

Policy Owner: Office Director, Office of Transportation System Management

Policy Contact: Project Selection Policy Manager, Office of Transportation System Management

Policy Statement

The Minnesota Department of Transportation will use an objective and transparent process to select construction projects on the state highway system to be included in the 10-year Capital Highway Investment Plan (CHIP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

MnDOT will document and make publicly available for each selection process or program:

- The criteria and process for assigning a numeric score and selecting projects
- The list of candidate projects considered
- The scores assigned to projects and reasoning behind selection decisions not included in the score

Reason for Policy

- Advance the Minnesota GO Vision and Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan objective Open Decision-Making
- Increase the transparency of MnDOT's project selection processes
- Implement recommendations in the 2016 Office of the Legislative Auditor's evaluation report "MnDOT Highway Project Selection"
- Implement Minnesota Laws 2017, First Special Session, Chapter 3, Section 124

Who Needs to Know this Policy?

- Commissioner and Senior Leadership Team
- District Engineers/Assistant District Engineers
- District Materials Engineers
- District Planners and Program Managers
- District Public Affairs Coordinators
- District Traffic Engineers
- Office of Bridge
- Office of Communications
- Office of Environmental Stewardship
- Office of Financial Management
- Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations
- Office of Government Affairs

- Office of Materials and Road Research
- Office of Public Engagement and Constituent Services
- Office of State Aid for Local Transportation
- Office of Traffic Engineering
- Office of Transportation System Management
- Project Managers
- Third parties, including consultants and contractors, involved in planning and programming state highway construction projects

Definitions

Capital Highway Investment Plan (CHIP)

A document detailing MnDOT's planned capital highway investments for the next ten years on the state highway system.

State Highway System

All roads consisting of Interstates, US Highways, and State Highways.

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

A four-year plan that identifies the schedule and funding of transportation projects by state fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). It includes all state and local transportation projects with federal highway and/or federal transit funding along with 100 percent state funded transportation projects.

Procedures

The specific criteria and scoring processes related to this policy are in the **Guide to MnDOT Project Selection**. The guide includes an overview of MnDOT project selection as well as detailed documentation on the technical criteria for each program and process MnDOT uses to select construction projects on the state highway system.

Applicability

This policy applies to evaluating and prioritizing capital construction projects on state-owned highways either delivered by or selected by MnDOT. The policy applies to all existing MnDOT programs, and any new MnDOT program created after the adoption of this policy, that fund capital construction projects on state-owned highways.

The Policy does not apply to:

- Programs that do not fund capital construction projects on state highways
- Programs which MnDOT does not make the selection decision
- Projects included in the 2019-2022 State Transportation Improvement Program

Use of Numeric Scores

MnDOT will use objective criteria to develop numeric scores in all selection processes subject to this policy. The numeric scores will inform project selection decisions, but MnDOT may also consider other factors in addition to the numeric score. When MnDOT does not select a high scoring project or selects a lower scoring project, MnDOT will provide a short explanation for the reasoning behind the decision in addition to the project score.

A change in score is generally not required when project details or timing change. For each selection process, MnDOT will indicate what types of changes would require changing or verifying the score assigned at the time the project was selected. MnDOT will update the score at least every five years for projects originally selected in years 5 through 10 of the Capital Highway Investment Plan that have not been included in the State Transportation Improvement Program.

Changes to Selection Processes and Programs

MnDOT will annually review and revise the criteria and methodology for each project selection process to incorporate new research and guidance, changes in state or federal law, updates to state plans or policies, stakeholder feedback, and lessons learned from implementing the new project selection policy. When MnDOT makes changes, it will post the revised criteria and methodology and note how the changes will affect projects which have already been selected.

Communication

MnDOT will include the score and category or program for each project subject to this policy in the State Transportation Improvement Program and Capital Highway Investment Plan. MnDOT will maintain a website with plain language descriptions and detailed technical documentation describing the selection processes and programs subject to this policy. The website will include the lists of candidate projects, the scores and reasons for selection decisions.

Exemptions

The following activities are not subject to the scoring and documentation requirements of this policy:

- Chip seals, patching and crack sealing of pavements
- Epoxy chip seal wearing courses and crack sealing on bridges
- Painting of bridge steel superstructures
- Bridge expansion joint replacement
- Scour countermeasures
- Culvert lining
- Tunnel repairs
- Sign, signal, lighting, sensor and guardrail replacement
- Striping
- Legal liabilities requiring capital investment
- Emergency repairs
- Seasonal response (example: fixing winter damage)
- Slope stabilization
- Landscaping and revegetation following major construction projects
- Installation or replacement of fiber optic cables or other transmission lines in state owned right of way
- Installation of solar panels or other energy infrastructure in state owned right of way
- Temporary or research demonstration installations

Responsibilities

Commissioner and Senior Leadership Team

- Support implementation of this policy
- Ensure new programs that fund capital construction projects on state owned highways follow the requirements of this policy

Office of Transportation System Management

- Maintain an accurate and up-to-date Guide to MnDOT Project Selection
- Provide technical assistance and guidance to districts and program managers
- Ensure the STIP and CHIP include the documentation required in this policy

Office of Financial Management

- Ensure accurate and complete recording of scores and selection decisions in the Capital Highway Information Management Enterprise System and reports created by that system

Office of Communications

- Develop and maintain a website with detailed information about MnDOT project selection processes and programs, including lists of candidate projects, scores and reasoning behind selection decisions
- Develop and maintain graphics and other communications materials using plain language to explain and communicate MnDOT's project selection processes

District Engineers, Assistant District Engineers and District Planners

- Identify, score and prioritize candidate construct projects following the direction in the Guide to MnDOT Project Selection
- Document reasoning behind project selection decisions

Office of Materials and Road Research

- Provide guidance and technical assistance to districts and program managers

Bridge Office

- Identify, score and prioritize candidate bridge projects following the direction in the Guide to MnDOT Project Selection
- Document reasoning behind project selection decisions
- Provide guidance and technical assistance to districts and program managers

Office of Traffic Engineering

- Provide guidance and technical assistance to districts and program managers

Program Managers

- Develop and maintain detailed documentation on the scoring criteria and selection process for their program consistent with the requirements of this policy
- Document reasoning behind project selection decisions

Project Managers, Public Affairs Coordinators and Public Engagement Staff

- Understand this policy and the processes identified in the Guide to MnDOT Project Selection sufficient to explain the process to stakeholders and the general public
- Provide information regarding the score and reasoning behind project selection decisions when requested

Office of the Chief Counsel

- Develop and maintain records retention guidance for project scores, reasoning and other documentation related to this policy

Forms and Instructions

[LINK to the Guide to MnDOT Project Selection]

Related Information

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/projectselection/index.html>

<https://www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/program/index.html>

<https://www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/program/stip.html>

<https://www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/10yearplan/index.html>

<http://minnesotago.org/>

<http://minnesotago.org/final-plans/sntp-final-plan>

<http://minnesotago.org/final-plans/mnship-final-plan>

Policy Ownership and Authorization

Policy Owner:

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Internal Control & Accountability Governance Board has reviewed this policy and recommends approval:

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Responsible Senior Officer:

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____