



Minnesota Infrastructure Alliance (MnIA)

Meeting Minutes

Date/ Time: Wednesday December 6, 2023, 9:00-10:00am

Location: Virtual

Meeting Objectives: Review our progress, set priorities for the next three months.

Attendees: Michelle Stockness (MnIA chair, Freshwater), Brad Henry (MnIA Steering Committee, Mn IAM), Amy Grothaus (MnIA steering committee, Braun), Lori Blair (Minnesota Rural Water Association), Matt Rasmussen (City of Minneapolis, representing MN AWWA), Jim Stark (LCC Subcommittee on Water Policy), Chad Kolstad (MDH, DWRP coordinator), Sam Lobby (PUC, representing CSWEA), Brooke Bordson (LMC), Jeannine Clancy (MnIA Steering Committee, TKDA), John Siekmeier (MnDOT), Monica Heil (MN AWWA, WSB), Russ Matthys (City of Eagan), Tony Kelly (MGEC), Chris Roy (MnDOT), Lisa Breu (ASCE rep, Graef), Troy Olsen (Ewald Consulting, MUCA government relations), Serge Phillips (MnDOT), Tom Eggum (MN2050 founder), Mike Stolarski (General Repair Service), Ann Johnson Stewart (former State Senator), Mark Rohweder (KLJ)

Meeting Minutes

1. **Welcome and background!** (5 min, Michelle)
 - a. Review agenda, meeting ground rules for hybrid discussions
 - b. Revisit our mission/ vision/ goals and members
 - c. Revisit overall schedule and quarterly meeting plans
2. **Introductions of attendees** (5 min, Michelle)
3. **Review of recent and upcoming activities** (10 min)
 - a. Infrastructure Resilience Advisory Task Force
 - i. Nonpartisan committee focusing on infrastructure. *(See attachment 1)*
 - ii. Replicating the Michigan Infrastructure Council (MIC) <https://www.michigan.gov/mic>
 - iii. Reach out to Russ Matthys (City of Eagan) with comments and feedback
 - b. Share calendars and events
 - i. Please share your Days at the Capitol as you schedule them.
 - ii. Please submit conference abstracts to talk about MnIA.
 - iii. MnIA will submit abstract for MN Transportation Conference presentation
4. **Review of new websites** (5 min)
 - a. Raise our Grade website
 - i. Purpose of Raise our Grade: help professionals and the public understand infrastructure and send messages to their state and federal legislators that infrastructure is a priority.
 - ii. Show QR code and add to conference slides to encourage our professionals to send messages to their legislators.
 - iii. Legislators need to hear from their constituents that infrastructure is a priority
 - b. MN Infrastructure Alliance website- Amy
 - i. Purpose: help professionals and legislators understand who MnIA is. Share information from our meetings and a calendar of events.
 - ii. Partner page may be missing some logos.

- iii. Send events to get on the calendar.
- iv. Can add conference presentations to resources.

5. Ideas for the 2024 Legislative session (25 min)

- a. Coordinate efforts
 - i. Review legislative session timelines.
 - ii. Presentations to legislative committees, sharing priorities- House and Senate.
 - iii. Coordinate Days at the Capitol (ASCE, ACEC, AWWA, Transportation Alliance, etc.)
- b. Legislative priorities from partners
 - i. What are unmet priorities after the 2023 session? What are your organizational priorities for 2024?
 - ii. Chad Kolstad- State Revolving Funds
 - 1. Finalized drinking water and clean water plan fund Intended Use Plan. Will incorporate the second round of IJA funds.
 - 2. \$240 million for lead service line replacements
 - 3. Need to fully fund water programs
 - 4. Would appreciate letting the governors office know if you support this program.
 - iii. Bonding Bill
 - 1. Will be difficult to pass this year.
 - 2. A bonding bill passed in 2023, but we need another one in 2024.
 - 3. We have billions in backlog (~\$7 billion)
 - 4. Senate democrats are proposing a \$1.3 to \$1.4 billion bonding bill.
 - 5. We should present to the Capitol Committee again – focus on rural legislators went well last time, rural legislators really rely on the bonding committee.
 - a. Start getting on committee schedules now.
 - b. Michelle and Margaret and Ann Johnson Stewart can lead that effort.
 - 6. Need explanations of good infrastructure planning: why pipes should be replaced with road reconstruction, limited options for some rural communities due to permitting requirements.
 - a. For example: Trunk Highway dollars can't be used for Utilities. Should there be a program so cities can apply to do utilities under highway when those projects occur?
 - iv. How can we help cities and counties access funding?
 - 1. Some municipalities don't have the staff or don't know how to ask for these funds
 - 2. Vendor reps reach everybody and can move a lot of information
 - 3. UMN project- excluding CEGE- has funding to outreach to small communities across the state- Brad has info on how to get involved. *(See attachment 2)*
 - 4. League of MN Cities has a grant navigator program
<https://www.lmc.org/resources/grant-navigator/>
 - v. We need to include capital costs plus operation and maintenance.
 - 1. Matt Rasmussen City of Minneapolis- cities are good at getting funding to build things, but O&M costs more than initial construction, but bonding is better at getting things constructed than long term maintenance
 - vi. Legislative coordination

