

# **The Resilient Reader**

## **Resilient Region Stories**



## **Transportation**

**October 2015**



# Collaborative Planning, Policy Development and Implementation Partnerships

**WHO:** Champions of the Transportation theme:  
Tim Houle (Engineer)-Widseth, Smith and Nolting  
Jarrett Leas (Engineer)-Kadrmaz, Lee and Jackson  
Tad Erickson (Regional Development Planner)-R5DC

**WHAT/WHERE:** In the Transportation theme area, Champion Tad Erickson, has been a part of several regional transportation efforts in the areas of planning, policy and implementation for several modes throughout the region.

## ***Planning***

In the area of planning, Tad facilitates the Transportation Advisory Council (TAC), a group of 19 local officials including highway engineers from each of the five counties and the three state aid cities from throughout the region. This group also has representation from special interest groups and all modes of transportation.

The TAC is charged with addressing issues of local and regional significance; reviewing and guiding the development of various transportation plans and studies effecting the region; providing input to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) in planning, policy and project development; and recommending a prioritized list of transportation projects seeking federal aid through the Central Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership (ATP).

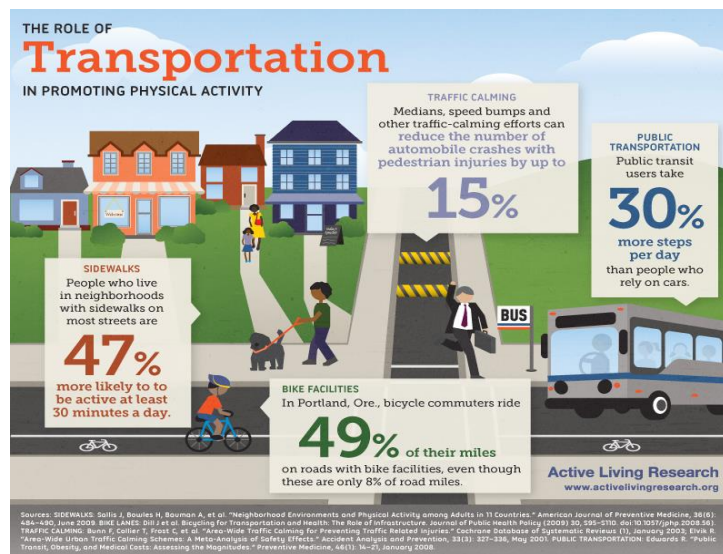
Additionally, Tad and several members of the Region Five TAC participate and are members of the ATP. Minnesota has established a decentralized investment process relying upon the input and recommendations of eight Area Transportation Partnerships (ATPs) throughout the state. ATPs bring together the transportation recommendations of MnDOT and other transportation partners into an integrated list of transportation investments called the DRAFT ATIP. ATIPs are prepared annually by each ATP and cover a minimum of four-year time frame.

These groups meet annually and develop an integrated list of competitive road, bridge, highway, and trail projects to be submitted to the state for funding from throughout the MnDOT District.

### **Policy**

In addition to statewide, regional and local planning, the Resilient Region Transportation theme champions are very active in innovation and best practices for the development of transportation policy. Perhaps one of the most dramatic changes in transportation policy is taking place in the area of active transportation policy. The Resilient Region Transportation theme Champions commissioned an Active Transportation Policy study which reviewed the current active transportation policies for each of the five county seat cities throughout the region. The study compared and contrasted the cities active transportation policies and made observations as well as recommendations regarding policy changes.

Additionally, the Resilient Region Transportation theme Champions, commissioned a second study regarding rural rideshare programs. This study was conducted by the William Mitchell School of Law and focused on best practices surrounding the most sustainable models of rideshare programs including the best legal structure of organizing and operating such a program.



### **Implementation**

Just as in planning the Resilient Region Transportation theme Champions are active in coordinating with state and local partners to bring transportation plans to the point of implementation expeditiously. One way the Resilient Region Transportation theme Champions are doing this is by working as a liaison between MnDOT and local units of government to review the MnDOT Districts 10 Year plan to identify any potential changes to the projects planned in years 5-10 of the 10 year plan. By doing this review in years 5-10 we can avoid changes to projects in years 1-4 when project changes are more apt to lead to project cost overruns and or time delays.

**WHY:** These types of collaborative planning, policy and implementation partnerships provide a cohesive mechanism by which to deliver high quality transportation outcomes to the region quicker and more efficiently than would otherwise have happened. By engaging in a highly collaborative planning process, that includes the state, regional and local partners, we have created an atmosphere

of communication, trust and respect that allows local input into a process that is regionally managed and centrally directed.

**HOW /WHEN:** Each year, MNDOT opens solicitation for several federal funding opportunities, and conveys the appropriate information to the regions. The regions then disseminate the information to their local partners who in turn respond via letters of intent and or applications. From there the process works its way back through the TAC, ATIP, and ATP process described earlier, until the ATP has its annual list of projects to submit to the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Additionally, the studies commissioned or done by the Resilient Region Transportation theme Champions are done as needed throughout the calendar year.



Links for Transportation:

Minnesota Department of Transportation <http://www.dot.state.mn.us>

William Mitchell College of Law <http://www.wmitchell.edu>

National Center for Safe Routes to School <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration <http://www.nhtsa.gov/>