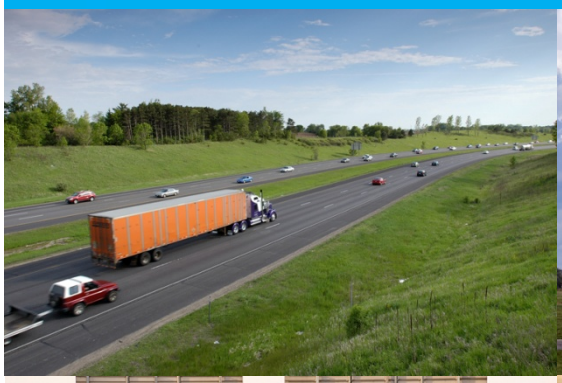


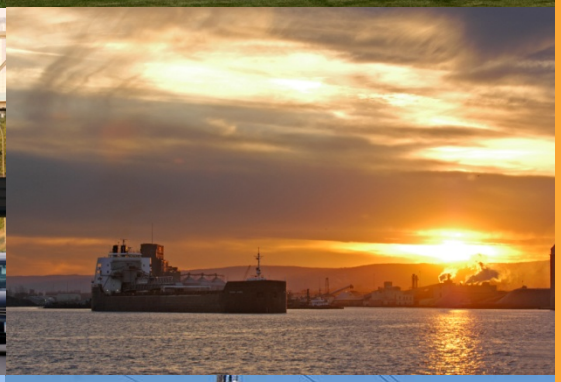




# Overview of Planning & Programming in Minnesota

October 2010

*Your Destination...Our Priority*

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**Minnesota Department of Transportation**
395 John Ireland Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55155

November 9, 2010

Dear Citizens of Minnesota:

I am pleased to share with you this Overview of Planning and Programming in Minnesota.

The research for this study was conducted by the Office of Statewide Multimodal Planning as part of an effort to document the coordination of planning and programming efforts for all modes of transportation in Minnesota, including roads, transit, nonmotorized, rail, waterways and aeronautics. This overview highlights the roles of Mn/DOT's various offices, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Regional Development Commissions and Area Transportation Partnerships. Moreover, it documents how decisions are made for investments in each mode of transportation.

The intention of the overview is to be a resource and provide a reference for citizens, Mn/DOT employees and partners to better understand the complexity of transportation planning and programming in Minnesota. The information provided presents a snapshot of current practice in October 2010.

As the transportation leader in Minnesota, Mn/DOT is committed to collaborating with internal and external partners to create a safe, efficient and sustainable transportation system for the future. This overview expands on Mn/DOT's efforts to be transparent in upholding public needs and enhancing the quality of life for Minnesotans.

We look forward to working with you in the coming years to improve transportation planning and programming in Minnesota. Beginning in 2011, Mn/DOT will be engaging partners, stakeholders and the public to establish a new, long-term multimodal vision for transportation in Minnesota that will form the basis of the next Statewide Multimodal Plan and subsequent system and investment plans. We hope you will join us in this important effort.

Sincerely,

Tim Henkel
Assistant Commissioner
Modal Planning and Program Management Division

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# Overview of Transportation Planning and Programming in Minnesota

— October 2010 —

Produced by:

Office of Statewide Multimodal Planning
Minnesota Department of Transportation
395 John Ireland Blvd. M.S. 440
Saint Paul, MN 55155

**http://www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/program/**

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# 1. Introduction

This document provides an overview of transportation planning and programming for all modes at the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Regional Development Commissions throughout Minnesota. The information provided presents a snapshot of current practice in October 2010.

The intention of the overview is to provide a resource and reference for Mn/DOT employees and partners to better understand the complexity of transportation planning and programming in Minnesota. Although this overview describes planning and programming for all modes of transportation, it is not intended to be exhaustive and does not describe all aspects of the process in detail.

This overview is organized into thirteen sections.

Chapter two provides a broad overview of the planning and programming framework, including definitions and key roles.

Chapter three describes the role of statewide multimodal planning and the statewide multimodal transportation plan.

Chapter four outlines the planning and programming process for trunk highways, including the roles played by the Mn/DOT districts and central office as well as the Area Transportation Partnerships. Chapter five discusses planning and programming in metropolitan areas and chapter six outlines the role of Regional Development Commissions in non-metropolitan areas. Chapter seven discusses the State Aid system of funding support for county and municipal roads.

Chapters eight through twelve discuss planning and programming for non-highway modes, including transit, nonmotorized, rail, ports and aeronautics.

Chapter thirteen outlines the roles of other federal, state and local agencies in the transportation planning and programming processes.

Three appendices provide a list of all acronyms used in the document, a summary of Federal and State planning and programming rules, and comparison charts for all non-highway modal programs.

# 2. Planning and Programming Framework

Transportation planning and programming is an iterative process of long-range planning, investment planning, project evaluation and selection, and funding decisions. Long range policy plans inform investment decisions, which inform project funding selection. Projects impact system performance and need, which are measured in subsequent planning efforts. All transportation planning and programming occurs in the context of both state and federal laws, rules and guidance, which are summarized in Appendix B.

Transportation planning involves the analysis of trends; evaluation of potential investments and programs; consideration of social, environmental, and economic factors; and the engagement of stakeholders and the general public. Plans document existing systems and conditions, identify current and future needs, and describe policies, objectives, strategies, investments and performance targets.

Programming is the process of selecting projects and investments to be made over a period of time and identifying and committing funding to those projects. Once a project has been included in a program (a list of selected projects with funding identified), the final design and environmental review processes can be completed and construction scheduled. In order for larger projects to be included in the program, the environmental review and preliminary design must be far enough along to establish a scope and cost estimate.

**Programming Documents**

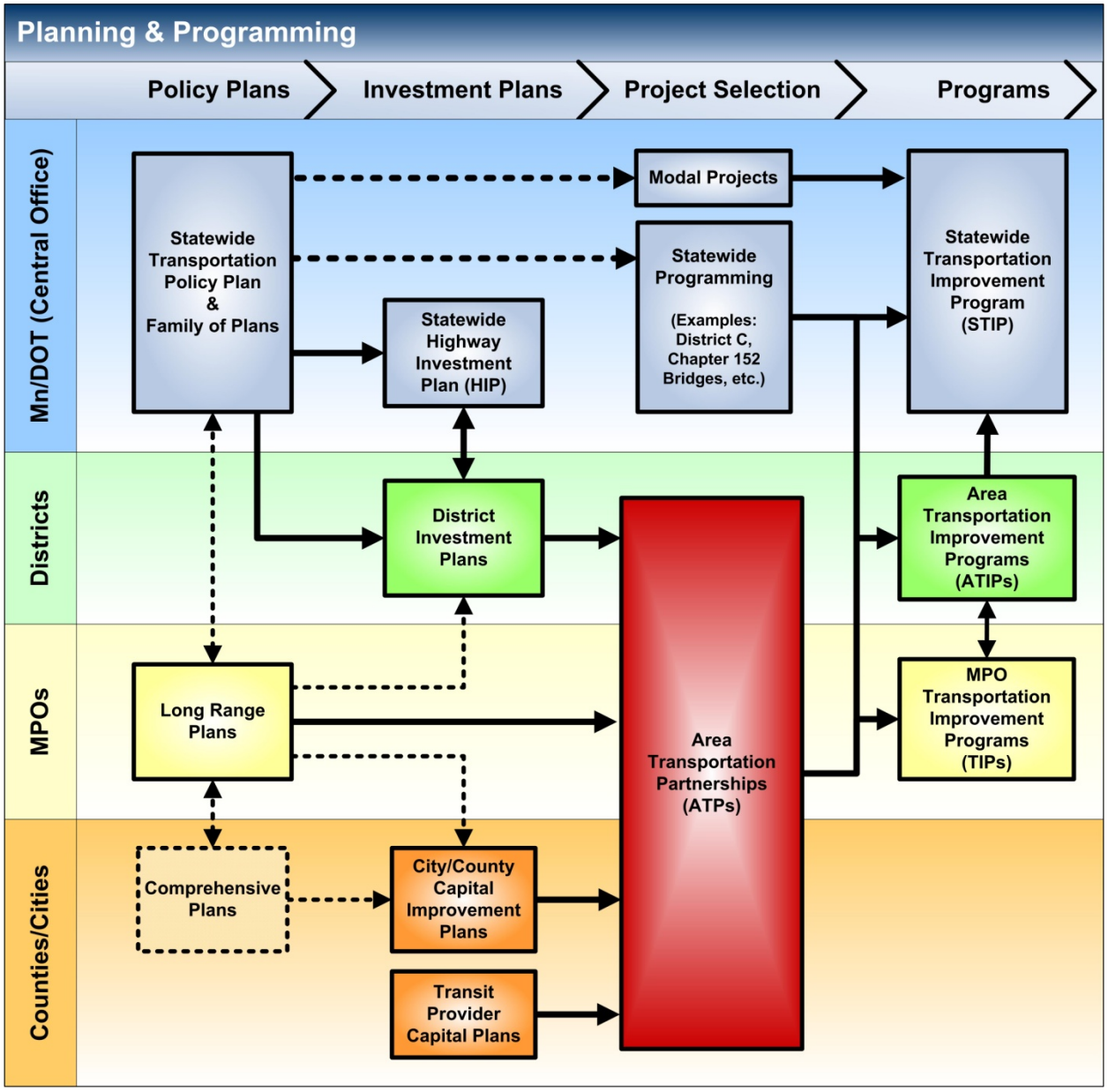
Area Transportation Improvement Program: An ATIP is a document developed by each Mn/DOT District and Area Transportation Partnership (ATP) that lists all projects in the ATP expected to be funded with federal aid highway funding, state trunk highway funds and federal transit funds within a four-year timeframe. The ATIPs are submitted to Mn/DOT's Office of Capital Programs and Performance Measures for inclusion in the STIP.

State Transportation Improvement Program: A STIP is a federally required document that provides a list of transportation projects that are expected to be funded with federal transportation dollars within a four-year timeframe. This list of projects includes state and local transportation projects funded with federal highway or federal transit funds. Minnesota also includes most projects on the state trunk highway system regardless of funding source (federal or state). Rail, port, and aeronautic projects are included for information purposes.

Transportation Improvement Program: The TIP is a list of significant transportation system improvements scheduled for implementation in a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) area within a four-year timeframe. Projects in the TIP must also be included in the STIP.

Figure 1 illustrates the responsibilities and relationships between different organizations, plans and programs.

***Figure 1: Planning and Programming in Minnesota***




Mn/DOT and each of the Metropolitan Planning Organizations develop long range policy plans. Many cities and counties also develop comprehensive plans that include policies related to transportation. Consistent with the long range policy plans, Mn/DOT develops statewide and district specific investment plans. Cities, counties and transit providers also develop capital investment plans. Project selection for funding occurs both centrally at the statewide level and through the eight Area Transportation Partnerships (note: the ATP in the Twin Cities

metropolitan area is the Met Council's Transportation Advisory Board). Projects selected for funding are included in the State Transportation Improvement Program and the MPO Transportation Improvement Programs.

# 3. Multimodal Planning

Mn/DOT conducts multimodal planning both at a statewide level as well as for freight initiatives. Multimodal Planning is the process of:

- Defining a transportation problem in a generic way that is not mode-specific
- Identifying more than one modal option to solve a problem
- Evaluating modal options in a manner that provides for an unbiased estimation of each mode's benefits and costs, either individually or in combination, to solve a problem

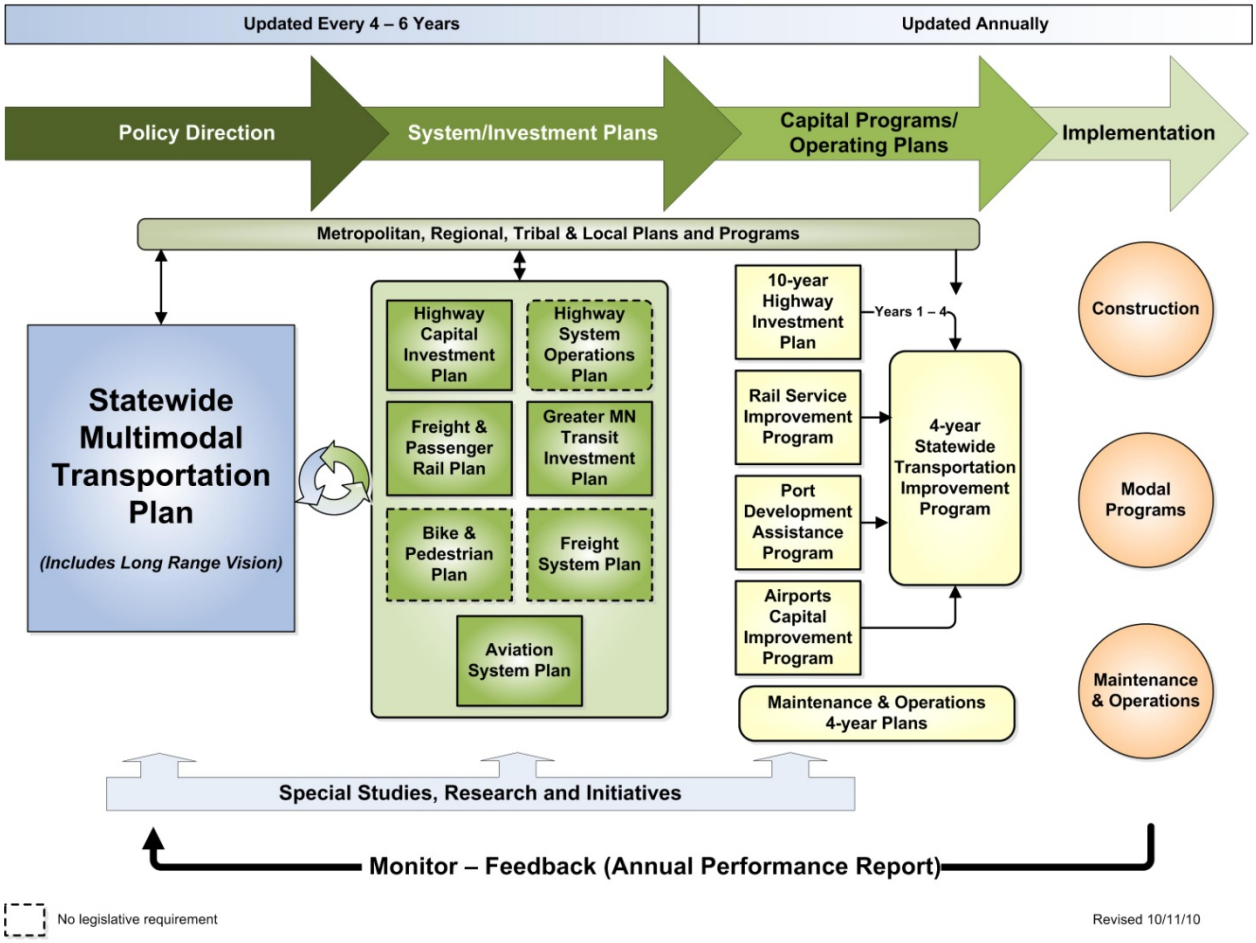
## Statewide Planning

The Office of Statewide Multimodal Planning (OSMP) is responsible for establishing a long-range multimodal vision for transportation in the state, creating guidance for the development of statewide plans, coordinating planning efforts with the Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Regional Development Commissions, and for developing a statewide multimodal transportation plan.

Updated every four years, the statewide multimodal transportation plan establishes policy direction for Mn/DOT's system, investment and operating plans, programs and implementation efforts. The current statewide multimodal transportation plan, called the Minnesota Statewide Transportation Policy Plan 2009-2028, establishes policy objectives within ten broad policy areas (e.g., Traveler Safety, Infrastructure Preservation), strategies to meet the policy objectives, and the performance measures/indicators and targets necessary to track system performance and determine progress toward stated policy objectives.

Figure 2 shows Mn/DOT's statewide "family of plans" and their connection to programs of capital projects and operations.

*Figure 2: Mn/DOT Family of Plans*




# Freight Planning

The Freight Planning and Development Unit of the Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations (OFCVO) reviews Mn/DOT's role in freight transportation and develops strategies for the integration of freight transportation into policy, planning, and investment processes at Mn/DOT.

The objectives of Mn/DOT's freight planning efforts are to:

- Ensure freight transportation needs are incorporated in Mn/DOT's planning and investment processes.
- Build freight partnerships that promote the exchange of information, ideas and opportunities between the shipping community and Mn/DOT.
- Enhance the efficiency of goods movement in Minnesota and support economic growth through policies and programs that optimize a multimodal transportation system.

- Promote transportation safety, efficiency, and productivity through innovation, research and education.
- Promote the policies and practices that enhance the safety of moving goods.

OFCVO leads a variety of multimodal planning efforts including the Statewide Freight Plan and regional freight plans and studies. OFCVO also facilitates regular dialogue between Mn/DOT and the private sector through groups like the Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee.

### LEARN MORE

**For more information about the Statewide Transportation Plan visit:**

**www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/stateplan/index.html**

**For more information about current Freight Planning efforts visit:**

**www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/freightProj.html**

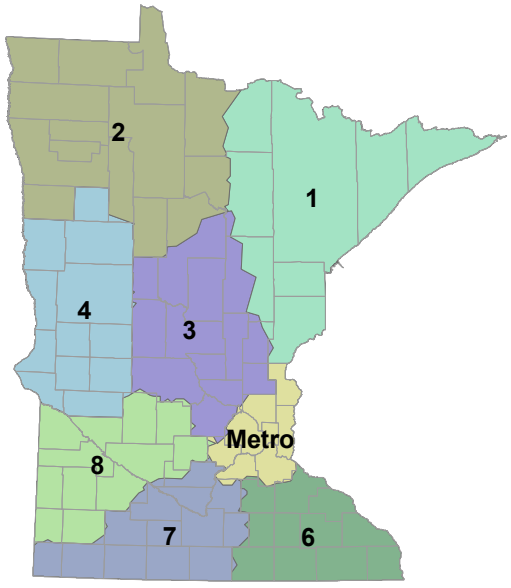
# 4. Trunk Highway Planning and Programming

Mn/DOT shares responsibility for highway planning and programming with MPOs, RDCs and local units of government through the Area Transportation Partnerships. This section focuses on the role of Mn/DOT's districts, central office and the ATPs.

