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# State Aid E-Scene

## Two new NEPA environmental documentation forms now available

By: Mike Scott, Assistant Project Development Engineer

State Aid has developed two new NEPA environmental documentation forms for federally funded projects as a result of revisions made to the updated Programmatic Categorical Exclusion (PCE) agreement between FHWA and MnDOT, dated May 1, 2020. The new forms are more streamlined with simple checkboxes, fillable text boxes, and applicable attachments designed to document compliance with NEPA and state aid standards.

The forms, along with a recorded training session and training slides can be found on the [Environmental Form webpage](#) under “Categorical Exclusion Short Forms.”

State Aid expects that the form entitled: “Short Form C-List CATEX” will be the “go to” form for the majority of State Aid projects. The form was

created to provide NEPA documentation for the 30 categories of action (referred to as the “C-List”) listed under [23 CFR 771.117 \(c\)](#). The C-List actions can be used as a basis for NEPA compliance as long as it is shown that there are no unusual circumstances as listed under [23 CFR 771.117 \(b\)](#) associated with the project. It is anticipated that (C)(23) – projects receiving less than \$5.6 million in federal dollars will be the most widely used categorical exclusion.

The form entitled: “Short Form D-List CATEX” is expected to be used on the remaining State Aid CE projects. The D-list covers 13 categories of action as listed under [23 CFR 771.117 \(d\)](#). The D-List actions require FHWA approval, however, the PCE agreement allows MnDOT to approve some of the D-List actions if certain conditions are met.

State Aid will continue to accept the old Project Memo Template if you have already started working on a project, but this form will soon be phased out and will only be used for non-programmatic categorical exclusion projects that will require FHWA review and approval.

The short form “Environmental Documentation for Federal Projects with Minor Impacts” should continue to be used for those minor action projects.

For questions, comments or suggestions in regards to the new forms, please contact either Sulmaan Khan at [sulmaan.khan@state.mn.us](mailto:sulmaan.khan@state.mn.us) or 651-366-3819, Lynnette Roshell at [lynnette.roshell@state.mn.us](mailto:lynnette.roshell@state.mn.us) or 651-366-3822, or Mike Scott at [mike.scott@state.mn.us](mailto:mike.scott@state.mn.us) or 651-366-3825.

# DBE Clearance

By: Elisa Bottos, Project Delivery Engineer

Before you award your federal project!

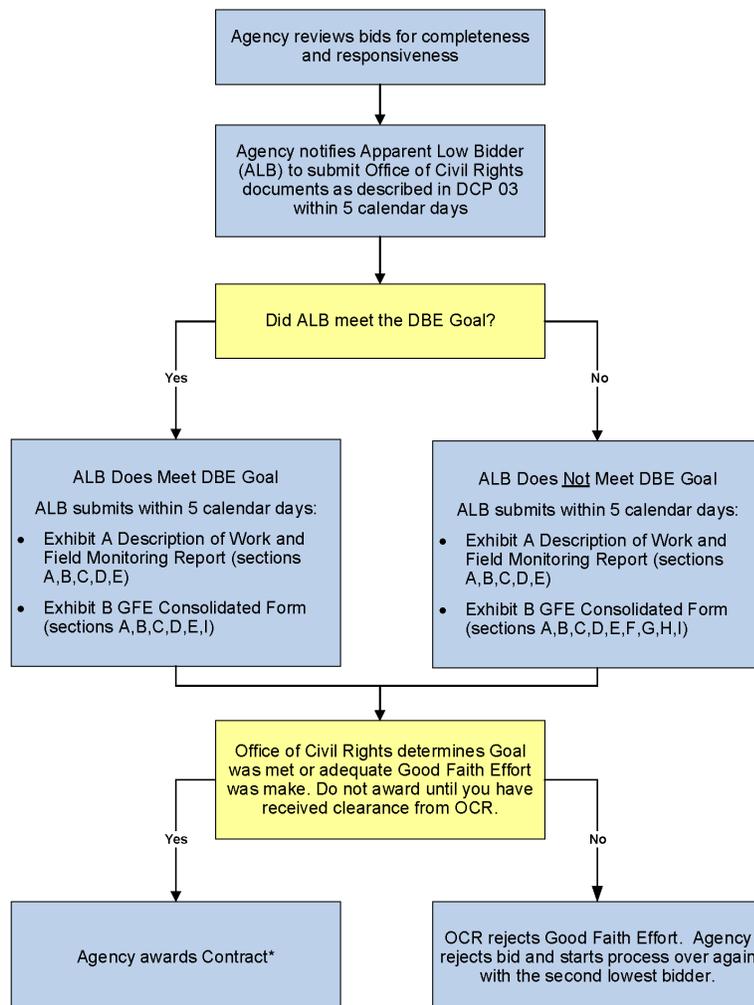
- Advertised your project - check!
- Let your project - check!
- Awarded your project- WAIT! If you have a DBE numerical Goal, you must wait for MnDOT Office of Civil Right Clearance before Award.

