

MARATHON COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA



Date & Time of Meeting: Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 2:00pm

Meeting Location: Wisconsin Room, 1000 Lake View Drive, Wausau, WI 54403

Members: Randy Fifrick – Chair, Allen Opall (Designee, Gaylene Rhoden – Vice Chair), Dan Helgeson, Betty Hoenisch, Steve Hagman, Doug Diny, Tim Buttke, Matt Lee Baer, David Phelps, David Baker, Mark Maloney, Kregg Hoehn, Pete Nievinski, Matthew Bronson

The meeting site identified above will be open to the public. Instead of in person attendance, Metropolitan Planning Commission members and the public may attend this meeting by telephone and video conference. **Persons wishing to attend the meeting virtually may call into the telephone conference beginning five (5) minutes prior to the start time indicated above using the following number:**

PHONE NUMBER: 1-408-418-9388

ACCESS CODE: 2490 716 6556

Please Note: If you are prompted to provide an "Attendee Identification Number" press the **#** symbol. No other number is required to participate in the telephone conference.

When you enter the telephone conference, PLEASE PUT YOUR PHONE ON MIUTE!

- 1. Call Meeting to Order
- 2. Public Comment
- 3. Approval of Minutes: April 15, 2025, MPO Commission Meeting
- 4. Policy Issues, Discussion, and Possible Commission Action
 - A. Domtar Dam Project Letter of Support
 - B. Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Grant Opportunity
- 5. Educational Presentations and Commission Discussion
 - A. Wausau MPO Bike/Ped Subcommittee
- 6. Next Meeting Date & Time, Announcements, and Future Agenda Items
 - A. Next Meeting Date and Time June 10, 2025, at 2:00pm
 - B. Future Agenda Items Members are asked to bring items for future discussion
- 7. Adjournment

Any person planning to attend this meeting who needs some type of special accommodation to participate should call the County Clerk's Office at 715-261-1500 or email countyclerk@marathoncounty.gov one business day before the meeting.

EMAILED TO: Courthouse, WDH, City Pages, and other Media Groups
EMAILED BY: AA

DATE: 5/8/2025
EMAIL TIME: 9:00am

SIGNED: PRESIDING OFFICER OR DESIGNEE

NOTICE POSTI	ED AT COURTHOUSE:
BY:	
DATE & TIME:	



MARATHON COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES April 15th, 2025

Meeting Attendance: Randy Fifrick – Chair, Michael Wodalski, Sydney Turner, Arran Hersey, Aaron Anklam, Laurie Miskimins, Morgan Arnold, Gaylene Rhoden – Vice Chair, Brad Lenz, Darryl Landeau, Dave Meurett, Jeff Gates, Andy Lynch, Ryan VanDeWalle, Mark Thuot, Dave Baker, Dave Faucet (From Domtar), Stephanie Jaecks, Jared Grande