## Mn/DOT Districts

Mn/DOT has divided responsibility for highway construction and maintenance into eight districts each under the supervision of a district engineer. Although the role of the districts has evolved over time, the basic configuration and boundaries have been in place for almost a century. The districts were formally designated with the creation of the Department of Highways in the 1920s. The district boundaries generally follow county lines, but in some instances split counties (e.g. Koochiching, Itasca and Aitkin Counties).

***Figure 3: District Boundaries***




Responsibility for construction was decentralized in the early 1950s and by the late 1970s other district responsibilities included right-of-way acquisition, traffic engineering and design. With the passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1991 and the creation of the ATPs, programming responsibility was also decentralized to the districts. More recently, a transit project manager was added to each district to work with local transit providers.

### Mn/DOT Central Office

Although the majority of the engineering, maintenance, and construction are managed by the districts, the Mn/DOT central office has a number of oversight roles and manages statewide planning and programming functions. Central office staff provide support to the districts for environmental reviews, economic analysis, data management, and budgeting and financial analysis. Statewide policy and modal planning, performance measures and data analysis are coordinated by the Division of Modal Planning & Program Management (MPPM). The Office of Capital Programs and Performance Measures (OCPPM) and the Transportation Programming and Investment Committee (TPIC) provide investment guidance to the districts and ATPs.

## Highway Planning

Statewide policy and investment planning for highways is managed centrally at Mn/DOT. Many plans are updated with regularity including the Statewide 20-year Highway Investment Plan.

The Statewide 20-year Highway Investment Plan provides the link between the policies and strategies established in the Statewide Transportation Policy Plan and the capital improvements made to the state highway system. In providing this link, the plan sets the framework for future capital improvements by satisfying two primary objectives:

1. The plan identifies investments required to achieve and maintain highway system performance targets established in the Statewide Transportation Policy Plan

2. The plan identifies priorities for available funding in four strategic priority areas: Traveler Safety, Infrastructure Preservation, Mobility, and Regional and Community Improvement Priorities (RCIPs)

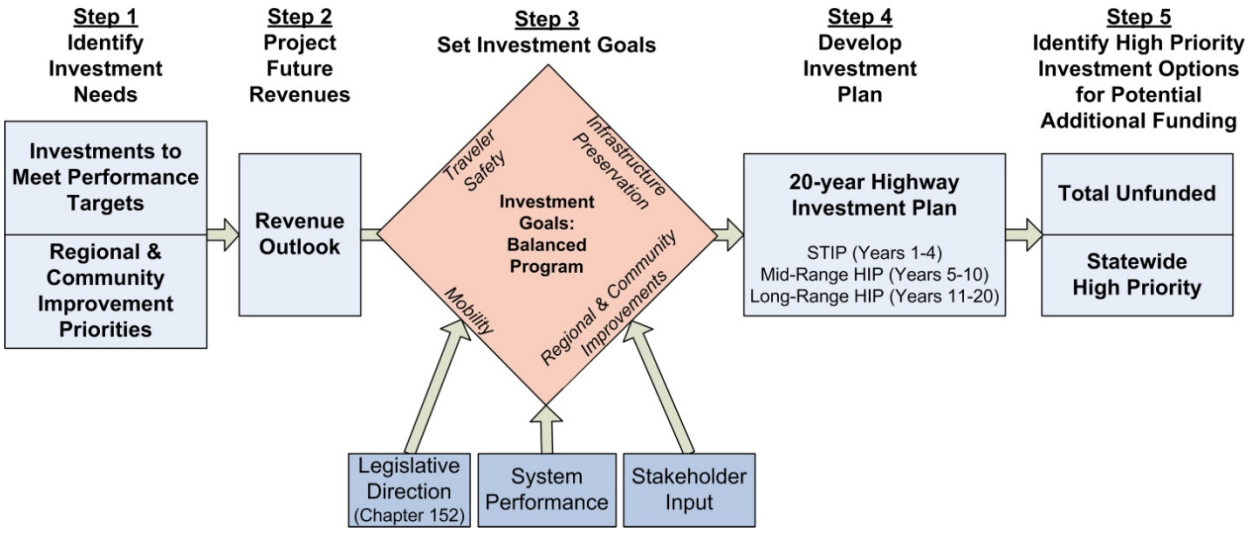
Each District prepares a separate 20-year Highway Investment Plan. The Statewide 20-year Highway Investment Plan aggregates the eight Mn/DOT District 20-year Highway Investment Plans. A statewide process and investment guidelines were developed centrally to ensure each district plan was developed in a consistent, objective manner. The guidance included the following five steps:

1. Identify investment needs that achieve and maintain the highway system performance targets established in the Statewide Policy Plan and address regional and community improvements.
2. Project future revenues for each of the three planning periods: STIP (years 1-4), Mid-Range (years 5-10), and Long-Range (years 11-20).
3. Set investment goals based on legislative direction, system performance, and stakeholder input as investment needs greatly exceed projected revenue.

4. Develop investment plan for each of the three planning periods.
5. Identify high priority investment options for potential additional funding over the next ten years.

The process is shown below in Figure 4.

***Figure 4: Five Step Process Used for the Statewide 20-year Highway Investment Plan***




Two additional statewide plans guide highway investment decisions:

- The Minnesota Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) was created to reduce the number of traffic fatalities and serious injuries on Minnesota's roadways. Critical strategies identified in the plan include the "Four Safety Es": enforcement, education and emergency services in addition to the more traditional engineering improvements. Mn/DOT's Office of Traffic, Safety and Technology (OTST) is currently developing safety plans for each county, which will be the basis for the next SHSP and be used in the selection of projects in the Highway Safety Improvement Program.

- The Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan outlines how Mn/DOT will comply with ADA statutes.

In addition to investment planning, the Statewide Highway System Operations Plan (HSOP) guides Mn/DOT's maintenance and operations activities. The HSOP provides guidance, strategies and performance measures for trunk highway system operations.

### District Highway Planning

In addition to assisting statewide planning efforts, districts are responsible for creating district plans, conducting corridor studies and project scoping. Performance-based measures and targets from the Statewide Transportation Policy Plan, Highway Investment Plan and District Plan are used by district planners, engineers and project managers to define deficiencies in the transportation system and prioritize investment needs. Using the principles of Context Sensitive Solutions, which calls for engaging a wide-range of stakeholders, district staff develop scopes and preliminary cost estimates and begin environmental reviews for individual projects. If selected by a district programming committee, projects are included in the STIP and can proceed with final environmental review and design.

**Context Sensitive Solutions**

CSS is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders in providing a transportation facility that fits its setting and leads to preserving and enhancing scenic, aesthetic, historic, community and environmental resources while also improving or maintaining safety, mobility and infrastructure conditions.

A CSS approach uses early and ongoing public and stakeholder involvement to help identify and resolve problems and value conflicts before they cause costly process and project conflicts, delays and rework cycles. Avoidance of delays and rework cycles contributes to process streamlining and overall time savings and improvements in agency cost-effectiveness. A CSS approach relies upon broadly informed innovation and flexibility in planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance decision-making to balance competing objectives with right-sized solutions that optimize benefit to cost ratios and return upon investments.

## Central Programming

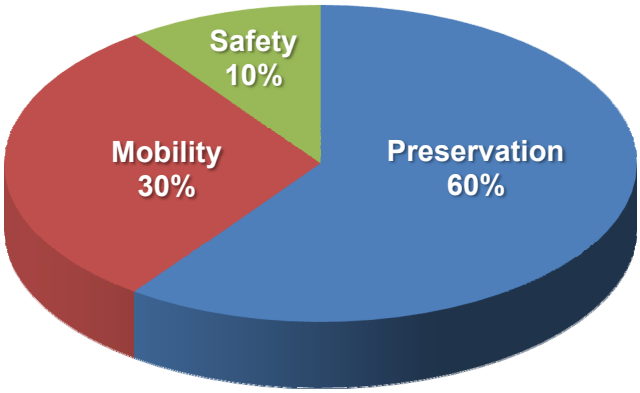
Mn/DOT central office both directly programs projects and investments and sets direction for district and ATP programming.

The primary guidance document used for programming transportation projects is developed centrally at Mn/DOT. Known as the STIP Guidance, it is intended for use by the transportation partners involved in the ATP process, including Mn/DOT districts, and provides an overall framework for the ATIP/STIP development process. The guidelines are based on projected available funding and are subject to larger scale adjustments such as periodic passage of federal surface transportation authorizing legislation. OCPPM works closely with the districts to develop and update the Annual STIP Guidance.

Federal funds are distributed to the ATPs according to a target formula based on Mn/DOT's priorities of preservation, mobility and safety. Preservation is based on average bridge needs, heavy commercial vehicle miles traveled, and average pavement needs. Safety is based on a factor of a 3-year average of fatal/serious injury crashes. Mobility factors include congested VMT, number of buses and future VMT.

Figure 6 shows the weights given to each priority in the target formula.

***Figure 6: Target Formula Priority Weights***

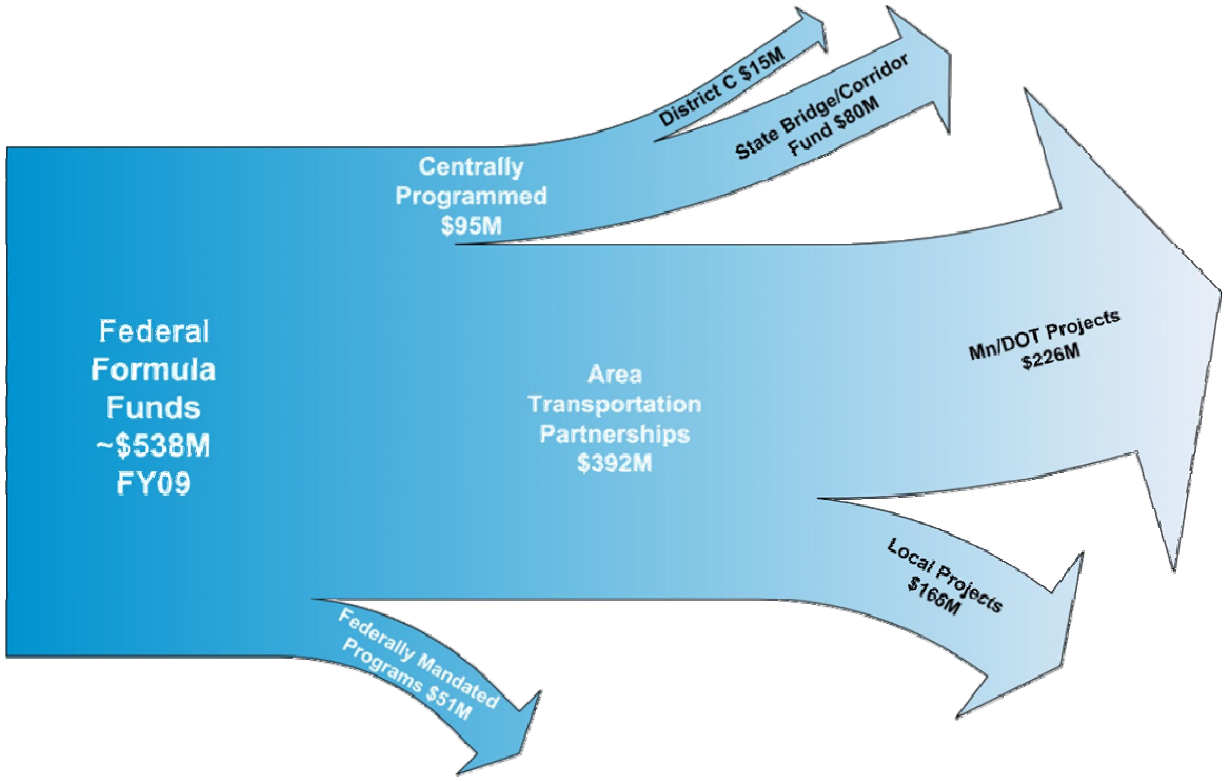



There are two primary project categories programmed centrally: District C and the Statewide Bridge and Corridor Fund.

The Transportation Programming and Investment Committee (TPIC) is the decision making body for District C funding and the Statewide Bridge and Corridor Funds and also has responsibility for overall STIP approval. More generally, TPIC's purpose is to recommend to the commissioner policy direction for state investment in transportation systems. TPIC reviews investment assumptions, forecasts, directions, and programs. TPIC membership includes Mn/DOT's chief financial officer, the metro district engineer, the deputy commissioner and the six division directors.

Figure 5 shows the breakdown of federal formula funds in Fiscal Year 2009 between projects programmed centrally, projects programmed by the ATPs and federally mandated programs.

***Figure 5: Distribution of Federal Formula Funds in Fiscal Year 2009***




*Note: the $392M for ATPs includes Highway Safety Improvement Program funding, which is centrally solicited but programmed through the ATPs (see below).*

## District C

District C projects are funded through a combination of state and federal funding and are not generally assigned to individual ATPs. District C receives approximately $15 million annually in federal funds, or about three percent of the available formula funds in 2009, and an additional $15 million in state funding. While there is no formal guidance or solicitation for District C, there is an expectation that projects have statewide significance. The Office of Capitol Programs and Performance Measures is responsible for tracking District C spending.

Examples of projects currently programmed for District C funding include:

- Intelligent Transportation Systems Deployment
- Rideshare/Pedestrian-Bike Coordination
- Weigh Stations & Scale Rehabilitation
- Rest Areas
- Wetland Banking

## Statewide Bridge and Corridor Funds

The Statewide Bridge Fund and the Statewide Corridor Fund each received approximately $40 million in federal funds annually, or approximately 15 percent of available federal formula funds. The Statewide Bridge Fund is used toward large bridge projects that would otherwise overwhelm a single district if required to fund it with target formula funds. Originally, the Statewide Corridor Fund was intended for Interregional Corridors that cross district boundaries, but currently corridor funds have been transferred for use in the bridge fund.

## Highway Safety Improvement Program

Prior to passage of SAFETEA-LU, federally funded safety projects used the Hazard Elimination Safety program (HES). Through this process, ATPs identified and programmed safety projects, and Mn/DOT's Office of Investment Management (now the Office of Capital Programs and Performance Measures) managed the process. In general, HES projects were often reactive in nature.

SAFETEA-LU made significant adjustments to the way safety projects were funded and programmed by establishing the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). HSIP shifted the focus to identifying locations where safety improvements would prevent future crashes—not just react to them. Since HSIP was established, it has undergone additional adjustment including a partial centralization of the process.

Annually, a target spending amount for HSIP is provided to each ATP, which is determined by a formula that considers the statewide distribution of total fatal and severe or incapacitating (injury A) crashes. Once the target funding amount is determined for each ATP, that money is taken "off the top" of each ATPs total annual federal funds. The total annual amount reserved for HSIP projects averages approximately $18 million.

The HSIP funds are then split into two funding categories: one for state projects and one for local projects.

The districts identify state HSIP projects each year based on Strategic Highway Safety Plan implementation criteria. Districts must submit these projects to Mn/DOT's Office of Traffic, Safety and Technology (OTST) for approval and prioritization.

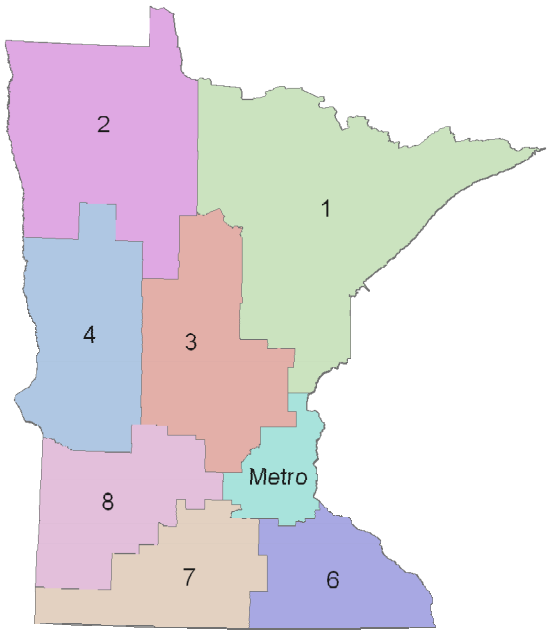
Local HSIP projects are selected following a statewide solicitation process, which occurs every other year and is managed by OTST. With representatives from FHWA and Mn/DOT State-Aid, OTST prioritizes the local HSIP projects for each ATP. Districts have an opportunity to comment and/or participate in the prioritization process.

# Area Transportation Partnerships

The Area Transportation Partnerships (ATPs) were created in 1993 to satisfy the requirements of ISTEA. The purpose of the ATPs is to create a more collaborative decision making process by involving a broader range of stakeholders in the selection of projects to receive federal funds. The ATPs prioritize and select projects to receive federal formula funds for highways, trails, and transit capital projects.

There are eight ATPs in Minnesota (shown in Figure 7).

***Figure 7: ATP Boundaries***




ATP membership generally ranges from 11 to 33 persons with the exception of ATP 1, which has 54 members. In addition to Mn/DOT, ATP membership includes a broad cross section of stakeholders such as MPOs, RDCs, city, county, and tribal governments and other stakeholders. Tribal ATP membership can be the most fluid, because many tribes transition leadership every two years. Table 1 shows the number of members, MPOs, RDCs and elected officials for each ATP.

