



HOW WILL WE IMPLEMENT THE SMTP

The next phase of the SMTP is to transition the plan’s broad policy direction into specific, action-oriented tasks. Some of the considerations are easier to foresee than others. For example, investing in first- and last-mile connections continues to be a priority for walking, rolling, bicycling, transit, freight and economic development. Other things are harder to predict 20 years—even 10 years—from now.

Evolving technology, reckoning with systemic oppression, a global pandemic and climate change present new opportunities, stresses, innovations and practices to keep transportation moving in Minnesota. The transportation industry can’t anticipate all the unknowns. However, it is known that the transportation system of the past cannot solve the problems of today or those of tomorrow.

The SMTP needs to be implemented with purpose, intention and in coordination with stakeholders and partners. And everyone has a role!

READ CHAPTER 7 TO:

- Understand how partners can integrate SMTP policy direction into their work.
- Read about what is required of MnDOT and partners to implement the SMTP.

PARTNER ROLES

Everyone has a role in implementing the SMTP. For partners with transportation decision-making authority, the SMTP provides a framework for changes to policies, programming and practices to move transportation toward the Minnesota GO Vision. For partners without transportation decision-making authority, the plan serves as a set of recommendations and direction to understand how transportation can be integrated into their work and an opportunity to hold transportation partners accountable. Roles include:

LOCAL PARTNERS include agencies and organizations responsible for transportation decisions at the local level, and who play the lead role implementing the SMTP in their communities. Local partners include entities that make important transportation decisions reflecting the value, context and needs of the community. Transportation partners will assist in aligning design, engineering, land use, programming and operational decisions.

TRIBAL PARTNERS are the 12 federally recognized sovereign Tribal Nations with jurisdiction over land and resources in Minnesota. Indian Country includes road, bridges, highways, transit services, sidewalks and more. Tribal partners plan, build and manage key parts of Minnesota’s transportation system and tribes are key partners in moving transportation forward.

REGIONAL PARTNERS include metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), regional development organizations (RDOs) and groups of counties and cities that can play a lead role in implementing the SMTP at the regional scale. Regional collaboration is critical to update other regional visions and long-range plans. In addition, these collaborations help to align transportation, economic development, workforce development and environmental stewardship decisions.

STATE PARTNERS can assist in facilitating the implementation of SMTP policy direction at the system level. Partner and sibling agencies can collaborate through steering committees and councils, coordinate implementation activities and assist in the monitoring and reporting.

FEDERAL PARTNERS can help ensure that ongoing planning efforts are consistent with the SMTP. Additionally, federal partners may be able to provide guidance and technical assistance to help implement the strategies and actions. On occasion, outcomes from statewide planning are able to inform work completed by federal partners.

PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERS own and operate transportation services. These include railroads, terminal operators and shipping companies as well as developers, construction companies, consultants, etc. Partnerships are key to delivering plans, programs and projects that meet the SMTP policy direction.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS are advocates, academics, community-based organizations and chambers of commerce. These partners help identify community needs, proven practices and tangible steps to improve transportation for people.

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (MNDOT) will lead, partner or facilitate as appropriate. MnDOT will lead strategic efforts where it is appropriate, serve as a partner for work that crosses over disciplines or missions, develop MnDOT-specific actions and facilitate implementation with partners to move forward the SMTP policy direction. MnDOT work plan items are identified in Chapter 6.

PREPARING FOR CHANGE

This SMTP is intended to provide a framework for evaluating evolving conditions to proactively manage the change required to serve Minnesotans now and into the future. One role of the public sector is to manage technology, innovation and change. Each agency—or even department, team or person—may be in different phases of change. Some will be working to understand opportunities and risks to new initiatives. Others will be evaluating the impact of pilots and offering lessons learned to others considering similar solutions.

The SMTP policy direction includes a range of work to meet jurisdictions where they are in the change process. For each strategy and action, it may be helpful to determine where the organization is at currently and how best to proceed whether preparing for, managing or reinforcing change:

- **PREPARE FOR CHANGE.** Understand opportunities and risks. Align change with industry values. Formulate plans for change management in collaboration with stakeholders. Build coalitions to accelerate change.
- **MANAGE CHANGE.** Listen for and respond to stakeholder feedback. Adapt work and apply new techniques to support change over time. Implement engagement and training plans to empower others to act.
- **REINFORCE CHANGE.** Monitor and track change processes. Identify gaps and plan responses. Document and share learnings and insights to integrate promising approaches as new standards of doing work.