Please make sure you have received clearance from the Office of Civil Rights for the DBE Goal for your federal project with a numerical DBE goal. The Office of Civil Rights must approve the DBE participation before award of the contract.

If there is a Race Gender Neutral Goal, the local agency can award the project, but the contractor must still submit the Good Faith Efforts Consolidated Form Part A, B, C, D, and E; and description of work for each DBE firm on or before the 5th calendar day after opening.

Please see [Delegated Contract Process \(DCP\) Checklist](#), step 2-14 and 2-18.

On the Job Training and Equal Employment Opportunity submittals may be required if applicable.



*\*\*If bid is over 10% of the Engineer's Estimate, a justification for awarding must be submitted to DSAE. Ensure all other requirements are in place before award.*

# Know the fine print – federal funds for preliminary engineering and right of way

By: Elisa Bottos, Project Delivery Engineer

If your agency has been awarded federal funds for preliminary engineering or right of way, please make sure you know about all the “fine print.”

According to 23 CFR 630.112 (c) (2), if a project funded by federal funds for preliminary engineering does not progress to a right of way or construction project within 10 years, the agency is responsible for paying those federal funds back to the FHWA.

Similarly, according to 23 CFR 630.112 (c) (1), if a project funded by federal funds for right of way does not progress to a construction project within 20 years, the agency is responsible for paying those federal funds back to the FHWA.

An extension may be granted with just cause if approved by the FHWA. Please note that if the environmental process produces a “no- build” alternative, repayment is not required.

Subsequent construction project can be funded with federal, state or local funds.

Applicable agreements have been updated accordingly.



# MnCMAT2 update

By: Loren Hill, Program Support Engineer

The last update which announced the launching of MnCMAT2 was the cover story in the [March 2020 E-Scene \(PDF\)](#). But a lot has also happened in the past several months.

We initially had planned in-person training limited to a class size of about 20, both at Arden Hills and St Cloud. But with the COVID-19 pandemic, the training was made 'virtual', with essentially unlimited class size. As a result, we have trained more than 300 users in our four training sessions to date. Each session was about 2 ½ hours consisting of a PowerPoint presentation, as well as demonstrating the application. While the training was certainly not the same as in person, small sized, it was a great way to train more than 100 attendees at a time which required no travel for the presenters or the attendees. The training has been uploaded to the website, and broken into sections for ease of use.

The below table shows the general agency category of the attendees. In addition to the engineering community, we are happy to have numerous law enforcement attendees. Their participation is an enticement to get even better data as well as showing them it is not just for insurance purposes – that they can use this data

to target areas and times to increase patrols.

In addition, we have retained the services of Great Arc Technologies (GAT) for maintenance and enhancements to the application for this next year. As a result, they have fixed a couple of minor bugs, and more importantly have already made several enhancements, which were rolled out June 3. These enhancements include:

- Ability to get Officer Sketch and Narrative from a crash listing.
- Ability to select intersections for Charts and Tables
- Ability to zoom out further when displaying Intersection and Segment Densities and Rates
- Ability to display breakout of Pedestrians, Bikes, and Drivers in five Charts
- Ability to select the start and end of a Route which selects all segments between them.