***Table 1: ATP Membership***

| | # Members | # of MPOs | # of RDCs | # of Elected Officials |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ATP 1 | 54 | 1 | 2 | 17 |
| ATP 2 | 11 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| ATP 3 | 24 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| ATP 4 | 18 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Metro TAB | 33 | 1 | 1 | 17 |
| ATP 6 | 12 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| ATP 7 | 14 | 0 | 2 | 5 |
| ATP 8 | 15 | 0 | 3 | 6 |

Most ATPs have membership policies on the number of representatives in each area. For example, an ATP may require one transit representative from an urban provider and one transit representative from a rural provider. Member jurisdictions/agencies appoint and replace their own representatives. In addition to representatives from cities, counties, MPOs, RDCs and elected officials, many ATPs include representatives from other state agencies such as DNR, advocacy groups such as pedestrian, bike, and transit interests and corridor coalitions (also known as highway partnerships). Pedestrian, bike, and transit interests are sometimes represented in ATP membership, but more often participate on Transportation Enhancement subcommittees. Many ATPs share members with corridor coalitions.

Mn/DOT district representatives staff the ATP and serve on subcommittees. The assistant district engineer (ADE), planning director, transit project manager and state aid engineer from each district are usually involved in the ATP. While all district engineers (DEs) may participate in discussions at ATP meetings, the DE is a voting ATP member in ATP 4, ATP 7, ATP 8 and Metro TAB.

There are numerous items that require a formal vote of the ATP, including membership, changes in processes and policies, investment priorities, and amendments to the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). While most ATPs only have voting members, ATP 2, ATP 3, and ATP 4 also have non-voting members who generally serve as staff to the ATP and provide technical support.

ATP chairs are usually nominated. The ATP 8 chairperson is always a non-Mn/DOT representative, and in ATP 6 the chair is always the ADE responsible for program delivery. In all other ATPs, the chair can be whomever the membership elects.

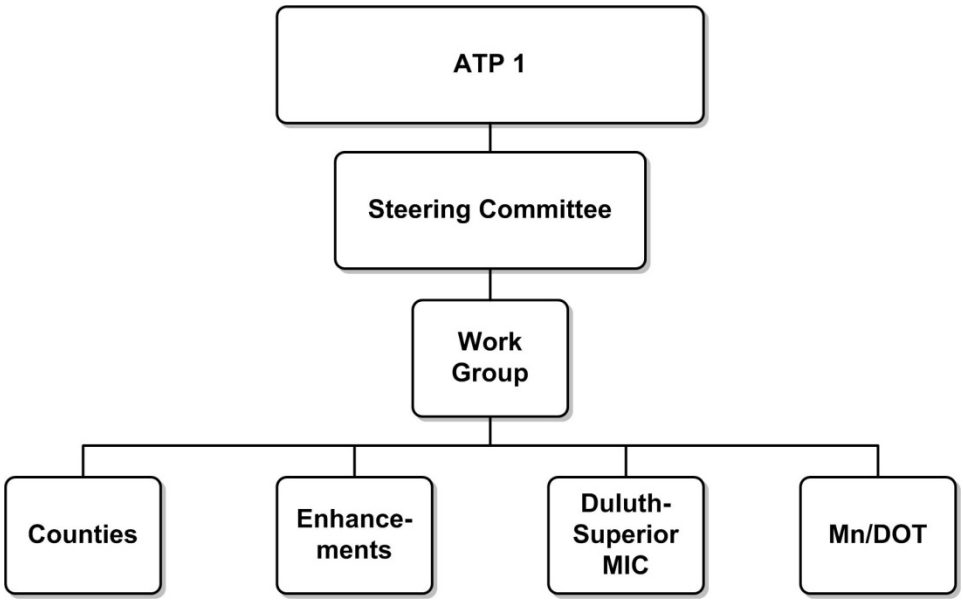
## ATIP Development Process

The ATPs annually develop four-year Area Transportation Improvement Programs (ATIPs) that prioritize federal money for state and local transportation projects. Each of the ATPs has established their own processes and procedures that have evolved over time.

All ATPs have subcommittees and most project prioritization is done at the subcommittee level. Each subcommittee has a ranking process and defines eligibility requirements for project submittals, subject to concurrence by the ATP. ATPs only prioritize federal formula funds, so earmarks or other special pots of money are dealt with largely outside the ATP process. ATPs often approve earmarks for amendment into the ATIP, but that is the extent of their involvement.

Each ATP has a different number of subcommittees and the sections below show examples of how three ATPs (ATP 1 in northeast Minnesota, ATP 3 in central Minnesota, and ATP 7 in southwest Minnesota) are structured. Although the structures in ATP 1 and ATP 3 are relatively unique, most districts have a similar subcommittee structure to ATP 7. All of these subcommittees prioritize the local share of federal funding, which is approximately 30 percent. Mn/DOT districts internally prioritize the approximately 70 percent of federal funding set aside for projects on the state trunk highway network.

### *ATP 1*




ATP 1 has 54 members including representatives from cities, counties, transit, trails/bikes/pedestrians, airport, ports, DNR, rail authorities, and environmental interests. The ATP has two subgroups: the steering committee and the work group. The structure of a full ATP, work group and steering committee is unique to ATP 1. The work group manages the ATP process and has the largest work load. The work group reports to the

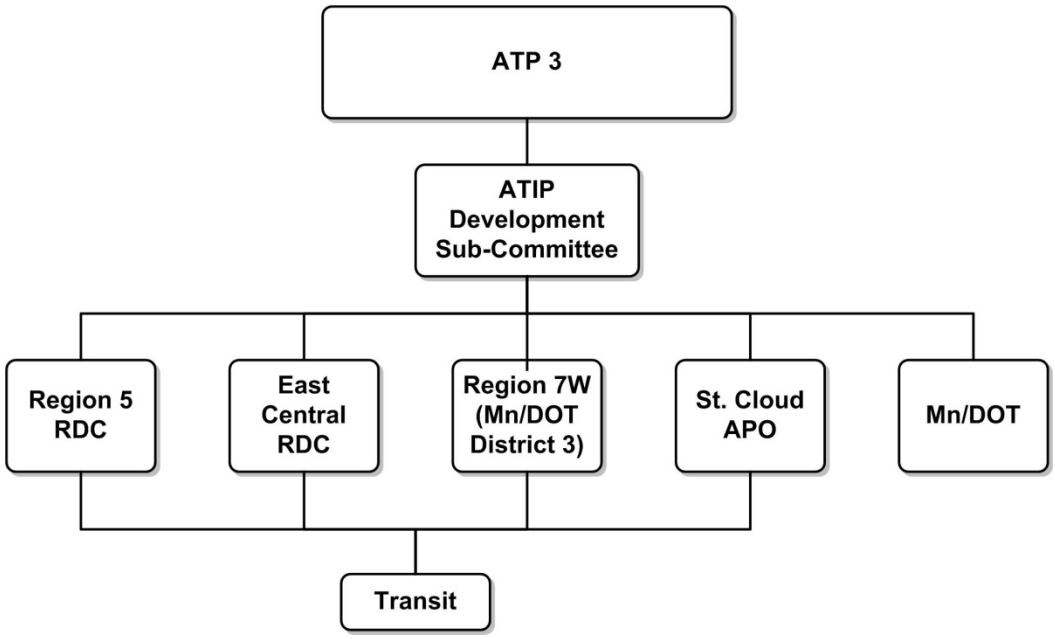
steering committee, which makes decisions and recommendations to the full ATP membership. The full ATP then approves decisions from the steering committee.

There are four groups/processes that initially prioritize candidate projects in ATP 1:

- County team meetings
- Enhancement Task Force
- Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC)
- Mn/DOT

Each county meets separately to prioritize projects. These lists are integrated by the work group, proceed through the steering committee and then presented to the full ATP. The Enhancement Task Force prioritizes enhancement projects (bicycle trails and pedestrian improvements) and is comprised of Mn/DOT, an environmental representative, a local government representative, a historical society representative and a trails/bikes/pedestrians representative. The Duluth-Superior MPO (MIC) prioritizes projects in the MPO area at Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Board meetings. Mn/DOT internally prioritizes projects on the state system.

### *ATP 3*



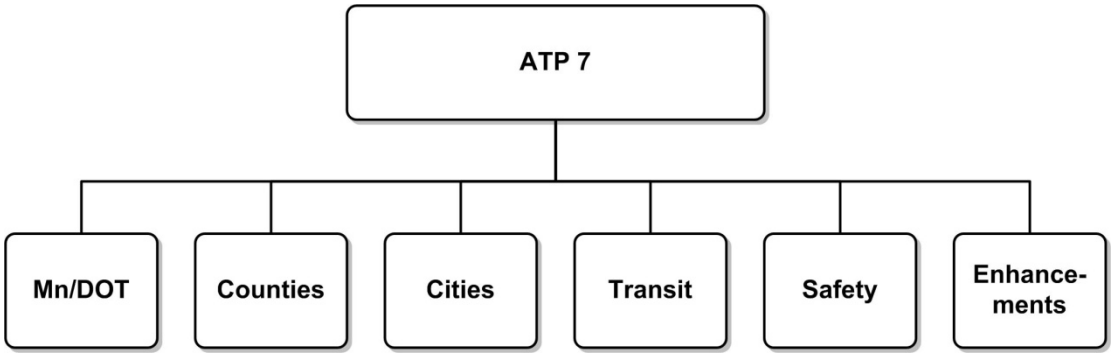

ATP 3 is unique because most decisions on local projects are not made through subcommittees but through the MPO and RDCs, which represent geographic regions. The St. Cloud Area Planning Organization and the three RDCs—Region 5, East Central,

and Region 7 West (staffed by Mn/DOT)—are the four entities that receive subtargeted funds and prioritize projects.

A separate transit committee meets to solicit and rank transit vehicle capital requests within District 3. After identifying a list of candidate projects, the committee reviews each request on the basis on need and develops a rank-ordered listing of projects to submit to the RDCs, APO, and district. In turn, these organizations are responsible for considering the committee's recommendations in developing their prioritized list of local transportation projects seeking federal funds for their regions.

Prioritized lists from the RDCs and MPO then come to the ATIP development subcommittee, whose primary role is to merge the local and state transportation priorities of the RDCs, APO, and Mn/DOT District 3 into the draft ATIP. The committee presents the draft ATIP to the full ATP for approval.

***ATP 7***




ATP 7 has 14 members and six subcommittees that prioritize the following categories of projects: Mn/DOT state trunk highway, county projects and off system bridges, city projects, transit, safety, and enhancements. Many ATPs have a similar structure where project prioritization is done in subcommittees.

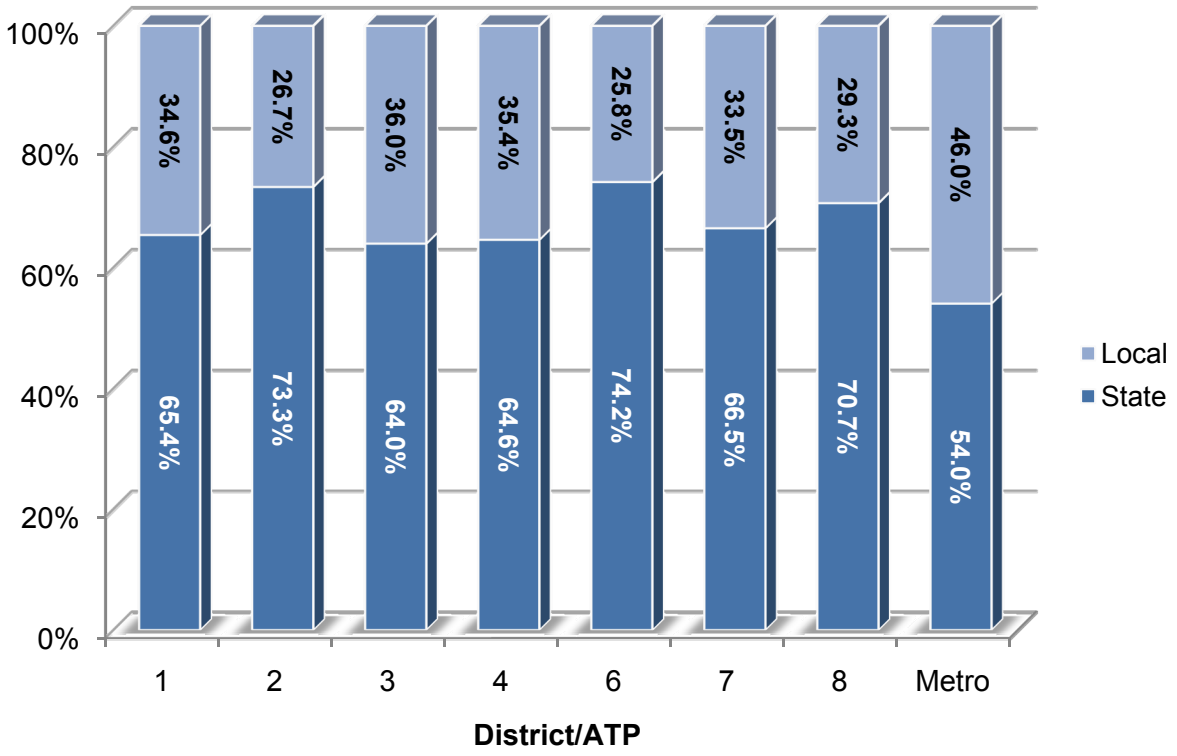
## Funding Targets

The ATPs allocate federal money to both state and local projects. On average, 65-75 percent of federal funding goes towards Trunk Highway (state) projects. This percentage was determined during the creation of the ATPs and primarily reflected the split of funds prior to ISTEA. From year to year, the percentage of money towards state projects and local projects can fluctuate as there may be a greater need on one system than the other. Although state and local projects are both funded through the ATP process, they are vetted in different ways. Mn/DOT projects are vetted internally with minimal input from the ATPs. On the other hand, local projects are

vetted by the ATP subcommittees, although the level of review varies by ATP and subcommittee.

Figure 8 shows the funding split between state and local projects using the out-year average in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).[1] The average percent of money spent on the state system varies from a low of 54 percent in Metro District to a high of 74.2 percent in District 6. As mentioned previously, these averages can be heavily influenced by a higher need on the state or local system.

***Figure 8: Out-Year Average of STIP (2008-2011 thru 2010-2013)***




[1] This figure takes the last two years in each STIP (e.g. 2010 and 2011 in the 2008-2011 STIP) and takes the average to approximate how much federal money is spent on state projects compared to local projects. After a project is included in the STIP, changes in schedule and scope can require adjustments to the STIP. This is particularly common for local projects, so the amount of funding for local projects in construction in any given year can vary widely. ATPs generally make decisions for the last year of a STIP, the "out year," so looking at the average out years provides the most representative illustration of funding splits.

## ATP Subtargets

With the exception of Metro District, all ATPs subtarget the money for local projects into certain categories. The broad subtarget categories are:

- County Road and Bridge
- City (greater than 5,000 population) Road and Bridge
- Off System Bridge
- Transit Capital
- Safety
- Enhancement
- Rail Crossing

Most of the Greater Minnesota ATPs subtarget by category (e.g. transit, city road/ bridge, etc) with the exception of ATP 3, which subtargets by geographic region (Region 5, East Central RDC, 7 W and St. Cloud APO).

Much like the funding split for state and local projects, the subtargets are flexible and can be adjusted depending on needs. The subtargets are largely based on historic equity and the funding split that was used before the ATP process was created. This funding split gives groups involved in the ATP process an approximate idea of how much money they can expect each year.

## ATP Solicitation Process

The solicitation process for projects is generally done in two ways. Some ATPs have a formal solicitation process where the Mn/DOT district, MPO or RDC sends letters to a variety of interested parties. Projects are usually solicited from a fairly uniform list, which includes state agencies (Mn/DOT, DNR, etc.), counties, cities with populations greater than 5,000, townships, bike/pedestrian interests, tribal governments, transit providers, and rail authorities. Some districts also develop news releases outlining the funding and programming process. Projects are submitted to the district, which brings potential projects to a subcommittee of the ATP. Other ATPs handle solicitation through a subcommittee, by allowing subcommittee members to propose projects from their jurisdictions to the ATP.

The Mn/DOT district handles the solicitation of projects except in ATP 1 and ATP 3. In ATP 1, solicitation and ranking in the metropolitan planning area is done by the MPO and the non-MPO area is handled by Mn/DOT District 1. In ATP 3, the solicitation and ranking of local projects is done by the RDCs and MPOs. The Grand Forks/East Grand Forks MPO in ATP 2 and Fargo Moorhead Council of Governments in ATP 4 are both making revisions to their processes and will now solicit and rank projects much like MIC in ATP 1.

## ATP Ranking Techniques

Once potential projects have been submitted, subcommittees convene to decide how to rank projects.

In many of the ATPs, project selection for city and county projects is based significantly on equity considerations. ATP 1 informally considers equity such that if one jurisdiction has received a higher cost project, they are expected to take a year off before requesting another project. In ATP 1 and ATP 3, equity can be used as a deciding factor between projects. ATP 2 formally tracks how much money each jurisdiction has received in order to maintain a sense of equity between the jurisdictions. Likewise, ATP 4 tracks funding by jurisdiction and allows cities and counties to "bank" funds until they have enough to do a project. ATP 6 tries to maintain equity between the number of projects programmed in Olmstead County versus the other counties in ATP 6. ATP 8 allows cities and counties to negotiate based on historical equity to determine the prioritized list of projects. ATP 7 considers equity as a criterion in the ranking of city and county projects.

Most transit capital projects are ranked based on the age and mileage of vehicles. Prioritization and selection of most transit projects is handled by a transit subcommittee which then makes recommendations to the full ATP. However, in ATP 3 a transit committee meets to review and rank transit capital needs and recommends the list to the RDCs and MPO for consideration.

Rail crossings are solicited and prioritized by the Mn/DOT Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations (OFCVO), which forwards a list of prioritized projects to each ATP for consideration. However, the ATPs have the discretion to choose projects for funding.

The transportation enhancement project solicitation and prioritization is managed by the RDCs in ATPs 1, 3 and 8. Other ATPs prioritize transportation enhancements through a subcommittee, which ranks and prioritizes projects before recommending a list of projects to the full ATP for concurrence.