1. Jim Stark is working on legislative water agenda for presenting to Legislative Subcommittee Committee on Water.
- vii. Specific initiatives:
 1. PFAS: Serge (MnDOT) says that PFAS is going to have huge costs and is a big concern for aviation.
 2. Troy- Lobbyist for MUCA Excavation rules- efficiencies
 3. Matt- City of Minneapolis- watch for CERCLA exemptions for hazardous waste.
- viii. Electric and Power
 1. Per Sam Lobby at the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), trying to figure out how PUC can help within the purview of it's role
 2. Keep in mind power/electric in MnIA. We should talk about it more.
- ix. Workforce development
 1. Can we add funding flexibility so we can fund workforce efforts? There's concern that we can't deliver all the projects we're funding, provide funding for educators to develop workforce and provide training through technical colleges where compensation for educators can be a barrier
 2. APWA has workforce development policy primer (*See attachment 3*)
- c. What should we work on together?
 - i. Legislative outreach and talking points.
 - ii. Coordinate activities for February for Infrastructure Month.

6. Action Items and Next Steps (5 min)

- a. Schedule our next meeting: Q1 2024 Jan-March
- b. Share the Raise our Grade and MnIA websites with your members with Q4 talking points.
- c. Submit abstracts for conference presentations on MnIA. We can provide slides and/or speakers.
- d. Schedule presentations with the state senate and house capitol committees. Consider presenting in February for infrastructure month.
- e. Coordinate on Days at the Capitol via our shared website calendar.
- f. Consider presenting at the Legislative Coordinating Commission Subcommittee on Minnesota Water Policy.

Future efforts:

- 2024 Statewide Asset Management Survey (redo 2016 report)?

Legislative Coordinating Commission

Infrastructure Resilience Advisory Task Force

Infrastructure Resilience Advisory Task Force

The Infrastructure Resilience Advisory Task Force is established to evaluate issues related to coordination, sustainability, resiliency, and federal funding on state, local, and private infrastructure in the state.

At a minimum, the task force must:

1. develop objectives and strategies to: provide for effective and efficient management of state, local, and private infrastructure; enhance sustainability and resiliency of infrastructure throughout the state; respond to and mitigate the effects of adverse weather events across the state, including natural disasters, droughts, and floods; and provide for equitable treatment in areas of persistent poverty and historically disadvantaged communities;
2. identify approaches to enhance infrastructure coordination across jurisdictions, agencies, state and local government, and public and private sectors, including in planning, design, engineering, construction, maintenance, and operations;
3. identify methods to maximize federal formula and discretionary funds provided to recipients in the state for infrastructure purposes;
4. evaluate options for organizational design of state agencies to meet the purposes under clauses (1) to (3), including consideration of: options for establishment of a board, council, office, or other agency; and models in other states; and
5. develop findings and recommendations related to the duties specified in this subdivision.

[Minnesota Laws 2023 Chapter 62, Article 2, Section 121](#)

E-mail Notification of Task Force Meetings

[Subscribe](#)

Sign up for email notification of all Task Force meetings and announcements.