- 1. <u>Call to Order:</u> In the presence of a quorum, with the agenda being properly signed and posted, the meeting was called to order by Chairperson Fifrick at 2:00 p.m. in the Wolf Room, 1000 Lake View Drive, Wausau, WI 54403 and virtually via WebEx.
- 2. <u>Public Comment</u> Discussion: No Public Comment
- 3. <u>Approve Minutes February 11, 2025, Commission Meeting</u>
 <u>Action:</u> Motion/Second by / Rhoden/Lenz to approve the February 11th, 2025, Minutes. Motion carried by voice vote, no dissent.
- 4. <u>Policy Issues Discussion and Commission Determination Discussion:</u> Wausau MPO Bike/Ped Subcommittee.
 - Anklam stated that the committee hasn't met since August of 2023. Now that the MPO receives SATO funds, staff believes it would be a good idea to continue the subcommittee.
 - Example Projects: Safe Streets for All Grant, Major Bike Map update, TAP projects, BFC Award, Regional Projects.
 - Staff would like to see a member from each community that could be a part of the subcommittee.
 - o How often would we have this Subcommittee Meet?
 - We would establish a regular meeting schedule over the next year or two.
 Meetings likely to occur every other month.
 - Establish a time and day of the week so that the designated person can make those meetings.
 - Fifrick mentioned reconvening at the June meeting and for each municipality to designate a member for the Bike/Ped Subcommittee.
 - Staff will follow up with the group to establish a first meeting date (in June) and to set a future meeting schedule to include regular meeting dates and times.
 - <u>Action:</u> Motion/Second by / Thuot/Rhoden to re-establish the Wausau MPO Bike/Ped subcommittee. Motion carried by voice vote, no dissent.
- 5. <u>Educational Presentations and Commission Discussions</u>
 - Introduction of New MPO Commission Members
 - Introductions from: Randy Fifrick, Morgan Arnold, Laurie Miskimins, Aaron Anklam, David Baker, Arran Hersey, Andrew Lynch, Mark Thuot, Gaylene Rhoden, Darryl Landeau, Brad Lenz, Michael Wodalski, Shad Harvey, Jared Grande, Dave Meurett, Sydney Turner, Stephanie Jakes, Jeff Gates
 - Domtar Dam Presentation
 - o Dave Faucet, General Manager, Domtar Mill Rothchild
 - Community Assets for North Central Wisconsin
 - Papermaking in Wisconsin
 - Forest products industry

MARATHON COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

- One of the top ten industries in WI
- Accounts for 11% of the state's total manufacturing jobs
- Rothschild and Nekoosa
 - Nekoosa Mill: Established 1883
 - Rothschild Mill: Established 1910
 - About an hour apart
- The Rothschild Dam and Lake Wausau
 - The Dam provided the mills early operations with hydroelectric power
 - Created Lake Wausau, a key recreational and economic asset to the area
- Challenges Facing the Rothschild Dam
 - Timber Crib Spillway Last replaced in 1964
 - Rothschild Mill has invested \$12M in maintenance and repair efforts over the past two decades to extend its life
- Domtar's Commitment
 - The modernization project is estimated to cost \$84M
 - Domtar seeks a solution to fund this project via cost-sharing funding opportunities at the local, regional, state, and federal levels
 - Domtar will continue to maintain the dam as part of its ongoing commitment to Wisconsin
 - Nekoosa Mill is 142 Years Old
 - Rothschild Mill is 115 Years Old
- Community Benefits of Modernization
 - Recreational enhancements
 - Property Value Stability
 - Flood Control
 - Preserves Lake Wausau
- Future Investments: North Central Wisconsin
 - Domtar will commit to investing \$100 Million in Rothschild and Nekoosa manufacturing operations over the next three years.
- Domtar is looking for letters of support from groups like the MPO. They are also looking for minor local contributions for this project. Rhoden questioned how much funding Domtar is looking for from each municipality.
- Staff will draft a letter of support for the Domtar Dam Modernization project and bring it to the May MPO meeting for review and further discussion.

2:42 meeting moved from Rock room to the Michigan Room.

- Safe Streets for all (SS4A) Funding Opportunity
 - o Anklam went through the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Grant opportunity -
 - Staff believes the grant would be beneficial to the MPO to establish a Safety Action Plan which would then set up the MPO with projects that are ready for implementation grants.
 - The plan would look at crash data and help make recommendations on roadway safety and improvements.
 - Multiple MPO's within Wisconsin have been awarded this and are working on a Safety Action Plan.
 - The deadline to apply is June 26th, 2025
 - Staff are attending a webinar to learn more about the grant and learn how to apply.