Technical and regional significance ranking sheets are used in some ATPs to help prioritize projects. The type of criteria used to rank projects is described below (examples from ATP 7):

- **City projects are ranked based on:** traffic safety and hazard elimination, traffic volume, pavement serviceability, economic development, recent or prior project in the current STIP, and city-county-state jurisdiction.
- **County projects are ranked based on:** pavement quality index, heavy commercial average daily traffic (HCADT), percent deficient in design speed, driving lane width, shoulder width, equity formula, regional significance,[2] intermodal design features, and cost effectiveness.

[2] Regional Significance is based on: economic factors; health, social, and environmental factors; access factors; project design; etc.

- **Bridge projects are ranked based on:** sufficiency rating, cost effective (average daily traffic multiplied by sufficiency/cost), net detour, average daily traffic, regional significance, and intermodal significance.
- **Transit capital projects are ranked based on:** mileage, months of service, maintenance and repair costs, and compelling need or other factors.
- **Enhancement projects need to be:** within the ATP boundaries; estimated total cost of at least $50,000; assured match of at least 20 percent; project maintained and operated with no change in right-of-way or land ownership without approval of Mn/DOT and FHWA; submitted through federal, state, county, or city (with population greater than 5,000); and eligible projects cannot be part of the mitigation for a transportation project.

In addition to formal ranking processes, many ATPs consider other plans during the development of the ATIP, including five-year capital plans for cities and counties and transit agency capital improvement plans. ATPs and subcommittees consider planning studies, safety plans and the RDC and MPO plans. For transit projects, a project proposer needs to have the project in a ten-year plan. For city/county projects, the project needs to be in a five-year capital plan. Some of the ranking criteria used to evaluate projects also take into account where a project stands in MPO and Mn/DOT long range plans.

## Coordination

The ATP process requires interactions between ATPs, other states, and coordination between urban and rural officials.

ATPs may need to coordinate with each other, because in some cases the Mn/DOT district and ATP boundaries are not the same (ATP boundaries follow county lines, which is not true of Mn/DOT District boundaries). For example, a project can be located in District 8, but can be in a neighboring ATP. In that instance, District 8 would need to work with the neighboring ATP to get the project funded. Sometimes the Mn/DOT districts have informal agreements with neighboring districts. For projects that cross multiple districts, the two districts develop cost splits at district boundaries.

Coordination can involve other states when projects cross state borders. Wisconsin, Iowa, and North and South Dakota are involved on a project by project basis. Mn/DOT districts usually handle working with other state DOTs and generally do not involve the ATP. There are no formal agreements to guide this coordination since it is infrequent and project specific.

## Public Involvement Practices

Although the majority of public involvement for projects occurs in the planning stages, ATPs do involve the public in the programming process. ATP meetings are open to the public and public

notices and meeting notifications are distributed. Scheduled ATP meetings are advertised or communicated to interested stakeholders and the general public in a variety of ways, including:

- Websites
- Public information spots on TV
- E-mail announcements
- Public meeting notice
- RDC newsletters

ATP 2, ATP 7 and ATP 8 hold public meetings on the Draft ATIP before it's submitted to OCPPM for inclusion in the STIP. While some ATPs do not provide a specific time for the public to comment on the draft ATIP, there is an opportunity to comment on the draft STIP before it is finalized. An announcement of the 30 day public comment period for the draft STIP is published in the State Register.

### LEARN MORE

**For more information about the 20-year Highway Investment Plan visit:**
**www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/stateplan/downloadinvestmentplan.html**

**For more information about the Strategic Highway Safety Plan visit:**
**www.dot.state.mn.us/trafficeng/safety/shsp/index.html**

**For more information about the ADA Transition Plan visit:**
**www.dot.state.mn.us/ada/**

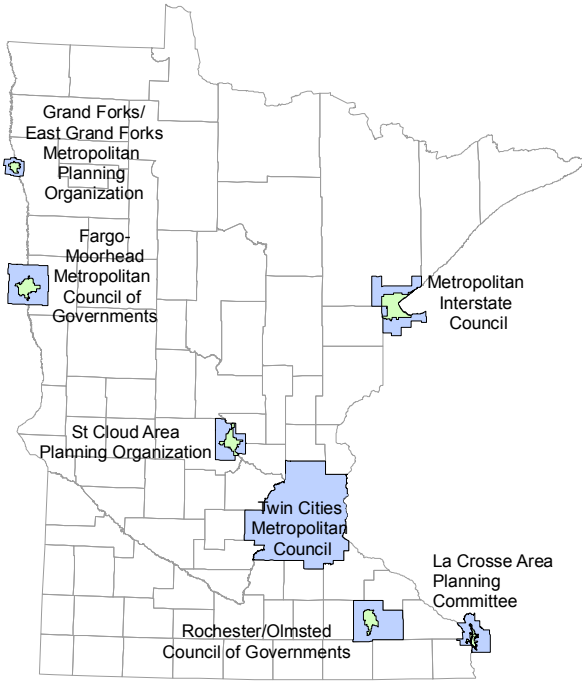
**For more information about the Highway System Operations Plan visit:**
**www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/program/hsop.html**

**For more information about the STIP visit:**
**www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/program/stip.html**

# 5. Metropolitan Planning and Programming

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) were created by federal legislation to lead transportation planning efforts in cities with urban populations greater than 50,000 persons. Minnesota has seven MPOs either partially or completely within its boundaries. The state's largest MPO, the Metropolitan Council (Met Council), is responsible for transportation planning in the seven county Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. Given the complex structure and additional responsibilities of the Met Council, the six Greater Minnesota MPOs are discussed separately.

***Figure 9: Minnesota MPOs***




## Greater Minnesota MPOs

The six Greater Minnesota MPOs are:

- Grand Forks – East Grand Forks Metropolitan Planning Organization (GF/EGF)
- Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments (Metro COG)
- Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC)
- St. Cloud Area Planning Organization (APO)
- Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments (ROCOG)
- La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC)

MPOs must comply with certain federal planning requirements, regulations and laws. For example, all MPOs are required to maintain a long-range transportation plan that addresses a minimum 20-year planning horizon and is updated at least every four or five years, depending on certain criteria. MPOs are also required to produce a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)—a prioritized four-year multimodal program of all projects proposed for federal funding. The TIP may include non-federally funded projects, but is limited to projects within the MPO's planning area. All projects listed in the TIP must be consistent with the MPO's long-range transportation plan and the STIP.

MPOs are also required to have permanent decision making bodies generally referred to as their policy or executive board. The boards are responsible for setting MPO policies and priorities, and their membership is generally comprised of local officials and stakeholders intended to be representative of the jurisdictions within the MPO area.

Though not required, all Greater Minnesota MPOs also have permanent technical advisory committees (TACs), which make recommendations to the policy board concerning policies, strategies, or specific projects. TAC membership may be broader and less defined than that of the policy board. Most Greater Minnesota MPOs also have additional permanent advisory boards and committees to address specific issue or functional areas. These are listed by MPO below. It is noteworthy that most MPOs have created advisory committees to advise the policy board on modal matters specific to transit, bicycles and pedestrians.

- **GF/EGF**: No additional permanent committees but does convene ad hoc committees as necessary
- **Metro COG**: Metropolitan Transportation Initiative, Metropolitan Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, Traffic Model Improvements Committee, Metro GIS Committee, Metro Area Transit Coordination Board, Metro Intelligent Transportation Systems Committee, Metro Traffic Operations Working Group
- **MIC**: Harbor Technical Advisory Committee, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- **APO**: Transit Committee, Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee
- **ROCOG**: Transit Advisory Committee, Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- **LAPC**: Transit Coordination Council, Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

There is considerable variation among the six Greater Minnesota MPOs, because MPOs are not required to have a standardized structure. One primary source of variation is that four of the six Greater Minnesota MPOs (GF/EGF, Metro COG, MIC, and LAPC) have planning areas that extend beyond Minnesota's borders. In these instances, agreements (in the form of Memoranda of Understanding) are executed between the neighboring states to outline roles and responsibilities and identify one state as the lead on oversight matters. The MPOs themselves are also required to execute an MOU with the state and the area's transit operator. Though some are in the process of being updated, these MOUs are generally out of date and are not well maintained.

Despite the existence of MOUs, bi-state MPOs face additional challenges meeting the expectations of multiple state departments of transportation and regional Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration offices.

MPO staffing arrangements and organizational relationships with other entities also vary. For example, while ROCOG is the state designated MPO responsible for transportation planning, it is staffed by county employees working for the joint Rochester-Olmsted Planning Department. The ROCOG executive director is also director of the Rochester-Olmsted Planning Department. The City of Rochester does not maintain separate planning staff. This arrangement allows the MPO greater influence in its planning area.

By contrast, LAPC is a stand-alone entity with its own bylaws and agreements with the state departments of transportation. However, LAPC staff are county employees and utilize county bookkeeping, office, and computers systems for efficiency purposes.

Another unique arrangement exists in the Duluth area. MIC operates as a division of both the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC), a multi-disciplined planning and development organization with a jurisdiction encompassing seven counties in Northeast Minnesota, and the Northwest Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, the ARDC equivalent for ten counties in Northwest Wisconsin.

The remaining MPOs operate as standalone entities and maintain their own staffs.

Table 2 highlights many of the organizational and jurisdictional differences in Greater Minnesota MPOs.

***Table 2: Metropolitan Planning Organization Membership and Jurisdictions***

| MPO | Lead State for Bi-State MPO's | Permanent Policy Board - # Members | Permanent Technical Committee - # Members | Additional Permanent Committees | Jurisdictions within Planning Area |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **GF/EGF** | North Dakota | 8 | 12 | No | 4 |
| **Metro COG** | North Dakota | 14 | 21 | Yes | 6 |
| **MIC** | Minnesota | 18 | 18 | Yes | 18 |
| **APO** | n/a | 42 | 18 | Yes | 12 |
| **ROCOG** | n/a | 16 | 10 | Yes | 9 |
| **LAPC** | Wisconsin | 10 | 31 | Yes | 17 |

## MPO Planning

Greater Minnesota MPOs vary considerably in their planning practices and purview. In addition to developing long-range transportation plans, many MPOs are either responsible for, or involved in, a range of planning activities. A comparison summary of the varying degrees of involvement in planning activities is presented in Table 3.

***Table 3: MPO Planning Activities***

| MPO | Long-Range Transportation Planning | Local Transportation Planning Assistance | Economic Development Planning | Land Use Planning |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **GF/EGF** | ✓ | ✓ | — | ✓ |
| **Metro COG** | ✓ | ✓ | — | — |
| **MIC** | ✓ | ✓ | — | — |
| **APO** | ✓ | ○ | — | — |
| **ROCOG** | ✓ | ✓ | ○ | ✓ |
| **LAPC** | ✓ | ○ | — | — |
| **Legend:** ✓ = Considerable Activity ○ = Moderate Activity — = Little/No Activity | | | | |

In addition to conducting the requisite long-range planning in their area, all Greater Minnesota MPOs provide some degree of transportation assistance to the local jurisdictions in their planning area.

Those MPOs with a higher degree of involvement in local transportation planning include ROCOG, GF/EGF and MIC. Due to ROCOG's unique organizational structure, as previously described, it is responsible for all of Olmsted County and the City of Rochester's planning functions. Additionally, ROCOG provides transportation planning services as requested to the other jurisdictions within its planning area. GF/EGF has responsibility for all transportation planning functions within its area while MIC provides considerable local transportation planning assistance. The other MPOs may only offer assistance and expertise when requested, are actively working to have more involvement in this area, or offer an established set of technical assistance services available for use as necessary (e.g. mapping, traffic projections, grant application assistance).

For the most part, Greater Minnesota MPOs have little or no involvement in economic development and/or land use planning. ROCOG, again due to its organizational structure, has considerable involvement in land use planning and to a degree economic development planning. ROCOG staff are principally responsible for developing city and county land use plans and for coordinating small city plans with overall regional land use plans. It also has direct contracts for land use planning with some of the smaller jurisdictions in its area. ROCOG staff provide information on forecasted employment growth and infrastructure opportunities and constraints for use by agencies directly involved in economic development planning.

GF/EGF is responsible for the preparation of land use plans for each of the cities in its planning area (Grand Forks, ND and East Grand Forks, MN). Additionally, the MPO provides all planning functions for East Grand Forks on a contractual basis.

The remaining MPOs have only limited involvement in land use planning in their areas. However, most MPOs provide some land use planning assistance through the maintenance of land use data for travel demand models. Economic development planning is generally the responsibility of other agencies.

All Greater Minnesota MPOs are engaged in some level of planning activities outside of the designated planning area. The nature of this effort varies by MPO. Examples include:

- Regional transit operations
- Regional freight planning
- High speed rail planning
- Planning for specific transportation corridors
- Environmental and watershed planning
- Planning for river crossings at shared boundaries

All Greater Minnesota MPOs are involved to some degree in planning for modes other than the automobile. Table 4 summarizes MPO involvement in planning for transit, bikes and pedestrians, rail and aeronautics.

***Table 4: MPO Involvement in Non-Highway Modal Planning***

| MPO | Transit | Bike/ Pedestrian | Rail | Aeronautics | Ports/ Waterways |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **GF/EGF** | ✓ | ✓ | — | — | — |
| **Metro COG** | ✓ | ✓ | ○ | — | — |
| **MIC** | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ○ |
| **APO** | ○ | ✓ | ✓ | ○ | — |
| **ROCOG** | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | — |
| **LAPC** | ✓ | ✓ | ○ | — | — |
| **Legend:** ✓ = Considerable Activity ○ = Moderate Activity — = Little/No Activity | | | | | |

GF/EGF is responsible for all transit as well as bicycle and pedestrian planning. Planning for rail is limited to the occasional rail crossing project and the MPO is not involved in aeronautics planning.

Metro COG is responsible for developing a five-year strategic transit plan and a five-year bicycle and pedestrian modal plan. The MPO has some involvement in rail planning due to its position along the Burlington Northern Santa Fe main line, but has no involvement in aeronautics planning.

MIC has considerable involvement in planning for transit and recently established a bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee to better advise its policy board on related matters. MIC's involvement in rail has increased recently due to plans for a high speed rail line connecting Duluth with the Twin Cities. MIC is involved in aeronautics planning via the Duluth airport authority's membership on MIC's technical advisory committee.

APO has not historically had substantial involvement in transit planning though is actively working to increase its focus on transit. APO has a permanent bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee and dedicates a chapter to non-motorized transportation in its long-range plan. APO actively coordinates with the St. Cloud airport on issues of mutual concern and is actively planning for an extension of the Northstar commuter rail line to St. Cloud.

ROCOG is the entity primarily responsible for transit, bike and pedestrian planning in the Rochester area. ROCOG also has considerable involvement in rail planning with a focus on planning for passenger rail in the community. ROCOG participates in periodic updates of Rochester's airport master plan when there are surface road and access issues.

LAPC is involved in transit planning through its preparation and coordination of a short-range transit development plan with area transit providers and actively maintains a regional bike plan. Rail planning is becoming an area of increasing activity for LAPC given the current Amtrak Empire Builder line's routing through the MPO's planning area and the current debate over the alignment of a potential high-speed rail line connecting Chicago with the Twin Cities. In terms of aeronautics planning, LAPC coordinates with the La Crosse airport as issues affecting the ground transportation system arise.

## MPO Programming

MPOs are responsible for developing a prioritized four-year multimodal program of all projects proposed for federal funding known as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Any project that is listed in the TIP must also be listed in the ATIP. If the ATIP is adjusted, the TIP must also be adjusted to reflect the change.

All Greater Minnesota MPOs have a permanent seat on the ATP whose jurisdiction it falls within, though not all ATPs have MPOs within their boundaries. ATP membership allows MPOs the ability to advocate on behalf of the communities within their planning areas.

TIPs must be fiscally constrained, which requires an estimation of available federal funds provided annually by Mn/DOT. Some MPOs receive an estimation of available federal funds directly from the Mn/DOT district office; others receive this information through ATP meetings and communications, which may occur late in the TIP development process.

In selecting and soliciting projects for the TIP, no MPO subtargets projects to individual cities or counties. However, APO uses categorical subtargets (i.e. 50 percent of funding for expansion

and 50 percent for preservation, transit, and bicycle and pedestrian projects) in TIP development.

MIC and APO are responsible for the management of a solicitation process on behalf of the ATP for projects within the MPO area. While Metro COG has not actively solicited projects in the past, it has recently developed a solicitation process for all projects within its planning area.

Other MPOs solicit and prioritize projects to varying degrees but their lists are not necessarily considered by the ATP in the same way as MIC, APO, and Metro COG's newly developed process. For example, LAPC conducts a detailed solicitation process for its Wisconsin projects, but due to its limited area in Minnesota, LAPC uses the ATP 6 ATIP to guide TIP development.

ROCOG's Technical Transportation Advisory Committee (TTAC) ranks potential projects and sends them to the policy board for approval. The approved list of ranked projects is submitted for consideration to the ATP. Like LAPC, ROCOG uses the ATP 6 ATIP to guide TIP development.

GF/EGF annually solicits projects from the counties, cities, and townships in its planning area. Minnesota projects are not ranked, because there are generally not enough project submissions to warrant a formal process. The respective MPO policy boards are responsible for approving project lists.

Table 5 provides a broad summary of the roles and responsibilities of the Greater Minnesota MPOs in transportation project programming.

***Table 5: MPO Programming Responsibilities***

| MPO | Seat on ATP | Uses Subtargets | Responsible for Project Solicitation | Policy Board Approval of Project List |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **GF/EGF** | ✓ | — | ✓ | ✓ |
| **Metro COG** | ✓ | — | ✓ | ✓ |
| **MIC** | ✓ | — | ✓ | ✓ |
| **APO** | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| **ROCOG** | ✓ | — | — | ✓ |
| **LAPC** | ✓ | — | — | ✓ |
| **Legend:** ✓ = applies to MPO — = does not apply to MPO | | | | |

As with consistency between Mn/DOT and MPO planning processes, consistency between the TIP and State Transportation Policy Plan is necessary. While MPOs and Mn/DOT district offices view the responsibility of ensuring consistency to be a shared one, the responsibility tends to fall more to Mn/DOT. Some MPOs rely completely on Mn/DOT to notify them of inconsistencies, while others work closely with the district to ensure consistency. Consistency between MPO TIPs and RDC plans, where they exist, occurs through participation in meetings of mutual interests. Active cooperation occurs between APO, GF/EGF and MIC and their respective neighboring RDCs.