Combined Meetings

December 2023						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

Task Force Meetings

Dec. 4, 2023

Legislative Coordinating Commission

Infrastructure Resilience Advisory Task Force

Infrastructure Resilience Advisory Task Force Meetings

Date/Time	Location	Meeting Materials	Audio/Video
Mon. January 29, 2024 12:00 PM	120 - State Capitol	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agenda:TBD Notice: Pursuant to MS 13D.015 , some members may be participating via interactive technology.	Livestream Link - TBD
Mon. January 15, 2024 12:00 PM	120 - State Capitol	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agenda:TBD Notice: Pursuant to MS 13D.015 , some members may be participating via interactive technology.	Livestream Link - TBD
Mon. December 18, 2023 12:00 PM	120 - State Capitol	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agenda:TBD• December 4, 2023 Minutes - Draft• Minnesota Statutes 2023• Michigan Infrastructure Council Governance Model Notice: Pursuant to MS 13D.015 , some members may be participating via interactive technology.	Livestream Link - TBD
Mon. December 4, 2023 12:00 PM	120 - State Capitol	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agenda• November 20, 2023 Minutes - Draft• Minnesota Statutes 2023• Template for Legislation• Michigan Infrastructure Council Governance Model Notice: Pursuant to MS 13D.015 , some members may be participating via interactive technology.	Livestream Link
Mon. November 20, 2023 12:00 PM	120 - State Capitol	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agenda• October 23, 2023 Minutes• University of MN - Empowering Small Minnesota Communities Presentation• MN Management and Budget - Federal Funds Implementation Unit• Chair Erin Koegel's Mission Statement Notice: Pursuant to MS 13D.015 , some members may be participating via interactive technology.	Livestream Link

Date/Time	Location	Meeting Materials	Audio/Video
<p>Mon. October 23, 2023 12:30 PM</p>	<p>120 - State Capitol</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • October 9, 2023 Minutes • Michigan Infrastructure Council Governance Model • Survey Responses <p>Notice: Pursuant to MS 13D.015, some members may be participating via interactive technology.</p>	<p>Livestream Link</p>
<p>Mon. October 9, 2023 11:00 AM</p>	<p>120 - State Capitol</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • September 25, 2023 Minutes • Michigan Infrastructure Council Presentation • Mission Statements • MN Climate Action Framework Presentation <p>Notice: Pursuant to MS 13D.015, some members may be participating via interactive technology.</p>	<p>Livestream Link</p>
<p>Mon. September 25, 2023 9:00 AM</p>	<p>120 - State Capitol</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • Infrastructure Resilience Advisory Task Force First Meeting Presentation • 2023 Minnesota Session Law • Open Meeting Law Overview <p>Notice: Pursuant to MS 13D.015, some members may be participating via interactive technology.</p>	<p>Livestream Link</p>

Legislative Coordinating Commission

Infrastructure Resilience Advisory Task Force

Infrastructure Resilience Advisory Task Force Members

The task force consists of the following 23 members:

Member	Appointing Authority
Rep. Erin Koegel, Chair	Speaker of the House
Rep. Dawn Gillman, Vice Chair	House Minority Leader
Jessica Burdette	Commissioner of Commerce
Sandeep Burman	Commissioner of Health
Sen. Jim Carlson	Senate Majority Leader
Tom Dicklich	Governor
Greg Ewig	Commissioner of Administration
Micah Intermill	Commissioner of Management & Budget
Lyle Femrite	Minnesota Association of Townships
Sen. John Jasinski	Senate Minority Leader
Paul Krabbenhoft	Association of MN Counties
Bree Maki	Commissioner of Employment & Economic Development
Kris Manderfeld	Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association
Russ Matthys	American Public Works Association
Samantha Minkler	Commissioner of Natural Resources
Brian Olson	Governor
John Paulson	League of Minnesota Cities
James Pearson	Public Utility that owns Nuclear-Powered Plant
Dana Vanderbosch	Pollution Control Agency
Jean Wallace	Commissioner of Transportation
Mike Zastoupil	Commission of Agriculture
Laura Ziegler	Associated General Contractors of Minnesota
TBD	Tribal Government, Appointed by Governor

Empowering Minnesota Small Communities Supporting Sustainable and Resilient Infrastructure State of Minnesota and University Partnerships

Sustainable Infrastructure Policy Committee

February 8, 2023

Regional Sustainable
Development Partnerships
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
EXTENSION



CENTER FOR
TRANSPORTATION STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

HUMPHREY SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

MINNESOTA DESIGN CENTER



Goals of Community/UMN/State Partnership

- Level the playing field for small communities by developing community-shaped infrastructure project proposals that can be competitive for discretionary funding and create higher ROI for state and local dollars.
- Inform robust policy, planning, and funding prioritization processes to support building sustainable and resilient projects and infrastructure systems across the state.