MARATHON COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

- Local match Component of 20%
 - Can be staff time (not MPO staff time), doesn't need to be cash match.
- Staff will follow up during the May MPO meeting with additional detailed information including scope of work, and further details on the grant.
- 2024 Federally Obligated Project List
 - o Anklam reviewed the list of Obligated Federal Highway Projects & Funds for 2024
- STP-Urban & TAP Update
 - o Anklam stated that both grants should open in early June and close in October.
- WisDOT Reroute of Bus 51 / WIS 52
 - Meurett went over the Bus 51 / Wis 52 reroute. WisDOT expects the new route signs to be completed sometime next week. Once that occurs the changes are official.
- 6. Next Meeting Date & Time, Announcements, and Agenda Items for Next Meeting Date TBD Discussion: The next meeting will be held on Tuesday May 13th, 2025, held at 1000 Lakeview Drive, Wausau, WI 54403 in the Wisconsin Room.
 - Fifrick mentioned adding the Domtar Dam Letter of Support to the agenda for the Tuesday May 13th, 2025, Meeting.

7. Adjournment

<u>Action:</u> There being no further business before the members Motion/Second by Rhoden/VanDeWalle to adjourn the meeting of the Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commission at 3:08pm. Motion carried by voice vote, no dissent.

Submitted by: Aaron Anklam, Transportation Planner Marathon County Conservation, Planning and Zoning Wausau MPO



Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Organization 1100 Lake View Drive, Suite 400 Wausau, WI 54403

May 13, 2025

Tammy Baldwin United States Senate 709 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510

Subject: Village of Rothschild Application for Congressionally Directed Spending Allocation for Rothschild Dam Modernization

Dear Senator Baldwin,

On behalf of the Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Organization, I write to express our strong support for the Village of Rothschild's application for Congressionally Directed Spending in connection with the critical modernization of the Rothschild Dam in north central Wisconsin.

For over a century, the Rothschild Dam and adjacent Rothschild Mill have stood as pillars of our region's industrial and economic vitality. Since its construction in 1912, the dam not only powered early operations of the mill but also created Lake Wausau—now a central recreational, ecological, and economic asset for Marathon County and beyond. The benefits of this infrastructure span far beyond Domtar's needs relative to mill operations, including quality of life, flood control, public safety, and recreational and business development that support both our residents and local governments.

Domtar's Rothschild and nearby Nekoosa mills currently support over 3,500 local jobs and contribute approximately \$1 billion annually to Wisconsin's economy. These operations rely on significant ongoing investment to remain competitive in a global market. However, the estimated \$84 million modernization of the Rothschild Dam—particularly the replacement of its aging Timber Crib Spillway— represents a financial investment that would otherwise require diverting necessary capital away from the critical manufacturing facilities that support the local and regional wood product economy.

To ensure the continued operations of these critical manufacturing facilities and to undertake the modernization of the Rothschild Dam, which is vitally important to flood control, public safety, and quality of life in the region, funding support is needed at both the federal and state levels. We commend Domtar for its demonstrated commitment to the region, including its willingness to fund one-third of the dam project cost and its pledge to invest an additional \$100 million in its local operations over the next three years. We believe this modernization project is not just an investment in physical infrastructure, but in the sustainability of the Central Wisconsin region's economy, environment, and quality of life.

The Rothschild Dam is more than a historic structure—it is a community asset vital to the future of Marathon County and the greater north central Wisconsin region. We respectfully request your support for the Village of Rothschild's funding request, which will help ensure the dam continues to serve the public good for generations to come. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Randy Fifrick Chairman

Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Organization



SENT VIA E-MAIL ONLY

April 25, 2025

Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commissioners & Designees

Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Grant Opportunity

Following our discussion at the April MPO meeting, we would like to provide you with additional detailed information regarding an upcoming grant opportunity in advance of our May meeting. The Wausau MPO is preparing to assemble an application for a Planning and Demonstration Grant through USDOT's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program. This competitive federal grant, established under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, supports the development of comprehensive safety strategies to significantly reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries.

The MPO seeks to secure funding to develop a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan, a community informed, data-driven framework that will identify safety risks, prioritize interventions, and position our region for future infrastructure funding. The proposed project budget is \$200,000, with 80% funded by federal dollars and a required 20% local in-kind match, which can be met through staff time and eligible contributions from member communities.