MPOs are required by federal regulation to involve the public in the transportation decision making process, including the development of TIPs. All Greater Minnesota MPOs provide the public with opportunities to provide input, including public workshops and at policy board and technical committee meetings.

MPOs advertise their meetings in a number of ways, including newspaper advertisements, public access television, radio, websites, press releases, email distribution lists, direct mailings, and legal notices. Though little input is often received on the TIP or amendments, public input is sought to varying degrees early in the TIP development process. Input could come through policy board membership, public dialogue and public notifications.

Additional entities are also consulted during the TIP development process and this varies by MPO. A summary of those consulted follows:

- **GF/EGF**: Public agencies; cities; counties; state DOTs; townships
- **Metro COG**: Committee membership; stakeholder lists; private transportation providers; environmental interests
- **MIC**: Cities; counties; state DOTs; townships; transit providers
- **APO**: Executive and Policy Board; businesses and facilities serving the elderly; general public; local, state and federal agencies; media; elected and non-elected government officials; public and private transit/transportation providers.
- **ROCOG**: Member jurisdictions; ROCOG committees; advisory committees of member jurisdictions; Olmsted County Township Officers' Association
- **LAPC**: Agencies with potential projects; transit providers; municipalities; state departments of transportation

# Metropolitan Council

Established in 1967 by the Minnesota Legislature, the Met Council is the comprehensive planning agency for community development/redevelopment, transportation and the environment for the seven county Twin Cities metropolitan area. The Met Council is a federally recognized MPO, but by state law has broader responsibilities and authority. In addition to transportation and land use planning, the Met Council has oversight of the regional parks and operates the regional wastewater treatment system.

All sixteen Council members and the chair are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the governor and are confirmed by the Minnesota State Senate.

The Met Council has four standing committees: Environment, Community Development, Management and Transportation. The Environment Committee addresses issues of sewer policy, planning and operations, environmental reviews (though not all environmental reviews are handled by the committee – many are assigned to staff), wastewater facilities and treatment, water supply, nonpoint source pollution, and federal and state regulations. The Community Development Committee addresses issues involving development and implementation of the Development Framework, Housing & Redevelopment Authority operations, Livable Communities Act grants, and regional park plans and grants. The Management Committee ensures accountability for use of financial and other resources and addresses issues regarding budget review, financial monitoring, personnel policy, labor agreements, bond authority and insurance. The Transportation Committee addresses issues concerning transportation and aviation policy and planning, transit operations, Metro Mobility and ride-sharing programs. There are also a variety of work groups, task forces and special purpose committees that meet occasionally.

In addition to the standing committees, the Met Council has five advisory boards:

- **Transportation Advisory Board:** The purpose of the TAB is to advise the Council on transportation matters involving the regional highway, public transit and airport systems; help the Met Council, Mn/DOT, counties and cities carry out transportation planning and programming for the region as designated in state and federal law; allocate federal transportation funds through the regional solicitation process and review, amend and adopt the region's three-year transportation improvement program.
- **Livable Communities Advisory Committee:** LCAC reviews and recommends funding awards to the Met Council under the Livable Communities Demonstration Account. This is a technical review group with broad expertise that reviews complex development and redevelopment proposals against the program's criteria for connected development patterns that link housing, jobs and services. Its 13 members represent and have expertise in development as it relates to local government planning, economic or community development, public and private finance, new development and redevelopment, transportation, environment, and site design.

- **Land Use Advisory Committee:** LUAC renders advice and assistance to the Met Council in the areas of land use and comprehensive planning, and matters of metropolitan significance.
- **Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission:** In coordination with ten regional park implementing agencies (counties, cities and special park districts), MPOSC helps the Met Council develop a long-range plan and an acquisition and development program that includes funding priorities for regional parks.
- **Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee:** TAAC is a committee of transit riders and advocates for the disability community that advises the Met Council on short and long-range management plans and policies for special transportation services.

All of the committees are structured to ensure broad geographic representation.

## Metropolitan Council Planning

The Met Council has broad planning responsibilities for the seven county metropolitan area. To guide development and growth, the Council adopted the *2030 Regional Development Framework* in 2004 and subsequent transportation, water resources management, and parks regional policy plans. In particular, the 2030 Transportation Policy Plan addresses problems and issues in preserving the region's mobility and describes actions that the Met Council, Mn/DOT and other agencies plan to undertake to preserve, improve and expand the transportation networks in the seven county metropolitan area.

State law directs all local units of government in the metro to adopt comprehensive plans and make revisions at least every ten years. Those plans must be submitted to the Met Council for review and approval. The Met Council reviews all comp plans to ensure consistency with the Regional Development Framework and Regional System Policy Plans.

The Met Council's role in transportation planning varies by mode:

- **Trunk Highway –** Joint planning with Mn/DOT
- **Transit –** Met Council is lead agency
- **Aviation –** Met Council is responsible for maintaining a regional aviation system plan
- **Bike/Pedestrian –** Met Council works with local units of government
- **Rail –** Met Council works collaboratively with Mn/DOT and County Regional Rail Authorities
- **Freight –** Met Council has limited role in collaboration with Mn/DOT

The Met Council does provide technical support to local units of government. A revolving loan fund is available to communities for right-of-way acquisition. Additionally, the Met Council participates in corridor studies and other special studies as the opportunity arises.

## Twin Cities Metro ATP Process

The Met Council's 33 member Transportation Advisory Board is the ATP for the Metro District. TAB membership consists of:

- Ten elected municipal officials (Minneapolis, St. Paul and eight appointed by metro cities)
- Seven county commissioners (one appointed from each county)
- Eight citizen representatives appointed by the Council
- Four state/regional agencies: Mn/DOT, Metropolitan Airports Commission, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Met Council
- Four Modal Representatives: two transit, one non-motorized and one freight

State statute identifies the commissioner of transportation as the TAB member representing Mn/DOT, or the commissioner's designee. In practice, the Metro District Engineer has always been the commissioner's designee.

The TAB has three subcommittees (executive, planning, and programming) and a Technical Advisory Committee composed of staff experts representing a range of disciplines. All three subcommittees meet monthly. All TAB meetings are open to the public and agendas, project rankings and selections are posted on the Met Council's website.

The TAB conducts a biennial regional solicitation for Federal Surface Transportation Program Title I funds, Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funds, Transportation Enhancements, and Bridge Improvement and Replacement funds. Mn/DOT solicits for HSIP and Railroad Safety. The Met Council and Metro Transit allocate Title III Transit funds. The Met Council and Mn/DOT solicit cities (more than 5,000 population), counties, transit providers, and any interested party who is or can find an eligible State Aid project sponsor.

Prior to the biennial solicitation, the Met Council works with OCPPM to identify available funding. OCPPM develops target amounts for the year of solicitation, and the TAB staff also consult with MN/DOT on inflation rates and obligating authority levels to apply to the apportionment amounts in the regional solicitation.

The metro application process uses specific criteria for each of the federal programs to reflect the federal goals and regional objectives, as well as the federal rules and regional policy. Applicant eligibility is primarily determined by Mn/DOT State Aid, and the TAC Funding and Programming Committee determines project eligibility.

The TAC's Funding and Programming Committee reviews qualifying criteria and ranks all the projects except HSIP and railroad safety, which are ranked by Mn/DOT staff. Table 6 lists the criteria and possible points used in the 2009 solicitation.

***Table 6: Metro TAB 2009 Ranking Criteria/Points***

| | ***Total Possible Points Per Category*** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Principal Arterial *non freeway* | "A" Minor Arterial Reliever | "A" Minor Arterial Expander | "A" Minor Arterial Connector | "A" Minor Arterial Augmenter | Bikeways Walkways |
| Relative Importance of Route | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 125 | - |
| Implementation of Planned System | - | - | - | - | - | 175 |
| Spot Facilities to Remove Barriers | - | - | - | - | - | 200 |
| System Segments | - | - | - | - | - | 200 |
| Potential Use | - | - | - | - | - | 125 |
| Crash Reduction | 150 | 100 | 150 | 150 | 100 | - |
| Air Quality | 50 | 100 | 50 | - | 100 | - |
| Congestion Reduction | 75 | 150 | 100 | - | 75 | - |
| Goods Movement | - | - | - | 100 | - | - |
| Shoulder Improvements | - | - | - | 100 | - | - |
| Cost Effectiveness | 300 | 275 | 275 | 275 | 275 | 200 |
| Safety/Security | - | - | - | - | - | 100 |
| Development Framework Planning Area Objectives | 65 | 75 | 65 | 65 | 75 | 70 |
| Natural Resources | 45 | 45 | 45 | 45 | 30 | 30 |
| Community's Progress Toward Affordable Housing Goals | 30 | 30 | 30 | - | 30 | 30 |
| Land Use and Access Management Planning | 70 | 50 | 70 | 75 | 50 | - |
| Access Management Ordinance Compliance | 70 | 50 | 70 | 75 | 50 | - |
| Corridor Access Management Improvements | 70 | 50 | 70 | 65 | 30 | - |
| Integration of Modes | 75 | 125 | 75 | 50 | 160 | 70 |
| Maturity of Project Concept | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| **Total Possible Points** | **1,200** | **1,250** | **1,200** | **1,200** | **1,200** | **1,300** |

The TAC scores and rankings are given to the TAB Programming Committee for consideration and project selection. Applicants who disagree with a specific score may appeal for reconsideration.

The scoring criteria were developed by the TAC's Funding and Programming Committee and approved by the TAB. The criteria are evaluated after each solicitation cycle.

The TAB generally does not use sub-targets, but occasionally will sub-target a specific project on a case-by-case basis (example, Hiawatha LRT). Although the TAB does not sub-target to individual cities or areas, project selections are made with a consideration to geographic equity.

Although the TAB functions as the ATP for Metro District, the Met Council's boundaries are not the same as the Mn/DOT Metro District. In particular, Chisago County is part of Metro District, but not the Met Council. To reconcile the difference for the ATIP, Region 7E RDC handles the solicitation for Chisago County's projects, and an integrating committee comprised of representatives of the Met Council, TAB, Region 7E, Mn/DOT and FHWA meets periodically.

The strong planning relationship between the Met Council and Mn/DOT Metro District is also present in the programming process and helps to ensure programming decisions are informed by planning. Mn/DOT Metro District selects projects with the counsel of the 22 member Capital Improvements Committee, which includes:

- Metro District Staff
- Met Council/TAB Staff
- FHWA Staff
- East Central RDC
- Eight TAC representatives

The CIC meets monthly to identify major programming issues, recommend investment strategies and discuss project selection with district staff. These meetings offer a forum for early information exchange on proposed investment decisions. Actual investment decisions are made by the Metro District Programming Committee.

### LEARN MORE

**For more information about Minnesota's seven MPOs visit:**

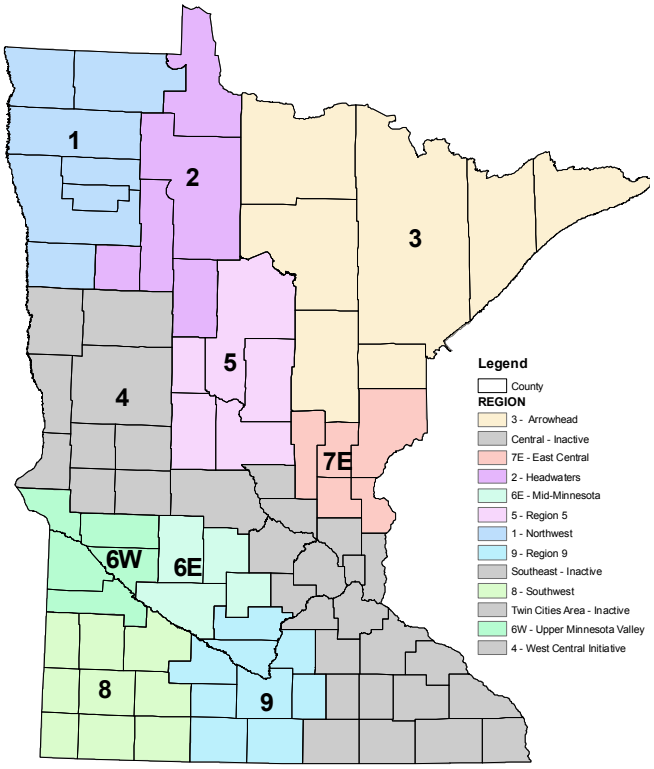
**www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/program/MPORDC.html**

# 6. Regional Development Commissions

Regional Development Commissions (RDCs) are multi-county planning and economic development districts that encourage and facilitate cooperation between citizens, local government officials, and the private sector. Established in 1969 by the Regional Development Act, RDCs help identify local needs and priorities and assist in transportation, economic development and land use planning. In addition to planning, RDCs sponsor many programs, including services for the poor and elderly, job training, small business finance, and minority enterprise programs.

There are 12 regional development districts in Greater Minnesota. District boundaries follow county lines. Nine districts currently have RDCs. In Region 4, the West Central Initiative, a private 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, functions in the place of a RDC. In the remaining two regions, Region 7W in the St. Cloud area and Region 10 in southeast Minnesota, Mn/DOT district staff fulfill the transportation related responsibilities of a RDC.

***Figure 10: Regional Development Commission Boundaries***




The nine active RDCs are:

- Region 1: Northwest RDC
- Region 2: Headwaters RDC
- Region 3: Arrowhead RDC
- Region 5 RDC
- Region 6E: Mid-Minnesota RDC
- Region 6W: Upper Minnesota Valley RDC
- Region 7E: East Central RDC
- Region 8: Southwest RDC
- Region 9: South Central RDC

Each active RDC is governed by a policy board of elected officials, which may also include business leaders and citizen representatives. In addition, each RDC has a Transportation Advisory Committee that assists with transportation planning and programming. In Region 7W, a special transportation policy board and transportation advisory committee have been established by a joint powers agreement between the four partner counties and Mn/DOT to carryout transportation planning and programming responsibilities for the region.

## RDC Planning

RDCs are involved in a wide range of planning activities. Mn/DOT provides each RDC an annual grant to assist in transportation planning. In particular, RDCs assist Mn/DOT with the following efforts:

- Transit: RDCs assist the Mn/DOT Office of Transit in the development of various transit studies and plans. RDCs have conducted transit needs studies–the first major step to establish transit service in counties. In addition, RDCs assist in the development of local human services transit coordination plans, and RDCs are involved in the development of transit investment plans.

- Functional Classification: RDCs assist Mn/DOT in managing the functional classification system in each region, which involves working with cities and counties to review the regional system. RDCs review proposed changes to functional classification based on needs and regional percentages.

- Trails: RDCs are involved with the development of trail plans at all levels from city to regional plans and inventories.

- Freight: RDCs assist the Mn/DOT Office of Freight & Commercial Vehicles in the development regional freight plans. RDCs have served on technical advisory committees, organized and conducted freight stakeholder interviews and coordinated public meetings. RDCs are also involved in the development of truck routes to serve agricultural and manufacturing businesses.

- Rail: RDCs participate in rail corridor studies that provide recommendations for safety improvements at railroad grade crossings. RDCs are also involved in researching the feasibility of short line rail service for manufacturing and agricultural industries. Local government assistance is provided by some RDCs in the rail abandonment process so that railroad right-of-way can be preserved for future trail use.

- Scenic Byways: RDCs provide assistance to various scenic byways organizations, including development and implementation of interpretive plans, byway signage, agency coordination and marketing.

- Safe Routes to School: RDCs are involved in the planning and implementation of Safe Routes to School projects, which involves working with school staff, parents, students and community members to develop safe environments in which students can walk and bike to school.

Many RDCs also conduct planning for cities and counties on a contractual basis.

In addition to the regional planning activities already listed, some RDCs have developed regional transportation plans; including West Central Initiative, Region 7W (staffed by Mn/DOT District 3), Northwest RDC, and Southwest RDC. Of those, only WCI and Region 7W's plans are current. Each active RDC develops a biannual Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, which includes transportation.

## RDC Programming

All RDCs are involved in the programming process for federal projects through the ATPs, but each RDC's role varies depending on the ATP. ARDC provides staff services to ATP 1, which includes managing the Enhancement Program, supporting the ATP Work Group, maintaining the ATP website and assisting with the planning and programming needs of the ATP. Conversely, East Central RDC and Region 5 Development Commission solicit and prioritize all local candidate projects for federal funding in ATP 3. Other common RDC programming activities include holding public informational meetings, providing assistance in the development of enhancement project applications, and the review of FTA Section 5310 funding applications for transit vehicles.

### LEARN MORE

**For more information about Minnesota's RDCs visit:**

**www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/program/MPORDC.html**

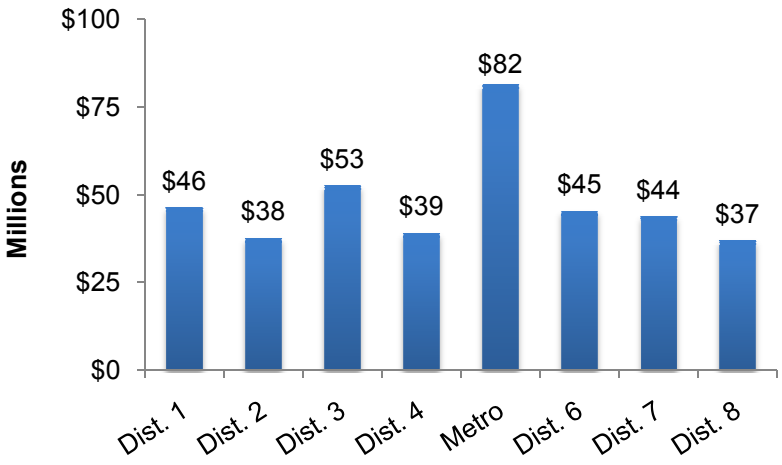
# 7. State Aid to Local Jurisdictions

In addition to programming federal formula funds, Mn/DOT also administers state funding for road construction and maintenance.