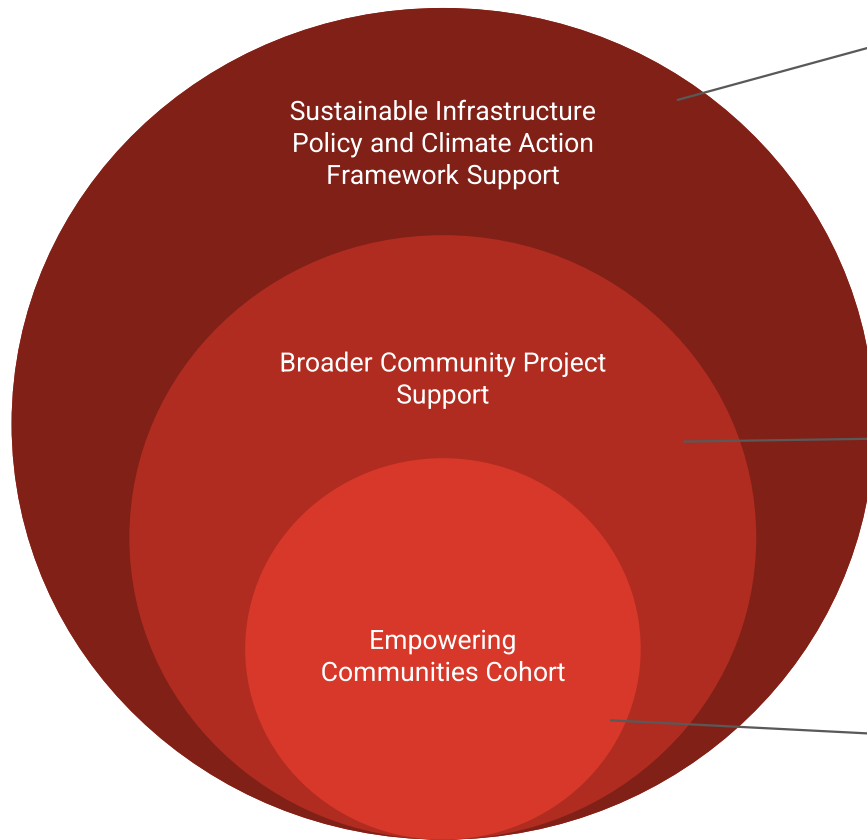


Program Tenets

Practicable work that serves community needs and challenges to create opportunities by:

- Being community-driven;
- Building upon existing community assets;
- Bringing additional capacity to small communities for project identification and development;
- Identifying and leveraging existing regional, state, and federal funding resources;
- Deploying nationally-recognized faculty and researchers in energy, infrastructure, transportation, environmental impact, and housing policy to support communities;
- Developing scenarios that deliver more community impact and value across multiple areas for program investments; and
- Supporting small communities through conception to execution.





Support the sustainable and resilient infrastructure in Minnesota by developing benchmarks and best practices for incorporating sustainability into infrastructure policy and planning.

UMN experts available to support non-cohort communities on key projects.