This memo provides an overview of the SS4A program, outlines the scope and goals of the Safety Action Plan, and details the support and in-kind commitments requested from each MPO member community. We will further discuss this matter at the upcoming MPO meeting on **Tuesday, May 13, 2025**. In the meantime, we encourage communities to begin internal conversations with leadership to support a timely and coordinated grant submission ahead of the **June 26, 2025**, deadline.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at (715) 261-6034 or aaron.anklam2@marathoncounty.gov

Aaron Anklam

Wausau MPO Transportation Planner



SS4A Background/Summary -

The Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program is a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation that supports local, regional, and tribal efforts to reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries. The program is part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

There are two types of grants:

- 1. **Planning and Demonstration Grants** to develop or update a Safety Action Plan.
- 2. **Implementation Grants** to fund safety projects based on a completed plan.

We would be applying for a Planning Grant to create a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan for the Wausau MPO.

Grant submission deadline: Thursday, June 26, 2025

Comprehensive Safety Action Plan -

A Safety Action Plan is a data-driven, community-informed strategy to eliminate or greatly reduce roadway deaths and serious injuries. It provides a framework for:

- Analyze crash data and identify high risk areas.
- Engage community members and local stakeholders.
- Prioritize safety projects that improve conditions for all road users including drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders.
- Builds a list of ready to implement projects eligible for future federal funding.

SS4A Funding –

The grant requires a 20% local match. For the Wausau MPO's proposed Comprehensive Safety Action Plan, the total project budget is estimated at \$200,000.

- \$160,000 (80%) would be covered by federal SS4A funds.
- \$40,000 (20%) must come from local sources.

The SS4A program allows the use of in-kind contributions to fulfill the local match requirement. This makes it possible to meet our 20% obligation without a cash contribution from member communities.



In-kind match refers to non-cash contributions of time or resources that directly support the planning process. For this project, eligible in-kind contributions could include:

- Participation in MPO/TAC/special meetings related to development of the Safety Action Plan
- Attendance at public engagement events
- Meetings with the consultant team during the planning process
- Stakeholder coordination, such as meetings with law enforcement, school districts, or other community groups
- Local staff time spent reviewing materials or providing feedback

All time spent must be documented and directly related to the scope of the Safety Action Plan.

To meet the \$40,000 local match, we estimate that each municipality would need to contribute approximately 40 hours of staff time over the course of the 12-month planning process. This breaks down to roughly 3–4 hours per month per municipality.

Project Objectives –

- 1. **Identify High-Risk Areas:** Use data analysis to identify intersections, corridors, and locations with the highest crash rates and safety concerns.
- 2. **Develop Actionable Strategies:** Recommend both short-term and long-term solutions, including engineering, education, enforcement, and policy strategies.
- 3. **Prioritize Projects for Implementation:** Provide a clear, prioritized list of safety projects and initiatives eligible for future funding opportunities.
- 4. **Foster Regional Collaboration:** Engage local jurisdictions, community stakeholders, and the public throughout the planning process.

<u>Project Goals –</u>

- 1. Significantly Reduce Traffic Fatalities & Serious Injuries.
- 2. **Create a Data-Driven Safety Action Plan:** Use crash data, local knowledge, and spatial analysis to identify the most dangerous corridors, especially for vulnerable users like pedestrians, bicyclists, and seniors.
- 3. **Advance Regional Safety Coordination:** Build stronger partnerships between municipalities, the county, WisDOT, school districts, and emergency services to implement safety strategies.



4. Integrate Safety into Future Transportation Planning: Embed safety design principles into the MPO's long range transportation plan (LRTP), TIP, and future local plans. MPO staff have identified the Safety section of the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) as a key area in need of significant enhancement for the upcoming plan update.

Scope of Work -

1. Project Management & Coordination:

- Conduct a kickoff meeting with Wausau MPO Staff, Commission, and stakeholders.
- Develop a project management plan with schedule, milestones, and deliverables.
- Facilitate regular meetings and coordination with the MPO and stakeholders throughout the planning process.