The Mn/DOT Division of State Aid for Local Transportation (SALT) serves as a liaison between Mn/DOT and county and municipal jurisdictions. SALT administers the County State Aid Highway (CSAH) and Municipal State Aid Street (MSAS) portions of the state Highway User Tax Distribution Fund. In addition to distributing funds, SALT maintains design and contracting standards for projects funded with state and federal funds.

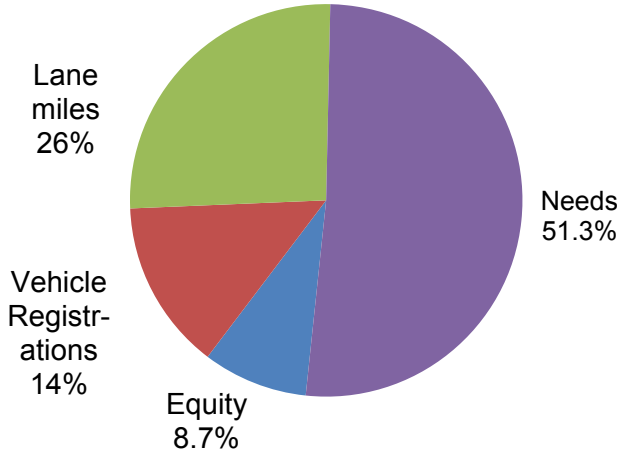
The CSAH system is a network of key highways under the jurisdiction of Minnesota's counties. It covers approximately 30,500 miles (about two-thirds of all county highway miles), and includes roadways within all 87 counties. Counties receive money from the state's CSAH fund for the construction, improvement, and maintenance of highways included in the State Aid system. Counties typically must spend 60 percent of their allocation on construction projects and 40 percent on maintenance efforts. Counties are also required to use a share of their CSAH aid on stretches of highways located within small cities with a population less than 5,000. Figure 11 shows the allocation of CSAH funding by Mn/DOT District in 2009.

***Figure 11: CSAH Aid by Mn/DOT District in 2009***




CSAH funds are distributed to counties based on formula that considers vehicle registrations, lane miles, identified construction needs to meet engineering standards and equity. Figure 12 shows the relative weight of each criterion in the CSAH distribution formula.

***Figure 12: CSAH Aid Distribution Formula in 2009***




The MSAS system is a network of approximately 3,000 miles of streets owned by cities with a population more than 5,000 people. Cities receive money from the MSAS fund for the construction, improvement, and maintenance of these streets. No more than 20 percent of a city's total street miles can be included in the State Aid system. MSAS funds are distributed to cities based on formula that considers population and identified construction needs to meet state standards.

**LEARN MORE**

**For more information about State Aid for Local Transportation visit:**

**www.dot.state.mn.us/stateaid/**

# 8. Transit Planning and Programming

The State of Minnesota does not own or operate transit systems, but Mn/DOT provides grants to support the operation of these systems. The Office of Transit administers a variety of grant programs for transit including:

- Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) (Section 5316): Provides funding for projects that transport welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals to and from jobs and work-related activities. In FY 2009, Minnesota's apportionment of Section 5316 funds was $1.9 million.
- New Freedom (Section 5317): Provides funding for new public transportation services and alternatives beyond those currently required by the Americans with Disabilities Act that assist individuals with disabilities. In FY 2009, Minnesota's apportionment of Section 5317 funds was $1.2 million.
- Public Transit Participation (Section 5311): Provides financial assistance for public transit services. This grant program supports capital, planning and operations of transit systems in small and large urban areas and in rural areas outside of the seven county Twin Cities metropolitan area. In FY 2009, Minnesota's apportionment of Section 5311 funds was $12.9 million.
- Elderly Person with Disabilities Capital Grant Program (Section 5310): Provides capital funding for the purchase of wheelchair-accessible vans and buses. In FY 2009, Minnesota's apportionment of Section 5311 funds was $2 million.
- Capital Facility Grant Program: Provides financial assistance for major public transit facility projects in Greater Minnesota to purchase, renovate or construct bus garages, bus stops, administrative offices and other transit related building activities. Capital funds can be used to finance up to 80 percent of capital costs.
- Urbanized Area Formula Program (Section 5307): Provides capital, planning, and operating assistance for public transportation in urban areas with populations greater than 50,000. Minnesota has seven metropolitan areas that receive an appropriation from this fund, including the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area, Duluth, Fargo-Moorhead, Grand Forks/East Grand Forks, La Crosse-La Crescent, Rochester, and St. Cloud. Funds are distributed directly to the local transit agencies. The federal share for planning and capital assistance is generally 80 percent. Operating assistance is available only to urbanized areas with populations under 200,000 and the federal share may not exceed 50 percent of the net project costs.

In addition to grant support, Mn/DOT's Office of Transit develops numerous studies and plans for statewide transit service.

The Greater Minnesota Transit Plan 2010-2030 is a 20-year strategic plan for preserving current public transportation systems while improving mobility for the general public. The plan establishes a vision for public transit in Greater Minnesota, quantifies transit service needs, and establishes supporting goals and strategies to assist Mn/DOT and its partners in focusing investments and services.

The Office of Transit is currently developing a Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan, which is anticipated to be complete by the end of 2010. As directed by the Minnesota Legislature, the plan will include an analysis of ridership and transit service needs throughout greater Minnesota; a calculation of total transit service need; an assessment of the level and type of service required to meet the need; an analysis of costs and revenue options; and a plan to meet at least 80 percent of total needs by 2015 and 90 percent of total needs by 2025.

### LEARN MORE

**For more information about grant programs for transit visit:**

**www.dot.state.mn.us/transit/grantapplications/grantapindex.html**

**For more information about transit studies and plans visit:**

**www.dot.state.mn.us/transit/reports.html**

# 9. Nonmotorized Transportation Planning and Programming

Mn/DOT works to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists on state highways where appropriate as well as assists local governments to ensure safe options for nonmotorized transportation throughout the state. Bicycle and pedestrian accommodations in roadway projects are supported by Federal Legislation, Minnesota State Statutes and Mn/DOT policy and practice. SAFETEA-LU requires all states to have Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator.

## Nonmotorized Transportation Planning

The Mn/DOT Office of Transit Bicycle and Pedestrian Section develops plans and policy guidance and provides training and resources for nonmotorized transportation. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Section developed a Pedestrian and Bicycle Toolbox to assist community planning efforts and wrote the pedestrian chapter of Mn/DOT's road design manual and the Bikeways Facility Design Manual. Bicycle and Pedestrian staff review project scoping documents and project plans and comment on accommodation for bicyclists and pedestrians, including ADA compliance.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Section also works closely with local planning efforts and advocacy groups like the Bicycle Alliance as well as the State Non-motorized Transportation Advisory Committee, which includes representatives from other state agencies and citizens from throughout the state.

Planning efforts are currently underway to designate a National Bicycle Route System. The first Minnesota route to be designated is the Mississippi River Trail (MRT), of which only approximately 25 percent is on state trunk highways. MRT extends beyond Minnesota the full length of the Mississippi river terminating in the Gulf of Mexico and includes both on and off-road segments.

The last State Bike Modal Plan was completed in 2005 and established a vision for bicycling as mode of transportation and established a framework for future planning efforts. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Section intends to conduct additional bikeway studies to identify potential segments of the trunk highway system that could be designated for bicycle accommodations as well as ways to better integrate on and off-road facilities.

The latest print copy of the State Bicycle Map was last updated in 2001. Mn/DOT is exploring the use of deploying electronic maps via the web to assist bicyclists in route planning and researching techniques to efficiently involve the public with the development of new route segments through an interactive program.

In 2010, Mn/DOT completed the first ADA Transition Plan, which outlines how Mn/DOT is working to comply with the requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act. An ADA Coordinator, ADA Title II Coordinator and ADA Design Engineer are responsible for ensuring implementation of the ADA Transition Plan.

## Nonmotorized Transportation Programming

The majority of nonmotorized transportation projects are solicited and selected for funding by the ATPs either as part of other roadway projects or under the category of "Transportation Enhancements." However, the Mn/DOT Division of State Aid for Local Transportation centrally administers the federally funded Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. Established by SAFETEA-LU, SRTS provides communities with the opportunity to improve conditions for bicycling and walking to school. The goals of the program are threefold:

(1) Enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school

(2) Make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age

(3) Facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools

Using a multidisciplinary approach, the SRTS program works with schools, students and parents to identify improvements that will make biking and walking to and from school a routine part of students' experience.

Funding for the SRTS program is divided into three categories: Infrastructure (sidewalks, trails, crosswalks, etc.), Non–infrastructure (planning, education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation), and either which is typically referred to as "flex" in the Minnesota program. A minimum of 70 percent must be spent on infrastructure and 10 percent on non-infrastructure with the remainder to be divided between the programs. Funding for SRTS has averaged $2 million annually.

SRTS projects are selected following a statewide solicitation process that is managed by the Mn/DOT SRTS Program Coordinator. With representatives from the Mn/DOT Offices of Transit and Traffic, a Minnesota city and county, projects are evaluated, prioritized and selected for funding on a statewide competitive basis. Solicitations are conducted as funding is available.

## LEARN MORE

For more information about planning and programming for pedestrians visit:

www.dot.state.mn.us/peds/

For more information about bicycle planning visit:

www.dot.state.mn.us/bike/

For more information about the ADA Transition Plan visit:

www.dot.state.mn.us/ada/

For more information about Safe Routes to School visit:

www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes/

# 10. Rail Planning and Programming

The State of Minnesota does not own or operate railroads, but Mn/DOT cooperates with counties, cities, townships, and railroads to improve the railroad infrastructure in order to support economic growth and connect Minnesota to global opportunities. Mn/DOT's involvement in rail projects includes allocating federal and state funds, which are combined with private money from railroads and rail users. More recently, Mn/DOT has begun long-range planning for both freight and passenger rail in Minnesota.

## Rail Planning

Mn/DOT Passenger Rail Planning was spurred into action in 2008 when Congress enacted the Passenger Rail Improvement and Investment Act (PRIIA). This Act authorized approximately $750 million per year in grants for intercity rail projects. In 2009, the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) appropriated an additional $8 billion for passenger rail projects in the PRIIA programs. Also in 2009, the Minnesota Legislature directed Mn/DOT to develop a comprehensive statewide freight and passenger rail plan.

The Statewide Freight and Passenger Rail Plan:

- Established a long-term vision for Minnesota's rail system, consisting of an integrated freight and passenger rail network as part of a balanced statewide transportation system
- Recommended program of priority improvements over the next 20 years
- Recommended potential approaches to financing these improvements
- Suggested other changes, including refinements to existing state rail programs, and institutional responsibilities for rail service and infrastructure development

The plan identified seven potential passenger rail corridors in two phases of development. While Mn/DOT provides some planning support for individual corridors, local governments and regional coalitions are primarily responsibility for planning and developing each corridor.

# Rail Programming

Mn/DOT administers one federal and three state programs for rail funding in Minnesota. The federal program is the Railroad-Highway Grade Crossing Safety Improvement Program. The three state programs are the Minnesota Rail Service Improvement Program, the Antiquated Equipment Program and the Port Development Assistance Program. Only the Railroad-Highway Grade Crossing Safety Improvement Program is part of the ATP process for project selection.

## Railroad-Highway Grade Crossing Safety Improvement Program

The goal of this program is to save lives at grade crossings. Most of the projects under this program have been funded using federal funds with matching state, local, and railroad funds. Under SAFETEA-LU, approximately $5.7 million per year in federal funding has been apportioned for rail safety projects in Minnesota. State funds are available to fulfill the required 10 percent match.

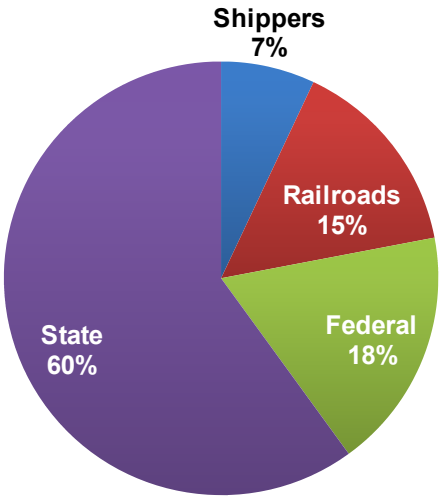
The prioritization of grade crossings is a data-driven process that is based on safety concerns. Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations (OFCVO) staff review the condition of crossings and corridor plans and create a prioritized list of projects. Project lists are brought to the ATPs, which then select projects for funding. Each ATP generally funds between two and six grade crossing projects per year.

## Minnesota Rail Service Improvement Program

The MRSI Program was established as a revolving loan program in 1976 to help prevent the loss of rail service on lines potentially subject to abandonment by railroads. The Minnesota Legislature has appropriated bond funding between $2 and $5 million annually every year since 2005 except 2007 for the MRSI program.

Figure 13 shows the share of MRSI funding from different sources. Of the $130.2 million invested in the MRSI Program from 1978 to 2007, 60 percent has been funded by state revenues. Currently there is no ongoing funding for MRSI.

***Figure 13: MRSI Funding Sources, 1978-2007***



The MRSI Program provides funding for projects in the five categories listed below:

- Rail Purchase Assistance Program: assists Regional Railroad Authorities in acquiring rail lines that can be operated on a self-sustaining basis for local rail service. Mn/DOT may provide up to 50 percent of the value of the property. State funds require repayment if the line is sold or ceases to serve a transportation function.
- Rail Line Rehabilitation Program: provides low and no-interest loans to rehabilitate and preserve rail lines that are financially viable and have the potential to increase rail use. Approval of the loan is subject to OFCVO conducting a shipper's survey, cost/benefit analysis, and needs assessment. There is no set prioritization process for projects, because to date there have been fewer requests than available funds.
- Capital Improvement Loan Program: provides rail users with loans for projects that improve rail service and strengthen the financial condition of the associated line. This program lends rail users up to $200,000 or up to 100 percent of the project, whichever is less, to improve rail facilities. Eligible projects have typically included expanding industrial spurs and building more efficient loading/unloading facilities. In 2008, the legislature authorized a new initiative to provide funding for a combination of capital projects to railroads and shippers under the Capital Improvement Loan Program.
- Rail User and Rail Carrier Loan Guarantee Program: assists rail users and rail carriers in obtaining loans for rail rehabilitation and capital improvements by guaranteeing up to 90 percent of the loan. The 1994 Legislature further amended the statute, recreating the program as the Rail User and Rail Carrier Loan Guarantee Program. In addition to rail line rehabilitation, rolling stock acquisition and installation are eligible.
- State Rail Bank Program: allows the state to acquire and preserve abandoned rail lines for future transportation use or for transmitting energy, fuel or other commodities. This program is only used when a piece of railroad is abandoned and Mn/DOT has determined it has a future use. This program was widely used in the 1970s and 1980s, but today there are few abandonments so this program is infrequently used.

The two most frequently used categories are the Rail Rehabilitation Program and the Capital Improvement Loan Program. The State Rail Bank Program, Rail Purchase Assistance Program, and Rail User and Rail Carrier Loan Guarantee Program are infrequently used.

OFCVO has identified $27 million in potential projects for 2010-2013. Projects will move ahead if funding is available and project agreements can be completed. Upon project completion, the recipients will repay the state. These reimbursements are returned to the MRSI Program account to fund future rehabilitation projects. Table 7 identifies the potential number of projects and estimated funding.

*Table 7: MRSI Estimated Funding Summary and Number of Potential Projects by Program and Year ($000's)*

| Program | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Rail Purchase Assistance Program** | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| **Rail Rehabilitation Program** | -- | -- | $700 (1) | -- | $700 (1) |
| **Capital Improvement Loan Program** | $3,000 (9) | $3,000 (9) | $3,000 (9) | $3,000 (9) | $12,000 (36) |
| **State Rail Bank Program** | -- | $1,000 (1) | -- | -- | $1,000 (1) |
| **Rail User/Rail Carrier Loan Guarantee Program** | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| **TOTAL** | $3,000 (9) | $4,000 (10) | $3,700 (10) | $3,000 (9) | $13,700 (38) |
| ( ) = Number of Potential Projects | | | | | |

## Antiquated Equipment Program

The Antiquate Equipment Program was established in 2010 to fund the replacement of antiquated grade crossing warning equipment. The 2010 legislature provided $1.6 million in state bond funds to initiate this program, which will cover the cost of upgrading grade crossing warning devices at approximately six locations.

There are approximately 1,300 railroad-highway grade crossings signals in Minnesota. The normal life cycle for railroad-highway grade crossings signals is 20 years. These signal systems need to be replaced as they approach the end of their design life. In order to mange this process, Mn/DOT is developing a statewide lifecycle planning process that will manage the state's investment in grade crossing warning devices. Approximately 70 signal systems need to be replaced each year.

### LEARN MORE

**For more information about the Statewide Freight and Passenger Rail Plan visit:**

**www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/railplan/**

**For more information about freight rail in Minnesota visit:**

**www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/railroads.html**

# 11. Port Programming

The State of Minnesota does not own or operate any waterway facilities. However, Mn/DOT does have a limited role in planning and programming port improvements.

The Port Development Assistance Program was developed by the state in response to the needs of the commercial navigation system. Although no federal funds are currently available, the program has provided a funding source to public port authorities to help facilitate compliance with tighter environmental standards, ensure the continued commercial effectiveness of lake and river navigation systems, and offset the increases in the general cost of commercial shipping.

Project proposals are solicited from the ports of Duluth, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Red Wing and Winona. Proposals are prioritized based on need, employment generated and overall economic benefit. There is a minimum 20% match and previous participation is a consideration in the approval process.

With the port authorities, OFCVO identifies a list of potential harbor improvement projects annually. Past projects include rehabilitating or improving rail and truck access, dock walls, building roofs, sprinkler and electrical systems, mobile handling equipment and adding warehouse capacity.