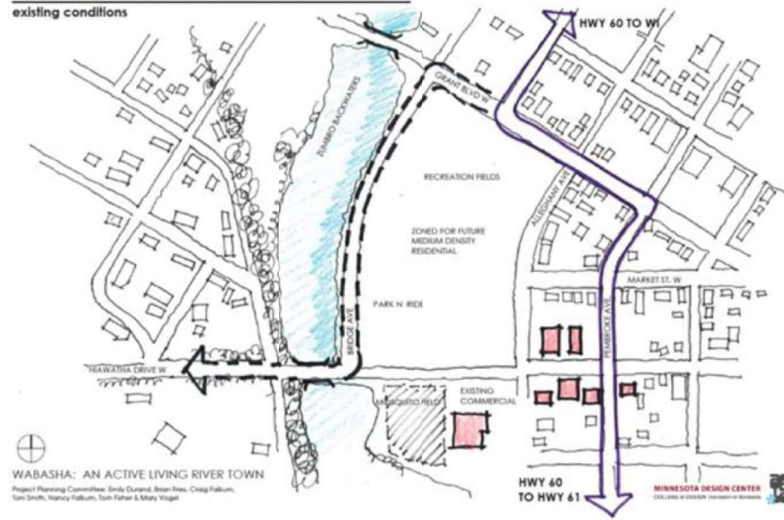
Intensive UMN-Community collaboration. A cohort of communities works with MDC and RSDP to develop broad-based project ideas to address communities needs.