2. Data Collection & Analysis:

- Identify traffic patterns, counts, systemic risk factors, and incorporate innovation/emerging technologies and analysis to create a holistic picture of the region's transportation network.
- Collect and analyze crash data, including fatalities and serious injuries for all modes of transportation.
- Identify high-risk intersections, corridors, and systemic safety issues.
- Incorporate data on roadway characteristics, traffic volumes, speed, land use, and demographics.

3. Community & Stakeholder Engagement:

- Develop a Public Involvement Plan to guide engagement activities.
- Conduct stakeholder workshops, focus groups, and public meetings to gather input from all communities and the public.
- Host at least 3 public input opportunities, these should be in person with a virtual option.
- Ensure outreach is inclusive and representative of the entire community, particularly underserved populations.



4. Development of Strategies & Recommendations:

- Develop a list of infrastructure projects and non-infrastructure initiatives to improve safety outcomes. Identify demonstration projects for grant opportunities.
- Incorporate strategies to reduce barriers to mobility for all users.
- Ensure recommendations prioritize safety improvements for vulnerable road users.

5. Project Identification & Prioritization:

- Develop a prioritization scale to rank projects and initiatives based on safety impact, equity, feasibility, and cost.
- Identify a list of short-, mid- and long-term safety improvement projects.
- Provide a phased implementation plan that aligns with future funding opportunities.
- Include planning level cost estimates for priority projects.

6. Final Comprehensive Safety Action Plan:

- Prepare a final report document that includes an implementation plan with an executive summary, safety analysis findings including data and maps, and recommended strategies and prioritized projects for future implementation.
- Present Plan to the Wausau MPO Commission and other boards/committees as applicable.

<u>Asks from each MPO Community –</u>

We are requesting confirmation of support and in-kind match commitments from each MPO member community. Please review the following requests with your respective municipal leadership:

Requested Actions from Each Municipality:

1. Affirm Support

Confirm your municipality's support for pursuing study funding.

2. Commit to In-Kind Match

Provide an in-kind match through staff time or other eligible resources. The estimated contribution includes:

• **Staff Time:** Approximately 3-4 hours per month over a 12-month period.



• Additional Contributions: May include hosting public meetings (e.g., providing community space and refreshments), posting and promoting public engagement opportunities on your website, or assisting with outreach.

Please note: MPO staff time cannot be counted toward the in-kind match due to the MPO receiving federal funding. However, contributions from other County departments (e.g., procurement, legal, finance, GIS, highway dept.) can be included. We estimate up to \$20,000 in in-kind contributions through non-MPO (County) staff time and resources (such as use of the Conference Center).

We will discuss this in more detail at our next MPO meeting on Tuesday, May 13, 2025. If possible, we encourage each community to begin preliminary discussions with your boards or supervisory bodies in accordance with your internal approval processes.

Webinar Recordings and Presentation Materials Now Available

The Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program recorded three public "How to Apply" webinars in April. The webinars focused on developing a Safety Action Plan; Supplemental Planning and Demonstration activities; and Implementation Grants. Please visit the SS4A website to access the webinar recordings and presentations.

Note: In March 2025, the requirement for funds that must be awarded for developing an Action Plan, including supplemental planning to update an existing Action Plan or demonstration activities to inform the development or update of an Action Plan, was revised from 40 percent to 30 percent. The Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (H.R. 1968) changed the set-aside in Section 24112(c)(2)(B) of Public Law 117–58, which contains the original requirement.

Upcoming SS4A FY25 Deadlines

If you wish to pursue the <u>pre-application review</u> option offered by the SS4A program, you must submit both your <u>Self-Certification Eligibility Worksheet</u> and your Safety Action Plan(s) **this Friday, May 9, 2025**.

