



Minnesota Infrastructure Alliance (MnIA)

Meeting Minutes

Date/ Time: September 6, 2023, 1:30-3:00am

Location: League of Minnesota Cities, 145 University Ave. W, Saint Paul, MN, Red Lake Room

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

Attendees: Michelle Stockness (Freshwater), Jeannine Clancy (TKDA), Margaret Donahoe (Transportation Alliance), Amy Grothaus (Braun), Brad Henry (U of M), Katie Zadrozny (Barr), Sam Lobby (PUC), Monica Heil (WSB), Matt Rasmussen (City of Minneapolis), Stephanie Menning (MN Utility Contractors Association), Kristin Asher (City of Richfield), Zach Johnson (City of Lakeville), Serge Phillips (MnDOT), Scott Barsuhn (Barsuhn), Mike Stolarski (General Repair), Shannon Burfeind (Barr), Jim Stark (Subcommittee on Water Policy), Craig Johnson (LMC), Brooke Bordson (LMC), Ross Binter (City of Edina).

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
2. **Introductions of attendees** (5 min, Michelle)
 - a. Suggestion to add MSES to our committee membership.
3. **Review of recent and upcoming activities** (5 min, Michelle)
 - a. See slides attached. We have been focused on legislative activities through May. Please talk about the Minnesota Infrastructure Alliance at your fall conferences and encourage people to pull up the Raise our Grade site and send a note to their legislators in support of legislative funding in the 2024 session.
4. **2023 Financial Update** (5 min, Amy)
 - a. Thank you to everyone that has contributed so far. We have around \$15k in dedicated funding, which has allowed us to update the Raise our Grade website, and build a new website for our organization. We may use additional funds for communication help in the future.
5. **2023 Communications plan** (10 min, Jeannine)
 - a. We need communications help for 2023 and 2024!
 - i. We would like to get the word out to other professionals about who we are, and to get the word out to the public and policy makers! Margaret Donahoe (Transportation Alliance) will lead this effort, along with Shannon Burfeind (Barr). We may hire outside help also.
 - b. Raise our Grade website

- i. The new website is up! <https://www.raiseourgrademn.org/> This is a great tool that allows us to send infrastructure messages to our legislators based on our zip code. Please use this at every conference!
- c. MN Infrastructure Alliance website
 - i. A website for us is being built now. It will list our mission, the member partners and their websites, the history of MnIA and MN2050, and will allow for file sharing. More info soon.

6. 2023 Legislative Recaps and Ideas for 2024 (20 min)

- a. Margaret Donahoe, Transportation Alliance (10 min) Slides attached.
- b. Craig Johnson, League of Minnesota Cities (10 min) Slides attached.
- c. The 2024 outlook for the legislative session will be different than 2023. It will be very hard to pass a bonding bill in an election year, and there is less surplus money to spend.
- d. This group would like to present at the house and senate capitol committees again.
- e. Other committees to watch: infrastructure resiliency task force, water/wastewater advisory committee.
- f. The Minnesota MMB is hiring a federal and state funds coordinator to work across infrastructure and funding areas. We hope this will mean we are fully utilizing funding, and more people across the state have access to funding.
- g. Watch for the state competitiveness fund that provides grants for front end work to apply for grants and loans.

7. Round Table (30 min)

- a. What are your organizational or legislative priorities for 2024?
 - i. Advocating for infrastructure funding and passing the bonding bill.
 - ii. Coordinating across existing committees and task forces.
 - iii. Building relationships with legislators and committees. .
- b. What should we work on together?
 - i. Redo the 2016 State of Infrastructure survey so that we can talk about comprehensive infrastructure needs? It was previously funded by MnDOT State Aid and coordinated with Wilder Research. <https://www.wilder.org/wilder-research/research-library/mn2050-state-infrastructure>

8. Develop Q3 Talking Points (5 min)

- a. Passing the bonding bill needs to happen so that cities and counties can plan their work and construction schedules.
- b. Infrastructure is a quality of life issue for every Minnesotan.
- c. Costs for infrastructure projects are going up, and deferred costs just require more money each year.
- d. 2023 funding was great, and there is still a backlog of projects.

9. Action Items and Next Steps (5 min)

- a. Next meeting: December 2023 (virtual)

Action items:

- b. **Stephanie Menning**- to send a suggestions for communications help.
- c. **Steering committee**- to develop an 'impact report' for what we did in 2023.
- d. **Steering committee**- to reach out to MSES about membership.
- e. **MnIA Members**- please talk about Minnesota Infrastructure Alliance is at your fall conferences. Please share the Raise our Grade website QR code and encourage attendees to send a message to their legislators in real time during your presentation. And share our talking points.
- f. **Margaret**- to work with communications volunteers on external communications messages for us to share in our own organizations.

Raise our Grade website




Our Ask: please share this at every conference to have attendees contact legislators



Q3 Talking Points

2023 funding was great and funded a lot of infrastructure projects	There is still a backlog of infrastructure needs across the state.	Infrastructure is roads, parks, schools, water and wastewater, energy, and more
Infrastructure investment signals commitment to a baseline quality of life for all Minnesotans	Inflation is eating away at infrastructure dollars	Infrastructure continues to age and deteriorate



WHAT IS PUBLIC WORKS?

The United States has approximately 19,400 municipalities of varying sizes. In each community, whatever its size, there are needs common to all human beings that must be met through the provision of public works services. These needs are met on a daily basis by visionary, values-driven, and hardworking men and women who provide and sustain public works services in the best interests of their communities.



The United States needs \$4.59 trillion by 2025 to maintain infrastructure.



LAWS IMPACTING PUBLIC WORKS

- Stafford Act
- FAST Act (Highway Bill)
- National Environmental Policy Act
- Clean Water Act
- Safe Drinking Water Act
- Endangered Species Act
- Water Resources Development Act
- PIPES Act