Minnesota Design Center

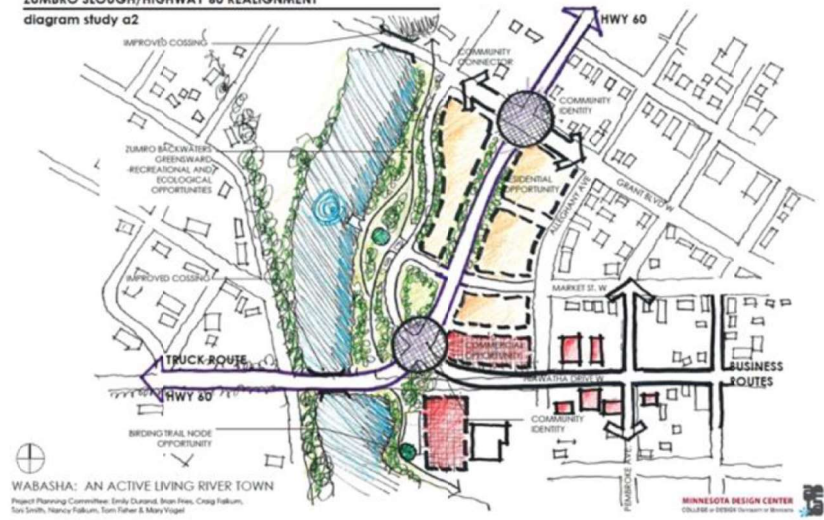
Wabasha Project Example



ZUMBRO SLOUGH/HIGHWAY 60 REALIGNMENT
existing conditions



ZUMBRO SLOUGH/HIGHWAY 60 REALIGNMENT
diagram study a2



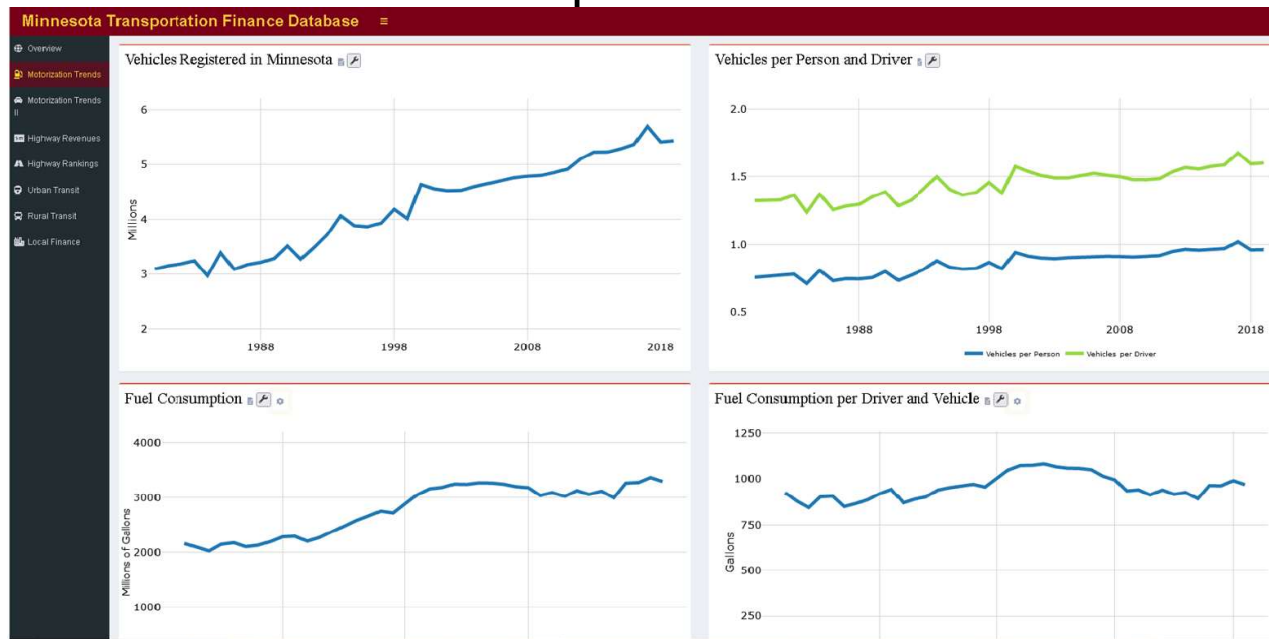
Humphrey School of Public Affairs

- Nationally-recognized faculty and researchers in energy, infrastructure, transportation, environmental impact, and housing policy
- Engaged research with small Minnesota communities and tribal communities



Humphrey School of Public Affairs

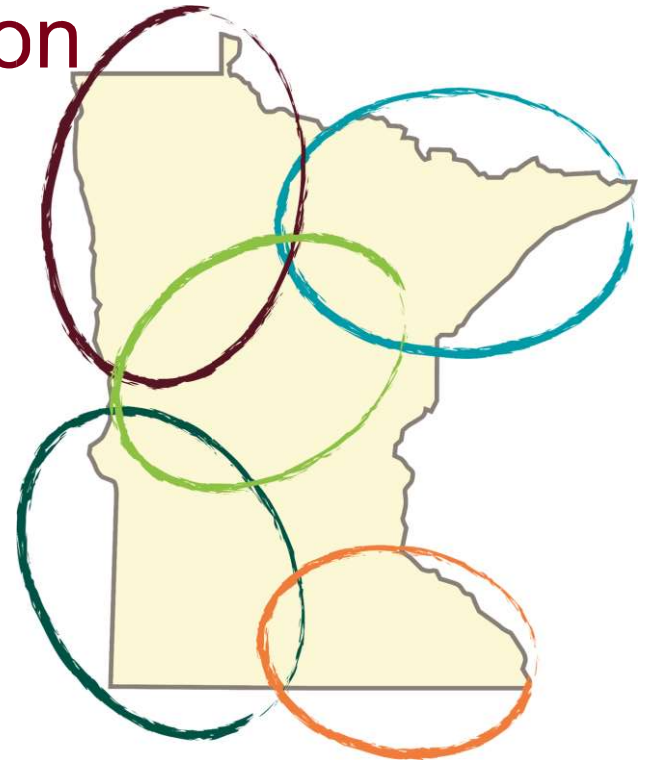
- Experience in developing and implementing policy
 - IURIF/TPEC Transportation Finance Database



Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, UMN Extension

Numerous projects with small communities across a range of topics.

- A New Downtown for Thief River Falls
- Lower Sioux Community Residential Heating
- Red Lake River Corridor



Center for Transportation Studies

- UMN System-wide, interdisciplinary unit.
- Large scale administrative experience, including national transportation center and support of statewide programs.
- Coordinated large-scale RFPs and funding across University programs.



Potential Funding

Program would be **\$2.5 to \$3 million/year** depending on final scope.

Empowering Communities Cohort, \$1 million/year.

- Minnesota Design Center and Regional Sustainable Development Partnership work with 15-20 communities.

Broader UMN Project Support, \$1 million/year.

- Additional support for small communities from “deep bench” of UMN system SME’s.

Sustainable Infrastructure Policy and Practice Development, \$200k-500k/year.

- Development of sustainable infrastructure policies and project frameworks. Could expand to include work to document infrastructure assets and lifecycles.

Administration and Support, \$300k-500k/year.

- Program and project management, communications, and potential grant writing capacity at UMN dedicated to supporting communities.