The [MnCMAT2 webpage](#) has been modified to include training resources. Please contact Loren Hill at [loren.hill@state.mn.us](mailto:loren.hill@state.mn.us) if you have any questions, corrections, proposed enhancements or any training needs.

Agency Type	Attendees					
	31-Mar	19-Mar	14-Mar	6-May	Total	Percent
County Engineering	30	35		19	84	26%
City Engineering	7	41		11	59	18%
MnDOT	18	4	3	22	47	15%
Consultant	10	10	2	19	41	13%
City Police			18	20	38	12%
County Sheriff			4	11	15	5%
State Patrol			22	8	30	9%
Met Council/ST CLD APO	5	1		1	7	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100%</b>

# MnDOT materials testing software

By: Nicole Madison, Construction/Materials Project Data Management Coordinator

MnDOT is in the process of implementing a new software program (AASHTOWare) to better store, manage, and integrate information. We are currently working on the component that will be used for all the materials testing (including testing performed for cities and counties). Currently MnDOT's Central Lab (Maplewood) is documenting admixture and cementitious samples in AASHTOWare. MnDOT will be incorporating additional materials and labs into AASHTOWare as the software is developed.

One of the basic requirements of AASHTOWare will be that everyone that submits a sample will be required to be entered in the system. **To ease the transition, MnDOT is requesting at this time that you provide the names, phone numbers, and email addresses of any people that you anticipate will be submitting samples or managing projects (samplers, inspectors, engineers, etc.) by July 15, 2020 if possible. Complete form for each separate individual using [this link](#).**

Important information to note about your submission:

- Each individual from your company only needs to be entered once

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## ...continued, MnDOT materials testing software

- If there is a consultant that is used by more than one agency, MnDOT will check for duplication if it comes in from multiple sources
- You are not bound or limited to these people and people can be added later using the same form
- If a person leaves an agency in the future, the same form can be used to remove the person from the system
- This is not a one-time chance to get people in the system, however please be proactive by submitting those names

MnDOT desires to continue to provide you with quality and timely testing of the materials on your projects. Thank you so much for your assistance.

There will also be an email sent out with this same information. Visit our website for more information the [AASHTOWare Project](#).

## Employee news

We are pleased to announce Krysten Saatela Foster as the new D1 DSAE. Most recently, she has served as Lake County Engineer since 2013, and in 2018 she became the Lake/Cook County Engineer. Prior to this, Krysten worked at MnDOT in the Grad Engineer Program and did rotations in districts 1, 7, metro, and central office. Krysten has a Bachelor's from the U of MN in Civil Engineering and a Master's in Business Administration from Saint Scholastica.

# New Statewide Interim Approvals website

By: Tiffany Kautz, Traffic Standards Engineer

The Office of Traffic Engineering is excited to launch a new [Statewide Interim Approvals website!](#)

The goal of the website is to make it easier for jurisdictions to comply with State and Federal reporting requirements. These reporting requirements apply to all locations in Minnesota, even those locations outside of MnDOT's jurisdiction. If your jurisdiction is using a statewide interim approval, please report it on the new [Interim Approval Reporting Form](#).

Interim approvals are discussed in Section 1A.10 of the Federal MUTCD and issued by FHWA. Interim approval allows the interim use (pending official rulemaking) of a new traffic control device, a revision to the application or manner of use of an existing traffic control device, or a provision not specifically described in the federal MUTCD or MN MUTCD.

Often when FHWA issues an interim approval, MnDOT will request a statewide interim approval on behalf of all jurisdictions within the State. MnDOT has received a statewide interim approval for the following:

- IA-13, Alternative Electric Vehicle Charging General Service Symbol
- IA-14, Green Colored Pavement for Bike Lanes
- IA-16, Bicycle Signal Faces
- IA-17, 3-Section Flashing Yellow Arrow Signal Face
- IA-18, Intersection Bicycle Boxes
- IA-19, Alternate Signal Warrant 7: Crash Experience
- IA-20, Two-Stage Bicycle Turn Boxes



An RRFB (IA-21) at a school crossing in Roseau, MN. Photo courtesy of HNTB.

