted that this could be beneficial for local communities as a potential tool to access additional funding for smaller communities who, in particular, need assistance with sidewalks.

The Committee discussed the safe routes to school program and it's cancellation / migration to TAP.

Struble noted that most of the high traffic routes will be arterial or farm to market extensions. The Counties can handle the farm to market extensions and the DOT would try to rectify problems in small towns on the arterial routes

Suhr stated that whenever Iowa DOT updates roads they try to make sure the sidewalks are ADA compliant. The City of Corning had a desire to connect the school to the north and south portions of the sidewalk system to link the baseball field to the swimming pool, so the city went through to add ped access on the bridges, so the city built a sidewalk from the bridges to the ball field. They now have connectivity, a portion with city funding, a portion with TAP funds, and a portion with ADA funds from the DOT.

Struble asked if the DOT administered the TAP funds? Suhr stated that [the City of Corning] applied to RPA-14 and received funding for that trail. Struble asked about the population of Corning. Halm stated the population is 1,600.

Morales noted that applications for this round of funding are due July 10, which is before the next RPA meeting. MAPA is still working on coordination with RPA-13. If anything changes, MAPA will let the group know and bring additional information to the next meeting.

8. **Additional Business and Public Comment**

Miller requested the meeting slides be made available to the Committee. Halm noted that meeting slides are often updated right up until the meeting time, so MAPA is unable to provide them in advance, but that they can and will be made available following the meetings moving forward.

Suhr provided a brief update on Iowa DOT's urban boundary updates, confirming that Gettys is the correct person to sign off for Harlan, and that it is unlikely there will be any changes for Harlan or Shenandoah. Boundaries will likely change for Glenwood, and Suhr will need to ensure he has the correct contact person.

**Ferro motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:49am. Motion was approved unanimously.**

# Future Meetings & Events

- **RPA-18 Policy and Technical Committee Meeting: July 12, 2023 - 11:00am**