Structure

- To be developed in partnership with Legislature.
- Could be standalone program or part of a larger effort for technical assistance and infrastructure planning.
- UMN will develop internal process to ensure streamlined administration and effective identification of pertinent SME's.



Contacts

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Questions/Discussion





Recognizing the need for a skilled public works workforce with the necessary capabilities to construct, maintain, and operate critical infrastructure, **APWA supports federal policies that will ensure a pipeline of public works professionals well into the future.** The public works workforce faces serious challenges – **aging workers, the growing ‘skills gap’, and a lack of awareness of public works careers.** The following key areas should be considered as workforce development legislation and regulations are drafted and implemented:

Awareness of Public Works Careers

Despite the importance of public works professionals to our communities and the stability of state and local government positions, many students, graduates, and mid-career jobseekers are **simply unaware of opportunities in public works.**



Efforts should be made to ensure **career counseling professionals**, including those in the **education system**, are equipped with the information to ensure individuals are aware of these possibilities.



Specifically, the Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics operates a **Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system** utilized by many of the nation’s career counselors. Ensuring the wide range of **public works careers are properly outlined in this system** is critical to raising awareness among jobseekers.

Workforce Development Programs and Integration of Public Works Careers

A wide range of federal, state, and local programs provide support to public works through **credentialing, on-the-job training, and certification.** These three main areas require continued federal investment and support:

1 **Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs** provide state and local workforce development boards with the resources to assist employers and jobseekers with hiring, training, and retention.

2 **Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V)** provide the skills necessary for a wide range of public works careers.

3 **Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs under the National Apprenticeship Act (NAA)** provide on-the-job training, which is vital for many public works positions that require significant practical instruction outside of a classroom.



In addition to the need for support for these programs and other elements of the workforce development system, there are opportunities for improved alignment with the public works workforce. **Increased cooperation between workforce boards and public works agencies, establishment of clear public works career pathways in CTE, and greater engagement of sectors including the water and transportation workforces in apprenticeships** are examples of possibilities for increased engagement.



Eligibility of Public Works Agencies for Workforce Development Funds

Public works agencies are an important component of the transportation, water, and emergency management workforces, among others, but in some cases have been **excluded from eligibility for new workforce development funds and programs** aimed at these sectors.



Establishing a **clear legislative definition of public works agencies** and ensuring they are specified as **eligible recipients** in future bills/regulations could enhance their worker training capabilities and help prepare for changing technology and the future of work.



License Portability

Numerous public works professions, including water/wastewater operators, construction inspectors, and engineers, are **regulated by state licensing programs**. Despite broad consistency among most states' programs, **license portability is generally limited**.



Increased mobility of licensure would better allow for **training in areas with greater need of employment**, and the subsequent **relocation to areas with greater need of employees**.



Support for Innovative Training Programs

Public works departments across the nation have implemented innovative training programs targeting **populations in need**, including outreach to **veterans** and workforce reentry programs for **currently or formerly incarcerated individuals**. These programs provide a smooth transition into the workforce for individuals in need by providing them with the necessary **skills, training, and certifications** in public works professions.



Policies promoting and incentivizing these initiatives can **bring benefits both to individuals in need and the overall community**.

Policymaker Primers supplement APWA's official Public Policy Priorities, providing additional information and context for issues that do not strictly fall into the categories of transportation, water resiliency, or emergency management.

The American Public Works Association (APWA) represents over 30,000 public works professionals across North America, dedicated to providing essential, high-quality equitable and sustainable services to millions of people in rural and urban communities, both small and large.

APWA members serve in both the public and private sectors, providing expertise to the local, state, and federal government levels. Working in the public interest, our members plan, design, build, operate and maintain, and oversee America's vast infrastructure networks essential to our nation's economy, environment, safety, and way of life.

APWA collaborates with all levels of government and supports federal investment in our shared infrastructure. APWA is opposed to unfunded mandates and any effort to impede the appropriate use of public right-of-way, and strongly encourages industry to partner with public works, and all state and local government entities.

APWA supports federal investment and support for professional development training initiatives, including investment in apprenticeships, grants, career and technical education programs, to assist with the growth and utilization of innovative activities related to having a diverse, high-quality public works workforce.

It is important that federal regulations do not become onerous and burdensome to localities in their use of advancing technologies.