### LEARN MORE

**For more information about the Port Development Assistance Program visit:**

**www.dot.state.mn.us/ofrw/waterways.html**

# 12. Aeronautic Planning and Programming

The Mn/DOT Office of Aeronautics is responsible for statewide aviation planning and program administration.

The Minnesota Aviation System Plan provides a macro level plan for guiding airport development in greater Minnesota. It provides input into the FAA's National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS), individual airport master plans, and the Statewide Transportation Policy Plan. The plan helps Mn/DOT determine the type, extent, location, timing, and cost of aviation-related development needed to insure that Minnesota has a viable system of airports.

There are five primary state programs and one federal program used to distribute aeronautics funding to the 135 publicly owned airports in Minnesota. In most cases, municipal or county governments own the airport, with the exception of one airport jointly owned by the state of Minnesota and the Canadian government due to its location on the border.

### Airport Capital Improvement Program

The Airport Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is the largest of all the state funded aeronautics programs. This program funds on average $10.4 million in planning and construction projects to develop and preserve Minnesota's publicly-owned system airports. Projects eligible for funding through this program include planning, land acquisition, paving, lighting, navigational aids, obstruction removal, equipment purchases, fencing, noise mitigation, and other needs.

The annual CIP cycle begins in October with a Mn/DOT Office of Aeronautics request to each of the publicly owned airports to submit an update of the capital improvement projects intended for delivery over the next five years. The Office of Aeronautics reviews project proposals based on a number of criteria included funding eligibility, realistic cost estimates, and reasonableness of the implementation timeline.

Eligible projects received from all airports are then prioritized statewide. For the past two years, the ranking has been conducted with the aid of a "Project Priority Equation" similar to one used by the FAA. Input was also sought from stakeholders such as the Minnesota Council of Airports. Ultimately, each project is assigned a score. The equation considers the following four variables:

- Airport Type (e.g. Primary Airport, Intermediate, Federal Fund Recipient Airport)
- Project Purpose (e.g. Capacity, Planning, Reconstruction)
- Airport Component (e.g. Buildings, Equipment, Runway)
- Project Type (e.g. Improvements, Lighting, Master Planning)

The equation weights project purpose most heavily, project type moderately, and airport type and component the least.

While the equation does provide a statewide prioritization of all proposed projects, Mn/DOT staff can adjust the ranking of a particular project based on expert judgment. For example, equity, lack of safety zoning, or recent inspection results could result in an adjustment of a project's prioritization.

Once projects are ranked, a cutoff point is determined and projects above that point will receive an invitation in February to advance the project with state funding. All other projects are notified of their status on the list. Funding offers are project specific.

In the five months between airport CIP submissions and prioritization many factors can change from the airport's perspective. This often results in an eligible project being rolled back a year and/or another project at another airport receiving the funding.

Airports part of the NPIAS, and therefore eligible for federal funds, are expected to provide a local match of 30 percent of total project cost. Airports not part of the NPIAS must provide a local match of 20 percent. Projects at any airport that have revenue-generating potential must provide a 50 percent match, while airport maintenance equipment purchases require a 33 percent local match.

Requests for funding are usually about twice as much as available funding. Approximately $300,000 of this program annually is reserves for emergency airport needs (e.g., electrical work following a lightning storm).

## Airport Improvement Program

The Airport Improvement Program (AIP) is federally administered and funds projects at eligible airports (i.e., part of NPIAS) for planning, land acquisition and capital improvements. There are 96 publically owned airports in Minnesota eligible for this program.

Minnesota receives approximately $70 million annually from the AIP. The FAA transfers program funding to Mn/DOT which then distributes money to the selected projects. There are three categories of AIP funds: entitlements, apportionment, and discretionary.

Entitlement funds are distributed based on number of enplanements. Airports with 10,000 or more annual enplanements (Minneapolis/St. Paul, Rochester, and Duluth) receive a base annual amount of $1 million, while those airports with fewer receive $150,000 annually.

Apportionment results in approximately $5.5 million in aeronautics funding for Minnesota. These funds are distributed by an FAA formula, which considers state population among other variables. Mn/DOT works with FAA to identify appropriate candidates for this money.

The annual amount of AIP discretionary funding for Minnesota airports varies year to year, is the smallest of the three categories, and is based upon national competition and FAA priority.

### Airport Maintenance and Operations Program

The Airport Maintenance and Operation Grant Program is state funded and generally receives approximately $3.9 million annually. The program provides a two thirds total cost reimbursement to the state's publicly owned airports for certain documented, routine maintenance and operation expenses. The actually amount received is dependent upon individual airports' existing infrastructure. Examples of costs which are eligible for the reimbursement include the day-to-day labor, material, equipment, and utility expenses of maintaining airport pavements, airport grounds, lighting systems, buildings, and maintenance equipment.

### Hangar Loan Revolving Account Program

Minnesota's unique Hangar Loan Revolving Account Program provides an 80 percent interest-free loan to airports to build new hangars. Under the loan agreements, monthly payments are made over the ten year life of the loan. As payments are received, funds become available to make new loans to other airports with identified hangar needs. This state program is generally funded at approximately $4.4 million per year. Hangars are major revenue sources for airports and can generate revenue and provide protection for the aircraft based at an airport.

### Air Service Marketing Program

The Air Service Marketing Program is a state funded program to preserve or expand airline service to Minnesota's publicly owned airports. The program's historic funding level is approximately $200,000 annually. Competition for the funding has been low in the past but has increased in recent years with more requests being made than available funds in 2009. Mn/DOT Office of Aeronautics staff are responsible for the final selection of airport recipients.

### Navigational Aid Program

The Navigational Aid Program is funded by both state and federal funds. The program provides funding for infrastructure critical to safe airplane navigation. The State of Minnesota and the federal government each own a portion of the navigational aid network located in the state. Though funded separately, the two systems are complimentary. The state's portion of this program averages approximately $2.1 million annually.

## LEARN MORE

For more information about the Aviation System Plan visit:

www.dot.state.mn.us/aero/avoffice/planning/sasp.html

For more information about airport development programs visit:

www.dot.state.mn.us/aero/avoffice/airdev.html

# 13. Other Agency Involvement in Planning and Programming

In addition to Mn/DOT, MPOs and RDCs, numerous other federal, state and local agencies are involved in transportation planning and programming. This section briefly discusses each of these agencies and their role in transportation planning and programming.

## Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

FHWA has broad responsibility for ensuring America's roads and highways continue to be safe and technologically up-to-date. FHWA provides financial and technical support to state, local, and tribal governments for constructing, improving, and preserving America's highway system. FHWA's annual budget of more than $30 billion is funded by fuel and motor vehicle excise taxes. The budget is primarily divided between Federal-Aid funding to State and local governments and Federal Lands Highways funding for national parks, national forests, Indian lands, and other land under Federal stewardship.

FHWA is responsible for enforcing laws and regulations governing the transportation process particularly long range transportation planning, programming, environmental review, and corridor planning. With FTA, FHWA approves the air quality conformance of long range plans and approves STIPs and TIPs. For environmental review, FHWA is the formal decision maker and ensures the process is collaborative and inclusive and consistent with all regulations. While FHWA does not approve corridor plans, it does ensure corridor planning efforts are collaborative and consistent with other plans.

## Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

FTA oversees formula and discretionary programs annually totaling more than $10 billion to support a variety of locally planned, constructed, and operated public transportation systems throughout the United States. Funds are provided through legislative formulas or discretionary authority. Funding from these programs is provided on an 80 percent Federal and 20 percent local funding match basis, unless otherwise specified.

FTA's two primary discretionary programs are New Starts and Small Starts. The New Starts program funds new and extensions to existing fixed guideway transit systems, including commuter rail, light rail, heavy rail, bus rapid transit, streetcars, and ferries. New Starts projects must emerge from a regional, multi-modal transportation planning process. The criteria for evaluating these projects include mobility improvements, environmental benefits, cost

effectiveness, operating efficiencies, transit supportive land use, future land use patterns, and local financial commitment.

Small Starts funds projects with total costs less than $250 million, with no greater than $75 million coming from Small Starts. Projects must also meet one of the two following criteria:

1. Be a fixed guideway for at least 50 percent of the project length in the peak period
2. Be a corridor-based bus project with the following minimum elements:
   a) Substantial Transit Stations
   b) Signal Priority/Pre-emption (for Bus/LRT)
   c) Low Floor / Level Boarding Vehicles
   d) Special Branding of Service
   e) Frequent Service - 10 minute peak and 15 minute off peak intervals
   f) Service offered at least 14 hours per day

FTA also reviews long range plans, STIPs and TIPs with FHWA to ensure the planning and programming processes conform to federal regulations.

## Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)

FRA promulgates and enforces rail safety regulations, administers railroad assistance programs, and conducts research and development in support of improved railroad safety and national rail transportation policy. Two major tasks of the FRA include:

- Railroad Development: FRA is responsible for Federal investment and assistance to the rail industry as well as the development and implementation of Administration policy concerning intercity rail passenger service and high-speed rail.
- Railroad Safety: FRA's Office of Railroad Safety promotes and regulates safety throughout the Nation's railroad industry. FRA inspectors specialize in five safety disciplines and numerous grade crossing and trespass-prevention initiatives: track, signal and train control, motive power and equipment, operating practices, hazardous materials, and highway-rail grade crossing safety.

The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 required states to establish or designate a state rail transportation authority that will develop a statewide rail plan that sets policy involving freight and passenger rail transportation within their boundaries, establishes priorities and implementation strategies to enhance rail service in the public interest, and serves as the basis for federal and state rail investments within the state.

## Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

FAA's mission is to provide the safest, most efficient aerospace system in the world. FAA's major roles include:

- Safety Regulation: FAA issues and enforces regulations and minimum standards covering manufacturing, operating, and maintaining aircraft.
- Airspace and Air Traffic Management: FAA operates a network of airport towers, air route traffic control centers, and flight service stations. FAA develops air traffic rules, assign the use of airspace, and control air traffic.
- Air Navigation Facilities: FAA builds or installs visual and electronic aids to air navigation and maintains, operates, and assures the quality of these facilities. FAA also sustains other systems to support air navigation and air traffic control, including voice and data communications equipment, radar facilities, computer systems, and visual display equipment at flight service stations.
- Commercial Space Transportation: FAA regulates and encourages the U.S. commercial space transportation industry. FAA licenses commercial space launch facilities and private launches of space payloads on expendable launch vehicles.

FAA also maintains a National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS), which includes all commercial service and reliever airports as well as selected general aviation airports. FAA administers Airport Improvement Program grants for airports included in the NPIAS for improvements related to enhancing airport safety, capacity, security, and environmental concerns.

## Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

EPA's mission is to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment—air, water and land—upon which life depends. The EPA program that impacts transportation the most is air quality. The EPA compiles and reviews air pollution data, develops regulations to limit and reduce air pollution, assists states and local agencies with monitoring and controlling air pollution, makes information about air pollution available to the public, and reports to Congress the status of air pollution and the progress made in reducing it.

The key area in air quality that impacts transportation and more specifically the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are nonattainment areas, which are areas that do not meet national ambient air quality standards. In Minnesota St. Cloud, Duluth, and the Twin Cities are maintenance areas, which means they were previously nonattainment areas. Once nonattainment designations take effect, the state and local governments have three years to develop implementation plans outlining how areas will attain and maintain the standards by reducing air pollutant emissions contributing to fine particle concentrations. The plans developed are called State Implementation Plans (SIPs). Through the SIPs, the states outline

efforts that they will make to try to correct the levels of air pollution and bring their areas back into attainment.

## Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)

MPCA monitors environmental quality, offers technical and financial assistance, and enforces environmental regulations. The federal Clean Air Act (CAA) places most of the responsibility on the states to prevent air pollution and control air pollution at its source. MPCA's role in air quality impacts transportation in Minnesota.

MPCA monitors air quality for the six criteria pollutants (carbon monoxide, lead, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, ozone, and nitrogen oxides). States that have nonattainment areas for these criteria pollutants are required to develop a State Implementation Plan (SIP). The CAA requires that State SIPs delineate areas in the state where the air does not meet the standards set by EPA (these are known as "nonattainment areas") and the SIP must outline what the State is doing to address these problems). At this time there are no nonattainment areas in Minnesota but there are a number of former nonattainment areas, or maintenance areas, that are subject to SIP requirements designed to keep the areas in attainment with Federal air standards.

In addition to air quality, MPCA also monitors water quality and works closely with Mn/DOT and municipalities on all transportation projects.

## Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

DNR's mission is to work with citizens to conserve and manage the state's natural resources, to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, and to provide for commercial uses of natural resources in a way that creates a sustainable quality of life.

Although DNR does some long-term planning for their park areas, the amount of transportation planning and programming they do is limited to trail planning for recreational purposes and transportation corridors. An example is the Stagecoach State Trail in Southeast Minnesota where a Master Plan is being developed by DNR that will guide the development, management, maintenance and operation of the state trail so that quality recreational, transportation and healthful exercise opportunities are provided. DNR has held numerous open forums about trail use and trail development options, trail maintenance and management issues, and trail operations and enforcement needs. In additional to general trail planning, DNR conducts numerous studies of trail usage, trail user experience and characteristics, and economic impact from the use of trails. In 2007, DNR developed *Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines* to guide future planning of trails. DNR has also developed guidelines for managing and restoring natural plant communities along trails and waterways.

## Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)

DEED's mission is to support the economic success of individuals, businesses and communities by improving opportunities for growth. DEED is the state's principal economic development agency with programs that promote business recruitment, expansion and retention; workforce development; international trade; and community development. Some of DEED's grant programs impact transportation, including:

- Greater Minnesota Business Development Public Infrastructure Grant: This program provides grants to cities for up to 50 percent of the capital costs of the public infrastructure necessary to expand or retain jobs in the area, increase the tax base, or expand or create new economic development. Eligible projects include streets.
- Redevelopment Grant Program: The Redevelopment Grant Program helps communities with the costs of redeveloping blighted industrial, residential, or commercial sites and putting land back into productive use. Grants pay up to half of redevelopment costs for a qualifying site, with a 50 percent local match. Eligible applicants are cities, counties, port authorities, housing and redevelopment authorities, and economic development authorities. Grants can pay for infrastructure improvements.
- Small Cities Development Program: The Small Cities Development Program helps cities and counties with funding for housing, infrastructure and commercial rehabilitation projects that benefit people of low and moderate incomes.

DEED does not maintain a long-range economic development plan for the state.

## Minnesota Department of Commerce

The mission of the Department of Commerce is to ensure equitable commercial and financial transactions and reliable utility services by: regulating and licensing business activity in more than 20 industries, investigating and resolving consumer complaints, advocating the public's interest before the Public Utilities Commission, and administering various state programs. The Department of Commerce's work in transportation is minimal and is primarily related to its objective of expanding the use of alternative fuels in Minnesota.

## Minnesota Department of Agriculture

The mission of the Department of Agriculture is to enhance Minnesota's quality of life by ensuring the integrity of our food supply, the health of our environment and the strength of our agricultural economy. The role of the Department of Agriculture in transportation is minimal.

## Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (Minnesota Housing)

Minnesota Housing's mission is to finance and advance affordable housing opportunities for low and moderate income Minnesotans to enhance quality of life and foster strong communities. While Minnesota Housing does some planning, their role is transportation planning is minimal. For all competitive grant programs administered by Minnesota Housing, funded projects must meet the Green Communities Criteria, which includes proximity to transit service as a requirement.

## Cities, Counties and Towns

Cities, counties and to a lesser extent townships have a broad set of planning roles and responsibilities. Cities, and in some instances counties, have responsibility for land use planning, including zoning and code enforcement. Cities have the authority to adopt comprehensive plans that set policy for transportation, utilities, land use, housing and green space. In the Twin Cities metropolitan area, cities are required to have comprehensive plans and to update their plans at least once every ten years. Both cities and counties have responsibilities to build and maintain road networks and many provide transit service. Both cities and counties are key partners for Mn/DOT in developing and maintaining a multimodal transportation system.

# APPENDICES

A – Acronyms

B – Federal and State Planning and Programming Rules

C – Modal Program Comparisons

# A – Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| ADA | Americans with Disabilities Act |
| ADE | Assistant District Engineer |
| ADT | Average Daily Traffic |
| AIP | Airport Improvement Program |
| APO | St. Cloud Area Planning Organization |
| ATIP | Area Transportation Improvement Program |
| ATP | Area Transportation Partnership |
| BAP | Bond Accelerated Projects |
| CAA | Clean Air Act |
| CIC | Capital Improvements Committee |
| CIP | Airport Capital Improvement Program |
| CSAH | County State Aid Highways |
| CSS | Context Sensitive Solutions |
| CTIB | Counties Transit Improvement Board |
| DBE | Disadvantaged Business Enterprise |
| DE | District Engineer |
| DEED | Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development |
| DNR | Minnesota Department of Natural Resources |
| EPA | Environmental Protection Agency |
| FAA | Federal Aviation Administration |
| FHWA | Federal Highway Administration |
| FRA | Federal Railroad Administration |
| FTA | Federal Transit Administration |
| GF/EGF | Grand Forks/East Grand Forks |
| GIS | Geographic Information Systems |
| HES | Hazard Elimination Safety program |
| HIP | Highway Investment Plan |
| HSIP | Highway Safety Improvement Program |
| HSOP | Highway System Operations Plan |
| IRC | Interregional Corridors |
| ISTEA | Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 |

| | |
|---|---|
| ITS | Intelligent Transportation Systems |
| JARC | Job Access Reverse Commute |
| LAPC | LaCrosse Area Planning Committee |
| LCAC | Livable Communities Advisory Committee |
| LUAC | Land Use Advisory Committee |
| LRT | Light Rail Transit |
| MIC | Metropolitan Interstate Commission |
| Mn/DOT | Minnesota Department of Transportation |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MPCA | Minnesota Pollution Control Agency |
| MPPM | Mn/DOT Division of Modal Planning & Program Management |
| MPO | Metropolitan Planning Organization |
| MPOSC | Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission |
| MRSI | Minnesota Rail Service Improvement Program |
| MSAS | Municipal State Aid Streets |
| NPIAS | National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems |
| OFCVO | Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations |
| OJT | On the Job Training |
| OSMP | Office of Statewide Multimodal Planning |
| OTST | Mn/DOT Office of Traffic, Safety and Technology |
| PRIIA | Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act |
| RCIP | Regional and Community Improvement Priorities |
| RDC | Regional Development Commission |
| ROCOG | Rochester Area Council of Governments |
| SAFETEA-LU | Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act— A Legacy for Users |
| SALT | Mn/DOT Division of State Aid for Local Transportation |
| SCAMPI | Mn/DOT Standing Committee to Advance Modal Planning Integration |
| SHSP | Strategic Highway Safety Plan |
| SIP | State Implementation Plan |
| SRTS | Safe Routes to School |
| STIP | State Transportation Improvement Program |
| TAAC | Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee |
| TAB | Transportation Advisory Board |

| | |
|---|---|
| TAC | Technical Advisory Committee |
| TH | Trunk Highway |
| TIP | Transportation Improvement Program |
| TPIC | Transportation Programming and Investment Committee |
| TTAC | Technical Transportation Advisory Committee |
| USDOT | United States Department of Transportation |
| WCI | West Central Initiative |
| TEA-21 | Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century |

# B – Federal and State Planning and Programming Rules

Federal and state legislation outline numerous requirements for plans and programs.