- IA-21, Ped-Actuated RRFBs at Uncontrolled Marked Crosswalks
- IA-22, Red-Colored Pavement for Transit Lanes

Is your jurisdiction using any of the devices listed above? If yes, then your jurisdiction is using a statewide interim approval and must adhere to the following requirements:

- Abide by the specific conditions for use of the device as contained in the [FHWA's Interim Approval](#) document;
- Provide MnDOT with a list of locations where devices have been installed, which can be done by completing the [Interim Approval Reporting Form](#); and,

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# ...continued, New Statewide Interim Approv- als website

- If needed,
  - ⇒ Restore the site(s) of the interim approval to a condition that complies with the provisions of the MN MUTCD within three months following the issuance of a Final Rule on the traffic control device; and,
  - ⇒ Terminate use of the device or application installed under the interim approval at any time that it is determined that significant safety concerns are directly or indirectly attributable to the device or application. The FHWA's Office of Transportation Operations has the right to terminate the interim approval at any time if there is an indication of safety concerns.

Please report any device using a statewide interim approval at the new [Statewide Interim Approvals website](#). If you have questions about interim approvals, please contact Tiffany Kautz at [tiffany.kautz@state.mn.us](mailto:tiffany.kautz@state.mn.us) or 651-234-7388.

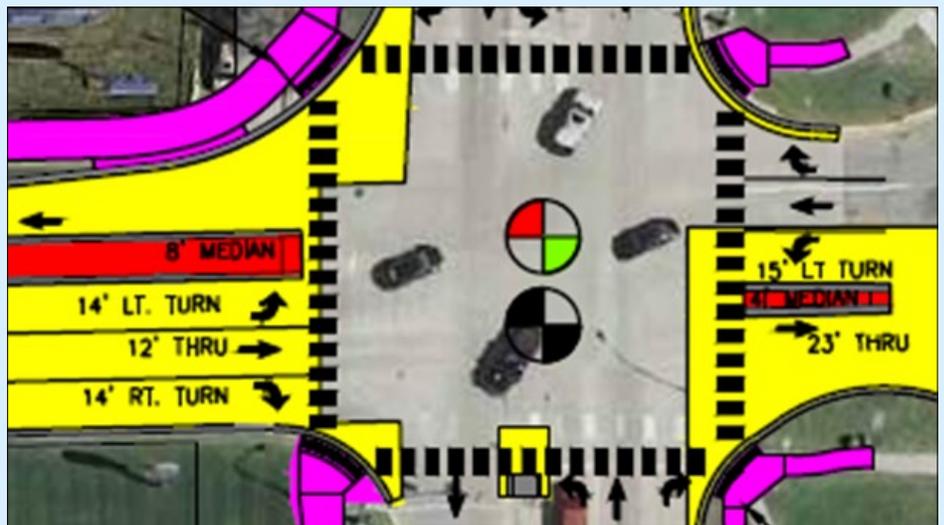
## LPP project highlights

By: Mao Yang, Assistant Operations Engineer

The Local Partnership Program (LPP), administered by the District State Aid Engineers, provide transportation partnership opportunities between MnDOT and local agencies with improvements on the trunk highway system that are mutually beneficial. The LPP project in Hutchinson is an example of how the program continue to build relationships and meet needs in the community. The City of Hutchinson and MnDOT District 8 leveraged LPP funds to replace the signal system at the intersection of South Grade Road and Trunk Highway 15. The intersection was identified for improvements under the City of

Hutchinson's Safety Plan and City 2012 Transportation Plan. The improvement addressed existing and projected traffic volume concerns with new commercial development in the area. The project also included non-motorized improvements with ADA updates and tied into a new multi-use trail along the South Grade Road.

General Information about the program is available on the [State Aid LPP webpage](#). Contact your [DSAE](#) for information on how you can participate.



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