- May 9, 2025: Deadline for the Pre-Application Action Plan Review for Implementation Grant applicants.
- May 29, 2025, by 5 PM ET: Deadline for technical questions related to the FY25 NOFO.
- June 26, 2025, by 5 PM ET: Deadline for all SS4A Grant applications. NOFO closes.

For more information on how to apply for the SS4A grant opportunity, please visit the <u>How</u> to Apply page of the SS4A website.

Applicant Resources

Based on the questions received during the SS4A "How to Apply" webinars, we wanted to highlight the SS4A website and its numerous <u>resources</u> to assist applicants, including the following:

- "How to Apply" Webinar Recordings and Slides
- SS4A Pre-Application Action Plan Review
- Eligible Supplemental Planning and Demonstration Activities

- Matching Funds for SS4A Grants
- How to Complete Standard Forms
- FAQs
- Supplemental Budget Templates
 - o Planning and Demonstration Grant Supplemental Budget Template
 - o Implementation Grant Supplemental Budget Template

About Safe Streets and Roads for All

Established by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the <u>Safe Streets and Roads for All</u> (SS4A) grant program will provide \$5 billion in grant funding over five years. Funding supports regional, local, and Tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries.

From: Aaron Anklam

Matt Lee Baer; dbaker@kronenwetter.org; Tim Buttke; Doug Diny; Jeff Gates; jgebert@westonwi.gov; Jared To:

> Grande; Rich Grefe; Steve Hagman - Town of Mosinee (hagman.s@outlook.com); dhelgeson@rothschildwi.com; Kregg Hoehn (mayor@cityofschofield.org); Betty Hoenisch; Brad Lenz; Eric Lindman; Andrew Lynch; Mark

Maloney; pnievinski@mosinee.wi.us; Allen Opall; David Phelps; Gaylene Rhoden; Mark Thuot

(mthuot@cityofschofield.org); Greg Ulman; Ryan Vandewalle; Tim Vergara; Peter Wegner; Allen Wesolowski;

Michael Wodalski (mwodalski@westonwi.gov)

Cc: Laurie Miskimins; Randy Fifrick

Subject: Follow Up - Wausau MPO Bike/Ped Subcommittee

Date: Tuesday, April 29, 2025 2:30:00 PM

Attachments: image001.png

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Hi Everyone,

Following up on our Bike/Ped Subcommittee discussion at the April MPO meeting, we've put together some proposed meeting dates and times to establish a regular meeting schedule. We've also included a list of initial topics we plan to begin discussing with the group this year.

Our goal is to hold the first Bike/Ped Subcommittee meeting in June, likely after the June 10th MPO meeting. If each municipality could identify and designate a representative to serve on the subcommittee at either the May or June MPO meeting, that would be greatly appreciated. We recommend designating a member of staff or an elected official. Someone who can give insight into your community's perspective and processes for getting approvals or support. The meetings would be open to anyone, and we would welcome cyclist perspectives to the discussion, but we are also focused on discussing and developing projects and ideas that the region can get behind as common needs.

We are proposing that the committee meet bi-monthly, beginning in June. Our suggested time is 1:00-2:00 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of the month (one hour before the MPO meeting). If that time doesn't work well, an alternative would be 1:00 p.m. on the 1st Thursday or Friday of the month, which would allow the MPO to follow up on any Bike/Ped discussions. Please note that our first meeting in June will likely not follow the set schedule, as we plan to formally establish the subcommittee during the June 10th MPO meeting. We can finalize the date and time for the first meeting at that point.

Initial topics we plan to cover in the first few meetings include:

- TAP Projects
- SS4A Grant/Plan
- Regionally significant projects
- Wausau MPO Bike Map update
- Bike/trail counters
- Bicycle Friendly Community Award/Application

Please take some time before the May and June MPO meetings to consider what schedule works

best for the subcommittee, and feel free to bring any additional topic ideas.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out. We'll plan to continue this discussion at our upcoming MPO meetings in May and June.

Thank you,



Aaron Anklam

Transportation Planner
Marathon County CPZ & Wausau MPO



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