## Federal Planning Requirements

Much of a plan's content requirements are mandated by federal regulations and statutes. For example, the United States Code of Federal Regulations under Title 23, Section 135 (f)(1) states that "each State shall develop a long range statewide transportation plan, with a minimum 20-year forecast period for all areas of the State, that provides for the development and implementation of the intermodal transportation system of the State." Moreover, planning factors that need to be included in a transportation plan were identified in SAFETEA-LU and subsequent guidance documents. These federal planning factors include:

- Support the economic vitality of the United States, the states, metropolitan areas, and non-metropolitan areas, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.
- Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
- Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
- Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight.
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes and throughout the state, for people and freight.
- Promote efficient system management and operation.
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

In addition to the federal planning factors that need to be addressed in a plan, there are SAFETEA-LU factors for public involvement. These requirements address the use of visualization, electronic formats, and public notice and meetings.

The Federal Rules for implementing SAFETEA-LU require the use of visualization techniques for the long-range statewide transportation plan and supporting studies, to the maximum extent practicable. "Visualization techniques means methods used by States and MPOs in the development of transportation plans and programs with the public, elected and appointed officials, and other stakeholders in a clear and easily accessible format such as maps, pictures, and/or displays, to promote improved understanding of existing or proposed transportation plans and programs."

The Federal Rules for implementing SAFETEA-LU require that the State's public involvement process "…make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web."

The Federal Rules for implementing SAFETEA-LU require States to "Provide adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed long-range statewide transportation plan and STIP." In addition, Federal Rules require that the State's public involvement process "to the maximum extent practicable, ensure that public meetings are held at convenient and accessible locations and time."

## State Planning Requirements

Explicit planning guidance is given by the State of Minnesota. Minnesota Statute 174.03, Subdivision 1a, requires that an update of the statewide transportation plan occur at least every four years. Furthermore, Minnesota State Statute 174.01, Subdivision 2, identifies the goals of Minnesota's transportation system. These include:

- Minimize fatalities and injuries for transportation users throughout the state.
- Provide multimodal and intermodal transportation facilities and services to increase access for all persons and businesses and to ensure economic well-being and quality of life without undue burden placed on any community.
- Provide a reasonable travel time for commuters.
- Enhance economic development and provide for the economical, efficient, and safe movement of goods to and from markets by rail, highway, and waterway.
- Encourage tourism by providing appropriate transportation to Minnesota facilities designed to attract tourists and to enhance the appeal, through transportation investments, of tourist destinations across the state.
- Provide transit services to all counties in the state to meet the needs of transit users.
- Promote accountability through systematic management of system performance and productivity through the utilization of technological advancements.
- Maximize the long-term benefits received for each state transportation investment.
- Provide for and prioritize funding of transportation investments that ensures that the state's transportation infrastructure is maintained in a state of good repair.
- Ensure that the planning and implementation of all modes of transportation are consistent with the environmental and energy goals of the state.
- Promote and increase the use of high-occupancy vehicles and low-emission vehicles.

- Provide an air transportation system sufficient to encourage economic growth and allow all regions of the state the ability to participate in the global economy.
- Increase use of transit as a percentage of all trips statewide by giving highest priority to the transportation modes with the greatest people-moving capacity and lowest long-term economic and environmental cost.
- Promote and increase bicycling and walking as a percentage of all trips as energy-efficient, nonpolluting, and healthy forms of transportation.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the state's transportation sector.
- Accomplish these goals with minimal impact on the environment.

## Federal Programming Rules

The State is required to develop a statewide transportation improvement program (STIP) for all areas of the state. The STIP must cover a period of at least three years and be updated at least every four years.

Creating the STIP requires cooperation with officials in metropolitan areas and consultation with officials in non-metropolitan areas. For each metropolitan area of more than 50,000 people in the state, the STIP must be developed in cooperation with the MPO designated for the metropolitan area. Each metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) must be included without change in the STIP. For each non-metropolitan area in the state, the STIP needs to be developed in consultation with affected non-metropolitan local officials.

The MPO, in cooperation with the state(s) and any affected public transportation operator(s), is required to develop a TIP for the metropolitan planning area. The TIP is required to cover a period of no less than four years and be updated at least every four years. The TIP may be updated more frequently, but the cycle for updating the TIP must be compatible with the STIP development and approval process.

While the creation of the STIP requires involvement from MPOs, TIP requirements are centered on involving the general public. MPOs are required to provide all interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP and the TIP needs to be published or otherwise made readily available for public review.

The STIP and TIP have almost identical federal requirements for items such as the types of projects that should be included, required project information, financial information, and consistency. The STIP includes capital and non-capital surface transportation projects (or phases of projects) within the boundaries of the State proposed for funding under title 23 U.S.C. and title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 (including transportation enhancements; Federal Lands Highway program projects; safety projects included in the State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan; trails projects; pedestrian walkways; and bicycle facilities). The TIP is also required to include capital

and non-capital surface transportation projects, but only those *within the boundaries of the metropolitan planning area.*

The STIP and TIP need to include for each project or phase (e.g., preliminary engineering, environment/NEPA, right-of-way, design, or construction) the following information:

- Sufficient descriptive material ( *i.e.* , type of work, termini, and length) to identify the project or phase
- Estimated total project cost, or a project cost range, which may extend beyond the four years of the STIP
- The amount of federal funds proposed to be obligated during each program year
- Identification of the agencies responsible for carrying out the project or phase

In addition to these four items, the TIP also requires the following three items:

- In nonattainment and maintenance areas,[3] identification of those projects which are identified as Transportation Control Measures in the applicable State Implementation Program
- In nonattainment and maintenance areas, included projects need to be specified in sufficient detail (design concept and scope) for air quality analysis in accordance with the EPA transportation conformity regulation (40 CFR part 93)
- In areas with Americans with Disabilities Act required paratransit and key station plans, identification of those projects that will implement these plans

The TIP and STIP finances are based on three principles:

1. Year of Expenditure Dollars: Revenue and cost estimates for the STIP and TIP must use an inflation rate(s) to reflect “year of expenditure dollars,” based on reasonable financial principles and information, developed cooperatively by the MPO, State(s), and public transportation operator(s). Additionally, the TIP needs to contain system-level estimates of costs and revenue sources that are reasonably expected to be available to adequately operate and maintain Federal-aid highways and public transportation.
2. Funding reasonably expected: The STIP and TIP can include a project, or a phase of a project, only if full funding can reasonably be anticipated to be available for the project within the time period contemplated for completion of the project.
3. Financial Plan: The TIP needs to include a financial plan that demonstrates how the approved TIP can be implemented, cooperatively develop estimates of funds that are reasonably expected to be available to support TIP implementation. The STIP may

[3] Nonattainment areas are areas that do not meet national ambient air quality standards. Maintenance areas were previously nonattainment areas, but currently meet national ambient air quality standards.

include a financial plan that demonstrates how the approved STIP can be implemented, indicates resources from public and private sources that are reasonably expected to be made available to carry out the STIP, and recommends any additional financing strategies for needed projects and programs

Each project or project phase included in the STIP needs to be consistent with the long-range statewide transportation plan. In turn, each project or project phase included in the TIP needs to be consistent with the approved metropolitan transportation plan.

| MODE & PROGRAM | PROGRAM FUNDING | APPROXIMATE FUNDING (Avg/yr)* | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | PROJECT SOLICITATION | PROJECT SELECTION | APPROVAL AND/OR REVIEW BODY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TRANSIT** | | | | | | |
| Federal Highways Transit Program | FHWA Surface Transportation Program - Flex to FTA (STP or CMAQ) | $32M identified through ATPs $1M identified by OT | Federal highway funding transferred to FTA for eligible transit capital projects | Projects solicited by ATPs in Nov/Dec (Projects must come from an approved CIP) | Projects included in ATIP & submitted to OCPPM by April 15 for inclusion in STIP | TPIC - reviews funding levels in May; approves funding levels in August |
| FTA Urbanized Area Program | FTA Section 5307 | $113M | Federal transit funding for Urbanized area over 50,000 in population for capital and operational assistance | Projects solicited in May, applications due in August | For Greater MN - Projects approved by Office of Transit in October for inclusion in STIP | MPO is final review body |
| FTA Transit Capital Program | FTA Section 5309 | $22M | Federal transit funding for transit capital projects | Projects solicited in May, applications due in August | Additional projects not selected through ATP process are selected by OT from approved CIPs and then amended into the STIP | MPO is final review body |
| FTA Elderly & Persons with Disabilities Program | FTA Section 5310 | $2M | Wheelchair accessible vans/buses for private non-profits | Applications due annually in October to Office of Transit | Projects selected by stakeholder panel in December (staffed by OT). Projects amended into STIP | Stakeholder Advisory Panel and Approved by Office of Transit |
| FTA Non-Urbanized Program | FTA Section 5311 | $12.9M | Federal transit funding for non-urbanized capital and operating assistance | Projects solicited in May, applications due in August | Additional projects not selected through ATP process are selected by OT from approved CIPs and then amended into the STIP | Approved by Office of Transit |
| FTA Non-Urbanized Program | FTA Section 5311F | Funded at 15% of Total 5311 allocation | Federal transit funding for non-urbanized capital and operating assistance to intercity bus providers | Project solicited every other year in May, applications due in August | Projects approved by OT in October for inclusion in STIP. Amended into the STIP. | Approved by Office of Transit |

| MODE & PROGRAM | PROGRAM FUNDING | APPROXIMATE FUNDING (Avg/yr)* | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | PROJECT SOLICITATION | PROJECT SELECTION | APPROVAL AND/OR REVIEW BODY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TRANSIT - CONTINUED** | | | | | | |
| FTA Job Access & Reverse Commute Program | FTA Section 5316 | $0.9M | Low income individuals to/from jobs and activities related to employment. | Projects solicited in May, applications due in August | Projects approved by OT in October for inclusion in STIP. Amended into the STIP. | Approved by Office of Transit |
| FTA New Freedom Program | FTA Section 5317 | $0.5M | New transportation services and alternatives to assist individuals with disabilities | Projects solicited in May, applications due in August | Projects approved by OT in October for inclusion in STIP. Amended into the STIP. | Stakeholder Advisory Panel and Approved by Office of Transit |
| Minnesota State Transit Program | State funds (MVST & General Funds) | $42.9M | State funds for eligible non-urban transit capital and operating assistance to Greater Minnesota | Projects solicited in May, applications due in August | Projects approved by OT in October based on eligibility criteria. Not included in the STIP. | Stakeholder Advisory Panel and Approved by Office of Transit |
| **RAIL** | | | | | | |
| Grade Crossing Safety Improvement Program | FHWA Highway Safety Improvement Program funds | $5.7M | Implementation of safety improvements at rail/highway crossings | Statewide solicitation annually in March. On site reviews June - Sept. Multi-year statewide ranked list of projects is developed in consultation with railroads. Each ATP provided with regional list in February | Each ATP selects projects to include in ATIP & submit to OCPPM by April 15 for inclusion in STIP | TPIC - reviews funding levels in May; approves funding levels in August |
| Minnesota Rail Service Improvement Program (MRSI) | State general obligation bonds or state general funds; state and federal earmarks | $5.5M | Provides infrastructure improvement loans to shippers, railroads and rail authorities | Informal solicitation for loan applications based on availability and timing of funding. Earmarks designated for specific projects. | Projects selected by OFCVO based loan criteria and project attributes. | Approved by OFCVO |

| MODE & PROGRAM | PROGRAM FUNDING | APPROXIMATE FUNDING (Avg/yr)* | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | PROJECT SOLICITATION | PROJECT SELECTION | APPROVAL AND/OR REVIEW BODY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **RAIL - CONTINUED** | | | | | | |
| Highway Safety Account | State funds | $1M | Used for safety enhancement projects such as circuitry upgrades, roadway geometric improvements, roadway closures, match for federal projects and engineering studies | Projects indentified by OFCVO throughout the year. | List of projects developed by OFCVO project managers to address smaller/repair and upgrade projects. | Approved by OFCVO |
| **PASSENGER RAIL** | | | | | | |
| Commuter, High Speed & Light Rail | Federal Funds augmented by State Funds | NA | Competitive grant application programs | NA | Projects selected by Grantor | |
| **PORTS & WATERWAYS** | | | | | | |
| Port Development Assistance Program | State Funds (Bond and General Funds) *One time federal funding - ARRA* | $1.5M | Assist public port authorities that have commercial navigation facitilities with access to the Great Lakes or Mississippi River systems - funding for modernization projects | Program is developed annually by OFCVO in consultation with port authorities (Duluth, St Paul, Mpls, Red Wing, Winona). | Projects selected by OFCVO based on loan criteria and project attributes. | Approved by OFCVO |
| **AERONAUTICS** | | | | | | |
| Airport Development and Assistance** | State Airport Fund (biennial appropriation) and Federal Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funds | $14.3M state $70M fed | Supports state aviation programs and activities by providing airport grant-in-aid programs | Annually (Sept/Oct) OA updates its 5-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) from the CIPs submitted by local jurisdictions who own and operate airports. FAA maintains an Airport CIP based on input from the OA and MN CIP. | Both State and FAA have project ranking process. Airports are offered funds for specific project in the upcoming state and federal fiscal year. Applications and agreements facilitate grant process. | State: Mn/DOT and local governing body, e.g. city council, airport commission, and county boards Fed: Mn/DOT Aeronautics, FAA, and local governing body. |

| MODE & PROGRAM | PROGRAM FUNDING | APPROXIMATE FUNDING (Avg/yr)* | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | PROJECT SOLICITATION | PROJECT SELECTION | APPROVAL AND/OR REVIEW BODY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **AERONAUTICS - CONTINUED** | | | | | | |
| Hangar Loan Revolving Account Program | Revolving Account initially established by the Mn Legislature | $4.4M | Provides loans to aircraft for the construction of airport storage hangars | Annually OA updates its 5-year CIP (Jan/Feb) from the CIPs submitted by local jurisdictions who own and operate airports. Airports identify hangars in their CIP | Airports must submit aircraft identification numbers of the aircraft that will occupy the hangar prior to receiving a loan. | Mn/DOT Aeronautics |
| Air Service Marketing Program | Appropriated by MN Legislature from the State Airports Fund | $0.2M | Provides grants for airports to market commercial air service. They can not market a specific air carrier. | Annually to airports that currently have commercial air service and occasionally, as requested, to airports studying the feasibility of attracting air service. | Based on formula that provides all applicants with equal percentage of their request | Mn/DOT Aeronautics |
| Airport Improvement Grant Program (Fed) | Appropriated by Congress to the federal Airport Improvement Program (AIP) | $70M (for MN) | Grants to assist the 97 airports included in National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems in planning and development of federally eligible airport infrastructure. | FAA maintains an Airport CIP (ACIP) based on input from the OA and MN CIP. FAA has ranking process. | Airports are offered federal AIP funds for specific projects in the upcoming federal fiscal year. | Mn/DOT Aeronautics, FAA, and local governing bodies, e.g. city council, airport commission, and county boards. |
| Airport Construction Grant Program (state) | Appropriated by the Mn Legislature from the State Airports Fund | $8.3M (planning & construction) | Grants to assist 135 publicly owned airports in the planning, and development of airport infrastructure. | Annually OA updates its 5-year CIP (Jan/Feb) from the CIPs submitted by local jurisdictions who own and operate airports. | Airports apply for grants. Airports are offered funds for specific project in the upcoming state and federal fiscal year based in part on the project priority score. | Mn/DOT Aeronautics and local governing bodies, e.g. city council, airport commission, and county boards. |

| MODE & PROGRAM | PROGRAM FUNDING | APPROXIMATE FUNDING (Avg/yr)* | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | PROJECT SOLICITATION | PROJECT SELECTION | APPROVAL AND/OR REVIEW BODY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **AERONAUTICS - CONTINUED** | | | | | | |
| Airport Maintenance/Operations Program (State Grant) | Appropriated by the Mn Legislature from the State Airports Fund | $3.9M | Grants to assist publicly owned airports included in the State Airport System with the annual maintenance and operation of their airport. | Grant application and agreement | Grant amount is based on formula that prorates available funding to the airport based on their portion of the total airport infrastructure they had as of FY 2008. | Mn/DOT Aeronautics |
| Airport Navigational Aids Program (state) | Appropriated by the Mn Legislature from the State Airports Fund | $2.1M | Develops, operates and maintains air navigation systems throughout Minnesota | Projects requested by airports and identified by Aeronautics | Based on system needs. | Mn/DOT Aeronautics |

* **Based on average of 4 STIP years (2011 through 2014)**

## Modal Programs Annual Project Selection Timelines