The challenges Minnesota is facing require bold, coordinated approaches. Collective commitment is needed from all who have a role in making transportation move for Minnesotans. Collaboration with transportation partners throughout the plan development process has built a solid foundation to implementing this plan. Continuing to collaborate and coordinate with partners is key to successful implementation of the SMTP. Consider the objectives, performance measures, strategies and actions in Chapter 5 an invitation to join MnDOT and transportation partners to build this bold new transportation future together.



NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

Fully implementing the SMTP will require adequate funding that is sustainable and equitable. While MnDOT does not have a current comprehensive estimate of funding needed for the entire transportation system over the next 20 years, past efforts—including the 2012 Minnesota Transportation Finance Advisory Committee¹ and the American Society of Civil Engineers infrastructure report card²—have consistently documented the need for more funding.

MnDOT has recently estimated that \$30-33 billion in funding will be available for construction projects on the state highway system (Interstates, US Highways and Minnesota State Highways) between 2023 and 2042. However, to achieve the targets and objectives in the SMTP on the state highway system, MnDOT would need \$52-57 billion for construction, not counting additional funding for maintenance, planning and operations. That means there is a funding gap of \$19-27 billion just for state highway construction, which is only a small piece of the transportation system. Funding gaps also exist for local roads and bridges, transit, walking and bicycling, rail, airports, and ports and waterways

The SMTP envisions a future transportation system that is different than what exists today. Realizing that system will likely require changes in how transportation is funded. For example, a shift to zero emission vehicles will reduce the amount of gasoline and diesel used in the state, reducing the amount of motor fuel taxes collected. Likewise, reducing per capita vehicle miles travelled would also reduce the amount of motor fuel taxes. Conversely, reducing per capita VMT would also reduce the extent and duration of congestion and reduce the need for construction projects to address delays for vehicle drivers and passengers. Those changes also require supporting services and infrastructure.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passed by Congress and signed into law by President Biden in November 2021 will provide a helpful infusion of funding over the next five years. However, it will not solve Minnesota’s long-term transportation funding needs on its own. Additional state funds are needed to match those federal funds. Even with the additional federal funding, there is not currently enough funding to address all of the needs on the transportation system.

MnDOT is committed to working with the Legislature and transportation partners to determine long-term, reliable and sustainable funding plans for the future of Minnesota’s multimodal transportation system. This may include changes to current funding mechanisms as well as exploring alternative ways to fund transportation in the state. All new proposals for transportation funding must also consider how to ensure the distribution of benefits and burdens is fair and just.

For detailed information about how transportation is funded in Minnesota, see Appendix F - Transportation Funding.

¹ “Transportation Funding and Financing for the Next 20 Years,” Minnesota Transportation Finance Advisory Committee, December 2012, <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/tfac/docs/final-report.pdf>.

² “2022 Infrastructure Report Card for Minnesota,” American Society of Civil Engineers, accessed on October 21, 2022, <https://ascemn.org/report-card>.

MANAGING TRADEOFFS

It's important to acknowledge that not all strategies and actions may be implemented concurrently. The policy direction set forth requires tradeoffs. Also, several of the commitments in the SMTP—like reducing greenhouse gas emissions and decreasing traveler delay—may have positive and negative equity impacts. Change is required to meet social, economic and environmental goals for transportation. But a one-size-fits-all approach will not serve Minnesotans in the near term.

Overall, examining tradeoffs is needed to understand how best to use available resources and barriers that exist. As a part of SMTP implementation, strategies and actions should be evaluated for barriers, benefits and burdens to inform future transportation decisions. Chapter 6 includes work for MnDOT to understand the distribution of benefits and burdens to inform phased implementation and future policy recommendations.

ESSENTIAL PRACTICES FOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The SMTP needs to be implemented with purpose, intention and in coordination with stakeholders and partners. Each step of the process helps to understand needs and develops strategies to address short- and long-term changes necessary to realize the commitments in this plan. Implementation activities should reflect flexible and realistic schedules to adapt to a wide variety of changing conditions. Essential practices for plan implementation include:

- Building more and better capacity for equitable and inclusive engagement.
- Consulting and evaluating other efforts to integrate transportation planning processes.
- Informing future long-range transportation plan updates across all jurisdictions.
- Coordinating on regional and local plans with Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Regional Development Organizations.
- Incorporating best practices from other state agencies and transportation partners.
- Providing ongoing implementation communications.

These efforts together are foundational to implement the SMTP. Everyone has a role in implementing the policy direction in this plan and ensuring the success of the transportation system. We will make Minnesota GO together.

